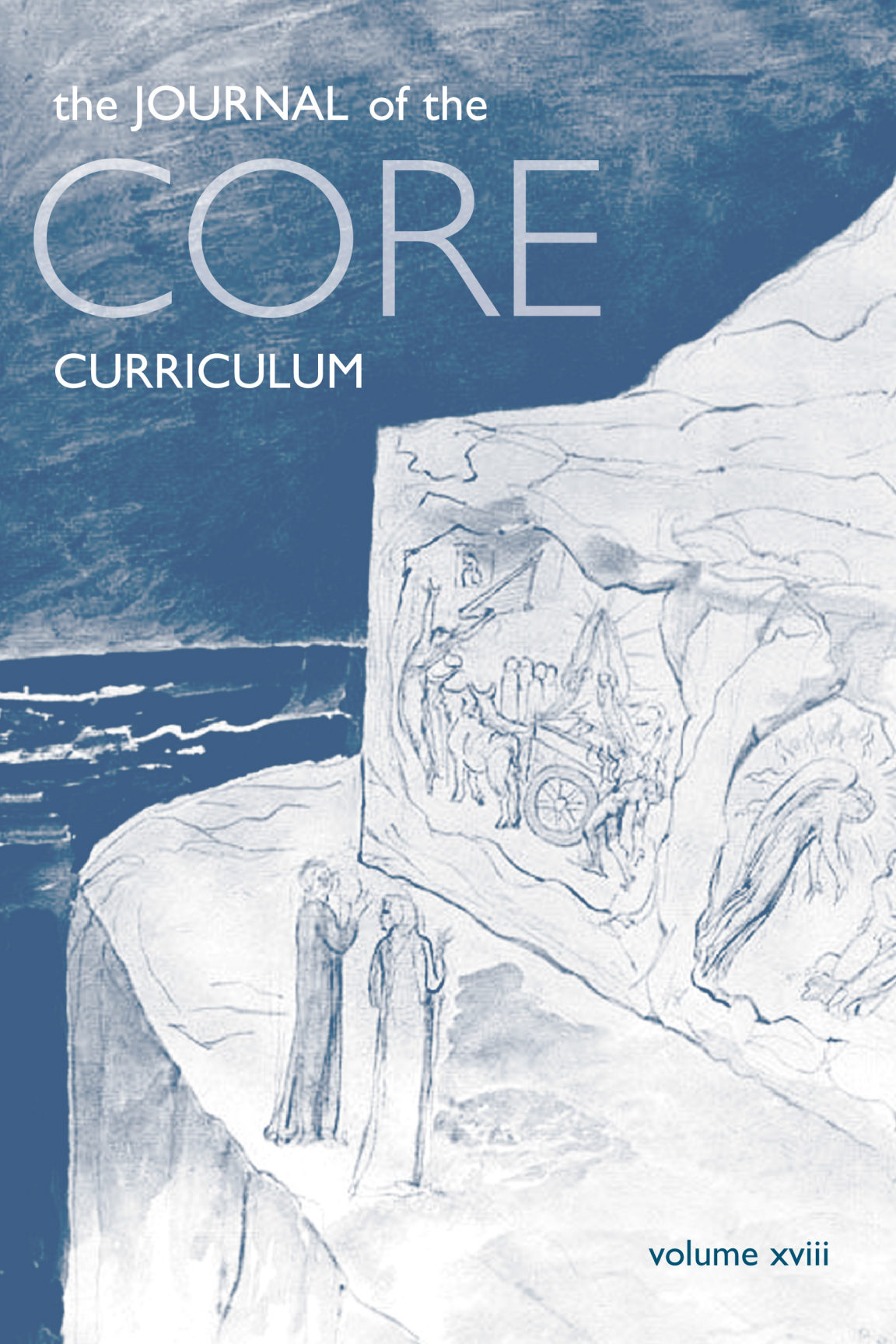


the JOURNAL of the

# CORE

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CORE CURRICULUM



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CORE CURRICULUM

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*to Cora and Leopold*

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# editor's note

The paintings which adorn the ceiling and walls of the Sistine Chapel present so many images and allusions that it is impossible to see and appreciate them all in any sort of organized manner. Yet that is exactly the point of a Core education: it trains us to interpret each layer of meaning, to recognize the threads of tradition and allusion—Genesis in Dante, Dante in Michelangelo, and Michelangelo in Velázquez. The Core foundation is valuable because it teaches us to think of these works as acts of human wisdom, feeling and creativity which belong in a continuous timeline, rather than as isolated works that emerge from history without context or cause. These books are not only stories, but varying interpretations of a theme. Core teaches us to think of themes, whether shown through literature, art, or music; they are layered in works like the Ptolemaic universe, each piece distinct but still part of a greater whole. We can read *Gulliver's Travels* and feel pity for its lost and foolish narrator, or we can hear Jonathan Swift echoing Voltaire's and Wordsworth's criticism of the Enlightenment's misapplication of reason. What Core shows us is that these and other interpretations are not only all possible, but are of critical importance to understanding the spirit and role of the work.

The making of this journal has been a rewarding if grueling experience for all of us, a journey through Purgatory with a literary Beatrice waiting to reward us at the top. Much appreciation is due to the members of my dedicated editorial staff, with whom I have enjoyed making this steep climb. Thanks also to Professor Tabatabai, for this opportunity and for his guidance and his good-natured patience in moments of panic; and of course thanks to Zak, our journey's Virgil, for his humor, his teaching, and his general embodiment of the Core spirit.

To those students whose two years in the Core are now coming to a close, I encourage you to take the humanistic education you've been given and start making your own interpretations of the world. Seek fame if you will and fortune if you can, but remember your time in Core and the heroes you have joined on their journeys. Keep Aristotle in your pocket and remember his admonition that no one can be happy without friends, be they living or literary.

erin mcdonagh

Spring 2009 Editor



ethan rubin

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# the malevolent enchanter

AT THE TURN of the seventeenth-century, the work of René Descartes permanently altered the epistemological methods of the academic world. By deconstructing the universe on the basis of doubt, he called into question even the most basic and universally held beliefs, such as the existence of matter. Miguel de Cervantes, a contemporary of Descartes, addressed a similar question in his seminal novel, *Don Quixote*. His protagonist, Don Quixote, is convinced that the world recognized by his fellow men is illusory and that his own mad creations are more substantial. Though his peers consider him insane, they are unable to offer any proof to the contrary and hence cannot force Don Quixote to accept their reality. The issues of doubting and proving seemingly obvious facts are central to both *Don Quixote* and the *Meditations*, though they apply divergent methodologies and arrive at different results.

Descartes writes the *Meditations* to determine whether one can obtain certain knowledge. He begins by rejecting sense perception on the basis of having “learned by experience that these senses sometimes mislead me, and it is prudent never to trust wholly those things which have once deceived us” (Descartes 76). This is not enough, however, to cast doubt on the more basic sense-related beliefs, namely proprioception (one’s awareness of his own body). Descartes is not suffi-

ciently certain of even these beliefs, invoking the confusion of dreaming and waking states to highlight the murky nature of the world in which we appear to live. This state of affairs has serious implications for the possibility of knowledge, as is recognized by other thinkers. R. D. Laing, for example, states that “even facts become fictions without adequate ways of seeing ‘the facts.’ We do not need theories so much as the experience that is the source of the theory” (Laing 17). If experience cannot be trusted to provide accurate perceptions, how is it possible to arrive at truth? For the time being, Descartes concludes that this avenue can provide no progress.

Having quashed his most fundamental beliefs, Descartes turns to truths that operate independently of the material world, such as mathematics. Whether one is awake or dreaming, he argues, two plus three will always equal five. Rather than accept this conclusion, Descartes posits an eventuality, however unlikely, in which this would not be the case: “I will therefore suppose that ... a certain evil spirit, not less clever and deceitful than powerful, has bent all his efforts to deceiving me” (Descartes 80). For Descartes, the possibility of a malevolent enchanter is a device by which any belief can be doubted. This is because the hypothesis is unfalsifiable—there is no way to prove that an all-powerful deceiver does not exist. Ergo, he can be applied to any belief or perception, save one: “Even though there may be a deceiver of some sort, very powerful and very tricky, who bends all his efforts to keep me perpetually deceived, there can be no slightest doubt that I exist, since he deceives me” (Descartes 82).

Don Quixote employs a similar method to discount the mean nature of his environment. Whenever faced with an undignified or unpleasant situation, Don Quixote insists that his enemies, who are powerful enchanters or demons, are creating a false reality with which to deceive him:

“I don’t know what I think,” replied Sancho, “not being as well-read as you are in errantry writings—all the same I must say I haven’t got much faith in these here visions.”

“Faith? Goodness gracious me!” replied Don Quixote. “How could you have faith in them when they are all demons who have assumed fantastic bodies to come and do this to me and reduce me to this situation?” (Cervantes 434)

Don Quixote's claims, by virtue of their unfalsifiability, provide him with insulation from reality. Any objection, no matter how logical or obvious, can easily be dismissed by invoking the malicious sorcerer. In this sense, Don Quixote and Descartes share a methodological principle. The difference between the two lies not in their methods but rather in their intentions.

In order to ascertain which of his beliefs are certain, Descartes assumes the possibility of a malicious enchanter. Don Quixote, on the other hand, finds himself confronted with a distasteful reality and defends himself by assuming the certainty of the aforementioned enchanter. Don Quixote has no genuine desire to discover truth or reality, instead seeking only to preserve the universe his mind has concocted. In the second Meditation, Descartes presents the relationship between his assumptions and conceivable alternative realities:

So I may by chance look out of a window and notice some men passing in the street, at the sight of whom I do not fail to say that I see men, just as I say that I see wax; and nevertheless what do I see from this window except hats and cloaks which might cover ghosts, or automata which move only by springs? But I judge that they are men, and thus I comprehend, solely by the faculty of judgment which resides in my mind, that which I believed I saw with my eyes. (Descartes 89)

Despite the possibility of ghosts or automata, Descartes comes to the conclusion that the figures outside his window are, in fact, men. Don Quixote, faced with a similar choice, comes to the conclusion that lowly prostitutes not only could be but unequivocally *are* fair ladies, that inns are splendid castles, that windmills are giants and that sheep are soldiers.

Quixote's assumptions ignore the logical counterpoint to seemingly insuperable Cartesian doubt. Occam's Razor, named for the philosopher and theologian Henry of Occam, states that the simplest solution is generally the most apt. It is couched in clear, logical language by Jerrold Katz:

If a hypothesis, H, explains the same evidence as a hypothesis G, but does so by postulating more entities than G, then, other things being

equal, the evidence has to bear greater weight in the case of H than in the case of G, and hence the amount of support it gives H is proportionately less than it gives G. (Katz 92)

There is no particular evidence to support Don Quixote's conclusions regarding inns, windmills or castles. His explanations, however, are far more complex than the commonly accepted causes his fellows implore him to accept. In the absence of evidence, Quixote's convictions do not carry the same weight as those that he rejects.

Furthermore, Don Quixote places more emphasis on his illogical brand of skepticism than Descartes does on his system of doubt. Descartes uses doubt to deconstruct the universe for the purposes of a thought experiment, and at the end of the six day period in which he penned the *Meditations* finds the universe reconstructed. Not only does Descartes return to normal life after reassembling his beliefs, but even during his meditations Descartes finds it impossible to truly dedicate himself to doubt, saying that "this undertaking is arduous, and a certain laziness leads me insensibly into the normal paths of ordinary life." (Descartes 80). The utility of Descartes' exercise is explained by David Hume in his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*:

The Cartesian doubt, therefore, were it possible to be attained by any human creature (as it plainly is not) would be entirely incurable ... It must, however, be confessed, that this species of scepticism, when more moderate, may be understood in a very reasonable sense, and is a necessary preparative to the study of philosophy. (Hume 181-182)

Don Quixote, on the other hand, is anything but moderate. He is far more convinced of beliefs that most would consider ludicrous than Descartes is of anything beyond the vague fact of his own existence. Quixote allows his life to be dominated by these strongly held convictions, only turning his doubt towards that which he would prefer not to accept. The goal Descartes sets out at the onset of the *Meditations* is "to undertake, once and for all, to set aside all the opinions which I had previously accepted among my beliefs and start again from the very beginning" (Descartes 75). To that effect, Descartes allows no prejudice towards

his beliefs but instead attacks them all indiscriminately. Quixote does not want to start again from the beginning; his goal is to make the world conform to his fantasy. He does not deign to doubt any of the beliefs that please him because he arrived at his conclusion before applying the method and therefore seeks only to justify the reality he has chosen. Earlier in the same chapter, Hume makes an unintentionally apt statement: “The knights-errant, who wandered about to clear the world of dragons and giants, never entertained the least doubt with regard to the existence of these monsters” (Hume 181).

If there is no certainty to be gained from this selective skepticism, why does Don Quixote adhere to his quixotic quest? The answer is simple: his eponymous epistemology is not grounded in truth or even the desire for truth, but only in pleasing himself. Bertrand Russell, in discussing the philosophical enterprise, states that

Uncertainty, in the presence of vivid hopes and fears, is painful, but must be endured if we wish to live without the support of comforting fairy tales. It is not good either to forget the questions that philosophy asks, or to persuade ourselves that we have found indubitable answers to them. (Russell 1)

Don Quixote is unable to endure this painful uncertainty, particularly in light of his mediocre social status and crushingly dull location. He chooses instead to sustain his hopes and fears through those fairy tales. Furthermore, he uses methods resembling the philosophical in order to create, not dispel, those illusions. He applies skepticism only when convenient, transforming what should be a governing principle of perception into a practical tool of self-deception. In this sense, Don Quixote shows himself to be a profoundly unphilosophical character. Descartes, by contrast, is philosophical in exactly this sense, pursuing the essential questions without assuming that he has found indubitable answers (despite his suspect claim of having proven the existence of God).

Cervantes himself may provide a better instance of the philosophical mind than his protagonist. By creating a narrator who is at the same time a character in the novel, he is able to provide another perspective on academia. The narrator is a dubious intellect, reflecting Cervantes' tongue-in-cheek criticism of the litera-



ture and academic thought of his time. In the prologue, the narrator expresses his hesitance to write a novel because of his own lack of knowledge. The other books of his time were liberally peppered with quotes from Aristotle, the Bible, popular poets and other sources of that ilk, which the narrator claims is an expression of knowledge and authority. He first asserts that his inability to include such citations is evidence of his inadequacy, but soon afterwards attributes his troubles to being “naturally lazy and disinclined to go hunting for authors to say for me what I know how to say without them” (Cervantes 13). This is an attempt on Cervantes’ part to lampoon seventeenth-century criteria for a work of quality, condemning them as superfluous at best and dissembling at worst. His sarcasm is reinforced by the response of the narrator’s friend, who suggests that the citations should be wholly fabricated. This friend tells the narrator that “even if it serves no other purpose, your long list will at least lend your book an instant air of authority” (Cervantes 15). The narrator accepts this proposal wholeheartedly, highlighting Cervantes’ view that the inclusion of quotations and the appearance of quality that follows is no reliable indicator of a work’s actual literary worth. This parallels the philosophical practice of ascertaining nature beyond appearance and superficial apprehension. Cervantes feels that neither he nor any other author has anything to gain from padding out a work with references if the work itself lacks substance, and that such practices reveal a sort of intellectual escapism.

The rest of the novel is also colored by doubt. In chapter IX of part I, the narrator interrupts an exciting fight scene with the announcement that part of his manuscript is missing. This establishes a first layer of doubt. The reader, originally under the impression that he has been given a first-hand account of events, discovers that the narrator did not, in fact, experience the events in question or even know of them himself. The fact that he is relating this story from a manuscript raises questions about the reliability of the source. Not only is the manuscript of unknown origins, it is also flawed and incomplete and hence cannot be trustworthy. These questions are compounded by the increasingly dubious narrator, who is the owner and presenter of this imperfect manuscript and who, without even this humble source, has no more knowledge of what occurs in the story than does the reader. If the narrator and the reader are equally ignorant, what justification is there for the reader to accept the narrator’s authority?

When the narrator recovers the manuscript, he finds it is written in Arabic

and, far worse, written by an Arab. His reaction is less than favorable:

If there is any objection to be made about the truthfulness of this history, it can only be that its author was an Arab, and it's a well-known feature of Arabs that they're all liars. (Cervantes 76)

This adds not one but two layers of doubt to the veracity of the narrative. On the one hand, there is the explicitly stated untrustworthiness of the Arabic author. On the other, there is the implicit issue of the narrator's bigotry, which cannot be ignored. The inclusion of the translator adds still another party to the relation of the story, and the potential that he is unreliable is compounded by the fact that he is an Arab as well. A subsequent passage appears to express Cervantes' views more honestly and, coming from the mouth of the narrator, provides an illuminating irony:

Historians should and must be precise, truthful and unprejudiced, without allowing self-interest or fear, hostility or affection, to turn them away from the path of truth, whose mother is history: the imitator of time, the storehouse of actions and the witness to the past, an example and a lesson to the present and a warning to the future. In this history I know that everything anyone could want to find in the most delectable history is to be found; and if anything worthwhile is missing from it, it's my belief that it's the dog of an author who wrote it who's the blame, rather than any defect in the subject. (Cervantes 76)

Though the narrator states that prejudice leads one away from truth and accuracy, a mere paragraph earlier he expressed prejudice towards the author of the manuscript. He claims that hostility has the same effect, and yet the passage itself shows hostility to the "dog of an author" and the entire novel he is assembling bears hostility to the accepted literature of the time, particularly chivalric romances. The claim that this "history" is perfect is qualified by an admission of the possibility of flaws and a violation of the very principles listed as necessary for an accurate, truthful work. Cervantes thus gives the reader a plethora of grounds

for doubt, calling his own work and the other works of his time into question on the fundamental grounds of truthfulness and accuracy, just as Descartes does regarding the universe itself.

It is clear that both Cervantes and Descartes are concerned with epistemology. In particular, they are preoccupied with whether knowledge is possible at all and therefore devote themselves to examining the relevance of doubt. Descartes considers doubt for the purpose of reflection and discovery, whereas Cervantes takes a more demonstrative stance, cataloguing the dangers of misapplying doubt and assuming knowledge. While they are unable to fully evade the implications of skepticism, neither is willing to abandon his efforts toward attaining knowledge.

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zachary bos

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# misogyny

*after Collins, Crickillon, & Niedecker*

I am the reader  
Of you the book  
I am the boulder  
You are the brook  
I am a pronoun  
You are any verb  
Er, or any adverb  
(Since you apply  
As well to verbs)  
I am the oak tree  
You are the alder  
Or else the beech  
And I am the yew  
Or you are the yew  
Else I am the ram  
And you the ewe  
I am the thin blade  
You a gold chalice  
That is, a nice cup  
Not a cheap cup  
Alright: I am a rabbit  
You are a girl rabbit



“Sarı Ağac”

*Naz Yücel*

daniel hudon

---

# how to build a planet in twelve easy steps

1. You'll need a lot of space. You can't just build a planet in the basement or the garage. You would have to cut corners, things would get in the way; you would never get it out again. Don't waste your time. Try to find an unused airplane hangar, or, even better, a vacant lunar base.

2. Decide on a shape. Spherical is always popular, but if you try one of the Platonic solids, like cubic or tetrahedral, you're sure to get points for originality, even if gravity has the final say. Stargazers won't know if they're looking at an orbiting Great Pyramid of Cheops or your new planet. It's sure to be a hit. And don't forget dodecahedral—a twelve-sided planet would be cosmic, man.

3. Acquire the proper ingredients. Nobody will be impressed if you just throw a bunch of mud together and squeeze it into a ball. It's been done. Be creative. Bear in mind that a liquid-metallic core goes over big with the geophysicists (magnetic fields, aurora borealis, S and P waves, that sort of thing), but liquids are inherently difficult to work with so you could save that for your second or third planet.

4. Don't be overly ambitious. In fact, you could probably start with a mixture of Saharan sand, dried leaves and maple syrup. Be liberal with the maple syrup; you'll need a core that things will stick to. Other kinds of sand will do in a pinch. No one's going to know. Build from the inside out. You'd be amazed at how many people go from the outside in. They don't take their work seriously and soon give

up. Or they somehow wind up trapped inside. It happens.

5. Don't skimp on the ingredients. Keep adding layers. Try old rubber tires, library discards (hardcovers work best), and junk mail. Spread it around. Pack it down. How can you expect your planet to hold an atmosphere, or a moon, if you don't keep packing it down? Add your record collection if you have to. You're never going to play them again. High school yearbooks, broken-down stationary bicycles, your boxes upon boxes of photographic negatives. Pile them on. It's your planet, after all.

6. Nobody says the surface has to be smooth but keep the aesthetics in mind when you're raking it all down. Smooth surfaces reflect more sunlight, which will make your planet easier to see. You don't want it wandering aimlessly in the dark.

7. When your planet is big enough—aim for at least twice the size of Pluto because as you know, Pluto just got kicked out of the family for being too small—climb up onto it and go for a walk. How does the surface feel between your toes? Does it feel planetary? Can you imagine great oceanic basins, mountain chains and plate tectonics down the road? Can you walk all the way around without falling off? If the ground shifts, you may want to let it settle for a while. Don't rush it. Take eons if necessary. Quality takes time. Nobody pays attention to detail anymore, but you should.

8. If you fall off, that's a bad sign. The gravity on your planet is too small—it will never make it in the solar system. You have no choice but to pack on more: Sunday newspapers, disposable coffee cups, old computer monitors. Keep adding until you can walk around without falling off. Gravity is a beautiful thing.

9. Don't worry about atmospheres, life and all that jazz. If you thought liquids were hard to work with, gases are next to impossible. Finicky, temperamental stuff, you'll be tinkering forever. Look how screwed up Mars and Venus are. Perpetual dust storms or runaway greenhouse effect. Not pretty. Save your energy. And for all we know, life on Earth was a fluke, or a miracle, or brought in from elsewhere. Don't waste your time. Building the thing is enough. Let the universe take care of the rest, *que sera sera*.

10. Choose the name carefully. Once named, the planet is stuck with it for eternity. All the good Roman god names are taken, so have a contest and keep pulling entries until you get something pronounceable from a nine-year-old Inuit girl or a twelve-year-old boy from Kerala. Makes a nice story. Just don't leave it

up to the astronomers or you'll be stuck with a mouthful like Quaoar (try "KWAH-o-ar") or 2003 UB313.

11. When you're finished building your planet, hoist it up into the heavens. Tether your planet to some hot air balloons or borrow some rockets (the Russians will go for it if the price is right) and lift it up into the atmosphere. For good measure, arrange for a spin to be imparted before it is released—gotta love night and day.

12. Choose the parameters of an elliptical orbit (sorry, thanks to Johannes Kepler, there's no other choice) for your planet. Set your planet free to roam forever around the sun. Gravity truly is a beautiful thing.



yuliya belyayeva

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# the sign and the sacrifice

Dawn spread her rosy fingertips across the golden heavens,  
sending her brilliant rays into the mansion of the red-haired hero, Meneláos.  
The servants were already busy butchering animals for roasting,  
pouring silver bowls of wine and water, and putting  
fresh loaves of bread onto ornately decorated plates.

One by one, the guests began to gather in the rich halls,  
as Meneláos welcomed each honorable man with a greeting.  
When all the dark honeyed wine was poured and the offerings made,  
Demódokos, the harper most favored by the merry gods,  
called out to Muse, the fair daughter of Zeus, and began his tale,  
the pitiful song of the cursed family of Agamemnon, the wealthy host's brother:

“On the verge of the war against Priam's great city,  
the huntress goddess Artemis sent a sign from the sunlit sky,  
releasing two eagles, a pair of winged companions, who  
plummeted to rip apart a hare, fat with unborn young, an unfavorable omen—  
they tore apart her stomach as the ground soaked up her dark blood.”  
In awe and horror, the crowd wondered about the foreboding symbol,  
fearing the worst challenges from the gods.  
The noble oracle Orestias rose from his silver-studded chair and said:

“Listen! Hear my wise words, and take note of the gods' needs.  
The old goddess of fertility and of the hunt, Artemis, displayed this sight,

giving knowledge of yet another victim, a young virgin, a woman born to die. My old age allows me to read signs, those deathly omens that make brave sailors tremble in their sleep. Pray, pray you Achaeans! Slaughter prime calves to appease bright Apollo and soothe the fresh desire for blood, a sure doom to our fierce army and much failure to our sailors.”

This was the wrenching speech that the clear-minded Agamemnon heard, and he delayed no longer. He strayed among his fleet, seeing the disheartened sailors, weak from battling the hard blowing winds, their spirit as fleeting as a fainthearted deer in the meadows of Ithaca, and the meager provisions in the store rooms.

With his heartache subtle yet painful, the true leader of the Achaeans set sail towards dangerous Chalkis, home of the swift, crashing riptide. As they were approaching the coastline, a storm, unprecedented in power, raged against the ships, ripping sheets and masts and cables in a harsh fury. The water quivered and sighed with the upcoming waves, gusts of wind shook each ship, while the soldiers prayed to the grey-eyed Athena. Fear on his mind, Calchas, son of Phorkys, said:

“Great captain Agamemnon, to preserve your crew and your mission, to defeat the mighty Trojans, you must give Artemis the precious blood, a human sacrifice. Lead us away from the darkness of death, a cold grave at sea!”  
Through his tears, the mighty Agamemnon replied:

“Son of Phorkys, I feel the heavy doom overbearing me, crushing me. What is worse, dear Calchas? Slaying one’s fair child on the altar, or deserting one’s ships and facing dark outcome in the war? The gods are lusting after pure virgin’s blood; I must obey their law. Law is law, and I must feed their cruel fury.”

Determined and terrifying, he turned towards the rose-lipped Iphigeneia, ordering his robust men to gag his pale daughter and bring her to the altar,

like a sheep waiting to be sacrificed. He feared she would curse his house, a curse that would haunt generations well past his time.

As the men carried her away, the fair Iphigeneia pleaded with her father:

“Merciful father!

Do you forget, my cursed parent, how I sang out my love to you during your bountiful feasts? Do you forget, feared ruler of Mycenae, how your guests praised me as the glory of your house? Spare me, father, don't let them slaughter me over the altar! Why must a parent see his own offspring's blood trickle over cold stone? I call upon wise Athena to spread my unfortunate story to the wide world and the light-filled heavens. Father, father... “

A broken scream, and silence overwhelmed Agamemnon's ships. The son of Atreus lowered his eyes to the pool of dark blood, making intricate patterns at his feet. His madness sobered up, as the men came together, wailing as the blood stained their hands, all wishing to forget the awful deed.

i am he  
as you are he  
as you are me  
and we are all  
together

VIRGIL'S *AENEID* REVOLVES around the details of one man's adventures during his journey to Italy. It therefore seems unlikely that Virgil would attempt to explore the idea of the individual as unimportant or even nonexistent, which is the view taken by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. There, Krishna states that while we may believe ourselves to be individuals, we are all in fact part of a greater whole and the characteristics that make us unique and different from others do not define our person. Although these views are generally not found in traditional Western thought, in Book VI Virgil attempts to find a way to establish similar ideas of reincarnation and the afterlife. When Aeneas descends into Hades, Virgil describes conflicting images of people whose individuality remains supremely important in death as well as souls that will be recycled after a person dies. Virgil's detailed but contradictory description of the underworld in Book VI suggests that he views Krishna's ideas of reincarnation and relinquishment of the fruits of one's actions as an ideal. However, unable to see this ideal as the truth of human existence, Virgil fails to sustain the idea of the insignificance of the individual.

Krishna is clear and consistent about what happens to the individual soul after a person dies. A soul is identical from person to person and can subsequently be passed on to another body after a person dies. While most people believe that their individuality is significant, Krishna teaches that all of a person's actions are in fact the actions of Krishna and that the concept of the individual is an illusion. Krishna states that, "Actions are all effected / By the qualities of nature; / But deluded by individuality, / the self thinks 'I am the actor'" (327). When a person realizes that his or her previous perception of themselves and how they fit into the world is incorrect, he or she escapes *samsara*, achieves *moksha*, is released from the cycle of reincarnation and joins Krishna as part of a greater whole. Krishna emphasizes that in order to achieve this state it is not enough for a person to renounce action, he or she must also relinquish the fruits of his or her actions. A person loses his or her defining characteristics and personality when he or she dies but a person must accept the unimportance of these traits while he or she is alive as well. Krishna sees all individuals as blending in with the whole rather than being distinct characters in a way that many people, including Virgil, cannot.

Virgil initially depicts people in the underworld as being distinct individuals who retain significant aspects of their living character in death. There is a clear emphasis on the individual and Virgil implies that even after a person dies, he or she still has connections to the living. Upon his descent into the underworld, Aeneas comes across Palinurus, the former captain of his ship who died after falling asleep on-board. Aeneas finds him amongst unburied souls who have yet to find their place in Hades. Palinurus' death was sudden and mysterious and the confusion surrounding it is seen in his position in the afterlife. The state of Palinurus' physical body, unburied and lost, apparently determines his existence after death. There is little separation between life and death and there is no suggestion that a person's individuality ceases to matter after that person dies. This idea is reiterated when Aeneas finds his former lover, Dido, in the Field of Mourning where people who have committed suicide reside. Dido appears as she did in life with her "fatal wounds still fresh" (VI.606). Aeneas attempts to speak with her but she turns away still fixed in the anger she had while alive. The significance of who Dido is and why she died remains and continues to affect those who are living. Unable to release the individual, Aeneas views the dead Dido as he saw her in life. Virgil is suggesting not only physical attachment to the indi-

vidual but also a deep-rooted emotional attachment that remains long after death. The physical connection to the individual is seen most clearly in the mangled body of Deïphobus. The Trojan warrior's body is "mutilated from head to foot, his face / And both hand cruelly torn, ears shorn away, / Nose to the noseholes lopped by a shameful stroke" (VI.665-8). The appearances of Dido and Deïphobus suggest that a person remains the same physically and emotionally after he or she dies and goes to the underworld; a person is unable to escape the gruesome details of his or her death. All three of these people in the underworld are still very much individuals and have their afterlife determined by how they lived and died.

As Aeneas continues his journey into Hades, Virgil increasingly emphasizes the individual and further develops the connection between what a person does while he or she is alive and how he or she spends his or her afterlife. Aeneas passes by the part of the underworld where there is punishment for sins, the part of Hades filled with the most evil. As Sybil describes it to him, "This realm is under Cretan Rhadamanthus' / Iron rule. He sentences. He listens / And makes the souls confess their crooked ways, / How they put off atonements in the world / With foolish satisfaction, thieves of time, / Until too late, until the hour of death" (IV.762-767). Now more than ever, a person's life determines his or her afterlife. For the people who have sinned, there is no way to escape their individuality and the reputation their lives leave behind. The individual is emphasized even more than before as it is a person's individuality and his own actions that determine his or her punishment. At this point, Virgil is still far from suggesting that the individual does not matter. However, the pain that both the sinners and the innocent people in Hades experience as a direct result of their individuality is a hint that perhaps Virgil wishes they were able to escape the curse of their individuality.

Virgil introduces a drastic change in his description of the underworld towards the end of Aeneas' trip through Hades. In stark contrast to the previous area of the underworld where people are punished for their sins, Aeneas visits Elysium, where encounters his dead father and Virgil describes a more comforting, and in many ways contradictory, version of Hades. For dramatic effect, Virgil places the most different views of Hades next to each other. Just as you think there is no hope for the souls who are forever punished for their sins, Virgil claims that in fact the individual is an illusion. Aeneas' father presents the idea of "souls for

whom / A second body is in store" (VI. 956-7) or of recycling souls. With an idea almost identical to the teachings of Krishna, Virgil suggests a world where souls are what matter, not the individual, and the souls can be reused in different bodies. Virgil further sets off the idea with Aeneas' response that reiterates a sense of Virgil's discomfort with an everlasting individual: "Must we imagine, / Father, there are souls that go from here / Aloft up upper heaven, and once more/Return to bodies' dead weight? The poor souls, / How can they crave our daylight so?" (VI.965-9). As a man who is unable to escape his individuality, Aeneas cannot imagine a world where who a person is does not matter. Tormented by the destiny the gods have given him, he seems to see individuality, and perhaps life, as a burden. It is thus in the context of a pessimistic view of individuality that Aeneas' father encourages Aeneas and shows him the possibility that there is something to look forward to in the afterlife. Through Anchises, Virgil is suggesting that for a person like Aeneas, accepting that he is merely a small, insignificant part of a much bigger whole would provide the most comfortable view of the world.

As poems, the *Aeneid* and the *Gita* are intended to serve very different purposes. However, both find a man, Aeneas and Arjuna respectively, in a time of war working to understand what they are supposed to do and most importantly how they fit into the world around them. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna focuses entirely on explaining the purpose, or lack thereof, of the individual. Virgil is more concerned with telling the story of Aeneas than explaining a religious philosophy. Life and death are prevalent themes throughout the *Aeneid*, and Virgil struggles to develop a concrete thesis about the connection between the two. Book VI can be seen as Virgil thinking through the ideas of how the individual relates to the whole. Seeing individuality as a burden, he attempts to come up with an alternative: the recycling of souls. Unfortunately, Virgil is never able to completely let go of the individual, and understandably so. In a time when people were finally able to be their own person and create a life for themselves, it can be disheartening to realize that all the trials and tribulations and successes and happiness we experience in life are insignificant. For Virgil, completely disregarding the individual would be ideal but throughout the epic he continually focuses on the significance of each person rather than seeing one greater whole.

## works cited

# photos of elsinore

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KRONBORG CASTLE IN Helsingør (Elsinor), Denmark, is the setting for Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. It was originally built by Eric of Pomerania in the 1420s as a fortified fortress, called "Krogen" ("The Hook"). Between 1574-1585 it was completely renovated by Frederik II who turned it into the magnificent Renaissance castle we see today.

– Photos by Sassan Tabatabai





meena aier

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# like a bamboo

IT WAS STRANGE. Perhaps, I was dreaming—I pinched my arm, just to make sure. My arm hurt and the skin around that area had turned red.

So, I wasn't dreaming. But it was a bizarre dream nevertheless.

I looked at the prospect outside the window and I had to blink several times, trying to comprehend. Why was everything black and white like an ancient cinematography? Was there no color in this city? Shops, roads, taxis, buildings, even the sky—everything looked positively bleak in that mixture of black and white.

And the buildings—each one taller than the previous—to my unsophisticated eyes, they all seemed as though they were competing against their own sort, their own people.

A churlish feeling in my stomach told me that I was scared, and I buried my head into my mama's warm, protective body—trying to drown out the chill that was invading my skin.

I'd heard that foreign countries were advanced and modern. They were always a step ahead of us; with every day dawned something new. Forever changing, forever evolving. It was a 'survival of the fittest' of sorts. A constant competition.

I'd shuddered at that image—but I'd tried to be positive. After all, my father was being offered the opportunity of a lifetime, and I couldn't possibly spoil it for him. He had regaled me with fascinating stories about the house, the rooms, and the majestic buildings. My mother had smiled and assured me that my life would be just the same—maybe a bit 'better'.

They were right, to a certain extent. The house was big, with spacious rooms and grand balconies. The stairs were just like those British palaces I'd seen in my History books—archaic and elegant. The grass in the garden was cut to perfection, just like a pasture. It was an endless expanse of the same shade of green, stretching out into oblivion. Somehow the absence of trees and flowers just made

that green look as nondescript as everything else.

Everything was grey—blank, without color, without character. It was better than home, it was worse than home. The house and the people—forever blank, forever judging.

But I? I stood out—because of my color, my accent, my characteristics and my ignorance of the ways of the world. Yes, ignorance about how the world worked, about modern technology.

I could still recall the stares that I'd provoked when I didn't understand how vending machines functioned. I'd stood there, trying to comprehend what went wrong, when I felt those stares burning into the back of my head. I'd looked around, just to see grey everywhere—the faces were blindingly white in seeming contrast to the surroundings. They were like buildings, each one taller than the other, all of them crowding around me. Their faces were blank, insensate—not even a twitch of a muscle—but I could see it in their eyes—see that I was an out-cast, an unwelcome intrusion. A mass of color trespassing upon their black and white existence.

I did not want to be an object of attention, another thing requiring judgment. But I stood out. That incident and many others told me that I will forever be an exhibit, a certain statue requiring critique. Or perhaps an animal locked in a cage, meant purely for entertainment purposes. But still, it was better than being one of them. Much, much better. 'Never will I succumb,' I vowed to my nine-year-old self. And so, I tried to establish my own way of life, just like it was back home.

Family dinner every day was just about as essential as breathing. It symbolized an ordered life—a ritual of sorts. This ritual was followed by the others: talking to Mama after school—telling her everything, yet telling her nothing; homework help always with Papa in his study, even if I knew the answers, I'd pretend. Any excuse of a ritual, to talk, to connect, to keep me sane and to help me make sense of my disturbingly colorless life. These rituals splashed colors into those reeking grey walls of my house.

And the excursions every weekend—a major, significant part of my life—my life that was at once real, at once artificial. We'd go to shopping malls, the movies, toy stores—but always pass via the park: one place that seemed to have escaped this maniacal, dingy way of life. There, flowers bloomed. Trees grew, and weeds were neglected. The park where the swings were broken, where the walls were

filled with bright, almost kaleidoscopic graffiti. I knew, it was a place for the outlaws, for the rebellious. But I felt at home; there, I felt like myself.

It was during one of these ‘excursions’ that I noticed a cluster of trees. A tree that stood out. A tree that was small, being shadowed by the others. The wind roared around it, mercilessly, while the other trees leaned on it, trying to crush it. But this tree, this outcast, clung to the ground with ferocity, always refusing to succumb to these insensate conventions—to slavery. I remember looking at it, and deriving solace, comfort. I remember thinking: that tree is me.

\*

I SIGHED AND opened my eyes. It seemed so long ago, as if it was a parallel existence, just another life. But in truth, it had just been nine years since that moment of epiphany. How drastically things had changed since then! It was gradual, but it was a change nevertheless. My resentment—the fire that always burned within me—slowly ebbed, to be replaced with wonder, with cognizance. With comprehension came acceptance. And here I was, back again, in that same park.

The park was now filled with children awaiting their turn on the swings. The graffiti was wiped out, to be replaced with stone walls—crumbly stone walls. The grass was cut, but not to precision—I could still see weeds peeking out here and there. The flowers were blooming and there were more trees. My eye unconsciously fixated on that spot—which had changed too. The oppressed sapling was no longer there: it had been replaced years ago by a tall bamboo tree. The wind still whipped around it, making the leaves flutter. The tree was tall, almost as if it was reaching the sky, aiming for the sun. The bamboo leaned ever so slightly to one side, but once the wind had died down, it returned to its original position, leaves still lightly swaying. It was always in motion, but always straight, clinging to the ground. It clung to its roots, yet made its way to the top, constantly in harmony with the rest.

It floated stably.

The wind caressed my cheek. I smiled.

That is me.



“Fish Worship”

*Andrew Bisdale*

alexandra levitskaya

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# traveler's woes: a psychological evaluation

CLIENT NAME: Gulliver, Lemuel

DATE OF BIRTH: July 13, 1663

MARITAL STATUS: Legally married, but emotionally unsatisfied/alienated

PLACE OF EXAMINATION: Oxford Psychological Research Clinic

## PRESENTING PROBLEM

Lemuel Gulliver did not come to my office voluntarily. According to the Redriff Police report, my patient was a Caucasian middle-aged male with slightly disruptive behavior, displaying inappropriate social schemas. His wife reports that ever since Lemuel returned from his last voyage at sea, he has not been the man she once knew, as he now spends more time conversing with his horses than herself or the daughter they parent. It is the midnight strolls with the horses that caused the citizens to file a complaint against Lemuel.

During the clinical interview, he denied problems with his behavior or mental state. When I questioned his reluctance to spend more time with his family, he replied that the sight of them “filled me with only hatred, disgust and contempt” (Swift 265). As he pronounced this grave statement, he looked at his reflection in the mirror, which caused me to question the sincerity behind his words.

## BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS

Lemuel held himself in an aristocratic posture, had delicately-shaven facial hair and ornamented clothing of an older era. He presented himself as a man with a respectable job and a healthy, supportive family. His speech was articulate and the affect on his face was neutral but not flat. He exuded a sense of indifference towards me, as well as overpowering smugness, as he distracted himself with brushing off his jacket repeatedly, worried that he may have been exposed to his

family's dirt (Swift 266). He commented that my office smelled of a horse stable.

As I drew him into discussion of his last journey, his attitude drastically changed. The speed of his speech increased with the rise of his eyebrows and for the first time his face showed sudden animation. Lemuel began to divulge the many details of his previous four journeys to distant lands that neither I nor any of my colleagues recognized. As I noted the key features of his story, his response, and his current presentation during this office visit, I hypothesized that Lemuel was suffering from an inferiority complex.

Psychiatrically defined, an inferiority complex is "a persistent sense of inadequacy or a tendency to self-diminishment, sometimes resulting in excessive aggressiveness through overcompensation" (Merriam-Webster). When a person feels a sense of weakness, helplessness, or dependency during childhood, the feelings transform into the reality of never being adequate. Feelings of inferiority can "arise from either real or perceived inferiority," so either what was actually done to a person or what they believed to have happened can have the exact same repercussions on a psyche (West). Finally, if an inferiority complex does arise in a person, the effect can either be conscious or unconscious. The more unconscious the inferiority, the more it shapes a person's drives and actions. If the inferiority complex is reinforced during adolescence by constant comparison to others or distant parenting, a person will overcompensate for their "weaknesses," resulting in very distant and opposing extremes of symptoms.

Overly dutiful obedience, withdrawal from society, worry, anxiety, and the overwhelming desire for acceptance are on the passive end of the inferiority spectrum. Also, those with an inferiority complex often strive for others to perceive them as superior, so there are many aggressive aspects to the patient. Physical acts of violence and dominance, criticism of others, and the manipulation of stories for the sake of interest, are examples of such behaviors (Katz 293). Clearly, it was vital to know Lemuel's childhood and family history in order to make a diagnosis.

## FAMILY HISTORY

Lemuel revealed that he was the third out of five sons (Swift 21). The more siblings a child has, the more opportunity a parent has to compare the children, and usually, one child receives the brunt of all criticism. At a young age, Lemuel was sent to a school away from his parents because he was "too great for a narrow

Fortune” (Swift 21). Before abstract reasoning set in (the usual age for this is 12), Lemuel’s inferiority was fueled by the distance from his parents and lack of supportive adults during his childhood. It is clear how he arrived at his present mental complication.

In terms of the family that Lemuel helped create, there are several points worth mentioning. Firstly, Lemuel did not mention any love or affection felt for his spouse, but instead spoke of the monetary value he gained when the marriage became official (Swift 22). From a male perspective, the marriage may have been detrimental to his ego because he was financially inferior to his wife, but for whatever reason, he still made the marriage proposal. Possibly, the marriage was an attempt to gain his father’s approval, in the hope that his father would finally see that, at least fiscally, he was equal to his brothers. His lack of emotional attachment to his wife is evident by the fact that between his voyages at sea, no matter how dangerous or unpleasant, his stay at home was always less than one year (Swift 79).

#### SUMMARY & DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSTIC IMPRESSIONS

After hearing Lemuel recall his travels to four variously-inhabited locations, there were many instances of his inferiority complex in many forms. During his first voyage to the land of the Lilliputians, who are no more than six inches in height, Lemuel displayed many subordinate behaviors (Swift 13). However, no matter how many times Lemuel was threatened by these diminutive humans, he refused to act as a dominant figure. Instead, he allowed himself to be chained up the way dogs are chained to doghouses. Even when he had to urinate, the Lilliputians refused to let him off of his chain, and not once did he voice any complaint (Swift 30). Although Lemuel knew that at any given moment he could exterminate this whole colony with a single flick of the finger, he allowed the Lilliputians to treat him as their slave.

Lemuel did not seem to acknowledge his physical size; his main realization was that he lacked the cultural knowledge of the people who surrounded him. His crushing desire was to gain their acceptance through subordination, as previously shown by his overly dutiful obedience. Because of this eagerness to please, when Lemuel heard that the Queen’s palace was on fire, he, without deliberation, urinated on it, thinking only of the later gratification of saving the Queen. (Swift

54). To his dismay, the consequence was the complete opposite of praise. Coincidentally, a clinical symptom of inferiority is irregular and uncontrollable urination, a very juvenile act. Patients with inferiority complexes often regress to early developmental behaviors (like bladder issues) which correspond with the time when they were first criticized.

Not only did he allow the Lilliputians to dominate him physically, but Lemuel also began to truly believe in their system of culture and government. Titles that were incoherent only days ago, such as Nardac, suddenly became very personal to his heart (Swift 53). He began to relate to these people with all of his being, especially when his behavior was reinforced by their acceptance of him. Lemuel's passive behavior shown towards the Lilliputians shifted towards the aggressive end of the inferiority spectrum once his society literally increased in size.

In the land of Brobdingnag, Lemuel was the Lilliputian; the people there towered over him. Lemuel had a completely new perspective of power; even if he wished to use his size as a symbol of power, here, it was useless. In order to make up for his inferior physical size, Lemuel began to overcompensate, as most patients with inferiority complexes do. In many instances, he attempted to show his incredible intelligence and physical strength to the giants, but it often resulted in him being perceived as nothing more than a silly plaything. In one instance, Lemuel encountered a frog that he interpreted as a threat, and he dealt with the situation with power and agility, both for his own safety and that of the giants. He was aware that the giants were observing his actions and, because he wanted to be taken seriously, thought it was very crucial to present his skill as a skilled sea captain (Swift 112). In reality, the whole body-of-water scenario was staged by the giants because they felt sympathetic for their doll who so eagerly wanted to prove his ability. It was another way for them to observe their doll play with the world.

Lemuel persisted in displaying what he saw as his own sense of power and dominance because his obsession with power and acceptance dissociated him from the reality that he was constantly being mocked. The explanation that he thought would persuade the king of the benevolence of his society and the many wonderful uses of gunpowder was actually taken as another reason to scrutinize Lemuel's people; indeed, the king refers to Europeans as "little odious Vermin" (Swift 123). Lemuel seems incapable of picking up the king's social cues, such as his disapproval of Lemuel's fascination with gunpowder. As with most psycholog-



ical impairments, a person becomes so indulged in their obsession or goal that their perception of reality and social schemas is skewed to fit the ideal they envision.

While in this land of the giants, Lemuel was cared for by a young girl. From our many therapy sessions together, she seems to be the one person closest to the absent maternal figure never mentioned by Lemuel. The same way a toddler pretends to be a “big kid” while trying on her mother’s dress and shoes, Lemuel exhibited a false sense of bravado. He claimed to be fairly strong and independent, but this extended only to the limits of his dollhouse, which the girl carefully watched over. Once again, Lemuel regressed back to childhood instincts, the same way he did with the urination, and became very dependent on the girl’s nurturing protection. He became addicted to the attention she gave him because as a child, he lacked such an essential maternal quality. Attention-seeking and clinging are very common symptoms of those with inferiority complexes.

After a chain of cascading human-impacted reasons (carelessness, which led to the first accident, to an act of cowardice, to an evil act, to an outward act of betrayal, and abandonment when he is finally left to starve), Lemuel reached his final destination. The fact that Lemuel experienced so many examples of human imperfection in a short amount of time adds to the severity of his complex. Whatever little hope and trust he once had in humanity was gradually chiseled away until his disgust with humans reached a climax at the land of the Houyhnhnms. These intelligent horses presided over the less civilized Yahoos, who Lemuel recognized as physically identical but mentally and emotionally lesser versions of himself.

Being so impressed with the order of this new society, Lemuel once again craved to be accepted, this time by the Houyhnhnms. He quickly abandoned his “Praise of my own dear country” that he previously preached to the giants, as he desperately tried to conceal his similarity to the Yahoos (Swift 118). Even though he was so repulsed by the Yahoos, he did not hesitate to use their skin as a set of replacement clothing when he desperately needed to conceal his nakedness (and similarity to them) from the Houyhnhnms (Swift 253). Lemuel allowed himself to contradict his deep disgust with the Yahoos, as long as his secret remained unknown by the Houyhnhnms and they continued to accept him. Once again, Lemuel showed that the end justifies the mean, even if that included internal inconsistency.

## PROGNOSIS

I strongly believe that Lemuel Gulliver suffers from an inferiority complex, and my colleague Doctor West agrees. Like so many with such a diagnosis, pride is his primary final defense. He is now defenseless against the terrible truth that he is a Yahoo, and he cannot face this, so he does what pride does best and ascribes the worst attribute to the others. Dr. West further assumes that Lemuel's pride is not broken but found to be rotted from within. While his inferiority complex is best explained by his childhood, Lemuel's disappointment with the human race arose from adult experience. It was this secondary psychological insult that brought Lemuel to his current behavioral state.

Dictated and submitted: 22 January 1719

*Personal notation to Dr. Doe West to supplement cc of report:*

Here we are again, Doe. Humans will always be capable of betrayal, manipulation and cruelty as not only the literature but life experience certainly does uphold. And it is our looking for a perfect world that is without these very human characteristics that can drive so many people, like Lemuel, to depression and constant dissatisfaction with life. It is our professional duty to attempt to help persons to focus on his or her own well-being aside and apart from the well-being of the world in general! And if they can only even strive to do so, the quality of not only their individual life but the quality of the world would increase. Too many people create utopias of the mind, and the journey to find them will only lead to more Lemuel Gullivers. Thank you again for consulting on this interesting case.

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# first year analects

The best works done and those which deserve  
the highest praise are those that are done to one's friend.

-Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

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*

'Know the self beyond understanding,  
Sustain the self within the self.'

What is the infinite spirit, Krishna?

What is the inner self, its action?

What is its inner being called?

What is its inner divinity?

-Arjuna, *The Bhagavad Gita*

Hammer away  
with all your rhetoric. Say I'm afraid  
When your own sword has left the dead in heaps...  
...What bravery in action can achieve  
You are still free to experience.

-Aeneas, *The Aeneid*

Stand up, then:  
 We now declare a contest for that prize.  
 Here is my lord Odysseus' hunting bow.  
 Bend and string it if you can.  
 -Penelope, *The Odyssey*

Never have I not existed  
 Nor you, nor these kings;  
 And never in the future  
 Shall we cease to exist.  
 -Krishna, *The Bhagavad Gita*

The great scholar hearing the TAO  
 Tries to practice it.  
 The middling scholar hearing the TAO,  
 Sometimes has it, sometimes not.  
 The lesser scholar hearing the TAO  
 Has a good laugh.  
 Without that laughter  
 It wouldn't be TAO.  
 -Lao-Tsu, *Tao Te Ching*

Beginning students can reel off the words they have  
 heard, but they do not know the subject. The subject  
 must grow to be part of them, and that takes time.  
 -Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

And when he came to the light, wouldn't he have his  
 eyes full of its beam and be unable to see even one of  
 the things now said to be true?  
 -Socrates, *The Republic*



*Ethan Rubin*

*Angela Guo*

## spiral lines

In the polished tiles of the Copley mall  
you can see the signatures of dead leaves  
of gill, rue, cinquefoil, flattened like mint  
against the inside of a glass. Among them  
fossil shells curl motionlessly and uncurl.  
If you're walking through, crouch down  
like a tourist taking rubbings off a stone;  
let your body part the crowds of foot traffic  
that move with the purposelessness of tides  
until you start to feel noticeably unnoticed,  
removed from context like the ammonites  
rampant and rocky in the limestone floor,  
whose china organs were long ago displaced  
as was marveling Archimedes in his tub.

erin mcdonagh

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# a perfectly unreasonable claim: examining swift's satire

JONATHAN SWIFT wrote *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* to satirize reason at a time when it was being glorified as if newly discovered by the scientists of his day. Francis Bacon, Descartes, Isaac Newton, and Alexander Pope all played their roles in the Enlightenment, and Swift, in keeping with his lifelong determination to be distinct, carved his own place among the intellectual critics of his time, "antagonistic to the current optimistic view that human nature is essentially good" (Norton 2302). Swift was not a misanthrope, though he did not deny the appellation; rather, he considered people to have grossly misconstrued their natures and capabilities. His satires, when closely examined, contain rapier-like wit and cudgel-like honesty: Swift mirrors in the absurdity of his works what he saw as foolish in his own society, but he cleverly uses his language and the relationship between the reader, author and narrator to make his points known. Professor Christopher Ricks notes that Jonathan Swift thought that *Gulliver's Travels* "lends itself to truth, beauty, and also absolute lunacy of every kind." He is correct, and the satires attack the misunderstanding of reason and language in the hopes of encouraging a more practical human understanding of them.

Jonathan Swift wrote with a clear awareness of voice, and carefully used the author-narrator relationship to identify with, or distance himself from, the ideas in his texts. Everett Zimmerman explores Swift's use of the narrator as a character in his book *Swift's Narrative Satires*. In *Gulliver's Travels*, the narrator Gulliver

tells the story in first person. Like Swift, he cannot entirely separate himself from humanity, but he still sees society from an outsider's perspective after his voyage to the Houyhnhms in Book IV, when he has "entered on a firm Resolution never to return to human Kind" (Swift 194). Swift was not a hermit, but his disdain for society as a whole and his sense of intellectual superiority encouraged him to see himself as an outsider. Gulliver identifies with the author in undergoing "experiences that convince him that human beings are justly an object of satire" (Zimmerman 24). By identifying himself with the narrator, Swift lends authority to Gulliver's voice, so the reader can begin to sympathize with him.

However, it is a mistake to align the pompous and silly narrator of *Gulliver's Travels* entirely with its candid author. First of all, unlike Swift, Gulliver is clearly not a practiced writer. His sentences are long and wordy, and he is sometimes aggressive in trying to convince the reader of his tale's veracity. Also, Gulliver is not a static character. Gulliver goes from being an ardent nationalist to an exaggerated misanthrope, though Swift maintains a static, satiric position throughout. On his first few voyages, he praises English society, "sometimes becoming an exemplar of the evils he describes," and then later he attacks "the Vices and Corruptions of [his] own Species" (Zimmerman 24, Swift 215). This fluctuating identification prevents the satire from being identified with the literature of the age, and especially publications of the Royal Society of London, which made aggressive claims to objectivity and veracity; it exposes "satire as literature, as an author's product, not the world's" (Zimmerman 29). Since Swift ridicules the idea of reason as an objective entity, it makes sense that he acknowledges the subjectivity of his book.

The narrator of *A Modest Proposal*, on the other hand, is not as much identified with Swift from the start and is in fact a ridiculous figure. Here the speaker uses passive voice and relies on his audience for verification, such as when he says, "I think it is agreed by all parties that the prodigious numbers of children...is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance" (Norton 2463). Though the narrator appears to be expressing sympathy, he is in fact complaining that all the poor people walking around are an unsightly blemish; he uses complicated language to obscure his meaning, showing the subjective relationship between words and what they represent. In this way he echoes Swift, whose writing reminded readers that understanding depends upon perception.



The narrator of *A Modest Proposal* goes on to overextend the use of reason, and it is here that he becomes ridiculous. He elaborates on the benefits of eating the poor children of Ireland, explaining that “instead of being a charge on their parents or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they

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“... he uses complicated language to obscure his meaning, showing the relationship between words and what they represent.”

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shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands” (Norton 2463). This scientific tone lampoons the efforts of Enlightenment literature to be objective and entirely factual, especially the travel accounts of explorers and scientific reports produced by the Royal Society of London (Zimmerman 149). When he finally gets around to presenting his proposal, Swift’s narrator is particularly concerned with objective detail, such as the weight of children and the costs of bringing them up as opposed to the money that their flesh would bring: “I have reckoned upon a medium that a child just born will weigh twelve pounds,” he says, “and in a solar year if tolerably nursed increaseth to twenty-eight pounds” (Norton 2464). The nar-

rator’s scientific tone and evident pride in his absurd proposal distance him from Swift as much as does the passive voice with which he speaks, allowing for the humanity and subjectivity in Swift which is so absent from the narrator.

Frank Boyle examines Swift’s use of representation in his book *Swift as Nemesis: Modernity and Its Satirist*. The Nemesis to which Boyle refers is the nymph in the Narcissus myth who turns Echo into a voice and Narcissus into a flower; it is her reflecting pool into which Narcissus longingly stares. It is important to note that in *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift’s reflections go deeper than simple identification with Gulliver as a Narcissist because “the discovery that a particular individual is directed by self-love has all the interpretive value of noticing that he or she eats, sleeps, defecates, and copulates” (Boyle 26). Instead, Swift uses Gulliver to showcase the Modern individual’s blindness to the implications of his or her own behavior, a blindness that results from narcissism. For instance,

Gulliver takes great pains to show the Houyhnhms how much he detests and fears the Yahoos, in order that he may not be classified with them; however, the reader later discovers that “the Yahoos were known to hate one another more than they did any different Species of Animals,” and so this aversion serves only to identify him more with its object (Swift 195). In his other travels, Gulliver talks of English culture with pride, but he rejects the Lilliputian and Brobdingnagian cultures which so closely resemble it, which shows his arrogance and his failure to correctly perceive that with which he identifies himself. Gulliver understands English society’s failings only when he is presented with a purely reasonable species in Houyhnhm-land, which bears only slight resemblance to English society.

The use of pure reason that many Enlightenment thinkers championed could bring about disaster, especially in a social context. Indeed, it is exactly the overextension of reason that leads to *A Modest Proposal’s* horrifying suggestion. Gulliver loses some sense of his humanity whenever he gets too close to pure reason, on Laputa or in Houyhnhm-land, and the narrator of *A Modest Proposal* has lost the sense of human sympathy or the ability to identify with less fortunate members of society. Frank Boyle explains what happens when Gulliver’s “humanity is fully mortified”:

Swift has left us with the option of seeing our reflection in the ridiculous Gulliver who tries to deny or disguise his Yahoo nature, or in the monster Gulliver whose misanthropy extends beyond the hatred endemic to the species, to thoroughly dispassionate murder. (Boyle 49)

Despite having a three-year-old son at home, the ardently “reasonable” Gulliver uses the skins of young Yahoos to make sails for his boat home—this is the murder to which Boyle refers. He then acts like a monster to his wife and family upon his return to England, informing the reader that “During the first Year I could not endure my Wife or Children in my Presence...[but] my Horses understand me tolerably well” (Swift 220–221). Having become so enamored with Houyhnhm culture of pure reason, he has lost his identity as a person and his capability for human sentiment.

Swift is able to accomplish his satire in both narrative and essay genres because satire is somewhat a genre all its own. He cannot be entirely separated from his readers because satire “assume[s] that reader and author share a context that remains incompletely represented” (Zimmerman 18). This shared context is what Swift uses as Nemesis’ reflecting pool for his readers. The satire of *A Modest Proposal* is a satire only if readers share the moral context to which its premise is opposed. Ironically, Swift’s cruel satire of reason works because of the shared sympathy and morals of which it is devoid because it forces readers to shy away from what Swift sees as an overemphasis on reason in society. Seeing their own reasonable inclinations reflected in the narrator’s voice would probably make readers very uncomfortable, and would encourage them to reflect on the parts of their natures that are distinct from that resemblance. The narrator speaks without the complexities of moral judgment to highlight the dangers of pure reason because “to strip human behavior of its complexities, on the ground that most complexities are invalid social rationalizations for corruption, is a common satiric technique” (Zimmerman 148). In this way Swift accomplishes his portrayal of the cruelty to which people are subject when the intervening influence of compassion is absent. He also brings attention to the uncompassionate way in which the English treat the Irish, which is echoed in how the Houyhnhms treat the Yahoos.

The commonality on which the satire of *Gulliver’s Travels* depends is the reader’s identification with the protagonist’s nationalism and his commitment to a Modern identity. When Gulliver’s nationalism is destroyed by his Modern commitment to reason in Book IV, the reader is severed from full identification with the narrator and therefore forced to see the failings of his or her own reflection. Gulliver expresses distress to his Houyhnhm Master upon being told that he must return to England:

The certain prospect of an unnatural Death was the least of my Evils:  
 ...how could I think with Temper, of passing my days among  
 Yahoos, and relapsing into my old Corruptions, for want of examples  
 to lead and keep me within the Paths of Virtue. (Swift 213)

Gulliver recognizes, perhaps unwittingly, that people are not meant to live entirely according to reason; if they were, he would not need constant guidance

from horses but could maintain the lifestyle himself. Since the reader is now without the guidance of identification with the narrator, he or she is forced to search for a new base from which to understand the narrative. The next logical identification is with English society, but Swift has spent much of the narrative ridiculing society, and so the reader is forced to admit incongruities between society, reason, and the individual.

Swift uses the dynamic between the reader, author, and narrator in his works to force his audience to see the subjectivity of reason and experience. He reflects society's image back at itself but indicates that the human mind is not a perfect mirror: it shows the distortions of compassion, individualism, and personality that are absent from a purely reasonable being. Swift does not deny the value of reason but warns people of the danger of trying to be what they are not. Though he posed as a misanthrope, he demonstrates a value for sentimentality and compassion, even in his biting satire and bitter accusations. He sees candidly where an extension of contemporary ideological trends could go, and "his satiric pool reflects the cold and bloody implications of the Modern identity" (Boyle 51). In *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*, Swift's voice and his intellectual wit pervade the text, giving it personality and demonstrating the benefits of being, as he was, somewhat unreasonable.

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# viens ici

Viens mon amour  
  cherche-moi  
  embrasse-moi  
Comme seulement tu peux  
  avec tes yeux  
  avec tes mains  
Comme seulement tu connais  
  mon corps  
  mon âme  
Tu sais comment  
  me dénouer,  
  me délier  
  me transporter  
Entre et prends  
  les délices  
  les bisous  
  les tendresses  
Qu'existe flottant  
  dans ma chaleur  
  dans mon chair  
  dans mon âme  
Pour toi mon amour.

translated by the author

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## come to me

Come my love—  
    seek me  
    kiss me  
As you alone are able  
    with your eyes  
    with your hands  
As you alone understand  
    my body  
    my soul  
As you alone know how  
    to untie me  
    undo me  
    transport me  
Enter and take  
    the delights  
    the kisses  
    the tenderness  
That exist floating  
    within my heat  
    my flesh  
    my soul  
For you my love

david green

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# the core HAMLET

WE KNOW THE play. The king is murdered by his brother. The queen posts with dextrous speed to her brother-in-law's bed. And the young prince languishes, brooding on revenge. We wait with anticipation to see how the scenes we remember are played. How doddering will Polonius be? How sweet Ophelia? We ask the timeless questions: Did Hamlet really believe Claudius was behind the arras? Do Rosencrantz and Guildenstern deserve to die?

We hold the mirror of memory up to new productions to measure them by the standards of the old. And by doing so, we become unwitting agents of what Peter Brook once called "The Deadly Theatre."

That's not to say I'm a fan of innovation for the sake of innovation, and I tend to think of gimmicks in the theater as the impositions of bankrupt imaginations. One line freshly delivered does more for me than all the Genghis Khan *Hamlets* or subway *Endgames* ever inflicted upon the stage.

So my taste is narrowly bounded on both sides: how do we perform classic theater without succumbing to deadly repetition or meretricious novelty?

When the directors of the Core production of *Hamlet*, Jessi McCarthy and Alexa Corriea, decided to cast a woman as Horatio, I had my doubts. It is a misreading of the play, I said. You must take into account Hamlet's suspicions toward women. They are meant to contrast with the confidence he places in Horatio. But as many of you know, Jessi and Alexa can be persuasive. And I'm not quite as calcified as my hair might suggest.

I felt more comfortable with the casting once I saw Sarah in the role. My first response was instinctive: she can act. But in the rehearsals, I still didn't know what would happen on the night. We had a good actress playing the role of a man as a woman. Would the audience accept this, or would Horatio create a tipping point into bathos and bring the rest of the play down in stifled giggles? I remained quietly concerned about how this might affect the role of Ophelia and alter the isolation felt by Hamlet over his abandonment by women. No matter how well done,



*Sarah Gazdowicz as Horatio,  
with Nick Campos as Hamlet*

the role was still incongruous.

My questions were answered on opening night. From the outset, the play was succeeding. The audience was rapt. Everything was falling into place. Precise inflections were struck like the chords of a concerto. In the title role, Nick was flawless. Jessi and Alexa had prepared him well and he had made his character his own.

In the fifth act, the sword fight came off without a hitch. Gertrude, Claudius, and Laertes were duly dispatched. Osric ran off to secure the court from further treachery. The world of courtiers and clowns was suddenly gone and our focus nar-

rowed on the dying Hamlet and grieving Horatio who stood alone on the stage. All the work, the months of preparation and memorization came down to this moment. And in this moment, in a modest lecture hall, the stage was transformed. The ancient power of drama was revived. As Horatio struggled to keep the dying Hamlet in her arms, as he struggled to breathe his last breaths in her embrace, we shared in the intimate revelation that Horatio was more than just a trusted friend, that she had in fact loved Hamlet. And the tragedy now, as she stood lost over the fallen body, was not simply that Hamlet had died, but that this woman had been bereft of her love at the very moment when it had blossomed into the world, no longer a secret of her heart.

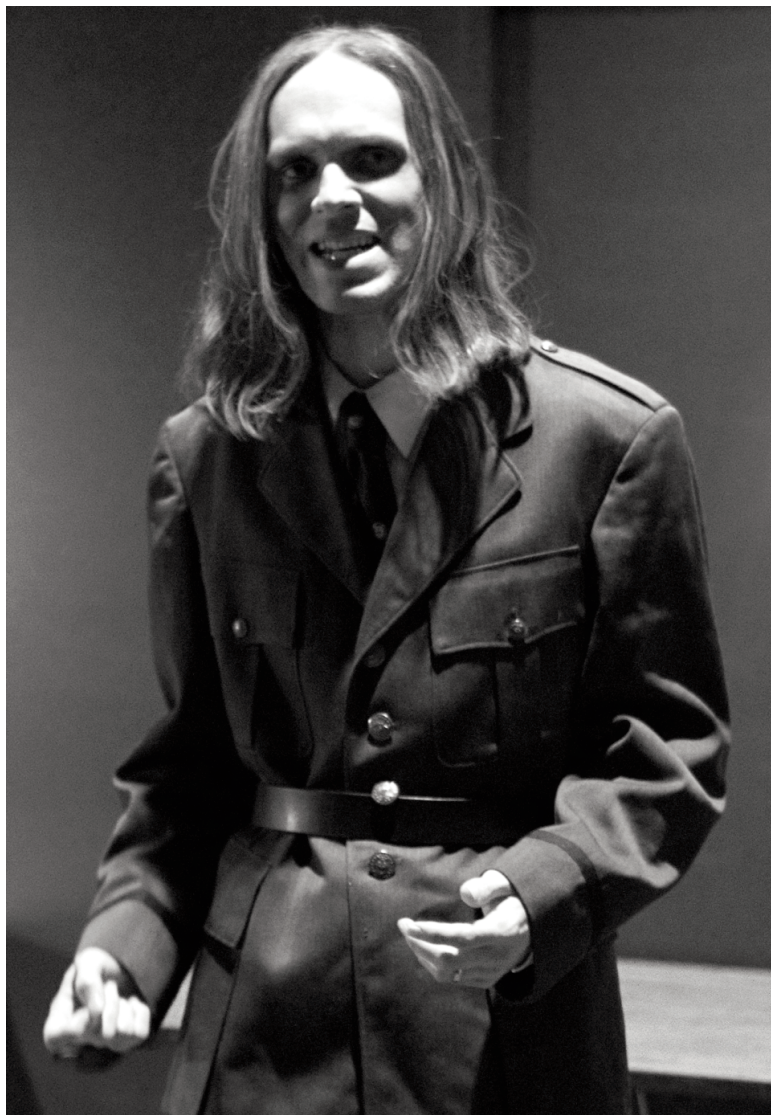
Strictly speaking, this moment was not Shakespeare's. But it did succeed where other productions have often failed—by creating the kind of drama that he had intended. It was honest and gave those fortunate enough to be in attendance the opportunity to witness the terrible beauty of a soul laid bare. And that's the essence of great drama.

The bar is high. Next year can't come soon enough.





*Ryne Hager as Claudius, Tom Farndon as Laertes, and  
Borah Coburn as Ophelia. Photo by Andrew Bisdale.*



*Prof. James Wood as The Ghost of King Hamlet.  
Photo by Andrew Bisdale.*

lindsey gould

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## after dark

Walt appeared in my dreams last night, as a man  
with a cocked hat and overcoat,  
a watch ticking happily in his pocket.

The air dances before his face, and  
smells of hearth cooking and  
crisp, fall leaves waft through space  
as gentle caresses, allowing  
themselves to settle over our conversation

He lays between golden shafts  
shaped by leaves underneath an oak tree,  
a green ornament punctuating vastness.  
he says few words

Ironic, considering “Song of Myself”,  
the density of words, of exclamations,  
of knowledge

How did you come to know the world so well?  
He tilts his head shyly, twitches his lips  
and rises up on woodland moss

My heart knows more than I do, and  
I write so I may understand it.  
Once that is done, I understand you

When do you find the answers?  
Walt smiles, his eyes following the leaves.

Only after the darkness,  
That's when the heart awakens  
From the confines of the world.

The ticking watch stops. I awake in a sweat,  
clammy beads reflecting my dream like  
dew drops shining in the morning haze.

e l e n a b a r a n e s

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# the tragic solitude of doctor pangloss

ENLIGHTENMENT THINKERS IN eighteenth-century Europe embraced the idea that everything should be based upon reason. All men were inherently reasonable, and therefore inherently equal. From this premise it followed that society could progress toward perfection by exercising the innate human ability to reason in the place of tradition, prejudice, and history. Such positive prospects aroused enthusiastic optimism across Europe, closely followed by a vast array of skeptics. Voltaire, a leading intellectual of the time, took note of the folly of some Enlightenment thinkers who seemed to lose sight of truth in the midst of a freedom-to-reason frenzy. In *Candide*, one of his later works, he sheds light on this naïveté by juxtaposing one character's misinterpretation of a well-known philosophy and the developing opinions of his other characters. First, he introduces Pangloss, an intellectual figure who lives by the concept that the world he lives in is the best of all possible worlds—a common misconception of Leibniz's philosophy of sufficient reason. Voltaire then exposes this fallacy initially by placing Pangloss in comical situations that prove his belief amusingly nonsensical, then finally by allowing his other characters to come to sobering realizations about the error in their philosopher's wisdom. Voltaire successfully conveys both the comedic and tragic consequences of the misplaced optimism of Enlightenment thinkers by presenting a character who unintentionally commits himself to a life of intellectual solitude by blindly following a misinterpreted philosophy.

Voltaire uses the misguided philosopher Pangloss as a vehicle to ridicule a common perversion of Leibniz's philosophy of sufficient reason. At the time, many people held the misconception that Leibniz's philosophy should be interpreted to mean that God placed man in the best of all possible worlds. This led to the false idea that everything happened for a good reason, and that all cause

and effect could be rightly justified. The idea that all must have been right in the world despite evil and tragedy gave way to the naïve optimism that Voltaire criticizes. Voltaire's narrator begins his story by introducing the two main characters: Candide and Pangloss. In the first scene, Pangloss preaches his philosophy to the young and impressionable Candide, saying, "Things cannot be other than they are, for since everything was made for a purpose, it follows that everything is made for the best purpose" (20). With regard to Leibniz's work, the first phrase of Pangloss's statement, "everything was made for a purpose," is correct. His mistake lies in the latter portion of his assertion, as he assumes that any predetermined purpose must be "the best purpose." Pangloss uses "best" to mean pleasurable, assuming that every occurrence, whether seemingly harmful or benign, must bring pleasure or good fortune to a predetermined recipient.

Leibniz discusses his concept of God's predestination and the 'good' in his *Discourse on Metaphysics*:

We must act in accordance with what we presume to be the will of God, insofar as we can judge it, trying with all our might to contribute to the general good and especially to the embellishment and perfection of that which affects us or that which is near us, that which is, so to speak, in our grasp. For, although the outcome might perhaps demonstrate that God did not wish our good will to have effect at present, it does not follow that he did not wish us to act as we have. On the contrary, since he is the best of all masters, he never demands more than the right intention, and it is for him to know the proper hour and place for letting the good designs succeed. (86)

Leibniz explains that the world is perfect in a functional sense. God is perfect because he is all-knowing, and is therefore able to create a universe at the beginning of time in which each particle of substance, or monad, could exist harmoniously alongside all other monads, without mishap or collision, until the end of its time. Nowhere in his philosophy does he state that the result of every situation is the most desirable to man; the outcome simply fits perfectly into God's "good designs," or grand scheme. He says that in making decisions, man must judge the "will of God" to the best of his ability in an attempt to aid "the embel-

ishment and perfection of that which affects us or that which is near us.” It is possible that a man should suffer as a result of misdeeds. This suffering does not, as Pangloss believes, yield some unknown, elevated gratification for the wrongdoer or for another man, but simply fits into “the proper hour and place” alongside all other experiences in God’s predetermined plan.

Leibniz’s recognized interest in Confucian theology in the beginning of the eighteenth century also suggests that his belief lies in the existence of a perfectly functioning world, not a most pleasurable world. Yu Liu discusses the impact of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Eastern thought on Leibniz’s philosophies, recognizing his “subtle rejection of the Augustinian dogma (about both the original sin and the arbitrarily exercised divine redemption),” then moving to relate his opinions more closely to “Confucian ethics and politics as divinely inspired by the natural law” (Liu). Leibniz identifies the existence of an all-powerful God who has created a universe that undergoes flawless operation. This God’s formation of a perfectly functional world in which humans have the freedom to either prosper or suffer based on their actions parallels the Confucian concept of “natural law,” which sets the world into harmonious motion. Both perceptions heed a more evenhanded ultimate power than Christian doctrine does, as Calvinism and Augustinianism force their followers to resign themselves to a Panglossian view that their destinies, suffering, and success are thoroughly predetermined and therefore unalterable.

From the moment Pangloss declares his mistaken philosophy, Voltaire begins to tease him by placing him in situations that highlight the absurdity of his claim. Shortly after the story begins, Pangloss and Candide are separated. Candide undergoes a series of bizarre experiences on his own, only to stumble upon again Pangloss after some time. Pangloss enlightens Candide with the tale of his venereal disease contraction, following the story with a justification for the existence of the disease. He informs Candide that “if Columbus, when visiting the West Indies, had not caught this disease, which poisons the source of generation, and is clearly opposed to the great end of Nature, we should have neither chocolate nor cochineal” (Voltaire 30). Pangloss rationalizes his condition by tracing its origin among Europeans to Christopher Columbus, deducing that the discovery of chocolate and food coloring validate his suffering. Here, Pangloss justifies cause and effect to an absurd end, making it easy for an audience to jeer at his misun-

derstanding of Leibniz's ideas. Later on, Pangloss and Candide find themselves at sea in the midst of a terrible storm. The Anabaptist, an honest and generous man, falls overboard and drowns, at which point Candide begins to question Pangloss's philosophy. He wonders how anyone could justify such grave misfortune, but the narrator interrupts his contemplation, saying "the great philosopher, Pangloss, stopped him by proving that Lisbon harbour was made on purpose for this Anabaptist to drown there" (33). The idea that a body of water could possibly have been created for the sole purpose of one person drowning in it is so outlandish that Pangloss immediately discredits his own philosophy. Pangloss's habit of imposing his senseless logic upon the reasonable contemplation of others further negates his point. Voltaire's method of creating exaggerated situations in which Pangloss can share his skewed philosophy adds a comedic element to his critique.

Throughout the rest of the story, Pangloss, Candide, and Voltaire's other characters experience a vast array of hardship, tragedy, and suffering. Candide, who has guided himself through these trials with Pangloss's philosophy, encounters the more sensible reasoning of others toward the end of his journey, and finally develops his own viewpoint by its close. While at sea, Candide meets Martin, an old scholar who offers him a new outlook. Martin describes an array of dishonorable tendencies he has repeatedly observed in men, ranging from malcontent to jealousy, from theft to murder. He concludes, "I have seen and experienced so much, that I am forced to believe that man's origin is evil" (92). Martin provides a realistically pessimistic counterpoint to the belief Candide has held onto up to this point. While Candide does not immediately abandon Pangloss's philosophy, such alternate suggestions warm him to the possibility that may be incorrect. Finally, at the very end of their journey, Pangloss makes his last, grand proclamation of his creed to Candide. He summarizes Candide's catalogue of suffering, building up to a climactic rationalization; the long-awaited grand finale—had Candide not suffered these horrific tragedies, he "would not be here eating candied fruit and pistachio nuts" (144). To this final, epic justification Candide responds, "we must go and work in the garden" (144). After years of blindly following Pangloss's teaching, Candide finally realizes that hard work and genuine honesty may be a more realistic means of finding contentment. At last he settles in close agreement with Leibniz's advice, "We must act in accordance with what



we presume to be the will of God, insofar as we can judge it, trying with all our might to contribute to the general good.” The final reconciliation of Candide’s realization and Leibniz’s true suggestion that honest work is the best path to happiness deals the fatal blow to Pangloss’s incredible philosophy.

It is easy to pity Pangloss by the end of the story, despite his consistently frustrating ignorance. The philosopher, who once held an honorable position and an eager follower, ends up in a most unpleasant state of solitude. While he still possesses physical company, he is left to bask alone amidst his misguided justifications for all suffering. Candide, a former intellectual companion, completes a process, defined by Josephine Grieder as the underlying structure of the story, by which “the paradox (the experience, the real) challenges the orthodox (the discourse, the ideal) by dislocating its equilibrium and calling into question its capacity to deal with the world as it is” (486). Candide keeps an open mind and a desire to obtain a vast array of knowledge, enabling himself to step out of a world of ignorance into one of positive, forward momentum.

Voltaire successfully employs various tactics to actively criticize naïve optimism through his character Pangloss. As he ends his story, however, he makes his most powerful statement about the pitiful nature of ignorance. He ceases his aggressive criticism of Pangloss, and quietly grants Candide a simple revelation. With one delicate stroke, he leaves lingering a disturbing notion that Pangloss will forever continue to suffer passively, blinding himself with the belief that his suffering is for a greater good, while the people around him work to build their lives full of knowledge and happiness.

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mat leonard

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# candide

IN THE LAND of Catsmackia lived a fantastically astute student of pessimism named Candide. Candide was around 6'2" with a muscular build (which he claimed maCandid's de it difficult for him to appear weak or unable in situations where people requested his help). He had 20/20 vision, long golden hair, perfect pitch, and an intellect that made Stephen Hawking look like Dan Quayle. He was valedictorian of his high school, and legend has it that he was the first man in history to lose his virginity before his father did.

On his first day of college, Candide was on his way to his Italian class in the College of Farts and Smellences at Moneypit University when he entered the wrong room. This was because Italian was taught on the fifth floor of the University, however the College of Farts and Smellences had two fifth floors which and elevators which only served one fifth of one fifth floor at a time. Candide entered room 501 thinking he was going to learn how to conjugate verbs in Italian, and instead sat through a rarely taken Misogyny 101 class, taught by the elusive and world-famous professor Fangloss.

After two minutes and thirteen seconds of sitting in the lecture hall, Fangloss walked in with short, rapid steps characteristic only of those who not only know they are late, but loathe the very destination they are heading to. He was a short, balding man with thick glasses, a comically large beret, and a large pipe which had bite marks all over. Without saying a word, the world's first Biologi-musicologica-sporto-lingui-whitey-oligist wrote a proof on the chalkboard, pressing the chalk into the board with such unhappy force as to kick up a cloud of dust, which did not settle until he had finished writing the proof. The proof read "1. All Women are Evil. 2. Most Men love Women. 3. Some Men Love Men. Therefore, All Men Love Evil."

Upon finishing this proof he slammed his pipe on the podium and asked "Have I been clear?" He continued his lecture by explaining that we all live in the worst of all possible worlds, and that all is evil and deceptive. "Why does it rain?"

So we may drown. Why does the sun shine? So we may get burned”. Cantdide was fascinated with Fangloss. “Finally,” he thought to himself, “another person who has as strong a passion for not having passion as I!”

As class let out, Cantdide approached Fangloss, shook his hand, and before he could utter a compliment, was cut off by Fangloss who snapped in a shrewd Irish accent “What’ya want you worthless ham hock? Come to tell me that you have some new fantastic interpretation of the text that nobody has ever thought of and you wanna write a paper about it? Huh? Going to change the way we think about the English language as we know it do you? You wanna take my job do ya? Take my salary? Your father was a billygoat and your mother was Elton John. Go play in traffic and die, you stupid wannabe intellectual!”

Cantdide was shocked. Having someone be a jerk to him before he could take his or her feelings for granted was a very new experience for him. “Truly sir, I just wanted to tell you that I agree with everything you said today.” Fangloss guffawed at Cantdide’s statement. “Truly?” Fangloss asked, “There is no such thing as ‘truly’. All people lie constantly. You must clear your mind of Kant! Kant told you never to lie, did he? Well let me tell you something about Mr. Immanuel Kant. He’s a failure, just like everyone on this stinking earth! That’s what you kids don’t realize. Life isn’t about joy and good deeds, it’s about suffering! The sooner you realize that, the better. If there is such a thing as better, which there isn’t! Now get out of my face!”

As Cantdide left the lecture hall, he vowed to himself that he would live a life of discrediting, disheartening, and above all finding the hidden, sinister causes for all events. As he walked out into the sun, an outrageously attractive blonde Bratislavokian girl named Heidi approached him. “Hello”, she began “my twelve identical twins and I are new to Catsmackia and want someone to show us around. We are all nudist masseuses, and could use someone to practice on from time to time.”

“Oh great,” Cantdide replied “now I have to play tour guide in addition to going to class? Wow, things really couldn’t get any worse.” He nodded, explaining that he already had a terrible life and “one more inconvenience was insignificant compared to the overwhelming plight of my existence.” He walked into a fancy French restaurant and ordered duck. As he ate with the gorgeous nudists, he overheard a family’s conversation.

“Oh boy, daddy!” a six-year-old boy exclaimed, “I just can’t wait for Easter! I love the Easter bunny.” “Have you been good this year?” asked the father. “Oh gee golly yes pops,” replied the boy. “Well, then, I’m sure he’ll be sure to bring you some marshmallow peeps again. Say, Martha, my boss just gave me a promotion, isn’t that sweet?” “Yes dear hunny bunny,” replied the mother. The parents kissed one another, simultaneously hugging their son Marc in between them.

Infuriated by the illogical happiness happening around him, Cantdide sprung out of his seat, threw Marc’s macaroni and cheese on the floor and spat in the bottle of wine. “Your lack of understanding of how the world works makes me want to filet my own skin!” Cantdide cried. “First of all, little boy, the Easter bunny isn’t real. Haven’t you ever been to CVS? They sell the same crap that magically ends up in plastic eggs under your cat’s goddamn litterbox! Also, you weren’t good this year! You can’t be good. Your idea of good is not pissing off the authority figures at your school and home. I bet if your teacher told you to punch a kid in the face you would do that too, you little puppet. And you, father of the family, you think getting a promotion is a good thing? First of all, your boss only likes you because your wife has got some nice meat where it counts. And you, Martha. You’re just living off the fatta’ the land aren’t you? You shack up with this guy who brings in enough money so that you can go shopping and parade around your son and win praise for yourself. By the way, if your son is this old already and still loves the Easter bunny, he’s probably a homosexual.”

Shocked, the father excused himself and his family from the restaurant and paid the check. “See,” Cantdide said to Ivanna, who was massaging his left heel, “that family only came here to drink someone else’s booze and than bolt out the door without even telling the maître d’ ‘thank you’. I tell you, this is a sick world, and I have got to be the most unlucky guy there is.” Just then, Martin Scorsese approached Cantdide and tapped him on the shoulder.

“Say, I couldn’t help but notice that you are surrounded by twelve naked women. That means you have charisma, which is essential in my field. Listen up, I’m directing a biopic of Thaddeus P. Shoningham, the greatest orthodontist who ever lived. It’s got Oscar written all over it. Paul Haggis adapted the script from a Ken Burns biography, but any lines that you want to adlib you can just go ahead and do. I wanna make you a star, baby. I would have Leo do it, but he keeps overdoing all of his southern accents so badly that right now I can barely understand

him when he speaks. So what'ya say kid, you wanna be in the pictures?"

"Fine," replied Cantdide with a burdensome sigh. He picked up his duck by the neck and walked out of the restaurant, taking bites out of the animal every few steps or so. When he arrived on set, he was greeted by Daniel Day Lewis, Robert De Niro, Meryl Streep, and, due to budget constraints, Adam Sandler. They all welcomed him with open arms, except for Daniel Day Lewis, who as a method actor insisted on staying true to his character as the family dog, so he merely humped Cantdide's leg in glee.

"What a horrible predicament I'm in!" screamed Cantdide. "Now I have to listen to some jerk tell me 'action' or 'cut' like I'm some kind of circus tiger!" The first scene began, with Cantdide's character straightening Douglass McArthur's teeth during the battle of Midway in World War II as frigates explode and planes fly overhead. A few minutes into the scene, Cantdide screamed out to the crew, "This is all worthless! Don't you see the pointlessness of what we are all doing? All of this work, all of this focus, and to what end? We wake up tomorrow with the same problems we had today! Yeah, look at you all. Don't try to do anything different, just do what daddy told you to do with your life. Go on, continue with this craziness, this madness. You're only wasting your life as well as the lives of anyone who might be inspired by what you do. You are sick perpetrators of a vicious circle of pointlessness."

Martin Scorsese interpreted this outburst as a supreme, heartfelt improvised monologue about the cost and pointlessness of war. He rose to his feet (which were being massaged by three of the nudists) and applauded like he hadn't done since the 1970's. "You are a rare talent, mister!" Scorsese exclaimed. The crew gathered around and talent agents were flooding Cantdide's cell phone with offers for unprecedented billion-dollar contracts. The film, *Straight Teeth in a Crooked World*, grossed \$999 billion worldwide and won 40 Oscars.

Shortly after hearing Cantdide's acceptance speech, which was characterized by such cries as "Do you think I am kidding? You are all squabbling over the dumbest crap imaginable!" and "Yeah, I have an Oscar, but what does it mean? Am I some chimpanzee who desperately needs the attention of others?" News broke of developments in the Middle East: inspired both by the most successful film of all time as well as Cantdide's acceptance speech, leaders of all the countries, governments, sects, factions, and other groups met and successfully came to

a peace agreement, citing the pointlessness of war monologue as a major influence. Cantdide was awarded with the Nobel Prize for Peace (which upset early favorite for the award Al Gore, who had recently released *An Inconvenient Truth 2: Look, Floating Polar Bears!*). Cantdide, disgruntled by his success which he attributed to the world's inescapable idiocy, returned to Moneypit University in search of some reassuring words from old professor Fangloss.

However, Fangloss was nowhere to be found. Cantdide looked in both room 501s, he went to Ripmeoff Convenience, but to no avail. Tired from traversing the college steps, Cantdide set about relaxing in the garden. There at last, he found Fangloss. "Fangloss!" he cried out like a mother who had briefly lost her child in a supermarket, "I need you to reassure me that the world is shit! Please, please tell me that everyone has got it all wrong, that there is no justice in this world. Tell me that joy is an illusion!"

Now very old, Fangloss looked up at Cantdide and smiled. "My boy," he said with a scholarly tone, "Look at these flowers. Look at my garden. They don't know right or wrong. They don't know jealousy. These flowers just are. It is we who choose how we will classify them and react to them. Whether you love the flower or hate the flower makes no difference to the flower. How you decide to view the world doesn't change it, it's what you do to the world that matters and defines you. Your disposition is a matter of choice. Take responsibility for your actions, but for your own sake, don't blind yourself with perpetual pessimism." Surprised, Cantdide asked why Fangloss had completely changed his affect. "Plants aren't the only ones who grow up," replied Fangloss. The two laughed at Fangloss for saying such a pseudo-intellectual, corny, and ultimately amateur playwright-esque line.

chloe tuck

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## the reunion

At last, Agamemnon the Great Fighter had finished his slaughter.  
 He had carried out the gods' bidding,  
 first with the blood of Iphigeneia,  
 subjected to forever hear her terrified cries,  
 now with the horrid war, party to the rape of Troy.  
 The Great Fighter sacrificed all for the war. Soul broken, the hero returns,  
 dying ashes of the city lingered in his sight.

Hair shining, broad shoulders sweeping through the landscape,  
 Agamemnon marched on toward his wife, the keeper of his house.  
 From afar, he still portrayed the Great Fighter,  
 one so great his strength could be compared to a lion,  
 but his eyes revealed the great monster that slept within.

His eyes turned now to his wife, loyal keeper of his house.  
 How would she greet him? As the great killer he was?  
 He could not speak to her as he once did,  
 having no words of eloquence to utter of love.  
 He would treat her with indifference  
 to hide the turmoil of his heart.  
 The once beloved wife approached him,  
 nobly she glided towards him  
 but his callused soul could feel no stir of past love.

With only indifference as a weapon, Agamemnon prepared for battle:  
 "Ah, Clytemnestra, loyal keeper of my house,  
 tell me what things have come to pass since my long journey abroad."

Clytaemnestra moved toward her husband,  
the perfect illusion of a happy wife welcoming her husband home.  
Her skin smooth as the water's surface before the coming of a storm.  
The beautiful image masked the great serpent  
living within her broken heart, ready at any moment  
to strike poison into its creator: Agamemnon.  
For years, the queen had waited for her king, for her attack:  
Does he suspect? Does this beast regret what he has done?

Unable to face him, Clytaemnestra turned to the chorus, beginning her great act:  
    "Oh my beloved husband returned at last.  
When my beloved first left, the loneliness was terrible.  
I never knew what news to trust.  
And oh...I wandered between the living and the dead."

Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra did not embrace as two lovers would,  
separated by unimaginable distance.  
Their beautiful bodies stood near each other  
with oceans still between them.  
Each waiting, lingering as a sailor would,  
for a ship that was wrecked at sea.  
Just so, their lost souls lingered at the edge of the world  
though their empty bodies stood now so close;  
oceans churned through the space between them,  
husband never to feel the warm embrace of his wife.

Then Clytaemnestra, the Great Serpent, struck:  
    "Our child is gone, not with us on this happy day,  
the wonder of our marriage, our everlasting love is not here."

Within the mind of the Great Soldier something snapped.  
Remorse flooded his heart Why would this woman remind him?  
Was that the cry of his daughter,  
his beloved daughter that he heard now?



The Great Serpent struck:

“Don’t be alarmed; Orestes is in good care.

Our brother in law will take care of him.

War has found me waiting for you each day so my eyes cannot cry;  
tears too many for one woman I have spilled for you.”

Her placid eyes spoke against her words.

Each step she had to force herself;

she was doing this to lure in the beast.

It took all her strength not to attack the monster

that had killed her beloved daughter. Recomposing herself, she spoke again,  
suggesting the plan she had been formulating:

“But come; don’t set your feet on the ground again.

A hero as great as you does not deserve that.

Bring out the royal red tapestry.”

She spoke again, hardly containing her rage,

giving orders to the people of her house.

Yes, she would make a fool of him,

this vain man would walk on the tapestry.

He would upset the gods and the Furies would do as she required.

“Let Justice lead my great king in, let it lead him safely home.

And leave all the rest to me. I will do as Fate requires.”

She could hardly contain herself, anger growing at each step.

Yes, justice would lead this man to his home and to his grave.

Why would she make him do this?

Wasn’t it enough that he had suffered

from watching the slaughter of his companions,

overseeing the rape of a city, thought Agamemnon.

He did not want to anger the gods. He looked toward her,

waiting for some kind of sign. But her eyes placid, told no story,

matching his broken soul. And so they stood, shells of husband and wife.

Clytaemnestra and Agamemnon bickered for a time.

Clytaemnestra, the perfect beauty, lacked the glow of a beautiful queen.

Her beauty faded with her eyes, barely masking  
the determination of the serpent beast inside her.

And so she bickered, making Agamemnon admit to his sins.

Weary Agamemnon reflected the same soulless wonder as his wife.

Too long he had witnessed the slaughter of men.

Weak with the struggles of war, he gave in to his wife's wishes.

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# second year analects

Assume a virtue if you have it not.

-Hamlet, *Hamlet*

That blindness is an addition to courage, by concealing dangers from us; that the fear you had for your eyes, was the greatest difficulty in bringing over the enemy's fleet, and it would be sufficient for you to see by the eyes of the Ministers, since the greatest princes do no more.

-Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*

It is proved, he used to say, that things cannot be other than they are, for since everything was made for a purpose, it follows that everything is made for the best purpose...It follows that those who maintain that all is right talk nonsense; they ought to say all is for the best.

-Candide, *Candide*

This ecstasy doth unperplex  
(We said) and tell us what we love;  
We see by this, it was not sex;  
We see, we saw not what did move:

-John Donne, *The Ecstasy*

Spirits odorous breathes: flow'rs and their fruit  
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd  
 To vital Spirits aspire, to animal,  
 To intellectual, give both life and sense,  
 Fancy and understanding, whence the soul  
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
 Discursive, or Intuitive; discourse  
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours.

-Raphael, *Paradise Lost*

"Well I am telling you friend Sancho," said Don Quixote,  
 "that it is as true that they are asses, or maybe she-asses, as  
 it is that I am Don Quixote and you are Sancho Panza; or  
 at least this is how it seems to me."

-Don Quixote, *Don Quixote*

The Child is the father of the Man.

-William Wordsworth

The candle-end had long since burned low in the twisted  
 candlestick, dimly lighting the poverty-stricken room and  
 the murderer and the harlot who had come together so  
 strangely to read the eternal book.

-Feodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*

People themselves alter so much, that there is something  
 new to be observed in them forever.

-Elizabeth Bennet, *Pride and Prejudice*

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,  
 If you want me again look for me under your bootsoles.

-Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

mat leonard

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## struck to the core

*Setting: Espresso Royale. GILGAMESH is sulking, sitting alone at the John Travolta-painted table. He has long greasy hair and yellow pit stains on his dirty white button-down shirt. He stares blankly into his coffee cup which he holds with both hands and by his foot lies a bouquet of withered roses. Enter PROFESSOR JORGENSEN.*

JORGENSEN: Gilgamesh? Gilgamesh! How have you been? It's been so long since we've met up. I have so much I've wanted to discuss with you. (*notices the flowers*) Is everything all right? You seem so sad.

GILGAMESH: Seem? I know not seem. I am sad. I just need some caffeine and some time alone with my thoughts. Please, get thee to a board meeting.

JORGENSEN: Nonsense! You are a friend of the core and helping friends of the core is to me both delightful and required as a part of my profession. Please sit a while and speak.

GILGAMESH: See, there is this girl I want to impress. Maybe you have heard of her? Her name is Sarah Palin. I have tried everything under the sun to try to get through to her. I sent her my poems about how much I idolize her veil and want to die in the river where she washes herself. I left voicemails telling her about how I've defeated giants and proclaimed her to be the most beautiful lady in the land. Then, I wrote some high-brow poetry hoping to simultaneously confuse and arouse her by way of talking about fleas. Finally I painted naked pictures of her on her mega-church ceiling. Nothing got through to her, so I finally mustered up the courage to speak to her in person. Well, that didn't go too well, because when she asked me what I was doing climbing through her bedroom window, I replied that I wanted to jump on her bed and "drill baby drill"! That's when Todd came

in with his moose shooting cannon.

JORGENSEN: Those are all honest mistakes that everyone makes. Everyone tries the old Donne-Petrarch one two punch of seduction. It's a rookie mistake, but your head is in the right place. You're looking to the past for examples of how to behave in the present. Your mistake is a small one. Petrarch, Don Quixote, John Donne, and the like were all failed lovers. They were unsuccessful in their pursuits because they lived in a world of ideals. The girl you are after won't go for that mushy emotional crap. She's after power, and if you want to command the attention of an aspiring president of the United States, you're going to have to overhaul your life and learn how to get, keep, and expand power. You need to "enter upon the paths beaten by great men", not by bleeding heart failures (*Prince* 22). Trust me, when I first got the job of Core course organizer, Hilary Clinton and Nancy Pelosi couldn't keep their grubby little paws off of me. Trust in Machiavelli and you'll see the best way to get a fox is to "be a fox" yourself (69).

GILGAMESH: I don't know J. Back in Uruk, you know, before the sex scandal that ruined my reputation, I was a pretty adept at being "a lion to frighten the wolves" (69). Now, Machiavelli claims that "if one has good arms, one will always have good friends" but this was simply not the case (72). I didn't have friends; I had yes-men who secretly wanted to take my power. Every day I feared for my life because my lust for power was judged as being too threatening towards my peers.

JORGENSEN: My brother, that's just how politicians are. However, you didn't lose your power because you were strong; you lost it because you never saw the true value of being a "great pretender" (70). Contrary to what you may have been told at the nail salon Gil, being Machiavellian isn't only about being self-serving; it's about deception as well. In order to "avoid hatred" you must "appear all mercy, all faith, all honesty, all humanity, all religion" while not limiting your potential by actually adhering to these virtues (68, 70). A great example of what happens when "a cruel and ready man" fails to play the part of a noble gentleman is the case of Remirro de Orco, who was set up as a fall guy after his duke required his savage services and later sacrificed him to appease the commoners (29).

GILGAMESH: I feel as if my recent education in Renaissance poets has caused me to learn my “ruin” and not my “preservation”, as I continually run into “so many who are not good” (61). Ever since Todd Palin mistook my beloved hairy Enkidu for a moose and shot him in the trachea I’ve gone soft. I’ve forgotten “that men should either be caressed or eliminated” when they stand in the way of my acquisition of power (10). Excuse me professor, I have one Mr. Todd Palin’s snowmobiles waiting for my plastic explosives.

JORGENSEN: Be careful, Gilgamesh; I wouldn’t advise such rash action. You see, Machiavelli advised that those who seek power be men of action, but there is a right and wrong type of action depending on the situation. If you wish to win the attention of Mrs. Palin, you will be far better off if you focus your energies into building your political power rather than towards homicidal deeds. Once you acquire enough power, those “who are less powerful” than you will be drawn to you (11). Making a martyr of Todd will only make Sarah sadder, and I know you don’t want that. From my experience, relationships with politicians on the rebound don’t go to well. Mrs. Dole and I still don’t speak.

GILGAMESH: Yes, I realize that by killing Todd I may “acquire empire, but not glory”, but my main objective is wooing Sarah Palin (35). Therefore, it does not matter if my actions do not warrant that I be “celebrated among the most excellent men” so long as I get what I am after (35).

JORGENSEN: Be careful, Gilgamesh. Remember what Machiavelli tells us about the consequences of relying too heavily on the manly virtues. In a perfect world you could simply take what you wanted, when you wanted. However, in the real world you are penalized by your peers for seeming overzealous in your pursuit of power. Keep in mind that when things are going well for you, “when times are quiet”, that you must build “dams and dikes” to protect yourself for when fortune turns upon you (98). Remember Gilgamesh, this is politics, and any misstep you make may be dug up and used against you later. Suppose you kill Todd and nobody says a word. When fortune, which is the “arbiter of half of our actions” changes, your adversaries will use this against you, regardless of the fact that they themselves might be inclined to take similar action against Mr. Palin were they in

your position (98). Therefore, you must minimize the negative impact of the “flood” of change by protecting your reputation whenever possible so your opponents will treat you with more mercy than you might deserve. You know best of all how devastating a sudden flood can be.

GILGAMESH: Forgive my foolish thoughts, Professor; it has only been a few moments since you convinced me to abandon my present state of woeful contemplation and re-adopt my more natural philosophy of action. In the old country my only knowledge came through direct experience, and somewhere along the way I thought that I could learn just as much from books and the like. Well professor, you have convinced me to stop being a spectator who sits in his house writing poetry to the woman he adores and instead become an actor in the play of my life.

JORGENSEN: That is exactly my point! One of the most precious aspects of Core is that we are exposed to a variety of minds and are able to decide for ourselves after whom we want to model our lives. I myself scoff at Descartes for sitting in his rocking chair and living in his head. Instead, I extol the lives of Aeneas, Odysseus, and Machiavelli for being men brave enough to test their metal in the face of confrontation. These are the men after whom you must model yourself, not those who “have imagined republics” and whose fates were yoked to the actions of others (61). Niccolo based his selection of virtues not on metaphors about caves, but in practical historical fact. His writing style is not full of “fulsome phrases nor with pompous and magnificent words” but rather terse, easy to digest maxims which are stated, supported with historical examples, and then restated for purposes of clarity (4). You must “contrive that greatness, spiritedness, gravity, and strength” that always at the center of your consciousness (72). If you ever want to tame that wild beast of a woman you call Sarah Palin, you must be “less cautious, more ferocious, and command her with more audacity!” (101).

GILGAMESH: Then I shall be like Philopoemen, a prince of the Achaeans who “in times of peace” sharpened his mind and never “thought of anything but modes of war” (59). I shall leave this café and start building a business empire which will rival Halliburton, become an ordained conservative Christian minister, and cam-



paign for the office of president of the United States. Machiavelli has instructed that I might have to leave my “old friendships” in favor of more advantageous ones, and once I have an obedient band of followers, it will take “little to maintain” my power (25). I intend to have you on board for my quest to marry this woman, and once I type a formal letter inviting you to be my counselor, I will “send it to your Magnificence” (3).

JORGENSEN: That would mean the world to me, my old friend. It is “my extreme desire that you arrive at the greatness that fortune and your other qualities promise you” (4). Again, it is my duty to help out friends of the Core at all times. Just as I gave professor Formichelli a paper shredder when she told me that Kenneth Branagh had written and was preparing to show her his script for a new and improved adaptation of *King Lear* in which he was to play the title role as well as all three sisters, I must hold in “natural affection” the persons whom I want to see live happy lives (17). Your “security and well-being” is very much a concern of mine, and you will find in *The Prince* a most excellent guide (62).

GILGAMESH: I don’t know what to say. Thank you. Thank you for using literature to open my eyes and empower my spirit.

*GILGAMESH chugs his last gulp of coffee, and lets out an emphatic “HUAH!!” as he hurls the mug to the floor, smashing it to pieces. He leaves the waitress 30 cents and powerfully walks out, knocking down a toddler along the way. PROFESSOR JORGENSEN smiles, leaves a \$20 tip for the weeping server, and calmly mops up the mess of spilled coffee and broken mug with the FINAL EXAM, which he decided to not assign after all, out of the goodness of his heart.*

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In-text citations are references to *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli, translated by Harvey C. Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

erin mcdonagh

# the real hero of GILGAMESH:

## an interview with david ferry

*Prizewinning poet and translator David Ferry is the Sophie Chantal Hart Professor Emeritus of English at Wellesley College, a Visiting Lecturer in Creative Writing at Boston University, and a frequent guest at the Core Poetry Seminar. His books of poetry and translation include The Epistles of Horace: A Translation (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), Of No Country I Know: New and Selected Poems and Translations (University of Chicago Press, 1999), The Eclogues of Virgil (1999), and The Odes of Horace: A Translation (1998). Of No Country I Know won the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize, the Bingham Poetry Prize, and the Rebekah Johnson Bobbitt National Prize for Poetry, and was a finalist for The New Yorker Book Award and the L.L. Winship/PEN New England Award. Ferry's other awards include the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Ingram Merrill Award, and the William Arrowsmith Translation Prize from AGNI magazine. In 1998 he was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.*

*Professor Ferry met with Erin McDonagh in April 2009 to discuss his Gilgamesh: A New Rendering in English Verse (1992), which students read in the first-year Core Humanities.*

Erin McDonagh: *I'd like to talk about Gilgamesh today. We use it in our Core classes, and it's the very first thing that we read. You say it's not a translation, but a transformation—*

David Ferry: *—a rendering, as I call it.*

EM: *Yes, a rendering. I assume you don't know ancient Babylonian.*

DF: I do not.

EM: *So I was wondering what text you worked from.*

DF: Well, I worked from various word-for-word scholarly translations in English. I began to do it because William Moran, who is now, alas, deceased, was an Assyriologist at Harvard and was a friend of mine and liked my poetry and other translations that I've done. So he started me out on rendering, making a verse form, of two word-for-word passages he had translated. I did those under his supervision, and I got hooked and wanted to make a version of the poem that would be as faithful as possible to the Babylonian. Bill Moran then led me to other scholarly translations, which are acknowledged in my book. There are several wonderful translations which I consulted, principally the Speiser translation in the great anthology, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*.

I started out trying to do it in chunks of blank verse, but I was having a hard time in those first passages. It was slow going, but when I started to do it in iambic pentameter couplets, I found I was able to kind of oxygenate the lines and to see into them so as to see what I was doing. I think it is also true for a reader, that it is a clearer way to get to experience the movement of the verse and to see the detail of it.

EM: *I assume that original verse, the original Babylonian isn't in couplets. How are they similar?*

DF: I have heard transliterations of the Babylonian. That is, reconstructions by scholars, how they believe that the lines would be heard. And it's marvelous to listen to. It's unbelievably alliterated, to a point that would be intolerable, I think, in English and very difficult to try to imitate. So I didn't try to imitate that, or the motion of the verse. So far as I can tell, Babylonian verse-line and poem is something like Anglo-Saxon, that is, it's a free verse largely with two main stresses in the first half of the line and two in the second, but there can be any number of syllables between those two main stresses.

EM: *Have you looked at what the writing looks like?*

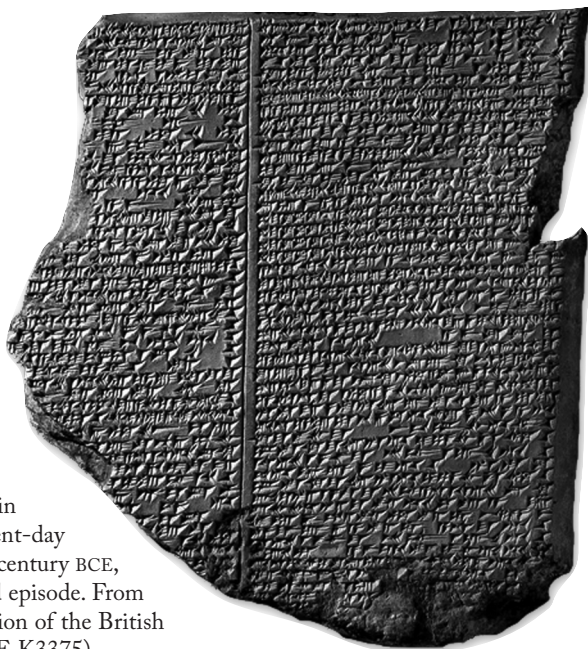
DF: Well the writing is cuneiform, and written in clay on tablets, and it's beautiful to look at.

EM: *Did that help you with your work, constructing your own verse?*

DF: Well, I just loved stupidly looking at it, admiring the look of it, without of course understanding any of it directly. What I tried to stay faithful to in the original, as experienced through the scholarly word-for-word translations, was the sense, first of all, second of all, the figures of speech, third of all, tonalities of the poem, *the manner of telling*, as best I could hear it registered in the scholarly, word-for-word translations that I read and that I could talk about with Bill Moran in conversation and have his help in reading the poem. There are holes in the time-damaged tablets that the scholarly translations all recognize. Those word-for-word translations stop where there's a hole; my task was to make a continuous poem, following the scholars' conjectures about how those holes would have been filled.

EM: *What are your thoughts about the story's themes of friendship and mortality?*

DF: First of all, it's the best story I've ever read. It's unbearably great, on so many



This 6" tablet, discovered in Ninevah in northern present-day Iraq and dated to the 7th century BCE, relates the *Gilgamesh* flood episode. From the Mesopotamian collection of the British Museum (catalog item ME K3375). Reproduced here with permission.

levels. It's not the first epic because Etruscan literature has some of the same themes—it has Gilgamesh. The Babylonians took over that region, historically, and they learned the writing—it was the Sumerians who invented the writing. The Babylonians' language is utterly different. The Babylonians adapted the writing instrument form of Sumerian, cuneiform, for their own language, and made it their own.

EM: *So they borrowed the story? Where does it originate then, in Sumer?*

DF: Well, pieces of the story. The Sumerian Gilgamesh is in many ways a different figure. But I can't say much about that here; I'm not really a scholar of this history. The great tragic story of Gilgamesh is of a hero-king who is so proud of himself in such a role that he has to be taught by life—especially by the death of his companion, the wild man Enkidu—that he is mortal. And he heroically goes in search of immortality. You know the story; you've read the poem. And he's both comically and tragically defeated in that mission. But the vulnerability of heroes in a sense that we hear over and over in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and in what I'm translating now, the *Aeneid*. So it's a precursor of that material. That's true in some degree of the Sumerian poems that use Gilgamesh. So that's one thing about it. The other thing is that it's so full of exciting, terrifying, comic entertaining passages. Like the passage when Ishtar hits on Gilgamesh and Gilgamesh tells her what happened to all her other lovers.

EM: *'I don't want to die!'*

DF: [Laughs] Yes. I read my grandsons—ages 8 and 5—the cedar forest passage, with the battle with the demon. That's terrific. They got it too, you know.

EM: *I know you've talked about the flawed hero theme continuing in some of your other work. Is there any other particular theme or even a scene in Gilgamesh that resonates with you, as a person or as a poet?*

DF: Yes, they are and aren't different, I think. The reason that's hard to answer is that it's in the nature of that poem that the story of it, from beginning to end, is so continuous that it's really hard to isolate one particular scene. It begins and ends with almost the same passage.

EM: *Yes, with the description of the city of Uruk.*

DF: Yes, the poem is, among other things, telling you that this is an organized unit that knows what it's about. It's telling you something about its own organization that is its own, in which Gilgamesh comes back to his city and points out to the boatman or to the reader, with a kind of rueful pride, what he's actually measured and what he's built and so on. At least he's done that, even though he couldn't achieve immortality. Everything in the poem leads to that. The poem is so wonderfully organized in that form, in the form in which we know it. It's hard for me to isolate a particular scene. On the other hand, you know, when I read from this poem, I find myself often reading the passage in which Enkidu is dying, and he has a dream of the underworld and Gilgamesh says the dream is terrible and then sits by the body for nine days until he sees the worms come out of his nose. That's so powerful—powerfully about death. And everybody's poems are about death, you know, in one way or another; it is possible to isolate some scenes as especially so. Another way to look at it is that the poem is a celebration of Gilgamesh the builder. I heard at a conference lately, a great Gilgamesh scholar say that in some ways, some things in the poem are allegories about inventing a great culture. For example, when Gilgamesh takes off his clothes in the waters of death and uses his clothes as a sail to sail across them, that something is being said about the invention of sailing. I don't know if it's valid to read the poem in that way or not, but one thing about the great theme of the poem is having to keep this king in line. He is, after all, a tyrant, and he's so beautiful and sexy that everybody loves him; but also from the get-go of the poem, they ask the earth goddess to invent a figure to hold him in line, the Wild Man, to teach the king measure and limitation so that things can be built. So it's hard to say. The minute I say 'yeah, that's the theme of the poem,' I think of another way of saying it. Another way to say the theme of the poem is how we are in the control of the gods and the gods are unreadable. And you don't know whose side they're on at any given moment. And they're quarreling among themselves.

EM: *They might all be on different sides!*

DF: It's the same thing in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*. And in life!

EM: *A lot of the lines are very simple, though really powerful, as when Gilgamesh says, 'Enkidu has died. Must I die too? Must Gilgamesh come to this?' And I don't know, is that more like what the original sounds like, or is that your interpretation?*

DF: It's certainly not what the original sounds like, but it certainly is what the original says, and my guesses, developed in my interpretation, are about what it sounds like, what the tones of voice are. My source for it is reading all the scholarly word-for-word translations. I didn't use any expressions that didn't have some warrant in the original, except in the passages where there was really a sense of damage to the tablets, and there I didn't use any language that I wasn't encouraged to do so by conjecture by the scholars.

EM: *Ok. I don't know anything about Babylonian verse, but do you think that that sort of powerful but simple language is more relevant to the story, that they would use that more for a story like Gilgamesh? Or is it very characteristic of most things that they would write?*

DF: There are other poems that I've read translations of from Babylonian and Sumerian, where that remarkable directness is the case. I've also rendered, and somewhat adapted, a poem that scholars refer to as the Babylonian *Job* and so on, and the directness of the language of the poem at the moment is just startling. He's talking in a very paranoid way about how his friends are out to get him, He talks about going to the palace of the king (I guess he's a court-functionary of some sort), and says: "The king is angry and he will not hear me. / When I go to the palace now, they look at me. // One person blinks and another looks away. / What are these omens? How is it I should read them." This startling vivid simple directness in *Gilgamesh*—and in the Babylonian *Job*— is a characteristic of their sophisticated art where this directness is *used*. It isn't that they're a simple people. Their language and their art is complexly derived and its vivid direct language serves its purposes.

Of course it's true that the *Gilgamesh* is not the product of a single artist. The culture wrote it, across many centuries. The version of it that we have, told on eleven of the twelve tablets found in the palace of an Assyrian king, may have been shaped and organized in a definitive way by one mind. There's a name associated with it, Sin-leqe-unnini ("Moon god, help me out"), just a scribe, maybe, but maybe the great ultimate poet of the poem as we have it. Certainly the way it begins and ends with the same words seems to be telling us, proudly, that we are reading a unified work of art, highly conscious of itself as such.

EM: *The flood story appears in a number of mythologies.*

DF: Regarding the story of the flood, the Babylonian poem is much earlier than the Hebrew Bible story, and a better telling. But the Hebrew Bible story's lesson is clearer and more moral: the misbehavior of men causes the Hebrew God to bring the flood down upon them. The *Gilgamesh* poem, which shares some elements of it—for example, strikingly, at the end of the flood sending the birds out—is almost the same as the Hebrew poem and the Hebrew poem must be borrowed from that, if not from some literature that we don't have that's in between. But the lesson in the Babylonian poem is more about the inscrutability of the gods and it's not necessarily saying the flood was brought down upon them for some cultural sin or deficiency.

EM: *I remember I read an interview you did, and you said when you do translations it sort of inspires you, helps you form poems that you wrote afterward. Did Gilgamesh help inform any poems you wrote?*

DF: There is a case of a poem of mine called "That Evening at Dinner;" it's in my last book of selected poems, *Of No Country I Know*, and its last line reads: "[...] there were also / Ashes to be eaten and dirt to drink." That is a literal quotation from the dream of Enkidu when he's dying and telling what it's like in the underworld. Virgil's lines in his *Georgics*, which I've translated, about Orpheus and Eurydice have directly entered into several elegiac poems of mine. I don't know about "inspired." I think every writer experiences how what he has been reading enters, directly or indirectly, into what he's writing.



brian jorgensen

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## euripides 2008

*This song was written to accompany a Spring 2008 performance of Aristophanes' Thesmophoriazousae. Aristophanes portrays Euripides as an ambitious and unscrupulous artist who snitches on the women in order to gain popularity; toward the end, the women sing a kind of hymn.*

(Psychedelic drone, in a plagal model)

I am a genius artist, but they never give me first prize  
 I am a genius artist, but they never give me first prize  
 Therefore I'm seeking something, to lock-in their ears and eyes  
 Use all those feelings about the war, to stun and hypnotize

I can shock and strangely satisfy, I can gross out, chill, and tease  
 I've got X-Men dangling from my cables, rescue you when things get queasy  
 I swing both ways and more, so I know how everyone feels  
 Let me come into your entertainment center, guarantee your mind will reel

When the sexes get extra suspicious, that's a good thing for the arts  
 I use gender resentment to send a stylin' frost along their hearts  
 I stir up those private parts until they're on a rant in monologue  
 Keep slowly turning up the temperature, just like you boil a frog

Well, I heard that all the women, resolved on a bad intention  
 Concerning my demise, it's a problem needs attention  
 I am the king of cybertragedy, got twelve kinds of escape and subvention  
 Can't you hear the women singing, at their wives-only convention

(shift to a Gospel rhythm)

*Demeter, bring your Summertime, to all the Midwestern farms  
 Forgive that asphalt, and those cyber smiles and cyber harms  
 Persephone, o daughter, down in darkness drowned  
 Return to your mourning mother, Zeus' holy months roll 'round  
 Wisdom's goddess, no man's girl, don't let this country down*

*Kick off your shoes, ladies, time to dance without the boys  
 Put lightness in your feet for Dionysus, god of joys  
 Once the dance is over, back to ties that bind  
 Isn't it like sun and freedom, when the women change their minds  
 Professor Henderson's got 'em speaking the American way  
 Professor Nelson and the actors, are you ready for the play? Are you ready?*

*Are you ready for the play?  
 Are you ready for the play?  
 Are you ready for the play?  
 Are you ready,  
 Are you ready,  
 For the play?*

jameson tieman

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## sanguine shore

GENTLE DAWN CREPT across Chalcis' dark cliffs and shadowed ravines, sunlight dripping from her pinkish fingertips, her arms gleaming in brilliance. To the shore Agamemnon walked, the thongs upon on his feet kissing Poseidon's sandy rib, he met quietly with the Stygian sea, warm and still. Towards Artemis' fateful bind Agamemnon strode. His voice a lusty hum to gods and men both, he said:

“Oh mighty Zeus! Seized by frenzy, your fury must be fed, and I obey. For Fate and war, saving Zeus, I pour to you libations! Blood of a daughter—mine—will sate the altar, or a heavy doom will crush me. Oh but a heavy doom *will* crush me<sup>1</sup>; I uphold my home, black as it is, and my name. If I cease, it will be my blood that is spilled along the sand. My name must be upheld, the house screams; I am doomed.”

The burning eye of morning emerged from the sea, wakening the sleeping crags and hills. On the strand, Agamemnon, like a hawk, narrowed his eyes and stepped into the shadow of Artemis' temple. In the courtyard of Atreus, as the cresting sun began to bear down upon the town of Argos, Clytaemnestra, beautiful wife of the Achaeans' captain, gave a laugh and began to sing gently like a sparrow:

“For love I never wanted, dear Artemis, you gave me two lives to cherish! And a husband so noble, I might believe that he was not of his father's blood.

“See the trees and hills, lady huntress, my what beauty there never was, and the sand, how pristine, like ivory to buffet the flawless brimming sea. And in the sky, look, a preying hawk. A hare or else he might be stalking.”

She turned gaily toward the shore carrying wine in jugs and, like a joyful bird, skimmed across the sand. She stopped to lay in the warm embrace of sun and sea, and to lazily sip wine from a jug. Crimson beads escaped her mouth and fell to the sand, like rivulets of blood, and then soft sleep showered her eyes. As the queen lay sleeping, distant screams rent the air black:

*“My father, father...”*<sup>2</sup>

*“Hoist her over the altar like a yearling, give it all your strength! Gag her hard, a sound will curse the house.”*<sup>3</sup>

Clytaemnestra awoke with a start, and like a hawk with eyes piercing, looked toward the sun shrouded in thick clouds, then down at her hands, dripping with wine, incarnadine like blood:

“What was this that I saw as I slept, was it a dream? No—a nightmare! In my vision, a calf slaughtered; and I am filled with fear! It cannot be, my husband, cutting at my flesh, severing one half from the other. I cannot think it true, but the stains on my hands scream hatefully. And now, this pall, brings me such eerie chill, the sun is lost, and it will not shine this day.

“He, my husband, what has he done? Severed one half from the other, my daughter torn from my bosom; and with her my heart! The sun will no longer shine upon this house not until his blood runs down these walls. He has frozen my heart; he has slaughtered my youth, my happiness. He has

killed me, and I am filled with hate.”

A thousand mornings passed, each lifted by gentle dawn  
 across the face of star-cloaked night, For ten years, flames  
 illuminated the streets of Argos and old men fluttered through  
 the streets like withered leaves, whispering words heard only  
 by the wind. Then a day came when suddenly, like a trumpet,  
 as dawn’s clear eyes opened again to thaw the chill of night,  
 from the rooftop came the cry of a sentry:

“Aieeeee! There’s your signal true and clear, my  
 queen! He is home, my king is home!”<sup>4</sup>

Clytaemnestra, dark and brooding, lit a torch and slipped into  
 the shadows of the house. Agamemnon, like a ghost, glided to  
 the courtyard of Atreus’ house, and moaned:

“The storms of ruin live! Her last dying breath, rising  
 from the ashes sends us gales of incense rich in gold—”<sup>5</sup>

Then Clytaemnestra, with eyes piercing and red, approaching  
 her husband and king with sanguine tapestries in her hands,  
 finished with a smirk:

“—But it is just the prelude.”<sup>6</sup>

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Lines quoted from *The Oresteia* by Aeschylus (trans. Fagles):  
 1, p.110; 2 & 3, p.111; 4, p.104; 5 & 6, p.133.



“Bear Brawl”

*Andrew Scott Whiteman*

annalisa dias-mandoly and meena aier  
with erin mcdonagh

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## inspired interpretation

THROUGH LITERATURE and art, people are able to connect experiences and themes into a more comprehensive and comprehensible whole. They bring their own set of experiences to a work of literature or art, and for each person a work is something different. Different interpretations of a piece can be correct; in fact, they may complement each other. Too, different pieces may be linked by a common interpretation or theme.

Since its publication, Cervantes' vast novel *Don Quixote* has inspired various artists to create their own depictions of the title character. What is it about this deluded old man that attracts people to him? Perhaps the very fact that Don Quixote refuses to see the world in any other way but his own speaks to artists who each have their own world view. In his refusal to submit to the pressures of conformity, Don Quixote lives out his own inter-



*"Don Quixote and Sancho Panza" by Honoré Daumier, 1849-50 (oil on wood)*

pretation of the world, his own interpretation of the truth. He supercedes the ability of any artist to depart from reality, as he doesn't just conceive a unique interpretation of the world—he actually lives it. Artists are limited by their trade; all they can do with their interpretation of the world is set it down on paper in hopes that it will speak to someone.

Whether one looks at Picasso's quickly sketched figure or at Doré's finely engraved knight, one is able to



*"Don Quixote" by Gustave Doré, 1863 (engraving)*

see what the artist envisioned when he read the novel. It seems, however, that Picasso and Daumier have come closer to the spirit of Don Quixote's character by leaving room for the observer to interpret their depiction of him: neither gives Quixote a face, as if they intend to leave the observer the creative space to see their own Don Quixote. The observer is able to *become* Don Quixote in a certain sense, seeing the work of art how they want it to be seen.

By using specific themes of interpretation for various literary characters, artists can establish parallels between works of literature. There is always an overarching theme that binds novels, plays or poems together. As human beings, artists and authors strive to understand human nature and motives. How the external world affects human nature has always been an object of fascination. Many artists try to grasp an underlying message and portray it subtly through their artwork.



This black figure kylix illustrates two different scenes from *The Odyssey*. Unlike many other pieces, wherein the scene portrayed by the artist is frozen in time, here the artist has made a genuine attempt to reproduce these events as a continuous, simultaneous action. This can be inferred from the fact that the crewman is already transformed into a boar from shoulders up and the cup from his hands is presumably being taken



*"Don Quixote" by Pablo Picasso, 1955 (oil on canvas)*

away by Circe. Behind him, other members of the group are shown as man-beast hybrids, though they seem to have progressed further in the stages of transformation, compared to the crewman right before Circe. Even though Eurylochus in the far left is running back to the ship to inform Odysseus of what has occurred, Odysseus is already running to the rescue. This applies to both the Circe and the Polyphemos scene, further showing time in continuum, and demonstrates on the parallel nature of both the events.

The artist evidently wishes to portray the triumph of man over the supernatural through his cleverness in one Polyphemos scene, but he simultaneously illustrates the downfall of man as a result of carelessness in the other. However, the main reason for the atrophy of Polyphemos and Odysseus' crewmen in both the scenes is wine. Thus, the artist delivers a clear message, which he has underlined by painting these scenes on a wine cup: excessive drinking always leads to detrimental consequences. Thus the painter mocks the very act of drinking and indicates its possible dire results to the person about to drink from the cup.



*Kylix depicting scenes from the Odyssey, by the Polyphemos Painter  
ca.550 BCE (black figure ceramic)*

While art can be interpretative, it is often didactic in nature as well. Artists and authors find different ways of understanding morality and seeking to influence potential readers or viewers through variations in story-telling and new techniques of depiction. So while striving to be different, art and literature ultimately have one goal: to understand the world around them, and to understand their place in it. There are a million paths to take, but each artist tries to render himself as an individual, as just another person trying to fit his piece into this daunting puzzle called reality.

zachary bos

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## genesis 3:1-4

He, shod word, spent his days away from home, didn't miss it.  
 She, ringleader of the sink, reigned uneasily, wore soft slippers.

He represented software companies when they appeared in court.  
 She, we know before it's said, resented all the unpaid overtime.

When he stood at the grill, the black metal became his shadow.  
 As he cooked, she lay on a redwood chaise, her skin darkening.

The black charcoal by turning into ash said much about him.  
 When he died with heart failure, she didn't; as he predicted.

Sunlight off the pond: white flocks across the bedroom ceiling.  
 She held on eight more years before being taken by a bad flu.

Without knowing how, they found themselves together outside  
 the gates wherein is found a paradise. Without, all obscurity.

Light fell from the unspeaking figures guarding the shut gate,  
 a current substantial enough to shake them like ash on a gust.

We cannot know of them, the eulogist\* is saying in summary,  
 whether they still wait unadmitted, with a heavy light pressing

down on their bowed shoulders, on their bent necks.  
 Maybe they said enough to be let in; who can say.

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\* "A grave robber of prior art." From Gr. εὐλέγειν, 'to speak well of.'

# omnipotence

In the narrow corridor  
between the payphones  
and the men's room,  
the homeless guy  
who makes one coffee  
last three hours said,  
'you better not be watching me'  
and resumed counting  
with determined self-absorption  
as if he thought if he stopped  
everything else would too.  
Groaning with its gallon,  
the pintsack in my pelvis  
called out with urgency.  
Even so, I have to count  
with great effort of thought  
to forty-three by primes  
before things start moving.  
The blistering paint  
divulges the sorry truth  
about the aims of man.  
A careful kind of creator  
it is who sustains all this:  
oxidation, coffee smells.  
I try not to miss,  
but inevitably contribute  
to the rust sprouting there  
like a bank of lichens.



“Sunflower”

*Naz Yucel*

katherine lochery

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# transforming the epic tradition: john milton's PARADISE LOST

AN EMBLEM OF seventeenth-century England, John Milton stands out as a giant among British poets and political activists alike. Crafting his literary works within a world where poetry and politics often collided, Milton regularly strove to use his poems and pamphlets to present powerful arguments that he hoped would inform and urge the people of England toward political and religious reform. Whether writing on the damaging and stifling effects of censorship as he did in 1644 in his famous *Areopagitica*, or the merits of divorce in his 1643 piece, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Milton spent the majority of his life promoting education, civil liberties, and a republican transformation of the English government. Although he was a harsh critic of the Catholic Church and the Church of England, in his writings for religious reformation Milton did not fail to proclaim his own belief in the truth of Christianity and his high regard for the Holy Scriptures (Johnson 1). Despite his ardent support and prolific work on behalf of reform, the volatile century in which he lived out his life led the political poet to experience the false yet invigorating hope of political and religious reformation followed by the harsh disappointment of a failed rebellion. It is within the context of this theological and political turmoil that Milton crafted his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, and in so doing, he transformed the epic tradition.

Veering away from the secular nature of the masterpieces of Virgil and Homer, Milton's epic revolves around the theological narrative of man's departure from Paradise and addresses the conflict between good and evil. Reflecting Milton's strong belief in the Bible as the word of God and the ultimate possessor of truth, *Paradise Lost* retells the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve as pre-

sented in the book of Genesis. The opening lines of the poem allude to the Biblical account:

Of Man's First disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and Regain the blissful seat. (I.1-5)

Although Milton's masterpiece includes trademarks of the classic epic, such as war, pastoral scenes, journeys into Heaven and Hell, and the self-possessed individual, the worth and purpose of these characteristics alters when presented within Milton's divine account of man's first transgression. In his study of the history of the epic form, C.W. Bowra writes that before Milton's time,

The best literary epic had been predominately secular; Milton made it theological, and the change of approach meant a great change of temper and atmosphere. The old themes are introduced in all their traditional dignity, but in Milton's hands they take on a different significance and contribute to a different end. (Bowra 196)

Whereas the scenes within the former epics of military carnage and pastoral bliss appear to advance the eventual founding of a glorious empire or the reclamation of power and territory through militaristic and tactical means, Milton's epic unfolds to "vindicate the ways of God to man; to show the reasonableness of religion, and the necessity of obedience to the divine law" (Johnson 48). In concluding his poem, Milton writes of Adam and Eve as they depart from Eden:

The World was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:  
They hand in hand with wand'ring steps and slow,  
Through Eden took their solitary way. (XII.646-649)

Milton's final verse fails to provide a definite resolution to missions under-

taken or prophetic destinies unfulfilled, but rather leaves man on the verge of a quest for the unknown, with only faith in the divine as his guide. In steering away from an ending shrouded in satisfying conclusions, Milton advocates a “spirit of confidence and of courage in which men should set out on the undoubted perils of life” and thus celebrates the potential of a journey’s course rather than its traditionally glorious end (Bowra 210).

In shifting the subject of his epic from earthly wars and empires to the fall of man, Milton simultaneously introduces an alternative depiction of the epic hero. Rather than embodying the epitome of militaristic courage and battle prowess, Milton’s hero is of

the better fortitude  
Of patience and Heroic Martyrdom  
Unsung. (IX.31-33)

Cloaked in humility and opposing the valiant descriptions of the bold heroes of classic epics, Milton’s hero is Adam, the father of mankind. However unqualified he may appear when compared with the heroes of Latin and Greek tradition, Bowra writes of Adam that “his very lack of external splendour only enhances his natural dignity” (Bowra 200). Although the development of Milton’s poem centers around the failure of Adam to obey God and retain an existence in Paradise, Milton nevertheless places the humble offender in the role of hero. Perhaps this decision on Milton’s part is rooted in Adam’s willingness to accept his offense against God and go on to face the mortal suffering of life outside the realm of Eden. Such resilience is displayed when Adam rebukes Eve’s suggestion of self-destruction after the Fall and rationally declares,

No more be mention’d then of violence  
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness  
That cuts us off from hope, and savours only  
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,  
Reluctance against God and his just yoke  
Laid on our necks. (X.1041-1046)



In addition to calmly accepting God's punishment, Adam also realizes his role as cultivator of mankind. Remembering the promise made to the parents of the human race, Adam knows that the defeat of Satan and the destruction of Hell can only occur if mankind exists to freely choose the divine path and place its faith in God and his Son.

In his biography on the life of Milton, Samuel Johnson writes that "history must supply the writer with the rudiments of narration, which he must improve and exalt by a nobler art, must animate by dramatic energy, and diversify by retrospection and anticipation" (27). Milton's decision to make the subject of his poem

the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures, their original happiness and innocence, the forfeiture of their immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace" may have found its origins in the history of the civil war that plagued seventeenth-century England. (48)

Originally a supporter of the rebellion, Milton was deeply disturbed when the personal desire for power drove other members of the rebellion to pervert their seemingly well-intentioned objectives. Even his friend and employer, and the leader of the revolution, Oliver Cromwell, fell prey to presumptuous aspirations and employed the wrong means to satisfy his own ambitions for power (Hill 369). In his temporary role as Lord Protector of England, Cromwell morphed into a tyrant who came to defy Milton's original vision of a tolerant leader for a republican England. Having viewed the demise of political players who embodied the pride and military might of heroes such as Odysseus and Achilles, Milton was eager to champion a new kind of heroism founded wholly in virtuous endurance and a noble devotion to what one knows to be right (Bowra 211). In Adam's adherence to his God-given task to propagate hope through his mortal offspring, Milton saw the loyalty and dedication that he had failed to observe in fellow members of the seventeenth-century rebellion.

In working for Cromwell, Milton lost his eyesight and risked severe punishment and perhaps execution, should the Royalists have come back to power and chosen to punish Cromwell's supporters. Given his sacrifices for the cause of removing a tyrannical monarch and upholding the installation of a republican

government, the sting of disenchantment stayed with Milton long after he had left the political sphere and retreated into his role as a cloistered poet. Finding nothing in his surrounding society to revive his faith in man, Milton turned to the indubitable divine truth that upon his creation, man had been endowed with free will. Bowra writes that “the old poet who had himself hoped that a new Heaven would be built in England, and had seen his hopes shattered by the corrupt doings of men, found a solace in the thought that a man’s nobility lies in his own grasp and is his to command” (210). The reason and freedom of the individual that is established in the story of the fall of man instilled in Milton a belief that men have the means to design their own destinies and perhaps choose the path of good where others had chosen that of evil. Milton’s epic celebrates this divinely-bestowed potential through Adam’s proclamation in the final book of the poem,

Full of doubt I stand,  
 Whether I should repent me now of sin  
 By mee done and occasion’d or rejoice  
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring.  
 (XII.473-476)

For Milton, the selfish failings of the men of the rebellion were not reflective of the entire race of man, but rather of individuals who chose to relinquish nobility and a divinely-inspired path in exchange for the hollow power afforded to men with little faith in the promise put forth in the Holy Scriptures.

Bowra claims that Milton was “the last great practitioner of literary epic because with him it found a finality which forbade any extension of its scope” (245). With the story of man as its subject, Milton’s poem delivers an illuminating narrative that diverges from the epic tradition and encompasses any potential focus of future epics. Equally impressive as the divine subject matter of *Paradise Lost*, however, is the ingenuity and dedication with which Milton pursued the creation of his greatest work. Refusing to fall prey to the vices of evil pride and perverted ambition that were commonplace among men of his time, the blind Milton risked political alienation and persecution in composing his poem. Faced with blindness and a dwindling money supply, the relentless poet drew from his own anguish and disillusionment to craft a work proclaiming the hope manifest-

ed in the God-given ability of man to form his own future. Both an advocate of nobly pursuing man's earthly struggle against tyranny and a poet eager to relate the divine history of man through innovative verse, Milton merits the praise of one of his most informed biographers: "His great works were performed under discountenance, and in blindness; but difficulties vanished at his touch; he was born for whatever is arduous; and his work is not the greatest of heroic poets, only because it is not first" (Johnson 60).

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“CC105 Fruit Drop, September 2008”

*Andrew Bisdale*

sassan tabatabai

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# land of the houyhnhnms

In Sweden  
even crossing the street  
presents problems:

how not to draw the ire  
of tall, beautiful blonds  
—chiseled from the bosom of Odin—  
waiting patiently  
for the green walk sign  
on a street empty of cars,

glaring at me,  
the dark little savage,  
unable to abide by civil law,  
already on the other side of the street.

# s'cores

## musical analects of the core

*Music, the great interpreter, captures the human condition in ways that cannot be described in textual form. Whether conveying triumph or despair, music changes hearts and helps us understand the universality of our various passions. The excerpts that follow, drawn from works studied in our Core lectures, put on display these transcendent powers. –KB*

Allegro con brio (♩ = 108)

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The title is "Allegro con brio (♩ = 108)". The score is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It features a four-note motif in the treble clef: G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass line has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The score includes dynamic markings like "ff" and performance instructions like "rit." and "\*".

BEETHOVEN, *Fifth Symphony*: Using the influences of Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven creates a four note motif that undergoes elaborate development in various key changes throughout the symphony. Beethoven succeeds in weaving numerous variations in a manner that flows harmoniously, but one must listen carefully to capture the original theme. Beethoven's immense work is revolutionary simply for the way each movement's themes respond to one another. Overall, the 5th symphony is a story of urgency, romance, and triumph which ultimately captures the revolutionary spirit of its time.



Bach's Violin Sonata in G Minor, fugue

*Angela Guo*

P R O L O G O .  
L A M V S I C A .

**D** Al mio permesso a mato a voine vegno Incliti Eroï

fanguè gentile Regi Di cui narra la famma ec celsi pregi Negiuge al ver perch'è trop-

MONTEVERDI, *L'Orfeo*: Influenced by classical Greek music and his own passion for experimentation, Monteverdi challenged musical ideals of the Renaissance. He revolutionized the opera in developing a second practice in which the music was to be slave to the text. His opera is one of the first to utilize rhythm, poetic meter, key signature, and notes to define strong human emotions. To give *Orpheus and Eurydice* a strong personality, Monteverdi assigned each part to a soloist, instead of a traditional chorus. The ritornello, or the instrumental, responds to the emotions in the arias and recitatives; with each ritornello, there is more passion and discordant tension. You can feel the anguish in Orpheus' soul as he tries to find his wife, Eurydice, in the Underworld.



## Nº 7. "Là ci darem la mano.,,

Duetto.

Andante.  
Don Giovanni.

Là ci da-rem la ma-no, là mi di-rai di sì;

ve-di, non è lon-ta-no, par-tiam, ben mio, da-qui. Vor-rei, e non vor-.

Zerlina.  
Vor-rei, e non vor-

*p Sforz.*

*Sforz.*

*p Sforz.*

*Sforz.*

MOZART, *Don Giovanni*: The drama in this opera is propelled by the dynamics of the music. Each note imbues every word with particular meaning. Mozart creates larger than life situations with violent, conflicted human beings in moments of tension and urgency. In this scene, Don Giovanni sings a gorgeous melody to the peasant girl Zerlina. Mozart's melody evokes a pastoral simplicity that is familiar to Zerlina, but the melody has underlying cruel intentions. The simplistic melody is meant to resemble a sweet and flirtatious sexual game between the two characters, yet Don Giovanni uses this melody to take advantage of Zerlina's innocence for his own lascivious purposes.

elizabeth perry

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## the literary dating game

AN EXPECTANT MURMUR ran through the crowd as they waited impatiently for the entertainment to start. The lady on the stage was pretty—pale, brunette, with a soft, gentle face; her eyebrows were knit in a mixture of excitement and anxiety. All eyes except hers were turned eagerly to the back door of the stage; the lady would have looked if she could, but she was separated from that half of the stage by a wooden partition.

When the door opened, an immediate hush descended. A stout man with a top hat walked genially to the front of the stage. He crossed in front of the partition, bowed to the lady and then to the audience.

“Welcome, welcome, ladies and gentleman!” he called. “I know you are all eagerly awaiting this fine night of matchmaking, so let us, without any further ado, begin our show! Let the bachelors come out!” He waved his arm dramatically to the door, and it opened once more.

This time, a man of average height stepped out. He was in his late prime, still youthful but with the look of wisdom about him.

“Bachelor number one hails from the romantic Italian states. He is well-loved for his poetry, but he is also a man of great intellect. Please welcome Francesco Petrarch.”

There was a smattering of applause, but it was hushed as the second man came out. There were whispers in the crowd, mostly women, as the tall, handsome man came into the light. He had a mischievous glint in his eye.

“Bachelor number two is also a native of a land well-known for its romance. He has journeyed here from France, taking time off from his studies. He is the disciple and friend of the great giant Pantagruel—say hello to Panurge!”

Panurge bowed low, adding a flourish as he sat down next to Petrarch. The

door opened for a third time and a man older than the rest stepped out. He was close to fifty, hearty and strong but with a wrinkled complexion. He entered the stage very formally.

“Our last bachelor, bachelor number three, calls the wondrous land of Spain his home—a village in La Mancha to be exact. His profession is that of knight errant, a profession requiring great fortitude and perseverance.”

“That’s certainly right!” muttered a man in the audience. “It’s the most troublesome job there is, what with sorcerers following you around and getting blanket tossed!”

His neighbor shushed him to hear the end of the host’s introduction. He only caught the end—his name was Don Quixote.

“Now that we have introduced our bachelors, let us introduce our lovely lady! She is a shepherdess from the fields of England, and desperately in search of a man. We hope that today’s show will help her find that man! With that, Miss Alice Lockton, start your questioning!”

A blush crept up the pale cheeks of Miss Alice Lockton, but her eyes were wide with excitement.

“What is your perfect first date?” she asked, her head filled with romance. “Bachelor number one?”

“Ahhh,” Petrarch sighed. “The day I first lay eyes on you, it will be as if a host of angels is singing, but the mischievous Cupid will not be as kind to me when wounding me with his arrows. Whatever we do on that first day will be perfect... I could sit for hours just staring at your beauty.”

The man in the crowd (who was Sancho Panza) muttered, “He hasn’t even seen her face yet! These blasted lovers and their fantasies! He’s as bad as Don Quixote, he is!”

Miss Alice’s eyes were filled with the promises of Petrarch as she continued, “Bachelor number two?”

“First date? Who needs dating, let’s just skip to the sex! But, if you insist, why, I would rob a bank for you and we would gorge ourselves with food, and I might perhaps even buy you a necklace. And then we would romp together for the rest of the evening. And throughout the morning and next day, too.”

“Why, what foul talk is this!” said Don Quixote, rising from his chair to draw his sword against Panurge’s throat. “You dare speak of befouling this fair lady’s

honor? I will cut you down before you have the chance!" He swung his sword so fast and hard that it stuck into the wood of the theatre floor—luckily, Panurge sidestepped, or else there would have been two Panurges.

The portly host rushed over as fast as he could. "Gentlemen, gentlemen! We should let the woman decide!"

Panurge grinned lewdly as Don Quixote sat down angrily. (He probably would have fought the host, too, if he had not seen Sancho's frantic waving and pointing to sit down).

"Let us continue," harrumphed the host.

"Bachelor three," Miss Alice continued, visibly shocked from the episode. "I recognize the truth of your bravery and honor. Truly do you deserve the term knight. What would your perfect first date be?"

"Alas," began Don Quixote. "It is not the fate of knights errant to come upon many opportunities to date. However, if, in the most unlikely event that I find you in distress, I will most readily come to your aid. Any time your honor needs defending, I swear by the heavens, I will save you, even if the odds are two hundred to one! Also, if I am ever in your kingdom, fair lady, I will gladly perform in a joust or accomplish other such knightly deeds in your name."

"Thank you very much, bachelors. Now, bachelor number two, what are your hobbies?"

Panurge winked at the audience. "I, too, joust, but with my codpiece. And I love to make hell with those crack-head theologians. They are nothing but dogs when I am through with them! I am also quite an expert at lawsuits. I only lose so many because of damned technicalities. As for my parties...I throw the best. We all get drunker than hell, we soil our pants and have a riot, and—"

"Er, thank you, bachelor number two," Miss Alice interrupted. "Bachelor number three, what are your hobbies?"

"The finest hobby one can aspire to, after knight errantry, of course, is that of reading. In fact, I can recommend you quite a few excellent books of chivalry. Amadis of Gaul is the finest of all knights errant, except for, perhaps, I, the Knight of the Sorry Face, who seek to emulate and surpass all that revered knight's deeds."

Sancho was muttering again. "Not this, again. That dratted Amadis of Gaul is more trouble than he's worth, I say!"

“Thank you, bachelor number three. Quite a worthy hobby. Bachelor number one?”

“What are my hobbies?” Petrarch asked himself. “Alas, my mind is so full of Love that I am afraid I can never find time away from him. Yet, I do enjoy climbing mountains and taking long walks... alone. Or as alone as a conflicted man like me can ever really be. I am also a proud classicist and a prolific letter writer.”

Miss Alice frowned, but did not interrupt him. He continued, “However, I also long to spend all my days lying on the banks of a stream, watching the one who has pierced my heart with fire and ice wash herself. I could watch the woman whom I loved forever and always, hoping I would die so I could see her cry for me.”

Miss Alice already had tears in her eyes. “You use such beautiful language. It is true you are a poet.”

The host stepped forward. “Thank you, Miss Alice. Thank you, bachelors. Now, bachelors, would you give a final statement?”

Petrarch stood up to give his. “The world is cruel, full of opposing desires. I have tried hard to balance my ambition and earthly loves with the rightful divine love. Love both keeps me sane and makes me crazy. It gives me the wings to soar to heaven, but I am always struck down. I see beauty everywhere, yet I also see pain. That, perhaps, is the curse of being an artist.” He sat down, and nodded to Panurge.

The tall man stayed seated, leaning back in his chair and crossing his legs. “I know how to give the ladies what they want. I can give them a good time.” He elaborated with lewd remarks, which will be left untold here, but suffice to say, mothers were covering their children’s ears while trying to cover their own as well. “And if you, Miss Alice, do not choose me, well... I love you, and I want you, but beware of refusal.” He grinned wickedly, his hands ruffling in his pockets as if preparing something.

Don Quixote looked solemn as he stood. “By all the heavens, strike me down if I speak a false word and betray my oath of knighthood,” he began. “I seek to preserve maidens’ dignity and rescue all those who have been wronged or are in distress. I search for adventure and for riches and for love, but the latter two usually come with the former. Let me be like Amadis of Gaul and the valiant Orlando, and the great Roland and—“

Just then, there was a commotion in the back of the theatre. The door slammed open and a man walked through the aisles, muttering to himself, until he got close up to the stage.

“Get thee to a nunnery!” he shouted, pointing at Miss Alice. “You inconstant woman! You are too fair to be faithful, too much a woman to save a man’s soul! And you—“ he said, turning to the bachelors. “You are worse than your fairer sex! What about Laura and Dulcinea? You faithless cowards. Disperse, or I shall disperse your bodies for you!”

The audience clambered out of their seats; some women screamed. There was a mass exodus of the crowd. Sancho fought his way to Don Quixote, who had drawn his sword. Sancho’s eyes widened, and he thought as fast as he could.

“Sir, you do not want to do that! That man is not a knight, and you remember what happened the last time you drew your sword against a non-knight. My body certainly remembers!”

Don Quixote hesitated. “Are you sure, friend Sancho, that this man is not a knight? He has quite a knightly manner about him.”

“I am sure! Now let’s go!” he was tugging on Don Quixote’s arm, and the knight errant reluctantly followed.

They saddled up Rocinante and Sancho’s donkey (all the while, Sancho still had to convince Don Quixote not to run back in and challenge the intruder to a duel, and there were several close calls). It was sunset when they left, riding off into the distance.

“Well, Sancho,” Don Quixote said. “I guess that adventure was not for us. The next one, however, is an island adventure. I can feel it.”

Sancho’s eyes brightened at this thought, but as he turned to look back at the theatre he scowled. “All the same, I wanted to find out who she would choose!”

## contributors & staff

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**meena aier** (Economics/English, 2012) finds Core is one of the three things worthy of affection; for Core is good, pleasant and useful. Apart from being addicted to Core Humanities, she enjoys strumming idly on her guitar, reading endlessly, and writing about anything and everything under the sun.

**allison amaro** (CAS 2012) enjoys reading and is constantly listening to music. She has an insatiable obsession with Shakespeare and is therefore looking forward to second year Core.

**elena baranes** (Art History/Philosophy, 2011) is a driven student with great aspirations. However, she suffers from the tragic reality that her inspiring potential is severely limited by her seventeen-second attention span.

**yuliya belyayeva** (Economics/International Relations, 2012) is an inspiring diplomat, always ready to initiate world peace. Although she is currently studying International Relations, Economics, and French, her heart lies in making Core her primary major. Contrary to popular belief, she does not enjoy the color red, watching James Bond movies, or utilizing a sickle on a daily basis.

**andrew bisdale** (History/Photojournalism, 2010) is a graduate of the Core and is thrilled to be featured in this year's journal. Though he is no longer enrolled in its classes, Andrew has yet to fully escape the Core's grasp, as he can often be found at the work study desk in the office. He would like to thank Zak and Liberty for all their guidance and tomfoolery, and the rest of the Core gang for their, well, tomfoolery.

**katherine book** (History, 2012) believes Core is necessary for survival. She enjoys dancing, art, songs with fantastic ukulele solos, and long walks on the beach, but finds the meaning of life to be in a piece of Warren Towers dining hall chocolate cake. If she were ever in a Miss America pageant and was asked the question, "What do you most want in life?" she would not suggest world peace, but Core Curriculum for all.

**zachary bos** is the Administrative Coordinator for the Core Curriculum. His writing appears in various literary magazines, and, regularly, in emails sent to Core students and alumni. He studies poetry as a graduate student at BU.

**amiel ewa bowers** (Classics, 2009) is a world-class traveler: she was born in Japan, has lived in Italy and New York City, and will continue her academic journey in law school. She is a Core lover and a kitten expert.

annalisa dias-mandoly (English/Religion, 2010) is a junior and cannot seem to give up her attachment to the Core. Although she enjoys telling people about her two majors and two minors, her “Renaissance-woman, think-Da Vinci, over-achieving tendencies” are more likely attributed to the fact that she simply cannot focus on one subject for more than three seconds. Her life goals include seeing the world the way it ought to be à la Don Quixote, and climbing the mountain of Purgatory.

elisa gill (Political Science, 2012) is excited by feminism, books, and any mention of her home state of Delaware. She has Boston to thank for her newfound love of Asian food, and Core for her blossoming interests in religion and Lao Tzu. She has no idea how to reconcile her passions into something useful, but, thanks to Aristotle, now disregards this concern as a little too practical.

lindsey gould (English, 2010) is pursuing a minor in Theatre Arts. Though she finished her Core experience last spring, she still gets a daily dose by working as an office assistant. She is grateful to Zachary Bos and to all of her friends in the Core, both students and professors.

logan gowdey (French/Philosophy, 2011) considers himself a true acolyte of the Core. His first year in the program has combined with his French and Philosophy majors to make him insufferably pretentious. When not copy-editing Core journals, starring in FilmCore movies, or plotting ways to befriend the Core instructors, he amuses himself by working out which circles of hell are reserved for bikers and which for hipsters.

david green teaches in the second-year of the Core Curriculum and is the Writing Coordinator of the program. He served as Faculty Advisor to the Core production of *Hamlet*.

angela guo (Psychology, 2010) enjoys nothing more than the artistic process, whether fine art, photography, or a live performance. She finds nothing more thrilling than the experience of creation and self-expression. When not committing abusive acts of photography she can be found performing on random stages, cuddling with her puppy, or convincing people to join her quest to find authentic Chinese restaurants.

daniel hudon, a veteran of the Core Natural Sciences, is always looking for new projects, the bigger the better. His first book, *The Bluffer's Guide to the Cosmos* is being published this spring (Oval Books, UK) and he hopes you'll read it and, whether you need to or not, start bluffing. He thanks *Opium Magazine* for originally publishing this piece.



Along with Professors James Jackson (Astronomy), Jay Samons (Classics), Wayne Snyder (Computer Science, Associate Dean For Student Academic Life), and Core alum Edmund Jorgensen, Core Professor brian jorgensen plays with the Fish Worship Blues Band.

mat leonard (Psychology, 2011) has varied interests, including film, jazz, and writing concise bios about his interests.

sasha levitskaya (Psychology/Religion, 2012) is excited to be graduating from the Core program, she has written and read more than she ever thought was humanly possible (in a good way!). When not psychoanalyzing everyone and everything in her path or reading up on Buddhism, she thoroughly enjoys music and, of course, napping.

katherine lochery (Political Science, 2010) hopes to inspire global harmony through her mother's recipe for scones and oversized mugs of PG Tips. And mince pies, if that's what it takes. Many thanks to the Core family.

erin mcdonagh (English/French, 2010) was so distraught about graduating from Core that she fled to Paris for the following semester to gain distance from the relationship. Unfortunately, Rabelais and Rousseau dogged her every footstep. Losing patience with their bickering, she—like the hoopoe to the Simorgh—was drawn back to CAS 119, to nest comfortably among her literary companions. She would like to thank the entire editorial staff and most particularly Zak and Professor Tabatabai for all their help and their patience.

elizabeth perry (History/Archaeology, 2011) is from Arizona, but her family is now based in Alaska. It is her lofty goal to spend all her money on graduate school and afterward spend her penniless days writing novels in a box under a bridge.

ethan rubin (Philosophy, 2010) is rumored to have demonic abilities, and as a result he is banned in certain third-world countries and six states, including (but not limited to) Arkansas and New Jersey. In Massachusetts, only his aerosol form is prohibited. He expects to graduate next year with a degree in Meat Consumption and a minor in Spanish. A devoted wrecker of general havoc, he takes no pity on the weak, instead culling the metaphorical weakest antelope from the proverbial herd. Abandon all hope, ye who hang out in the Core office on Monday or Wednesday afternoons.

rafi spitzer (CAS 2012) is a wandering soul. As he wonders what major to choose and where to go in life, so too does he consider each possible path toward eudaimonia. Non-action may not be what he chooses, but he'll keep in mind that

one cannot, after all, pick up the entire elephant. He hopes to someday leave his own personal Egypt, experience revelation, and ultimately be redeemed.

sassan tabatabai is the Faculty Advisor of the *Core Journal*. He teaches in the second-year Core Humanities, as well as courses in Persian for the Department of Modern Languages and Comparative Literature. He is a poet and translator. His translations of the poetry of tenth-century Persian poet Rudaki, *Father of Songs*, was published by Purdue University Press in 2008.

elena thurman (Political Science, 2011) is from Berkeley, California. She enjoys Thai food and *This American Life*.

jameson tieman (International Relations, 2012) was born in Los Angeles, but was raised primarily in Austin, Texas, the city to which he credits for his love for writing. Jameson plans to continue the Core in his sophomore year.

chloe tuck (CAS 2012) hails from Austin, Texas. After a year of classes, she still has no idea what major to pursue, for she is a lover of all subjects. She has thoroughly enjoyed her time the Core Humanities, and looks forward to next year's offerings.

andrew scott whiteman (CAS 2012) is glad to at know now that he lives in a cave. While others have plans, he is wayward and stubborn, but not alone; when he read the Tao he had a good laugh.

jess wise (English, 2012) is from Newnan, Georgia, and is rather infatuated with the Core. The first-year Humanities were the first subject since coloring she has not avoided with her usual procrastination. She cannot wait to see what the second year has in store.

lisa wishinsky (International Relations, 2011) is sad to be leaving Core. When she isn't reading classic works of literature, she—like Don Quixote—wanders in search of adventure. She sees herself governing her own island someday.

naz yucel (International Relations, 2012) unexpectedly found love in the Core House—it is her best reason for staying in Boston. Nowadays, she busies herself with efforts to appear in Google Maps Street View. (Don't forget to blink when you pass by.)

olga zhukov (CAS 2012) recently joined the community of Core office devotees. She has no idea what she wants to do with her life, but she hopes Ethan will let her be the star of his opera so she can fully express her passion for Mozart, and be invited to perform in the Mozart lecture next year.

# colophon

designer  
Olga Zhukov

art director  
Meena Aier

The image appearing on the front cover is modified from a digital copy of William Blake's watercolor, "The Rock Sculptured with the Recovery of the Ark and the Annunciation" (1824-7). In this image, Dante and Virgil are climbing the Mount of Purgatory, a scene described in Canto X of Dante's *Purgatorio*. The Chinese characters overlaying the detail on the back cover represent the sound of laughter—literally, "tee-hee-hee!"—and are extracted from a woodcut made by Buddhist poet and painter Lu Pin (1733-1799) picturing Cold Mountain poet Han Shan in jovial conversation with his friend, the kitchen worker Shih Te. A copy of this woodcut hangs in the main office of the Core Curriculum.

Two font families are used throughout this journal. Titles are set in Gill Sans, a typeface designed by Eric Gill for the London Underground. Reading text—including this paragraph—is set in Adobe Caslon, a serif font designed by Carol Twombly in 1990 based on specimen pages belonging to William Caslon. The original 18th-century typeface was used widely and in many historic documents, including the United States Declaration of Independence.

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*Said Socrates,*

“... and when he came to the light, wouldn't he have his eyes full of its beam and be unable to see even one of the things now said to be true?”

- *The Republic of Plato*  
516a, trans. by Allan Bloom

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