

The Writing Anthology



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Advisor Joshua Dolezal

A Publication of the English Department and the Art Department

Central College Pella, Iowa 2017

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 37th edition of *The Writing Anthology*.

It is our delight to share this year's publication with you. After reviewing submissions representing a wide variety of disciplines, we selected the following eleven pieces to be featured in the anthology. The rigor of this selection process proves the continuing excellence of student writing at Central College. We offer our sincerest congratulations to the published student authors: you should be proud of your exemplary work.

While the goals of specific disciplines are easy to spot in this diverse blend of essays, we hope you will also take notice of the recurring themes that connect them. Gretchen, in the first essay of this anthology, looks at the "future of the past" and considers a great tragedy in light of the creation it has engendered. The title of the final essay, "Rebirth," encapsulates our overarching message. The rest of the authors take on the monumental task of creating a new way of looking at a subject, be it a landscape, a piece of art, or our own humanity. Creation and innovation are presented in the pieces you are about to read as valid, significant responses to destruction and decay. This anthology encompasses the cycle of life.

Each year, The John Allen Award is granted to the individual exhibiting the highest quality of student writing. We are pleased to announce that Sydney Embrey will receive the honor this year. Sydney's masterly essay "And Here Our Troubles Began: An American Reaction to 9/11 in Comix" is a perceptive analysis of Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *In the Shadow of No Towers*. She weaves together critical race theory, political commentary, and nuanced artistic investigation to form an incisive portrait of Spiegelman's unique response to the personal and national tragedy of September 11, 2001.

We offer our thanks to the tireless professors who inspired and shaped these essays for going the extra mile by submitting them to *The Writing Anthology*. Your dedication to your students' success is commendable. Thanks also to Professor Mat Kelly for his discerning eye and to all of the featured student artists for their outstanding contributions. We would particularly like to recognize Kayla Foster for providing this year's cover art. Finally, our thanks to Steffanie Bonnstetter in Central College Communications for her expertise.

Most importantly, we acknowledge our faculty advisors, Dr. Joshua Doležal and Dr. Elena Vishnevskaya, who have been insightful guides throughout the publication process. Dr. Doležal inherited his role as lead advisor for this edition from Dr. Walter Cannon, who founded *The Writing Anthology* in 1981 and remained involved with the publication until his retirement last year. One final thank you to all—past, present, and future—who have made this anthology possible.

Without further ado, we present the 2017 *Writing Anthology*.

Hannah Marcum '18
K.E. Daft '19

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Representation of the Holocaust through the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

LAS-410: The Future of the Past

The horrific and inconceivable events of the Holocaust are engraved in Germany's past. The mass murder of more than 6 million Jews tarnished every aspect of what it meant to be German and put the country on a long road to recovery. The Holocaust left behind a void and a culture of guilt. In an attempt to fill this absence and generate a positive national identity, Germany commissioned a Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe located in Berlin, Germany. The German Parliament intended: "To honor the murdered victims, keep alive the memory of... inconceivable events in German history and admonish all future generations never again to violate human rights, to defend the democratic constitutional state at all times, to secure equality

Gretchen's paper on the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin impressed me because of its clear, organized writing, thorough and objective approach to the topic and effective appeal to and integration of scholarly sources. A unique feature of Gretchen's paper was the incorporation of personal photographs from her visit to the Memorial. I like the idea that her lived experience informs her writing without being the focus of the piece.

-Kathy Korcheck

before the law for all people and to resist all forms of dictatorships and regimes based on violence" (Chin). In this paper, I will analyze how well the memorial achieved these intentions and the controversies surrounding the memorial in order to demonstrate how the memorial has allowed Germany to overcome guilt and to generate a positive national identity for modern Germany.

First and foremost, it is important to identify the difference between a memorial and monument and to define the fundamental function of a memorial. Both a memorial and a monument are designed to recognize and preserve memories. However, a

monument celebrates life while a memorial commemorates death or loss (Doss 7). In recent years, there has been an expansion in memorials. This is a result of "a highly successful public art industry and increased expectations of rights and representation of diversity" (Doss 9). Lisa Mahlum argues that "physical structures engage visitors in the present, connect them with the historical truths of the past, and instill a memory of the Holocaust in the future" (281). The aim of a memorial is to strike a balance between the horrors of the past, engage visitors in the context of the present, and inspire memory for the future.

Commemoration

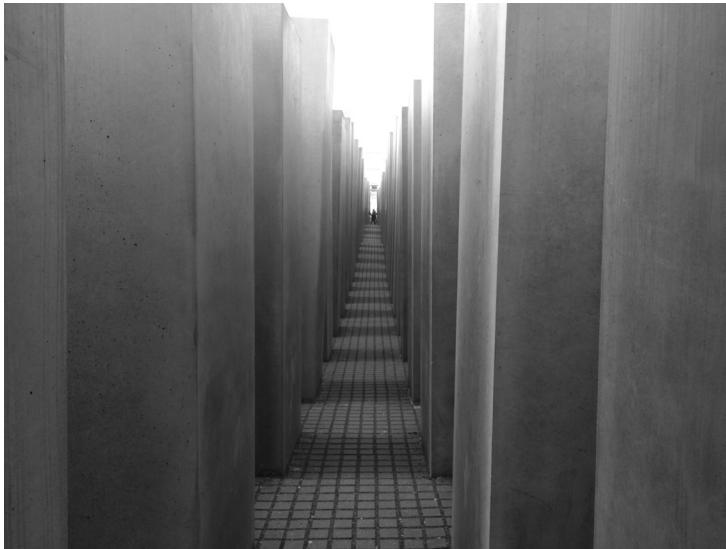
through a permanent structure allows the past and present to co-exist in a social relationship.

However, creating an accurate representation of the past in the present is much easier said than done. The problem is that any past can be distorted by the context of the present. The act of “claiming a particular history as a method of persuasion modifies the art of memory” (Grenzer 96).

Memorials possess enormous influence and power over collective memory.

Designing the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe was no easy task. It took 17 years of debate before the memorial was finally opened in May of 2005 (Chin). Designer Peter Eisenman constructed an abstract memorial which avoided all symbolism with the intention of allowing the visitors to create their own interpretation from the absence of the structure. According to Eisenman, “enormity and

scale of the horror of the Holocaust is such that an attempt to represent it by traditional means is inevitably inadequate” (qtd. in Mahlum 282). The lack of representation and symbolism of this memorial makes it much different than most



Interior view of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe
(Photograph by Gretchen Kistenmacher)

memorials, which tend to give the viewer a strong sense of identification. The absence of “symbolism reduces it to pure presence” (Marzynski). This memorial is not about what is seen but instead what is felt by the viewer.

Evoking a ‘feeling’ at the site was achieved by the grand scale of the memorial. It consists of 2711 concrete slabs, or stelae, arranged in a grid pattern over 4.7 acres (Brody). The concrete slabs are rectangular in shape

with sharp lines. Marian Marzynski, a Holocaust survivor, suggests that the slabs resemble architecture of the Hitler regime. The slabs plunge out of the ground vertically. A wavelike appearance is achieved by the uneven ground and varied

heights of the slab blocks. Around the perimeter of the concrete field, the slabs are very low to the ground, but as one walks down the narrow alleys between the slabs, towards the center of the memorial, the slabs reach a height higher than one’s head.

Commemorating the

six million Jewish victims collectively in this way allows for a highly personal experience and interpretation of memorialization. Nothing is suggested to the viewer. Eisenman’s original design was just that detailed above; however, many felt that German Holocaust education was needed at the site. Marzynski argues, “art cannot express the content of the Holocaust, education is needed.” As a result, the design was altered to include

an underground information center located below the concrete slab field. In order to preserve the aesthetic of Eisenman's design, the entrance is simply a staircase going down with minimal signage, not immediately visible to a passer-by. The exit is located in the middle of the concrete field, hidden from sight due to the height of the blocks. The structure above ground was integrated into the information center in two ways: the ceiling is structured with a grid of the rectangular concrete blocks and the form of the concrete blocks is imitated in the information panels (Mugge). The exhibit is not a museum. It does not contain any artifacts from the Holocaust. Instead, the center details the fate of the victims and sites of destruction through non-fiction stories of Jewish victims accompanied with pictures of families and concentration camp scenes (Young). Through the information provided, Germany takes ownership of its role in producing the final solution while also providing history and context of the Holocaust. The information center "takes the abstract nature of the field of

concrete above it and breaks it down to the level of the individual victim," acting as a link between the abstract architecture and personal narratives of Jewish victims (Chin).

The reality of the Holocaust is also present in the significance of the

The death of the Jews is being memorialized on the very site where their death was planned.

memorial's location, at the political and social heart of Germany. The memorial is placed near the geographical center of Berlin, the capital of Germany (Magge 718). At this location, it is a part of everyday life. It embodies a social relationship with society in a way that Germans cannot ignore its presence. Many feel that the memorial enriches the aesthetic of the city (Chin). Furthermore, the memorial stands as a sign of the productivity of Berlin: "A modern city is reflected in representing the past as a demonstration of its

progress" (Grenzer 98). The mere physical presence of the memorial is an indication that Germany has chosen to deal with its past and acknowledge its role as perpetrator. In addition, the field of stelae is located at the political center of Berlin. Current German government, the Reichstag and Bundesrat, are just meters away, and the memorial is on the very site that was Hitler's ministry gardens (Chin). The death of the Jews is being memorialized on the very site where their death was planned. This allows for a deeply reflective memory experience for visitors. Lisa Mahlum explains this phenomenon very well: "It is the perfect juxtaposition of perpetration and victimization with culpability and responsibility" (300). This location displays the willingness of Germans to publicly accept responsibility for the Holocaust.

There are many interpretations of the abstract Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. There is no right or wrong explanation of the memorial because this was the goal of the design: to nurture individual experience. Some believe the

stelae resemble headstones forming a graveyard for victims unburied or thrown into unmarked graves (Brody). The absence of writing expresses the silence of the victims (Grenzer 102). Another interpretation is that the memorial mimics the experience of a Jew. The perimeter of the memorial is very open, with blocks low to the ground. It acts somewhat like a park, with people sitting and taking in the city around them. This represents the carefree life Jews lived before the Holocaust (Brody). As one walks into the interior of the memorial, the blocks get higher and higher. The view of other visitors and the surrounding cityscape is cut off. Feelings of claustrophobia, desolation, and confusion set in (Brody). Each concrete block is set at a different angle, which generates feelings of disorientation. The contrast between the perimeter and the interior of the memorial imitates the journey of a Jew “going from the world they knew to a lost and lonely

environment” (Young).

Visitors are confronted face to face with the memory and feelings of the Holocaust. Visitors are an integral part of the memorial because they ultimately define how the memorial is experienced. It can be entered from all four sides in multiple spots, offering different viewpoints. Visitors who stay



Perimeter of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe
(Photograph by Gretchen Kistenmacher)

only on the perimeter of the memorial will have a different experience than those who enter the interior. The path through the memorial is not defined by a beginning or end; “the memorial is not frozen in time or static in space...it resists closure” (Young). In the same way, the Holocaust itself resists closure, never to be ignored or forgotten. The information center adds context to the space above it;

however, the path inside the center is defined and fixed. The effect of no beginning and no end is somewhat lost, which takes away from Eisenman’s design of the memorial.

Germany’s goal with this memorial was to honor the victims of the Holocaust, keep alive the memory to educate future generations, and warn

future generations to never violate human rights (Mahlum 281). Does the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe achieve this goal? Some believe the memorial was successful in realizing this goal while others believe it falls short. Those that feel the memorial did not reach its full potential believe that

the abstract design and the lack of signs pointing direction leave people confused. Visitors are merely fascinated by the aesthetic impression of the memorial and leave having only achieved a superficial understanding of what the memorial stands for (Brody). In addition, it is argued that the memorial came too late. It was opened 60 years after WWII ended (Brody). Since

the end of WWII, Germany has worked to overcome the negativity and create positive nationalism for modern Germans. However, some citizens believe focusing on the Holocaust represents negative nationalism which threatens to reverse the efforts towards a unified Germany (Grenzer 97).

On the contrary, German politicians believe the memorial was a success just based on the sheer number of visitors it has attracted. Attendance to the memorial each year has been much higher than was originally anticipated (Mugge 717). The discussion spurred by the memorial building process and the continued dialogue of its presence has generated more individual memory work than there would have been otherwise. Its existence brings the lessons of the Holocaust into public mind and consciousness, acting as a permanent promise to stop human rights violations. The notion of representing the past in the present was achieved. Grenzer classifies “the memorial as a demonstration of the past [which] prepares the ground in the present for a

future that will be mastered” (102). The existence of the memorial indicates the success of Germany accepting responsibility for the past and commemorating the largest targeted group of the Holocaust. Mahlum argues that the memorial does not represent negative nationalism but rather encourages the reunification of Germany by solidifying a collective memory for a nation of perpetrators (304). Additionally, Chin argues that it did not come too late because the memorial is intended for young Germans, the third generation. The earlier generations had their own personal memories and connections to the events. It is for future generations that this site is imperative.

So far the success of the memorial has been defined in terms of Germany, but how does the Jewish community view the memorial? The site is named Memorial ‘to’ the Murdered Jews of Europe. This insinuates that it was constructed for the Jewish community, but the Jewish community argues that it provides greater benefit to Germans (Marzynski). Furthermore, the title - ‘Murdered Jews’ - fails to indicate who did

the murdering. Germany has taken a passive voice by focusing on the recipients of the apology and ignoring those doing the apologizing. Marian Marzynski, a Holocaust survivor, speaks for the Jewish community, saying, “We did not ask for it. We do not need it.” The proposal and design of the memorial was conceived by non-Jewish Germans; therefore, it does not reflect the true sentiments of the Jewish population (Chin). This suggests that the memorial was not meant to commemorate the Jews, but rather meant to flatter the Germans.

Mahlum summarizes it best by stating, “Remembrance of the Holocaust becomes a negotiation between the historical records of the past and the political agenda of the present” (305). It has been suggested that Germany strategically used the memorial politically on a national and international level to wash their hands clean (Chin). It provided Germany with a convenient opportunity to re-establish itself as an ethical country. This is an example of the past being shaped by the affairs of the future.

The decision to

dedicate the memorial to only the Jewish victims of the Holocaust initiated controversy. Some argue that this is discrimination against non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust: homosexuals, Gypsies, Slavic people and the mentally disabled (Chin). Partial history of the Holocaust is ignored by only focusing on the Jewish victims. On the other hand, the murdering of European Jewry was the central matter within Nazi policy and ideology. This put the Jewish community as the top priority for Germany to commemorate. Germany chose to be specific due to the large volume of Jewish victims compared to other groups targeted during the Holocaust. However, setting a hierarchy of victimization indicates a national position on who suffered the most. Mahlum reasons that the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe "contributes to the ignorance regarding the full history of the Holocaust...creating division just like before" (305). Failure to recognize the whole past and honor all the victims of the Holocaust could lead to a portion of history being forgotten.

The construction of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe has allowed Germany to take collective responsibility for the event. The guilt that Germany has carried for so long has been transformed into a public apology and display of accountability. Every society "sets up images of the past...it is not enough for a

The concrete blocks could quite literally be called the “foundation stones” for a new society.

certain past to be selected" (Mahlum 307). Germany's ability to accept its past and acknowledge its wrongdoings as a country is in some ways unique. For example, America has no memorials constructed to recognize our crimes (Marznski). One could argue that America is still hindered by our past because we have failed to fully confess our acts of perpetration, whereas Germany has been able to overcome a great deal of relatively recent history as a result of how well they deal with the past. Germany

has provided a template for dealing with the past that other countries could follow.

The memorial now stands as an everlasting symbol of German national identity. The Holocaust is now a permanent memory of Germany's history and landscape. Since the memorial was funded by the state, it is also a sign of political representation (Mugge 713). This was Germany's first national effort to recognize the systematic murder of European Jews. A political and social conviction has been made to never let this happen again. The memorial indicates that Germany is on a path toward a more positive sense of national identity.

The memorial provides memory and hope for the future of German society. The concrete blocks could quite literally be called the "foundation stones" for a new society (Marzyski). For the past 60 years, Germany has dealt with the Holocaust through guilt; however, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe presents the opportunity for liberation from that guilt. Confronting the past has allowed it to move on into the future. By making the memory of

the Holocaust permanent, Germany runs the risk of the memory becoming frozen or buried as new generations become further removed from the horrors of the Holocaust. Future generations are now obligated to keep the memory alive: “The responsibility for preserving the past becomes increasingly bestowed upon

the hands of the present” (Mahlum 306). Nevertheless, the presence of the memorial has broken Germany from the shackles of the past and allowed freedom to pursue the future of a modern Germany.

The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe was overall successful in accomplishing the German

parliament’s goal to honor Jewish victims, educate, and admonish future generations. Memorialization of the Holocaust provides a memory tool for future generations to understand the significance of the Holocaust. Through a field of stelae, the past has been immortalized in the present.

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Ibuprofen Synthesis

McKenna Kilburg and Rachel Tyler

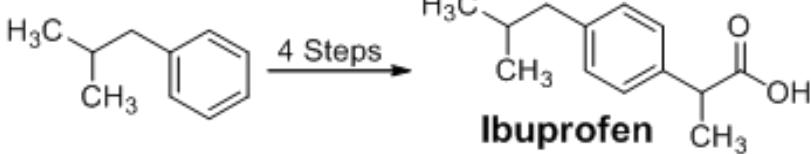


CHEM-236: Organic Chemistry II

Abstract

The synthesis of ibuprofen was accomplished from isobutylbenzene. The synthetic process included a Friedel-Crafts acylation, reduction, chloride substitution, and Grignard reaction. The products of each step were analyzed using IR and ^1H NMR spectroscopy and the final product was additionally confirmed by melting point analysis.

Abstract Graphic



Introduction

Ibuprofen is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug used to relieve pain and reduce swelling, among other common treatments. It was first patented in 1961 by the Boots Pure Chemical Company, and was approved

In my courses (Organic Chemistry I & Organic Chemistry II), most students are exposed to technical writing for the first time. This genre is important because nearly all of the students who complete this course sequence intend to pursue careers that utilize technical writing. To give authenticity to the assignments in my courses, students are instructed to write their “lab reports” as though they were going to submit the paper for publication to the *Journal of Organic Chemistry*. I found that McKenna and Rachel were able to write this report in a way that was more clear and technically accurate than I have read when reviewing some papers written by professional scientists for journal publications. I think this work deserves to be showcased as an example of the high-level of technical writing Central students are capable of after less than one year of instruction.

-Jay Wackerly

as an over-the-counter drug in 1984.¹ Since its creation, ibuprofen has been marketed under several brand names such as Advil® and Motrin®.

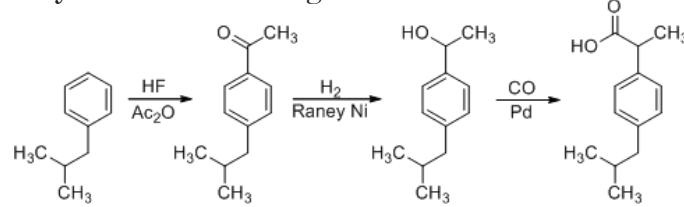
In 1992, the BHC Company developed a new, sustainable synthesis that halved the number of

BHC method is the reduced amount of unwanted waste due to the generation of only one molecule of water as the byproduct; this, among other factors, have contributed to a genuinely green synthesis.²

In this report, we describe a five-step synthesis of ibuprofen that mimics the industrial BHC synthesis. Like the BHC method, our synthesis began with a Friedel-Crafts acylation and carbonyl reduction. However, our synthesis utilized a chloride substitution, Grignard formation, and Grignard reaction in the final

synthetic steps (Scheme 1). The first step utilized anhydrous hydrogen fluoride as both a catalyst and solvent, which was then recycled and reused.

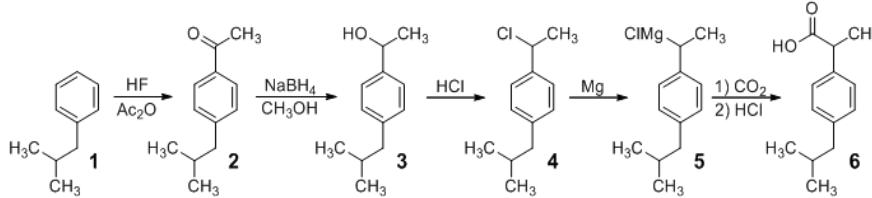
Additionally, the true brilliance behind the



Scheme 1. BHC Company synthesis of ibuprofen

steps as the industrial method, which uses carbon monoxide (CO) at 500 psi, was avoided due to safety concerns.

Results & Discussion



Scheme 2. Synthesis of ibuprofen

The synthesis of ibuprofen was accomplished through a five-step process shown in Scheme 2. Initially, isobutylbenzene (**1**) and acetic anhydride, were reacted under Friedel-Crafts acylation conditions to create *p*-isobutylacetophenone (**2**). Acetic anhydride and AlCl_3 formed a lewis acid complex that produced an acylium ion, which was then attacked by **1** to form *p*-isobutylacetophenone (**2**) through electrophilic aromatic substitution. This product was obtained in 25.6% yield.

Ketone **2** was analyzed using IR and ^1H NMR spectroscopy. The IR spectrum displayed the presence of $\text{Csp}^2\text{-H}$, $\text{Csp}^3\text{-H}$, C=O , and C=C frequencies with peaks at 3026, 2954 cm, 1684, and 1605 cm^{-1} , respectively. This shows the appearance of the appropriate ketone functional group. The

^1H NMR spectrum validated the structure of the product. The two doublets integrating to 2 hydrogens at 7.89 and 7.15 ppm suggest **4** aryl

substituted by chlorine under acidic conditions to form **4** via an $\text{S}_{\text{N}}1$ mechanism. The reaction proceeded smoothly and produced 49.2% yield. The product was analyzed by IR and ^1H NMR spectroscopy. The ^1H NMR spectrum of **4** does not display the hydroxyl hydrogen at 1.45 ppm, and there was a shift in the benzylic hydrogen peak from 4.81 ppm to 5.09 ppm. The IR spectrum does not contain the broad O-H peak, indicating a replaced alcohol group.

Next, the Grignard reagent, **5**, was formed by reacting **4** with magnesium in refluxing ether. Carbon dioxide was bubbled through **5**, which permitted the nucleophilic attack of the Grignard reagent onto CO_2 to form **6** followed by protonation. The final ibuprofen product, **6**, was produced in 24.6% yield. The expected product was confirmed through IR and ^1H NMR spectroscopy. The ^1H NMR spectrum of **6** displayed a shift in the benzylic hydrogen peak from 5.09 ppm to 3.73 ppm. The IR spectrum suggests the formation of the carboxylic acid with new peaks at 1706

cm^{-1} indicating the carbonyl bond and a broad peak ranging from 3300 cm^{-1} to 2400 cm^{-1} showing the O-H bond. Finally, the observed melting point ($68 - 69^\circ\text{C}$) is similar to the literature melting point³ ($75 - 78^\circ\text{C}$) of ibuprofen, indicating the synthesis of impure ibuprofen.

Prior to the loss of

product in step 2, the overall yield of the synthesis was 1.74%. This low yield is mostly contributed to the high concentrations of unreacted isobutylbenzene within the first step. The purity could be improved by allowing a

longer reaction period or by adding a catalyst. After supplemental stock product was obtained, the remainder of the synthesis yielded 12.1% ibuprofen product.

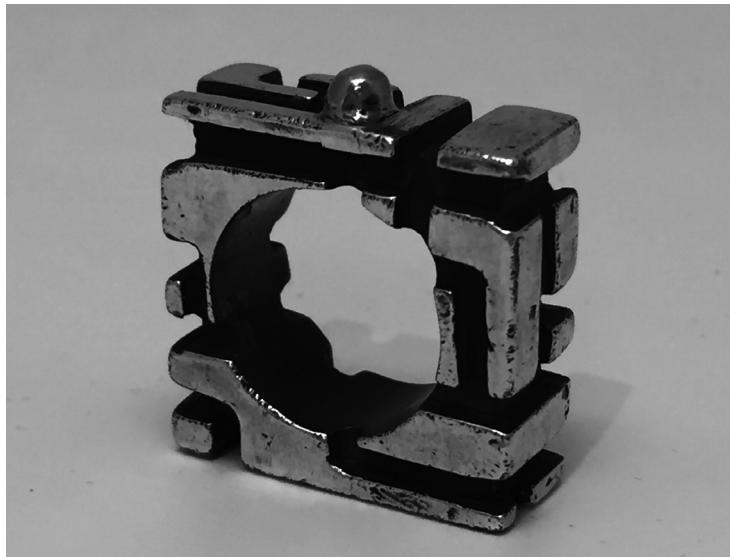
Conclusion

Ibuprofen was successfully synthesized from the starting materials isobutylbenzene and acetic anhydride through a Friedel-Crafts acylation, carbonyl reduction, chloride

substitution, and Grignard reaction. The structure and purity of the product were supported by IR, ^1H NMR, and melting point analysis.

Experimental

General. All starting materials were obtained from commercial suppliers. IR spectra were recorded



McKenna Kilburg, silver

on a Perkin Elmer FT-IR spectrometer in attenuated total reflection (ATR) mode. The ^1H NMR spectra were recorded on a 300 MHz spectrometer. Chemical shifts are expressed in parts per million (δ) using residual TMS as internal standard (δ 0 ppm). Coupling constants, J , are reported in Hertz (Hz), and splitting patterns are designated as s (singlet), d (doublet), t (triplet), q (quartet) and m (multiplet).

***p*-Isobutylacetophenone (2).**

To a 50 mL round-bottom flask, 5.40 g (60.0 mmol) of AlCl_3 and 20 mL of CH_2Cl_2 were added and cooled on ice. Slowly, 4.03 g (30.0 mmol) of isobutylbenzene and 3.06 g (30.0 mmol) of acetic anhydride were added, and the solution was stirred for 45 min at 0°C . The solution was warmed to rt and quenched with 0°C 4M HCl solution. The aqueous layer was extracted with dichloromethane ($3 \times 20 \text{ mL}$). The combined organic layers were washed with 20 mL of 10% NaOH, 20 mL of 50% brine, and 20

mL of H_2O , then separated. The solution was dried over Na_2SO_4 , and the solvent was evaporated under a stream of nitrogen gas to produce 1.1 g (6.3 mmol, 26%) of yellow liquid product. ^1H NMR (CDCl_3 , 300 MHz): δ 7.88 (d, 2H, $J = 7.5$), 7.14 (d, 2H, $J = 6.3$ Hz), 2.58 (s, 3H,), 2.47 (d, 2H, $J = 6.6$ Hz), 1.85 (br, m, 1H), 0.903 (d, 6H, $J = 6.0$ Hz). IR (ATR): 3027 ($\nu_{\text{Csp}-\text{H}}$, m), 2954 ($\nu_{\text{Csp}-\text{H}}$, m), 1684 ($\nu_{\text{C=O}}$, m), 1605 ($\nu_{\text{C=C}}$, m) cm^{-1} .

1-(4-Isobutylphenyl)ethanol (3). In a separatory funnel, 1.23 mL (6.28 mmol) of *p*-isobutylacetophenone was dissolved in 6.0 mL of methanol. Quickly, 0.237 g (13.2 mmol) of NaBH₄ was added to the solution and allowed to react for 10 min. 20 mL of 10% HCl were added and the aqueous layer was extracted with petroleum ether (3 × 5 mL). The combined organic layers were dried over Na₂SO₄, and the solvent was evaporated under a stream of nitrogen gas to yield 76 mg (0.43 mol, 6.8%) of yellow liquid product. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.25 (d, 2H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.10 (d, 2H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 4.81 (q, 1H, 6.0 Hz), 2.45 (d, 2H, *J* = 6.6 Hz), 2.27 (s, 1H), 1.84 (m, 1H), 1.45 (d, 3H, *J* = 6.0 Hz), 1.90 (d, 6H, *J* = 6.0 Hz).

1-Chloro-1-(4-isobutylphenyl)ethane (4). A 1.0 mL (5.6 mmol) solution of 1-(4-isobutylphenyl)ethane in 20 mL of 12 M HCl was added to a separatory funnel. The

funnel was shaken for 3 min, and the product was extracted with petroleum ether (3 × 5 mL). The combined product was dried over Na₂SO₄, and the solvent was evaporated under nitrogen gas to yield 534 mg (2.71 mmol, 49.2%) clear liquid product. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.32 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.1 Hz), 7.12 (d, 2H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 5.09 (q, 1H, *J* = 6.9 Hz), 2.46 (d, 2H, *J* = 7.2 Hz), 1.85 (m, 4H), 0.898 (d, 6H, *J* = 6.6 Hz). IR (ATR): 3020 (ν_{Csp2-H}, m), 2954 (ν_{Csp2-H}, m), 1511 (ν_{C=C}, m) cm⁻¹.

2-(4-Isobutylphenyl)propanoic acid (6). To an oven-dried, 50 mL round-bottom flask, 534 mg (2.71 mmol) of 1-chloro-1-(4-isobutylphenyl)ethane, 20 mL of THF, 1.06 g (43 mmol) of magnesium, and a drop of 1,2-dibromomethane were added. The solution was placed in a reflux condenser and heated under reflux 30 min after foaming was apparent. After cooling to rt, 1 L of CO₂ was bubbled

through the resulting product, 1-(4-isobutylphenyl) ethylmagnesium chloride, and decanted in a separatory funnel with 10 mL of petroleum ether and 16 mL of 10% HCl. The aqueous phase was extracted with petroleum ether (2 × 10 mL) and the organic layers were combined and extracted into 5% NaOH (2 × 8 mL). The solution was acidified with 20 mL of 10% HCl. Ibuprofen was extracted with petroleum ether (3 × 10 mL), dried over Na₂SO₄, and the solvent was evaporated under nitrogen gas to yield 138 mg (0.670 mmol, 25%) of solid, white product. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.22 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.1 Hz), 7.11 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.1 Hz), 3.72 (q, 1H, *J* = 7.2 Hz), 2.46 (d, 2H, *J* = 7.2 Hz), 1.84 (m, 1H), 1.51 (d, 3H, *J* = 7.2 Hz), 0.881 (d, 6H, *J* = 6.6 Hz). IR (ATR): 3014 (ν_{Csp2-H}, m), 2954 (ν_{Csp2-H}, m), 1706 (ν_{C=O}, m), 1512 (ν_{C=C}, m) cm⁻¹; m.p.: 68 - 69 °C (75-77 °C lit.³).

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Madness in (Stage)craft

K.E. Daft



ENGL-346: *Shakespeare*

Part I: A Haunting Problem

In Act III Scene iv of Shakespeare's "The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," there exists ambiguity regarding the proper way to portray the presence of the ghost. In much the same way as it is throughout the rest of the play, in this scene it is unclear whether or not the ghost is real and simply being ignored by Gertrude, or if it doesn't exist outside of the mind of Hamlet. The stage directions for this scene (provided by editors Evans and Tobin) would seem to indicate that the ghost is present for the scene; however, Gertrude's response is to the contrary of this notion and, indeed, many directors of both film and stage have chosen to cut the ghost from this scene of the production altogether.

Whether or not the ghost is visible to other parties – specifically to Hamlet's mother – gives a lot of insight into Hamlet's sanity in the

The assignment asks students to consider Shakespeare's plays as scripts meant for performance; therefore, an informed understanding of how scenes work is dependent on what is theatrically intelligible. K.E. Daft's witty essay on the selective invisibility of the ghost in the closet scene considers the implications of the textual and stage direction problems for Hamlet's ultimate tragedy. Her solution is informed by a capacious look into contemporary performances and first-hand responses of both professional reviewers and amateur theatergoers.

-Walter Cannon

show. If the ghost truly is invisible to Hamlet's mother, he is not simply feigning madness, as he asserts; but, rather, is legitimately mad. This means, then, that Hamlet is not in control of his actions throughout the show, and thus cannot be manipulating the other characters into doing his bidding. If Gertrude is ignoring the ghost, however, it reveals Hamlet to be a sane character and instead presents the question of why Gertrude refuses to acknowledge the ghost's existence. If this latter situation proves true, the assumption can be made that Gertrude's refusal to admit to seeing the ghost stems from her guilty conscience regarding her hasty remarriage or – perhaps – complicity in her late husband's murder.

Two important

factors exist for developing Hamlet's mental state within this scene: the existence (or lack thereof) of a physical presence to play the ghost and Gertrude's reaction to Hamlet's conversation with said ghost. On a stage, much of the interpretation of Hamlet's mental state will depend upon whether an actor is cast to play the ghost, whether the ghost is onstage during its conversations with Hamlet, or whether the ghost is included in the production at all. Gertrude's acting in this scene will also give a large indication as to how the audience is supposed to see Hamlet. If she appears to legitimately not see the ghost, it is safe for the audience to assume that he is in madness; however, if her body language and voice betray her and reveal to the audience that she

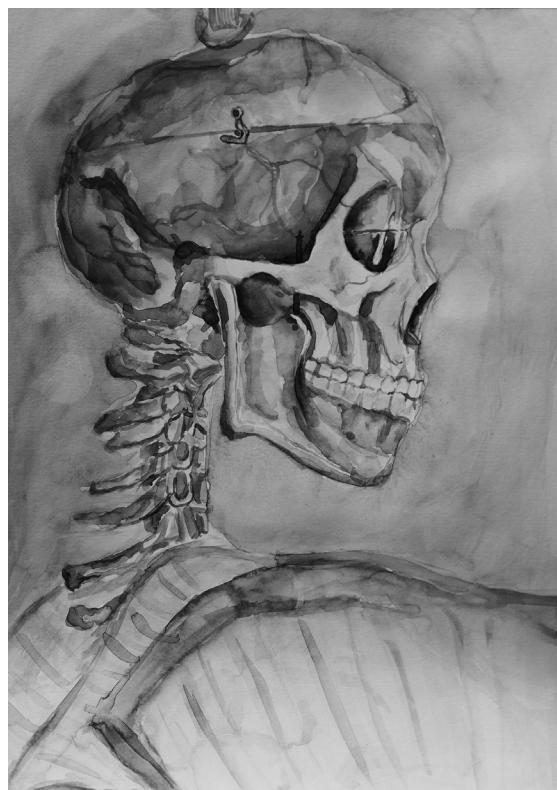
does, indeed, see the ghost in her closet, this scene discloses just as much about Gertrude's character and mental state as it does Hamlet's.

Part II: *Hamlet* in Madness and Onstage

In Pendleton's *Hamlet* (presented by the Classic Stage company in April of 2015 and played by Peter Saarsgard), the character of the ghost and all of its lines were completely removed from the storyline. The effect of this omission is stated rather pithily by Charles Isherwood in his review of the production, in which he asserts, "The decision to excise the ghost of Hamlet's father from the production... points to the possibility that Hamlet's pursuit of vengeance may stem from his own psychological problems. Perhaps Hamlet conjured the ghost himself as a pretext for working out his mommy and stepdaddy issues?" (1). The choice to expunge the ghost and its lines from the play clearly indicates that Saarsgard's Hamlet is not merely "mad in craft" as he avows; but, rather, that he is experiencing severe and

uncontrollable mental health issues and that his erratic actions are not simply an act for the benefit of his uncle (3.4.188).

Ian Rickson developed a more straightforward approach to Hamlet's sanity (or, in this case, lack thereof) in his 2011 production of



Jenny Morrett, watercolor, 11" x 15"

Hamlet with his decision to set the play in an insane asylum. Posing Claudius as the institution's senior consultant and establishing that all the other individuals within the asylum – including the other characters that saw the supposed ghost – are mad explains the reasoning behind Gertrude's inability

to perceive the ghost in this scene: it simply doesn't exist. The character of Hamlet's father was not cut from the production, however, though the way in which it was portrayed was very unusual. Michael Sheen, the actor portraying Hamlet in Rickson's production, also played the role of Hamlet's deceased father (and Fortinbras, at the end of the production) – very visibly depicting Hamlet as having split personalities and thus as being very mentally unstable. As stated by reviewer Andrew Billen, "[Hamlet] is...stark raving bonkers. We know this not only because he is in the bin but because he haunts himself. His father's first apparition is announced by a total blackout. When the ghost returns, it turns out to

be Hamlet in his father's overcoat and stentorian voice," going on to say that, "The boy has multiple personality disorder" (2). The effect of this is a complete revamping and simplification of the character of Hamlet. By establishing his insanity in this manner, it removes the ability of the audience to draw their own

conclusions, and makes for a very black and white reading of Hamlet's character and his motivation in the production.

While these two stage productions centered very much upon Hamlet and his mental instability in the infamous closet scene, Nicholas Hytner's *Hamlet* (wherein Hamlet is portrayed by Rory Kinnear) takes this scene in an entirely different and compelling direction. In Hytner's production, originally staged in January of 2011 at the National Theatre in London (and later broadcast at a movie theatre in New York as a component of the National Theatre Live series), the acting is such that the audience can infer "that Gertrude has (contrary to the usual interpretation) seen the same ghost that Hamlet sees, though she may deny it" (Brantley 2). Staging the production in this manner not only confirms Hamlet's sanity, but also brings into question the reason for Gertrude's denial. By confirming Hamlet's sanity, though, this production also establishes for the viewer that all of Hamlet's interactions with Polonius in which Hamlet tries his best to appear insane are just pretenses, as Ben Brantley of

the *New York Times* alludes to when he says that Kinnear's delivery of the "Words, words, words" line "sounded just how someone would sound were he trying to convince somebody else that he was out of his mind" (Shakespeare 2.2.192, Brantley 1). Staging the play in this manner gives Hamlet much more control over the proceedings in the body of the play, giving his lines intentionality and, thus, greater power and resonance.

Part III: The Apparition of a Solution

Since the stage directions clearly indicate the entrance of the ghost – "*ENTER GHOST [in his night-gown]*" – I couldn't find justification in not casting an actor to play the deceased King Hamlet or in manufacturing the scene in an attempt to convince the audience of the young Hamlet's faltering sanity, because I do not believe Hamlet to be mad (3.4.101-102). In his dealings with Polonius, Hamlet certainly appears to be mad, but in his interactions with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, calculated statements such as "You were sent for, and there is a kind of confession in your looks,

which your modesties have not craft enough to color. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you" and "I will tell you why, so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather" would seem to indicate to me that the Prince Hamlet is fully in charge of his faculties and is simply feigning madness to those in positions above him in order to buy himself time to plan Claudius' murder free from suspicion (2.2.278-281, 2.2.293-295).

This conversation with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, in conjunction with the fact that the soldiers on watch duty at the inception of the play see the ghost – evident in lines such as "The apparition comes. I knew your father" – substantiates, in my mind, the idea that Hamlet is in possession of his sanity (1.2.211). Based upon the reactions of the guards to the ghost and their ability to consistently perceive its presence, the assumption can be made that the ghost is real and visible to all those on stage, but that Gertrude is intentionally ignoring its presence in the closet

scene. Thus, a large part of ensuring the coherence of the scene relies upon the acting skill of Gertrude. Her reaction to the ghost in this scene needs to be visceral and unmistakable in order to relate to the audience that she has, in fact, seen the ghost, but is making the conscious decision to underplay its presence in an attempt to assuage and conceal her guilty conscience.

To accomplish this, I would place the ghost downstage and to the right of Hamlet and Gertrude with its back facing the audience on the diagonal. Furthermore, I would place the Queen and Hamlet kneeling on the floor, upstage left, somewhat heaped together from the physical scuffle that had just occurred between the two. Nothing in Shakespeare's staging conditions or within the script would seem to indicate the existence of a bed in this scene, so I feel no need to unnecessarily play up the Freudian implications of this scene with its inclusion. By placing mother and son on

the floor and the ghost in the opposite direction, it allows for a clear line of sight to be drawn between Gertrude and the late King. The effect of this, of course, is that the location of the ghost is so clearly out of what would be a natural line of sight for the Queen as to make her recognition of the ghost unmistakable. Having the ghost standing also gives it a touch of otherwise-nonexistent menace and authority in the scene. Putting the ghost in a position above Gertrude and establishing her ability to see it also means establishing its knowledge of her actions as well as her knowledge that her actions have been – and continue to be – seen and judged from beyond her late husband's grave.

Part IV: The Spirit of the Matter

The interpretation of Hamlet's mental state in this scene is absolutely essential for developing an understanding of Hamlet's character and for informing

the production of the play as a whole. As this interaction with Gertrude is the first time that someone has challenged the seeing of the ghost, the way in which Gertrude either reacts to or fails to react to the ghost reveals to the audience the degree to which Hamlet is insane (if at all) and her knowledge of the means behind her late husband's death, if such knowledge exists. Either way, this scene's establishment of Hamlet's mental state has the responsibility to dictate the way in which all of Hamlet's lines are performed up to this point, as well as to influence the way in which Hamlet takes action after this pivotal moment, and the way in which the audience will view Hamlet from this point forth. For these very reasons, it is important that the acting and directorial choices regarding this scene and the presence of the ghost be made carefully and thoughtfully in order to clearly communicate what the director sees as being Shakespeare's authorial intent.

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Nutrition and Neurology

Andrea Arthofer



HONR-191: Food As Medicine

This century has been the century of medical advancement. Worldwide, understanding of the pathology of many diseases has greatly increased, which has led to the development of more effective treatments. A view near the end of the twentieth century was that eventually, we could develop a medication for any disease in order to eliminate disease entirely from the population. However, this generation is beginning to realize that medication may not be what we should be relying on. Medicine, while capable of treating symptoms or even curing many diseases, also often presents miserable side effects for its users, as well as extreme financial burdens. One aspect of healthcare that is slowly attracting more attention is nutrition and lifestyle. Many researchers have investigated the relationship between diet and both chronic and acute illnesses. The main chronic illnesses that have been

This assignment encouraged students to investigate an area of health around the general topic of food as medicine. Nutrition has gained a lot of attention in metabolic and cardiovascular diseases, but neurology is one area where the discussion of diet is nearly absent. While some research exists on the relationship between diet and the disorders multiple sclerosis and epilepsy, there is a severe lack of research on how nutrition affects other neurological disorders. This led Andrea to investigate the effect of dietary behaviors on brain function overall and apply this information to how nutrition may be a crucial missing piece to the treatment of many neurological disorders. This essay was written to call attention to the need for further research in this area.

-Sara Shuger Fox

researched include type two diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. For these chronic diseases, diet has consistently shown to be a major factor in their incidence and prevalence. Another health concern that has recently gained a lot of attention is cancer, which has also been strongly linked to dietary behaviors. After learning of the high correlation between dietary patterns and chronic diseases such as these, it is important to examine how nutrition can affect the development and progression of other types of diseases. Specifically, nutrition's impact on neurological diseases should be of particular interest.

Multiple sclerosis is one of the neurological diseases that can be greatly influenced by nutrition. This interaction was suggested by

epidemiological studies stating that prevalence of multiple sclerosis is higher in areas where saturated fat intake is higher as opposed to polyunsaturated fat (Payne, 2001). In relation to this, in people already affected by multiple sclerosis, there is a significant decrease in death rate for people following a very low-fat diet, defined as less than twenty grams of fat per day (Payne, 2001). The type of fat being consumed is also something that has been investigated. Essential fatty acids (EFAs) are currently being recommended for patients with multiple sclerosis. However, three studies done on this topic have actually showed no real benefit from the consumption of n-3 or n-6 EFAs (Payne, 2001).

The low-fat diet's effect on multiple sclerosis, while remarkable, can be enhanced by the supplementation of antioxidants. Mauriz et al. conducted a 42 day randomized prospective placebo-controlled trial on long-term residents with multiple sclerosis to investigate the effect this supplementation would have on cell metabolism and the inflammatory processes related to multiple sclerosis (2013). In this study, five participants were assigned to the experimental group, which was given a low-fat diet and antioxidant supplementation, while four participants were put in the control group, only receiving the low-fat diet and a placebo instead of the antioxidant supplements. Biomarkers were measured at baseline, then after the 42 days of the trial. At the end, participants in the intervention group had significantly reduced C reactive proteins and inflammatory markers isoprostane 8-iso-PGF_{2α} and interleukine IL-6 as compared to the control group (Mauriz et al., 2013). Therefore, when treating multiple sclerosis through dietary interventions of a low-fat diet, it would be beneficial for antioxidant supplementation to be included.

While this presents the possibility that a low-fat diet and antioxidant supplementation can reduce progression and onset of multiple sclerosis, there are several drug side effects that may interfere with a patient's ability to follow a proper diet. Drugs commonly prescribed for patients suffering from multiple sclerosis include skeletal muscle relaxants, urination frequency reducers, antibiotics due to frequent urinary tract infections, and corticosteroids. These medications can lead to nausea, dry mouth, diarrhea or constipation. All of these symptoms would cause an overall decrease in food intake, which would inhibit a patient's ability to consume a proper diet. Additionally, some of these prescribed medications prevent sufficient nutrient absorption from food (Payne, 2001). Since these medications already cause a decrease in food consumption, inability to absorb nutrients will further destroy a patient's ability to follow a diet that could delay the progression of this illness. These effects of drugs demonstrate their harmful side effects, only further reinforcing the idea that medication should be

less heavily relied on and that nutrition interventions should be investigated as a primary treatment.

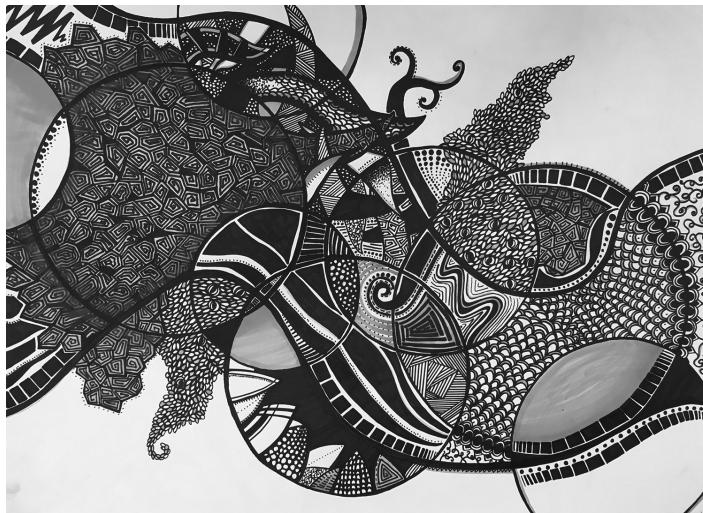
One nutrition intervention that has been employed as a primary treatment are specific diets for decreasing seizure prevalence in epilepsy patients. Contrary to the recommended diet for multiple sclerosis, the diets proposed for epilepsy treatment have promoted high-fat diets, particularly emphasizing the importance of medium-chain triglycerides. The ketogenic diet is the first of these proposed diets, suggesting epilepsy patients consume a diet consisting of 90% fats and 10% protein and carbohydrates combined. This led to the development of the modified medium-chain triglyceride ketogenic diet, which recommended a slightly lower percentage of fats, at a total of 71-75% of the diet composed of fat, 10% from protein, and 15-19% from carbohydrates. Further, this diet explained that 30-60% of the diet should specifically be from medium-chain triglycerides, while 11-45% should come from long-chain triglycerides, but no matter what, this breakdown should add up to at least 71% of the

diet from fats. Newer, less frequently used diets include the low glycemic index treatment, which breaks the proper diet composition down to 60% from fat, 20-30% from protein, and only 10-20% from carbohydrates, and the modified Atkins diet, which strongly encourages the intake of high-fat and high-protein foods while limiting the intake of carbohydrates to 10 to 15 grams per day (Neal & Cross, 2010).

Neal and Cross (2010) conducted a literature review of many studies examining the effectiveness of these diets. The ketogenic diet and medium-chain triglyceride ketogenic diets showed to be most effective. These, on average, resulted in nearly one-third of participants becoming seizure-free. Further, 30% to 100% of participants, depending on the particular study experienced a 50% or more reduction in seizure frequency.

While these diets may be effective in reducing seizure prevalence, other health aspects should

be considered in such an extreme diet. These diets revealed negative effects on children's biomarkers. One study examined children's biomarkers after six months of adherence to the diet. These effects included a significant blood plasma increase in LDL, VLDL, and non-HDL



Raigen Furness, "Congestion", marker, 22" x 30"

cholesterol as well as a significant decrease in HDL cholesterol. Additionally, triglyceride levels and apolipoprotein B significantly increased in the blood plasma of these children (Kwiterovich et al., 2003). In response to this, considerations from Johns Hopkins stated that children should adhere to this diet for only two years, after which their seizures may not return and their biomarkers should return to normal (Lawson, 2003).

The role of diet has

been illustrated in these two specific neurological disorders. Further, there are links between nutrition and lifestyle and the brain's health in general. The efficiency of the brain tends to decrease with age as part of the natural process of aging, which can lead to a decline in cognitive

functioning, development of dementia or Alzheimer's, or other neurological disorders.

However, diet and lifestyle factors have been shown to prevent or reduce this neurodegeneration that

occurs with age. This correlation can be explained by what is known about how the vascular system is affected by diet, which is important in the functioning of the brain because the brain consumes over twenty percent of the body's oxygen and nutrients even though it only makes up approximately two percent of the body's weight (Kalaria, 2010).

This relationship between the vascular system's health and neurological health can be explained because pathological changes in the

smooth muscle of the walls of the cerebral resistance arteries change the brain's autoregulatory responses. For example, changes in circulation due to dilation or constriction of cerebral resistance arteries often results in hypertensive encephalopathy or cerebral hypoperfusion. Many links such as these exist between the cardiovascular system and the brain's functioning. For example, hypertension is correlated with an increased risk of dementia, particularly Alzheimer's disease, and adult onset type 2 diabetes mellitus leads to a 2 to 2.5 fold increased risk of dementia with aging (Kalaria, 2010). Further, the nutritional interventions that prevent neuronal degeneration are very similar to those that improve cardiovascular functioning.

Many nutrition interventions have been investigated for their effect on cognitive functioning and

neurological deterioration. First and foremost, adherence to a Mediterranean diet, which promotes the consumption of moderate alcohol, olive oil, whole grains, and fish, has been significantly associated with a decrease in neuronal degeneration. Additionally, increased fish consumption alone has shown to have a similar effect of decreasing the rate of decline in cognitive functioning and lowering the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease due to its anti-inflammatory properties, ability to develop vascular tone of the smooth muscle, and prevention of atherosclerosis. Aside from the overall diet, there is evidence that fruit and vegetable extracts serve to decrease the neuronal degeneration that leads to dementia and cognitive impairment. This is due to the polyphenols and B vitamins contained inside these fruits and vegetables. Therefore, when consumed as a concentrate, these extracts

are rich in these, making deficiencies of these essential components of the diet nearly impossible (Kalaria, 2010).

More research must be done in order for nutrition interventions to be utilized as a primary treatment in neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, dementia and Alzheimer's disease, and overall general cognitive impairment. However, there is sufficient evidence that nutrition plays a role in neuronal degeneration and other neurological deficits to reasonably rely on nutrition interventions as minimally a secondary treatment for these chronic diseases. Therefore, these dietary patterns should be promoted by medical doctors and other health professionals as supplementary to other treatments. Eventually, it may be possible for research to illustrate nutrition as the most effective treatment for these types of conditions.

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An Identity in the Seams

Kayleigh Rohr



LAS-110: Intersections

On a hot August day in 2014, I found myself in a bleak gray shirt, embellished with a green caterpillar decal, standing in front of a local daycare center. My hands were clammy and my body was tense as I hesitantly punched in the door code to Hastings Child Development Center. I stumbled into the office of my new boss, and she directed me to one of the three preschool rooms at the end of the noisy hall. When I stepped into the pale blue, peculiar smelling preschool room with twenty-four-year-old children sitting criss-cross-applesauce on a colorful rug spelling out the ABCs, I could not have imagined the roller coaster ride I was in for. My job as a preschool teacher's aide has tremendously shaped my life. Although I have gained an abundant amount of knowledge about removing stains, identifying unusual smells, and sanitizing absolutely everything, my

I submit this paper because of the exceptional creative writing. The author's use of the symbol is creative and she incorporates narrative well into her piece. Overall, I feel that both the content and writing are very strong.

-Linda Laine

personal identity has also evolved greatly. To this day, I still have that same bleak gray shirt, but now it has stains, small holes, and thousands of life lessons woven into the seams. To anyone else, it would just be an old t-shirt, but to me, the t-shirt holds a plethora of memories and life lessons in between the stitches. Just like the shirt, I may seem more tattered and worn compared to when I started, but the knowledge and skills I have gained are incredible.

I vividly remember after my second day at the daycare center, I went home and cried to my mother. The first two days were incredibly stressful; trying to adapt to the cleaning schedule, internalizing the pure chaos, and keeping up with the kids' needs—or tattletaleing—seemed to be nearly impossible. I had even spilled a gallon jar of

sticky applesauce all over my shirt and shoes, causing a huge mess in the kitchen. My shirt appeared to be ruined. I tried to scrub out the bits of applesauce, but instead the mess grew and the shirt still smelled like the sickly sweet puree of sugar and apples. I did not have another shirt with me, and I still had about three hours left of my shift. I felt hopeless, just as my shirt looked to be.

I desperately wanted to go into my boss's office the next morning and tell her that I could not work in the center anymore. However, I knew I could not give up that easily. The night after the applesauce incident, I tossed my t-shirt in the washing machine, and I decided to stay at the center for at least another three months before I made a decision. Today, I am incredibly thankful that I waited to make my choice because of how my time in the

center shaped me. However, the next two years would prove to be difficult. I spent countless hours sitting in a bathroom, encouraging three-year-olds to use the potty. I scrubbed cots until my fingers felt raw, and I reeked of bleach solutions.

I nursed bloody noses until my knees hurt from kneeling. I accumulated stains on my shirt almost daily, but I knew that when I went home, a quick toss in the washing machine would make it look almost brand new. Not all

stains were easily removable, though. Sometimes it took stain-lifting spray and extra scrubbing to remove the stains that had seeped into the fabric a little deeper. Many of the daily occurrences of the center have escaped my memory, much like most stains were quickly erased. It was to be expected since I tended to work long hours in the summer, or I worked after I had been at school all day. However, there are also memories that I cling to

and will cherish for years to come, similar to those stains that cannot be removed. For example, I will never forget the first time I cleaned up a ghastly bloody nose, but I do not remember every bloody nose incident I dealt with.



Leah Schouten, silver, copper

They have been embedded into my memory due to their ability to form my thoughts and judgements. Through these experiences, I gained the identity of perseverance as well as a love for children.

Unlike stains, holes and tears are not easily removed with a little bit of laundry detergent and hot water. They can be restitched, but they will never look quite the same. One day, I was pushing a four-year-old girl on a bright yellow swing, and the bottom

of my shirt was caught in one of the chains. When she swung forward, the chain tore a small hole the size of a thumbtack at the hem of my shirt. It was hardly obvious, but many of the children still noticed. They constantly

questioned me about what had happened, and eventually I became impatient with their unceasing interrogations. However, their attention to detail amazed me, and one day, their ability to notice and comprehend their surroundings greatly impacted me.

In June of 2015, one of my closest childhood friends lost her dad to type 1 diabetes. I received the news during a quick fifteen-minute break, which did not allow time for me to process the information and prepare to return to twenty screaming children. I headed back to the pale blue room with red, puffy eyes and tear-stained cheeks, hoping that the kids would not notice. I underestimated their attention to detail enormously. The first child to approach me was a

little boy named Lane. Lane was one of the tallest boys in the class, but his sweet lisp and little baby face with big blue eyes contrasted his height. I was sitting at a table cutting small squares of brown construction paper for the next craft, and he sat in the teensy red chair right next to me. He laid his head on my arm and innocently asked me why I looked so sad. Not knowing how to respond to question without losing composure, I told him that something bad happened to a close friend's family. He did not say anything at first, but rather he sat on my lap and watched me work on the crafts. After a while, he told me that his parents always told him that no matter what happens, everything will always be okay in the end. Lane had taken the time to see the small spots on my shirt from the tears I had shed, and this attention to detail allowed him to provide the simple words of encouragement that I so desperately needed to hear. He taught me the importance of noticing the small details, which is something I strive to include in my identity.

Most students will encounter a difficult time in

their education; it is inevitable. There will be nights spent working on homework until ungodly hours of the morning. There will be mornings when getting out of bed seems nearly impossible. There will be weeks that appear simply unbearable. There will be

...this attention to detail allowed him to provide the simple words of encouragement that I so desperately needed to hear.

homesickness. There will be loneliness. There will be loss. However, if students come together and pay attention to their classmates, there will be triumph. If we notice the small details and changes in others, we can comfort and encourage them. Then we can allow for our friends and classmates to bear through their low points and climb to their successes, creating a more positive environment.

Highs and lows occur in daycare centers just like they do in our day-to-day

lives. Widespread sickness is easily the low point of the winter season in daycare centers. Sickesses spread quickly from room to room because the center is such a large daycare. One of the worst culprits was strep throat. Oftentimes, children would contract strep throat but show very few symptoms, so their parents would still bring them to daycare. After being at the center for a few hours, the symptoms would become drastically more noticeable and the poor children would become miserable. One day specifically, I sat in the office with a four-year-old girl named Carly for over thirty minutes. Her parents worked outside of our hometown, and their commuting time was rather lengthy. Carly had an incredibly high fever, and the staff was desperate to keep it down as much as possible. While my coworkers were urgently looking for icepacks to place on her neck and armpits in order to control her fever, Carly sat on my lap with steady streams of tears and snot rolling down her cheeks. By the time her mother had arrived at the center to whisk her away to

the clinic, the stain of tears and boogers consumed my sleeve. At first, I was slightly disgusted; after all, she was obviously quite sick. But the more I thought about it, the more I understood how important the stain was to her. Carly needed someone to comfort her and make her feel safe, and I had the privilege to be that person to her. Every tear that has seeped through the seams reminds me of the times that I have sat with a crying child to comfort them and the importance of empathy in my life and identity.

The day after preschool graduation, I was sitting at a table with two sisters, Kira and Ruby, who were coloring flowers with a thick, bolded outline. Ruby, being the younger of the two, scribbled away with her bubblegum pink crayon, paying little attention to the outlines of the flowers. Kira, who was a recent preschool graduate, carefully shaded the stem with a deep green crayon. When Kira saw Ruby's disregard for the dark outline of the flower, she was appalled. She told Ruby that she must color in the lines for it be pretty. Ruby quickly looked up at

Kira and declared with all the feistiness that a two-year-old can conjure, "Mama thinks it is pretty because I colored it!" Kira, with wide eyes, turned and asked me to tell her she was wrong. However, when I looked down at the t-shirt I was wearing and saw the whitish stain from the bleach solutions I used to clean the bathroom and the spot where the caterpillar logo was peeling, I realized that beauty is a subjective standard developed from our differences and shaped by our experiences. To anyone else, my t-shirt looked like it belonged in the trash. Beauty is not perfection; instead, beauty is what makes us different. To me the t-shirt symbolizes experiences that have changed my outlook on the world and who I am today. I now know that I may not be considered beautiful by societal norms, but beauty comes from within, causing me to be far more accepting than I once was. My identity changed with me. A realization like this seems to be a normal pathway for many other college students. At some point over the course of an education, our beliefs about what is true and accepted are challenged. Many students come from small towns that

have a population that is very likeminded, and other students come from large, diverse cities. Students come from different types of households, cultures, and religions. We encounter people from different backgrounds that impact how we reason and how we act. We are encouraged to think deeper and contemplate perspectives that we may not have considered before. College encourages us to become more accepting of people by forcing students to look past the surface of a particular subject and reconsider our initial judgements, changing the identities of students everywhere. We learn to love others for their differences instead of their similarities.

So much of who I am today was challenged and reshaped by the experiences I had in the center. I initially accepted the job expecting that I would be teaching the children, but rather I was their student. Their pure and innocent view of the world caused me to rethink my values. I have learned to be much more self-disciplined, empathetic, and optimistic, and I am far less self-centered than I was when I started. Most

importantly, I have discovered a passion for working with children, which has greatly influenced who I want to be in the future. Compassion Child Sponsorship (2013), an organization dedicated to assisting children who live in poverty, quotes Angela Schwindt stating, “While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about.” By the time I put in my leave

of absence for school, the job was no longer about making money; instead, it was about nurturing and loving the kids. My last day at the center before I left for Central College was incredibly difficult; saying goodbye to all of my kids was much harder than I had anticipated. Now, my t-shirt sits in my dresser at my house. When I return home, the partially peeled decal letters that scrawl

STAFF across my back will still be there, the permanent stains will not have magically disappeared, and the green caterpillar on the breast pocket will still have the cliché smile spanning its face. Much like the elements of the shirt will still be there upon my return home, everything I have experienced and all of the lessons I have learned will stay with me for years to come.

References

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Marshal Way, charcoal, 18" x 24"



Legal and Cultural Contexts of Gay Rights in India

Duncan Brumwell

ANTH-290: Marginalization in Indian Society (Independent Study)

1. We may note firstly that the U.S. Department of State under Hillary Clinton took the initiative in using all its diplomatic tools “to press for the elimination of violence and discrimination against LGBT people worldwide, particularly those forced to flee their homes or countries” (The Department of State’s Accomplishments Promoting the Human Rights of Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People, 2011). In coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the State Department continues to work to implement a comprehensive LGBT refugee protection strategy.

2. India underwent a sea change in its treatment of homosexuality in 2009, when

SR (identity protected) was a gay man from India applying for political asylum in the United States. We were requested to provide background information to aid the court in evaluating his case. Duncan Brumwell put together legal testimony summarizing such evidence, which I used in providing expert witness to the court in November 2016. SR did earn asylum, setting a precedent for other gay men seeking refuge from India. The assignment demanded a fluency with legal conventions of writing and presentation as well as capabilities in research in a foreign setting.
-Cynthia Mahmood

Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was revoked. This Section, titled, “Of Unnatural Offenses,” dated from British colonial times, and punished “carnal intercourse against the order of nature” with up to ten years’ imprisonment (“India’s Historic Ruling on Gay Rights,” Time, 2009). However, prominent sections of Indian society did not accept the revocation of this element of the Penal Code. Representatives of both the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party and the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board made public statements against the ruling, causing it to come before the Indian High Court, which again supported it. Still, this legislation and its support by

the High Court did not mean equivalent changes in Indian society. (The ruling did not officially remove the code, because it also criminalizes sex with minors and sex with animals. Instead, it ruled that homosexuality was not an “unnatural offence.” The court is not able to legislate, and therefore was not able to change the language of the law, leaving Section 377 in place and susceptible to overruling by later courts.)

3. In 2012, three years after this action, a lawyer for the Home Ministry said publicly that gay sex was immoral and “against nature” (“Will India Stand Up For Gay Rights?” Time, 2012). The previous year, the Health Minister Ghulam Nabi

Azad said during an AIDS conference in Delhi that men having sex with men was “a disease” and “unnatural.” A 2011 survey conducted by CNN-IBN news revealed that 73% of Indians still believed that homosexuality should be illegal. Prominent politician Lalu Prasad Yadav was most outspoken in claiming that gay sex was an obscenity that should not be allowed in the country (“Gay Sex Shouldn’t Be Legalized At Any Cost: Lalu,” Indian Express, 2012). Although the law had been changed, this change was not accepted in important venues, nor in society at large.

4. A new law on sexual violence (Criminal Law [Amendment] Ordinance 2013) signed by President Mukherjee in February 2013, was criticized by human rights groups as not living up to international standards (Human Rights Watch, Human Rights in India: Reject New Sexual Violence Ordinance, 2013). Among other criticisms was the key failing that the new ordinance did not repeal the infamous Section 377 criminalizing consensual same-sex relationships among adults – despite the Delhi High Court’s affirmation of the original

2009 revocation. This key non-support by the President’s new Ordinance opened up the dispute over gay rights once again. It must also be understood in the context of wider non-support for human rights efforts by the Indian government.

5. In December of 2013, a two-member Indian Supreme Court, responding to the petitions of several religious and political groups, reversed the ruling from 2009, recriminalizing the act of homosexual intercourse (“India Top Court Reinstates Gay Sex Ban,” BBC News, 2013). It issued a statement suggesting it was up to the Indian Parliament to legislate on the issue, but this was particularly unlikely given that parliamentary elections would be held the following year. Furthermore, the past four years had allowed thousands of gay men to be legally open. This ruling now forced them into hiding to avoid persecution. In January of 2014, a two-member bench of the Indian Supreme Court denied petitions from several gay activists, indicating that it was up to Parliament to initiate legislation on the matter (“Apex Court Refuses to Review Verdict

Criminalizing Gay Sex,” The Hindu, 2014).

6. In December of 2015, a bill introduced by Shashi Tharoor to strike down Section 377 was defeated in Parliament 77-24, showing that even the newly elected parliament had no interest in decriminalizing homosexuality (“Shashi Tharoor’s Bill to Decriminalize Gay Sex Defeated in Lok Sabha,” Huffington Post, 2015). In early February, 2016, a three-member bench decided to hear all the petitions filed by gay activists and organizations, but nine months later, a date has yet to be set. This delay leaves homosexuality in India criminalized and without any respite in the foreseeable future (“Supreme Court’s Next Step on Section 377 and LGBT Rights,” The Hindu, 2016).

7. In June of 2016, the Indian representative to the United Nations abstained from a vote creating a position for an independent expert on gender identity and sexual orientation to review the extent and degree of discrimination of the LGBT community in countries around the world. The Ministry of External Affairs cited the ongoing

court cases, and felt that it would be inappropriate to vote on an issue which had not been ruled on by the Supreme Court. However, the representative continued to vote on resolutions weakening the position, including one resolution which ensured that the reports issued by the office holder would have to take into account the existing laws within the countries. That is to say, criminalizing homosexuality would not necessarily be considered discriminating against

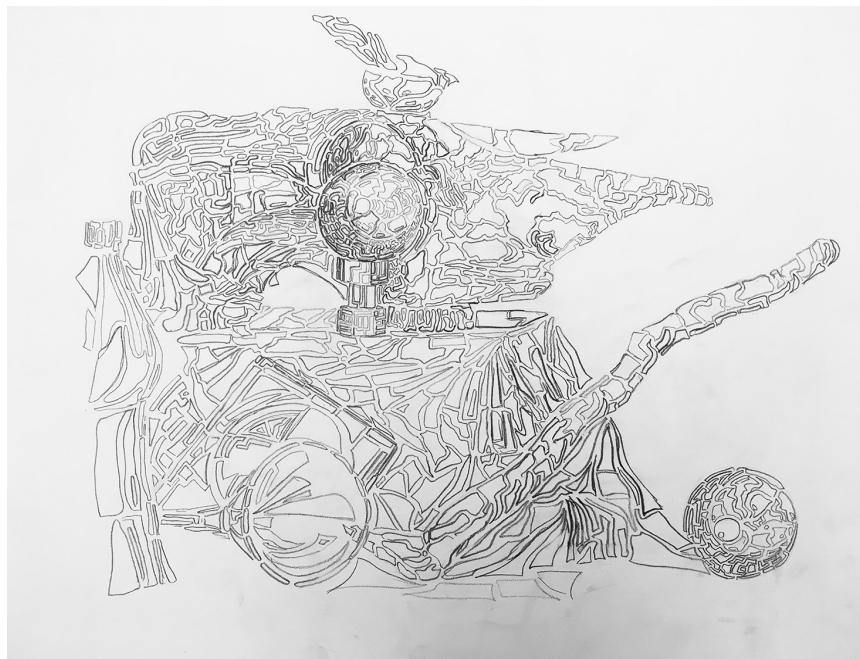
homosexuals (“Supreme Court’s Next Step on Section 377 and LGBT Rights,” The Hindu, 2016).

8. The ambiguity of homosexuality’s standing in Indian law allows for societal prejudices against gay men to continue to flourish. The U.S. Department of State’s 2011 Country Report on India (released 2012) notes that LGBT persons “faced

discrimination and violence in many areas of society,” also commenting that LGBT persons “faced physical attacks, rape, and blackmail,” and furthermore that “police committed crimes against LGBT persons and used the threat of arrest to coerce victims not to report the

hospitals in programs intended to “cure” them of homosexuality, that police extorted sex from gay men under threat of arrest, and that HIV/AIDS outreach workers were persecuted by police (Human Rights Watch, India: Repeal Colonial-Era Sodomy Law, 2006; Human Rights Watch, Epidemic of

Abuse: Police Harassment of HIV/AIDS Outreach Workers in India, 2002; UNHCR, India: Situation of Homosexuals, Availability of Support Groups and State Protection June 2004–April 2009).



Marshal Way, graphite, 18" x 24"

incidents.” This is consonant with the known corrupt behavior of the Indian police, not remedied by attempted workshops and programs in police training (Human Rights Watch, A Broken System: Dysfunction, Abuse and Impunity in the Indian Police, 2009). In the past, human rights groups put out reports alleging that gay men were held captive in psychiatric

The U.S. State Department’s comment in its 2004 Country Report that “gay and lesbian rights are not considered human rights in India” (2005) accurately describes the overall situation in India still today. Legislative changes, ambiguous as they are, show some progress but have not essentially changed the life situation of a gay man in India.

9. Although it is

possible for a homosexual man experiencing harassment to hire lawyers to press his case to the highest levels of the Indian judicial system – where it may get a fair hearing, particularly if media are involved – the average person, particularly a little-educated individual from a rural area, simply has no chance to fight back against social mores that allow or even encourage beatings and rapes from gangs or family members as punishment for homosexuality. Police at local levels do not have the consciousness of the gay rights lobbies in Delhi, Mumbai, or Kolkata, and regularly simply report a gay man complaining of harassment to his family or village which is then expected to handle the matter.

10. A factor playing a significant role in many cases of persecution of homosexuals is the cultural tradition of family honor. It is not only because an individual is gay that is the source of the scandal, but because he brought shame upon the entire family and clan. In India, the preservation of family honor through fulfillment of traditional obligations like marriage is key to all social

standing. Honor crimes, such as we know are conducted against women, are also conducted against gay family members. These are difficult to prosecute because the whole society rallies around the family facing the dishonor of homosexuality.

11. There are deep religious roots in the majority Hindu tradition regarding homosexuality. The Manu Smriti is a text dating back almost two thousand years, and it speaks explicitly against homosexuality. If an adult woman was found having sexual relations with an unmarried girl, for instance, her “head should be shaved immediately or two of her fingers should be cut off, and she should be made to ride on a donkey.” If two unmarried girls have sex, each must pay a fine the double of her marriage fee, and receive ten lashes with a rod. For Brahmins and forward-caste men, “causing an injury to a priest, smelling wine or things that are not to be smelled, crookedness, and sexual union with a man are traditionally said to cause loss of caste.” Likewise, a twice-born (forward-caste) man “who has had intercourse with a male, or with a female in a

cart drawn by oxen, in water, or in the day-time, shall bathe, dressed in his clothes.” This refers to a ritual cleansing bath restorative of caste status in Hinduism. (“Homosexuality in India: Better Late Than Never,” India Law Journal.)

12. All the major religions in India condemn homosexuality and any legal challenges to decriminalize it. Though the hijras (transgender individuals) did have a valid position in traditional Indian society (and indeed the “third gender” has recently been legally recognized), this is not the position occupied by gay men fleeing India for the United States. These are gay as defined by their own culture, which is an extremely low, indeed outcast, position in society. A gay man can expect help from no one, and attacks, rapes, and harassments from many. These abuses are likely wherever in India he may attempt to resettle.

13. Given the State Department’s initiative on gay rights, particularly focusing on those persons forced to flee their countries, the United States should consider each case of homosexual asylum carefully.



The Judgement of “Penelope”: A Day in the Life of Molly Bloom

ENGL-425: Seminar in
Literary Studies

Lindsey Greer

Introduction: The Problems

From the dawn of *Ulysses* in 1922, the character of Molly Bloom has been under scrutiny, judged for her actions, implied or explicit, on one particular day. Early readers called her “earth mother” and ‘satanic mistress’ while 21st century readers called her “bitch,” ‘slut,’ and ‘thirty shilling whore’ (Norris 217). Certainly she is often perceived to be the latter for much of the book, as Bloom seems perpetually obsessed by her body, her actions, her suitors, and her affair. But such interpretations seem to contradict her chaste religious and mythological parallels, the Virgin Mother Mary and ever-virtuous and faithful Penelope, to whom she can be reconciled with a little reader insight. Fifty years after the world was introduced to Molly Bloom, Fr. Robert Boyle summed up the situation: “Critical opinion is hopelessly

The major assignment for this senior seminar on James Joyce was to illuminate something significant in *Ulysses* drawing on intensive knowledge of Joyce’s works and extensive knowledge of the large critical conversation about *Ulysses*. Lindsey Greer’s essay on Penelope in James Joyce’s *Ulysses* is both lucid and authoritative, a delight to read. Lindsey presents us with a seemingly easy grasp of difficult materials ranging Homer’s *Odyssey* through Joyce’s own works that precede *Ulysses* and with the linguistic pyrotechnics of *Ulysses* itself to contemporary criticism in order to perform a kind of feminist rehabilitation of Molly Bloom.

-Walter Cannon

fragmented among those who would condemn [Molly] and those who would praise her, even among those wiser souls who admit her mysterious inaccessibility to limited human vision” (407).

In-depth revelations of Molly’s character become increasingly difficult as time progresses, and the gap between present world culture and the extremely contextually based Dublin constructed by James Joyce becomes more and more obscure. One hundred years after Joyce’s mind-boggling publication hit the shelves, modern (or rather, post-modern) readers are left with mountains of questions regarding the plot, the characters, and the historical

and cultural references — surface details which hinder a reader’s grasp of the symbolic. Once these questions are dealt with on the reader’s own time (“[*Ulysses*] margins black with cross-references... So much homework, is done; so many, many facts have been checked out” [Kenner 63]), issues of symbolism and interpretation abound. And these are much more difficult questions to answer, considering that Joyce’s writing style and means of conveying Molly’s character to readers leave quite wide ranges of possibilities, and layers of them. Who is Molly Bloom, or can we even grasp the nature of her character? Is she the embodiment of Joyce’s own modernist brand

of feminism, or the opposite? What was Joyce trying to achieve by writing "Penelope" as he did? In this essay I will explore a few lines of thought, from first impressions to careful considerations, on Molly's person and purpose, and ultimately I hope to pass an arguably fair judgement on a woman who I believe is neither wholly guilty nor wholly innocent. She is vulgar, but forgivable; she is, extraordinarily, normal.

Molly's Assumed Identity

Molly's nature is particularly hard to grasp compared to Ulysses' other main characters, mostly because, while Stephen and Bloom can reveal their natures through inner thought processes, dialogue, and interaction with other characters and each other, Molly is not given such a narrative opportunity until the very end of her husband's Odyssean day. The majority of what the readers infer about Molly is based on hearsay and assumptions up until "Penelope," and even then, everything one thinks one knows about Molly is still only inferred. She is like a ghost haunting Bloom in his travels, barely thought

of or viewed as human; she is one who "has functioned chiefly as an 'other' in the text up to 'Penelope,' a situation that obliges us to think with particular care about the justice of the responses that are being provoked to her throughout the progress of the text" (Norris 229). In terms of symbolic connotations, Molly can be seen in several illuminating

**She is like a ghost
haunting Bloom in
his travels,
barely thought of
or viewed as
human...**

and somewhat conflicting views. In order to make sense of Molly's personality, as well as her purpose, the reader ought not to pass judgment too soon.

For example, if Bloom is generally understood to be the black panther of Haines' nightmares, then Molly's animal parallel must be the cow. She is assumed to be in bed for the first half of the day, and admits herself that she had not even gotten fully dressed by 3:15PM ("because it was $\frac{1}{4}$ after 3 when I saw

the 2 Dedalus girls coming from school I never know the time... when I threw the penny to that lame sailor for England home and beauty when I was whistling there is a charming girl I love and I hadn't even put on my clean shift or powdered myself or a thing" [Joyce 615, line 344]). She is in the background, not doing much, just grazing from the light breakfast Bloom brought her that morning and the fruit basket delivered in advance of Boylan's arrival; not speaking much (her first word of the day is "Mn," actually not a word at all [46, line 57]): and not knowing much either, as during the course of her only conversation with Bloom until "Ithaca," she asks him the meaning of a word she does not know. The word, "metempsychosis," is from a cheap erotica novel of highly questionable scholarly merit, and she does not understand the first explanation he gives (52, lines 321-343). The initial impression of Molly's slow, sluggish cowness becomes noticeably more of a morally questionable, promiscuous, and physically objectified cowness as stories bandied about by Bloom's social circle become more

derogatory (Norris 230). They imply that Boylan may not be Molly's first affair, or at least that more than one man has lusted after Molly. Her figure being large but pretty, men find her desirable and often make passes at her (conveniently leaving her reactions to these passes out of their stories

[O'Brien 2]). The animalistic and carnivorous Bloom introduced to readers in "Calypso" ("Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with crustcrumbs, fried hencods' roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine" [Joyce 45, lines 1-5]) likewise lusts after his domesticated prey. But Molly "de-lionizes" him by taking the "Leo" out of his name and calling him "Poldy" (Blamires 26-27). He then essentially becomes a domesticated housecat, not to

be taken seriously by his peers or, at times, the readers. What then, does Molly become? Perhaps an elusive bird, flying out of the cat's reach, preferring to mate with flashy peacocks like Boylan?

On another note, recall that in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the recurring



Parker Hill, paper sculpture, 6" x 6" x 6"

cow symbol has maternal connotations, and so it is suitable that Stephen, when adopted by Bloom, acquires a cow as a foster mother to replace his own deceased mother.

Following the adoption theme leads us to the religious parallels, in which Bloom = God the Father, Stephen = Christ the Son, and Molly = Marion = Virgin Mother Mary. Some bizarre things happen when one delves beyond superficial facts (such

as Molly "[sharing] a name and a birthday with the Blessed Virgin" [Boyle 423]) of the religious parallels of *Ulysses*, especially considering Joyce's fascination with the theme of transubstantiation; it becomes quite confusing trying to keep straight who is supposed to be who. As

Christ is an extension of God the Father, so Bloom is seen as a Christ-figure nearly as much as he is seen as representing God. This is especially so in respect to his issues with

Mary and Martha: one his wife and the other his secret penpal. Biblically, the two are sisters who accommodate Jesus for a short while: Mary is praised for listening in reverence to Jesus while

Martha is chastised for being a busybody and not knowing what is truly important (Luke 10:38-42). In this case, Molly becomes simultaneously the Virgin Mother of Jesus and one out of the multitudes of his followers, but one who is commended in particular

for her priorities. Molly's eagerness to listen to whatever Stephen-Christ might have to say is in line with this image: "Id love to have a long talk with an intelligent welleducated person" (Joyce 641, lines 1493-1494).

Having not met Stephen since he was a child, Molly idealizes the adult version (637-638). But then she contemplates seducing Stephen, thinking that the three of them, Molly, Stephen, and Bloom, ought to be able to live together in harmony ("why cant we all remain friends over it" (639, lines 1392-1393); this could also be in reference to Boylan, Bloom, and Molly, but is a bit vague due to Molly's moving from "he" to "he" without saying who either "he is"). At this, present-day readers might be tempted to draw another connection between Molly and Mary Magdalene, the sometimes-theorized wife of Jesus; but of course, as Joyce passed away in 1941 and no conspiratorial evidence for this theory surfaced until 1945, readers ought to throw out this connotation (and, even if Joyce had thought of such a thing, it would have been certain heresy to

suggest it in any obvious way). Thus, this third Molly-Mary parallel is technically void; however, all an author (especially one like Joyce) can do is guide the reader's interpretation, not dictate it, and so meaning evolves with time, and with every new reader (so the parallel is not historically feasible, but is legitimate nonetheless). In any case, marital and gender issues do still arise here with Bloom still being cuckolded if Molly seduces Stephen, as in Molly's fantasy he is pictured bringing Stephen and Molly breakfast in bed (Joyce 641, lines 1491-1492) -- he is the "new womanly man" and genderless God presiding over his son and wife/daughter-in-law (Blamires 248). Such morally and socially would-be-frowned-upon thoughts, coming from Molly herself, do not help her fight the derogatory cow issue.

Of course, given the nature of the comments made about Molly by Bloom's friends throughout the book, readers are not particularly surprised when they find her pondering sexual encounters with nearly every man she thinks of in "Penelope," whether the encounters are wanted or unwanted, actual

or merely hypothetical. This at first makes Molly seem slutty and scandalous; after all, she is in reality no Blessed Virgin. But as we've seen from "Nausicaa," men find virgins just as attractive and seductive as experienced women, if not more so. Molly could therefore be seen as the victim of double standards; knowing gender ideologies and stereotyped expectations to be unrealistic, Molly committed herself to none, but let on that she had, in this way keeping her identity safely her own.

Here we come to the Homeric symbolism. A clever revelation by Kimberly Delvin in her article, "Pretending in 'Penelope': Masquerade, Mimicry, and Molly Bloom," points out one of Joyce's more subtle tricks in making Molly Penelope's parallel: "'Penelope' actualizes her name, which translates to 'countenance of webs' or mask" (72). This rings true not just for the Ulyssean chapter of the same title, but for the entire problem of knowing and interpreting Molly Bloom, as "Molly's contradictions are internalized cultural contradictions: she weaves and unweaves ideological cliches" (Delvin 74). Even as a young girl, Molly was a victim of--

or was she manipulating? --double standards. She recalls her first kiss, with a sailor named Mulvey: "It never entered my head what kissing meant till he put his tongue in my mouth his mouth was sweetlike young I put my knee up to him a few times to learn the way what did I tell him I was engaged for for fun to the son of a Spanish nobleman named Don Miguel de la Flora and he believed me that I was to be married to him in 3 years time theres many a true word spoken in jest there is a flower that bloometh" (Joyce 625, lines 770-775). Before Mulvey, Molly was actually inexperienced, except for whatever sexual knowledge she had gained from reading or listening to stories. She used Mulvey, leaning on said indirectly gained experience, in order to gain actual personal experience. All of this was for the purpose of later being able to act inexperienced, despite being more experienced than she let on, or vice versa to continue the trend. Also, based on the lies she told Mulvey, we can deduce that Molly never took him seriously as a suitor. It is therefore likely that Molly is not serious in any of the

similar recalled or imagined sexual musings; for example, those involving Stephen have "little to do with the fearful, brilliant, introspective, ineffectual" young artist, and more to do with Molly working her way mentally back towards her husband (Boyle 421).

As has been stated, Molly is of course the Penelope to Bloom-Odysseus and Stephen-Telemachus in Joyce's Homerian parallel, staying at home while her husband, constantly distracted by the question of her fidelity to him, embarks on a perilous journey through a land in which he is an ethnic stranger. The main issue with this parallel is that Joyce seems to have inverted certain characteristics of the characters (namely, sexual fidelity) so that Molly is also the unfaithful Odysseus, and Bloom is Penelope.

Joyce apparently inverted more than just this parallel. At the end of "Ithaca" and for six out of eight "Penelope" paragraphs, we see one of the two scenes which prompted some critics to call Molly an "Earth Mother": Bloom partly curled into the fetal position with his head towards Molly's feet, mentally

zooming out on the world, kissing "the plump mellow yellow smellow melons of her rump, on each plump melonous hemisphere, in their mellow yellow furrow, with obscure prolonged provocative melonmellonous osculation" (Joyce 604, lines 2241-2243). Bloom is at this time experiencing the convergence of "antagonistic sentiments and reflections" into a "final satisfaction...at the ubiquity in the eastern and western terrestrial hemispheres...of adipose anterior and posterior female hemispheres...expressive of mute immutable mature animality" (lines 2228-2236). Once again, Bloom appears to prefer not to see Molly as particularly human, but he has mentally bridged the emotional waters that kept him physically apart from his wife; thus, the physical inversion which awakens the slumbering Molly. The two briefly parallel the mythical couple, choosing only to converse at their reunion (or perhaps not "only," a question for later). Then another inversion commences when Bloom-Penelope falls asleep, leaving Molly-Odysseus wide awake in the wee hours of the morn to embark on her own

mental journey of Homeric proportions, wandering through perilous obstacles of thought and feeling, relying on nothing but memory to bring her home to Bloom and their marital bed.

This seems a bit contradictory considering the fact that Molly has just had an affair. She also dedicates much of her thoughts to comparing her husband to her lover, or lovers, past and present. Molly is almost cruel in her critique of Bloom; in her brief “Calypso” appearance, Molly does act blunt and short with him, giving him an “imperious set of questions and orders” (Norris 218). She seems to wear the pants in their relationship, being “a woman of few and pointed words, who wastes little time on courtesies” (Norris 218). Perhaps, then, Molly is selfish and greedy, wanting Boylan’s money and absolutely everyone’s attention, treating even her own daughter as a rival. Or perhaps this is only Molly being pragmatic, seeing both the pros and cons of each lover, all their faults and good points. But perhaps it is still more than that, as Molly is in truth a good and a fair judge of character, giving great attention to detail, catching

others in the vaguest and most subtle of lies while also giving them due respect to genuine behavior (Sternlieb 765). Thus, one of Molly’s most contradictory points, her apparently constant changing of opinions, is actually proof that she is intelligent, “worldly and capable of wit” despite being “poorly

In order to defend others, she must insult them; in order to love Bloom, she must see him for who he is; in order to go forwards, she must go backwards.

educated” and superstitious (Norris 218, Boyle 422).

One last Molly-Penelope parallel: the duo “[weaves] in order to unweave...[does] in order to undo” (Sternlieb 758). In order to hold off suitors, Penelope weaves the same burial robe for four years, unweaving it every single night and starting over again every morning, keeping the pattern in her mind. Molly does the same: in order to

defend others, she must insult them; in order to love Bloom, she must see him for who he is; in order to go forwards, she must go backwards.

Perceptions of “Penelope”

“Penelope” is yet another of Joyce’s linguistic experiments, yet another chapter of *Ulysses* written with an “aesthetic of mobility” (O’Brien 2). Many twentieth-century critics and feminists claimed that “Penelope” was a prime example of *écriture féminine* due to Molly’s perceived “language of flow.” In quite a contrast to Stephen and Bloom’s narrations, Molly’s lack of punctuation of any kind creates the illusion of disorienting timelessness, giving the impression of simultaneously rushing and rambling; as the monologue of the Other, Molly’s narrative “exposes the leisureliness of Bloom’s introspective and often maudlin journey” (Sternlieb 767). Though perhaps not always “maudlin” per se, Bloom’s version of stream of consciousness is extremely fragmented compared to Molly’s neverending runs. It is as if Joyce were puddle-jumping, and the scattered droplets equate to

every period, every disjointed statement conveyed from Bloom to the reader. Given time, those droplets will converge into a new puddle of meaning, but it is largely up to the reader to connect the dots, and this is extremely difficult without knowing from which puddles certain droplets originated.

Take, for example, Martha's letter to Bloom. It is presented to the reader as a whole exactly once, in "The Lotus Eaters," and this is the main puddle (Joyce 63-64, lines 240-259). Before this, the reader only gets scattered bits of information about Martha and the affair, and about Bloom's intention to collect the letter (by hiding the card of his alias Henry Flower in his hat, etc.). After this, several events throughout the day bring to Bloom's mind phrases, often incomplete or registered only as a connotation segwaying other fragments, that originated in Martha's letter. Thinking of death, Bloom is reminded of Martha's typo: "I do not like that other world she wrote" (94, line 1002); "To aid gentleman in literary work" is a reference in "Lestrygonians" to how the relationship began (136, lines 532-533); "Are

you not happy in your home
you poor little naughty boy?
Wants to sew on buttons for
me. I must answer. Write
it in the library" (137, lines
612-613) and "Lovely name
you have. Can't write.... She's
a. I called you naughty boy.
Still the name: Martha. How
strange! Today" are Bloom's
reminders to himself to answer
Martha (226, lines 713-716);
"Full voice of perfume of what
perfume does your lilactrees"
is the specific answer to one
of Martha's questions in a
"Sirens" reference to Molly
(lines 730-731); "How many
women in Dublin have it
today? Martha, she. Something
in the air. That's the moon"
is a reflection on women
and their periods brought
on by Gerty McDowell and
connecting to Molly (301,
lines 781-782). All of this the
reader can catch and connect,
slowly but surely. Molly's
thoughts are the opposite, with
details constantly gushing
forth, overflowing to the point
that they are connected in too
many ways, and the reader's
new concern is not gathering
raindrops but trying to stay
afloat in her female mind's
flood of information.

But is this *escriture féminine* supposed to be a positive portrayal of the

Other? At first glance, there is no denying that "Penelope" looks like a complete mess: seemingly "rogue capitalization" abounds (Brown 4); "Pronouns have unclear antecedents and words that start with one grammatical connection can end by shifting to another one in the flow of her language" (Stanier 3); and "the quotidian and the epic overlap as do the present, past and future" (Sternlieb 770). The syntax of "Penelope" gives readers the impression that they are listening in on an uneducated and extremely fickle mind. However, we have already seen that Molly is not so fickle as she seems at first. Likewise, all of Joyce's confusing formal techniques are "ambiguities only to the reader and not to Molly" (Stanier 3). Perhaps in Molly's mind, she hears or pictures her thoughts, sees them ending and beginning and flowing into one another much more clearly; and Joyce could have better conveyed this by doubling up linking words or phrases. But was it ever Joyce's intention to be clear when it came to Molly? Or any of *Ulysses*, for that matter?

Just as "Oxen of the

“Sun” is written in a style that shows the evolution of English prose, or as “Cyclops” moves through commentary voices of “the legal, the epic, the scientific, the journalistic, and so on” (Blamires 118), “Penelope” is Joyce’s experiment in the writing styles of popular culture, and specifically feminine ones.

The language of Molly’s thoughts moves through such genres as gothic, romantic poetry, drama, girlish memoir, and erotica (O’Brien 3-6).

However, the episodes which contain such language are not necessarily written in those styles, *per se*; rather, Molly herself remains uniform in her running commentary of her own memory and imagination, and simply pulls certain images and vocabulary from conveniently corresponding literature. According to Delvin, these styles are supposed to correspond to whatever form of media Molly had been reading at the time of the formation of

the memories she conveys to readers, and all of the “Mollys” seen in “Penelope” are therefore “byproducts of identifications with specific texts of femininity” (74); for example, when thinking of her potential relations with the presumably prestigious

there is no way of knowing exactly how recently Molly may have read any of them. They simply manifest cultural ideologies of gender, which Molly fantasizes being inside, occasionally also acting them out. In any case, a multitude of different aspects or

expectations of femininity are present in “Penelope,” and we cannot after all take gender and language as separate topics, especially regarding a character and

a chapter as controversial and syntactically dense as Molly Bloom in “Penelope.”

Whether or not

Joyce has been successful in the endeavor of accurately portraying the Other (or whether this was his endeavor at all) therefore remains a controversial topic. Molly is often written off as the queen of female stereotypes, the “illogical” archetype of feminine thought processes, but these are unfair judgements. Delvin debunks the theory that Molly herself



Drew Willis, paper sculpture, 10" x 10" x 5"

Stephen, she imagines herself as the female protagonist of a romantic poem and a song she once heard (“they all write about some woman in their poetry well I suppose he wont find many like me... two glancing eyes a lattice hid Ill sing that for him theyre my eyes if hes anything of a poet two eyes as darkly bright as loves own star” (Joyce 637, lines 1333-1340)). While we may safely assume Molly has done her fair share of reading of all the various genres pointed out by O’Brien,

is constructed of either stereotypes or archetypes; archetypes are the “original copies,” simultaneously “a perfectly typical example’... and ‘the most extreme example’... which revealingly claim, moreover, the norm and the exaggeration of it are one and the same” (73). Molly, though unaware of being written, is aware of “being watched” and of the need to “act natural”(without necessarily “[*being*] natural” [Sternlieb 771-772]). She stores up all those cultural ideologies and stereotypes inside herself and dispenses them as she sees fit, casting herself as whichever role seems most suitable for the situation and accompanying actor (whose pretending she despises because they do not know it for pretending). Meanwhile, despite outwardly acting as an experienced seductress, wicked adulteress, tragic victim, or innocent flirt, Molly keeps her self-definition separate, safely behind a figurative mask, knowing herself to be much more than she lets on. In this way, Molly “undermines the notion of womanliness as [*she*] displays it” (Delvin 73).

On the other hand, Michael Stanier’s article,

though recognizing that portraying the Other was perhaps Joyce’s goal, challenges feminists’ conclusions that Molly’s inner thoughts in ‘Penelope’ are the epitome of feminine writing meant to “destabilize the phallocentric nature of the world that has been depicted” (4). His article

Joyce is ultimately just a man trying to define the “Otherness” of the feminine, and his writing cannot escape his own presumptuous masculinity.

“The Void Awaits Surely All Them That Weave the Wind’: ‘Penelope’ and ‘Sirens’ in *Ulysses*” is explicitly about the relationship between femininity and language, or Joyce’s portrayal and use of them. In it he argues that “Joyce’s attempt to portray the essential feminine as destabilizing, undermining, and ‘unweaving’ the world of phallocentric language and presence is ultimately doomed to failure,” because

Joyce is ultimately just a man trying to define the “Otherness” of the feminine, and his writing cannot escape his own presumptuous masculinity (2-3). From Stanier’s perspective, Molly’s monologue “merely shores up this world by being contained and assimilated into it” (4). Indeed, Molly has her fun knowingly mixing and matching stereotypes, but such social commentaries get her nowhere; she gratifies the men she encounters and is in turn gratified by knowing her behavior to be an act -- but the joke is lost on the men (Delvin 89).

All of this debunking and undermining can be gained only from taking a closer look, from giving Molly a chance to defend herself -- or rather, giving Joyce the chance to defend her. There are a few passages in which Joyce’s feminism/egalitarianism is indisputable. For example, when Molly goes off on this tangent rant: “Men again all over they can pick and choose what they please a married woman (which Molly is) or a fast widow (which Bloom has earlier imagined her to be) or a girl (which Molly has been) for their different tastes like

those houses round behind Irish street no but were to be chained always chained up theyre not going to be chaining me up no damn fear" (Joyce 639, lines 1388-1391, parentheses mine).

Molly's Significance to the Internal Plot of *Ulysses*

Central to the plot of *Ulysses* is Bloom's constant awareness of Molly's infidelity, though he assumes it more than knows it; his suspicions cause him pain, it is a stressful subject for him to dwell upon, yet he cannot avoid thinking about it, reminded so often as he is by the slightest question, statement, or association of thought. But what, if anything, is Bloom going to do about it? And why is Molly unfaithful in the first place? What has led the couple to this day?

In the "Sirens" episode, Bloom contemplates a passive kind of revenge against Molly for her adultery: "Gone. They sing. Forgotten. I too. And one day she with. Leave her: get tired. Suffer then. Snivel. Big spanishy eyes goggling at nothing. Her wavyavyeavyheavyeavy-
evyevy hair un comb'd" (lines 806-809). According to

Norris, this passage "could be seen as a punishment Bloom threatens, namely that he could as readily leave her as she might leave him" (226). Norris correctly infers that this line of thought is brought about by Bloom's speculating on a wife losing a husband, as it is preceded by thoughts of Dignam's death: "Gone. They sing. Forgotten. I too" refers to Bloom's observations of Dignam's funeral and his own future death. However, along with "And one day she with," the line has the dual meaning of Bloom's realization that Molly might leave him for another man, specifically Boylan, potentially as soon as during the coming concert tour, a thought that does indeed briefly cross Molly's mind in "Penelope" ("suppose I never came back what would they say eloped with him [Boylan]" [lines 373-374]). Norris is again correct in interpreting that Bloom thinks he could "as readily leave her" -- but she misses the mark in stating that this hypothetical leaving would be because "he got tired of her," as this would imply that Bloom tired of Molly in her entirety, including her personality and living habits, that he no longer loved her (226). Not so:

Bloom imagines instead that he might go home and catch her in the act of adultery. This would give him the legal and social ability to leave her, with the excuse given to her that he is tired of her abstinence from him despite blatant indulgence with other men. Such an event would surely cause Molly to regret her actions; if she loves Bloom, she would cry, she would miss him, but it would be too late, he would be gone.

Norris likely missed this conclusion because of her belief that it is Bloom who is abstaining from sexual intercourse with Molly. This confusion on whether it is Bloom or Molly who has been abstaining from/withholding sexual intercourse from the other for the last ten years of their marriage is of course thanks to the insurmountable vagueness of Joyce-brand stream of consciousness writing. The controversy lies in the key line "Could never like it again after Rudy" from "Lestrygonians" (line 610). Norris seems to think Bloom is the abstainer/withholder: "Bloom blames Molly's lusty libido for the death of Rudy and arguably punishes her for what is finally a fictitious construction of

the dynamic of the tragedy by withholding interior sex from her from then on" (221). Norris's support for this claim makes sense. Bloom, as a Jew, naturally breaks from his usual scientific line of thought to seek some divine reason for the emotional event of his newborn son's death. And he finds one, absurd as it may seem: Bloom attributes Rudy's conception to a specific morning when Molly was apparently aroused by the sight of two dogs mating, and he decides it must have been sinful to copulate at such a time, for such a reason (Joyce 73-74, lines 77-81; 640, lines 1444-1447).

However, Harry Blamires attributes "Could never like it again after Rudy" to Molly: "Molly ended their full marital relationship with the plea that she 'could never like it again' after their son Rudy's death" (69). The phrase would then become an explanation for the sexual death of the marriage passed on to the

reader through Bloom, who, though frustrated, respects her decision both because he loves her and because the loss of their son is equally sad to him. Taking this death-based logic one step further (they "avoid intercourse for fear of

to both seeking solace from suitors. And, ironically, as Sternlieb claims, Molly's affair is what eventually brings them together again.

Norris's stance does make more sense in light of her other arguments. It is the

basis for what she believes is the reason Bloom is so forgiving of Molly's assumed affairs, the next controversial round of the blame game: "Bloom...seems to take some responsibility for Molly's adultery, perhaps recognizing that

just as he scuttles about for compensatory sex, Molly has her own need to find compensation for Bloom's rusty gun and the decade-long sleep it has induced in their bedroom" (228). And Molly does indeed defend herself with similar-sounding logic on this point: "Still of course a woman wants to be embraced 20 times a day almost to make her look young no matter by who so long as to be in love or loved by somebody if the fellow you want isn't there (Joyce 639, lines 1407-1410).



Jenny Morrett, copper

the pain of another death") Boyle takes up the third stance: "It is not possible, it seems to me now, to determine which of the two, Molly or Poldy, is responsible for their unsatisfactory sexual relationship" (416). Both are mutually responsible; not only for ceasing to copulate but for not knowing when or how to start again, each retreating inside themselves to deal with the problem independently rather than together as a couple, which eventually leads

Bloom is experiencing self-blame for Molly's sexual freeness because it is only natural that she would act so, and Molly also seems to be blaming nature for her actions.

However, she also says "its all his own fault anyway if I am an adulteress" (641, line 1516), blaming Bloom for orchestrating her illicit relationship with Boylan; Boyle points out several instances where Molly suspects that Bloom has been "plotting and planning" everything from sending Milly away to allowing Boylan's flirting and further advances, to getting himself out of the way for the day (419). In fact, Molly almost seems to have a passive aggressive attitude about the whole affair. She occasionally lashes out at Bloom in her imagination; she more than once thinks of overdoing something sexual in order to draw out Bloom's animalistic urges, such as using his jealousy to arouse him, wanting to seduce him by "[letting] him know if that's what he wanted that his wife is fucked yes and damn well fucked too up to my neck nearly not by him" (641, lines 1510-1511). Molly's language

takes a vulgar turn whenever she has these violent impulses, showing her irritation with Bloom's apparent wishy-washyness in their long-dormant sexual relationship.

Perhaps this aggression is also pointed at Bloom's hypocrisy. Though Molly is generally perceived as the unfaithful one, throughout *Ulysses* readers witness Bloom lustng guiltlessly after a number of women and girls. It is revealed that on a previous day, Bloom did commit physical adultery with prostitutes (Norris 227). This is what Molly suspects when Bloom returns from his Odyssean day ("yes he came somewhere I'm sure by his appetite...so either it was one of those night women if it was down there he was really and the hotel story he made up a pack of lies to hide it planning it...or else if its not that its some little bitch or other he got in with somewhere or picked up on the sly" [Joyce 609, lines 34-45]). Molly is only slightly wrong in her assumptions: Bloom has not committed physical adultery with another woman. No, on this day, he merely sticks to ogling every passing female and masturbating at the sight of his "Cyclops" attacker's

granddaughter (the "little bitch" is Gerty McDowell, whose grandfather is Giltrap, "the citizen" who owns Garryowen [289, line 232]).

In any case, both Molly and Bloom at least have a general idea of the other's affairs, and each makes a decision not to interfere based on the logic that though they may be jealous, the other's actions are acceptable because their own marital bed is dead. In her article "The Oxymoron of Fidelity in Homer's *Odyssey* and Joyce's *Ulysses*," Keri Ames discusses in depth the parallels between Molly and her mythical Greek counterparts, Penelope and Helen of Troy. Ames gives special attention to Penelope's excuse for her fidelity to Odysseus during his absence – that Helen's infidelity to Menelaus was due to a sort of divine possession or influence, an act of the gods rather than of her own free will – an excuse one would expect Penelope to give only if she had been disloyal (2-3). However, her using this kind of excuse is both a show of humility and of forgiveness, since it exonerates Odysseus from his infidelity while also stating that she was also tempted and could have been sexually disloyal to him too, had the gods willed it (4). This is monumental in reestablishing the couple's long-

estranged marriage relations; Penelope only cares that Odysseus returned to her, and nothing he did (or she could have done) during his absence matters in the light of his return. The two then have an unspoken agreement that sexual infidelity is not as important as others make it out to be, because what matters in marriage is loyalty of the heart.

Ames argues that the same can be said of the Blooms' marriage, because they are both aware of each other's sexual infidelity and allow it, forgiving it, and that this is real love. In light of this, the Bloom marriage appears to be based more on mutual respect and emotional affection rather than on sexual gratification, a point several critics agree on.

Furthermore, both Bloom and Molly appear to intend to re-establish sexual relations. Clearly, the issue of infidelity has been on Molly's mind quite a bit. Both Boyle and Kenner are of the opinion that Boylan is in fact Molly's very first affair, that she put it off for as long as possible after Rudy's death (Boyle 415, Kenner 67).

Both point out that Bloom's

list of Molly's suitors includes any and all men who "showed any interest in Molly as a sex object" and support the theory with the fact that Molly's wandering but blatant thoughts only reference actual past sex with Boylan and Bloom (Boyle 415). Kenner even argues that Molly procrastinated sexual intercourse with Boylan while he was in her house by having him rearrange the furniture in the living room, an act that was as behind-the-scenes as Penelope's weaving and unweaving her father-in-law's (Bloom's father Rudolph = Rudy for short, the name of their son) burial robe (66, 70). To Kenner this was Molly's "masterstroke," a genius plan that belies her reluctance to actually act out the affair with Boylan despite all her lust and all her husband's maneuvering - but it fails, Penelope is caught in the middle of unweaving, and Molly allows full, not just partial ("She makes Boylan withdraw" [Boyle 417]) intercourse with her lover.

Conclusion: The Future of the Blooms

So finally, in a

desperate act to shock her marital status quo into oblivion, in order to pick up the pieces and glue them together again -- or rather, in order to weave once more the soon-to-be-unraveled threads -- Molly sleeps with Boylan. She has "left" Bloom, and now must return to him as he has just returned to her in "Ithaca;" this is "Penelope," the aftermath of the affairs, the summation of all of *Ulysses* crammed into eight paragraph-sentences that take up 35 pages. Bloom and Molly are opposites, inverted, one shocked into a daze and the other into a frenzy. One has come forward from a slow and languorous journey to the marital bed, the other, having already been there, must recap it all in her own mind, working backwards and forwards again until she has reached the same place (literally: Bertolini points out that in Joyce's original manuscripts, "Ithaca" begins at one end of a notebook, "Penelope" at the other, so that the reader would have to turn it upside-down in order metaphorically begin again [5]).

And what place is that? It is the dawn of a new day, the conception of a new "sun," as Joyce might write

to pun on “son,” that other goal of Bloom’s throughout *Ulysses* (as Molly cheats to remain faithful, Bloom adopts Stephen in order to beget). Ames, Sternlieb, and Kenner are all staunch believers in love shared rather than lost in this relationship. Boyle goes one step further in speculating on the Bloom couple’s immediate and long-term future by, once again, going backwards to find yet another subtle, cleverly concealed cause of Molly’s Bloom-orchestrated affair with Boylan: perhaps Bloom subconsciously wanted Boylan to father Molly’s next child. Of course it will not work, because Molly is not pregnant (her period comes at the end of

the sixth sentence-paragraph [Joyce 632, lines 1104-1105]) and will not be having Boylan over again, if Sternlieb is correct in believing that Molly’s final “orgasmic” Yeses are to be taken as overlapping with physical events (as Gerty McDowell’s “Ohs” overlapped with Bloom’s masturbation [300, lines 733-740]). Of course, as Molly is very tired at this point, having been trying to fall asleep for most of “Penelope,” she also could have merely been slipping off into a dream, albeit an erotic one, which would make perfect sense given the events of the day and the course of her late-night thoughts.

In any case, I agree

with Boyle’s other, safer, more basic interpretation of things: “The breakfast which Bloom demands and which she finally determines to provide is the most obvious evidence of a new and healthier relationship” (420). This simpler breaking of routine (“I love to hear him falling up the stairs of a morning with the cups rattling on the tray and then play with the cat” [Joyce 628, lines 933-934]) is the first step towards re-establishing anything. The couple has mentally worked hard to find each other, to rediscover their love for one another, at the end of this one single, extraordinary, normal, Odyssean day.

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A Measured Response: Staging the Ambiguity in *Measure for Measure*

ENGL-346: *Shakespeare*

Hannah Marcum

Silence is far from conventional in Shakespearean theatre. The most acclaimed modern productions are always fast-paced with little downtime; those found lacking are often critiqued as sluggish or dawdling. Many of Shakespeare's comedies, if not so zippy for his contemporary audiences, lend themselves well to a rather breakneck pace today. This is especially true on the thrust stage, and companies who simulate Shakespearean staging conditions are often the quickest of the pack. In this environment, comedies like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing* can essentially be taken at face value: happy-go-lucky entertainment, low stakes and an assurance of a happy ending that is never far off. For a modern audience, silence onstage is not unlike silence in a conversation. The experience is tense, awkward, and we are

The theatrical problem solving assignment takes seriously the ideas that Shakespeare's plays are scripts for performances and that textual "problems" can be "solved" theatrically. Hannah Marcum's eloquent essay focusing on Isabella's lack of verbal response to the Duke's marriage proposal at the end of the play presents a sensitive and persuasive solution to Isabella's silence in light of recent, significant performances.

-Walter Cannon

left with an opening for a kind of internal processing we've come to avoid.

Measure for Measure is different: silence saturates and settles it. As the last comedy Shakespeare penned, not even acknowledged as a comedy by some current scholars, a "dissatisfaction with its own dramatic mode" underscores the tone of this singular work (Barton, 579). Set in a bleak, promiscuous Vienna, the action circles the government of *pro tem* leader Angelo. In his first act after Duke Vincentio hands him the scepter, Angelo sentences to death an unlucky young man who has impregnated his fiancée. Doomed Claudio's sister, the nun-to-be Isabella, pleads with Angelo for her brother's life and is finally met with

a proposition: if she sleeps with Angelo, her brother will go free. She declines immediately, but before long, Duke Vincentio, disguised as a friar, helps her plot a bed trick to save Claudio without sacrificing her maidenhead. Although Angelo does not follow through on his end of the deal, another switch causes both him and Isabella to believe Claudio has been executed.

All this troubling doubling leads up to the famous final scene, V.1, in which the Duke sets to work controlling the outcomes of all present situations, which it may be remembered are the result of his own unwillingness to control those situations in I.1. To fulfill comic traditions, he arranges

marriages between Claudio and Juliet, Angelo and Mariana, Lucio and a whore, and himself and Isabella. All four of these pairings are fraught to some degree, but the Duke's proposal to a novitiate nun seems especially prickly. For one thing, there is little evidence of any romantic interest between them before his proposal; for another, there is no indication of Isabella's response. After he entreats her, "Give me your hand, and say you will be mine" (492), nearly 50 more lines elapse before the play's end, none of them Isabella's.

Context clues make it fairly evident that Isabella's response to the Duke's first proposal is a nonevent. In the previous breath, the Duke has just revealed Claudio alive, standing before Isabella. After a shock of that caliber, little wonder she ignores the Duke's next words. If she rushes towards her brother in an embrace, she might entirely miss the proposal; this reaction would explain the Duke's following qualifier of his sudden romantic impulse. His next sentence is a short clip: "But fitter time for that" (493). In the line after, he changes the subject entirely and metes out forgiveness to Angelo.

After dealing with him, Lucio, and Claudio, he returns to a softened rehash of his proposal: "... Dear Isabel, I have a motion much imports your good, / Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline, / What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine. / So bring us to our palace, where we'll show / What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know" (534-539). Again, these final lines of the play shed little light on the nature of Isabella's ultimate response, but their mere existence is evidence to assume that she did not accept his first proposal. The question we are left with is whether she accepts the second. And with line 539 marking the end of the play, that question easily becomes the most important for a director to consider when staging it.

Measure for Measure has a rather unique performance history in that it was largely avoided in 18th and 19th century theater; the subject matter was considered too racy to appear on the public stage. Modern interest sparked in the mid-20th century and the past several decades have seen a wide range of interpretations from "comfortably comic" (Frank McMullen, 1946, reviewed in

Gay 121) to "sadomasochistic" (Libby Appel, 1998, reviewed in Taylor 73). As Nicholas Hytner, who directed *Measure* in 1987, said in an interview, "you can never aim for a definitive production of a Shakespeare play," least of all *this* Shakespeare play with its built-in ambiguity (Gay 139). With this in mind, the next most admirable step is to create a production based in textual evidence and which edifies textual authority.

Modern performances have achieved this in varying degrees of success, especially in regards to the Duke and Isabella. In the summer of 2015, Dominic Dromgoole staged a version at the Globe that didn't quite measure up: "And the Duke proposes to Isabella and she accepts. ... There are many ways to approach the play but Dromgoole has gone for, essentially, the romantic comedy approach with quite a lot of excess bawdiness added for good measure. It works well enough, but it comes nowhere near the blazing and confronting heights this play can reach when its limits are pushed and its darkest crevices carefully examined" (Collins). Another reviewer qualifies the production's shortcomings

by recognizing, “Dromgoole doesn’t solve this play. I doubt any director could at the Globe, given its inherent sparseness” (Trueman). Puzzling, however, since the play was likely put on at the Globe in 1604 before its first recorded performance at court on December 26 of that year (Barton, 579). Or didn’t Shakespeare “solve” his own play, even in “inherent sparseness”?

Admittedly, we can never know how the King’s Men might have played out the proposal scene, either in the Globe or at court. What

we do know is that if

Shakespeare had wanted his final comedy to be typical, that is, played for laughs with a happily-ever-after ending, he would have surely written it that way.

A decade before Dromgoole, Mark Rylance attempted a very different ending for *Measure* at the Globe under the direction of John Dove. Reviewers Hopkins and Orr lay out the scene after Vincentio receives no response from a shocked Isabella to his first proposal:

“Rylance (Vincentio) repeated this full stop when he again broached the subject of marriage in the final lines of the play, pausing after saying, ‘What’s mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.’ Again, Isabella does not

traditions by including a dance, a move I hail as brilliant. Initially, this would have been uncomfortable for an audience still processing the outcome, but would then serve as a transition out of the theatrical

headspace and back into reality. Finally, this performance also highlights the importance of those still, silent moments onstage; the action of the final scene is more fathomable with these pauses, uncomfortable but realistic and vital for staging such ambiguity.

A concurrent production, directed by Simon McBurney at

the Royal National Theatre, also emphasizes Isabella’s wordlessness in the final scene, although to a much different end: “The Duke said, ‘What’s mine is yours,’ then, with an ominous change in tone, ‘and what is yours is mine.’ While saying this line, he gestured upstage, where the scrim flew out to reveal the full vastness of the theatre. In the distance was a small white room containing only one thing: a bed with a red rose on a pillow. As



Alexis Hunter, watercolor, 11" x 15"

answer. Yet the production answered for her: just as Isabella seemed about to reply to the Duke, Thompson (Isabella) took Rylance’s hand and they began to dance” (99). This production follows the textual evidence that speaks against true romantic interest from Isabella toward the Duke, and extends the Duke’s role as, ultimately, a benign manipulator of other characters’ destinies. It follows comedic staging

the lights faded, Isabella was left gasping and choking, desperately trying to find words with which to respond to a proposal that left her with neither choice nor voice” (Hopkins and Orr, 100). In this interpretation, silence is used to “underscore Isabella’s ultimate powerlessness,” which is furthered by this Duke’s unique inflection of line 537 (Hopkins and Orr, 100). A similarly avant-garde production of *Measure for Measure* ran concurrently with Dromgoole’s Globe version in 2015. Directed by Joe Hill-Gibbins at the Young Vic, the blatancy of this interpretation made waves with reviewers. After all, not everyone is going to find the opening scene, “a swirling mass of inflatable sex dolls” which never entirely disappear from view, quite fitting treatment of Shakespeare (Billington). Katelyn Stevens, who saw this production when she studied abroad in London this fall, told me about the playing of the final scene: “The Duke matches everyone up and they kind of think he’s gone crazy. I remember Michael [her instructor] leaning over and gleefully commenting, ‘He’s gone mad!’ And then he

proposes to Isabella and she kind of sighs in an annoyed rom-com *Bridget Jones Diary* type of way. Like, ‘Eh, men?’” Katelyn, a self-identified Shakespeare traditionalist, was not impressed with this portrayal of the ending or this production in general: “It was too sexual, too fast and the sexuality presented in this specific updated version wasn’t the sexuality that Shakespeare intended.” I immediately noticed her critique of the fast pace. Even in today’s instant entertainment climate, we are keenly wired to notice unnatural tempos, like jittery high schoolers rushing through their first speech in public speaking class. In *Measure for Measure*, we cannot downplay the importance of slowing down and taking time to develop the multifaceted characters rather than creating a simple spectacle.

On my stage, Isabella would be more timid and reserved, prone to long silences, and saving her unbridled emotion for a few scenes where her temper outweighs her training in the convent. The Duke would start out egotistical but benign, slip into a visibly false gentleness as a friar, then reemerge in Act V with the capability of

malice. The audience may notice him trying to cover it up when speaking to Isabella at line 381. The one thing he will not be is bumbling or inept; if anything, his plans seem to have been set up long before Act I. When Claudio is revealed to be alive, Isabella will rush to him and embrace him. The Duke’s lines 490-492 will occur during this embrace, with a long pause before his “But fitter time for that.” Only as he goes on to the next order of business, having turned away from the siblings, will Isabella let go of Claudio. She is obviously overwhelmed to see her brother alive after hearing time and time again that he was dead, but she also extends the embrace as an excuse to ignore the Duke’s first proposal—wishing herself invisible in Claudio’s arms to avoid facing Vincentio. She remains by Claudio’s side until line 525, when the Duke bodily pulls Claudio towards Juliet as he proclaims, “She, Claudio, that you wrong’d, look you restore.” He approaches each character as he addresses them in the following lines, leaving Isabella distanced from the group and unguarded. All this movement would place

the two of them in opposite quadrants as he reaches line 534. At “Dear Isabel,” his motion ceases, then he begins a deliberate journey toward her, one hand extended, while she remains stoic. After “what

Isabella has been relegated to an onlooker in her own life at the end of this play.

is yours is mine,” an even longer pause than the first is filled by Isabella slowly backing away from him to an empty gallant stool on the side of the stage, where she sits aghast. Once she sits, a lengthy beat, then the Duke turns back to the others, delivers the final two lines and ushers them offstage ahead of him. He remains alone, near the exit, back to the audience,

and turns his head to gaze one more time at Isabella, still seated. After another tense silence, she looks down at her lap, leans forward as if to rise, then looks up at the rustling of the curtain to see the Duke’s heel as he disappears.

In effect, Isabella ends up on the outside looking in, sitting down with and becoming part of the audience to observe the Duke’s final actions. This specific response might not mirror Shakespeare’s staging of the final scene, but it does communicate his intentions. Isabella has been relegated to an onlooker in her own life at the end of this play. For some characters, this role would break them, but Isabella is made of sturdier stuff than that. There is power in her silence. Peter Brook’s 1950 groundbreaking production hinged on the earlier pause before Isabella kneels to plead

beside Mariana, which Brook urged his Isabella (Barbara Jefford) to hold “until she felt the audience could take it no longer’...usually about thirty-five seconds” (Gay 125). More than half a minute of silence is an unbelievably long time on stage. Making her silences meaningful is a way to return power to Isabella in her final scene, over the audience if not over her own situation, as well as upholding the character Shakespeare developed. Giving the audience space to think what she might be thinking, in the moment she’s thinking it, is a subtle but effective method for engaging modern audiences, full of multitaskers accustomed to high-tempo, on-demand entertainment. Suddenly, they are trapped, forced to process the lines and acknowledge the problems before them and, ultimately, to decide what they would have done in her place.

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And Here Our Troubles Began: An American Reaction to 9/11 in Comix



Sydney Embray

LAS-410: The Future of the Past

In the Shadow of No Towers is a graphic novel by Art Spiegelman, completed in the years following 9/11 and published in 2004. It features ten full-color spreads prefaced by an introductory essay and followed by another essay and short anthology of historic comic plates that inspired and consoled the author while he dealt with the trauma of his first-hand witness to the attack on the Twin Towers. In this work, Spiegelman explores his personal reaction to the terrorist attacks as well as his perception of the country's reaction through the use of literary and artistic methods and deliberate reference to other comic works. Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* explores both personal and nationalized American reactions to the terror attacks of 9/11/2001.

Recipient of the John Allen Award

Rich with detail, strong with argument and voice, and inventive in its analytical process, Sydney's paper offers us a rare opportunity to examine a graphic novel up close and appreciate the form's visual and narrative complexity. Sydney approaches Spiegelman's work with intimate knowledge of and enthusiasm for the graphic novel as a form and with critical sensitivity to the subject of 9/11 and how it has been, and will be, remembered.

-Kathy Korcheck

through the use of motif, stylistic choices, and reference of historic and nostalgic comix.

Analytic Process

The close reading portions of this paper are based on the analyst's own close-reading approach—firstly, an analysis of overt narratives, or storylines and panels that follow a traditional and simple rhetorical and stylistic approach; secondly, an analysis of implicit narratives, or storylines and panel sets that offer more commentarial, “between the lines” messages and implications; and finally, an analysis of latent narratives: planted

or hidden elements or clues to a more ephemeral layer of the graphic novel which are communicated mainly through artistic elements and supplementary reference of cultural phenomena and externally-sourced works. By recognizing these concepts in Spiegelman's work, the analyst is able to interpret not only intentionally obvious messaging, but also messaging stashed in rhetorical and stylistic layers. While this paper does explore the overt narratives of *In the Shadow of No Towers*, the close reading analysis focuses more on detailing and understanding the implicit and latent narratives layered

in Spiegelman's writing and illustration.

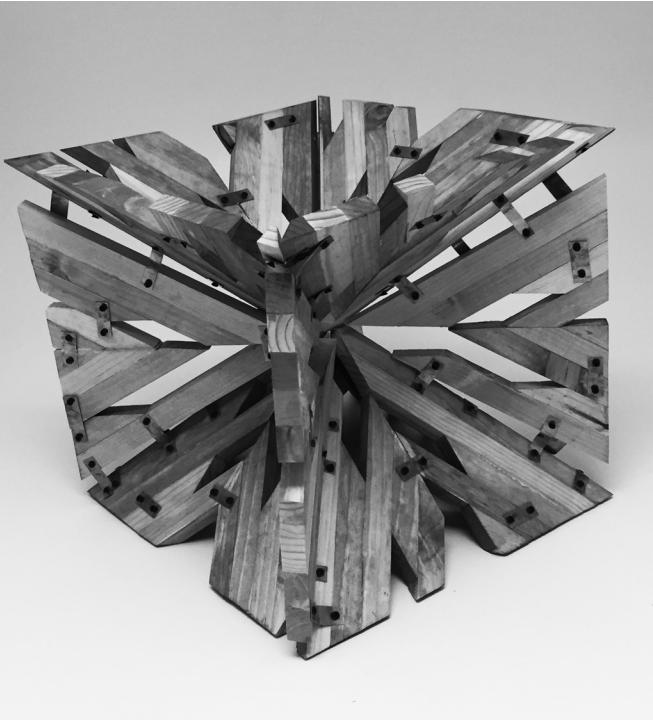
Expository Comments

Many of Spiegelman's implicit and latent narratives in this work reference or more clearly explain the overt narratives he includes. For the purpose of exploring the implicit and latent, I include an expository summary of the relevant overt narratives.

The work begins with an introductory spread, providing thematic overlay to set the tone of the piece. Spiegelman is newly traumatized by the events of 9/11, and has turned to historic comics and retrospective design for comfort. In the first four pages, Spiegelman describes the events of the day as well as the days to follow. He and his wife search for their daughter, Nadia, who attends school a few blocks away from the attack, fearing her school may have been affected in the immediate fallout. Along the way, Spiegelman notices his fellow New Yorkers taking pictures and hears Nadia's

classmates discussing the attacks with more awe and less terror. He and his wife are eventually reunited with their daughter, drawing the personal overt narrative to a close.

On page 5, a localized narrative begins with



Jenny Morrett, wood, copper

commentary on the difference between the effect of the attacks on New Yorkers and on the rest of the country. Spiegelman has a run-in with a homeless Russian woman on page 6, who, rather than cursing him in Russian like he is used to, screams anti-Semitic statements at him, linking the present to his past work on the *Maus* novels.

After page 5, Spiegelman begins to shift

from processing his own trauma and the local trauma of his city to focus on the nationalized trauma and subsequent patriotic nationalism purported by his government, mass media, and other Americans, providing commentary on

the situation from personal, local, and American perspectives. He ends the collection of spreads with a recollection of an interview with a media outlet that deemed him "not American enough" and an image of his family, in full *Maus* style, fleeing the influx of Republicans to New York for

the Republican National Convention in 2004.

While the overt narrative does contain a broad sense of the personal, local, and nationalized reactions to the events of 9/11, the implicit and latent narratives provide a more complete view of the complexities and perspectives these reactions represent.

Motif

A motif, or a usually recurring salient thematic element, is a deliberate rhetorical tool used by artist and authors to layer subsequent information, ideas, and themes overtop a more explicitly communicated narrative (“Motif”).

Spiegelman’s use of motif in *In the Shadow of No Towers* pervades the entire comic work, providing the reader with deliberate yet discreet clues to the author’s intended purpose. In order to engage the reader beyond the narrative of the work, Spiegelman uses three main motifs throughout *In the Shadow of No Towers*: shoes, the towers, and birds.

The first of Spiegelman’s motifs, the shoe, appears throughout all ten pages of the work. Its first appearance occurs in a strip entitled, “*Etymological Vaudeville*” (1). Illustrating the classic use of the phrase, a bumbling drunk drops one shoe on the floor while getting into bed; suddenly conscious of his sleeping downstairs neighbors, he places the other shoe gently onto the floor. Shortly after, he is woken by shouts of, “Drop the other shoe already so we

can sleep!” While Spiegelman does not explicitly explain his other allegorical choices in the work, it is crucial that the reader understand and continue to recognize shoes in each spread; in this effort, Spiegelman illustrates the idiom of “waiting for the other shoe to drop.” Lower on the page, Spiegelman illustrates the “shoe” as a massive brogue with a lit fuse falling from the sky onto screaming 1950s-style characters. In this illustration, Spiegelman recalls the idiom and manufactures a mid-century-esque scene in which the recognizable fear of invasion and chaos of a generation past is coupled with the anxiety and fear of a post-trauma New York: everyone waits in fear of the next disaster.

Shoes continue to appear in the panels that follow. From page 5 onward, cowboy boots represent American nationalism, and can be seen on flag-waving Americans and members of the Bush presidency alike, a nod to Bush’s Texan roots. Page 5’s main illustration, Americans with their heads stuck in the ground (members of the “Ostrich Party”) bears a side note: “Beware

of cowboy boots!” next to a boot-clad man with a target painted on his raised behind. Cowboy boots also appear on Spiegelman’s borrowed historical cartoon characters, identifying these characters as representative of Americans. However, Spiegelman separates himself from this crowd in the self-starring strip on page 9, where he makes a blatant point of displaying his loafers—perhaps in this instance boots represent patriotism, and shoes a more anti-establishment lean. On the final page, boots rain down on a crowd of comix characters (including a *Maus*-style representation of Spiegelman’s family) as the 2004 Republican national convention is held in New York.

The towers themselves are also used as a more on-the-nose motif. The “glowing bones,” as Spiegelman refers to them, are such a symbol of Spiegelman’s personal trauma that they appear on every spread—representative of his struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder in the years following the attacks. Spiegelman also references the towers in other iterations. On page 2, his panels literally become towers,

shifting in 3D to display their burning edges. At the bottom of the page, Spiegelman employs double-entendre when he writes, “I never loved those arrogant boxes, but now I miss the rascals, icons of a more innocent age,” implying that the nostalgia he feels for drawing comix is paralleled in his emotions toward the towers. The falling of the towers has caused him to raise his pen again, and the dichotomy of loss and gain has carved a rift between his past and present life.

The towers are also metaphors in a few senses. The “glowing bones” of the towers are an anthropomorphic metaphor, representing both a skeletal spectre that haunts him and the embodiment of the death of Americanism—Eric Darton’s biography of the towers describes them as symbolic of a litany of American values behind which every American could stand: achievement, renewal, self-betterment, and above all, the power of the free market (Darton). To Spiegelman, the “death” of the towers and the subsequent media frenzy and political action indicate the death of an era of unchecked

nationalist optimism.

He continues to humanize the towers by representing them as the “Tower Twins,” a parody of the classic comic *The Katzenjammer Kids* detailed later in this paper, painting

The falling of the towers has caused him to raise his pen again, and the dichotomy of loss and gain has carved a rift between his past and present life.

the historically terroristic Kids as the victims of manipulative authority figures. This portrayal acts as a referential interpretation of the relationship between civilian New Yorkers and the U.S. government. Finally, but perhaps most importantly, Spiegelman references “the twin towers of Auschwitz and Hiroshima” as humanity’s last great terrorist event, pulling 9/11 away from the sphere of national tragedy and into a universal commentary on the capacity

of humans to kill each other *en masse*. This reference to these specific WWII events hearkens back to his days of illustrating *Maus*, calling to mind his own personal history as well as the history of the world and America’s role in it.

Spiegelman’s third motif is a bird, used throughout his work, each time with a separate and distinct representative power. His first use of a bird, this time an eagle, appears in the second spread. Spiegelman portrays himself with a bald eagle in an “Uncle Sam” hat tied around his neck, evoking recall of Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, in which the sailor who wears the albatross does so as a sign of suffering and remorse. This use of allegory through the eagle motif casts Spiegelman as the sailor, retelling the tale of the falling towers to a largely indifferent yet fascinated audience.

The eagle appears again on page 4, ridden by a grinning George Bush and a grim Dick Cheney. The former vice president is depicted slicing the bird’s neck with a box cutter, a direct reference

to a CNN article from 2001 that controversially claimed hijackers used box cutters to attack airplane passengers and crew. By placing this particular act of supposed terrorism (the box cutter story has never been supported or proven by any evidence) in the elected hands of the government, Spiegelman inserts an implicit narrative into the spread—that of an antagonist government utilizing news media to appear victimized at the expense and victimization of its national constituency. The eagle asks, “Why do they hate us? Why???” and from the familiar, haggard expression on its face, the reader can infer that this eagle represents Spiegelman himself, victimized by his own government. Red “Republican” eagles appear alongside blue “Democratic” doves and red angels of death on page 7—while Spiegelman identifies with neither party, he clearly believes Democrats to be more passive, peaceful political agents and Republicans aggressive and deadly.

Spiegelman also employs other symbolic species of birds. The

“Ostrich Party” on page 5 depicts Americans “sticking their heads in the ground,” neither Republican nor Democrat but a “third party” that “actually represents us.” Page 4 features a vulture on the back of a photographer as he shouts, “Watch the birdy!” at the flaming towers, referencing the overt narrative of the first five pages—his confusion and dismay at seeing amateur and professional photographers picking at the remains of the falling towers. A ubiquitously omnipresent pigeon, clearly representative of local New Yorkers, appears on page 9 to illustrate the stupefaction of New Yorkers after the attacks. On pages 2 and 9, Spiegelman quotes Chicken Little—“The sky is falling!”—in an attempt to wake those around him to the daily terror he perceives thanks to post-traumatic stress disorder. Due to their prevalence, the reader can go so far as to assume that perhaps the presence of birds in Spiegelman’s work is prompted by the nickname given to airplanes, acting as an attempted shifting of blame from himself—the wearer of the albatross—to the real perpetrators.

Stylistic Choice

According to comic artist, analyst, and author Scott McCloud, there are five arenas in which an artist can make decisions that will affect the way a comic story is understood: moment, frame, imagery, word, and flow.

The first arena is moment. An artist shows the moments he believes to be the most important in a story—a concept that seems obvious, but is intentional in subliminally conveying what objects and ideas are (and are not) important. For instance, Spiegelman obscures some panels in the page 3 spread with overlaid illustrations of postcards and propaganda. Not only do these overlays enrich the storyline with another layer of detail, but their presence between the reader and the story heighten the speed and frantic feeling of the page, eliciting similar feelings in the witness of the story as those likely felt by the author and his wife as they searched for their daughter.

The author’s choice of frame is also important. Spiegelman takes more license with his frames in this work than in previous works like *Maus*, superimposing one strip

atop another, using strips as borders for the main artistic “event,” and overlapping strips in order to partially or fully obscure certain moments. One example of this can be found on page 4 of the graphic novel. Spiegelman notes the abundance of photography by others on the day of the attacks, and narrates his ongoing search for his daughter in “photos” as well, illustrating in a softer, more lifelike style that portrays Spiegelman’s characters as they are rather than as caricatures of themselves; for a moment, pulling the narration from the arena of comix and into the arena of storytelling. The panels show only vital moments, snapshots which condense the entire experience to just a few seconds. The layout of the photographic panels is scattered, evoking the chaos and surrealism of the experience.

Spiegelman carefully chooses his imagery to fit the intended mood of his commentary. While he often resurrects characters from *Maus* to portray himself and his family, he also dabbles in surrealism and hyperrealism to evoke shock and empathy from the witness. Pages 6, 7, and 8

all include detailed, artistic parodies of classic 1960’s and 1970’s underground comic styles, including highly disturbing, complex imagery and symbolism of death, pain, and anarchy. He also portrays characters in his story as characters borrowed from classic and retrospective comics and graphic novels, a stylistic choice discussed at greater length later in this paper. One unique example, however, comes from page 7 of the novel. Spiegelman portrays the bipartisanship of the nation as well as his blatant disgust and distrust towards the executive branch of government at the time through his illustration of the entire spread in shades of red and blue, with only himself and a few “extras” he relates to drawn in grayscale.

Imagery in the form of non-sequitur is also used to convey a sense of confusion and disarray in Spiegelman’s own mind. On page 9, Spiegelman includes a self-portrayal strip. In each panel, Spiegelman’s body, head, or hands are replaced by objects in the room around him, including his cat, the lampshade, his own foot, and finally, a full transformation to the mouse from *Maus*.

When he is not using the vernacular of a borrowed comic, Spiegelman’s voice throughout *In the Shadow of No Towers* is his own. It appears as both expository narration within panels as well as in dialogue. Though much of the commentary and story is written in first person, Spiegelman often switches to third-person-omniscient to give the story more of a “newsroom” feel, heightening the drama and playing on the reader’s recall of storytelling modes used by news sources of the time. Page 6 of the graphic novel juxtaposes Spiegelman narrating himself as The Falling Man on the left hand side of the spread against his first-person narrative of his encounters with the Russian homeless woman. The choice is effective in separating commentary from active storyline by contrasting present, reflective omniscient narration with thematic dialogue.

Spiegelman’s choice of flow is the final arena in which he can make stylistic choices to affect the story. He uses flow in a variety of ways to convey separate emotions and settings. Where the content is technical and complex (maps, intricate

step-by-step retellings of the tragedy, complex metaphor), flow from panel to panel is largely uninterrupted. Spiegelman also uses a simple, left-to-right, top-to-bottom flow when artistic differences between panels hold an important storytelling cue.

For instance, Spiegelman's commentary on the lower Manhattan air quality post-attacks is positioned around the point in the story when he and his wife are running to their daughter's school—his smoking habit inhibiting his progress. He

intertwines the "real-time" story with a commentary on air quality, narrated by his own character from the *Maus* novel. As the panels progress, the cigarette smoke surrounding the character gets thicker and the narration more agitated. Spiegelman's flow is more complex when he includes political commentary more heavily. On page 5, the flow of panels progresses across the page from left to right,

then down the left side. The background image from page 4 is superimposed on the image of the glowing towers, and the reader is given a cue to the direction of flow by the increasing blurriness of the two joined images.



Jenny Morrett, "Submerge", charcoal, 4' x 4'

Reference to Nostalgic/ Historic Comix: Race

Spiegelman's choice of certain referenced comix in *In the Shadow of No Towers* is deliberate in charging his panels with racial strife. As the son of two Holocaust survivors and as a Jew living in New York, his exposure to and experience with racial issues runs deep. He is able to process certain aspects of his city and nation's grieving

process through a racially charged lens, offering a new approach to the idea of Americanism and patriotism after the attacks.

To demonstrate and cultivate the overarching theme of racial terror,

profiling, and fear, Spiegelman chooses to use Rudolph Dirks' *Katzenjammer Kids* as a running theme and operative metaphor for the attacks, towers, and government response. In their first appearance in Spiegelman's novel, the usually terroristic Kids wear the Towers as hats, and, rather than causing mischief, are

the victims of it. The Kids' grandfather and parents continue to ignore (and sometimes, exacerbate) the flames shooting from their children until at one point both children are doused in oil and pesticides in their grandfather's war on the Iraknid. Grandfather is routinely portrayed as Uncle Sam, though he retains the German accent of the original character—an offhand gesture toward villains from

past Spiegelman works.

Another racially charged work, *Happy Hooligan*, features Spiegelman himself as Happy in his own parodied version. Happy, an “Irish tramp...an eternal loser with a heart of gold” epitomizes class and racial tensions of the day, satirizing them in a way that appealed to lower-class immigrant families (Sabin). The plate included in Spiegelman’s appendix utilizes symbolism and storyline with an eerie connection to the 9/11 attacks. Happy is asked to dress as an Arab, but when his friends point him out and the camel recognizes him to be an imposter, he is thrown into a circus strongman rehearsal. The final panel shows a confused Happy being asked by a lawyer which of the strongmen “dropped a weight on him.” The symbols—of imposters, legality, and retaliation via displaced violence—resonate with those who share Spiegelman’s malcontent. In post-9/11 America, the dual “weights” of responsibility and allegiance were dropped on racial relations, especially between Americans of Arab descent and other Americans. Grewal’s 2010 article on

racial profiling after 9/11 covers the gendering and racialization of Muslims in the media after 9/11, exploring the trope of the “Muslim male” as representative of an entire race and religion (Grewal). Just as Happy is portrayed clad in a turban and beard in the historic strip, Spiegelman features the representation throughout his parodies, drawing the turban and beard on characters to indicate their applied role as “terrorist”—even when the character is Spiegelman’s own wife.

Reference to Historic/ Nostalgic Comix: Politics and Culture

Spiegelman’s choice of referential comics is an exercise in self-portrait as much as it is a political and cultural commentary. His choices—*Krazy Kat*, *Bringing Up Father*, and *Mr. Natural* (as well as 1970’s comic style)—carry symbolically significant cultural weight. In the first instance, the love triangle of Ignatz the mouse, Kat, and Offissa Pup is utilized to show the relationship of the displaced homeless, the police, and New Yorkers. Spiegelman portrays himself as both his

character from *Maus* and Kat, symbolically carrying the burden of the towers as individual bricks. Like Ignatz, he is both a perpetrator and prisoner of aggression. Spiegelman also appears as the clueless immigrant patriarch from *Bringing Up Father*, who, in the appended plate, props up the leaning tower of Piza with a pile of scrap wood—more allegorical reference to U.S. involvement in the “falling tower” of Middle-Eastern tension.

Spiegelman also borrows thematic elements from comix culture not included in the appendix of *In the Shadow of No Towers*. As *Mad* magazine first featured *Maus* as well as some of his other early works, Spiegelman’s connection to the edgy, symbol-ridden style of the underground comic genre is evident in his illustrative choices. The artist invokes the angst and rage of the age in his final four spreads. Spiegelman uses both the iconic 1970 *Mr. Natural* cover art from the comic of the same name on page 10 as well as on his daughter’s t-shirt on pages 4 and 10—he comments on the destruction of innocence through the attacks by

pairing such a lurid, violent comic with his own daughter. The simple illustration of a grinning Mr. Natural bears the caption, “The entire universe is insane!”—an apt observation made especially obvious for the final panels of the work.

Spiegelman’s anti-government tendencies align with his disdain for media manipulation, as shown on pages 1 and 2 of his graphic novel. He comments that on television, the towers aren’t any bigger than the host’s head, but logos are huge—ending the criticism with the comment, “it’s a medium almost as well suited as comics for dealing in abstractions.” Analyses of terrorism and media coverage concur. Psychologists Li, Quiong, and Brewer define and delineate the differences between patriotism and nationalism and their opposites, as the world after 9/11 is highly polarized. Their paper finds that “love of patriotism” also tends to be construed with attitudes, feelings, or actions of what one could call “anti-other,” which expresses that a love for one’s own nation constitutes a disdain for other nations (Li and Brewer).

Spiegelman’s rejection of this line of thinking expresses his wish for the terror attack to be construed as a crime against humanity rather than a political mode of inciting nationalistic feelings in the American public.

Spiegelman explores the idea of displacement—of anger, of terror, of retaliation—on page 9. In

The work solidifies his identification as an American—not from his patriotism nor from his love of nation, but from the creative and radical use of his First Amendment rights.

an obvious metaphor, he likens the replacement of the family cat with the U.S.’s war in Iraq (a “war on terror” that Spiegelman believes demolished a country rather than the terrorism thought to reside there). He continues to explore the theme, noting the *New York Times’* apology letter for minor journalistic errors as they continued to

print military speculation as fact, and rampant financial sector crimes for which Martha Stewart was made a martyr. The *Happy Hooligan* comic in the appendix, explained earlier in this paper, as well as Douglas Kellner’s 2004 paper on media manipulation explore the idea of political propaganda in the form (and under the guise) of news media (Kellner).

This media hijacking by the party in power as well as the fundamentalist, dichotomized storylines it spread played into the helplessness of Americans in a post-terror state.

Concluding Remarks

Because it explores an event so complex and intrinsic to 21st century American identity, the purposes of the graphic novel are many. As a victim himself, *In the Shadow of No Towers* provides its author with the mode and opportunity to heal and process his own personal trauma. While he may never forget the “glowing bones,” creating the graphic novel transformed the fallout of terrorism into an expression of the most American value of all—freedom of speech and of expression. In creating,

reading and referencing his favorite historic comix, he finds peace in a personal, local, and national sense.

The work also gives Spiegelman a voice—his experience with the reach and impact of *Maus* and his local celebrity status provide him a means of reaching the greater public with a story untold in the mass media. The work solidifies his identification as an American—not from

his patriotism nor from his love of nation, but from the creative and radical use of his First Amendment rights.

For the reader who can remember 9/11, the work becomes a new lens through which to view the tragedy and in turn a new basis for discussion—for the reader who cannot, it acts as a supplementary education and testament to the many voices of America. For the analyst,

it provides an exercise in careful study of stylistic themes, quick recognition of parallels, and immersion in a complex melding of artistic and textual language. *In the Shadow of No Towers* explores without explanation, illustrates without advertising, and censures without apology—it is an iconic and essential facet of the American 9/11 narrative.

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Cheryl Wells, "Cacophony", marker, 22" x 30"

Searching for the Beginning

Josie Youel



ART-325: History of Modern Art

To be an artist one must be unique and challenge what has been done before them. Whether or not that sentence contains any credibility or truth, the painter Jean Dubuffet fits almost perfectly into it. He was audacious, interesting, challenging, and fearless, yet one can think his approach to painting might also be a bit clichéd within the world of art if the first sentence holds any validity. Jean Dubuffet, affected by World War II, found himself starting from the beginning, even going as far as inventing a term entirely new to the world of art; a term that challenges “classical” art. In his work, he drew from children’s artwork and their innocent eye and creative minds when, in 1947, he painted a full body portrait of a man standing on the edge of town, *Le Villageois aux Cheveux Ras* (*The Villager with Close-Cropped Hair*), an oil on canvas, 51 ¼” x 63 ¾”.

This research paper is a study of a difficult-to-love painting from 1947. This image of a man is coarsely drawn and painted, utilizes a narrow range of dull white, grays, and black, and incorporates scratches and simple shapes in a chaotic manner. It rarely catches the eye of students for very long due to the painting’s refusal to give the viewer a pleasing picture and easy interpretation. In short, it’s a very challenging work. Yet, Josie takes the approach of meeting the image at the level the artist hoped viewers would be willing to embrace. She looked closely at what at first appears to most as unfinished and poorly drawn and instead reveals through her writing the complexity of thought and vision that the painting carries and then generates in the viewer.

-Susan Swanson

At the end of World War II, the whole world let out a sigh of relief as those involved and affected by the war knew change was on the horizon. It was a bleak world due to the effects of decisions and events that took place throughout the six years of war across the world (Turner 332). Commenting on artists during this time, art historian Jonathan Fineberg writes, “Postwar artists felt they had to construct an authentic new foundation for art in response to the pressing social and ethical issues which had come to the fore in the thirties and early forties” (Fineberg 128). In other words, what was done during World War II by humanity against humanity was life-changing and these artists felt the

deep necessity for something completely new. Fineberg goes on to say, “In Europe Jean Dubuffet [and other artists]...returned to first principles and reinvented art for themselves “from scratch” (Fineberg 128). Many artists did not want to return to the way society was before the war, because what was before had led them to, or influenced how, the world had gotten to the place it was—and that place was comparable to hell. Despite Dubuffet’s challenging personality and his disgust with everything mainstream in the culture, he jumped in and let the current take him with the conventional culture.

Starting from the beginning, Dubuffet rejected art that mainstream society

considered “beautiful.” Dubuffet described himself: “I am a presentist, an ephemeralist. Away with all those stale canvases hanging in dreary museums. They *were* paintings: they no longer *are*” (qtd. in Rhodes 779). He wanted to throw out every concept, theory, and piece that was accepted as “art” in western society. He goes on, “I think this culture is very much like a dead language, without anything in common with the language spoken on the street. This culture drifts further and further from daily life...It no longer has real and living roots” (qtd. in Rousseau 17). For Dubuffet, his postwar world was dead and no longer living. He was disgusted and outraged as he found himself at the roots of what conventional art “is.” Dubuffet was radical in his thoughts and actions, and in response to his outrage, he coined a whole new term in art, one

that seemed to eliminate all concepts and thoughts about what art was supposed to be and turned it to a completely blank page. He called this new art “Art Brut” or “raw art.” For Dubuffet, Art Brut

created are of little extent, show very small means, are even limited in some cases to sketchy and unsophisticated small doodles, traced on a wall with the tip of a knife, or with a pencil on a used piece of paper. Such little hasty drawings often seem to reveal to me a much broader content, and a much more precious meaning, than most large pretentious paintings... I find that things are more moving (when they remain at a humble level, halfway realized or ruined) when they arise at an early stage of their formation...” (qtd. in Rousseau 21). Dubuffet was drawn to art that seemed to reveal the underbelly of society. He was drawn to the unfinished pieces, sketches, and thoughts that were



Photo credit: Rich Sanders, Des Moines, IA

Jean Dubuffet (French, 1901-1985)

Le Villageois aux Cheveux Ras

(*The Villager with Close-Cropped Hair*), 1947

Oil on canvas. Dimensions overall:

51 3/16 x 38 3/16 in. (130 x 97 cm.)

Purchased with funds from the Coffin Fine Arts Trust; Nathan Emory Coffin Collection of the Des Moines Art Center, 1981.41

described art at its beginning when the work is rough, rugged, unrefined, and plainly unfinished. This was where Dubuffet saw true art. About Art Brut, he said: “It doesn’t bother me that the works

rejected. He was moved by “halfway” finished pieces or “ruined” pieces. They are the very start of what is considered a masterpiece by society: the bare, raw, sketches, and the very root

of beauty. He thought his paintings should stay in their raw state because that is where they would challenge society to see the world differently, after World War II had left society with nowhere to go. Dubuffet did not contain in his vocabulary the words “finished,” “refined,” or “masterpiece.” The only time he would use these words was as an insult to society’s idea of “charming” art. He desperately wanted to rid society of its notions of what art is. He wanted to start over at the beginning, before the brush hit the canvas.

Dubuffet incorporates in many of his paintings sand, pebbles, or other materials from nature. Art historian Colin Rhodes informs readers, “Dubuffet not only draws our attention to the fact of the works’ painterly construction, but insists that we recognize in them the base nature of pigment itself by including stones and other recognizable inorganic and organic elements” (Rhodes 780). In other words, Dubuffet pulls materials from the earth, essentially from where we get everything, starting from the very beginning, in

order to show society the same need to start from the very beginning. His viewers are drawn to the thick and uneven strokes and textures he uses to depict the subject; however, then they are drawn to and focus on the material he started with. The materials not only relate to his need to start over but they also relate to his subject matter. He references tar and asphalt as similar to sand and pebbles. Art historian Thomas M. Messer describes Dubuffet’s method by saying, “Tar and asphalt are materials that are considered to be of little value. In working with these materials, the artist himself becomes a road labourer. This association between the artist and the proletariat is indicative of the subversive power inherent in his art that was capable of exploding narrow-minded bourgeois notions of what is acceptable” (Messer 62). Messer argues that Dubuffet rejects notions of the upper society, of accepted culture, and instead, connects to the laborers; the ones who lay the roads with tar and asphalt. Dubuffet sees these workers as part of the start of civilization. Laborers are not famous or known;

they do not have money or a say in what is beautiful or not, because they do not own anything beautiful or have the power to declare it beautiful. They are common, everyday people.

Dubuffet is drawn to the common man for his subject matter, but also for his audience. He does not want his art to communicate and speak to the upper part of society, the bourgeoisie; he focuses on the common people. Dubuffet commented on his choice of subject matter, writing, “It is the man in the street that I’m after, whom I feel closest to, with whom I want to make friends and enter into confidence and connivance, and he is the one I want to please and enchant by means of my work” (qtd. in Fineberg 131). He wanted his works to speak to the common people, the ones who work every day with sand, pebble, tar, and asphalt, who have it under their nails, in their hair, and in their shoes as they study the same materials in his pieces. Dubuffet reflects on the creation of Adam, as he was created from the dust of the earth. As if the pieces are rooted in them,

in the start of civilization, in the start of the roads, in the start of production and manufacturing. Dubuffet was not only focused on the common people as his audience, but also the individuals that society rejected. Even further away from the mainstream upper crust of society, Dubuffet searched for inspirational works from children and individuals in psychiatric hospitals.

Dubuffet was fascinated with the works created by children and by individuals suffering from mental illnesses. He admits: “To find a true artist is almost as rare among the mentally ill as among normal people. It happens a bit more often, however.... It is because art is a language in which we apply...our inner voices that are not usually exercised, or that are exercised only in a muffled, stifled way.... Yet, it is the particularity of insanity to force open these floodgates and allow the entire bounding flow of its wildness to rush out” (qtd. in Rousseau 24). Dubuffet believes there is a quality among individuals with a mental illness that elevates them from mainstream minds. They are

uncontaminated by the ideas, norms, and accepted concepts of culture. For Dubuffet, these individuals have this sense of innocence just as children are born with innocence to the world around them.

This different way of looking at the world or at art is what Dubuffet was focused on. Messer claims, “Good art, according to Dubuffet, has to make the viewer see things differently” (Messer 62). Dubuffet creates and paints in simplistic forms. His piece *Le Villageois aux Cheveux Ras* (*The Villager with Close-Cropped Hair*) looks as if a child created it. Proportions are unequal and harder for the viewer to piece together in their mind and understand right away. The color in *The Villager with Close-Cropped Hair* consists of black, grays, white, and a yellowish pigment; staying close to neutral hues in all his color choices. Dubuffet challenges the formal elements of design as an adult, however, the children from whom he draws his inspiration do not understand these elements in their own drawings.

Dubuffet’s lines are thick, uneven, broken, and confused. They look sketched and hurriedly drawn rather

than made with the utmost care and precision of most masterpieces created in an era such as the Renaissance. His lines draw out the viewers’ senses with their physicality. In studying the painting, the viewer will see lines where Dubuffet could have used his fingers rather than a brush to draw them, which is similar to finger paintings that children love. There are other lines where it seems Dubuffet made mistakes, as many young artists think they do. The brokenness and unevenness of the lines add to the viewers’ confusion or perhaps interest in the piece. The lines are comparable to a maze for the viewer; they are interested in the activity of finding a way out but unable to and the ending in confusion and frustration. Many children find these same emotions within art, and the tone of Dubuffet’s piece as a whole is not a happy one.

The subject matter is a man or possibly boy. However, the viewer notices the figure to be dressed in a suit a father or grandfather would wear. The figure has an Adam’s apple, which is drawn with an uneven circle. The outline is heavy, and the viewer cannot help but

be drawn to it. The form is simple and hastily drawn; a quick observation made by a mind free from shading and the complexities of making a shape become three-dimensional. There is only a foreground and background, similar to how many children's pictures turn out, since they do not understand scale and spacing yet.

When considering scale, the viewer's eye goes from one portion of the piece to another, trying to make sense of it. The viewer knows it's a human body but also knows it looks nothing like one realistically. They see an abnormally large head, thick neck, bell-shaped body, rectangular legs, and noodle arms. Dubuffet uses basic shapes to create his man just as a child would. The Adam's apple, kneecaps, nostrils, and irises are simple, irregularly-shaped circles. He also uses the same shapes for the man's bow tie and buttons that complete the man's suit. The suit is the same color as the entire man. The viewer only finds white, black, and a touch of yellow/tan/brown throughout the entire body, with the white and black mixing in areas to create greys and to add texture.

However, these greys by no means create realistic or correct shading.

The textures seem to be both purposeful and not purposeful throughout the body. The short stubble hair of the man mimics the hair a child might draw for a portrait of their bald uncle. The hair is just short lines and dots on the top and sides of the man's head. Dubuffet draws lines on the suit to show the lapel, buttons, pockets and opening of the jacket, while on the trousers of the man, he draws lines from the crotch diagonally down and out to indicate creases, folding, or wrinkles in the man's trousers. This feature of the painting in particular is very uncharacteristic of a child to observe and then feel the necessity to put it in the drawing. There are other textures throughout the man's body and suit that do not seem to hold a purpose for the viewer. These textures look like accidents in some areas, but in others they look like a child's imagination and creativity took hold of what it wanted to, leaving the piece at the mercy of the child's hand.

In the background

of the piece, one sees mainly black with white and yellow/brown/tan etchings coming through to show mostly lines, textures, or grids almost, but also a city skyline making up the horizon and background. There is also a house in the middle ground, or the closest thing this piece gets to a middle ground. While the man occupies the foreground, front and center, we are unable to see the man's feet, as if the artist ran out of room for them. This aspect of the piece reflects that of a child artist. Children start in on a painting or drawing without a thought of sketching or planning. All they know is they have a paintbrush in their hand and an idea in their head.

Dubuffet demonstrates his extensive studies of children's artwork through this portrait. He mimics their tendencies, techniques, and creative processes. He exposes their creative mind: a mind that is unspoiled by the world they live in, a mind that can create art in its raw nature, a mind that is at the beginning of time as they know it. Through his neutral, dark colors, Dubuffet foreshadowed the dark and destructive

nature of society and how it will contaminate a child's innocent mind. Ossorio, an artist, collaborator, and friend of Dubuffet, described what Dubuffet was trying to express with Art Brut: "We witness here the artistic process in all its purity, raw, reinvented on all its levels by the maker, starting solely from his own impulses" (Rousseau 9-16, 23). From the very beginning of the creative process, Dubuffet rejects thoughts, ideas, and concepts, and desires pure impulse. He finds this

emotion in children's work and individuals with mental illnesses.

Just as everyone is affected by their environment, after the war Dubuffet uncovered and started from scratch with what art is, defying the art that was before. Art Brut was Dubuffet's solution to the polluted culture the world took on; as if he found the key to the cage he was trapped in, underneath the rubble of his environment. He tried to set the rest of society free; however,

they were content in their cages. Instead, he fostered a desire in society to grow into a new art; an art that returned to its roots. When he saw the need to start over after the war, children's art was his inspiration. By starting from the beginning with the raw material—a newborn thought—Dubuffet utilized the genius behind children's untamed, free, and uncorrupted artwork to compel society to open their eyes to a world after war, pick up the fragmented earth at their feet, and rebuild.

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Rebirth

Zach Moss



ENGL-213: Nature & Environmental Literature

Two months ago, a solid blanket of six-foot-tall grasses towered over my head. The blanket danced with every breeze like an ocean with the come-and-go of the tide. It is hard to believe that in the span of a few minutes, almost all five acres of this prairie was burned to the ground. Less than one month ago, this area was a bare expanse of charred earth. Some crisped, naked stems of stiff goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) were the only signs that a mighty prairie was once there.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had performed a controlled burn on the area, allowing the dense buildup of grasses to be thinned out.

Now, as if through some magical transformative power, the land is alive once again with fresh green shoots. What was once dead and black is now bursting with life and hope for the future

I appreciate Zach's passion for and understanding of the natural world as well as the philosophical questions that he explores in this short journal.

-Mary Stark

of this ecosystem. The land has transformed itself and bounced back from what some would see as a death sentence. As I waltzed through the prairie, the words of Walt Whitman came to mind: "Oh how can it be that the ground itself does not sicken? / How can you be alive you growths of spring? / How can you furnish health you blood of herbs, roots, orchards, grain?" (Whitman, "This Compost," 6-8). While I was at the prairie, two themes continued to run through my mind. Looking at the unripe regrowth poking up through the black earth, I pondered the resilience of nature as well as the small pieces of life that make up an entire ecosystem.

Because the area was so open and the plant life was so short, I was able to get a new point of view of the prairie as I freely walked about it. It is bewildering

to me to think that these one to two inch tall plants could eventually grow into the large plants that used to dominate the prairie biome. I bent down and observed one small green plant, to see if I could tell what it was going to grow up to be. Judging by the square stem and minty smell it was emanating, I concluded that I was looking at wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*). There were also countless ankle-high shoots of different kinds of grasses which I could not identify at this point in their life cycle. The smallness of the living things here forced me to be more observant and appreciative of finer details. I kicked over a tuft of partially-burned dead grass to see what was beneath it. "I found a ball of grass among the [prairie] / and proged it as I passed and went away; / and when I looked I fancied something stirred" (Clare,

“Mouse’s Nest,” 1-3). To my surprise, there was a large amount of activity below the surface. It was not a mouse, as the persona in Clare’s poem found, but a bustling ant colony. In this large open place, these hundreds of small creatures had made their home—their society—in a single square foot of space. The tiny black ants frantically rushed around, trying to gather their senses and their eggs and get to safety. Feeling bad for having disturbed their peaceful goings-on, I flipped the grass ball back over in hopes that they could rebuild after the destruction I brought upon their little world. I realized that everywhere I look, invisible or nearly-invisible activities and relationships occur right in front of me. These relationships hold the Earth together, but I simply don’t think about them most of the time.

Just as the ants were

able to defy odds to pack such a dense population into such a small space, the prairie ecosystem is able to defy odds by recovering from a fire. What amazes me is that

**...the prairie
doesn't just grow
back; it grows
back healthier and
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before it was
burned.**

the prairie doesn’t just grow back; it grows back healthier and stronger than before it was burned. An area can be engulfed and consumed by flames, all living things being burnt to the ground, and still manage to recover within a short period of time. Nature truly is magical. With more sunlight available, new plants are able to grow where before they could

not. It is a race against time and against other plants to establish a foothold in the prairie before the dominant grasses take over. Akin to the *carpe diem* theme, the smaller plants must struggle and try to grow quickly before the grasses grow up around them; otherwise the “... flower that smiles to-day,
/ To-morrow will be dying.” (Herrick, “To the Virgins,” 3-4). As I left the prairie, I had hope that the small, unseen workings of nature will reinforce its resilience and resistance against change brought by human activity. If this little five acre prairie, with its deep roots, can come back from being nothing but burnt black soil, there is hope for the reestablishment of habitats and ecosystems across the world that were thought to be once lost. This prairie’s rebirth is a story of hope and optimism in the face of great adversity. Nature has something to teach us all.

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Illustration Credits

Paper sculpture by Kayla Foster 12" x 10" x 9"	Cover
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