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2010 Literary Review (no. 23)

Sigma Tau Delta

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"Talent is helpful in writing, but guts are absolutely necessary."
-Jessamyn West ('23)

Dear Reader,

It is our pleasure and honor to present to you the 2010 Edition of the Whittier College Literary Review. This annual publication of student writing and art work, was organized and edited by the Whittier College Upsilon Sigma/Jessamyn West Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honors Society.

It was our endeavor to bring together a diverse collection of work from a wide range of disciplines. As Poets, we take great pride in our Liberal Arts curriculum and embrace the broad range of creativity that springs from our community of students. In years past, we have showcased an impressive array of work ranging from poetry and short fiction to scholarly essays and photography. This year, we are pleased to include the exciting addition of music composition to this volume, along with an impressive collection of art, photography, and essays from disciplines as varied as Political Science and English, to History and Religious Studies. This eclectic volume represents the spirit of the principles of Whittier College and the imminent Jessamyn West for her love of words and the courage that defined her character.

Best known for her 1945 novel The Friendly Persuasion, West founded the English Appreciation Society at Whittier College at a time when national organizations were forbidden on the Quaker campus. Today, the society she founded is not only a recognized chapter of the International Sigma Tau Delta, and one of the largest Honors Societies on campus, but also one of only a select few with a historical tie to a renowned author. The Upsilon Sigma Chapter continues to keep Jessamyn West's adventurous spirit alive by striving to encourage students to explore their creativity and make the Literary Review an outlet for creative expression and academic excellence.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our wonderful advisor, Professor Sean Morris for the unwavering support he so graciously volunteered during the editing process and throughout the year. His guidance and knowledge have made an impact on every student in the English Department and we would like to express our sincere gratitude for his kindness and commitment to excellence. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to all of our incredible Professors for their generosity in encouraging students to submit their work. Also, a special thank to Angela Freeland, our beloved English Department Secretary for her daily assistance, and to all who took part the editing process. We could not have done it without you!

Doing this work is a labor of love for us and we hope you are inspired by the creativity and dedication of our students.

Sincerely,

Katy Simonian and Tina Rinaldi
Co-Presidents and Editors of the 2010 Literary Review

Shannon Jaime

I Wonder Why the Muse Has Risen in Me

And so I listen
as you talk of your drunken,
off-road excursions,
your lies doughnut-glazed and
the slurs spilling like
bright, urine-gold beer
from your glistening lips.
(That old '66 Mustang
will probably outlive you.)
And so I flicker
across the face of memory,
but always, always on the edge
of your vision, a stain upon
the blueness of your eyes
(they were never
so scornfully clear),
seeping silently into the
deep dark corners of your sight.
And so I simmer
as the clock strikes five,
not twelve (there's no carriage
calling, no shot glass
shoe to mend),
my insides burning with
resentment though I
barely know your name,
though smoky cinders cover mine.
And so I twiddle
my chocolate-flavored thumbs,
dazed and waiting for—what?
For life to begin? For time to end?
For a sticky ray of tropic sun
to light my way?
You said the fire route was
only half a mile long,
so where do I go from here?
And so I wander
with the watery weight
of the future in my arms,
a siren's coffee child
who can't hold her caffeine
(she's too green for liquor),
who follows the olive path to
nowhere, no ruby-studded heels
to take her home.
And so I wonder
as these wafer-thin words
soak up the secrets in
your milky smile,
as your story twists and
turns like a strand in the
divine synthetic wind,
why the muse has risen in me.
I wonder.

Annealing of the Lamb

White lamb, you called me, delicate and sweet—
A morsel for your black jaws to devour;
In wolf's guise, mad with hunger and deceit,
You thought to slay me in my final hour.
My soul, though smothered by the tyrant's hold,
Is not so weak, so brittle as to break;
No flames or eyes of blazing crimson-gold
Can mold my will, my glassy core unmake.
Alone I stand, facing the hunter's gaze,
Now seeming meek upon a fiery floor:
Yet you shall see how innocence betrays,
How trembles earth when it hears silence roar.
Then will I rise once, seething, you return
To me at last the heart that would not burn.

Wren Saito

TOMATOES

Essential garnish to the meal,
The flavor, the color, the shape.
Adorned in red, brown, yellow, a gem of intense heat.

A migrant brotherhood bonded in labor,
Hooded to ward off glaring blaze,
Relentless, crouching, reaching, gathering.

Deceptive names evoking fantasy
Of Siberia relief in a inferno,
Of Brandywine liquid for parched lips

Of an Heirloom in a penniless existence,
Of a Garden Peach in a treeless world,
Of Jubilee in an endless struggle.

A mere penny more per pound
A cry to the fi-fie-fo-fum giants
Conducting the hamburger drive through.

Pray a minute for an awning
To stem the rivulets of sweat
That run before the ketchup.

Worship Monsanto assuring a red bounty,
Producing a chemical miracle penetrating the flesh,
The womb, the guileless child.

Tomato victims innocently memorialized
Sweetie, Small Fry, Early Girl,
Snow White in hardly a childhood fairy tale.

Cherry lure on a garden salad
Roma tantalizer of Italian fare
And welcome Stupice, a reminder of corporate dominance.

Sterilized tomato seeds
Never to germinate again
Save in endless profit masked in benevolence.

But in poverty born a new generation,
Tomato slaves to pennies per pound,
Assuring an unappreciated McDonald slice.

The juice, running red.

Katy Simonian

Sonnet in E Minor

I hear the eager weep of violins,
Like a cool cascade of battle cries
As the cello moans through dark gypsy hymns
And fills the wanting center of vacant eyes.
The room stands still as souls become enraptured
With the rise of humble harmonies,
Which dance between the current captured,
Within nostalgic rhapsodies.
I hear the rebel yell of Godly sound
Compete in a daring duel of string
Where notes cause mortal blood to pound
And stir the tempo, cuing bells to ring.
And as the band of strings rises once more
I rise to welcome the last encore.

Urban Nature

I can hear them
singing
In the concrete meadow
Where predawn shadows mask
the faces of the forever young.
As the retired rose's fragrance
Amuses the fireflies dancing
In the moonlit night
They call out to me
"Remember us" they say
And go on dancing
singing
Waiting for dawn.

Lindy Blake

Untitled

The Ocean has healing powers beyond the greatest shaman.
I have but to gaze into Its vastness and my soul is whole again.
If for some reason to look upon or gaze into the Blue is not enough,
I can dive into Its depths and ride Its mountains.
My body and the Ocean move as one.
If I try to fight It, It lets me know it and pummels me into the bed.
Keeps me balanced.
I let the rolling hills do what they want with me,
then I crawl into the shallows and collapse,
tired from the love we just made.

Doris Youmara

The Middle-Eastern Boy

Born and raised in France. Not French.
I like hanging out with friends and play video games; go to café's and ride my bike around the parks.
Muslim raised, my culture is different; alien.
I go to school and speak French like I speak Arabic. None of the kids stare.
I go to school so I can live better; fit in with the French.
My parents tell me that we are different and that we must remember where we come from.
I have not seen where we come from; all I know is Paris.
The city is very busy, always full of people that look like me or darker than me.
We always speak French together yet people stare at us like we are speaking a strange language.
We are not French.

Shelly Converse-Rath

Picture Perfect

You look so posed, your suit new and stiff
Hair groomed, with the smile you wear for others;
A jester's dance.
But I know you, sweaty, angry, and imperfect
Stumbling over words you've tried to memorize
As you spit them at me in bitterness between the hours and miles.
I know you, eyes wide and mouth breathless
As we hold ourselves palm to palm, baited by the uncertainty of tomorrow.
Never as perfect as the picture
You are folded and creased, and faded from age
As you, combed hair askew, shoes scuffed with ambivalence,
Part disassembled.
Your arms around me.

Leave a Message

Palms pressed together, this time I mean it,
I look up.
There's a crack in the ceiling,
One I don't remember—
But then again, the line between what
has always and never been
Seems a little smaller
These days.
I'm not sure of the right way,
So under my breath I begin. "Dear God,"
"Please..."
And the sound of a car outside, engine sighing, interrupts
My lips remain parted, waiting.
As if there's some goal in mind—
Ashamed at the plea whispered
Only moments ago,
I instead thank all the believers
All the churchgoers, the Bible thumpers
For giving me nothing
to say.

Freddie Malcomb

An Island of My Own

I land on the lettery shore, kicking periods and commas off of my sandals.

My eyes take in the majesty of the mountain of books that lies ahead.

I am glad to be back; it has been all too long.

Walking up the trail of leather-bound covers, titles peer at me from the mass of books: *The Stand*, *Severance*, *Great Expectations*, and "The Waste Land."

I stop when I see a title on a spine facing me: The Regulators by Richard Bachman

"All of the best passageways involve removing a book from a shelf," I think as I tilt it on its back.

That old library smell hits me as the stale, strong scent of old paper escapes from the opening wall.

The mix of browned leather and colorful paperback spines greet me in the dark cave.

Taking some of them with me to the bright sky, I settle into the wall.

I smile as the sunlight tightens my skin and contrasts the black ink from the faded yellow paper.

The old leather cover creaks as I open it ever so carefully.

I know to treasure this time on my island, sifting fact from fiction at my own leisure.

Suspended Over the River

Jutting from the Colorado River,
Walled in by terracotta cliffs
Is an enormous spear-tip of an island
Piercing through the skin of the water into the sky
Two men stand climbing the rock,
One in his fifties, the other well into his twenties.
They are grasping at the sun-faded pink rocks and the dry shrubs for a foothold.
A boy just past seventeen hovers over the river
Grabbing his legs, pulling his knees into his chest.
Air, rather than pebbles, digs into his feet.
The water below waits to swallow him
His face is tightened as not to let water in, but he betrays his worry in his brow.
His eyes are closed; he blindly aims for the deepest blue of the river.

Jannelle Andrade

Untouchable

I have no form.
I am a song lingering in the silence.
I am a poem that flows through awed ears.

I am the shadow behind every object.
I am the star millions of miles away.
I am the light in the darkness.

I am hope when it is lost.
I am mercy when it is begged for.
I am love when it is longed for.

I am the breath when it is choked.
I am the heartbeat of new life.
I am the silence of a graveyard.

I am the wind that flies past the flame of a candle.
I am the oasis far in the desert.
I am the shade between endless miles of heat.
I am the valuable object thrown from a cliff.
I am the book thrown into the fire.
I am the key seen by the prisoner.
I am the horizon far ahead of the ship.
I am the dream crushed by the one who does not believe...

Awakened Once More

On the base of a tree at midnight, alone
All things are as they should be;
Perfection surrounds me- the companion of my solitude.
The sky is blanketed with eternal stars,
The stillness of the night echoes my comfort;
The calm of my heart yields solace...

I sing the praises of this world,
The wind brings forth the melody.
The beauty of this moment transcends all time.
The pulse of the earth reverberates from beneath the ground-
A steady heartbeat, pulsating with unending sound.

This is no dream, but unveiled truth.
I am awakened once more to this illuminating Vision.
I feel it swell within me- the freedom to know Peace.
My heart gives in to a greater kind of love,
One only found at this tree.

Catherine King

The Nymph Tires of Facebook

With Apologies to Sir Walter Raleigh and Christopher Marlowe

Come live with me and be my love
For how long will these pleasures prove?
A thousand shining empty boxes
Two-line friends with empty losses
Don't click with me and be my love
Or drink with me and be my love
Don't waste our time with fake connection
Or vapid, vacuous celebration
But *live* with me and be my love
Let's take a night that we two chose
And wander all the city streets
The quiet parks, the traffic beats
We'll open up our heart's chimeras
Hopes express like bud azaleas
Share a meal that's quick and cheap
The night air rendering it sweet
We'll wander sleepless all the night
And be caught by the morning light
We'll wade into the ocean's berth
Dance slowly in the noontide surf
A love is built partway on dreams
But needs more than computer screens
I want some pleasures we *can* prove -
Come live with me and be my love!

Catherine King

Where In The World Is The Tropic of Orange?

(sung to the tune of 'Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?', written by Sean Altman and David Yazbeck)

Well it's born in Mexíco
And then we'll go to California
It's a city sucking citrus
With a sweet symbolic taste
Its itinerary's loaded up
With moving violations, tell me:
Where in the world is
The tropic of orange?
All its pips are made of symbols
And its skin a bitter history
It hops across the borders
With conquistadore glee
It'll take you on a ride
On a guilt trip to Chinatown, tell me
Where in the world is
The tropic of orange?
It's from Mazatlan to border to L.A. to freeway
Alhambra to Mayans to Whittier
AND BACK!
Rafaela is its mama
And then Gabriel's a moron
Students all over the campus will be
Singin' the blues
And Arcangel is a freakshow
And the others don't advance the plot so
Where in the world is
The tropic of orange?

Bryanna Benedetti

The Fall of Babel

Shaky shallow grounds are crumbling.
Ancient earth can be heard mumbling,
Down with man-made Babel towers
deep within our waking hours.
Rolling tumbling tumults of dirt
make sleeping bloodshot eyes alert;
and unstable legs under bodies prevail
while concrete buildings quake and fail.
Dazed confusion confronts the masses,
standing stunned in white picketed green grasses
Children hiding under warm wool layers
reciting simple Sunday school prayers
The earth rests its fervent aggression
finding release for its concrete tension,
while doe eyed Babylonians look upon
their treasured towers in ruins before the dawn.

Bryanna Benedetti

East Bay

It all began one day
at a coffee shop down in East Bay
One large latte in a white paper cup,
wearing sleepy eyes and last night's makeup.
White foam sticks to my upper lip
and you walk in on my next sip.
Converse-clad.
Boyishly bad.
You are my Tristan noir
in plaid.
Americano and a blueberry scone,
I wonder why you are always alone.
And as I glance up, you catch my eye
I smile, and your mouth signs, "Hi!"
Warm tingling flows down my spine
Feeling sensational, feeling fine.
Converse-clad.
Boyishly bad.
You are my Tristan noir
in plaid.
You turn to leave, I smile goodbye
Wishing you not to leave my life.
Each step you take in your high-tops
And I wish I had the nerves to just yell "stop!"
But you read my mind or so it seems
You turn around, and come towards me.
Your white teeth glisten as a sit in wide eyed
Watching you approach and sit by my side.
And I wonder if you know...
Converse-clad
Boyishly-bad.
You are my Tristan noir
In plaid.

Mary Helen Truglia

Tomorrow They Will Cut Down This Forest

We head to our favorite wrinkled tree,
aching for something we have always had but cannot name.
In the plaintive wind
speckled leaves collapse the light
into earth, slowed by honey-thick streams of sunlight
dripping leisurely to rest
in the glitter of the bruised ground.
The gale rises and we fall
into a discomfited, incomplete heap
among trees resonant with flashes of flame.
Puffs of breath make cloud shapes
in the universe between our lips
and we analyze them, because
they are the only things left to make sense of.
Frozen flurried air tastes white wine,
docile chills trickling down our tongues.
Velvet evergreen moss licks backs caked with
warm color veined leaves–fragments of our past lives.
Oaken roots rise, tangled with
skin, and together we unravel
reveries of becoming unstrung.
Thus we are gone, among crumpled paper leaves and fractured twigs,
sated but not satiated, compliant but not complacent,
down into the unbreathable cavern
of all we ever craved and lost.

Tomorrow they will cut down this forest;
tomorrow we will cleave our roots,
move forth to trod the upturned soil alone.

Mary Helen Truglia

Someone Should Have Noticed the Distinct Absence of a Large Glass Bottle; or, On the Partaking of One (or Five) Too Many Screwdrivers, Thinking They Were Only Orange Juice at the Hole-in-the-wall Bar Just Outside of Town Where No One Thought to Stop Me; or, Jugo de Vodka

The world swirls in soft-serve spirals.
My head lands on the smoothed grain
of the bartender's pouring palette.
I attempt to munch a mouthful of the chocolate-wood Bar;
splinters singe swollen bicuspids.
Slurring purple into indigo, I leap
from forte fire fiesta-ware orange to
pianissimo onyx, tripping over
staccato slate as I pass through
the night, no longer obscured
in breaths of satin and peculiar plantains but rather
Vodka clear.
Smooth eggshell horns sound
bright from this distance.
The glaze of music recalls a swim
within your earlobe, lime tart and peach fuzz,
honey tears and bear-hug smile.
Wheat-brushed bristles whisper
to my waiting cheek.
Nothing will ever be as strong as
your last licorice goodbye, staining
tongue, leaving bitter corners.
Marble hands guide me to a winged bench
so I cannot do anything but float
to where you are a crescendo
of crispy couscous
and most distinctly not
the fire-engine apple
of my spleen.
The twinge of twang in my
core is a Picasso,
all angles.
Pungent punch-drunk pupils grow wider
in my looking glass
of Skyy.

Translations by Nicole Beauchamp

Le Parti pris des choses
The Voice of Things

Les Plaisirs de la Porte

Les rois ne touchent pas aux portes.
Ils ne connaissent pas ce bonheur: pousser devant soi avec douceur ou rudesse l'un de ces grands panneaux familiers, se retourner vers lui pour le remettre en place, –tenir dans ses bras une porte.
... Le bonheur d'empoigner au ventre par son nœud de porcelaine l'un de ces hauts obstacles d'une pièce; ce corps à corps rapide par lequel un instant la marche retenue, l'œil s'ouvre et le corps tout entier s'accommode à son nouvel appartement.
D'une main amicale il la retient encore, avant de la repousser décidément et s'enclore,–ce dont le déclic du ressort puissant mais bien huilé agréablement l'assure.

Par Francis Ponge

The Pleasures of a Door

Kings don't touch doors.
They don't know this pleasure: to push forward, with softness or severity, one of these large, familiar panels, to turn around in order to return it to its place, –to hold a door in their arms.
...The pleasure of grabbing one of these tall obstacles to a room at its stomach by the porcelain knob; this hasty hand-to-hand in which the movement stills, the eye opens and the whole entire body adapts to its new tenement.
It is still held open with a friendly hand, before decidedly pushing it back and enclosing itself, –which the click of the powerful, yet well oiled, spring pleasantly ensures.

By Francis Ponge

Le feu

Le feu fait un classement : d'abord toutes les flammes se dirigent en quelque sens...
(L'on ne peut comparer la marche du feu qu'à celle des animaux : il faut qu'il quitte un endroit pour en occuper un autre ; il marche à la fois comme une amibe et comme une girafe, bondit du col, rampe du pied...)
Puis, tandis que les masses contaminées avec méthode s'écroulent, les gaz qui s'échappent sont transformés à mesure en une seule rampe de papillons.

Par Francis Ponge

The Fire

The fire assembles a ranking: first all the flames head in whatever direction...
(One can only compare the march of the fire to that of the animals: it must leave one place to occupy another; it marches like both an amoeba and a giraffe, pounces at the neck, crawls on foot...)
Then, while the contaminated masses are methodically demolished, the gas that escapes is transformed at once into a single flight of butterflies.

Translations by Nicole Beauchamp

La Fin de l'Automne

Tout l'automne à la fin n'est plus qu'une tisane froide. Les feuilles mortes de toutes essences macèrent dans la pluie. Pas de fermentation, de création d'alcool : il faut attendre jusqu'au printemps l'effet d'une application de compresses sur une jambe de bois.

Le dépouillement se fait en désordre. Toutes les portes de la salle de scrutin s'ouvrent et se ferment, claquant violemment. Au panier, au panier ! La Nature déchire ses manuscrits, démolit sa bibliothèque, gaule rageusement ses derniers fruits.

Puis elle se lève brusquement de sa table de travail.

Sa stature aussitôt paraît immense. Décoiffée, elle a la tête dans la brume. Les bras ballants, elle aspire avec délices le vent glacé qui lui rafraichit, les idées. Les jours sont courts, la nuit tombe vite, le comique perd ses droits.

La terre dans les airs parmi les autres astres reprend son air sérieux. Sa partie éclairée est plus étroite, infiltrée de vallée d'ombre. Ses chaussures, comme celles d'un vagabond, s'imprègnent d'eau et font de la musique.

Dans cette grenouillerie, cette amphibiguïté salubre, tout reprend forces, saute de pierre en pierre et change de pré. Les ruisseaux se multiplient.

Voilà ce qui s'appelle un beau nettoyage, et qui ne respecte pas les conventions ! Habillé comme nu, trempé jusqu'aux os.

Et puis cela dure, ne sèche pas tout de suite. Trois mois de réflexion salutaire dans cet état, sans réaction vasculaire, sans peignoir ni gant de crin. Mais sa forte constitution y résiste.

Aussi. Lorsque les petits bourgeons recommencent à pointer, savent-ils ce qu'ils font et de quoi il retourne, – et s'ils se montrent avec précaution, gourds et rougeauds, c'est en connaissance de cause.

Mais là commence une autre histoire, qui dépend peut-être mais n'a pas l'odeur de la règle noire qui va me servir à tirer mon trait sous celle-ci.

Par Francis Ponge

The End of Autumn

The whole end of autumn is nothing but a cold infusion. The dead leaves of every essence steep in the rain. No fermentation, no alcohol production: wait until spring to see the effects of an application of a compress on a wooden leg.

The counting of votes becomes chaotic. All the doors of the polling booths open and close, slamming violently. Throw it away! Throw it away! Nature tears apart her manuscripts, demolishes her library, bangs furiously against a tree for those last fruits.

Then she abruptly gets up from her work table.

Her stature immediately appears immense. Disheveled, she has her head in the haze. Dangling arms, she inhales the inspirational icy wind with delight. The days are short, the night falls fast, the comic loses his rights.

The earth in the air among the other stars resumes its serious air. Its illuminated part is narrower, infiltrated by a valley of shadow. Its shoes, like those of a vagabond, become soaked with water and make music.

In this frog marsh, this healthy amphibiguity, everything strengthens, jumps from stone to stone, and changes pasture. The streams multiply.

This is what's called a beautiful cleansing, without respecting the conventions! Dressed in the nude, soaked to the bone.

And then it persists, not drying right away. Three months of salutary reflection in this state, without vascular reaction, with neither robe nor horsehair glove. But its strong constitution resists.

Also, when the little buds begin to prick up again, they know what they are doing and what they return to,—and if they show caution, numb and sanguine, it's because they know what lies ahead.

But another story begins, one that depends perhaps, but doesn't have the scent of the black ruler that is going to serve me to underline this right here.

By Francis Ponge

Bryanna Benedetti

A Tale of Two Cities: The Idealist Meets Reality

The rhythm of the music keeps time with the racing of my heart as I soak in the sights and sounds and smells of the Bazaar with every sense of my being. I can feel the heat of the earth rise through my thin sandals as I compress the soot with every confident step. I glance through the crowd, in awe of the bustling interactions taking place – a woman draped in lemon garments, flowing down into the clinging hands of a scruffy haired toddler. The woman bargains with the shopkeeper over his merchandise, seemingly unaware of the young one pulling at her bottom hems, exposing her nude feet. Animals scamper around the feet of the crowd – such high commodities in this region. I think back to my Western raising – once so unaware that animals had more purpose in life than being displays in pet shop windows. I place the viewfinder to my right eye and snap a progression of candid photos, trying to capture all the beauty and life within one moment. It is simply impossible. I stare at the scenes once more, flooded with emotions of life, love, loss, and longing, then continue on my journey.

I pass a small boy selling dried figs from a basket tied across his chest and waist. I stop and buy a few of his wares and am rewarded with a gap-toothed smile of gladness. As I bite into the first fig, I savor its sweet juice and rough textures of its seeds. I recall my first taste of fig in papa's favorite newton cookies which filled our endless kitchen treat drawer. I wonder if the little trader has ever tasted such deliciousness in his life. I let this somber thought linger as I continue to walk and place the other figs in my pocket to share with the others. I breathe in deeply and turn my head up towards the sun, bathing my fair skin with the glowing rays. The wind traces the round of my face, then blows my weightless scarf off my head. The scarf lays resting upon my auburn tresses which fall down my back, confined by a loose braid. I put the scarf back in its place, then turn around once more to catch a final view of the marketplace. I ready my camera and capture a few more moments in time, then turn down the ally to my left.

I weave my way through the familiar streets, trudging through the uneven ground of stones and soil and obstacles of fresh laundry. As the streets widen and obstacles vanish, my pace slows, and the silence of the lone road reawakens my contemplative mind. The realization of this place, this journey, this dream of mine brings a smile to my face. I wanted to be the change I wished to see in this world, and now I have the chance.

In the distance I see small figures running towards me. I cover my eyes from the sun with my hand and peer out towards them, trying to identify them. There are so many at the camp – so many children I teach and more that I love. So different, so unique, yet they are all the same. They are the future. I start a steady sprint towards the figures, arms outstretched, scarf flowing carelessly behind me, ready to embrace the future in my arms. Whoever said one person cannot change the world had never met someone like me...

****

The rhythm of the earsplitting horns keeps time with the racing of my breath as I the stares and blares pierce through every sense of my being. I can feel the dirt and grime of the city streets cling to my sandaled feet as I rush through the crowd, eyes averted to the ground. I glance up, trying to catch no gaze as I jump into the hot red trishaw, and feel the thousands of eyes glaring with fire at my back. I ride – thump thump – swerve – honk – through the gray streets, watching out the open door as we pass; a poor woman begging along the street, seemingly unaware of the young emaciated one pulling at the bottom of her flowered sari soaked with mud, exposing her feet of kohl. Animals lie on the waste side as groups of machungs attack with sticks and stones and do not stop until there is one less,

leaving bloody corpses for the crows. I think back to my western raising - once so unaware that animals were not always treated like my house pets. I hold my camera tight to my side, but do not take it out. I do not need to capture the candid scenes on film, as they will be engraved in my memory for years to come. I stare out once more, flooded with emotions of rage, hate, fear, and helplessness. I lean back in the trishaw - thump thump - swerve - honk.

I pass a young boy, selling nothing but hate from a gun slung across his chest and waist. He stops us and checks our IDs at the roadside checkpoint. We are free to pass and I am rewarded by a wicked wink and a dirty kiss blown through the heavy air. As I recline in the tiny red trishaw, I replay the scene in my mind, disgusted by just the thought of him. I recall the memory of my papa, and wonder what he would have done, would have said, if he were with me. I wonder if the young boy with the gun ever had a papa like mine to teach him how to act right. I let this somber thought linger as I continue - thump thump - swerve - honk - through the city. I breathe in deeply and cough at the fumes of diesel and the smell of rotting garbage on the side of the road. I pull my handkerchief out of my bag and wipe my face, bathing the white cloth in the dirt and sweat of the day. The wind traces the round of my face, bringing with it the cat calls from the side walk. *Sudaa sudaa...hello beautiful....where you from lady....* I lean back further into the seat to hide my white face and auburn tresses which fall down my back, confined by a loose braid. I wipe my face one last time, then place the not-so-white handkerchief back into my bag. I no longer look out the door, no longer take any photos for memories. Then we turn down the alley to my left.

The trishaw weaves menacingly through the unfamiliar streets, throwing me wildly around as we serve to avoid stray dogs and beggars in the road. As the streets grow smaller and traffic increases, our pace slows, and the cat calls from the men in neighboring cars are reawakened. The reality of this place, this ideal journey that I have longed for, this dream of mine, brings tears to my eyes and makes my knuckles whiten with frustration. I wanted to be the change I wished to see in this world, but these people will never give me the chance to try. To them, I am just a *sudaa* and could be nothing more.

In the distance I see figures crossing the street ahead, as a line of trishaws approach quickly. I cover my eyes from the glare with my hand and peer out towards them, and I know. There are so many at the camps to the North - and so many more on the streets of Colombo. So many misplaced and mangled children of war - so different yet they are all the same. They are the future of post-war Sri Lanka. We continue driving, straight towards the crossing crowd at a steady pace, Sri Lankan flag flying high on the antenna of the hot red trishaw, the Sinhala Lion prominent in view. Whoever said one person cannot change the world must have been learned.

Kady Oliker

Eternal Damnation

I couldn't tell for sure where I was. I knew two things though: 1. the last memory I had was the flashing lights and the alarming noise of the ambulance sirens and 2. I couldn't feel my own heartbeat. I looked around, trying to figure out just where the hell I was. I looked up, there were cobwebs hiding in the corners with spiders dancing in their strands, there was bits of ceiling missing from years of termite abuse and the sky light, that was missing its glass, poured in the translucent light of the moon. I looked down at myself, wearing only a paper-thin gown, my arms were covered in bruises alongside the pinpricks of the now absent needles; I had one single key next to me.

Dead ahead of me, a single door jammed shut with a pad lock attached to it. There were three knocks that came from the old, rusted door. I looked through the peephole and standing before my eyes was the man of my dreams. He was tall with small-framed glasses, brown eyes, a curly mop on his head and a crocked smile; he was holding a single red rose. The rose was mesmerizing the way the water droplets balled up and one by one dribbled off towards the floor. I reached for the knob to meet this mystery man but it was nowhere to be found. I searched around the room but all that remained on the floor was the old Victorian key with no purpose in sight. I tried screaming for him to stay but only moths escaped my mouth; it was an eerie silence. I looked through the peephole once again, watched him glance at his watch and turn away. I tried yelling again and this time a small whimper came out followed by a single tear that made a cool path down my cheek. I walked to the middle of the room once again to sit and sulk in my own sorrow and confusion, but alas, another knock from that single door. Could it really be him again!

I sprinted to see my man but only laid eyes on a letter floating in midair with a "Congratulations you have been accepted" written across the top. I looked closer at it and realized it was the college letter I had ignored so many years ago. I watched the left corner begin to smoke and then the entire paper disintegrated before my eyes. From the ashes of the paper on the floor rose my two beautiful children now fully grown. I looked into their eyes but they were nothing more than deep, hollow pits. "You were never there for us mother, never, never, never..." This continued as their bodies began to crumble and wither away to nothing. I couldn't bear to watch any more. I ran to the center of my windowless room, curled in the fetal position and thought *what have I ever done to deserve this?*

I rocked back and forth just staring at the bruises on my forearms, at the key to my left and at the empty room just waiting to take my soul. As my mind began to wander to all that I had seen, a tremendously loud knock came from behind me. I whirled around to find myself staring at a second rusting door, but one with a knob and lock this time. I wiped my eyes with the back of my hand and picked up the key; there was no peephole this time. The key slid in with ease, turned to the right and slowly opened. An iridescent orb floated before me blinding my vision.

When I regained sight, I was left staring at myself in a mirror. The dark circles under my eyes matched the color of the bruises on my forearms. My skin had a yellow hue to it and every blue collapsed vein could be seen rearing its ugly head to the surface. Above the mirror was a heart monitor completely flat-lined. A deep feeling of sorrow arose in my body as I realized this was heaven, hell or somewhere in the middle. I walked through the mirror and on the other side was the windowless room I had just escaped from, with a single key lying in the middle of the wooden floor. Three knocks could be heard from the door dead ahead of me. The fog encroached around me, the heaviness like a blanket wrapping its fingers tighter and tighter. It was at this moment that I realized I was trapped in the confines of my own mind. There was no escape, just a broken record forever playing its same song over and over; everything I had missed.

Submitted By Tina Rinaldi

Chapter 8

From the Postmodernist Cookbook!

Do Electric People Eat Simulacra Lamb?

During the last 50 years, dramatic improvements built into androids like the I-Person and Nexus-7.5.0 (from the Apple and Rosen Association) have transformed the metal, slightly stolid and easily distinguishable "androids" that our parents knew, into electric people. ("Android" is the politically incorrect term, since it excludes them from the wider population of Cyborg/ Humans.) Possessing an enhanced sense of empathy and faster reaction time, electric people are impossible to differentiate from other types of people, participating in a wide variety of ordinary activities like local P.T.A.s, MADD, the American Cancer Society, and EPU (Electric People United), as well as occupations like, University-level teaching, writing for reality television, toy making, conservation and law. As advances continue to be made and false memoires installed, many smart Postmodernist homemakers are beginning to upgrade their perception and reprogram their menus to include the inclinations of electric people. As we become less human through our technology and electric people become more humanly sensitive, the vanishing division between them and ourselves has made serving simulacra a snap!

Chapter 8 - Quick Recipe Index

Simulacra Lamb with Peaches

So easy and appetizing, this recipe is perfect for impressing new neighbors or any additional guests that show up at your abandoned apartment building. A delicious meal anytime. it can be served with baby, carrots, or peas to compliment the lamb's delicate flavor. Serves 6.

Ingredients:

- Simulacra Lamb, "Family Pack"
- 1 einnamon stick or 1 tsp of ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp of cayenne pepper
- 1 large onion, cut in half
- 1/2 cup of port or red wine
- 4 large ripe peaches
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 cup roughly chopped cilantro
- Olive oil

Preparation:

1. Arrange the lamb pieces in a 12-inch skillet, with olive oil acting as a thin lining membrane for the inside of the skillet.
2. Season well with salt, cinnamon, cayenne, onion and wine. (Including any other spices of life necessary or desired.)
3. Cook for 1 to 1 1/2 hours, checking and stirring every 15 minutes or so, adding a little more wine or other vital liquids as needed. Do not let the lamb go dry... (continued pg. 84)

Jessica Miller

The Most Rewarding Purpose

I lifted my beak so as not to seem nervous. This testifying moment was sprung upon me so suddenly, yet... I had to be ready. Making this hit could be a big step up in the world for me. I could be notorious! I turned to face the head seagull.

"No problem, sir," I said, trying to mask the slight quiver in my squawk. "I've been waiting for this moment. And I would like to thank you for personally choosing me, sir. I am truly grateful for the opportunity."

"Stop all your cawing and crowing and get to it, Cornelius." He shook his head and little flecks of sand hit me in the neck. "Don't make me regret this decision."

I advanced slowly to the edge of the umbrella, slicing the breeze with the tip of my beak. I shifted my weight from left foot to right, right foot to left. I squinted my eyes and zeroed in on my target. The man was flat on his back. That would make this more difficult; I would have to shoot at just the right angle so as not to hit either his chest or the umbrella. However, he was sleeping, too, which made him a more stable target.

I flexed my wings, once, twice. I shook my whole body, starting with my head and working all the way down to my rear. Keep the adrenaline up. I lifted my wings slightly to feel the current of the air. I would have to aim just a nudge Southeast to counteract the particularly strong wind of today. With one final shuffle of the feet, I was off.

I slid into the air rapidly, moving down, down, up over a wave of air. My target grew closer and closer. I gained more speed. I could practically see my reflection in the man's bald head. Almost there... and three, two, one: this was it. This was the moment of truth. I couldn't stop what I started, and before I knew it I was just a feather's width below the canopy of the umbrella. The change in light was disorienting but I stayed on my mark, and... a hit! A palpable hit! That old familiar slapping sound of poo on head chimed like a victory chorus as I successfully maneuvered my way out from under the umbrella and back into the bright blue sky. Looking back down, the man groggily awoke, slapped his hand to his head, and sank his shoulders in despair.

The sensation was surreal. I felt like I could swim to the bottom of the ocean. The head seagull flew over to meet me. Flapping mid-air, he looked me straight in the eyes. "That was, in all my experience of making these beachgoers' lives miserable, some of the best damn maneuvering I have ever seen."

"Thank you sir."

"This means big things for you, boy."

"Yes sir."

"You'll be soaring with the eagles soon enough."

"Thank you sir."

He turned and began to glide toward the pier, calling back, "There's a whole bag of sandy fries waiting for you behind Tower Six. Reward yourself, Cornelius. You deserve it."

I landed on a jetty rock and thought to myself, perhaps I will. With that, I turned tail feather and flew toward Lifeguard Tower Six, to enjoy some of the most decadent sandy food I would ever eat. And as I flew over the heads of those who had been spared for today, I pondered, "Could life be any better?"

Jessica Miller

Titus Andronicus: The Dark Comedy

(Young LUCIUS runs in wearing a backpack, LAVINIA following behind with her bloody stumps stretched out towards him and making disgusting gurgling noises because her tongue is cut out)

(Enter TITUS and MARCUS)

LUCIUS. Uncle! She won't leave me alone! She's been chasing me around all day.

MARCUS. Don't be insensitive, Lucius. It's just your Aunt Lavinia!

(LAVINIA lurches towards young LUCIUS, who jumps back in fear)

TITUS. See? She only wants a hug.

LUCIUS. *(some distance away from her)* I'm fine right here.

(LAVINIA is making exaggerated, absurd fervent motions and more ugly gurgling sounds)

MARCUS. Looks like SOMEBODY wants attention. What is it, girl?

TITUS. Oh, I love charades. At the Christmas party last year I got everyone to guess "All's Well That Ends Well"... in thirty seconds! I'm the king at this game. *(suddenly remembering LAVINIA is there)* No, no, Lavinia. You're doing it wrong. First you have to tell us if it's a song, movie or book.

(at the word "book" LAVINIA flaps and gurgles)

MARCUS. Book! It's a book!

TITUS. Okay... but I'm going to dock you points for not doing the proper hand motion. What book? *(LAVINIA does the corresponding hand movements as in traditional charades, only with her stumps)* One word... five syllables...

LUCIUS. I know! "Twilight: Breaking Dawn!"

MARCUS. ONE word, Lucius.

TITUS. Hmmm... five-syllable words... 'Inexplicable'... 'Curmudgeonliness'... 'Discombobulate'?

(A very frustrated LAVINIA forces the backpack off young LUCIUS and beings pawing at the books)

LUCIUS. Rape! Rape!

TITUS. I give up, Lavinia. I'm stumped.

MARCUS. Wait, look. She's using her stumps to turn the pages. What book is that?

LUCIUS. Ovid's "Metamorphoses." She turned to the story of Philomel.

TITUS. The girl who was raped by Tereus? *(LAVINIA makes a "Yes... AND!..." motion with her stumps)* Oh my God! That's what happened to you?

MARCUS. Poor Lavinia. Who did this to you? Tell us. *(LAVINIA begins gurgling, MARCUS cuts her off.)* -Er, don't TELL us tell us.

LUCIUS. Who's up for Round Two of charades?

TITUS. Don't be ridiculous, Lucius. She's terrible at that game. *(spying a walking stick)* Wait, I have an idea. *(to LAVINIA)* All you need to do is write the names of the perpetrators in the sand with this stick. *(TITUS gives the stick to her to hold, but she, having no hands, drops it)* Well, if you're not going to cooperate...

(LAVINIA picks the stick up with her stumps and her feet and begins writing in the sand)

MARCUS. She's done it. *(reading)* Do my eyes deceive me?

TITUS. There it is, plain as day: "Rap: Chevron, Dime trees." *(LAVINIA shakes her head and fixes the legibility of her writing with the walking stick)* Oh. "Rape: Chiron, Demetrius." Can it be?

MARCUS. Tamora's sons? But they seemed like such nice guys. It's no matter. We must all make an oath right here, right now, to avenge Lavinia and shed the blood of her perpetrators. Everyone put your hands in. *(they all put their hands in. LAVINIA is the last one to put her stump in, and when she does the three men try and fail to hold back their looks of sheer disgust)* Um... ugh... *(swallowing vomit)* Okay. We here swear to kill those vile Goths. One, two, three, break!

ALL. Break!

TITUS. Everyone meet at my house in an hour. There, we can make proper plans. I'll provide the snacks. *(All exit)*

Jessica Miller

A Day Without Pants

It was difficult to recall a time before the war with Scotland. A sense of malaise had long since fallen over the little country known as the United States of America. Each and every day was the same desolate and destructive situation, with no glimpse of hope on the horizon. The country was in shambles, yes, but there was something that it was not in. No, something it had not been in for quite some time: a pair of pants.

When President Oglethorp had first declared war on the Scottish, the response from the patriotic hoi polloi was immense. Men of every diameter, from all across the nation, stood at attention in their finest trousers, eager to put the disgraceful kilt-wearing Scots in their places. This was not just any war. It was a fierce struggle for dignity, for honor, for the common man, and for the fact that pants were simply superior to any other bottomwear. Soldiers raced to the battlefront and proudly bore their slacks, jeans, sweat pants and gauchos, prepared to fight to the death for the attire they knew and loved so well.

Unfortunately, that turned out to be the case. The nature of bottom fashioning played an obvious preferential towards kilts, and the United States suffered horribly. The Scottish (called Kilters) more easily claimed victims by savagely dashing off pant legs, leaving wounded soldiers wearing short, undignified, and to say the least risqué jean skirts. However, the Americans, otherwise known as the 'Panties', had a more difficult task before them. Once a Kilter was incapacitated, a Panty had to remove the sewing kit strapped to his own back, measure and cut ("measure twice, cut once" the military training camps instructed) the appropriate amount of fabric necessary, sew diligently, and festoon the Kilterman with a new, well-fitted pair of pants. As any one person may assume, this made ambushes rather difficult, and hardly feasible.

As the pant casualties soared, the war began to stretch onto the homefront. Posters in the streets barked importunately: "GROW A PAIR: JOIN THE MILITARY, AND SHOW THE KILTERS WHO WEARS THE PANTS ON THIS PLANET." Propaganda cartoons, popping up like whack-a-moles, began to infect the minds of young ones (the character of Spongebob Squarepants has taken on a significantly different meaning). There was then a requisition of all pants on the homefront. Then finally came the inevitable draft. One by one, men were picked off like sesame seeds on an everything bagel and shipped off to training camps, where they would learn the basics of combat and stitchery. Women were not called to arms. In order to negate all false stereotypes and prove the equality of male and female in the United States, women were constitutionally banned from sewing or stitching.

Thus, the scene lay as it was now. A pallid sky encased the dirty, poverty-ridden country, filled with pallid, dirty, poverty-ridden people who had no pants. Every single pair had been requisitioned to the war effort. Boxers, too, were seldom seen anymore, as the majority of them were plaid, the Kilter's emblem. Anyone seen wearing a skirt would immediately be accused of treason. And so, the pitiful Panties were forced to take desperate but hardly satisfactory measures. Some used shirts as substitutes, wearing their legs through the sleeves and leaving the torso to hang between their legs like a loincloth. Others tried to fashion themselves a form of cover by using twigs, leaves, or whatever garbage they could find littering the ground. Still, there were those who believed humanity was predestined to live in a world extracted of all pants or any other form of covering, and enjoyed the cool breeze between their legs (coupled with some looks of appall from the neighbors) as they strutted down to the marketplace.

Dudley Wilks, a portly man with a languid energy about him, sat on the cement steps outside his apartment flat with a tall glass of Very Berry Kool-Aid in his hand. He drank slowly, silently, deeply. This sopor always seemed to accompany Dudley, particularly during his Kool-Aid-drinking periods. Dudley was not content. As he sighed out this frustration into his beverage, a splash of the red stuff squirted over the rim of the glass and plunged in his lap. Dudley let out a plaintive moan. He *knew* rice paper pants were a bad idea!

Taking in another fulfilling sigh, he calmed himself as to avoid discomfit. Dudley had always been a very self-conscious man, embarrassed by the sight of his jiggling bottom in whatever happened to be covering his lower half. His very entity, he felt, was threatened by the massive gobs of dough surrounding his thighs and belly. How he yearned to reside in the auspices of a pair of pants! Unfortunately, Dudley was fat as he was lethargic. The burden of his depression confined him to a boulder of procrastination and inactivity. Therefore, though the opportunity to adorn himself with a fine pair of slacks was just an enlistment away, his cowardly languor got him no further than the stoop of his apartment (and occasionally to the cupboard for a new packet of Kool-Aid).

Therefore, it was certainly a profound event when a man in a corduroy uniform parked a van beside the curb and approached him with a parchment letter. The man asked him if he was Dudley Wilks, to which Dudley replied, yes, yes he was Dudley Wilks. Well, Dudley, he had received a draft notice, and was given the option to either first attend training camp or readily begin on the battlefront in the war against Scotland. Which would he prefer?

Dudley looked up at the messenger, quite sloth-like, and spoke out the word 'battlefront' with such confidence that his jowls quivered when his lips (at the moment stained a pinkish red) bore that poignant 'b.' Dudley's cholesterol-riddled heart quickened to just a few more beats per minute, and the restive Panty messenger nodded. His life was going to change for the greater good: Panties on the battlefront were each allotted one pair of trousers.

After hauling into the back of the van and arriving at the Panty Resource Station, measurement upon measurement was taken around Dudley's middle, thighs, legs, ankles, and shins. The painstaking process was momentous and almost epic, as both Dudley and the (we can all agree) unlucky tailor worked through the evening and until the next day. Finally, after much anticipation and odorous sweat beads, the tailor presented him with a marvelous pair of gray slacks. They were bold, yet understated. They were perfect. The tailor bid him only use them when absolutely necessary, and Dudley saluted him dutifully.

At the top of a luscious, grassy hill that surveyed the entire battle scene, Dudley chugged all the way up and took a breath of the sweetest air he'd ever tasted... sweeter than any glass of Kool-Aid he could ever imagine. The pants, hugging his hips in a comfortable yet stylish fashion, flapped in the wind and echoed a faint, thunderous beat. That, Dudley thought, was the best battle cry of all.

Unfortunately, this momentous occasion was short-lived because a Kilter came up from behind and smothered Dudley to death with an oversized kilt. The struggle (if one could call it that) took no more than three minutes. After poor, fat Dudley was undeniably dead, the Kilter slashed at his pants and mutilated the fabric legs beyond recognition as any sort of apparel. Both Dudley and his pants were destroyed, but the rejoice and contentment with life that had existed there still remained. It in no way aided the Panties, who eventually capitulated on the terms that "kilts rule and pants are for losers," but all the same it stood there, never to be disrobed.

Freddie Malcomb

As She Walked Out

It's not like I'm even the type to cheat. But damn, when you see someone like that walk by, it makes you reconsider. The short hair, the red dress with the exposed back; it's like she was taking an order from my mind on how to look. As my old wooden stool creaked under my weight, I considered my surroundings. This dusty, dimly-lit, miserable excuse of a bar has been my life's story for a while now. At least since Janet's accident. Of all the houses for that asshole to rob, he chose mine. I could only imagine him breaking in like those retarded security commercials where the purps are scared off by the sound of the alarm. If I hadn't been on the other side of town; if I hadn't fuckin' volunteered to take that fender-bender call... Hell maybe if that moron could have aimed better, he could've ended Janet's misery and not have left her as a fucking vegetable.

I set my hat and badge down on the bar; I can't even wear them past my shift without feeling like I'm carrying a hundred pounds more on me. The bartender hands me the darkest beer in the house, seeing in my exhaustion that I probably need it. We don't exchange words; words are for people who need to know stories. If I felt like talking, I would talk. As the bitter, terrible taste of the mud hits the back of my throat, the taste I've come accustomed to in this rotting bar, I wonder what could possibly attract a pretty girl to a dump like this. It's so grimy in here that even the tourists don't bother taking two looks at it. So why take the time to enter this shithole long enough to have to exit all the way from the back? Why was she here long enough so some ugly chud like me could let her out?

I replayed that red dress walking out of the creaking glass and wood doors, "Murphy's" emblazoned in gold on the glass. For a moment, I think I can escape this life; chase her and start anew. Throw everything away, move on, leave Janet behind; it's not like she'd be mad. The brew anchors me to my reality, erasing the possibility and wonder and leaving me staring at some miserable asshole cop drinking in the mirror.

Catherine King

The Winter's Tale Or, The Spring of Eurynome
A Tale Told on Pilgrimage to Canterbury

With thanks to Charles Aznavour, Pink Martini, Tom Kitt, and Mitch & Mickey

In the land of Whilom, there was a desert in which nothing lived. A cursed young woman tried to cross it to reach a magical spring, but she was only halfway across when her curse sapped all her strength away. The gods took pity on her and turned her into a tree, but her tears still flowed. Eventually a spring came up from that spot. Her spirit watched over the waters, and she brought healing to all those who came, and the desert slowly bloomed. In her honor, the spring was named "Eurynome" – that is, the wide wanderer.

Three hundred years after the Spring of Eurynome began to flow, a poor young man named Caleb decided his life was unfortunate. He had an unusual condition that had afflicted him for as long as he could remember: when he was emotionally agitated, or around people who were so, he would burst into song, and often cause them to burst into song too. This, he had decided, was not the best way to Make Friends and Influence People. So he bought passage on a merchant ship, *The Scallop*, destined for the great city of Biblos. As the wind filled up the sails and the sun sparkled on the water, he felt a song coming on.

He didn't hold back, but leapt to the prow and sang with all his heart,

"Take me away, away from here!
Take me away, where sunlight is clear!
Oh, it seems to me that my fears
With a new sunrise will all disappear!"

Biblos was an amazing city, full of more people and more kinds of people than Caleb had ever dreamed of. One such person was a richly dressed young man standing beneath a woman's balcony. He was serenading her – badly. Caleb took pity on the fellow and stepped closer. When he did, the lovebird's voice became clearer, and his words took on the truth of his heart:

"*Maria baby, I see that maybe,*
You're still a little angry with me..."

At this point a comely young woman walked past. The rich young man's eyes followed her for a beat, where he completely lost track of the song. Caleb then noticed that the singer's eyes were purple.

The lovebird picked up his pace at once, singing glibly,

"*Gotta go now, hope you know now,*
I love you, that is a fact!
Gotta hurry, but don't you worry
Baby, 'cause I'll be back!"

However, the way he followed the comely young woman who was *not* Maria belied his words. Caleb followed the young man and accosted him outside a bar. The rich young man sighed with exhaustion, even from the simple act of singing. Without much reluctance, he gave up pursuing his current inamorata to share a drink with a friendly stranger.

It turned out, the rich young man was named Rafiel. Rafiel's purple eyes indicated that he was cursed – a genuine curse such as one gets from a divinity.

He had a weak heart; not only did he fall in love at the drop of a hat (and fall out as soon as the hat was picked up), but his physical heart was weak. So he was heading for the Spring of Eurynome to heal himself, because all his money could not win him the forgiveness of the goddess of love.

He and Caleb fell to talking, and Caleb saw that even though Rafiel's heart was weak, the rich man was still clever and sensible with coins, and not so proud as to be insufferable, so he asked Rafiel to accompany him to the Spring. Rafiel gladly agreed. They traveled on together.

After a month of journeys, they arrived at a poor hamlet. There they met a girl called Loveday, with ribbons in her hair. She a friendly thing enough, although very foolish and lightheaded. But when she heard that they were set for to the Spring of Eurynome, she begged them to let her go with them. Then they saw that her eyes, too, were purple. But when they asked her how she was cursed, she only gestured fiercely and told them that part of her curse was that she could not explain it to anyone.

Caleb and Rafiel discussed between themselves whether to let her come along or not – who knew what her unspeakable curse might bring to *them*? Eventually, out of pity, they let her join their party, now a proper little caravan of curses and discontents.

They journeyed on a little more, and Rafiel's heart began to trouble him, but he tried to hide it from the others – right up until he collapsed. Loveday went in

Joseph Marlitt

The Clash: A Relationship of Music and Life

As the late Joe Strummer quoted before a show, "Here's our tunes, and we couldn't give a flying fuck whether you like them or not. In fact, we're gonna play them even if you fucking hate them." A lot of words can describe the feelings expressed in this quote. While it is crass and "punk", it carries a more important meaning for me that I believe is important and contains a better message. This quote exemplifies how The Clash exuded individuality, purpose, and diversity. The question "Why would you tattoo a band on your shoulder?" has been a common occurrence for the last four weeks of my life. I got a tattoo of Paul Simmonen slamming his guitar onto the stage during a concert in New York. It is a timeless picture depicting the raw energy of rock and roll. It's on my shoulder, my way of paying homage to a band that has influenced my outlook on music and, most importantly, life. I get a lot of blank looks from people when I say "It's from a Clash album." The album is almost archaic, being released in 1978, and many people of my generation feel a disconnect because of this time difference. But I find that even nowadays the album speaks more about the truth of being independent, being an adult, and finding out who you are among the masses than many new artists.

My earliest memories evolved from this album. When I was still small enough to curl up in my father's lap, I would come down the stairs of our small house early in the morning before he had left for work. Sitting on the corner of the old beige couch closest to the window, he would drink coffee, read the New Yorker magazine, and listen to music. At this young age, I was first introduced to The Clash while lying on my dad's chest, his heart beating along with the song into my ear. I would listen to their hit "London Calling", which many consider a punk rock anthem, which would flow straight into the song "Jimmy Jazz". This happened every morning until I had to go to school, and the music he played is now reflected in my musical taste. My dad is a self titled "dead head", meaning he was part of the country wide obsession surrounding The Grateful Dead. To be attracted to The Clash, a band that differs so greatly from his usual taste, tips the hat to how broad and influence they have had on music.

Between the two songs, I learned many lessons about life that I had no idea would influence me so heavily. How two musical styles can mix, complement each other so seamlessly together and yet be so completely different. The electric guitar from London Calling, the rashness of punk rock and the soul of rebel searching for meaning through anger and music. Then smoothly, it transitions into a punk, jazz, ska, reggae story of police brutality against a main who "killed" someone in a jazz club. The range of music that influenced The Clash directly affected how wide a variety of music I have an appreciation for today. I can appreciate music even when I do not like it, because The Clash helped me realize that these artists are expressing emotions that have influenced their lives in ways I do not know about. I started later thinking in middle school, why were The Clash so indecisive about what genre of music to play, why they would always change the tone of their albums instead of continuing to play what worked?

Though I have always listened to rock, I never steadfastly listen to only one genre. I never feel like I should only listen to rock just because I relate to its texture. I consistently change genres depending on my mood, my surroundings, my feeling. This influence directly stems from listening to the broad forms of music that The Clash play. Instead of basing perceptions on first impressions, I read deeply into the person, place, music, history, or perspective that a situation presents. This has influenced my education,

helping me think critically about subjects, not simply jumping to a conclusion without seeing all sides of the conflict. The Clash were rebels, they were grungy, and they could care less what people thought of their music. This attitude and confidence has inspired me not to change who I am for other people, but to rather present myself and let others decide what they think.

I by no means consider myself wealthy simply because I bought a tattoo. In fact it set me back 200 dollars. I consider myself lucky to be wealthy enough to get a tattoo that means so much to me. What the tattoo represents to me is what I consider my greatest wealth, my individuality. My wealth means a lot to me, and my perceptions of other people and their perceptions of me help this wealth grow. The thing that is great about music is that no matter how rich you are, you can still live a wealthy life through music. I find myself lucky to have a great appreciation of music, which is composed not only of my musical tastes, but of the history and culture behind music, the skill required to create those sounds, and the emotion that the song is trying to get out.

My dad always told me to think hard before I permanently etched something into my skin. I honored that, considering that a tattoo is permanent. But The Clash's influence on my life had been etched in my brain long before I had even considered getting a tattoo. I came to my realization that no matter what stage I am at in life, I can still relate my choices back to this British punk rock band. So when I have to answer the question I say, "Because they remind me how I want to live my life." I don't want to do drugs or play music for a living, or even wear the same clothes that they do. I want to embrace their philosophical independence and diversity, their individuality and toughness, and their character. My journey towards self-definition began with this band, and continues to this day.

Ronny Nevo

Rainy Days and Mondays

Heaps of dirty clothing lay in piles in front of the heater like bored cats, stretching and kneading, stealing our warmth. The cluttered kitchen drips faucet water and emits a dank odor of leftover chow mein and broccoli beef, scatters of recipes from a book without a spine. The refrigerator hums a forgotten doo-wop tune and flips to side B. Beyond the chintz curtains, the lights from the movie theatre can be seen, one letter illuminated at a time. Often I have gazed at the sign, rearranging the letters in my mind to create something dirty, something crude. After all, Santa is just Satan reorganized.

I pad quietly into the bathroom, cool linoleum tiles below my bare feet. They reflect with a jaundice yellow, sick at their cores. I gaze into the mirror and wonder how long it has been since its hidden compartment had been cleaned out. Empty floss containers probably remain, collecting dust like state coins, irrationally kept in cardboard slots. Georgia with the engraved peach. Oregon's Crater Lake. Florida. California. Ohio. The towels need to be washed.

I return to the bedroom, sit on the 40% off rocking chair and stare at you. How beautiful you seem. How peaceful and innocent. The moon arched around the earth, causing the slivers of light to caress various objects. Gertrude Stein's objects float through my mind, tingles of Barnes and Nobles cafes-within-bookshops. A carafe, that is a blind glass. Slowly I unfold my legs from beneath me. They tingle with near-sleep. I flex and crack my toes and heels. Shiver.

Sitting next to the alarm clock on the nightstand, I gaze into your shut eyes. "Gabe." I call you to wake up but you do not even stir. I lean forward. "Gabe." I feel like Orpheus, playing his music to call his wife back from the afterlife. But she responded to his postcard tune. Your shut eyes flash "Return to Sender" and I sigh.

I toss clothing off the bed and climb in, pulling covers over my panties and t-shirt. My feet, airplane cabin cold, find yours and attempt to freeze you back to awareness. An instant recoil spasms through your body and I cannot be sure that it wasn't a "falling dream." Desperation dawns like a smoker caught in 30 degree rain, lamely attempting to light a limply wet cigarette with damp matches. Smoke billowing quickly. Maybe it's in a hurry to get to heaven.

I reach out and touch your smooth chest, work my hands up your body. Hands pause briefly, fingering an ancient artifact, weighing fruit in Middle Eastern alley stores. Continuing, I find your collarbone with my hand, feel your scar on the ridges of my fingerprints. "It was stupid," you had once said. "I was skiing and I crashed into a tree. Broke it in two places. It hurt like a bitch." I thought back to my own skiing mishap, which now seemed impotent and incomparable to yours. Mine was only an inconvenience.

I blow air into your ear to revive you, but you swat my breath away like a fly with your cowtail of a hand. "Gabe," I whisper again. "Hm?" you sleepily respond. "Gabe," I repeatedly urge, "wake up now."

Your butterfly eyes flutter open. "What is it?" You glance at the clock. The alarm won't be going off for another few hours. I feel eyes settle onto my face, your hands pulling me to sleep. Gently, I rest my chin on your chest and look at you. Now that you are awake, I don't know what to say.

"Sorry to have woken you," I lamely begin, lying. "I needed to tell someone how beautiful the night is and what the streets smell like in the rain."

Melissa Samarin

Welcome to Downtown Fullerton

A rush of wind blows my hair, a car honks its horn, and the smell of exhaust wafts past as I stroll down the sidewalk: this is Downtown Fullerton. It is the Orange County equivalent to Uptown Whittier because of its parallel location near a college, thriving commercial and residential sectors, and 'quaint' atmosphere. I chose Fullerton for precisely this reason, as I thought it would be a great comparison to a city I walk through almost every day.

Perhaps because I do frequent Uptown Whittier, I might not be as observant of it anymore, but as I objectively sauntered down the boulevard in Fullerton, I noticed some interesting, yet subtle, things on the street. Much of Fullerton is easily overlooked from a car, but as a pedestrian, I was struck with the composition of this portion of the city.

Being close to a college campus, the landscape of Downtown Fullerton is rather typical; shops, restaurants, and of course bars of all kinds line the checkerboard grid of the city with Harbor Boulevard as the main and most travelled thoroughfare. It is separated from the rest of Fullerton by an obvious conglomeration of shops, a change to quaintly written street signs, plenty of parking spaces, and more pedestrian accessibility. Thus, my derive began.

Upon arriving, I first noticed that there were many bright teal park benches lining the walkways. They were scattered every so often near these beautifully manicured planters and well-groomed trees, making these benches seem the perfect locales for stopping from a strenuous shopping spree (or particularly heavy night at the bar). They are ideal as long as you don't mind the view. If you don't mind gazing out upon a rushing river of nonstop traffic, a sparsely filled parking lot, or a decrepit looking alley way during your moment of respite, then these benches truly are fantastic resting spots. Too bad I did not see a single person sitting on a bench, although an older lady did set her purse on one while she waited for a bus.

Never mind the benches though. If you are in Fullerton, you most likely aren't going to want to sit down anyways. There are too many shops to browse through. Dozens of stores dedicated to clothes, bath and body, kitchen, antiques, shoes, books, and interior design line the main street. In fact, there are so many of these tiny store fronts that most of them try to grab a passerby's attention, and do so through a variety of ways. In these store windows, I saw an extremely elaborate version of Santa's village complete with moving train, huge signs advertizing 60% off sales, Christmas lights framing picturesque salons, and – my favorite – mannequins standing outside store fronts. These mannequins, typically bookended by a clearance rack of clothes, are particularly good at catching the attention of a prospective customer. They are quite visible and eye-catching, especially when they are hanging on a noose. I don't think this particular store owner meant to do this, but I was struck by a certain mannequin clad in a red coat and black pants hanging by its neck from a post and hook in the middle of the sidewalk. Apparently these shop clerks weren't as disturbed as I was by a womanly figure suspended by her neck, but then again with this recession going on, I suppose people are trying everything in order to attract business.

Downtown Fullerton also has a barrage of restaurants to choose from after you are finished with and famished from your full day of shopping, most of which boast a full bar and lounge. As I strolled past many of these restaurants in the late afternoon, I detected the beginnings of Italian, Mexican, and Mediterranean dinners, which smelled absolutely delectable. Coupled with the aroma of coffee (and no doubt wine on a Friday night), I can see how Fullerton could easily entice a hungry pedestrian. Their selection of restaurants and bars cater to all sorts of people; themes range from: Western, Asian, modern, French, or retro. My favorite was a bar called Cherch. Granted the spelling was off, but considering a beautiful white Methodist Church actually does stand a block away from this infamous bar, I found it very ironic. I know Cherch isn't meant to be a place of worship, but I could not help laughing that a bar, the ultimate place of secular enjoyment, shares a name with the ultimate place of holy piety. I honestly don't know what to make of this metaphor and correlation.

In any case, these bars and restaurants are all within walking distance of each other, and I imagine (or rather know having been one of these bar hoppers myself) that people do bounce from restaurant to restaurant on a Friday or Saturday night. But today, they

were all virtually empty. Of course, I was wandering around in between meal times, but the only person I saw at one of these joints was a lone man sitting on the terrace of an Italian restaurant smoking a cigar and drinking a glass of something I am sure was not simply iced tea. No matter, it's always five o'clock somewhere.

This dichotomy of bars and churches (there are about four churches and a Christian book store flanking all sides of Downtown Fullerton) is not isolated, for there are also several dichotomies on the streets. The shops on Harbor were all lined up and fit perfectly next to each other like a set of Legos. This particular street was also tree-lined, speckled with matching teal benches and trash cans, landscaped, laid out with scrolled sidewalks, and was surprisingly free of trash. Lights glazed the trees in the center divider and big beautiful lampposts stamped the corners of intersections. It is the perfect example of urban spectacle.

However, turn down any side street and things are slightly different. The streets are still relatively clean and the buildings still quaint, but the fronts are older looking, there are gaps between buildings, some empty lots, construction sites, and a series of not-as-ritzy shops: liquor stores, hardware stores, pawn shops, and even a bail bondsman.

I was still impressed by the lack of graffiti overall in Downtown Fullerton though. In fact, I only saw one instance of it during my entire journey. I had turned down a side street and noticed a back door facing a parking lot that was splattered with markings. Although, I wouldn't even consider it legitimate graffiti, because it looked more like purple smudges. Nonetheless, it was a door I would not want to enter on my own. I don't know if this lack of graffiti indicates anything about the demographics of Fullerton or if I was merely in a 'better' part of town, but it is interesting still how these public marks symbolize the amount of safeness on the streets. It is as if graffiti is a barometer of how dangerous a neighborhood is; thus judging by the relative absence of it in Fullerton, I suppose I was in a very good area.

On the other hand, sanctioned public art is also a sign of the scale of a neighborhood. On a corner, I came across a wall mural sketch of Fullerton above a series of newspapers. It portrayed a Spanish-style building with rolling hills in the background and an old car parked on the side, a picture reminiscent of the past, because none of these elements exist at all in Fullerton today. Yet I got the impression that this is exactly the way that the city wants its visitors to experience Fullerton. The image was not realistic at all, (in order to be so, it would need to include houses crowding the hills, a rush of cars, trucks, and SUVs in the foreground, and a mess of storefronts and window displays). In any case, this is just another instance of the myth of urban spectacle. Downtown Fullerton is a nice place, don't get me wrong, but it is certainly not caught in a time warp of the 1920s. However, using this nostalgic sentiment is a classic way to appeal to people looking to come to a city and enjoy thoroughly themselves, like they did in the 'good old days'. And this is Downtown Fullerton.

Where are All the People?

In a city that is built with nice curvy sidewalks, park benches every few feet, and ample stores to mill around in, the only thing that was missing in this urban mix was people. Interestingly, the sidewalks were uncannily clean, but also uncannily devoid of pedestrians. In fact, the word that came to mind as I was strolling down one street was: sterile. There are an oddly large amount of bright Christmas decorations and faint music playing (which the roaring traffic could obviously not benefit from), yet no people to enjoy it. As a matter of fact, I came across two apropos signs in an antique shop window that eerily captured this absence of people. One said "On the Air" and the other said "Applause". It was as if the store was trying to conduct a non-existent passing population. I was literally the only person around when I saw these signs in the window and it is an odd feeling to walk by a sign that directs you to applause when there is no crowd around in which to applause with. I am sure that if we froze traffic, evacuated the cars, and gathered everyone around that window, we could certainly have created applause worthy of a concert, but isolated in their air-conditioned vehicles, the people in Fullerton were in no shape to notice these details in the store fronts. The stores in Fullerton are bunched up together, making them the perfect composition for pedestrians to take advantage of, but this layout is easily zoomed past at 30 mph.

To be fair, there were a few people on foot or on bike during my trip. However, out of the 25 or so people I crossed paths with, only 4 of them were women (two teenagers, one college student on a skateboard, and one old lady). The rest were all men, and peculiar men at that. Most had backpacks and unkempt facial hair (perhaps college students or dare I say those down and out...) and many were Hispanic men on their bikes. I did see one African American man with dreadlocks, but

he just stared me down as I passed. In fact, not a single passerby ever uttered a word as I walked by. I must admit, there were moments, especially as I was walking down a side street with no cars, that I certainly wanted to reach a main thoroughfare as soon as possible.

Perhaps this is all a reflection of the fact that this was a Monday afternoon and not a Saturday night, but it is a bit strange and rather disappointing to see that so many people would rather travel inside their own vehicles (I also only ever saw two buses) than experience life in Fullerton on the sidewalk. You can see so much more on foot taking in the storefronts, listening to the Christmas music, smelling the cafes, catching the tail end of a heated store interior as a door closes, burning calories... this must be an indication of the Southern Californian mentality that the use of cars far outweighs the use of our feet and the benefits of walking.

What Time is it again?

In this age of cell phones, I hardly think anyone even wears watches much anymore, except of course in the name of fashion. Therefore, it struck me as particularly interesting that as I strolled around Fullerton, I came across several clocks on public display. The first was placed on top of a lamppost and had a beautiful face in Roman numerals with a scrolled frame. It was, naturally, in the center of the main thoroughfare. I honestly did not even notice what time it was by that clock, although I did notice the old-fashioned, *Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* lamppost look about it. I guess it was ten after four when I did see it, but that is precisely what was so ironic about this clock and why it was even there.

First of all, this clock was located among the central shopping/bar area, and I assume most shop keepers and restaurant owners would want their customers to feel as if the city was timeless as they strolled along the streets, in order to spend more time and money there. However, this giant clock stands overlooking the pedestrians and reminds them of how much less time they have to enjoy their day. I am assuming that this structure was there merely for decoration and to recreate a nostalgic atmosphere of when a city clock was necessary for the entire town, but it seemed rather pointless to me here. If any one wanted to know what time it was, I can almost bet the first thing they would turn to would be their cell phone or blackberry where they could not only get the time, with seconds included, here in Fullerton, California, but also in Sao Paulo, Beijing, Helsinki, and Vladivostok, all in one glance.

And still, this was not the only public clock in Fullerton. A ways down on a side street, the Fullerton Community Bank building, which looked like it had been built in the fifties, (and probably had) displayed both the time in digital format as well as the temperature. This clock was no doubt a remnant of some past era when cell phones still were not common and being able to tell the temperature and digitized time was both technologically advanced and convenient. Unfortunately, both these functions can also be easily achieved through a cell phone or blackberry, as long as you have an internet connection. However, not having my cell phone in hand, I did appreciate knowing that it was 56 degrees outside, and I thanked myself for bringing my jacket.

Although once again, I did not even notice what the time was from this clock. What this indicates to me is that our society has obviously become so regimented on time that people are becoming immune to it. Looking back, I had absolutely no idea of what time it was the entire time I was walking (even though these clocks were staring me in the face throughout my stroll) until I got a phone call. Even then, after I finished talking and put my phone back in my purse, I had to grab it again because I had already forgotten: what time is it again?

STOP Telling Me What to Do

I honestly never realized how much a city is really planned out. Of course there is the discipline and profession of city planning, but this term did not impact me until I started wandering around the city. It struck me in Fullerton that cities are not just planned, they are literally dictated. Every street corner, sidewalk, curb, alleyway, and intersection is adorned with some sort of sign telling us what to do. Naturally we encounter these signs incessantly while driving, but I don't think any of us realize how bizarre or mundane some of these signs truly are.

Signs are fantastic inventions for a city; without them people would be running red lights, zooming down streets, and causing major traffic jams, but we are seriously inundated with them. Because I was walking, I was truly able to appreciate how much of the basic city plan – the streets and sidewalks – can be physically read, and in most cases repeated. As I approached a corner intersection, there was a stop sign. But the word 'stop' was also painted on the ground. This double reminder can be interpreted as either an added precaution or an insult to a driver. If a driver cannot spot a red reflecting

sign, they should not be driving. But it just struck me as funny how almost every stop sign in the city was repeated like this. This particular one was even mounted on a fancy light post to bring extra attention to it.

But stop signs are not the only double duty indicators on the road. On another particularly complicated intersection where you could not go straight but only turn left or right, a 'right turn only' sign was repeated on both sides of the road and painted on the road itself. Coupled with two stop signs and a 'no parking anytime' sign, I would be a little afraid to ride my bike on this section of sidewalk for fear of getting tangled in the posts. It is not that I don't appreciate all the extra warnings about traffic rules in this part of town, because in a predominantly shopping, dining, and entertainment location I am sure there are many a drunk drivers and careless pedestrians on the road. But as in the case of this corner, the signs seem a bit excessive. All I can say is that it's a good thing that Fullerton does not have any one way streets.

Even the 'miles per hour' were constantly repeated every few feet on the road. This is particularly helpful because nothing is worse than getting ticketed for speeding in an area where the speed limit is not accessibly posted, but it was hilarious to see just how many times 25mph was plastered across this thoroughfare.

But my favorite sign was a random post crookedly standing in the center front of a narrow alleyway that said: "No motor vehicles". What was so ironic about this posting is that five feet behind it was a full grown tree in the center of the alleyway that would not allow any vehicle bigger than a mo-ped to get through anyway. Not to say that the sign was not helpful, but I would like to see a car or truck even try and pass into this alleyway. These are signs that I am sure I would have never noticed nor at least given a second thought to had I been in my car. But being a pedestrian in this city gave me an entirely different experience and read like an entirely different narration. For instance, the buttons you press to cross the street were rather unusual. They were not traditional press buttons, but censored switches that would make a beep when your finger touched the center of the dial. The post also had the proverbial signs with arrows pointing which way that button is in control of, and in many cases these corner posts also served as a local bulletin board for posters and fliers. I am assuming the reason Fullerton used these teal metal frames as stop lights is that they are sturdier and less environmentally damaging than wooden posts and because they don't accept staples for fliers like wood does. But, people still managed to tape up announcements on these corner signposts, demonstrating the utter malleability of the city.

Even the roads themselves had some interesting signs labeled on them. One read "taxi cab 8pm to 2am", which I am assuming is mostly in reference to the weekends. However, it was rather funny to see that while the other side of the street was packed with cars, this whole section was empty because of these yellow stripes on the curb. Even though the words clearly stated it only applied from 8-2, people still avoided this zone. Clearly, people in cities are just so used to obeying traffic laws and regulations and recognize the color coded nature of the city. Red, yellow, orange, and all the hot colors always seem to indicate some sort of warning and I just think people have become accustomed to this, which is not necessarily a bad thing. But what it tells me is that we have clearly become conditioned to respond to not only words and phrases, but also the colors they are presented to us in urban settings.

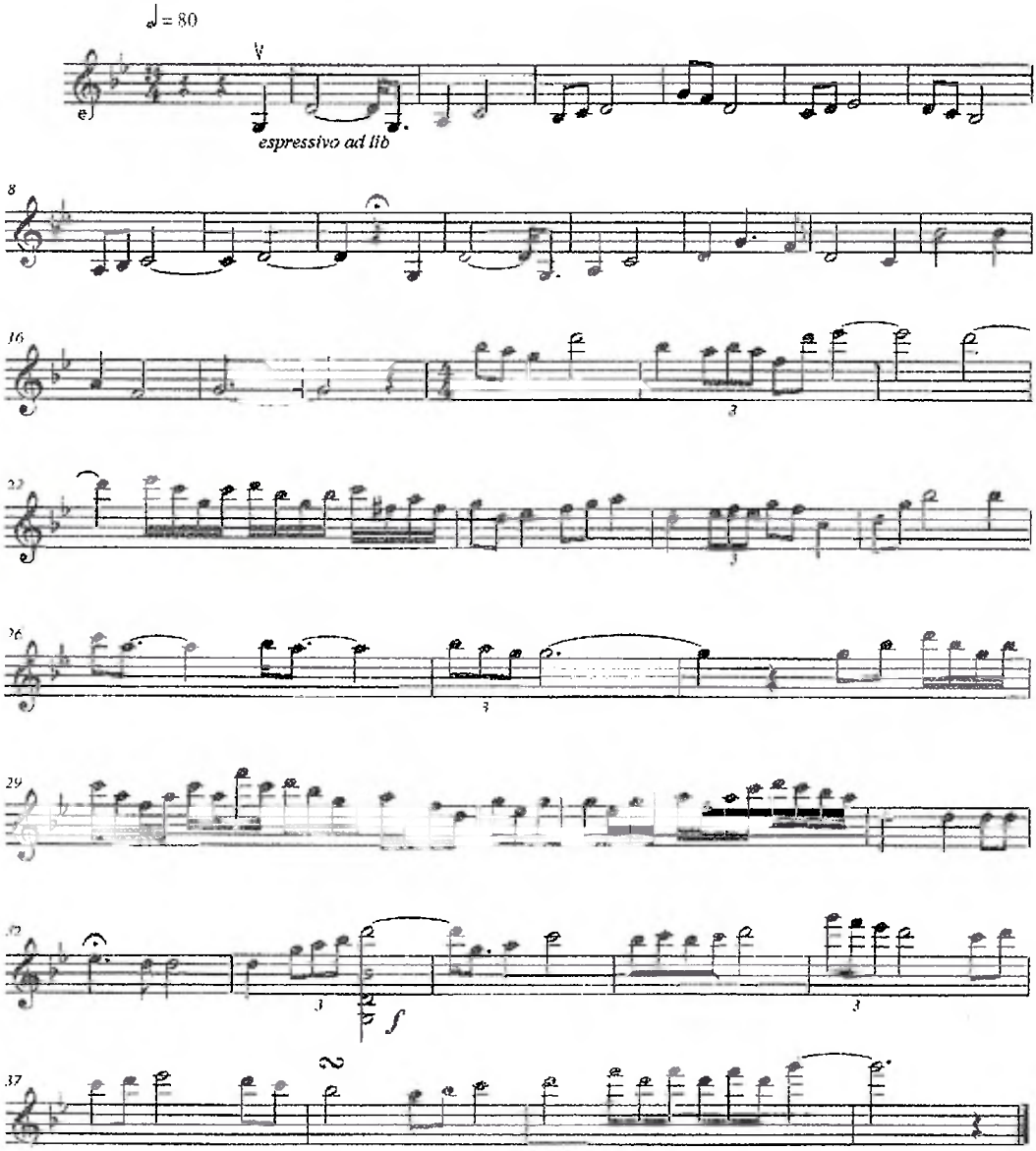
With so many stimuli bombarding us in a city, traffic laws have to compete with being noticed by people, so they resort to bright colors and repeated phrases. I appreciate all the efforts that the city planners do for its citizens in trying to regulate and order this urban locale that can all too easily become chaotic. However, I cannot help smirking at how much they do dictate the flow of the city and how it is displayed. Fullerton, like nearly every other modern city is truly a Word City

Grace Chou

Musical Composition

Lacrimosa

Violin



Emily Baeza

What's Your Blood Type? O Positive or Middle Class: An Analytical Essay on Dracula, Van Helsing and Blood

Standing in one corner, with an ivory moustache atop a simpering smile and towering height, your favorite nocturnal leech, is everyone's favorite vampire: Count Dracula. And across the ring, a withered red-haired Dutchman glares, taunting his adversary with what seems to be a crucifix, the challenger: Dr. Abraham Van Helsing. These men may seem physically unmatched to face each other but, however, are perfect rivals in Bram Stoker's Dracula. Set in nineteenth century England and Eastern Europe, the novel brings focus to the prejudice of the middle-class onto those of the lower-class due to a period of overcrowding and mass immigration. Dr. Van Helsing's relationship to the Count embodies the racism and class discrimination of the Victorian era in Europe, as seen most thoroughly in the scenes depicting Dracula's vamping of Lucy Westenra, her subsequent blood transfusions, and the professor's progressive scientific practices.

Dracula, the doppelganger of Van Helsing, challenges the strict moral codes and etiquette by which Van Helsing lives by. The professor was a man of God, just enough to carry out "God's will" (p. 432), and just inadequately enough to consider the possibilities of supernatural solutions to a supernatural problem. This is evident within the scenes of Dracula's vampings of Lucy. Dracula, in a manner much against that of the gracious courting of the Victorian era, enters the room of an engaged woman in the dark of night to indulge in the transmission of bodily fluids. This kind of behavior antagonizes the very fabric of Van Helsing's cultured protocol. His respect for the sanctity of marriage is buttressed by his mention of his deceased wife who is "alive by Church's law, though no wits, all gone..." (p. 211). It was custom in Victorian England for the mourning of a loved one to be publicized and lengthy (morbid outlook). That which was kept most private and secretive was sex via an uptight civilization. Contrary to this, Stoker presents Dracula who nonchalantly "courts" his first victim, Lucy, in a public setting (atop a cliff) and his second victim, Mina, in a very perverse manner, having her suck the blood from an open wound on his chest. The Count's whole manner is anathema to him as these incidents of vamping ruin the sanctity of holy matrimony. By actively trying to resist the Count's attempts to seduce these women, Van Helsing is serving as a keeper of order and organization. This was because the British Empire feared that the blend of peoples would lead to their demise (AxWound). The Count is meant to represent everything the British Empire feared (i.e. racial degeneration). He is not of a pure bloodline and is not shameful as "We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races..." (p. 40). This usage of blood indicates that it is closely tied to race. Dracula's mixture of race, or blood, is allegorical to that of the Celts and Irish. The very backdrop of Castle Dracula, Transylvania, is reminiscent of Irish folklore. This impurity of blood was despised and antagonized social expectations. By presenting the romantic cordiality of Van Helsing alongside the savage antics of the Count, Stoker builds a foil between the characters as they magnify each others' strengths and weaknesses.

In the Victorian era, England saw mass emigrations of Irish peoples who had experienced horrors such as famine and poverty and sought a better life. This fusion of middle-class Englishmen and lower-class Irish only amplified the Victorian obsession with purity and clarity of distinction among different groups of people by means of race and nationality. By Dracula preying upon English women, he is going against what was socially acceptable and indulging in their fear of losing purity within bloodlines. In opposition, Van Helsing dictates who can and cannot participate in Lucy's blood transfusions. He points out, "[Arthur, her fiancé] is so young and strong and of blood so pure that we need not defibrinate it," (p. 149). By "defibrinate", the professor is referring to the process of unclotting the blood. Blood types were unknown at the time, making this screening method extremely precarious. Suggesting this means that he assumes Arthur, a middle-class Englishmen, has the strong blood that Lucy needs, judging only his appearance and class status. He continues to attribute Arthur, her "brave young lover," by saying that "he is the more strong and young than me," (p.150). By doing so, he is screening the possible participants and classifying them by strength and appearance. Furthermore, he disapproves of allowing Lucy's lower-class servants as he "fear[s] to trust those

women, even if they would have courage to submit," (p.180). Although Lucy is in a great state of peril and quick action is necessary, he refuses to ask her maids for their aid. Van Helsing continues this filtering process throughout Lucy's four blood transfusions. The professor always chose the best man by his appearance, without regard of medical history of disease or health. This is referring to the screening of migrated peoples as they passed or arrived in England. At the time, it was common for British scientists to classify the lower-class by sole appearance. The "index of nigrescence," invented by physician John Beddoe, was a formula to identify the racial components of a given people. It was believed that certain races differed by not only physique, but character (i.e. "refined features of the British meant a "superior" character). Anthropologists went so far as to measure skulls to assign people a "race" based on the placement of their jaw (Racism). Van Helsing's process mirrors this socially acceptable method of assessing others and resonates the British disdain of Irish people. This was because the British Empire feared that the blend of peoples would lead to their demise (AxWound). The Count is meant to represent everything the British Empire feared (i.e. racial degeneration). He is not of a pure bloodline and is not shameful as "We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races..." (p. 40). This usage of blood indicates that it is closely tied to race. Dracula's mixture of race, or blood, is allegorical to that of the Celts and Irish. The very backdrop of Castle Dracula, Transylvania, is reminiscent of Irish folklore. This impurity of blood was despised and antagonized social expectations. Evidently, Stoker presents his "impure" title character as an Irishmen and the antagonist of the English vampire hunters.

At the turn of the century, or the Industrial Revolution, the overall growth of urban England propelled the advancements of medicine and surgical practices. Embodying this very movement is Van Helsing as he is quick to suggest the then-innovative practice of blood transfusions to salvage the drained Lucy. "There must be a transfusion of blood at once. Is it you or me," (p.147). The succinct diction he implicates to present such a modern practice emphasizes his initiative. Similarly, he is familiar with the operation he plans to use against Lucy by saying "I shall cut off her head and fill her mouth with garlic, and I shall drive a stake through her body." His ability to connect supernatural medicine with modern day practices further magnifies his superiority over the muddle-blooded Dracula. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Dracula is a man, for lack of a better word, who lives in the past. As previously noted, he takes pride in his Szekely blood and the accomplishments of his ancestors. Van Helsing is able to lead a team of vampire hunters, whereas Dracula works alone. This team consists of a Dutchman, Englishmen and an American. This fusion of cultures in an effort to defeat the Un-dead being provokes the idea of racial supremacy over the invading people, or Dracula or the Irish. The hunters are able to adapt to new places and travel easily, as oppose the Count who seeks stability in his coffin or Castle in Transylvania. The ability to adjust to a changing setting reiterates the supreme characteristics others hold over the Irish.

Blood is much more than just that which allows us to live as it flows through us. To Van Helsing, it was the holder of race that perpetuated class discrimination. So you don't only have to watch out for Dracula sucking your soul, but also for the impurities that occur once your bloods mix!

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Julia-Ellen Spruill-Smith

John Milton and Philip Larkin: Traditional and Contemporary Discussions of Time

Despite the three-hundred-year gap between John Milton and Philip Larkin's published works, their ideas regarding time and the human experience seem to echo each other quite strongly. Milton's three most personal sonnets, numbered 7, 19, and 22, present concerns about his own identity and purpose as a poet in relation to "the subtle thief of youth," also known as Time. Knowing that all humans, including himself, are subject to the inevitable rape of Time forces Milton to consider how to best utilize his life. Similar sentiments are found in the post-World War II poetry of Philip Larkin. Often criticized for being morbid, Larkin fearlessly addresses ideas of death throughout his works, particularly in his poems titled "Next, Please" and "Aubade." While similarities can be found in Milton and Larkin's poetry, a major difference lies in their religious affiliations which undoubtedly affects the messages present in their work. Yet both poets' careful consideration of the impermanent human condition are artfully presented through their poetry and offer timeless food for thought about the significance of our human experience.

Milton wrote Sonnet 7 in the early 1630s, around the time of his twenty-third birthday. At this point in his life he was at the end of his collegiate studies and was anxious to delve into his life's work as a great English poet. Sonnet 7 discusses his concerns about how much of his life had already past and how little he felt he had to show for it. The sonnet begins, "How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth, /Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!" (P&P 144, lines 1-2). These opening lines reveal Milton's anxiety about the relentlessness of Time and in, personifying it, assigns a certain forcefulness of character, thereby acknowledging that he had no control over its course. He wrote that his hasting days "no bud or blossom shew'th" (P&P 144, line 4), which implies his failure to produce any work of greatness yet in his life that had already seen twenty-three years. It is clear in the first quatrain of Sonnet 7 that Milton was very focused on his legacy and purpose in life, and he comprehensibly articulated his astonishment about the rapidity of time for a single human. Despite the anxieties demonstrated in the beginning of the sonnet, Milton confronts the notion of his death head on by the end in writing, "Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow, /It shall be still in strictest measure even/ To that same lot, however mean or high, /Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven..." (P&P 144, lines 9-12). By the end, Milton seems to accept his fate as a mortal man, using this acceptance as a kind of strength to persevere in his life "As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye"(P&P 144, line 14). This last line when Milton references the Taskmaster he is, of course, referring to his god and more specifically the parable of the laborers in the vineyard found in Matthew 20:1-16, in which the Taskmaster declares "Thus the last shall be first, and the first last." This is significant to Milton's perseverance because it highlights his acknowledgement of his powerlessness over Time and the will of the Taskmaster (i.e. God).

In Sonnet 19 Milton again contemplated his purpose as a poet and, being at another turning point in his life, was forced to reconsider his efforts. This sonnet, written approximately twenty years after Sonnet 7, revolves around Milton's newly acquired blindness and how being blind greatly affected his sense of purpose and identity as a poet. In Sonnet 7 Milton was focused on the obstacle of Time in relation to his life's work, but in Sonnet 19 he is focused on his blindness as an obstacle amidst the ever present Time. Milton develops a sense of frustration and impatience throughout this sonnet, uncertain of why God has dealt him this hand. Being a highly driven man, Milton seemed enormously troubled by his blindness and unsure of how to continue his work especially since he had yet to complete his greatest work *Paradise Lost.*

In the first quatrain of Sonnet 19 Milton expresses his feelings of uselessness when he writes "that one talent which is death to hide,/ Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent..."(P&P 157, lines 3-4). Milton recognized that his talent as a poet should not be kept from the world, but felt that it was trapped inside him without his ability to see, and in spite of his strong determination to share the gift. The climax of the sonnet seems to come in line seven, when he imagines chiding God by asking, "'Doth God exact my labor, light denied?"'(P&P 157, line 7). How is he expected to continue his work in complete darkness, for the duration

of his time on earth? Time being such a precious element of human existence, as discussed in Sonnet 7 - in combination with his blindness - makes the notion of eternal darkness, i.e. death, even more real for Milton at this stage in his life. But again, he must persevere. And so he does, as seen in the following few lines when he acknowledges that his chiding would serve no purpose - that "'God doth not need/ Either man's work or his own gifts...'"(P&P 157, lines 9-10). This humbling realization that "his [God's] state Is kingly" perhaps reassured Milton that he was not the only one attempting to live according to God's will; that he was not being punished by God with blindness because God does not rely on even the great talent of John Milton. Nonetheless his blindness was a huge road block for Milton, and through Sonnet 19 we as readers are able to gain a sense of his dilemma and pain.

Only a few years following Sonnet 19, Milton wrote Sonnet 22, in which he again discussed his blindness but seemed much more at ease about his state. He wrote that his eyes had forgotten their sight in the few years that they had been without it, seemingly as a way of saying that he had come to terms with his blindness, a drastically different position when compared to Sonnet 19. He wrote, "Yet I argue not Against Heaven's hand or will...but still bear up and steer/ Right onward" (P&P 160-161, lines 7-9). Milton's new found strength and confidence, he says, is derived from knowing that he lost his sight defending England, and no task is more noble. Therefore although he has no more sight, he does not feel that he lost it for an unworthy cause. Milton wrote, "This thought might lead me through the world's vain masque/ Content though blind, had I no better guide" (P&P 161, lines 13-14).

The progression of Milton's thought concerning his identity is initially tested in Sonnet 7 by the notion of time and later tested in Sonnet 19 and Sonnet 22 by his blindness. By the end of Sonnet 22, Milton has seemingly accepted his fate as a man and, further, as a blind man. His discussions of time and purpose throughout the three sonnets lead him to this place of confidence and acceptance. Milton recognized that he would not live eternally on earth, but was determined to leave behind a legacy of great poetry by using his talent and time to the fullest.

The poetry of Philip Larkin parallels many of the ideas that Milton presents in his sonnets with regard to the impermanence of life. In his poem "Next, Please" Larkin writes, "Always too eager for the future, we/ Pick up bad habits of expectancy...Watching from a bluff the tiny, clear,/Sparkling armada of promises draw near. How slow they are! And how much time they waste,/ Refusing to make haste!"(Larkin, pg. 50). The opening of this poem describes the human tendency to waste time thinking about the future or preparing for a future that probably never comes. The metaphor that Larkin uses of the "sparkling armada" effectively characterizes the experience of looking with endless hope towards the promises of the future, whatever they might be for an individual, and anxiously awaiting their arrival without taking note of the present. Larkin continues, "it's No sooner present than it turns to past. /Right to the last" (Larkin, pg. 50). It seems that what Larkin is trying to convey here is that setting up expectations for the future, planning out time before it has occurred, only leads to grave disappointment. It is easy to think that each promise of the future will "heave to and unload /All good into our lives, all we are owed/ For waiting so devoutly and so long. /But we are wrong..."(Larkin, pg. 50). Time is unforgiving and unstopping. Each expectancy of the future - writing a masterpiece, marriage, children - occurs momentarily in our lives and then is over, turned to past. Nothing is certain in human existence except the "black-Sailed unfamiliar" ship also known as death. While this may seem fatalistic, it is in fact totally realistic, and after reading Milton's sonnets it seems likely that he would resonate with Larkin's approach.

Similarly in "Aubade," Larkin further discusses death and the human fear of accepting it as our fate: "The mind blanks at the glare...The good not done, the love not given, time/ Torn off unused..." (Larkin, pg. 190). Human beings do not like to think of their death because it has been socialized to be a tragic and shocking event, when in reality everyone must die and it does not have to be such a dreaded fact. Perhaps if humans were to accept their death before it happened, they could appreciate the present that they are alive in; they could make better use of it; they could be liberated by this idea instead of oppressed by it. What Larkin seems to emphasize about the fear of death and time is that when we meet it we will have no choice but to accept it, for "Death is no different whined at than withstood"(Larkin, pg. 191). Knowing this now, however, while there is still time left in our lives could dispel fear and encourage us to live our lives instead of pretend they will never end and waste them away holding out for a future that holds no hands and keeps no promises - except one.

While both Milton and Larkin contemplate similar ideas regarding the human condition in their poetry, their thoughts ultimately move in separate directions. For Milton, the discussion of Time leads him to the consideration of death, which for a faithful Christian leads to the ascension into heaven; Milton is moving up. Larkin's understanding of death and time, however, is much more final (Larkin was not a religious man), and is therefore moving down. As Milton's time passes he moves closer to the kingdom of heaven, but as Larkin's time passes, he moves closer to mere death. Because for Milton there is the prospect of a life after death, Time as a force seems to be of greater interest to him in his poetry than death alone, whereas death alone seems more interesting to Larkin than the force of Time leading to a place that he does not believe in. Despite these differences in their views, Milton and Larkin still seem to be pushing the same idea that in spite of impending death, our lives have worth and deserve to be experienced whole heartedly.

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Mary Helen Truglia

"What if the Duchess Should Speak?": Speech, Silence, and Submission in *The Duchess of Malfi*

For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,
You only will begin then to be sorry
When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder,
She held it less vain-glory to talk much
Than your penance to hear her: whilst she speaks,
She throws upon a man so sweet a look,
...and to dote
On that sweet countenance; but in that look
There speaketh so divine a continence,
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
(Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, I.ii.112-17,19-22)

The Duchess of Malfi is ostensibly a story of resistance of a young widow who actively defies her brothers' wishes and refuses to be constrained by (male) authority. While her brothers, Ferdinand and the Cardinal, "would not have her marry again" (I.i.265), she sets out to do so in the name of love, declaring: "If all my royal kindred / Lay in my way unto this marriage, / I'ld make them my low foot-steps" (I.i.348-50). When she does marry soon after, she not only marries in secret, she also marries out of her high social class, choosing Antonio Bologna, her household steward. Before we know it, she has also had several children - provocative signs to her brothers (who have little room to talk) of a sexuality gone wild, when in reality they are the product of a legal and loving marriage. Her actions peg her as a woman willing and eager to fight back, to prevent anyone from taking charge of her body and desires. She does have grounds for asserting such authority. She is, after all, an aristocratic widow with claims on a duchy and with autonomy so legitimate that her brothers must use clandestine means to restrain her. Yet at stake in the play is not merely the question (or problem) of a widow's unique rights, independence, and power and how they can or cannot be contained by male authority. At issue too is the prospect of female self-fashioning and the kind of voice and agency it carries.

Though in part *The Duchess of Malfi* dramatizes what men can do to women, at its core is rather what women can do to men by the act of being submissive. That the duchess will act on her will comes as no surprise, given her initial asides. What is puzzling, and revealing, however (especially since she seems to have married as much to exhibit her autonomy as to satisfy herself), is that she does so through submission. On the one hand, she dares "old wives" to report that she "winked, and chose a husband" (I.i.355-6). On the other, she keeps her move into marriage and sexuality under close cover. When the "deadly air" (III.i.56) of a "scandalous report" (III.i.47) actually approaches her, her honor, and her brothers, she proclaims her innocence. In the face of the suspecting Ferdinand, she

denies the truth and assures him that she will marry only "for [his] honor" (III.i.44). Pretending to be deeply troubled by rumors "touching [her] honor" (III.i.48) and helpless to intervene, she leaves the remedy in his hands. It is only later, when he overhears her speaking of her closeted sex life (she thinks to Antonio), that she confesses to her marriage. Yet when she does, she strategically hides her husband's identity and his problematic social standing through her careful choice of words and underplays the implications of all her secrecy, insisting: "I have not gone about, in this, to create / Any new world, or custom" (III.ii. 111-2).

To some degree, the duchess' posture of "innocency" (III.i.55), and at times her silence, is a matter of survival, forced upon her by a family and society intent on keeping the widow under wraps. *The Duchess of Malfi* assumes the form it does because Webster simultaneously participates in, and calls into question, the Renaissance's cultural repression of the feminine and its associated assertion of masculine power. The tragic playwright's role is paradoxical: the closer his attention to the dynamics of feminine idealization and desecration, the stronger become the repressive mechanisms that reinforce cultural perceptions of women as either saints or whores.

At the end of the play, when her secret is out, when false words have been said about her and people have listened, her time to live is up. Importantly, however, hers is not a simple case of cooptation, a forced relinquishing of her desires. Her gains are truly extraordinary, at least for a female character on the early modern stage, and the play amplifies their significance by underscoring the pressures that surround her. By the end of Act II, the duchess' reputation is under siege and her life threatened. Ferdinand vilifies her as "a notorious strumpet" and is ready to "purge" her "infected blood" (II.iv.26) and, even to the Cardinal's horror, "[hew] her to pieces" (II.iv.31). At the beginning of Act III, her infamy has spread to the "common rabble," who, according to Antonio, "do directly say / She is a strumpet" (III.i.25-6). Yet in the meantime, during a leap of two children and several years, this "excellent /Feeder of pedigrees" (III.i.5-6) is living and producing heirs at her liberty. And her brothers, the representatives of church and state, have not said any words that were able to stop her.

To some degree, the play smoothes over this gap in time and plot by having characters talk about how time and children fly. Nonetheless, the break works dramatically to underscore the duchess' unprecedented freedom, to highlight the remarkable, though invisible, license that comes with visible compliance. Secretly autonomous, she is overtly submissive to her brothers' constraints; overtly submissive, she seems at once untouched and untouchable. Under the cover of patriarchal authority, she can act on her will. In the end, of course, the duchess is caught, confined, tormented by madmen, and turned into "a box of worm seed" (IV.ii. 124) at the murderous hands of Bosola, Ferdinand's right- hand man. Yet tellingly, when her subjugation becomes reality, a matter of force rather than choice, she no longer complies. When there is nothing left to gain from submission, she asserts her will directly, making clear the uncompromised and uncompromising nature of her voice.

While the men around her "write" her to conform to their own perceptions of the feminine "Other," she is silent. From her brothers' perspective, she can talk, but she cannot speak; she can make noise, but can have nothing to say. Ferdinand's pun, "women like that part, which, like the lamprey / Hath ne'er a hone in't," is significant, in this regard, because although it is certainly a sexual reference, it may also refer to the tongue. *The Duchess of Malfi* abounds in images and scenes which emphasize the Duchess' entrapment in a world in which she can talk eloquently, but cannot speak her mind directly because she must display her will by disguising it behind submission. Early in the play, Antonio praises her "discourse," but only by evoking, in the same breath, her silence. It is not her speech so much as her "sweet countenance" that "speaketh so divine a continence, / As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope" (I. ii. 121-122). With her brothers, the Duchess hardly utters a word. In fifty lines of Act I, scene i she speaks four times, never more than two lines, and is interrupted twice. In Act III, after exchanging trivialities with Antonio and Cariola, she is confronted by Ferdinand and told "Do not speak" and "cut out thine tongue" (III. ii. 75, 108). He refuses to let her speak her innocence. Finally, during her torture, Bosola notes that "her silence . . . expresseth more than if she spake" (IV. i. 9-10).

As long as there is hope for release, as long as Ferdinand (as Bosola pretends) will entertain reconciliation, the duchess displays "a behavior so noble / As gives a majesty to adversity" (IV.i.5-6), and asks for her brother's pardon, still (if Bosola is right) "passionately apprehend [ing] / Those pleasures she's

kept from" (IV.i.14-5). But once Ferdinand himself gives up his guise of innocence and betrays his undaunted aggression, so does she. When he brings her the hand (he pretends) of Antonio and denounces her children as "bastards" (IV.i.36), she lambastes him for denying the legitimacy of her marriage and "violat[ing] a sacrament o' th' Church" (IV.i.39)-once again invoking a patriarchal authority to authorize herself, but this time openly against him. It is then that she "account[s] this world a tedious theater" where she "play[s] a part. . . 'gainst [her] will" (IV.i.83-4), and then that she refuses to play it. It is also then that she resists Bosola's efforts to dominate and destroy her, and then that she declares herself "Duchess of Malfi still" (IV.ii.142).

In locating this, her signal moment of self-assertion, in the midst of her confinement and immediately before her death, Webster may be dramatizing what he has been showing throughout: the possibility of self-assertion within circumscription. Even if the self in question is not yet fully interiorized, articulated, or defined, the duchess' claim is neither vacuous nor defeating. For it is she who ultimately gets the last word. After her death, her voice reverberates from the grave, echoing warnings to Antonio that could (if this were not a tragedy) save his life. And at the end of the play, we hear that the eldest of her and Antonio's sons will inherit the duchy- importantly, through his "mother's right" (V.v.113). She is indeed "Duchess of Malfi still." Significantly, it is from a position as wife and not widow, the ruled rather than the unruly, that the duchess has established her "right"; through marriage and not widowhood that she has acted on her desires. In Elizabethan drama, when marriage figures as a means to power, it is predominantly as a means to male power–a means for men to safeguard (male) society from oversexed and overactive women, to manipulate, appropriate, traffic in, and otherwise dominate women. Yet, in *The Duchess of Malfi*, the illusion that women could be contained through marriage is seriously challenged by the Duchess' agency through her "submission", speech, and silence.

Mary Helen Truglia

"Creating it every moment afresh": Representations of the Modern City in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and Boccioni's *The City Rises*

The city can be seen as a structure that both forms and fragments consciousness. The city provides a unique experience that shapes how and why these pieces of art were created.

Aspects of the "modern city", as we know it today, had their origins in the early twentieth-century depiction of cities within art and literature. "Modernity," as a term, invites thoughts of change, progress, industry, science, and urbanization, among others. Emotional sentiments about modernity are also significant: it is changeable, fleeting, and transient. The cityscape, as well as creating the literal setting, serves as a symbol for states of mind and internal methods of coping with external reality. The city provides the backdrop for the modern sense of fragmentation, as if everything is splintering and disintegrating. Reminiscent of T.S. Eliot's "fragments . . . shored up against my ruin" or Yeats' lines, "Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold;/Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world", the fragments, use of time, and fluidity in both *Mrs. Dalloway* and Boccioni's *The City Rises* are symbolic of their attempt to capture and illustrate facets of the modern city.

To the writer, attempting to capture or recreate city and consciousness, words become weapons against such destruction or loss. For Woolf, war and violence were forces to be countered and erased, in part by searching for continuity and community. For Boccioni however, employing vibrantly violent colors, war and violence were to be reveled in and celebrated as catalysts for change and for the future. We see in *Mrs. Dalloway* a different view of fragmentation, one subversive in that very difference. Woolf sees multiplicity as creation and innovation. Rather than evincing a single, linear urge to shape and contain, to control, the narrative instead evolves in a fluid process, just as the city is constantly changing. Woolf brings the motion of the city into her novel through her choice of words and even through her punctuation style. She employs a great deal of semicolons, making her paragraphs both fluid and halting simultaneously. Representations of the city are part of what makes modern art "modern". For each character in the novel, and indeed for each reader, the city, in this case London, comes to represent different things in their lives. They literally inhabit the same streets, but mentally travel different paths.

Time anchors movement in the city but one must always be aware of the relativity of time in context, rational time as shown by the changing of the hours announced by Big Ben and internal time in memory triggered flashbacks. Clarissa longs to look into the mirror and see herself as unified, coherent, as "Clarissa Dalloway; of herself". When she looks in the mirror, however, she can only see her self as "definite" when "some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew the parts together". She "tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her", but she can only attempt to convey this self to others through performing a role. The role of the perfect hostess is to serve as a substitute for what she refers to as her "incompatible" self so that she alone, she says, may acknowledge her split self and may instead project to the outside world the image of one who possesses the much-coveted conception of the self. Clarissa, during her walk down Bond Street, associates her absence of a unified self with the vitality of the city. Where the novel as a whole sees the city as changing and fragmentary, Clarissa attempts to latch onto the steady grandeur and external timing in order to center herself. Immediately preceding her refusal to say people that are "this or that," for example, Clarissa notes that she is watching the taxi cabs in the busy London streets. At this point, she again reflects on her "self", notes again that the city was "absolutely absorbing; all this; the cabs passing", and then reflects again that she will never say of herself that she is this or that. Similarly, Clarissa reflects on her "oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown" immediately before noting the "astonishing . . . progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street". After having made this observation, Clarissa comments that being Mrs. Dalloway, and more specifically being Mrs. Richard Dalloway, has caused her to be not even Clarissa anymore. Clarissa associates the absence of a self with the vitality of the city. Upon seeing Hugh Whitbread, Clarissa states, "I love walking in London. Really it's better than walking in the country". The characters are connected by place and time, they are literally crossing paths. The self and the perception of the city are always placing fragments together, and are always changing and malleable while giving the intangible sense of stability. All of the action/dramatic effect in *Mrs. Dalloway* is internal. It is not about the city explicitly; it is about the perception of the city through the emotions and unconscious of the characters, most especially Clarissa.

Clarissa loves London because the city environment provides her with a sense of the order, vitality, and stability she lacks within her self. In addition, London validates and celebrates Clarissa's choice of performing the role of the perfect hostess. In doing so, London validates the only sense of identity Clarissa has aside from her emptiness and the lack of the unified self she covets. While in the city, Clarissa is "part" of the house there, ugly, rambling all to bits and pieces as it was; part of people she had never met; being laid out like a mist between the people she knew best, who lifted her on their branches as she had seen the trees lift the mist, but it spread ever so far, her life, herself. Clarissa at this point merges with the city environment and thereby becomes a part of this environment. The city environment does more than sustain and expand Clarissa's self. Merging with the city environment helps Clarissa, for a fleeting moment at least, achieve some semblance of unity and stability. In doing so, the city functions as a substitute for the unified, stable self she lacks. The city, then, as the aforementioned quote indicates, momentarily becomes Clarissa's self. She comments to herself "that somehow in the streets of London,...here, there, she survived". Clarissa survives specifically because the streets of London embrace her and nurture her during the times when she feels the worst about her inability to attain a stable, unified self. Clarissa is not always comfortable with herself or with her role in the private sphere, but she can be comfortable in London.

On the streets of London, for example, Clarissa, in addition to using her ability to merge with her urban environment as a substitute for the self she desires, is an aristocratic insider and worthy of respect. Perhaps most importantly, the representation of Big Ben within the novel indicates the ordered, dominating world that urban life can provide to those like Clarissa who seek such order and stability. The sound of Big Ben, which Rezia describes as "sensible", is a dominating presence in each character's life, a demand to adhere to one's busy schedule, a reminder that life is progressing in an orderly, measurable fashion. Big Ben's dominance and insistence on order interrupts numerous moments when Clarissa either finds herself sadly contemplating her lack of a unified self or finds herself forced to confront the unhappiness of the life she has chosen. Big Ben strikes the half hour, for example, just as Peter seizes Clarissa by the shoulders and cries, "'Tell me .... Are you happy, Clarissa? Does Richard-'". The strike,

along with Elizabeth's entrance into the room, truncates Peter's words and saves Clarissa from having to answer Peter's question. Peter's words at this moment threaten to force Clarissa to question her choice to perform as Mrs. Richard Dalloway, the perfect hostess; Clarissa is on the verge of being forced to attempt to define her self outside of her role. Instead, Elizabeth, the product of Clarissa's decision to marry Richard, enters the room as if to validate Clarissa's chosen lifestyle, and Big Ben strikes very loudly, restoring order by confirming that this conversation between Peter and Clarissa will not take place. There could be no such external ordering outside of the structured pacing of a city. External time enters in so as to give external order to internal flux.

Woolf attempts to capture the nature of the changing modern city by giving the reader fragments and exploring the internal self, where Boccioni creates disorientation through rapid brushstrokes and energetic colors. *Mrs. Dalloway* gives the reader a sense of seeing the city through the people rather than the people through the city; *The City Rises* blurs the people until they are barely recognizable because they are so much a part of the rush of the city. The Futurists "sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and boldness". This is evident in the flush of warm colors, reds and yellows, interspersed with cooler blues and whites. Rather than allowing the 'reader' to view the city through description of characters, Boccioni places the viewer in media res, attempting to place upon the viewer the sense of the violence and energy of the city.

For Boccioni, the painting strives to represent time as both fleeting and constantly in movement; the painting pictures more than one action, and yet the painting is frozen in time.

Just as the sensory perception and spectacle of the city in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the onomatopoeia of the strikes of Big Ben and the noise of the busy city, in *The City Rises* the vibrant and violent colors depicts the horses and people as forces of nature pitted against and aligned with one another in a primal struggle from which perhaps something revolutionary and modern could be born. *The City Rises* depicts the appearance of movement through the blurring of figures in the foreground while the city factories in the background remain steady. As a Futurist painter, Boccioni focused on "process rather than on things" and the power art had to "synthesize the manifold experiences of sense and memory in a coherent 'simultaneity'".

Dynamism, labor, construction, scaffolding, smokestacks - all combatively vie for attention in the painting, and in creating them so, Boccioni depicts both the city and the concepts of the movement of Futurism itself. *The City Rises* can be seen as a visual representation of the written Futurist Manifesto. The central image of a man with upraised arms placed before a rearing horse shows mankind confronted with the revelations of light, power, and energy of the burgeoning urban world, and from this confrontation man is being converted to the cultural movement which strove to defy the traditional urban spectacle: Futurism. *The City Rises* could in no way resemble traditional depictions of the city because the Futurists refused to live in the past. They questioned the desire to live engrossed in the past when there was so much modernity and vitality to be had. The traditional constraints of time and space no longer mattered because "already we live in the absolute...we have already created speed, eternal and ever present". The urban landscape was therefore the most fitting thing to depict - why would a Futurist want to paint a field or bowl of fruit? Neither of those captured the chaos of modern urban life like imagery of the city. The same fluidity present in *Mrs. Dalloway* enters the city in the form of speed and movement for Boccioni. As Futurists, proponents of "factories suspended from the clouds by their strings of smoke," which we see in *The City Rises*, they are able to create representations of the modern city that would be impossible to create in the countryside, where there are no masses of crowds or a rush of traffic, no clashes of man and machine in quite the same way. The urban space of the city provides an environment of symbiotic stability and motion. Both *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The City Rises* are constantly "creating it every moment afresh", showing the nature of the early twentieth-century city as fleeting and eternally changing.

Tina Rinaldi

When Science Looks Back: Animals and Morality

It would be unfair to suggest that people do not consider or value the vitality of salmon when throughout United States and Canada numerous fish hatcheries have sprung up in order to save these fish from extinction by replenishing their swiftly dwindling populations. In the case of salmon, it is clear that humans certainly do place value on their lives, however it would be well within reason to question our motives in which species we decide to "help" and in manner we decide to "save" them. In hatcheries, extremely controlled conditions are maintained in order to manufacture highly engineered salmon, perfectly designed for efficient farming and trained to act with a regularity and predictability ideal for the application of the scientific method. While wild salmon are chaotic, engineered salmon are tooled to meet hatchery needs: learning to eat from automatic feeders, growing accustom to wholly regulated hatchery conditions and fat at an accelerated, standardized rate. These fish become so appropriated for hatchery life that they become failures in the wild, while additionally posing a threat to the survival of natural salmon populations by their cultivated abundance and lethal potential for spreading hatchery-fostered diseases. In all these ways it becomes evident that our true interest in salmon lies within our own self-interest; that in acting to replenish wild salmon populations, humans have created for ourselves a more easily manageable version of salmon, engineered fish(sticks), deliciously suited for our purposes. Through the various ways these fish have been tampered with, both wild and hatchery salmon have been irrevocably transformed by the actions of the humans "saving" them, costing salmon what can be considered their "salmonisity", their salmon-version of humanity, in the process. Through the dramatic changes humans have induced in salmon, we divulge our true motives in "helping animals" by showing that we value them based upon their "specific human meanings", the significance we place upon them as producible. As shown by the hatchery-created schools of interchangeable swimming fish(sticks) we use to replace the disappearing wild salmon, humans have very little understanding of how to produce salmonisity in the fish we breed.

In Barbara Noske's book, Beyond Boundaries: Humans and Animals, she challenges the human meanings of animals by putting forth substantial evidence of their independent mentalities and cognitive abilities thereby forcing the reader to recognize the consciousness owned by other species. The similarities between animals and ourselves, disrupts the distinguishable binary between "us" and "them", damaging our perspective of animals as producible objects. In recognizing the existence of salmonisity and the cognitive abilities of animals, we can no longer claim ignorance and continue to operate without a sense of morality regarding the animals we affect. It is my goal to make apparent the unfolding of this perspective, by examining the affects of engineering salmon as portrayed in Rik Scarce's book, Fishy Business, in relation to the awakening evidence of other creature's cognitive abilities as exhibited in Noske's work. As humans come to the realization that animals are more conscious then we would like to believe, and that our manipulation of them produces noticeable consequences, it will become increasingly important for science to adopt a more ethically-minded approach, one that utilizes a greater sense of inter-subjectivity towards the creatures we interact with.

The current process in hatcheries of raising highly engineered fish geared towards pleasing our consumer and scientific needs demonstrates the "human meaning" of salmon as being interchangeable fish(sticks). In a hatchery, engineered fish are vital in order to achieve economic efficiency, controlled conditions and near-total predictably, since wild salmon pose the problem of being erratic living creatures, too unruly to fulfill the needs of human productivity. Hatchery fish are ideal to the "human meaning" of salmon because they have been literally created for that human purpose, selectively and artificially bred, placed in incubation trays and then quickly relocated into "raceways", holding tanks for young fish that resemble "miniature horse-racing tracks" (Scarce 88). Scarce describes the efficiency of their accelerated development, explaining that they "emerge from their eggs at the same moment, and mature at the same pace... [they are] released at the same time and return to the hatchery as adults within a narrow 'window'" (Scarce 97). Furthermore, to insure a successful and abundant "crop" of fish, weak salmon are eliminated by "shocking" them while still in the egg stage.

A practice accomplished by pouring the tray of incubating eggs "waist high...into an empty plastic bucket placed on the floor" (Scarce 97). In both the creation of engineered fish and this method of "shocking" out the weak, hatchery salmon are clearly human products made to satisfy the role we have demanded of them. They are predictable, obedient, rapidly growing fish(sticks), perfectly appropriated to the business-like efficiency and timekeeping of the hatchery.

Not only are these salmon tooled to fit our needs as consumers, but as a result of being engineered they embody the repetitiveness and interchangeability ideal for study. In the scientific method, salmon biologists attempt to break down what they are studying into parts, choosing to examine one fragment rather than the whole complexity of an ecosystem all at once. This technique combined with the scheduled behavior of hatchery fish lends itself to the false impression of salmon as an interchangeable, mechanical mass, rather than a school of individual and spontaneous fish. By investigating the actions of salmon that have been isolated from the fluctuations of the wild, their predictable behavior appears to be mechanized, allowing for the reinvention of living fish into little swimming machines. This is illustrated by one salmon biologist who describes salmon as being, "beautifully fueled" like rockets (Scarce 88). In thinking of salmon as being mechanical, it stands to reason that the principles of one machine could be applied to another. Within this mentality, individual salmon are seen as being the same as the rest in the school, different breeds of geographically diverse salmon are blended as one, and even dissimilar species of animal are chunked together. One scientist expressed, "You can take a course in ecology, and if you've got a good grasp of the principles, you can apply them to any animal. It didn't bother me that I worked on moles rather than on whitefish cod" (Scarce 72). As shown by this scientist's response, the physical construction of salmon in hatcheries has made it easy for humans to think of living creatures as interchangeable mechanisms, objects waiting for production. In their design to meet the demands of science and consumerism, engineered salmon have been drained of their salmonisity, acting less "salmon-like" as they become more fish(stick)-like.

This adverse affect of salmon construction as fish(sticks) is further shown in the way that engineered fish, while being excellent at living in hatcheries, are terrible at existing in the wild to the extent that they even harm the survival of wild salmon populations. Within the hatchery, conditions are carefully maintained to insure that salmon, as the product, are kept healthy and plentiful. In many cases, production is increased by means of raising and regulating water temperatures while boosting the amount of food supplied to the fish. Along with stabilized temperatures, water is also kept as sterile as possible in an attempt to prevent hatchery-fostered diseases. Each of these precautions are taken as a way of protecting the hatchery's "products" from unexpected fluctuations in environment, while ensuring that they grow fat according to schedule. This mentality disregards the importance of salmon learning to be salmon, favoring instead the automated reliability of engineered fish(sticks). For the hatchery-bred fish, "home" is the hatchery, explaining why so many of them are ill-equipped to handle life in the turbulence of rivers and streams. Once released from hatcheries this becomes glaringly apparent by the way that engineered salmon are physically weaker than wild salmon, having spend the greater part of their lives eating in harmonized holding tanks. They lack the skills needed for survival, racing towards any figure that "looks like a human feeder" while additionally "staying near the surface of the water to get food quickly", an idea that even very young wild salmon know could be very deadly (Scarce 104). As overfishing, dam construction and other influences cause a decline in the wild salmon populations, hatchery salmon are being used to "supplement" rivers and streams for the benefit of commercial and recreational fisherman. The co-existence of wild and hatchery salmon within rivers has led to occurrences of interbreeding that some biologists are worried will irreversibly blend the binary between the two, thereby weakening the population as a whole. In recognizing the hatchery salmon's absence of salmonisity, their interbreeding with wild salmon acts to distort the species itself, polluting the salmonisity of all salmon. This point is fictionally illustrated in Octavia Butler's science fiction novel Dawn, where Lilith, a survivor of earth's total destruction, finds herself in the care of aliens, who in return for saving humanity wish to blend with it. As the aliens genetically equip Lilith with the skills she needs to comfortably survive amongst them, she gradually becomes less and less human-like, comparably to how the salmon we're "saving" are becoming less "salmon-like". As the novel's plot progresses, other humans distrust and ostracize Lilith because they do not recognize her as being part of humanity. Her gradual transformation from human to an alien-hybrid coincides with how salmon are losing their

salmonisity to the human-driven construction of them as inert product.

This self-interested perspective of animals as being what we construct them to be is contented and troubled in Noske's Beyond Boundaries: Humans and Animals, which provides ample evidence that while we scientifically objectifying animals, they actually possess a variety of cognitive abilities that make them just as aware and complex as ourselves. This consciousness of an animal's mental presence is frequently experienced by humans, when while looking at an animal suddenly comes to realize that the animal is actively looking back. This phenomenon is described by John Berger, who explains,

> The eyes of an animal when they consider a man are attentive and wary...Man becomes aware of himself returning the look...And so, when he is *being* seen by the animal, he is being seen as his surrounding are seen by him. His recognition of this is what makes the look of the animal familiar...The animals has secrets which, unlike the secrets of caves, mountains, seas, are specifically addressed to man (Noske 62).

Within this instance, man becomes aware of his own construction of nature and that it is not what he has assumed it to be. In this realization, when animals can no longer be perceived as mechanical, soul-less objects, our frequent reaction is that a new division must be drawn. We distinguish ourselves as superior to them by "the qualities generally thought to distinguish humans from animals, those which concern the human being, singly or collectivity, in its capacity of thinking, planning, (inter)acting and speaking Subject" (Noske 126). By denying animals these cognitive abilities, we deny them their own animalness, their species-specific way of being. We convince ourselves that if they are interchangeable and cultureless, then our alterations upon them are irreverent. We falsely reassure ourselves that nothing has been wronged.

Noske combats this erroneous belief with numerous cases where animals have been "discovered" to possess the abilities we previously denied of them. For instance, various studies have shown that animals possess their own way of communication. In one case, vervet monkeys were found to use different calls to warn of specific predators like eagles, leopards or pythons. The monkeys would react to the call even when no predator was insight, looking up at the sound of an eagle warning and down at the surrounding ground upon the call of a python (Noske 133). Other instances of animals communicating with each other includes; wolves, bees and members of the Cetacean family, such as dolphins and whales. Apes, who prefer to "speak" with gestures rather than words, have been successfully taught ASL, American Sign Language, demonstrating a great deal about their leaning capabilities and ability to comprehend the human concept of words. Different studies have held evidence that monkeys and apes even recognize some instances of syntax and hold a connection between words and their real or abstract meanings. These animals have additionally been observed manipulating the language of ASL to create new words and even telling the occasional behavioral lie or joke (Noske 142). In another study, even pigeons were found to have the ability to recall abstract concepts, identifying not just trees in photographs, but fish, an image unfamiliar to them as well (Noske 145). Lastly, a variety of animals have been found to use tools, including polar bears, vultures, sea otters, and elephants. Some creatures, like chimps, not only use tools but construct them, exhibiting an innovation that humans frequently forget they have (Noske 152). In all of these cases, animals have clearly exhibited that they are not mechanical but cognitive and feeling creatures, each unique in their own being. These "discoveries" do not just blur the binary between them and ourselves but remind humans of the blind-spots in our understanding of their behavior.

In conclusion to Scarce's portrayal of engineered fish(sticks) and Noske's awakening evidence on the consciousness of animals, it becomes evident that humans have overlooked the salmonisity of salmon in favor of our own self-interested and product-driven meanings. Taking into consideration the proof that Noske provides of animal's cognitive abilities as well as the disappearance of salmonisity in hatchery and wild salmon, it becomes necessary to adopt a moral responsibility for our actions towards the other equally self-aware animals we affect. This requires science to utilize a perspective of inter-subjectivity, the ability to perceive differences but not devalue them, in the processes of learning to make more ethical decisions. As Noske points out, this mentality is frequently applied on a human to human basis in the discipline of anthropology, where a participant-observer "does not just work with her mind as if observing humans in a laboratory setting" but instead "immerses herself body,

mind and soul in the Other's sphere, sharing her people's daily life, learning their language as well as their habits and views" (Noske 169). I do not mean to suggest that salmon biologists should throw themselves overboard in order to obtain of this mentality; but that science as a whole, in order to operate with an improved sense of morality, must come to gain a sense of empathy for the creatures we study, giving them the space to be their own "tribe". In action this requires that salmon hatcheries not be allowed to continue diluting the wild salmon populations with their own concoction of engineered fish. While in addition, salmon biologists must overcome their previous sense of interchangeability in order to more fully study and appreciate salmon as they are in the wild, rather than how they react in laboratory, controlled settings.

This inter-subjective approach accompanied by the realization that there are blank spaces within our understanding of animals that we have, as of yet, been unable to fill, reminds us that "science is not Nature, nor even a reflection of it" (Scarce 198). In recognizing these voids in our comprehension of animals, it becomes easier to see how the balance between control/power and self-determination/freedom present among animals and ourselves, must be reevaluated, to lessen our self-interested interference in favor of granting salmon more self-determination in their existence. This should be the objective of salmon biologists, as it would an anthropologist, to act as a representative of the animals they study in response to the surrounding governments and corporations, who will always principally be concerned for their own welfare. Currently, this most directly entails salmon biologists to take action against the dwindling numbers of wild salmon by, rather than artificially "replenishing them", demanding limitations upon the amount of fish caught by both commercial and recreational fishers in order to allow populations to come back naturally. Understandably, what I am suggesting will have an impact upon the traditional manner in which scientific endeavors are funded, but I believe the payout will bring both moral and scientifically insightful rewards. By seeking financial support from alternative institutions, salmon biologist will be able to approach their species on a more complete, inter-subjective level while moreover owning the possibility to study whichever aspects they feel most essential in their animal, free from the demand of producing pre-funded results. In these ways it is my argument that in gathering a moral standard and greater respect towards the salmonisity and consciousness of salmon, we can achieve an inter-subjective perspective towards this species, as well as others, granting us a more complete picture of the animals we share earth with.

Jannelle Andrade

Meditation of the River, Light, and Climb

Close your eyes, sit in a comfortable position and free your mind of outside thoughts. Begin by breathing in and breathing out slowly. Focus on your breaths. Become aware of the air entering and leaving your body slowly. Now listen to the following meditation and picture these images while maintaining your steady breathing....

Picture a wide, open space with nothing around you. Slowly, there begins to appear a landscape of beautiful green meadows with the sun high above shining brightly. Imagine now that there is a flowing river beside you. The water appears immaculate, absolutely clean. It shines brilliantly, catching the light of the sun above it. It reflects the golden rays of the sun perfectly, so much so that the river appears to be golden in hue. You begin to follow this golden river down a smooth path until you come across a rough and rugged terrain. The road along the river becomes increasingly more difficult and you begin to struggle, but still you keep following this golden river. As you follow the river, you hear faint music that seems to resound from the water of the river. The music becomes increasingly louder as the road becomes more challenging. You find that the river comes to an end and empties into a black lake. You reach the dark lake and the music stops completely. The land surrounding this lake is barren and dead. There are no lush, green fields, no flowers or trees, no animals- just a dying world. The sky appears dark and the sun has disappeared leaving you engulfed almost completely in darkness, except for the faint light of the moon. You can still see the river slightly, so you sit next to the lake and begin to focus on the dark water. You find that you cannot see your own reflection in the water as you did in the clear river that feeds it. There is a whirlpool in the middle of this lake,

swirling around rapidly. Suddenly, the sun breaks through again fighting the moon for the sky...the sun warms the air. You begin to feel warmth emanating from the sun above you and as the sun warms your body, you hear the music start up again, getting louder and louder. You look in the lake once again and see the darkness start to fade into clear and crystal-like water like the river water until the whole lake becomes just as clear and sparkling. The whirlpool in the middle of the lake vanishes and the lake grows calm. You stand up to find that everything around you has become green and lush. The ground is green with tall grass, many beautiful trees and various kinds of flowers appear. Now you begin to form words to go with the music and you realize that your eyesight has become sharper; all your senses are heightened. You become more aware of all the minute details around you as well as the landscape as a whole. Everything looks so much more beautiful than before....

....Imagine that you have just awakened from a deep sleep and you are not yet fully awake. Your eyes burn from the light around you, but after a while your eyes adjust to the light in front of you. It is all hazy and you are uncertain of what you see. At first you think that what you see is a huge mass of fire, but as your vision begins to focus, you find that what you are looking at is actually rows and rows of large towering candles lit up magnificently. The rows of candles are endless, expanding for miles in every direction. You walk among the rows, taking in the warmth from their flames. Some candles are taller than others, some are close to burning completely out. You come across a candle that looks different from the rest. This candle seems to not need a wick for the flame to burn above it. The flame of this candle is suspended in mid air and it remains perfectly still and doesn't flicker like the other flames. Next to this candle is another one. As you approach this candle, you are surprised to find that you can see your reflection against its side. You walk over to other candles but they do not reflect as the other one does. You go back to the candle with the ability to reflect and you study it closely. Suddenly, you hear the flapping of wings. You look up and see a flock of birds approaching various candles. The birds flap their wings vigorously and blow out the flames of the candles they are above. You look anxiously for a bird to approach your own candle but instead you see a bird approach the candle next to yours, the one with the immobile, disconnected flame. As the bird begins to flap its wings, the flame begins to waver. You call out to the bird, pleading for it to stop but the bird continues on. You run to your candle and push it slowly towards the bird, offering it up instead. The bird pauses, as if it is considering what to do. Finally, it leaves the special candle and starts to blow out the flame of your candle, until the flame vanishes. The bird flies away joining the others it came with. You are left now with a candle that no longer has light or warmth, but you notice that your own body still feels the warmth of a flame. You look down at yourself and see a brilliant glow about you. You have become your own source of light and warmth...

....Imagine that you are walking along a beach at night. You come to a cliff and look up to find that it is jagged enough to climb. You are not sure why you have this overwhelming feeling to climb, but there is something above calling out to you. You think it might be someone calling your name, coaxing you to reach the top. You begin to climb slowly because the rocks are very smooth and you are afraid of slipping. You come to the halfway point of the cliff and the wind feels wonderful around you. It feels as if it is helping to lift you up. Suddenly, you feel something grab one of your feet. It tugs on you, causing you to almost lose your balance. You cling to the rocks as hard as you can, but there is still something pulling you down. You look below you and see a seaweed-like vine wrapped around your leg. It is coming from the ocean where you can see millions of floating boats. Each one has something in it. One boat has an abundance of food, another has dozens of sparkling jewels, and another boat is filled with beautiful, lustful people calling out to you. You are entranced by these boats and allow the vine to pull you down to the beach once again. You revel in the joys of each boat during the day, but at night you still have a desire to climb the mysterious cliff and reach the top. Each night you attempt to climb this cliff, but every night you allow yourself to be pulled back down when you reach the halfway point of the cliff because you stare off into the ocean and see the boats. One night you decide to tie a cloth around your eyes and you begin to climb. This time, when the vine wraps around your leg, you begin to fight it. You cannot see anything around you and this scares you, but still you struggle with the vine. Finally, it lets go of you and you continue your climb. You reach the top of the cliff and remove the cloth from your eyes....

Analysis

My aim in writing this meditation was to show in a somewhat simple way some of the complex and

important points of Buddhism. The meditation is like a narrative that you are meant to place yourself in. It directs your thoughts specifically to certain images to show precisely what you are meant to see and experience. This is a three part meditation. Each part represents one branch of Buddhism: the Theravada, the Mahayana, and the Vajrayana.

In the first part of the meditation representing the Theravada branch, the golden river represents the path of Buddha's teachings, the Dharma. The road becomes more challenging because it represents the sacrifice a Buddhist must make to reach enlightenment at the end. It also represents the hardships and temptations along the way that make it hard to stick to the path of the Buddha. Coming to the dead wasteland with the black river represents giving in to the temptations of the material world, a world that quickly festers away. When you begin to lose the path, you lose yourself completely, that is why there is no reflection in the black lake. The whirlpool in the lake represents the cycle of samsara continuing on and so your suffering continues on. The sun breaking through represents the awakening you feel when you come to realize that the material world holds no promise of happiness. Then the waters begin to clear up and the whirlpool disappears and the world begins to "come alive". This is the point of enlightenment, when all becomes clear and perfect. This part of the meditation shows the Theravada branch in that it shows how strictly one must adhere to the rules and steps in order to reach enlightenment (Carbine lecture). There is the time in the meditation where the sky grows dark- this is because you have come to a point where you are not following a path but have reached a "dead end". Only after you reject the false glamour of the world and focus your thoughts to higher ends do you find that enlightenment is within your reach (Carbine lecture). This part of the meditation is meant to tell the reader about the stricter side of Buddhism that most people who know nothing about this religion may find surprising.

In the second part of the meditation, it shows some key points of the Mahayana branch in Buddhism where there is a great sense of sacrifice and giving. In this part of the meditation, the candles represent each person's life, or more specifically each person's potential for enlightenment. The birds that come in to blow out the flames represent the continuance of suffering because they hinder the candles from continuing to be lit. The only way a person can become enlightened is if their flame goes out on its own by just burning out. But because the birds come in to blow out the flames, those candles represent those who have lost their way and are not any closer to enlightenment. When you envision yourself giving up your flame for another's and you become your own "flame" then you have become fully enlightened through your selfless sacrifice. The Mahayana branch stresses giving and doing so for bettering your karma to reach enlightenment and also to help others be free of suffering (Carbine lecture). This is shown in this part of the meditation. The 2nd part of the meditation is meant to show a "middle", milder side of Buddhism that shows how much "heart" goes into the desire to become enlightened.

In the third part of the meditation, which portrays the Vajrayana branch of Buddhism, you are trying to reach enlightenment which is at the top of the cliff. You are always brought down by carnal pleasures and materialistic things of this world. These are represented by the boats in the ocean that are luring you in and away from climbing the cliff. Each time you attempt to climb the cliff but fail represents a new cycle of samara that you have entered into. The cloth that blindfolds you so that you will no longer be distracted by the pleasures represents your understanding that these pleasures simply do not fulfill your deepest desire, which is to reach enlightenment. That is how you are able to finally climb the cliff and reach the top. It is important to stress that the constant enjoyment of these earthly pleasures was the vehicle to reaching enlightenment because it was necessary to enjoy them and then become tired of them so that you could find the motivation to let them go and be free to reach enlightenment (Carbine lecture). This part of the meditation is meant to show how contradictions can serve a higher purpose in Buddhism. The things that are meant to draw you away from enlightenment can actually be your means of getting there.

Nicole Gonzales

The 20th Century US Citizen: the Living Dead

As technology progressed and the efforts that people had to put into certain actions lessened, humans became a creature that was portrayed as ultimate fear: the Undead. Although not Undead like a vampire, but the bumbling, simple minded Zombie. In zombie movies, the cultural fears and desires of a certain time can be illustrated either by the survivors or the zombies. The most political and prominent zombie movies of the 20th Century take place in the United States and they were created by George A. Romero. His movies were *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), *Dawn of the Dead* (1978), *Day of the Dead* (1985), *Land of the Dead* (2005), and *Diary of the Dead* (2008). Although it is not one of his movies, the *Night of the Living Dead* remake (1990) will be incorporated for a point of contrast between American culture in the late 60's and early 90's. Romero's zombie movies portray the fears of political power and the desire for change, illustrated through either the characters or the zombies. Romero's first movie, *Night of the Living Dead*, uses the characters/ survivors in the film to portray the cultural desire of civil rights by making the main character an African American male.

In the 1968 black and white flick, *Night of the Living Dead*, characters face inevitable doom when the country is overrun by flesh eating zombies. To refute the stereotypes that American culture held during that decade, Romero had an African American male be the only character to be completely composed throughout the chaos. Pinedo remarks how "*Night* features as hero the sole black character whose race is, remarkably, unremarked upon" (Pinedo 47). It was unheard of to place a black man as a main character in a film that was recorded at the time of the Civil Rights Movements. He was the only one that kept his cool throughout the whole movie, already forming enemies with the ill-composed white character, Cooper. Pinedo says, "[Dryer] points out that all the living dead, whose determination to dominate is resolutely resisted by the hero, are white" (Pinedo 57). This shows the cultural desire of white domination and the resistance to give minorities rights. The hero fights to survive the takeover of whites. Ernest points out that culture "views black Americans as zombies, ghosts, or some other stereotypically monstrous Other" (Ernest 191). At the time, blacks are fighting to break out of the discourses that have revolved around their ethnicity since their arrival to the Americas, and the best symbol of this is to fight the power that oppresses them: the whites. With the black hero killing off the white swarms, he shows how his race wants to fight off the opposition of their movement. While the 1968 version of *Night* may be illustrating the desire to change the views of blacks, the remake and 1990 version of *Night of the Living Dead* symbolizes the desire to change the stereotype of women.

In the 1968 *Night of the Living Dead*, the central theme was on racial tolerance, but in the 1990 version the female characters go through an extreme make-over. Pinedo points out that "the 1990 remake of *Night of the Living Dead* similarly casts all the living dead as white and features a black male character... but the central tension of this film revolves around gender rather than race conflict" (Pinedo 150). The fact that the desire of racial equality has been replaced by the desire to destroy gender stereotypes shows how American culture has evolved. Men are no longer the focus of attention and power. Pinedo says, "Through most of the 1968 *Night of the Living Dead*, Barbara is passive" (Pinedo 144). Romero wanted his main focus to be on the fact that the main character was black so that the audience fails to notice how majority of the female survivors were pathetic, weeping, lost causes. The best example is that of Barbara, who throughout the entire movie becomes lost in her own world and allows things to happen to her. Pinedo then finishes with, "In the 1990 version, she is remade into Barbara... who sheds her impractical pumps and skirt... and who initiates the defensive boarding of the windows" (Pinedo 145). In this modern version of *Night*, Romero removes the image of the weak, helpless female and gives his hero a female sidekick, who dominates above the males in the farmhouse. This transition shows how culture desires women to be seen as independent and strong, whereas before they were portrayed as "pathetic". Another character that Romero uses to illustrate the female uprising is in Cooper's young daughter, Karen. Aaron argues that "the still-shocking scene in which the zombiefied child, Karen, murders and then starts to devour her father before hacking her mother to death with a trowel" is the most "convincing, cinematic birthplace of the monstrous child" (Aaron 96). The fact that Karen, who represents the newer

generation of females, kills her parents, who represent traditionalist beliefs on women, leads to predicting the Sexual Revolution in 1969, where the newer generations of females were shooting down the traditional beliefs of woman frailty. While the *Night of the Living Dead* movies may represent the desire of social revolution, Romero's other zombie movies portray the fear of political power.

Romero creates the movie *Dawn of the Dead* to illustrate the fear of the government's inability to control consumerism. In the movie, the survivors take shelter in a mall, where the zombies represent American consumers in their kingdoms of consumerism, the shopping mall. Morse says, "Freeways, malls, and television are the locus of virtualization or an attenuated 'fiction effect', that is, a partial loss of touch with the here-and-now, dubbed here as 'distraction'" (Morse 99). This shows how people lose themselves to consumerism, turning themselves into mindless zombies. The cultural fear of domination of consumerism is fed by the fear of the government not being able to control consumerism. Morse adds, "Malls and freeways... induce a state of distraction: for example, the very design and intentions of the mall taken to extreme can induce what the "cosmallogist" Kowinski diagnoses as the "zombie effect" (floating for hours, a loss of a sense of time and place)" (Morse 110). This "zombie effect", which has already afflicted visitors of the malls and freeways, has now branched off into the living rooms of every American citizen. The high demand for television has lead to the increased dependence on TV which can be illustrated in the beginning of the movie when the two gentlemen who are arguing on the TV station. Lewis says, "Add to this authoritarian management, which essentially tells all employees not to do anything without being told, and you wind up with a group of zombies who can't think or take an initiative for themselves" (Lewis 94). This very easily applies to the movie *Land of the Dead*, where Romero modeled the ruling capitalists as the Bush administration. The ruling party orders the soldiers to take out the zombies that returned to playing their roles when they were alive. Allen and Bekoff say, "The most extreme form of... skepticism [of behavioral capacities] is evident in those who believe it is possible to have a zombie who behaves just like a human" (Allen 150). The zombies are portraying normal citizens that appear as zombies, as the Bush administration made the impoverished people in Middle East become a breeding ground for terrorists that resemble poor human beings. Americans blindly followed the Bush administration to their own destruction, an economic downturn that was the result of a long and fruitless Terrorist goose-chase. Swinburne points out, "The pain may be a pain which causes not the existence of a human but that a human who would otherwise be a very happy zombie becomes capable of moral choice, and desires knowledge" (Swinburne 242). The Bush administration took the pain of 9/11 and morphed it into a blind motivation that egged on Americans to use every last fund in the government's coffers to find the Terrorists that destroyed the WTCs. In the end, the country was flung into an economic recession; a fear that is represented as a government that takes its citizens down a path that leads them to their own destruction similar to what occurs in the movie; the zombies did not kill the survivors, their electric fences used for protection did. Along with fear of a government that leads itself and their citizens down a path of destruction another fear is of a government that resembles an army regime.

George A. Romero expresses the fear of government being an oligarchy and taking total control. In his 1985 movie *Day of the Dead*, the remaining survivors are a group of scientists and armed soldiers. Lewis describes how leaders "addicted to personal power talk in terms of 'I want this done.' They are concerned with achieving their objectives, and care little for the concerns of others" (Lewis 94). In the movie, as the characters begin to lose all forms of civility, the leading general disregards his orders prior to the apocalypse and takes matters into his hands. During the year 1985, Ronald Reagan is the president of the US and was participating in the Cold War, and his actions were feared to be somewhat authoritarian. Hameroff, Kaszniak, and Scott say, "But suppose the zombie, genuinely but mistakenly, believes that it is conscious" (Hameroff 173). While the surviving humans fall into a complete state of anarchy, the zombies themselves begin to show signs of composure and civility. The zombies represent how American citizens should rise against this authoritarian government, seen in how they rip and tear apart the soldiers, literally, and should not be left in the passive, submissive state that the surviving scientists are in. Therefore, it can be seen that the majority of Romero's films have a political undertone.

In conclusion, it can be seen that Romero's zombies are the fear of government power and his survivors are the desire for social revolution. In most cases, it can be seen that Romero provides a window that the zombies

create to look into the raw mental interior of the survivors, bringing out the best of them and bringing out the worst of them. At times, he wants the zombies to be pitied, and the survivors are in fact the bad guys, which illustrate how the zombies, being American citizens, are taken advantage of by the government. His first film was the only difference to his political motifs, the survivors having their true forms become revealed and illustrating the desire to change culture's view on race and gender.

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Nicole Gonzales

The Rape of Mina Harker, Victorian England's Model of Perfection

Every society constructs a model into which it demands its citizens to become the exact likeness of that model. Of course, there would always be opposition to these 'perfect models'. In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Mina Harker symbolizes ideal womanhood in Victorian England and Dracula is the opposing force that drives to destroy her image, and this can be seen through Stoker's discreet insults and mocks that he makes towards the lifestyles of the citizens of Victorian England. Dracula, viewed through the interpretation of blood as a sexual fluid, portrays Mina's repressed thoughts, desires, and vices that Victorian England sought to destroy in women. Dracula can be seen tainting Mina's purity through his nightly vamping with her by mixing their blood.

In the psychoanalytical interpretation of blood in the novel, it is viewed that when a character is asleep and Dracula is vamping that character, the character is experiencing their subconscious thoughts. When Mina was describing her being vamped, she said she was "bewildered" but "did not want to hinder [Dracula]" (Stoker 342). Freudian psychology decrees that dreams are the repressed desires and fantasies of people, and in Victorian England, citizens were set to follow very strict morals and values. Dracula is indeed the apparition of Mina's desires, and perfectly reveals that although Victorian England tried to mold its citizens into perfection, they were nowhere near perfect within their own minds. Mina is distraught that she was inclined to "such a fate" when all she wanted was to "walk in meekness and righteousness" (Stoker 343). Consciously, Mina promised to follow the idealism that was held for women, and because of this state of mind, she feels that she has destroyed herself because she has disrupted the lifestyle that was believed to be the norm. Dracula can be seen as abstract thoughts and ideas that came to be as the result of the uptight regulation of Victorian England, the physical form of the rejected naturally 'sinful' tendencies of humans. Dungan says, "Dracula may indeed be read under the scope of psychosexual intentions and certainly... the real danger whether perceived or actualized [is] of... eroticism". All of the characters in Dracula have held repressed thoughts and desires, but

the primary targets of repression have been women because they are required to remain pure throughout their lives. Mina Harker is the perfect example because in the novel she is the most revered female character and upholds strictly all Victorian morals. There it can be seen that through all these harsh rules and teachings, many natural human temptations became taboo.

Religion reigned supreme in England in the Victorian era, and thus had God's word as law. To contain purity and to remain pristine throughout, the church had many natural human desires become repressed and forbidden. When rescuing Mina from the Count's clutches, Arthur and Quincey hesitate from entering her room exclaiming that it is "unusual to break into a lady's room" (Stoker 335). Even with time running out to rescue their dearest Mrs. Harker, the men hesitate because of these hardbound lessons. Even with her life at stake, these rules still appear to have well ensnared the men's morale. When she sees the state that she is in, Mina cries that she is "unclean" and that, when it comes to Jonathan, "must touch him or kiss him no more" (Stoker 339). Mina feels that, because she has been violated by the blood of Dracula, she is filthy, tainted, and no longer Harker's pure wife. Due to the fact that Mina is the embodiment of Victorian England's model of perfection, her horrified reaction implicates the fact that she has been thrown down from her pedestal of pristine glory and feels the end of life as she had known it. Dungan states that "Dracula penetrates and in effect rapes his victims taking their life and Victorian realities, then flip[s] them causing them to give in to sexual temptation and satisfaction". In Victorian England, sexual satisfaction for women was invariably taboo and the fact that Mina, who is the image of Victorian ideals, has experienced what was believed to be forbidden provides Stoker's view on Victorian beliefs. Through the sexual interpretation, Stoker can be seen revoking Victorian morals through the actions of Dracula. Stoker is portraying the weakness of Victorian teachings and of humans to their animal instincts by how Mina gives into her lust, represented by Dracula, a vice she so sought to repress.

Repressed vices and desires are pushed away out of consciousness and as seen in the novel, Dracula releases and indulges in them. Renfield is "mad" that the Count was "taking the life out of [Mina]" when he was waiting for him (Stoker 334). Renfield had described that the Count was indulging his ultimate desires and became very jealous when he found out that the Count was attending to someone else, especially Mina Harker. This very well expresses that humans naturally tend to prefer pleasure subconsciously, and the fact that Renfield was a common lunatic, he is outraged to find that he was replaced by Mina the Pure. "The blood" on "her lips and cheeks and chin" was the outstanding proof that the prim and proper Mina Harker had been indulging in bottled up vices (Stoker 337). Provided by Mina's hysterics at her discovery, she cannot hide the fact that she has broken her own barriers of self control. In their lifetime the victims of Victorian norm are lost when they find that they have broken their very own standards and morals. Dungan argues that "Stoker uses sexuality in Dracula as a commentary on the politics and society [of Victorian England]". Stoker is obviously making Mina the portrayal of Victorian ideals and is using Dracula to destroy that image, expressing his disdain of Victorian ideals and his refusal to conform to follow these ideals. In a sense, Stoker may be expressing his desire to live as Dracula, unperturbed by sobriety. Therefore, as it may be seen that Stoker idolizes Dracula, Stoker molds Mina, the model of Victorian England, just so that he can taint her with his whims to be free from societal frameworks.

As seen in the novel *Dracula*, Mina is the model for women in England in the Victorian Era and Dracula is the suppressed temptations and sexual desires that women contain. In the psychoanalytical interpretation, these blood exchanges show the raping of the ideology for women in the Victorian Era with new ideas and beliefs. As seen through the mock details of Mina's lifestyle, Bram Stoker uses Dracula to poke fun at and to show the weakness of the model that religion had construed for women, as well as men, of the time.

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Shannon Jaime

The Darkling Chamber: The Mystery of Mind in Virginia Woolf's "A Mark on the Wall"

In her famous essay "Modern Fiction," Virginia Woolf describes life as "a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end" (2432). Such a description, striking in both its insight and poetic beauty, reveals the modernists' fascination with the mind and their desire to understand its nature through language and art. Considering the failure of Romantic idealism, however, one might assume that the majority of modernist literature would reject the notion of the inward turn. Yet as inhabitants of a post-war landscape, modernist writers argue that we articulate our artistic vision not by interacting with Nature, but by navigating the shadowy labyrinth of human psychology. Consciousness is, for Woolf and the other modernists, a name for the essential thing we seek, for the principle of higher being. It encompasses experience, memory, dreams, an awareness of self and surroundings permeated by feeling and thought. It is the source of—and often inspiration for—creative power. It is an instrument of interpretation that, due to its very subjectivity, can give us neither perfect knowledge nor faith in the stability of the external world. The fact that the term "consciousness" has so many different connotations illustrates why modernist works are infused with such a deep sense of doubt. In attempting to express the complexities of the mind, they also question the meanings of words and our ability to make sense of the incoherence that exists all around us.

A prime example of modernist exploration into consciousness is Virginia Woolf's short piece, "The Mark on the Wall." From the beginning of the story (if we use the term loosely), the first word, "perhaps," gives the impression of uncertainty, multiple possibilities, and lack of clear definition. It suggests that, regardless of the intrinsically vague nature of recollection, our mental faculties are all we have for recalling past events and reflecting on their significance or futility. Like all of Woolf's works, this internal narrative is about the circular and often unreliable way in which we think, imagine, make associations, and return again and again to the present. While the "I" sits alone in a fire-lit room, sheltered from the coldness of winter, with only flickering shadows and lifeless objects for company, her mind starts to wander—until she absently notices "a small round mark, black upon the white wall, about six or seven inches above the mantelpiece" (2425). This mark, seemingly meaningless on its own, becomes an occasion for meditation on the self, life, tradition, civilization, nature, freedom, chaos, unknowability, and even existence after death. As Woolf herself mentions, it is in our moments of idleness that we truly become aware of our thoughts and see how they veer into the banal, random, philosophical, or fantastical. Yet in spite of the stream of ideas that follows, the woman simply cannot fathom what that thing on the wall is: "But for that mark," she says, "I'm not sure about it" (2425). This brief statement of doubt represents a purely modernist dilemma. If understanding is rooted in the task of piecing together the disconnected fragments of experience, then failure to do so could potentially lead to a crisis of personal identity.

Lulled into a daze of comfortable warmth, the woman continues her reverie, wishing that she could "sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard separate facts" (2426). According to the modernists, consciousness alone connects and is connected to everything. It is represented as the summation of fluid momentary impressions, half-memories, and "almost infinite number" (2426) of reflections, all of which influence the way we perceive ourselves in relation to others. For "as we face each other in omnibuses and underground railways we are looking into the mirror; that accounts for the vagueness, the gleam of glassiness, in our eyes" (2426). Again in "Modern Fiction," Woolf describes consciousness as "a self which, in spite of its tremor of susceptibility, never embraces or creates what is outside itself and beyond" (2433), indicating that all we observe and consider affects us on a psychological level and becomes a part of our personal mental space. Truth, for modernists, does not exist objectively on its own, but is instead a product of the mind's interaction with reality. Foreshadowing postmodern multiplicity, Woolf also implies that the world, which is composed of countless fragments of meaning, is a looking glass that reflects the form of our identity (Howard 1). Additionally, she expresses the idea that fiction, or any type of worthwhile literature, is the tablet on which the language of the conscious and subconscious mind may be written.

Although she is very much interested in words and their relationship to objects and the psyche, Woolf, like

any true modernist, has some serious misgivings about humans' limited capacity to interpret reality. After another series of musings, the woman in "The Mark on the Wall" returns again to her contemplation of the unidentifiable mark; she still, however, cannot figure out what it is, and this leads to an increasing sense of desperation: "No, no, nothing is proved, nothing is known...And what is knowledge?" (2428). As she thinks more and more about the past, the woman begins to feel oppressed by the burden of history and literary tradition, which, like that mark, can never be washed away or ignored. The mark, a superficially tangible thing, impacts the woman on an abstract level, revealing that it is her state of mind, and not the mark itself, that changes. Nevertheless, she latches on to the mark in order to distract herself from her thoughts, like one who, "waking from a midnight dream of horror...hastily turns on the light and lies quiescent, worshipping the chest of drawers, worshipping solidity, worshipping reality, worshipping the impersonal world which is proof of some existence other than ours" (2429).

Based on this train of thought, the implications of total subjectivity are indeed disturbing. If we become too immersed in our consciousness, where can we go if we wish to escape ourselves? Near the conclusion of the narrative, this woman's inner-conflict comes to express an acutely modernist loss of connection to the external world. When no lightning flashes of significance illuminate the dark chamber of her mind, her thoughts become more and more confused, and all semblance of order swiftly disappears:

Where was I? What has it all been about? A tree? A river? The Downs? Whitaker's Almanack? The fields of asphodel? I can't remember a thing. Everything's moving, falling, slipping, vanishing... (2429)

But just as the woman lingers on the brink of chaos, another voice brings her back to the present. In the end, it is something as ordinary as the mention of a newspaper—a chronicle of common, everyday events occurring in the outside world—that restores the woman to her current existing self.

When we do at last discover what the mark is— "Ah, the mark on the wall! It was a snail" (2429)—it seems an almost anti-climatic, if somewhat strange and unexpected, realization. The answer is so simple that we wonder why it ever mattered in the first place. Yet we see that "snail," as a word in the English language, has symbolic significance. A snail can refer to the actual creature, or to a slow-moving or sluggish person. It can signify death and rebirth, as it seals itself in its shell during the winter—like the woman in the story—and re-emerges in spring. The shape of a snail's shell is associated with spirals, whirlwinds, labyrinths, winding paths—all meanings that apply to consciousness as it is represented in the narrative. By looking at language in this light, we realize that the title of Woolf's work also carries with it a number of figurative associations. A mark is a symbol used in writing or printing; a token, sign, or indication; a distinctive or defining characteristic; and, perhaps most importantly, a visible impression or trace, either deliberately or accidentally made, that distinguishes a small area from the space around it. A wall is a boundary, a barrier, something that defines the limits of a space or object and prevents total comprehension. The mark on the wall may also be a symbol of humanity, or consciousness, surrounded by emptiness and incomprehensibility. Or maybe the mark is just a mark, the snail is just a snail, and things really are what they are. From a modernist perspective, the mark is both nothing and everything; it gains value only when we acknowledge and ascribe meaning to its existence. Ultimately, whether or not we fail to determine the essential nature of things, artistic interpretation is both the act and the purpose of the conscious mind.

In the first section of the introduction to his work, Yeats claims that "the world knows nothing because it has made nothing, we know everything because we have made everything" (2418). Woolf, in "The Mark on the Wall" and her other major works, agrees that humans create meaning through perception and language. The major problem with subjective meanings, however, is that they are inherently fluid and changeable. Modernist writers acknowledge the difficulties in integrating the scattered pieces of myth, memory, dreams, feeling, thought, language, and experience into a coherent whole, which is why they express such doubt toward the attainability of objective knowledge. While they do consider the mind, like art, to be something that reflects itself, modernists also realize that dwelling in a state of complete subjectivity can ironically lead to chaos and insanity. Yet as Virginia Woolf suggests, life is a brilliant ring of light in the midst of existential darkness. If boundaries that seem solid do allow some insight to pass through into our minds, our goal as human beings is to become more aware of our world, to open the door into our consciousness as a means of discovering some truth about our private and our public selves.

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Kate Normand

From "Separate but Equal" To Equal: The Treatment of African American WWII Veterans Upon Their Return, and The Effects on Their Masculinity

The case of Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896 established the policy of "separate but equal" in American race relations. By the 1940's and the beginning of WWII, the policy was still in effect in all aspects of public doctrine, including the military. The invisible heroes of the war, African American soldiers, were enlisted into a restricted form of service which yielded limited benefits after the term. These men, fighting for a country that had forgotten them, had varying expectations of their postwar treatment, though many believed they would emerge from the frontlines to a more successful life or more equal treatment. Regardless of their reasoning, they were let down, stuck in the quagmire that was "separate but equal." As a result of the limited resources and benefits granted to African-American GIs, it was difficult for many men to have faith in their masculinity. If they did not receive the benefits they needed to go to college and get a decent job, how could they provide for their families? How could a black man feel confident in his manhood when the country he fought for abandoned him, and failed to recognize his heroism? Thus, black masculinity became largely invisible for many of the following decades.

As it was in the beginning so it would be in the end; Black men drafted into military service were drafted into an environment similar to the environment they would enter upon their release. The quota system of drafting enlisted black men into segregated units. Many of the men enlisted believed they would be able to choose the branch of the military to serve in. On the contrary, most black men found themselves in the army. Even in other branches, there were a limited number of jobs reserved for black men.[1] In Maggi M. Morehouse's book Fighting in the Jim Crow Army, an African American soldier states:

In the navy you could only be a mess man, and I didn't want that. There were very limited opportunities in the air corps. You didn't really have a choice—you thought you did, but you really didn't. They assigned you where they wanted you to go. It wasn't like now, where you go in and pick a branch of the service you want to enter. Then, they mostly assigned blacks to the army, so that's where you went.[2]

In most branches of the service, black men were placed into segregated units and were allotted a small number of jobs. The masculinity of black men was already being broken down. African American GIs had no control over where they would be sent or what their job would be. They were placed in that position due to their race, and would remain there after the war, without a solid foothold in their ideas of black masculinity.

The Selective Service Act of 1940 stated that soldiers, white or black, could be drafted into the army wherever the army had need of them.[3] However, army units remained segregated, and discrimination was evident with the allocation of jobs to black GIs. In his book The Warrior Image, Andrew J. Huebner explains, "Most blacks in the military worked in service roles, carting around supplies, cooking food, and in general doing the dirty work required to equip millions of soldiers far from home."[4] Thus, another piece of black masculinity was taken from these men. Instead of serving their country in honor, many men "served the service."[5] Service jobs are often seen as demasculinizing, and the fact that most African American soldiers in the military were given service jobs, is proof that their masculinity was invisible and failed to be acknowledged.

The segregation and discrimination of the military was also seen in the number of black officers and the soldiers under their command. The racial tension was evident in the small amount of African American officers in the service. Not only were there few, they were generally in the army, and they were only in charge of fellow black soldiers. According to the army's 1940 Plan for Mobilization, "black officers were to command only black troops. No black officer could command a white enlisted man, and no black officer could hold a position higher than any of the white officers in the unit."[6] This structure caused racial tension and strengthened the idea of "separate but equal." In effect, it also affected the view of black masculinity by instilling within the men that black men possessed a lesser form of masculinity and loyalty, and as such must be separated from the superior white men.

Because black men served their country in service roles and in segregated units, some white Americans questioned them and their loyalty. In a particular incident, Senator James Eastland of Mississippi stated, "the conduct of the Negro soldier in Normandy, as well as all over Europe, was disgraceful, and that Negro soldiers have disgraced the flag of their country."[7] This disdain for the service of black soldiers showed that their service was not recognized as true service because they were not often in combat. Most black soldiers joined so that they could fight for their country, but because of the quota system and the sad state of race relations during WWII, they were not often able to do so. This disdain may be the reasoning behind the lack of benefits slated to black GIs after the war.

Not only did black veterans lack benefits upon their return to the states, often it took many extra months for them to even return home. There were various reasons for this, namely the fact that no bases wanted to house African American soldiers after the war while they became readjusted.[8] Furthermore, the U.S. government created boundary zones in a policy they called "Redistribution." This policy, which Morehouse calls, "perhaps the most demoralizing aspect of the deactivation program," defined areas in America where soldiers could deactivate or rest before going overseas.[9]

There were many other instances of discrimination in the daily lives of African American veterans. Huebner discusses a number of violent cases of such discrimination in his book, such as the story of Isaac Woodward:

On the day of his honorable discharge from Camp Gordon, Georgia, Isaac Woodward took a bus to South Carolina, only to be arrested, beaten senseless, and blinded after an altercation with the driver. The police chief of Batesburg, South Carolina admitted to crunching Woodward's eyes out as he lay on the ground, but was later acquitted of the crime.[10]

With so many cases of violence occurring against black veterans, it is obvious that the hopes of these men for equality back at home were ultimately dashed. They should have come home with pride to a country that would applaud their sacrifices, and they should have come home to a country in which they could feel secure as men and as human beings. On the contrary, they were constant targets of hate and violence, and thus could not protect themselves and their manhood, or their families from the contempt of the country that would not protect them.

African Americans had many reasons to enlist into military service—whether it was the desire to climb the business ladder after the war, or the hope to emerge into a more racially accepting environment, these men were let down. Few benefits were granted to black GIs, though many men were able to take advantage of their benefits immediately. However, the benefits given to black soldiers were extremely limited and sadly reduced compared to those allotted to white soldiers. Most WWII veterans in general wanted to take advantage of their educational benefits, which proved difficult for black veterans. In Christopher Paul Moore's book, Fighting for America, he explains:

The few black colleges were flooded with applicants, and most other colleges accepted whites only. Job-training programs were segregated in the south and under white supervision. Black veterans were one-third of the WWII veterans in the South but got one twelfth of the job training slots. Home buying was skewed against black veterans too. Many black veterans bought new homes with the help of a Veteran's Administration mortgage, but they were limited as to where they could buy homes.[11]

As Manifest Destiny was to the white man a century earlier, owning a home was to black veterans coming home from the war. The American Dream, which had so long been reserved for white middle class Americans, seemed in reach with the money given to black veterans to buy homes. Unfortunately, there were restrictions on that as well. Much stake was placed in independence and freedom in America, especially for black Americans

who went without it for so long. For an African American man, it is important to have self-determination. A true black man has a job owns property and builds a family. Without the freedom to go to school and get a good job to buy a property somewhere and raise a family, what does a black man have to be secure in his masculinity?

After their release from the war, many African American veterans wanted to use their government stipends for schooling. As previously stated, it was often difficult for black men to get into and stay in college following the war. Morehouse's book showcases firsthand accounts of the educational struggle of the black WWII veteran. One man, Fred Watt, "found that he could not go to college and support a family, even 'with Uncle Sam's help,' so he gave up furthering his education."[12] Another, Jim Williams, "studied music for two years, and then, he said, he 'became an addict—I was addicted to eating at least one hot meal a day. So I had to go to work.'"[13] Thus, black men who already had families but wanted to make more money in a more rewarding career, as well as those men who aspired to more than a military career, had to abandon their hopes in order to support themselves and their families. Moore cites Langston Hughes' poem *Harlem* to describe the plight of black veterans:

> What happens to a dream deferred?
> Does it dry up
> like a raisin in the sun?
> Or fester like a sore—
> and then run?
> Does it stink like rotten meat?
> Or crust and sugar over
> like a syrupy sweet?
> Maybe it just sags
> like a heavy load.
> Or does it explode?[14]

The poem, published in 1951, can be related to the deferred dreams of black veterans, particularly those who wanted to pursue a college education but were disappointed when they discovered that the meager benefits given to them were not adequate for education and survival. This disappointment was no doubt devastating to the black veteran's idea of his own manhood, since he was made to defer his dreams to take care of his family and himself, and part of being a real American man is having a claim in the American Dream.

The lack of educational and housing benefits struck quite a blow to black veteran's faith in their manhood. It would be difficult for any man of any race to feel secure in his manhood when the country he sacrificed so much to protect does not feel the need to protect his rights as a citizen. To combat these iniquities, the NAACP arrived to make the American people aware of the problems with the country's race relations. They wanted to raise awareness of the benefits of an educated black society to show that black veterans discharged from the military deserved equal benefits as white veterans.[15] It has often been said that Americans are fond of their lawsuits, and that is exactly the course of action the NAACP took. Another veteran cited throughout Morehouse's book, Alex Pitcher, joined the NAACP shortly after his release from the service, and he explains that the NAACP did not just talk to veterans; they implemented the GI Bill of Rights in their arguments, which would allow many black veterans to be able to attend graduate schools. However, most graduate schools of various disciplines discriminated against blacks. To combat this, the NAACP started filing antidiscrimination lawsuits against graduate schools.[16] If the NAACP could inspire the American government to change policy, their effort could not only change the educational benefits of black veterans, it could also subsequently change the availability of jobs for black veterans, significantly increasing their quality of life and faith in themselves and their masculinity. Similarly, the actions of the NAACP helped incite passion into the hearts of black veterans so that they could fight for their own rights individually. After their return from the frontlines, many veterans, "felt they had earned their citizenship," they wanted to implement their, "newfound 'Americanism' by demanding all the rights and privileges of full citizenship."[17] These men, as Morehouse explains, "were not content to live within the constraints of a segregated society," and so, joining their brothers in arms once again, this time those in the NAACP, they stood up for their rights, joined as soldiers, and as men, and as African Americans.[18]

African American men were some of the first Americans to enlist in the military at the start of WWII. Instead of being applauded for their service, many black men were given subservient jobs instead of field work—"honorable" work. That is not to say that black men were not in combat positions or honorable ranks. In fact, thousands of black men fought for their country, albeit in vain. When they returned from the battlefields,

instead of being met with parades and confetti, many black veterans were greeted by hatred and violence as well as disdain and apathy. On top of that, African American soldiers returning from WWII were victims of severely diminished benefits and very little aid from the US government. As a result of these diminished benefits and the discrimination against black veterans, many men could not afford to support themselves and go to college or enter job-training programs. Subsequently, it was difficult for black veterans to feel secure in their manhood, because they often were forced to give up their aspirations and their claim to the American Dream in order to survive. Eventually, the NAACP stepped in to fight for the rights of black veterans, specifically in education. Thus, the black veteran was inspired to fight against the inequalities thrust upon him by his country—the country he had fought to protect. The reduced rights of black veterans caused a change in race relations in American government policy. Now, each soldier who fights or has fought for the American nation has an equal right to the benefits slated for veterans following war. In the decades following the postwar era, many changes occurred within the American infrastructure which drastically changed the rights of African Americans as citizens. Because of the heroism and support of black soldiers in WWII, America and the free world were able to emerge victorious. Similarly, because of the heroism and support of the NAACP and the warriors of the American Civil Rights movement, black manhood has emerged a powerful force—one that is now visible, fighting the good fight at home and abroad, and setting examples of courage, strength and wisdom for all to admire and emulate.

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Catherine King

Jane and the Broken Narratives

Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* has many striking elements, including unlikely coincidence, harrowing adversity, and hints of the supernatural. These connect the novel to the tradition of fairy tales commonly told in England and on the European Continent. However, Jane's life does not follow an easily predictable path, and neither does the plot. When a plotline that threatens to turn into a cliché turns up, it is only allowed to germinate so far before it suddenly and dramatically changes. Four separate aspects of the novel – Jane's relationship with the Reeds, her relationship with her uncle, John Eyre, her relationship with Mr. Rochester, and her time with the Rivers – interrupt and support each other, building off of the three fairy tales of *Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast,* and *Cap O' Rushes,* along with the traditional myth of the changeling. *Jane Eyre* contains all these themes, and variations on all these stories, but Brontë does not execute them as simply as they appear. In the end, although the novel ends happily, none of the stories have taken the expected path to reach that goal. They rely on each other for their full and complete execution. Brontë weaves the various fairy tales and myths together in conflicting but ultimately complementary threads.

The fairy tale elements of Jane's life begin at the start, when Brontë draws parallels between Jane and a changeling – a fairy that has been substituted for a human baby, but which cannot blend in with humans. Her aunt, Sarah Reed, will not admit Jane to any of the pleasures that the Reed children enjoy until Jane acts "more natural," because Jane is very unlike what Reed thinks a child *should* be (*Eyre* 9). Even as an infant, Aunt Reed says, Jane would "not [scream] heartily like any other child, but [whimper] and [moan]" (267). In folklore of the British Isles, a child who did not develop normally, or was deformed or sickly, was dubbed a changeling, a baby from the Fair Folk. Perhaps "a fairy come from Elf-land," as Mr. Rochester likes to idealize Jane later on, had switched the troublesome child with the real, human baby (309). Though some stories offer a way to retrieve the stolen child, most of the time a changeling would only weaken and die. Sarah Reed tries to doom Jane thus when she writes to Jane's uncle saying that "Jane Eyre was dead: she had died of typhus fever at Lowood" (275). The reader by this point sees Jane as a person. However, to Aunt Reed, Jane remains a monster who should not be allowed happiness. To accept that would mean to accept that Jane was *not* a vengeful sprite who vanished easily when she was sent to Lowood – "I wish she had died!" Sarah Reed spits – but a real person with real needs. Reed hated Jane and resented her, and so made her into something less than human. This inverts the traditional changeling fantasy because Brontë tells it from the point of view of the 'changeling' herself, who is a victim of an unsympathetic and resentful guardian.

Additionally, Brontë wrote from the point of view of a governess, a member of society who also was viewed as an anomaly, someone ultimately expendable – a changeling in terms of class. The Honorable Miss Blanche Ingram declares governesses, as a species, to be "incubi", or sexual demons (205). Like the changeling child Jane, the governess Jane has to hide away from the grand, rich company, "behind the window-curtain," and spoken of as "one of the anathemised race." However, Brontë reminds us that, though "men are hard-hearted... God is a friend to the poor orphan child" and the unwanted governess – despite being "poor, obscure, plain, and little," Jane is dear in God's sight (27, 293). In order to prove that both dependent children and seemingly dismissible governesses merit warmth and respect, Brontë casts Jane as the outsider and 'other' in a traditional changeling narrative.

The changeling disrupts the order of the household into which it enters by absorbing the love and energy that should go to a human child. To love a changeling is folly, and so for Jane's Uncle Reed to love her is only another reason for Sarah Reed to hate Jane. According to Sarah Reed, referring to the infant Jane as 'it,' "he used to nurse it and notice it as if it had been his own," and Mrs. Reed can only perceive this as a weakness for a weak child (267). His affection for his niece only helped to fuel the jealous ire that Mrs. Reed bore towards Jane, making her even more miserable in the long term. Even the idea of him distresses Jane more than it calms her: during her terrifying stay in the red room, Jane fears that "Mr. Reed's spirit, harassed by the wrongs of his sister's child" might come, "revisiting the earth [...] consolatory in theory, [but] terrible if realized" (20). By both provoking Mrs. Reed's anger towards Jane,

and by terrifying Jane in the red room, her literal godfather only enhances Jane's misery without meaning to. However, Jane does have a fairy godfather who improves her life, even if it looks like a curse: John Eyre of Madeira, Jane's paternal uncle, has an important sway on the plot despite never actually appearing on-page. He helps to account for many of the more improbable coincidences of the story – such as the dramatic reveal of an impediment to Jane and Rochester's first marriage, and the windfall of an inheritance. John Eyre of Madeira is nothing less than the fairy godmother – or godfather – to Jane's Cinderella. However, through the machinations of Aunt Reed, John Eyre's boon to Jane is not revealed until years later. John Eyre also acts as Jane's fairy godfather in a much more direct way. Briggs the solicitor reveals that it was Mr. Eyre who told Mr. Mason about "the contemplated union between [Jane] and Mr. Rochester" and when the truth of Mr. Rochester's prior marriage was revealed, "he implored Mr. Mason to lose no time in taking steps to prevent the false marriage" (339, 340). He protects her honor, reputation, and her integrity, so even though her heart breaks to leave Rochester, Jane herself knows that the news was for the greater good – that she "was right when [she] adhered to principle and law [...] God directed [her] to a correct choice" (414). This action also sends Jane directly on the path to her (hitherto unknown) cousin's house, where she not only discovers kindred spirits in the form of St. John, Diana, and Mary Rivers, but her uncle "[leaves] her all his property," leaving her rich and independent (440). Neither the boon of independence, nor the blessing of family, would have been possible had it not been for the broken wedding with Mr. Rochester, nor for her uncle, who acted behind the scenes as a fairy godfather.

Similarly to how the subverted fairy godfathers – bringing blessings out of pain and anxiety out of good intention – alters and redirects what would be a simple *Cinderella* plot, the presence of Mr. Rochester and his wife as a two-faced Beast interrupts and diverts what would be the clearest fairy tale in the narrative of the story: *Beauty and the Beast.* The first clear diversion from the formula is in the apparent nature of the Beast himself. The Beast is supposed to be ugly, dull, but good-natured; Mr. Rochester readily admits himself ugly, witty, and condescending to everyone around him. He concedes this, and laments it to a certain degree: "Nature meant me to be, on the whole, a good man... one of the better kind, and you see I am not so" (159). This statement also indicates an initial transformation that took place in the past, when he was "thrust onto a wrong tack at the age of one-and-twenty, and [has] never recovered the right course since" (158). Brontë thus indicates that Rochester is a good man at heart who yearns for redemption, even when he is not willing to seek it. Jane's status as an intelligent, destitute girl, her departure and delayed return, her anguished confession, and acceptance, all fall into place according to tradition. It seems like they are all set for their happily-ever-after – until Jane's unwanted fairy godfather intervenes. This forces Mr. Rochester to reveal the true Beast of Thornfield Hall – his powerful, animal-like, lunatic wife. She is ugly, ("the fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments!"), but, far from dull, she is "cunning as a witch," and malicious (327, 492). The most horrible truth of this revelation is the fact that there is no lasting good that Mr. Rochester can offer Jane. Although he has a good heart underneath his crusty exterior, he still cannot honor Jane as his wife. Brontë, despite her mercy shown to the 'changeling' Jane, does not give an easy solution to the bind between Mr. Rochester, who is a beast in his pride and stubbornness, and Bertha Mason, who is a beast by her insanity. Jane holds Rochester responsible, even to a wife who is a danger to him and reminds him, "you are inexorable... she cannot help being mad" (347). Jane cannot force him to change his ways, but by abandoning him a second time, she can and does force him to live with himself and his own past. *Now* the formula begins to work again – for Jane later has a vision of Mr. Rochester crying out to her in anguish. She returns to him, finds him entirely humbled, and accepts him as a husband. Though he has not lost the sharp tongue that she learned to love, he is no longer a godless wanderer, sick with pride. Rather, he is an atoning man who has paid the price for his sins, asking God, "give me strength to lead henceforth a purer life than I have hitherto!" (516). He and Jane wed each other as equals – not only socially, but morally, with a felicity which they base in virtue, like that of the Beauty and her Prince.

While Jane exiles herself from Mr. Rochester, she acts out another fairy tale, a lesser-known variant on *Cinderella*: *Cap O' Rushes* (from the *Best-Loved Stories Told at the National Storytelling Festival*). This story tells of a girl who, after being driven out from her home by her father, makes a suit for herself out of rushes. Through use of disguise and three masked balls, in the end she reconciles herself to her father. Her marriage to

a rich young man is a nice bonus, but only secondary to being returned to the father she loves so well. The important distinction of *Cap O'Rushes* is that her notion of 'home' never changes from her father's house, whereas Cinderella loses her home – her center of love and identity – with the death of her mother and gains a new home with her new husband. Jane's first true home is with Mr. Rochester, but she abandons him of her own free will. Over the months of her banishment, Jane cannot forget her master – she finds herself "weeping [...] for the doom which had wrest [her] from adhesion to [her] master" (415). However, as Brontë altered the paths of *Cinderella*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and the changeling narrative, she cannot leave the story of *Cap O'Rushes* as is. Even though the story ends with Jane's return to Rochester, she discovers, thanks to her fairy godfather, her own people – with whom she shares a "perfect congeniality of tastes, sentiments, and principles" (402). This reversal of young Jane the changeling – someone wanted, someone who belongs – is no less important than her exile and return to her master. Jane's definition of 'home' is not relocated nor completely altered, but it is expanded. Before, Jane affirmed, "wherever [Mr. Rochester is] is my home – my only home," only natural, as he was the first person who not only treated her as an equal, but who was an intellectual and emotional match for her (283). Now, home is also Moor House, a fact that is more than evident in the utter delight that Jane takes in preparing the home for the return of her cousins: upon becoming rich and independent, she says that her purpose is "to have all things in an absolutely perfect state of readiness for Diana and Mary [...] to give them a beau-ideal of a welcome when they come" (451). Domestic freedom and control is a new activity for Jane (as opposed to being an extra hand when Mr. Rochester's vast party came to town), and it is a new way for her to express her affection and gratitude towards the cousins who have done so much for her. And when she does return to Mr. Rochester, she does not forget Diana and Mary. On the contrary, they visit each other yearly. Before, Jane was unhealthily obsessed with Mr. Rochester, because he was all that she had to love – she "could not, in those days, see God for his creature, of whom [she] had made an idol" (316). Now, however, she has kinswomen who are her own true friends besides – she loves Mr. Rochester and chooses to live her entire life with him, but she is not alone in the world but for him. In this case, Brontë corrects the story of *Cap O'Rushes* by amending the heroine's single-minded paternal affection, which she has translated as matrimonial love that is enriched through maternal, sisterly, and religious love. Jane still places 'home' with Mr. Rochester, but she no longer depends on him for 'home' as she once did.

Jane's story, if taken as a fairy tale, is unconventional, difficult, but ultimately more rewarding for these difficulties. Unlike a typical changeling, she did not simply vanish because she was not wanted. She did not have everything laid out easily for her by her silent uncles, but had to fight for herself from the start. She did not vanquish Mr. Rochester's wife by merely saying, "I love you," but had to accept Bertha's gruesome existence and act accordingly. She had to truly break away from Mr. Rochester in order to be sure that she loved him, and she did not remain fixated on him to the exclusion of all else, but opened her heart to other forms of love as well. If Brontë had played any of these stories straight, exactly as they appear, they would not have as much power as they do woven together. The *Beauty and the Beast* narrative is broken because *Cinderella's* fairy godfather intrudes on the plot. *Cap O'Rushes* goes from and returns to the Beast's castle, but on the way wins for herself family and independence. These plots not only highlight Jane's isolation from the Reeds, but they also highlight the divine providence that guides her Uncle Eyre to stop her wedding, which allows her to truly transform the Beast into a real, flesh-and-blood human. And, of course, Jane's reversal of fortune by the end – from an unwanted dependent to a mother, a wife, a treasured member of a family – signifies that she has, indeed, earned her happy ending – a prize beyond any pot of gold that a rainbow could offer.

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Melissa Samarin

The Ultimate Art

In the midst of the world-wide wars, political revolutions, and social changes of the early 1900s, several new artistic movements emerged. These avant-garde groups each began with a small gathering of like-minded, forward-thinking artists who developed new, radical ideologies that they then manifested in their artwork, literature, and performances. Yet, while each avant-garde movement distinctively established itself upon certain principles, they all arose for one recurring, particular reason: to redefine what art is and should be. However, while the Dadaists, Symbolists, Futurists, and Surrealists all proposed ideals about art, they ultimately used art as a form, particularly theater, as a medium to promote their philosophies. Kandinsky did this as well during the movement Der Blaue Reiter, but he is unique, because his ideology investigates the nature of pure art itself. Kandinsky's play *The Yellow Sound* is distinctive from all other avant-garde plays because he pushed theater in an entirely new direction by exploiting its *artistic* elements of light, music, dance, and color to create what I believe to be *the* ultimate work of art and *the* ultimate artistic experience.

There are two elements to an artistic experience that make it a truly exceptional sensation: the removal of the mind from logic and the stimulation of the senses. An 'artistic experience' occurs when a person feels fully enthralled in an artistic composition to the point that his/her mind in essence becomes removed from reality. This experience is exactly what Kandinsky coins the "activity of the soul" or "vibrations" (Kandinsky, On Stage Composition). The soul and the mind, to him, are two separate entities, and one of the major problems he grapples with in this dichotomy is that "the human being seeks to find a material form for the new value which lives in him in spiritual form" (Kandinsky, On the Problem of Form). There are two worlds that exist in his theory: the "soulless-material" and the "psychic-spiritual" (Kandinsky, On the Problem of Form). While our minds operate in the "material" world, our souls, as well as art, exist in the "spiritual" world. When reason and the conscious mind are overridden then, a person is momentarily released from "material" reality and his/her soul can begin to fully function, or "vibrate", which includes enjoying an aesthetic work of art, for instance. This idea of an 'artistic experience' is a concept never developed in art previous to Kandinsky, which is one of the reasons his work is so uniquely progressive.

Kandinsky believed the way to access the "spiritual" world beyond reason was through the senses. Senses are human qualities devoid of conscious control and result in a person 'feeling something'. The soul, not the mind, is what facilitates feeling in a human, which consequently connects it to the senses. By stimulating the senses then, a person will feel what Kandinsky called the "inner resonance" (Kandinsky, On the Problem of Form), or in others words an 'artistic experience'. For this very reason, he was particularly interested in synesthesia, the mixing of senses. Synesthesia was not a new concept at the time, for Charles Baudelaire's "Correspondences" is the springboard that inspired Kandinsky, as well as other avant-garde artists, to investigate the phenomenon. The poem describes synesthesia as, "All scents and sounds and colors meet as one" (Baudelaire). However, while other artists were aware of it, Kandinsky was the first to actually incorporate synesthesia into his artwork. He fully acknowledges the elements of "sound, color, words!" (Kandinsky, On Stage Composition), and uses them all in his art, particularly in his plays. The reason he likes synesthesia or the "correlations between taste and color [for instance] which refuse to be classified" (Kandinsky, The Effect of Color), is that people with the condition are constantly having their senses stimulated. To Kandinsky, this ongoing confusion of the senses also means the constant rousing of the soul. Synesthesia is a continual 'artistic experience' and that is why Kandinsky strives to recreate this phenomenon in his art.

The result of this goal is his development of Abstraction. Kandinsky bases his art on two poles of form: "1. the great abstraction, 2. the great realism" (Kandinsky, On the Problem of Form). He reasons that the more Realistic a work of art, the more abstract it actually is, because representative art is completely fake and illusionary. Conversely, Abstract art is more realistic, because it is pure art. Abstraction is devoid of "material" imitation and can therefore circumvent the logical impressions our minds automatically try to impose on representative art. Kandinsky is the first abstract artist and saw Abstraction as a means to convey the "spiritual" world because of these very reasons. He furthermore saw the "necessity of the inner unity, which

is supported and even constituted by the external lack of unity" (Kandinsky, On Stage Composition) as imperative to a work of art, particularly a performance; no external unity is the epitome of Abstraction. Using these complicated and progressive artistic theories, Kandinsky produced many canvases, poems, and plays including *The Yellow Sound* that reflect all these ideologies.

The Yellow Sound is not only provocative because it illustrates Kandinsky's artistic theories, but also because it utilizes the theater as an applicable art form and develops a series of nonconventional theatrical components. There is no main character, no significant plot, no definable setting, and no dialogue in the play. Instead of an introductory scene, the audience is graced with "some indeterminate chords," "dark-blue twilight," and "a chorus [in which] the source of the singing is unrecognizable" (Kandinsky, The Yellow Sound: A Stage Composition). Music, color, and singing had been used in theater beforehand, but never in this context. They are traditionally applied to compliment the development of the drama, but Kandinsky is using them as his central focus. Enveloped in this situation, a conservative audience would be uncertain if in fact they were in the theater. However, while Kandinsky's play may seem a complete departure from all conventions of theater, he does actually base it on the basics of theater. He borrows bits and pieces from each type: "drama - words; opera - sound; ballet - movement" (Kandinsky, On Stage Composition). Although, the elements he takes from these types of plays are the *artistic* features and not the technical ones. In this sense, he is attempting to recreate theater as an art, and not just as a means to entertain or profess ideologies. So instead of characters, plot, and setting, the lighting, music, choreography, and arrangement of all three become the central and defining aspect to his sense-stimulating composition.

Kandinsky also thoroughly exploits synesthesia in *The Yellow Sound*. He not only uses an immense amount of color, sound, music, tone, words, light, texture, dance, and movement in his play, but does so simultaneously. Because the majority of any audience is most likely not naturally synesthesic, he attempts to recreate this quality by attacking the senses all at once so that they may mix-up artificially. So as well as combining different components from types of plays, he also uses elements usually found on a canvas or in a sculpture into his theater, which further enhances the synesthesic atmosphere. The mere title of the play immediately implies synesthesic undertones, for a 'sound' cannot rationally be described as 'yellow'. His entire play is a conglomerate of these simultaneous sensory stimuli in order to try and epitomize synesthesia much like his title does. Scene five is a perfect example of this, for it directs, "*The stage is gradually saturated with a cold red light, which slowly grows stronger and equally turns yellow*" (Kandinsky, The Yellow Sound: A Stage Composition). Not only has he instructed the stage to be painted with a color, but he dictates it to be a *cold* color, a notion inconceivable without the knowledge of synesthesia. In the same scene, he also notes that, "*Then one hears again in the orchestra individual colors*" (Kandinsky, The Yellow Sound: A Stage Composition). To hear color again is not logical nor is it definable; in order to comprehend what the color yellow, for instance, would sound like, is only possible in a world beyond this "material" one. Because he incorporated synesthesia as the core of the play, however, it is possible that by this time the audience could understand what a yellow chord sounds like, a clear testament to the success of Kandinsky's work.

Kandinsky's play is also abstract, naturally, and was part of a series of plays written by Kandinsky that were the first examples of abstract theater. The reason he has no definable setting, plot, dialogue, or characters is because he is depicting the "spiritual" world where those elements do not exist. Instead he portrays "Giants", "Indistinct Beings", People, rocks, flowers, and a milieu of colors, sounds, and movements, which are all abstract components. Granted the people, flowers, and rocks can be considered imitative because they do actually exist in the material world, yet they are all removed from reality. The Child, for instance, is an actual child, but he/she "*is pulling slowly and rhythmically at the lower end of a rope*" and when "*the child drops the rope. It becomes dark*" (Kandinsky, The Yellow Sound: A Stage Composition). Clearly this child is not portraying a child 'character', but is rather functioning as part of this artistic composition; the Child sways with the rhythm of the bell on the end of that rope and triggers changes in lighting, meaning he/she is imbedded in the art. It is scenes like these that allow the audience to steer clear from trying to rationalize the production, even if there are some "material" likenesses. Another great example of these coinciding elements, like the Child and the darkness, which make the work all the more abstract, is scene five. In this scene, the "different-colored people" are directed to "*take up different positions on the stage...the whole*

arrangement should be neither 'beautiful' nor particularly definite [and engage in] *a kind of dance, only with frequent changes of tempo, sometimes corresponding with the music, sometimes not*" (Kandinsky, The Yellow Sound: A Stage Composition). This display is utterly abstract and meaningless in our rational minds, because Kandinsky was not appealing to them. He is portraying what the "spiritual" world must be like, which we can only comprehend through the medium of our senses and the acceptance of Abstraction.

Kandinsky is a mastermind of theory and artistic composition, but that is not what distinguishes him from all other avant-garde artists. What truly makes him *the* most artistic and unique member of the avant-garde era is his focus on and achievement in conveying the 'artistic experience' in his art. If I were to watch *The Yellow Sound*, I believe I would feel "vibrations" in my soul and become so enraptured in the play that I would loose my sense of reason, because it is purely, intensely, and ultimately abstract, synesthesic art. I imagine myself sitting in Kandinsky's theater with a stage that sounds lemon yellow, smells of shrill voices, and looks like indeterminate chords of music and believe that after watching the entire production, I would come out of that theater describing it exactly in this jumbled fashion. Kandinsky succeeded because he *does* artificially create synesthesia and erases logic and reality in his play. But the reason I consider this play the *ultimate* work of art is that while paintings are two-dimensional and sculptures are three-dimensional, this play is fourth-dimensional. It is live, in motion, and dynamic, which are all aspects that cannot be found in other types of mediums. Theater then is the supreme form of art in the respect that the viewer is physically watching, experiencing, and absorbing the art as it is unfolding. In watching this dynamic and animate world of art that *The Yellow Sound* captures, the audience should be so overwhelmed, so removed from reality, and so dazed from the "inner vibrations" that this composition elicits because they are undergoing the ultimate and complete artistic experience.

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Katy Simonian

From Portia With Love: Drama Within Comedy Through the Eyes of a Shakespearean Heroine in *The Merchant of Venice*

"I am informed throughly of the cause. Which is the merchant here? and which the Jew? (4.1.173-174)" The climactic courtroom scene is Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* is not the first time we encounter the dynamic personality of arguably the strongest of Shakespearean heroines, but Portia's actions in this scene speak to the different, at times contradictory facets of her character. The scene, in which a disguised Portia enters the court where Antonio and Shylock's fate will be revealed, captures the essence of both the ambiguity of her character and the nature of the play itself. By her own account, Portia enters the trial out of love for Bassanio and loyalty to his friend in need. However, in this moment, the darker, more intuitive side of Portia is revealed in the subtleties of the language which she uses to seal the fate of all the men in her life. As a woman, she faces the limitations of her gender in terms of her marriage and familial obligations. Beyond her poise and wisdom, she is a young girl with desires and ambition which refuse to be concealed by the confines of a female body. It is through the ambiguous nature of her character that the dramatic elements of the play surface amid the riot of comedic moments which have placed the play in the realm of comedy. But is it fair to think of the play as a comedy, when ideas of betrayal, identity, and vile anti-Semitism dwell at the core of the story? Is Portia a spoiled heiress who manipulates those around her out of boredom, or does she take it upon herself to get what she wants without the permission of others or adherence to rules? To unlock the drama within the comedy, we must observe Portia's precise actions before, during, and following the trial and find the tragedy of love and loss within the comedy of clowns, couples, and wives dressed as suitors.

In order to appreciate the seemingly straight-forward introduction she makes for herself at trial, we must first visualize the scene. The court is filled with people, some in support of Antonio, while most linger out of curiosity for what a pound of flesh looks like when stripped from its owner. When Portia arrives dressed as the young lawyer, Balthazar, it is easy to see the comedy in a young bride coming to the defense of her husband's friend under the guise of a bright and eager fellow. She is after all, by her own admission, "an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractic'd" (3.2.156) who has much to learn about womanhood in matters of the world and love. Why does she begin with a question which demands such an obvious answer? On one hand, she may be asking for the parties to make themselves known for the record, as that is what she knows or thinks to be the appropriate protocol. Yet, the structure of the players in this scene tells a different story. Upon entering the court, for anyone, let alone the presiding judge in the case, the identity of the merchant and the Jew would be clear. One must wonder what Portia has to gain by surveying the court as she does and what motivates her to carry the trial to its final moment of suspense over Shylock's fate. The answer lies in her love for Bassanio, not out of a sense of honor or loyalty, but rather suspicion and discovery.

Moments before embarking on her spur of the moment journey with Nerissa to wield her unique brand of power over the trial, Portia is the picture of the contented betrothed. She is in the clouds of girlish love for her new husband, whom she sought through the contest of caskets for her hand in marriage. She has attained the love and commitment of Bassanio, who she regards as the ultimate brave, romantic knight, "her lord, her governor, her king (3.2.165)." The news of the plight of Antonio's character cuts through her romance and provides her with a needed, but unforeseen dose of reality. She falls in love with a man with expensive tastes, including but not limited to his choice of wife. He craves luxury and winning Portia gives him access to her unlimited wealth, Belmont estate, and her exquisite beauty. For his part, Bassanio indeed loves her by all accounts, but covets the wealth and influence such a marriage would mean to him in feeding his careless ways. Upon seeing Bassanio's distress over Antonio's troubles, it becomes clear that the three thousand ducats brought to compete for Portia's hand, was borrowed, ill-gotten from the baseness of usury. The issue of wealth is paired with the lack of trust and dishonesty on the part of Bassanio. The nature of his friendship with Antonio and the circumstances of their marriage is a concern for Portia. Her actions in the trial are reflections of her suspicion towards her new husband and intentions with regard to his merchant. She does not pace her through

the court proceedings, as a novice lawyer, or frightened girl in fear of errors in performance. Her pacing is a clear sign of her confidence in wielding the power she seizes from those around her.

In taking the opportunity to carefully observe her husband and his demeanor toward the merchant, Antonio, Portia witnesses her idealized image of Bassanio end in another moment covered with the veil of comedy. Bassanio declares his love and loyalty to Antonio when he says "life itself, my wife, and all the world are not with me esteemed above thy life (4.1.284-285)." Portia's response is in irony as she reflects on how his wife would hardly thank him for such an offer made to someone else. One can imagine a light chuckle from an audience upon hearing this exchange. However, there is an underlying tone of power and disappointment which lingers on through the play's final scene. Bassanio's wife is indeed present in the court and does not take pleasure in seeing the man, who is now her husband in a new and disappointing light that does not fit into her good graces.

Portia's disillusionment with Bassanio does not mark the end of their love. The revelation of her disguise in court in the play's final scene serves to transform the dynamic between Portia and Bassanio in terms of their relationship. It is Bassanio who is made the fool and humbled by his wife's audacity. While he remains besotted with her, she is above the romance of her idealized version of him. She loves him, but not in the way she once did. Her love and outlook matures from these experiences and she reclaims her place as the lord of her house, master of her servants (3.2.168-170) openly, and without need of manipulation. Belmont is her estate, and Bassanio knows he is privileged to live there as long as Portia finds him in good favor.

Perhaps the greatest evidence for the gravity of her strength in relation to the other characters is her last line in the play. While others reflect, she departs with an order to her husband to come to her where she "will answer all things faithfully (5.1.259)." She leads him to his fortunate fate, just as she leads Shylock to the result of his vengeance, Antonio to his redemption far apart from the need of her husband, and the play's other young lovers to their contented end. Beneath the surface of comedy, we see the broken spirit of the exiled Shylock, the nostalgia and confusion of the flawed merchant, and the foolishness of idealized love, from the perspective of a woman, in love and in command.

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Katy Simonian

The Emptiness of Gender: The Inclusiveness of Women in the Buddhist Tradition

"Shariputra, sons and daughters of good lineage who want to practice the profound perfection of wisdom should perceive [reality] in this way: They should correctly perceive the five aggregates also as empty of inherent existence. Form is emptiness; emptiness is form[1]." This statement, made by Avalokiteshvara, one of the most important bodhisattvas of the Mahayana tradition of Buddhism[2], opens what is known as the Heart Sutra, and reveals much about the nature of emptiness and its relation to all things. Although at first glance, the words of the bodhisattva may appear vague and highly abstract, the explanation of emptiness and the implications of applying emptiness to everything and everyone (both men and women) reveal much about the Mahayana philosophy and the inclusiveness of women in the Buddhist tradition.

First, we must have an understanding of the Doctrine of Emptiness in terms of its claims on reality and the perfection of wisdom. The doctrine states that all things, mental and physical are empty of essence. The five aggregates, referring to sensations, feelings, perceptions, the mind or consciousness, and the body, are empty of true essence and therefore do not exist[3]. Many have misunderstood this belief and have interpreted the doctrine as a claim that no being or object exists on any level, and that nothing in this world is real. However, the Doctrine of Emptiness is geared more toward what we can call evaluation of what truly matters in this world in terms of relevance for one's attaining enlightenment and subsequently nirvana. It is not that sensations, feelings, perceptions, the mind, and the body do not exist. Rather, it is that they do not have a profound essence in

and of themselves to exist on their own. The five aggregates exist but are of no real significance to enlightenment and the attainment of oneness in the Mahayana tradition[4]. Unlike the Theravada tradition in Buddhism, which stresses the five aggregates as the essential elements of the self, the Mahayana Buddhists saw emptiness as the unifying factor in achieving oneness with the world and everything in it. According to Avalokiteshvarra, "there is no form, no feelings, no discriminations, no compositional factors, no consciousness"[5] that inhibits us from living without ignorance and fear, and embracing perfect wisdom as the complete awakening to enlightenment. Instead of bringing all things together through meditation, the Mahayana tradition introduced the notion that one could meditate in order to realize that if we are all empty, we are all one[6].

In order to appreciate the gravity of the bodhisattva's opening passage in the Heart Sutra, it is important to consider a key, and overlooked element in the question that was first posed to Avalokiteshvara, by the inquisitive Shariputra, who himself was a disciple of the Buddha. Shariputra asks, "How should a son of good lineage train if he wants to practice the profound perfection of wisdom?"[7] The disciple of the Buddha refers only to the ability of a son, or male to attain perfect wisdom. The bodhisattva responds by saying that any sons *or daughters* of good lineage are eligible, as it were, to attain wisdom and enlightenment. And since emptiness applies to all discriminations, compositional factors, and consciousness, any divisions drawn to promote the superiority of men over women in terms of the path to becoming a bodhisattva, must be disregarded.

Dr. Rita Gross, a self proclaimed "engaged historian of religions"[8] explores the issue of gender in Buddhism and applies the concept of emptiness in order to highlight the textual inclusiveness of Buddhism, as it struggles to overcome the bounds of a global patriarchal society. Since the terms, male and female exist only as labels, they are empty of any substantial reality[9]. It is important to remember that like Christianity, and other major world religions, the basis of the founding and establishing of religious practices takes place within history. As such, religious traditions are subject to being reflections of the time and place in which they emerged. Many Buddhists embraced the patriarchal notion that high levels of spiritual attainment cannot be attained by a female body[10]. However, there is a great deal of textual evidence to refute these ideas. There is a clear status improvement of women in the Mahayana tradition, as both men and women were encouraged to take the bodhisattva vow in order to pass on their wisdom to those in need of guidance[11]. In one text, a princess named Jewel Brocade uses the Doctrine of Emptiness to refute a male disciple who objects to the equality of women in the faith. She argues that if no one can attain Buddhahood in a woman's body, then no one can attain it within a man's body either, as both designations are empty of essence[12]. If sexuality does not exist in a substantial way, and beings are more than the bodies that encapsulate them, there should be no question as to the status and rightful place of women in Buddhism.

Although it is clear that women are capable of the sacrifice and discipline necessary to attain enlightenment, it is hard for many people to detach themselves from the socially ingrained image of maleness that is attached to Buddhist practices toward enlightenment. Rita Gross analyzes the Goddess of the Vimalakirtinirdesa Sutra, in order to support the argument for an inclusive Buddhism. When Vimalakirti invites Shariputra to his home, the Reverend, who is a direct disciple of the Buddha, encounters a Goddess who challenges his beliefs in the inferiority of women[13]. Shariputra asks her why she does not use her power to transform out of her female state. To this she responds, "Although I have sought my "female state" for these twelve years, I have not yet found it."[14] She cannot find the innate characteristics of the female sex, because in essence, there are none to be found. At one dramatic moment in the piece, the Goddess transforms Shariputra into female form and explains to him that "all things are neither made nor changed, and that they are not made and not changed, that is the teaching of the Buddha."[15] Even though we may appear to be men and women, when we take on male and female forms, the being of one's essence has nothing to do with the gender of a being. By applying the doctrine of emptiness to the matter of gender, we can see that the teachings of the Buddha clearly preach against discrimination of any kind as it falls under the category of that which is empty. If dharma, or what is real is neither male nor female, then we need only look at one another as equal beings in essence, and embrace those who seek the path to enlightenment[16].

The connective thread between what divides us on issues of gender may simply be the language we use to discuss such issues. Language limits us in our ability to speak of "mankind" and include women into the

equation. Even though we know that mankind refers to both men and women, the underlying lack of inclusion of women and spiritual beings in essence prevents us from reaching the pure view of the world which is ideal in attaining the Buddhist enlightenment. By applying the doctrine of emptiness to issues of gender roles in the practice of Buddhism, we are able to see the confines of the patriarchal society in which Buddhism resides, and do what the fundamental teachings of the Buddha intended. In this way we can look beyond the conventional and arrive at a place of unity with everything through the oneness of emptiness. Thus, emptiness becomes the thread that weaves itself through gender and essence to complete the tapestry of the Buddhist tradition.

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Christina Gunning

The Epic to End All Others

An almost essential quality in literature is defeating the author who came before. All writers of epic struggled with the originals - Homer and Virgil - and the shadow they cast on the literary world. The *Beowulf* poet dealt with Homer and Virgil. Edmund Spenser dealt with Homer, Virgil and *Beowulf.* Each poet was aware of the poets that came before. The trick was to improve or alter the poetry of those who went before in order to make something original. John Milton, however, took the epic to an entirely different level - doing "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme" (ll. 16) - and left those who followed with an impossible task. Milton's *Paradise Lost* presents the struggle between good and evil on an enormous scale. The poets - John Dryden and Alexander Pope - who followed found themselves unable to compete with the sheer magnitude and resorted to describing the terrible banality of good and evil in everyday life.

In the poem *Beowulf,* the hero must fight multiple monsters: Grendal, Grendal's mother and the dragon. Both the hero and the monsters, however, are of human proportions. They do not exist on a supernatural scale. The hero, Beowulf, is the "mightiest man on earth,/ highborn, and powerful" (ll. 197) but he is just a man. Grendal is a "fiend out of hell" (ll. 100) able to grab "thirty men from their resting places" and butcher them. However, he is still of a manageable size. In his first and only meeting with Grendal, Beowulf rips off the monster's arm after a short battle and successfully dispatches him. Though Grendal is a "grim demon" (ll. 102), his proportions fit the human world. Beowulf successfully destroys Grendal's mother as well. The Dragon, in the end, manages to defeat him but only because Beowulf is very old by this time and "sad at heart/... sensing his death" (ll. 2419-20). However, a "youth" (ll. 2626) in his band, Wiglaf, manages to conquer the dragon in Beowulf's stead. The dragon may be of mythological strength but it is overtaken by a youth the first time he is "tested as a fighter" (ll. 2628). These battles are almost predictable because the sizes of the players match on a human scale.

The second major epic is *The Faire Queen* by Edmund Spenser. The main hero is Red Cross Knight. He is a "Gentle Knight" (ll. 1) on a "great adventure" (ll.19) to kill a "Dragon horrible and stearne" (ll. 27). He is obviously inexperienced in the art of knighthood, falling into an unnecessary battle with Error at the very beginning of the poem even with the warnings of his lady. Despite his inexperience, he is a good man and a good knight. Throughout the poem, he battles many different enemies and each of these tests his morality more than his strength. While the strength of Beowulf decides his victory, the morality of Red Cross Knight decides his. His fidelity is tested by Duessa who tempts him away from his lady Una. He is drawn in by the House of Pride, a palace run by Lucifera who is attended

to by her "six sage Counsellours" (ll. 155) the Deadly Sins. Though these are large moral issues, they are still on a human scale. Most humans deal with similar temptations. They are not supernatural. The battles Red Cross Knight faces are on an earthly level.

The dimension of Milton's *Paradise Lost* cannot be considered earthly. All of his characters are supernatural or at the very least superhuman. Both his protagonists and antagonists are depicted on an immense scale. His description of good and evil involves the very epitome of each. He chooses as his subject the battle between God and Satan - ultimate good and ultimate evil. His subject is Original Sin itself.

The sheer size of Satan as he is portrayed in Book 1 is awe-inspiring. He is "extended long and large" (ll.195) as large as those "whom the fables name of monstrous size" (ll.197) the "sea-beast Leviathan, which God.../ Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream" (ll. 200-1). Grendal would not stand a chance in a battle with Satan. His shield alone is the size of "the moon.../ Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views" (ll. 287). His spear is "equal [to] the tallest pine/ Hewn on Norwegian hills" (ll. 292). He is the "Arch-Fiend", the angel who dared to rebel against God himself. He is massive and with the sheer size of him comes encompassing evil. No longer is the epic on the earthly, human level. The evil in *Paradise Lost* is a supernatural behemoth.

In addition to the immensity of Satan, evil also takes the forms of Sin and Death both of which are "formidable" (ll. 649). Sin is half-woman, half-serpent with a belt of "hellhounds.../ With wide Cerberean mouths" (ll. 654-5). Death has no shape "distinguishable in member, joint or limb,/ Or substance..." (ll. 678-79) since there is no death yet in the world. Satan drags these two forms of evil into the world with him when he enters Paradise for the first time, unleashing Sin and Death on the world. These two demonic characters are the offspring of Satan and add to his magnitude.

In opposition of the Arch-Fiend stand two humans who seem insubstantial in comparison to Satan. However, these humans are extraordinary. Similar to Beowulf and Red Cross Knight, the characters are not average humans but something much more. Adam and Eve are obviously superior to their descendents in many respects. They are "godlike erect, with native honor clad/ In naked majesty" (ll. 288-9). Through them "the image of their glorious Maker shone,/ Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure" (ll. 292-3). Eve is described as beautiful with "unadorned golden tresses" (ll. 305) that fall down her back "as the vine curls" (ll. 307) and also very intelligent. Adam is also described as handsome - though not as attractive as Eve - and intelligent "for contemplation he and valor formed" (ll. 267). Both work hard in their gardens, though they don't have to, and learn from Raphael, one of God's angels. Even God describes them as "sufficient to have stood" (ll. 99) against Satan though they are "free to fall" (ll. 99). Adam and Eve are not simple, fragile humans. They are created in God's image to have infinitely higher abilities. They are poets, lovers, astronomers, farmers and philosophers. They may not be supernatural but they are certainly possess superhuman capabilities.

Greatest of all characters in *Paradise Lost* is God the Son. He is the only face of God and in that face "divine compassion visibly appeared,/ Love without end, and without measure grace" (ll. 140). When God the Father asks him to live amongst mankind, God the Son answers with no manipulation "account me for man" (ll. 238) and he says that for man he will "lastly die" (ll. 240) in order to erase mankind's sins. His goodness is more encompassing the even Satan's evil. His power is immense as well. In Book 6, Raphael tells Adam the story of the fall of Satan. In the story, the angels and rebel angels have been fighting for three days without stopping. On the third day God withdraws all his armies and send only his Son into battle. God the Son drives all the rebel angels back without the slightest bit of effort and causes them to fall for nine days into Hell. God the Son is the most powerful character in the poem next to perhaps God himself. He is not only larger-than-life, he's larger than death and larger than evil. He is all-encompassing. By using God the Son as a protagonist, Milton breaks the mold of epic characters. It is practically impossible to employ a character larger and more extraordinary than the Son of God.

The epic poets who followed Milton were faced with an intricate problem. Because of the immensity of Milton's characters, the only way for the poets to go was down. John Dryden conquered the problem in *Mac Flecknoe* by creating a character as dull and as small as possible. His 'hero' Shadwell is the son of Flecknoe, the ruler of "the realms of Nonsense" (ll. 6). Flecknoe is getting ready to hand over his reign and chooses Shadwell as his best successor. Shadwell is "mature in dullness" (ll. 16) and "confirmed in full stupidity" (ll. 18). He "never deviates into sense" (ll.20) and "seems designed for thoughtless majesty" (ll. 26). The evil in this poem is not specifically personified in one central figure

as in *Paradise Lost.* This poem depicts the banality of evil in everyday life. The evil in this poem is the celebration of "new impudence" along with "new ignorance" (ll. 146). Dryden takes the larger than life quality of Milton's epic characters and reduces them to human standards. In earlier epics, the hero had qualities that set them above regular humans, though not as much as God the Son or even Adam and Eve. Beowulf is more powerful than thirty men. Red Cross Knight defeats all his enemies. Shadwell, on the other hand, is basically a vain and talentless fool. His qualities push him below regular human standards. He has a "double portion of his father's art" for vanity and meaninglessness (ll. 217). Instead of competing with Milton's characters, Dryden dropped his character as low as possible.

Another successor of Milton was Alexander Pope. He wrote *The Rape of the Lock* based on an actual incident that occurred in the Catholic community at that time. One of the main alterations between Pope's work and Milton's is his use of a single female heroine, Belinda, without a male counterpart. Instead of waking early and facing the day, Belinda wakes "just at noon" (ll. 16) and begins "the sacred rites of Pride" (ll. 128). She has "fair tresses [that] man's imperial race ensnare" (ll. 27). Belinda is, unlike Shadwell, raised above other humans. At parties "every eye [is] fixed on her alone" (ll.6) because she is more beautiful than any other woman. She is essentially vain. She protects her chastity by flitting from man to man. Because she never loves just one man, he can never convince her to "stain her honor" (ll. 108). However, she is just as concerned with her "new brocade" (ll. 108) as her honor, with her necklace as with her heart (ll. 109). At one point she fights in a sort of epic battle where she competes with two "adventurous knights" (ll. 26) at ombre, a type of card game. She wins the card game but then the Baron, one of the men who desire her, snips off her favorite lock of hair causing her to lose the battle.

After this event, Belinda is plunged into "Spleen" (ll. 16) or 'ill-humor'. Spleen is the major evil in the story personified in the Goddess of Ill-Nature. She possesses "a wondrous bag" (ll. 81) where she "collects the force of female lungs,/ Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues" (ll. 83). She also has a vial "she fills with fainting fears,/ Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears" (ll. 85). These things, used by the Gnome Umbriel, cause Belinda to scream at the Baron. Neither the heroine nor the evil in *The Rape of the Lock* have the enormity of Milton's characters. However, Pope treats them with the same solemnity as Milton does in order to use the poem to poke fun at the young woman Belinda is based on. Belinda is given an epic battle and fails as Adam and Eve do in *Paradise Lost.* As Pope satirizes the true event, he also seems to tease Milton's work as well. He is both solemn and comical though the poem cannot be considered a comedy since it does not end with a marriage. Pope takes an entirely different stance on epic poetry.

Originality is a difficult subject to address in epic poetry. Each poet seeks to out-write those who came before. However, none thought to break out of the style of epic poetry into a new style until Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson and Daniel Defoe finally pioneered the novel. While the poets tried to bring in their own style and voice to their poetry, they also borrowed from those who came before. This borrowing was a way of showing up the poet that came before. In writing *Paradise Lost,* Milton wants to 'beat' all epic poets from Homer to Spenser. In Book 3, he compares himself to "blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides,/ And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old" (ll. 35). He wants to be both Homer and the blind prophet Tiresias. He wants to be better than ever poet that came before him. He does this by stretching the epic to an incredible scale.

Dryden and Pope take different approaches to originality. Instead of stretching the epic, Dryden shrinks it down as far as possible and rubs it around in the dirt and grime. He takes the idea of an epic and switches the poles. Rather than make Shadwell epically large, he makes his hero epically small. Pope applies the techniques of epic poetry to teenage fancy as an alternative to the Creation and Damnation of Mankind. Because Milton took the glimmering, pristine subjects, Pope takes a true event and wraps it in epic language. He treats the minor whining of a young woman with a bad haircut with the same earnestness that Milton employs. All of these poets strove to find originality while remaining inside the epic model.

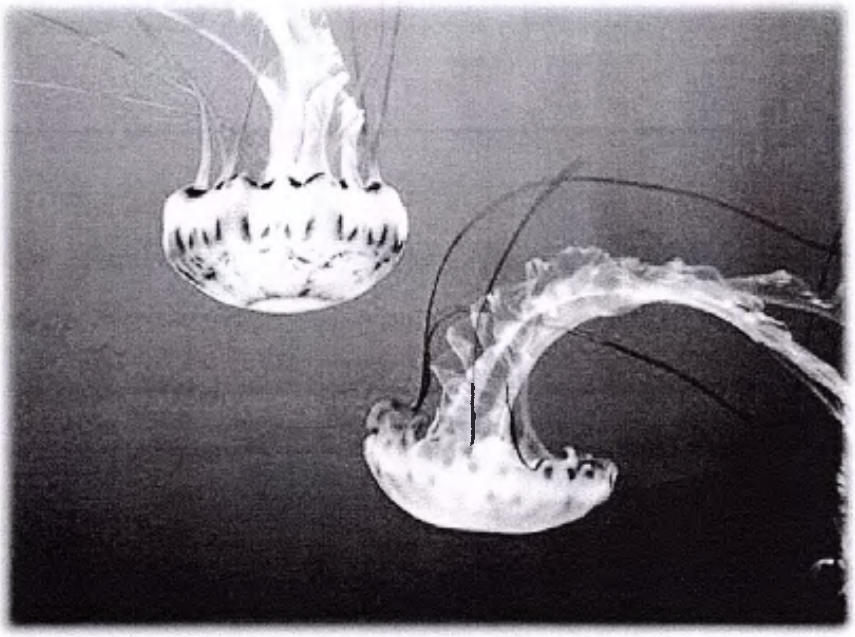
Milton's impact on the epic was extensive. Before *Paradise Lost,* epics were presented on a human level, with human heroes and standard-size monsters. His work was meant to be unbeatable and it was. He surpassed all previous poets and discouraged all future ones. *Paradise Lost* is probably the defining moment that incited the new literary movement of the novel. It is the work that both exemplified and destroyed epic poetry for future generations of writers.

Bryanna Benedetti
Upon Lotus Leaves

Bryanna Benedetti
Ceylon 2009

Bryanna Benedetti
Victims of Humanity

Shannon Atkins
Just the Two of Us



Katie Jenkins-Moses

Blind Love

Julia-Ellen Spruill-Smith
Untitled

Johanna Weber
Santa Croce, Florence 2008

Johanna Weber

Rodin Museum Fashion Shoot, Paris 2008

Rome 2008

Nicole Beauchamp

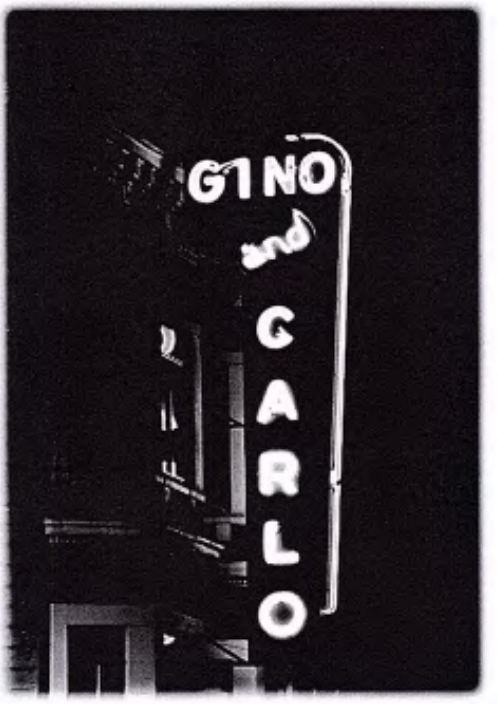
June (Mostly)

Mitch Calmer

Shallow Water Blues

Save Your Soul Every Sunday

North Beach



Poetry - 2010 Whittier Awards -First Place

Allen Feldman

Amidst All the Craziness, I Always End Up In a Cab

I. Odessa
Lime tongues dance together,
salt bitters the edges;
we savor regret stinging
the back of our senses,
Oolya and I that is,
she was my Ukrainian lover
for ten whole days,
her code for sex was—
Let's watch a movie,
we become salmon
dancing on vibrato,
cut open down the chest
with the sharp of our nails,
just to stay close,
sand and sea close,
we ride a wave together in the club,
my stiff pants against her wet skirt,
till the sun bursts blood orange
down the center, it's
5:00am,
the death march up to the parking lot
is a pit stain and spaghetti legs,
she stops to hear a mandolin,
pizzicato,
dusty fingers beg
for rubles in an old fedora,
Let's get out of here, I say anxiously,
she won't have it, the melody
reminisces her childhood,
feeling cradled, the warmth
of its transcendent tune,
rain wets her blouse
and it hits me like a Jackson Pollock—
we haggle a cab driver with the remains
of our excess, lie draped over each other
the entire sickly jarring way,
till we climb up our doorstep—
Oolya gives me her 32-caliber smile.

II. New York
I Saturday-stumble into bed,
the night as clear as my childhood,
my phone vibrates, it's Abby,
Hey, Margaret and I just drank a bottle
of wine, come over—
I open the squealing kitchen window,
toes sweating, step onto the fire escape
tasting wet flour within my skin,
I feel like superman, I howl,
I hail a cab, no wait— I flag down
a cab, this ain't Reichstag,
those worn out leather seats
dream floating space cats,
I peer between slits onto bending
streetlamps whispering soft allegories,
my snowcovered body seeps back amid—
where'smyphone? and spare change,
the cab halts,
That'll be $22.50,
I don't remember
paying,
I scramble up endless winding stairs,
rolling along blank walls,
tiger-clawing a black door,
Abby answers, grinning like a murderer,
we walk into her room, a candle of castles—
Margaret's on the bed, sipping Cabernet,
midriff showing, smiling wildly,
Soooooooo what's the plan? I pose,
we're on the bed, rolling sex dice,
the snow is a window frame
of naked flesh and spilled wine.

Poetry - 2010 Whittier Awards -Second Place

John Jackson

The Mattress in the Sinkhole

Storm clouds were black-capped
beasts chewing the swooning
white ones, but we refused
to ever see them.
At night they swung from stars
and rappelled down onto
the telephone wires, and tiptoed
their way over our home.
Our white home, with a white
fence that we built, we painted,
and we kept.
It was in the unerring escapes
of breaths in each other's embrace,
when it, staring through the
window in the torpid night,
emptied its storm upon us.
Rain clapped against the roof,
walls started slipping down
and winds fingered and pulled
our old rooty trees.
The roof sunk smile to frown,
the door a limp tongue
on the ground, and our fence
split like pulled teeth.
The worst was when our porch
cratered and a sinkhole formed,
the storm had hit
and the earth had swallowed
the heart of our home.
Time has passed.

A kid fogs the window of his
mother's car with awe
as they drive by us:
a hollowed out home like a hole dug
with wood that was dirt
thrown all around,
two cars pointed at each other,
us behind blue glass
not willing to speak.
One day I will find you in there,
you will have climbed through
the window, knee high in our
memories and junk,
crouching in destruction.
I will bear your warm face in the
teared half-moon of my eyes,
and we will lock-eyes
and soon after lock-fingers
and collapse down into the muck
in our open home and lay
on our backs all breathy
with caresses.
You will raise and straighten
a picture on the scarred wall.
I will help you clean.
You will start dragging
the broken branches from our garden.
I will look for new trees.
You will start to pick up the mattress,
and I will carry it with you,
and toss it into the sinkhole.

Poetry - 2010 Whittier Awards -Third Place

Catherine King

The Finals Season

Prowling and prowling on the widening campus

The poet cannot hear the poetry

Tweets call a phone, the C.I. cannot hold

Mere Gatorade is loosed upon the Spot

The ink-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The reddish bricks of memory are drowned.

The best lack all correction, and the worst

Are driven with tobaccoish intensity

Surely some reckoning is at hand?

Surely the finals season is at hand?

The finals season! Hardly are those words out

When a jpg from a page of Wikipedia troubles my sight:

Tanned, slow thighs move across the upper quad

A student wearied with an enormous backpack

As the shadow of Extreme Frisbee cuts the cement

The URL has failed, but now I know

That six sweet hours of deservéd sleep

Were vexed to wakeness by a loud alarm clock.

And what rough freshman, her hour come round at last,

Slouches towards Whittier to be born?

September 29, 2009

Poetry - 2010 Whittier Awards –Honorable Mention

Abigail Chandler

You Didn't Want My Heart

I slashed my chest open
With a scalpel I found.
I pulled out the pulmonary vein
Like pulling off boots
That were sizes too small.
I jerked out the vena cava
Like a claw of a hammer
Stuck in a chest of drawers.
I wrenched out the ventricle
Like a garden hose
From the mud.
I tore out the aorta
Like a gutter
Off the side of a house.
I scooped out all of the syrup
And the left over solids.
I slammed the sticky mess
On the granite kitchen counter.
You didn't even peer over the newspaper.
You kept your eyes safety pinned to the sports section.

Poetry - 2010 Whittier Awards -Honorable Mention

Jeff Wilson

Isaac

"And He said, 'Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." - Genesis 22:2

I.

You think I'm too young to understand,
The desert sun blazing hot in my memory.
In silence, you lead me up the mountain.
Sand filled my throat in an earthy deluge,
Whipped up by tumultuous winds,
And sweat stung my eyes like bitter tears
From Heaven, sincere and irrelevant.
My feet dirty and callused from the trek,
I wondered, as I will forevermore,
What were you thinking?

You unfurled the ropes,
Tangled and confused,
Like a serpent drunk on its own venom,
And laid me on a stone
As if it were a crib.
You tied me down, lovingly,
His voice in your soul, an echo,
A vibration pulsing through you,
Moving you to act in this way.
The covenant must be sealed.
It all makes perfect sense, doesn't it?

You looked into my eyes, then,
But what did you see?
A life? A soul? A son?
A duty with a beating heart.
A sacrifice.
You think I didn't see
The wall behind your gaze.
Could you tell the difference
Between disbelief and horror
When you looked into my eyes?

The moment was eternal
When you raised the knife,
The sun sharp on the edge,
Blinding and painful
Like an excruciatingly beautiful face.
You blinked and your expression changed.
Was it puzzlement? Rapture? Disappointment?
A young ram, unblemished and perfect,
Stumbling, wandered towards its destiny.
Your features waxed lucid
And you cut the bonds.
What were you thinking?

II.

You think I'm too young to understand
But I know all your secrets:
Countless bloated backs
Arched and floating in the ocean,
Towers crumbling under the weight of His fist,
Cities blasted to dust, women turned to salt.
The covenant must be sealed
In innocent blood
So that He may pass over us.
Your descendants will overwhelm
The sands of the desert,
The stars of the sky,
And He will preserve them;
For I am the good son,
And I want you to know, Father,
That it all makes perfect sense.

T

Fiction - 2010 Whittier Awards -First Place

Jessica Miller

Yellow Lemons

I crept inside a few minutes late, and awkwardly slid into the most hassle-free chair available. But then I saw there were cookies on the back table, so I sacrificed my attempts at subtlety and got up for one.

The REC Center volunteer was already talking: "...A woman who has helped thousands regain control over their lives, Ronnie Delgado."

Mildly enthusiastic clapping splattered around the room. Ronnie Delgado slinked up to the podium. She was wearing loose, flowery clothing which failed to conceal her miniscule frame. I caught a glimpse of her ankles beneath her skirt as she passed. I had seen thicker tubes of lipstick.

"Hello everyone, and thank you for having me here. The only thing I ask is that you do not think about a yellow lemon."

I instantly thought of the freshest, yellowest lemon.

I looked around me. Senior citizens. Nothing but white-haired women with droopy faces, and the spouses they dragged along. They were all glancing conservatively at one another, as if to sniff out He Who was thinking about yellow lemons.

Ronnie Delgado smirked knowingly. "Who here thought of a yellow lemon?"

Geriatric murmurs sifted through the room as every hand inched upward.

"That's how our subconscious works. And it's that part of the mind that's at work when we are hypnotized."

A sea of fluffy, white, nodding heads bobbed in affirmation.

"Hypnosis is a form of subconscious persuasion. The important word here is persuasion, as opposed to coercion. With hypnosis, you will never be forced to do anything you don't want to do. You know that feeling when you're sitting by a bowl of chips, and you take one... and even though it's stale, you take another... and another... and another..."

I knew exactly what she meant. Unenthusiastic laughter bubbled over the room.

"It's that sensation. You can stop any time, but for whatever reason, it's a more difficult, conscious decision.

"Now, hypnotherapy is not the same thing as those hypnosis shows you see in Vegas. I'm not going to make you strut around like a rooster or convince you your belly button has fallen off."

Slightly louder unenthusiastic laughter came again. Ronnie Delgado was on a roll.

"Hypnotherapy is a way to help you change your lifestyle, and make you more able mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. The exercise is very relaxing."

So far I hadn't heard anything I hadn't expected to hear, but I gave her my full attention.

"Before we begin, are there any questions?"

Everyone fell silent and resorted to shifting needlessly in their chairs.

Suddenly, an old man in the back corner spoke. He had a thick, Slavish accent and had clearly not mastered volume control.

"Can you help forget? Because my brother died a long time ago and I still have grief and I want to forget."

Ronnie Delgado, slightly ruffled, peered at him from behind the podium. There was a brief hesitance to her response.

"Yes," she said. "Many of my clients have used hypnotherapy to overcome grief."

There were no more questions.

"Okay then. I want you to close your eyes, and imagine you are on a beach."

With my eyes shut, a million different postcard beaches flickered through my mind. It was hard to choose just one. I tried to hone in on a beach at sunset, with a purple and orange sky and cattails along the shore. I managed to hold onto this scene, but for some reason the shore kept turning into a cliff. The cliff was peaceful, so I kept it. I just hoped she wouldn't tell us to wade into the water because I'm not sure how I would have done that from atop a cliff.

"It's a beautiful beach. The sand is soft under your toes, the waves are calm, the sun is bright and warm on your skin..."

Damn it, the sun was still up. I tried to make the sky blue but it kept switching back to purple and orange. I grappled with the sky as Ronnie Delgado continued, "You feel an overwhelming sense of calm. You feel safe and comfortable, and you are utterly relaxed."

I let my shoulders slump. That was relaxed. The scenery became clearer in my mind, but then I would realize the sky was the wrong color and get tripped up again.

"You are walking along the beach, allowing the sand to massage the soles of your feet. There is a cool, calm breeze as you walk, and the sun is warming your skin."

The breeze felt good in my mind, and anytime I started getting chilly I would remember the sun was warming my skin. This was manageable. I had given up on the sky. It would just have to be purple and orange.

"And as you're walking, you come across your towel. You know it's your towel because it's your favorite color."

In front of me was a lush, green towel. It reminded me of cake frosting. It was a beautiful towel, and I wished I had one like it in real life, instead of those ones with the tacky starfish patterns all over them.

"You lay your body down on your soft, cozy towel. And as you look up at the sky, you feel completely relaxed and content."

And as I lay there on my bright green towel, I did feel relaxed and content. I turned my head to the side to face the ocean. The sun on the water was a breathtaking spectrum of rich, saturated colors. I was suddenly aware of how close I was to the edge of the cliff, and with a breeze blowing. But I knew I was fine and continued to gaze into the distance.

"Feel how marvelous it is to be there."

I did.

"Now you're getting up, and walking back in the direction you came."

I was a little sad to leave my towel, but a part of me knew it would probably still be there if I ever decided to visit again. I hiked back along the cliff, with a sense of fulfillment.

"Now I want you to imagine a candle burning."

Wait—what? When had candles come into play? My mind stumbled for a moment, and then the beach scene fell away. I was looking at a white candle with wax dripping away from the little flame. It was floating ominously in a perpetual blackness. The candle, I realized, was slowly turning upside down.

"Focus on the flame, flickering. Notice how it gets brighter."

I tried to hone in one the flame, but the candle had since floated upward and the flame was just above my frame of vision. I became frustrated with the flame and wished it would come down. It came down a little bit, but not all the way.

"The brighter it gets, the calmer you feel."

I could see the glow of the bottom half of the flame, and I knew that meant I was supposed to be

calm. My head slowly flopped to one side. The candle came into better view, and I was no longer angry with it.

"Now, as I count to three, you will feel complete relaxation. On each count you will feel ten times more relaxed than you did before. One..."

My shoulders sank forward.

"Two..."

I no longer felt tension in my hands and knees. I could just barely feel the ground.

"Three."

It felt as though my body was a condensed mass of cloud. I sensed misty tendrils, like hot ice, wisping off of my arms and neck and disapparating into nothing. I was suspended in time, suspended in being.

"Now I'm going to count back down to one, and with each count you feel yourself coming back to reality. When I get to one you will open your eyes, feeling calm, awake and refreshed."

As much as I liked being here at Three, I knew I would have to return to reality and that it was probably in my best interest to do so. I floated for a while longer and anticipated the impending countdown.

"Three..."

Some sort of microchip in my head suddenly clicked back into place, and I felt myself coming back down to the ground.

"Two..."

I could sense my fingers and my heels, I was aware of the chair beneath me. I could feel my neck, my shoulders.

"One."

Like a bug slurped through a straw, I had the sensation of being yanked back into the REC Center, in my foldout chair. My eyes popped open and I looked around. I noticed that I was very slouched and held my chin up higher to relieve the pressure. The senior citizens surrounding me were gazing around the room as well. They looked bored, and began muttering to one another.

Ronnie Delgado skimmed the room, smiling all-knowingly.

"Any questions? Reactions? Responses?"

I felt good, but I didn't have anything much more substantial to say than that, so I kept my mouth shut.

A wrinkly woman with frizzy gray hair and a deep voice said, "I liked the ocean and, and the... calm I got from it, it was so calming and soothing, and I thought of the beach I went to when I visited Hawaii. It was like I was really there, and... I felt safe, like I knew the beach was an okay place for me, to be."

More elderly side murmurs skittered around the room. "I didn't see anything," the Slavic man muttered crankily, and loudly.

The voices eventually tapered off, which was as good a point as any for Ronnie Delgado to launch into promoting her private hypnotherapy sessions, available by appointment and willing to work around YOUR schedule. She then stepped down from the podium, and everyone clapped meekly.

After filing out of their seats, the gaggle of seniors herded at a snail's pace toward the door. I was most unfortunately caught behind the mass, and was creeping out of the room as slowly as I had come in. It did give me enough time to grab another cookie on the way out, though.

Outside, the air was marvelous and clear, excluding the faint odor of car exhaust. I walked upright, taking in all the colors of the houses passing by me. I thought I might get a tea. I hated tea. I looked down at my legs. They seemed longer, tanner. My neck felt more slender and my hair seemed softer as it blew against my cheeks. I peered up at the sky, and it was the most gorgeous blue I had ever seen.

Fiction - 2010 Whittier Awards - Second Place

Victor Vargas

Beneath the Boards

There's a man laughing on the Moon.

You probably can't see him, but don't be quick to dismiss his existence as mere foolishness. He's been walking the same crags and craters since before the dawn of mankind and in some two hundred thousand Earth years his nature has never changed. He's got shimmering red eyes, chalky white skin, and he's pregnant with a child he can never birth. Usually he's invisible to the naked eye, knowable only to playing children and those unlucky mothers of the dead. His name is Deuteronomy and he hates the Earth in earnest.

He does not remember how he got to be on the Moon. Nor does he remember his purpose or why he is with child. One day he simply was and the next day he was laughing. He's not a god by any stretch of the imagination. He has no divine say in the life of mortal men. He cannot strike lightning at the greater planet. He cannot turn water into wine or resurrect the dead. This man is incapable of saving even himself, and yet his anguish influences the blue Earth gently, subtly.

The man cannot leave the Moon and he cannot die. Cursed might not be a bad appropriation but it doesn't seem enough. All the man can do is laugh. And cry.

* * *

Diana stared up at the pale circle beyond the glass dutifully. She was sitting awkwardly on the dining room table. Cross-legged, her weight extended forward and it seemed that at any moment gravity might push a little harder and she would fall over the edge. Her arms were held out, palms extended, and she prayed. She waited patiently for the laughing man's blessing, for some sign of his approval, but he ignored her as usual. His head was thrown back as he paced across the Moon's surface in tight circles.

In the next room, the small kitchen, Diana's grandmother was gabbing animatedly with someone on the phone. Dr. Olivera maybe. Or old Douglas Kent from beyond the lake. They were supposed to be keeping the line clear in case Manny called, but that didn't impede their conversation, they'd been chatting happily for over an hour. Diana knew her brother wouldn't - couldn't - call, but her grandmother didn't and she didn't appreciate that.

Her parents, both her mother and father, were out in the forest now, along with the small police force and most of the town. They were scouring the woods and lake, desperately searching for her missing baby brother.

The sky was overcast today. A dark churning curtain rolled across the wide heavens. Behind the swirling haze, high in the atmosphere, a bright spherical ball of light made itself known through the clouds: the Sun. The short little weatherman on the television had promised an end to the incessant downpour of the last three weeks, but there still clung a balmy humidity to the air. Diana suspected it might rain for a few days more. It wouldn't be the first time the weatherman from Toluca had been wrong. And it probably wouldn't be the last.

Technically, Diana couldn't see the Moon. Not through the dense, shapeless gray blanket high above. But she could see the man. She could always see the man, even when the others couldn't. Even when the Moon was on the other side of the planet, she could see him. If she tried.

Manny had disappeared yesterday, sometime around noon. He and Billy had been playing in the basement. Later, when their father, the police chief, had pressed him for information in front of the then small assembled force, Billy had squeaked in between sobs that the monsters had taken him.

The spiders.

Diana knew where Manny was, just as Billy and a few kids from town probably knew. He was with the monsters, downstairs in the basement very, very far away.

The thought of the crybaby alone, surrounded by darkness, or even worse, in the *fire,* scared Diana. More than she would ever admit to anyone. She wanted to go, to run to him and ensure his safety. But she wouldn't go without the laughing man's blessing; without his help.

But he was an obstinate bastard. He saw Diana of course, and he knew what she wanted, but he seemed to enjoy the sight of her calm terror. Again and again he turned away from her, his constant laughter shaking him more than usual.

Billy was behind her, and unlike her, sitting normally at the table. He was playing with his oldest toys: a Ronald McDonald figure missing a left floppy shoe (the bad guy) and a frayed little squat He-Man figure (the good guy) that Diana had always thought looked ridiculously toned. Every once in a while he would whistle or pucker his lips to add sound to the dramatic exchange they were engaged in, but the noises seemed halfhearted in the noon atmosphere. His eyes were on his sister.

The man on the Moon froze during a half-step. Diana's breath caught and she raised her arm's higher. Slowly, muscles taught and belly round, he turned to her and smiled widely, displaying a toothless grin and a blue tongue. He looked ridiculous like that, one leg raised. But Diana couldn't have been more serious.

"Please," Diana whispered to him.

The laughing man licked his lips once and then winked at her. Then he turned back to his original position and continued his step. But that was enough.

Diana jumped from the table and suddenly Billy was at her side. His toys abandoned, a strange little pile of clothing tucked under his arm.

"Let's go," she said simply.

As they passed their grandmother, she turned and pushed the phone a few inches from her shoulder. "Where do you two think you're going?"

"We're going out back for a bit, ma'am," Diana explained simply, shrugging. "We're bored cooped up inside."

"Yeah," Billy agreed meekly. His eyes glued to the floor. Neither of them liked their grandmother, but Billy had a special reason to fear her. Once, maybe four years ago, she had spanked him repeatedly with a belt for coming home late one night.

Their grandmother seemed to consider them for a moment (but not really, Diana knew she would say yes but she really shouldn't - any other adult would say no. Their brother was lost and the rain wasn't gone yet, it would be awful irresponsible to let them go out, but their grandmother didn't really care) and then nodded once, turning away from them. "Just mind you stay away from the woods."

Immediately she returned her attention to her nameless conversation partner and began laughing at something unheard by the children. "Oh, no. No. Don't say that. No."

Diana and Billy stepped past her, through the kitchen and a small hallway, into the open backyard.

It was surprisingly cold; a sheer chill clung to the ground while winds high in the sky pushed the gray clouds faster and faster. Everything appeared slightly colorless, even the usually vivid green and brown of the trees seemed to have been washed away somewhat. And the chilly breath that pushed against Diana's lips and sent a shiver down her spine made her all the more certain of her weather prediction: it would rain soon. Which would be really bad for Manny if he really had been lost out in the woods as the adults seemed to think. That thought might have encouraged Diana but her mind shifted to the spiders and she knew his situation might be more desperate than a trifle wet and cold.

First Diana fetched the garden hose. A long green tube spun around itself in a neat circle at the base of the pipe at which it hung. It would be her only protection where she was going. Her knuckles turned white as she clutched it and Diana knew she was afraid.

But not unwilling.

The basement's entrance was a wide double wooden door placed diagonally against the base of the house. Made of some ancient wood, this door and the accompanying basement were the one part of the house that her parents had failed to remodel throughout the years. It was all that remained of the original house her mother had bought fifteen years ago, only a few years before her birth. Sometimes, as she passed this elderly portal, Diana wondered why it had never rotted, even after seeing so many months and years of the rainy season. But she was secretly glad her parent's hadn't seen fit to replace it with something newer yet. To Diana, the ancient door seemed like a survivor of a time now past. She rather liked it.

Unlike the rest of the basement...

The door was kept locked with a padlock. Dull bronze gold and silver metal against aging brown, it was much newer than the door it was supposed to protect. But her father had long ago lost the key so it was never completely locked. Not that they had anything truly worth stealing in the basement, and besides, Diana's father didn't think anyone would dare steal from the police chief's house.

Billy and Manny had stolen the key of course. They were the first ones to make contact with the

spiders and they liked to play in the basement. Diana had objected vehemently at first, she didn't trust the spiders. But her brothers had ignored her and continued to pay them visits in secret it now seemed. Yesterday, after Billy had gotten away from their father, he had pulled off his shirt and showed Diana two long red marks that ran around his belly. Burns.

Diana tossed the padlock out of the way. She pulled the rusting latch away from its knob and reached down, gripping the edge of the wood with tentative fingers. With a little effort she managed to heave the heavy wooden door open single-handedly, revealing the festering interior. Rotting wooden steps descended into the darkness of the basement. Aging support beams and cracking cement ran down a steep incline, and at the bottom, Diana knew she would find a small square room filled with antiquities and rubbish. And darkness.

And things even worse yet.

Beside her, Billy gulped audibly and she knew that she had to be brave for him. She turned to him, a smile parting her lips, and she hit his shoulder lightly with her free hand.

"Don't worry, kiddo," she soothed. Her voice sounded terse to her ears. "I'll have Manny back in no time."

Billy didn't say anything. His eyes moved from the basement to his sister, and a tight smile pulled at the corners of his mouth. But it disappeared quickly enough.

"When I get to the bottom, turn on the water and close the door, okay?" she commanded, as evenly as she could manage. "Gimme his clothes."

Billy handed her the small bundle he carried. A small blue shirt, faded shorts, and a pair of new tennis shoes - it was all that they had found of Manny yesterday. She cradled the lump of fabric and sole under her remaining arm, and then she started her decent.

The stairs creaked pitifully in protest at her light weight. She took each step slowly, without a free hand to hold the wall for support; she balanced the hose and bundle in each hand carefully. At one point, the garden hose in her left hand yanked backwards forcefully and she nearly toppled down the stairs. She regained her balance at the last moment and a pitiful apology drifted down the stairs to her.

"Sorry!"

Diana stepped over the third to last step, a broken and missing board, and waited at the landing. Slowly, her eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, and stark blackness turned to pale gray.

The basement was just like it had been yesterday. It was cramped, most of the space was taken up by furniture that had long ago fallen to disuse, but which her mother couldn't bear to part with. A series of mismatched cabinets, an armoire, three stoves, a refrigerator, and a broken bed post were among the casualties. The walls of the basement room climbed and opened into a small crawlspace that spanned the entire area of the house. Above her, the ceiling of the room was low and pipes ran overhead, an adult would probably have to mind their head. It smelled horribly of both rotting Earth and new ash, disgustingly musty and refreshingly pepper at the same time.

Diana detested this place.

Once, Diana's father had told her that the previous occupant used to burn things in the basement. When she had asked what exactly, he had patted her head softly and told her: "Don't matter no more." He had never brought the subject up again, and something about the look of his eye then had told her that she shouldn't either.

(But she knew it was the man on the Moon who burned here)

She moved to the center of the room, tugging the hose along. The very center was the only clear part of the congested little room, it stood directly below an ancient light bulb that hung from above. Diana dropped the hose there. She tugged the small cord that accompanied the bulb and it reliably flickered on, bathing the gray room in a faint yellow luminescence. She scuttled toward the closest overturned cabinet and ducked behind it. There she deposited the little bundle of clothes she carried. That accomplished, she moved back toward the light bulb and turned back to the stairs. She could barely make out Billy's little floating head as it bobbed down from above the opening.

"Do it!" she cried up to him.

He stared at her for an eternal moment before his puckered features disappeared. Seconds later, a long winded groan gave away the swinging of the basement door from beyond. She expected it but nonetheless the smash of the ancient wood hitting the threshold made her gasp. The sound echoed around her softly and suddenly, Diana found herself very much alone.

Standing there, bathed in the faint light, the darkness deepened and strange shadows emerged around her. Lonely shades sprung forth from innocent cabinets, and the single bedpost created a sinister crooked face against the wall. Ominously, laughter drifted from above her. It took Diana a moment to realize it must be her grandmother, still on the phone, but that knowledge did little to relieve the fear that had stricken her legs into jelly.

The sputter of water gushing out of the hose snapped her out of her sudden terror. She reached down and scooped up the garden hose in shaking hands, bending it in order to limit the flowing water to a slight trickle. She desperately hoped that she wouldn't need to use it.

Diana took the moment to steady herself, she breathed in deeply, willing her racing heart to calm. *For Manny, for Manny, for Manny,* she chanted mentally. It was her only mantra in the darkness.

She raised a single arm and grasped the light bulb's cord, she prayed again then, not to the man on the Moon this time to but to baby Jesus in the clouds, and then she pulled the cord.

And darkness greeted her.

Unlike before, when the light from the open basement door had aided her eyesight, this time she found herself completely and utterly blind. The room was no longer framed by dark degrees of gray and strange shapes, her eyes found no purchase in the blackness. She released the light bulb's cord and brought the hand before her face, waving it frantically. Nothing. She couldn't even see her own hands in front of her eyes.

The feeling was disquieting, almost numbing. Diana remembered the Dentist then, and her mind flooded with memories of her last visit. She remembered getting several shots of Novocain and soon she couldn't feel her jaw at all. She'd spent a good few hours stroking her jaw in the mirror, feeling with her hand what seemed like a missing part of herself. The feeling that gripped Diana then in the stark darkness of the basement was very similar to then. Only now it seemed more all encompassing, not merely affecting her jaw but her whole body. It was almost too easy to believe that she herself was bodiless in this blackness. That she had left her physical form behind at some point. Almost.

Almost because she could still hear the trickle of water from the hose she held in her clammy hand. Almost because she could still picture the room around her, the abandoned pieces of furniture and appliance that decorated this space. Almost because she could still make out, extremely faintly, the sounds of her grandmother upstairs, talking on the phone.

She wasn't there yet.

Diana closed her eyes and counted the seconds by. *One Mississippi, two Mississippi, three Mississippi...* Five seconds, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty. She almost counted a whole minute. Almost.

But when she reached fifty-seven, she realized she could no longer hear her grandmother upstairs. She opened her eyes then and peered at the deep darkness around her. Diana tried picturing the room she had been standing in, the cramped tiny room filled with forgotten junk, and found that she didn't believe she was still in the same room. She might as well have been standing in a wide cavern. It was very easy to believe that there were no walls surrounding her, that the darkness extended forever and ever.

And it does.

"Manny... Manny!" she cried into the emptiness. Around her, darkness swirled broodingly, and all she wanted was to reach above her, pull the cord and run far, far away from this horrible place. But she refused to leave without her baby brother. "Manny!"

She turned in circles, willing him to appear suddenly before her, but all she found was silent nothingness. The smell was much worse now. More pronounced, no longer merely rotting wood and faint pepper, now the odors around her made her think of the dead dog her friends had found last month on the highway. The disgustingly sweet smell of rotting flesh in the rain. Her head began to spin as her eyes wandered the unknowable expanse and she found herself dizzy. Her only companion in the void was the low trickle of water as it dripped from the hose.

Then from behind her, a sudden noise made her freeze. A great thundering boom echoed all around her and her nerves shot wildly. The next moment, her hand already had the light bulb's cord clutched greedily, but she stopped.

It wasn't the spiders. Just the boiler. Get a hold of yourself! Or at least she hoped. It *had* sort of sounded like the familiar gas boiler *thrumm* lazily as it worked itself on, only exponentially louder. Maybe her grandmother was making coffee.

Or maybe they're going to cook me alive.

The thought sent her heart into double time and she struggled to calm herself. *They don't even know I'm here*, she promised herself. *I just need to find him. They never have to come back down here ever again.* And she was sure that Manny and Billy would never step foot into this hell ever again. She would make sure of it, even if she had to break their legs.

"Manny. Manny, please. Where are you?" she hissed into the darkness.

And then she heard it. She turned to her left and held her breath, straining her ears. Incredibly quiet, but there nonetheless, the sound of shallow breathing.

"Manny?"

No response.

"Manny!"

She couldn't afford to move away from where she stood. She would never be able to find the light bulb in the darkness, but the low panting sounded close by. Maybe only a few feet away.

"Manny? Is that you? It's me. Diana." She clutched the hose closer to her and leaned forward. She couldn't make out his shape, but she was certain it was him. "Manny, please answer me! Manny!"

And then someone answered her. Not from ahead, but from behind.

"Whoooo's theeeere?" a low voice whispered.

Diana froze. Suddenly, everything seemed too dark. The stench around her seemed too vivid. Her heart seemed to be hammering far too fast. Slowly, she turned on her toes.

"Who iss iiit?" the same strangely low voice asked again. More of a chirp than a voice really. This time she could see the speaker. In the darkness, what seemed like far, far away, a group of small red dots floated ethereally. "Diiiianaa?"

"Iss it Diianaa?" This time another low voice, from somewhere to her left. She cocked her head and another group of red dots appeared in the distance. But these were much closer, the red much more vividly pronounced. She could almost see the flames.

"Haas shee come to plaay?"

* * *

The first rain drops of the day splattered against the kitchen window. Miriam turned her attention away from Douglas on the phone and the boiling water on the stove. She could have sworn someone had just called her name. But she was alone in the house now. She peered out the window but all she could see was the green of the forest and the gray of the sky. And the rain.

It was coming harder now, moving quickly past a small shower into a true torrent. Seemed like that weather boy on the telly didn't know the clouds worth squat after all.

Then she remembered the kids and she cried out to them. "Diana! Billy! Get in the house now, you hear? Now!" But her orders were met only with the pitter-patter of rain drops on the roof's shingles.

Annoyed, she considered letting them be. But her husband's woman would give her all hell if one of them caught a cold for playing in the rain under her watch. *They've already lost one of* her *good-for-nothings*, she thought dryly and sighed.

"I'm sorry, Dougy dear," she interrupted whatever it was that the old fool was rambling on about on the other end. "Can you give me a moment? Got to fetch the kids out of the rain."

"Rain?" the old coot asked absentmindedly. "It's raining yonder?"

How senile can you get? You're only over the lake. If it's pouring here, it'll damn well be raining there.

"Just a minute," she promised with a frown, and then she placed the phone down. She marched stiffly through the hallway and into the backyard.

And then she froze. Little Billy was just standing there, in front of the basement doors, his mouth hanging wide. No mind paid to the rain starting to really come down around him.

That little fool*!*

"William!" she practically screamed. "What in God's good name do you think you're doing?!"

He must have jumped a foot. One foot swung out and he ended up tripping on some mud. But that same mud cushioned his fall so he landed softly into a sitting position. He turned to look at her, his expression strangely disconcerted.

"Get out of the rain and into the house this minute!" She fumed. "And where's your sister?"

At that last word his eyes flickered away from her and to the basement door again. Miriam followed his eyes and saw something she hadn't caught earlier. The backyard's garden hose was stuck beneath the wooden basement door. And it was on.

In her rage, she almost leaped cleanly off the stairs.

* * *

They were close enough now. Diana could make out their features in excruciating detail. Their burning bodies provided a sickly luminescence. They were spiders. Horribly oversized spiders. Some the size of dogs and others the size of horses. Their faces were the appropriate fuel for nightmares: hundreds of glowing red eyes accompanied by a sickening slobbering mandible beneath. Their bodies were a tangled mess of eight legs and wild dancing flames. Each step produced a gruesome *click clack* that reminded her simultaneously of breaking bones and searing flames in the forest.

"Stay away!" she cried shrilly. "I've got water!"

But suddenly the pitifully thin hose in her hands didn't look like it could possibly deliver enough liquid to keep what surrounded her at bay. The shinning lights of their eyes were all around her. Some far above her. Some to her left. Some to her right. Some behind. And some ahead.

"Waaaateer?" one asked shrilly from behind her. "Buut wee're nooot thiiirtsy!"

"Wee doon't waaant waaateer Diiianaa." From above her.

"Weee juust waaant too plaaay," a spider to her left whispered.

"With yoooou," another finished in a horrible coo.

Diana unloaded on the closest one. A spider as big as a cow had ambled far too close on her right, less than ten feet away, and her hands unfolded the hose and she aimed its strengthened stream at the monster. Liquid met flame and something sizzled. In a daze she thought of overcooked pork before she heard it scream. The arachnid scuttled away, further into the darkness. And then there was quiet.

Diana stood frozen. All around her, the fiery eyes seemed to still in their procession and she was suddenly aware that a layer of cold sweat lined her skin.

"Hooow hooriible," a single voice offered.

"Whyyy yooou doo thaat?" another chirpier voice reprimanded.

"Baaaad giirl, Diiiianaa." And this voice, Diana realized in her stupor, was startlingly close by. Far too close actually. Directly above her. "Yooou beeeen a baad giiirl. Aaand baad giiirls-"

Diana's head shot up and she met the spider head on. This one was only a few feet away. Its horrible marionette body was wrapped around the single light bulb that hung above. Its mandibles opening and closing furiously as spittle dribbled out in a fine line that touched her head.

"-shooould bee puuniiisheed."

Diana dropped the water hose. This close by, the arachnid's flames helped to illuminate her view and her surroundings became much clearer. There were hundreds of spiders, maybe thousands. She couldn't count then individually but she could now make out their gray burning shapes against the omnipresent darkness. Further off they piled on each other and clung to each other in burning piles. And all their eyes were turned to her.

She could hear the scuttle of thousands of legs moving to her. Worse yet she could hear the sound of open flames drawing to her. She knew she could not succeed against their numbers, she knew hopelessness.

So she ran. She ran to the second noise she heard in the darkness. The shallow breathing of Manny close by. It drew to her in the darkness and she ended up tripping over him. Diana crawled back to his side, ignoring the burning of her knees, and grabbed at his form. He didn't respond to her touch and fear robbed her of her might. She reminded herself that if she could hear his breathing, he must be alive. And then she used that thought to bring her strength.

Diana lifted her brother's body in her arms and turned back to the spider that had surprised her. It twisted silently in the air as it clung to the light bulb; a horrible parody of a light source. She gritted her teeth and ran to it, a single shaking hand outstretched. In one motion she had the light bulb's cord in hand, and then she yanked it.

The bulb flickered weakly and as sweet relief flooded her system, she had enough time to draw one breath of victory. Just one breath of assured survival before everything went to hell.

The fiery spider that straddled the light bulb flicked out a single spindly leg and smashed the bulb before it could glow bright and return Diana and Manny to the basement of reality.

It was truly hopeless now, Diana realized. Billy would not know to save them. The light bulb was gone. And all around her the arachnids surged in excitement. They knew it too.

The spider above her cackled sickeningly. "Baaad giiirl noooo moore."

Diana hugged her brother. She would protect him to the very end at least. She put her head

against his shoulders and closed her eyes. And she waited for it to end.

In the last moments, the raw stench of rotting and burning flesh was all she could breathe. The sounds of hundreds of monsters spitting her name all she could hear.

Then there was silence.

"Diana!" an incredibly high voice screamed. "Get out of that basement this instant!"

She opened her eyes and she was momentarily blinded by the light.

Her eyes adjusted and found that she was back in the basement, sitting on the cold cement floor, overturned furniture and appliances surrounding her. Behind her the basement's open door lit the room in a gray light. The water hose gushed absently beside her, spilling water into the room. Above her, the basement's light bulb was ruined; the cap and filament were exposed without the shattered glass. A single tiny daddy long-legs spider scuttled up the bulb's cord and out of sight. In her arms was her little brother Manny, and he was dead.

Terror hit her system, and at once there were tears. Tears of shock, of dismay, of self-loathing, and of loss. He was wearing the bundle of clothes that she had placed down earlier now, but they were different now, burned in some places and frayed in others. She reached for his face, willing his eyes to open, and she screamed when they did.

He wasn't dead. But he was seriously burned she realized as her hands traced the remains of his face. His breaths were shallow and pathetic but his heart beat all the same. He was alive.

"Diana?" he whimpered in her arms as she hugged him fiercely.

She hushed him with one shaking finger. Lifting him, she turned to the stairs and began to climb. Certain of only one thing: she would never return to this particular place ever again.

* * *

The man laughing on the Moon is insane.

Relatively so, he's been insane since the first Earth Eclipse of his sudden appearance. On his first day he traced the small satellite's circumference, dancing over craters and smartly avoiding the dark side. All he found to greet him was loneliness and the vastness of a dark space above him. Then, unexpectedly, darkness came totally to the Moon and the man found himself in excruciating pain. It's called an Earth Eclipse and it blotted the sun from his small home. Jagged agony plucked and struck him, raking his form and he found that the darkness was more than merely scary. It was physically agony to him.

When the accursed Earth finally moved and the merciful sun appeared next, he was laughing. And he's been laughing ever since.

Still he helped the girl.

And he didn't know why. Honestly, whether she and her brother burned in the basement (like so many other things had burned) or lived on, their fate disinterested him. But why had he helped them?

The laughing man stopped in mid jostle and patted his wide round belly, patted the unborn one within him. This child would never be born, he knew. And that was just as well, for the world scarcely needed another like him. But the girl on the Earth was a child of his in another sense and maybe the world did need her.

Maybe, he concluded. And then he laughed.

Fiction - 2010 Whittier Awards – Third Place

Joseph Larrea

The Cleaning Women

"How long do you think it's been here?" Roberta asked.

"I'd say since Friday evening." Valencia answered.

"What makes you say that?"

"Well, for one, it's dry, so it has to have been here a while."

"Sure, but it's Monday now, so someone could have easily left it on Saturday evening and it would've still had a chance to dry." The two women stood there staring at it for a few moments. This was nothing new to either of them. In fact, they encountered it quite frequently in their line of work. They had probably seen it at least once on just about every surface in the building, in the hallways, in the lobby, on the couch, on the stairs, on the landing between the stairs, on the patio, in the bushes, and in the trash. It was a common sight, and it didn't surprise them to see it in the bathroom. That's where it was most commonly left. However, in those instances, it tended to be flushed away. This wasn't always the case, but at least in most instances it was true. This time it was different. The person who it belonged to had not quite made it to the toilet, so he left it on the ground right in front of the stall nearest to the door. Too bad. He was so close, only two feet from the desired destination. He didn't make it though, and as a result, that particular stall was probably cut-off from human contact for the remainder of the weekend.

"I suppose I'll be cleaning it up." Roberta told Valencia in one of her more guilt-provoking tones.

"Yeah, why don't you take care of that while I clean the showers?" Valencia replied casually, choosing to take Roberta's statement as an offer rather than a complaint.

"Why do you always insist on having me clean this stuff off the floors?" Roberta persisted, choosing to turn her passive aggression into a full-blown ultimatum.

"I don't like to kneel on the ground. It makes my knees dirty."

"You think I enjoy it?"

"Well I'm always the one who cleans the showers!" Valencia retorted.

"The floors and the toilets are much dirtier." Roberta argued, pointing to the ground directly below her feet for evidence. "Case and point."

Valencia waved her off, saying, "I've found worse in the showers."

"I doubt it." Roberta replied.

Valencia began to grow tired of the argument, so she decided to bring it to its resolution. "Enough bickering." she said, "Lets get to work."

They set to work. Valencia put her cleaning bucket on the sink closest to the window. She would start at the furthest shower from the door and work her way across. She liked to do this when she cleaned the showers. She enjoyed the feeling of getting closer to the door as she worked. She took out a can of *Bon Ami* and sprinkled it on the tile, then began scrubbing in a circular pattern. She did the same when cleaning the shower at home, however she usually had to turn on the water to wet the tile beforehand. This was rarely the case at work. The showers were used so frequently that they tended to be damp already, making the scrubbing process much easier for her. However, removing the hair balls from the drain was another story entirely.

Roberta ran her dried sponge under the nearest faucet until it was heavy and wet. She didn't bother to ring it out since this job would require the dampest of sponges. Then she knelt down and set to work. After a moment she called over the Valencia saying, "You know it's not much longer that I can be kneeling down on the floor like this.

It's not healthy for me in my condition."

"Oh quit your whining." Valencia shouted back. "You have months to go before you have to worry about that. "

Roberta scrubbed vigorously at the soiled part of the floor with her sponge, making no progress. It was a bigger job than she had anticipated. Chipping away at it was like trying to remove graffiti from the stall door with a wet wash cloth; a wasted effort. The sponge was not right for the job, it was clear that she would have to use chemicals and a heavier tool if she wanted to make any progress. She went out the door, into the hallway to her cart. She grabbed a bottle of windex from the side of the cart and then looked for a proper instrument to use in order to pry the substance off the floor. Finally she settled on a light blue, hard plastic, dust pan. It was the best thing she could find without having to return to the janitor's closet. Although it was just down the hall, she liked to think that there was no clean-up too big for the items on her cart and that going to the closet for reinforcements would, in some small way, be like admitting to defeat.

Upon returning to ground zero, she sprayed the area with windex and allowed it to sit a while and soften. This, of course, was not one of the recommended uses of windex, but after several years of janitorial work Roberta learned a great deal about the versatility of certain household products, and that windex, next to baking soda, was one of the most multifaceted chemicals in her arsenal. While she waited, she decided to get started on the toilets. So she reached into her apron pocket and pulled out a ziplock sandwich bag full of circular capsules resembling alka seltzer tablets. She went from stall to stall dropping one of these tablets into each toilet. As each one dropped into the water, it made a small plopping sound like a pebble falling into a pond, followed by the sizzling and the bubbles as the capsule dissolves and effervesces. Roberta always enjoyed the sight and the sound of this process. She loved seeing the chemicals go to work in such an aggressive and visible way. Within moments the water is green with a layer of white bubbles over the top, and all she needs to do is pull the plunger and flush the toilet and all the germs go away. If only everything was this easy. After dropping one of these tablets in each toilet, she went back to cleaning the floor.

The windex seemed to have softened it up pretty well, now it was just a matter of breaking it apart and disposing of it. It wasn't easy, but it was no longer impossible. She scraped vigorously with the edge of the dust pan, chipping and chipping until it was nothing but a pile of scattered, detached pieces on the floor. She swept them up and emptied them in the trash. Then, letting out a huge sigh of relief, wiped the sweat from her brow, and went over to the mirror to straighten herself up.

At this point, Valencia had finished with the showers and returned to the sink area where Roberta was standing. Roberta offered Valencia the windex. Valencia thanked her, pulled dry rag out of her apron and began cleaning the mirrors.

"Which floor do you think is messier?" Valencia asked as she cleaned.

"To me, it's between the second and the third." Roberta replied, "The first isn't too bad."

"I think that they are equally messy. Only the second floor has trouble with toilets and third floor has trouble with trash cans."

"Neither floor is that great with toilets."

"Well then perhaps second floor is the better of the two."

"I just think that less people on the second floor wash their hands. That's why the floors aren't as littered with paper towels."

"I admire your ability to examine all sides of this issue." Valencia said, "You would've made a great lawyer."

"Perhaps in another lifetime."

Just then, both of the women were startled by a loud squeak, followed by the sound of wood cracking against tile as two young men burst in through the door. The one in front was the larger of the two, he was overweight, but not fat. Rather, he was bulky in a way that implied he was athletic but still consumed more calories than he burned off. He had a buzzed hair cut, which made his head

look like a freshly-trimmed lawn. He wore a t-shirt which most likely had sleeves at some point, but he cut them off to give the appearance that his biceps had become so immense that the sleeves gave way and he burst through his shirt like the incredible hulk. He walked like a bull dog, chest out, stomach in, cheeks clenched, but that may have had something to do with the burden he was carrying at that moment. "I have to take a shit so bad!" he announced to everyone within earshot as he quickly shuffled to the furthest stall from the door. He shut the door behind him, lowered his shorts, sat down on the toilet, and let out unapologetic sounds of relief.

The boy that followed behind him wasn't in as much of a hurry, in fact he sauntered to his stall. His hair was disheveled and his eyes weren't yet adjusted to the light. It appeared as if he had just woken up. His body was in pristine condition. He looked to be the model of the ideal male physique, like Michelangelo's statue of David. He knew his body was beautiful and he was not shy about showing it. He wore nothing but a pare of jade-green boxer shorts and flip-flops, making a point of lowering his shorts far enough down his backside so as to show off his perfectly formed obliques. However, this meant that the crack in his gluteus maximus was also visible, but seeing as he was quite fond of that part of his body as well, he saw this as no real sacrifice. He chose the stall right next to the door, the very stall which Roberta had just knelt in front of for the last 20 minutes. He didn't close the door behind him, but would rather the two cleaning women have the opportunity to get a look at his chiseled plumber butt as he passed his water.

"Ah fuck dude!," the bulldog called to David, "I have an ethnic studies class in twenty minutes!"

"Sucks for you." David replied, "What are you taking ethnic studies for honkey?"

"It's a requirement bro. I need to take it for my social sciences credit."

"Why'd you choose a boring-ass class like that?" David asked, flushing the toilet and walking out to the sink area where Roberta and Valencia stood.

"I woke up late on sign-up day." said the bulldog, "That was all I could get into."

"That sucks." David said washing his hands.

"Fuck it!," the bulldog growled, "I'm not going. I don't feel like it."

"You're gonna fail that shit dude."

The bulldog flushed, but the toilet didn't complete its action. It made a gurgling sound for several seconds until finally giving up. The bulldog left the stall hooking up his belt and saying, "All I need is a C to pass. Anyway, who gives a shit about ethnic studies? I just need to get the credits out of the way so that I can take some real classes." He joined David at the sinks to wash his hands.

"What are you majoring in?" David asked while walking over to the paper towel dispenser.

"Business. I'm gonna own a company one day just like my dad."

"You're dumb ass? You'll be lucky if you can get these bitches' job cleaning up Sam's puke."

The bulldog took two paper towels, and began drying his hands with one then the other.

"Bout time they got to that." he said, "It's been sitting there since Friday."

"You can't get good help these days."

"What do you expect from Mexicans?"

They walked out. David held the door open for the bulldog who tossed his paper towels behind him as he exited. Both missed their mark and fell to the floor.

"What did I tell you?" Valencia proudly exclaimed after the boys left, "It's been there since Friday night. I knew it!" Roberta ignored Valencia's gloating. She was distracted by what she had just heard.

"Can you believe those guys?" Roberta exclaimed both anger and disbelief, "Saying all that stuff right in front of us?"

"They must not have thought we understood english." Valencia replied, not seeming too upset by their words.

"They said such, fowl, nasty things."

"I'd think after all this time as a janitor, you'd be well familiar with the fowl things that come out of people." Valencia joked.

"How could they allow those two into a place like this? I thought this institution was reserved for the best and the brightest."

"The best, the brightest, the most athletic, and the richest. My guess is that those gentlemen are part of the last two groups."

"What a waste of space."

"I agree. However, unlike them, we're being paid to come here, so act professional."

"The big dumb one clogged up the toilet." Roberta muttered in frustration.

"Professional," Valencia reminded her.

"Yes, I know," Roberta snapped back, "I'm upset with him as a professional."

The women went back to work. Valencia mopped the floors, and Roberta cleaned the toilets. She was forced to go back to the janitor's closet to get a plunger for the bulldog's droppings. After they finished their work, the two women packed up their equipment and moved on to the next room.

"How many months along are you?" Valencia asked Roberta as they pushed the cart down the hall.

"Three months. I'm afraid that I'll be showing soon."

"Yes, but don't worry, that doesn't last long."

"Do you think that one day my child will be able to come to a place like this?"

"Perhaps. If he's lucky."

2010 Scholarly Writing Prize - First Place

Katy Simonian

Restoring *Agbala*: The Transitional Character of Ezinma in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

After spending all night latched onto the back of the priestess Chielo, as they trekked through the darkness to the farthest corners of the nine villages to the cave of the Goddess Agbala, Ezinma had fallen asleep. Her parents, Ekwefi and Okonkwo, are equally exhausted from protecting her all night: following Chielo all night under the cover of darkness. The three lay exhausted while the entire household and neighborhood prepares for the betrothal ceremony of the daughter of Okonkwo's friend Obierika. Ekwefi, out of concern over the ordeal of the previous night, waits for Ezinma to wake up:

> "You need some sleep yourself," said Nwoye's mother.
>
> "You look very tired." As they spoke Ezinma emerged from the hut, rubbing her eyes and stretching her spare frame. She saw the other children with their water pots and remembered that they were going to fetch water for Obierika's wife. She went back to the hut and brought her pot.
>
> "Have you slept enough?" asked her mother.
>
> "Yes", she replied. "Let us go." (Achebe, 111)

"Yes, Let us go": The simple power of Ezinma's words signals her place in Chinua Achebe's explosive *Things Fall Apart*. Barely the age of ten, Ezinma carries herself with the grace of an old soul, and the biting spirit of a warrior. Her words are direct, deliberate, and to the point, echoing the verbal style of her father Okonkwo. Feminist theorist Luce Irigaray might call Ezinma's masculine verbal style a subordination of the feminine for the sake of feeding the collective need, or preference for the masculine in gender discourses (Irigaray 495). Critics like Florence Stratton indict the book and Achebe for not giving Ezinma enough of her own individual power through the story (Stratton 24). While women play a vital role in the novel, as well as in historical Igbo society, Stratton questions whether Achebe undermines or restores the dignity and respect to African women through his female characters. In response to these questions and concerns over the depth of respect given to the female characters of *Things Fall Apart*, I take a position similar to one offered by Ato Quayson in his interpretation of Ezinma. I will argue that Achebe writes female characters, like Ezinma, with tremendous depth and additionally that he places the most sacred responsibility of surviving and maintaining Igbo culture amidst the rise of British colonial rule in the hands of his unlikely heir and pride of his life: his daughter Ezinma. Far from undermining feminine agency, Achebe weaves a powerful exploration of the strength of the feminine in Ezinma's character and the confronting presence of *Agbala* throughout the novel.

Ezinma comes to represent a transition in the novel, on the local level with the status of Igbo women, the effect of the imposition of colonial rule in her family's homeland, and the struggle Okonkwo fights within himself over the demons he bears for his own father, and his desperation to maintain the tradition and respect he worked so hard to earn. Part of her father's internal struggle is the disappointment he feels in his eldest son Nwoye, who rejects his father's legacy, leaving Okonkwo without an all-important male heir to inherit and continue his name. It is through Ezinma that we sense her father's struggle the rising tide of Christian colonial missionaries as they pour onto the pages of history and weave their way into the lives of the Igbo in the novel. Ezinma's characterization as a transitional figure in fact represents the historically accurate Igbo woman in terms of their actions in response to colonial rule. Her force as transitional figure is portrayed through the relationship she shares with her father and the impact her mere existence and devotion has on his life and her own life throughout the novel. This, along with the other woman in the novel who surround her, including her mother and Okonkwo's second wife, Ekwefi, her father's other

wives, Chielo the priestess of Umuofia, and even the male characters who express their ideas about the importance and need to respect women, prove that Achebe does not seek to condone Okonkwo's preference for violence. Rather, through Ezinma, we see Okonkwo as an individual, bitter and resentful over the failures of his own father, the son who is not the measure of the man he wishes him to be, and the inner devastation he feels over building a legacy that will ultimately be locked in the hands of a daughter—even one he loves. His preoccupation with violence is a result of his biography as well as Igbo culture, but his views on women do not represent the general beliefs of the Igbo people. Ezinma's existence leads Okonkwo to confront his pride in his daughter, despite her femininity and embrace her as the child he loves.

Despite Okonkwo's pride in Ezinma, he is plagued by his inability to separate women from weakness in his own mind. Part of his undoing is his exile from the land he built with his own strength and will, only to return to find a new, effeminate crop of neighbors carrying Bibles and who woo men of Okonkwo's status to surrender their sons and daughter in the name of God and country. Lost and disengaged with the world he once loved, it is Ezinma who stays at her father's side through the bittier end. Her loyalty and courageous survival enact a transition between traditional indigenous life and British imperial rule, while the arc of her father's character invokes a quest narrative of reconciliation with one's identity.

Ezinma's ordeal with Chielo takes place toward the middle of the narrative. To get to the heart of the dynamic between Ezinma and her father and the importance of their relationship for both respectively, we must venture back to the beginning, when we are first introduced to her in the narrative. Through a close exploration of the text and by applying a deconstructive lens for both feminist and postcolonial criticism, I will reveal the imperative role Ezinma plays in the narrative and how she is the connective thread between her father, the transitional period of Igbo history, and her own ability to fully inhabit her role with mixture of determination and grace. In order to understand Ezinma's significance, it is crucial to consider her origins as an Igbo daughter. We are first introduced to her through a violent scene in which Okonkwo beats Ezinma's mother Ekwefi for plucking leaves off a banana tree.the beating results from Okonkwo's frustration and is early evidence of his defensive masculinity. "Okonkwo gave her a sound beating and left her and her only daughter weeping. Thus satisfying his anger, he goes out hunting" (38). At this tense moment, Ekwefi challenges Okonkwo's sexual prowess, commenting snidely and with Okonkwo in earshot "about guns that never shot (39)." Okonkwo's reaction is immediate—he chases her, fires his gun, narrowly missing her. Seeing that she is unharmed, he gives a heavy sigh and the two go on about the day's celebration of the New Yam Festival. The scene represents the passionate nature of their relationship and is depicted with a sense that such occurances, though tumultuous, are the norm between the two.

Ekwefi is Okonkwo's second wife, with whom he shares an obviously tumultuous and passionate relationship that can only be understood and appreciated when we consider its origin. Their love began at the same New Yam Festival years earlier, when Ekwefi, the village beauty, saw the young Okonkwo for the first time. The festival itself is a symbolic reminder of their passion for each other and conjures memories for Ekwefi:

> There was no festival in all the seasons of the year which gave her as much pleasure as the wrestling match. Many years ago when she was the village beauty Okonkwo had won her heart by throwing the Cat in the greatest contest in living memory. She did not marry him then because he was too poor to pay her bride-price. But a few years later she ran away from her husband and came to live with Okonkwo. (39-40)

The passion exists between Ekwefi and Okonkwo is unlike what he feels for his two other wives. For Okonkwo, wives signify a man's success in being able to afford to keep three women and a growing family on his farm. His marriage to Ekwefi is not like that of his other wives in that no formal engagement took place. She loved him, but both were bound by tradition and his lack of wealth prevented them from being together. However, it is clear early on in the discourse between Ekwefi and Okonkwo, that she is not an idle housewife who lives and breaths obedience to her husband's demanding will. Ekwefi is significant in highlighting the freedom Igbo women had to divorce, a freedom not shared by women in many western countries, including Great Britain in the 1890s when the action of the novel takes place. She decides to leave her husband for the man she truly loves and does so on her own accord. Indeed, she does satisfy her traditional role as an Igbo wife and as such, is not afraid, even after an unprovoked beating from her husband, to criticize Okonkwo. Through Ekwefi alone that we see some glimpse into Okonkwo's own history and the origins and causes of the passion he feels for her which at times with an overwhelming white heat that leaves them both scorched in the wake of domestic combat.

Much of the family dynamic of the novel revolves around Okonkwo's authority which instills fear in those around him, all except Ezinma, Okonkwo's daughter by Ekwefi. The parent-child bond is prevalent throughout the novel and is not limited to Okonkwo and Ezinma. The conflict in this dynamic runs throughout the novel between Okonkwo and his eldest son Nwoye, and begins with Okonkwo's relationship with his own father, Unoka. It soon becomes apparent that Okonkwo's preoccupation with overt displays of masculinity stems for his desire to be the epitome of everything his father was not in life: brave, hard-working, dependable, proud. Okonkwo is haunted by the memories of his father and the resentment he bears for his gentle, idle nature, and penchant for music and merriment over what Okonkwo considers to be more appropriately masculine endeavors like war and working to pay off his many debts to support his family. Okonkwo, was forced to be the man of the family, from an early age due to his father's neglect of financial security. Traces of Okonkwo's inner rage and reactive sense of masculinity are evident in the narrator's reflection:

> Even as a little boy he had resented his father's failures and weakness, and even now he still remembered how he had suffered when a playmate had told him that his father was *agbala.* That was how Okonkwo first came to know that agbala was not only a name for a woman, it could also mean a man who had taken no title. (Achebe 13)

Kwando Osei-Nyame references Bakhtin's theories on heteroglossia to analyze the ways in which Okonkwo's language links women with the idea of weakness. The Igbo word for women according to Achebe, also means "gentleness" or "idleness." Such weakness is connected to Okonkwo's bitter memories of his father and the fear he inwardly bears of losing his own strength (Nyame 148). While the Igbo culture in general is one that values strength, which Okonkwo equates with overt masculinity. But here, Achebe makes it clear that while some elements of Igbo life in Umuofia fall under the wing of a patriarchal structure, Okonkwo's feelings do not represent the broader Igbo society presented in the novel. The privileging of the masculine while denouncing anything peaceful or meek as feminine, a word which serves as a substitute for weakness, is specific to Okonkwo's character.

Nyame reflects how Okonkwo's tumultuous relationship with Ekwefi and his loving relationship with Ezinma represents the assertion of independence of women in the novel as they stand up to his dominant nature and assume his power of decision making in key places in the novel. This idea is further supported by "companionship of equals" between with regard to Ezinma and Ekwefi. It is easy to understand then that when Okonkwo finally takes Ekwefi as his wife, it is not merely for the prestige of a second marriage. For Okonkwo, it is a moment of accomplishment in proving his worth as a man. Losing Ekwefi earlier in his life

wounded his pride, as he had no father of honorable name or communal respect to bid for her hand on his behalf. Looking at Ekwefi is a reminder to Okonkwo of not only his true love for her, but of the uphill climb to high respect in society that he earned only through his strength and will. In doing so, he steps out of his father's shadow and carves a name for himself that commands respect and represents honor in the nine tribes. Having a daughter is not the ideal bearer of a legacy of masculinity for a man with such inner torment. Yet, a daughter is the perfect lens through which Okonkwo's humanity is revealed to his society and to himself.

Ezinma is her father's daughter, an only child, and the center of her mother's world:

> Ezinma did not call her mother *Nne* like all of the other children. Instead she called her by her name, Ekwefi, as her father and other grown up people did. The relationship between them was not only that of mother and child. There was something in it like the companionship of equals, which was strengthened by such conspiracies as eating eggs in the bedroom. (Achebe 76-77)

It is clear that Ezinma is the center of her mother's world, and that center is comprised of love and a mutual protective bond they share with one another. The mention of their secret penchant for eggs, as children were not permitted to have them for fear they would encourage them to steal (76), is significant in the fact that Okonkwo has prior knowledge of their habit. Though he threatens to beat Ekwefi, she and Ezinma continue and Ezinma's appetite for the eggs, and perhaps the quiet subversive quality of eating them in secret, grows keener as time goes on. Even though there is a bond between Okonkwo's three wives, there does exist a hierarchical structure in terms of duty granted to each, depending on their rank as it were, within the household. With Ezinma, we see an equal born into a family, as a woman and as the daughter of her father's second wife. She may be an unlikely person to be the equal in the patriarchal structure of her father's house, but she is one nonetheless. Ezinma's assertion of independence as a character and her father's aversion to feminine weakness sets the initial terms for masculine and feminine discourse in the novel.

At the heart of this discourse is Okonkwo's inner struggle over the fact that Ezinma is a woman, a daughter and not a son. His closeness to Ezinma contrasts with his strained relationship with his eldest son, Nwoye. He has high expectations for his boy, who is the obvious heir to the legacy his father worked so hard to build. Okonkwo did not wish his children the same childhood shame he experienced with his own father. His tough exterior and status as one of the greatest warriors gives his children a sense of pride in their father, which he hopes they will both respect and move to emulate in their lives. As one can imagine, having a son who reminds Okonkwo of his own father, is a source of regret and rage and puts a knife through his desire to escape his past and create a present and future of sons to carry on his feared and revered name. Okonkwo wants for Nwoye a future life that validates his masculinity:

> He wanted him to be a prosperous man, having enough in his barn to feed the ancestors with regular sacrifices. And so he was always happy when he heard grumbling about women. That showed that in time he would be able to control his women-folk. No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and his children (and especially his women) he was not really a man. (Achebe 53)

Okonkwo's preoccupation with his son's future is linked to his defensive masculinity. A man who can control his wife can control himself and those around him and those who cannot are not real men. Control, power, and prosperity, are the values that motivate Okonkwo and he hopes to see that same fire in his son. But as the novel shows, Okonkwo fails in this precisely due to his hyperbolic masculinity, which is rooted in

his desire to dissociate from the feminine qualities of his father. In doing so he neglects the tenderness and communication necessary to forge a relationship with his young, impressionable son, Nwoye.

Nwoye, for his part, knew that it was right for a man, according to his father, to be masculine, strong, and violent, but he could not help but feel more at ease with himself when at home with his mother and the women and children of the family. His grumbling about women is in fact not his own, but of the influence of Ikemefuna, the young man sent from a neighboring village as payment for a debt that was owed over the murder of an Umuofia man's wife. The boy is sent to live with Okonkwo and his family until the Council of Elders decides what is fit to do with him. The boy stays with the family for three years, and in that time grows out of his initial shock and homesickness to become a beloved member of the family. He even grew in high esteem in Okonkwo's eyes, though his presence would unnerve Okonkwo, who he referred to as father. Okonkwo's emotions are usually kept inward unless they are displays of violence or anger, but his pleasure in the development of his son in Ikemefuna's presence is made clear. Ikemefuna is the son Okonkwo wished he had; he is a hard worker and mature beyond his years. Despite the liking Okonkwo takes in him, Ikemefuna's presence highlights, by contrast, Nwoye's gentle disposition and character, and the more Okonkwo shows pride in Ikemefuna, the more he feels the intense disappointment over the plight of his own son by blood.

Having a suitable heir is a problem early on for Okonkwo and persists throughout his emotional journey in the novel. Okonkwo's pleasure over at least the prospect of a son to match his potential is swiftly taken from him when the Elders of Umuofia decide to kill him. Here were see Okonkwo and his preoccupation with masculine displays set apart when he beats Nwoye heavily for breaking into tears when he hears Ikemefuna will "be taken home the next day" (57). The fate of the boy is obvious to all those in the household and his impending death inwardly devastates Okonkwo. He is losing the son of his heart. True to form, not wanting to appear weak, Okonkwo goes so far as to accompany the men holding Ikemefuna into the heart of the forest. As one of the men in the group raises and fires his machete, Ikemefuna runs toward Okonkwo shouting "My father, they have killed me!" (61) and "dazed with fear Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down" (61). The fear the narrator speaks of is Okonkwo's fear of his own weakness, which can be interpreted as femininity and lack of masculinity. His fear runs deep enough within his tormented soul to move him to be the one to strike down the boy who called him father, whom he loved and wished was his own.

It is through Ikemefuna's death that Ezinma emerges as a force in the narrative through her relationship with her father and Okonkwo's growing admiration and nostalgia over the realization that the best of him is secure I her. Though he admires her strength and wisdom beyond her years, he is further tormented by the fact that in his mind, as a woman, she cannot fulfill his legacy. The dynamic between Okonkwo and Ezinma is one of comfort and deep mutual understanding as seen through the few exchanges they share throughout the narrative:

> "You have not eaten for two days," said his daughter Ezinma when she brought the food to him. "So you must finish this." She sat down and stretched her legs in front of her. Okonkwo ate the food absent-mindedly. 'She should have been a boy' he thought as he looked at his ten year old daughter. He passed her a piece of fish. (Achebe 63-64)

As he sits contemplating what he has done, he repeats the words once again to himself, "She should have been a boy" (64). Such statements along with the tone of Ezinma's speech serve as examples of what Irigaray would refer to as "the path", the one historically assigned to the feminine: that of mimicry"(Irigaray 795). The direct feminine challenge to the condition of a purely feminine voice is to speak as masculine, in

order to exhibit qualities more associated with maleness. Irigaray points out the tradition of women needing to assume masculine qualities in terms of voice and action in order to be deemed strong, or even relevant in the eyes of the reader. Her reflection on the distinction between the masculine and the feminine and the collective preference for the masculine in literature reflects Okonkwo's admiration and pride in Ezinma's strength as he sees it as mirroring his own.

Next, a discussion between Okonkwo and his friend Obierika shows that Okonkwo is aware of his daughter's strength and character, and his pride in her independent spirit. Okonkwo vents to him about the worry he feels for his son Nwoye, saying that "a bowl of yams can throw him in a wrestling match (66)" and that he sees nothing of himself in his son or any of his children except Ezinma. He goes on to say, "Where are the young suckers that will grow when the old banana tree dies? If Ezinma had been a boy I would have been happier. She has the right spirit"(66). These lines directly link Ezinma with the idea of preserving his legacy. When he, the banana tree in question dies, his sons are to grow in his stead. However, he feels the chill of a man who knows he will wither away, and that his tree as it were will bear no leaves for the future generations to admire their origins. He would have been happier if Ezinma had been a boy, because he sees in her a spirit of determination that he feels he possesses. The more he tries to compliment the nature of Ezinma's character, the more he feels nostalgic over his perfect child being trapped in the confines of her gender. We also see another important revelation in this scene in Obierika's point of view on the death of Ikemefuna. Okonkwo questions his friends' reasons for not being there at the execution, to which he is met with firm resolve in Obierika's unwavering position on Okonkwo's actions. He feels that though it was part of tradition, the act of killing the boy is not something the Earth Goddess will reward, and even if Obierika himself had been in the same position, he declares that "if the Oracle said my son should be killed I would neither dispute it nor be the one to do it" (67). His views are another way in which the discourse proves that Okonkwo's penchant for violence is not an inherent tradition for the Igbo, but rather the manifestation of his own rage. Obierika's character acts as both a mirror and a source of conscience for Okonkwo.

His trust in Obierika reveals the inward emotions Okonkwo feels toward the subject of his children, and his son's lack of potential, which is boiling up inside him after the death of Ikemefuna and the spark he sees in Ezinma. Soon after this exchange, Obierika's son Maduka enters the room, who we know from a previous scene, is an accomplished wrestler and intimidating figure for his young age. Through the insertion of this subtle detail, we see what could be a pang of envy in Okonkwo for the fortune of his best friend to have such a promising son. Despite his hard work for everything that he has, he does not see the ultimate reward of a son to bear his name. While these scenes between Okonkwo and Obierika may seem to be peripheral moments in the richness of the story, the interaction between the two friends serves to emphasize the beginning of Okonkwo's isolation and alienation from the culture and community he loves the most. It is apparent that while he outwardly justifies the killing of Ikemefuna, the fact that he takes the matter up with Obierika reveals the pain in his heart rather than the strength of his fist. The revelation of his heart comes to the surface even more through the exertion of his protective nature for Ezinma.

Despite Okonkwo's chauvinism, there is a subliminal privileging of the women in Igbo life as depicted in the novel. Ezinma shares common ground with her father, not just in her sharp sense of necessity and rather brief way with words. The two share the identity of an ostracized child, alienated from others do to the circumstances of their birth. While Okonkwo feels a sense of alienation for his father's failures, Ezinma feels the pressure and staple of being the only child among her mother's several miscarriages. For this reason, she is a miracle to her parents, but also a source of concern as her health is precarious throughout her childhood. She is thought to be what the Igbo call an *ogbanje*, or a changeling; a child who repeatedly dies and returns to its mother's womb and is then reborn in what is often an unending cycle. The only way

for an *ogbanje* to survive is for a special kind of stone which forms the link between an *ogbanje* and the spirit world, known as the *iyi-uwa* to be broken:

> Everybody knew she was an *ogbanje*. These sudden bouts of sickness and health were typical of her kind. But she had lived so long that perhaps she had decided to stay. Some of them did become tired of their evil rounds of birth and death, or took pity on their mothers, and stayed. Ekwefi believed deep inside her that Ezinma had come to stay.
> (Achebe 80).

One can easily imagine the terror Ekwefi feels when Chielo, the Priestess of Agbala comes to call on her daughter to present her to her God. As a woman and priestess, Chielo commands the respect of those around her, who dare not offend her. To offend Chielo is to offend Agbala, and no manner of protestations can match the will of the Goddess. When she arrives at Okonkwo's compound unexpectedly, she asks Ekwefi, "Where is my daughter Ezinma? Agbala wants to see her" (101). There is a level of sisterhood imbedded in her words and a level of trust between the discourse of the women. Chielo's tone in speaking with Ekwefi is far more genial then her tone with Okonkwo. As he tries to plead for his daughter, saying that she is ill and still asleep, the priestess screams, "Beware, Okonkwo!" she warned. "Beware of exchanging words with Agbala. Does a man speak when a God speaks? Beware!"(101) Here, we see Okonkwo in his first moment of vulnerability in the novel when he feels helpless desperation to protect the daughter he admires and loves. He sees so much of himself in her, that though her gender is problematic for his manly persona, her will to survive is a match for her father's own.

But there is something far more revealing in this discourse, as it is just as playful as it is profound. The discourse between Chielo and Okonkwo marks a subliminal turning point in the novel that manifests itself in the final chapters of Okonkwo and Ezinma's narrative. She warns him not to exchange words with Agbala, her Goddess. If we remember from earlier on in the text, Agbala is a word which has humbled Okonkwo before, as agbala is the word that was once used to describe his father. *Agbala* is the Igbo word for woman. He must beware not to exchange words with the Agbala, a woman, as mere men do not speak or challenge the words of a God, in this case being the spiritual personification of women. Biodon Jeyifo describes this episode between Ezinma, Ekwefi, Chielo, and Okonkwo as a subplot of the novel that showcases the determination of Okonkwo to protect his daughter and the feature of strength exhibited by the female characters at this turning point in the narrative (Jeyifo 874). For the first time, the feminine is not subordinated in the discourse but rather elevated to the dynamic of equals between Ekwefi and Chielo, and the assertion of the superiority of the feminine over Okonkwo by both Chielo and Agbala.

The elevation of the feminine discourse comes at a time when Okonkwo and his family are exiled after he inadvertently shoots and kills the son of a prominent Elder. When faced with immediately having to leave the land and life he built, he retreats to his mother's homeland of Mbanta, as is Igbo tradition under such circumstances. Jeyifo examines the importance and significance of the absence of Okonkwo's mother from the narrative. There are very few details given about her life, and little if any outward mention of her impact on her son's life. However, it is important to note that when he is humbled by his exile from the home where he holds prominence in society, he retreats to the home of his mother's people for asylum (Jeyifo 874). While the motherland is a source of spiritual healing and nurturing from his mother's kinsmen, it is also a living reminder of his shame. It is here in Mbanta that he is greeted by his mother's kinsmen, and it is here where he ultimately learns of the arrival of colonial forces.

White men had only previously been described once earlier in the text, when we get the first hint at their arrival, back when Okonkwo had his place in Umuofia:

"And have you seen them?" asked Machi.
"Have you?" asked Obierka.
"One of them passes here frequently," said Machi.
"His name is Amadi."

> Those who knew Amadi laughed. He was a leper, and the polite name for leprosy was "the white skin" (74).

Later when they are said to arrive on "iron horses" (138) we know immediately of the opinions of the Igbo on the impending settlement of the uninvited guests. As depicted in the novel, especially for Okonkwo, they are exactly that; uninvited guests who carry with them unwanted offerings of inquisition. For Okonkwo, there is truth in jest of the reference to the whites as lepers. He sees the influence of the colonists as a disease which will flourish throughout the Igbo if they do not fight to mark what is theirs. His feelings run deeper as he loses Nwoye to the Christian religion and the seemingly kind nature of the colonists. Nwoye's renouncing of his identity as Okonkwo's son is due largely in part to Okonkwo repeatedly expressing his disappointment over Nwoye's rejection of his values. He is not born a suitable heir to his father's legacy but he is his eldest son and his loss is a personal strike against Okonkwo's masculinity, as Nwoye opts for a life of acceptance among the colonists rather than the pitiless endeavor of trying to live up to his father's expectations. The loss of his son represents a permanent loss of masculinity and power in his home life and in the Igbo community at large through the impact of the colonists, who Okonkwo finds effeminate and weak.

It is important that Okonkwo reestablish himself on his return from his seven year exile in order to secure the protection and freedom he has in being the ruler of his household. Now that Nwoye is an abomination in his eyes, Okonkwo suddenly finds himself in a fortunate position as he is lucky to have beautiful, desirable daughters, especially Ezinma. "He never stopped regretting that Ezinma was a girl. Of all his children she alone understood his every mood. A bond of sympathy had grown between them as the years passed"(172). During their exile, Ezinma grows from the frail child with a fighter's personality to one of the most beautiful girls in Mbanta. While the hardships of exile led to her own bouts of depression, she could bear the company of no other person but her father. Known as the Crystal of Beauty, she comes into her own in the land of her grandmother, and many men express a desire to marry her;

> But she refused them all, because her father had called her in one evening and said to her: "There are many good and prosperous people here, but I shall be happy if you marry in Umuofia when we return home." That was all he said. But Ezinma had seen clearly all the thought and hidden meaning behind the few words. And she agreed."
> (Achebe 173)

Her obedience to her father's wishes is not a mark of subordination, but rather an example of her intuitive perception of her father's situation. She is the one to refuse these men, who would provide her with a stable life, because of her understanding of her father's intentions. She knows that marrying in Umuofia will reopen the door of their old life and she is eager to be the key to their return. Her eagerness to do what her father wishes is not a sign of her being a subject to his dominance, but instead reveals her awareness of the power of her own beauty and position as a woman which will give her family their life back. Her presence in this portion of the text solidifies her as Okonkwo's only heir. History speaks of the plight of the women in Igbo life in the lower part of Nigeria during the time in which the story takes place. We know that the one economic resource that women did not own was land, but that Igbo society was flexible when it came to the gender system, and women did own their own livestock, rich fields in farm and garden crops, and the "presents" from their wealthy in-laws upon marrying influential sons (Amadiume 31-32). Ezinma alone can

bring herself and her family stability, prominence, and fulfill the promise of redemption Okonkwo envisions on their return.

A common critique of the novel by Stratton and others is that while Ezinma is presented as a promising character for action—she seems to disappear from the pages at the end of the story. Throughout this paper, I have sought to dismiss such claims through the clear evidence within the discourse of the novel. I would argue that it is in the final pages of the novel that Ezinma fully comes into her own, not simply from the perspective of her father, but from the reflection of the narrator, whose observations represent those of the other characters in the story, and subsequently our own. Ato Quayson points out the fact that women are important, active, and revered in Igbo society and that we see this in Ezinma as she is represented as a "tough-minded and questioning personality (Quayson 125)." Given the importance of her marriage upon her return to Umuofia, perhaps the greatest display of bravery and love comes when Okonkwo is arrested by the local colonial magistrate and is facing his impending death. It is Ezinma who rises to the occasion and does not accept or submit to the rule of any force, even one as great or as masculine as the British imperial troops. When facing the bitter end, it is Ezinma who boldly abandons her engagement and makes a call to action on behalf of her father:

Okonkwo's compound was like a deserted homestead. It was as if cold water had been poured on it. His family was all there, but everyone spoke in whispers. His daughter Ezinma had broken her twenty-eight day visit to the family of her future husband, and returned home when she heard that her father had been imprisoned, and was going to be hanged. As soon as she got home she went to Obierika to ask what the men of Umuofia were going to do about it.

(Achebe 197).

This is not a woman governed by any sense of imposed propriety, but by the call of her own conscience and the need for action in defending the father she loves. In doing so, she postpones the expected display of proving her worth to her in-laws, and instead safeguards her identity as an Igbo woman through action. True to history, when facing colonial rule women played a vital role in their direct participation in the resistance of colonial domination, and Ezinma is a literary testament to the true spirit of Igbo women of the time. In 1900, when all other ethnic peoples of Nigeria accepted British colonial rule, the Igbo of southeastern Nigeria continued their war of independence until 1906, paying a heavy price for their struggle. While the Igbo warriors of Okonkwo's era did not win then, their descendants led to the struggle and victory for independence in 1960 (Crowder 72).For Okonkwo, the intrusion of colonialism and losing his grip on his family and place in the world places him in a child-like position, where as an Igbo son he must be submissive to the rule of the colonists, who in his eyes are an outside version of his own effeminate father. He takes his own life only when he realizes that there is no place left for him in his old world, as the best of who he once was is secured in Ezinma. He is not disappointed in seeing himself and his legacy handed down to his daughter, but he cannot help but equate his legacy and being delivered to the hands of women, as a sign of the Igbo culture being enveloped by the weak, effeminite, but overwhelming power of colonial rule. It is clear that Okonkwo's reservations about his legacy being secured in Ezinma, is not a product but a symptom of the effects of his own demons as an Igbo son. Ezinma comes to represent a fusion of discourses, both masculine and feminine, as her character is a marker of transition between the spiritual, indigenous world of her father, and the occupation of colonial Nigeria. Through Ezinma, Achebe establishes one true discourse in which we are left with a woman of dignity and guile, tradition and power, who is not defined by her father but by the love she bears him and the innate wisdom, audacity, and sense of her own identity as she is a woman, a daughter, an Igbo—she is Agbala.

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Labyrinth, Labourinth, *Labor intus*: Inner Work and Female Subjectivity in Lady Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

In Lady Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, the labyrinth can be seen as representative of internal and private space, both constructed and confusing. In a time where a woman was seen to be good if she remained "chaste, silent, and obedient," the labyrinth serves as an excellent metaphor for the internal struggle that "inner work" can cause. Adhering to the Petrarchan symbolic, Pamphilia simultaneously has to articulate her desire and be the sexualized object. As a result, Pamphilia suffers more than her male counterpart. The significance of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* is identified by Natasha Distiller: "Wroth is the first woman to enter the amorous sequence as its other, and to begin to speak back" (96). Subjectivity in this sequence is all about perception: woman as subject, viewing and being viewed, seeing and seeming, eyes and "I's", internal and external, and most significantly public versus private perceptions and personas. Labyrinthine themes run throughout the sequence, evoking associations with the myth of Ariadne, who rescued Theseus only to later be betrayed by him. This reinforces the connection between the labyrinth and tragically frustrated love. In the corona, Pamphilia wanders through a maze of repeated efforts to pay homage to her captor, Cupid (she is "all-loving", after all) but emerges with a renewed feeling of entrapment in an understanding of the relation of love and the self. Her strategies involve inverting modes of cultural regulation in order to construct and legitimate certain conceptual, psychological, and physical spaces for her narrative. The labyrinthine theme that runs through the sequence serves to remind the reader of the struggle with female subjectivity as it is displayed through the depiction of the pain of having to self-represent and the self-representation of pain.

Lady Mary (Sidney) Wroth is best known today as the first English woman writer to have published an original work of prose fiction during her lifetime. For her contemporaries, her primary identity was as a member of the illustrious and learned Sidney family. As the elaborately decorated title-page of *The Countesse of Mountgoumerie's Urania* announced to the world in 1621, she was, after all, "Daughter to the right Noble Robert Earle of Leicester, and Neece to the ever famous, and renowned Sr Philip Sidney knight, and to the most excllet Lady Mary Countesse of Pembroke, Late deceased" (Fitzmaurice 110). It was an identity which left a decided mark on all her writing. Because of her relation to these two famous authors, Wroth followed not only in the tradition of a writer, but as a *Sidney* writer.

The foremost literary precedents in Lady Mary's life were, as noted above, two - her illustrious uncle, Sir Philip Sidney, and her aunt, the Countess of Pembroke. The Countess was a noted literary patron, and a poet and translator in her own right. In choosing to edit Sidney's *Arcadia* and continue his translations of the Psalms after her brother's death, she had in a way appropriated the authority which had been posthumously vested in Sir Philip Sidney as the ideal Protestant patron and author, while still conforming to the established and acceptable genres of feminine writing. Breaking with this powerful precedent, Wroth ventured into a totally different literary arena in which men had always been the creators and women the passive recipients. This was the world of romance, love, and Petrarchan lyrics.

In the case of Wroth's sonnets, the issue of gendered address is problematic because Pamphilia avoids speaking to Amphilanthus directly. Although he is named in the title, he is never explicitly mentioned in the 103-sonnet sequence. The sonnets tend far more often towards apostrophizing abstractions such as Night, Hope, and Time. Part of this evasiveness on the part of Pamphilia may be Wroth's nod to the context in which she was writing. There were a great deal of social constraints on an Elizabethan/Jacobean woman

writer dealing frankly with the subject of desire. Through *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, Wroth revises the sonnet form, removing it from the public and even 'political' arena and placing it within a more private, self-created, psychological space. In doing so, she resists the performative aspect of other sonnet sequences ("blest be these sonnets, source of all my fame"). Consequently, while the writing itself may not engender the kind of intrigue suggested by other sonnets, it does represent the trials of female authorship and Wroth's transformation of the Petrarchan sonnet. Wroth develops subtle techniques to circumvent these obstacles, as in the following sonnet: "Dear famish not what you yourself gave food/destroy not what your glory is to save/kill not that soul to which you spirit gave" (P15 1-3). The lines can be read as an open confession to her beloved, but can just as easily be interpreted as an address to Cupid. The mythological veil allows the speaker to speak with the same bluntness as Astrophil in Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil to Stella*: "Your sight is all the food I do desire." Occasionally one of the sonnets will have an internal turn, a subtle shift of address, as in Sonnet P47 beginning with "You blessed stars" and which moves from a description of the celestial heavens to refer to the "light of my joy, fixed steadfast, nor will move"(10). Rather than blatantly attacking or admonishing Amphilanthus for his infidelity, Pamphilia at times links him to the mischievous actions of Cupid, and describes the various punishments the 'child' undergoes, as in P58, 64, and 70.

One of the most significant tropes in the sequence is when Pamphilia reveals herself to be a woman lover writing about her male beloved, rather than solely a disembodied lover. One factor is how she frequently assigns a feminine gendering to the abstractions that she addresses. In sonnet P13, she speaks of Night as a female companion and fellow love-sufferer: "My thoughts are sad; her face as sad does seem/My pains are long; her hours tedious are." (9-10) This bonding with a female Night recurs again in Sonnet P17 when Pamphilia sees herself as part of a larger body of "oppressed" lovers, emphasizing the female perspective of the speaker in contrast to "men's phant'sies" (Miller "Rewriting" 297). Pamphilia's fellowship with feminized Night reappears when she invokes the name of darkness, which "does truly suit with [she] oppressed" (P22 3), as it covers a carpet woven together from dead leaves: "If trees and leaves for absence, mourners be/ No marvel that I grieve, who like want see" (P22 13-14). Wroth's most 'graphic' reference to the female body comes in Sonnet P40:

> False hope which feeds but to destroy, and spill
> What it first breeds; unnatural to the birth
> Of thine own womb; conceiving but to kill
> And plenty gives to make the greater dearth. (1-4)

Wroth perceives the kind of display associated with birth (as a metaphor for creation) as dangerous. To "birth" the sonnets would be to leave them vulnerable to the betrayals of the public world of the court. The contrast between birth as a metaphor for creation, so prominent in male-authored sequences, versus birth as an image of silent betrayal demonstrates how, for the male author, the reader may observe both the public and private spaces he inhabits – the inner self may be revealed to the public eye. On the other hand, the reader of Pamphilia to Amphilanthus must intrude upon the private experience of miscarriage and ultimately find his or her own way out of this private domain, just as Pamphilia must attempt to work her way out of her inner labyrinth. She describes false hope in a distinctly female image of miscarriage, and links it in the next stanza to an example of the political ruler who rewards and advances his subjects only to betray them. By transitioning from the natural body to the "body politic", she hints towards love's tyrannical power to employ false hope to ensnare the lover. Up to this point all is familiar enough from traditional literature of unrequited love; but there is a shift in the seventh sonnet, addressed to Cupid, signaling the presence of a "resolved soul":

> I do confess, 'twas thy will made me choose,

And thy fair shows made me a lover prove,
When I my freedom did for pain refuse.
Yet this Sir god, your Boy-ship I despise;
Your charms I obey, but love not want of eyes. (10-14)

Cupid's famous blindness does not impress her. She admits her powerlessness before his charms but will not allow this as an excuse for not taking responsibility for her own actions. Although, like darkness in the opening sonnet, Cupid has caused her a "want of eyes" (read "I's"), she will still retain enough of her inner self to remain constant. This ethic is the basis for her honor and is the ethic she is recommending to Amphilanthus. In P24, she makes this recommendation explicit:

Then, since my faith is such, so kind my sleep,
That gladly thee presents into my thought,
And still true lover-like thy face does keep,
So as some pleasure shadow-like is wrought.
Pity my loving, nay, of conscience give
Reward to me in whom thy self does live. (9-14)

Wroth uses the Petrarchan convention that an act of fealty must be recognized and rewarded by the beloved. Masculine voices use the argument to gain sexual access--the woman, if she consents to "ease his pain," consents to being treated as an objective and as an object. Pamphilia's objective, however, is not Amphilanthus himself (whom she has already attained) but rather his constancy. She is so faithful that she dreams of him: "my faith is such." The dream image, however, is not the Amphilanthus of experience but the Neo-platonic potential she sees in him ("*true* Lover-like"). She will not objectify, for to do so would deprive her beloved of the only example available to him of a non-objectifying love, and so seal his fate. In like manner the remainder of the sonnet sequence turns inward, with many poems meditative and contemplative in character, or self-exhortatory: "Yet Faith still cries, Love will not falsify" (P68 14). The echo (and reversal) here of Philip Sidney's "But ah, Desire still cries, give me some food!" (*Astrophil to Stella* 72 14) is instructive: where Astrophil seeks escape from virtue through the voice of personified Desire, Pamphilia seeks to hold to the virtue of constancy through the personified voice of Love.

In prior male-authored sonnet sequences, it was through the mediating figure of the female beloved that the division between public and private space could be imagined. Peter Stallybrass notes that it is through this "sonnet mistress" that "it is possible to envision a retreat from the claustrophobic court...into a world of private desire" (67). Similarly, William Shullenburger describes sonnets as the only pure space, a space away from the "persistent sense of social intrusiveness" (49). Although for women private space was not necessarily representative of freedom, Wroth nonetheless uses he emergent division between public and private to construct a textual space for Pamphilia - one that could resist the social stigmas attached to female speech and writing.

With no female predecessors to model her new Petrarchan-style poet upon, Wroth constructs a textual space that favors Pamphilia's voice, simultaneously repressing the social constraints that would interfere with her speech and showing the labyrinthine internal struggle of self-representation. *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* traces the shadowy boundaries of Pamphilia's psyche, and Wroth's emphasis on her inner emotion avoids depicting her in ways that might transgress societal norms. Jeff Masten describes the text of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* as an "almost inscrutable private language" (67), noting the extreme lack of social referents that would tie the reader back into the public world. Pamphilia, and therefore Wroth, desires that the reader remove him or herself from the constant view of eyes (society) and instead focus in on the internal gaze, self-construction and the search for self-knowledge within a maze that seems to be inescapable. Pamphilia's "inscription of absence as the central force in the sequence indicates that Wroth transforms the

restrictions of poetic discourse into its very theme" (Wall 335).

The textual space of the sonnets, located in Pamphilia's labyrinthine thought, effectively eliminates the pressing social constraints and referents that would compete within the sequence with Pamphilia's position as lover-poet and Wroth's as female writer. This distancing begins with the inward turn of the first sonnet in the sequence, which is initiated under the cover of darkness: "When night's black mantle could most darkness prove,/And sleep, death's image did my senses hire/From knowledge of myself" (P1 1-3). During her dream vision, Pamphilia is separated from her "self." No longer attached to her physical body that causes such problems for her representation in the physical and social world, she is transformed into a "lover" (14). Her transformation is a wholly private experience that excludes even Amphilanthus. The concluding lines confirm Pamphilia's deliberate entrance into this private space: "I, waking hoped as dreams it would depart/ Yet since, oh me, a lover I have been" (13-14). Wroth does not present Pamphilia as a writer struggling to find the best words to describe her beloved, but rather as one literally caught in the private dilemma of love - a lover unable to free herself from the flames that are now burning within her. The dream initiates a form of agency by creating a secure textual space. By distancing Pamphilia from her physical and inherently social body, by taking the heart and thrusting it further inward, Wroth opens a textual arena located beyond the social and public realm. The speaker in the initial sonnet is not specifically gendered, but the title of the sequence itself reminds the reader of the speaker's voice: Pamphilia's.

Throughout the sequence the reader remains within Pamphilia's private space, within her mind. In direct opposition to the typical female persona present in a sonnet sequence, nothing is known about her external appearance. Sonnet P48 epitomizes Pamphilia's distance from her physical body: "Then look on me, I am to these addressed,/I am the soul that feels the greatest smart,/I am that heartless trunk of heart's depart" (5-7). In these more assertive lines, Pamphilia exposes herself as a "soul" compared to her "heartless trunk" (trunk glossed as human body). Masten reads Pamphilia's "heartless trunk" as embodying the potential for a female subject rather than object - the gutted body is therefore representative of her "refusal to circulate as a Petrarchan sign" (74-75). The contrast between Pamphilia's gutted body and her spirit suggests the importance of Pamphilia's psyche rather than her body. Wroth proposes that Pamphilia is essentially bodiless, leaving the reader with the impression that Pamphilia's emotion, and the text that is a product of this emotion, are located in her "soul". Nonetheless, the conclusion of the sonnet reveals Wroth's painful awareness of the impossibility of constructing a wholly private space: "I should not have been made this stage of woe/Where sad disasters have their open show" (12-13). Although Wroth recognizes that a written manuscript is an inherently public gesture - once the words are written down they become much more difficult to keep contained - she demonstrates her resistance to the text being a part of the public spectacle. Pamphilia is a spiritual essence and "should not" be understood as a part of the spectacle of the stage.

Wroth's emphasis on Pamphilia's soul allows her to distance herself from the social implications of the act of writing and focus instead on expressing inner emotion. Throughout the sequence, Wroth promotes the truth and sincerity of what remains unseen. Sonnet P54 begins with this theme: "Oh stay mine eyes, shed not these fruitless tears" (1). The eyes, a symbol for the visible world, are "stayed", turned inward upon themselves, upon the self, and Pamphilia reveals that "true sorrow" is kept within:

> True sorrow never outward wailing bears,
> Be ruled by me, keep all the rest in store,
> Till no room is that may contain one more,
> Then in that sea of tears, drown helpless me (8-11).

This sonnet echoes the inward momentum of the opening sonnet. By keeping her grief private, Pamphilia effectively internally drowns herself. By drowning herself in her tears, Wroth implies that Pamphilia is

separate from the "me" of the sonnet. The conclusion proposes that if Pamphilia can successfully come to a type of self-actualization, she will then be free, stating, "[this] done, we shall from torments freed be" (14). Wroth uses emotion to define Pamphilia as a Petrarchan subject rather than object and simultaneously suppresses her "social" body. This is demonstrated again in Sonnet P55, which uses fire as a metaphor to suggest Pamphilia's interior passion. Again Wroth notes the fallibility of the eyes in fully affirming her affection: "Mine eyes can scarce sustain the flames, my heart/ does trust in them my passions to impart,/And languishingly strive to show my love" (9-11). Pamphilia's eyes are unable to fully demonstrate the passionate emotions of her burning heart; consequently, the true emotion is contained and the conclusion of the sonnet reinforces this image: "My breath not able to breathe least part/ Of that increasing fuel of my smart,/ Yet love I will till I but ashes prove" (12-14). She is breathless, and therefore speechless. The fire that burns inside of her is part of her private experience and cannot escape through her mouth or eyes - it must be written. The reference to "eyes" can also be read as "I's". Line 9 implies that even her writing cannot sustain her emotion, in spite of the fact that Pamphilia trusts them (her "I's") to show her love. Her overwhelming passion finally causes the dissolution of her physical body. Pamphilia's body is burnt to ashes, but love triumphs and remains.

Pamphilia's thoughts are the immutable landmarks of the private space that Wroth constructs - the indelible markers of her psyche. In Pamphilia's sleep of the initial sonnet "thoughts did move/ Swifter than most swiftness need require" (3-4). Within the darkness present in her vision of Venus and Cupid, Pamphilia's thoughts take precedence over her physical location. This stress is also depicted in another sonnet, showing Wroth's comparison of Pamphilia and a traveler "who tired sought/ in places distant far, yet found no end/ Of pain or labor" (P11 103). While the traveler suffers from physical exhaustion, Pamphilia is tired within her "mind" (9). The traveler finds happiness through "ease of limbs" (10), where Pamphilia's content is internal: "I, greatest happiness that I do find/ Belief for faith, while hope in pleasure swims" (11-12). Wroth suggests that Pamphilia voyages in her mind and that the destination, the way "out" of the labyrinth, is to find her burning heart, also internal. Even when the world of the court is evoked, as in sonnet P26, Pamphilia's reflections focus on her internal pursuits. She is in a space that has been created "free from eyes" (5) and characterized by "daylike night" (6). There, Pamphilia can leave courtly activities to "poor vanities" (8) and continue to prize her thoughts above those worldly activities. Pamphilia eschews public pursuits of pleasure in order to discourse with her "spirit" (11) and chase her "thoughts" (9). For each of the public activities of the court Wroth provides a comparable private pursuit for Pamphilia. Fienberg sees this comparison as gendered and suggests that Pamphilia "redefines the terms that allow her to create her own subjectivity" (186). Masten also attributes masculine qualities to the activities, arguing that Wroth repudiates the "rhetorical trappings and metaphorical suits of male Petrarchan discourse" (73).

While it is evident that Wroth avoids placing Pamphilia within a social context in order to repress the contradictions associated with a female Petrarchan speaker, this refusal should not be understood as merely negative. Rather, Pamphilia's private space in opposition to the court maybe understood as food in itself. The final couplet, written in the form of two questions, serves to stress Pamphilia's self-reflective nature as representative of her created private space. In distancing Pamphilia from the activities of the court, Wroth effectively rejects "public" displays of love. The image of the court is presented as characterized by deception and external spectacle as opposed to Pamphilia's internal pathos. "'Tis not a show of sighs or tears can prove/ Who loves indeed" (P46 9-10), Pamphilia notes, citing the deceptive quality of publicly displayed "fained love" (10). Instead, she argues, it is in "the soul" where "true love in safety lies" (12). Sonnet P9 clarifies the separation between Pamphilia's interior space and any written representation of her pain. She seeks "for some small ease by lines, which bought/ Increase the pain; grief is not cured by art" (3-4), indicating the distance between the public and unsatisfactory act of writing and what is in Pamphilia's

heart, which is "true, and free from changing thought" (P9 6). This sentiment is confirmed in sonnet P45 wherein Pamphilia states, "[for] where most feeling is, words are more scant" (10). For Wroth the act of writing is too closely connected at times to the "fained love" and "outward shows" of the court to prove fully satisfactory.

Not only is the language of the court suspect, but Pamphilia's as well:

> Nor can I, as those pleasant wits, enjoy
> My own framed words, which I account the dross
> Of purer thoughts, or reckon them as moss
> While they, wit sick, themselves to breath employ. (P45 5-8)

This suspicion regarding writing and public activity in general serves to emphasize the inherent truthfulness of Pamphilia's "thoughts" in comparison to the words of the "pleasant wits" of the court who are, according to Wroth, "wit sick" (8). Later, Wroth compares "ancient fictions" to the "disguised pleasures" of the stage: "To me it seems as ancient fictions make/ The stars all fashions, and all shapes partake/ While in my thoughts true form of love shall live" (P100 12-14). The prominence remains on the sincerity and truth intrinsic to Pamphilia's private thoughts.

Wroth's emphasis on the private nature of the text of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* allows her to promote Pamphilia as a sincere and constant character. It is not unusual for sonnet sequences to emphasize the author's inner and consequently more truthful emotion, especially here were there are essentially two authors: Wroth penning Pamphilia and Pamphilia penning the sonnets themselves. Wroth is thereby not only writing as a Renaissance woman but also *writing* a Renaissance woman. In her discussion of the literary practices of the Renaissance, Wendy Wall notes that "the truth of what is said is grounded in the intimate and the private, in that which is hidden from public view" (384). However, Wroth's text is distinctive in the way that she uses textual space and syntax to create the emotional feeling within the reader of Pamphilia's authenticity. Textual clues that link the sonnets to the outside world, the attributes that make other sonnet sequences political and public, are noticeably absent in Pamphilia to Amphilanthus, tying the poetry's existence more closely to the private sphere of Pamphilia's psyche.

The labyrinth referenced explicitly in the corona is evident here – how does one escape the words one has created to express feelings when the only escape is through the self? The disorientation of the steadfast lover brought to the edge of despair is expressed by the randomness of the early poems of the second section, and then becomes the focus of a highly organized analysis in a fourteen-sonnet corona, a "crown" of sonnets, in which each poem begins with the last line of the preceding one. The problem is stated in the first stanza of the first sonnet of the corona:

> In this strange Labyrinth how shall I turn?
> Ways are on all sides while the way I miss:
> If to the right hand, there, in love I burn,
> Let me go forward, therein danger is (P 77 1-4).

And it is resolved in the eighth:

> He that shuns Love, does love himself the less,
> And cursed he whose spirit, not admires
> The worth of Love, where endless blessedness
> Reigns, & commands, maintained by heav'nly fires (P84 1-4).

While the mode of this poem in its setting is soliloquy, the pronoun with which it begins reminds us that Pamphilia's advice is not to herself alone but to all. The love that here is "shunned" is the non-objectifying love Pamphilia has herself embraced, and she argues to herself that she must not now waver; at the same time she universalizes the argument, and suggests that the grace of honor is accorded only to perseverance

in constancy. Remembering in her crisis that constancy is for everyone, she achieves a spiritualization of love that, unlike the spiritualization of earthly love by Petrarch and so many of his masculine followers, does not depend upon dressing up the beloved as God. Instead, the beloved is pointed the way to become like Pamphilia herself, who in her constancy has found a way to union with the divine. She attains a costly clarity in so doing: she sees she must be prepared to give up her pursuit of Amphilanthus if her constancy is to remain exemplary.

The corona also serves to further emphasize the interiority of the sonnet space that Wroth has created. Wroth's corona of sonnets represents perplexity even as it perplexes. Wroth achieves this effect through syntax and poetic forms that mimic two traits of labyrinths: enclosure and complexity. Like mazes in classical literature, the sonnet is identified through poetic tropes in English as enclosed space and highly crafted form. Wroth magnifies the confines of the sonnet through contracted syntax, suggesting the difficult fit of her meaning to the poetic form. The corona formally embodies enclosure through reiterative opening and closing lines, creating a closed poetic crown, thus dramatically engaging the reader in the female sense of self that Wroth depicts. Wroth's labyrinth echoes and alludes to those of her predecessors, but she also voices new meanings through the figure's influence on style and its relevance to gender. In poems by women – whether the author is the fictive poet, Pamphilia, or Wroth herself – the tension between form and syntax suggests the difficulty of fitting female experience into forms created to suit the shapes of male erotic desire.

The labyrinth's enclosure reinforces another trait of Wroth's work: that it is private. Pamphilia's fictional privacy allows her to blur her transgressive expression of erotic desire. Far from denying female subjectivity, Wroth depicts a female sense of self through the labyrinth–presenting a self that is isolated, enclosed, difficult, and complex. The labyrinth's several meanings are inherent to its three-dimensional form, which makes possible two positions: inside and outside. Seen from inside, the labyrinth confuses the wanderer, as it does Pamphilia. Seen from the outside, the perspective the reader takes, the labyrinth reveals its complexity and artistry. Labyrinthine images can thus simultaneously amaze and please.

Wroth's use of darkness and solitude throughout *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* is particularly significant in Sonnet 1 of the 103-sonnet sequence. Allusions to Petrarch and Dante are understood in the chariot of Venus and the image of the speaker's heart as food, and they serve to validate Pamphilia's (and Wroth's) poetic credentials. Love's appearance during sleep creates isolation, which contrasts with the initial experience of love in most Petrarchan sequences. In Sir Philip Sidney's and Petrarch's second sonnets, for example, love strikes through the beloved's sun/eyes, their light beams becoming arrows. By contrast, encapsulating Pamphilia's experience in the dream vision isolates and encloses her experience of love. Further, love itself, as personified in Venus and Cupid rather than the sight of the beloved, creates Pamphilia as both love poet and lover: "Yet since, O me: a lover I have been" (line 14). The dream vision's isolation introduces an element of Wroth's sequence related to the labyrinth-intense enclosure. The absent beloved is, of course, a central topic of Petrarchism, but the physical beloved, conventionally depicted in ways explored by many scholars, appears as image, imagined or remembered.

Wroth's absent beloved occupies a more substantial gap. He is never physically described, as the female beloved is in the imagery of male sonneteers. This absence further isolates and encloses Pamphilia in her own complexity. While her treatment of the beloved distinguishes Wroth's from other Petrarchan sequences, Pamphilia presents herself as a typical Petrarchan poet, evoking labyrinthine themes of blindness and desire. Her assertion, for example, that night and sleep "did my senses hire / From knowledge of myself" represents the unconsciousness of sleep as loss of self-knowledge (2-3). Further, the absence of light, emphasized through the physicality of the "black mantle", and the repetition in night and "most darkness" (1) creates a sense of peril.

The poem's contracted syntax creates a labyrinthine texture that supports these meanings. Sonnet 1 manifests both Pamphilia's trouble being able to know herself and the author's trouble containing her experience in literary form. The lack of certain articles and personal pronouns, for example, create gaps in meaning: "thoughts" in line 3 most likely means "my thoughts," but it also may mean all thought; likewise, the phrase "Swifter than those [who] most swiftness need require" lacks the pronoun "who" and inverts word order in a Shakespearian manner, complicating understanding. An intricate phrase like "When night's black mantle did most darkness prove" suggests several meanings: when night could test degrees of darkness, or when this night proved the darkest of nights, or when night proved the darkest of all things.

The corona of sonnets, poems P77-90 of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, names the labyrinth explicitly. Here, spiritualized diction evokes the labyrinth's theological meanings, while distinctly gendered imagery of reproduction suggests female poetic production. The line "In this strange labyrinth how shall I turn?" opens and closes the corona, whose interlocking paths, like the repetitions, pauses, "turns", and "returns" of the first poem, stylistically mimic the labyrinth. Once again, this line has many possible meanings: it may refer to the poem itself (line 1)-the most immediate "this"-or the word may refer to the poet, her life, her amorous experience, even to all of these. Brief clauses and repetitive diction ("Ways are . . . the way" [line 2]; "If to the right hand, there ... / ... / If to the left" [lines 3-5]; and : Let me go forward . . . / . . / Let me turn back" [lines 4-6]) enact labyrinthine turns and returns, dead ends, and restarts. This reflects the sameness of paths when no path is ever truly "the way." The omitted word in the phrase, "shame cries I ought [to] return" (line 6), like other omissions, enhances an impression of contracted energy, of forced containment just as there would be within a physical labyrinth. Further, the phrase "Stand still is harder, although sure to mourn" implies that standstill itself mourns (line 8), purposely confusing the poetic subject and her feelings with the action of negotiating the labyrinth.

This fusion of place, action, and speaker, however, exactly represents the labyrinth as subjectivity, as the speaker's own self, a self whose enclosure constrains as well as contains. Like the difficult syntax, the corona form plays off the labyrinth's classical associations with artistic intricacy while imitating its enclosure. The corona links individual poems together: the first poem's last line becomes the second poem's first line, and so on, concluding with the final poem's last line repeating the first poem's first line. These echoing lines bring the corona poems into a complete circle, a fitting poet's laurel crown. Between poems, reiterated opening and closing lines parallel other reversals and imitate echoing voices in enclosed spaces, giving the reader an aural image of the labyrinth. Wroth's corona of sonnets represents perplexity even as it perplexes.

The concluding sonnet of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* reiterates Wroth's positioning of Pamphilia in an interior space. The first line, "My muse now happy, lay thyself to rest" (P103 1), seems to be an appropriate counterpoint to the dream vision that induced these poems at the beginning of the sequence. Pamphilia's private vision has sustained her throughout and now she may return, to sleep possibly, in the outer public world. She will not "wake to new unrest" (4), leaving the dream and the labyrinth of sonnets behind. When she does choose to reflect upon love, those thoughts will be "addressed/ to truth" (5-6). The writing itself may be happily left, as it is a painful process to self-fashion one's own words about one's own passion, but it is Pamphilia's thoughts that will be a source of "true joy" (7).

This clarity stays with Pamphilia as she pens her parting sonnet. Though it is ostensibly a "farewell to love" addressed to her muse, it is a farewell not to love but to immaturity in love. The poem shifts in address until it ends in advice not only to herself but to Amphilanthus, to whom the sequence as a whole is addressed:

> My Muse now happy lay thy self to rest,
> Sleep in the quiet of a faithful love,
> Write you no more, but let these Phant'sies move

Some other hearts, wake not to new unrest
But if your study be those thoughts addressed
To truth, which shall eternal goodness prove;
Enjoying of true joy the most, and best
The endless gain which never will remove.
Leave the discourse of Venus, and her son
To young beginners, and their brains inspire
With stories of great Love, and from that fire,
Get heat to write the fortunes they have won.
And thus leave off; what's past shows you can love,
Now let your Constancy your Honor prove. (P103 1-14) [*Pamphilia*]

The concluding signature, found in the manuscript, strengthens the address. Only his conversion to the "womanly" virtue of constancy will make Amphilanthus the man of honor Pamphilia knows he can be. Assuming *his* thoughts are addressed to truth, Wroth's argument that a single standard of virtue precedes gender proves to be an argument from a position of strength.

Pamphilia's voice is determined by her "thoughts." Wroth illustrates the importance of Pamphila's psychological landscape through her use of the Petrrachan conceit of the shipwrecked lover in sonnert P68. In spite of the fact that within the physical realm she is "lost, shipwrecked, spoiled" (9), her inner realm, where "thoughts have scope,/ Which wander may," (10-11), provides considerably more liberty. Thus, Pamphilia's freedom - presumably her freedom to write - is connected to her ability to speak (and think) within the circumscribed environment of her psyche. In Song 3 (P21), notably not a sonnet, she restates the importance of her thoughts, as they are aligned with her freedom: "Let me thinking still be free,/ Nor leave thy might until my death/ But let me thinking yield up breath" (22-24). The inability to think poses a threat greater than death. While the act of writing is framed (the walls of the constructed labyrinth) in negative terms throughout the sequence, inner emotion (self-knowledge) signals liberty.

Petrarchism fragments and displays the self in poems meant to be circulated. Isolation enables the female poet to lay claim to a speaking part in the Petrarchan drama of self-knowledge, creating her as subject, not object, of speech, vision, and desire. Finally, Wroth's labyrinth of style illuminates a contradiction between Renaissance theology and cultural constraints on women. While the culture controlled and inhibited a woman's sense of self by defining her as owned by another and prohibiting her access to "public language" - a primary aspect of subjectivity as Stephen Greenblatt and others have shown - self-knowledge is urged as a theological necessity. A theology of self- knowledge, further, implies the existence and value of a self. A woman creating a poetic labyrinth in a Petrarchan sonnet sequence speaks from the very center of this contradiction, transforming public self-analysis into a spiritually respectable private search for self-knowledge. Wroth's labyrinthine style dramatizes this search, engaging her reader in the very process she represents in this difficult but accomplished work of art.

In *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, Wroth is not engaged in a complete repudiation of Petrarchan discourse, but rather has chosen to reinvent Petrarchanism by removing transgressive elements to construct a space for Pamphilia's psyche. The text is therefore presented as a product of Pamphilia's inner self, and in this intensely private space the terms "master" and "mistress" are basically meaningless. Wroth describes Pamphilia's inner characteristics rather than giving references to her external beauty; her "thoughts," "mind," and "spirit" are far more significant. The sequence illustrates Wroth's rejection of the body-as-sign and instead proposes a space where Pamphilia's "inner work" might signify.

2010 Scholarly Writing Prize - Third Place

Shelley Converse-Rath

Fiction as Truth as Fiction:
How Slaughterhouse-Five Troubles the Notion of Fictionality in Novels

Is Slaughterhouse-Five a work of fiction? While the obvious answer seems to be a resounding "yes," as the plot of the novel is an unusual, offbeat tale of science fiction– the bizarre story of a man's travel through time and to a far off planet. However, while many dismiss it as fictional for the sheer mention of aliens and time travel, those who know better understand the use of the story to reveal a complex discussion of a man's experience in war amidst a culture that glorifies it to satisfy their need for heroes.

While Vonnegut's work is valuable in understanding the dark underbelly of American policies and culture, it is often difficult to tell when–and if–he is being serious. His simple sentence structure belies the importance of his message. In the beginning to Slaughterhouse-Five, in which he makes an appearance as the narrator, he states, "All this happened, more or less. The war parts, anyway, are pretty much true. One guy I knew really *was* shot in Dresden for taking a teapot that wasn't his. Another guy I knew really *did* threaten to have his personal enemies killed by hired gunmen after the war. And so on. I've changed the names" (1). The conversational tone implies a casualness that runs in contrast to the themes of the novel itself, which examines the complex effects and violence of war. It is this sensibility that perhaps influences the feeling of fictionality the novel has–that, and of course the story of Billy Pilgrim, which serves to deliver the experiences of war in a character that both is and is not Vonnegut himself. Vonnegut creates Billy with intention as a separate character:

> Billy was born in 1922 in Ilium, New York, the only child of a barber there. He was a funny-looking child who became a funny-looking youth–tall and weak, and shaped like a bottle of Coca-Cola. He graduated from Ilium High School in the upper third of his class, and attended night sessions at the Ilium School of Optometry for one semester before being drafted for military service in the Second World War(30).

Vonnegut includes minor details that mirror his own life, such as birth year and marriage to a high-school sweetheart, but mainly Billy represents an entirely plain, if rather unextraordinary, man who goes to war–which is an important divergence from literature dominated by valiant men and heroes.

Vonnegut's troubling of fiction, though intentional, is not a new conflict; fiction has often been in conflict with truth and fact, it often seeks to mimic it, thus creating difficulty in determining proper definitions of both fiction and truth. Though words within a language rely on the acceptance of a common definition in order for it to function properly, that does not mean that there is not room for debate. Even for a word as seemingly clear-cut as fiction, which has an entire genre relying upon its definition, there has been and is continued vacillation on the true meaning of fiction. Though it is thrown around in common conversation with seemingly a common agreement on its meaning, it is important to find the definition of fiction. According to Dorrit Cohn, " 'The word 'fiction' is subject to chaotic and perverse linguistic usage...[the] only common denominator, it appears, is that they all designate 'something invented'–a notion no less vaguely denotative than (though oh not exactly identical to) the word's Latin root, *fingere*, 'to make or form' (2).

The history of the connotation of the word plays into the blurring between fact and fiction. Cohn writes, ""We may also conjecture that it was its pejorative meaning of untruth that delayed the lexical move of calling novels 'fiction' to a time when this genre had become a well–established, highly respected literary form...the pretense of factuality in the prefaces to first person novels like *Robinson Crusoe* was clearly an attempt to escape the charge of falsity by escaping the charge of fiction, or vice versa, or both at once. Historians of the novel have shown that, as the century advanced and as readers learned to accept the norms of literary realism, novelists tended to drop claims to reality or factuality." (3) Fiction initially sought out to be truth–which leads to the blurring between truth and fiction. In many ways, fiction still seeks to be truth, even when acknowledging its own falsity.

However, its falsity is often perceived as negative, and used in a derogatory form to emphasize the untruth of a statement or work. Ironically, perhaps, it has defined a whole genre of literature that strives to create a world that appears realistic. Cohn writes,

> When, in our daily lives, we charge journalists or rumor mongers with having written or told "a fiction," we use the term in its derogatory meaning of a doubtful or untrue statement—alternately attributing it to deliberate deception, faulty memory, or misinformation. This meaning is, on occasion, specifically signified in works of literary criticism as well: thus a scholar, examining Mary McCarthy's autobiographical writings for the intentional and unintentional "lies" she tells, informs us that, as we enter the private world of the self, we inevitably "meeting the grinning face of fiction at the door"; another asks word-playfully whether 'the distinction between fiction and nonfiction is fiction or nonfiction' (3)

The mention of the autobiography brings up an interesting point. In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut tells the reader that this book is about his experiences in Dresden, but then creates a world that, for the most part, does not include him. In many ways, Vonnegut acknowledges "the grinning face of fiction" as a part of one's memory by creating a fictional world to tell the story. He understands the unreliability of human memory, perhaps best outlined in his conversation with O'Hare, in which such a monumental event in both their lives is outlined by meaningless stories about men they knew. Even so, if the two were to address the experience of emerging into a charred, empty world outright, it is likely that it too, would be fuzzy from the years of trying to forget it—though, like Billy experiences, it never really goes away.

Cohn is relentless in the need for definitive clarification, noting that

> As we have seen, however, this standardization of *fiction* as a generic term has not resulted in eliminating its other meanings. And this is true despite the fact that in all four of these meanings it is used as synonym for other, readily available words: untruth, abstraction, literature, narrative. Though it is no doubt futile to campaign for lexical reform, one may perhaps hope that a clearer awareness of the word's semantic instability will prompt literary critics to adhere to its restricted generic meaning (12)

To clarify the ambiguity Cohn claims fiction to be, she comes up with three primary criteria by which to discern fiction, aptly named the "signposts" of fictionality (109). The first of the signposts is "cognitive privilege" (Cravens 79), or what is more commonly known as omniscience—"a character who is known to his narrator in a manner no real person can be known to a real speaker" (Cohn 116). She differentiates from historical, or "truthful" writing, by claiming that "this is not, at any rate, the manner in which historical figures are known to historians," (118) that any emotions known about the person by the narrator have been properly documented based on fact. Clearly, Vonnegut violates this first rule throughout the entirety of Slaughterhouse-Five with his involvement with Billy; there are countless statements wherein he provides intimate knowledge of Billy's state of mind, such as "Billy was mystified. Billy wanted to be friendly, to help, if he could, but his resources were meager. His fingers now held the two objects from the lining of the coat. Billy decided to show the surgeon what they were" (193). Additionally, as Craig Cravens states, "Not only are we privy to a character's mental life in certain types of fiction, but we often experience time and space from a character's perspective as well. Hence, only in fiction do we come across such grammatically odd constructions as, 'His plane left tomorrow,' where the past tense refers not to the past in relation to the speaker (the narrator), but rather to the present of a fictional character looking forward to the following day (24-25)" (79). Undoubtedly, readers have that experience with Billy Pilgrim as he bounces in and out of time and they are witnesses to all of it.

Cohn determines the second signpost of fictionality as dual vocal origin. She writes, "I will assume, then, that the reader of a nonfictional narrative understands it to have a stable univocal origin, that its narrator is identical to a real person: the author named on its title age. The notion of a cleavage of this vocal unity in fiction is actually of fairly recent vintage, having entered the mainstream of narrative poetics [that].... 'the narrator is a created character into which the author has transformed himself'" (124). Again, Vonnegut's novel has no choice but to fall under the category of fiction. Cohn explains the differentiation between historical writing and fiction further:

> First of all, it must be emphasized that there is a world of difference between the two vocal domains of fiction in respect to the explicitness of the author/narrator distinction...the nominal differentiation between narrators and authors of fictional autobiographies is, as Philippe Lejeune has extensively demonstrated, a decisive signal for the reader's recognition of their novelistic status: a status that is determined by the presence of an imaginary speaker incarnated as a character within the fictional world (125).

Though there are allusions to the connection between Vonnegut and Billy, according to Cohn's assertion, Billy is imaginary, and, consequently, that makes the novel fiction. However, Vonnegut seems to beat her to her own label, making the transition from "non-fiction," or, autobiography, to his book, which he concedes is the end of a long process of his inability to write about Dresden.

Cohn's third and final signpost of fictionality is the referential nature of historical writing versus the lack thereof in fiction. She states,

> What most immediately jumps into view is, of course, the presence of an entire 'perigraphic' apparatus (foot- or end-noted, prefatory or appended) that constitutes a textual zone intermediating between the narrative text itself and its extratextual documentary base. But this base also penetrates into the textual terrain itself, which, as Michel de Certeau puts it, 'combines the plural of quoted documents into the singular of quoting cognition'...there is, as a rule, nothing that corresponds to this testimonial stratum in fictional narrative (115)

According to Cohn, in order for something to not be fiction, it must have a constant stream of quotations in one form or another that reference documents and thoughts that have properly been recorded by someone else. Though she says, as there are for most rules, exceptions, her example is the historical novel, which undoubtedly has a whole other set of qualifications that Slaughterhouse-Five does not meet. And yet, according to Croswaithe, in some ways, it does. He writes, "What makes Vonnegut['s]... writings of this period particularly striking—what distinguishes them as 'postmodern'...is the way in which they state the dislocation and dispersal of the moment of originary rupture through an eerie intertwining of their own historical moment with that of the war. Not only is the referent projected by these novels often shrouded or obscure, it is rarely singular, so that the works enact the separability, in psychic temporality, of chronologically divergent historical moments" (6). According to Crosthwaite, Vonnegut's writing about the war, which includes Slaughterhouse-Five, possesses referential moments to World War II, not only in the general sense but also in the personal experience of it. While Cohn's point is well taken with the majority of the novel wherein Billy is the primary character, and the story supports him as he makes his way through time, Slaughterhouse-Five cannot be purely ruled a work of fiction because it possesses the factual and autobiographical aspects Cohn marks are not being those of fiction. While Cohn looks to find a thorough, clear-cut answer to the trouble of fiction and truth, the postmodern novel, in daring to include elements of both, troubles the line she so carefully drew in the sand.

While Cohn seeks to answer the problem that, "Narratologists themselves have, to a quite astonishing degree, ignored the question of demarcation between fiction and nonfiction" (3) by defining fiction in a clear way that determines what it is and is not, Percy Lubbock focuses on the narrative strategies used by the author and the effects on the reader's perception of the text. Lubbock agrees with Cohn that fiction should be properly analyzed, but has not because of a sentimentality one seems to have for it, questioning, "It spoils the fun of a novel to know how it is made—is this a reflection that lurks at the back of our minds?" (90) He continues his assertion that the inability to properly discern between fiction and nonfiction is not the difficultly in clarifying the two, but the attachment we have, "...We are haunted by a sense that a novel is a piece of life, and that to take it to pieces would be to destroy it" (90). Despite this, however, Lubbock believes one can and should pay attention to the form, stating, "The impressions that succeed one another, as the pages of the book are turned are to be built into a structure, and the critic is missing his opportunity unless he can proceed in a workmanlike manner. It is not to be supposed that an artist who carves or paints is so filled with emotion by the meaning of his work—the story in it—that he forgets the abstract beauty of form and colour...in the art of literature, still the man of letters is a craftsman, and the critic cannot be less" (89). However, it is, according to Lubbock, not the reader's task to determine how the author has created

the story, but to analyze the story as it is presented. He writes, "How a novelist finds his subject, in a human being or in a situation or in a turn of thought, this indeed is beyond us; we might look long at the very world that Tolstoy saw, we should never detect the unwritten book he found there...For this reason we judge the novelist's eye for a subject to be his cardinal gift, and we have nothing to say, whether by way of exhortation or of warning, till his subject is announced...From point to point we follow the writer, always looking back to the subject itself in order to understand the logic of the course he pursues" (90). Lubbock appears to think the ability of the author to sweep the readers into a believable story is crucial, as that is his mission. As a result, he views the ability to create a narrator that the readers can trust as important:

> "The whole intricate question of method, in the craft of fiction, I take to be governed by the question of the point of view—the question of the relation in which the narrator stands to the story. He tells it as *he* sees it, in the first place; the reader faces the story-teller and listens, and the story my be told so vivaciously that the presence of the minstrel is forgotten, and the scene becomes visible, peopled with the characters of the tale...If the spell is weakened at any moment, the listener is recalled from the scene to the mere author before him, and the story rests only upon the author's direct assertion... [The author's] assertions gain in weight, for they are backed up by the presence of the narrator in the pictured scene. It is advantage scored; the author has shifted his responsibility, and it now falls where the reader can see and measure it; the arbitrary quality which may at any time be detected in the author's voice is disguised in the voice of his spokesman. Nothing is now imported into the story from without; it is self-contained, it has no associations with anyone beyond its circle" (91)

Lubbock seems to be speaking about verisimilitude, an important quality—no, a necessary quality when creating fiction. According to Beckson and Ganz, verisimilitude is "A quality possessed by a work the action and characters of which seem to the reader sufficiently probable to constitute an acceptable representation of reality. What degree of probability, or likeness to fact, is necessary to achieve verisimilitude has never been finally ascertained...for some, a close depiction of actuality...for others, a degree of imaginative power sufficient to capture the reader's life" (295) Vonnegut does both, in the moments where Billy is ordinary: "Billy dozed, awakened in the prison hospital again. The sun was high...Englishmen were building themselves a new latrine" (175) and when he is not:: "Billy, with his memories of the future, knew that the city would be smashed to smithereens and then burned—in about thirty more days" (192). Vonnegut uses the fantastical moments in a secondary form as well; to build a "depiction" of trauma suffered from wartime experiences.

In his analysis, Lubbock also stresses the importance of a steady, if not reliable narrator within fiction, stating "Now if he speaks in the first person there can, of course, be uncertainty in the point of view; he has his fixed position, he cannot leave it. His description will represent the fact that the facts in their sequence turned towards *him*...it is rounded by the bounds of the narrator's own personal experience" (93). Lubbock implies that readers must have one or the other; they desire the author as narrator, or a secondary character that may reflect the author's views, but do so in a way that is masked. Vonnegut violates this rule, like he does with so many of Cohn's, and leaves the reader to decide what to make of his multiple narrators. However, Lubbock argues that even in a secondary narrator, there are seemingly two narrators:

> Nobody notices, but in fact there are now two brains behind that eye; and one of them is the author's, who adopts and shares the *position* of his creature, and at the same time supplements his wit...there are touches in it that go beyond any sensation of his, and indicate that someone else is looking over his shoulder—seeing things form the same angle, but seeing more, bringing another mind to bear upon the scene. It is an easy and natural extension of the personage's power of observation. The impression of the scene may be depended as much as need be; it is not confined to the scope of one mind, and yet there is no blurring of the focus by a double point of view (94).

While Cohn and Lubbock seem to agree that this is a primary aspect of fictional writing, it is precisely what allows Vonnegut to tell his story about his war experiences. Vonnegut has the creative license to do with

Billy's character as he pleases; however, he can use Billy as a means to portray his own thoughts. While it is not stated or known that Billy is supposed to be relating the thoughts of the author, Billy is an animated version of the emotions Vonnegut lays out in the outset of the novel regarding the reality of war: " 'If I ever do finish [the book] though, I give you my word of honor: there won't be a part for Frank Sinatra or John Wayne...I tell you what,' I said. 'I'll call it 'The Children's Crusade'" (19) Billy stumbles around in wartime, described as having a "feeble will to survive" (193) and "his daughter [accuses] him of acting like a child" when he begins reporting his time travel. Billy goes to war a child, and cannot process the events of Dresden like the "man" he is supposed to be.

While this is a seemingly roundabout way for Vonnegut to relay his feeling about war to the readers, as Thomas Marvin says, "Conventional storytelling techniques encourage writers to glorify war by concentrating on the heroic exploits of their characters. Experience taught Vonnegut that real wars rob people of the ability to act heroically. He could not make the people he knew during the war into conventional literary characters and still be true to his own experience" (114). The creation of Billy Pilgrim, which cements the novel's status as a story of "fiction," allows Vonnegut to tell his own personal story; in the beginning of the novel, he relates to his readers the difficulty he has in telling his story, even phoning an old war buddy to recall members that will inspire his ability to write about his experiences in Dresden. Marvin addresses this conflict, "Having discarded traditional ways of telling a story, Vonnegut has to invent a new way that will allow him to overcome another obstacle: the fallibility of human memory. When he and O'Hare sit down to reminisce about the war, they discover that they recall only insignificant detail. If he cannot clearly recall an event as important as the fire bombing of Dresden, how can Vonnegut hope to give readers an accurate impression of his wartime experiences?" (115). "I think of how useless the Dresden part of my memory has been, and yet how tempting Dresden has been to write about" (3) Vonnegut confesses. Though Vonnegut never outrightly makes the connection between the invention of Billy and his inability to tell the story himself, he says,

> And Lot's wife, of course was told not to look back where all those people and their homes had been. But she *did* look back, and I love her for that, because it was so human. So she was turned to a pillar of salt...I've finished my war book now...This one is a failure, and had to be, since it was written by a pillar of salt(28).

He acknowledges the story as his own, looking back at the massacre he witnessed. Vonnegut seeks to stress the fragility of human memory, particularly when shaken by trauma—as Vonnegut says, the war has pushed the characters, and imaginably, the people he knew in the war to be so weakened and weary that they are "the listless playthings of enormous forces" (208). Ironically, however, he emphasizes human trauma to the highest degree in most unreal aspects of his story.

The most outlandish aspect of Billy's story, which further detaches the novel from the conventions of truthfulness of wartime experience is, as Marvin says,

> His surprising solution to this problem is to give his protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, the ability to travel in Time. Time travel allows Vonnegut to create the impression that readers are looking at events as they happen, rather than through the mists of memory. But because most readers do not believe in time travel, the technique also highlights the artificiality of any writing about the past. While a conventional novel gives readers the illusion of a clear and accurate depiction of events, *Slaughterhouse-Five* constantly reminds us that we are reading fiction. Yet Vonnegut begins the book by claiming, "All this happened, more or less," and he often comments on his own presence at crucial moments in the story. *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a curious hybrid of fact and fiction that insists on its factual truth even as it uses fantastic fictional techniques. (115)

While Vonnegut's use of time travel adheres to the overall themes within his book, it is also a postmodern convention. . As Steven Connor states, "Fiction has always subsisted upon the larger ideological fiction of the reader's continuous and uninterrupted attention, or the synchronization of the narrative time of the novel and the reader's actual reading time. In a post modern epoch, this normative link between reading time and the individual subject begins to dissolve..." (77). Billy's concept of time does not match that of its readers, which challenges the readers' ability to remain interested in the novel. However, as Connor says,

"Under these conditions, it is a matter for the novel no longer of keeping its reader in step with it, or of protecting itself against interruption, but of synchronizing with that can be called a 'culture of interruptions.'"(78). In this particular situation, Billy's life is a series of interruptions, as the war was on his memory and his innocence—and Vonnegut writes his novel to be in conflict with his readers' concept of time so that they may understand Billy's plight. The readers, like Billy, change time without any warning, for example, "[Billy] got out of bed, said, 'Excuse me,' went into the darkness of the bathroom to take a leak. He groped for the light, realized as he felt the rough walls that he had traveled back to 1944, to the prison hospital again" (Vonnegut 157). The "unreal" elements of the novel, in many ways, discredit Vonnegut's intention on writing "a book about Dresden" (*Slaughterhouse-Five* 4). However, it is the only way in which Vonnegut is accurately able to illustrate his feelings about war and the individuals who fight it. As Marvin says, "Stories about antiheroes teach us about our limitations" (124). Without a doubt, Billy is the epitome of a anti-war hero; as Marvin says, "[Billy] never learns to enjoy life, and it often seems that he would rather be dead. He has no strong preferences, so he is content to drift through life wherever the winds of change many blow him...without a helmet or a single weapon, wearing cheap civilian shoes, he is more like an innocent bystander than a participant in the war" (124). Billy's weakness allows Vonnegut to point out to readers the impact of the brutality of war has on an individual.

Therein lies the question of Slaughterhouse-Five's fictionality. Because Billy Pilgrim is not a real person, and the sequences of events his life follows are not real either, it is, in a very simple sense, fiction. But knowing Kurt Vonnegut's participation in the Dresden bombings and his struggle to write a story about it, Billy exists only through Vonnegut's experiences. By splicing himself into his story, Vonnegut directly acknowledges the author's influence on a work of fiction, becoming a literal voice within the novel that serves as a reminder. Through the lens of Slaughterhouse-Five, the artificiality of fiction is clear—though other novels may not acknowledge the merging of truth and fiction with such honesty as does Vonnegut. Even a plot or a character that is not as deeply connected to the author's life as Billy is to Vonnegut requires some sort of truth—the language an author uses, the visual they paint, is available only because of the author's understanding of the world, which has occurred through experiences.

However, an author's fiction wields power only if the reader acknowledges it as having some relevance to their own life. Even in the most outlandish stories—such as though with fantastical elements, such as Slaughterhouse-Five—there must be some way for the reader to trace the character to themselves or their life—or it becomes meaningless. The author must use the conventions of fictional writing in order to achieve the important connection with the reader.

Michael Riffaterre discusses the conventions author use in his attempt to distinguish the novel as an effort of truth or fiction. While he notes that narratology has "emphasized narrative structures, plot typology, and the functions embodied in the personae of narrator and characters, including the impact of their viewpoints on the telling of the story rather than on the personae themselves" (xiii) he focuses on the words themselves as a creation of fiction or fact. He seeks to resolve the dissension between the two by claiming that, "The solution of the truth-in-fiction paradox evidently lies in redefining referentiality. Whereas referentiality assumes an actual or potential relationship between language and reality, we have to hypothesize that this assumption suffices only so long as it respects the rules of representation that exist in any language and with which all speakers of that language are familiar" (Riffaterre xiii). Riffaterre's argument relies on the basic concepts crafted by Ferdinand de Saussure, who determined that the sign is created from the signifier—the phonetic components of an image identified and accepted by a culture, and the signified—the idea that is paired with the sound (Rivkin & Ryan 333). According to the basic principles of the "sign," one must agree upon the accordance of the signifier and the signified for a word to mean anything in a culture. Riffaterre argues that the reason truth seems to appear in fiction relies upon the code of signs the readers agree upon. He states, "Rather, truth in fiction rests on verisimilitude, a system of representations that seems to reflect a reality external to the text, but only because it conforms to a grammar. Narrative truth is an idea of truth created in accordance with the rules of that grammar" (xiv) One can only understand a character having car trouble, for example, if there is an accepted understanding of what a car is and how it works. The significance of the event to the story relies on the readers' understanding of the concept. However, as Riffaterre points out, there are other factors that affect the way that an event or idea is

understood. He provides a detailed example of how the idea of "having a drink" is dependent on not on not only its implications as a sign:

> The action *having a drink* or just the idea of a drink, in any narrative or indeed any conceptualization, depends on the availability of a verbal sequence: ordering and obtaining the drink (conflated into making oneself a drink, if the epic of thirst conquered is a private quest); drinking the drink with the proairesis of slow sipping, fast bottoms-up, or spilling; paying for it, and so on. Parallel to this narrative unit are valorizations with their own ready-made sequences, such as conviviality, including the option of the bartender as conscience-director, versus solitary soaking-up, etc, etc. Such sequences are essentially unchangeable orders of succession: action first, then consequences. They therefore form a syntax, a grammar of linear distribution with the *before-after* rule basic to narrative, and appropriate props like tense and conjunctions for retrograding from the end to the beginning, from the present to the past (4).

There are grammatical and syntactical codes within language that craft how one communicates with another. Though Vonnegut's grammar in large part follows the traditional pattern found in the English language, the pattern in which he tells his story is skewed. Much like a sentence has a sequence, stories traditionally follow a linear, often chronological sequence; because Billy has no control over his travel in time, the trajectory of the story is uneven and rebukes the traditional story sequence.

Riffaterre states, "...verisimilitude can substitute an idea of truth for an actual experience of actuality" (6). Because Vonnegut does not follow a traditional layout for a story sequence, he uses other elements of the story to entice and interest the reader. Billy, though an unusual character, possesses traits that make him, in many ways, a believable person according to the "code" we follow in terms of what a functioning human being would be like. As Riffaterre writes, "Words may be lies yet still tell a truth if the rules are followed" (xiii). While Billy is not an existing member of American society, he feasibly could be—because, for the most part, he adheres to the "rules" of what readers perceive a person to be. Furthermore, he serves as a means by which Vonnegut displays his true, human emotions and experience in war—which are both very real. In general, though the scenarios in a novel of fiction that an author writes are not true in the sense that they did not happen, the author writes them with the assumption that the reader will comprehend, based on the code the two share—as Riffaterre writes, "[Fiction's] very name declares its artificiality, and yet it must somehow be true to hold the interest of its readers, to tell them about experiences at once imaginary and relevant to their own lives" (xii). However, the supporting characters that support Billy are largely undeveloped and thus not relatable to the readers. Though it seems Vonnegut does this for a particular purpose; Billy is the only one traveling in time and with knowledge of the Tralfamadorians, and similarly, he is the only one within his post-war world that understands the destructiveness of war. Vonnegut uses characters like his wife, Valencia, to emphasize the vapidness and glamour with which Americans comprehend battle. Billy thinks of his own marriage as, "at least bearable all the way" (153) and asks Billy to tell her war stories. Though readers would not readily admit and in many instances, find it difficult to relate to such a character, Vonnegut uses Valencia—among others—as a code for the darkness readers don't see in themselves and in their culture. However, in large part, the ability of a fictional story to resonate lies primarily within the reader because "Narrative truth is thus a linguistic phenomenon; since it is experience through enactment by reading, it is a performative event in which participation on the reader's part can only serve to hammer the text's plausibility into his experience" (Riffaterre xiv).

However, despite the author's desire to make a story one that can occur within the human experience, "Being a genre, [fiction] rests on conventions, of which the first and perhaps only one is that fiction specifically, but not always explicitly, excludes the intention to deceive. A novel always contains signs whose function is to remind readers that the tale they are being told is imaginary" (Riffaterre 1). Vonnegut seems to do both in Slaughterhouse-Five, taking the time and effort to create a fictional story with enough elements to be somewhat plausible, but undoing his efforts by introducing himself as the first narrator of the book.

However, as Riffaterre reminds, "The wonder is that fiction still managers to interest, to convince, and eventually to appear relevant to the reader's own experience, despite containing so many reminders of its artificiality" (1). While his argument is for fiction, Vonnegut's hybrid text is blatant in its artificiality, aware of

its "untruths," as it were, and yet is considered an important text because it speaks to truths that readers can understand. Ultimately, not just fiction, but all literary works in general fall to this problem: "In fact, exterior referentiality is but an illusion, for signs or sign systems refer to other sign systems: verbal representations in the text refer to verbal givens borrowed from the sociolect, but such verbal givens are actually presenting the text, explicitly or implicitly, as presuppositions" (3) Ironically, Thomas Pavel says that "the convention of fictionality warns the readers that the usual referential mechanism are for the most part suspended" (123). Similarly, Cohn says that truthful works are those with referentials. However, the referentials of which narratologists seem to base their claims of "fiction" and "non-fiction" are merely another form of codes, required in order for the reader to understand the work ahead of them. In an attempt to clarify, Cohn merely confessed that fact and fiction are closer than they are separate. This is never clearer in Slaughterhouse-Five, wherein there is an obvious separation from what is widely accepted as truth—the voice of Vonnegut, a real person, and the world of Billy, which seemingly epitomizes fiction. However, Vonnegut relies on language codes and refers to his own memory to craft the story of Billy, which either means that the entire novel is real—or all of it is not, because the world that is so blatantly accepted as "fact," relies solely on the foundation of language.

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We are Large,
We Contain Multitudes