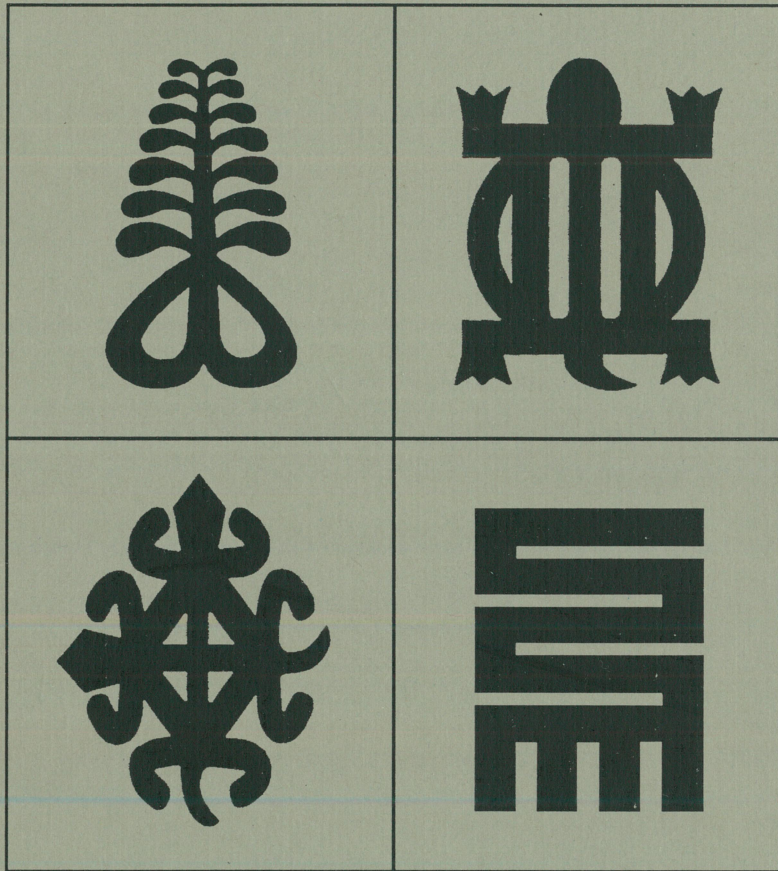


WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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A GATHERING OF VOICES



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# A GATHERING OF VOICES



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An Anthology of Student Writing  
Whatcom Community College

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Associate editor, submissions coordinator  
Pamela Helberg

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Barbara Hudson

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Rosemary Sterling-Suchy  
Copy-Duplicating Staff

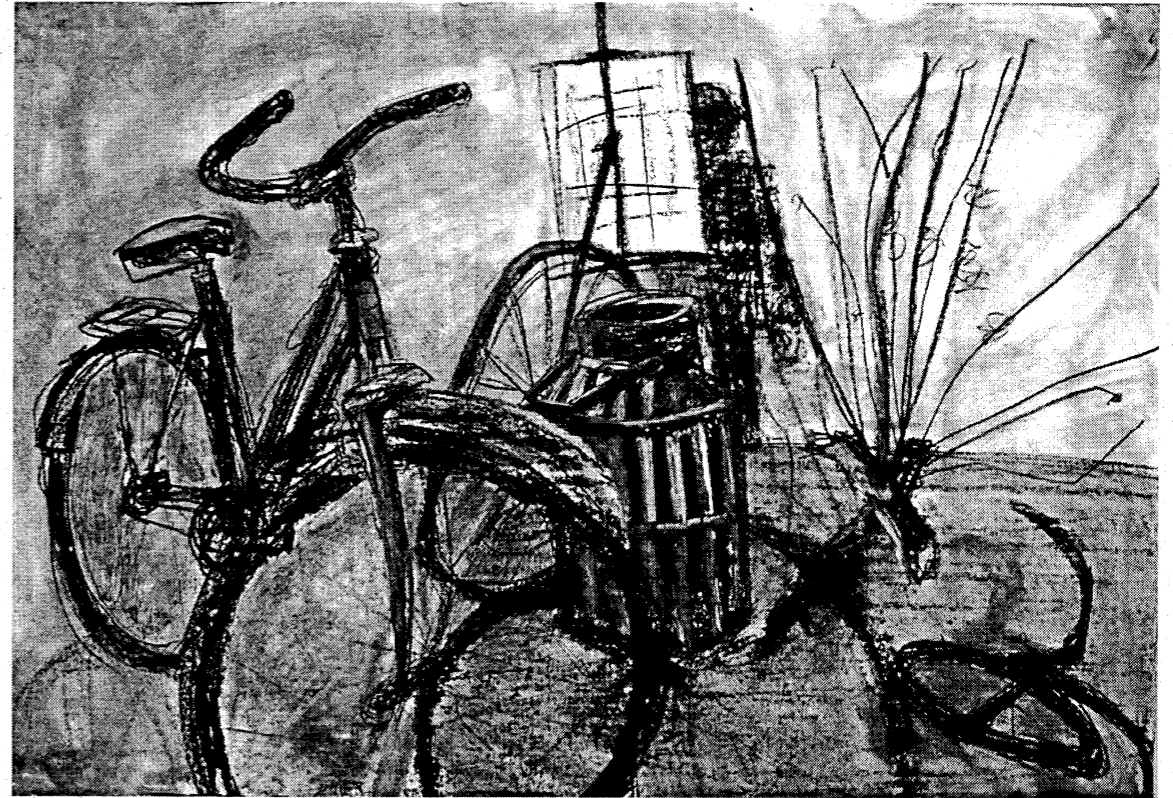
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Matt Seely  
*Bike still life*  
Charcoal, 24" x 36"

*Artist's comment: I chose to keep my 'bike still life' very simple by using only a few lines and by trying to capture the general shape of each object in the study. In order to keep the drawing "active" I used very quick strokes while sketching everything out. I made the objects almost look like they were silhouettes by using dark lines and adding little detail. This created a drawing that is somewhat mysterious and can be interpreted in different ways.*

*Matt Seely  
Art 212*

## **Introduction**

A *Gathering of Voices* is a collection of experiences, thoughts and ideas offered in reflection. It takes considerable courage to reflect on one's life or experiences and even more courage to subject those reflections to the review and reflection of others. That is true of institutions as well as individuals.

Who are we, who do we hope to become, and how do others see us? The life of a college student is a life of reflection, examination and growth. As individuals we must reflect to grow. Similarly, as a college we must continually reflect in order to grow and become more effective. The students, faculty, staff and trustees are all involved in the process of individual, professional and institutional evaluation and reflection during this, Whatcom Community College's 30 year self-study accreditation review.

*Harold G. Heiner, Ph.D  
President, Whatcom Community College*

This collection of written work by Whatcom Community College students embodies the best of our institution: students and instructors working together to ensure excellence in student achievement, excellence in teaching, and excellence as an institution as a whole. The selections we read in these pages demonstrate that we have successfully met the criteria we set for ourselves and for our students, particularly two of our five outcomes:

**Integrating:** Graduates will demonstrate self-appraisal, responsibility for their actions, ethical awareness and integrity as they apply their knowledge and skills as members of a democratic society.

**Relating:** Graduates will demonstrate their ability to understand and relate to the natural world, to people, and to the cultures, perspectives, and expression of others.

As our world shrinks in the wake of technological advances, we must grow to master these abilities. We must take responsibility to apply our knowledge and skills ethically and with sensitivity, on campus and around the world. During this year of reflection as an institution, we have discovered what we are doing right and what areas need additional attention, a process not dissimilar to what our students are doing in their training as nurses, computer repair technicians, English teachers, early childhood educators, psychologists, geologists, astronomers, economists, and political scientists.

Read, reflect, enjoy.

*Pamela S. Helberg*

## My Reading Discovery

Cathi O'Connell  
Jessica Steele, English 100

My family history search had begun in earnest the year before. I had relentlessly scanned census records on old worn out microfiche readers in the dark, drafty corners of the old Ferndale Library. My father had given me smudged copies of probate records with unpronounceable names. I had spent hours listening to my aging father relive his memories of my grandmother, aunts and uncles. Along the way, he briefly mentioned that I was related to that Sioux warrior named Chief Gall. He did not know anything about this person except that we were related. His name was there, printed boldly on the probate records, listed on the allotment records and barely readable on the scratchy microfilm. No one could tell me how or where this person lived or what he looked like. Just another name to put on the family tree.

Since the death of my Great Aunt, and earlier of my Grandmother, my Dad and I shared the feeling of being disconnected from our extended family. The core women of our matriarchal family, on my father's side, had both died. Prior to the death of his aunt, my father had begun his search for his birth father after finding out the person he knew as his father, was really his step father.

My Dad's stepfather, Harris, lived out his life on the road as a carnival worker and rarely saw his family. In his retirement years, Harris lived as a recluse in a small community in North Whatcom County and saw his family only at the Christmas Holiday. As a child, I remember how scared we were of Grandpa Harris, as he seemed mysterious and secretive. He did not hug or kiss us hello, and he shuffled his feet and stared at the ground when he talked. I never saw Grandpa Harris even shake my father's hand or touch him in any way. His behavior confirmed my feelings that Harris was not connected to us as a family.

My Dad's mother was no longer alive at the time that my Dad discovered he had a different birth father. My Dad's birth father had also died by the time he began his search, and my Dad depended upon his Aunt to help provide this missing link. To her dying day, she honored her sister's wish to not tell my Dad about his Father. When my Auntie Evelyn died, it left a hole in my Dad's heart and in his sense of who he is and where he came from. My Dad's feeling of not belonging and being isolated from his birth family was what helped fuel my own curiosity and drive to find where we belonged in our society. Together with some of my other brothers and sisters, we began a journey to discover who our extended family was, where they lived and what stories could be shared, in an effort to

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help us feel we belonged. It led us down many new pathways with unexpected challenges and some surprising results.

Part of my task was to do research to find our direct ancestors, putting faces to names on legal documents and learning about who these people were and what lives they lived. I was living at the library, hanging out with the microfilm readers, begging my husband and children to have one more MacDonald burger evening so I could search for my genealogy records and information about Chief Gall. I wanted answers to my questions; who are my ancestors and relatives? Where did they live, and what kind of lives did they lead?

One particularly dark, rainy night, I was strolling down the dimly lit aisle of the local library when my eye locked in on an old, rarely read history book. I quickly scanned the pages and recognized it was the story of Custer's Last Stand. The book was written some time ago, and my nose began to itch from the smell of the mold emanating from its yellowed pages. I briskly walked back to the worn oak library table and began to flip through the pages looking for the words Gall, Pizi, Standing Rock Sioux or Hunkpapa. As I turned the musty pages, I came upon a picture of a dark skinned warrior in a staged formal pose. He had a broad nose, long flowing black hair, barrel chest and appeared to be in his forties. I kept staring at the picture, mesmerized by his eyes and his facial features. He looked a lot like my father! I quickly scanned the text to find who was in the picture, and I gasped as I read the name, Chief Gall. Forgetting the text, I stared at the picture. For the first time ever, I was looking at a picture of my great, great, great grandfather on my Dad's side of the family. I closed my eyes and took a big breath to calm me. Slowly my surroundings came back in focus and I remembered I was sitting in the middle of the crowded, hushed library.

I inhaled the words written about Chief Gall, a proud Hunkpapa warrior, a great Sioux Chief, and a leader and tribal judge. I finally began to sense a connection with my ancestors, with my great-great-great grandfather, and my Dad's stories. I began to realize this is whom I came from and what life he lived. I wanted to jump up and show people the picture and tell them the story of my grandfather, but I restrained myself, as they would think I was just one of those crazed, slightly off-kilter people hanging out at the library. I wanted to run and call my Dad to tell him I found a picture, and I could now put a face to the person in the stories. Then I realized that the library staff was beginning to tell people that the library would be soon closing. I did not want to have to return my precious book to its shelf and lose this feeling of being connected. I gathered up my belongings and zipped through the check out line to take my treasured pictures and book home. I then called my Dad and let him know of my discovery. He made me promise to send him copies right away.

The discovery of a part my family history and the picture of my great, great, great grandfather was an important find in my search. It stands out in my memory because it put a face to a name and gave me a visual glimpse of Chief Gall, and it told me something about how the man and his family lived. For once I felt I knew something about from whom and where I came. He did not seem like a real person until I saw his picture. It was a surprise to see my father had many of Chief Gall's physical traits. I felt a real sense of pride when I saw that picture for the first time. That day in the library stood out for me because I did not know what led me to pick up that particular book. At first it did not appear to directly relate to my family but appeared to be an account of a famous battle between the army and Indian warriors. I did not expect to find my family history by looking in a book about General Custer and Custer's Last Stand. I remember this day because it was exciting for me, and it re-energized me to continue my search. My rejuvenated search led to even more unexpected discoveries and numerous visits to meet my Dad's birth family.

With the discovery of this book, I learned that perseverance pays off, especially in researching family histories! You never know where you can uncover some bit of information that will help you in your search and you never know where your search will take you. I learned family history searchers can really get invested emotionally in finding their family history, no matter what their motivation to begin. It became a journey of self-discovery as I connected with my ancestors, their stories and met my bigger family. I wanted to feel I belonged somewhere. I wanted to feel connected to someone or somewhere beyond my father. I wanted to better understand myself. Since this particular reading experience, I have read numerous books about my ancestors, including my Dad's father George and Chief Gall. My Dad and I were able to travel together back to his homeland to visit his half-brother and half sister and their families. We visited Chief Gall's honored gravesite in Wakpala, South Dakota and eventually found Grandpa George's burial site. Both my Dad and I now feel we are connecting with our ancestors and discovering where we fit, in both our bigger family as well as history.



## The Conditions for Life

Selah Tay-Song  
Mark Herrenkohl, *Astronomy* 100

In the beginning of the new millennium, the UFO craze is in full swing. Adding to the frenzy is the recent discovery by astronomers that at least five stars are orbited by planets in habitable zones, meaning they are within a certain range of distance from their prospective star to maintain liquid water (McDonald 1). While these planets may only be gas giants, they could have orbiting moons with surfaces for water and alien dwelling (3). However, the conditions that give Earth life are far more specific than the presence of H<sub>2</sub>O. Atmosphere, geologic activity, rotation time, and eccentricity all effect a planet or moon's ability to support life.

Assuming that life forms would have to breathe, they would need an atmosphere in order to exist on a planet or moon. On smaller orbital bodies, the escape velocity is lower, and an atmosphere can escape more rapidly as atoms are moved by heat. Even on Earth, there is a measure of carbon dioxide that escapes and is replenished (LePage 2). But when a planet or moon is too small, all of the atmosphere can escape, as on Mercury or our own moon. Another way that atmosphere escapes is through sputtering, where a charged particle collides with a gas molecule and knocks it into the vacuum of space (2). Because of this phenomenon, it is necessary for a planet or moon to have a strong magnetic field. Some of Jupiter's moons, for example, have magnetic fields that may have been adapted from their mother planet (3). Perhaps if a field is strong enough, it can counter the effects of a low escape velocity and sputtering, keeping an atmosphere around longer.

Another important factor is the ability of a planet or moon to control its temperature and maintain carbon dioxide levels through geological activity. Mars, for example, does not have a current carbonate-silicate cycle, so it cannot produce enough CO<sub>2</sub> to provide a "green house" effect and heat up its atmosphere (LePage 4). Tidal heating, as occurs on some of Jupiter's moons, is a possible solution to the lack of this cycle. Tidal heating is probably limited to moons because it depends on the mass of the planet it orbits, and the proximity and orbits of nearby moons, to provide the force to create volcanic tides in rock (4).

The length of day for a moon or planet also effects its ability to support life (LePage 5). If a body's day is too long or short, or it is locked into a state of none-rotation like most large moons, then surface temperatures will either experience large swings, in the case of the former, or in the latter be too uniform. Studies also show, however, that an atmosphere with a lot of carbon dioxide can act to heat the dark side of a locked or

synchronous planet, and similarly slowly rotating bodies can be kept at constant temperatures with CO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O clouds, and large bodies of water (5).

A final factor in survival on a moon or planet is the eccentricity of the body's orbit. Although many planets discovered so far have mean orbits in a habitable zone, their actual orbit, the path determined by their degree of eccentricity, may take the planet and any moons orbiting it farther away from the sun or too close to it (LePage 6). This could complicate temperatures, as with rotation, because the amount of sunlight could vary dramatically from time to time. Some of the problem could again be solved by the presence of carbon dioxide; as a planet moves further from the sun, the carbonate-silicate cycle (if the body has one) increases the production of CO<sub>2</sub> (Anonymous 2). This could keep levels above freezing for the duration of the outer orbit.

The conditions for life as we understand it are very specific and would be difficult to replicate. Once all of the above conditions are satisfied, the specific chemical reactions that birthed the first amino acids must be replicated. While the universe does hold many amino acids and organic compounds (Herberman 2), the odds of these things coming together on a planet or moon with an atmosphere, geologic activity, a proper day length, and an orbit of perfect eccentricity are almost infinite. Furthermore, the evolution and circumstances that produced sentient, conscious human beings are so precise and undefined that repeating them seems to face incredible odds. Nonetheless, we keep looking to the skies, both laymen at home and government funded scientists in huge observatories, and wondering. Perhaps we simply cannot bear the idea that out here at the edge of the Milky Way, so far from the glow of other galaxies, we may be utterly alone in the universe.

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## The Turning Point: Making My Own Luck

Masami Hikosaka  
Jeffrey Klausman English 101

Whenever I have stood at a turning point in my life, it has never been easy to decide which way I should go. Also, I do not know if I can change my destiny or if I should change it. However, because of one of my turning points. I came to think about when I die, and I just do not want to regret my life. People say that no one can tell the future, but until I was face to face with death, I did not really understand what they meant. Therefore, after I had this turning point and had to decide something, I made up my mind not to regret about what I have done because I learned from my experience that there is no regretting in advance.

Since I was interested in English, especially speaking English, my youngest brother, who was Western student, suggested to me to come the United State to study English again for five years. Even though I knew I was lucky, and it was easier for me to do because I had a family member in the U.S., I could not decide if I should come here. The reason why I wavered on the subject is that I had a job and worked for my family business; I was afraid of losing my job and money, I had saved, and afraid of leaving my father alone—he was 68 years old and previously had a heart attack. Also, I had never studied hard especially English since I was a high school student in Japan—even I sometimes likely escaped high school, I climbed over the school gate and skipped many English classes during college, so although I was interested in speaking English, I was really not sure I was able to become bilingual. First, all my friends who know me from high school were very surprised and thought that I was out my mind, and the whole idea was unreasonable.

I am an only daughter with two brothers in my family, and my mother passed away a long time ago. In Japan, some people tend to think that a daughter should take care of her parents even though there is sibling, a son, and I was brought up in this way. Therefore, I for these people, there were no way that I could leave my father to do something I wanted, except marriage. I felt I was such a bad daughter if I did this, and my dream would have been against my family. Therefore, I thought that my destiny was to take care of my father and brothers, do the housework, and work for the family business. However, I was not really happy with that. Even then, I did not think I could change my destiny or could make any changes in my life. Although I wanted to find something I really liked, I did not try or think what I really want to do deeply about.

On Monday, January 17, 1995, at 5:46 a.m. in Kobe and Osaka area Japan, called kansai area, we had a big earthquake. It was announced that the magnitude of the earthquake was 7.2 on the Richter scale, and the number of deaths was over 5,500. In

addition, even thought we have frequent earthquakes in Japan and had expected a big earthquake might occur within a few years, no one though about having it in the Kansai area. Therefore, many people thought it was the end of the world. I was just lucky to survive. A day before the earthquake, while I was talking over the international phone call with my sister-in-law, I felt a weak but very strange earthquake. It was like the ground was twisted; a few people felt it. It made me feel uneasy and my sister-in-law and I talked about what might happen to me if I was in an earthquake. Also, just before the big earthquake, I woke up in the dark in my bed as clear as I had not been sleeping. Because of the conversation with my sister-in-law and the being awake at the moment, I thought it was an earthquake, so I could cover my whole body with all my quilts. Otherwise, I am sure that I would have been killed by a lot of glass, books and a broken bookstand.

The first big shock lasted for only about 20 seconds. While it was shaking I felt like I was in a blender with a lot of glass, and also I could not tell any direction; however, I amazingly I thought about many things. "I cannot die; otherwise, my baby brother will quit his American College. I cannot give them my funeral instead of my other brother's wedding—he was going to get married next month. My mother wanted me to have a long happy life. I should have gone the U.S. because I knew what I wanted to do..."

In fact, that Kansai area was hell. Many people lost their houses, placed of work, family, friends, parts of body, and lives; we lose all our power: gas, electric, and water. I was the first time for me to worry about my family, relatives, and friends whether they were dead or alive. Also, it was the first time for me that I was glad my mother was dead already since there were no functioning hospitals, and many hospitalized patients lost their lives with terror because of no electric power and heaps of rubble. I was glad my mother did not need to go though this terror with her disease.

After I escaped from our broken house with my father, I realized it was true that no one could tell the future, no one could change this kind of fate, or mother nature, and no one could buy any lives. I thought that if I were dead in the morning, I might have regretted that I did not go the U.S. even when I had a chance; if I were dead without satisfaction from my life, I might be sorry for myself. Also, I might have thought that I could not do something I wanted to do, and it was because of my family matters. However, I was too busy to be sad over losing my house and to be scared by many aftershocks because I had a lots of matter to take care of; I had to find a place to stay, to get water, and to think about how to overcome the difficulties with my old father, who has a weak heart. That was why I could face realities and also the matter of my life about why I was not really happy and satisfied.

I, however, perceived that it was really because of me. Because I did not try doing something, but also I did not try to decide what I really wanted I could not change my life to make it better. Also, I did not take matter into my own hands, but also I was passive

with my family. Although I wanted to go to the U.S., I did not think about the possibility of study abroad. I just gave up the idea of living abroad before I did something about it; even I did not talk about it with my family.

Moreover, while the area, which suffered the earthquake damage, was under reconstruction, I realized that while there is life, there is hope. In the area, many people were strong enough to make fresh starts under great difficulties, but some people were not. It depended on whether the person wished to do it or not. Like me, if people had someone they had to take care of, it was easier to recover from such a chock of realities than for the people who had to do it for themselves. However, I thought that I wanted to be a person who could recover for one's self, too.

In fact, I might have been dead, but I was not; therefore, I thought I should make good use of my life. In order not to have regrets, I should take a chance; otherwise, the chance would pass e by. Also, I remember what I thought about during the horrible shaking: I did not want my family to be unhappy. For that, I should make myself happy, but also should not blame my destiny on my family. I thought that if it was time to be dead, I just did not want to say that I could not have done something because of my families who love me, and whom I love.

Finally, after we rebuild our house, I persuaded my boss, my uncle (who were in charge of my family business), and my younger brother (who has thought I have done nonsense) to understand me that I wanted to go to the U.S. and study again. At this time, I was able to make them understand me because of the earthquake, which changed the thoughts for all of my own recognition and us. It was not easy to be understood by my family and make my boss consent to my quitting work. However, I could not help working hard on my wish to study abroad.

When I was in Japan, I was afraid of changing my life, but also I did not try to change it or think about what I really wanted to do. I, therefore, think that even if I had some god chances in my life, I would not have realized it. I was afraid of doing something by myself because I was afraid of failure; I did not take matters into my own hand, however. Moreover, I did not realize that I could not make my family happy unless I was really happy, and like my mother, they wanted me to be happy. Sometimes, I still waver between coming and going. In fact, I, again, stand at a turning point. Since I found other ways of transferring to the university, I must decide whether I should change my college or not in a month. Because of some advantages and disadvantages of both colleges to me, I am not sure what I should do yet. This will make a major change to my plans in studying abroad, and also if I make misjudgment, the plan might fall.

However, after this earthquake, I learned how I could make a decision with a good grasp of my objectives, what about I want to do and whom I want to be in my life. If I understand what I want to do and make efforts to obtain it, even if something I try goes

wrong, I would accept the result, but also I might not regret what I did. Everyone has a life, but it is only once, and also it is not always rosy. Now I, however, think that I cannot live in the past, but I can destroy the present with worrying about the future. Therefore, I should make an effort to obtain new goals are not to let a chance slip by and regret my life.



Karuna Arnold  
*Benu*  
Oil on canvas, 18" x 24"

*Artist's comment: This was an open assignment, so I decided to paint from a photo that I had of Benu. Benu is my beautiful black cat. I liked the photo because of the contrast of colors and the fact that Benu had jumped into this old Thai crib. She looked so small, but obviously felt protected. I wanted to capture that.*

*Karuna Arnold*

*Instructor's comment on Art 120 artwork: I try to set up a painting assignment so that the conditions for success are high. When creatively interpreted by an attentive student the results are sometimes spectacular. "Benu," for example, began as a unifying dark tone and thicker, brighter colors were layered on top to produce a rich and harmonious painting. "Reflection of Life Passed By" is a study in contrasts, both in the way the paint was applied and in the viewing of life. "2000" concerns the examination of tactile presences and introspection.*

*Lloyd Blakley, Art 120*

## Forever Old

*Jeremy Lemcke  
Margaret Bikman, Library 201*

A battle cry is emerging through the Pacific Northwest. Between California and Canada, from the coastal plains to the high Cascades: old-growth or ancient forests are being stripped from the land in a process known as clear-cutting. Clear-cutting is the practice of cutting down every tree on a large tract of land. It is used extensively in old-growth forests, and it has the single most devastating impact on the forest's ecosystem. Loggers send snarling chainsaws through the flesh of these old-growth forests that have held their place against wind, fire, rockslides, and floods for over two hundred years. It takes only ninety seconds for four feet of searing steel to rip through the thick bark, living tissues, and growth rings of an old-growth tree (Gup 56). Although loggers' jobs are at stake, irreplaceable old-growth forests should be saved, because they play an integral role in supporting the wildlife, cleaning the air, providing resources for many people, and enriching the land.

Why should loggers have to sacrifice their jobs to save the old-growth trees? Today, analysts suggest that somewhere between only five and twelve percent of this nation's original, native forests remain unharmed by human intrusion and they continue to topple at an incredible rate every day (Dumont 2.). Trees are clear-cutted to the ground, leaving stumps to bleach in the hot sun. Trees are plowed in piles by heavy machinery that trample over the forest's floor. According to the National Audubon Society, "Each year enough old-growth trees are taken from the Northwest to fill a convoy of trucks twenty thousand miles long" (Gup 56). Even right now as you read this, old-growth trees are being sawed down to the ground and Americans are not aware of it.

Some loggers and timber advocates take a much different stand than conservationists. They feel that radical environmentalists express biocentrism, which is the notion "that all living things are of equal worth, and the health of the whole ecosystem takes precedence over the needs and interests of individuals" (Chappelle and Webster 3). Timber advocates claim that in America we import more wood than we export so that our excessive consumption of wood comes from over-cutting forests in other countries. The problem with this is that every time we export logs, we export the processing jobs that could have been produced. Unfairly, the loss of loggers' jobs gets blamed on the environmentalists who want to save the ancient forests. If we would stop the exports we would have many more logs for our own use instead. We then could possibly export value added wood products and create new jobs due to the decrease in timber production. The

basic problem for loggers is that the forests do not last forever. Often timber industries are just after a short-term gain that the forests provide. It's been the tradition for the industry to cut trees down then move on to a new area. The problem with this is that there is a very limited area to move on in the Pacific Northwest (Lonsdale 23).

Many timber companies feel they are doing no harm by cutting old-growth forests, because they plant hundreds of new trees in tree farms. These tree farms may produce a quick yield of timber, but ecologically, they cannot take the place of a natural forest. Tree farms are physically inferior to natural forests. They have inherent weaknesses that makes them far more susceptible to disease, insects, and fire. "Never in the history of the world have humans achieved successful perpetual rotations of clear-cutting and replanting" (Chapman 18). When an old-growth forest becomes clear-cut, the forest is lost forever. To say that loggers' jobs will be lost as a sole result of protecting trees is misleading. Jobs will inevitably be lost when the worlds remaining old-growth is felled. (Kerasote 2)

Though there might never be an agreement between loggers and conservationists, we can only hope that an answer will prevail soon. Meantime, much of our forests are providing the world with paper cups and disposable diapers. Our forests are much more valuable than this, but our paper industry hopes "we will continue our...consumption of paper and not look beyond the narrow beauty strips left along the highways and see the millions of acres of missing forests," write Doug Murray and Dana Smith, who are working to protect the Southeast's forests (1). If this mass tree consumption continues to occur, timber prices will rise, because the forests just cannot keep pace with the lumber company's appetite for wood as the old-growth trees approach extinction.

Yes, if loggers stop or slow logging among ancient forests, timber prices will rise, but the timber costs are minor compared to the priceless wildlife lost at the cost of deforestation. Rescuing the owl and the timeless forests may mean barring the logging industry from many tracts of virgin timberland and that would deliver a jarring economic blow to timber companies. (Gup 57). The old-growth trees hold a variety of species that reinforce the overall health and balance of the ecosystem. Shutting down logging industries such as Ketchikan Pulp Company might not be the answer. K.P.C is Alaska's 17<sup>th</sup> largest private employer and shutting it down would result in 1,000 people out of work (Satchell 2). Though some loggers might lose their jobs, the people in the Pacific Northwest have to understand that we have been running a ecological deficit and the bill has come in. If we do not take action fast, there will be pain for owls, for people, and for trees. (Gup 58)

The owl is not the only wildlife that is danger. "At least 118 other vertebrate species also use old-growth. These include ospreys, northern goshawks, northern flying squirrels, red voles, fishers, five species of salamanders, and Roosevelt elk. Forty-one of these species are so closely tied to old growth that they're unable to find nesting, breeding or foraging grounds anywhere else" (Kerasote 2). The spotted owl plays an important role

in the food chain in the forests, because the owl serves as a population indicator. If the spotted owl becomes extinct, so too will many other species. "Saving the owl will not be a simple task. It involves both political and economic issues. By curbing the logging industries, humans lose jobs and the Pacific Northwest is then exposed to a disruption in its economy" (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 8).

Besides the importance of protecting the forests for wildlife, forests have many other uses that can directly help humans. The old-growth forests help counter global warming. Daily, power plant smokestacks and automobile exhaust create carbon dioxide, which escapes into the atmosphere and increases global warming. A forest removes carbon dioxide from the air in a process common to all green plants, photosynthesis. "More than half of the carbon removed from the forest when old-growth is logged returns to the atmosphere as CO<sub>2</sub>" (Bishop 1). The ancient forests are the greatest storehouses of carbon in the world and this carbon is released when these logs are clear-cut to the ground. According to Warren Cohen, "The forests of the Pacific Northwest occupy less than 25 percent of the world's total forests, clear-cutting and other practices have made them the producers of 1.31 percent of the land-use-related CO<sub>2</sub> added to the atmosphere annually" (Bishop1).

If we continue to harvest forests as a crop we will not only exhaust the land to the point of infertility, we also will destroy one more chunk of the world's carbon dioxide conserving oxygen producing forests. "Recent estimates suggest that deforestation worldwide releases about 2 billion tones of carbon into the atmosphere every year through burning and decomposition" (Pye-Smith 1). Changes to the earth's atmosphere are by nature global, and for all practical purposes irreplaceable, not only in our lifetime, but in those of our children and grandchildren as well.

Our children and grandchildren will not only face the problems of global warming, but the harsh diseases that increasingly spread throughout the world. If protected, the old-growth trees will play an important role in preventing and fighting diseases. For example, the old growth Pacific Yew tree has shown many cancer-fighting promises for the future. We are probably just on the edge of understanding the trees. If we continue eliminating old-growth forests, we'll never have the opportunity to learn about them, because they won't be there to study. The cutting of the old-growth forests eliminate any potential breakthroughs in the medical field. "Fifty percent of all medication come from organic sources and if we wipe out the world's old growth forests we could be destroying the only cure for some of the world's most devastating diseases" (Chapman18).

Old-growth forests enhance the productivity of fisheries and enrich the stability and character of the soil. Trees, soil, and water have a mutually beneficial relationship: remove or damage one and you remove or damage the others. In a clear-cut rainfall can erode large amounts of nutrients and topsoil. The forests help rainfall from running off

the ground as they suck up water into their roots. Fish habitats are destroyed by high spring runoff which follows intensive logging in a watershed. Pacific salmon and trout are facing increased risks of extinction the logging of the Pacific Northwest forests. Logs are hauled through the forest and cause soil degradation as well as altering water flow patterns. Logging in forests can result in disrupted streams that are "left to wide, too shallow, too warm, lacking cover, suffering from excessive erosion, choked with fine sediment, too likely to flood, without healthy riparian vegetation, and confined away from wetlands and floodplains." (Powell 2). Some loopholes even allow clear-cutting to occur directly across streams

The people of the Pacific Northwest have a choice. Our forests can be left in the hands of the timber industries or be kept forever old the way nature intended them to be. Consider what the old-growth trees provide in terms of wildlife, storage of carbon and water, potential breakthrough in the medical field, and fisheries along with soil and compare this to the use of old-growth trees for plywood, toilet paper and diapers. The old-growth trees will become extinct unless an action of change takes place. Saving the forests might have a few costly affects in years to come, but will be much easier than facing the priceless affects in the future.

What would the world be, once bereft  
Of wet and of wilderness? Let them be left.  
O let them be left, wilderness and wet.  
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.  
— Gerald Manley Hopkins, *Inversnaid*  
(Gup 1)

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## Vegetable Soup for the Soul

Brian Mapes

Pamela Helberg, English 101

This summer, I attended my friends' wedding. They had a beautiful ceremony followed by large buffet style diner. I was chatting with some of the groom's friends as we waited in line for the food. We were in the middle of talking about the wedding and how it was strange to see our friends getting married, when all of a sudden, conversation stopped, everyone's eyes focused down on to my plate. There in the middle of my plate, resting on a bun was a green and brown puck-shaped disk.

"What's that?" they all asked inquisitively.

"A Gardenburger" I responded with a little sigh. They proceeded to run down the list of questions that all beef-eaters ask all vegetarians when they see them eating non meat products:

"You don't eat meat?"

"No."

"So there is no meat in that thing!"

"No."

"What's in it then."

"I don't know."

"Does it taste gross."

"No."

"Does it taste like meat?"

"No."

"Why don't you eat meat?"

This is the question that always stumps me. I can never give quite the right answer to fulfill myself, only to fulfill them. I know why I quit eating meat, but my opinion of it has changed drastically since then.

When I became a vegetarian, morals helped my decision. I did not feel like I could seriously condemn acts of animal testing or fur clothing while I continued to eat meat. How could I fight for an animal's rights while I ate them? However, as the years went by, I found that eating meat affected the world and me much more than I had ever considered before. The sum of eating meat adds up to be a lot more than just the slaughtering of animals; individual health, and the health of the planet are also at stake.

I toyed with the thought of breaking out the big guns and informing my inquisitors of every little meat fact I had stored in memory, but I decided to let it go and tell them it was health related. After that, they all left me alone to eat my grain patty in

peace. I began thinking about meat and why so many people still consume so much of it. If thought about rationally, from an alien perspective, the idea of meat is ridiculous in this day and age. I once watched a show on television about auto manufacturing. It had several scientists discussing what cars would be like, had they been invented a hundred years later. They bickered about many of their predictions, but the one they were all sure about was the fuel they would use. They all agreed that there was no way anyone would have chosen gasoline to propel cars had they been invented in the 1990s: We have many choices that are more efficient now that are much less harmful. I wonder what humans would have decided to eat, if the appetite had been invented in the 90s.

Meat and gasoline may have more in common with each other than we think if we consider our bodies as our vehicles. It has been proven over the years that oil is an inefficient fuel source. The pollution it causes and waste of energy it takes to make it is much greater than the energy it produces. It is also hard on our car engines as well. Meat is hard on our bodies; it gets stuck in places where it shouldn't; it clogs up arteries and is breeding grounds for diseases. Meat may be a renewable resource, but the amount of land used to grow a pound of beef could be used to grow ten times as much grain product. The resources used to grow a pound of beef could feed a family of four for a week. Two thousand five hundred gallons of water is used to grow a pound of beef, and half of all water consumed in the United States is used to grow feed or is drunk by cattle or livestock. Meat has a large environmental impact on rainforests. Not all meat is rainforest beef of course, but a large percent of it is. Meat has become the number one cause for rainforest depletion, and this means more than just trees, many animal, plant, and insect species are being wiped out for cheap grazing land.

After the lunch buffet, everybody scrambled to their cars and drove a few blocks to the local Eagles Hall the bride and groom had rented for their reception. After about an hour everybody began relaxing and enjoying the music of the band. The feasting continued at the hall, and alcohol was added to the equation. The bride's mother began talking to me about the wedding and pictures and people and the band, and finally on to food. She asked if I had enjoyed everything, and I told her it was fine, and thanked her for adding gardenburgers on the menu. She asked me if I was a vegetarian, and as soon as I replied, she began telling me stories of every vegetarian she knew. Then she began to tell me of her father and how the doctors were telling him to quit eating meat. It turns out he was having a hard time stopping himself from eating meat. Not that surprising really if you think about it, especially if you live in the U.S. 64 percent of U.S. cropland is used to grow feed for livestock while only 2 percent is used for producing fruits and vegetables. This country is very meat oriented. I quit eating meat at a young age, and it was not very easy, and still is very difficult. If I had eaten meat for 50 or 60 years before I quit, I bet quitting would be nearly impossible.



Her grandfather was also concerned about protein, because he wanted to keep his strength. I told her to tell him about Dave Scott, six-time winner of the Ironman Triathlon and the only man to win it more than twice. He stuck to vegetables and did just fine. I informed her as well that there were many vegetables that were just as good, if not better, sources of protein than meat. She seemed to take the information unseriously, as most people who eat meat do. It is hard for a person to believe something is bad for them when they use it every day.

Elderly people are not the only ones at risk from meat. Women who eat meat are 3.2<sup>1</sup> times more likely to develop breast cancer and men who eat meat are 3.6 times more likely to develop fatal prostate cancer. Risk of heart attack rises as well. America's most common cause of death is heart disease and the risk of death from a heart attack for the average American is 50 percent, but it drops drastically for Americans with a diet of no meat or dairy products to 4 percent. In addition, 68 percent of all U.S. diseases are diet related and most of them are preventable by having a low fat animal free diet. This does not include meat diseases such as salmonella, which one third of all inspected chickens have. A poll surveying poultry inspectors found out that 75 percent of them would not eat chicken. Most Americans are so stuck on meat that even the idea of not eating meat horrifies them, and America is not an easy place to quit. Fast food restaurants are found everywhere, and non-meat items are found nowhere on their menus. Meat industry is a booming one; it has a lot of money to throw around to get its way, and usually does. We deserve a better choice.

After the party had ended and everyone was had left, or were in the process of leaving, I noticed all the left over food, and I noticed the clean-up crew throwing it all away. I began to think of the farmer who had spent so much time in the field growing vegetables, the bakers who put so much effort in making rolls and buns, and the animals that had given their lives for cold cuts. The night of talking about environmental and human ill effects of meat had me almost forgetting about all the other lives at stake. I had nearly forgotten the thousands and thousands of tortured animals that waited their entire painful confined life just to die so they could be processed into cold cuts and be thrown away. It all but made me sick thinking about it. How can we be so cruel to other living creatures? I began feeling rather depressed about the whole thing. How dare someone look down on me because I choose not to destroy life. I was getting ready to arm myself to teeth and go fight for animal freedom when I remembered that people had certain freedoms that

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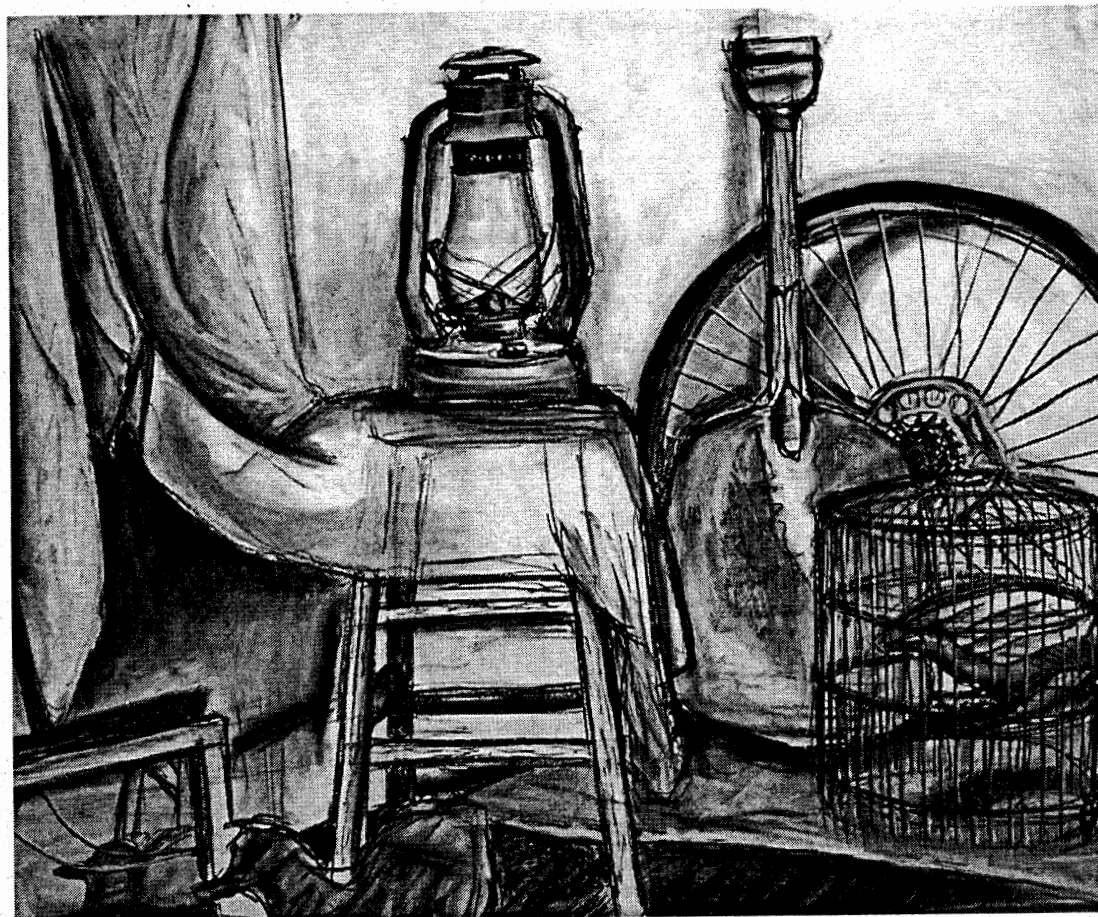
<sup>1</sup> Diet for A New America by John Robbins pg248-273

nobody should take away and the fact that I could be arrested for it. So I began thinking of ways to help stop the senseless slaughtering of animals.

In other countries, animals don't come prepackaged, in ready for the grill form; they come much more natural, alive. I believe if Americans had to buy live animals, take them home, butcher them, clean them, and then cook them up, many things would be different. For one Americans would have a lot more respect for what they were eating. Too many people grow up not really knowing where meat comes from. My mother always told me that it came from trees. I would have been horrified if I known what murder had taken place for it.

I don't believe having to butcher their own animals would stop all Americans from eating animals, but it wouldn't hurt. Maybe it would restore some of the Animals dignity as well. We could stop looking at cows and pigs as food, and start looking at them like we do other animals. Who are we to choose what animals die anyway? Americans look down at other cultures for eating cats and dogs, and then we eat another countries' sacred animals. Where is the logic in our choices? The only thing I can come up with is that animals are chosen by physical appearance. Cute animals get to live and ugly ones get sent to slaughter house.

As I helped the clean-up crew finish, and said my last good-byes to the few remaining stragglers left, a calm feeling fell upon me. My mind began to slow down and a happiness came over me. I may not be able to save the world, I thought, or make everyone stop eating meat, but at least I am doing something to help. I could see that in my own way I was making a better world for myself, my family, and most importantly, the cows.



Mariko Takano  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal, 30" x 36"

## Brilliance with Despair

Thomas Daniel  
Jane Frankenfeld, English 100

Vincent Van Gogh was born in 1853 at Groot-Zundert, in North Brabant, Holland. He was the first of the Dutch Expressionists. His artistic style of inner-self-expression was emphasized with rather realistic portrayals of common people and rural places. However, he suffered from hallucinations, which would leave him with only vague memories of the events that transpired during these episodes. During one of these periods of infirmity, he was confined to the asylum of Saint-Re'my-de-Provence, where he generated a hundred and fifty paintings and hundreds of drawings. Unfortunately, Van Gogh's work as an artist was not appreciated during his lifetime; in fact, he only sold one painting while he was alive. Consequently, his financial position frequently caused him instability and despair. Today, however, he is regarded as one of the greatest impressionists.

One can see the changes in Van Gogh's style of painting throughout his lifetime by viewing the only constant subject matter: himself. For example, the self-portrait done at Antwerp, Holland (November 1885-February 1886) exhibits the Dutch influence of dark, earthy tones. Next, in a series of self-portraits done in Paris (1887-September 1888), one can see the changes of style he made after discovering Japanese fabrics and prints which swayed his influences. However, the self-portrait "Pipe with Bandaged Ear" (February 1889) significantly stands out from the rest. In this self-portrait, he appears distressed and fragile, unlike in his other self-portraits where he appears confident and intense. In this piece, Van Gogh most likely was examining himself to understand his own personal perspective.

Vincent Van Gogh's self-portrait "Pipe with Bandaged Ear" was painted during an irrational period in his life. After his relationship with Paul Gauguin ended at the height of a tumultuous period, Van Gogh severed off his own ear. Perhaps this self-portrait was done during one of the periods of hallucinations, which may be why the self-portrait exhibit qualities that create an intense wonder and dismay leaving the viewer to ask who this person is and what he is thinking. The painting shows a deep sense of torment accompanied by questions about his identity especially because of his bouts of instability; he worried about how he was regarded by others. Yet, he also reveals a mysterious peace, as if he knows something that has provided him with a sense of utopia. His eyes appear to be deep, compassionate, peering, hard, yet soft, as though glazed and clouded by the things he has seen and felt.

These personal insights are drawn from the visual qualities of his self-portrait. The more specific qualities in Van Gogh's art are displayed through images, colors, and brush

*Artist's comment: This drawing is from memory. The still life was set up outside in the hall, and I was allowed to look at it as often as I wanted, but I had to draw inside the classroom. In making this drawing, I focused on the shapes and their relationships to each other rather than the identities of the objects.*

Mariko Takano  
Art 212

effects. For instance, the variations of color intensity jump out at the viewer with an array of vibrant primary colors: reds, oranges, greens, blacks and whites with radical contrast yet lusterless. However, there are very obscure changes which allow the colors to merge and blend, producing shades with a smoothness of brilliance accentuated by colors of blues, blacks, whites, greens, grays, browns, beige, oranges and reds commanding great concentration by the viewer.

The visual organization of Van Gogh's painting is spectacular, possessing a mastery of separation that functions as a whole. The organization of a great artwork is similar to that of an orchestra made up of individual musicians who all play various musical instruments, who, when properly arranged or harmonized, function as a whole. The horizontal line that is positioned in alignment with his eyes creates one of the outstanding effects. The line dividing the background focuses the viewer's attention to the detailed facial expression; his face and eyes appear to be swollen, possibly induced by tears. Yet, his nose has a rounded bridge unlike the distinct and sharp features in his other self-portraits; the eyes are set deeply into the face and his nose has a bridge that is flat and straight. Finally, the dressing covering his ear is pale green and blends in with the coat where it meets the face. This sparks the viewers' curiosity as to why it was bandaged; possibly suggesting the bandage was part of the outfit and whether or not he was trying to hide the injury.

When viewing the self-portrait "Pipe with Bandaged Ear," it is difficult for the viewer not to take into consideration the emotional condition of Vincent Van Gogh and how he penetrates his own image beyond what is obvious. A central image in the portrait is the pipe; painted with great detail and care, giving the viewer a sense that Van Gogh had a great fondness for the pipe and received comfort from it. However, the amount of smoke that swirls upward in the portrait along with the pipe's bowl and red coals, suggests how intensely he must have been using it at the time. Another interesting detail is that he is dressed in the self-portrait as if dressed for the outdoors, but the portrait appears to be painted indoors. The coat is bold with a fullness that envelopes his body as if he wanted to hide within it or perhaps fending off a fever caused by infection under the bandage. Then there is the hat and its unruly fur, which suggest dark thoughts bursting forth from his brain. This possibly may be the point when he begins to feel he is losing all control of his life and now entertains thoughts of suicide, or perhaps he was experiencing a catharsis which would help him exact the chaos of his thoughts to allow relief and the ability to function.

In this self-portrait by Van Gogh, his detailed face is incredible, almost mesmerizing in its expression because the lines and blending of the colors and shades give the viewer the feeling that it is going to come alive. The dark pupils are like that of a well's bottom that cannot be seen, with musty bluish green corneas that yield to a distinct bright

pinkish red in the corner of the eyes nearest the nose. The multitude of colors in the face displays illness, fatigue, and a dispirited man. The coloration of the painting, the face in particular, displays great grief or self-persecution.

Contributing to the emotional effect of the self-portrait are the brush strokes. The visual brush strokes produced by stiff lines create simplicity to the self-portrait, yet convey an acuteness of expression by graphic means. In this self-portrait, Van Gogh's brush strokes are much less obvious than many of his other self-portraits. The brush strokes in the face are so soft, they are almost indistinguishable. The pipe smoke is done with curves rather than a billowing effect, like white fluffy clouds. These apparent changes in how he had seen and painted himself in the past produced questions as to why he inspected himself so meticulously. Having done a total of forty-seven self-portraits, it is apparent that he was constantly examining himself.

Through the scrutiny of this self-portrait "Pipe with Bandaged Ear" and his other self-portraits, it is obvious that apparent changes took place in Van Gogh's style of painting during his brief ten years as an artist. Analysis of the over-all color intensity, visual organization, specific images of colors, and brush effects of his self-portraits leaves the viewer with a question of whether or not he was close to transforming his style of painting again. One can only wonder what masterpieces he would have produced if he had not committed suicide in July 1890.

Vincent Van Gogh's self-portrait, "Pipe with Bandaged Ear," has affected me in a profound way, leaving me with questions about why he severed his ear and why he painted himself in this condition: was he hoping to catch something in the painting about himself that he may not have seen or understood in himself? Could he have been relying on the self-portrait to perhaps teach him something or provide an answer to a question he was unable to ask or write with words? Maybe this was a way for him to search out his feelings and release his frustrations with himself and perhaps life. Through my research of this self-portrait of Vincent Van Gogh, I recognize the brilliance in all of his works as well as how he was haunted by his despair. Furthermore, I have gained a desire to further research this man's life and search out a deeper sense of feeling and appreciation for the complexity yet simplicity of his work.

## Death in Shakespeare's Tragedies

Erin Meier

Robert Winters, *English 258*

It was evening. I was in a large University library and I had been researching in circles for most of the afternoon. Standing exhausted between seemingly endless stacks of books, I pulled out a Sociology textbook. In the act of scanning through it I came across a picture that affected me to such a degree that I sat down on the floor stunned. It was a black and white photograph, which depicted a young boy around the age of fifteen holding an old man cradled in his arms like a babe. The old man was clearly suffering from a fatal illness. He was emaciated; his skin hung off his frame and he could not have weighed more than ninety pounds. His eyes stared up at the boy in mute agony but with trust. I had physically affecting waves of horror and fear breaking over me as I sat almost shivering between the book stacks. For the first time in my nineteen years, I comprehended why...why people can choose to live despite physical pain which seems unendurable. Crouching on the cold library carpet, I realized that death means the end of me, the end of myself, the end of existence forever. It sounds simple. I had contemplated it before, but suddenly I *understood* it. Never again does one have the chance to feel cold, to hear music, to smell sunshine, to exist, to feel, to think, to be.

I knew then that for me the evil of death lay in the reality of nonexistence. However, death, or the ways that death can be considered evil is different depending upon the person. Is death evil because it means non-existence? Is death good only as long as it means heaven follows it? Is death only evil to those bound for hell? Is death simply a natural process, neither good nor evil? Does death become evil because of the circumstances surrounding it? Can the state of mind in which one meets death affect its relative evilness? Shakespeare explored these possibilities throughout all his writings. I wish to discuss certain moments in the plays *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* that resonate with the starkness of death. With the aid of four critical essays by assorted authors, I will show that these scenes, besides being entertaining and artistically fine, inquire thoughtfully into the enigma of death.

In the play *King Lear*, when Lear carries out his dead daughter Cordelia, some essential quandaries concerning death are considered. In Act three, scene five Lear has already endured the betrayal of his other two daughters, the onset of madness and the frustration of capture by the forces of Regan and Goneril. He is exhausted. He confirms in the first few lines of his speech that Cordelia is dead, but then goes on to ask for a mirror in the hopes that she may still breathe. He holds a feather over her so that he might catch her breathing. However, Cordelia is decidedly dead, it cannot be disputed. Yet Lear is

struck by the idea that had he been a little earlier he could have averted her death. After all he did manage to catch her assassin and dispatch him. He cries out, "I might have saved her; now she's gone forever./ Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little"(Orgel 139). Death is irrevocable: is that what makes it such a frightening evil? One can recover from a broken leg or brainwashing, but death cannot be reversed. Here we see Lear tragically frustrated by the knowledge that Cordelia's banishment from his life is now absolute. Unlike her removal to France earlier in the play, Lear knows that now he will never see her again. Adding to the tragedy is the awareness that given just a bit more time or foreknowledge Lear could have prevented it. Later in this scene Lear says, "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life./And thou no breath at all?"(Orgel 141). This is a timeless question concerning death. Why should worthy people die, people who are beloved or even those who are young? Why should such people die when many people live who are awful in their wickedness? Why should a young person die, when an exhausted person ninety-five years of age lives on? Why should some people die at sixty-five, who want desperately and passionately to live on? Is this what makes death evil? That it seems to randomly slaughter people with no concern for their individual value? Of course from there, one could argue, who can judge value?

Nonetheless, I think the audience can deeply relate to Lear as he bemoans the loss of Cordelia. "Her voice was ever soft,/ Gentle and low..."(Orgel 139-140). Here we see that not only can death be evil due to its finality but also depending upon who dies. Lastly this scene addresses the manner in which one dies. That is, a death can be considered good by some if it were peaceful. Cordelia's death was not peaceful; she was murdered. This definitely seems to bother Lear. No one could wish for someone to die a violent death, and to see one's own daughter die thusly is certainly grounds for sorrow. Lear declares, "I killed the slave that was a-hanging thee", almost proudly (Orgel 140). It seems he is trying still to atone to Cordelia for his dismissal of her, and of course he cannot help but recognize that had Cordelia not returned to save him, she should not have died. It is bitter to see a beloved person die a cruel death, but even more so to feel that oneself should have been the cause of it. "Howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones...She's gone forever. I know when one is dead, and when one lives./ *She's dead as earth...*" (Orgel 139 italics mine).

In the essay, "King Lear and the Psychology of Dying", Susan Snyder contends that a valuable analysis of Lear can be made by comparing Lear's struggles to Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' outline of a patient's successive states as he or she faces death. This works out well for her essay. The part that is valuable to my argument begins with her discussion of Lear's relationship with Cordelia. In a footnote earlier in the essay, Snyder discusses the myth of Adam and Eve. She says that the idea of the snake being the source of trouble makes it so that a, "contradictory sense grows up that death, rather than proceeding from human imperfection, has been laid upon naturally immortal man by a mysteriously malevolent

outside force" (Snyder 450). Thus she points out that in our occidental culture the evil of death is seen to have originated from a source outside ourselves. When she begins to discuss Cordelia, Snyder explains that Cordelia, "Like the other two daughters,...is in some sense a part of Lear as well as a separate person. Her death is thus an aspect of his own, but its separateness allows Lear to do the impossible, to experience his own death and cry out against the terrible wrongness of it...Hers is senseless and violent" (Snyder 459). Lear sees the various true and pitiable reasons that Cordelia's death is such a violation of our human understanding. Cordelia's death causes Lear to understand the horror of his own, even before he knows that he is dying. For the audience Cordelia's death and her father's subsequent grief confirm the tragedy of the entire story that has played out before us. "Cut off young against all expectation and justice, Cordelia embodies our sense of death as wrong, outrageous. The hanging, the attack from without, expresses our unconscious conviction that, since death cannot be natural to us, it must come as a 'malicious intervention from the outside by someone else'" (Snyder 459). Snyder has isolated a large part of the audience's sympathy, and it is clever that she connects Cordelia's self with Lear's. We, the audience, are not only troubled by Cordelia's death for her sake, but for Lear's. To see Lear endure the finality of such an evil after his assorted trials seems far too much to ask. Then when Lear expires from exhaustion and heartbreak on stage, it seems almost inevitable. From the beginning of the play when Lear declares his own infirmity to rule, to the last shock of a beloved daughter's death, we are watching the death throes of a king. Taken as a whole this scene is essentially preoccupied with the absoluteness of death.

The scene I wish to discuss from the play *Hamlet* does not involve the death of a character. Rather it is the soliloquy of formidable reputation from Act Three, Scene One. One question which this soliloquy broaches almost unconsciously is the idea that the relative evilness of one's death depends upon the sort of life one lived before it. "Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer/ The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune or to take arms against a sea of troubles/ And by opposing end them" (Spencer 124). Perhaps death is less evil to people who have lived an active life, persons who have gone after what they believed in. It certainly isn't meant to say that, but as Hamlet questions whether or not to take action, the idea that death is bitter to those who have not lived without taking full advantage of their physicality and will, permeates the soliloquy. Conceivably part of what drives people to achieve in this life is the hope that when they die they will feel less badly about it because they will feel their life was useful or meaningful.

Then there is the other question debated for many years. "'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished... To die, to sleep- / To sleep- perchance to dream...in that sleep of death what dreams may come/ When we have shuffled off this mortal coil/ must give us pause" (Spencer 124). Hamlet essentially feels that if people were not frightened of hell after death and were assured that death would only be a peaceful sleep, more people would be

willing to take their lives. That is death is only evil if a person must experience pain following their decease. Is this certain? Even if death is merely oblivion, does that make it less vile? In oblivion is the end of all thought, all hope. "Who would fardels bear,/ To grunt and sweat under a weary life,/ But that the dread of something after death,/ The undiscovered country, from whose bourn/ No traveler returns, puzzles the will..." (Spencer 124). In this age of atheism, many people have lived through horrendous trials of agony without taking their lives. Despite their certainty of nothingness, they still fear death. Then of course there is the camp of humanity who devoutly believe they are going to heaven. Can death possibly be evil for them? Perhaps their deaths could be made evil through the manner of their dying or other alternatives I have discussed above. It is interesting too, that the promise of heaven while encouraging some people to lead a moral life, has as "the opiate of the people" kept some from living a satisfying life, from taking action. When death comes people are forced to accept the manner in which they have lived their life because it is the end. It seems almost that death is a sort of irrational number. It has infinite possibilities for evil without ever needing to repeat itself.

"We do offence to the speech, or so it seems to me, unless we see Hamlet contemplating first, the killing of others with perhaps, then, his own death, and second, a suicide: both are ways of taking arms against a sea of troubles; and the taking arms in either form is seen against the fearful background of a world to come in which condign punishment may be inflicted by a righteous God" (James 33). So D.G. James says in his essay entitled, "The New Doubt". This gives a new perspective on the speech which is valuable to my arguments above. Hamlet is shown to be questioning the relative evil of various paths of action, all of which involve death., excepting of course the inactive path. James sees that Hamlet has not only death to contemplate in his situation, but also retribution. That is, by murdering anyone, including himself, Hamlet places himself in the same trap that Claudius is in. Because death is irreversible, once Hamlet has chosen that path he cannot turn back. James later in his essay eloquently elucidates the heart of Hamlet's dilemma.

Everywhere in this play there is uncertainty and doubt: everywhere also there is incalculable and incredible conduct. . . Death may be a nothing, or a sleep, or its world may contain a heaven and a hell. It may be right to leave criminals to the action of heaven; it may also be right to find quarrel in a straw when honour (whatever that may be) is at stake (James 33).

This soliloquy may at first seem to be asking a few simple questions but as one considers its meanings, rather than answers, a continuous string of questions is follow. Thus even after

years of leaving the theater, *Hamlet's* audiences continue to contemplate what mortality can mean.

The third play that will be discussed is often referred to as, "The Scottish Play." This euphemism is indicative of the uneasiness that surrounds *Macbeth*. It is a play distended with references to and examples of evil as well as death. I will be drawing from the end of Act two, scene two and the beginning of scene three from the same act. Here we see, like in *King Lear* and *Hamlet*, reference to the finality of death. When Macduff says, "He did command me to call timely on him:/ I have almost slipped the hour"(Barnet 32), there is a terrible irony to it. We the audience know that he is by far too late, and there is a bitterness to his late arrival like that of *Lear's*. There is no longer any hope for Duncan. The second quandary concerning death which *Macbeth* addresses alike to *King Lear* is that of the manner of one's death. Is a violent death essentially more evil than a peaceful one, or does it matter? When Macduff finds the king dead he exclaims, "O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart/ Cannot conceive nor name thee"(Barnet 33). For Duncan though, would this sort of death be worse for him? In the case of the people who live after the king, a sudden, violent death it seems is more appalling. Macduff goes on to say, "Confusion now hath made his masterpiece./ Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope/ The Lord's annointed temple..."(Barnet 33). Death cannot just be evil to those who experience it, but also for persons who are touched by it, although to a considerably lesser degree.

The third concept I would like to discuss is perhaps an extension of or related to the notion that how one welcomes death depends upon the course of action one takes in life. It seems that Macbeth decidedly has chosen, "to be"(James 33), to take the active course rather than the thoughtful one. At intervals throughout the play he momentarily grasps the enormity of his actions, but ambition always *seems* to help him ignore his conscience, until the moment he is faced with his own death. In the minutes following Duncan's death Macbeth is confronted with the overwhelming evil of his actions. He realizes then that he will never again be at peace. He tells Lady Macbeth, "Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no/ more!/ Macbeth does murder sleep'—the innocent sleep, ... the death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,/ Balm of hurt minds..."(Barnet 28-29). In life he will be tormented by the knowledge of his deeds and if he kills himself he will only go to hell according to his beliefs. Indeed choosing life is only delaying his passage there. Then he hears a knock, and that knock, that intrusion of ordinary life, seems to irrevocably confirm the malevolent act that he and Lady Macbeth hath committed. Macbeth says, "Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!"(Barnet 30). Duncan's death besides spelling the end for himself, has also done so for his murderers. They are damned now no matter how they look at it. Therefore, Macbeth wishes that he could undo his

deeds, but death is non-negotiable. "Will all Neptunes' ocean wash this blood/ Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather/ The multitudinous seas incarnadine,/ Making the green one red"(Barnet 29-30).

In his essay, "The Secret'st Man of Blood. A Study of Dramatic Irony in *Macbeth*", William Blissett approaches the irony in *Macbeth* through the medium of four themes: air, blood, seed and time. It is his discussion of *time* in *Macbeth* which correlates with the arguments I have introduced above. He states:

We realize, even if Macbeth does not yet realize, that he has, like the farmer of whom the drunken porter speaks, 'hang'd himself on the expectation of plenty'. Both the temporal possibilities glimpsed in the fog of Macbeth's mind are coming to pass; time does go on, and will finally commend the ingredience of his poisoned chalice to his own lips: time has stopped at the moment of the murder, for Macbeth and his wife have gone through hell gate(Blissett 407).

Blissett adeptly explains here his idea that Macbeth has gone through with the murder not understanding the consequences. It is following the murder that he begins to understand what they have done. He shows in his essay that the porter's ramblings have a direct correlation to the murder that precedes them. The porter's first speech which discourses on hell and sinners entering into it relates to the previous scene in two ways. Firstly, it is evident that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's actions have cut them off from salvation; thus the porter's commentary on hell is very appropriate. Secondly the sinners (the farmer, the tailor and the equivocator) each have a trait in common with Macbeth. The porter's conversation with Macduff, touches on the decadent themes of lechery and drunkenness. Macbeth, however, does not partake in such activities and seems to lead a rather temperate life. So here, Macbeth's terribly foul crime is contrasted with lechery and drunkenness which hardly seem sins in contrast. Such a comparison is made later in the play when Malcolm tells Macduff that he is unfit to rule because he is given to debauchery. Macduff replies, "All these are portable, /with other graces weighed"(Barnet 74). Malcolm's faults are bearable when compared with Macbeth's. Here we see that the evil of one who inflicts death upon others is considered far greater than any other crime. The porter scene gives the dismayed audience a chance to step back and get a perspective on the death which preceded it. Furthermore Blissett explains that, "By the protagonists, time is made the object of an act of violence: an attempt is made to seize the future in the instant by catching a way nearer than the natural process of growth: Macbeth doth murder time. Time is indeed dead for him at that moment; and ...[his act] leads at last only to the impotence of tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow"(Blissett 407). This supports my assertion above that the murder of Duncan has essentially trapped Macbeth for all time.

Thus one death is capable of sending not just one, but three people to hell with one act. The evil blooms and swells like a mushroom cloud rising toward the sky.

I was lucky enough to come upon another essay concerning Macbeth entitled, "On the Knocking At The Gate," by a Thomas DeQuincey. It discusses how the shift from scene two to scene three of Act two affects the entire play as a whole. He begins by pointing out that Shakespeare has taken a novel and difficult approach to the presentation of a murderous character before an audience. In the passage below DeQuincey refers to murderers in dramatic works in general.

Our sympathy must be with *him* (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them, ~ not a sympathy of pity or approbation)...[I]n the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion, ~ jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred, ~ which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look (Masson 391-392).

DeQuincey as he speaks of the murderer's hell is also commenting upon the unreality which permeates the murder of Duncan and is brought to an abrupt halt by the arrival of Macduff and Lennox. As Lady Macbeth and Macbeth stand before the audience covered in gore, we start to feel the jaw-clenching scariness of their situation, of their deeds. The knocking pulls us from our apathy and the porter's entrance gives us time to comprehend the preceding events. DeQuincey points out that to an audience member, "at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed"(393). Thus the presence of death is not truly felt till that awful instant when life comes knocking.

For the length of this essay I have grappled with the concept of death as presented in a few of Shakespeare's tragedies. To be sure these plays are infinitely interpretable and that perhaps is Shakespeare's triumph. Like such concepts as death, beauty, evil or love, Shakespeare's plays can never be defined with the sort of clear-cut clarity that our westernized thought processes seem to long for. DeQuincey said it most eloquently in his lauded essay:

O mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art, but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers, like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing

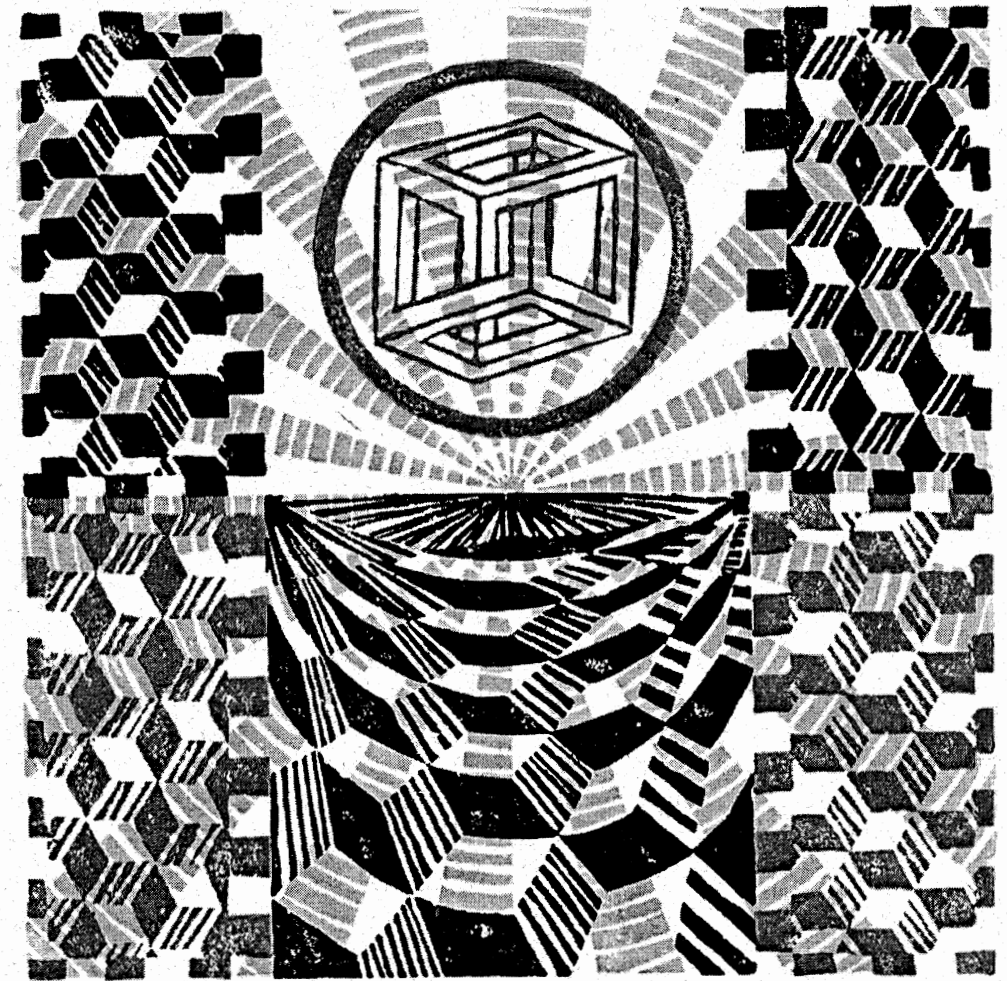
useless or inert, but that, the farther we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!(DeQuincey 393-394).

Like the gorgeous black and white photograph which affected me so deeply, Shakespeare's plays can help his audience come to a intellectual and emotional point where they begin to comprehend the reality of that great mystery, death.

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Travis Janeway  
*Extraterrestrial Chess Board*  
Linocut, 6" x 6"

**Working with an Interpreter**  
to complete an accurate and informative nursing assessment

Lynnette J. Ondeck  
Ronna Loerch, Nursing 203a

**Abstract:**

Nurses are being asked to work with culturally diverse populations. Within these cultural populations many languages are spoken. Because the nursing assessment is vital to clients receiving appropriate care, communication with a non-English speaking person is very important. The Office of Civil Rights is very clear that persons who have limited English proficiency are entitled to be provided with medical information in their primary language. Working with an interpreter is something that all nurses and health care professional need to be ready for. Guidelines for working with interpreters and tips for assuring accuracy of the information are reviewed. As is the case in many small medical facilities, interpreters are not always available. Information is included on how to handle this situation.

Doing an accurate assessment is vital to providing good health care to any individual. Without a thorough history or description of the current symptoms, providing care would be very difficult. S.H. Strumpf and K. Bass (1992) state "...students who lacked sensitivity or the ability to communicate, or both, would be handicapped significantly in their attempt to take an accurate history or win the confidence and compliance of the very diverse patient population..."(p. 113). As the diversity of the United States population changes, nurses need to be ready to work many different groups of people. Dedra Buchwald et al., (1993) writes "The day is here—or soon to come—when you'll need to communicate with patients across the barriers of language and culture through an interpreter."(p. 141). There are many aspects to working with people of different cultures and especially when working with interpreters. Some of the aspects that will be discussed in this paper include: 1) the importance of being aware of different cultures and how to be respectful of these differences, 2) the laws regarding providing care to someone whose primary language is not English, 3) guidelines for working with interpreters, and 4) what to do if an interpreter is not available. For the nurse who is working with an interpreter the information included in this paper will help to assure that an accurate and informative nursing assessment is completed.

Completing health histories and current health assessments makes it very important that health care professional are aware of cultural difference between people, even within their own culture. Transcultural nursing is a term fairly new to nursing and is

*Artist's comment: This art piece is an oil-based linocut, printed from two blocks. One block was used to print the radiating background. The other block was done in two colors, and three printings.*

*Travis Janeway  
Art 175*

something of which all health care providers need to be aware. According to Margaret McKenna, (1999) it is important that nurses are aware of the need for transcultural communication for several reasons. The first reason is the increasing cultural, ethical, and racial diversity of the American population. The population has changed dramatically since the 1970's. The percent of people living in the United State that are white has decreased. More and more people from Asia and Latin America are immigrating here. A second reason according to McKenna (1999) is the cultures within the cultures. A culture is defined as "the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another."(Urdang, 1988, p. 325). These cultures are influenced by heritage, experience and lifestyles. A third reason is that settings for health care are multicultural and multinational. By this, Mckenna(1999) is referring to work or care that is provided by many different providers of different backgrounds as well as patients and providers with different backgrounds. The last thing Mckenna (1999) states is "the nursing profession has a commitment to provide humanistic culturally appropriate care."(p. 15) This statement is the driving force behind transcultural communication.

According to McKenna (1999) cultural considerations are now being recognized by the National League of Nurses and many state boards of nursing. Because of this, these organizations have encouraged schools to include cultural concepts in the curriculum for nursing students. It is also being included in other health professions as well. In an article printed in the Public Health Report by Stumpf and Bass (1992), cross-cultural communication is being included in training provided to the Physician Assistant. The University of Southern California School of Medicine includes a 38-hour curriculum to improve its graduate's cultural communication. The goals according to Stumpf and Bass, are to:

enrich the students' personal experience and knowledge regarding cultural and socioeconomic issues related to health care for a specific population groups,... encourage students to reveal their own biases and prejudices regarding persons of different cultural and socioeconomic groups, and improve student's abilities to cope with sensitive issues relating to cultural stereotyping and health care(p. 113).

Being aware of your own personal culture and the cultures around your is very important to communication especially when the interaction takes place with a person who speaks a different language. McKenna (1999) states "The delivery of health care depends on clear communication between the individuals involved—for example patients, physicians, nurses, interpreters, and family members."(p. 13)

Communication can take place in many ways. It can be an interaction between two people, a nurse speaking to groups of people, or presenting in a class. Communication may be done orally or through body language (McKenna, 1999). Marilyn

Ray(1994) states "Increased awareness of cultural diversity in contemporary society and nursing mandates the need for transcultural nursing ethics. The core of this ethics assumes that all discourse and interaction is transcultural because of strengths and differences in values and belief of individuals and groups within global society."(p. 251). For this reason it is important that nurses recognize their own belief and value system as they work to improve transcultural communication skills. The steps that need to be completed for this to occur according to McKenna (1999) are "Assess your own cultural background. Identify the values that underlie your behavior. Recognize that communication is influenced and determined by your culture. Recognize that there are many cultures that interact in a health care setting." (p. 17).

While it is important for nurses to be aware of cultural differences, they need to also be aware of the laws that have been written that address the language barriers sometimes encountered while working with these cultural groups. The laws regarding access to care for people with limited English Proficiency is very clear. If a person who has "Limited-English Proficiency" (LEP) seeks medical attention at a federally funded medical facility, then an interpreter or other means of communicating needs to be provided ( i.e. ATT Language Line). According to Section 601 of Title VI(1998) it states "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1998, p.1). This means that any agency that receives federal money must meet requirements of Title VI. Nurses need to be aware of this because of the implication this has when working with a client who is LEP. In Title VI, Section I (1998) it states "...the language barrier often results in the denial of medical or social services, delays in the receipt of such care and services, or the provision of care and services based on inaccurate or incomplete information." (p. 3). It is important that nurses are able to communicate with their client to get complete and accurate information. Nurses need to be advocates so that all clients are given the proper medical care to which they are entitled.

Having an accurate picture of the client is critical to providing nursing care. Completing a complete and accurate assessment with a person who does not speak the same language can be very difficult and should be facilitated by an interpreter. Using an interpreter adds to the communication challenge. Overcoming the difficulties of communication with someone who does not speak the same language as you can be diminished by being aware of the cultural differences and using some general guidelines provided in several medical journals and books (Bushwald et al., 1993). One the first steps in using an interpreter effectively, thereby increasing the clients willingness to share information, is choosing an interpreter who is the same sex and similar age as the client (Luckman, 1999, Buchwald et al., 1993). According to Buchwald et al., (1993) in order to

decrease the client's fears and anxieties. "...the ideal interpreter should also be the same sex as the patient to make it easier to approach intimate questions and be at least as old as the patient to allay anxiety in adult patients and evoke the authority and trustworthiness many cultures attach to age." (p. 142).

Once the interpreter is chosen, a meeting to discuss the assessment that needs to be completed should take place. The interpreter needs a chance to review the forms or questions to be asked so that the interpreter can be familiar with or look up words that may be difficult to translate. The interpreter needs to have a clear understanding of the information to be communicated to the client, whether it be assessment information that is needed, consent for a diagnostic test, or treatment procedure (Luckman, 1999, and Buchwald et al., 1993). According to Luckman (1999) you can look to the interpreter on how to approach delicate or personal questions in a culturally appropriate way. As with any assessment or medical interview, it is important to put the client at ease. This can be done by trying to communicate with the client while you are waiting for the interpreter to arrive. Learning to say a few words or a greeting in the client's own language can help (Luckman, 1999 and Pakieser and McNamee, 1999). When completing an actual assessment it is important to be aware of how to position yourself, the interpreter, and the client. No matter where the interpreter sits or stands it is important that the nurse or person doing the assessing always face the patient (Luckman, 1999). Luckman and Buchwald et al., suggest that questions or comments should be directed at the client. Eye contact should be made when it is appropriate with the client during these interactions. The nurse should try to limit the amount of note taking, observe the body language, and observe verbal and non-verbal interaction between interpreter and client. Nurses should refrain from making comments that are not meant to be heard by the patient, wait until you are alone with the interpreter to make these comments because even though the person does not speak English, doesn't mean they don't understand some of it (Luckman, 1999).

Doing an assessment with an interpreter is a time consuming process and requires that as a nurse you are organized and ready to do the interview or assessment. Prior to the assessment forms are completed with information that you already have, questions are written that are short and concise and will elicit information that is needed to complete assessment, and enough time is allotted to complete the assessment (Luckman, 1999). Luckman (1999) and Buchwald et al. (1993), both emphasize that an assessment or interview with a non-English speaking person is time consuming and enough time needs to be set aside as to not make the client feel rushed.

The nurse is really dependent on the information the interpreter provides to establish plans of care. It is important that the nurse feels that he or she is being provided with accurate information. There are several things the nurse can do to assure this

accuracy. If responses to questions are very brief, you can switch from short and concise questions to more conversational questions. If the response from the interpreter is very brief after a lengthy response from the client, ask the interpreter why this happened (Luckman, 1999 and Buchwald et al., 1993). You can ask that the interpreter to answer verbatim what the client said. This is called a literal translation. A literal translation lets the health care professional interpret the information provided (Buchwald et al., 1993). Luckman (1999) suggests after the assessment interview is complete, it is a good idea to spend a few minutes with the interpreter to go over the patient's answers.

Working with an interpreter is the best way to complete an accurate nursing assessment, but an interpreter is not always available. The last topic that needs to be discussed is what are the options if a trained medical interpreter is not available. Some families insist on using a member of the family. If this happens the nurse needs to communicate to the family member serving as interpreter, the importance of getting accurate accounts of the patient's response to questions (Buchwald et al., 1993). It is best to avoid using a member of the family for many reasons. Some reason would be: it could reduce the accuracy of the information received; family members may be uncomfortable answering or asking delicate or personal questions; or the family member may feel the need to protect their loved one. Another reason not to use family members is that they would lack understanding of medical terminology (Luckman, 1999 and Buchwald et al., 1993). Another staff member at the medical facility could be asked to lend their assistance, if the situation is an emergency. Luckman (1999) and Buchwald (1993) both listed as another option the AT & T Language Line. This is a twenty-four-hour interpretation service for over one hundred forty languages. It can be accessed by calling 1-800-628-8486. Large hospitals and medical centers may join for a fee and be billed monthly for use. Individuals can call the 1-800 number and have it billed to a AT&T Universal Card or other major credit card. This service does allow the client to speak to someone who does speak their language, but some clients are uncomfortable with speaking with someone over the phone. Although the interpreters are thoroughly trained, their knowledge of medical terminology may be limited.

Completing an accurate and informative nursing assessment is vital in providing care to clients. This is a skill that nurses practice and work to improve on over the course of their careers. This skill is difficult enough when the client speaks the same language, but when you add the client who speaks a different language this assessment becomes an even bigger challenge. Nurses and other health care professionals need to be ready to face this challenge. Nurses and other members of the health care profession need to be aware of their own cultural beliefs and values and be respectful and educated about their client's culture. The laws regarding people with limited English proficiency are very clear and all health care professionals need to be informed about them. It is considered discrimination if a

person with limited English proficiency is not spoken to in his or her own language (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1998). Nurses need to be informed of what kind of interpretation services are available to them in the health care setting in which they work and be ready to use them if necessary. As the United States population continues to become more diversified, nurses need to be ready to work with people of many different cultures and languages.

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Kru(s)

Saran Poovarodom  
David Kehe, ESL 117

A year ago, I experienced, for the first time, an American high school. With excitement and enthusiasm, I tried to be a good student and get to know all my teachers well. It was such a common question for those teachers to ask me, "Saran, how do you say teacher in Thai?"

"It's *kru*, sir," I always quickly replied because that is the way I called many of my teachers in Thailand. However, after seeing American students doing things such as pointing their feet at their teachers, calling those teachers by made-up nicknames, or breaking classroom regulations, I realized that I had made a mistake. The word *kru* is not suitable to use with those American teachers at all.

It is not very easy to translate *kru* to other languages. Moreover, *kru* can be hard to explain to people from different cultures. Many times, even original Thai speakers can be confused by the word *kru* also. The word *kru* has several meanings and unique aspects that must be clarified.

Very often, the words *kru* and "teacher" can be really confusing. Both of them can refer to someone who teaches or gives knowledge to somebody else. However, they are not exactly the same. While the word "teacher" tends to make us think about a person who teaches in front of a classroom in a school or institution, in Thai, not just one who teaches in school can be called a *kru*. In Thailand, which is a Buddhist country, many Buddhist monks, who learn, practice, and spread Buddhism the way Buddha taught, are referred to by using the word *kru* as a prefix before their name because they have taught people about morality and how to reach peace and happiness. Another interesting example is parents. Growing as a little child, everybody is taught or trained by his/her own parents on how to speak, eat, stand, walk, and even how to be a nice child; therefore, in my country, we refer to our own parents as our "first *kru*."

It is not necessarily that everyone who teaches others can be referred to as a *kru*. It takes several important components to make it so that someone can be called *kru*. First, it is necessary for all *kru*s to be highly respected by their own students. For example, Thai students are normally very polite when they talk to their *kru*. Pointing their feet at their *kru* while sitting in a classroom is considered very rude and must be avoided. Another important factor is a long and good relationship between a *kru* and students. It usually takes at least several months for students and a *kru* to get to know each other well and develop a close relationship. Last, not only do *kru*s help their students with the subject

they teach, but also real *kru*s are expected to help students with something else other than academic materials. My Thai literature teacher in high school in Thailand, for instance, helped one of her students who called her *kru* pay for a dinner in a restaurant after the student's wallet had been lost. After receiving a call from him late at night, she hurried to that restaurant in her pajamas, organized to pay for his meal, and, finally, took him home safely.

A *kru* tends to be someone who has a huge influence in students' lives and beliefs. For example, kids between first grade and sixth grade mostly call their school teachers *kru*s, because they spend a lot of their time with those teachers, and usually believe in what teachers tell them. In some cases, things that teachers in primary or elementary school teach them are developed to be their own beliefs that stay with them for the rest of their life. In contrast, high school or college instructors are hardly ever called *kru*s. Most young adults in high schools or colleges like to develop their own ideas and beliefs; therefore, it is hard for them to be influenced by one of their instructors. Instead, they mostly call their teacher ar-jan, which is more likely to mean just a normal teacher.

In Thailand, I always heard about "kru ceremony" which is a ceremony that is created in order to show respect to some mythological figures. As a child, *kru*, for me, always referred to a person. However, when I learned and understood more, I realized that it is not necessary for a *kru* to be a person. Once when I watched a traditional Thai play on the television, I saw all actors and actresses performing the ceremony showing respect to a figure they called *kru*. I learned later that it is very important for some kinds of performance that the actors or musicians show respect to those gods before getting on the stage. Believing that those gods created and gave the knowledge of the traditional plays or music to humans, many artists always call those intangible figures *kru*s and deeply respect them.

Another meaning of *kru* that does not refer to a person is experience. Since experience teaches people how to improve themselves, Thai folks often refer to experience as one kind of *kru*. For example, there is a famous quote in Thai that says, "Take your mistakes as your *kru*."

After realizing my error concerning the Thai word of "teacher", I went back to my American high school teachers and tried to correct what I had done wrong. I told them that it is better to use the word ar-jan to refer to their position. Then, I clarified the true meaning of *kru*s to them. I explained that *kru*s could be referred to something or someone who gives knowledge to someone else. In the case that *kru*s refer to persons, three important factors are required: high respect from their students, a long and good relationship between them, and an willingness to help their students even with things that are not related to school materials. Furthermore, *kru*s are more likely to have a great

influence in ones' life and beliefs. In cases that it does not refer to persons, *kru*s can refer to mythological figures that some artists respect, or an experience that guides us along the way to improve our life in future.

## "Doublespeak"

L. Pollack

John Gonzales, English 261

"If ye had known ... ye wouldn't have condemned to guiltless." Mathew xii, 6-12 (Starkey, p. 261)

The counselor asked that I keep a journal; ordinarily I would have told him where to shove it. My expulsion was unjust as stupid. Unfortunately, the easiest and most sure way of proving the inane accusations are false is to cooperate. I am a seventeen-year-old deliberately left behind as a defective product in the factory that produces "capable (though not necessarily educated), well-adjusted adults"; I'm talking about the public school system. If the school administration is an example of capable and well-adjusted adults, thanks but no thanks!

Schools have become George Orwell's 1984; it is rather amusing in a sick sort of way if you think about it. It is all there, the lowering of standards as we are force fed pep rallies attempting to convince us that progress is at an all time high. The way the smart ones are smart enough to bury themselves in the pointless rituals that are expected by the powers that be. That is until they crack, while the arrogant administration fancy themselves omniscient. They assume all their good little students are willing to accept anything as truth. Some of are intelligent enough to think for ourselves and see deeper into and beyond the doublespeak so prevalent in the school. So similar to 1984 that those who do not buy into the doublespeak are quietly removed while being vilified.

There are many who, unfamiliar with 1984, would liken zero tolerance to the witch trials of the late seventeenth century. Some would say that to be an unfair analogy by pointing out that zero tolerance, unlike the witch trials, is a preventative opposed to punitive measure. On this one point they are correct; however, they share more similarities than differences. The most shocking similarity is illustrated by the poignant comment "The Puritans had a low opinion of lawyers and did not permit the professional practice of law" just as students are judged not by judges in a court of law but by a council of administrators in a mockery of the judicial system (Starkey, p. 51).

Cotton Mather said, "There was little occasion to prove witchcraft, it being evident and notorious to all beholders." Just as teachers always assume a transgression has been committed and if they are in doubt as to who was responsible all the accused would be punished. As with the witch trials there is no shortage of susceptible peers more than willing to point their fingers. A girl by the name of Jamie Schoonover had a suspension

slip, which cited her for "casting a spell on a student." (Danger). Come on! This isn't the seventeenth century but the twentieth and it is, in fact, the information age. Must we still act like superstitious zealots? Three hundred years and nothing has changed.

It's no secret that a citizen isn't given full constitutional rights until they reach the age of majority, but that does not mean that we are willing to give up the rights we do have. Whether or not we are aware of the fact, we, by stepping onto school property forfeit all our constitutional rights. It is the schools' quiet little secret that few realize, and unfortunately it is the students who are usually burned at the stake for it. No warrants are needed for search and seizure, just "probable cause" which can be quite arbitrary in school where a single person reigns king.

I went from being a respectable member of the society within the school to being a juvenile delinquent, a witch if you will, in a single day. Exiled for violating a law never defined. The school undoubtedly is making me out to be a menace to society, a threat to my peers. My sentence: Instant expulsion and threatened with a police encounter. My crime: Caught with Midol, an over-the-counter painkiller.

My first day at the alternative school was not what I expected. First of all it was a joint middle and high school. There was only one teen mother, no gang members, and only a few potheads. There are basically two groups: the first group is kids with learning disabilities; too smart to be tested for special classes or the handfuls of drugs so eagerly pushed on them by parents and doctors, but too obnoxious to attend normal classes.

The other group was like me! Likewise forsaken by a system designed to accept all. A sophomore expelled for blue hair, a girl who had made a gun with her thumb and index finger and said "Bang" (Cloud). Among the younger students there was the middle schooler who had brought nail clippers to school (Leo), and another student for wearing clothes that had a Stussie symbol, a brand name as legitimate as Nike (Doe).

Perhaps one of the most outrageous was the eighth grade boy expelled for drawing the confederate flag, because it was considered a hate symbol by the school district (Leo). Don't get me wrong; I consider it a hate symbol too, it is after all the accepted logo for the KKK. But while the bars and stars fly proudly over the state capital in South Carolina students shouldn't be expelled for it. This is another much more obvious case of doublespeak.

These are the new faces of juvenile delinquency; no longer is it the gangster selling heroin on the streets. "Juvenile delinquent" is a phrase coined by the schools and law enforcement agencies, but have they ever stopped to reflect on the meaning. Heinlein said it best; "juvenile delinquent' is a contradiction in terms. 'delinquent' means 'failing in duty.' But duty is an adult virtue-indeed a juvenile becomes an adult when, and only when, he acquires a knowledge of duty." Really, who is it in public schools has failed in their duty? Even Heinlein aside we, the students have not failed in our duty. We are not

delinquents juvenile or adult, we have committed no crime. Perhaps a transgression was committed, but not with the intent to break the ill-defined laws.

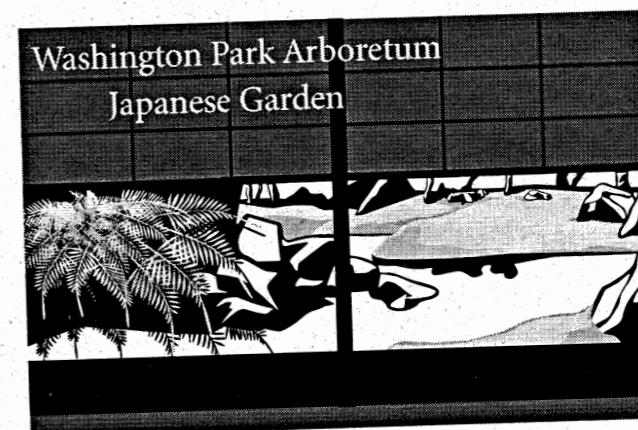
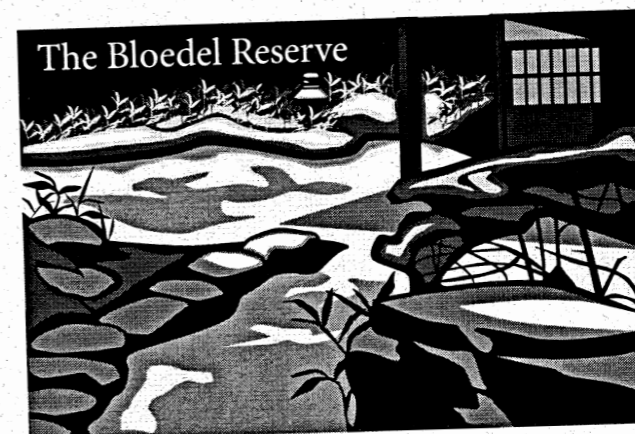
The local middle school according to one of its forsaken students has a ban on the following: Mechanical pencils, compasses, zip down coats, baseball hats, unnatural hair colors, coats, and cannabis symbols (Doe). The girls cannot wear spaghetti straps nor can they put their pencils in their hair for fear of punishment, the ban includes permanent markers and liquid glue as the school is afraid the students will use them to get high (Doe).

The student who told me this was suspended because he with his friends pulled a fight apart to try to keep a friend from trouble. They were walking away when a kid bulldozed him and his friends in front of the principal. There is no doubt that many of the suspensions and expulsions are arbitrarily issued by administrators who do not know how to do their jobs effectively.

Ann Putnam wrote a confession nearly two decades after her accusations led to the excommunications and deaths of her neighbors. In it she explains: "It was a great delusion of Satan that deceived me" (Starkey, p. 261). I wonder what the administration will say twenty years hence when considering their actions, how many will say it was all part of the hysteria of condemnation?

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Shinichiro Takahashi  
*Teien*

Computer illustrations, 4" x 6"



*Artist's comment: This postcard series was a project from an illustration class. These are Japanese gardens which are in Washington State. I want you to feel the space from the images, just as if you were standing at the place. By using windows and the contrast between inside and outside, I tried to convey the sense of space.*

*Shinichiro Takahashi*

*Instructor's comment: I enjoy having students from different cultural backgrounds in my classes. Their design solutions can have a very unique non-western feel to them, and can have the effect of broadening all of the students' approach and understanding of design. In Shin's work, he chose to pull the viewer visually into the garden, and used muted gray earth tones to give the feel as if one is privately viewing the garden in early morning light. His work is visually organized, and finds a nice balance between simplicity and complexity, of delicate organic shapes and strong man-made shapes. This work was especially successful.*

*Dave Evraets, Artgr 260*

## Book of the Year

*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*

By Sherman Alexie

This is the 6th year Whatcom Community College has selected a Book of the Year to be used by various faculty throughout the curriculum. The book is chosen by interested faculty with some student input. The goals of this campus project are to improve critical reading skills of students and emphasize the inter-connectedness of student learning outcomes

This year approximately 15 faculty from 4 disciplines read the book with approximately 400 students. Students responded to many of the issues presented in Alexie's collection of short stories in class discussions, at public forums and in essays such as the ones included here. Many classes also saw the movie *Smoke Signals*, an adaptation of one of the short stories, and Evan Adams, a playwright and star in the movie, gave a well received presentation to over 500 students and community members spring quarter.

Overall, this campus wide effort provided an opportunity for faculty and students to explore multicultural issues and improve on the student learning outcomes of Relating, Communicating and Thinking.

*Barbara Hudson*

Selected stories from this year's Book of the Year, Sherman Alexie's collection *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, provided the perfect final unit in our Writing about Literature course this winter. Having begun the course studying poetry (an art form in which the artist sculpts with words) to help my students develop new reading processes—and continuing to drama (an art form in which the artist's words are performed on stage) to help my students consider the interplay among author, performer, reader, and audience using Shakespeare's *The Tempest*—we concluded with a unit on fiction using six Alexie stories. These stories allowed us to examine a number of important issues, including the artistic components of fiction and the construction of personal and cultural history through storytelling. Therefore, the character of storyteller Thomas Builds-the-Fire, as a stand-in for his author and for all who tell stories as a means of making sense of our individual and collective experiences, was central to our discussions. The outstanding student essays that follow examine stories within Alexie's stories of cultural construction, familial reconciliation, and Colonialism's legacy.

*Jennifer Bullis, Ph.D*

Thomas Stokes the Fire of the Past  
An Analysis of Thomas Builds-the-Fire

Glenn W. May  
Jennifer Bullis, English 202

The character of Thomas Builds-the-Fire in the anthology of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, by Sherman Alexie, has many qualities which make him a man out of place in time. By this I mean that he was born about three hundred years too late. Gone are the people who would listen to his stories, the people for whom those stories are intended. Thomas' people today have lost the patience to sit and listen to the stories.

Thomas is a speaker of truth, in all that he does. He always tells the stories, even when his people have long since stopped listening to him. Part of the reason for that is because Thomas often speaks a word that is difficult for his people to hear. He is described in the story "The Trial of Thomas Builds-the-Fire" as having "A storytelling fetish accompanied by an extreme need to tell the truth. Dangerous" (93). It is this "extreme need to tell the truth" that causes his own people to shun him, because he not only sees things as they should be, but speaks those words to his people. Someone once said that people will shy away from the light because they are ashamed of what it will show them. In this case the "light" is Thomas' stories, because they invoke understanding among the listeners and force the listener to look inside themselves. The people shun that "light" because they don't like what they know it will show them about themselves.

It is his speaking of the truth that causes those around Thomas to feel uncomfortable around him. There are those who feel so threatened by Thomas that he is taken to trial for absolutely no other reason than to separate him from his people. Before he is taken to trial, questions such as, "What charges should we bring him up on...Inciting riot? Kidnapping? Extortion? Maybe murder?" are pondered by the BIA, and they reach the conclusion that "it has to be a felony charge. We don't need his kind around here anymore" (94). They are so fearful of Thomas' speaking of the truth that they will distort justice to keep him silent and away from his people. It is ironic that Thomas will incite a riot, and he will be convicted for murder. He almost seems to be offering himself as a sacrifice so that his people will finally see what they have refused to acknowledge for so long. Thomas walks into his trial knowing that he will be convicted: "All that was variable on any reservation was how the convicted would be punished" (95). With this in mind, Thomas sets out to show his people what they have constantly ignored, and I think they are as surprised as the reader of the story.

Thomas' stories use elements of the past along with Indian tradition to tell the stories of the present and even the future. In the story "The Trial" Thomas uses metaphors from the past to symbolize what has happened to his people and what continues to happen. His story about the slaughter of the eight hundred young horses parallels the treatment of the U.S. towards the native peoples, telling with chilling clarity what has happened to his tribe and others throughout American history. When he tells the story, he "opened his eyes and found that most of the Indians in the courtroom wept and wanted to admit defeat" (97). They knew what he was showing them, and for the first time, they had no choice but to listen to him.

Another unsettling example Thomas uses is the story of Qualchan. He tells of how an Indian named Qualchan trusted a U.S. colonel enough to walk into his camp with the intention of having his father released. Qualchan is then hanged along with six other Indians, and then the truly horrid detail comes out. Hanged along with Qualchan and the others is an Indian named Epseal, "who never raised a hand in anger to any white or Indian" (99). Thomas uses that as a prime example of his people's treatment at the hands of white men. It isn't until he tells the judge that the city of Spokane is building a golf course named after Qualchan, in the valley where he was hanged, that the people are stirred into action. This is what the BIA and others are afraid of. Thomas wields a very real and very powerful tool that could have devastating effects as shown when "the courtroom burst into motion and emotion...the bailiff had to restrain Eve Ford...Eve stomped on the bailiff's big belly until two tribal policemen tackled her, handcuffed her, and led her away." As she is being taken away, Eve yells, "We're all listening...we hear you" (99).

The stories Thomas tells that day are ones of Indian defeat. He tells of Indians being hanged and slaughtered, then matter-of-factly stirs the Indians in the courtroom into action. It isn't until the people are forced to listen to Thomas that they see the defeat they have been ignoring for so long. However, Thomas sets a different mood in another story, "A Drug Called Tradition." In this story, themes of victory and healing are primary, as opposed to those of defeat and brokenness seen in "The Trial"

The three boys, Thomas, Victor, and Junior each take a "new" drug, which is some sort of hallucinogen meant to give them visions. Thomas takes it first and sees what none of them expected. He tells of Victor stealing a horse that stands "twenty hands high" (14). In the way Thomas speaks of Victor, the reader gets a feeling of prowess, of power from Victor. The reader can see how perfectly the theft of the horse proceeds. Thomas says that Victor crawls "right between the legs of a young boy asleep on his feet" (15), right up to the horse.

Another story, told by Junior, describes Thomas dancing, dancing away the smallpox that decimated his tribe, bringing them back to life. They begin small, the size of children, and begin to grow, soon surpassing the trees themselves. He says they continue

dancing, continue growing until they can see the white man leaving America, going back to Europe in the ships that brought him.

Victor has his own vision as well, and what he sees is not so important I think as one of the accompanying ideas he has. He sees Junior singing, but it is who has heard Junior sing that makes the story so powerful: "Even the President of the United States, Mr. Edgar Crazy Horse himself, came to hear [him] once" (18). Edgar Crazy Horse himself, the President of the United States, is an Indian president.

In all those stories, the subject and outcome is victory. Victor steals a horse, a traditional rite of passage for a warrior in that culture. Thomas is a dancer, something a storyteller would have done in Indian culture, and sends the white man back to Europe. Victor's vision for Junior is perhaps the most significant of the three. The idea of an Indian president is an extremely powerful one for the Indians, signifying their power in a country that had once used and abused them. In all three visions, brought on by the "new" drug, we are presented with a scene of victory for the Indian people.

Is it a new drug? Indians used hallucinogens for countless generations before the white man's arrival to invoke visions. It seems to me that the "new" drug would be the alcohol which contributed so much to the decline of Indian culture in early America. As they are having their visions, returning to tradition, the boys are shown pouring out their alcohol. This is an extremely important image for these boys, as the effect of alcohol on their culture was devastating. Alcohol had become just another part of life for Indians. Thus, with their denial of alcohol, they defeat that plague on their culture once and for all, and complete their return to the old ways.

While speaking in the persona of the young horse, Thomas declared that he "was not going to submit without a struggle. [He] would continue the war" (97-98). I think that is the whole point of his telling of the stories. If he stops telling them, then the white man has won the war. The old ways will be truly gone, and his people will have traded their rich cultural identity for one of ambiguity. While some of the stories Thomas tells detail Indian defeats at the hand of the white man and are difficult to hear, much less listen to, not all of the stories are so bleak. There are those that tell of victory and of setting things right for the Indian people. If Thomas continues to tell these stories of victory along with those which are difficult to hear, then the past is not forgotten, and his people's rich heritage is preserved.

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## The Destruction of the Native American A Comparison of *The Tempest* and *The Lone Ranger* and *Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*

Richelle Bjelland  
Jennifer Bullis, English 202

The play *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare and the set of short stories by Sherman Alexie called *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* are linked together by one aspect. In different ways they deal with the idea of Native Americans, how European settlers viewed them, and how they were affected by them. One shows from a unique aspect how it was when settlers first came to the new land, their views of the natives, and what they did to them. The other shows the effects of the settlers four hundred years later, how the natives were forever changed, and their heritage nearly destroyed. One simple subject, the native, incredibly links together a play from the 1600's by British poet and playwright, William Shakespeare, with a set of modern day short stories by Native American author, Sherman Alexie.

In the play *The Tempest*, Shakespeare creates a character who at first glance seems to be nothing more than what he appears, a "monster" (2.2.60). Yet with further insight, and a step backward, we can see that what Shakespeare has created is more along the line of a native. In the play, Caliban is a "monster," left alone on the uninhabited island by his mother, a powerful witch. He lives a solitary but seemingly content life alone, when a man and his daughter from Italy arrive, exiled to this island. Caliban recounts these events bitterly:

This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,  
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,  
Thou stok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me  
Water with berries in't, and teach me how  
To name the bigger light, and how the less,  
That burn by day and night. And then I loved thee  
And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle,  
The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and fertile.  
Cursed be I that did so! All the charms  
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!  
For I am all the subject that you have,  
Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me  
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me  
The rest o' th' island. (1.2.334-346)

This quote plainly shows the loss that Caliban endured, losing his entire island, his culture and his dignity. Caliban, whose name can almost be changed to "cannibal," is enslaved by the European man and then "civilized." He is taught their language, their culture, their rules and their punishments. He is called a "monster," a "savage" (2.2.54) and considered nothing more than a slave. However, as the reader gains further insight, Caliban begins to seem much more than just a flat character with nothing much to him, but a deep and misunderstood character whom Shakespeare has written to be much like a Native American.

It is interesting to see how closely this story, written by a British man from the 1600's, resembles the story of how the white settlers came to the new world. *The Tempest*, shows how the settlers took over the new land, how they viewed the native and what they did to the native. They took his land without even stopping to consider that it was his. They enslaved him and civilized him without ever considering that perhaps he didn't want to be civilized or that in his world he was civilized. They called him names like "savage" and "monster" without stopping to think that maybe he was not these things. Lastly, when more of Prospero's people came upon the island, Caliban was introduced to alcohol, which he took an immediate craving to. Then everyone prepared to leave the island, and with it, leave a now civilized and cultured "savage" alone. Now that he has had all these things done to him, can he ever really be content again to live a solitary life on his island? This is almost exactly the problem the Native Americans ran into hundreds of years ago when they were finally left alone on their own land.

*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, a set of short stories by Sherman Alexie, give a view of the Native American four hundred years later. It is past the time in which their land was stolen, their ancestors enslaved and killed and then pushed onto a small amount of government land to live separated from the rest of society. These stories show the effects of all the damage the white settlers inflicted on the Native American: how their culture and their ancient traditions were lost, and new, harmful ones replaced them. The Native Americans were forced to live off the government on their reservations, and seemingly gave up trying to get out of the hole that they were placed. Many of them allowed alcohol to ruin their chances at much more than their poverty stricken existence. These stories poignantly show how all of this has affected the tribes, even their own views of themselves.

Through this set of short stories we can see the loss the Native Americans have endured, the poverty they are often forced to live in, and how all of this has affected how they view themselves. In a short story called "This is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona," two Indian boys are on a plane when one of them strikes up a conversation with a pretty white girl. The other is utterly embarrassed thinking that a pretty girl would never

want to talk to them. "Victor was ready to jump out of the plane. Thomas, that crazy Indian storyteller with ratty old braids and broken teeth, was flirting with a beautiful Olympic gymnast. Nobody back home on the reservation would believe it" (Alexie 66). They wouldn't believe it because they didn't believe Thomas was good enough to be talked to by a pretty white girl. The author shows us how society's views of the Indians have become their own views of themselves.

Hundreds of years ago, the Native Americans were the only inhabitants of the New World, much like Shakespeare's Caliban. It was their land and their home, and they were free to do whatever they wanted upon it. They hunted the whale not only for food, but as part of an ancient tradition. They selectively hunted the buffalo and other animals, to ensure the animals' continuing existence. The Native Americans told stories in many ways, by words, dancing or singing; these things were a major part of their culture. They had many ancient beliefs and traditions; some of these varied throughout the different tribes, but they were a part of every tribe. Now the Native American tribes struggle to hold together some of their ancient traditions and rituals, but these often clash with modern-day society's rules and regulations. Now they have new traditions, living on government regulated reservations, small amounts of land that has been given to them to make up for the taking of all the rest. Many of them don't work, and many of them have fallen into the picture society holds for them: poor and alcoholic. A story told by Thomas Builds-The-Fire in the short story "A Drug Called Tradition," attempts to reach back into the ancient traditions of their people, and get a feeling of what it would have been like to be a part of it.

*It is now.* Three Indian boys are drinking Diet Pepsi and talking out by Benjamin Lake. They are wearing only loincloths and braids. Although it is the twentieth century and planes are passing overhead, the Indian boys have decided to be real Indians tonight.

They all want to have their vision, to receive their true names, their adult names. That is the problem with Indians these days. They have the same name all their lives. Indians wear their names like a pair of bad shoes.

So they have decided to build a fire and breathe in the sweet smoke. They have not eaten for days so they know their visions should arrive soon. Maybe they'll see it in the flames or in the wood. Maybe the smoke will talk in Spokane or English. Maybe the cinders and ash will rise up.

The boys sit by the fire and breathe, their visions arrive. They are all carried away to the past, to the moment before any of them took their first drink of alcohol.

The boy Thomas throws the beer he is offered into the garbage. The boy Junior throws his whiskey through a window. The boy Victor spills his vodka down the drain.

Then the boys sing. They sing and dance and drum. They steal horses. I can see them. *They steal horses.* (Alexie 20-21)

The boys in these stories yearn to be a part of their ancestor's ancient traditions, and to erase the harmful ones that have replaced them. But they are lost, and most of them never to be recovered.

The Native Americans of today fight to reinstate some of their people's ancient traditions, but it is hard, and most of them are denied. Sherman Alexie with his humorous, witty, and often touching stories shows us the trials of the Native Americans and the losses they have sustained. These are the effects of what the white settler did to the Indian. The Tempest, through a "monster," an island, a man and his people, gives us a small glimpse of what it was that the white man did. Perhaps now we see the ultimate effect Prospero and his people might have had on Caliban.

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## Alexie's Victor and What It Means to Say Father

Josh LaRosee

Jennifer Bullis, English 202

In Sherman Alexie's short story "What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona," the life of the main character, Victor, is led to a point of great personal trial. Victor's estranged father, who left Victor and his mother as a boy, has passed away in his home in Phoenix, Arizona. Victor was not close to his father, yet he realizes quickly the trial he would face in resolving the personal issues surrounding his father's death. Thomas Builds-the-Fire, a childhood friend of Victor's, whom he does not interact with anymore, offers Victor financial support for his journey to Arizona, where Victor is to bring closure to his father's life. Thomas, the insistent storyteller, whom Victor as well as most others on the reservation avoids, insists on coming with Victor on his journey. By the end of their trip, Thomas proves to be much more than just financial aid for Victor in his time of need.

Victor's journey to Phoenix, Arizona is to be a journey of closure. Certainly this kind of journey is necessary for such closure, even under the less than desirable circumstances (little money, estranged father, etc), but Victor's remorse for his father's death is not explicitly shown to the reader. The story's first paragraph notes the distance between Victor and his father: Victor "...only talked to him on the telephone once or twice [in a few years], but there still was a genetic pain, which was soon to be pain as real and immediate as a broken bone" (63). However, it is apparent in the same passage the coming pain that is brought by the news of his father's passing.

Money becomes the immediate issue for Victor. The trip to Arizona would cost more than he had available to him, both from personal and tribal resource. Thomas Builds-the-Fire steps in to offer his financial help. Thomas' only stipulation for helping Victor in a financial manner is that Victor take Thomas to Arizona with him to retrieve his father's belongings. After a short time, Victor agrees to Thomas's terms. Soon, Victor is on a plane to Arizona, his estranged father on his mind and his distanced boyhood friend at his side.

At this point in the story, Thomas's role begins to take form. Even as children, Thomas seemed to know more of Victor's father than Victor did. When the two of them were seven years old, Thomas told Victor of his father. He told him that his father's "heart is weak" and that "he is afraid of his family." He told Victor that his father was "afraid of [him]" (61). Being a third party to Victor and Victor's father, Thomas is able to give insight into Victor's father's life as well as insight into Victor's own ideas about his father.

When the two of them reach the trailer, the smell of death makes them both apprehensive. Both enter the trailer to see what could be salvaged from the smell that had permeated the trailer and its contents. While there, Victor asks Thomas what he

remembers of Victor's father. Thomas closes his eyes and tells Victor of the time he followed a dream of his from his home on the reservation to the Spokane Falls Park. There he found Victor's father, who then took Thomas for dinner at Denny's. Thomas tells Victor that Victor's father was his vision, that he was a message that told him to "take care of each other" (69). Thomas's story invokes in Victor a desire to search the memories of his father to find the good that he was in his life. Thomas is, in a sense, helping to lead Victor through his time of trial. Where as Victor was resentful toward his father because he knew so little of him, Thomas understood Victor's father and how he had been destroyed by his own broken culture. This is what Thomas is relaying to Victor.

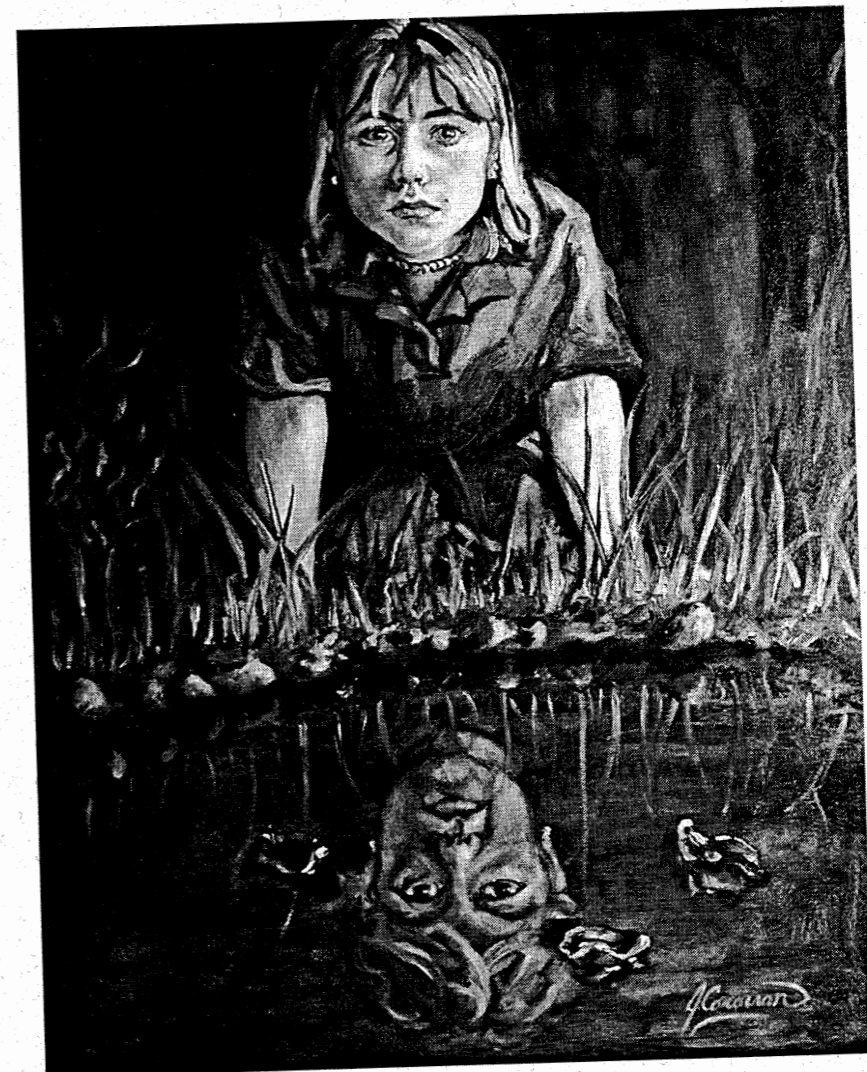
As the two of them drive Victor's father's truck North toward their home, Thomas hits a kills a jackrabbit. As they stand over the dead animal, Victor and Thomas ponder the animal's life as well as its death, a scene very reminiscent of the one at Victor's father's trailer. "I don't know," Thomas says about the rabbit, "I think it was suicide" (71). At this comment, Victor notices the emptiness and loneliness of the desert. The symbolism of this incident seems to have close ties to that of Victor's father's death. Perhaps this passage suggests that Victor's father's death was a suicide. Or perhaps the random death of the jackrabbit on a desolate Nevada highway represents the idea that Victor's father had no intention of dying in his trailer so very far from his true home.

As Victor and Thomas sit in Victor's father's pickup outside of Thomas's house, they both search for words to end their trip. Thomas realizes that the experience that they two had together on the trip to Victor's father's trailer would not change how Victor treated him. But, after all, it was not Thomas' intention to re-ignite their boyhood friendship. Thomas came to help Victor on his journey, just as Victor's father told him to do so many years ago over their dinner at Denny's. He was Victor's guide. Just as he had helped Victor from the bees' nest, he has helped him through his fathers passing. Thomas will continue to tell his stories, to have his dreams and his visions. In exchange for his help, Thomas requests of Victor that he someday stop and listen to one of his stories as he once did.

Thomas's role in the story really helps to expose Victor's feelings toward his father, which might be otherwise lost in his seeming inability to express himself. For Victor, the memories he has of Thomas and the stories that he told gives him insights into the nature of his father. As readers, we are not sure if Victor truly comes to terms with his father (or at least the memories that is father left him with), but Thomas, as Victor's guide, has led him to the door of forgiveness and has persuaded him to knock.

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Justine Corcorran  
*Reflection of Life Passed By*  
Oil on canvas, 28" x 22"

The "Declaration of Sentiments"  
at the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention, 1848

Heather Petersen  
Mary Haberman, History 206

Using the Declaration of Independence as a structural foundation was a bold, clever choice that reiterated the patriotic phrases Americans held dear and aligned these democratic ideals with women's struggle for equality and representation. Also this maneuver pointed out the inherent hypocrisy and biases of the original document, proposing ways to correct the error. It was important to describe man's treatment of women as "absolute despotism" and "absolute tyranny" because at the time I would think few men viewed the situation that way. They perhaps thought of the gender traditions as natural or perhaps they did not even think about it at all, it was so deeply engrained. Perhaps this is why most of the mainstream media reacted so vehemently.

The Seneca Falls Convention's Declaration of Rights and Sentiments lists men's abuses and offenses against women. The document in Major Problems is concerned with voting, political representation, legal rights for married, single and divorced women, the rights of ownership, opportunities for education and employment, hypocritical moral double standards and man's weakening of female confidence, self-respect and hope. They resolved that all laws that prevent women from achieving "true and substantial happiness" have no authority and should be changed. They proposed that women should be treated and "recognized" as equal to men. They determined that the same moral standards should be applied to both sexes, that women should be able to speak in public without charges of "indelicacy and impropriety", and that women should grow beyond their assigned spheres and secure their right to "the elective franchise".

Most of the rights mentioned in the Declaration of Rights and Sentiments have been achieved: voting, political representation and participation, rights in marriage and divorce, the right to own property and wages and equal opportunities in education and jobs. Many laws have been passed to recognize women's equality but that doesn't necessarily mean all those sexist attitudes have been destroyed. It is difficult to legislate social attitudes and prejudices.

We still encounter a few of the offenses brought up in the Seneca Falls convention, if somewhat more subtle; particularly the persistence of different moral codes for men and women. For example, the classic double standard where men are admired for their sexual promiscuity and women are condemned for it. Another persisting offense is the destruction of women's confidence and self-respect. Men (and many women) evaluate

*Artist's comment: The assignment was to divide a canvas into two equal parts, one half depicting a realistic self-portrait, and the other an abstract or interpretive self-portrait. Instead of placing the two subjects next to each other, I chose to have both "selves" interacting within the canvas. The realistic portrait is painted from a mirrored image, while my interpretive portrait is a reflection of myself many years from now. Painted during a time when I was tired, stressed, and lacking adventure in my life, these images convey a fear that life will pass by without having left enough time for myself, my hobbies, and the ones I love.*

Justine Corcoran  
Art 120

a female's worth by her physical attractiveness. In modern America this idea has been so deeply imbedded in our society that nearly every public cultural expression (media, art, music, entertainment, advertising) reinforces the value of youth and beauty. In response to this pressure women pay ridiculous amounts of money to alter their appearance with cosmetics, dieting and surgery, which can lead to psychological and physical damage.

But I think that in some respects the women's movement has exceeded its early founders' expectations as outlined in the Seneca Falls document. Women have infiltrated nearly every profession. Women serve in the military. Some of the most important, powerful positions in the world, such as the U.S. Secretary of State and the U.S. Attorney General, are held by strong women. In a relatively short amount of time women have gone from being the property of their husbands to individuals with the legal authority over their own bodies to the extent that they have the right to an abortion and the legal protection against unwanted sexual advances in the work place. We live in a cultural climate now, known as political correctness, in which straight white men are perceived as unfashionable villains. Granted, the majority of the high-status, high-paying professions are still male-dominated and women often are paid less than men are for the same job but since 1900, definitely since 1848, women have made some incredible advances in American society.

### Underdog: A Third Party Candidate

Shayne Blair  
Pamela Helberg, *English 102*

Can there be compromise between the two most influential parties in American politics? Is there a party that breaks the partisan lines of the Democratic and Republican parties? There are those who bend party lines by becoming a conservative Democrat or a liberal Republican. But is there a party that takes this mix of ideals to be their political platform? Since we hear so much about the Democratic and Republican parties, these are hard questions to answer. Imagine, if you can, an extremist hybrid of both the Democratic and Republican parties. This party would carry to the extreme characteristics of both parties. They would advocate the legalization of drugs, pardoning of non-violent drug offenders, the cutting of the military, allowing gay marriages, and the end government censorship. But despite these predominantly liberal views, this party could not be considered a leftist organization because it would also advocate conservative views, such as the end of federal income tax, federal welfare programs, regulation on private business, gun-control, federal law-enforcement agencies, and all other federal agencies. This party would say that the federal government should abide stringently to the "Bill of Rights" and should be limited to only the functions enumerated in the Constitution of the United States. The Executive, Congressional, and Judiciary branches of government accompanied by the departments of State, Justice, and Defense would be all that remained of the federal government after the reforms called for by this party (Lowry 1). They would argue that the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> amendments place "strict limits...on the size and power of the federal government" to keep it from becoming too big and too intrusive, and that the federal government has overstepped these boundaries (Browne 1). There is a little known party that does advocate these changes, and it is called the Libertarian party. In recent years, the Libertarian Party has had several candidates on the U.S. presidential ballot. The most recent of these candidates is Harry Browne who ran for president in 1996 and plans to run again in the year 2000 election. He is a 63-year-old investment consultant and author of two books. This year, Browne and his running mate hope to gain more votes than ever before for the Libertarian Party (about 1 million). If elected, Browne will try and answer questions debated over by Democrats and Republicans for decades. Among these will be questions pertaining to future growth or reduction in size of the federal government, and federal government's involvement in education and crime.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what type of federal government is going to be needed in the United States? Does the government need to grow to meet demands from the people, or should the federal government shrink in size and allow for alternative solutions to



America's problems? Browne says that U.S. politics should be concerned with the issue of limiting the power and "scope" of the federal government. He says that such a reform would only be abiding by the Constitution (Browne 1). In July of 1999, Browne said, "[w]hat I want to see is our government abiding by the Constitution, which would end the nightmare of drug prohibition. It would end the income tax. It would end government stealing your Social Security. It would end all of these things and return us to a free country of individual liberty and personal responsibility where people do pay the consequences of their acts, where they don't do all the things that you're afraid of" (Issues2000 Browne on Gov. reform). Republicans, such as George W. Bush, on the other hand, say that government should maintain its current level instead of adding more government. Bush says, "when there's leftover money like there is today, instead of creating more government, we must cut the taxes" (Issues2000 George W. Bush on Gov. reform). Democrats Al Gore and Bill Bradley say that federal government is the only fair way to perform governmental tasks. Bradley says, "[b]y 1994, after 60 years of well-meaning action, the delivery mechanism of government was covered in barnacles, yet to argue that the best government was local government ignores the facts. Civil society was eroding locally, as well as globally. Corruption was infinitely more likely at the local level, and in an increasingly interdependent world, national government was more, not less, important" (Issues2000 Bradley on Gov. reform). But, in spite of other's beliefs that more government will bring about a more peaceful and fair society, the Libertarians uncompromisingly believe that personal responsibility, not government, is the only way to achieve this type of society. They feel that this personal responsibility brings personal freedom, and that personal freedom should be considered a virtue.

Is the U.S. educational system adequate? If it is not, what should the federal government do to help parents acquire the most beneficial education for their child? For the Libertarian party, this question is answered by simply keeping the government out of the educational process (Gillespie 5). Browne says, "[a]s an individual I support the Separation of School and State, as President I promise to keep my nose out of how your family and your community addresses the social development [of your] children" (Issues2000 Harry Browne on education). Browne proposes instead, that the federal government should sell off all its unneeded assets like schools, national parks, vacant land, commodity reserves, dams, pipelines, building, and all types of vehicles (Gillespie 4). The money earned in this venture would, he says, enable the federal government to end income tax. Browne says that the discontinuation of federal income tax would leave parents with the needed funds to send their children to the best school possible. Republicans agree that there is a distinct need for the parents, rather than government, to have control over their child's education. They say, however, that freedom of choice should be promoted by a system of vouchers issued by the government to parents. Parents would then exchange

vouchers for their children's education in private schools. In this way, these vouchers would promote competition in schools and achieve excellence through a laissez-faire theory (Chaddock 1-5). Republican, Gary Bauer says, "I will defend the rights of parents to guide their children's education...." Similarly, Steve Forbes (R) says, "[n]o mother should be forced to send her child to a bad school." Allen Keyes (R) agrees with these statements when he says, "[i]t's absolutely critical that we put the control of our educational system back in the hands of our parents.... So let the money follow the choice of parents, not the choice of 'educrats', bureaucrats, and politicians" (Chaddock 3). The front-runners for the Republican Party in the year 2000 election, George W. Bush and John McCain, also agree with vouchers but are being careful not to step on toes. Bush is cautious not to offend supporters of public schools. He says, "[w]e've got to figure out how to encourage the spread of vouchers so as to improve public schools and to convince people it will improve public school" (Issues2000 Bush on school choice). McCain says that it shouldn't matter whether the school is public, private, or parochial but that parents are able to make the choice, and that the schools are providing proper training.

In stark contrast to the Libertarian and Republican parties, Democrats are in favor of high levels of government involvement in the educational process. Democrat Al Gore would like to see a massive influx in government implemented programs targeting a better educational process. Some of his proposed programs would include the encouragement of young college graduates to become teachers through government hiring bonuses, the federal licensing of teachers that requires testing every 5 years, and the passage of legislation which forces Internet prices down for schools. Gore opposes the use of private school vouchers to encourage the betterment of schools. He says, "[d]iverting tax dollars from public schools to support tuition for some children at private school would drain the funds we need [for] an ambitious program of ...reform that would allow us to have world-class schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (Gore qtd. in *Time Magazine* 36). In his 18 months as an U.S. Senator, Bill Bradley has voted in favor of vouchers several times. Yet, recently he has said, "I don't think that vouchers are the answer to the problems of public education...I voted for experiments" (Issues2000 Bradley on school choice). It would seem that neither the goals of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party will find a place in the Libertarian utopia of a government-free educational process.

In what way should the federal government influence law enforcement and the punishments handed down to criminals by the courts? For the Libertarian Party, law enforcement and sentencing should be a matter of the local or state governments. In fact Harry Browne would like to see all federal law enforcement agencies abolished. He says, "[t]here is no warrant in the Constitution whatsoever for the federal government to act in common crime" (Issues2000 Browne on crime). In a 1996 interview with *REASON* magazine Browne was asked what he would do on the first day as president. He

responded, "I will pardon everyone who has been convicted of a tax evasion crime; I will pardon everyone who has been convicted of nonviolent drug crime; I will pardon anyone who's been found guilty of any gun-control violations—all on a federal level" (Gillespie 4). Browne says that it is his hope that by pardoning these people and ending the drug war he can free up law enforcement resources and prison cells for the truly dangerous criminals. Republican Steve Forbes, however, says that the federal government should spend more money on building prisons so that convicted criminal can be held for longer periods of time. To providing fair and unbiased justice to all, Forbes says the government should implement a "one strike and you're out" policy that allows no early release for violent criminals. Fellow Republican Orrin Hatch agrees. Hatch wants to implement a policy which makes convicted criminals serve the full sentence imposed by the court rather than a sentence shortened by early parole. He says, "[Our Bill] provide[s] funds to States to build prisons, which lower crime rates by encouraging States to incarcerate violent and repeat offenders for at least 85% of their sentence. The average time served by violent offenders nationally has increased 12% since 1993. Simply put, violent criminals cannot commit crimes against innocent victim while in prison." However, Republican George W. Bush is in favor of a "two Strikes and you're out" policy against violent offenders. He says, in reference to his gubernatorial term, "We have approved a tough "two strikes & you're out" law for sexual offenders.... I do not believe criminals have a Constitutional right to get out of jail early." Even more forgiving is Al Gore when he says that the "three strikes and you're out" policy that he and now president Bill Clinton enacted will work just fine. However, Gore cautions that there is a possibility of negative effects on society coming from this current policy if it is not implemented correctly. He says, "[w]e should review of the kinds of penalty that are calculated under the [policy of] 'three strikes and you're out.' The focus should be on truly violent crime." Gore's Democratic rival, Bill Bradley, shares the concern that nonviolent criminals may be receiving unfair sentences. He says, "...kids [are] getting mandatory sentences for first-time non-violent drug use and being put away 20 years. That shouldn't happen" (Issues2000 Candidates on crime). While all of the other teams are pitching for strikes, Harry Browne and the Libertarian team want to throw a wild ball in hopes that this country does not strike out on the issue of crime.

In the game of politics, it is the heavily sponsored, flashy teams that are usually favored to win. And, usually the underdog is considered "comic relief" while it leaves the field with its heads hanging in defeat (Gillespie 1). Without these underdogs, however, there would never be the very real threat of any major revolution in U.S. politics. If, for just a moment, continual victory skews these teams' basic understanding of the U.S. political system, then, as they say, the victorious teams' "pride will come before their fall."

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Carrie Koreis  
*Two*  
Linocut, 7" x 6"

*Artist's comment: For this particular assignment I was asked to create something that represents myself or something of importance to me. I choose two trees to represent the very close relationship I share with my twin sister, Heather. The trees and mountains also express my love of nature.*

*Carrie Koreis  
Art 175*

## Ode to a Chilean Poet

*Selah Tay-Song  
Jeffrey Klausman, English 221*

Zither and Glebe—are these even words? They must be—they have Spanish translations (citara and lodo). Whatever their meaning, they accurately embody the experience of reading Pablo Neruda; confusing and unfamiliar, yet at the same time meaningful and effective.

Pablo Neruda was born and raised in the wildernesses of Chile. He wrote and published many great collections of his poetry, the second when he was only twenty years old (Reid iv). His thousands of poems encompass subjects from the Spanish Civil war to the coastal rainforests of Chile to love and eroticism. I have chosen to focus on one collection entitled "Odas Elementales," published in 1954. The ode form is one I have not had much experience with, beyond Calvin and Hobbes' "Ode to Tigers." This critical reading has exposed me to a new way to write poetry where the poem is focused intently on one subject, generally an ordinary part of life. Neruda writes his odes to many different subjects, from birdwatching to books to a tomato.

As in all of his poetry, Neruda's easy use of the language makes his odes seem natural and intuitive. One gets the impression that he does not revise; that the words magically appear on the page without effort or concern, arranging themselves in the proper patterns. The rhetorical modes are varied: listing, actions, vivid descriptions, heartfelt emotional abstraction. All these modes are linked together to create a solid, concrete but highly complex picture which is itself a metaphor for a theme which is at times personal, at others social.

Neruda uses language like "little broken fragments.../wood, seaweed, shells"(309) in his odes; each word is an individual with meaning and emphasis. His line length is remarkably short, with often one word to a line and rarely more than five. This stresses even more the importance each word carries in the poem. For instance, in "Ode to a Tomato," Neruda begins,

The street  
drowns in tomatoes:  
noon,  
summer,  
light  
breaks  
in two

tomato  
halves,  
and the streets  
run  
with juice"(319).

The effect is firstly that the poem undulates slowly into the brain, rather than coming all at once, and secondly, every noun leaps out on its own line rather than being buried in the rest of the sentence. Imagine if the lines read,

The street drowns in tomatoes:  
noon, summer, light breaks  
in two tomato halves,  
and the streets run with juice.

The effect of the metaphor is ruined because all you notice is tomatoes: breaks halves, juice. As a reader you are aware that there is a tomato but are unsure of its importance to street, summer, noon and run with.

Neruda wrote this collection of Odes to be accessible to a wider range of people than his previous poetry touched. They are less dense and pithy, and when read aloud are merely strings of simple sentences. It is hard to determine Neruda's intentions in sound and rhythm, for although the English translation has its distinct sound, the original Spanish is the truly rhythmic verse. For example, the alliteration of "the hedgehog husk/ half opening its barbs"(281) takes a different form in "el erizado erizo/ que entreabrió sus espinas"(280). The Spanish language has been remarked to be very poetic intrinsically, with a plethora of vowels and nasals and fricatives. It is very breathy, and may not be as versatile in sound as the English language; each vowel has only one manner of pronunciation, whereas in English, there are at least three per vowel. This limitation, however, only seems to make it easier for Neruda. And he finds other methods; nearly every Spanish word ends in a vowel, an s, or an n, making it hard to have a line end without enjambling smoothly into the next line; to make up for this, Neruda uses many end-stops, except of course where the enjambment is purposeful. There is a colon in nearly every Ode. The repeated use of commas makes sections of the poems a list, as in Ode to the Yellow Bird;

Afterwards  
With closed wings  
You went back  
To your sky,  
To the spacious heart,  
To the green fire,

To the slopes,  
To the trailing vines,  
To the fruits,  
To the air, to the stars,  
To the secret sound  
Of unknown springs, (305)

It is hard to say that the commas are essential to the English version; heart and sound and *to* incur natural pauses of their own. But the Spanish words, *corazón extenso* and *sonido secreto* keep right on going, especially as the sharp *to* translates to a soft, penetrable *a*. There, the commas become necessary.

Neruda's poems, whether simple Odes or long, complex works, always convey some essential meaning to the reader. The Odes are fun to analyze because Neruda wrote them for many different people to be able to grasp, and so they serve as a springboard to studying Neruda's poetry. Even here, he uses metaphor in a combination with human emotion to bring the experience directly to the reader's core.

"Birdwatching Ode" is one of the less complex, more accessible examples of this. It follows those actions, thoughts and emotions of a speaker who is watching for birds in a rainforest. The speaker begins to imagine birds in the surrounding nature—a waterfall, leaves and fruit:

Above  
a crazy song  
a waterfall:  
a bird.  
How  
can this throat  
narrower than  
a fingerwidth  
gush singing waters? (291)

The brushed magnolia's dust  
or fruit  
bouncing to earth:  
was that a flight? (293)

The speaker, plagued by these fleeting images, becomes obsessed: "Birds of the devil/ off with you/ to the devil!" (295)

He is going from hopeful to angry and finally to resigned; "Impossible./ Not to be touched." (295) Neruda uses end-stops in this poem to emphasize the emotions and finality being conveyed. He concludes to

love [birds]  
thus,  
unattainable . . .  
stunriders  
of the air . . .  
happy  
constructors  
of the softest nests (298-99).

These few passages cannot do "Birdwatching Ode" justice; as a whole the poem is a powerful machine, a metaphor for the idea that however we try to seize free things such as birds, we can only truly appreciate them in their natural state, "far from gun and cage" (297). The concrete images and even emotions Neruda portrays are effective in letting the reader feel first the need to see the birds, then the need to control them in some way, and finally the acceptance of their freedom. The effect is meaning which can be applied to all things that should be free, from birds to wildlife to human beings. (I can assume this is his meaning because of his long battles for human rights in Chile and abroad.)

Neruda has a way of taking a cliché, such as birds as the symbol for freedom, and portraying it in a way that seems so fresh and real that you hardly notice it's a cliché. His images are striking and precise; not just a tree but a "cinnamon tree" (293), not just "oceanic substances" (309) but "yellow agates" (309), not just a supper but "blonde onion . . . filial essence/ of the olive tree . . . parsley/flaunts/ its little flags" (321). Neruda's poetry puts me there, at that moment, experiencing life as Neruda must have experienced it. It makes me want to move to Chile and live on the coast and write poetry.

This hardly seems remarkable. After all, it's what "good" poetry is supposed to do. However, I have never really enjoyed or appreciated poetry before reading Neruda. I had my few favorites that spoke to me, and all else was just meaningless words. Then some of Neruda's became my favorites, and then more and more until I began to enjoy poetry not for what I could take from it but for what it could impress in me. And if I read enough, maybe I can start to produce my own metaphors with the freshness and vitality and meaning that Neruda conveys in his.

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## Reading Mike Hammer

Wanda Ringkvist  
Sherri Winans, English 100

When I think back to the many books I have read, I wonder how much power they had over me. How much are children influenced by what they read? I began to ponder these questions recently as I read *Hank the Cow Dog* to my eight-year-old grandson, Jon. Hank the Cow Dog is a very funny character. We both laughed through the whole tale of mishaps and adventures. As Jon and I read that book, I began to think of stories and books I read as a child, books that made me laugh and cry, or made my hair stand on end. As a child, I was an avid reader; I would read absolutely anything. I remember people reading to me, too. I loved being transported away, carried off to another time and place. But I question whether everything I read had a positive influence on my life.

I was thinking back to my own childhood and the days when I first became interested in reading. In order to make any sense of that period in my life, I need to go back a few years to the 1940's.

I was born in 1946 in Long Beach, California. My parents had migrated to California with two small daughters during the early 1940's. My father and mother left their small farming community in mid-Tennessee, so that my father could find work. My father worked in the oil fields throughout World War Two; Mom never worked outside the home. She was too busy taking care of five small wild children. The oil fields of California in the 1940s were tough places. The men worked long hours, day and night. They also did hard drinking on and off the job.

My father was caught up in the trap of alcoholism. In the early 1950's, he had a series of misfortunes. When the war was over, jobs were cut back in the oil fields, and he had more time to drink. He was drinking more and earning less. After a while, we were in debt. One night after drinking at the Drift-Inn for hours, Dad got into his 1948 Buick and started to drive the two blocks home. He hit every parked vehicle on that two blocks. Dad went to jail that night. In the morning he jumped bail and left California, and us, for the hills of Tennessee.

We went on Aid to Dependent Children, as welfare was known then. My mother moved to an over-stuffed green chair with a cup of coffee and her cigarette. She didn't get up, I swear, for years. We five children were left to our own devices. We didn't spend much time in the house. It was usually dark and smoke filled. On rare occasions, my mother would leave her post (the over-stuffed green chair) to walk to the corner liquor store to get another package of cigarettes. It didn't make much difference if Mom was home or not; we just noticed when her chair was empty.

Our home was like a Montessori School. We experimented with food. We did artwork on the walls and created our world to suit us. No adult interceded.

My sister Geraldean and I spent a lot of time together. She is three years older than I am, so I tagged along with her most of my childhood. We spent a lot of time at the library. The Long Beach Public Library was a grand place. Outside were large, old trees and wide cement steps that led to the heavy glass doors of the building. I loved the smell of the inside of the library, a mix of paper and the faint scent of the Magnolia tree outside.

On certain days, the librarian would read stories to us. She was old and wore a suit, makeup and nail polish. I studied her. I hung on her every word. I was not subtle with my fascination. We truly irritated the woman. Frequently she asked us to wash our hands (we were not clean little girls). To her we were two dirty little ragamuffins pawing her beloved books. Mrs. Tuttle, our ever-vigilant librarian, did tolerate us enough that we were able to find our favorite books at the library. Mine was about a troll living under a bridge. He had a mountain of green peas neatly stacked and was guarding them from a yellow dragon. The content of that story eludes me. The illustrations I remember very well.

As I grew older and developed better reading skills, I literally would read anything I could get my hands on. We had a bookcase of assorted books in our living room, that various door-to-door salesmen had sold to Mom over the years. There was a set of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a *Physicians' Home Health* book, and a set of *Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories*. I read them all many times. My favorite book was the *Physicians' Home Health*. It had color pictures of guts and genitalia that I memorized. My first introduction to anatomy and physiology was in that book, and it was possibly the seed of my interest in the medical field.

Things changed a bit in our home in 1953. It was now the end of the Korean War. My oldest sister Billie Sue had married a sailor and had moved home while her husband Bill went overseas. After he was discharged and while he looked for work, he too lived with us. They rented one of our three bedrooms. Bill unpacked his duffel bag, while we all pushed and shoved to watch. It was loaded with clothing, souvenirs and books. Books that sailors read immediately captured my attention.

That is how I discovered Mike Hammer the detective. Mike Hammer was the proverbial trench coat. He drank like a fish: he had "lots of dames" and an office in an old building. Mike had the bare light bulb over the desk, cigarette dangling from his lips and women, lots of women. Mike was my hero.

When the three adults were out of the house, I took over the sofa with my latest Mike Hammer novel. I would light up a Lucky Strike cigarette, kick back like Bill did, and read away. My sister Geraldean still comments, she is sure I was the only twelve year old

that would lie on the sofa puffing cigarettes and reading novels, both compliments of brother-in-law Bill's bedroom dresser.

I was like a sponge. It makes me sad in a way that I read the books I did. I wish I had read the same books other children were reading. The adult books I read intrigued me to the point I no longer went to the library. Those books in the children's section were now boring. I read every book Mickey Spillane wrote. I progressed to bigger and better fixes: *Payton Place*, and *Valley of the Dolls*. Oh boy, those were steamers. I filled my head with sex, violence, and drugs. I never read the classics.

I have continued to read; however, I have changed my choice of material. Now, I do not enjoy reading books about the darker side of life. Give me a good *Hank the Cow Dog* any day. Just in case history repeats itself, and real life starts looking like one of the novels I just read, I would rather just have a good laugh.



Jenny Frank  
*Still Life*  
Charcoal, 18" x 24"



*Artist's comment: The problem presented for "Still Life" was to draw the objects without using lines. This was accomplished using charcoal, creating planes and shading to add depth and form. This resulted in a more realistic representation.*

*Jenny Frank  
Art 112*

## Everything Happens Somewhere

*Daniel Jones  
Jack Pierce, Geography 105*

Geography is an interesting scholastic discipline. While it at times seems similar to other disciplines as it incorporates the findings of many other fields to achieve its goals, many of these fields that geography looks to are in fact disciplines that evolved from *geography* (Austin 15)!

The word *geography* was first used by the ancient Greek scholar Eratosthenes (276?-195 BC), and is made up of two Greek terms - *geo*, which means "earth," and *graph*, which means "write" (Rubenstein v). While the study of geography evolved in many civilizations, it was the Greeks who really took the lead; they worked with geographic concepts for hundreds of years before Eratosthenes even invented the *word* geography (Clawson & Fisher 3, Rubenstein 4). Geography grew out of the ancient Greeks' philosophical concern with the nature of the universe, and for approximately 2,000 years the field dealt mainly with studying and describing the earth and its peoples and places (Getis 3, Rubenstein 5). In their studies, the Greeks developed scientific principles of observation and reasoned explanation (Austin 15). With the 1800's came the use of these principles to explain systematically the geographer's observations of the world (Rubenstein 4). The modern era of geography began with two nineteenth century German geographers, Alexander von Humboldt and Carl Ritter, who argued that geography should move beyond its then-current purpose of describing the features on the earth's surface and toward explaining and interpreting the reasons for the presence or absence of certain phenomena (Rubenstein 5).

Modern geography is, in my opinion, amazing. I did not know until I opened my geography textbook what exactly the definition of the scholastic discipline *geography* was! Modern geography "blends" almost every scholastic field into one all-encompassing discipline that not only attempts to describe the earth, but to explain it in all of its interrelatedness! Wow.

All of the definitions that I have read in my research for this paper describe modern geography in very similar ways. In general, today's geographer attempts to describe the characteristics of the earth while also explaining the ways in which the spatial distributions of important cultural and physical characteristics can help us to answer questions of political, economic, social, and ecological concern (Getis 3, Rubenstein 33). To do this, geographers pull together knowledge shared with a variety of disciplines to create an overall image of this complex, divided world (Clawson & Fisher 10, deBlij &

Muller 34). For example, economic geography focuses on the spatial dimensions of economic activity, while social geography looks at the spatial and regional attributes of culture and social organizations (deBlij & Muller 34, Kromm 17). Most of the world's problems are interrelated in a spatial sense, and can be better understood within a geographic context (Stansfield & Zimolzak 2). This makes sense.

Spatial, geographic relationships can also help to explain differences among peoples. The history of humanity is a history of conflicts between groups of humans, and geography can help to explain why. Geography's spatial perspective can help to relate political unrest in certain parts of the world, for instance, to the spatial distributions of cultural characteristics such as languages and religions, demographic patterns such as population growth and migration, and natural resources such as energy and minerals (Rubenstein v). Geographers would focus on the *interrelationships* among these various factors in order to help explain the original problem of "why is there political unrest?" (Rubenstein 4, Austin 15).

The ways in which people live their lives differ all around the world. Much of this is due to the *cultures* of peoples - their behaviors and beliefs, the sum total of their way of living. deBlij and Muller point out in Regions 2000 that in today's multicultural world, it is vitally important that we as a species attempt to improve our understanding of other's cultures: the more we understand our fellow humans, the easier we can accommodate them (deBlij & Muller 33). Geographers can help us by preparing systematic, accurate, and readable studies on areas all around the globe, thus increasing world knowledge of various cultures and helping to promote peace and greater international understanding (Kromm 15). People from all around the globe are currently immigrating to the United States in possibly record numbers. Knowledge of American geography and the geography of immigrant's homelands may increase understanding of such events and perhaps promote a more tolerant attitude among Americans (Clawson & Fisher 10). Geography can help.

Everything happens somewhere. In other words, everything occurs in a geographic space. Geographic knowledge helps us to understand the important issues that face the world. From global warming to human hunger, all of the world's problems occur in a geographic context, and *geography* helps to explain them (Getis 3). Geographic knowledge also provides us with good "background information," which in turn makes it possible for us to think critically about things. For all of these reasons, the field of geography is indispensable to the human race.

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## Heimelig

Agnes Fleischer  
David Kehe, ESL 117

Last night, I was at a Halloween party with two of my Swiss friends and Marco, an Italian friend of mine. After eating and drinking quite a bit, we all sat down on the floor near the fireplace. Somebody took his guitar and began to play and softly whistle a familiar melody. Slowly one after another started to join in the whistling. By the time our cheeks glowed with the heat of the fire and the gleam was reflected in our eyes, we found ourselves singing all together the song of liberty which was once forbidden: "Die Gedanken sind frei" (the thoughts are free, nobody can read them). I think I remember hearing someone saying: "Wow, das ist heimelig" (Wow, that's heimelig) and I happened to see Marcos baffled glance, not understanding what this meant.

This would be a situation where the word *heimelig* is appropriate. Someone who studies languages knows the problem of certain expressions not translating easily into other languages. In Swiss-German we have a special word we use when we feel cozy and well. It does not even exist in my native language of High-German. The word is *heimelig*.

When I celebrated my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, I invited all my friends to a wooden cabin up in the mountains. Since it was a very warm summer evening, we decided to spend the night outside. When night fell, we crawled into our sleeping bags and contemplated the night sky and the many shooting stars while snuggling against each other in order to not get cold. A month later, I met one of my friends. He thanked me for this special birthday party by saying: "It was so *heimelig*!" He said this because of the mood he felt, lying outside and watching the shooting stars, as each one wished for something special to become true.

There are three important characteristics of *heimelig*. First, one can use this word to describe his/her mood and feeling about the environment, while being at a special place. Second, an atmosphere can be *heimelig*. However, both the feeling and the atmosphere are dependant on the third characteristic: the place. A place is then *heimelig* when it creates a homelike (peaceful) atmosphere, when it arouses this special *heimelig* mood in someone.

At this point, it is useful to explain the origin of the word *heimelig*. *Heim* means in German "home". If I would translate it word for word, it would say homelike. One can use it for describing a place; then it would probably be translated like home place, but still home place and homelike would not be the right translation. In view of this fact, it

seems logical that *heimelig* is not a word which can be used together with one's home, since, as in English too, it makes no sense saying: my home is homelike.

*Heimelig* is a word that is impossible to directly translate into English. Some may say that it means comfortable, but that's not accurate, because as in the example given above, one would never say he felt comfortable laying on the hard ground and being cold.

Unfortunately, I couldn't look it up in the dictionary, since it is a Swiss-German word, which is just a very deviated dialect form of the High-German. But I am sure it would be translated somehow as "a snug feeling" or "a pleasant atmosphere" and "comfort". Perhaps, if taking a bit of each and mixing it up with the factor of "domestic warmth" (for the mood) thus creating a single word descending from the word home, it would come really close to *heimelig*.

However, the English word "cozy", in spite of not hitting the nail on the head, has some similarities to *heimelig*. Like "cozy" *heimelig* also describes a feeling or a place where you feel well and "at home". Nevertheless, "heimelig" is a word one would never use to describe ones office. Generally, it is not appropriate in connection with work. Therefore, one would seldom use it when describing a situation where a higher positioned person, such as a boss or person one doesn't know very well, has been present. *Heimlig* is only applicable among good friends, including both describing a place, a feeling or an atmosphere where friends were present, and talking to them as an audience.

Only a few weeks later, Marco wondered about this event and spoke to me. I tried very hard to explain to him this weird word, not existing in the Italian language either, but I didn't manage to make him understand the whole meaning. That's why I chose to write this essay, hoping that it helps him to see clearly now what the word *heimelig* means.



Jason Andersen  
2000  
Oil on board, 20" x 16"

## The Pragmatic Value of Aesthetics

Jenny Bristol  
Tere Pinney, English 101

The physics of beauty is one department of science still in the Dark Ages.  
— Aldo Leopold

In her essay, "Three Days to See," Helen Keller suggests that we do not use our senses, especially sight, to their full potential (Keller 1108-1115). Because her senses are drastically reduced, she provides a unique type of insight for those who were granted a more normal range of senses. Although Keller is limited in certain sensual aspects, her intellect and imagination enable her to *see* quite clearly. She has an intimate grasp on all her surroundings. Her emotions are intertwined with her limited senses in such a manner that she grandly defies any deficit of sensual perception.

In his essay, "The Green Pasture," Aldo Leopold compares the flow of a river to an artist painting a landscape (Leopold 54-56). The river begins by drawing a ribbon of silt, then, as it flows along it etches out thick, lush tufts of eleocharis, a type of sod that entices moles, deer, foxes and other grassland inhabitants. The river splashes wildflowers of pinks, blues, whites and reds upon the Green Pasture. You may watch the painting in progress, but as the river flows, the painting disappears, never to be precisely duplicated or seen with the eyes again. The painting is held in the gallery of the mind, only to be viewed with the mind's eye. I believe it is this "mind's eye" through which Helen Keller looks at the world. Aldo Leopold sees the world with his physical senses, including sight, as well as with his mind's eye. He encourages us to do so also, in order to develop an appreciation for nature. According to Leopold, the mind's eye needs to be utilized in conjunction with the evolutionary and ecological context in which a landscape is viewed. Instead of merely looking at the landscape, Leopold also challenges us to understand the biotic community that exists in each ecosystem.

In "The Marshland Elegy," Leopold shows us that by using a holistic basis to view our surroundings, we can experience the true beauty of an otherwise, seemingly drab landscape (101-108). Leopold describes the miraculous processes that took place so precisely as to create the wonderful, elusive Shitepoke Crane. He stresses all of the factors that had to be so elegantly woven in order to produce the diverse marshland, the supportive habitat for the Shitepoke Crane. One must experience the sounds, sights, smells, and textures, Leopold expresses, as well as have some knowledge of the completeness and connectedness; the intrinsic worth of the marshland ecology, in order to

*Artist's comment: This piece is one of a series of four in which I hope to achieve a feeling of sickness and deformity. This painting is done on cardboard using oil, some acrylic, and bits of chalk found on the floor. I paint most of my pictures with my fingers.*

Jason Andersen  
Art 120

understand it and acknowledge its true importance and aesthetic value. Leopold writes the following of the Shitepoke Crane:

Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet uncaptured by language. The quality of cranes lies, I think, in this higher gamut, as yet beyond the reach of words. This much, though, can be said: our appreciation of the crane grows with the slow unraveling of earthly history. His tribe, we now know, stems out of the remote Eocene. The other members of the fauna in which he originated are long since entombed within the hills. When we hear his call we hear no mere bird. He is the symbol of our untamable past, of that incredible sweep of millennia which underlies and conditions the daily affairs of birds and men. (102-103)

The crane and the marshland cannot be separated. The crane cannot exist in the absence of the marshland. The beauty and the awe of the Shitepoke crane lies in the ancient connectedness it displays to its environment.

Humans, it seems, have lost this connectedness to their surroundings. Keller speaks of a lethargy we experience. This lethargy, she writes, "characterizes the use of all of our faculties and senses. Only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight" (Keller 1109). Keller wonders how she can get so much pleasure from mere touch, yet those with eyes see very little. She challenges us to "set [our minds] to work on the problem of how [we] would use [our] own eyes if [we] only had three days to see" (1110). She writes of her imaginary "three days to see," and eloquently combines the aesthetically appealing with the history and context behind the beauty. She also appreciates the aspects of her surroundings that aren't so beautiful. Keller takes a holistic approach to the world. She takes naught for granted.

I think Leopold would appreciate that Keller is asking us to "set our *minds* to work on [this] problem. . ." I think both authors are pointing out that there is much more involved in the act of perception than meets the eye. Keller advises us to take advantage of the wonders our senses provide us. She encourages us to live our lives fully and to marvel in the delights of nature and mankind. Leopold goes several steps farther in his various essays throughout *A Sand County Almanac*. With his often poetically pragmatic prose, he informs us of the biological and environmental need to pay heed to Keller's astute advice. When I think about the zest Keller has for the world and the appreciation Leopold expresses for the natural community (of which humans are merely a part) I begin to understand the importance of opening my eyes to more than the superficial. When I take the time and apply the knowledge and proper use of the senses necessary to appreciate the

world's connections in their truest form, I experience an inner peace; I feel balance and joy.

I believe it is an enhanced and enlightened sense of perception that will inevitably deliver the insight that we, as individuals, need in order to save the planet. I feel that once we experience nature with this sense of perception there is no way we can possibly allow harm to befall her. It stands to reason that if we simply begin to take advantage of our natural gifts of perception and insight, not only will we benefit individually and in our communities, but nature and her various communities will also be sustained.

I know many people who have an extremely hard time when it comes to this appreciation of the natural world. They cannot stand to be away from their televisions and telephones. They insist in being in touch with the superficial aspects of life. They feel secure when they are surrounded by the false security these objects provide. They strive harder and harder for more and more, and in the process, they lose themselves. They can no longer see the beauty in a sleeping child's face, or the love in a puppy dog's eyes. They feel no emotion with the pinks, oranges and purples of a sunset. They are not happy and they do not add anything to our communities.

Fortunately, I also know of many people who do see the world as Keller and Leopold instruct. They understand the delicate intricacies of all that surround them. These people are happy wherever they go. They shed joy and kindness. They provide security and strength to all with whom they come in contact. Compassionate people like Gandhi, The Dalai Lama, Jesus, Helen Keller, and many others should be an example to us all.

The Hopi Indians had no concept of "time." They simply lived each moment for all that it was. They could not "waste" time or "spend" time, for time did not belong to them or have any meaning to them. Without this concept of time, they lived each moment to the fullest. They had a constant appreciation of the forces and the gifts of the natural world. They realized no separation between themselves and their surroundings. Today, most humans have separated themselves from nature. We view time and nature as devices that can be utilized to secure material possessions. We use these material possessions to create and buy more possessions. With each level of material growth we grow further from the true gifts nature provides. We lose grasp of the inherent value of everything that comprises the natural world.

Keller suggests we look deeper at our surroundings and appreciate them for all that they are. Leopold tells us that only when we appreciate the intrinsic value and aesthetic beauty of nature and her communities, will we have the level of motivation necessary to preserve and protect the natural world. When we combine the mind's eye with the holistic natural beauty of the biota, we begin to see that each of us is a vital and intricate part of

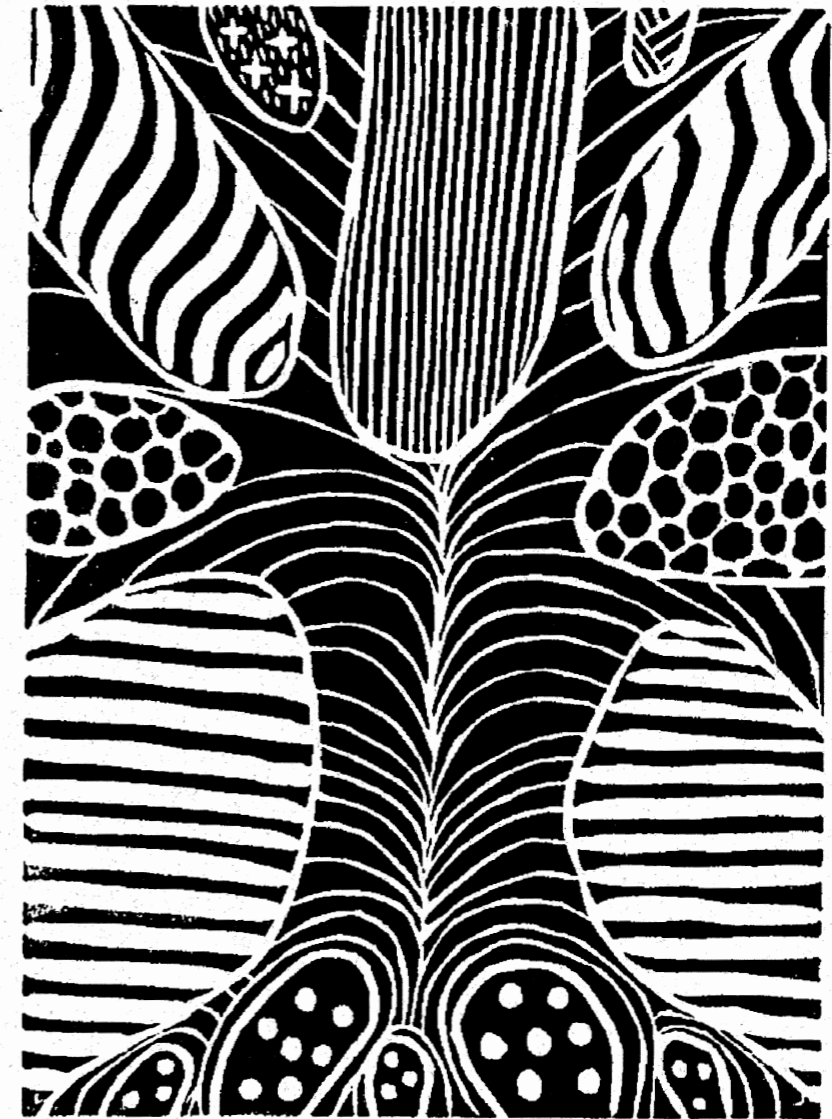
this planet Earth. We must all work together to appreciate, protect and respect this complex system of communities we call home.

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Simona Hughes  
*Texture Tree*  
Linocut, 7" x 5"

*Artist's comment: Texture Tree was an assignment on... texture. The idea was to fit eight different textures into a design of any sort. I chose this tree design of mine. It has a balance of design, but also represents some sort of balance that surrounds us. In my eyes, trees represent that type of balance.*

*Simona Hughes  
Art 175*

## This Bud's for You

*Brian Mapes  
Pamela Helberg, English 101*

Americans drink alcohol. Not all of them of course, but a large amount do. Liquor stores beer isles, bars, advertisements, college dorms, wherever we go we see signs of alcohol in our society. Why? Alcohol is a drug. It damages the human body like a poison. People become addicted to it. State run liquor stores are in every town. People beat their children and spouses because of it. People ruin their marriages, jobs, and lives because of it. So why do we put it on every street corner? Is it because we are used to it? Is it because the government agrees with it? Is it because the church uses it? Why do we allow this particular poison to run free in our society? Why Alcohol, and not, say, Marijuana.

Alcohol was not always a legal drug. From 1919 to 1933 the U.S. passed the 18 amendment, prohibiting the making or distribution of alcoholic beverages. These laws were only respected in cities where people wanted it to. In bigger cities where the majority of the populace wanted to drink, contraband liquor was available.

The 18 Amendment gave birth to a new breed of criminals; Bootleggers. Bootleggers manufactured and sold illegal alcohol. The bootleggers formed gangs and took over cities. Organized crime exploded into every big city and people were becoming rich. Al Capone was one of the most successful bootleggers of the time. With profits coming in at an estimated \$60,000,000 a year and control of the largest gang, it is no wonder that he almost had a monopoly on the bootlegging world. These new criminals made the public cry out for more enforcement of the laws. This led to government to spend big money paying for more cops and more jails, to arrest this new "criminal" and his clients. Jails were filled with people that had done nothing but bought a drink, or sold a bottle. The crime was not decreasing ether. More cops just meant that the gangs would just have to improve in size as well.

By the start of the 1930's, people were getting pretty sick of the silly prohibition. Political parties began making promises to end it, and in 1933, with the help of the new democratic president Franklin Roosevelt, the 21 Amendment was passed. This made the sale of alcohol legal once again. This made many people very happy, and with in 30 years, there was not one dry state left.

The main supporters of prohibition had been Christian revivalists, who believed alcohol was destroying America's moral fiber. Four years after prohibition had ended, they found a new enemy to stomp out, only this time they had the support of the new booming Alcohol business. This new enemy was called Marijuana.



The Christians believed that Marijuana was destroying America's moral fiber as well. The alcohol companies believed that they were losing too much money because of marijuana. This combined power force led to the quick demise of legal Marijuana. Lower class citizens were the main users of Marijuana, with most of the use in rural and African American communities. It was not as much of a "gentlemen's drug" as Alcohol was, so support for it was low among the upper class. With not enough powerful supporters, and too many powerful enemies Marijuana has remained illegal.

If compared to alcohol, Marijuana seems to be much easier on the human body. Reports on the health risks of marijuana are varied, and many are left inconclusive. An analysis of Marijuana policy by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Science does agree that Marijuana can have negative effects on the respiratory system if smoked, and can effect short-term memory<sup>2</sup>. Alcohol can damage the stomach, liver, kidneys, and many other organs. It can be deduced then, that a drugs legal standing has little to do with how healthy it is. Perhaps it is based on their alleviating values.

Marijuana has medical properties. Many cancer patents use Marijuana to gain appetite and reduce pain while undergoing chemotherapy. Many states now allow doctors to prescribe Marijuana to such people. However, the federal government refuses to support such laws and so even people with prescriptions are criminals and can be arrested. The only illness Alcohol can cure is a broken heart. Other than that a person would almost be better off standing naked in the rain, then drinking when they are sick. So medical values can also be thrown out of the equation when while trying to decide if a drug shall be legal or not. Maybe it is because of the "gateway" theory.

Marijuana has been labeled as a gateway drug. This means people that use Marijuana are more likely to try harder drugs. In reality however, drugs do not make people do other drugs, people do. Some Marijuana users may move on to bigger and badder drugs, but not because they are stoned. It is because they are forced to go to a drug dealer to buy Marijuana. If they could go into a clean well lighted place to buy their drugs, we would not have this "gateway" problem. I have never been solicited to buy crack from the liquor store clerk. I also do not know many people that did Marijuana before they drank Alcohol. Alcohol is the easiest drug to start doing because it is everywhere. Kids look around and see it on T.V., magazine ads, even their parents do it, so it does not seem bad to them. Alcohol is the main gateway drug if there is such a thing.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.druglibaray.org/schaffer/studies/nas/append.nas](http://www.druglibaray.org/schaffer/studies/nas/append.nas)

Marijuana is not illegal because it is the devil weed. It is not illegal because it kills people. It is illegal because of fear and ignorance. Thanks to America's war on drugs, half the population is afraid of a plant. The government does not like saying it is wrong. It would look pretty silly to begin selling something it has been condemning for 60 years. The government is also worried that it will not be able to collect enough money from Marijuana due to the fact that people may just grow their own. The Alcohol companies do not want it legal because it will cut into their profits; right now they corner the market on mind-altering drugs. Christians do not want it legal because, for some reason, it destroys moral fiber. These are three mighty forces Marijuana is up against. Not to mention most of its supporters are blown off as irrational potheads.

Over the years Marijuana support has been on the rise. The legalization of medical Marijuana more and more states proves that Americans still have some compassion for their fellow man. This is not enough though. We need federal backing to make it a reality. There are too many horror stories of prescription Marijuana users being mugged in alleys, or arrested while to purchase medicine.

This country is facing the same problems it had during prohibition; people are being arrested for smoking a joint while criminals are becoming rich. Jails are flooded, crime is constantly on the rise, and our country has the highest murder and violent crime rate. So why does the government use so much of its resources chasing after non-violent offenders? Children's school time is spent learning how to "just say no", then they look around and see a country full of racism, sexism, and hate crimes, and think, "why bother". Why don't the schools have unarmed men come in and teach them how to love their brother?

The Marijuana user has gotten a bad rap over years. In the 1940's and 50's, pulp novelists described him as a sex-crazed drug fiend. In 1960's and 70's he was a burnt-out, dropped-out draft dodging hippie. In the 1980's he was a criminal so evil, our only course of action against him was war. The pot smoking doctor was never talked about, nor was the dope fiend cop, and until recently, there was never a mention of the joint inhaling politician, but all of these people existed, and still do exist in our society. Their voice is needed to help stop the real war on drugs.

Marijuana has paid its dues; it is time to set it free. With every new positive fact learned about it, and every old myth destroyed, the reason for prohibiting it seems a little more ridiculous and our reasoning for locking someone up because of it seems a little crueller. Because something has been around for a long time, does not necessarily make it right. In the 1930's this country had segregation laws, people were separated because of the color of their skin. The people who made such laws, are the same people who prohibited Marijuana; can we really trust their judgment?

## The Meaning of History: Carr vs. Tuchman

Ben Floreen

Anita Aukee-Johnson, English 101

Probably every high school in the United States requires its students to take some history course in order to receive a diploma, whether it is U.S. history, world history, or any other type of history. However, compared to the apparent importance of this specific course, it is surprising that the question, "What exactly is history?" is rarely asked. Two authors, Edward Hallet Carr and Barbara Tuchman address this question, attempting to find a solid answer to satisfy their own personal opinions, and at the same time give insight to their readers. Strangely enough, while both authors have the same topic ("What is history?"), they come up with two distinctly different answers. This creates a new question: "Who should we believe?", or more precisely, "Who is right?" In order to formulate a decision, we must look at both authors' definitions of history, examining them to determine the conclusions of each, and also the points on which the two authors contradict each other.

E. H. Carr makes it very apparent that he believes history to be facts about the past, combined with the interpretation of the historian who records the facts. The following quote displays this idea: "The belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous fallacy..." (Carr 569). Barbara Tuchman, on the other hand, presents and adheres to a different viewpoint. She says, "...facts are history whether interpreted or not" (Tuchman 605). These two opinions, it seems, are diametrically opposed. In order to have a better working knowledge of this discrepancy, let us analyze these views further.

Carr and Tuchman both agree that facts are an essential part of history, but they disagree on whether or not facts are the only part of history. Carr maintains that "...facts are essential to the historian. But...they do not by themselves constitute history..." (601). Tuchman, however, adopts the opposing stand. She states, "I...simply assumed that history was past events existing independently, whether we examined them or not" (Tuchman 604). Before accepting one of these viewpoints as correct, let us scrutinize a few more examples.

Carr and Tuchman mutually agree upon the idea that there are certain basic facts that are the same for all historians. The controversy arises when the question is asked of whether or not these basic facts are history in themselves. In this context, Carr attests to the process, "First get your facts straight, then plunge...into the shifting sands of interpretation..." (595). Tuchman, on the other hand, "...define[s] history as the past events of which we have knowledge..." (605).

Concerning past events existing independently of the historian, both authors agree that without the historian, we would not know that the events occurred. Conversely, the two authors disagree with each other on the issue of past events existing only as facts until the historian interprets them. Carr takes the side that the historian's interpretation converts the facts from past events into historical facts. This firm stand is seen in the following statement: "...[an event's] status as a historical fact will turn on a question of interpretation. This element of interpretation enters into every fact of history" (Carr 597). Yet, once again, Tuchman disagrees, this time resorting to one of Carr's own terms. She says, "I...declare myself a firm believer in this 'preposterous fallacy' of historical facts existing independently of the historian" (Tuchman 605).

It seems that while these two authors agree on some small details, overall, they disagree. As a result, the question of the true meaning of history remains unanswered. Since Carr and Tuchman contradict each other, how do we know who is right and who is wrong? One way to find out is to compare these views with another source. This might aid our decision by distinguishing one author's opinion as incorrect, eliminating it as a possibility. To locate the definition of a word, one of the best places we can look is in a dictionary. According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, history is "an account of what has happened, all recorded past events, the branch of knowledge that deals with the recording, analysis, etc. of past events, or a known past" (Guralnic 287). This definition of history clearly contradicts E.H. Carr's view that history is the facts about the past combined with the historian's interpretation. Although Carr presents many significant ideas, it is Barbara Tuchman's view of history that most closely corresponds to *Webster's* definition. However, if we were to look at another dictionary, we might find a different definition yet. All the references we have examined are contradictory, each providing a conflicting, opinionated view. I personally believe that history is the facts about the past that were recorded because of their significance. True, I drove to the store in the past, but it is not considered history, even though I am recording it now. In order for it to be classified as history, it must have had some significance, making a lasting impression or resulting in some change that will be remembered into the future. If it does not meet these requirements, it will only be a fact about the past and will never become actual "history." But that is merely my opinion.

So how, then, do we determine the requirements for true history? We must use the information provided by these sources to distinguish the most reasonable and accurate definition. Carr addresses a valid point by saying, "...the nineteenth-century heresy that history consists of the compilation of a maximum number of irrefutable and objective facts [has produced]...a growing mass of dry-as-dust factual histories" (598 - 599). This idea that a mere compilation of facts, if not planned with skill and decorated with colorful language, can seem very dull or "dry", as he puts it, is true. However, this compilation is still history,

regardless of the way the facts are presented to the reader. Now this does not imply that the historian's role in history is not important, but rather that the historian is not responsible for giving meaning to the facts. The facts in and of themselves make up history. Based upon this information, we agree with Barbara Tuchman and conclude by defining history as "...the past events of which we have knowledge..." (610), and leave it at that.

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- Tuchman, Barbara. "When Does History Happen?" in *Fields of Reading, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*, eds. Nancy Comley, et al. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. 604 - 610



Heather Ziegler  
*Silence*  
Charcoal and chalk,  
31" x 36"

*Artist's comment: Since I was supposed to draw the picture by memory, I made a rough sketch at first and then went back to the still life many times to get the right proportions and dimensions. I later filled in details after I was satisfied with my sketch.*

*Heather Ziegler  
Art 212*

## A Death in the Family

*Rick Petersen  
Susan Lonac, English 101*

A voice on the phone has just informed me that my nephew, Eric, with whom I shared a birthday and little else, was in the hospital and not expected to live. The voice belonged to my sister, with whom I shared a history, and nothing else. I tell her that I would like to go to Phoenix but it's simply not possible: I am in the middle of school and I have very little money. Later, a man I don't know and whose name I have since forgotten calls to tell me that he has just now bought plane tickets for me and my wife and that they are waiting at the airport. I thank him, but tell him that I'll only need one ticket: my wife will not be going. He asks why and I mumble something about school, and tests, and work, but the real reason is that I don't *want* her to go with me. One needs adequate preparation just to *meet* my family; for spending a week with them under these circumstances, boot camp is probably insufficient. So I tell my instructors that I am going home to attend a funeral (but no one is dead), and I ask for assignment that I know I'll never do. Privately, I wonder why I am *really* going home. I feel no sadness or grief, just a vague, indefinable compulsion to go. Some kind of catharsis, I suppose, or perhaps a re-examination of some ancient wounds inflicted by a few old ghosts. In the fifteen or so odd years since I left home, other family members had died whose funerals I didn't attend, but this one is different. This is not disease, or old age, or an auto accident, or any of a thousand and one other pedestrian ways to die. Eric was found hanging. He was eleven.

I am scheduled to fly out of Seattle on America West Airlines and I am nervous because I don't like flying. I have an irrational fear of crashing. Or rather, I have an irrational fear of *falling*, from thirty thousand feet. Ten minutes to contemplate mortality while floating weightlessly next to your chicken salad and your last martini. I'm not comfortable putting my life in the hands of people with whom I've never discussed religion or politics. But the flight and the landing are smooth and I survive. A wave of nostalgia greets me as the aircraft taxis to the terminal and I see Phoenix through my allotted sliver of window. It is early morning, early February, and the sky is a smooth pale blue, and the mountains that ring the city are restless with the spirits of ancient Indians. Arizona is full of these spirits: to the south are the Apaches and to the north are the Navajos and the Hopis. Here in Phoenix are the Hohokam - the canal builders. But the ghosts that I'm thinking of are not Indian; they are the ghosts of my childhood, and I see two of them awaiting my arrival at the end of the tunnel.

These particular ghosts are two of my older sisters, and I haven't seen them in over two years. But even at a distance I can see that things have deteriorated. They are both

bunker, trying to hide. I'm not prepared for this and I don't know what ever made me think that I was. The doctors in the white coats with the nets are just around the corner and the preacher is selling Jesus but doesn't mention Eric at all and I wonder why. And everyone says "hallelujah" and "we'll miss Eric" (but I don't know who he was) and "he's in a better place," and I wonder why. And most everyone cries but I can't, and I wonder why.

Later, back at Eric's house, his older brother Jay shows me his beautiful drawings and asks me if I think they are any good, and I really do but my weak words are unconvincing. And Carl Jr. shows me how he blows glass with a blowtorch nozzle, a Coleman propane tank, and a cheap glass tube from a craft store. He has an extraordinary talent and produces some very beautiful pieces that he throws away as soon as he is done smoking out of them. And so we sit, silently smoking cigarettes. And a baby crawls around unattended on the floor and I don't know whose child it is but it has been here all week, and I fear it has no future. And later, I horrify Eric's brother Michael by revealing that I don't believe in God, and in scandalized, righteous disbelief, he tells me I am going to *hell*. But I know that if he ever escapes *this hell* and spends years asking questions of a God who never answers... And then one day he realizes that he doesn't even know his own family... And he suddenly remembers his brother Eric and he wonders why he died... And no one answers... And there are no answers...

So I fly home. But now I am too numb to remember to be nervous about flying, and I am too numb to be happy about going home. But I know that in a few weeks, I'll return to "normal". I'll decide that law school and culture, and everything far from funerals and family, is what I really want, what I really need. And years later and miles away when I look around and see no more ghosts, I'll call Carl Sr., and I'll thank him for teaching me how to run.

## The Stability of Meaning and the Shaping of Narrative: Truth Redux

Mark Harfenist  
Jeffrey Klausman, English 295

I turned 40 among strangers on a small island in the Indonesian archipelago--that one known for its population of giant carnivorous lizards, colloquially called dragons. In the morning local guides herded little clots of tourists down a narrow path to the fenced enclosure from within which we studied groups of dragons; giant, lumbering beasts drooling poison, tongues flickering. We were told that the old custom of feeding a few goats to the dragons for the entertainment of tourists had been ended; nonetheless they circled our little enclosure expectantly. Threadbare deer grazed cautiously just out of reach, and our guides told gruesome stories about the intersecting lives of local farmers and their livestock, about the deer and feral goats and these languid dragons. In brief spurts of speed, they said, the dragons could run down a grown man. Their saliva contained a nerve toxin. Once or twice a year a farmer was killed and eaten.

Later, restless in the heat of the day, I went walking down the beach, studying the way the land rose abruptly harsh and angular from the soft sea and searching the horizon for some sign of the afternoon boat. Coming toward me across the broken coral I saw a dragon; 12 feet long and easily as thick around as I, walking slowly on squat, powerful legs. I got out my camera and started taking photos, the dragon looking immense and foreshortened. It got closer and more detailed, filling my field of view; I kept pressing the shutter and flipping the winding mechanism, thinking of the enlargements I'd hang on my walls at home, the stories I'd tell ("I turned 40 among strangers on a small island...").

When the dragon's head blurred I pulled my eye from the viewfinder and looked directly at his face--scales, fangs, folded flesh, venomous drool--suddenly only ten feet away. No longer framed by the camera he became real, and once real he became abruptly terrifying, carrying the weight of a lifetime of bad dreams half-glimpsed and forgotten. I felt distinctly an abrupt rush of adrenaline and backed away quickly, scratching myself on scrubby vegetation and half-tripping over hidden obstacles. The dragon, never altering his gait, continued down the beach; I retreated to the safety and comfort of the tourist compound of stone paths and decrepit grass huts. Waiting for the arrival of the boat that would carry me to the next island I prepared in my mind my story, and I replayed the feeling of rushing terror in my veins. I did not speak to the other people, and no one knew me there.

Later that week I learned of the death of a musician who'd been one of my heroes long before, who'd seemed to take what I felt but could not speak and transform it into rhythm and tone and soaring melody, who had in this way spoken for me in my time of

silence; on the day that I turned forty he had died of a lifetime of self-abuse. Now, years later, I wrestle with the unwieldy shape of that day, struggling to make of it a narrative that will do for me what I wish it to do: to tell of the eerie disconnection of that place; the strangeness of the terrain and of the giant lizards there, my momentary confusion between what was real and what was merely a chance to create for others an opportunity to imagine me in a certain light...I have struggled, that is, to render my experience of that day real by making of it a *story* to be told by myself and by others. I have always carried secretly my regret therefore that the dragon never lunged for me, or hissed at me, or gave any sign that he noticed my fleshy, vulnerable presence there on that beach. I do not know why the death of the musician on that same day affects me so powerfully, but I hope some day to find a way to weave it into the story that I hope some day to tell.

(This story, it describes many years of lies piled haphazardly atop ancient daydreams. The past brushes lightly against my chest and I hear the drone of the teacher's voice, chalkboard dust suspended in sunlight through dirty glass, old steam pipes clanking; I am restless, fingertips tracing carved messages in wooden desktop. Already I feel deeply the loss of a place that never was; my grief I cannot carry, and will soon leave behind. I am seven years old, and the clouds outside this window are mountains and on their flanks are open fields and steep headwalls, and I play with wild animals there. Sometimes I look back down to the valleys from which I came, shaded and close.)

I walk slowly on broken sidewalks and this night is my friend. I am made of time and red clay, and the edge of town is near, where the road grows narrow and smooth, the corners banked for speed; where the night is steady and strong.

I am feather and bone, frightened of surging waves once friendly to me, hissing at my feet, frothing and angry. I moved freely here, I sang songs of this place before I knew its name; I walked forests of ghostly old mossy trees and fields of silent stones. There was an old storyteller here; warm salt air welcomed me.

I am dry cinders, I am boneyard dust under skies swirling purple and gray and slowly melting in night. This ache in my throat is grown radiant and huge. This sky, it is Africa; all my fears are here.

Now listen:

I have come today from the country just to the north of here, where I stayed in a small hotel in a town along the highway. By day convoys of trucks rumbled past carrying food to the refugee camps to the south; by night I would sit with other travelers and

discuss what we had seen and done, how it was that we had come to that place and where we might go next. By night, too, there was sporadic gunfire in the streets outside our hotel, and rumors of armed men infiltrating through the jungles and mountains.

Then I crossed the border and came somehow here, to this small country where now I sit in my room with the door closed despite the heat. I have paid these missionaries for a bed for the night, and for food and water, and for a door that I might close against the world. This country only some months ago belched violence and death, its rivers running thick with corpses and a great stench in the air. The soldiers at the roadblocks do not smile, and their eyes are hard and old. I think about the stories I have heard, the things I have read about this place. I am a long way from home.

I get a late start on the following day, intending to travel only the short distance to the eastern border, deceived by the appearance of normality in the capital city (only the bullet scars on buildings and bridge abutments hint at what has just passed). By late afternoon I am standing at a crossroads just half way to the frontier with a crowd of locals, hoping for a ride. The trucks and minivans that used to race up and down these roads carrying passengers and cargo are gone, and no one here travels at night. I am wondering how safe I will be, curled up in the bushes until morning; I will wait until all the locals give up and then decide what to do.

But at twilight a van pulls up, and twenty or more of us race to get inside. I do not know where it is going; only that when I speak my destination they tell me no, not there. I am adrift; I try to stay alert and to trust my luck. It gets dark outside, and we pick up speed.

Outside, small towns dark and empty; grasses and shrubs crowding the road. Every now and then a single building is lit from within by candlelight; I can make out human shapes gathered in the half-light, but we pass quickly, and I hardly see. There is no one of whom I can ask questions, and at any rate nothing to ask. My fellow passengers are quiet, and some look out the windows nervously. My backpack is crushing my legs; there is no room to shift its weight.

I have been here forever, right here in this back seat smelling exhaust and the sweat of strangers, leaning into the turns in the road, watching the blackness pass outside my window, glimpsing through glass those more rooted than I; *they* sit inside in the light. Always I have felt this sweetness; the outsider constantly moving; the short-timer never still. I am hoping this ride goes on forever, careening along through black night, through eerie empty towns, our passage swirling the air--swirling ghosts of those now gone. In this back seat I am safe from the strangeness all around me, and as long as I am moving I am grounded and real.

(Always, too, I have felt this terror. I am alone here, soft and exposed, and I am afraid of the end of this ride when I will step into the night, again and forever. There is death in the night breeze, and unbearable sadness in the swaying of the tall grasses in the edge of the headlights.)

Now: stand here in the dark, just outside the circle of lights. Look in through the window; what do you see? Listen hard to the night; what language does it speak, and whose?

I am the age of my father;  
the age of gray weathered stone.

Who ever thought I'd live so long breathing so shallow, eyes watering, my mind nimble and burnished smooth in vivid memory; heavy and stodgy here and now by harsh daylight? Who knew that years slip away in such brittle clumps, that concrete realities lack cohesion, that all I have ever known would hover in the shadows, murmuring softy?

In early 1975 I was still young and strong; 19 years old, working long hard days in a factory on the outskirts of Phoenix, renting a bare cinderblock flat in the student ghetto surrounding the state university, watching my pennies, living cheap. On weekends my coworkers would drive out to the desert, where they'd drink steadily in the shade, talking about cars and trucks, shotgunning tin cans and the occasional rattlesnake. I'd stay at home sleeping late, then walk the curve of the railroad tracks along the dry wash into town, thinking about the odd twists my life had taken, plotting my future and chewing on my past. I felt old and shop-worn and wise. I'd been around, I'd done a lot of things and been a lot of places. I was big and tough and strong, and I was scared of nothing.

Sometimes my long walks would take me through the university campus, where people much younger than myself with good teeth and unlined faces threw frisbees and lounged in the sun. They moved slowly and gracefully and smiled a lot; they seemed to have time to spare, no worries, assured futures. I think they never even saw me through the impenetrable barrier separating us; walking in their midst I'd stare freely, without fear I'd catch someone's eye and have to look away. My envy--of their clean, slender, carefree perfection, their obvious community, their belonging, their comfort with each other--pained me, though I had not yet learned to feel pain.

Of course I hated them, and even now I can feel the sadness and the bitterness of my old hatred tightening at my chest. These were the ones who *had*, while I had not; who understood what was mysterious to me; who would grow up to purchase my sweat and toil, the strength of my body and the skill in my hands until they emptied me out and I had none left to offer. My friends and I, we hated those students for the carefree lives we imagined for them, for the way they never quite saw us in their midst. And yes, we hated

them because they spoke darkly to the hatred we carried for ourselves, to the delicate balance we named strength, to the hollow places where we kept our fears and weakness.

Come Mondays I'd go back to work in the factory. With astonishing speed I aged and deteriorated, and I was never myself that young or that strong again, never so unlined, never so unafraid. I don't know what happened to those carefree students and I've lost touch with the people with whom I worked and with whom I shared the class-hatred I claimed as my own. The years passed and I stopped seeing that world in which I once lived; its inhabitants blurred, began to pass light and became eventually invisible to me. The texture of the world changed and my place in it changed, and the earth on which I stand, hunched now under the weight of what I have seen and done. Deep in me: stinging desert winds; distant mountains of molten rock and glacial ice; lush, silent, empty villages smelling of blood; bottomless thirst and hungers without end; a thousand stories in ten thousand languages.

Stand close; let me look into your faces. I recognize you, of course, though I last saw you long ago, shimmering surreal in too-bright white light along the curve of the tracks. Will you now squint and rub your eyes hard until you see me among you? Now greet me, now tell me your stories?

I am not now so strong nor so fearless;  
I am made of time.  
I think you know me.

My parents met while both pursued doctoral degrees; both were excellent students, both equally devoted to the concept of "Truth," fixed and eternal. To my parents, this Truth hovered at some definite location out there in space, probably just out of sight over the horizon, and a noble life's work consisted of inching ever closer to that place. On occasion, by almost superhuman sweat and toil one or the other would actually reach that which they took to be Truth, and they would bring back a tiny chunk for further study and analysis. Because the cost of each small piece was so extravagant my parents came to feel quite attached to that which they possessed, and the thought that there might be other truths, other realities, other perspectives in the world, they therefore experienced as very threatening.

And I, I am--undeniably and irrevocably--the child of my parents. I too have sweated and toiled in clumsy attempts to come closer to a Truth that I *know* is somewhere outside of me, hidden in the mist just out of sight. When I believe I have found some fragment of the one Truth I cling to it with all my strength, and I take it deep into myself

and around it I weave the fabric that becomes, as best I know, my self. To the suggestion that the fragments of the one Truth around which, upon which, I am constructed might be false, or meaningless, or limited in application I react violently, lashing out reflexively. I tell you one of my most secret fears: that if there is in fact no Truth common to all I will disintegrate, dissolve, disappear; that without a single stable Truth there is only void and I will cease to exist.

But: as is sometimes true, this most serious of perceived threats contains also the seed of redemption for the boy that is me...and for the children that are, if they only knew, even now my parents. It is not quite that there is no Truth: instead, a world is offered in which the truth of one parent need not have negated entirely the truth of the other; in which the truths of adults need not have obliterated that of the child which I once was but am no longer, in which we might have seen and recognized and to some extent even conversed with each other.

Ah yes, there we sit: the three of us around a small fire in gathering darkness. The air is warm and friendly and smells faintly of cut grass. I am telling my parents the story of the creation of the world. My voice is very, very old and I have been telling this story forever.

Since I was a child I've listened carefully to the world and heard music, faint and elusive in the background behind more immediate sounds. No matter how hard I focused and concentrated I never succeeded in bringing this music forward into my consciousness that I might hear and perhaps learn its language. It is always there; I can hear it now, gently.

Sometimes too I hear similarly vague and half-formed words within me, and when I concentrate and try to listen to hear what is being said those words resolve not into spoken language but into cadence and rhythm, something emphatic and weighty, soaring and dipping and screaming its name not quite distinctly enough for me to make out.

I always know what's being said: this is the world singing itself alive in sheeting melody; ecstatic dance inside pounding drums and pulsing lights; the night-clatter of horses' hooves on stone; yes, and wild-eyed atonal keening at the funerals of children...and this music that is the foundation upon which my whole being rests, this language it speaks is the language of Coltrane in his junk-dreams, saxophone honking and bleating and soaring, sweeping wailing cascading sounds; it is the language of Neal Cassidy, of constant restless movement lacing two-laned nighttime America again and again, endless crystalline jags in old cars. This music I heard before language, itself when the world was an inexplicable avalanche of sensations indistinguishable; this saxophone I have never played in a language not spoken, trying always and endlessly to speak my name aloud and be heard, and be recognized, and be seen.

If I were John Coltrane I could tell these things, sure. I could speak then, saxophone squawking and leaping and shaping night air; people would listen respectfully from their seats and shout encouragement and approval and they would hear me. But *he* dug so deeply and dove so eagerly into dope-sick death; tell me, what was he looking for there, to find and bring back and tell? Is there for Coltrane or for me a solid place to stand, to listen and absorb the music that creates the world, to learn its language, to speak the saxophone that is *my* true voice with which *he* defied for a short time his quiet friend death, who brought comfort at last?

I listen and I sway gently back and forth. I wrap myself in animal hides; I chant and sing and I wait for sunlight to touch me. I am looking for the old storyteller's voice that echoes in me even now; the voice that once taught me what to value and what to disdain, what it would come to mean to be me, in my skin, in my circumstances. What battles shall I fight? Where will I find my worst enemies, and how will I know them? How will I suffer, and what will my suffering teach me? How can I interpret what I have seen? How will I recognize it when, at last, I arrive home?





Melissa Hughes  
*Metropolis Encroaching*  
Linocut, 9" x 12"