The Journal *of the* Core Curriculum

Volume XII Spring 2003

The Journal
of the
Core Curriculum

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My mother groan'd! my father wept.
Into the dangerous world I leapt:
Hapless, naked, piping loud:
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

~William Blake

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Editors' Note

To participate in the Core Curriculum is an accomplishment and a privilege. From Virgil to Voltaire, Dawkins to Durkheim, it has given us a grounding in literature, philosophy, science, and social theory that will stay with us as we continue to cultivate the ability to use our minds. The Core certainly persuades us to do so, as it encourages us never to stop thinking in new ways. At the close of this spring semester, many of us will complete the program. The rest of us will look forward to that accomplishment, while enjoying the privilege of being a Core student.

The twelfth edition of the Journal of the Core Curriculum is a collection of essays, dialogues, poems, and artwork produced by Core students. These works were chosen on the basis of clarity, originality, and quality of both writing and thought. The authors and artists whose works are contained in this edition best express the experience of Core. There were many excellent submissions that could not be included here due to space constraints, and the editors found the task of making the final selections difficult. Sonia Pasthuov-Pastein and Suzyn-Elayne Soler, intrepid Core staff, also deserve praise for their organization and assistance. We also thank Dean Johnson for the invaluable hours he has contributed to the production of the Journal. We owe Zachary Bos and Agnes Gyorfi special thanks for their layout skills. The Journal is the work of many and would not have been possible without their help.

Julia V. Bainbridge
EDITOR-in-CHIEF

Kelilah Miller *(CAS 05) is majoring in religion for reasons she still can't properly explain. She is from Philadelphia (born and raised) and, as the weather gets warmer, can probably be found up in a tree somewhere.*

In the Beginning

Stefani Pickman

In the beginning Mom created everything. She created the earth as a large, spherical mass of land, made up of seven continents and several large bodies of water. And Mom said, "Let there be animals of all kinds so that the earth can be filled with life"; and so it was. And Mom saw that it was good. This was the first day. Then Mom said, "Let there be vegetation for the animals to feed on"; and so there was. And Mom saw that this was good. This was the second day. Then Mom said "Let there be people so that I can take care of them"; and so Mom created a woman, Stefani, in Her image and She saw that she was good. This was the third day. Then Mom saw that Stefani was bored, so She created a man to be her companion. So Mom caused Stefani to fall into a deep sleep and removed one quarter of her brain. She turned this segment of Stefani's brain into man. She named this man Steve and She saw that he wasn't so good, but that he was good enough. This was the fourth day.

Then Mom said, "Steve, you shall build a home in which you and your companion shall live for eternity"; and so he did. Then, when the building was completed on the fifth day, Mom said, "Let there be electricity for all the needs of my people"; and there was electricity. And Mom saw that the electricity was good; and Mom created the on/off switch, so that it would not be wasted, for She was very conscious of her environment. This was the sixth day. On the seventh day, Mom created the perfect place; and she named it The Mall.

After creating The Mall, Mom grew weary and needed to rest; and so She did. She allowed Stefani and Steve to go to The Mall, since it was right around the corner from the house that Steve built; but She issued a warning. She said, "You shall shop freely throughout The Mall; but you shall not venture into the store of sporting goods, for if you do, you shall be punished." And so they agreed with Mom and entered The Mall.

Stefani and Steve walked in and out of many different stores for a good part of the day. They were growing weary and were about to leave, until something caught Steve's eye: a brightly lit store that was as big as their house. He told

Stefani to go into the lingerie store and that he would meet her at the exit in a few minutes. Steve and Stefani went their separate ways. Steve slowly walked over to his store and stood at the doorway. In the front of the store was a large bear standing on his back legs wearing an oversized, colored jersey with "mascot" written on the front. He was waving his arms around and around while dancing in a circle. Once the mascot saw that Steve was standing there, he ceased dancing and waving his arms and looked straight at Steve. Now the mascot was more tricky than any other being that Mom put in The Mall. He said to Steve, "Did Mom say, 'You shall not venture into any store in The Mall?'" Steve said to the mascot, "We may shop freely throughout The Mall, but Mom said, 'You shall not venture into the store of sporting goods, or you shall be punished.'" But the mascot said to the man, "You shall not be punished. For Mom knows that when you venture into it you will not want to leave, and you will not want to go home and spend time with your companion, the woman, and she will be bored again."

So when the man saw that the store was filled with all kinds of sneakers, sports equipment, and sportswear, he stepped into the store of sporting goods and picked up a basketball. He put on basketball shoes and a basketball jersey. In the back of the store, there was a court on which one may play. The mascot went onto the court with Steve. They began to play.

Much time passed, and poor Stefani waited for her companion. She heard loud shouts coming from one of the stores. She grew curious and followed the noise to the store of sporting goods. She looked in and saw that Steve had beat the mascot in a game, and was dancing wildly around the store and shouting loudly. She stepped inside and saw an abundance of tennis rackets and tennis clothes. She ran over to them and put on the clothes. She put on the shoes and she picked up a tennis racket and some balls. She walked out onto the court as well and asked if they wanted to play. Steve and the mascot refused and went back to playing basketball. Stefani took off the shoes. She took off the clothes and put down the racket and balls. She walked out of the store and out of The Mall. She walked all the way home.

Eventually, Steve returned home and went outside to set up a basketball court and hoop. He stayed out there for the remainder of the night, playing basketball with himself. The next day, Mom saw that

Stefani was bored and that Steve was playing basketball outside. Mom came down and started to walk up the driveway to the house. Steve heard the footsteps of Mom on the cement, dropped the basketball, and ran inside. Mom called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard you coming up the driveway, and I was afraid, because I was playing basketball; and I went inside." Mom said, "From where did you get the basketball? Did you venture into the store which I told you not to venture into?" The man said, "Yes. I did. But the mascot tricked me into venturing into it and Stefani ventured in, too!"

And so Mom said, "Look at what you have done. Now I must punish all three of you." Mom said to the mascot, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all sports spectators and among the sports teams; from this point on, you shall not be taken seriously at any of the sporting events you shall attend. You shall be mocked and jeered by all those you encounter all the days of your life." To the man, She said, "I will make the woman more intelligent than you are, for she has the larger portion of the brain. I will also make most women dislike venturing into stores of sporting goods, so that it shall be difficult for all men to venture into them because the women shall not venture into them with you." And to the woman, She said, "For having such curiosity on your part, I will make the man drawn to the stores of sporting goods like a moth is drawn to light; and this shall make the man not want to leave the store and return home to spend time with you, his companion, and you shall be bored again." Thus saying this, Mom left Stefani and Steve and returned to Her home to watch over all that She created.

Author's Explication:

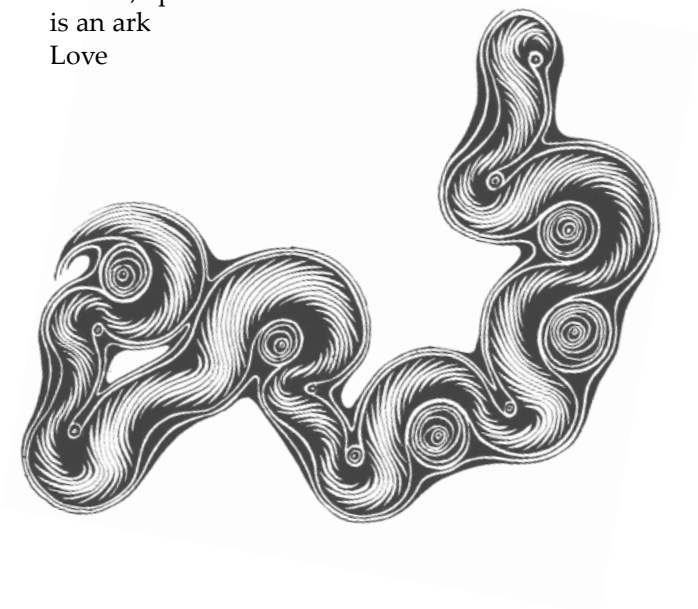
The tale of Stefani and Steve is modeled on the first three books of the Bible. However, here the Creator is Mom , the first human is a woman, and paradise is The Mall instead of Eden. The overall tone is intends to imitate the Bible's sense of antiquity. The imitation follows the Elohist style of writing, referring to Mom only as Mom, not as the Lord Mom, etc. The treatment of men in the imitation, of course, is meant to be humorous. ■

Stefani Pickman *(SAR 06) studies communication disorders. She is from Queens, New York. She is having a great time exploring Boston with her friends and is looking forward to the academic challenges that lie ahead of her.*

Love

Jonathan Wooding

Love
is an arc
that is carved into the air
by a young woman's big toes
as she performs a back flip on a trampoline:
fleeting notion upon the ether,
eternal, ephemeral curve
is an ark
Love



Jonathan Wooding *(CAS 06) is from Southington, CT(which is actually quite close to the center of the state). He is an English major and hopes to someday inflict himself upon some poor, unsuspecting high school as a teacher. He enjoys American poetry and literature, but for some reason, he just can't seem to finish* A Farewell to Arms*. He has had the book for three years; he is currently halfway through. He hopes to reach the end before middle-age.*

Sans Artifice

Ryan D'Angelo Barrett

The fashion model stands tall and slender as her photographer snaps endless shots of her in countless different positions. Her face, though seemingly flawless, is caked with blush, lip gloss, and eye shadow over powder, over foundation. Her lashes stretch farther than those of a normal girl's, but only because they have been painted with layers and layers of mascara. The curls of her bountiful, bouncy, blond locks spiral over her shoulders and cascade down her back, though they would have looked like frazzled frizz had her stylist not pumped them with a can of hair spray. Here the model stands, symbolizing the desires of every man and the jealousies of every woman. However, her painted face and sprayed, stiff hair do not represent who she really is but create a façade of her true self. The model's appearance is merely a projection of her image in extreme excess; hyped to such an extreme that she scarcely looks like a real human being. The relationship between the model's everyday life and the her photo shoot session are nonexistent. It can only be found by washing off the excess and finding her natural, everyday appearance.

Women paint their faces to mask themselves from their natural state every day. Similarly, Rabelais ornaments each page of two of his works, *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, with an excess amount of words both real and imaginary. By overloading his prose with words upon words, he creates two different worlds: the outside covering of words and the inside—what these words actually represent. While one could read one of Rabelais' works and take his piles of words for true meaning, this would be mistaken. Rabelais uses his explosion of words to mask these words' true meaning. Because he uses countless different, juxtaposing, or barely-understandable expressions to describe one object or emotion, he destroys the correspondence between the signifier and the signified. By exploding the language, Rabelais forces the reader to either get stuck trying to translate the elevated diction literally, or to recognize the underlying significance.

In the prologue of *Gargantua*, Rabelais addresses the problem of finding the inside—the true mean-

ing—beneath his words. However, he does so by counseling his reader and then mocking his own advice:

> *Now, you must follow the dog's advice, and be wise in smelling out, sampling, and relishing these fine and most juicy books, which are easy to run down but hard to bring to bay. Then, by diligent reading and frequent meditation, you must break the bone and lick out the substantial marrow… (38)*

Here, Rabelais notifies the reader that there is "marrow" in his stories and within his prose. His words are not only empty letters strung together, but also have a deeper meaning that one must search to find. The excess of words are like the bone that the dog must crack open. Like the bone, these words have a tough exterior because of their excess.

> *"If his pages have been difficult to read, not only for modern Frenchmen but for his own contemporaries, it is because he chose to make them so, heightening in his revisions the archaic turn of a phrase, and importing into his prose many hundred foreign words" (Greene 16).*

Greene is pointing out that Rabelais chose to make his prose nearly impenetrable by using an excess of words. Greene is showing that Rabelais uses phrases in French, other well-known and distant languages, and rhetoric created from his imagination. Interestingly, while Rabelais armors the "marrow" of his works with imaginary and obscure phrases, he also implores the reader to look deeper. In his prologue, though Rabelais does not tell the reader explicitly what may be found underneath the surface, he turns his advice around by completely contradicting himself.

Though Rabelais suggests that the reader scratch the excessive exterior of his prose to expose the true meaning, he only gives the reader a contradictory argument to this suggestion and not a description of the interior. Directly following his proposition to the reader to suck the marrow from the bone Rabelais puts forward an alternative viewpoint. By using Homer as an example, Rabelais suggests that classic writers never intended to include such obscure ideas and allegories in their works that critics have read into them. Rabelais states that critics and philosophers have "squeezed" meanings out of stories that were never even thought of by the authors themselves. The word "squeezed" implies that, according

to Rabelais, the reader forces a meaning out of a text; a meaning that was never really there. In this light, the dog is a fool for sucking the marrow from the bone, for the marrow symbolizes false and forced ideas projected onto a piece of writing. The reader is left bewildered, not knowing whether to look deeper or simply to read the text for its electrifying use of words and fairy tale-like plot.

Left befuddled in trying to understand the text, the reader is prone to miss Rabelais' next crucial step. Rabelais strips down the excess and shows the reader what is underneath the explosion of words. An example of this is when Rabelais describes the author behind the prose.

> *…As I dictate [my jolly chronicles] I gave no more thought to the matter than you, who were probably drinking at the time, as I was? For I never spent—or wasted—any more—or other—time in the composing of this lordly book, than that fixed for the taking of my bodily refreshments, that is to say for eating and drinking. (39)*

The author who Rabelais describes is not a typical celebrity. The author is neither reverent nor respectable, and is in no way superior to any common person. Thinking back to the fashion model scenario, one does not associate the model with "bodily refreshments" because the model is the super flux of glamour and glitz, and therefore has no business drinking beer and using the bathroom. In his description of the author, Rabelais gives the reader a fashion model sans make-up and hair-spray by washing away all the excess. He gives the reader everyday life.

By tracing the steps that Rabelais takes in his prologue, one can identify the use of excess inside of the stories themselves. By giving the reader an abundance of words both real and imaginary, he destroys the relationship between the words and their meaning.

> *Rabelais is incessantly assaulting and belaboring his language, twisting it out of shape, mincing it, sending it up in smoke. (Greene 16)*

Here, Greene discusses the extent to which Rabelais uses and destroys, words and language. By exploding language in a different way, Rabelais blinds the reader from seeing what is underneath them. For example, he throws the reader off with a four-page list of the adolescent giant Gargantua's games. All are funny and strange for different reasons. Also, Rabelais makes use of puns, incon-

sistencies in descriptions, and Panurge, a friend of Gargantua's son Pantagruel (who is also a giant), by having him speak a multitude of languages both real and imaginary. However, the ideas that Rabelais puts forth in his prologue are most clearly demonstrated by the short chapter in which Pantagruel encounters a Parisian intellectual.

This "Limousin," whom Pantagruel tries to greet, can scarcely be understood because he speaks in an undecipherable language:

> *'So you come from Paris,' said Pantagruel. 'And how do you spend your time, you gentleman student at this same Paris?'*
>
> *'We transfretate the Sequana at the dilucule and crepuscule; we deambulate through the compites and quadrives of the urb; we despumate the Latin verbocination and, as versimile amorabunds, we captate the benevolence of the omnijugal, omniform, and omnigenous feminine sex' (Rabelais 184).*

The Limousin speaks in an almost imaginary language; while one can identify the constructions as English (though they were written in French), the actual words are nonsensical. If one did not know that the Limousin's lexicon was full of imaginary words, it would appear as though he had a very strong grasp on language. However, he is analogous to the overly made-up model and the words that the Limousin attempts to command are his artifice. Because Rabelais stuffs the Limousin's mouth with an excess of long, imaginary words, the Limousin keeps others at arm's length. The words are like armor, keeping the reader (and Pantagruel) out of his interior and therefore making the correspondence between his words and who he truly is, unknown.

Once Pantagruel strips the artifice from the Limousin, Pantagruel exposes the Limousin's true interior. As one might have suspected, there is no correspondence between the hyper-intelligent words that are glued to the Limousin's exterior and the man behind the costume. "Then the poor Limousin began to plead: 'Haw, guid master! Haw, lordie! Help me, St. Marshaw. Ho, let me alane, for Gaud's sake, and dinna hairm me!'" (Rabelais 185). The Limousin's speech goes from artifice to truth. Here, he is exposed and naked, stripped of the words that he used to shield himself. While, by speaking in excessive rhetoric, the Limousin gave others the impression that he was very

intelligent and well-educated, his guard is completely dropped once Pantagruel threatens him. The Limousin's speech shows what he hides behind artifice. Without his high rhetoric, the Limousin is just an ordinary, everyday man. He speaks in a commoner's or peasant's dialect and loses control of the language that he had such strong mastery of just moments before. By frightening the Limousin, Pantagruel strips him of all artifice. Pantagruel has cracked the bone and sucked out the marrow. Strangely, this interior meat is not what one might expect it to be.

Rabelais' marrow is the common man or woman in everyday life. By using a vast amount words, languages, and phrases, Rabelais is mocking those like the artificial Limousin, while simultaneously playing with language. Rabelais' ultimate mockeries are his stories in entirety; they are full of artifice and yet yield no internal truth other than to drink and be merry. "Still, if you read [the book] as I wrote it, for mere amusement, we are both more deserving of forgiveness than that great rabble of false-cenobites, hooded cheats, sluggards, hypocrites, canters, thumpers, monks in boots, and other such sects of people, who have disguised themselves like maskers, to deceive the world" (278). The people that Rabelais lists are those who use artifice as the Limousin does, covering their true selves beneath false words and actions. These people do not show their everyday lives to the rest of the world. They show themselves in artifice; and because of this they are deceivers. These deceivers are the people who Rabelais refers to in the prologue—the people who squeeze excessive meaning out of places where it had not been intended. They do this because they want to appear the way that they have deemed elevated, when in fact they have entirely missed the point. Rabelais mocks these people by parodying their actions in his style of writing. By using over-the-top rhetoric, Rabelais cuts off the correspondence between his words and their signifiers. This is precisely what these people do. There is no correspondence between their outsides and insides because they have masked themselves in excess.

Though Rabelais' tells the stories of Gargantua and Pantagruel with excessive and heightened rhetoric, the trials and tribulations of two average men are revealed if the reader cracks open the bone and eliminates the artifice. These men enjoy their lives because they revel in their own desires, friendships, and bodies. Rabelais moti-

vates the reader to discover the lusciousness of everyday life, and so he promotes the indulgence of bodily pleasures such as eating and getting drunk. These pleasures are the marrow inside of the tough artificial exterior, and these are the pleasures that should be celebrated. ■

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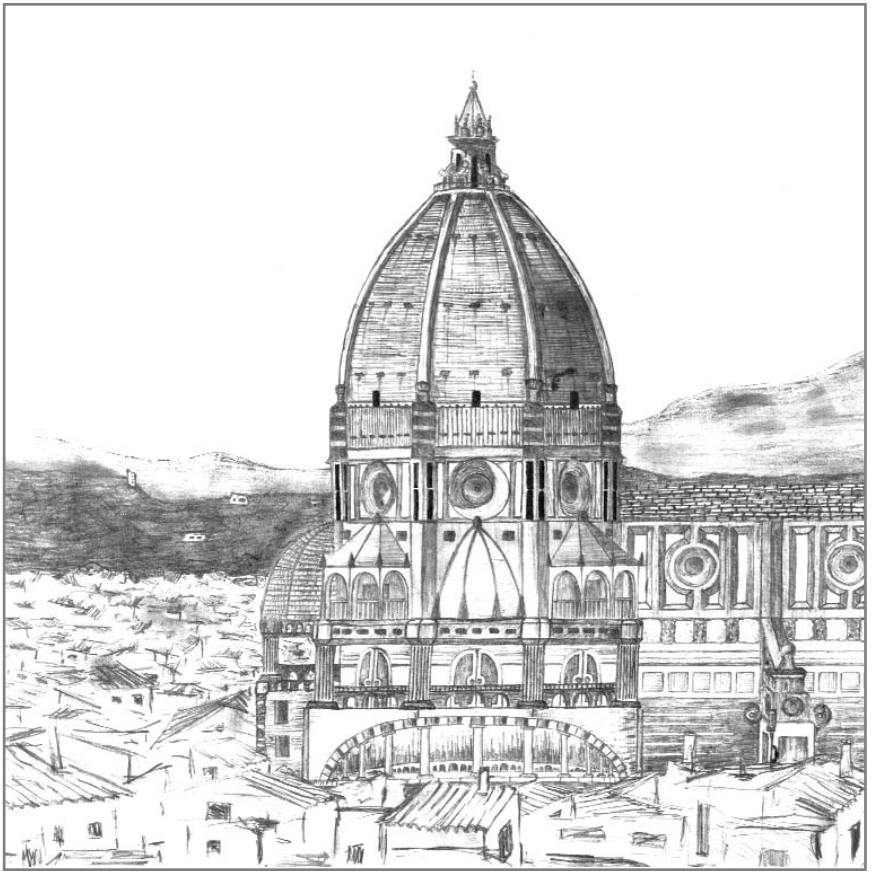
Ryan D'Angelo Barrett *(CAS and COM 05) is majoring in French and advertising. She hails from the best city in the world, Philadelphia, PA. She loves to act and dance, but also has a secret passion for haphazardly memorizing entire sections — music and all — from obscure movies.*



John Hawkins IV *(CAS 05) is majoring in economics and minoring in Spanish. He hails from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, enjoys architecture and travel, and hopes to play for the Milwaukee Bucks after graduating.*

A Splintering

Jaimee Garbacik

Swallow hard, a great many boundaries will be pushed today.
You, I, we are on a search for the perfect rejuvenation,
The simplest awakening possible

Children fading as they notice their differences,
How everyone didn't grow up in the same garden.
Innocence is now under inspection In the age of techno:
"Yeah, we got a pill for that"

Be it caffeinated exercise-oriented or attached to a modem
People are conscious but not particularly concerned
We love packaging, relationships are expendable

The phrase 'renting space' has taken on new meaning
With formal introductions to polished partisans
No non-party members will be validated

Always ride in glass elevators, so if the cable snaps
You can watch yourself in direct proportion
To whatever mechanical parts pass by
Before you disintegrate on marbleized concrete

Grace is a state of full extension with no expectation
Even the muscles keeping you intact and upright are calm
A rarity these days, as there is
Consensus of being passed over in some fashion
"Why am I here if you don't feel my presence?"

We're afraid of that spark of recognition, a glance
—eyes shifting; so many averting light—
You could eat the sunrise
If you still believed it existed.

Society gets its birthmarks removed,
Then wonders why, "I'll never get to be
Quite like I was intended."

We get only instants of awareness
One flicker when definition is exceeded
Followed by days so surreal they're negotiable:
Not everything implies anything.

Inflections are not art but processing
Which should be reserved for meat
But what else is there except moments?

Trying to burn memories and: Be. Here. Now.
Unable to forget your past is what invented you
Identity could be independent of any action or habit
Unaltered by daily occupation
Simply your conception, or rather your hum
The radiation of your passive state

Truth: people are what they emanate in the instant after laughter;
Pause before anything else can permeate.

Jaimee Garbacik *(CAS 05) is majoring in anthropology and philosophy in the hopes of pursuing documentary film. She hails from the Maine woods, denies that grunge and folk are dead, but admits the likelihood of her starving in a basement studio appartment after graduation. She dances ballet, attends too many emocore concerts, and writes like burning.*

Barbara Kitchell *(CAS 06) is currently undecided in her major, but is leaning toward economics with a minor in advertising or Spanish. Her hometown is Hamilton, NJ, and she enjoys all sports, with snowboarding being her favorite, photography, and nature.*

Analects of Core

“My heart, as it strays from one object to another, unites and identifies itself with those which soothe it, wraps itself in pleasant imaginings, and grows drunk on feelings of delight."

~Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Confessions

"For love, all love of other sights controules,
And makes one little roome, an every where."

~John Donne: Selected Poems, *The Good-Morrow*

"Others may notice that your face is flushed (that your subcutaneous blood vessels are dilated), yet no one else knows the heat of the blush in the way that your deeply embarrassed self does."

~Paul M. Churchland: The Engine of Reason, the Seat of the Soul

"Hate is not inborn; it has to be constantly cultivated, to be brought into being, in conflict with more or less recognized guilt complexes. Hate demands existence, and he who hates has to show his hate in appropriate actions and behavior; in a sense, he has to become hate."

~Frantz Fanon: Black Skin White Masks

"And I have reached a part where no thing gleams."

~Dante Alighieri: Inferno

"And the serpent
Slipping between her gown and her smooth breasts
Went writhing on, though imperceptible
To the fevered woman's touch or sight, and breathed
Viper's breath into her. The sinuous mass
Became her collar of twisted gold, became
The riband of her head-dress. In her hair
It twined itself, and slid around her body.
While the infection first, like dew of poison
Fallen on her, pervaded all her senses,
Netting her bones in fire-though still her soul
Had not responded fully to the flame"

~Virgil: The Aeneid

“Salut au monde!
What cities the light or warmth penetrates, I penetrate those cities myself;
All islands to which birds wing their way, I wing my way myself.”

~Walt Whitman: Leaves of Grass

Ripeness and Rot in Shakespeare

Stephan Miran

The title characters of *King Lear* and *Macbeth* can be analyzed and contrasted to each other in terms of fruits. Because Lear begins immature and childlike, his story is one of maturation and ripening; conversely, Macbeth begins virtuous and mature, and his story is one of rot and decay.

Although King Lear is extremely old, he is painted as a child. In the first scene of the play, Lear decides to give up his kingdom, but retain his title of king. "'Tis our fast intent / To shake all cares and business from our age, / Conferring them on younger strengths, while we / Unburthened crawl toward death" (*King Lear* 1.1.40-43). Though he is old, Lear is mentally unripe: a child, fresh and immature. He further says of Cordelia, "I…thought to set my rest / On her kind nursery" (*Macbeth* 1.1.125-126). Shakespeare shows us, using the imagery of crawling and nursing, just how young of mind Lear is. The Fool, however, sees straight through Lear's deceptive old age, and says to him, "Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise" (1.5.44-45). Lear begins the play unripe.

Through the course of his travails, Lear matures. His imaginative bubble of a dream world is burst by the cruelty of Goneril and Regan. In the beginning, Lear believes obvious untruths because he wishes to believe them. When he asks his daughters how much they love him, Goneril responds, "Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter; / …As much as child e'er loved, or father found" (1.1.57-61). She tells him language cannot convey the magnitude of her love, and proceeds to use language to quantify it anyway. Regan does the same: "I am made of that self mettle as my sister…Only she comes too short, that I profess / Myself an enemy to all other joys" (1.1.71-75). Lear however, whether consciously or subconsciously, chooses to ignore the hypocrisy and impossibility of their adulations. Later, after they force him to cede his knights, Lear

is able to see through their sycophancy: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is / To have a thankless child" (1.4.295-296). Lear's pain at the rebuke and contempt of his children makes him wiser, gives him a keener perception of the world, and collapses his illusory dream.

Lear suffers wildly in the storm, but all his suffering helps him to mature. His previous mistakes have driven a cycle of events that have humiliated him, outcasted him, and bereaved him of his family. While mad, in response to Edgar's ravings, Lear says, "Then let them anatomize Regan. See what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?" (3.6.75-77). Through his madness, ironically he grows wiser and wiser, and at last begins to perceive the truth about himself. "They flattered me like a dog," he says, "and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there" (4.6.97-99). We see Lear ripen as he progresses from acknowledging that things were not as they seemed, then that his daughters were not as they claimed, and finally that he allowed himself to be duped by flattery.

Lear's development continues in Act IV with his reunion with Cordelia. "I pray, weep not. / If you have poison for me, I will drink it. / I know you do not love me; for your sisters / Have, as I do remember, done me wrong. You have some cause, they have not," he says (4.7.71-74). Lear seeks forgiveness for his crimes, and though he now focuses the proper emotions on the proper people, he is still not fully ripe: he turns a perfectly good apology into something completely about himself. In the middle of the sentence which begins "I know you do not love me," he turns completely around, continuing, "for your sisters/ Have as I do remember, done me wrong." Cordelia, already ripe, mature, and wise, unselfishly ignores his egotism and brushes aside his suggestion of poison, saying "No cause, no cause" (4.7.75). He is becoming less childish, but is not yet fully ripe.

After the death of Cordelia in Act V, Lear attains complete maturity. While speaking over his daughter's dead body, he has trouble breathing and so asks for help: "Pray you, undo this button. Thank you sir" (5.3.311). The earlier Lear would never have asked politely and expressed gratitude, as contrasted in Act III. He begins a small speech by insulting Edgar, "Thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncovered

body this extremity of the skies" (3.4.103-105), and concludes by commanding, "Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here" (3.4.111). He has learned civility and is no longer rudely demanding. He gives up his selfishness entirely, in fact: his last lines are mourning for Cordelia, not for his sorry state or downfall or impending death. He cries, "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life, / And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more, / Never, never, never, never, never…Look, her lips. / Look there, look there" (5.3.308-313). In Act IV, his concern for her was still wrapped around a core of self-pity. Any thought of himself is absent here. He does not even grieve for himself, that *he* lost her, but simply that *she* lost her life. His total lack of concern for his own well-being is verbalized by Kent, who says, "O, let him pass! He hates him / That would upon the rack of this tough world / Stretch him out longer" (5.3.314-316). Lear, now totally unselfish, has no more desire even for life.

Maturity is central to the theme of *King Lear.* "Men must endure / Their going hence, even as their coming hither: / Ripeness is all" (5.2.9-11), says Edgar, and this is the heart of Lear's story. Ripeness is the most important virtue and is what Lear achieves through the course of the play. His initial envy for Cordelia's love sets everything in motion: he thereby could be said to be starting green, but he gradually ripens into a wise, mature person. Stage by stage he proceeds, first realizing that things are not as they seem, then that his daughters do not love him, then that he allowed himself to be duped by flattery, and finally he leaves behind all self-concern in his grief over the death of Cordelia. Lear's story is an illustration of his ripening.

However, the tale of Macbeth is the complete opposite of Lear's. Whereas Lear starts out immature and ripens, Macbeth begins very wise and upright, and rots until he is a putrid degenerate, and then an empty husk of humanity. In the beginning of the play, Macbeth is wise, well-tempered, and rational—the exact opposite of Lear, who is foolish, ill-tempered, and irrational. For example, when the witches tell him he will become Thane of Cawdor and King, he is dubious and cautious. "To be King / Stands not within the prospect of belief, / No more than to be Cawdor" (1.3.73-75), he says. Though he is curious and bids them speak more, he does not react turbulently, as Lear would have done. Further, the witches' prophesy that Macbeth will be king, and

Banquo the father of kings—this presents a problem in that Macbeth and his line would have to die before Banquo's issue could take the throne. Macbeth does not at once turn on Banquo, however: "Your children shall be kings," Macbeth says to Banquo. Banquo replies, "You shall be King," and Macbeth responds, "And thane of Cawdor too. Went it not so?" (1.3.86-87) Macbeth's "Went it not so?" is pensive, unthreatening—it has nothing of the ring of Lear's warning to Kent, "Come not between the Dragon and his wrath" (*King Lear*, 1.1.124).

Yet Macbeth does not stay mature, ripe, wise, and tempered. He degenerates into a murdering, lying scourge. The plant and fruit imagery begins immediately after he begins contemplating actual murder to achieve kingship. He muses, "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well / It were done quickly," and concludes, "I have no spur / To prick the sides of my intent, but only/ Vaulting ambition" (1.7.1-27). His metaphoric being has been separated from the vine, and after reaching the apex of ripeness he is ready to begin rotting. Separate from the vines or bushes he was growing on, there is an absence of thorns to prick anything, and Macbeth begins his decay. Moreover, whereas Lear's ripening is set in motion by his suffering, Macbeth's rotting is set in motion by his ambition. It is only when he begins actually to consider killing Duncan for the kingship that the imagery of rot appears and he begins to show vice of character.

The rotting and accompanying plant imagery continue murder by murder. When he is preparing to have Banquo killed, the maturity he evinced at the start of the play is absent. He says, "There is none but he / Whose being I do fear: and under him / My genius is rebuked, as it said/ Mark Antony's was by Caesar" (3.1.54-57). He continues, "So he is mine [enemy], and in such bloody distance / That every minute of his being thrusts / Against my near'st of life" (3.1.116-118). The calm, gentle "Went it not so?" of the first act is replaced by seething hatred and fear. The accompanying imagery of degeneration comes in the form of "Us, / who wear our health but sickly…" (3.1.106-107). All of Macbeth's temperance, valor, and maturity are replaced by paranoia, dishonor, and false pride, and Shakespeare juxtaposes imagery of rot with Macbeth's moral failing to illustrate his degeneration.

Macbeth rots even further, though. Whereas in the beginning he did not immaturely feel threatened by Banquo even after hearing

the witches say that Banquo's descendants would succeed him, now he feels immensely threatened by Macduff even after hearing that Macduff is no threat at all. The Second Apparition summoned by the witches tells him, "Be bloody, bold, and resolute! Laugh to scorn / The pow'r of man, for none of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth" (4.1.79-81). Macbeth responds, "Then live, Macduff: What need I fear of thee? / But yet I'll make assurance double sure, / And take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live; / That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies, / And sleep in spite of thunder" (4.1.82-86). He believes Macduff is no danger, but nevertheless wishes to "make assurance double sure": he is going to kill Macduff—and when he cannot get to Macduff, Macduff's entire family—to cement his position. This childish fear, and the irrational means of overcoming it, demonstrate just how far Macbeth has degenerated from his previous state of temperance, rationality and ripeness. Shakespeare gives us more imagery of rotting after Macbeth kills the family of Macduff: when Macduff asks Malcolm, "What's the disease he means," Malcolm replies, "'Tis called the evil…All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye" (4.3.146-151). The image of "swoll'n and ulcerous" is essential to Shakespeare's exposure of the rot that is now Macbeth.

Macbeth becomes even more ill-tempered and petty in Act V. When a servant enters, he bears the brunt of Macbeth's anger. Macbeth explodes, "The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon! / Where gotst thou that goose look?" The servant disregards the insult and proceeds with business, telling him "There is ten-thousand—" but Macbeth interrupts him with "Geese, villain" (5.3.11-13). This irrationality and shortness with servants brings to mind Lear at the beginning of his own saga. After the servant informs his liege that there are soldiers there, Macbeth screams, "Go prick thy face and over-red thy fear, / Thou lily-livered boy…Death of thy soul!...What soldiers, whey-face" (5.3.14-17). Macbeth has completely lost his temper, and any semblance of self-control or rationality, or kindness. His mentality resembles the early Lear's. He then says, "My way of life / Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf" (5.3.22-23). He has become withered, dried, yellow. The imagery of rot and decay, now dryness, once again accompanies displays of rotten behavior.

Macbeth reaches the ultimate state of decay before he dies. After

hearing of Lady Macbeth's death, the loss of his closest friend and best-trusted advisor, he does not weep or show any emotion at all, but emptily says, "She should have died hereafter" (5.5.17). His following speech, "…the way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle! / Life's but a walking shadow…full of sound and fury / Signifying nothing," is empty and lifeless (5.5.23-28). Macbeth has passed beyond being putridly rotten and is now an empty, lifeless husk, devoid of any of the humanity with which he began the play. His inability to weep signifies that he has passed through the stage of rot and become dry. After Macbeth's death, Malcolm says, among other things, "What's more to do, / Which would be planted newly with the time" (5.8.64-65). The fruit has rotted and dried and is now completely gone, leaving only seeds...it is time for Scotland to begin life anew. Macbeth's saga is over: he has passed from ripeness, separated from the branch, rotted, dried and withered, and now is dead so Scotland may replant.

Shakespeare in *Macbeth* portrays a mirror of *King Lear*. Lear begins immature, unripe and childish, but grows and matures over the course of the play, attaining ripeness. Macbeth, on the other hand, begins dignified, temperate, strong of character, and bit-by-bit degenerates and rots. For Lear, it was the process of madness, of anger and then reconnection with his daughter that taught him maturity. For Macbeth it was the process of cold calculation, of wanting more than he had and fear of losing it that caused his decay and estrangement from his wife. ■

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Idea from Mr. Pat Mitchell

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Interview with a Lunatic

A Psychiatric Counseling Session with Don Quixote

Emily Patulski

At a busy psychiatrist's office in London, a phone rings. A middle-aged man, wearing reading glasses, a tweed blazer, and corduroy trousers, puts down his reading material, Psychiatry for Dummies, and swivels in his chair to pick up the ringing telephone. A perky voice on the other end chirps, "Dr. Shrink, your 10 o'clock is here, a Mr. Quixote...Mr. Don Quixote." The doctor thinks for a minute and then replies, "Ahhh, yes. Thank you, Helen. Send him in."

After a few minutes, Dr. Shrink hears what seems to be a clanging of armor and the sound of horse hooves, followed by a knock at the door. Helen enters the office, showing Mr. Quixote in. "I tried to tell him that we don't allow animals," she whispers to the doctor, "but he insisted." She throws Dr. Shrink a worried glance and shrugs her shoulders, closing the door behind her as she exits.

Before the bewildered psychiatrist stands a 6' tall armored knight, wearing a visored helmet that bears a striking resemblance to a barber's basin. The man is accompanied by a decrepit horse that wears a traditional saddle and bearings. The knight lays down his sword and raises his visor to face the doctor. Quixote clears his throat before proclaiming, "Hello Sir Magician. I am Don Quixote De La Mancha, and this is my mighty steed, Rocinante." Dr. Shrink struggles to regain his composure. After a moment's pause, he stretches out his hand to the armored knight and says, "Hello Mr. Quixote. It's nice to meet you. I'm Dr. Shrink, but you can call me Arthur."

Don Quixote takes the outstretched hand and in typical chivalrous fashion, kisses it as he bends down on one knee and bows his head. Dr. Shrink stands stunned in amazement. After once again regaining his good thoughts, Dr. Shrink takes a seat in his leather-bound swivel chair and sips his coffee. "Please sit," he advises Don Quixote, "Shall we begin?" Don Quixote struggles to sit down on the brown, leather sofa, producing

a loud ruckus with his heavy, clanging armor. Rocinante looks on enviously and lies down in front of the sofa, resting his head on his master's feet. And so the psychiatric session begins:

Dr. Shrink: *(removing a file folder from a cabinet and reviewing the paperwork inside)* I see. You were referred by your niece...nice girl...I remember speaking with her.

Don Quixote: Yes, good sir, that is correct.

Dr. Shrink: She says you are in need of counseling for some hallucinations, delusions, and other unexplainable psychological phenomena. Can you tell me about that?

Don Quixote: Well, Sir Arthur of the Shrinkwrap...

Dr. Shrink: *(chuckling softly)* The name is Shrink, Dr. Shrink. Just call me Arthur.

Don Quixote: I'm sorry, sir, but I can do no such thing. Where I come from it is customary to call people by their correct and proper titles, especially men of such high social standing as yourself.

Dr. Shrink: And what standing would that be, Don?

Don Quixote: Wizardry, of course.

Dr. Shrink: *(trying to suppress his laughter)* With all due respect Don, I am no wizard.

Don Quixote: Well...'magician,' if you prefer. I never can remember what you people are calling yourselves these days.

Dr. Shrink: I am neither a wizard nor a magician, sir. I am a psychiatrist. You can see my degrees on the wall there.

Don Quixote: *(looking quite perplexed as he glances at the wall)* There is no need to boast, Sir Shrinkwrap. Your glory has reached the ears of knights

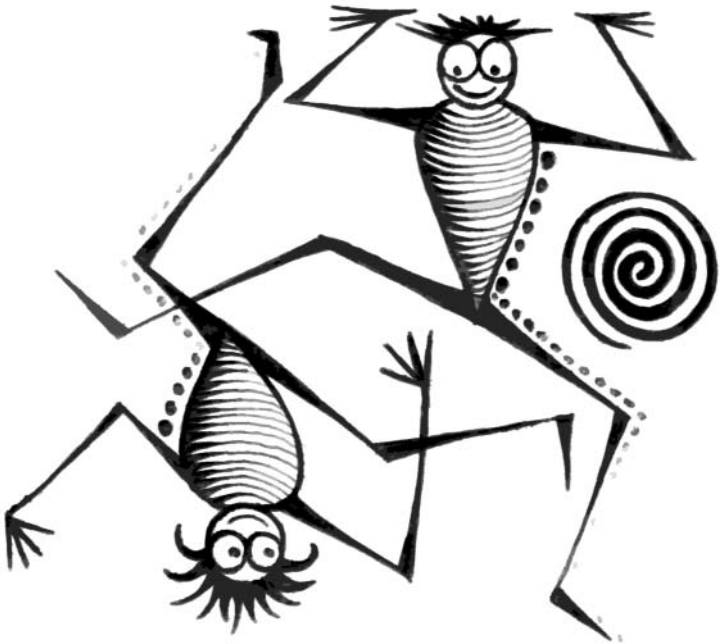
and damsels across all the lands of Spain.

Dr. Shrink: Well, never mind all that. *(He sees that the subject is hopeless and glances at his watch.)* What do you say we get started? It is already a quarter past.

The doctor reviews his chart once more and sinks into deep thought. Meanwhile, Don Quixote takes a branch of wheatgrass from his satchel and begins chewing its stem, dropping some hay on the floor for Rocinante.

Dr. Shrink: Okay, Don. Why don't you tell me why you are here?

Don Quixote: My niece threatened to burn my books if I did not come. Besides, my squire Sancho Panza was busy with his family today, and I could not pass up the opportunity to meet such a renowned wizard as you.



Dr. Shrink: *(breathing in deeply and sighing in frustration)* This says you once had a run-in with some windmills. Can you tell me about that?

Don Quixote: Those were no windmills, my good wizard. Those were the most vile and cowardly creatures ever to be found on earth-giants... hoards of them. But I was not afraid. I mounted my steed and rode in full force toward them, unsheathing the fury of my sword against their boundless magnitude! But just as I was approaching, the sage Freston—the same vile enemy who stole my library—turned these giants into windmills, depriving me of the glory of my victory, such is the enmity he feels for me! But in the end his evil arts will avail him little against the might of my sword![1]

Dr. Shrink: *(mumbling to himself as he scribbles furiously in his notebook)* So at first the hallucination was in the form of giants and it then morphed into that of windmills?

Don Quixote: Well I don't know all about your fancy wizard terms but yes, that sounds about right.

Dr. Shrink: So the windmills knocked you from your horse? Did you suffer any injuries because of the fall? Perhaps a sharp blow to the head?

Don Quixote: Knights errant are not permitted to complain about their wounds, even if their entrails are spilling out of them.[2]

Dr. Shrink: I see. That is a little graphic. Did you have any other similar incidents when you got lost away from your home?

Don Quixote: I do not think you understand, Sir Shrinkwrap. I was not 'lost away from home;' I was on a mission both for my own increase in honor and for the common good, to travel the world in search of adventures, redressing all kinds of grievances and exposing myself to perils and dangers that I would overcome, thereby gaining eternal fame and renown. And this is what I did.[3]

Dr. Shrink: Your goals seem a little far-fetched, Don. Why do you take it

upon yourself to rectify all the evil in the world? That is an awfully big task for one man, don't you think? Maybe we should work on your goals as well as your overwhelming fears and unrealistic expectations.

Don Quixote: I have no idea of what it is you speak, Shrinkwrap. Have you not read the story of the great knight errant, Amadis of Gaul? Nor of Palmerin of England? Nor of the Knight of Phoebus? Nor of Don Galaor? I could lend them to you if you...[4]

Dr. Shrink: No, Don. It is quite all right. I have plenty of my own reading materials, thank you. *(Saying so, he quickly slides* Psychiatry for Dummies *out of sight and into a desk drawer.)*

Don Quixote: Would you like to hear more of my adventures, Sir Shrinkwrap?

Dr. Shrink: *(He looks down at his pocketwatch again and then checks the time with the wall clock.)* Actually, I would rather hear more about your relationship with your friend, Sancho Panza... your discussions with him and the memories you shared.

Don Quixote: Well, I can tell you that he is quite a simple-minded man. Much to my distaste, he often doubts me and tries to convince me that I'm crazy. He, in fact, is quite a raw novice when it comes to the matter of adventures.[5]

Dr. Shrink: *(scribbling in his pad)* I see. So would you say that you have difficulty establishing a close relationship with Sancho out of fear of his disapproval?

Don Quixote: Not at all; according to the books of knight errantry, it is not proper to have a close friendship with your squire, so I try to stay as professional as possible.

Dr. Shrink: *(scratching his beard)* I see...so you are afraid of intimacy?

Don Quixote: I am the great Don Quixote De La Mancha you most boastful Sir of Shrinkwrap! I am not afraid of anything!

At this, Rocinante lets out a loud neigh of approval. Dr. Shrink shakes his head as he begins to wonder whether he should have skipped medical school and become a janitor. His thoughts are interrupted by Don's continued speech.

Don Quixote: Besides, the only person I am intimate with is the fair lady, Dulcinea del Toboso, and such sensual affairs are none of your concern.

Dr. Shrink: Is this a girlfriend of yours?

Don Quixote: I don't think you understand, Sir Shrinkwrap. This is no ordinary woman. She is the most beautiful and majestic maiden of all the lands of Spain.

Dr. Shrink: I see. Do you see her often?

Don Quixote: In the traditions of knights, it is more appropriate to admire from afar.

Dr. Shrink: So you have never actually met this woman?

Don Quixote: Well no, but I don't think that fact has any effect on the scope of our love.

At this point, Dr. Shrink re-enters the magical dream world of the janitorial arts, fantasizing about brooms and mops, inanimate objects incapable of such incredible delusional thoughts as those plaguing his patient. Don Quixote notices the doctor's disturbed state and shifts uncomfortably in his armor.

Don Quixote: Excuse me for saying so, but you are considerably slow and methodical in your thought process, somewhat like the Giant Sloth of Yore.

Dr. Shrink: *(astonished and bewildered)* Well thank you...I think.

Dr. Shrink glances at his watch, and realizing gratefully that time is almost up, furiously scribbles in his notepad, struggling to decide on a final analysis of the patient.

Dr. Shrink: Well Don, the hour is almost up. It is very hard to diagnose a serious condition such as yours in the span of only one session. But after considerable thought, I have decided that you are suffering from a combination of several different types of schizophrenia as well as narcissistic personality disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and dissociative identity disorder, among other things. I am going to write you some prescriptions and ask you come in for therapy twice...no...better make it three times a week. How does that sound to you?

Don Quixote: While I feel you are insulting me, good Sir Shrinkwrap, it is not in the nature of noble knight errantry to argue with a man of such an honored status. Thus, I will take your magic potions of witch hazel and toadstool and continue on with my adventures, trying to fit your appointments into my busy schedule of saving damsels, fighting giants, and ridding the world of evil.

Dr. Shrink: Very well. You can see yourself out, and Helen will schedule your next appointment. Take care, Don. Remember to take your medications—it is very important.

At this, Don Quixote bows before the Doctor and gives Rocinante a pull. The armored knight clangs his way out of the office, Rocinante's hooves clicking on the floor behind him. Once alone in the office, Dr. Shrink pours himself a double shot of whiskey and promptly returns to his happy daydreams, trying desperately to rid his mind of the psychological conundrum he has just witnessed. ■

1 Cervantes, 65
2 Ibid., 65
3 Ibid., 27
4 Ibid., 26
5 Ibid., 64

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Emily Patulski, *(CAS 05) is a native of Syracuse, New York, and will be majoring in psychology with a minor in women's studies. Emily enjoys singing in the Boston University Choral Society and rollerblading.*

In My Mind

Julia Schumacher

In the glazing iris of my mind,
I watch me trip and trickle far from where,
Without ardor, bidding brain-wheels grind
Perched across the bleak pulpit of science

This alien lector with cadaverous air
Grimly swears the answer is confined
Somehow behind the math—and I despair
Of returning, calmer and resigned,

Bald of treacherous traces of defiance,
To face my fear of Logic, unaware
That truth lurks not within genetic strand
But waits to leap through graphite from the hand.

***Julia Schumacher** (CAS 06) is a bewildered fresh-woman from la belle ville of St. Louis, MO. When she isn't working gallantly towards her English degree, she spends her time dancing or teaching ballet, listening to vintage rock, and planning her future as a glamorous writer in Paris.*

On Hope and Feathers

Matt Merendo

That fine-feathered Friend
who's perched in my soul
keeps singing her Tune
no matter the toll.

The storm knows no end
and strong blow the Gales.
All Hope is lost
and still that Bird wails.

I have drowned in the Ocean
and Coldness conquered me.
Yet, even now, in Extremity
that Stupid bird will not let me be.

#254 ("'Hope' is the thing with feathers –")
Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –
And sore must be the storm –
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm –

I've heard it in the chillest land –
And on the strangest Sea –
Yet, never, in Extremity,
It asked a crumb – of Me.

Matt Merendo *(CAS 05) is a biochemistry/molecular biology-turned-English major on academic leave from his hometown of Monaca, PA, a suburb twice-removed of Pittsburgh. After getting a doctorate, he plans on whiling away his time by sitting under a tree in a park somewhere, writing best-sellers and reading poetry. He likes using Western PA slang like 'yins' (you all) and 'sweeper' (vacuum cleaner), even if people do mock him for it.*

Explorations of Exaltation
A Study of the Methods of James and Durkheim

Julia Bainbridge

Living in the late nineteenth century, William James and Emile Durkheim were interested in the state of religion and its effects in the modern world. Although they both looked for answers in the consequences of religion, their methods and definitions were profoundly different. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, James takes a psychological approach. Through his examination of healthy-minded and sick soul religious types and his theory of conversion, James shows that religion is a private and personal experience. Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* analyzes the origin of the totemic principle. His definition of religion is a manifestation of social solidarity realized through collective effervescence. For the American, religion is concerned with feelings and emotions, not with cognition, as it is for the analytic Frenchman.

James' lectures refer to religion as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine" (James, 31). He does not deal with theology or ecclesiasticism, but solely with the immediate personal experiences of those people he studies. To show the kind of power with which religion can influence an individual, he uses the most exaggerated and intense examples. The psychologist describes two religious types: the healthy-minded, or once-born, and the sick souls, or twice-born.

The healthy-minded believe that the world is good, God is good, and everything that happens is good. James uses the supreme example of Walt Whitman to demonstrate this attitude that pain is an illusion:

> *His favorite occupation . . . seemed to be strolling or sauntering about outdoors by himself, looking at the grass, the trees, the flowers . . . and listening to . . . all the hundreds of natural sounds. It was evident that these things gave him a*

pleasure far beyond what they give to ordinary people. . . He never spoke deprecatingly of any nationality or class of men, or time in world's history . . . nor any of the laws of nature, nor any of the results of those laws, such as illness, deformity, and death (James, 84-85).

This frame of mind requires thought control and enthusiasm. The mind-cure movement's healthy-minded attitude finds glory even in misery. People of this faith deal with their individual struggles by losing themselves and becoming one with God. They transcend their egos, transform themselves, and soon realize that God is everything; He is a powerful force existing everywhere that can help them. James describes one of these people who was physically healed by his faith:

I fell, spraining my ankle, which I had done once four years before, having then had to use a crutch and elastic anklet for some months, and carefully guarding it ever since. As soon as I was on my feet I made a positive suggestion (and felt it through all my being): 'There is nothing but God, all life comes from him perfectly. I cannot be sprained or hurt, I will let him take care of it.' Well, I never had a sensation in it, and I walked two miles that day (James, 120).

Healthy-mindedness is an activist, positive, and progress-oriented religious type. By putting all faith in God, these people rise above unhappiness.

James applies the same technique, using individual examples of fantastic religious experiences, to demonstrate the religion of the sick soul. These people cannot so easily rise above the consciousness of evil; they believe the world has lost all color. They feel that their lives are meaningless, and they have a sense of death, alienation, and lack of pleasure. Tolstoy is James' example of religious melancholy, "I felt that something had broken within me on which my life had always rested, that I had nothing left to hold on to, and that my life had morally stopped. An invisible force impelled me to get rid of my existence, in one way or another" (James, 153).

Fortunately, the divided self can be unified; the sick soul can be cured through a process of conversion. Through conversion, religious ideas once unimportant to one's consciousness become central. One's emotional interest becomes focused on religion spontaneously, after feeling the presence of divinity. Once again, James

uses a personal account:

> *Never with mortal tongue can I describe that moment. Although up to that moment my soul had been filled with indescribable gloom, I felt the glorious brightness of the noonday sun shine into my heart. I felt I was a free man. Oh, the precious feeling of safety, of freedom, of resting on Jesus! I felt that Christ with all his brightness and power had come into my life; that, indeed, old things had passed away and all things had become new (James, 203).*

This change is brought about by no medical attention; it is brought about only in the minds and emotions of the people who undergo them. James, a Bostonian, uses a variety of private, particular examples of healthy-mindedness, sick souls, and conversion to show that religion is a subjective experience. America is a place where religion is a personal choice and is always changing.

The founder of French modern sociology, Durkheim, on the other hand, studies religion to find the basis of human solidarity. To him, religion grows out of human interaction and is rooted in social ritual. Society does not begin with free individuals and their private experiences; it begins with society, as religion does. It is "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (Durkheim, 44). Like James, Durkheim acknowledges a division between the sacred and the profane, but unlike James, he thinks that religion is inherently a communal thing.

Durkheim examines the origin of the notion of the totemic principle, a primitive kind of tribal religion, to show that the force of collectivity brings the feeling of the sacred into maturity. Emotions of the original ecstasy would not survive if only experienced individually and not strengthened by group feeling. By coming together, people can share their emotions and a collective effervescence emerges from their gathering. Durkheim describes a corroboree held by the totemists:

> *Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches them to an extraordinary height of exaltation. Every emotion expressed resonates without interference in consciousness that are wide open to external impressions, each one echoing the others. The initial*

impulse is thereby amplified each time it is echoed, like an avalanche that grows as it goes along. And since passions are so heated and so free from all control cannot help but spill over, from every side there are nothing but wild movements, shouts, downright howls, and deafening noises of all kinds that further intensify the state they are expressing (Durkheim, 217-218).

Ritual is a shared experience of people engaging in an intense interaction of emotion and this recapturing the elements of the sacred. It becomes a religious action that people perform again and again, following prescribed rights that demand respect. The totemists feel such a state of exaltation when engaging in ritual that they feel possessed by an external power and no longer themselves. They find it difficult to detect the source of this strong feeling, so they attach it to a concrete object, the totem.

"The symbol thus takes the place of the thing, and the emotions aroused are transferred to the symbol. It is the symbol that is loved, feared, and respected. It is to the symbol that one is grateful. And it is to the symbol that one sacrifices oneself" (Durkheim, 221-222).

The totem becomes the symbol of the clan, and binds the group together:

"Because religious force is none other than the anonymous force of the clan and because that force can only be conceived of in the form of the totem, the totemic emblem is, so to speak, the visible body of the god" (Durkheim, 223).

By looking at the foreign, simple culture of the totemists, Durkheim learns that religion is relevant to everyone and that it brings believers of a certain faith together.

Both James' and Durkheim's theories of religion examine its origins and its effects. James looks at how religious emotions play within the individual, whereas Durkheim values the collective religious experience. As Durkheim says, religion is something inherently social. People come together to share emotions of happiness and praise of a supernatural being in many different ways, from tribal dances to formal communion at church. Something is lost when such emotions are kept private; the individual is never sure of his or her beliefs unless someone else acknowledges the same feelings.

To reach its full maturity within the individual, religious feelings can only be fulfilled in a group. James explains half of the story, but Durkheim takes a step further. ■

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Today I Saw Tombstones

Emilie Heilig

Today I saw tombstones
Embraced by morning light
Rising, falling, their heads poked black
And rounded from white hills,
Their arched stubs like scattered teeth.
The life-giving sun illuminated
In endless shadows of fingers,
Tombstones and towering tree trunks
cast across the endless slopes of snow.
Expectant landmarks
Beckoning in mute jubilation:
"Come, stand in the sun."

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A Dangerous Journey Through the Aisles of Shaw's

Brianna Ficcadenti

Sing to me, Muse, and tell me the story
of the man so skilled with a shopping cart,
the wanderer who spent tens of minutes
aimlessly meandering the aisles of Shaw's
attempting to bring home a meal of peanut butter
and jelly to his precious wife and son.

Heartily hungry Odysseus, the bearer of meals, walks
down the sidewalk. The tall office buildings loomed
above him as he makes his way towards the
supermarket. They peer down at him from their
immense height. As a starving shipwrecked sailor yearns for food,
so did Odysseus' stomach growl. He dressed for the cold
wearing a black wool jacket with a beige scarf and
black hat. He rolled around a piece of lint in his left
hand, which was in the pocket of his wool jacket. He came
upon the store, went in, and prepared to shop.

"Would Zeus that I am able to get in and out of
this supermarket without much problem. How my
stomach grumbles with need for food! Am I doomed
to wander this supermarket indefinitely? I wish I could just
be home with my meal ready in front of me!
Oh, that Penelope
could have gone shopping earlier this morning so that I
would not be walking in this building right now."

Odysseus began walking down aisle three.
The cereals were lined up on the left side

of the aisle. On the other side of the aisle there lay an
enormous variety of granola bars. To his eyes
no peanut butter and jelly was revealed.

At that moment Athena, the caretaker of Odysseus,
came upon the scene, leaving Olympus and a feast of the gods,
to guide Odysseus in his journey. She walks down
the aisle in the form of Jen, a friendly Shaw's worker.
Odysseus looks up and sees the pretty face of the
girl walking towards him. She was wearing a
pink scarf, reminding him of a girl from his youth.
Odysseus, the college man, had
walked through the Campus Convenience store when a
girl with a pink scarf had asked him if he needed anything.
She was most helpful and aided him in finding all that he
needed. This girl, Jen, wore the same scarf and Odysseus
smiled to himself, knowing he was in the presence of divinity.

Athena, the caretaker of Odysseus, said to him:

"Odysseus, heartily hungry,
the bearer of meals to your family, is there
anything that I can help you find in this store?
I know that you are looking for sandwich fixings
for your family. I can tell you that you will find
all that you need in aisle seven. Someone will
try to beat you to the jelly but you must be
quick and you will get your dinner. Despite
the trials you will get through
the line and bring your meal home."

Athena then left Shaw's, and, riding the back
of the T, returned to her spot on Olympus.

Now Odysseus hurried towards the seventh aisle.
He sees a woman reaching to grab the last jelly just
as he turned down the aisle. In one grand movement
he races down the aisle, cleverly maneuvering his cart,

grabbing the jelly, a can of Jiffy and some Wonder bread
then sped off without looking back.

Odysseus, the heartily hungry, praised himself:
"How clever I am that I got through the aisle with all that
I need. Would Zeus and his beautiful daughter Athena that
I get through the teller and on my way home without any glitches."

He prayed for swifter legs and an abundant checking
account as he hurried towards the check-out line preparing
his debit card for purchase. In line he found that his only
obstruction to leaving the store was his friend Bill,
king of the far off land of the Yukon Valley.

"Oh Bill, son of Jon, King of Yukon, I pray that you let
me pass you that I might leave this place and return to my home
in order to appease my own growling pit and that of my wife and son."

Bill, quite reluctant because he too was suffering from a
growling stomach, knew that Odysseus was one to
grow upset in the light of a hungry stomach, so he
let him pass. Odysseus reached the front of the
line and swiped his Fleet card with no further problem.
Luckily his account was abundantly stocked. He left
the grocery store knowing that he succeeded and that
his stomach would soon be filled with the PB & J it desired. ■

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Analects of Core

"It is absolutely true, both that we must believe that there is a God because it is so taught in the Holy Scriptures, and, on the other hand, that we must believe the Holy Scriptures because they come from God."

~René Descartes: Discourse on Method and Meditations

"Speaking seriously, there are good reasons why all philosophical dogmatizing, however solemn and definitive its airs used to be, may nevertheless have been no more than a noble childishness and tyronism."

~Friedrich Nietzsche: Beyond Good & Evil

"Beginning students can reel off the words they have heard, but they do not yet know the subject. The subject must grow to be part of them, and that takes time...a man who displays moral weakness repeats the formulae in the same way as an actor speaks his line."

~Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics

"We are forced to conclude that human nature is almost unbelievably malleable."

~Margaret Mead: Sex and Temperament

"I thought in silence of the vanity in us mortals who neglect what is noblest in ourselves in a vain show only because we look around ourselves for what can be found only within us."

~Petrarch: Selections from the Canzoniere, *The Ascent of Mount Ventoux*

"The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home."

~Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Selected Works

"'To think that I can contemplate such a terrible act and yet be afraid of such trifles,' he thought, and he smiled strangely. 'Hm…yes…a man holds the fate of the world in his two hands, and yet, simply because he is afraid, he just lets things drift - that is a truism…I wonder what men are most afraid of…Any new departure, and especially a new word - that is what they fear most of all…But I am talking too much.'"

~Feodor Dostoevsky: Crime and Punishment

"I have never seen a greater monster or miracle than myself."

~Michel de Montaigne: The Essays

Searching for Reality

Western and East Asian Conceptions of the True Nature of the Universe

Jessica Marin Elliott

We belong to a race of philosophers and, as such, instinctively struggle to answer the basic questions of our existence. We wonder how we fit into the world around us. Do we affect the universe, and does it affect us? What is the relationship between our bodies and the environment? Our first step has always been to articulate these questions; only then can we begin to seek answers. By uniting mankind across lines of race, class, and sex, this search takes on even greater significance. Although different cultures often focus on separate issues, and, therefore, reach diverse conclusions, we search together for an underlying meaning in our lives. Do connections exist between the traditions? Can systems as varied as Chinese medical theory, Western quantum mechanics, and Taoist mysticism work together in order to illuminate the nature of reality? By examining whether or not the universe (conceptualized as energy) can be explained by traditional cause and effect relationships, one begins to see parallels between the systems.

Chinese Medical Theory

According to established medical theory in the West, illness is causal; one is exposed to bacteria or a virus, and this exposure leads to sickness. Western medicine "starts with a symptom, then searches for the underlying mechanism—a precise cause for a specific disease."[1] Westerners think of disease as something to be isolated and destroyed; it interferes with our lives, and we have someone get rid of it for us as soon as possible. We assume that every case of the flu is the same, and we have no qualms about borrowing our neighbor's decongestant. After all, our symptoms are the same, and we probably "caught" the flu from the same person—why wouldn't the same medicine work for both of us? Chinese medical theory, however, instructs that illness is noncausal. The Chinese physician

does not assume that patients presenting similar symptoms suffer from the same illness and require the same treatment; instead, he searches for "what Chinese medicine calls a 'pattern of disharmony.'"[2] He finds this fundamental pattern by investigating all aspects of the patient's life.

The Chinese physician divides his examination into the following four categories: looking, listening and smelling, asking, and touching; these examinations allow the physician to discern an underlying pattern of disharmony in the patient. The physician begins by examining the patient's general appearance, bodily secretions and excretions, facial color, and tongue.[3] The physician then notes the patient's voice, respiration, and bodily odor before asking the patient about his other symptoms and general medical history. Chinese physicians traditionally consider the last examination, in which the pulse is felt, to be the most important. These examinations allow the physician to discern the complete pattern of the patient's life; the physician can then understand the patient's underlying disharmony.[4]

As illness is believed to be noncausal, physicians do not need to "treat" the patient's disease. The Chinese physician does not search for a disease—causing agent in order to cure the patient; neither does he merely ease a cough or reduce the patient's fever. Symptoms are part of the overall pattern, and by addressing the underlying disharmony, the physician and patient render these symptoms irrelevant. According to Ted Kaptchuk, the Chinese doctor uses "his or her specialized skill to try to restore health-to achieve balance and harmony within a living organism."[5] He reharmonizes the patient's Qi , aligning the internal energy with the Qi of the universe. When one's energy flows smoothly and interacts properly with the Qi of heaven, there is no disharmony and, therefore, no illness.

This inherent connection between the internal and the external—the idea that illness is associated both with a lack of harmony within the body and with a failure to align oneself with the Qi of heaven—inspires one to wonder if a distinction between the two worlds truly exists. If external agents do not cause internal illness, how, exactly, does one's internal health reflect one's environment? Can energy "communicate"? If energy, in fact, can process information, one must wonder whether other aspects of the universe are not as they originally appear.

Western Quantum Physics

Classical physics[6] has always attempted to explain the nature of reality, and despite frequent failures, most classical physicists remained confident that they had the tools necessary to discover the long-sought Grand Unified Theory.[7] Unfortunately for these physicists, increasingly surprising research necessitated the development of a "new" physics-quantum mechanics-that recognized the incompatibility of Newtonian principles and the subatomic realm.

In 1803, the physicist Thomas Young attempted to uncover the true nature of light. When passed through two vertical slits cut into a solid screen, sunlight illuminated the wall "with alternating bands of light and darkness."[8]

This phenomenon—interference—is a well-documented property of waves; light, therefore, must be wave-like. However, by experimenting with the photoelectric effect, Einstein demonstrated that light is particle-like. We "know" that something cannot be both a particle and wave. What, then, is light exactly? The question becomes even trickier when Young's experiment is run with photons.[9]

Let us imagine that we cover one slit, fire a single photon through the other opening, and mark where it hits the wall. We realize that the photon has hit an area of the wall that would be in the middle of a dark band if the other slit had also been open. Somehow, the photon "knew" that it could land in a location that is always off-limits when both slits are open. If the second slit is reopened, a photon will never land in the darkened area. One way or another, the photon was able to gather information and to use this information to influence its future behavior. Zukav mentions that a photon's ability "to process information and to act accordingly"[10] allows it to be classified as organic; therefore, counterintuitive as it might seem, studying energy quanta may perhaps allow us to learn something about other organic life forms—even ourselves![11]

Perhaps even more important, wave-particle duality is what saves us from a deterministic universe. According to the theory of classical causality, "we can predict the future of events because we know the laws that govern them."[12] By knowing everything about a particle at a specific moment in time, we could predict its actions far into the future. In theory, if we knew everything about the universe at the moment of the Big Bang, we could predict everything that

would ever happen within the universe. Free will would not exist; instead, everything would be determined by prior conditions. Fortunately, the double-slit experiment has shown this theory to be false; it saves us from the dreary fate of inhabiting a universe in which all is preset and unchangeable.

In two-slit experiments, despite knowing everything possible about the initial conditions, we are unable to accurately predict where a photon will land. In both experiment one (one slit covered) and experiment two (both slits open), the initial conditions of the involved photons were the same. Both photons "start from the same place, travel at the same speed, go to the same place, and therefore, are moving in the same direction just prior to passing through slit number one."[13] Newton's laws of motion tell us that both photons should land in the exact same location; herein, however, lies the fundamental problem—they do not hit the same location. Although the "initial conditions pertaining to both of them are identical and known to us,"[14] the photon from experiment one lands somewhere that the photon from experiment two can never hit. We cannot accurately predict the behavior of individual photons; we can only predict the likelihood of finding one in a specific place.[15]

Apparently, simply knowing initial conditions is not enough. Something happens at the subatomic level of which we have no knowledge. The universe is not something to be figured out with equations and formulae; rather, physicists have been forced to "adopt a much more subtle, holistic

and 'organic' view of nature."[16] We have learned that, on their own, the individual components of the universe are not very significant; a light "particle" means little without its associated wave function. The universe gains significance only when seen as a dazzling, intricate web connecting all the diverse parts of the whole.

Taoist Mysticism and Its Connections to Quantum Mechanics

At a very high level, the distinction between science and religion becomes blurred; in both cases, one eventually transcends mere technique or ritual in favor of something greater: true comprehension of reality. On both paths, the truly dedicated eventually reach a point where their current knowledge is simply not enough.

Understanding is often revealed to the adept in a great flash of insight, and this direct experience of ultimate reality can be so shocking that it unsettles one's entire worldview. The physicist Niels Bohr wrote the following:

> *The great extension of our experience in recent years has brought to light the insufficiency of our simple mechanical conceptions and, as a consequence, has shaken the foundation on which the customary interpretation of observation was based.*[17]

His language, so similar to that of an Eastern mystic, reveals that perhaps divisions between quantum physics and mysticism do not truly exist; at its highest level, each becomes simply a search to understand the true nature of reality.

Taoist mystics realize that something beyond conventional knowledge is necessary in order to understand the Tao. Lao-Tzu wrote the following in the *Tao Te Ching*:

> *Tao endures without a name.*
> *Though simple and slight,*
> *No one under heaven can master it.*[18]

The Taoists understand that true wisdom can never come from logical reasoning; the Tao cannot be discussed and "mastered." Instead, mystics turn away from the man-made world and focus on nature, knowing that the true order of the universe is revealed in the natural world.

Quantum physicists have also learned that true understanding can only come through intuition; the world is not as it originally appears. If the universe could be understood purely through reason, its laws would make more sense.

However, we inhabit a universe where laws[19] that accurately

describe the macroscopic world mean nothing at the subatomic level—a universe where something can be neither a particle nor a wave and yet, somehow, at the same time be both. The physicist, much like the spiritual seeker, learns to wait for inspiration.

Both traditions also recognize that human language is inadequate to describe knowledge that is essentially nonverbal and intuitive. We persist in describing our world to the best of our ability, although "the direct experience of reality transcends the realm of thought and language, and, since all mysticism is based on such a direct experience, everything that is said about it can only be partly true."[20] Often, the "paradoxical nature of reality"[21] cannot be verbally expressed without sounding utterly nonsensical.

Taoists often embraced these paradoxes in order to expose the limits of human communication.[22] In light of this aim, the following passage from the *Tao Te Ching* can be understood:

> *Reversal is Tao's movement.*
> *Yielding is Tao's practice.*
> *All things originate from being.*
> *Being originates from non-being.*[23]

Our language is completely inadequate to describe what must be comprehended through direct experience and insight.

Similarly, the modern physicist recognizes that his models and theories are necessarily inaccurate; they also describe something that can only be imprecisely illustrated.[24] These theories are the "counterparts of the Eastern myths, symbols and poetic images,"[25] and they help us wrap our minds around ideas that are—in essence—incomprehensible. However, these models are only helpful if we remember that they are mere approximations; one cannot understand verbally the nature of reality.

On both paths, the moment of comprehension is represented as an instant of great insight. The universe is revealed to the seeker in all its dazzling complexity. As Brian Swimme wrote, one realizes:

> *The vitality of a dolphin as it squiggles high in the summer sun, then, is directly dependent upon the elegance of the dynamics at the beginning of time. We cannot regard the dolphin and the first Flaring Forth as entirely separate events. The universe is a coherent whole, a seamless multileveled creative event.*[26]

Things do not cause other events to occur. Everything is interconnected, and individual aspects of the universe only make

sense when viewed in light of each other. It is the complexity of the whole—not the individuality of its parts—that we find so moving. Once we escape the limits of verbal communication, the universe can be appreciated in all its transcendent intricacy.

Conclusions

As we learn more about the subatomic realm, we realize the impossibility of precisely defining or predicting anything, which is exactly what mystics have been saying for centuries. Perhaps the most we can hope for is a reasonably helpful metaphor; we say, this illness is associated with Internal Wind, or that photon is represented by this probability wave, or "Tao called Tao is not Tao."[27] Using different languages and metaphors, all of the systems described—Chinese medical theory, Western quantum physics and Eastern mysticism—attempt to describe the same thing: energy that somehow manages to arrange itself in patterns and to process information. Quantum physicists use a different method to discover what Asian mystics, perhaps, have always known: we inhabit a universe composed of energy—a universe that is a complete, dynamic whole. ■

1 Kaptchuk, 3.
2 Ibid. 4.
3 Examinations not neccesarily conducted in this order.
4 Ibid. 176-194.
5 Ibid. 19.
6 Defined by Gary Zukav as "any physics that attempts to explain reality in such a manner that for every element of physical reality there is a corresponding element of the theory." Zukav, 22
7 A theory that explains every principle process that occurs in nature-basically, one that explains everything (Tejman).
8 Zukav, 61.
9 Ibid. 60-62.
10 Ibid. 63.
11 Ibid. 62-64.
12 Ibid. 64.
13 Ibid. 64.
14 Ibid. 65.
15 Ibid. 64-65.
16 Capra, 54.
17 Bohr, 2.
18 Lao-Tzu, 32
19. E.g., the Newton's laws of motion
20 Capra, 42.
21 Ibid. 43.
22 Ibid. 43.
23 Lao-Tzu, 40.
24 Capra, 44.
25 Ibid. 44.
26 Swimme and Berry, 18.
27 Lao-Tzu, 1.

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Journey to the Festival

Emilie Heilig

As the sun drained the earth of her warmth,
the chill of the night was free to reign.
The lone figure pulled her jacket closed and
quickened her steps across the bridge.
The lights of the city reflected off the water
and adorned the building and bridges
As if they were stars that had fallen from their
precarious positions in the sky and
Wedged themselves within the architecture of manmade erections.
To the girl these lights were signs
of opportunity, beauty, and accomplishment,
What the stars once were to those people who came
before the city and its lights.
The chill night crept into her clothes,
and she was reminded of their distance,
While the careening skeletons of tin rushed past her mortal body
As if chasing Pluto back into the underworld;
And the broken concrete slabs rose up
like mini earthquakes to meet her footsteps.
Images of giddy girls and gallant youths floated
around her head, and she remembered the preparation
for the garba, which had taken place only moments before,
In which the girl was aching to partake.

The swift beat of her footsteps was broken by that of another,
The long eyelashed wife of the curly-bearded, Bingh,
A woman so beautiful, the sun's silvery rays
never chance to leave her face in shadow,
And a husband so filled with joy, that a songbird
was believed to have lived within his throat.
Then the beautiful one called out to the lone one thus,
"My dear friend, where does your path take you?
One should never go unaccompanied on such a night as this.

The wind is rejoicing in me and exciting my limbs,
for she sings my name tonight.
Because tonight she calls on me to a garba and to rejoice in her name,
To sing, to dance, and to be merry.
For this reason, I smile like a child
who has obtained colored chalk on Holi, and
My eyes glitter as when the moonlight reflects
off the crests of a black and restless river.
I bounce my shoulders and curl my fingers,
lift my eyes and smile at you,
And tap my toes to lift your forlorn spirits
From the depths of the river, into the outer reaches of the universe,
And into all the mysterious wonders of the heavens,
For the vivacity of the garba beckons to me tonight."

And thus, to the beautiful one the girl responded,
"Such sweet thoughts as these I wish to come to me.
But over all else I desire to revel in your happiness and
Bask in your beauty and hide my shame from your adoration.
Your sweet smile and sheer joy of song and dance
frequent my mind to times and Traditions often forgotten;
ill celebrated as time and technology advance.
Smelling your palms I pine for India,
where flowers are dried in one's hair and
Incense burned on the alter seeps into one's clothes, and
The scent of spices linger languidly upon one's lace covered palms;
Where grapes are broken in festival with the soles of ones feet,
Dying them such a color as the kings of Persia
would have been fain to wear upon their backs,
And where the litter of rose petals in vermillion and marigold
Adorn the cool shallows of fishponds
and the swirling hair of budding brides,
Where men and women rejoice with the songs of their forefathers
And dance for the love of their land, their families,
and for India, homeland of their ancestors.
Yet, even as I revel in the beauty of the world
and the diversity of life and happiness around me,
I know not what these things mean to me,


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Nova Scotia

for I was not born into them, as you have been.
To your touch I am as yet cold, and to your joy I am ever puzzled.
Yet the one thing I know for sure, is that to share in your happiness and
To encourage such joy in the world as is contained within you is my
ultimate desire and the surest thing I know."

And thus, the beautiful one clasped the girl's arm in her own
and responded as a wise and generous friend:
"You I shall no longer call the lone one but my sister;
my sister who smells the Sweet thyme of the Earth
and rejoices in the harvests of young and the toils of old;
And who does not forget the songs of her ancestors.
Yet now the scent of incense as yet awaits us,
the beat of the garba calls to us,
And the voices of our family cry out to us.
Thus together we may be merry, for tonight
the wind has called on us to rejoice in her name."
Carried off by the swift feet of euphoria, they rushed
to join the curly-bearded one and
All those whose name the wind called out to and sent into the night,
Dancing, singing, and rejoicing in the scent of her palms. ■

[the center is still & truth follows like a shadow]

Kristen Cabildo

you pick this death

tearing your spirit away from the wind
you place your eyes on the bottom of your feet
and gaze into the depth.
sinking into the sweet scents of soil
the fragrance of foretold flowers
a pregnant presence of the past

the moment is full, nothing less than perfect.
immobilizingly comforting…

but the wind can be heard even deep underneath
it howls and it whispers
about a sadness of a stolen secret.
for it to fathom falling into fate
is a reality undesirable,
the wind unforgiving,
yet the truth undeniable

you pick this life

deep within the earth
always yearning for the air
you'll emerge like a blade of grass
one unique singularity amongst so many
you'll bend against a breath without breaking

awaiting for the fury of a hurricane
… to set you free.

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Ebony and Ivory

Benjamin Goshko

The sun poured into the bedroom in rivers through the small gaps in the curtains. I marveled at the golden streams as they stabbed my eyes through a reflection in an old picture frame. I sighed and pulled the soft, white bedcovers up to my neck and rolled over onto my chest, the bed pressing into my body. John was staring up at the ceiling with a twisted expression in his eyes that I couldn't guess at. I lay my soft, white arm over his black chest and pulled him toward me. His chest heaved for a minute and then he gave a smile with his pearly, white teeth beaming. I wiped the sweat off my face. The morning sun was sweltering and John hadn't turned the air on. My black hair stuck to last night's make-up and my face felt sticky. For a while I just stared into his brown eyes with a subtle smile on my face and felt his warm breath on my arm until he craned his neck and looked at me with such an innocent expression I nearly burst out laughing.

"What?" he said, trying to sound offended. But the big dumb grin on his face always gave him away.

"What, what?" I said, playfully staring up at the white ceiling.

"Aw, you've been staring at me with that little smile on your face since sunrise. What about it?" John sat up. The bedsheet gleamed in the sun, and my arm slid down his body.

I marveled at the contrast of our skin color, I then turned onto my side and pulled down the covers a bit for some cool air. "I was just curious. What are were you thinking?"

"About what?" His face had a look of boyish amusement.

"Just a minute ago, what were you thinking?" My blue eyes sparkled at his, which made him crumple up his nose and laugh.

"Women bed-talk, right?" He began laughing till I playfully punched his arm. ""I was thinking about my boy. He goin' to school next year and I, well, you know Nate ain't Rhonda's, right?"

I frowned a bit and answered, "No."

"Naw, he was from a girl I had a while back — Jessica. Yeah, Jessica, little firecracker." A big grin came over his face. "Pales to you, of course. Haha. Yeah, she wuz a fine

girl. Had seizures. Doctor used ta haveta give 'er all kinda pills an' instructions, tellin' her where an' when ta do dis an' that."

"What happened between you two?"

John turned and his head blocked out one of the sun streaks. His face melted into dimness as he just studied my body for a minute. He brushed the beaded sweat off of his scalp and then lay back down.

"When I was a teenager, stupid boy, I guess, I loved hangin' with my friends dusk till dawn — no end in sight — till all da money ran out. I'd slink back to my momma's front door close ta three in da mornin'. One day my friend Reggie comes knockin' on my door and shows me his new red hatchback an' tells me how we're gunna tear up da town dat day. I didn' have any money so I went ovah to momma's room. She always kep some money there jus' lyin' around cause no one wuz gonna steal it from dat woman. She had a slap dat would turn you red in a secen'. But that day somethin' wuz jus' eatin' me up an' I wuz angry wit her for somethin' that I donno, but I wen' up an' grabbed that money and dove inta da backseat udda Ford while Reggie floored it. Wuz one o' dem hot summah days when da seatbelt buckles burn like fire an' da streets shake through da heat in da windows. So we wen' out aroun' town, an' picked up girls-you know, dressed in their sweaty jean shorts an smellin' like sweet berries-an we got a quick lunch an dinner. Partied an went wild all night till I came home noon the next day ta my momma. I remember that mile-long walk up those three steps ta da front door, knowing da whole time I wuz gonna get a backhand like you wouldn' believe from dat woman da minute she saw my face. So of course I push open da door jus' a bit ta see what's goin' on, an' da coast is clear. I walk inta da house an' do what any teenager'd do: I creep quietly as a church mouse up those twelve stairs ta my room. As I walked down da hall, I saw into my baby brotha's room, and there was the old woman. She was sitting cross' from the crib, staring down at da floor lookin' so bad I couldn't even say how."

I watched as John's removed his gaze from me to concentrate on the covers.

"She saw me an' jus' began ta cry. See, she needed dat money to get diapers for my brotha an' without em he'd been dirty an' cryin' all night, keepin' her up all mornin'. She didn' yell at me, tell me how worthless an' stupid I is,

didn' give me a slap, but just cried. An' when she cried, the baby started up like a fire engine an' da two of dem ate me up. Baby wuz standin' up in da crib starin' at me wit dem eyes- those little eyes- an' cryin'.an' cryin'. The look on 'is face.like mine musta been after I'd gotten hell from pa's belt. Little guy's whole face wuz all puckered up like he wuz suckin' on a lemon an' his eyes were red. An' it was a nice day, my momma always tol' me Devil work is best when da sky is blue. Sun came through doz little curtains, baby ones, you know, wit little trains 'em. Room smelled like apple juice an' diaper. I could see the sunlight on 'is face, little tears shinin' in da sun.my momma cryin' like a little girl. That sound, it bleached all da black from my face, and I turned white.

I watched as his lip quivered and he bit down on it for a moment. He smiled to purge his feeling and turned on his back again.

"Felt like when you break a glass an' watch it shatter on da ground. Like you've broken somethin' you ain't never goin' ta fix an' inside you feel.hollow. Yeah, hollow, like somethin' ate a huge hole inta your stomach an' made your knees quake. Doz same tears I saw there I saw on Jessica's face da day she left. Same cryin', same sun shinin' down. Nate in da crib like I wuz a seventeen year old punk again. She called me all da good-for-nothing names I had earned an' slammed da door so da whole house shook. An' dat's when I felt hollow again. Da whole world's broke an' no one's gunna fix it. An' I wanted so bad ta fill myself up wit somethin'-anythin' or anyone-ta make me feel less cold. When you feel like dat, Mandy, does dat make you a boy or a man?"

I stared at him without being able to way a word. He was so sincere and serious, his face looked so nervous, like a child's. His muscular arms and barrel chest looked flabby for a moment and his whole frame looked so weak. Then, as if he felt naked, he shrank back into himself and put on a protective smile to hide his face.

"Yeah, well anyway," he laughed, and kissed me on my bare neck. ■

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Notions of the Male/Female Dynamic in *Don Giovanni*

Jacob Morrow

Once at a dinner party my uncle introduced me to an older Italian gentleman whose name I have since forgotten and whom I will now call, for convenience's sake, Antonio. Antonio was somehow connected to the Italian ambassador and was living for a short term in the U.S. on official state business with his wife Maria. In the living room before dinner, Maria, my uncle, and I stood by the piano with a glass of white wine, Chivas on the rocks, and ginger ale, respectively. I watched Antonio as he spoke to a younger woman in a black sweater. He was smiling and drinking with one arm around her waist, comfortably close to her slender frame. My uncle carefully asked Maria, "Is Antonio always that affectionate to people he's only just met?"

She replied without hesitation in a heavy accent, "Ah Antonio, he has too much love in his heart for just one woman." Now, I do not believe that people often react to their spouses' mild flirtations with the same reserved acceptance as Maria did. But the story raises questions about what our contemporary standards of fidelity are and how free we are in our relations to members of the opposite sex. The relationship between the sexes in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is an interaction of the powerful and the powerless. When Don Giovanni intrudes on the wedding of Zerlina and Masetto to claim the bride for his personal pleasure, Zerlina is confident in her own constancy and in the security of her bond with Masetto. She reassures Masseto: "You need have no doubts[1]." At Don Giovanni's first romantic approach, Zerlina insists that she has promised to marry Masetto: "I have given him / My promise to marry him.[2]" Don Giovanni, no doubt remembering his many other conquests, dismisses such promises of marriage: "That kind of promise / Has no validity.[3]" By nullifying the bond between Masetto and Zerlina in this line, Don Giovanni not only

opens the door to Zerlina's heart and, perhaps more importantly, her bedroom, but also creates the architecture to play her for a fool. Don Giovanni reveals his intentions to marry Zerlina ("Io ti voglio sposar," "I intend to marry you") and, despite her instincts that she will be betrayed, she consents to the man who has just exclaimed that promises of marriage are empty. Indeed, Don Giovanni's promises are as empty as they are convincing.

Don Giovanni's candied conversation and false innocence dismantle the wall between him and Zerlina brick by brick: ("Presto non son più forte," "My strength is deserting me"). He invites Zerlina to go to bed ("Andiam, Andiam," "Let us go, Let us go") and Zerlina answers him by repeating his invitation: "Andiam". However, there is a musical suggestion here that this word of consent is not completely consensual. When he sings "Andiam, Andiam" Don Giovanni begins a musical phrase which only resolves when he and Zerlina begin their duet at "Andiam, Andiam, mio bene." By the time Don Giovanni looks to Zerlina for an answer to his invitation, he has already developed a kind of musical momentum. This is not to say that Zerlina does not have a choice in the matter, but musically her "andiam" is part of the comfortable progression towards resolution at the duet. One feels inevitability in Zerlina's assent. She does not have complete control.

Having been, in her own words, "deceived" (Act I, Scene xvi), Zerlina pleads with Masetto. She does not deny that she was unfaithful in her heart, nor does she mention it — a lie of omission. She only emphasizes that she was manipulated and she carefully drowns Masetto's jealous rage in a verbal flood of submissive devotion. She calms the swelling sea of his anger with the words "pace, pace" (peace, peace), under which a solo cello rises and falls in violent waves until it finally descends and settles; the end of the aria, the cello, is like Masetto, a baritone. Masetto receives his bride, even admitting that he has little power to resist the charm of his "povera Zerlina," and conquest by subtle deception continues to proceed through the ranks from its source—Don Giovanni—to Zerlina and to Masetto.

Beneath these two examples of the dynamic between men and women in *Don Giovanni*, lies the notion, commonly held in the eighteenth century and after, that people, especially women, are slaves to their emotions and are, accord-

ingly, easily manipulated. Don Giovanni is able to capitalize on women's inability to rule their emotions sufficiently to control their own actions. He is a skilled player in a complicated game of chess in which he plays both sides and can, therefore, easily orchestrate the queen's capture. This reading of the opera is in danger of becoming an interpretation of *Don Giovanni* as a misogynist work, which it is not, that portrays women unfairly. However, at least when examining the deliberate deception and manipulation of spouses and lovers, *Don Giovanni* does not discriminate according to sex. Don Ottavio, Masetto, and even Don Giovanni himself are affected by love, that is, their affections are moved, as much as Donna Elvira or Zerlina or Donna Anna.

Within the time of the opera, none of Don Giovanni's exploits to satisfy his sexual hunger actually succeed. Donna Elvira arrives just in time to rescue Zerlina from Don Giovanni's caress when he first attempts to seduce her. Don Ottavio, Donna Anna, and Donna Elvira, this time in the guise of masqueraders, will deliver Zerlina from the master's clutches once


Gräflich Nostitzisches Nationaltheater.

Il 29 Ottobre 1787.

Oggi per la prima volta:

Don Giovanni ossia il Dissoluto punito.

Dramma giocoso in due atti con bellissimi cambiamenti. Parole del Sign. Abate da Ponte, musica del celebre maestro Sign. Amadeo Mozart.

Ecci di recitativi, duetti, terzetti, quartetti, cavatine etc.

more before the finale. Why are these three so opposed to Don Giovanni's pursuit of pleasure? On what moral grounds do they object to his lifestyle? They certainly condemn Don Giovanni's methods, which range from sweet seduction, as in the in cases of Donna Elvira and Zerlina, to raw, violent rape, as in the case of Donna Anna. But his methods are but a means to a far more foul end, namely, sex which is outside the boundaries of "the sacred law of heaven and earth" (Act I, Scene iv). Divine law dictates that a man and woman must be joined before God, and their union must be sealed by the approval of the church before sex. This is not to say that society as a whole condemns sex or love. At her wedding festivities, Zerlina encourages all the young women present to pursue love and passion:

Giovinette che fate all'amore
Non lasciate che passi l'età:
Se nel seno vi bulica il core,
Il remedio vedetelo qua.
Che piacer, che piacer che sarà!

You girls, who are in love,
Do not let time pass you by;
If your heart leaps within your breast,
The remedy is right here.
What delight, what delight it will be!
(Act I, Scene VII)

To obey one's natural emotions is acceptable, provided one understand that the cure for these fiery feelings is not Don Juan's promiscuity. "The remedy is here" at the wedding feast. In Don Giovanni's world, there simply is no physical act of love outside of marriage, either pre-marital or extra-marital, which is not damnable. Don Giovanni often overcomes this obstacle between his urges and their fulfillment by feigning a state of marriage, and he is, of course, at the conclusion of the opera damned by heaven as he has been damned by society since the beginning. Donna Elvira clearly believes that for a woman to have been seduced, to use a phrase which smacks of eighteenth century morality, before marriage, is to have been tainted in an irreconcilable way. She will spend the rest of her days in a nunnery, chaste as the day she was born, and yet never again virginal.

Contemporary American society's outlook on both pre-marital sex and on virginity differs strikingly from the restrictive establishment against which Don Giovanni rebelled. This contrast is at least partially due to the liberation of women from the domestic prison and also to the gradual destruction of marriage as a sacred and secure institution. Women are no longer

viewed as clay figures who, in the hands of a sufficiently skilled artist, can be molded into any position, shape, or form the artist chooses. They are independent, capable of and responsible for making their own decisions, and understanding and accepting the consequences.

The decline of the church and of its ability to regulate the social norms of the day has also contributed to the progression from Don Giovanni's world to ours. Citizens of a society in which the individual values his own strength and independence define for themselves what is morally sound. If a sixteen-year-old American decides that by having sex he can feed his curiosity, satisfy his natural hormone-high appetite, and gain valuable experience without sacrificing anything of comparable value, who can tell him he is wrong?

More and more, the differences between marriage and unmarried commitment to a significant other are blurring. When pre-marital sex passed social acceptance to become a social norm, marriage began lose its symbolic significance. A couple of five years has made a commitment which may or may not ever be embodied in an engagement ring or wedding band. Such a relationship can very much resemble our conception of a healthy marriage. This is not intended to mean that Don Giovanni was simply a man ahead of his time. Today we frown on the conception of women as military conquests, and Don Giovanni's brutal assault of Donna Anna would be damnable by state law today (if not by divine judgement). However, it is true that we are now more free than Don Giovanni was to examine the horizon before taking marital vows, to sample the menu before ordering, so to speak. ■

1 "Tal parola / Non vale un zero," Act I, Scene viii
2 "io gli diedi / Parola di sporsalo," Act I, Scene viii
3 "Non c'è da dubitar,"Act I, Scene viii

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Confused Magnificence

Donne's Conception of Love

Cassandra Nelson

John Donne describes love slightly differently in each of the songs and sonnets written between 1593 and 1601. He permits love to defy the laws of physics, freeing it from the constraints of time and space. At times, his metaphors appear fragmented and contradictory. Taking a handful of these intensely personal poems into consideration at once, however, reveals a larger picture. What emerges from the widened perspective is debatable—either a beautifully complex theory of love or a résumé of rhetoric and "confused magnificence" (*John Donne: The Critical Heritage* 219).

Donne's version of love is fundamentally paradoxical. While his goal remains essentially the same in these poems—acquiring love—Donne is unsure as to how long he wishes to keep it. He often bemoans the inconstancy of the fairer sex, complaining in *Song*1 that "No where / Lives a woman true" (lines 17-18). If such a one does exist, he continues, it will not be for long: "Though at next doore wee might meet,… Yet shee / Will bee / False, ere I come" (lines 25-27). In *Woman's Constancy*, Donne chooses not indict an entire gender but instead zeroes in a specific woman. His accusatory tone slips away by the end of the poem, however, when Donne admits that woman's constancy is as fleeting as man's constancy. That she may fall out of love with him in the morning is acceptable, "for by to morrow, I may thinke so too" (line 17).

This contrasts sharply with *The Relique*, in which Donne lies with his love for more than one night. Buried together, "a loving couple lies," to be unearthed in the future and made "Reliques; then / Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I / A something else thereby" (lines 16-18). Still, while love in this poem lasts longer than a day, it does not truly endure. The lovers die and only a "bracelet of bright haire about the bone" remains to connect them (line 6). They are not together forever. Their graves are disturbed and their bodies separated. Their identities have been lost and their relationship incorrectly categorized.

Donne increases his level of commitment in *The Good-Morrow*. He promises that "if…thou and I / Love so alike, that done doe slacken, none can die" (lines 20-21). There is no more morning-after filled with, if not regret, then changed minds. There is no more lying next to each other, separated by death. Here, Donne and his love are together forever, equals and equally in love.

Whether this is a progression on his part or simple indecision is arguable, and that argument is perhaps not worth the effort. Clearly, Donne cannot decide how long love ought to last and perhaps he does not have to decide. In *The Sunne-Rising*, he asks the sun, "Must to thy notions lovers seasons run?" (line 4). Obviously, the sun does not respond but the poem implies, or at least it hopes, that the answer is no. Donne's inconstancy in his poetry, then, is not necessarily a shortcoming on his part. It may simply be an unavoidable aspect—almost a symptom—of being in love.

Geography is even more paradoxical than time in Donne's poetry. The lovers have a transcendent, almost spiritual—though not sacred—quality: they are in the world but not of the world (John 17:14-16). Donne is acutely aware of the rest of the world—that is, everyone excluding himself and his lover—but its effect on the couple is minimal. In the *Good-Morrow*, he explores the tension between lovers past and present. As it turns out, there is none. Even as he pledges to live forever with his love, Donne acknowledges that there have been others in the past: "If ever any beauty I did see / Which I desir'd, and got, t'was but a dreame of thee" (lines 6-7). His current love is not the first, but hope still exists that she might be the last; that is, that she is the one with whom Donne will live happily ever after.

The relationship between lovers then and now, however, is less complex than the one between the lovers and the rest of the world at the present time. It is as if there are two different worlds: the one in which the lovers reside and the one that encompasses everyone else. They overlap completely and yet they are two different universes, neither of which can affect the other. Returning to the *Good-Morrow* provides an illustration of this idea. The lovers' company eclipses the rest of humanity, "For love, all love of other sights controules / And makes one little roome, an every where" (lines 10-11). The world, Donne admits here, has not disappeared, it is simply that the poet ceases to care

about it. He takes pains to mention the hustle and bustle of the outside world, even giving it permission to continue ("*Let* sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone / *Let* maps to other, worlds on worlds have showne," lines 13-14; emphasis mine). Implicit in his commands is that the world carry on without him and his love.

He is not able to separate the lovers and the world with such clarity in *The Sunne-Rising*. "I could eclipse and cloud them with a winke," he boasts of his power over the sun's rays, "But that I would not lose her sight so long" (lines 13-14). If Donne closes his eyes, both his lover and the world disappear. It is not simply that she is framed against a backdrop of the world—she is the world. Moreover, so is Donne. He writes, "She'is all States, and all Princes, I / Nothing else is" (lines 21-22). He even dares to say that "Princes doe but play us; compar'd to this / All honor's mimique; All wealth alchimie" (lines 23-24). The lovers are the world; nothing else exists. The real world is merely a shadow of the lovers. Taken literally, these four lines defy logical explanation, except perhaps to be interpreted as Donne's suggestion that love itself is inexplicable.

Not every reader analyzes Donne's conceits so kindly. Samuel Johnson criticizes Donne and other metaphysical poets, complaining that "they left not only reason but fancy behind them, and produced combinations of confused magnificence that not only could not be credited, but could not be imagined" (*Critical Heritage* 219). Joseph Spence also views Donne's complex descriptions of love as nothing more than opportunities for the poet to showcase his endless wit. He accuses Donne of sacrificing content for cleverness, saying that "the majority of his pieces are nothing but a tissue of epigrams" (*Critical Heritage* 196).

Donne is similarly accused of showing off with his shocking, perhaps sensational, metaphors. His imagery is surprisingly, almost disturbingly, at odds with his subject matter. The *Relique*, for instance, is not particularly romantic. The scene is a plundered graveyard; its characters are skeletons disturbed from their peace. Samuel Johnson calls this juxtaposition of love and death inappropriate. The metaphysical poets, he says, resort to "a kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike." The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions

(*Critical Heritage* 218).

These kinds of unexpected connections, Johnson continues, do not impress or edify the reader. The reader merely wonders "by what perverseness of industry they were ever found" (*Critical Heritage* 218). Donne is not even granted recognition for his inventive ideas. Johnson remains wary of his novelty, "for great things cannot have escaped former observation" (*Critical Heritage* 218).

In Donne's defense, his poetry warrants criticism but not complete dismissal. His language is not new, but his ability to use ordinary words to express extraordinary idea deserves praise. His poetry, like his conception of love, bends the rules in order to get its point across. He admits as much in the last lines of the *Relique*: "but now alas / All measure, and all language, I should passe / Should I tell what a miracle shee was" (lines 31-33). His poetry and his love are unscientific and extravagant; it is difficult to imagine that they could be any other way. ■

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The Tall Tale of Pecos Pete

Jacob Crane

Epitaph
Boot Hill, New Mexico

Here lies Tim McBeet,
Who loved his ladies and loved his liquor.
He pulled his gun on Pecos Pete,
But Pecos Pete was quicker.

Railroad Workers Song
San Antonio, Texas

Born o' thunder *clang*
Born o' lightnin' *clang*
Raised by black bears *clang*
Bred fo' fightin' *clang*

He'll send a man *clang*
Right to 'is grave *clang*
When Pecos Pete's around *clang*
Ya best behave *clang*

He's the meanest man *clang*
In the 'ole wide west *clang*
If 'e talks to you *clang*
Keepin' quiet's best *clang*

Chapter 1: *Of the infamous Pecos Pete taking up the cowboy profession and of his preparations to leave city life*

In a prosperous suburb, in the great state of Texas, there lived not so long ago a wealthy oilman with a Spanish name that slips my mind. He was the type that played golf at his country club on Wednesdays with doctors and lawyers and decorated his house with the finest southwestern pottery, crafts, and memorabilia from the days of Sam Houston, El Alamo, and the mighty 7th cavalry[1]. His estate was bright and green and well-tended by numerous gardeners and intricate sprinkler systems. It even included a tiny pasture in which he kept an aging race horse that was to live out its remaining days as a stud for hopeful mares.

Texas oilmen found their businesses prospering effortlessly and without impediment; one of their own was in the governor's mansion[2]. Our businessman had quite a lot of idle time, which he filled by watching old cowboy movies such as *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*, A *Fistful of Dollars*, *Winchester '73*, *The Shootist*[3], and many more. He became mesmerized by the pure, rugged manliness, the cold, cutting gazes, and the romance of life in the wilderness. He argued endlessly with his uninterested maid Consuela about which of the most famous rustlers had the fastest quick draw. The sharp twangs and whistles of the movie soundtracks echoed in his head until he was not able to sleep without being awakened by the bang of a gunshot and the ricochet of a bullet in his mind. Before long our oilman became completely insane from lack of sleep.

Our oilman's first declaration in his altered mental state was to gather supplies and, as soon as possible, to leave city life to become a legendary cowboy and bandit roaming the open, dusty plains of the Texas frontier. Having made up his twisted mind, he set right away to thinking of an appropriate handle for himself, since his real name was neither impressive nor at all fit for a wanted poster in front of the sheriff's office. After several days of painstaking deliberation, he came up with the name Pecos Pete[4]. He became so enamored with his new title that he spent the next week sewing it into an antique cavalry saddle in his study that still bore a blood stain or two from a soldier who met his end at Custer's Last Stand[5]. Pecos Pete then settled on creating a bandolier, using antique six-shooters

and several dozen bullets from his display case, a leather belt, and holsters. After two weeks, he managed to tape several small construction paper loops to his bandolier for holding cartridges and two large cardboard holsters to his gun belt. Pecos Pete had immense difficulty in securing bullets in the paper loops, so he finally decided to scrap the construction paper in favor of gluing two dozen cartridges permanently onto the bandolier and storing the rest of them in the pocket of his jeans. He secured the belt around his torso from the left shoulder to the right hip and - for the finishing touch - he glued a shiny, silver ashtray to the gun belt to serve as a proper belt buckle. To complete his outfit, he cut a large hole in the middle of a bright, striped Mexican blanket that had adorned his wall to create a poncho à la Clint Eastwood and put on a tan, unworn Stetson hat[6].

Now completely and totally under the influence of his fanciful delusion, our adventurous Texan saddled his prized stud, although it resisted at first. In its old age it was not accustomed to vulgar straps and bridles. Once his horse was secured, Pecos Pete scrambled atop the old cavalry saddle and, with a scream of "Yeeehhaaaw!" put his heel sharply to the animal's side, causing it to slowly lumber down the driveway and off the estate. All the while, the hired help watched their employer ride off into the desert with expressions ranging from lack of interest to total indifference.

Chapter 2: *Concerning the rugged drifter Pecos Pete's contemplation of his horse and his sweetheart Carly the whore*

It was quite a few hour's ride to get out of the suburb where our cowboy had formerly rooted himself and out into the wild, dusty desert. There were many city folk who laughed at him as he trotted down the street, but Pecos Pete had too much on his mind to notice their jeers. He was deeply engaged in working out two details concerning his new life as a cowboy, the first of which was what to call his companion.

His faithful mount's official registered name was "Arthur's Fast Break," but obviously this was no good name for a cowboy's horse. For over two hours Pecos Pete drew from every natural disaster, every gun manufacturer, and every precious metal he could think of to come up with an appropriate name. Finally, he settled on the name Tonto[1].

Pecos Pete's next problem was that he did not have a sweetheart.

Every respectable cowboy has a whore in town for whom, under his rough and rugged exterior, he has affection, and who he wants to rescue from prostitution one day to settle down to raise youngins on a ranch somewhere. Then Pete remembered the prostitute he saw on the street corner when he was in Houston last month for the political fundraiser. He remembered the woman he saw so long ago: she had curly red hair that was as fiery as her disposition and wore a tight corset and a frilly hoopskirt from Paris. Others said that memory failed him, because she really had dyed orange hair and she was dressed in a mini skirt and fake fur coat. She told him that her name was Carly, but Pecos Pete was not so crazy as to believe it. Surely it was the name she chose when she was forced to move to town after the bank closed down her family farm and her brothers were killed in an Indian raid.

Throughout his journey into the desert, Pecos Pete was occupied with thoughts of rescuing Carly from her cruel madam at the bordello. Some day he would make enough money to settle down with his sweetheart, even if it meant robbing every bank, train, and stagecoach from here to Sacramento[2].

Chapter 3: *Our daring rustler Pecos Pete's sighting of highway 82 and the great stagecoach robbery*

Not long after Pecos Pete arrived in the desert, he lay in wait in hopes of ambushing the first passing stagecoach. He saw a long stretch of road there, on which hundreds of cars were whizzing by going to and from the city of Houston.

"Well I'll be," Pecos Pete said out loud to himself, in his best western accent (which he had been working on diligently, seeing as how he was originally from Connecticut[1]). "A whole herd of buffalo on the stampede!" He knew sights like this were common in the western wilderness, but he was still in awe of the endless stream of majestic beasts as far as the eye could see. "Yep, this sure is the life fer me: big sky and the call of the lonely trail."

After breathing in the exhaust-filled air, he turned Tonto around and trotted away from the highway. Soon again he was in the middle of nowhere without any sign of civilization. This is where he decided to wait for the next passing stagecoach. First, he knew he had to practice his aim.

Pecos Pete dismounted from his tired old horse and loaded a six-shooter with bullets from his pocket. He then took aim at a prickly

pear[3] not five feet away and shot a single bullet clean through, leaving a large hole in one of the arms. "Too easy," Pete said out loud to himself. He turned around and walked a good distance away, until the cactus was about fifty yards away. He aimed steadily, and fired three shots in quick succession. Then, Pecos Pete holstered his piece[4] and walked back to the cactus. When he was close enough, he saw that there was still only one hole in the plant.

"Yeehhaaw! Hot dawg!" Pecos Pete screamed and raised his hat off his head. "Four bullets through the same little hole! I must be the best shot this side of the Mississippi!"

At this point Pete figured it would be pointless to practice anymore, since he was as excellent as any man could be at shooting, and decided it was best to get ready for the stagecoaches. He got back on Tonto, who had been too tired to wander far from where he was left, and started to patrol the area. He traveled north, so as not to wander into Apache country[5], and circled around for three days. He had very little to eat, since all he had packed for himself was a small bag of beef jerky. His planned to dine on jackrabbits and prairie dogs[6] like the outdoorsmen he had seen in his cowboy films, but he had yet to see a living thing fit for food. Fortunately, he remembered an old canteen that supposedly belonged to Wyatt Earp[7], so he was not without water.

On the third hot afternoon of Pecos Pete's adventure, he was moseying through the desert when he saw a pickup truck driving towards him. He saw vaguely two men in the cab and at least two others in the bed, throwing bottles of beer and hollering in drunken splendor.

"Finally! A stagecoach! Yeehaaw!" Pecos Pete yelled as he kicked his horse sharply was off towards the truck at Tonto's top speed, yelling and firing his six-shooter up in the air. At this point, I have not yet been able to find information on what happened to Pecos Pete during his encounter with the pickup truck. We can rest assured that it must have been one hell of a romp. ■

CHAPTER 1

1 Sam Houston, El Alamo, and the mighty 7th cavalry: A reference to the war of independence when Texas broke away from Mexico, who then fought with native tribes.

2 One of their own was in the governor's mansion: George W. Bush, whose family gained its fortune through oil, was currently serving as governor of Texas.

3 The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly…The Shootist: Famous western

movies with well-known actors like Clint Eastwood, James Stewart and John Wayne playing cowboys.
4 Pecos Pete: Similar to Pecos Bill, the mythical cowboy who was credited with lassoing a tornado.
5 Custer's Last Stand: Refers to the battle between the US cavalry and Native American warriors that resulted in the complete wipe-out of General George Custer's unit.
6 Stetson hat: A brimmed hat — also known as a ten-gallon hat — commonly worn by cowboys.

CHAPTER 2
1 Tonto: The faithful companion of Lone Ranger, a cowboy character from the early days of television.
2 Sacramento: A city in California.

CHAPTER 3
1 Connecticut: Many wealthy oil-men were not native Texans, but moved there from Connecticut (like the Bush family) or other northern states.
2 A long stretch of road: Highway 82, which runs from Houston across much of Texas.
3 prickly pear: A species of cactus characterized by large, round, paddle-like arms, common to the southwestern deserts of the US.
4 piece: Cowboy slang for gun.
5. Apache country: A Native American tribe that was particularly aggressive towards settlers and who fought the US cavalry.
6 prairie dogs: Small rodents who live in large colonies on the plains.
7 Wyatt Earp: Famous sheriff of Dodge City.

Works Cited

Cervantes. Don Quixote. Trans. John Rutherford. New York: Penguin Books. 2000.

Jacob Crane *(CAS 05) an English/political science major, attended Free State High School in Lawrence, KS, but his original source is Stockbridge, MA. The Tale of Pecos Pete is his humble attempt to capture some of the humor and madness of* Don Quixote*, which in his opinion is one of the most entertaining works read in Core.*

A Sober Shot

Linda Tan

Listen up cuz I've got a confession to make
These lips of mine have never emptied
a bottle full of the blood of the vine
I've never done more than hold
a 40 in the clutch of my small hands
Looking on to my peers who chug
alcohol faster than Mexico can make
I simply can't understand why anyone
would want to spend a night kissing a toilet seat
There are those who tell me: alcohol is an acquired taste
I ask, why would you drink something in order to like it?
That's like stepping on broken glass until it feels good
And then there are those who depend on liquor like a best friend
brewed, bottled, and packaged in a store near you
I can't drown my problems under a flood
I've seen too many people become their addictions
(And I'm not letting that happen to me)
But my older sister, see, she looks
up to these twenty somethings
Cuz when they get high they write some real intellectual shit
So she tells me that I would write better if I just loosened up
Downed some shots and smoked some blunts
And I've always wanted to ask her: why
Is my poetry not toxic enough for you?
Must I drench my prose in liquor for you to understand it?
Do I have to roll my words and light them for you to listen to me?
Because to tell you the truth I don't need a glass of 80 proof
to tell you
what's going on
in my head
Shit comes out of my mouth all the time
And if you don't like it I'm not sorry for that.

Linda Tan *(CAS 06) hails from Brooklyn, NY and will be majoring in history or classical studies and religion. She frequents the slam poetry scene in NYC and hopes to attend the Culinary Institute of America. Linda is a closet socialist and finds writing in the third person amusing.*

A Safe Place

Soren Johnson

A man dressed in all white sat cross-legged on a stone bench in a grove of trees. The midday sun gave incredible vibrancy to the place, playing happily among the emerald leaves. The rich foliage formed a paradise of safety and tranquility, and yet the man in white scowled. Across from him sat an older man with a navy blue button-down shirt and a short-brimmed tweed hat, looking down worriedly at the blades of grass twitching from a light breeze. The woman sitting on his left was dressed rather plainly in a pink shirt and blue jeans, but for all her informality she stared at the man in white with a look of unflinching earnest.

"Do you remember the book we used to read to you when you were younger?" she asked him.

"Which, the one about the witless masochist?" he said.

"He wasn't witless or masochistic, he just believed more in books and his own ideas than he did in other people," she said calmly. "He was a hero who was simply deluded as to what he was supposed to be fighting for."

"He was a joke, is what he was," replied the man in white. "Don Quixote de La Mancha: knight error. I thought it was sort of funny, but after 900 pages or so I found it a bit mindless."

The woman looked at him with worried fascination, but could make no reply. The man sitting on her right, who hadn't taken his gaze from the grass this whole time, took off his hat, shuffled it around in his hands and then put it back on. The wind murmured gently through the rustling branches, but only seemed to intensify the silence.

Finally, the woman said to the man in white, "We all have our illusions, there's nothing wrong with that."

"There's everything wrong with it!" he snapped at her. "It's why people like you won't leave me alone and let me do what I'm supposed to be doing. It's why Don Quixote spent his miserable existence heroically making life worse for all involved."

"His quest was based on a mission of faith and love," she said. "He didn't always bring harm, and in any case, it's not the result of his actions that matter, but what he

stood for."

"So his many terribly harmful and unprovoked assaults against the various people he encountered is fine because he did it for the right reasons?" he retorted. "Don't make me sick. You portray him as some saintly figure, but I think if he ever existed he would shame his Creator."

At last the man in the hat relinquished his gaze from the grass and stared at the man in white.

"Don't presume to know what God thinks of us," he said. "Don Quixote behaved as well as any good Christian could ever hope, given his delusions."

"God likes violence, does he?" the man in white said. "I seem to have been quite mistaken all these years. I always believed Christians went more for love and charity. That's part of their rhetoric at least."

"He is full of love," replied the man in the hat, sitting straight up, "and moreover his faith endures throughout all the challenges that reality presents him. I don't deny that his faith is extremely misguided, but he has it in great abundance."

"He's full of shit, and the only thing he has in abundance is delusion," the man in white replied. "He uses his precious faith to buy into every ridiculous notion he can find in his books. Faith only helps him deceive himself, so you'll forgive me if I don't applaud him for it."

"Mind your language, son," the older man scolded, his voice gaining an air of authority, "and show some respect for those who are faithful to a cause. It's not every day you see someone who's willing to risk his or her life to help others."

"He never helps anyone," said the man in white, "and the only reason you don't often see people like that is because most of us have some basic intelligence."

"He's deluded," said the woman, "but he still has a great deal of intelligence. He knows everything there is to know about the chivalric code. The tragedy is not that he is unintelligent, but that he has wonderful gifts which he misapplies."

"If you like," replied the man in white, "I will agree that Don Quixote is moderately intelligent in every way except the way which is most important. Even with that concession, there's still Sancho Panza who is stupid enough to follow him even though he sees through his master's delusions."

"Sancho Panza is not stupid," retorted the man with the hat. "Remember when he ties Don Quixote's horse's legs to keep him from riding into danger? Time and

again Sancho gives Don Quixote sound advice which the knight often follows. Sancho is trusting and faithful because he wants to believe in his master."

"He does it for the money, dear father," said the man in white with contempt. "Or don't you remember him bringing up the isle Don Quixote has promised him every chance he gets? He's faithful only because of his own delusion that Don Quixote can fulfill such outrageous promises."

"He's in it for the money in the beginning," said the older man, "but he soon gains such respect for Don Quixote that he would never leave his side. Don't you remember how profusely he cried when Don Quixote spoke of how he might die fighting the loud noises that turned out to be fulling-hammers? Or how Sancho never left his side while he was on his deathbed. What isle was to be gained then? Sancho, like Don Quixote, simply had incredible faith and love."

"Faith!" said the man in white. "I see fools hanging on to illusions. What you call faith, I call the inability to see reality. Illusion is the plague of society, and I can't understand how you or anyone else could possibly consider it a good thing. Christianity is a way for those who like to be brainwashed with illusions to do so in a socially acceptable way. History abounds with instances when people used religion for the most idiotic ideals and ended up harming themselves and others."

"But that's just the point," the older man replied. "That's what Cervantes means to warn us against. He depicts a character who has such fantastic faith and courage, but doesn't have the sense to use it properly. There are those people who are misled by one deception or another and use faith as a way to avoid thinking for themselves, but that's not being a good Christian."

"We're not all like that," said the woman, "not those of us who are intelligent, at least. Faith is a marvelous thing, when it's not distracted by these ridiculous notions that Cervantes attacks."

The man in white sat perfectly still for a moment with his arms folded and his eyes narrowed in disgust. He took a deep breath, but kept his countenance completely still. When he spoke, he spoke calmly and slowly.

"You create for yourselves a God," he said acidly, "or perhaps you conjure him up from a book. He is by definition intangible and unable to be experienced in any way. What you have done is created an illusion, and when you have

faith in that illusion you call it a good thing instead of what it really is: lunacy. If Cervantes thinks that Don Quixote is a good way to argue the contrary, then he is even more insane than his absurd creation."

"Faith is a good thing," the woman replied, "because it allows us to see beyond what is immediately visible. Don Quixote is, if nothing else, remarkable, and he would be just another Spanish nobleman with too much time on his hands without his faith. Of course he was misguided, but that doesn't mean that his faith did anything to him but set him free."

"Set him free from reality, you mean," said the man in white, raising his voice a little in anger. "He was unable to live in the real world, so he made up some illusions for himself, and when they were finally obliterated he died."

"By that time in the book he had gained so much respect because of his courage and his love that he had friends who stayed with him day and night until he died," said the older man, his voice almost pleading. "He died richer than most men will ever be. Just because we don't believe in the same things doesn't mean that our illusions are so much greater or more despicable than your own. Illusions are a part of life, and we all have..."

"I have no illusions, you fool!" screamed the man in white, jumping to his feet. "I know who I am and what I'm supposed to be doing! I don't want to be here, so take your religion and all the rest of the..."

He stopped in mid-sentence, because he suddenly noticed a burly, middle-aged man in a light-blue uniform standing off to one side. None of them knew how long he had been there, although they knew that he had been watching them from some discreet place amongst the trees since he had led the three of them to that spot.

"I'm sorry, but I'm afraid that's enough for today," said the man in the uniform. "He's got to come inside now."

They all stood up and each took a few deep breaths.

"I can't live comfortably with you in your illusions," said the man in white with an intense tone of contempt. "Sorry about that."

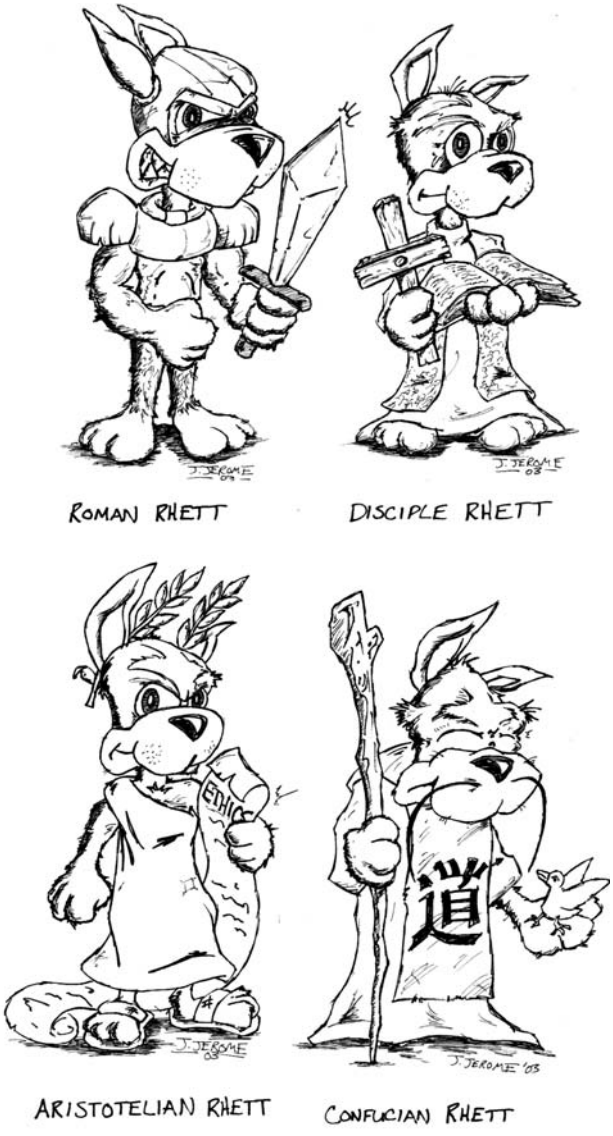
"It's okay, son," said the man with the hat speaking softly and dejectedly. "You'll come home when you're ready."

Then they parted and the burly man led the man in white away. The couple watched them go a distance and then turned around. They walked in the other direction towards the exit of the asylum with

their arms around each other as if to keep warm from such an icy encounter. It was all the woman could do to hold back tears and all the man could do not to suffocate his wife because he was squeezing her so tightly. ■

Soren Johnson *(CAS 05) grew up in the lovely city of Providence, RI. He is majoring in computer science. He will miss Core Humanities as its many readings gave him a nice break from those silly computers. This piece was originally presented to Professor Ricks as an assignment for Core Humanities III.*

Samantha Mascuch *(CAS 06) is studying marine biology. She is from Toledo Ohio. A big fan of the core, Samantha currently lives on Core floor 12B in Warren Towers. Yea 12!*



Joseph Jerome *(CAS 06) is a political science and philosophy double major as of this writing. He hails from the middle of a cornfield outside of Davenport, Iowa. When not fuming over the absurdity and arrogance of Aristotle, he enjoys drawing and kindly debating with his peers.*

Of Philosophy and Big Macs

A Debate on Social Science

Alison Watts

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith and Max Weber gather at a McDonald's in Boston, present time.

Smith: Well, here we are gentleman, gathered in McDonald's: the brain-child of modern society, the star student of capitalism and ultimate symbol of humans' desire for comfort and progress . . . what a scrumptious Big Mac, can you pass the fries, Rousseau?

Weber: Here, here. Good point, Smith. What a breeding ground for the Protestant work- ethic. Shall we have a toast to the modern workaholic? *(He raises his Coca-Cola.)*

Rousseau: *(in disgust)* You have got to be kidding me! How can you be serious? And you call yourselves philosophers . . . despicable. McDonald's is far from this social ideal you describe; rather, it represents the arch-nemesis of humanity, the culmination of all society's evils and a factory for laziness, vanity and corruption. I am ashamed to be seen in such a place! And this coffee is really disappointing.

Smith: Oh calm down Rousseau. Just try some of these Chicken Mc Nuggets; they are both crisp and juicy at the same time. Where else can you find such taste for so quick a preparation and so cheap a cost?

Weber: Kentucky Fried Chicken?

Smith: Well, if you want to get technical, yes, but then you must get into the argument of competition and economies of scale and how each company responds to supply and demand and . . .

Rousseau: *(with anger)* Enough! All this talk is gnawing away at my

soul! Don't you see how this obsession with progress has destroyed our independent minds and strong bodies? If we just look back to man in the State of Nature, we see . . .

Smith: Good God, no! Not again Rousseau! This State of Nature business has got to stop! Your ideas are too theoretical, too idealistic for this world. You have got to be more practical!

Rousseau: I am a philosopher, am I not?

Weber: A philosopher who has been star-gazing too much these nights, if I do say so. One must not look back to this "Natural State"; it never existed! Mankind has always existed with society, and society has always existed with mankind.

Smith: That is right. One must observe actual human behavior and the ways people interact to determine what makes an individual human and how those aspects influence society.

Rousseau: But only when one strips away all of society will one be able to detect man in his natural essence—before the effect of society dirtied his mind and tainted his soul—before McDonald's had a place in this world. Men were doing fine before this society came along.

Smith: Poppycock! Where do you think this society came from?

Rousseau: Well, society developed from man's natural desire for self-perfectibility.

Smith: Like I said: man's desire for perfection directly determines the movement of society towards progress, resulting in the sorts of institutions like McDonald's.

Weber: I believe the relationship between humans and society, between traits and culture, is a bit more complex than either of you think. The relationship is reciprocal in the sense that each element perpetually influences, but at the same time is dictated by, the other. One can only identify social trends by studying historical examples.

Smith: Fair enough Weber. How then would you explain this phenome-

non? *(He motions around the restaurant.)* I look at the counter and I see people exchanging goods. I see a customer trading his earned money for one of those delicious Big Macs being sold by the cashier representing the larger operation of the company. My observation indicates that humans' propensity to truck, trade and barter causes this progress so well expressed by this McDonald's. Humans want ease and comfort; a nation's progress and economic success will only be achieved by fulfilling the selfish desires and by feeding the vanity of its inhabitants.

Rousseau: But that is exactly the problem! Vanity and selfishness, are you blind? Humans do not need Big Macs; they would have been perfectly content with nuts and berries found in the woods before society implanted this idea of comfort in their minds. Humans were tough and capable creatures before society spoiled them rotten. They could live independently creating their own shelter and providing their own food. They were free and equal in the State of Nature before society infected them with the idea of ease and catalyzed their desire for perfectibility! Slowly humans became weak and dependent, like wild animals domesticated and enslaved. McDonald's represents corruption incarnate. Humans are too lazy to make their own food, too incompetent to hunt for their own meat and too dependent on the work of others to survive without society.

Weber: Let's face it, Rousseau. You could never have enjoyed that Big Mac that you are about to taste in your precious State of Nature. *(Weber and Smith chuckle.)*

Smith: Certainly not without progress - that is without the development of technology and the application of the division of labor. *(He raises his eyebrows and smiles.)*

Rousseau: Oh Mon Dieu, here we go. . . *(He bites into his Big Mac.)*

Smith: You see, humankind's propensity to exchange and the perpetual desire for comfort ultimately result in these two methods of fostering progress. None of these things we see, use and now need every day would be possible without technology and the division of labor, especially not Big Macs. The development of technology allows people to ease labor and maximize profit. This results in better quality and more

quantity. There is less human error involved and more final goods produced. The machines in the back there, the ones frying the French fries, soft-serving the soft-serve and "Big Mac'ing" the Big Macs allow us to enjoy such delicacies with such consistency and speed.

Rousseau: *(muttering to himself)* This Big Mac is mighty tasty.

Smith: And there is more. By applying the theory of the division of labor, we even further enable the production of more goods for less money and time. It is really amazing to think of the time, effort and work saved by dividing tasks among individuals. Just think of that Big Mac you are eating: one must sell the grain for the cow's food, one must provide land for it to graze, one must provide shelter, one must slaughter the animal, one must prepare the meat for transport, one must transport the meat to a factory, one must manufacture the meat for selling, one must sell the meat to McDonald's, one must oversee the meat through the machines we were just discussing, one must sell the meat over the counter and one must eat the final product, and that would be you, Rousseau!

Rousseau: *(putting down his Big Mac)* Thank you Smith for so . . . vivid a description.

Smith: I am just describing such an example to illustrate the incredible connectivity of such a process—I mean thinking of the complex network of the multitude of little parts fitting together to create a whole, the benefits of the "invisible hand" trickling down through the varying levels of labor; it is truly beautiful. The power of the whole truly surpasses the sum of all its parts. If only Durkheim could have made it today.

Rousseau: However powerful, can you not see the danger in such an intertwined network and powerful

machine? Think of how mechanized and systematized people have become! Think of each individual performing the same dull task over and over again until he risks insanity. Think of the negative aspects of this progress, this technology and this division of labor. Think of the alienation of the individual from society when his task becomes so monotonous and meaningless. Think of the massive conformity—enterprises like McDonald's erupting all over the world, taking over, wiping out diversity of culture and independent businesses in the name of efficiency, comfort and profit? Think of the vanity that develops from so much leisure time and maximized profit as a result of this "fast-food" and overall "fast-culture". Social progress causes people to revert to vice and corruption to ensure their beloved comfort and maximize their ease. Each time I look over at that Ronald McDonald, I just want to rip off that grinning red mask of hypocrisy! *(He crumples his burger wrapper and hurles it towards the Ronald McDonald statue.)*

Smith: Well, I never said that there wasn't any danger in the development of progress . . . *(He quietly slurps his milkshake.)*

Weber: It is true: there are great concerns involving the concept of progress, especially when applied to the future of this modern society. People need meaning to make sense of life, and what happens when one's meaning becomes focused completely on progress? But my question for you, Smith, is from where you think this obsession with progress originates. Although you have observed that the propensity to exchange is natural to humankind, this rapid acceleration in the name of economic success is not found in every culture. Why, for example, did McDonald's originate in America and why has it spread so successfully across the world?

Smith: If Tocqueville could have made it, he would have proposed the idea of the Entrepreneur Club founded on America's birthday responding to the need to establish one's individuality and position through money and power. I for one, have no proposition to offer.

Rousseau: Je voudrais dire que de Tocqueville envoie ses regrets*.

Weber: May I suggest, then, we look at history as represented through

*Trans: "I would like to think that de Tocqueville sends his regrets."

the Christian religion to explain this modern phenomenon?

Rousseau: *(sarcastically)* What do you mean? Could you be more specific and tangible?

Weber: What I mean to say is that in history, a dramatic divergence in work-ethic and lifestyle occurred between the Catholic and Protestant sects of Christianity leading to America's obsession with labor and success.

Smith: Are you referring to a difference between traditional and modern workers? Because that is a distinction I have begun to notice.

Weber: Precisely. What one observes in history are the types of workers, whom are recognized as the most successful, most prosperous and most business-savvy; then one discovers the key that unlocks the division: religious influence on lifestyle. *(He looks to the registers.)* I am surprised we do not see more young Protestant women working behind the counter at this moment, for they are generally in high demand.

Rousseau: Young women are always in high demand, but why Protestant?

Weber: The difference between Catholic and Protestant lifestyles represents the difference between traditional and modern work ethics. In the Catholic tradition, one obtains Salvation through following rituals and the Commandments, confessing sins and devoting one's self to the church and priest. In Protestantism, however, Luther emphasized the importance of Salvation through Faith, hard work and one's personal connection with God. Catholics were taught to be skeptical of wealth and success because they represented obstacles burdening the Stairway to Heaven, whereas Protestants identified profit and prosperity with fulfilling God's wishes and as steps leading towards Heaven's Gate.

Rousseau: So the Protestants fled to America and started proving their worth by developing the brilliant concept of Capitalism.

Weber: Well, yes, after Baxter made few revisions regarding the dismal concept of Pre-Destination featuring Salvation through hard, systematic,

and methodical work. He described one's capacity to work hard and fulfill God's calling to a specific labor is evidence of one's ability to be saved. Intense labor is willed by God to tame one's passions and subdue one's desires. Hence, the pursuit of wealth and success became the indicative element of one's religious commitment and thus ultimate Salvation.

Smith: No wonder America invented McDonald's, the Gap and Apple Computers. The country had been programmed from its birth to operate in the most orderly and efficient manner with the sole intent of creating businesses that maximize profits and advertise ease.

Rousseau: No wonder we could not find any better restaurants in town.

Weber: Oh there are delightful restaurants in this town, but they are fading out of fashion, more of a rarity these days. Fine-dining would be more suitable to the more traditional work-ethic and more Catholic lifestyle. The traditional worker values time over money; the factors of family, amusement and relaxation time are important in the traditional worker's days. They would be more inclined to spend their earnings in an extended and fancy meal at a Newbury Street restaurant with family and good friends than stop at the nearby Dunkin' Donuts for a quick cheap snack before rushing to work. We are dining Protestant-style today. This place is crawling with workers trying to save money and time for the sake of success and profit.

Smith: McDonald's is certainly bubbling with activity this afternoon.

Weber: Well, the Protestants do prescribe intense worldly activity as a means to deal with the anxieties of the world. They believe in perpetual work and production to keep the mind safe from corruption.

Rousseau: But again! Humans would not need to sacrifice their leisure and freedom to participate in this stressful worldly activity if they had not succumbed to social pressures. People created McDonald's as a remedy to the very social ills that produced the need for such a remedy. Do you follow me? Think of how people in history invented art and reason as a means to repair the wounds inflicted on humans through art

and reason. It is a ridiculous circle.

Smith: When you observe it that way, McDonald's runs the risk of crossing the line dividing the importance of a nation's economic success from the morality and overall wellness of its inhabitants and workers.

Rousseau: I think it is interesting how the corruption of McDonald's is working on two levels here. Not only is it a product of that culmination of modern, Protestant and American obsession with efficiency, order and profit, but it also caters to a society operating under that system. It is a company produced from that work-ethic convenient for the people abiding by the corresponding lifestyle.

Smith: But because the entire system is based on power and success, it is impossible for it not to eventually dominate the entire world and spread across borders and cultures. Individuals have no choice but to join the forces of modern workers.

Weber: God loves those workaholics!

Smith: And those workaholics sure love McDonald's.

Rousseau: So therefore God must love McDonald's . . .

Weber: And God must love Big Macs

Smith: Well there is at least one element we can all agree on; even if we disagree over philosophy and what constitutes the social sciences; *we* all love the Big Macs! ■

Alison Watts *(CAS 05) from Minneapolis, Minnesota, is majoring in English with a minor in French. In addition to an amazingly dedicated and thought-provoking professor, she found inspiration in Starbucks, baklava, and late-night discussions with friends who carried her through the last week of first semester last year. She dedicates this piece to the army of garden gnomes who in her sleep whispered the idea of this piece.*

Michelangelo, Cordelia & Panurge on the Measure of Valor

Raja Bhattar

Dramatis Personae:
Michelangelo: the great Italian sculptor/painter
Cordelia: the Queen of France and daughter of King Lear of England
Panurge: the sexually-charged but loyal side-kick of Pantagruel
Gentleman: servant of Queen Cordelia

The scene opens with Michelangelo sitting in the middle of a public garden with his "David" in the upper-left corner of the stage. He sits in a state of contemplation (similar to the portrayal of Michelangelo in Rafael's "School of Athens.")

Michelangelo: Oh frail soul, why do you not leave this misery? Look. Look here! *(He points to the "David.")* Is he just an illusion of my old age or a reminder of my sinful life? Look, someone comes in this direction.

Cordelia: *(to Gentleman)* What a beautiful day for a walk through this new country of ours. We are truly impressed by the natural beauty of this royal garden, which reminds us of our father's castle. Oh poor father, now at the mercy of my merciless sisters. Say good sir, does that man not resemble one who is troubled by something?

Gentleman: Indeed, your highness.

Cordelia: *(to Michelangelo)* Gentle sir, what troubles you in such a way?

Michelangelo: Madam, I am but a deteriorating body and "my soul's wings have been fully clipped and plucked"[1] Sadly, my self-expression is limited by these societal pressures.

Cordelia: *(in a motherly tone)* Oh poor sir! How wretched life is to us all. What is your…

Cordelia is interrupted by Panurge who runs in holding his three-foot codpiece in his hand.

Panurge: *(pointing to "David")* Pardon me fair lady, but do you not see a discrepancy in that statue there?

Cordelia: No, good sir. I do not.

Panurge: Surely you, the Queen, can seen that for a man of such supposed valor, his "what-d' you-call'-em" is but two inches. That must surely be a mistake on the part of the sculptor. David is not as brave as they say. Is it no common knowledge that a man's valor is determined by the size of his codpiece? Then surely David is not a hero because he does not have a codpiece! What do you say, oh beautiful lady?

Cordelia: *(disgusted)* "Nothing"[3]

Michelangelo: Who are you, sir, and why are you here?

Panurge: Well sir, a valid question indeed. I am the great Panurge here on a very vital mission.

Michelangelo: And for what is this mission, sir?

Panurge: Well sir, as you can see *(pointing to his codpiece)*, I am a man of great valor, and so I am here to write a book on "The Utility of Long Codpieces"[2]

Cordelia: I have not seen such a ridiculous creature since I last saw my sisters! Can he even be considered as having valor?

Michelangelo: Well, I believe that that statue represents society's ideal form of masculine valor. He is an ideal that society wants me to meet, but I know I can never reach that norm. His body is the epitome of physical beauty and his gaze has such power.

Panurge: And who do you think you are, sir, to utter such an idiotic comment?

Michelangelo: Well, I am only the creator of this statue, sir.

Panurge: You! Ha! You do not resemble the great Michelangelo of Italy!

Michelangelo: I pity your ignorance of old age sir. Through many years, "I have been weakened, ruptured, crushed, and broken/ by all my labors..."[1]

Cordelia: *(to Panurge)* Do not make assumptions on mere looks, sir. Sometimes the thing that looks harmless on the outside is full of venom.

Panurge: Well-said madam! All the ladies that I know are full of it too.

Cordelia: Disregard him, good sir. He speaks like my sisters, not knowing what he says. That statue to me represents true valor. David portrays the ability of being true to oneself and doing what is right and truthful, regardless of one's responsibility to self or society. To really say what you believe and think and not be a slave to other's requires the courage that he portrayed. He fought Goliath because he felt it was something he had to do. Similarly, I spoke truthfully to my father, though I was aware that it was not what he wanted to hear. Someday my father will realize that I was simply uttering the truth for the sake of itself.

Michelangelo: Dear Queen, do you really believe that it is possible to relay the truth without considering other's reactions? "That esteemed art in which I...enjoyed such renown, has brought me to this state; poor, and old, and a servant in the power of others."[1] I feel as though I cannot be true to my self without the fear of sinning in the eyes of God.

Panurge: It is possible! Am I not telling the truth when I say that my what-d' you-call-'it is as long as my codpiece? What do you say, dear Queen?

Cordelia: As I told my father years ago, "nothing."[3] Such foolish comments deserve no reply.

Panurge: It seems to me that your speech is but hindrance to our love. Let us not speak anymore, but, as I said one day to a Parisian lady, "[to] spare time, let's to and fro and at it."[2]

Cordelia: Get away with you!

Michelangelo: Get away you rogue! Do you not know that she is the Queen of France?

Panurge: Indeed sir, I do. That is why I came to her. See, "I notice that in this country the thing-o'-my-bobs of the ladies are cheaper than the stone!"[2] *(He points to the David.)* So naturally, the Queen of this country must be the cheapest of them all. Though she maybe the Queen, she is

still a woman and therefore here only for my pleasure.

Cordelia: You serpent! Your tongue is more vicious than those of my sisters. How do you go about making such comments?

Panurge: *(waving his codpiece around and making sexual gestures)* Well madam, I have been in Paris for not nine days and have already "stuffed four hundred and seventeen"[2] of them. So you see, the women of Paris are the easiest around.

Michelangelo: *(whispering to himself)* Unfortunately, the men of France are not so easy.

Cordelia: Did you say something, good sir?

Michelangelo: Uh...I said that I have not been able to find a model for a new sculpture.

Panurge: What are you looking for sir?

Cordelia: Certainly not a vicious fellow such as you!

Michelangelo: I am sculpting a woman, but you will do. If I could get away with modeling the Lybian Sybil after my apprentice, I can surely have you as my model.

Panurge: Will you include my codpiece in your work? Will I be reimbursed for my time?

Michelangelo: I am currently desperate for a model. If you will model for me I shall pay you when I am back home in Italy.

Cordelia: Good sir, I do not recall how you came to be in the country of France. Please do tell us.

Panurge: Madam, we are wasting precious time. "It would be most beneficial to the whole state, delightful to you, and an honour to my progeny, as it is a necessity to me, that you should be covered and breed from me."[2]

Cordelia: Sir, your words confirm our thoughts that a fool has his brain in is mouth and nothing in his brain. *(Addresses Michelangelo.)* Disregard him, oh good sir. Please continue with your story.

Michelangelo: Your Highness, this voyage is a gift from Pope Julius II for my completion of the Sistine Chapel.

Panurge: So, you are the man who enjoys depicting a nude Jesus. Come to think of it, I see no need for clothing really. Your Highness, would you not be more comfortable out of your heavy clothing? *(he tries to pull her dress)*

Cordelia: *(hitting Panurge on the head with his codpiece)* Oh rogue! You serpent! You are as vicious as your words!

The gentleman attempts to fight Panurge but falls and is wounded.

Panurge: Pardon me madam, I was just trying to help you.

Cordelia: What nerve do you have to say that you were helping us. You might as well have been one of my sisters, who claim one thing yet believe another!

Michelangelo: *(to Panurge)* It seems to me that you were helping yourself.

Panurge: *(to Cordelia)* But I love you, madam!

Cordelia: Love? Do you really know the meaning of that word?

Panurge: Love, madam, is a thing that brings joy.

Cordelia: Is there any truth to your argument? For if there is nothing but falsity, then you are not worth listening to.

Michelangelo: *(aside)* Is all this just an illusion? Is love just a form of the devil, "like all things men want in spite of their best interests."

Panurge: I assure you, it is no devil sir! Love *(looking at Cordelia)* is what makes Master John Owl *(pointing to his crotch)* search for your nest."[2] It is the natural attraction that draws my body to yours.

Cordelia: Do you really believe that love can be expressed so easily? If you can boast your love for me with such ease, then it is probably not love. I remember when my sisters professed their undying love to our father. They did it with such ease and provided him with everything he wanted to hear. Then they betrayed him and left him to rot in the storm! How much evil people can possess!

Michelangelo: That is true. My heart has been broken such that "not a spark of love is left within my heart."[3]

Cordelia: Oh my good sir, regardless of what one does to you, you should love them unconditionally. I told my father that I could only love him with half my heart because the other half belongs to my husband. Is that a wrong calculation on my part?

Panurge: Surely it is, your Highness! Does not a quarter of your love come my way?

Cordelia: No! I shall not take anymore of your absurdity! Be gone with you.

Panurge: But madam, you vowed to perform the dance of the four-legged beast with me!

Cordelia: When?

Panurger: Why, in my dreams last night.

Michelangelo: Are you not aware that dreams are but illusions that are created by the mind? "Now I recognize how laden with error / was the affectionate fantasy /...like all things men want in spite of their best interests."[4]

Cordelia: *(to Panurge)* Only a blind man sees illusions. Open your eyes and see what stupidity you profess! Such illusions have the power to destroy whole families. Ours was destroyed as a result of my father's illusion of keeping control of the kingdom while dividing it.

Gentleman: Pardon me your Highness, but I do believe that the King is awaiting you in the royal dining hall. Shall we proceed to the engagement?

Cordelia: I truly forgot! *(To Michelangelo.)* Kind sir, we would be honored if you would join us at our castle for supper.

Michelangelo: I gladly accept madam. *(To Panurge.)* Will you be joining us, sir?

Panurge: We are too sophisticated for such mediocre company. *(Panurge spots a well-dressed woman walk across the stage.)* I have some

other business to handle. *(He begins to run after her.)* Pardon me fair lady, *(pointing to "David")* but do you not see a discrepancy in that statue there? ■

1 Quotation from Michelangelo's Poem 267.

2 All quotations from Francois Rabelais' Gargantua and Pantagruel. London: Penguin Books, 1955.

3 All quotations are from William Shakespeare's King Lear. New York: Signet Classic, 1963.

4 Quotation from Michelangelo's Poem 285.

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In the End

Emily Patulski

1 In the end the plane destroyed the building and the people. 2The air was filled with smoke and dust, and clouds of darkness were upon the horizon; and the spirit of destruction moved over the face of the earth.

3And the terrorists said, "Let there be silence"; and there was silence. 4And the passengers knew that their silence would soon be forever; and silence separated the terrorists from the passengers and joy from sorrow. 5And there was silence and there was mourning, that day.

6And the terrorists said, "Let there be stillness", and there was stillness. 7And the passengers knew that their stillness would soon be forever; and stillness separated the terrorists from the passengers and life from death. 8And there was stillness and there was mourning, that day.

9And the terrorists said, "Let there be darkness"; and there was darkness. 10And the passengers knew that their darkness would soon be forever; and darkness separated the terrorists from the passengers and the present from the future. 11And there was darkness and there was mourning, that day.

12Then the terrorists said, "God is great." 13So the terrorists destroyed men in their own image, in the name of God they destroyed them; male and female they destroyed them.

14And God saw everything that the terrorists had destroyed, and behold, it was horror. 15And there was sadness and there was mourning, that infamous day.

(adapted from *Genesis*: Chapter 1)

Author's Explication:

Although when I first started this assignment I decided to write on my chosen subject just because it seemed right based on current events, I realized the more I thought about it that a biblical text on murderous activity makes an interesting contrast. It is essentially taking a text about creation and light and turning it into a story of destruction, horror, and darkness. But it is this contradiction which gives the idea so much purpose.

Contrasting creation and destruction through biblical writing on terrorism magnifies the tragedy and selfishness of such acts. The creative nature of God in *Genesis* greatly contrasts with the destructive nature of terrorists who try to play God. Simply stated, in *Genesis,* God creates; in my story, terrorists destroy God's creations. This is why writing about terrorist acts in a biblical style is so abstract and yet still makes a strong point about the needlessness and stupidity of terrorism. What makes terrorism even more incomprehensible is that terrorists often are motivated by religion and use God as an excuse to kill innocent people. For example, it was reported that one of the terrorists involved in the recent attack on America said, "God is great" in Arabic before the plane crashed. Although believers and nonbelievers may disagree about God's powers and existence, I doubt there is any dispute for most of us that terrorists are not great and also are not God. ■

The Master said, Respect the young. How do you know that they will not one day be all that you are now?

~Confucius: The Analects

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