

illumination

THE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES

Spring 2005 Issue

Slow-Burn Moonlight Vinyl
Sarah Mucek

Push Button, Go Round
Matthew Pace

*Love, Without Retention or Restraint:
Exploring Homoeroticism in Twelfth Night*
Jane Wanninger

Awakening to Our Common Compassion
Colleen Roark Condon

Plus: paintings, photos, sculpture,
poetry, short stories, essays, and more



THE UNIVERSITY
of
WISCONSIN
MADISON

Cover: Tyler Peterson, Kristof Wickman, *Makeover*, 20 x 40 x 5 feet, 800 square feet sod over approximately 2 tons industrial and consumer waste, 5 meat chickens, heat lamp, steel cable, May-June 2004 (this page: detail).

This piece was conceived in spring of 2004 for a group show in Ironworks, a 10,000 square foot dormant industrial scale factory on Madison's east side. A large pile of extant waste, including I-beams, pipes, palettes, and television sets, were incorporated by Wickman and Peterson into the installation. Large gaps were filled in with fiberglass insulation and the entire area was covered with chicken wire. Sod was blanketed over the pile allowing the topography to be determined by the shapes of the objects underneath. On the night of the opening, a wooden "pod" holding 29 baby chickens was suspended directly over the sod. The grass was watered daily for four weeks until the show closing. The chicks, who had been living in Wickman's backyard, were put directly on the grass where they stayed for the duration of the reception.





Zak Bruder, *New City*, oil on canvas, 2005

illumination

Spring 2005

Sponsors	2
Letter from the Editor	3
Staff	4

POETRY

Lindsay Daigle	6	<i>Blank Mail</i>
Sarah Mucek	6	<i>Slow-Burn Moonlight Vinyl</i>
Lindsay Daigle	6	<i>A Single File Line</i>
Kristen Jones	7	<i>Little Graces</i>
Ari Feld	8	<i>I Want You</i>
Richanda Grant	9	<i>In the Kitchen, On the Floor</i>



Cameron Jones, *Ipod Box*, copper, brass, and silver, Fall 2004

SHORT STORIES

Matthew Pace	10	<i>Push Button, Go Round</i>
Suzanne S. Album	15	<i>Rural Reasoning</i>
Julia Bartz	20	<i>Aquarium</i>



Diana Dewi, *Cutting Edge*, silk, wool, cotton, rayon, and leather, 2003

ESSAYS

Susanna Rasmussen	29	<i>A Silent Legacy: Understanding my Grandmother's Refusal to Testify before HUAC in 1955</i>
Sarah Mucek	37	<i>Identity and the Disabled Tutor: The Possibilities of Re-Constructing Selfhood in Peer Writing Conferences</i>
Jane Wanninger	43	<i>Love, Without Retention or Restraint: Exploring Homoeroticism in Twelfth Night</i>
Jason Rozumalski	48	<i>English Agriculture and Enlightenment</i>
Sarah Minsloff	53	<i>A Vague Sweetness: Accessory as the Intersection of Ethics and Aesthetics in The Ambassadors</i>

WISCONSIN IDEA

Denise Maddox	56	<i>My Odyssey</i>
Colleen Roark Condon	58	<i>Awakening to Our Common Compassion</i>
Katy Wheeler	60	<i>The Morgridge Center for Public Service</i>
Contributors	62	



Jackie Topol, *Mannequin*, black and white photograph, 2004

SPONSORS OF ILLUMINATION:

**UW-MADISON LIBRARIES
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
CARTOGRAPHIC LABORATORY
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS
WISCONSIN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
THE CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES**

STAFF:

Adam Blackbourn

Founder/Editor-in-Chief

Marieka Brouwer

Art Editor/Layout Design

Joanna Borgione

Literature Editor

Joel Feingold

Essays Editor

Roshelle Born

Marketing and Promotions Director

Ashley Hall

Marketing and Promotions Assistant

Daniel Semo

Business Manager

BOARD OF ADVISORS:

Emily Auerbach

Professor

Rick Brooks

Department of Professional
Development and Applied Studies

Ken Frazier

Director of UW Libraries

Al Friedman

Associate Director,
UW Communications

Jim Jacobson

Assistant Dean

Quitman Phillips

Art Department Chair/Professor

Mary Rouse

Director of the Morgridge Center

Virginia Sapiro

Professor/Associate
Vice Chancellor

Kathy Sell

Professor

Ron Wallace

Professor

Susan Wofford

Professor/Director of
The Center for the Humanities

The Editor would like to thank the following people: Amanee Markos, Onno Brouwer, Mark Blackbourn, Jill Blackbourn, Jean Looze, A.J. DuBois, David Luke, Tom Murray, Jill Klaila, Hendrick Hertzberg, Paula Bonner, Niki Denison, Cheryl Porior-Mayhew, Rob Seltzer, Grant Samuelson, Richard Worthington, Peter Spear, Samuel Henry, Christena Gunther, Lalita Pandit, David Null, Doug Hastad, Charles Lee, Victor Macias-Gonzalez, Mark Sauter.

il . lu . mi . na . tion: To enlighten intellectually; to make illustrious or resplendent.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of *Illumination* is to provide the undergraduate student body of the University of Wisconsin-Madison a chance to publish work in the fields of the humanities and to display some of the school's best talent. As an approachable portal for creative writing, art and essays, the diverse content in the journal will be a valuable addition to the intellectual community of the University and all the people it affects.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

It was over a year ago that Amanee Markos and I thought of the idea for this journal. Initially, it was nothing more than a thought, but the support of Amanee and Kathy Sell, along with the power of the idea, made its creation a reality. I did not know how it could happen, but I knew that this great undergraduate body needed a tangible way to express itself. Through the efforts of the editorial board, the extremely supportive advisory board and many others, the idea began to take shape. The project was certainly a challenge, but there was nothing harder than choosing which pieces to publish out of over 500 pieces submitted. That said, seeing the beauty of the artwork, the originality of prose in the literature and the quality of the essays was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. My hope is that as you page through this journal, you are as proud of the work and this school as I am. Before I close, I find it necessary to recognize the work of two people in particular. First is Ken Frazier, the Director of UW libraries. His encouragement, friendship and knowledge have not only been of primary importance in the creation of the journal, but he has also been one of the greatest teachers I have had. Second is Marieka Brouwer, our art editor and layout designer. Her dedication, support, and talent have helped create a journal finer than any I could have envisioned. When I first started this project, one main motivation was to make my mark on campus, yet in the end, the process of creation has made a profound impact that will stay with me forever. Without any further ado, it is my great pleasure and honor to present to you the inaugural issue of *Illumination: The Undergraduate Journal of Humanities*.

yours,

Adam Blackbourn

illumination

STAFF



Adam Blackburn

I am from La Crosse, Wisconsin and I will be graduating this spring. History is my major and I plan to go to graduate school following a brief hiatus from college. I started *Illumination* because I thought it would be extremely interesting to see and read some of the best authors and artists at this University. I am hoping that others share that same interest. atblackbourn@wisc.edu



Marieka Brouwer

I am from Middleton, Wisconsin, and will graduate this spring with a major in art history and anthropology, plus an archaeology certificate. Next year, I will to continue my archaeological studies in graduate school, in pursuit of a Ph.D. I wanted to be a part of *Illumination* because I feel all students should have a creative outlet where they can publish their work. The competitive edge inherent in the journal's submission process replicates real world obstacles and prepares undergraduates for life after their degree. mebrouwer@wisc.edu



Joanna Borgione

I am a junior majoring in journalism and mass communications. Following graduation next year, I would like to pursue a career in the field of strategic communications. I joined *Illumination* because I thought it would provide a satisfying opportunity in successfully accomplishing a large and unique project proposed by a fellow student and friend. This journal represents the respect those involved have, as well as the mutual respect students have for the work put forth by the undergraduates on campus. jcborgione@wisc.edu



Joel Feingold

I'm from Janesville, Wisconsin. I study history and political science, and I'll graduate in spring 2007. I plan to work in community or union organizing. I wanted to join the *Illumination* staff because I feel undergraduates need a publication of our own. The amount of intellectual activity on this campus is incredible, and this journal aspires to capture it. Sounded like a worthy cause to me. jlfeingold@wisc.edu



Roshelle Born

I'm from Baraboo, Wisconsin. I am an art history major, with a certificate in business-marketing. After I graduate in spring 2006, I plan to attend graduate school for arts administration. I joined the *Illumination* staff because I wanted to become better connected with the arts on campus. raborn@wisc.edu



Ashley Hall

I am a journalism and art history major from Granby, Connecticut. After I graduate in May of 2006, I hope to find a job that relates to my majors. I wanted to be a part of *Illumination* because I feel it's important for students to have a chance to showcase their undergraduate work. ashall@wisc.edu



Daniel Semo

I am from Bethesda, Maryland, and am majoring in finance, investment, banking, and will receive a certificate in integrated liberal studies. After I graduate in May, 2006, I plan to pursue a business related career. Having worked as an undergraduate research assistant, I wanted to be involved in *Illumination* because I believe that students should have a medium to publish their own works. Also, working on the financial side of a student organization will compliment my business studies. desemo@wisc.edu



Celeste Heule, *Lion Heart*, the ink of the heart of the lion on paper, 2004

LINDSAY DAIGLE

BLANK MAIL

The mail came late
so we forgot to get it
until Thursday.
My roommate, lazy
on the white couch,
never took off her boots
to nap—
But she said she'd check the
box on her way to
her therapist's.

She's back on the couch,
black hair as matted as the
pillow she leans on.
She says nothing, but
the orange and red dotted
tablecloth tells me,
this one's for you.

Shining white without a pen mark,
the envelope propped up on
a soda can, is separate from her
dirt bike magazine.
It smells of burnt cardboard in
ice cream,
with a round gold sticker
holding together an edge, no
Glue.

SARAH MUCEK

SLOW-BURN MOONLIGHT VINYL

There was a summer:
Us sitting in the garage-cool
in white shorts, cheek-
to-cheek with sweating
cans of coke, we'd
drop the needle in
that turntable groove: Sandy
with a bunch of worn
album-sleeves under her arm—
whatever her brother left
behind, mostly Motown, some
folk stuff. Me and Dee
slapped at mosquitoes, sat
at Sand's dad's workbench or
drew hearts in chalk on
the floor, chin in hand,
mouthing back-up,
too hot to speak.
At night with the sun
turned down low,
the other kids came out
of the darkness like fireflies,
drawn to the single bulb
over the pile of bikes,
to dance in the tar-stick heat:
Dee flapping her elbows
like some joyously awkward
bird, me digging my
bare toes in the grass, rolling
back my head—boys in
the trees, rolling joints, points
of orange in the leaves—
the lawn packed with bodies
and the buzz of cicadas,
our bodies full of music
in the lemonade-light.

LINDSAY DAIGLE

A SINGLE FILE LINE

means nothing to a poet.
There is no line-leader,
No designated person
to turn off the lights.
We need to be jumbled.

So when a fire alarm
disturbs the analysis
of the way the person next to me
ties her shoes,
one white building full
of others contemplating
a pencil shaving—or a shoelace,

becomes

one white stairwell full
of interrupted poets—

But it's snowing.

An ark of two-by-two creatures
carrying mounds of papers and books,
unblinking eyes on the open one on top,
floods to the concrete sidewalk
from the concrete walls inside—
a chaos of dark eye circles
from sleepless nights of writing.

And it's snowing.



Jane Duffy, *Sin Amor No Hay Nada, Chueca*, photograph, 2004

KRISTEN JONES

LITTLE GRACES

At the end of long, hard nights,
 When we work in silent anti-social solitude—
 The only time we can have no care for *clientes*—
 When we are speedy and the fumes of the vats rise up
 And the heat is all-oppressive, and wages war upon us,
 And the clock ticks minutes past,
 And the whole world is dark with dirt and night,
 And our work is furious and hard, precise and chemical,

I will fill a glass with water
 And take it back to the cooks—
 To *el guapo*, Elpidio, *mi amor*, who will
 Look up sharply, blink the sweat back from his eyes, his
 Thick hands clenching the broom handle, and then
 Clenching the glass—he will drink, grateful, and nod his
 Assent of gratitude; and then to Martín, surrounded in a fog
 Of dishwater and steam and the dregs of our night's work,
 And he drains the cup with a slurp, as the drain swallows the garbage.

Más? I ask.

Sí, mucho más.

Regreso.

And I return.

And he drinks again.

I WANT YOU

to fit a new transmission
into language
and hotwire the motherfucker.
Use those hands of yours,
those hands
that finish the functions
of welding torches, metal
sanders, and two-inch ratchet
wrenches. Expand
the intake, cut the exhaust
and lift in the engine block
with those hands
that have fitted us
together
so many times.
Set the drive shaft
to ranging the length of the chassis
until the whole body hums
with its new tongue.
Grind me
the only set of keys,
with a lucky turn of phrase
jangling on the chain,
and hide them behind
my father's house
the day before
you suck laps on the street
where he met my mother, past
the liquor store, over
the flaking curbs
at city hall. Then let it idle
for a minute before you
tear off the muffler
and stomp on the accelerator
until everyone comes squinting out
for their lunch break, gasping
at the rhythm
you made me.
The mayor
will blurt out, blinking
in the sun
and holding his ears,
"what's the meaning of this?"
Because I want that rig
to roar as loud as the sun is hot,
I want the tire tracks

you write on main street
to spell my name
and stink like a body shop.
I want to hear it coming for me
over half a county of dirt roads.
And you'll get out
and slam the door
with your stick shift hand,
slam it so hard
daddy looks up
from puttering with the
lawnmower.
And you'll say you're here for me
and the cut grass

will stain your boots
with little dashes,
crisp as typesetting.
I'll be down the porch steps,
keying the ignition
before he can even speak,
and I'll be ready
with a reverse drop
that scrawls a mean turn
in the yard
and leaves him
with his lawnmower
and its tiny, little
voice, whirring goodbye.



Celeste Heule, *Dead Legs*, ink on graphing paper, 2004

RICHANDA GRANT

IN THE KITCHEN, ON THE FLOOR

At two in the morning, as the party died,
I found Kelly, after all these years
in the kitchen on the floor. Her fingers
were wrapped around the neck
of a bottle of Jim Beam. Her skirt
was pulled a little too high, and I almost
felt bad for her.

Our fathers had worked together
in some accounting firm where I had
eaten jelly doughnuts and had too many
Cokes under my father's absent supervision.

I wondered if she had done the same,
but I doubted it. She ran track, and her
mother the Dentist made her brush
after every meal. Sometimes I smiled
at her in the mirrors of our high school
bathroom as she brushed, flossed, rinsed.
All the while wondering how her mother
could exert this power over Kelly from
her dentist's office across town.



Celeste Heule, *Tenting Upping*, yarn on paper on paper, 2004



Nick Herro, *Gallo Gravitron*, oil on canvas, 2004

MATTHEW PACE

PUSH BUTTON, GO ROUND

Push the button and watch the Octopus go 'round. Wait. Push the button again and make everything stop. Then comes a shuffling of heads; hands pushing and pulling in all directions get nowhere. Little hands and short heads, big hands and bald heads, all anxiously waiting to take a ride, wanting to see the trees turn into green and brown blurs. They pile in, one after the other, little kids gripping tightly to the collar of daddy's shirt, while daddy tells himself he's not as old as his age suggests. Always round and round, always ending where it began. Then it's their turn to wait, nervously clenching their fists and crossing their legs, trying to look calm. They are waiting for me, some even look at me, studying my actions, hoping to anticipate my next move. This is nothing new, same old story of start and finish, beginning and end, interrupted only by screams of terror and joy. Right now, I am in control. I push the button and watch the Octopus go 'round.

It's hot today, real hot, the kind of hot that makes

everything slow down. Even the wind seems to be dragging, mustering up enough strength only to create slow, fleeting dust storms. Today's crowd is the smallest it's been all summer, leaving a surplus of cotton candy and snow cones that melt underneath the sun. I operate one of the oldest rides belonging to the Jacobson Brothers' Traveling Carnival: the Octopus. The goal of this ride is for people to wait in line, and as they're waiting they see and hear all the people who got on the ride before them scream and laugh. By the time they finally reach the front of the line, they're so overcome with anticipation that they shove for access to the best seats. Once all are seated, I start the ride; the eight legs of the Octopus, each with a chair at the end, slowly start to revolve around the black and purple body. After ten seconds, the more adventurous riders thrust their hands in their air, shrieking and whooping as their legs tighten their grip on the sides of their chair. After thirty seconds, when the Octopus has reached full speed, the entire ride transforms into a uniformed rotating mess of blurred machinery and limbs. The Jacobson Brothers, who are actually two old ladies from Connecti-

cut, have granted me sole control over this thrill machine, which means this: I get to push the button.

Today's sweltering heat has left my Octopus sad and lonely, though I offer her little compassion. Watching a squirrel try to sneak a piece of a young girl's cotton candy, I see Ms. McKay, one of the Jacobson Brothers, out of the corner of my eye, appearing to be heading in my direction. I figure I have a bit longer to investigate the interactions between the squirrel and the girl, for Ms. McKay moves only as fast as her walker allows. By the time she arrives, the little girl has spotted the squirrel, yelled for her daddy, and dropped her cotton candy in the daring escape from the cunning rodent.

"Go home, Carl," Ms. McKay mumbles, followed by a fit of coughing loud enough to have come from some truck driver named Gus. "We're gonna close early today - too hot. I've already lost a days worth of snow cones to the heat, and I'll be damned if I'm gonna throw away any more money. Stick around for another hour and then you may leave. I'll see you tomorrow."

"Seven o'clock," I respond, "like always." At that Ms. McKay begins her jittery hike back to her trailer. "Ms. McKay," I murmur, as the old lady painfully turns around to face me, "well, uh, I was just wondering if, um, you think we might be heading off to another city or something?"

"Every day with your questions, like business here is no good. I've told you before, when the time to pack up comes, we'll let you know. In the mean time, keep up the hard work. Do you think I would leave town without the only person who knows how to operate the Octopus?" Ms. McKay once again sets off on her arduous trek back to her trailer. I have pushed her button before too, and, like the Octopus, she is very reliable. Though she frequently complements me on my hard work, Ms. McKay always answers my question about leaving by taking me around in a circle. Business is good, I work hard, and therefore both the carnival and I are to remain stationary until something comes along to upset this circular balance.

The thing is, the Jacobson Brothers' Traveling Carnival has stopped traveling. Arriving in Manchester three years ago, Nancy's older sister, whom no one has ever seen or heard, fell ill with a severe case of the gout. Rendering her a cripple, the Jacobson Brothers' Traveling Carnival was forced to make an unexpected stop of indeterminate length.

This was all fine and dandy for the old sisters, the warm climate and overall friendly atmosphere of the south greatly appealed to the McKays, yet I was as anxious as ever to be away from Manchester. The McKays say they still plan on reaching New Orleans, some day, when the

time is right. In the mean time, I've been sitting around, watching squirrels and my Octopus go around in circles and waiting for that day to come.

I've worked for her and her sister for five years, basically since I graduated from high school. One day after graduation I noticed an advertisement for a traveling carnival that was scheduled to stop in my little town of Manchester, Tennessee. The ad said that the Jacobson Brothers' Traveling Carnival would be here in a week, stay for a week, and then continue its national tour, heading south along the Mississippi until it could go no further. Beginning somewhere up near Chicago, the Jacobson Brothers' Traveling Carnival was headed to New Orleans and had decided to add Manchester to the prestigious list of stops along the way. Having graduated high school, the desire to leave home was stronger than ever, and at that time the carnival seemed to be my best outlet away from the stagnant retention pond that was Manchester, Tennessee. My dad, believing that a young man needed direction and responsibility, offered me a job with him, working in a soap factory just outside of town. They made fancy soap: aloe and sandalwood and other plants that grew far away from Manchester. My dad came home every night tired and smelling of cooked lard and chemicals, he was usually so dirty that no one ever believed he worked in the soap factory. For Christmas I would always get soap; every year, without fail, I woke up to find three bars of soap peaking out of my stocking.

"Aloe Vera, triple milled soap. Uh, thanks pop, I guess."

"Give it a smell. Pretty nice, huh? Don't even get me started on how it softens your skin." Though the soap changes, we have this conversation every Christmas morning. "You know, your old man plays some important strings down at the factory, and, well, I know you need a job and all."

"I got a job. I work hard. How many times do I have to tell you?"

"Yeah, that Octopus thingy at the fair, I know all about it. But I mean a job that's going somewhere, a job that's got prospects." Around this point in the production I usually walk away, which generally leaves my parents to continue on without me, both my mother and father playing my part when they see fit. This is also nothing new-Pop pushes my buttons and I go walk around.

Maybe Pop was trying to slowly integrate soap into my life, with the hopes that I would one day come join him at the factory. Maybe he thought I was dirty. Later that day Pop would usually walk into my room, moving

real slow and watching his feet touch the ground. I pretended there were poisonous snakes on my floor and he had to step lively to avoid being bitten.

"I didn't mean to insult you or your job, you know that, don't you?"

"Yeah, I know Pop, it's just that, well, how many times do we have to go through all this?"

"Well," he stammers, "I guess until you get over this crazy idea of moving to Louisiana. What the hell they got in Louisiana that you can't find here?"

"Crocodiles, to start, and..." I quickly loose any interest in trying to explain why I want to get out of Manchester to my father, "...and, nothing, I guess."

"That's what I been tryin' to say. Anyways, Ma' wanted me to get you for supper. Be down in ten minutes." He stands up, quickly glancing around my room and shuts the door behind him, leaving only his smell in my presence. The thing was, ever since I was a child and saw the crocodiles on a field trip to the zoo, I knew I wanted to work with dangerous animals. Not wrestle them, or any other type of sideshow parlor trick, I wanted to study them. You know, research and stuff. Anyways, after that field trip in the third grade we never went back to the zoo, and the only book our library had with pictures of crocodiles was some pamphlet a travel agency made about vacationing in Louisiana. Since then, I knew where I had to go.

That was five years ago. I live alone now, in a small and hot room I sublet on the lower floor of a house just two miles down the road from the carnival grounds, where I am quickly running out of room for all the soap. On the plus note, I am the best smelling carnie this side of the Mississippi.

Push button, go 'round. All day, every day, for as long as people want to ride, they need me to push the button and make the Octopus go 'round. I pay attention while their world spins. I see their eyes, electrified and lit up and struggling to focus on a reference point to connect them with their previous, more linear existence. I see arms and legs. I see hair twisted out of ponytails and hats blown from the tops of heads. I see people flying through the air screaming and laughing, too thrilled and caught up in the



David Parisi, *Heavy Chopper*, drawing, comics page, 2005

ride to pay attention to the fact that after it's over, when all the ponytails have been put back together, they have nothing to show for their journey save a mild sensation of dizziness. In the end, it's just the same old story of start and finish, beginning and end, interrupted only by screams of terror and joy. I see all these things, every day, as they circle before my eyes just like they have for five years, and it all starts when I push the button to watch the Octopus go 'round. This is nothing new. Always 'round and 'round, always ending where it began.

With the exception of going home early, today was not like any other. I had another hour to kill before I would be allowed to return home to a nice hot can of baked beans and of my television set. I was in no hurry, as going home only brought me closer to returning to work the following morning. For this reason, and out of sheer boredom, I remember being unsurprisingly excited when a group from the Manchester Home for Senior Citizens edged their way towards my Octopus. Normally I would have questioned some of the more unstable senior citizens, asking about heart and back problems and the like, but the day's lack of activity left me lenient in my occupation. Collecting their tickets, I mumbled through the safety guidelines, reciting them like lines out of a play that no one really finds interesting.

"Make sure your harness fits snugly over your waist. Keep your arms and legs inside the ride at all times. Never, and I mean never, leave your seat while the ride is in progress. Any questions? If not, hold on and enjoy the ride." Given to me on my first day of working the Octopus, these have been my lines ever since. I never change them; I always end by telling them to stay in their seats and enjoy the ride. Some of the elders seem apprehensive, and they approach my ride with a sense of bewilderment in their gate.

"This fangled contraption will hold now, right sonny?" Some old man with suspenders and spots on his skin asks in my general direction.

"She's been running for as long as I've known her, five years, without a single glitch."

"Good old American Engineering, that's what that is." The spotted man replies as he walks away, picking at some lump on his neck and securing his suspenders. I ponder pointing to the large type ingrained on the side of the beast: Made in Madagascar.

Like always, my warnings fell on deaf ears—either from not listening or not being able to hear. It didn't matter; this was nothing new. They just had to sit and enjoy the ride. Soon came the shuffling of hands (though

much slower than normal) followed by mostly baldheads, as the group of elders took their seats. They are old, I thought.

I pushed the button and watched the Octopus go mad.

I never made it home early from work that day. I try to understand it sometimes, I mean, what went wrong. Surely it was not my fault; it was nothing new, same old story of start and finish. I tell myself that I was just doing my job, doing what I have always done, and what I would have been doing for many years had my Octopus not decided to break apart in mid ride. The Manchester Home for Senior Citizens says they plan on making a case out of this accident. I offered to help, but the officers told me I was only allowed to touch the Octopus' pieces. The senior citizens had to be handled by professionals. I was an Octopus Professional. I guess I should be thankful and all, seeing as how I was spared when the oversized mechanical limbs of my Octopus decided to split away from the rest of the monster.

I tried to push the button and make everything stop. It had worked so many times before, whenever there was a screaming child or someone about to be sick, all I had to do was push the button, the same button that turned on the whole damned ride, and it would stop just as fast as it began. As I jammed my hand against that button again and again, it dawned on me that this ride was not going to end with smiles and sighs of relief; *this ride was going somewhere*. It didn't work though; nothing I knew or could have done would have stopped that Octopus from hurling half of the senior citizens in Manchester through the hot and heavy air.

The sun had set long before I finally decided to leave the fair grounds. I am pretty sure the Jacobson Brothers would be forced to disjoin, meaning that the two elderly McKay sisters must return to Connecticut with their heads held low. They never made it to New Orleans, which also meant I needed to find a new vehicle to aid in my escape from this old town. For five years I had traveled with a rag tag festival destined for the Big Easy and had nothing to show for my journey, except maybe a sun tan and one hell of a story. Five years of pushing that stubborn button and expecting my Octopus to behave and go 'round, and now, just like that, it all blows up in my face. I can't go home – not my room or my parent's house. Both those places offer nothing new; a job making fancy soap or baked beans and television?

I think about all the old people. I saw some of their faces as the Octopus spit their chairs over my head,

and surprisingly enough they were relatively calm, nothing to coincide with the inevitable demise that loomed in the very close future. I guess it was nothing new for them—life that is. Always round and round, and always ending where it originally began. Now that it's all over, the accident, the carnival, everything, I guess maybe the Octopus was

destined to fall apart some day—I mean it couldn't have gone around in circles forever. It only takes one push of the button, the same button that you've been pushing everyday hoping for a different outcome; just one push and it might tear everything to pieces. ❖



Alice Laskey-Castle, *Mise en Garde: The Watchers*, steel, fabric, cast plastic, 2004

RURAL REASONING

Wolf sits with his left leg slung over the box that is neatly fitted between the driver and the passenger seats. He is reading a *Home and Away* magazine; every now and again expelling a “humph” or a “hmmm” accented by a scratch of his index finger over his left ear. His right elbow rests in the open window frame and the chicken leg in that hand is dancing to the tune of each word. Envelopes, magazines, small parcels, and circulars, all but one banded in small bunches, sit within the two topless cartons on the driver’s seat. He moves his leg slightly outward and the magazine flaps shut between his legs and falls to the floor. While Wolf is retrieving the magazine, he accidentally jams it beneath the lunch cooler and tears the front cover. Once returned to his lap, he notices that he has gotten quite a bit of chicken grease on the cover. He returns it to the stack for the Edmundsen family and rebinds it with a rubber band, feeling an air of guilt at it having been soiled.

With lunch being done, it is time to return to the remainder of his rounds; The Tierney’s, The Blake’s, The Stuckenschneider’s, Dr. Biddlen, and, of course, The Edmundsen’s, are amongst the few that have yet to receive their Monday mail. He should be finishing up around 4:00 or so. There are so many bills to deliver today. Monday’s are rough. The revolving orange light on the roof needs to be switched back on. He maneuvers his left foot over the accelerator, turns the keys in the ignition, and moves out onto Highway U.

The fence lines along the shoulders work much as a mantra would for Wolf. His thoughts steer toward a painfully young memory of last week. He had just returned home for the evening, having dropped the outgoing mail at the office, to find his son tormenting his daughter. Sibling strife was not unknown in Wolf’s household, but usually his wife kept the kids well in line, at least when he was home.

It was the nature of the tormenting that gave Wolf such anguish. He had returned to find his six-year-old daughter trapped in the cage of the papassan chair with his eleven-year-old son reclining in the bowl. His

daughter was sobbing and there was a quickly spreading puddle of urine on the parquet floor. His son was gesturing wildly, accentuating his monologue:

“The w-w-world is a-a-a-mighty big place! Hu-hu-hu-one can’t just expect t-t-t-to live w-w-ithout contributin’ somethin’! You need t-t-to m-m-make you’re mark, a-a-accomplish somethin’, be a MAN!”

Wolf opens the Stuckenschneider’s mailbox, removes the outgoing mail and places it in the carton on the floor behind the seat. He grabs their bundle, removes the rubber band and puts the mail in the box. He grasps a *Pioneer* and places that within the newspaper holder attached on the post below the mailbox. He lowers the flag. Glancing out over the field, he sees Aaron about to climb into his tractor, lifting the brim of his ball cap and wiping his forehead with his forearm. Aaron’s son is already in the cab. Wolf can hear him tuning the radio. Aaron just became a grandfather to a five pound, three ounce baby girl.

“If all y-you ever read are those comic b-books your friends sneak you, you’re n-n-n-ever gonna learn nothin’ ‘bout nothin’. History, now th-th-there’s what you need. Learnin’, reading! Hah! He thinks he’s so smart. He can’t even talk right. Mitz, you like my comic books, doncha? Well, doncha?”

Wolf had frozen in the doorway with his arms at his sides. He had felt like his face was melting and everything tilted. He wanted to yell, scream, but when he gets really upset he really can’t say it right. Is that really what he sounds like? His son’s voice had been so menacing, so nasty. His daughter had tucked herself between her knees whispering, “Yes, yes, please let me go.” He could not see her face, but he imagined her eyes held the same look of pain and shame.

Stop, mail, flag; stop, mail, flag; stop, mail, flag and Wolf spies Mrs. Tierney heading down her drive waving a letter. He feels a stab in his intestine and pulls up just a little more in from his usual spot so as to leave little room between his window and the mailbox. In this way, Mrs. Tierney will have to approach from the side. Maybe, she won’t even want to talk. She is huffing with exertion, “Well hi there, Mister Becker! I’m so glad you’re a



Melissa Cooke, *Bear and Bees*, gouache, 2004

little late today. If I didn't get this bill out today I mighta ruined us. Good credit and a spotless record. Not many farmers can say that, can they? We don't wanna end up like Maureen and her bunch. Foreclosure, terrible! Did you hear 'bout that? Oh, a course you did! Don't imagine your deliverin' any mail there these days.

"So, Mister Becker, maybe you might wanna take your lunch here tomorrow? I should have some hot roast beef left after the boys have had theirs. Fresh peas, mashed potatoes, fresh bread; you could have a hot roast beef sandwich. I can wait for you, if you like? I haven't been to town lately and I just know you know everybody's doin's. I an don't tell me nothin'."

"N-n-n-no th-th-thanks, m-m-m-Missus t-t-t-Tierney. Alice is p-packin' me a r-r-r-ight nice lunch."

"Well, I thought I'da ask anyway. I know you can take your lunch in residence. Back home our Mister Knowles always took lunch with one of us. He was a terrible gossip, but you wouldn't be like that, I know, Mister Becker."

Wolf stares at Mrs. Tierney. He just knows he looks stupid. He's NOT STUPID. He knows what she wants. She's relatively new to town; a couple of years and the *Welcome Wagon* ladies don't talk with her anymore. She doesn't have any kids, so they don't really need speak

to her. She likes to meddle. She smiles, raises her eyebrows, and rests her hand on the cooling hood. "Well, Mister Becker, I suppose I'da better let you get back to your job since I know your runnin' late. You just think 'bout my offer. Anytime, you're welcome in my home. You just drive up to the house and give a honk. That's what Mister Knowles always did, you know; give a honk and scatter the chickens. You being a Wolf could scatter the chickens. Isn't that funny, Wolf, chickens, get it, Mister Becker?"

"Y-yes. Th-th-thank you. Bye."

With that exchange weathered, Wolf escapes Mrs. Tierney. The gravel was spitting against the undercarriage of the mini-van. He couldn't help but think it would have been nice to have this sound to drowned out her voice.

Stop, mail, flag; stop, mail; no mail for Dr. Biddlen today. Dr. Biddlen is Wolf's kids' physician. Pretty soon, his son won't be going to her anymore. She is a pediatrician. He won't want to disrobe in front of a woman in his budding manhood. Wolf gets to thinking about it and decides that he will definitely talk to his wife about this. It is about time he starts to see Dr. Mac, like his papa. His son would have gone to this doctor in the first place if Dr. Mac had not been so old. In recent years, Dr. Mac had not been very good with children. None of the neighbors could quite see the need to still be vaccinating for things such as

polio and smallpox.

"Boy, w-w-w-atcha doin' to your sister? C-c-can'tcha hear her c-cryin'? Get outa th-that chair, NOW!"

Wolf had hurled the bowl of the pappasan onto the adjacent sofa and lifted the basket from over his daughter. She had remained bound up; the pink pants she was wearing appeared purple wherever they had been soaked with urine. He unwound her from the ball she had tied herself into and walked her to the bathroom. He grabbed a towel from the linen closet and laid it over the toilet seat. He eased her down onto the towel and smoothed back her hair. She still had not lifted her head when Wolf asked her, "Sweetheart, does y-your brother do that a lot?"

She didn't say anything and when Wolf lowered his head to try to see her face, he had caught her biting her lip. Huge tears were dropping on her hands; they were dropping on his heart. He realized that he had just added to her shame in asking her to inform on her brother. What did it matter if this happened often, once would have been enough. He knew that, certainly, once was enough for him. "It's okay, Sweetheart, let me go f-f-ind your mother. She'll get you c-cleaned up fine. Your papa loves you."

The Edmundsen's house was right on the road. Unfortunately, their mailbox is on the wall next to the front door. Mrs. Edmundsen is terminally shy and will pretend that she does not see Wolf coming down the road. From about a block away, Wolf sees Mrs. Edmundsen abandon her chore on the porch and flee around the corner of the house. At first, this used to unnerve him. Now, he thanks the Powers That Be that the one time he has to get out of the van and expose himself to the elements that there is no hindrance between him and the box unless ... there is Mr. Edmundsen, then there is a lot of back-slapping and rib-jabbing and *how ya doing, Buddy Boying*. Thankfully, there is no sign of the feed salesman today. But, there is still the issue of the magazine that was corrupted at lunch. It is with a feeling of parting with contraband that Wolf places the mail in the box. He returns to the van, telling himself all the while that the Edmundsen's may not think that he did this to their mail. They will probably think it happened in route or at the office. *Buddy Boy* would never do such a thing.

"So, you th-think your papa's s-s-Stupid do you? You think he d-d-doesn't know nothin' 'bout the world, 'bout being a man? Well, Boy, your papa knows, no doubt in his m-mind that cruelty and un-un-unkind words and acts on your family won't get you nowhere no-no-no matter how much book learnin' you have! Kris, you just

full of the m-m-m-mean m-m-m-meanness of prejudice. You'll learn, there's all k-kinds a people in the world, all d-different than you. If you can't ac-accept this in your own family maybe you not meant to have a family and th-then you'll be ALONE! I care 'bout you, Boy, but you gotta c-care about your own self, your c-c-character. I'll never, NEVER leave you alone long as I live, but your ma and I wo-wo-wo-on't live forever and then where wo-would you be? Before su-supper you need to say 'sorry' to your sister. Now go clean up in the k-kitchen and th-think about it some."

Wolf had left his son weeping at the kitchen sink while he went to find his wife. He had found her reading in a chair on the back lawn. He had explained to her that she was needed by her daughter in the bathroom and decided not to tell her about the incident. It took some time to sink in; his son did not respect him.

The last stop before the office is the Blake farm. Mr. and Mrs. Blake put six of their eight children through college. No farmhands in those kids. Their children, in turn, have helped support their parents in their old age. Now there are tenants on all the parcels. Mr. Blake spends his days assisting them. Mrs. Blake stays in writing letters to all her children and their children. It is all Wolf can do to not tear into the many packages from this house as they all smell of chocolate and gingerbread and it is always close to dinner.

Wolf thinks how nice it would be if he could talk to the Blakes, about his son. Having so many children who are all doing so well, they might very well know what could be done, what to say, and how to say it. He places their mail in the box and heads for the office. When he arrives, there is a message from his wife; dinner will not be until 6:00, instead of 5:00, and maybe Wolf might like to stop off at the tavern for a couple. He isn't much of a social drinker, but they pretty well leave him to listen when he goes to the Buck & Ale.

At 5:45 he climbs back into the passenger seat of the van with a quick "I'm heading home" wave to Mr. Edmundsen. Even without the cartons, he still drives from the passenger seat. It is more natural to him and he has a clearer view of his path. Home is visible over the side-view mirror and the dread begins to well up in his mind. His son has barely spoken in a week, not even to apologize. His summer activities seem curbed. He has spent much of the time in his room behind a closed door. Wolf did not even ground him; he seems to have grounded himself.

Wolf's wife greets him at the door. She is not wearing her customary *Cinzano* apron. She is, instead, wearing slacks and a blouse; something she would

normally have on when Wolf's sister comes to visit. He can't stand the idea of a visit from his sister right now. Why didn't she warn him in the message? "Welcome home, Wolf. Let's go sit in the livin' room. The kids are doin' dinner tonight. Isn't that nice?"

The first thing he notices is the conspicuous absence of the pappasan chair. In its stead is a used recliner that looks so comfortable Wolf just has to make a beeline for it. He settles in as the dread subsides into the well of memory. His wife sits on the sofa and winks at him. "They've been very busy arrangin' our evening. Kris has been the mastermind and Mitzy, a course, has had to take a bunch of directions from her brother. Like the chair?"

"Well, yes, it's nice. Comfy. Just right I th-think."

"Kris picked it out yesterday from the Hayes' garage sale. He's quite a bargain hunter, unlike his papa."

"How come I don't smell nothin'?"

"Oh, supper's not here yet. What, you thought Kris was cookin'? What do you think I am, crazy? I know who'd still be doin' the dishes, even if the kids are cookin'. It's my night off, too, you know."

There is a sound of blaring hip hop; the bass from the woofer rattles the windows. Kris emerges from the kitchen with his wallet and struts toward the door. Wolf makes to get up and his wife gestures palm down for him to reseal himself. His son somehow looks older and more serious. He checks inside the box to make sure that it is what he ordered, his head bobbing to the sound of the retreating music. Wolf did not know his son liked hip hop.

After dinner, the family sits in the living room watching the television. Wolf is not paying much attention to the program; he is watching his son. His son is not watching the program either. He is staring at a corner of the room with words caught in his throat. Wolf is watching him swallow, pull his lips in, squint, and squirm. Finally, he speaks, "Pop, can I ask you somethin'?"

Wolf's wife gets up and taps his daughter on the shoulder. They go out onto the front porch, turning the television off as they go. Wolf wishes they would stay. He

is so suddenly uncomfortable in his comfortable chair.

"Sure, Kris."

"Did you always stutter? I mean, did somethin' happen to you to make you stutter, somethin' bad?"

"No, son."

"So you're not *handicapped*, right? I mean, my teacher wants us to call it *mentally challenged*. But, if you were *handicapped*, you wouldn't be able to read, or drive, or have a job, right?"

And there it was, so clear and so biting. He had hit this wall before and with the help of his own parents, and a few understanding teachers, he had hurdled it again and again. This time, the wall was too high to hurdle. His son had heard others call him *retarded*. That must be where this came from. These kids know about inferior stock. They know about the genetic possibilities in breed-

ing these traits; the probabilities involved with the offspring; the decline in value on the market. His son was scared.

"Look, Kris, th-this won't never happen to you. Everybody's dif-different. Just with some you c-can see it, or h-hear it on the outside. You're gonna have y-y-your own th-things to deal with; your own ch-chall-challenges."

"Papa, I wanna talk to you more, but you don't like to talk. You're not stupid and I'm really sorry I called you stupid."

His son started crying and fighting with himself to stop. He was beating his palms against his forehead and the air was fast being expelled from his nose along with mucous that he kept wiping away with his left hand. Wolf went into the kitchen for a dishrag, but grabbed three, attached sheets of plain white paper towel. He handed them to his boy and reseated himself in the recliner. After it seemed that his son's emotion had played itself out, Wolf gave a little cough, "We can talk m-more, I promise."

"I was thinkin', maybe I could write you letters, you know, and leave 'em in the van? Or, I could mail 'em, if you like? That way, if it's hard to talk 'bout, I can just write it down and you could find it later."



Melissa Cooke, *L-o'go; log'os*, serigraph, 2004

Why hadn't he thought of this before? And, he could write him back. His son could see how much he had to say. His son got up and went to his bedroom and Wolf waited for the door to slam. But, he returned with a letter addressed to Papa and placed it on Wolf's knee. "That's for tomorrow. Don't read it 'til tomorrow, okay?"

Wolf nodded slowly and shook his son's hand, "I promise I'll r-read it at lunch, okay?"

Instead of picking out a magazine from the carton, Wolf opened the letter from his son. He felt nervous and tingly, just like a first date. This was new and exciting, but very frightening:

Dear Pop,

I thought alot about what you said about being alone. I do not want to be alone EVER!!! I am alone in my room right now but I still know you are all outside in the kitchen or the living room. I do not want to be prejudus. I do not want to be mean. Mitzy cried because I was mean to her. I cried because I thought you were mean to me. But I thought alot about it and you were not really mean. You just do not want me to be alone. You do not want Mitzy to get so mad at me that she would not talk to me anymore and I would not have anybody to call me papa or uncle Kris. I am going to work on my charicter. I want you to be proud of me. I promise not to make fun of your stutter any more. You are my dad and its hard for you to talk. So thats why I am writing you this letter. You can write me back if you want to. Just leave it by my door. If you write me back I will make a mailbox for my door that you can leave letters in. Thank you!
your loving son
and warm regards, sincerely
Kristof W. Becker

Wolf opened the glove compartment and took out a pen and a spare envelope. He placed a stamp on corner of the envelope, addressed it to his son at his home, and



Melissa Cooke, *Lake Clean-up*, serigraph, 2004

placed it on the dashboard. He then pulled out a pad of paper from the pocket behind the seat and began his letter:

July 16th

Dear Kristof,

I was so very pleased to receive your letter. Installing a mailbox on your bedroom door, I feel, might fit very well into some father and son time this Sunday. If this letter does not reach you in time for plans on Sunday, I will knock on your door Saturday night before dinner...❖

AQUARIUM

Rich always thought that if faced with death, he would prefer to be eaten by sharks. The flash of teeth, the splashing of blood, the fins slicing through boiling water: how could death be any more spectacular?

Painful, maybe. That was the major drawback. Rich wasn't a big fan of pain, and even a paper cut could reduce him to a crouch and a quiet "Fuck!" which had already happened several times this morning, only a few hours into the new job. In response, the mothers glared as they grabbed the tickets off the counter and pulled their children's arms like they were leashes. Luckily, supervisor Sherry was nowhere to be seen.

But anyhow, if he could get past the pain, and needed to die for some reason, it would most definitely be via shark attack. Rich was still pondering this when Sherry appeared, her frizzy red hair surrounding her head like a halo.

"Break time, buddy!" she shouted and touched his arm while taking his place behind the counter. Rich tried to smile back at her and failed.

He decided to use his 100% employee discount to walk though the aquarium, which he had not yet seen. Having arrived in town only a week before, he'd been sleeping all day on his brother's sofa bed until John had picked up the sheets and thrown him on the floor. Rich took this as a hint and decided to walk around downtown, searching for "Help Wanted" signs in any of the dreary souvenir shops and seafood joints.

The aquarium was bizarrely out of place in the center of town—a new, modern-looking building that dwarfed its run-down and pastel-colored neighbors. But here Rich spotted a sign in the front window, a plain sheet of paper that announced "Apply Within" in flowery letters. Sherry had granted him an interview immediately, and he started the next day.

As the ticket man. Holy shit. Rich tried to forget about the hours of intense boredom ahead as he set off down the main corridor. It narrowed and wound around,

becoming dark with tanks on both sides that radiated shifting blue light. He slipped off the sunglasses he'd worn all morning to hide his reddened eyes. His buzz was almost completely gone, but the darkness of the hall made some of the dream-state return.

Noisy children whizzed past him, running up to the glass and beating their fists against it. "Hey fish! Hey stupid! Wake up!" They quickly gave up and raced to the next tank, leaving only nose-smears on the glass behind them.

Rich realized that the fish did look kind of morose. They stayed in one spot as if suspended by strings, with only their wavering fins and bobbing mouths providing any movement. He named them as he walked past each tank: anorexic fish (the boney one), paranoid fish (the one with the huge eyes), dominatrix fish (the spiny one), imagining himself a twisted Dr. Seuss who would write children's tales of fish committing atrocious sins and getting eaten by ignorant tourist fishermen in the end.

He read the sign beside the spiny fish, which was (he learned) more commonly known as the clown fish. It was orange and black striped, loaded with long barbs that swayed in the water like shreds of cloth. When he was a little boy he'd had a goldfish named Bruce that he thought was lonely. So he had bought another goldfish, brighter and shinier, to keep Bruce company. The next morning he'd come into the living room to see that Bruce's fins had been completely shredded by the new one, somehow. He flushed the new one immediately and told his mom it died, an easy fabrication in regard to the fragile lives of fish.

One of the clown fish was larger than the rest, and started moving closer to him. He thought he was imagining it at first, given his current state of mind, until the fish actually bumped into the glass. Rich watched in disbelief as the fish did it again, its bobbing mouth softly kissing the glass. He smiled and nodded at the fish, wanting to appease it, before backing away and continuing onward.

Sometimes the corridors opened up into larger rooms. One held an enormous shallow pool holding flat

creatures that zoomed around, past the outstretched hands of children. Manta rays: not harmful, according to the sign. The next large room housed a vast collection of sea-shells arranged in glass cases covering the walls. Yeah, pretty, but kind of boring. Rich continued through the winding corridors, slowing in front of each tank to watch the fish come to the glass to stare back at him. Wild. Knowing it had to be an illusion, he decided to enjoy it. He nodded and pretended to tip an invisible hat at each stop.

The final room cut off his amusement at once. It held a huge tank that went up almost three floors, and at first glance appeared empty with only some seaweed and rocks on the bottom. Then Rich looked up and saw them; two dark shapes moving swiftly, their large tails whipping back and forth.

Sharks. Rich looked at the sign on the wall and read that they were both tiger sharks, second only to the great white in numbers of unprovoked attacks on humans. Apparently these were caused by innate curiosity and an indiscriminate appetite.

The sharks didn't look at him as the other fish had. They continued to surge through the tank, almost

running into the glass before turning at the last second, as if they were searching for a secret way out.

It wasn't until he arrived back at his post an hour later that Rich remembered breaks were only supposed to be 15 minutes long. Sherry stood in his place, idly flipping through a *People* magazine and ignoring a teenage couple making out behind the brochures. The room was otherwise empty: an apparent lunch-time lull.

"There you are," she cried and straightened up, looking him up and down. "I thought you'd fallen into a tank and drowned. Lucky there's been no problems today." She motioned to the small radio clipped to her hefty waist.

"Sorry," Rich murmured and slipped his sunglasses back on. "I got lost." Sherry shook her head but smiled. She patted his ass on the way out. Rich found it entirely depressing and sighed through the rest of his shift.

Sherry stopped him in the coatroom as he was checking out his time card.



Ooda Group (Shaun Owens-Agase, Tyler Peterson, Kristof Wickman), *Office Kiss*, ceiling tile, carpet, plywood, 2x2's, fan, CK Contradiction, CK Truth, 2004

"So, Richie Rich," she said, slipping on a huge sweater. "I got a question for ya."

"What's that?" he asked, attempting to match her over-enthusiastic tone, and wondering if Richie Rich would become his new, hated nickname.

"Well, where I'm from, which is here, we only use sunglasses when we're outside. And only then if actually sunny."

Wait, didn't you come from a cave? Rich realized he was required to provide an explanation instead of standing there smirking, and he removed the sunglasses and squinted. "I actually have weak pupils. They don't get as small as they're supposed to, so when I'm subjected to a larger amount of light, even indirect, my eyes can't handle it. And there are a lot of windows in the lobby."

Sherry scrunched her forehead as she buttoned her sweater. Rich waited patiently for her to question and perhaps fire him. She was kind of old, probably in her late 30s, but she couldn't be as dumb as she appeared if she was running such a large aquarium. He pictured the aquarium at night, the lights out and the fish drifting around in complete darkness.

"Does anyone else stay here over night?" he asked, hoping they did.

She nodded. "Of course. We have night people that keep things running. I heard this horror story a couple years ago about a terrible aquarium in Anaheim where the night people all left to go to a bar, and when they got back in the morning all the fish were floating on top of the water. The central heating system had blown out and they weren't there to fix it."

"That's awful!" Rich cried, and Sherry nodded.

"I know," she said, her mouth frozen into a brave grimace. "It was a sad day for that aquarium."

Nothing more was said of Rich's eye condition, so he went back home to John's. He fell asleep early and dreamed about sitting on the bottom of the ocean, watching dark shapes approach him from a distance.

The next day at work, another stranger stood in his place; a small girl with thick blond hair and clear braces.

"We're not quite open," she told him. "I haven't turned on the cash register yet."

"I work here," Rich said. "This is my shift."

"No," the girl said, her friendly tone gone. "It's mine." He shook his head and turned to walk back out the door, wondering if he had enough money in his pocket for breakfast at Denny's, when she called, "Oh, are you

Richard? Sorry, I forgot. Sherry told me to tell you that you're helping Lisa today. You're feeding the fish. She said something about it being easier on your eyes."

Richard smiled and started down the corridor.

Sherry was nowhere to be found, so he searched for Lisa. He saw the net before anything else, waving slowly through a tank of tiny green fish and dropping little food particles into their path.

He wondered how he could get her attention, since she was above the tank. He walked to the tank and crouched down, looking up through the seaweed and school of tiny fish. A girl's face appeared above him, bluish-white like a corpse, with her mouth and eyes dark holes. The face looked oddly detached; a severed head floating at the surface. The tiny green fish sparkled as they flitted through their food. He stood transfixed by the sight until something else appeared next to the head: a waving hand. He waved back, but the head and hand disappeared.

A minute later something grabbed his arm.

"Rich." The corpse in its entirety. Only she was much more beautiful up close, her skin smooth and translucent like mother-of-pearl, her dark green eyes full of the same radiant sheen of the tiny fish.

"I'm Lisa," she went on. "You're going to help me for a couple weeks, until Carson gets back. Have you ever fed fish before?"

"Just my goldfish," he said truthfully, and was surprised when she laughed.

She turned and walked away, the thin gold sheet of her hair fluttering against her back. Rich followed her and felt as if they were both underwater, and though he was moving as fast as he could he wouldn't be able to catch up.

They fed the manta rays next. Lisa said they were her favorite, and Rich told her they looked like flying carpets, which made her grin at him like they were sharing a private joke.

Lisa brought out two buckets of fish innards and set one by Rich's feet before walking to the other side of the circular pool. For once the room was empty, and they were alone.

"Just grab a piece like this," she said and held a dripping pink mass under the water. "They have to eat from our hands, because it's too much of a pain to drag the extras out after they're done."

"What spoiled manta rays," Rich said, grabbing a

piece with his gloved hand and holding it underwater. He suddenly realized what he was doing and wanted to snatch it back out. What if the rays bite him? They obviously had plenty of teeth to chew this food, let alone his hand.

"Don't worry," Lisa said, watching his expression. "They don't bite." A dark shape flew by her, and she held up her hand, unharmed. "See?"

Rich nodded and concentrated on the several creatures heading straight towards him, their thin bodies rippling. His face felt very warm, though his arm shivered from the cold water. The largest one, probably three feet across, swished sideways over his hand and sucked up the food like a tiny vacuum. He held up his hand and showed it to Lisa, who pretended to send him a high-five through the air.

A group of middle-school boys wandered in, yelling and punching at each other. They ran up to the pool and started splashing each other.

"Stop!" Lisa yelled with the ferocity of a lifeguard. They paused mid-splash and stared at her. "Do anything like that again and you'll get kicked out," she said.

"Fuck you, fish lady!" the tallest said, too quiet to be truly defiant. The other boys giggled and they all sprinted into the next room.

Lisa rolled her eyes, but a grandmother and some little girls came in before she could speak. They continued to feed the manta rays in a peaceable silence, and Rich soon became brave enough to touch the rays with his other hand, feeling their velvety softness brush past.

Fish Lady, he thought when he looked over at Lisa, and saw that she was petting the rays as well.

By the time they got to the shark tank, Rich felt like he had known Lisa since kindergarten. He had no idea he could joke around so easily with someone new, but after a few hours his throat felt raw from talking and laughing so much. It was thrilling, especially given Lisa's gorgeous smile. Rich had never experienced any deep-rooted self-esteem issues, but he thought he viewed himself more accurately than most. He was twenty-six, and had stopped talking about going back to school more than a couple years ago. He had worked a variety of jobs since high school, including truck-washer, encyclopedia salesman, and even a hair salon receptionist. It hadn't really mattered in the past; Rich had thought that eventually, when he and Jane got married, her Dad would be forced to give him a job at his company, and then he would stop being such a slacker and would work his way up the corporate ladder so that their kids could wear Baby Gap

clothes and go on family vacations to Disneyland. It had seemed reasonable at the time, and Rich was so content that he never heeded Jane's complaints that he was wasting his life and wasn't going to go anywhere if he didn't get his shit together. Then they'd watch a DVD and he'd think that was it, just a small obligatory outburst from time to time to make her feel she was fulfilling her duty as the supportive, encouraging girlfriend. And after six fucking years he had found out that she was actually serious. Since his ex-best friend Dave's aspirations of rock-stardom were utterly ridiculous, he realized that Jane would have been happy with any delusion, which he'd always been too realistic to have.

"These are the worst," Lisa said as they stood atop a bridge that extended over the top of the shark tank. "They're always hungry. We used to keep other fish at the bottom of the tank, but these guys kept eating them, so they had to be moved."

Rich nodded, swallowing. They looked much bigger from above, their thick bodies winding around in an intricate pattern, speeding up as if they could sense the humans above and were excited about the possible chance of one falling in.

"Have there ever been any accidents?" he asked. Lisa shook her head.

"Not here. I've heard of that happening in other places, though. They seem so peaceful right now, but they really are killers."

Peaceful? What was she talking about? Lisa grabbed a basket-ball sized chunk of meat, raw and dripping, and dropped it. Immediately one of the sharks chomped it, tearing off half with an efficient head-twist. The other grabbed the rest, and it was gone.

"Do you want to?" she asked. Rich nodded, gripping the small metal railing that stood only a foot from the floor of the bridge to keep their crouched bodies from tipping in. He picked up another piece of meat (disgusting), and let go. This time both sharks attempted to grip it in their mouths at one time, and they crashed into each other, their giant bodies churning the water. The slightly bigger one won and gnawed and tore the meat until just a few floating particles remained. As they tossed down more and more meat, Rich began imagining that it was his body instead that plopped into the water. He pictured himself floating, treading water with a startled expression on his face. What would they go for first? An arm? A leg?

By the time the buckets were empty, Rich had to excuse himself to run to the bathroom. He vomited twice



Christine Carlson, *Schism*, mixed media on paper, 2004

before returning to Lisa and pretending that nothing had happened.

Time with Lisa only got better from there, and not just because his contact with Sherry dropped to zero. Even virtually non-verbal brother John said something when he noticed that Rich had stopped watching all-night MTV marathons of reality shows.

"Things good at work?" John said one night as they feasted on spaghetti noodles and ketchup.

Rich just nodded and smiled. The constant thoughts of *Jane, Jane, Jane* had begun to attenuate, making it less necessary to smoke and drink as much as he had been doing. And finally, it happened. He wasn't sure exactly how it occurred, but one night he and Lisa ended up grabbing dinner after work.

"So what's with the eye thing?" she asked as they bit into their hamburgers.

"What?" He had been concentrating on her loose green sweater, trying to picture what was beneath it.

"Your eye condition. Sherry said you were having trouble at the ticket counter because it's so bright in the lobby. But you look okay now."

"Oh." Rich shrugged and bit into a fry. "That was a lie, actually. I smoked weed that morning and couldn't go in looking like Frankenstein." The words were out before he could stop them, and his shoulders sagged. Lisa

didn't look like the type of girl to condone smoking on the job, or marijuana in general. It was all over; she'd label him a loser and that would be it.

She stared down at her plate with a fry frozen in her hand, her expression serious. Then she looked up and smiled. "Promise you won't tell anyone?"

He nodded, drinking some Coke to avoid an enthusiastic verbal affirmation.

She folded her hands on the table. "When I was twelve I learned about Tourette's syndrome from some movie, after we'd just moved from Chicago to San Diego. And on the first day of seventh grade, on one of the breaks I just started screaming at this girl that had been bitchy to me the whole morning. I said the most awful things; I don't even know where I'd heard them before. And then of course I was forced to go to the principal's office, and I started crying and I told them I had Tourette's. They called my house that night, and I answered the phone and pretended to be my Mom so I could confirm the story. And for the rest of junior high I randomly yelled at people that pissed me off, and sometimes my friends, for no reason."

She looked up, her green eyes huge and shimmering in the sunlight.

"That's amazing," Rich said. *Jane. Jane who?*

Things came crashing down exactly two weeks later, when Carson returned. Rich remembered hearing

about him vaguely on the first day, but in Lisa's glowing presence he had completely forgotten about Carson's existence. So of course it was quite a shock to skip into the clock-in room that morning and find Lisa covering her face and shaking as a dark-haired stranger gripped her shoulders.

"What the fuck," Rich cried, and grabbed the man's right arm. They both turned to him. Lisa uncovered her face, and Rich saw that although her eyes were red and runny, it was from laughter.

"Rich," she said, as if his sputtered profanity had never occurred. "This is Carson." He removed his arm from Rich's grasp and passed off a grimace for a smile.

"Carson," Rich said, still not knowing.

"He's the original fish feeder," Lisa said. "He just got back from Argentina, so I guess you'll be able to go back to drugs in the morning."

The comment hung in the air, obviously supposed to be a joke but coming out flat. Carson held out his hand. "Good to meet you, man." His voice was smooth and deep, the perfect complement to his chocolate brown eyes and faultless features. Rich shook it and nodded, remembering suddenly that he had forgotten his sunglasses.

Carson offered to take Rich's spot for the day, given Rich's dilemma of having to work sans-sunglasses and explaining this miraculous healing to Sherry. It was a nice gesture on Carson's part but it made Rich hate him even more. It did give him one last day with Lisa, though.

Rich had a terrible suspicion that he wouldn't see her again after this. They had connected (he was sure of that), and an hour before he would have put money on the fact that they'd start to officially date in the next couple weeks. He'd even begun planning the perfect situation in which to kiss her and feel her soft lips against his.

But the way she had been looking at Carson that morning, and was now blathering on about him non-stop made Rich seriously question the longevity of their relationship.

"I would love to go to Argentina," Lisa gushed as they sprinkled food into the clown fish tank. "Carson says it's so gorgeous. God, he's been scuba-diving all over the place. Last summer he went to Australia and swam in the Great Barrier Reef. Can you believe that?"

But we laughed together. I know one of your secrets. Rich tried to smile at the required moments when she looked at him. The fish seemed to sense that something was wrong. In every tank the food fell to the bottom, untouched.

"That's weird," Lisa said. "I wonder if there's something wrong with the water."

The manta rays wouldn't even come near them. They stayed on the bottom of the pool, their flat bodies completely still.

"Come on, guys!" Lisa called to them, shaking the bait in the water. "Lunch is served!" Rich leaned against the tank and watched them, not bothering to hold out any food.

Maybe he and Lisa would pass in the clock-in room from time to time, saying hello and awkwardly attempting jokes. She might mention his eye condition. He'd nod and chuckle and feel like crying.

And perhaps Carson would come in, and Lisa would look at him and beam with the smile that used to be solely for him.

Lisa's exuberance heightened throughout the day, until Rich thought she was acting manic. He, conversely, sunk lower into a swirling pit of resentment and jealousy. He had thought Lisa was his rescuer, his savior, but it had all turned out to be a pathetic mistake on his part. How could such a luminous being feel anything but pity for such a worthless creature as himself?

On the way to the shark tank they walked through several corridors, where the fish aligned in rows near the glass and watched them pass. Lisa didn't seem to notice. They stared at Rich as if he were a prisoner being led to the chair and they were the other inmates leaning against the bars. He walked behind Lisa and tried to make eye contact with all of them, winking courageously and rolling his eyes in defiance. He wished desperately he could save them, maybe load them all into a huge tank in a van and drive them to the coast and release them into the sea. They would turn and wave their little fins in gratitude before swimming away.

"These guys are crazy today," Lisa said, staring down into the water. Ben and Jerry (who they'd named to make less intimidating) looked as if they were moving in fast-forward, swimming much faster than usual and causing ripples on the surface fifteen feet above their bodies.

Rich didn't reply. He leaned onto the thin railing. He felt exhausted and slightly dizzy. The room seemed too dark, and the tank below looked blindingly bright. The sharks were huge and black, their apparent energy making them twice as large.

"You little guys must be hungry," Lisa called down

to the sharks in a baby-voice Rich had never heard before, and which grated on his nerves. She pulled on her gloves and dragged the bucket closer to her. "What have you been doing to work up such an appetite?"

"Don't talk to them like that," Rich said. His voice sounded strange, strangled and too high. He wiped his forehead, forgetting he already had the gloves on, and it left a pungent fishy smell on his skin. His stomach clenched upon itself.

"What's wrong, is Richie scared they're going to bite me?" she asked and, her laugh sounded malicious, as if she knew that he had loved her.

"Is Richie scared of the big bad sharks?" she asked. She leaned over the side and splashed her hand in the water. "Well, I'm not afraid."

"Don't do that," Rich said, irritated. He grabbed her hand out.

She grabbed her hand away and splashed again. "Here, sharkies. Come and get me."

They were swimming close to the surface now, closer than Rich had ever seen them before. He caught sight of their black

eyes, gleaming on both sides of their flattened heads. Ten feet. Five feet.

"Lisa, don't," he said. "They're too close." The room seemed even darker now, and he rubbed his eyes, ignoring the fishy smell all over his face.

Lisa still had her hand in the water, no longer splashing but just slowly waving back and forth. She

watched it as if in a trance. "Do you really think they would bite me?" she asked, leaning further over the railing. The slightly larger shark, Jerry, swam up suddenly and passed by only a foot from her hand.

"God, what the fuck are you doing?" Rich said. He gripped her arm and pulled it out of the water.

"Stop, you're hurting me!" she cried and jerked

away. Rich felt her body tipping over the railing almost before it started happening. Her face changed; her mouth opened and her eyes became wide.

He reacted quickly, pulling her body back with all of his strength and tossing her away from the water. And with that wrench, his own weight shifted over the railing and he felt himself falling. He was then in the water, shockingly cold, and from below the surface he could see Lisa's face, white as a corpse, her mouth and eyes two shadowy holes.

The terror Rich would have expected didn't come, but he found he couldn't move. He stared up, watching Lisa's face grow smaller as he began to sink. Something brushed his

outstretched fingers, and he turned to watch Jerry glide past, staring at him with one black marble eye. They circled him, so close he could catch glimpses of their yawning mouths lined with little white teeth. He moved his hand and touched the end of a fin as Ben slid by, and it burned against his fingers like sandpaper. There were now tiny red dots on his fingers.



Melissa Cooke, *Throne of Wisdom*, gouache, 2004

That was when Rich kicked and pulled his arms until he broke the surface, gasping and reaching for the small bridge. Lisa was shrieking and she grabbed his hands and tried to pull him up, but she wasn't strong enough.

The railing was too far above him to reach. He treaded water and looked around him at the fins now cutting through the surface of the water. Holy fuck. This was ridiculous. Jerry brushed past his hand again. His fingers were now releasing thin ribbons of pink into the water.

Lisa continued screaming from the bridge; Rich couldn't process the words. Instead, he continued treading water and felt strangely calm. He really couldn't have planned it any better. He would finally be put out of his unending misery, and the world would be free of his body doing nothing but taking up space and creating waste.

He felt kind of bad for Lisa, who would probably blame herself in some capacity. But would she really? Or would she just tell everyone that he had fell in because he was a dumb-ass and leaned too far over? Yeah, they'd talked a lot when working together, but it was always about old TV shows and bands and never anything important, except for that one flash of intimacy at the burger joint. But really, how well did he know Lisa? Would he have ever expected her to purposefully tease the sharks?

He had to stop this; Lisa was just a person, as full of blame as anyone else. She was not perfect, not an angelic Fish Lady. And neither was Jane, for that matter.

Then Rich actually became afraid, and threw his head around at the fins. But they swiftly sank into the water, and he watched as the sharks swam towards the bottom of the pool, circling around at a much slower pace as if he'd bored them. Rich grabbed again at Lisa's outstretched arm, who pulled him up enough so he could clutch the railing. He managed to hoist himself up and roll over onto the bridge. Lying on his back, he panted and stared at the ceiling. Lisa clutched at him and laid her head down on his chest, moaning a stream of profanities that didn't sound right, coming out of her mouth.

After a second Rich sat up and stared into the water. The sharks' power was apparent, even from up here. And they'd given him a second chance. He looked at his fingers, which spilled bright red droplets through the grating and into the tank. He stood up and walked across the bridge and down the stairs, back into the aquarium. Lisa followed a few steps behind, still blubbing.

The fish were actually swimming now, and they ignored him as he passed. Some of them looked almost

playful, chasing each other and hiding behind bright pieces of coral. Maybe they weren't trapped, like he had thought they were. They could be perfectly happy. They were only fish, after all.

When Rich entered the lobby, Sherry looked up from behind the cash register, where she and the blonde girl were smacking at the machine as a long, annoyed line formed.

"Where are your sunglasses?" Sherry asked, and then, in a higher voice, "why are you wet?"

"Ask Lisa," he said as he breezed by. "I can't work here anymore. I'm going to go find something better."

Outside, the sun warmed him immediately. He looked all around him, at the honking cars and bikers and rollerbladers shooting by. Seagulls screeched down from the sky, and he looked up at them with a hand over his eyes. They swooped and shrieked, as if announcing how great it was to be a bird, even if they did eat garbage from time to time.

Rich grinned. He shook his head and droplets flew out of his hair, sparkling in the light. Then he started walking down the sidewalk, leaving wet footprints in his wake. ♦



Weston Ulfig, *Daytime Monster*, serigraph, 2004



Andrew Hutchison, *Pacifist*, oil, 2005

SUSANNA RASMUSSEN

A SILENT LEGACY: Understanding my Grandmother's Refusal to Testify before HUAC in 1955

To say that my grandmother shaped who I am today, in terms of my values and beliefs, would not be entirely correct, for she never told me outright that I needed to share her radical views. She also never shared her story of struggle and loss that occurred as a result of the political and cultural environment of the Cold War and Red Scare in 1950's America. She never spoke of her pain—only her memories of her large, close-knit immigrant family, her love of Slovak music and food, and the needs of others less fortunate than her. Yet her radical beliefs and past were never completely absent when we were together: it was through less overt means that I began to understand the experiences of a woman I would only know until my fifteenth year. I learned my grandmother's politics through the *United Electrician, Radio, and Machine Workers of America* coat that I buttoned up every fall (unaware of the union's radical political beliefs, but perfectly aware of the coat's warmth), and the issues of *Mother Jones* that served as a tablecloth during our afternoon tea parties. I have absorbed many of my grandmother's radical beliefs simply by sitting next to her as she darned socks, baked Slovak *kolach* from scratch, and cheered wildly while watching Packers' football.

I cherish my childhood memories of my grandmother Darina, but they are sugar-coated. I have no recollection of any conversations about the Communist Party, and coming to terms with this silence forces me to admit that I do not entirely know who my grandmother was. As a child I had no knowledge of her many attempts to organize workers, her struggle to adjust from city to farm life during the Depression, and the pain she experienced with her husband's death. In an effort to gain more knowledge, I must try to understand the historical context of the mid-1950s and listen to the only words of my grandmother that I have left: the transcript of her testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) from 1955. In an effort to further understand her experience, and to reinforce that my life is an extension of hers, I choose to focus on her experience testifying before HUAC to try and answer the question that remains.

Was She a Communist?

From family stories, I understand that she was called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee, yet beyond this basic knowledge no specific information surfaces. This has always left me with various questions: What was her party affiliation? What exactly was she accused of? And was she innocent? I understand that the Red Scare occurred at a time when the varying political beliefs of my extended family brought on a painful tension between certain relatives. This was very difficult for a close, immi

grant family in Cudahy, Wisconsin who held on to each other for a connection to the old country of Czechoslovakia. The paranoia that was prevalent during the Cold War left many people with a fear of being associated with the "enemy" and thus exclusion by means of the blacklist. At this time, there was no clear line drawn for the public between people who sympathized with Marxist ideology and people who were Soviet spies: "In the minds of many or most Americans, [the Rosenberg and the Fuchs] cases and others indelibly linked the American Communist Party to Soviet espionage"¹. It is with great respect that I ask this delicate question: to what extent was my grandmother involved in the Communist Party? In an effort to better understand my grandmother, I wish to investigate our national history, my family history, and thus myself.

For her entire life, my grandmother was a member of the working class. She was born in East St. Louis, IL in 1913, the eldest daughter of Slovak immigrants John Moravec and Anna Toth. Although they were always pressed for money, my grandmother often spoke of happy childhood memories of food, family gatherings, and music. My great grandparents taught their children the importance of hard work, and to take pride in their ethnic background. Once the family relocated to Cudahy, a suburb of industrialized Milwaukee, my grandmother witnessed her fellow Slovaks hard at work and saw many of her fellow laborers organizing for workers' rights. These observations and lessons stayed with my grandmother; she eventually became one of the founders of both the Wisconsin Slovak Historical Society and of the Labor History Society of Wisconsin.

My Grandmother's Labor Education

My grandmother experienced life as a laborer; when she graduated from Cudahy High School in 1930 she immediately went to work on an assembly line for 16 cents an hour. In 1935, after holding six different jobs, she won a scholarship to the University of Wisconsin School for Workers Summer Session in Madison. There she lived in a dormitory on Lake Mendota and took courses in public speaking, parliamentary law, labor history, labor politics, effective writing, labor drama, worker's poetry and literature.² She received a formal education focusing on labor and felt camaraderie with others who believed in organizing for workers' rights. She went on to several other job posts and tried her hand at organizing workers. Her first attempt was while she was employed as second cook at Lake Tomahawk State Rehabilitation Camp. Her efforts fell short and the workers failed to organize, but

later she had more success. While employed at Chase Bag in Milwaukee, she effectively organized the shop and became the union's chair person.³ She took her position seriously and was respected by people on both sides of the negotiation; she became life-long friends with her supervisor at Chase Bag, even though they were on opposing sides of the labor issue. She was a member of the joint board of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in Milwaukee, and worked 26 years at the United Electricians Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE). Her background in labor would remain a consistent presence throughout her life.

While she was employed at Lake Tomahawk Rehabilitation Camp, which housed recovering tuberculosis patients, my grandmother met my future grandfather, Carl F. Rasmussen. My grandfather was a recovering patient and a worker in the camp's power plant. One day, when my grandmother was filling plates with food, the sun caught her auburn hair—it was love at first sight for my grandfather. Since affairs between patients and sanitarium staff were forbidden, they courted secretly through notes in his lunchbox.

From City Girl to Farm Wife

My grandparents married and moved to Argonne, Wisconsin where my grandfather owned land and a farm. My grandmother had to adjust quickly to farm life. They raised almost all of their own food, and few modern conveniences. One time, my grandmother delivered a neighbor's baby because they had no telephone and the doctor was miles away. In an article she wrote for the *Wisconsin Labor History Newsletter* in 1988, my grandmother explained that it was during this physically and economically challenging time that she gained appreciation for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA). This piece of legislation was passed under President Roosevelt's administration during the One Hundred Days in 1933, and included such programs as price supports, subsidies, and soil conservation programs. Although life with my grandfather would involve more struggles and leftward political leaning, it is clear that my grandmother was influenced by ideas often referred to as "socialist" even before she encountered my grandfather.

My grandfather was a man of many talents. He made his living as a farmer, worked as the local lay preacher, and was an avid scholar of politics and philosophy. In addition, he was an active member of the Communist Party. He passed away in the fall of 1951 with no life insurance (TB patients were not eligible for Social Security)

or money. My grandmother moved back to Milwaukee and started working at the UE. Four years later she was called to testify before HUAC.

Significant parts of the puzzle are missing: my grandmother never stated that she was a member of the Communist Party, but the UE was rumored to have the highest concentration of Communists in the CIO, and would eventually be expelled for this reason. Through her job at the UE, my grandmother became acquainted with Michael Ondrejka, Jerry Rose, and John Killian. All of these men were called to testify in Washington and claimed to know my grandmother. Ondrejka named her as a member of a Communist group that met at the Milwaukee UE. As a result, my grandmother was subpoenaed to testify before HUAC.

My ears still ring with my grandmother's silence; I am haunted by the fact that I do not know what really happened to her. Several questions persist: was she a Communist? Did she remain quiet because of the turbulent political context of the fifties? Or was she simply caught in the wrong place at the wrong time, a simple victim of a paranoid, red-baiting society?

The United Electrical, Machine and Radio Workers of America (UE)

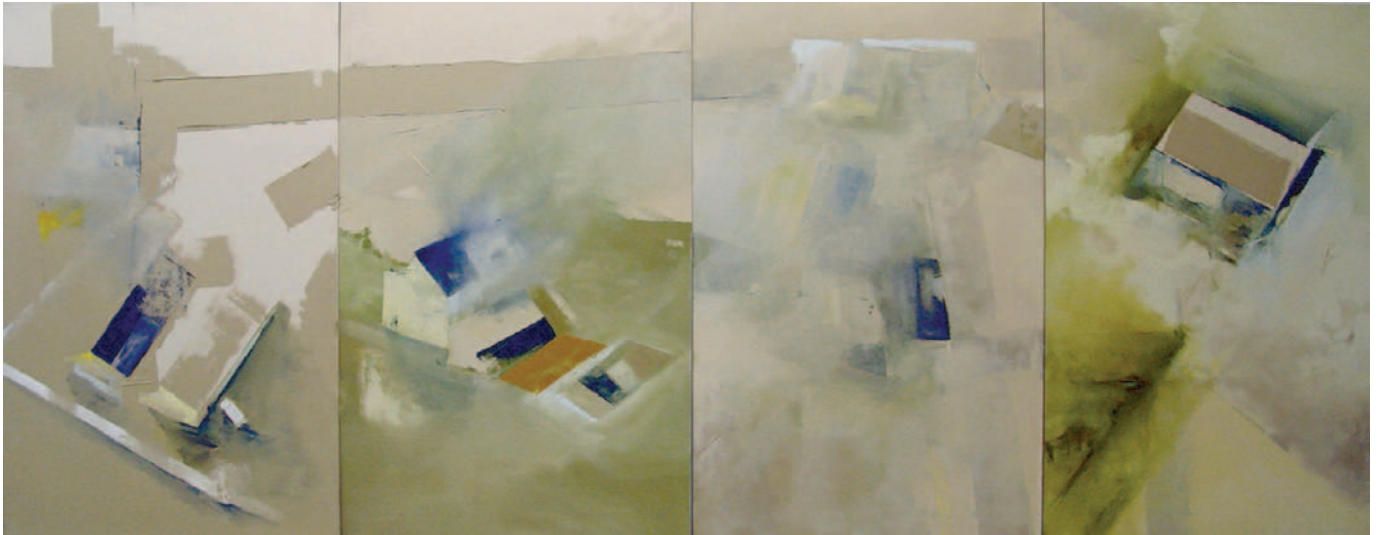
To understand what drew my grandmother to join such a union after the death of my grandfather, I turned to the history of the UE. Before my grandmother began her employment with the UE in Milwaukee, the union had a very radical history. Author John Haynes claims that the UE had the highest rate of Communist infiltration of any of the unions in the CIO. Haynes is careful to point out that unions were often not affiliated with political parties, preferring to promote solidarity and look out for their interests as a union.⁴ According to Haynes, there was not a large Communist presence in labor: "Of the total labor movement, workers in Communist-aligned unions represented less than a sixth of the membership."⁵ The UE was the first and largest member of the CIO. The UE today does not readily mention its Communist-laced past, but members proudly describe themselves as an independent union (it is not affiliated with the AFL-CIO), and a "rank and file" member-run union. The UE's democratic structure and its traditionally progressive politics stem from the union's history. However, to understand what led the UE to expulsion from the CIO and thus to its independence, it is necessary to look back to the union's political history and the historical context.

The UE began in March of 1936 as a coalition of

several autonomous local unions and militant workers' committees based in electrical manufacturing and radio assembly plants. Initially their request for a charter as a union for the unorganized electrical manufacturing industry was rejected by the American Federation of Labor, so they chose to be independent and launched their own national union. The UE became the first union chartered by the CIO, brand new at this time; by the end of World War II, the UE was the third largest CIO union with a membership of 500,000. Philip Murray, head of the CIO before the Taft-Hartley Act, was initially indifferent to Communism. He was aware of its presence in his unions, but did not mind (many of the largest CIO unions had members and officials who were Communist). However, after the Republican senatorial class of 1946 came to power and passed the Taft-Hartley Act, Murray felt that the Republican legislation was endangering labor. The Communist presence in the unions was hurting the CIO by fracturing the Democratic opposition into smaller parties, such as the Radical Progressive Party.⁶ Murray decided he could no longer tolerate Communists in his union and began attacking unions rumored to have the highest Communist infiltration. He started with the UE.

The struggle for radical laborers did not stop there. The Taft-Hartley Act stated that unions would lose their National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) protection if they did not sign the anti-Communist oath. Many union members did not wish to face their employers without the NLRB protections. The desire to have a more unified anti-Republican front, along with the Taft-Hartley Act, drove Murray to give Communists an ultimatum: reform or be expelled from the CIO. He also expelled the UE, creating an alternative called the Union of Electrical Workers. The UE barely survived: they lost more than half of their members to the CIO's new alternative and to other unions. Further, Murray's action brought the UE to HUAC's attention: shop leaders were fired, blacklisted, and sometimes jailed. Many UE members, including my grandmother, were called to testify in Washington.

My grandmother's local labor union was under investigation when HUAC was informed that a Communist cell held meetings in their Milwaukee office. One wonders if the particular interest in the UE stemmed from their radical history. My grandmother spent years of her life working for the UE in Milwaukee as a receptionist and secretary. She was subpoenaed to testify in Washington because of the people she knew and worked with. Haynes argued that the real struggle between Communists and anti-Communists existed within labor unions. However, few union members outwardly declared themselves mem



Andrew Hutchison, *Landscape*, oil, 2004

bers of political parties, especially the Communist Party. According to Haynes, in this tumultuous time for laborers, many were silent when questions arose about their political affiliation—in an effort to protect themselves and to preserve their union. I know that my grandmother had a strong background in labor both from her work experience and from her educational background. She firmly believed in the worker's right to organize and the effectiveness of organizing laborers. Since my grandmother did not answer these questions herself, I can only speculate as to what her motivations were to remain silent: perhaps she wanted to protect her union by maintaining some separation between the union and party affiliation. However, I have no way to confirm this theory and can only speculate that my grandmother took great pride in her labor union.

Judgment Day: The Transcript of My Grandmother's HUAC Testimony

My grandmother, a single working mother, employed at a radical labor union in Milwaukee and widow of an ardent Communist thinker, was subpoenaed in 1955 to testify in Washington before the House Un-American Activities Committee. After taking the time to understand the general attitudes of Americans of this time, it is not altogether surprising that a woman in her situation would be called. Her deceased husband had been open about his affiliation with the Communist Party and she worked at a labor union that had been excluded from the CIO because of the high number of Communists within its membership. However, this does not answer the question: why her? To get a step closer, I looked carefully at the transcript of her testimony.

The main characters in this testimony are Michael Ondrejka, Jerry Rose, and John Killian, all of whom were called to testify before the committee. Ondrejka was connected with the UE through various tax services he conducted for the union. Jerry Rose was not affiliated with the UE, but was present at Communist group meetings held at the Milwaukee office. John Killian was a member and a former steward of the UE local 1111 and was allegedly involved in a Communist cell. Reading the transcript of my grandmother's testimony, it becomes clear that Mr. Tavenner, the prosecutor, is trying to link these three men to my grandmother and convince her that Ondrejka has named her as active within a Communist cell. Although my grandmother does not confirm his statements, Tavenner uses these men and their previous statements to paint a picture of what has occurred at the UE in Milwaukee and what my grandmother had allegedly contributed.

While skimming through the transcript, I immediately noticed how my grandmother repeatedly pleads the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution, which allowed her to not testify against herself. I was reminded of the difficult situation she must have been in: pressured not only to incriminate herself, but to name other names as well. Although her repeated refusal to answer the question keeps me from learning exactly what really happened, it causes me to wonder if some answers to my questions could emerge through her silence.

The best example, the first time my grandmother asserts her Fifth Amendment privilege, follows:

Tavenner: Are you acquainted with a person by the name of Jerry Rose?

(Witness conferred with counsel)

Rasmussen: I refuse to answer that; I assert the privilege not to testify against myself.

My grandmother gives the exact same response when asked if she knew Michael Ondrejka. Suddenly, she does not want to talk about the present, or about these acquaintances. Both of these men have already testified. Who is she protecting?

This shift leaves me with a feeling of confusion. She is offering absolutely no information, yet as a result of the very implications of the Fifth Amendment, and the continual flow of questions by the prosecution, she is affiliating herself with the “criminal” or “unpatriotic” behavior that the prosecution wishes to link to her while testifying on the record. Her answers have an almost robotic feeling, which is bizarre to me—this is hardly the woman I knew and loved. A closer reading of the transcript shows that she is, in fact, open about herself and her past, but shuts down the moment other names are involved. She may be protecting herself or refusing to incriminate others.

Tavener continues with his line of questioning, and my grandmother repeats her Fifth Amendment privilege several times. She is not confirming any of what he is saying, but by refusing to comment, she is not contradicting him either. Her refusal to speak shows strength on her part, but it also makes Tavener’s case more convincing.

As Tavener continues his questioning, he begins to include excerpts from the testimonies of other witnesses: Ondrejka, Killian, and Rose. In an effort to incriminate my grandmother and these other men, Tavener uses statements made by others to fill in her silence.

A segment of Ondrejka’s testimony is presented by Tavener to my grandmother, a portion of which follows:

At the end of this meeting [a cell meeting April 15th, 1953] I had told John Killian that I would be glad to sit there the rest of the morning with him, that we might go through a telephone directory and get the names of the stewards that we would have a mailing list to send them to. He [Killian] said, ‘That isn’t necessary because I will go to the union office and get them from one certain individual.’ He said to me, ‘In case you didn’t know it, this individual is the fifth member of our cell,’ and he asked if I was surprised; and the

reason I remember is because he asked that question, and I said ‘No, I suspected it the day Jerry Rose was in the office [Ondrejka claimed that he worked for a time as an FBI informant].

When asked about this information, my grandmother invokes her Fifth Amendment privilege, though she previously stated that she knew John Killian. The references to Ondrejka’s testimony continue:

Tavener: Now, you [Ondrejka] have not mentioned the name of that individual?

Mr. Ondrejka: I do not mention this person’s name because of the fact that I was told by Jerry Rose at the first meeting it was as undisclosed Fifth. I was told by John Killian who the member was, but because of the fact that this member worked on days while we held our meetings at 8 o’clock in the morning, John Killian said that he would take the agenda which was written, plus the discussion notes that resulted from the meeting, and he would go down early in the afternoon before work and brief this individual on it.

Tavener: Under instructions from the committee, Mr. Ondrejka did not publicly identify that individual because of it being hearsay testimony. However, in the executive session before this committee, Mr. Ondrejka did identify that individual as you. Were you a member of the Communist Party of which John Killian was a member?

My grandmother pleads the Fifth.

Here, we finally see the substance of Tavener’s accusation. Ondrejka, a former FBI informant, had implicated my grandmother as the fifth member of a Communist cell that met at the UE office where she worked in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Ondrejka has not said this under oath, but he has implicated my grandmother. Why, if he had been an FBI informant, does he not confirm this information? Why should we believe he is not still working for the government and implicating people he is not entirely sure are members? Though Tavener has a threatening case, no evidence is on record. This returns us to the theme of silence. My grandmother chose to be silent but others did not and she was put in danger by words that were not her own. Her silence suddenly seems entirely justified, even though it leaves me no easy or direct explanation of her actions. Words were weapons, and she chose to be a pacifist and to fight her own war in a strong, silent way.

Though her silence is frustrating, it is not surprising coming from the strong-minded and patient woman I remember-making Slovak pastries by hand and organizing her fellow patients at the retirement home to lobby for better care. In a difficult situation, she was not intimidated by threats of the blacklist and jail time. She did not crumble, but stuck firmly to her values and belief in the protection offered to her by her country's Constitution. Although no facts have emerged, I feel as though her transcript conveys a great deal of answers about my grandmother's character: her toughness, her bravery and her perseverance regardless of her political affiliation.

Coming to Terms with My Legacy

As I sort through the scholarship on the historical period known today as the Cold War, including the Red Scare and McCarthyism, I am left with more questions than I began with. Some pertain to inconsistencies in my sources, my own wrestling match with hindsight versus the power of family loyalty, and the frustration that my work on this project seems to have only skimmed the surface of potential discovery. By looking at the national shift towards conservatism after the Depression and the war, McCarthy's rise and fall, Wisconsin's progressive politics and conservative politicians, and the emergence of HUAC as a household name in the 1950s, as well as some of the history of labor and the anti-labor legislation; I have begun to create a context in which I can approach the questions of why my grandmother was called to testify before HUAC in 1955. I may finally be able to meld this hushed family story with actual historic events, thereby explaining American anti-communist attitudes of the time. History explains how such attitudes evolved and expanded, leaving us a message to be wary of our attitudes in dangerous times and to always protect the constitutional rights of every citizen.

This story has real significance today: we see a parallel in the contemporary security situation in the U.S. after the September 11th World Trade Center attacks. The comparison is commonly made since the passing of the Patriot Act, a virtually unopposed piece of legislation that

some assert infringes on the civil rights and privacy of U.S. citizens. (This time, the only immediate opposition came from a Wisconsin senator.) With the government's introduction of a colorful scale of nondescript terror alerts, Americans are coerced to live in fear of the ever-impending terrorist attack. Racial profiling has caused unnecessary harassment of Arab Americans and Middle Eastern students at American universities. Under the mantle of homeland security, people are imprisoned without due process of law; now the U.S. is more than two years into a war in Iraq, the motivations of which are to "keep the American people safe."

Once again, we are in a dilemma spawned by fear. American people wish to be protected from both terrorists and the government. The Red Scare proved that fear can bring out the worst in people, causing them to persecute others based solely on their political affiliations. From my grandmother's case, we can learn from McCarthyism by revising our closed-minded attitudes, maintaining a free flow of ideas, and protecting the civil liberties of all Americans.



Zak Bruder, *Final March*, work on paper, 2004

Investigating this experience has caused me to consider how my family was affected. In the very last lines of the transcript, my grandmother finally speaks when asked about her children. Although nothing more than their names are stated, it is at this point that she speaks. It becomes apparent that her family would bear the brunt of this experience; even the lives

of her young children would never be the same. As the kids attended high school in inner city Milwaukee during the race riots and college through the Vietnam era and the "War at Home," they would always live with the fear that the government was out to get them. To this day, they believe there are FBI files on them and perhaps on my generation too.

If any part of this incident brought my grandmother pain, it was the fact that her actions would inevitably have an effect on her family and loved ones. Maybe she was also concerned that the incident would bring her family shame. When she was originally called to testify in Washington, she asked her youngest sister if she would accompany her on the trip. The sister, who was dating a prominent young conservative in the community, refused.

My grandmother most likely felt that people were ashamed of her at the time, when an anti-Communist sentiment was common among Americans.

Today, it is widely accepted that red baiting and the anti-Communist movement was allowed to escalate to the point of cruelty. Although my grandmother's experience isn't talked about light-heartedly (if at all) among family members, I do not believe the reason is shame. Instead, this suppression of information is a sign of unhealed wounds and a warning about the terrifying power of government and mass hysteria in times of war.

Although I began this project in an effort to uncover some murky elements of my family history, I also chose to explore my grandmother's background. I have always felt a close, personal connection with her. Although I am not sure how deeply one can read into a union jacket and *Mother Jones* magazines, I feel strongly that she has left a legacy for me. I do not know if I will ever fully understand this legacy, on account of the missing facts in her HUAC case.

After reviewing everything that I have learned, my questions about my grandmother remain unanswered. Was she a Communist? If she was a Communist, was she intrigued by Marx's dialectic, or was she a Soviet sympathizer? Was she the fifth member of the UE cell? I now understand that as a single-mother in 1955, with virtually no support, my grandmother stood strong and resisted the temptation to tell HUAC what they wanted to hear. Whether she was guilty, or simply refused to incriminate fellow workers or her husband, I will never know; her legacy to me is her silence.

Additionally, the legacy is about overcoming lingering feelings of shame and promoting the pride I have for my grandmother's brave actions. Even if she was a

Communist sympathizer, or a member of the Party, I know that she was not un-American and she loved her country. After all, it was the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution that protected her against the aggressive House Un-American Activities Committee. Her invocation of this Amendment was a great act of patriotism, allowing her to continue to love this country, even after the ordeal in Washington, D.C. She has taught me how to persevere by converting shame into pride.

Although her HUAC experience was one of few words, she rarely remained silent about causes she believed in: the civil rights movement, the various wars she lived through, or simply feeding people at homeless shelters and sanitariums. I am reminded of a poem by Ralph Chaplin, published as a conclusion to her 1988 article in the Wisconsin Labor History Newsletter:

*Mourn not the dead
But rather mourn the apathetic throng
The cowed-and meek
Who see the world's great anguish
And its wrong
And dare not speak*

I now have a better understanding of the message my grandmother conveyed through her silence. She did not simply refuse to tell her story; she protested the injustice she saw in her society. This action, more than a blue UE jacket, the occasional Progressive or Farmer-Labor party vote, or my appreciation of *Mother Jones* magazine, is the essence of the legacy that my grandmother passed on to me. ❖

Works Cited:

- Boyer, Richard O; Morais, Herbert M. *Labor's Untold Story, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America*. New York, NY: 1955.
"House Committee on Un-American Activities." *Britannica Student Encyclopedia*. 2004. Encyclopedia Britannica Online. 17 June 2004.
Haynes, John E. *Red Scare or Red Menace? American Communism and Anti Communism in the Cold War Era*. Ivan R Dee, Chicago, IL: 1996.
Holter, Darryl. *Workers and Unions in Wisconsin: A Labor History Anthology*. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI: 1999.
Koepp, Jarmila. *Darina Rasmussen: A Tribute to One of the Founders and First Officers of the Wisconsin Slovak Historical Society*.
Matles, James S; Higgins, James. *Them and US: Struggles of a Rank and File Union*. Prentice Hall INC, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: 1974.
Rasmussen, Darina. Testimony for the House Un-American Activities Committee, Eighty Fourth Congress, First Session; May 3rd 1955.
Oshinsky, David, M. *Senator Joseph McCarthy and the American Labor Movement*, University of Missouri Press, Columbia, Mo: 1976.
Selcraig, James Truett. *The Red Scare and the Midwest, 1945-1955: A State and Local Study*, UMI research Press, Ann Arbor, MI: 1982.
Wagner, Steven. Ph.D. Assistant Prof of history, department of Social Science Online; Missouri Southern State College.

¹ John E Haynes. *Red Scare or Red Menace? American Communism and Anti Communism in the Cold War Era*, 63.

² Rasmussen, Darina. *Testimony...*, 90.

³ Koepp, Jarmila. *Darina Rasmussen: A Tribute to One of the Founders and First Officers of the Wisconsin Slovak Historical Society*, 17.

⁴ Haynes, 110.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 134.



Melissa Steckbauer, *Theirs*, mixed media, 2004



Melissa Steckbauer, *Perfect Pitch*, mixed media, 2004



Melissa Steckbauer, *Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down*, mixed media, 2004

IDENTITY AND THE DISABLED TUTOR

The Possibilities Of Re-constructing Selfhood In Peer Writing Conferences

Introduction: Disability Studies and the Construction of Disabled Identity

At the heart of disability studies lies the question: What does it mean for a person to be disabled? The answer is deceptively simple: a person who is disabled has a disability. It is a circular answer, and one that goes largely unquestioned even in a culture which supports disability-gearred facilities such as bathrooms and parking spaces. However, a simple list of who is counted among the disabled reveals how unclear a distinction disability actually is. Disability includes such categories as the blind, the deaf, the mute, the developmentally disabled, the learning disabled, the physically disabled, and the mentally ill, many of which are themselves ambiguously defined.¹ The category of disability, then, is premised on the seemingly commonsensical notion that the blind, schizophrenics, and amputee veterans should all belong to the same category. The question dogging disability studies therefore becomes, "What connection actually exists between those identified as disabled?" For disability studies theorists, the answer is a troubling "none," or more accurately, "none outside of the category of disability itself." Theorist Brenda Jo Brueggemann articulates this in observing that, "Disability stabilizes most in its instability."² The defining characteristic of the category of disability, then, is exactly that no one characteristic unites it. The common tie is only the category itself.

The idea that there is no objective foundation for the category of disability is one of the main tenets of disability studies. Like its sister disciplines, critical race studies, queer studies and women's studies, disability studies rests upon the notion of constructivism, specifically that all categories of identity, including disability, were constructed to serve a set of power relations in a specific historical and cultural moment. Disability studies in particular emphasizes the historical and cultural groundings of disability as an identity. It is important to note, of course, that "the very permission given to think of identity as a complex construction also serves to undermine the notion of identity" itself. Because identity is synonymous with the essence of the person, and a construction is by definition non-essential, disability is considered a non-essential category by those in the discipline.³

That the category of disability has no essence is an assertion at once both doubtful and obvious. It is doubtful in the sense that unique bodies have always existed, but obvious in that they have not always been called "disabled." To the ancient Greeks they were "marvels" or "monsters," to P.T. Barnum "freaks," and to our contemporary social system, disabled.⁴ Constructivist histories chronicle the constructions of identity through time to better demonstrate their non-essentiality. Having identified the construction of disability in this way, the primary concern of disability studies then becomes debunking the current incarnation, what Robin M. Smith refers to as the "deficit-based system" of disability. Disability studies traces the origins of the current

category of disability to medical science, significantly the idea that persons with disabilities are diagnosed according to their bodies' deficits, i.e. what they are seen to be lacking.⁵ Being identified according to lacking causes persons with disabilities to be viewed as "abnormal" within an otherwise "normal" culture.⁶ Because of the pervasiveness of scientific diagnosis in Western thought, disability studies locate the problem of disability not at a single point but in the culture at large. Lennard J. Davis articulates this as "The 'problem' [being] not the person with disabilities; the problem is the way that normalcy is constructed to create the 'problem' of the disabled person" in the social environment.⁷

While the ambiguity of the problem's location makes the creation of any solution daunting, it is also reason for hope in that there exist innumerable spaces for the construction and possible re-construction of the disabled identity. After all, if disability is constructed—has been constructed—it can also be de-constructed and re-constructed. It is the possibility of disabled identity-making in the specific space of university-based peer tutoring situations that I have chosen to explore here. In particular, I aim to investigate the reading of disabled undergraduate writing tutors' bodies-as-text in one-on-one writing conferences based on data collected largely thanks to the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Writing Fellows Program.^a I chose to focus on tutors with visible disabilities, i.e. those disabilities which cannot be hidden, in order to eliminate the complexities created by passing and outing in terms of disabled status. I will use these findings to argue for a barely-tapped potential for disabled identity re-construction in such peer conference situations.

Assumptions of Disabled Identity Re-construction and the Process of Reading

At its heart, the idea that the category of disability can be constructed (and re-constructed) rests on two major assumptions. The first is that those defined as disabled did not define themselves that way. The fact that many persons with disabilities choose to pass as "normal" and express resentment towards the roles they perceive themselves to be forced to take on as disabled persons, supports this assumption. Disability studies aims, then, for re-construction of the disabled identity with the purpose of returning self-making to the selves concerned.

The second assumption is that if disabled persons did not create the disabled identity, it follows that other parties did. This process, by which other (often non-disabled) persons observe and identify disabled persons, is what disability studies and its sister disciplines refer to as the reading of bodies-as-text. The reading of bodies-as-text is a process analogous to reading written texts. What I understand by reading is coming to an understanding or interpretation of a text by evaluating certain textual markers. In written texts, for example, a reader faced with a block of poetry may recognize that it is composed in unrhymed iambic pentameter and as a result read/understand the text as blank verse. Another way to put this idea is that the reader *identifies* the text by reading, and by doing so, the reader acquires authority over that text and its identity. While the author of the text may be said to have ultimate authority over the reading/understanding of a text, in the absence of the author, the reader has authority by identifying that text. Because the original author is absent in most circumstances, the reader may thereby create and "author" the text's "self."

A similar process occurs in the observation of human bodies, or bodies-as-text. Reading bodies-as-text is something which most people do every day when observing one another—usually visually, but in other ways as well. Instead of markers like meter, rhyme, or language, markers by which readers evaluate bodies might be height, weight, sex, skin color, or (dis)ability. Disability in particular complicates the reading of bodies-as-text, especially for visibly disabled persons. The difficulty (if not impossibility) of *not* being observed as disabled can cause the disabled identity to dominate over any other readable identity. For example, if a person is observed to be missing an arm, that characteristic of the missing arm becomes much more significant to the reader than, say, the characteristic of her brown hair. The dominance of disabled characteristics is what theorist Rosemarie Garland-Thomson refers to as "enfreakment," a process by which "the body envelops and obliterates the freak's potential humanity."⁹ Enfreakment may appear to be an extreme proposition—most people would likely not consider "obliterating humanity" part of their daily routine—but Jeff Mossman observes that it is in fact an unfortunately common occurrence. By way of example, he notes that many "people do not see the individual child who has Down syndrome; they see only the child as a Down

^a "The Undergraduate Writing Fellows Program pairs undergraduate peer writing tutors with writing-intensive courses. These tutors, or 'fellows' read students' drafts of academic writing assignments, make written comments on these drafts, and hold conferences with each student to discuss these comments and help the student strategize about how to revise the paper."⁹

syndrome child, as a stereotype.”¹⁰ In this way, persons with disabilities are dis-abled in their identity simply by being observed. It is the devastating process of enfreakment of those with visible disabilities which makes identity re-construction at once extremely difficult but at the same time extremely urgent as well.

The Silencing of the Body-as-Text and the Power of Autobiographical Narrative in Identity Construction

What is key to the success of the reader in determining bodies’ identities through reading is the silence of that body. According to Garland-Thomson, the freak show was so successful in its heyday exactly because the freaks on display were silenced, i.e. they were not allowed to talk to their observers in order to identify themselves. In their silence, “freaks” were not able to take authority over the making of their own identities. Garland-Thomson argues that Barnum’s first “freak” Joice Heth became “a freak not by virtue of her body’s uniqueness, but rather by displaying the stigmata of social devaluation.”¹¹ Because she was silenced, Joice Heth could not identify such stigmata as being otherwise, and so was reduced in her identity to solely those “abnormal” physical characteristics, characteristics which were devalued by her readers.

If persons with disabilities are not permitted to speak for themselves, observers of disabled bodies-as-text may easily come to the conclusion that a particular disability is tantamount to that person. Such a situation may occur even though the person does not view herself that way. However, the minute a person is able to employ voice, i.e. authority over the self, new identity-making can take place. This does not mean, of course, that a person may create *any* identity they wish; identity re-construction at the site of a body-as-text is inextricably linked to the physicality of that body. Mark Jeffreys points out that for a visibly disabled person, identity-making at the site of the body-as-text must—for that exact reason—incorporate the disability, because while the category of disability may be culturally constructed, the unique bodies to which it pertains are not.¹² Disability studies hopes, then, not to erase the visible disability in the body-as-text, which would be impossible, but to fashion a new identity incorporating those disabled characteristics and which would center on personhood.

Methods for forming a new person-centered identity in the body-as-text are suggested in the literature regarding identity-formation in written texts. Such

literature points to the promise of autobiographical narrative in identity-construction, which makes sense considering that autobiographical narrative is the writing/expression of one’s self, one’s identity. By communicating personal stories to others, then, people can read their own bodies and form their own identities. G. Thomas Couser further details this idea:

autobiography by definition involves self-representation; as such, autobiography offers an alternative to patronizing and marginalizing (mis)representation by others; it thus provides a medium for counterdiscourse that challenges stereotypes and misconceptions.¹³

One such marginalizing discourse, at least in written texts, might be considered academic discourse. This is significant for Writing Fellows’ bodies-as-text which not only teach academic discourse, but because of their role might also be considered to exist in an academic discourse of the body. This does not mean identity-construction in such an arena is impossible, however. Smith argues that on the contrary, “Academic articles are forms of research stories,” and so may actually contain the possibilities of autobiographical narrative space. As tutors of academic discourse functioning in an academic environment, then, it may be possible for peer writing tutors to open up spaces for identity-making through their work. It is exactly this possibility which concerns me in the following sections.

Methods and Findings: The University Setting and Peer Tutoring Conferences as Sites of Identity Formation

To understand the unique role of the disabled tutor, I examined the experiences of both Miriam^b, a peer tutor with the Writing Fellows, and those of Dr. Jim Ferris of the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Communication Arts department, both of whom are visibly disabled. Because I was more concerned with understanding spaces for authority and identity-making than the exact properties of silence, I chose not to pursue explicitly the experiences of disabled (non-tutor) students. Paulo Freire among others has theorized that students are silenced simply by the nature of uneven power relations in the classroom whether they are disabled or not. Professors, by contrast, have authority in their classrooms and thereby identity-making power,

^b Miriam’s name has been changed in order to preserve her anonymity.



Melissa Steckbauer, *Terza*, mixed media, 2004

and tutors demonstrate similar authority in guiding students. I interviewed both Miriam and Dr. Ferris regarding how they negotiate the university setting with their disabilities and which environments work best for them and why. One objection to my research, I realize, might be that Miriam and Dr. Ferris do not share the same disability. Miriam is deaf and wears hearing aids while Dr. Ferris wears a leg brace. However, it is one of the claims of disability studies that although there is no connection between many of those labeled as disabled, because they share the same label, they experience many of the same situations, the same identification at the hands of the same authority.

At first glance, the university setting would appear to be an ideal place for large-scale knowledge exchange and thereby identity-construction. However, theorists James Wilson and Cynthia Liewicki-Wilson argue that the university may instead be viewed as:

an environment intended for nondisabled persons. Often such intentions are built into the literal landscape of a university's inaccessible buildings and classrooms, but such intentions are no less a part of the cultural and mental landscape of its faculty and administration . . .¹⁴

The university landscape includes language use, especially phrases like "blind" ignorance, ideas fallen on

"deaf ears," and making "lame" points, all of which have negative connotations. These in particular are used so commonly that Davis observes them to be nothing short of "shocking to anyone who is even vaguely aware of the way language is implicated in discrimination and exclusion."¹⁵ However, exclusion is nothing new to the university setting, as I have already mentioned briefly the silencing of students in the classroom noted by Freire.

By contrast, the exclusion applied to visibly disabled professors is unique in that such persons can be read as at once having authority (as a professor) and being silenced (as a disabled person).¹⁶ This duality is not one easily overcome, even with the authority that comes with professorship. Brueggemann has discussed her "worries that students might read her disability identity with pity or might question her intellectual ability or authority because of their perception of missing 'faculties'" even though she has attained a teaching post in the first place.¹⁷ A disabled professor's road to self-making may also be hindered by the environment of the classroom itself which privileges certain types of knowledge. Significantly, intellectual knowledge is favored over personal knowledge, and so even direct autobiographical narratives presented in a classroom context may be devalued.¹⁸ There is no guarantee that visibly disabled professors will not face exclusion themselves.

My initial hypothesis regarding disabled peer

tutors was that they would share the silence of their fellow students, and because of the academic context of their work, would also share in the challenges facing disabled professors. If anything, I surmised that tutors might be more invisible than either in carrying out a role which serves both students and professors by teaching academic discourse.

However, I did not find this to be the case. Wilson and Liewicki-Wilson note that the silence of students and professors may not *always* occur. "While institutional encounters tend to reinforce the unequal power relations inherent in any interaction between individual and institution," they say, "they do not have to: negotiations between individuals and institutions can sometimes be mutually transforming."¹⁹ In my preliminary hypothesis, I did not take into account arguably the most important and potentially transforming component of the success of the reader of bodies-as-text: the silencing of those bodies. Peer tutors like the Writing Fellows are simply not silent. Of course, one might point out, neither are professors, but tutors are unique in their role as both active speakers and listeners. Because of the emphasis placed on collaborative learning, tutors' interactions take the form of conversations, not academic lectures to be conveyed or absorbed by professors or students, respectively. Tutors interact both with their tutees and the professors whose classes they fellow both personally and through their comments, and both comments and conferences provide possible avenues of tutor authority. However, my findings suggest that conferences are far more promising for tutors because of the setting's conduciveness to engagement in autobiographical narrative. While Miriam mentioned briefly that self-expression does play a role in the comments she makes on student papers, Dr. Ferris did not. Both agreed, however, that helping the students write the papers they wished to write was the first priority in commenting. Because of the restrictions placed on this type of writing, commenting on student papers may not be the most productive avenue for disabled tutors' identity re-construction.

By contrast, the authority which tutors have over the conference situation, and the fact that the goal is to impart that authority to their tutees, only serves to reinforce that such tutors wield authority in the first place. This fact holds great possibilities for a disabled tutor, but actually for anyone concerned with constructing their own identity. In Miriam's interview, she discussed how she worries at times about her disability overtaking her identity, that people may see her as

"Miriam, hearing impaired, instead of Miriam, likesnutella-driveslowly-hashearingimpairment-lovestowrite-listenstojonimitchell." This kind of situation, when the disability is given the same weight as the whole person, is exactly the enfreakment that Garland-Thomson was referring to. Interestingly, though, the kind of interaction which Miriam's role as tutor provides may actually stave off enfreakment. Miriam says the following of her experience as a tutor:

I'm lucky because I have control over the setting [of the one-on-one peer conference]. This is a major advantage. I'm realizing more and more that a big 'limiting' factor of my hearing impairment is simply social awkwardness when the other person isn't sure how to act...In the tutoring situation, I've found a place that counteracts a lot of this social awkwardness.

Tutoring, then, is an arena where Miriam can form her own identity through one-on-one interaction because she has authority and can thereby eliminate much of the awkwardness that may otherwise exist for both her tutees and herself, the kind of awkwardness which could have otherwise resulted in enfreakment. She can adapt her tactics to her tutees to help them feel more at ease and understand where she is coming from, and the tutees are likewise able to express their needs to Miriam because of the nature of her authority.

Arguably even more significant than the authority and identity-making potential wielded by the peer tutor is that Miriam has come to understand her disability as a particular asset in conference both for herself and her tutees. Because her disability plays a role in how she tutors, she has found that it does so to certain advantages. She notes that:

I've found that my disability, in subtle ways, engages with the complicated power situation of the peer-tutor/peer-tutee relationship—for the better...I ask the person 'to understand,' to cooperate with me. In a way, I feel like this extra element facilitates and authenticates the back-and-forth model for a conference that I believe is ideal.

All Writing Fellows ask their tutees to engage with and take authority in commenting on their papers, but because Miriam is able to create an identity which includes but is not limited to her disability, she further

facilitates her tutees' acquisition of authority. This is exactly the kind of identity reconstruction that disability studies aims to achieve and by giving students authority fulfills exactly the goal of collaborative learning-based tutoring programs. Miriam, because of the back-and-forth model of a tutoring conference, because she has voice and authority over the situation as a tutor, is in little danger of being viewed solely as her hearing impairment. She is not silent and therefore can self-identify by expressing autobiographical aspects of herself as a person from the start, one that just so happens to be disabled. By doing so, she helps her tutees to create their own space in which to similarly explore selfhood both in the conference and in writing. I would go so far as to say that the Writing Fellow conference is a space of identity-making for both parties because both parties are capable of simultaneously wielding authority and self-making potential.

Discussion: Taking the Next Step

Although such findings are promising, it must be acknowledged that the social problems identified by disability studies will not be definitively solved in the near future. Brueggemann notes that we still "face dealing with the erasure of disabled subjects from the public sphere. The apparent invisibility of disabled subjects in places like the academy confronts us."²⁰ This fact, however, should not be a cause for despair. There are many reasons yet for hope, says Mossman, particularly because of the nature of university setting:

It is through the meaningful critical analysis of classroom practice that such development

can take place, for it is in the classroom, in an aspect of our profession that involves for many the active empowerment of others through pedagogy, that the real subtleties of discrimination, the complicated process of building abnormality can be detected and changed.²¹

Identity-making may be the most important method of changing the construction of disability in public settings like the university. While my findings are certainly suggestive of the possibilities inherent in one-on-one peer tutoring situations, they are by no means conclusive. Further research is absolutely essential in order to more fully investigate the unique role of peer tutor and understand the mechanism by which peer tutors are able to author their own identities and facilitate the same for their tutees. The findings of such research may show how identity-making in peer tutoring might be applied in the service of those marginalized elsewhere.

In addition, the constructivism on which disability studies is based must too acknowledge its location in a specific time and place and yield to other "siege engines" of knowledge. It is by this system of proposal and critique that theories of identity may progress and develop. Davis argues that such forward motion will one day result in the eradication of all identity, because after all, "when all identities are finally included [as normal], there will be no identity."²² While I can hardly imagine what such a world would look like, I can only hypothesize that the absence of silencing and prevalence of shared authority will make how we got there a story worth telling. Further investigation of the peer tutoring space in disabled identity formation will be a worthwhile step in that direction. ♦

- ¹ Davis, Lennard J. "Who put the the in the novel?" *Bending Over Backwards: Essays on Disability and the Body*. New York: New York University Press. 87.
- ² Brueggemann, Brenda Jo. "An Enabling Pedagogy." *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*. Eds. Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson. MLA: New York, 2002. 319.
- ³ Davis, "Who put the the in the novel?": 83 - 4.
- ⁴ Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disabilities in American Culture and Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. 56.
- ⁵ Smith, Robin M. "View from the Ivory Tower: Academics Constructing Disability." *Semiotics and Dis/ability*. Ed. L. J. Rogers and B. B. Swadener. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. 59.
- ⁶ Davis, Lennard J. "Constructing Normalcy: the Bell Curve, the Novel, and the Invention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century." *The Disability Studies Reader*. Ed. Lennard J. Davis. London: Routledge, 1997. 13.
- ⁷ Ibid. 9
- ⁸ (Steinhoff, fn 1 - 2)
- ⁹ Garland-Thompson, 59.
- ¹⁰ Mossman, Mark. "Visible Disability in the College Classroom." *College English* 64:6 (2002). 379 - 80.
- ¹¹ Garland-Thompson, 59.
- ¹² Jeffreys, Mark. "The Visible Cripple (Scars and Other Disfiguring Displays Included)." *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*. Eds. Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson. MLA: New York, 2002. 38 - 9
- ¹³ Couser, G. Thomas. "The Empire of the 'Normal': A Forum on Disability and Self-Representation. Introduction." *American Quarterly*. 52:2 (2002). 305.
- ¹⁴ Wilson, James C. and Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson. "Constructing a Third Space: Disability Studies, the Teaching of English and Institutional Transformation." *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*. Eds. Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson. MLA: New York, 2002. 297.
- ¹⁵ Davis, "Who put the the in the novel?": 87.
- ¹⁶ Mossman, Mark. "Visible Disability in the College Classroom." *College English* 64:6 (2002). 653.
- ¹⁷ Brueggemann, Brenda Jo and Debra A. Modellmog. "Coming-out Pedagogy: Risking Identity in Language and Literature Classrooms." *Pedagogy* 2:3 (2002). 315.
- ¹⁸ Ibid. 312
- ¹⁹ Wilson and Lewiecki-Wilson, 276 - 7.
- ²⁰ Bruggeman, 318.
- ²¹ Mossman, 652.
- ²² Davis, "Who put the the in the novel?": 86.

LOVE, WITHOUT RETENTION OR RESTRAINT: Exploring Homoeroticism in *Twelfth Night*

*"...My desire
More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth,
And not all love to see you- though so much
As might have drawn one to a longer voyage-
But jealousy what might befall your travel,
Being skillless in these parts, which to a stranger,
Unguided and unfriended, often prove
Rough and unhospitable. My willing love,
The rather by these arguments fear,
Set forth in your pursuit." (3.3 4-13)*

William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* deals with a variety of romantic entanglements, both homosexual and heterosexual in nature. A great deal of its dramatic tension is provided by the implications of these relationships. Through this work, Shakespeare conducts a fascinating examination of the nature of desire outside the bounds of binarism. While the comedic genre of the play demands resolution at the end, the central action of the plot is fraught with anxiety over the alternative outlets of desire. These conflicts reflect recurrent homosocial and homoerotic themes in literature and history. Ultimately, the conflict in *Twelfth Night* between homoeroticism and the more acceptable outlets of desire is displaced onto Antonio, whose clearly expressed passion for Sebastian goes unrequited for the sake of maintaining a societal status quo.

Crucial to understanding the context of Antonio's desire within a more general framework is an examination of the importance of status and service in such desire. An argument persistent in classical literature states that true friendship is only possible between equals, or rather, two people alike in virtue, so that neither is using the other for

the gratification of some need. Historically implicit in this argument is the notion that true friendship can only exist between two men, as the general inferiority of women yielded them unable to maintain a friendship with a man free from neediness.^a Male-Male friendship is often depicted as being so strong that it bridges the gap between the hetero- and homo-erotic. A certain subtle ambiguity exists in the embraces of friends when given the intimacy attributed to the pure male bond as described throughout history.^b The merging of sexual relationships with this friendship is paradoxically impossible (in that it precludes the equality of the friends) and inevitable (given that it is presented as the height of intimacy). The inverse of the argument of equality in friendship is the assertion that sexual desire involves an inherent quality of submission. This idea brings up new possibilities in the realm of male friendship. As a means of maintaining the patriarchy, the homoerotic often mingles freely with purer forms of mentorship. Obviously, most relationships between men and boys remained chaste. However, in a society which was rigidly organized by status and age, the resulting theme of men pursuing boys and boys learning from men can be seen in history and literature.^c Men, through

^a While I found this argument in a variety of sources, notably in Montaigne's "On Friendship," it was clarified and applied to Shakespeare in an extremely helpful way in Bruce R. Smith's *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England*.

^b "In Plato's account, male friendship and sexual attraction, far from being opposites, are two aspects of the same bond" (Smith 37). Furthermore, "Effeminate lust is debilitating; masculine love inspires virtuous action" (Smith 38). In other words, to lust after a woman is humbling because of their innate inferiority. However, relationship with another male in a similarly submissive societal role does not carry that same connotation; rather it is an act which serves to strengthen the male society.

^c For example, Sedgwick mentions Dover quoting Pausanias in Plato's *Symposium* as saying "that is would be right for him [the boy] to perform any service for one who improves him in mind or character" (4).

actively possessing younger boys, actually initiate them into the male power structure; also, they are able to co-opt the innocence of youth.

As these homosocial^d politics illustrate, sexuality inherently involves the mastery, metaphorical or otherwise, of one party over the other. The household structure of Shakespeare's England was such that the unmarried woman and the young man held similar positions of servitude, and this made them equally sexually available. For example, in prostitution, a female is made sexually available through purchase; the buyer obtains temporary ownership, and therefore sexual rights. Similarly, a young male employed in a household would have been subservient, and therefore in many cases sexually subservient to his master. Therefore, the cross-dressed young male or female represents the scope of possible sexual fantasy.^e This form of desire in which genders roles are confused and both males and females are included in the sexual hierarchy as objects of conquest is emancipating in settings where it is allowed to flourish. However, when the homosocial male bonding rituals implicit in a patriarchal society come into conflict with more overt homosexuality, tensions arise.^f

The adolescent boy, embodied by Sebastian in

Twelfth Night, becomes the subject of specific desire as it described in topos of the Shipwrecked Youth.^g Unlike the love involved in strong friendship and comradeship between men, this form of lust is specific and homosexual, rather than homosocial, in nature. Sexual appetites which cannot be expressed within the strictures of society become possible when the action is moved to a foreign or temporary space. Young men have a place in the discourse of desire as things of beauty where the burgeoning sexuality of adolescence is coupled with mystery and vulnerability. However, what is permissible in the transitive environment of the Shipwrecked Youth becomes dangerous and impossible once the participants are returned to land, metaphorical or otherwise. Indeed, the expression of this desire could have potentially dangerous consequences; for most of Shakespeare's life, homosexuality was a transgression punishable by death, especially if the contact involved force,^h as was often the case between older men (masters) and the more androgynous youth (servants).ⁱ As a result, societal pressures often tempered, or at the very least influenced, the expression of homosexual desire.

All of these historical and literary realities are manifested in some way in Antonio and his relationship with Sebastian. The two men clearly share an intimacy

^d While it is obviously a simplification, for the interests of this essay, the term "homosocial" refers to the bonds exclusive to members of the same sex, and can take a variety of forms (This terminology is influenced by Sedgwick's work). It can potentially coincide with the "homosexual", but it is less specific. In contrast, "homosexual" desire implies a clearly focused desire for sexual intimacy with a member of the same sex.

^e This passage was influenced by Lisa Jardine's essay "Twins and Travesties," in which she compares the notions of service and sexual availability. I was particularly interested in her conclusions regarding the implications of cross-dressing in society as well as in theater. Our arguments diverge to some extent however, because where I focus primarily on Antonio, she is interested most in Viola's predicament. Also, she includes an account of a young apprentice who accused his master of sodomy, describing how the master took it for granted that the apprentice would accept his place in the household without protest.

^f This argument is described in Sedgwick's work *Between Men*, and while she does not specifically apply her statements to Shakespearean drama, the sociological and critical theories she proposes were extremely helpful in my attempts to categorize (insofar as it is possible to place something so complex as desire) the relationships in the play. According to Sedgwick, this homoerotic anxiety is produced when the boundaries between male friendship and male love coincide, and the natural corollary to this is homophobia.

^g This literary topos is defined in Smith's *Homosexual Desire*. Therein he describes a common theme in dramas contemporaneous with Shakespeare's. He theorizes that certain expressions of desire which would be socially prohibited in general become permissible, or even inevitable, in liminal spaces (for example, a sea voyage from one port to another). The chaos of a shipwreck and the vulnerability of a shipwrecked youth seem to invite the subverted norms implicit in the topos, and indeed, in *Twelfth Night*, they do.

^h While the term "force" as it is used here and the conventional term "rape" are by no means mutually exclusive in my argument, "force" also could indicate the roles required of men and boys by the Elizabethan social infrastructure.

ⁱ The societal implications of homosexuality are spelled out in the groundbreaking *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* by Alan Bray. Published in 1982, it was one of the first comprehensive explorations of the topic published, and not only did the book form a foundation for this realm of study, but it is still a key text in the field.



Allison Kirby, *Lost*, mixed media, 2005

which could potentially be interpreted, at least on the part of Sebastian, as close friendship. For example, together they spend “three months.../ No int’rim, not a minute’s vacancy. / Both day and night” (5.1 90-92). While the specific inclusion of “night” in this description has homoerotic undertones, it is not clear that this undertone indicates the actual nature of their previous relationship; all that Shakespeare makes clear is that the two men have an extremely deep relationship. Also, Sebastian, as an exemplar of the Shipwrecked Youth character, is intended only as object of desire; he is not required by the topos to requite Antonio’s affections. That he has a nearly identical female counterpart only highlights the interchangeability of gender within this topos. Likewise, the relationship between Sebastian and Antonio contains the imagery of master-servant desire. Sebastian is specifically referred to as a boy in the play, while Antonio is more experienced and worldly. When Antonio “took [Sebastian] from the breach of the sea” (2.2 15), he in essence gave him new life, and this places Sebastian in his debt (though Sebastian, grieving for Viola, seems to view it differently). Antonio’s conferment of his purse to Sebastian symbolically implies that Sebastian is dependent on him. Upon bestowing the purse on Sebastian, Antonio says: “Haply your eye shall light upon some toy/ You have desire to purchase; and you store/ I think is not for idle markets, sir” (3.4 44-46). This passage has a wealth of meanings - first of all, the wording creates an image of Sebastian as a youth desirous of “toys,” with Antonio as one capable of providing for his flights of fancy. The emphasis on their disparate means once again highlights Antonio’s power and Sebastian’s subsequent availability. This quote has further implications as a description of Antonio’s view of Sebastian; Antonio has “desire to purchase” Sebastian’s affections, and will do so through money, if necessary.

However, just as Sebastian is subject to Antonio in terms of worldly goods (though not necessarily in terms of rank, as Antonio is an outlaw), Antonio is subject to his desire and its implications. When he says to Sebastian, “If you will not murder me for my love, let me be your servant” (2.1. 26), he is turning the master-servant rhetoric of desire on its head. Not only could the fulfillment of his desire lead to actual execution in a historical context, but he more specifically places himself in danger for the sake of his love for Sebastian by following him to Illyria. The word “murder” in this context also implies that the homoerotic attraction he is describing could have negative

repercussions beyond merely the arm of the law, if only for him. Antonio wants Sebastian to want him enough that Sebastian would want Antonio’s presence even in dangerous circumstances. However, Antonio cannot will Sebastian to requite his love, and the impossibility to this amounts to a murder of desire. Despite the intimated peril, Antonio follows Sebastian, saying, “But come what may, I do adore thee so/ That danger shall seem sport, and I will go” (2.1. 35-36). In order for Antonio to maintain his erotic fantasies in the face of danger, he must be on some level be seen as “sport,” thus allowing him to overlook the mortal peril he faces for following someone who does not seem to requite his affection.^j

The intensity of Antonio’s feelings is apparent in the preceding passages; indeed, it can be argued that his love for Sebastian is the purest and most heartfelt in the play. Furthermore, their relationship is the only one which does not involve some kind of deception. When, in Act 4, Antonio believes that Sebastian is betraying him while he is actually talking to Viola, his passionate response belies the sincerity of his emotions. Having saved Sebastian from the shipwreck, he says: “[I] Relieved him with such sanctity of love, / And to his image, which methought did promise / Most venerable worth, did I devotion” (3.4. 302-304). In this speech, Antonio equates his love for Sebastian to religious worship through the words “sanctity” and “venerable.” These specific words imply that his affection is secure from profanation, which ironically subverts the conventional view of homosexuality as being inherently profane. By making the most pure and selfless love be one which is stereotypically viewed as morally repugnant, Shakespeare highlights the tension of genuine homoerotic desire. When Antonio describes his relationship with Sebastian to Orsino, his purity of heart is unambiguously outlined: “His life I gave him, and did thereto add / My love, without retention or restraint, / All in his dedication. For his sake / Did I expose myself- pure for his love- / into the danger of this adverse town” (5.1. 68-72). Once again, he describes his love as pure, disassociating it from the homosexual lust it accompanies. Further, while he mentions that he “gave” Sebastian his life, he does it not to emphasize the debt Sebastian should consequently owe him, but rather to demonstrate the total generosity of his love; it is “all in [Sebastian’s] dedication.”

Another characteristic of Antonio’s love speeches are their assertive lusty masculinity; instead of being passive and effeminate, his homosexual desire is

^j The discussion of the psychological dangers of the homoeroticism of *Twelfth Night* is covered in more depth in Valerie Traub’s *Desire and Anxiety*. She makes some especially interesting conclusions regarding the convergence of the Viola/Cesario plot and the Antonio/Sebastian plot, saying that when Viola is threatened with actual destruction, “crucially, it is Antonio who saves her/him, thinking he is defending his beloved. His entrance at this moment enacts the central displacement of the text: when the ramifications of a simultaneous homoeroticism and heterosexuality become too anxiety ridden, the homoerotic energy of Viola/Cesario is displaced onto Antonio” (p.133).

expressed in potent, phallic language. Sir Andrew seems to seek alliance with Olivia to fulfill a societal heterosexual demand, and his inability to defend himself against Viola/Cesario, who will not even defend her/himself, renders him only ostensibly heterosexual. Orsino seems to be more in love with himself and his ability to love than with Olivia; his persona has an emasculate undertone. Finally, Malvolio, the play's other pursuant male, is depicted from beginning to end as a romantic joke.^k All these men can be contrasted sharply with Antonio, who says, "My desire, / More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth" (3.3. 4-5). His words evoke a picture of something hard and sharply erect. The word "spur" has a penetrative quality in keeping with the potent sexuality of his language. When he says to Sebastian that at the Elephant "There you shall have me" (3.3. 42), Antonio's language to this point seems to insist that the word "have" to some extent must denote carnal possession.

Antonio also asserts his love in a potent fashion when he fights Sir Andrew on Viola's behalf, thinking that she is Sebastian. It is significant that Viola is unable to behave violently; this is what seems to fundamentally separate her from her alternative male persona. When Antonio comes to the rescue, it highlights the difference between the cloudy homoeroticism between Viola/Cesario and Olivia and Orsino and the unequivocal masculine homosexual lust of Antonio. The fight scene demonstrates how the tension of Viola's assumption of a male identity is displaced onto Antonio, this time in a literal sense. As a woman, she seems essentially unable to fight; therefore, Antonio instantly appears to assume her role. Additionally, in once again appearing dramatically to rescue "Sebastian," Antonio reasserts himself as a figure to be depended on.^l While his willingness to assume a potentially mortal responsibility further demonstrates the total extent of his commitment to Sebastian, his obvious skill makes him more masculine, in a sense, than his heterosexual adversary. Paradoxically, the virility implied by his potent words and deeds is contradicted by homosexual lust and love.

It is interesting to compare the state of Antonio's relationships with his state as a fugitive. As an outlaw, he exists in a liminal space where he is free not only from the bonds of law, but also of the societal limitations on his desire. His decision to come to Illyria after Sebastian, who "Being skillless in these parts, which to a stranger / Unguided and unfriended, often prove / Rough and inhospitable" (3.3.9-11) is crucial because Antonio's concern for Sebastian is so great that he enters a setting where societal exigencies expressly outlaw his desires. The words "rough" and "inhospitable" refer not only to the land's treatment of strangers—in a more subtle sense, they also indicate the treatment of explicit homoeroticism, and Antonio understands this. Ironically, one of the acts which most clearly shows the depth of Antonio's love for Sebastian ultimately leads to the intentional exclusion of Antonio at the play's end, when he is re-captured.^m

Given all the gender confusion and sexual tension in *Twelfth Night*, Antonio serves to anchor and give voice to a desire that is only hinted at by Viola/Cesario. Given that femininity on Shakespeare's stage was something conceived and presented by males, it follows that to some extent, even in "heterosexual" theatrical pairings, a certain amount of potential homoerotic tension existed. The fact that it is not clearly delineated gives the audience license

to interpret the representations of desire at their will. Antonio provides an outlet for the subtle homoeroticism of females being portrayed by males, voicing an ever-present erotic possibility of Shakespeare's day. The fact that these males were probably young only serves to make them potentially more desirable as innocent, biddable, and

androgynous. Significantly, despite the fact that similar actors would have played both Viola and Sebastian, there is no overlap in Antonio's affections. This indicates that it is not merely androgyny that he appreciates, but Sebastian specifically. Comparatively, the relationships between Orsino and Viola/Cesario and Olivia and Viola/Cesario exist primarily in the far more ambiguous homosocial realm.



Jackie Topol, *Cabaret 1*, digitally-altered color photograph, 2004

^k The tendency to view heterosexual desire as emasculating can be seen in a variety of Shakespeare's plays, including *Romeo and Juliet* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. An extension of the idea of homosexual desire as having a martial force is exemplified in the relationship between Coriolanus and Aufidius in *Coriolanus*. These examples are more fully developed in Traub's book.

^l Again, as per Jardine's argument, the dependence this suggests signifies homosexual availability between Antonio and Sebastian.

This is not the only way in which Antonio serves as a receptacle of tensions created by the plot. As Sebastian famously says, “nature to her bias drew” (5.1.245), and the tensions of the plot must ultimately be eased in order to maintain the comedic structure of the play. The conflicting relationships between Orsino, Viola/Cesario, and Olivia would be headed for inevitable tragedy if not for the convenient appearance of Sebastian, and the creation of traditional, “appropriate” heterosexual pairings. Emotionally, it seems that Olivia is coming between Antonio and Sebastian instead of the other way around. However, in order to achieve an overall happy ending, Antonio’s love must be sacrificed and the unrequited homosexual nature of the interactions of Olivia and “Viola” and Orsino and “Cesario” are displaced onto Antonio. It is as if, since he will inevitably be unable to satisfy his desire, he must also assume the burdens of the other impossible desires in the play. In the face of his passionate claims of love for Sebastian, the officers decide that, “The man grows mad. Away with him!” (3.4. 372). Rather than being mad, Antonio is recognizing a genuine love for another man. However, given the context and repercussions of his love, society labels him as such. There is no comfortable place for Antonio in the structure of the play, and therefore he is marginalized. The phrase “nature to her bias” describes the creation of legitimate sexual relationships, “legitimate” being an appropriate word to the extent that heterosexual pairings ease reproductive tensions. Heterosexual pairings seem natural because they can reproduce, but again, there is irony in the fact that despite the impotence of homosexual pairings, Antonio expresses his desire in virile, generative language.

However, the idea that tensions are neatly displaced onto Antonio is not totally satisfactory. The same Sebastian who weds Olivia with phenomenal speed and celebrates the “natural” aspect of the pairing also proclaims, “Antonio, O my dear Antonio! / How have the hours racked and tortured me, / Since I have lost thee!”

(5.1. 215-217). His words are by no means void of undertones of desire. Similarly, to some extent, Viola allows and even encourages Olivia’s affections - for example, she asks to see Olivia’s face, though it is “out of her text” (1.5. 180). Ultimately, desire is shown to be more complicated than explanation via simple natural conventions will allow. While tension is eased by the end of the play, in great part through Antonio’s marginalization, some uncertainty remains. One example of this lies in Orsino’s refusal to see Viola/Cesario as a woman until she has donned her “maiden’s weeds” (5.1. 252); acknowledging the gender blending created by expressing love for a woman while she looks like a man. The uncertainty is somewhat homophobic-for Orsino to openly admit love for Viola before she looks like a woman would be to admit that it was there before he knew she was a woman.

Despite these lingering anxieties, for the most part, the primary heterosexual couples are left to happily assume their roles in a conventional reproductive society. Those left on the fringes are those who do not fit into the structure of this society. Sir Andrew and Feste, the true fool and wise fool, are presented as being primarily asexual. For them, the end of the play is not necessarily tragic. However, Antonio seems to be an unfortunate man caught being the main tragic figure in a comic plot. Intensely passionate, he is denied an outlet for his passions, and marginalized as mad. While he is released from his physical imprisonment at the end of the play, he is eternally damned to a prison of unrequited love. Based on the social context of the play and the more immediate context of his plot, for him there is no happy ending, no third gay sibling of Sebastian and Viola. And even if there were, given the apparent purity of his love, this might not be a comfort to him.). Despite its pronounced relish for exploring gender and desire, *Twelfth Night* ultimately refuses to validate explicit homosexual desire, and Antonio’s love for Sebastian is sacrificed as a result. ❖

All Shakespeare quotations are from *Twelfth Night: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Bruce R. Smith. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2001.

Bibliography:

- Bray, Alan. *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*. Boston: Gay Man’s Press, 1982.
 Jardine, Lisa. “Twins and Travesties.” *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*. ed. Susan Zimmerman. London: Routledge, 1992.
 Montaigne, Michel. *The Complete Essays*. Trans. M. A. Screech. New York: Penguin Classics, 1993.
 Sedgwick, Eve K. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.
 Smith, Bruce R. *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare’s England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
 ---. *Shakespeare and Masculinity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
 Traub, Valerie. *Desire and Anxiety*. London: Routledge, 1992

^m Referring again the Smith’s work on the Shipwrecked Youth, he says that this story and others with the same motif “ordinarily [engage] desire only to deny it” (156). Shakespeare uses Antonio as a forceful endorsement of legitimate homoerotic desire, but ultimately refuses to sanction it in the end. According to Smith’s research on historical sources, Antonio is fortunate; often “the most usual way of negotiating the inevitable clash between sexual fantasy and social reality is the death of one or both of the amorous protagonists” (134). In practical terms, however, it may be argued that Antonio’s exclusion at the end of the play is tantamount to his death, in terms of the plot.

ENGLISH AGRICULTURE AND ENLIGHTENMENT

Wherein Lies an Argument Contending that the Changing Views of
Husbandry in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England
Preceded and Founded The Political and Social Changes
known collectively as the ENGLISH ENLIGHTENMENT

The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

- Psal. CXV. 16

The most distinguishing feature in the national character of the people of Britain seems to be excessive impatience under the pressure of that lot, which, they apprehend, their destiny has imposed upon them, ever impelling them to remove the cause of complaint by their own efforts.

- John Naismith, 1790

In history, the term Enlightenment refers specifically to the social and political processes underway in the western world that reached their climax in the middle and late eighteenth century instigating the Age of Revolution. The Enlightenment embodied belief in human benevolence and acuity of mind. It also advanced the conviction that human wisdom could and should search beyond received knowledge (received knowledge being the culturally inherited structures that stressed strict hierarchical authorities such as the divine right of monarchs and personal punishment by God). Central to the ideals of Enlightenment philosophy lays reason. To an enormous extent the English speaking world accredits John Locke (1632 – 1704) with epitomizing the spirit and authoring the mechanisms of the Enlightenment. Though Locke indeed reasoned creatively and penned many original concepts, it would be misleading to believe that he operated free from cultural inspiration. Whereas political and intellectual elites arouse changes in their societies, the cultural tides of everyday citizens likewise shape the perceptions and environment of “Great Men.” Imagine these two forces, common culture and the elite, as individual cultural powers that interact with one another

but are not the same. These movements may contradict each other and often have delayed reactions. In this sense the Enlightenment, as represented by elites including Locke, was not an epiphany, but a result of contemporary trends, specifically, agricultural.

In 1790, near the end of the Enlightenment, a Scotsman named John Naismith authored a treatise expounding possible improvements to the terrain of Scotland in order to make the fields yield superior crops and livestock.¹ In his conclusion, Naismith wrote that in order “to remove encumbering stones, to carry off offensive water, to give rugged land an advantageous form, without burying the productive upper soil . . . requires a course of unremitting labour and care, to which efforts of a divided attention is altogether unequal.”² In addition to spreading manure and plowing-over previously fallow lands, Naismith called for intensive effort to recreate the physical landscape itself. Enlightenment ideals of government demanded the same “unremitting labour and care”. The preservation of an enlightened society requires the full attention of all citizens to the politics and social attitudes of their community. Every person must be educated, attentive, and participating.³ The expectation of that much effort on the part of the



Katie Day, *Untitled*, watercolor, acrylic, and charcoal on paper, 2004

citizenry is not a mere usage of the people as in feudal societies, but a cultural reshaping of the role individuals play in their society and politics. It is in the spirit of restructuring these hierarchical systems of authority and labor since the middle of the sixteenth century that the Enlightenment movement mirrors systemic changes in agriculture. The connection between agricultural change and Enlightenment is neither obvious nor inherent (in light that the first Agricultural Revolution in England came coupled with monasticism and “Christian corporatism.”)⁴ Furthermore the correlation of agrarian and socio-political change is interesting only if the former preceded the latter, as, in fact, it did.

The mid-sixteenth century saw a new form of agricultural literature in which one can trace the evolution of ideal agrarian practices in the English speaking world. These writings took the form of husbandry manuals meant to school landowners in the proper employment of their property. The fact that these volumes were rare and expensive reiterates the point that those individuals who had the power to dictate the usages of land were wealthy feudal lords who themselves toiled not in the soil but rather managed a population of laboring tenants. Indeed, this specific genre of

agrarian manuals is collectively known as *hausväterliteratur*, or “house father literature,” because it instructed the lord of the manor in how to care paternally for his tenants.⁵ The manorial lord controlled and cared for all aspects of his home and lands and in this realm was absolute.

From the manor house a long jump need not be taken to arrive at the doorstep of monarchy. Perhaps an argument could be made that agricultural systems begat monarchy, but that is not the contention here. Significant to this paper’s assertion is that in the mid-seventeenth century, when civil war terrorized England, the great thinker Thomas Hobbes seized upon reactionary manorial roots in his *Leviathan* as the mechanism to end England’s troubles. “But it is an easy thing,” wrote Hobbes, “for men to be deceived, by the specious name of Libertie; and for want of Judgement to distinguish, mistake that for their Private Inheritance, and Birth right, which is the right of the Publique only.”⁶ For Hobbes, liberty did exist but not necessarily for the individual. Instead, an overseer took liberty to direct the affairs of those hierarchically below him. In government, this power belonged to the king; in agriculture, liberty was a possession of the manorial lords. In return,

Hobbes carefully argued that subjects of the king ideally should be treated kindly and have security as long as they respected monarchial law. Likewise, in feudalism, tenants were directed by lords but had the security of land to labor on as long as they remained diligent. In this way, government and agrarian practices employed the same hierarchy of power and liberty.

The parallelism of feudal authority in politics and in the fields during the late sixteenth century as expressed in *hausväterliteratur* and the *Leviathan* need not surprise anyone. The next step in agrarian literature is, however, remarkable. In 1598, an Englishman named James Roberts significantly edited and reprinted Fitcherbert's patriarchal *Boke of Husbandrye* first printed in 1528. In his reworking of Fitcherbert's text, Roberts, for the first time in English literature, changed the verb "to thrive" into the noun "thrift" and employed it to argue a new ideal in agriculture.⁷ Ingenuity became important as more people had to find new ways to support themselves and their families as English farmland became increasingly enclosed. Late sixteenth-century husbandry manuals thus took on the language of improvement and profit. In *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, Thomas Tussler told his readers "To take thy calling thankfully, / and shun the path to beggary. . . . / To folow profit earnestlie / but medle not with pilferie. / To get by honest practisie, / and keepe thy gettings covertlie."⁸ In Shakespeare's chef d'oeuvre *Hamlet*, Polonius' advice even carries an agricultural tone:

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be,
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.⁹

These quotations reveal the forces of common culture pulling away from feudal subservience and emphasizing the possibility for individuals to make an improved living through work and thrift. The movement to thrift is so extraordinary because it fundamentally reshaped for whom husbandry manuals were written and who had the freedom to execute their suggestions. Lords would not be as interested in making profit off of the land because they could secure income through taxes. By emphasizing thrift, agrarian literature strengthened the possibility for less wealthy landowners to operate independent of manorial patriarchs and thereby gain some of the liberty denied them by *hausväterliteratur* and Hobbes.

Though Hobbes did not expressly write on the

topic of thrift in agriculture, the spirit of his arguments counter the value of individual profit. Hobbes argues that a king does not deliberately harm his people because in so doing he would undercut his own strength. A king, in other words, would not starve his people because he needs them to support his kingdom in battle and through the production of goods. Likewise, a manorial lord would not harm his tenants, for they support him monetarily. In Hobbesian logic, a king need not be perfectly just (in the modern sense of justice), he need only to not egregiously harm his subjects. By extension, a manorial lord need not employ land to its utmost capabilities or garner maximum harvests as long as he provides secure structure for those below him. This is a significant disparity because the idea of individual profit is not only contrary to Hobbes' ideal of strict top-down authority but is also the *raison d'être* of the Enlightenment. America's most famous enlightened gentleman, Benjamin Franklin, espoused the same industrious values innumerable times in *Poor Richard's Almanack*, his autobiography, and through daily example.¹⁰ The point is that individualism emerged first in agricultural systems and was primarily rejected in elite politics.¹¹

However, thrift is not the be all and end all of the Enlightenment: values of representational government must be accounted for. Representational government is founded in a belief of reason, and the cultural emphasis on reason began in reaction to the scrupulous use of profit-earnings ideals. Changing agricultural practices and corresponding literature illustrate this metamorphosis. In 1641 Gabriel Plattes wrote a utopian fiction in which one law maintained that "if any man holdeth more land than he is able to improve to the utmost, he shall be admonished, first, of the great hindrance which it doth to the common wealth. Secondly, of the prejudice to himself"¹² This fictional statute well represents the moral difficulties agrarian culture ran into once thrift and profit became emphasized in the first half of the seventeenth century. Reality showed that landowners gained to the detriment of their workers and the rest of the community because they began to plant cash crops, such as woad (a blue dye), instead of grains.¹³ Cash crops generated large profits for individuals but significantly decreased English food stocks and therefore also increased the price of available food. In the mid-seventeenth century the focus of agricultural reformers shifted to correct this erratum.

Late in the sixteenth century, a torrent of publications began to argue that planters had a moral obliga-

tion to profit their community, not just themselves. In 1652 the agriculturalist Walter Blithe argued that the goal was “to make the poor rich and the rich richer, and all to live of the labour of their owne hands.”¹⁴ Though he and most other writers of his time did not interest themselves in social and economic leveling, the key word of their airs was ‘reason.’ The margins of profit earned by individuals had to be reasonable as opposed to excessive, also they could not allow land or food go to waste. Meanwhile, the poor could use the powers of reason and ingenuity to enrich themselves.¹⁵ Private property, if employed intelligently, could be good for the goose and good for the gander.

It is into this cultural environment that John Locke was born in 1632. John Locke linked the aforesaid agricultural ideals with politics to arrive at what is today recognized as formal Enlightenment thought. Believing that private property was fundamentally good for society, Locke changed the argument from an economic one to one of politics. In his *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke argues that since individuals have a right to possess their own body, they had an equal right to own that which nourishes it.¹⁶ Thereby nature leaves

common possession and enters personal property. Furthermore, Locke argued that though God gave the earth to all of His children “it cannot be supposed he meant it should always remain common and uncultivated. He gave it to the use of the industrious and rational . . .”¹⁷ It is on this premise, which reflects the opinion that private property is indeed just and good for the community, that Locke can thereafter build his philosophical, enlightened treatise on government. If it is reasonable for an individual to own property, which Locke believed it was, then society must figure out a way to maintain property in the hands of its owners. The solution is government. However, in Enlightenment theory, since the people had rights (i.e. to property) in the State of Nature before the creation of government, the people thereby had power over government. For Locke, this reasoning led to representational government wherein the people, not the monarch or the lords, had absolute authority. The Enlightenment was born.

The development of ideas over time is a difficult course to retrace. In order to reach the Enlightenment conclusion that common people have power over government the philosophical foundation that



Katie Day, *Untitled*, watercolor and charcoal on paper, 2004

people had some fundamental inalienable rights had to be first established. The agricultural sphere of society in the sixteenth century began that battle and thereby laid the foundations for Enlightenment culture in England. However, since the agrarians of that day were generally manorial lords, they represented neither common nor elite culture. But, they did control liberty and property. This norm was reflected both in contemporary political treatises and in *hausväterliteratur*. Then, in response to enclosure of land, agriculturalists began to herald thrift and profit. However, this created its own set of moral and hierarchical problems for all English society. The early seventeenth century found solution in the ideals of labor, reason, and ingenuity to benefit both individuals

and the community. Throughout this evolving process, political philosophy was slow to follow. However, by the latter half of the seventeenth century, English social and political philosophy, as represented by John Locke, embraced personal property and used it to argue for governmental reform into a more representational system. Within a century, the western world began to adopt this philosophy and began dramatic reformations—of which the American and French Revolutions are prominent examples. Indeed, it appears then that the cultural foundations of the Enlightenment movement belong not to “Great Men”, but rather to the evolving tide of early-modern agrarian culture. ♦

- ¹ John Naismith, *Thoughts on various objects of Industry pursued in Scotland . . .*, (Edinburgh, 1790).
- ² Ibid., *Thoughts on various objects . . .*, 615.
- ³ Jean Lee, 2004. Personal communication. From a series of lectures given at the University of Wisconsin, 27 April to 6 May 2004.
- ⁴ Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor, eds., *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing and the Land*, (Leicester, 1992), 65.
- ⁵ Andrew McRae, *God speed the plough: The representation of agrarian England, 1500–1660*, (Cambridge, 1996), 138.
- ⁶ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), C. B. Macpherson, ed., (London, 1985), 267.
- ⁷ Andrew McRae, *God speed the plough: . . .*, 144.
- ⁸ Thomas Tussler, *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, taken from the 1573 edition as quoted in McRae, *God speed the plough: . . .*, 148.
- ⁹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1603); I, iii, 77 – 75.
- ¹⁰ Note especially Franklin’s writings on personal vice and virtue: Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin and Other Writings*, Kenneth Silverman, ed., (New York, 1986), 90 – 100.
- ¹¹ “Primarily rejected” because these ideas, as written by Roberts, Tussler, *et alii*, were in print before Hobbes’ *Leviathan*, which he philosophically dismissed in his text, but were later adopted as will be shown.
- ¹² Gabriel Plattes as quoted in Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor, eds., *Culture and Cultivation . . .*, p. 66.
- ¹³ Andrew McRae, *God speed the plough: . . .*, 151 – 156.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 161.
- ¹⁵ Andrew McRae, *God speed the plough: . . .*, 161.
- ¹⁶ John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), C. B. Macpherson, ed., (Indianapolis, 1980), 20.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 21.

Works Cited:

- Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin and Other Writings*, Kenneth Silverman, ed., New York: Penguin Books, 1986.
 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), C. B. Macpherson, ed., London: Penguin Books, 1985.
 Jean Lee, 2004. *Personal communication*. From a series of lectures given at the University of Wisconsin, 27 April to 6 May 2004.
 Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor, eds., *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing and the Land*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992.
 John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), C. B. Macpherson, ed., Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980.
 Andrew McRae, *God speed the plough: The representation of agrarian England, 1500–1660*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
 John Naismith, *Thoughts on various objects of industry pursued in Scotland: with a view to enquire by what means the labour of the people may be directed to promote the public prosperity*, (Edinburgh, 1790).
 William Shakespeare, “Hamlet” (1603), *The Portable Shakespeare: Seven Plays, The Songs, The Sonnets, Selections From Other Plays*, New York: Penguin Books, 1972.

Works Referenced:

- God Speede the Plough*, (alt. title, *God speede the plovgh*), (London, 1601).
Holy Bible, King James Version.
 Norman Davies, *The Isles: A History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
 D. Brooks Green, ed., *Historical Geography: A Methodological Portrayal*, Savage, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1991.

A VAGUE SWEETNESS

Accessory as the Intersection of Ethics and Aesthetics in *The Ambassadors*

Accessories are the dwellings of paradox. True, a handbag or a pair of pink shoes may seem terribly trivial, but any such ornament contains a considerable and complex ontological puzzle. Since it is common to walk around in wardrobes unadorned by accessories, it would appear that an accessory is an inessential extra added to an already complete ensemble. It is, however, just as common to hear one say that a silk tie or a pair of pearl earrings simply *makes* an outfit. This assertion suggests that an accessory is necessary in the production of a whole outfit. Ever a fan of the paradoxical, Henry James seizes upon this seemingly contradictory in his novel *The Ambassadors*. In the novel, James uses interpretation of the complex nature of the accessory as a



Diana Dewi (Collaboration with Jennifer Kittleson), *Blind Construction: Mixed Media*, buckrum, copper wire spray paint, fabric paint, novelty fabric, and chain, Spring 2004

point of contention illustrating the differences in European and American ethics. Using Paris as a representation of European sentiment and the small town of Woollett, Massachusetts as the indicator of American values, James outlines each nation's governing ethic. While the Woollett ethic of production necessitates a perception of the acces-

sory as a nonessential addition to an already completed whole, the Parisian ethic of enjoyment is interdependent with a notion of the accessory as an essential element in an on-going process of completion.

To understand this intersection of value structures and accessories, it is necessary to examine the guiding ethic of each of the societies examined. Woollett, to begin with, is governed by an ethic of efficient production. That is, society in the small town values economy and utility above all else and measures worth of an object on the basis of its practical use. James demonstrates this value system through an examination of the Newsome family who represent their society's notion of success. The Newsome family business enacts the Woollett assembly-line sensibility

quite literally: it is a structure whose sole purpose is to manufacture utilitarian products, and its worth is determined by its efficiency, as measured by financial profits. Furthermore, the driving force behind the plot's trajectory is Mrs. Newsome's desire to retrieve Chad from his non-productive life abroad and anchor him in the operation of

the family business. The matriarch's valuing of a lifestyle of industry above all else demonstrates her society's mindset that measures worth in terms of productivity.

The Woollett ethic of efficient production is made all the more perceptible when juxtaposed with the contrasting system of values that governs Parisian life. In Paris, society is organized around what one might call an ethic of enjoyment—the belief that pleasure (intellectual, physical, emotional, etc.) is of the utmost importance. Unlike the Newsomes of Woollett, whose identities are nearly inseparable from their industry, James's Parisian characters rarely if ever so much as mention vocations or indeed any sort of labor executed for a practical purpose. Instead, Parisians elect to engage in activities and experiences that are, in a practical sense, useless but that provide a great deal of pleasure. The great Parisian past-times of window shopping and smoking cigarettes, for example, produce no concrete object, and would doubtlessly be admonished in Woollett as disgracefully frivolous.

At the same time that James delineates the ethics that govern society in Paris and Woollett, he documents the way in which these ethics contribute to social perceptions of the accessory. Turning again to Woollett, an analysis of the town's production ethic reveals that there, an accessory can be nothing more than an inessential, fussy detail. Inherent in a value system based on the efficient production of objects is the assumption that an object can attain a state of completeness. Furthermore, in order to minimize the resources expended in the production process and thus maximize efficiency, an object is considered complete as soon as it fits the most basic requirements of existence, in the same way that a product is yanked from an assembly line as soon as it can realize its market value. Therefore, in the town's industrialized philosophical paradigm, production stops and completion is achieved when an object attains functionality. In such a system, the accessory—an element added to an independently functioning body—is rendered inessential, for it adds extravagantly to an already completed unit. Unable to contribute anything that would affect the essential nature of the object to which it is joined, an accessory is valued in Woollett only if they can serve a purpose independent of its context.

In Paris, however, the governing ethic of enjoyment is interdependent with a notion of the accessory as not only valuable but essential. As noted above, the Parisian ethic places value not on efficient production of objects but on the quality of pleasure an object or experience offers. Mere function cannot produce this sense of quality. Rather, something must be added to a base

functionality to render an object not just coherent but also enjoyable. Thus the Paris sensibility recognizes that an object can be complete as an thing of function and at the same time incomplete as an thing of interest. In this system, accessories—those elements that are added to already functional objects—are necessary for the completion of a certain type of whole, a whole unimaginable under Woollett's value system.

In a brief but finely-wrought scene, James gives readers an enactment of both the ethical dynamic of each city and its vision of the accessory. The scene is a description of the attire that Mrs. Newsome and Maria Gostrey wear to the opera in their respective cities. Mrs. Newsome's outfit exemplifies the Woollett ethic of efficient production. The outfit has a specific, practical function: to communicate its wearer's wealth and refinement. This is demonstrated in Strether's account of Mrs. Newsome's dress. It was "a black silk dress-- very handsome, he knew that it was 'handsome'" (43). This statement includes two separate ideas: Strether's impulsive vision, and a more conscious revision in which he places *handsome* in quotation marks. By adding the marks, Strether announces that he was not the originator of the term he applied. That is, he realizes that his impression of the dress is not that it appealed to his sense of handsomeness, but that it conformed to some pre-constructed category that those around him have labeled "handsome." Hence, Mrs. Newsome's opera costume fulfills its function in projecting an image that her society will read as elegant affluence. Once her outfit attained its designed functionality, however, Mrs. Newsome considered the production process complete. This is apparent from the fact that aside from its purpose as a status symbol, the outfit has nothing to offer. The dress's black color lends it a sense of formal coldness and void. Not "cut down" (42), its style refrains from offering an impression of the sensuality of the body it cloaks. Finally, the hyper-conventional nature of a black silk dress—little short of a uniform for high society women—disallows the garment to stimulate any original impression. Also, ceding her choice of outfit to the doctrine of social norms, Mrs. Newsome demonstrates utter disregard for any aspect of the ensemble apart from its practical function as social statement.

To the product of her outfit, the lady adds an accessory, a *ruche*, but engages it not as an essential piece of the ensemble, but as a disconnected entity independently serving a purpose. The lady's frill seems to bear no relation to the rest of her outfit, as its description is completely distinct from that of her dress. In addition, Mrs. Newsome's devaluing of accessories is so apparent

that Strether cannot imagine that she would select the ruche or any other accessory so that it would “carry on and complicate... his vision [of her]” (42). Treated as incapable of adding significant meaning to the ensemble, the ruche becomes an isolated piece of finery, serving the purpose of displaying luxury independent of the rest of the outfit.

Mrs. Newsome’s Parisian counterpart in this scene is Maria Gostrey, whose opera attire epitomizes her city’s ethic of enjoyment and the necessity it assigns to accessories. Maria’s outfit (her object of production) is intended to stimulate interest and pleasure. The red color of her ribbon, which James stresses by mentioning no less than three times (42), is bright and warm, giving her ensemble a spark of vibrant visual appeal. In addition, the band is made of velvet (James reminds readers four times on 42), a material that suggests the sensual pleasure of touch. Finally, Maria’s dress is “cut down” (42) as Mrs. Newsome’s is not to reveal part of her shoulders and chest, a fashion that invites observers to take pleasure in the sexually appealing form of her body.

As mentioned, Maria adds to her outfit a red velvet ribbon with an antique jewel pendant, regarding the accessory as an essential component of an outfit designed to provide enjoyment. The way in which her necklace “added, in appearance, to the value of every other item—to that of her smile and of the way she carried her head, to that of her complexion, her lips, her teeth, her eyes, her hair” (42) demonstrates a sophisticated consideration of band’s relation to its context, as well as an appreciation for it as an element with something significant to offer. Furthermore, the antique character of the necklace renders it unique, outside the realm of modern fashions. This denotes that unlike Mrs. Newsome, Maria

did not abandon choice to demands of the social standard, but consciously selected her accessory. Again, this illustrates the fact that what is in Woollett perception an inessential “trinket” (42) is, in Parisian eyes, the central element, without which the whole would be lacking.

In this complex scene, James recognizes the accessory as a site where ethic blends into aesthetic, where the valuing of efficient production mingles inseparably with the insipid elegance of Mrs. Newsome’s ruche. As a practitioner of aesthetic, specifically an “artist of fiction,” James has great interest invested in this intersection where one can observe the ways in which art and social values

come to bear on each other. By demonstrating how such an interrelation operates, James can convince readers the importance of (his) art. In his essay “The Art of Fiction,” James asserts that art is “essentially selection” (in Wegelin & Wonham, 388) and can be thought of as theory that results in “delightful spectacle” (in Wegelin & Wonham, 376). James’s analysis of the perception of accessories demonstrates that these facets of art are exactly those elements that are valued under the Parisian ethic and that are viewed as worthless in the ethic of Woollett. Thus, James suggests to readers that an embrace of (his notion of) art corresponds to a Parisian world of enjoyment and interest, while a denial of art is indivisible from Woollett’s



Samantha Rose Gray, *Necklace*, sterling silver wire, 2004

realm of industrial function and efficiency. In this pairing, James encourages readers to evaluate the two responses to art/aesthetic. If we regard Paris highly, as we likely will, we must also recognize the value and importance of his art. However, if we choose Woollett, the author reminds us, there will be “no pink lights, no whiff of vague sweetness” (42), and no Jamesian art. ♦

All citations refer to:
James, Henry. *The Ambassadors*. New York, Norton Press: 1994 .

DENISE MADDOX

MY ODYSSEY

The UW Odyssey Project introduces economically disadvantaged adults in the community to college-level work in the humanities. Now in its second year, the Odyssey Project provides approximately two dozen students each year with evening instruction in literature, philosophy, art history, American history, and writing. The majority of the students are single parents, the first in their families to go past high school, and members of racial minorities. Emily Auerbach, Marshall Cook, Craig Werner, Kathi Sell, Gene Phillips, Jean Feraca, and other UW faculty and guest artists teach the course. Denise Maddox is a graduate of the first year of the Odyssey Project (2003–2004).

My name is Denise Maddox, and I am one of twenty-four people who were the first graduates of the UW Odyssey Project, Class of 2003-2004. I would never have thought that classes in the humanities would change my life forever. I mean “forever” without exaggeration because Writing, Art History, American History, Literature, and Philosophy transported me into a new world, where written words came alive and made magic inside my heart.

An odyssey is a life-altering journey of discovery. Like Odysseus in Homer’s *Odyssey*, I too started out on a life-changing journey. The boat was our classroom at the Harambee Center in South Madison, and the reading materials (books by Shakespeare, Plato, Thoreau, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, Toni Morrison, and so many more) were the rough seas we had to travel through. In each and every port we landed were wonderful lessons to learn. The Odyssey crew consisted of the UW professors and staff members who gave us supplies to maintain this one-year exploration of learning. The teachers were the compasses that directed us through these rough seas and guided us safely to our destination.

The journey started in September with William Blake’s poems from *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience*. We learned about a chimney sweeper who was a little child sold into slavery by his parents. As Professor Emily read the poem, tears rolled down my face. As an African American, I understand the bitterness of slavery. The poem went on to light a fire within my soul. I have been victorious in freedom. My freedom included wanting to better myself through education. This was the first time I realized how words can move you forever, even if the original writer is gone from this world.

WOW! The transformation had started, and there was no turning back from this course. I wasn’t alone on this journey. Twenty-four minds started to look at the world with different perspectives. Indeed with each lesson taught, the fire of knowledge began to burn brighter and brighter. For example, my classmate Tiffany Smith said, “I always wanted and have the will to succeed. The Odyssey class pulled it all out of me, letting



Denise Maddox gets encouragement in writing and speaking from Jean Feraca of Wisconsin Public Radio. (Photo by Richard White)



Odyssey Project Director Emily Auerbach with the class of 2004-2005 in their South Madison Harambee Center classroom. (Photo by Michael Forster Rothbart)

me know I could do it." Another classmate named Joseph Hurst said, "I was fortunate to have been a part of the first Odyssey class. One of the great benefits of this class was studying the humanities. I have always loved history and knew about African-American philosophers, but through the Odyssey class I gained a great appreciation for the Greek philosophers, like Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates."

Jean Feraca of Wisconsin Public Radio had heard about a free humanities program for adults near the poverty level started by Earl Shorris in New York. She had Emily Auerbach, Professor of English, set up and direct a program here in Madison. During the first-ever Odyssey Project graduation in May 2004, Jean Feraca quoted a poem by James Wright called "Today I was so happy, so I made this poem": "An eagle rejoices in the oak trees of heaven, / Crying / This is what I wanted." The reason she quoted this poem was that the graduation was a confirmation and fulfillment of a dream: that courses in the Humanities offered to students who wanted to go to college and never had a chance could transform lives and lift them out of poverty. This was only the beginning. Our class laid the foundation for the Odyssey Project Class of 2004-2005, which has been meeting every Wednesday night since September 10, 2004, and will have its graduation ceremony on May 18, 2005. Graduates of the UW Odyssey Project receive six credits in Integrated Liberal Studies.

Just months after starting their journey, members of the new Odyssey Class 2004-2005 showed signs that a transformation had started. Several students

wrote about the emotional experiences they went through during the first weeks of the course. Terry Fox reported, "This class is thought-provoking. It increases your awareness of the history of man along with the origins of many current systems we use as well as language. This class teaches me to look farther, to read about and most importantly develop my own thoughts and opinions." James Robinson, whose brother Joe graduated from the Odyssey Class 2003-2004, said, "I feel different because I did not know that I would look forward to coming to class. I enjoy this time in class because it is an escape for me, an escape for a few hours that lets me explore my mind." Other classmates report similarly enriching experiences.

Earl Shorris, who founded the original Clemente Course in the Humanities, a model for the Odyssey Project, explained in his book *Riches for the Poor*, "I like watching people having a second birth." His statement is true—I am one of the examples of his words. "Rebirth" is the perfect word to describe what happened to me. I was like a caterpillar eating everything in sight, yet I was never full until I found focused learning in the Odyssey Project a year ago. The knowledge I received helped me finally transform into a multicolored butterfly. I spread my wings into the air to dry, and now I'm flying. I am pursuing a degree at MATC and I am on the Dean's List. I hope eventually to transfer to the UW-Madison and earn a degree in writing and literature. The world might still see me as being poor, with little money and material wealth, but I am rich with knowledge and wisdom. ❖

AWAKENING TO OUR COMMON COMPASSION

The world awoke to the horror and grief of South Asia after the tsunami of December 26, 2004. Much of the global community watched the aftermath with sadness and compassion, wanting to do something for those weeping for lost family members and devastated lives.

Members of the University of Wisconsin-Madison community were no different. Students, faculty, staff, and administration felt a need to support the people of South Asia. The avenues of support have been diverse, but all have shared a collaborative spirit. The common lessons and stories of these tsunami response efforts are rich with life and meaning.

Students and staff were brought together by this shared concern when Rick Brooks, UW Outreach Program Manager, called for a campus-wide tsunami-response coordinating meeting. Faculty, staff, and students attended, representing different components of the campus community—from the Indian Student Association to the Morgridge Center to the School of Social Work. Syasana Fatkhi, student Associate Director of Promotion for the Wisconsin Union Directorate, expressed that all the student organizations came together in their common desire to help those affected by the tsunami. Fatkhi has since become a

leader in tsunami relief fundraising and believes that the core of these meetings was a shared compassion for South Asia.

The International Student Services Office took the lead in coordinating and overseeing campus response efforts after these initial meetings. A taskforce was formed to coordinate this common concern into real support for UW students who were affected by the tragedy of South Asia. The first priority, according to

Director of International Student Services, Pap Sarr, was ensuring the safety of all international and study abroad students who might have been affected by the disaster. Fortunately, all South Asian international and study abroad students were contacted and confirmed as safe.

On campus, students became a primary force driving tsunami relief efforts. The Wisconsin Union

Directorate's staff and volunteers were at the forefront of student fundraising. WUD's Community Service Committee and Student Performances Committee partnered to host a benefit concert featuring a mosaic of performers ranging from the UW Bellydancing Group to spoken word artist Eric Mata.

Student groups and departments plan to continue their support for the relief and rebuilding efforts in South Asia, even as many people around the world lose sight of the millions of people who still need



Photo courtesy of www.sarvodaya.org

support. Student organizations, the Center for South Asia, and International Student Services plan to sponsor further educational events focusing on the lessons learned from the tsunami. International Students Services plans to keep their commitment to students by partnering with the Wisconsin Alumni Association and the University of Wisconsin Foundation to create the International Students Assistance Fund. This fund will assist any student whose financial situation was affected by the tsunami.

Eric Mata spoke at the WUD fundraiser about the necessity of remembering that the people of South Asia will need long term support and dedication from the global community, and also of the necessity in opening our eyes to the disasters within local communities. He reminds the university community:

*We need to start looking
within the confines of our own borders
and acknowledge those which are happening
underneath our footsteps
see there are men and women being laid to rest
in the cracks we try to avoid
as we stroll down university streets.*

His words touch on a common lesson learned by many who took part in tsunami relief and support efforts. When local and global communities recognize the needs of our neighbors and the common compassion that unites us, we can work together to impact individual lives and the community as a whole.

Rick Brooks, the UW staff member who initially called the UW community together to respond to the tsunami, believes deeply in this lesson. In addition to his university job, he was the volunteer executive director of Sarvodaya USA, the partner organization to the largest indigenous relief and development organization in Sri Lanka, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement. Sarvodaya's founder and president, Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, translates Sarvodaya Shramadana to mean the sharing of thought, labor, and resources for the awakening and well-being of all. Brooks explains: "We tell people in local communities: share yourself for the good of all. Sarvodaya USA exists both to directly support Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka and to facilitate

awakening and social change in local U.S. communities. Sarvodaya USA strives for social change for the well-being of all people, the development and coming together of communities internationally, and the awakening to our common humanity and interconnectedness."

Brooks' small university office, just up the street from the Red Gym and the Memorial Union, was converted into the Sarvodaya USA national headquarters after the tsunami. Since December 27th, Sarvodaya USA has received thousands of calls and emails, built partnerships, coordinated international volunteers and professionals, and began to develop programs like Village to Village, linking Sri Lankan villages to communities in the U.S. for the sharing of culture, community, and resources. With the help of students and other Madisonians, Sarvodaya USA channeled over 1.3 million dollars directly to Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka. Brooks predicted: "This is just the beginning. People around the world were deeply moved by this historical disaster. People want to help so deeply; people are inspired. We have established relationships and built partnerships which will support Sarvodaya in the future. We have spread the vision and the work of Sarvodaya to millions of people. And most of the energy behind tsunami relief efforts in this office and on this campus has come from the students."

This inspiration and the awareness of the power of coming together to serve others might be one of greatest lessons people have learned from this disaster. Whether it is student organizations at the UW coming together to fundraise in Madison, Wisconsin, or villagers helping each other rebuild their lives and homes in Sri Lanka, people around the world have personally learned these lessons. People throughout the university and the world have realized we need to remember these lessons. So that the lives lost and destroyed are not in vain, my hope is that we continue to honor these lessons in a way which focuses on the continuous awakening, solidarity, and common compassion for our global family. ❖

For more information see: <http://www.news.wisc.edu/tsunami/> and <http://www.sarvodaya.org>.

THE MORGRIDGE CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

"Being awarded a Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowship for our project Diving Deeper: Venturing into Science with Rural Wisconsin was one of the greatest opportunities I have received as a student at UW-Madison. I am incredibly thankful for the impact that participating in our WIF has had on both my education and my personal life."

-Allison Bichler, 2004-2005 WIF

The Morgridge Center for Public Service is an institution on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus that most have not heard of, but that has greatly impacted many lives. A University's responsibility is not just to provide its students with an education, but also to shape them into valuable citizens. Since its conception in 1994, the Morgridge Center's role at the UW has been to help guide students into becoming more civically minded individuals who play key roles in their communities.

The Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowship, or WIF, is one of the many programs that the Morgridge Center for Public Service provides for the students at UW-Madison. At this pivotal time in students' lives, the Center uses programs like these to involve them in the surrounding communities. The continued development of service-learning and Campus Community Partnerships, along with the WIF's are some of the most critical ways the Morgridge Center is enhancing the learning of UW students and improving the Madison community and beyond.

"In designing the project, I learned more about scientific concepts...and how scientists design experiments. While I probably could have learned this information in a lecture, pursuing these topics on my own was more challenging and rewarding. I think I gained a much deeper understanding of the subject matter than I would have if I was being lectured to."

-Allison Bichler

The WIF Fellowship is not necessarily defined as a service-learning experience but it does get to the heart of service-learning—enhancing the academics of learning with community service. The Morgridge Center defines service-learning as:

"Service-learning is a credit bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility."

-Bringle and Hatcher (1995)

Service-learning classes can be found in several different departments at UW-Madison. In Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education 300: Individuals with Disabilities, students spend time with members of the community that have disabilities. In Curriculum and Instruction 375: SHAPE, students tutor at schools in Madison. Because service-learning classes tend to require more time and dedication from both the professor teaching and students enrolled in the course, there are not as many of these classes as the Morgridge Center would like to see.

In an effort to expand service-learning at the UW, Morgridge offers a library of service-learning literature, offers grants to service-learning faculty and employs five undergraduate service-learning fellows. The fellows assist professors of service-learning classes by leading class reflections, giving service-learning

orientations, reading student journals and acting as liaisons between the university and the community.

Not only is the Morgridge Center focusing on the proliferation of service-learning classes, but it is also integrating service-learning into new departments at the UW. One of the attempts to do this is the Center's partnership with the Institute for Cross Campus Biology Education (ICBE). Biology has the largest number of majors at the UW. A Morgridge Center service-learning fellow has worked this year on introducing biology students and faculty to service-learning through a Web site, presentations and brown bag lunches. Morgridge has similar partnerships with the School of Human Ecology, the department of Landscape Architecture and the Center for Humanities.

"I know when I was in high school, I had no clue what it would be like in college, so I believe we cleared up some preconceived notions of Madison and encouraged students to pursue college here."

-Annika Swenson 2004-2005 WIF

Morgridge is also the University's center for campus-community partnerships, which are important



Megan Cole Paustian, *Maizinha*, black and white photograph, 2002

to maintain a strong relationship between the University and the Madison community. One of the most vital of these community partnerships is the Campus Community Partnerships Center in the Villager Mall on South Park Street. Working with South Madison residents, UW students and faculty have the opportunity to enhance the university's image. The university leased this space in 2001, and began offering different educational programs along with Edgewood College, MATC, and UW-Extension Dane County. Community members have the opportunity to take high school equivalency classes, ESL classes or get involved in the unique programs CCP has to offer. Every year, volunteers run the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA), providing assistance to South Madison residents with their taxes. The Morgridge Center hopes to help improve the economic situation in South Madison through programs like these.

"Carrying out our project was a great experience for me because it gave me something to be passionate about...The entire process of developing the project and carrying it out was incredibly fun and rewarding, and it was wonderful to feel that I was truly impacting the lives of others."

-Allison Bichler

The Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowship is one of the most involved and rewarding service-learning programs the Morgridge Center is involved in. Fellows get the chance to work with a faculty advisor and a community organization on a project to address a specific community need. Students can earn up to three academic credits, receive funding for their project and a personal stipend. Allison and Annika's project took them to the high schools of rural Wisconsin where they taught students new scientific research concepts that they would not normally be exposed to. Judging from their quotes, the experience of being a WIF was an extremely positive one, impacting their lives as well as the community's.

From its headquarters on the first floor of the Red Gym, the Morgridge Center and its staff have created a more positive and productive environment at UW-Madison. Along with the five academic staff and undergraduate service-learning fellows, ten student peer advisors and Wisconsin Union Directorate committee directors put in countless hours to improve the campus environment. And so, a visit to the Morgridge Center can literally become a life-changing experience. ❖

Contributors

Suzanne S. Album: I am a senior, majoring in English (hopefully, with an emphasis on creative writing tacked on). I have been thinking about Wolf and his family for several years now, and it is an exciting experience to know that others will have the opportunity to hear their voices. After graduation, I hope to attend graduate school in creative writing (here at the UW would be nice). I also intend to work in development for cultural organizations (in other words, writing grant proposals—it takes a good amount of creative writing to get museums money). album@wisc.edu

Emory Allen: I am a senior majoring in art with a focus in graphic design. Most of my work falls somewhere in between what is considered art and what is considered design. Emory tries to explore the ways a computer can be used as a medium for artistic expression. derrickallen@wisc.edu

Julia Bartz: I am a junior, majoring in English and journalism. This story was prompted by a visit to the London Aquarium last semester, when I could have sworn I was communicating with a moray eel. After graduation I plan to write about accessories at a magazine in New York until my novel takes off. juliabartz@wisc.edu

Zak Bruder: My work focuses on modernist architecture and the military engineering of the twentieth century super powers. Using both to expose the hubris of man I create impure forms that question the human urge to create and the value of these forms to society. The first image is an apartment complex in Osaka, Japan, used by oil workers. The second is a procession of soviet troops. zfb Bruder@wisc.edu

Christine Carlson: My interest in the relationship between internal and external representations is reflected in my work. Schism uses the visual vocabulary of body language to illustrate how the internal thoughts of the individual figures relate to their external appearance, which in turn influences relationships between the figures. The body language of the figures disconnects them from one another, thereby constraining human interaction among the figures. My work primarily deals with visual forms of communication, such as graphs, diagrams, and symbols. Most recently, my work is predominantly mixed media and two-dimensional. I am currently a junior at UW-Madison, and am planning to attend graduate school to study Art after completing the Art Education program. cmcarlson2@wisc.edu

Megan Cole Paustian: The photographs I've submitted were taken both in Angola and in camps of Angolan refugees in Zambia over the course of several trips which have significantly shaped my life and thinking. After 27 years of brutal civil war, the Angolan people have emerged with stories that I can barely begin to imagine and an enduring passion for life that challenges and inspires me. My photography is an attempt to capture in images both the struggle and the beauty of Angola's people. macole@wisc.edu

Colleen Roark Condon: I am a senior, majoring in social welfare. I wrote the article in order to share the lessons learned from the tsunami relief efforts both at the University and internationally. Currently, I plan to continue working as Sarvodaya USA's operations manager. I then plan to pursue a master's degree in social work in order to prepare for a career in community organizing and advocacy. crcondon@wisc.edu

Melissa Cooke: My artwork illustrates my concerns about the domestication of nature, modern development, unsustainable consumption and the consequences of supporting these standards. I collage different perspectives of environmental issues with facts about the natural world to show the cumulative impact of certain actions. I interpret everyday events into narratives that fuse cause with effect. Through my work I raise questions in an effort to stimulate interest and dialogue. I research, employ and advocate non-toxic, environmentally friendly artistic methods in an effort to integrate my values with my practices. I also make every

effort to integrate art into the community by making fine art posters and installations that address environmental issues. I strive to create art that intertwines with nature, creating a delicate balance of beauty and awareness. Art can change the way people see the world. My objective is to make a positive impact on society and lobby for change in environmental policies. mmcooke@wisc.edu

Lindsay Daigle: I am a sophomore, majoring in creative writing. This is my first opportunity for publication as a college poet, and seeing as how "Blank Mail" and "A single file line" are examples of much earlier work, I hope to achieve further publication as my writing develops and strengthens. After graduation, I want to continue on to grad school to hopefully attain an MFA in poetry, write always, and teach others how to find their voice through lovely words on paper. lrdaigle@sbcbglobal.net

Katie Day: kgday@wisc.edu

Diana Dewi: My work is focused on creating textile into apparel, aesthetically driven and conceptual in a natural way. I use a lot fabrics and hardware products and treat them in unique ways. Garments that I create are meant to be worn on beings in movement. nana_pg@yahoo.com

Jane Duffy: I studied abroad in Madrid, Spain, the academic year 2003-2004. As the only "out" lesbian on our trip, I often found myself feeling lonely and searching for a connection. I took these pictures in Chueca, the neighborhood in Madrid that has been adopted by the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) community. Although the community is predominantly men, the neighborhood still made me feel like I belonged. janeduffy@wisc.edu

Ari Feld: adfelfd@uwalummi.edu

Richanda Grant: I am a junior, majoring in English with a creative writing emphasis and a political science. Unlike the good dental hygiene in this poem, I have ten cavities. After graduation, I would like to go to graduate school and earn my M.F.A. in creative writing. rlgrant@wisc.edu

Samantha Gray: I am a freshmen. In school, I am taking the usual required classes for zoology majors and as many art classes as possible. This necklace started with the idea of making a simple chain and turned into a something that I feel is complex, yet retains the simplicity and elegance that I originally wanted. srgray@wisc.edu

Nick Herro: I construct paintings that use images taken from my personal cache of Internet photographs. I montage specific images to form compositions that evoke personal memories and describe idiosyncratic associations. The paintings reflect my emotional relationships to the photographs and stand as representations of a process of visualization that involves self-reflection as well as an attention to the process of painting. ncherro@yahoo.com

Celeste Heule: My work reflects a personal inability to articulate and apply significance to ideas. A majority of my pieces are first created by hand and then copied using a color copier. In other works, I focus on physically interacting with the light of the color copy machine. I am interested in the distorted quality of the derived image. My preferred medias to work with for this process are puffy paint, glue, and yarn. In addition I am interested in incorrect jokes. ctheule@wisc.edu

Andrew Hutchison: I try to make paintings that are self-contained and essentially about themselves. Therefore, I concentrate on revealing the construction of the paintings. Currently, I am interested in the construction of narrative in a painting, both in a kind of storytelling and in a psychological narrative of the painter's process. These two narratives are continually converging in the work. Painting is a struggle for me to overcome my own issues of security, self-confidence, and fear. While the resolution of a painting is a personal accomplishment over these issues, the beginning of another is a kind of paralysis induced by myself. I

see this as a constant, personal narrative in my paintings and recently, the events and stories that I describe and tell are those of vulnerability and the destruction of security from external sources, such as natural disasters and war. ajhutchison@wisc.edu

Cameron Jones: I am a part-time sophomore. Currently, I'm studying art with a focus on Metal and 3D. My work is about juxtaposing the modern with the traditional. Though I did not initially realize it, ipod case is ironic: it represents the totting an ultra modern device, prized for sleek design and convenience, in a box that is difficult to manage, mares the piece, and weights more than the iPod itself. Cameron.jones@novagen.com

Kristen Jones: I am a freshman, majoring in physics. This poem is about human compassion, a cultural divide in even so common a location as a restaurant, and what happens when one person dares to mix the two. After I graduate I am interested in going to grad school for a Ph.D and continuing my involvement in research. KMJones2@wisc.edu

Allison Kirby: I am a freshman art major. Lost is about a summer I spent living on a reservation in South Dakota. I had not been back in several years, and experienced an over whelming feeling of loss, mainly for my friends. Many still live there, and they are never going to get out. My good friend is going to the small college in town, and will probably marry the guy she is dating right now. She does not travel, and neither does anyone else who lives there. Everything is run-down: my old house is boarded up, with a big fence around it. The woods where I used to play as a child are all overgrown, and a small grave marked by a wooden cross lies nearby. In Lost, I wanted to convey some of the feelings I had that summer in South Dakota. akirby@wisc.edu

Alice Laskey-Castle: I am a senior and will graduate this May with my BFA. I make objects and create actions. I want to construct a current mythology with my work. laskeycastle@wisc.edu

Denise Maddox: See page 56.

Sarah Minsloff: I am a senior, majoring in English and art history. "A Vague Sweetness" explores an intersection of aesthetics and politics, and is dedicated to Professor Rebecca Walkowitz, to whose brilliant and generous support it owes much. After completing my undergraduate work, I plan to pursue graduate studies in English. sgminsloff@wisc.edu

Sarah Mucek: I am a senior, majoring in English (Creative Writing). My paper on disability was the result of an extended project for UW-Madison's undergraduate writing fellows training seminar, and "Slow-burn Moonlight Vinyl" came out of a poetry workshop I took during my year abroad at the University of Warwick, UK. After graduation, I would like to teach English abroad, go to graduate school, and write superhero comic books (not necessarily in that order). sbowlesmc@aol.com

Ooda Group (Shaun Owens-Agase, Tyler Peterson, Kristof Wickman): Kristof Wickman, Tyler Peterson, and Shaun Owens-Agase conceived this collaborative project in the summer of 2004. Its production began that September, and it was installed November 5 through 12. The installation was kept open to the public for one week, 24 hours a day. During that time, visitors were encouraged to stay and speak to the artists, at least one of who was there at all times. The main room of the gallery was bisected and fitted with a secondary floor, which separated the original floor on a parabolic curve. A mirror of this curve was made from a secondary dropped ceiling, suspended inches above the floor, with a "hallway" space cut out of it to allow passage over the floor. Along this hallway, at the height of the floor's curve, was a vent that pumped a constant flow of perfumed air. Coffee and doughnuts were served in a small break room at the rear of the gallery. www.oodagroup.com

Matthew Pace: I am a senior, majoring in English and psychology. Many of the events and details within the story are taken from or are distorted versions of moments or elements from my life. After graduation, I am open for suggestions. mwpace@wisc.edu

David Parisi:



daparisi@wisc.edu

Susanna Rasmussen: I recently graduated, majoring in English and political science. My paper is an exploration of the reasons my grandmother Darina Rasmussen invoked her Fifth Amendment privilege and refused to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1955. After graduation I plan on pursuing a career in politics, writing or political journalism. serasmussen@gmail.com

Jason Rozumalski: I am junior, majoring in history (honors) and political science. I originally wrote "English Agriculture and Enlightenment" as a term paper for a botany course, and now I intend to develop the research and argument further for my senior thesis in history. I have no after-graduation-plans other than to travel a bit, work a while, and then go to graduate school for history. The details will come eventually. jrozumalski@wisc.edu

Melissa Steckbauer: It's about the joyful experience of my messy, childlike abstraction meeting the grown up, cleaned up sophistication of figural representation. I enjoy the striking polarity I am afforded in this mode, and the power I have over the characters in my game/artwork. I am mapping and excavating emotional events that within the painting process I am able to access and analyze. Be it loosely organic or structurally figural, I am discussing my raging boundaries and sacred indemnity. I commonly use string, oils, tar, acrylic, shellac, pastels, charcoal and street-marking paint. I apply these in bouts of aggression and felicity onto stretched and un-stretched canvas and in sometimes linoleum. melissasteckbauer@hotmail.com

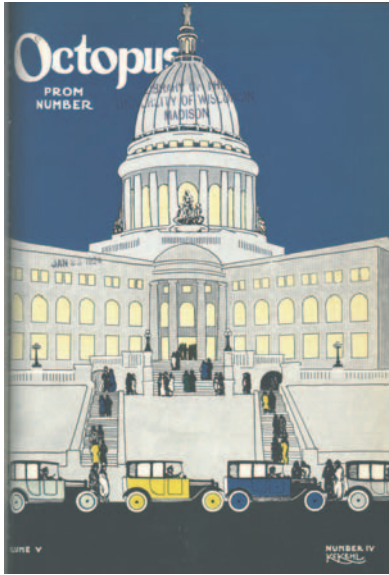
Jackie Topol: I am a junior at UW-Madison, majoring in art. My concentrations are graphic design and photography. Two of the most common subjects in my photography work are mannequins and food. There is something very strange, but still very beautiful about mannequins that intrigue me. They are interesting because they cause me to have two very different reactions at nearly the same time. At first glance, one can appreciate a mannequin's beauty and perfection. A moment later though, and one will begin to feel quite uneasy. I also enjoy photographing food because I like to beautify the mundane and help my viewers look at an object in a new and different way. jgtopol@wisc.edu

Weston Ulfig: Weston likes to draw birds, hearts, and television sets, enjoys putting himself in dangerous situations and will go skinny-dipping if you ask him. Printmaking is his main focus-serigraphy, relief, intaglio, and stencil. wjulfig@wisc.edu

Jane Wanninger: I am a sophomore, majoring in English. "Love Without Retention or Restraint" was written last fall for English 417; I am fascinated by the ways in which hallmarks of literature, like Shakespeare, can be continually reevaluated from innovative perspectives. While I plan to continue my studies post graduation, right now I plan to explore the publishing world after receiving my undergraduate degree. jmwanninger@wisc.edu

Katy Wheeler: I am a junior, majoring in journalism and mass communication. I'm a service-learning fellow for the Morgridge Center for Public Service and hopefully this gets more students and faculty excited about service-learning! After graduating, I plan to work in advertising or public relations for a non-profit organization. kawheeler@wisc.edu

Remembering *The Octopus* . . .



January 1924



February 1929



March 1923

Back cover: "Saying it with Spanish," *The Octopus*: The Old Timers Number, May 1924.

Starting in 1919, a literary and humor publication called *The Octopus* was published by the student body of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It was a great success in its time and continued production well into the middle of the 20th century. For our back cover, we have chosen to use the image from the May, 1924 issue of *The Octopus*. It is an excellent example of the quality of art captured by the publication. Many students involved in *The Octopus* continued to work in the publication business—James Watrous and Helen Firstbrook Franklin are just two of the many distinguished alumni who were involved.

Unlike a photograph or yearbook, the nature of *the Octopus*' content provides contemporary readers a direct link to the students of nearly 75 years ago. It is our wish to provide this same historical and intimate snapshot of the University in the year 2005. For us, *the Octopus* symbolically illuminates the importance of a student publication as a part of the past, the present and the future.

Opposite page: Alice Laskey-Castle, *High Horse*, steel, paper mache, fur, 2004

This piece was the product of Laskey-Castle's disappointment in the contemporary artist's role in society. In the early decades of the 19th century, many European artists were dissatisfied with the artistic status quo. They published manifestoes, expressing their arrogant thoughts and reactions. In order to call attention to the diminished role of the modern artist, Laskey-Castle decided to get up on her own 'high horse.' Thus, the shape of the work replicates what the artist feels her personal high horse would look like. Laskey-Castle made the figure double headed to represent her ability to see both sides of many arguments.





The Old Timers Number Octopus.