The Kent State University Stark Campus Writing Center staff, along with our director, Dr. Jeannette E. Riley, realize that student writing should be recognized and celebrated. We believe recognition for successful academic writing builds student awareness about the value of writing not only in the academic world, but also in the world outside of the university. For this reason, we are pleased to continue the tradition of publishing the best of student writing from across the curriculum in the fifth volume of the Writing Center Review.

These fifteen papers were selected anonymously by a team of readers composed of faculty members and Writing Center peer tutors and ranked according to standards outlined by the Review editorial board. Once again, we have a selection of papers that demonstrates skill, originality, clear organization, effective and appropriate support, and appropriate documentation according to the standards in their disciplines. Although we edit each paper for sentence level errors, we leave students' distinct and varied voices intact, which are influenced by their class standings.

It is our hope that the Review will spark conversations, offer models for student writing, and encourage other students to submit their work for consideration next year. Although we have a fine selection of papers that represent various disciplines, we would like to encourage submissions from other disciplines such as Psychology, History, Foreign Languages, Political Science, Communications, Nursing, and Philosophy, so that in the future we may have an even broader representation of writing across the curriculum.

As in the past, we are always looking for ways to improve the Review. For this reason, we have made a significant change in the format and style of this year's journal. These changes have been made in order to create a more professional looking publication that is easier to read. Hopefully, you will enjoy this fifth edition of the Writing Center Review, and we welcome any comments and suggestions you might have for future editions.

The Writing Center staff would like to thank the following faculty members who volunteered as readers for this year's submissions:

Denise Ben-Porath, Assistant Professor of Psychology
Penny Bernstein, Assistant Professor of Biology
Andrew Burns, Assistant Professor of Chemistry
Ruth Capasso, Associate Professor of French
John Carson, Assistant Professor of English
Laura Delaney, Instructor of English
Lee Fox-Cardamone, Assistant Professor of Psychology
Leslie Heaphy, Assistant Professor of History
Robert Miltner, Assistant Professor of English
Jayne Moneysmith, Assistant Professor of English
Robert Sturr, Assistant Professor of English
Jen Welsh, Instructor of English

As co-editors of the Writing Center Review, we would like to thank our director of the Writing Center, Dr. Jeannette E. Riley, for her help, patience, and encouragement, and for allowing us, and the staff, the invaluable opportunity to direct and produce this publication entirely on our own. The skills that we have
learned from her will continue to be a source of inspiration and guidance that we will most certainly carry with us into future endeavors.

We would also like to personally thank our staff for all of their effort and hard work involved in creating the Review. Working as a team, the staff directed the advertising, submission process, selection committees, and editorial processes, while also helping with the creation of the new format. Without their dedication and commitment, this publication would not have been possible. We have been fortunate to work with such talented peers:

Carolyn Adelman
Robert Berens
David Duvall
Julie Fisher
Marianne Jackson
Emily Hetler
Ali Miltner
Kris Shearer

A final note to all students of the Kent/Stark Campus: as we pointed out, we believe that student academic writing should be recognized and celebrated. Here, within these pages, we celebrate and applaud the academic achievement of your peers whose essays may vary in style and construction, yet are nevertheless creative, thought provoking, complex, and often profound. We offer these essays in hope that they will be not only an educational resource for your writing, but also an inspiration to strike out on your own and submit a piece of your writing for consideration to the 2001 Writing Center Review.

Pamela Wilfong and Jonathan Judy, Editors
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Today's schools have standardized promotion requirements in the hopes that all students will be promoted in fairness. Like most states, Ohio's criteria for promotion in grade school include a passing grade in English composition, mathematics, science and reading. There are state-mandated benchmarks that must be met in all of these areas. The four levels of grading are: Advanced - student performs at a superior level; Proficient - student has a solid performance; Deficient - student's performance is lacking; Failing - student's performance is unsatisfactory. A student must be proficient or better in all areas to qualify for promotion. Also, if a student is not performing in the C-range or better in a majority of areas for the final four weeks of school, the school has the option of retaining that student. This sounds like a good plan, but how effective is it?

Alarmingly, forty percent of Ohio students in K-12 do not qualify for promotion. These are shocking numbers, yet proponents of the existing system consider this as evidence that this type of traditional evaluation is necessary to ensure the quality of our children's education. But, we must also consider that this same program has been used to evaluate students for decades. It was found that each year between 30-50% of students in elementary and middle schools would not have qualified for promotion (Ohio Fourth 81); however, the failure rate fell to 5% by the time these same students were ready for graduation (Ohio Twelfth 154). This drop in failure rates indicates the tests were not a reliable or valid representation of a student's ability to do well in school or of their right to be promoted. In addition, consider that many of the students were struggling in only one area. Each of these students would be denied promotion to higher levels of learning in many areas in which they are proficient because of a deficiency in only one area.

Additionally, the state of Ohio uses these proficiency tests to evaluate the schools themselves. The schools must pass all areas to retain accreditation. Approximately 93% of schools evaluated are failing in at least one area (1998-99 1). This creates problems, as teachers, under pressure to perform well, tend to teach toward the tests. Instead of having fun with their students and exploring areas related to the topic, the teacher focuses on the areas the students will be tested over. That is, their curriculum loses its wide range and tunnels towards the information covered on the tests. This tunneling tends to narrow our children's education.

The percentages of failures indicate change is needed. A new form of educating our children, which is really a return to the schoolhouse-type of education, is Mixed Age Education. MAE is an educational program built on the premise that different children learn different things at different rates. This program allows children to be organized not by age, but by skill level. The groups are generally divided into K-2 and 3-5. A child may be in Kindergarten level math and first level reading or fourth grade science and fifth grade English. The child's progress is frequently assessed for trouble areas and to determine when he or she is ready to advance to the next level in each individual area of teaching. A child's progress is directed toward third-grade and sixth-grade proficiency testing, which is designed to meet state standards.

MAE has many benefits for children. Children are allowed to advance at an individual pace. For example, a child who has mastered math can move into the next skill level in math even though that student still needs work on reading. The child who can read well above her peers is able to continue to read more advanced books and does not become bored or frustrated with
reading. A child would not be retained in all areas due to a weakness in one area. The child who has surpassed “first-grade” reading would go on the “second-grade” level, even though he/she is still in the “first-grade” math.

With MAE’s flexible-age grouping, children do not solely identify with same-aged peers and then feel a sense of frustration and lack of self-confidence when that entire group is advanced to the next educational level and they are not. With flexible-age grouping, each child moves through the different instructional groups independently and advancement does not occur for all but one or two. Instead, a number of students would be advanced each year, and a number would remain. Frequent assessment allows for teachers to follow more closely their students’ progress, and the teachers are able to give more support in the trouble areas. The children would be promoted at their own rate rather than at a subjective, age-based rate determined by state legislators who do not know the children and their personal weaknesses or strengths. No longer would a teacher feel obligated to promote a child based on age. The use of flexible-age grouping would also take care of the problem of social promotion. The child would remain in the appropriate skill level, receiving the needed attention in trouble areas, until he/she is completely ready to advance.

Another area of benefit for children would be interaction with children of other ages. During the course of the day they would be dealing with children as much as four years older or younger than themselves. Younger children learn skills and obtain information they would not normally receive from their peers. Older children are given an opportunity to test the skills they have learned and pass these skills on to younger children. By teaching these skills to younger children, older children have the opportunity to create a deeper understanding for themselves. Older children also learn leadership skills, which they pass onto the younger children who will need them in a few years. The children play off one another to learn and develop skills.

There are some difficulties to Mixed Age Education. It would be costly to implement, but the tens of millions of dollars spent each year on state-mandated testing, which would no longer be needed, would defray this cost. There would be additional education requirements for the teachers, but these additional courses would only make for better teachers. There would also be a need to retrain existing teachers. Teachers already possess most needed skills, so they would basically need only additional courses, which could be given during the implementation period. The expense of implementing the MAE program is negligible considering the benefits

My eight-year old daughter, who is in the third grade, would have benefited greatly from this program. She excels in math and science, but has trouble reading. Each year they discuss holding her back because of her reading skills, and she is very upset and embarrassed by this (“only dumb kids have to repeat”). She is frustrated and lacks confidence in her abilities. With MAE she would have received the extra help she needed with reading, while continuing on with her math and science and developing a positive feeling about school. Yes, there would be difficulties in changing the existing system to Mixed Age Education; nevertheless, I feel that the benefits for the children far outweigh these difficulties. There are costs, but what price can we put on a well-educated, self-confident individual?

Works Cited


When was the last time you were exposed to propaganda? If you think it was more than a day ago, you are probably unaware of what propaganda really is. According to Donna Woolfolk Cross in “Propaganda: How not to be Bamboozled,” propaganda is “simply a means of persuasion” (149). She further notes that we are subjected daily to propaganda in one form or another as advertisers, politicians, and even our friends attempt to persuade us to use their product, vote for them, or adopt their point of view. Propaganda is usually considered in a negative sense. However, when viewing propaganda as mere persuasion, one can readily appreciate that it is neither good nor evil: the good/evil effect is the direct result of the purpose for which it is used.

Politicians and leaders have long used propaganda to further their goals; Hitler’s use of propaganda as a means of controlling the populace of Nazi Germany is the most recognizable twentieth century example of propaganda used for evil. On the other hand, Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, in which he urges non-violent resistance in the cause of racial equality, portrays persuasion used with good intentions. Although oratory, as in King’s speech, is a highly effective means of delivering ideas or doctrines, the written word can be an even more influential medium. In the early days of America, long before instant communication, literature was used extensively as a means of persuasion. As early as 1631, John Smith wrote “Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters...” to encourage settlement in the new world; indeed, much of classical early American literature was written as propaganda for one cause or another.

Such was the case with Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, a pre-Civil War autobiography written at the urging of the Northern Abolitionist movement and employed effectively as propaganda for its cause. Although the work was ostensibly written to prove that Douglass had actually been a slave, according to critic Houston A Baker, Jr. “the light of abolitionism is always present” (584). Douglass, working for the abolitionist group, wrote for a specific audience: white Puritan Christians whom the abolitionists hoped to convert to their way of thinking. Thus, what began as a telling of life experiences evolved into a mighty tool of persuasion.

As does all propaganda, Douglass’ Narrative contains certain elements that appeal to the emotions of the reader. This emotional hold allows the writer to sway the opinion of the reader. The various devices employed in his artful promotion of abolitionism are especially worthy of note, for, although a self-taught writer and orator, Douglass makes use of sophisticated elements of persuasive writing.

Most evident of the literary devices he uses is his treatment of language to manipulate or produce an impression. In Douglass’ highly descriptive manner, he makes liberal use of “charged words,” those words which by their connotation “carry a judgment of a person or situation” (Birk and Birk 54). The use of words with unfavorable connotations (charges) emphasizes the negative aspect of a character or situation, whereas the opposite effect is produced by the use of positive expressions. Douglass’ stark portrayal of the slaveholders’ inhumanity to slaves is seen in his lamentations over the fate of his grandmother. He tells of her owner “virtually turning her out to die! ... she lives to suffer in utter loneliness [...] to remember and mourn [...] .” He envisions her “helplessness [...] loss of children [...] with no one to wipe from her wrinkled brow the cold sweat of death, [...]” (1782-83). He preys on the
sympathies of his readers by emphasizing the innocence of the grandmother and the horror of conditions imposed on her by slavery. In describing Mr. Gore, the cruel overseer, Douglass uses less explicit but no less damaging negativity: “He did nothing reluctantly no matter how disagreeable; […]” (1771). He follows with a highly charged and pointedly graphic description of the man: “His presence was painful; his eyes flashed confusion; and seldom was his sharp, shrill voice heard, without producing trembling and horror […]” (1771). Each word is calculated to produce the desired effect of unspeakable evil. Charged language is a mighty weapon in the propagandist’s arsenal.

In addition to charged words, Cross, in her analysis of the content of propaganda, recognizes “name-calling ... and glittering generalities” as two elements frequently found in persuasive rhetoric. “Name-calling” is self-explanatory: the author employs a negative noun to describe a specific person, concept, or belief. By denouncing something, the writer seeks to influence the reader to reject it (Cross 149-50). Douglass, zealously striving for an end to slavery, demonizes the Southern Christian Church as:

A mere covering for the most horrid crimes,—a justifier of the most appalling barbarity,—a sanctifier of the most hateful frauds,—and a dark shelter under which the darkest, foulest, grossest, and most infernal deeds of slaveholders find the strongest protection ... being the slave of a religious master is the greatest calamity [...]. (1796)

We are led to understand that the Southern masters as well as the overseers were exceedingly cruel, even barbarous, yet they were protected by their religion. In addition, when recounting his experience with Mrs. Auld, who began and then refused to further teach him, he again uses demonization as his weapon of choice to destroy any positive impression his audience may have of her: “That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made of all sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon” (1776). Northern abolitionists, targeting the New England Christians with Puritan backgrounds, considered this work a boon to their cause.

Slightly different from name-calling is Douglass’ penchant for identifying with descriptive names some of his more colorful characters. Mr. Gore, for example, has a name synonymous with the behavior demonstrated by the man. Likewise, Mr. Severe, another cruel overseer, “who seemed to take pleasure in manifesting his fiendish barbarity” (1766), is aptly named. Then there is Mr. Freeland, who, as the rare and compassionate slaveholder, is credited by Douglass with being “the best master I ever had” and from whom the author escapes in an effort to find the “free land” (1798). The fact that these names and others are so obviously contrived only lends credence to my contention that Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave was written with a specific purpose, propaganda, in mind.

Although “name-calling” is effective in provoking a rejection, sometimes propagandists need “glittering generalities” to entice a reader to embrace a concept or person. These expressions encourage the reader to “accept and agree” with a person or concept by using “virtue words,” those that “make us feel good.” “Feel good” words are those that fall in the motherhood, baseball and apple-pie category such as, freedom, justice, civil rights, and the American way, words that sound honorable, yet do not have a “specific, definable meaning” (Cross 150). Douglass’ “You are freedom’s swiftwinged angels […]” (1776), referring to white sailed ships anchored in a bay, is a classic example of this element of persuasion. He uses these “glittering generalities” most frequently when discussing his dreams of a better life. In the appendix, he expresses the desire for the success of his book in “hastening the glad day of deliverance [...] faithfully relying on the power of truth, love, and justice [...]” (1818). The writer hopes his readers will associate the “glittering generalities” with his cause and come to accept and agree with abolitionism.

Although Douglass is a master at manipulating language for the sake of persuasion, he is equally adept at using structural devices to emphasize
particular passages of his writing. The expository portions of his *Narrative* contain comparatively short, compact sentences with few extraneous words. However, when broaching a subject about which he feels strongly, such as Southern Christianity, or the evils of slavery, his writing style changes dramatically. Instead of the simple declaratory sentences, which carry the narrative, he employs the use of lengthy compound sentences, those with parallel construction and many with balanced construction. A typical statement, “He was just the man for the place, and it was just the place for such a man” (1771) contains thoughts on the man as well as the place: the clauses actually associate the man with the place. One of the strongest statements of Douglass’ book—“You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man” (1790)—is considered by many to be the theme of the entire *Narrative*. The balanced and inverted construction makes for a powerful statement. By inverting the subjects and complements, Douglass creates balanced clauses “strongly reminiscent of the Old Testament, particularly the Psalms” (Stone 136). Considering his New England Christian audience, the Biblical connection makes perfect sense when this work is viewed as persuasive rhetoric, or propaganda.

Douglass makes further use of balanced construction in the form of the many aphorisms, which he uses to emphasize ideas and make pointedly meaningful statements. While speaking of Mr. Auld, his master when he was but seven years old, Douglass recalls, “What he most dreaded, that I most desired. What he most loved, that I most hated” (1776). The opposing feelings serve to emphasize the differences in attitudes, social positions, and goals of the slave and master. The aphorism has the appearance of containing great wisdom, and would have held much significance for his audience. The rhetorical quality of both the aphorisms and the balanced/inverted sentences make for ease of reading and remembering.

Noted are but a few of the many elements of persuasive rhetoric, which can be found in Frederick Douglass’ autobiography; however, the elements alone do not prove his intent to write for any reason other than to prove his background as a slave. The most convincing argument for the contention that this was indeed written as propaganda is the organization and placement of the material and the manner in which the persuasive elements are used. The body of the narrative is written in a fairly simple and straightforward manner; the tale is told quite matter-of-factly, even the gory and pathetic scenes of cruel beatings and killings of slaves. This lack of histrionics is true even when the targets of the overseers’ whips are Douglass’ own family members. Yet, when Douglass speaks of Southern Christianity defending slavery (a hot issue to northern abolitionists), he works himself into a frenzy of emotion and uses the more obvious elements of propaganda. When discussing slaveholders who treat their slaves no better than animals, the author uses few of the literary devices mentioned; however, when he writes of the religious practices and hypocrisy of the same slaveholders, he again reverts to persuasive rhetoric. Some chapters are genuine throughout, while others contain much propaganda. One segment in particular, that having to do with the fate of his grandmother, is written in a style that is not consistent with the rest of the book. Rather, it is a maudlin lamentation, extremely histrionic, in which the believable, factual Douglass disappears, and is replaced by someone writing solely for effect.

It appears that Frederick Douglass did begin his autobiography with the intention of writing his story in a realistic manner; the basic narrative bears that out. But in the course of writing his intent strayed, and he became aware of the power that could be unleashed by inflaming the emotions of readers. Undoubtedly encouraged in his use of persuasive rhetoric, he eventually created a masterpiece of propaganda.

**Works Cited**


The second book of Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* deals primarily with the group's journey, or pilgrimage, to Spain and their experiences in and around the fiesta and the bull-fights. It is also during this period that Jake Barnes begins to have a full understanding of his own perspective on life. Beginning with his solitude while fishing and culminating in the climactic events of the fiesta, which reveal the intricate relationships among his band of expatriates, Barnes makes a noticeable transition in attitude from one of sport and leisure to an attempt at establishing an identifiable real life. Drawing on his own somewhat tragic experience with the war, the tragedy of man against beast in the bull-fight, and his and others' growing frustration with Robert Cohn and his lack of stability of character, Jake Barnes undergoes a considerable change. This is a metamorphosis that will result in his coming to terms with his own reality, his love for Lady Brett Ashley, and his somewhat rootless existence as an American tourist/writer in Europe. As the novel's focus changes from one of sport and carousing in the first book to reality and introspection in the second, Barnes' earlier narrative attention to Robert Cohn becomes clear. Cohn represents the sporting side, the ungrounded, rootless aspect of these characters, while Barnes discovers that it is the bull-fight, the struggle of life that is of greatest importance, setting it quite apart from the world of sporting man against man in the boxing ring which Cohn comes to represent. The bullfight, the focus of this portion of the novel, is symbolic of the actual lives Barnes and his compatriots lead under the guise of sportsmanship and entertainment.

To understand the way in which Cohn is viewed by Barnes and the rest, it is necessary to see why Barnes chooses to begin his narrative with the introduction of this seemingly secondary character. The opening line of the novel, "Robert Cohn was once middleweight boxing champion of Princeton" (11), initially implies that he is the probable focus of the novel. As the book progresses, however, it is discovered that not only is Cohn merely one member of a gang of America's lost generation, but a reviled and peripheral one as well. His existence in the novel serves clearly to establish a sort of attitude and character that eventually Barnes will seek to abandon. He is the primary player of book one, as the young matador is of book two. The fact that these two characters will literally clash at the climax of the novel is symbolic of Barnes' very dilemma. Cohn's very world is centered around sport, both literally and figuratively. It is not important that boxing is now behind him. He embodies the spirit of boxing in his very life. He is filled with bravado, taking a fighting stance against everyone he encounters. He dances around each character, especially Lady Brett, in attempt to win the game that they all play; he is determined to remain standing.

Even the choice of entertainment for the rest of the group in this portion of the novel is boxing. Reading Hemingway one expects fishing, bull-fighting, the rustic scene of man outdoors struggling with nature. Instead, these characters are found milling around from cafe to cafe and attending boxing matches. Like Barnes, they have not grasped any meaning of their own existence. Even Jake's commentary on the activity, "The Ledoux-Kid Francis fight was the night of the 20th of June. It was a good fight" (87), lacks the passion and aesthetic appreciation that is inherent in his observation of bull-fighting and his attempt to explain it to Lady Brett later in the novel. He moves through the first portion of the novel in a lackluster malaise and ennui that is indicative of the coldness of feeling so displayed by everybody in Paris.
Often, Barnes' frustration is manifested in dramatic displays of temper that reveal his growing restlessness and need for meaning:

I was very angry. Somehow they always made me angry. I know they are supposed to be amusing, and you should be tolerant, but I wanted to swing on one, any one, anything to shatter that superior, simpering composure. (28)

As he and the others move on to Spain, the novel seems to follow their passing into a completely new state of revelry. The group moves from the encounter with American tourists on the train to the less civilized, more primal feel of wine and merriment amid the company of the Basques on the dusty road. Jake punctuates the change through one of the few instances in which he is found alone in the novel. In an earlier chapter, out of growing tension and desire, he cries alone. Now, in the third chapter of Book Two, he finds himself in a cathedral, where, wishing he was the good Catholic that he used to be, he prays. Specifically, he prays for all of his friends by name, for himself, and he prays "that the bull-fights would be good, and that it would be a fine fiesta, and that we would get some fishing" (103). His prayers, it seems, will be answered, as each of these three, or a combination of all, will be what brings about his spiritual redemption. He needs to return to life, real life, real struggle and cease playing at living as he has before.

At this point, the novel not only centers around the Fiesta of San Fermin, the running of the bulls, and the bull-fight, but all of the action is metaphorically the bull-fight itself. This is where Jake and his associates either begin to live, to really face the challenge inherent in a life and death struggle, or they will be destroyed in the process. Since bull-fighting occurs in many of Hemingway's novels, it is imperative that one understands the way in which the author views this event. *Death in the Afternoon*, a book written some years after *The Sun Also Rises*, best describes Hemingway's distinction between bull-fighting and sport. In it he writes "The bullfight is not a sport in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word, that is, it is not an equal contest or an attempt at an equal contest between a bull and a man. Rather it is a tragedy; the death of the bull [...]" (16). His distinguishing the matter as a tragedy, a contest to the death, is integral in acknowledging the respect that Hemingway, and subsequently his characters, lends to this custom.

Jake, for the most part, is the one character who truly recognizes bull-fighting for its element of sacrament. In this sport, he sees a spiritual element that is necessary to his comprehension of his own experience with war, and the state in which he has returned. As Jens Bjorneboe writes in his article entitled "Hemingway and the Beasts," the author has certainly found a profound metaphor in bullfighting:

One of [Hemingway's] main points is that bullfighting is not a sport. It is a tragedy, in three acts, where every slightest detail is determined in advance. Accidents, deaths exaggerated foolhardiness or visible fear and cowardice have no place in the arena, and destroy the esthetic effect of the drama. It is wrong for the bullfighter to die in the arena; it is the bull who must die. Along with the bull and the matador there is a third person on the stage: death enters with them, and the amphitheater is one of the few places where one can study Death up close. Not a visible masquerade-death, not a theater-death, but the living, invisible Death, the majesty itself. But he is to take the animal, not the matador. (3)

In this analysis, one can see the clear difference between bull-fighting and a mere sport such as boxing. The bull-fight is much more similar to the war that Jake Barnes has experienced. In that particular struggle, however, it is man against man, or man against the beast of man that causes war. Death still plays a living, breathing role, and as stated above, he is to take the animal, the beast. Man should return from war a man. Preferably, he should return a whole man, and therein lies Jake's greatest loss. He has not returned from the war.
He has brought with him a physical reminder of the beast, the soldier. Man has been defeated, unjustly, and the way in which Jake gets vindication is through the victory of the matador over Death and the bull in the bullring.

The time for fun, the sport of Paris, is over. Jake's prayers in the cathedral symbolically place him on a very real quest for some meaning, some understanding. There are no more jokes about his condition. He does not take his situation lightly. From this come two major changes in Jake's attitude and action. He must rid himself, as they all must, of Cohn, and he must continue to pander his love, Lady Brett, to a worthy alternate suitor. That suitor is now the soldier of the bullring, the matador Romero, not the sportsman Cohn. This is not to say that Jake acts consciously. He seemingly continues his usual cycle where Brett and drinking are concerned, but the motives have changed drastically.

Jake is not fully aware of his own discovery, it seems, until the very poignant scene in which he shares his passion, his aficion, for bullfighting with Brett. He quite literally opens up to her, using the metaphor to reveal the man that he has for so long kept hidden behind sport, drinking, and listlessness. There are even a few moments of reflection in which Jake seems to let his narrative confess his true humanity to the reader. It would seem that, in this passage for example, he is not speaking so much about Romero, but himself as he intimates, "Pedro Romero had the greatness. He loved bull-fighting, and I think he loved the bulls, and I think he loved Brett" (Hemingway 220).

From all of the characterization about Jake, he is easily recognizable in those lines. In the following pages of the novel, Barnes describes in detail the ballet like dance that he and Lady Brett observe the young matador participate in with the bull. His true role as an aficionado of bull-fighting is portrayed as he observes the masterful way in which Romero executes his undertaking, explaining, "It was not brilliant bull-fighting. It was only perfect bull-fighting" (221).

This pragmatic approach to defeating the bull, thereby honoring the code of Death in which the bull, not man, is sacrificed, is reminiscent of how a soldier might conduct himself tactically in combat. It may not be a brilliant fight, but it is perfect if man emerges, defeating death, defeating the beast. This analogy becomes clear when examining again how Hemingway observes that the presence of death is what separates the battle from the sport: I am afraid... due to the danger of death it involves it would never have much success among the amateur sportsmen of America and England who play games. We, in games, are not fascinated by death, its nearness and its avoidance. We are fascinated by victory and we replace the avoidance of death by the avoidance of defeat. It is a very nice symbolism but it takes more cojones to be a sportsman when death is a closer party to the game. (Death in the Afternoon 22)

That is why Jake Barnes can relate to the matador in a way that he can't relate to Cohn. As a former soldier, he understands the avoidance of death as opposed to Cohn's mere striving to avoid defeat. Jake realizes the similarity between war and the bullring.

War, like the bull-fight, is an artificial situation. Its only necessity is in satisfying the bravado of those who wish it to occur. The matador doesn't encounter the bull in the street, and feel forced to deal with him, any more than the soldier might happen upon his battlefield enemy anywhere other than the designated battlefield. Perhaps this is where the running of the bulls is significant. It seems to provide the matador, and his spectators, with a reason for facing the bull. If this beast should die for no other reason, it might be a case of vindication for the men who are potentially gored as the bull makes his way through the Pamplona streets. In either case, the matador or soldier faces an impersonal enemy to fulfill a sense of duty for an unknown commandant.

This is Jake's identification with the young matador. Romero represents an earlier, more whole version of Jake. Barnes' behavior toward Lady Brett at this point reflects this similarity. Again, he continues his habit of pushing her
toward a comparable rival, yet this particular action has more significance than before. Realizing his own role as a matador, he must see Brett with a true fighter, a soldier like himself. He is no longer the sporting fellow embodied by Cohn. That entire persona is rejected in the actual ostracizing of Robert Cohn. And the very last two physical conflicts in the book represent the departure of meaningless activity from the life of Jake Barnes, as well as the shift toward something more significant. Cohn is forced out of the group. Before he goes, however, he will cause his share of damage. He brutally beats the young Romero, and even delivers a few good blows to Jake. Likewise, Jake may attempt this change, but not without the lasting effects his dabbling in aimlessness has brought about. Cohn, and the characterization that he represents, will never be forgotten. His presence is felt at Romero's last bull-fight, in which the real life struggle slowly begins to erase his image:

The fight with Cohn had not touched his spirit but his face had been smashed and his body hurt. He was wiping all that out now. Each thing that he did with this bull wiped that out a little cleaner. It was a good bull... He was what Romero wanted in bulls. (223)

It is as if Jake, with his new resolve, will begin to transcend all that he has been before. That, at least, is his plan as he returns to Paris. He soon finds, however, that even amid the peace and the calm of the end of the Fiesta and his subsequent departure from Spain, he is dangerously near to returning to his state of ennui.

Despite his need for recuperation, then, he is motivated by Brett's telegram to return to his place of epiphany. He understands that France "[is] a rich country and more sportif every year. It would be the most sportif country in the world... He knew France. La France Sportive" (240). After all of his introspection, he is placed in the third book right back in a state of sport. Against all of his instincts he must return to Spain, where he found, however unpleasant, aspects of reality.

The cycle, then, is complete. The novel ends vaguely echoing the first encounter of Jake and Brett in a cab at the start of the story. The impossibly matched couple speculates fondly on the opportunity for union between them. However, the feeling that this union is not going to happen is prevalent. As the title suggests, very little change is found, no matter how detached, disjointed, or removed this generation feels it must become. Growth is minimal. Jake's realization is just that. It serves very little practical purpose other than his own discovery of true reality. He may not yet change. "The sun also ariseth," the passage reads, "and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose... All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Ecclesiastes). Jake's journey may have been just that.

Works Cited


The Library: A Contradiction of Purpose by Design
LaShonda Card

The Stark County Library is a place that has something to read for everyone. It is the source of a vast amount of information. The library is designed to cater to all age groups. However, the design in many ways contradicts its rules implicit and written. In some ways, the library discourages others from accomplishing what they set out to do. Although the library has unlimited resources for those who need information, at some point the library can prevent some of the same people from obtaining the information they came to acquire. What happens when a place such as the library, designed to suit a purpose, prevents that purpose from being fulfilled by the same design?

When you walk through the doors, the “Children’s” and “Young Adults’” divisions are immediately to the left. The “Large Print Books” and “Humanities” sections are to the right. As I watched people come in, I saw them follow the intended paths. Those who were older went in the direction of the “Large Print Books” and those who were younger went in the opposite direction. What is ironic is that these two sections attracted people’s attention long enough to influence which way they decided to go, but no one stayed and very few stopped momentarily in either section.

As I looked closer at the layout and the contents of not only these two sections, but also other parts of the library, the irony began to be understood. The area labeled “Large Print Books” had no large print index to go along with it. I assumed, as most would, that this section would be more for senior adults. There was no librarian assigned to this part of the library. Books were shelved as high as six feet. Most elderly people would not be able to reach the books high on the shelves without a stool; there was no stool or a librarian, the person this area was designed for could have a difficult time finding anything here.

The “Children’s” division was vividly designed for the season with pumpkins, witches, fall leaves, and books to match. Little chairs and tables that stood knee high were scattered around. Shelves were low enough that an average eight year-old could reach any book. Two librarians stood behind a small desk very attentive and friendly. This section was definitely made for kids, yet no kids were here. I found out later in my observation of the rules that no child can be left unattended under the age of ten. Although the library wants children under supervision at all times, there are not adequate seating arrangements for an adult to be comfortable in the “Children’s” section. This means any child, nine years old or younger, would have to go along to whatever section of the library the adult would choose. This poses a problem for a parent and a child at the library together with separate agendas. I noticed a lady with small children in one of the “No Talking” areas hushing them insistently. The moment she redirected her attention to what she was doing, they went back to what they were doing. I watched this incessant pattern continue for several minutes. She finally left in frustration.

The rules of conduct could only be found in the “Young Adult” section of the library. Yet, the focus was on things that related to adult conduct as well. Security strolled by twice in the fifteen minutes I was there. There were no problems with the teenagers following the rules, in fact one could have heard a pin drop. There was a father sitting with his son and daughter. He seemed mildly disinterested in his surroundings; he was just staring blankly at the pages of a book. It is possible that he also read the rules of conduct and thought it better to accompany his children at all times even though they appeared to be well past the age of required supervision.
I walked to other parts of the library, namely "Periodicals" and "Genealogy," and there were no rules at all. The average age here ranged from 25-55 years. In the "No Talking" sections of these areas, voices were clearly audible. People moved about freely and spoke freely. The librarians seemed unconcerned about this conduct. Also, this was the only area in the library that was equipped with copiers, microfiche machines, computers with Internet access, and printers. It could stand alone without any interaction with other parts of the library. Most of the elderly people were in the "Genealogy" section and still at the stage of independence. In this section things seemed to be spelled out more clearly. Instead of just posting a sign to let them know not to re-shelf books, the sign also explained the reason for not re-shelving the books. I found this interesting because it contributed to the relaxed non-offensive atmosphere created by the rest of the surroundings.

I began to wonder if the library was trying to send a message. Although the information available in the library caters to all ages, the library itself places restrictions on those who require more help and supervision. The design seemed to confirm this by setting apart those who do not require a lot of assistance. Since the library is for public use, it should make every effort to meet the needs of the public and encourage its use in every way possible. The library could easily set up a "Story Time" section with readings twice an hour to accommodate these adults who have young children with them. There could be someone in the "Large Print" area at all times to assist the elderly who need extra help. The rules of conduct should be posted in all sections of the library, or in one centralized location. If these conflicts were obvious to me and I hardly ever visit here, then these conflicts must also be obvious to those who visit or work here on a regular basis. It is possible that someone inadvertently designed the structure this way and deliberately refuses to conform the design to meet the needs of the people who use this space today. Does it have anything to do with the fact that groups being most affected are young children and very senior adults, the same groups who are overlooked in society and government?
Explication of Blake’s “My Pretty Rose Tree”
Beth Ann Fisher

“My Pretty Rose Tree”

A flower was offered to me;
Such a flower as May never bore,
But I said, “I’ve a Pretty Rose-tree,”
And I passed the sweet flower o’er.

Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree,
To tend her by day and by night.
But my Rose turned away with jealousy,
And her thorns were my only delight.

Initially, William Blake’s “My Pretty Rose Tree” reads as uncomplicated verse, but in reality the poem operates on many levels. Close examination of Blake’s use of objects, familiar yet profoundly symbolic, thwarts expectations of light romance. Superficially the poem speaks of flowers, love, and jealousy but beneath the surface lurk deeper messages of rejection, resistance to change, and faith.

On the surface, the poem is about a pretty flower being offered to one who passes it over in favor of the rose tree he already has. He tends the rose tree by night and day, but is rewarded only with thorns. The repetition of flower in the first stanza points to its importance as a symbol; operating on many layers, the flower can represent love, experiences, and faith. Because Blake uses flower, not rose, something new and different is implied. This new flower is described in superlative language, “Such a flower as May never bore” (2).

The rose, taken to epitomize love, casts the poem on a romantic level. Another flower, or woman, offers love to the speaker. The word offered connotes unsolicited giving, as well as the implied choice of acceptance or rejection. May alludes to springtime hinting at romantic love. Although the flower’s advances are rejected and the speaker continues in faithfulness to the rose, the rose reacts with jealousy. For all the careful and constant tending, he is rewarded with painful thorns. “And her thorns were my only delight” (8) suggests that the speaker may not be altogether unhappy with the rose’s response of jealousy; the thorns may be the price he is willing to pay for their continued relationship. Delight may also be an oxymoron, thorns being rarely linked to delight. Another dynamic in the jealousy and resulting thorns is that the rose has become possessive and seeks to guard her lover from others. In this case he truly delights in her thorns as a symbol of her love for him.

On another level, the offered flower may be experiences or knowledge. Like the fruit of knowledge in the story of Adam and Eve, the flower is appealing; unlike the Edenic fruit, however, the flower is rejected despite its tempting description. Rejecting the experience keeps the speaker in the same garden with his rose tree or in the same state as before. No growth is possible without experience. A safe haven becomes stale without the benefit of diverse experiences to enliven it. Lavishing care in maintenance instead of growth, he
ends up with thorns being his only delight; he must embrace his harvest since he was the one who rejected growth. Indeed, for the speaker, the pain of the thorns may be infinitely preferable to his fear of the unknown.

The rose, as a symbol of faith in God, illustrates an all-encompassing faith that is broader than the one the speaker already possesses. In this case, the one who offers the flower is God. The word offered alludes to sacrifice as well as gift. Both are elements of faith; while God endows us with the ability to have faith, we must sacrifice our ideas and habits inconsistent with that faith. This deep relationship with God is a frightening loss of personal power, and, for many, it is too great a sacrifice to make. The speaker would rather preserve his superficial faith. The rose, as the church, produces thorns, which are the fruit of zealously tending the outward trappings of religion without inner spiritual communion with God. In this poem Blake suggests it is preferable to enjoy the thorns rather than to grow in faith.

On the most universal level, this poem is about the inherent nature of human beings to resist change of any type, even changes for the better. Changes incorporated into our beings make us different than we were before; our response to that change determines whether we grow or are diminished by that change. So, paradoxically, by choosing not to change, we are changed by that very decision. If change is opposed successfully, we are unhappy with our lot and long for the greener grass on the other side of the fence.

Blake has created a poem of depth with brevity of space and a frugality of words. On the surface, the tone of the poem is light, the images are pleasant, and the mood is comforting. The only word with negative connotations, thorns, is not surprising, as they are an expected and accepted part of the rose. The poem is neither abrupt nor laborious; the length of the lines and the rhyme scheme produce a soothing rhythm, which belies the deeper, discomfiting message. What initially appears to be limpid verse is dense with meaning; through close reading and reflection, the reader is able to peel away the many layers of the poem.

"What has a hippo in common with a feather?"“What is the longest place name in the world?”“Can green ideas sleep furiously?”“Rim ember us poke in cent tense all mow stall ways con deigns word snot in then did.” These are just a few of the topics you will find under A Web of Linguistic Fun. Phantom Linguist, Bucknell University Professor Robert Beard, provides a unique collection of “fundamental subdisciplines of linguistics”(1).

The website introduces linguistic terminology such as grammar, morphology, phonology, semantics, and syntax. If this does not sound like much fun, keep going! There are also pages and pages of wordplays, games, puzzles, dictionaries, and even a fun poem about the orthography of English. You will find essays on social, mental, historical and structural aspects of language in “Language Miniatures” and lessons to teach you how to write your name in “Egyptian hieroglyphics.”

You do not have to be a linguist to understand the contents of the page. In fact, it is specifically designed for those “Curious Georges” who want to learn more and more and more. Thirty-two pages of informative, interactive, and sometimes just downright goofy pages come together to form this Web of Linguistic Fun. Each page has at least one additional link to it and in the case of the “Morphology” page, forty-three links in all. What a vast amount of information!

So what exactly does a hippo have in common with a feather? If you click on the “Historical Linguistics” page you will soon find out. The Phantom Linguist explains the origin of each word, tracing all the way back to the Indo-European language. With careful reading you will find that the pot- of hippopotamus and the feath- of feather share a common origin.

What in the world does “Rim ember us poke in cent tense all mow stall ways con deigns word snot in ten did” mean? Click on the “Syntax” page, and find out that phrase structure plays a big part in successful communication.

“What can green ideas sleep furiously?” (1). According to the Phantom Linguist, and the rules of semantics, probably not. He proves that the structure of sentences and their meaning are two distinct things, representing two different levels of language processing.

Linguistic Fun is definitely not for someone who does not have time to waste. Once you click on to one of these links, you will be entranced for hours. Find the original meaning of your first name in “Etymology of Names.” This pages also provides links to related pages such as “Baby Names,” “Hall of Names,” and “Name Games.” Interactive games, puzzles, and word searches can trap you into spending hours and hours on the web. You can play a crossword puzzle with someone on the opposite side of the country, play the "Linguistic Olympics" to challenge your knowledge, or increase your vocabulary with the “Word of the Day Game.”

Surfing is easy: almost every page accesses the Linguistic Fun home page. The unique styles of relating educational topics to everyday life make it easy and fun to learn. There is nothing exceptional about the graphics of the website, and other than the constant glare of the lima bean green background on the home page, A Web of Linguistic Fun is great!

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Work Cited

The Impact of Alcohol on Grade Point Averages
Samuel E. Galluch

1. The effect of alcohol on grade point averages is an intriguing topic for many young people. The Introduction to Sociology class stated the hypothesis that the consumption of alcohol has a negative effect on the grade point averages of college students who drink more than three beverages at a time. Simply stated, the more alcohol a person drinks, the lower his/her grades will be. In this case, the amount of alcohol being consumed is the independent variable, while the grade point average is the dependent variable. Henslin’s Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach states that “Drinking alcohol is directly related to college grades...the more that college students drink, the worse they do in classes” (Henslin, 1998: 545).

The relationship between the variables of alcohol and grades can be explained through the sociological theory of Robert Merton, termed the Self-fulfilling Prophecy. This phenomenon occurs when “an originally false assertion becomes true simply because it was predicted” (Henslin, 1998: 481). In accordance with this term, one could theorize that a student who has been picked as an “underachiever” by a professor might unknowingly increase the consumption of alcohol to deal with the lack of outside support. A continued increase of alcohol consumption could lead to even worse grades for that individual, making the sub-par expectations of the professor a reality for the student. This decline in grades is essentially due to the fact that the more a student consumes large amounts of alcohol, the greater the chance that less time is spent on school-related activities such as studying or reading.

Dr. Bruce Friesen asked students in his Introduction to Sociology (SOC 12050) class to conduct a survey of Kent Stark students concerning their drinking habits and GPA’s. Students were then required to interpret the data and control a third variable. The assignment was accomplished by responding to seven prepared questions and data tables provided on Dr. Friesen’s assignment sheet. In The Impact of Alcohol on Grade Point Averages, Sam Galluch concludes that drinking, particularly in males, does have a significant impact on grade point averages.

2. The data in table one confirm the hypothesis that the amount of alcohol consumed negatively affects a student’s grade point average. This is supported by the fact that the majority of students surveyed who drink at least four alcoholic beverages at a time (62.3%) had less than a 3.0, while those who drank three or less earned a 3.1 or higher (52.3%). In both cases, the relative amount of alcohol consumed reflected on the grades of the students, wherein the students who drank less alcohol simply earned better grades and vice versa. The epsilon of this data is +/- 14.6%, representing a reasonable percentage of association between the original variables of alcohol and grade point average. This means that the amount of alcohol consumed had a noticeable effect on the percentage of students with either a 3.1 or higher in comparison to those with a 3.0 or less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G.P.A.</th>
<th>4 or More</th>
<th>0 to 3</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 or Higher</td>
<td>46 (37.7%)</td>
<td>67 (52.3%)</td>
<td>113 (45.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 or Less</td>
<td>76 (62.3%)</td>
<td>61 (47.7%)</td>
<td>137 (54.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>122 (100.0%)</td>
<td>128 (100.0%)</td>
<td>250 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. In this specific case, the control variable will be gender. Gender will impact the original relationship between the amount of alcohol consumed and grade point average in such a way that males will end up being impacted on a greater scale than females. The strength between the two variables will
increase with the male sample and decrease with the female sample because alcohol seems to have more of an effect on the grades of male students. Females, on the contrary, seem to be able to handle alcohol more responsibly, as they generally do not allow such distractions to interfere with their school work as much. This difference between males and females concerning their ability to deal with outside factors, such as alcohol, is easily observable both in and outside of the classroom. Moreover, males seemingly have a more accepting attitude towards alcohol than females; many see it as a necessary element for parties and other social activities.

4. One can conclude from table two that the majority of males who drink more than four drinks of alcohol are more likely to have a grade point average less than 3.0. The data overwhelmingly support this hypothesis, as 73.1% of males with a 3.0 grade point average or less consumed four or more alcoholic beverages at one time. Consequently, only 26.9% of these heavier drinking male students earned a 3.1 or higher. The epsilon for this data (+/-25.5%) indicates a considerably larger percentage of association between the original variables of alcohol and grade point averages than was found in the combined data representing both genders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G.P.A.</th>
<th>4 or More</th>
<th>0 to 3</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 or Higher</td>
<td>28 (59.9%)</td>
<td>45 (54.3%)</td>
<td>73 (51.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 or Less</td>
<td>27 (49.1%)</td>
<td>41 (47.7%)</td>
<td>68 (48.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>55 (100.0%)</td>
<td>86 (100.0%)</td>
<td>141 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. One can conclude from table three that the majority of females that drink more than four drinks of alcohol are only slightly less likely to have a grade point average of 3.1 or higher than those that consume little or no alcohol. The data support this hypothesis, as 49.1% of females with a 3.0 grade point average or less consumed four or more alcoholic beverages at one time, while 50.9% of these heavier drinking female students earned a 3.1 or higher. The percentage of female students who consumed little or no alcohol were only slightly more likely to earn a 3.1 or higher (52.3%) while those female students with a 3.0 or less were relatively close to the heavier drinking females with 47.7%. The epsilon for this data is a remarkably low variable association of +/-1.4% between alcohol consumption and grade point average. This data confirms that female students can deal with outside factors more effectively than males, while disproving the original hypothesis that more alcohol usually leads to lower grade point averages.

6. Generally, I think that interviews are a good way to collect data. This is because interviews are often seen as a more personal method of gathering information. Henslin stated that the advantage of interviewing was that one can "make sure that each question is asked in precisely the same way" (1998: 126). Moreover, interviews give the researcher the opportunity to ask questions "directly, either face to face or by telephone" (Henslin, 1998: 126). The disadvantages include a higher cost, a reduction in the number of people that one can question, and the possibility of interviewer bias. Additionally, one definite disadvantage is that people often give false information that they think the interviewer might want to hear.

It could also be useful to use an experiment to collect more data on the effects of alcohol on grade point averages. In this case, one could use students who usually do not drink and receive a 3.1 or higher and have them drink at least four drinks at a time throughout a determined period of time. In the same way, one could encourage students that drink more than four drinks at a time.
and have lower than a 3.0 to abstain from drinking for a determined period of time. It would be useful to find out if any variance in the grades of the two groups occurred.

7. From a scientific point of view, the results are not generalizable because the data was collected through a sample of convenience, using students at the Stark branch of Kent State University as the population. Therefore, the data represents only the specific individuals that were interviewed, not the entire population of Kent Stark. As stated in the textbook, such data "will produce unrepresentative results in each case" (Henslin, 1998: 125). In general, the class hypothesis was proven correct, as alcohol usually has negative effects on grade point averages. Unfortunately, this data was not obtained in a representative sample, making it applicable only to those students that were studied.

Work Cited

I often wonder what it would be like to communicate with those extremely talented people in our history. One such person I would enjoy speaking with is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Motivated by a project in our Pre-Calculus class, I chose to investigate the theory that Mozart was not only aware of the golden ratio, a fascinating mathematical concept, but also used this "divine ratio" in composing many of his piano sonatas. In presenting the results of this investigation, I chose to imagine how Mozart would respond to this interesting theory. The following is my interpretation of how this dialogue would proceed.

Rebecca: This is Rebecca Lindstrom from WWBC reporting today from Salzburg, Austria where the famous Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in 1756. We have the privilege today of meeting the talented composer to discover if his sonatas were planned to coordinate with the concept of the golden ratio. (To Mozart) First of all, I'd like to welcome you, Mr. Mozart, to our show today and tell you how much I admire your music.

Mozart: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here today.

Rebecca: Mozart, you obviously had a great interest in music at a very young age, beginning at the age of four. Can you tell me who influenced your music most?

Mozart: I had several influences at that time in my life. First of all, in 1756 the Classical Period was widely recognized in Europe with Salzburg being one of the centers for art. I greatly admired the compositions of Bach. Secondly, my father was a fine musician and published a book called Violin School.

When I was six, my father arranged to have both my sister and I appear in every court in Europe. I suppose today you would call that a tour. My mother, too, thoroughly enjoyed music, since her father was a bass singer.

Rebecca: Well, by the age of 14 you were a violinist, a keyboard player, an improviser, and a composer. But music was not your only area of interest.

Mozart: No, I also loved to study mathematical equations. My dear sister often said I could talk of nothing, or think of nothing, but figures during my school days. I suppose she was right. I even often calculated the odds of winning the lottery in the margins of some of my compositions.

Rebecca: There has been a phenomenal discovery called the golden ratio. Can you tell our listeners the history of this ratio?

Mozart: Yes. Euclid came upon this idea far back in 300 B.C. The idea relates to a given line segment AC with a point somewhere between points A and C on the segment where the length of AB, the shorter of the two segments, divided by the length of BC is proportionate to the length of BC divided by the length of the entire segment AC:

\[
\frac{AB}{BC} = \frac{BC}{AC}
\]

Assuming that AC = 1 and BC = r. Then this proportion can be written as:

\[
\frac{1}{r} - r = \frac{r^2}{1} - 1
\]

When we cross multiply this equation, we end up with \(1 - r = r^2\) or the quadratic equation \(y = r^2 + r - 1\). Solving for r gives us \(r = \left(1 + \sqrt{5}\right)/2\) or r is approximately equal to .618.

Rebecca: This special proportion is thought to be the most aesthetically pleasing proportion and has influenced many artists. Another mathematician by the name of Fibonacci discovered this proportionate number when coming...
up with the Fibonacci Sequence. Fibonacci discovered that when you begin with the number 1 and add it to the number in front of it, in this case nothing, you end up with one again. But the third number is calculated by adding 1+1 to come up with 2. And the sequence continues as 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, … Fibonacci discovered the golden ratio when he began to divide the first term by the second term, then the second term by the third term, as diagramed in the following chart.

As you can see, the further he went in the sequence, the closer he came to the golden ratio. So according to this table, a musician could plan his or her compositions to correspond to the golden ratio. This could be done by relating the length of the development and recapitulation in measures to the length of the exposition in measures using the Fibonacci Sequence as a guide. Mozart, were you aware of this when you were composing?

Mozart: Yes. I studied his ideas for many years.

Rebecca: I did some research, taking 29 of the sonatas you composed, specifically looking at the length of the development and recapitulation in measures and the length of the composition in measures (Appendix A). Plotting the points on the x and y axis, I came up with the following graph (Appendix B). I also calculated the line of best fit to be y = 0.626x + 1.3596 with a correlation coefficient of 0.96876. This proves to be a rather strong correlation and might imply that you did indeed use the golden ratio in composing your sonatas. How do you respond to that?

Mozart: For me, life is discovery. Life is searching for answers to questions and problems with each answer leading to another question. Yes, some may say that I used the golden ratio in my compositions. Yet, there are still others who bring serious doubt to this theory. I am excited to see people thinking, questioning, and discovering, and I would be disappointed in myself if I put an end to that activity in any way.

Rebecca: Well, Mr. Mozart I thank you very much for all of your wisdom and expertise. This has truly been an exciting moment in my life.

(To viewers) So, the world may never know if Mozart did indeed compose his sonatas using the golden ratio.

Works Cited


Appendix A: Table of lengths in sonatas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piano Sonatas</th>
<th>Development and Recapitulation (in measures)</th>
<th>Exposition (in measures)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>279,1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>279.II</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>279.III</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280,1</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280.II</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280.III</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
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<td>89</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>60</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Appendix B: Graph of Mozart Sonata ratios

http://digitalcommons.kent.edu/wcr/vol5/iss1/1
Anna
Marianne Jackson

John Berger made two statements in his book *Ways of Seeing*. After I chose my art piece for this assignment, I remembered those statements. He said, “The way we see things is affected by what we know and what we believe” (8). He also stated “The reciprocal nature of vision is more fundamental than that of spoken dialogue” (9).

At first glance, the unnamed painting of “Anna” by L. Weaver, could be a relative of any one of my friends, as well as of me. She just looks like someone’s great-aunt or great-grandmother. The woman portrayed in this art piece is of African descent, but it’s not just her appearance. It’s more than that. Anna feels like my ancestor.

The artist’s coloring of Anna’s skin really impressed me because it’s not just black skin. I can almost touch the texture of her skin. It looks tough and worn and very tired. The color is very close to the color of cinnamon sticks with highlights of orange mixed with gold. It reminds me of the colors I’ve seen when an island sun slowly sinks into the ocean’s rippled surface with the moonlight softly kissing the creases. Her hands tell a story of very hard work and much pain. The knuckles are swollen with arthritis. Anna’s fingers are a deeper shade than her arms and face. They’re more the color of cinnamon toast, a little burned around the edges.

As interesting as this entire piece is to me, the most striking thing is Anna’s face. She has a thin, haggard face with high cheekbones that seem out of place on such a thin face. Her eyes are large with one eye a little lower than the other, suggesting a previous injury to that eye. I wonder how it happened? Did she get in the way of a runaway horse and wagon, or did she catch the wrath of the mistress of the house? Her nose is large, as most African noses are. Anna’s lips are full and stiff. There is no smile on her lips or in her eyes. I see years of pain, loss and suffering on this face. Even though the pain is most evident on her face, it’s all over her, from the top of her neatly braided hair down to her rigidly folded arms.

I am not sure of the timeframe of this piece, though her clothes suggest post-slavery days. On her finger is a small thin gold band. I wonder if she’s married, or has she been widowed. She looks just the way my grandmother has described her own great-grandmother, who was a slave. However, the ring she wears tell me she was probably not a slave at the time of her painting because I don’t think slaves were permitted to openly wear jewelry. Her dress is a simple beige with soft shades of greenish-blue stripes crisscrossed with a deeper shade of brown. The collar of the dress is white cotton, shaped like an old kerchief, with gentle ruffles around the edges. The sleeves are long and finished with deep broad cuffs. Anna seems to me to be a house slave. These slaves were dressed better than the other slaves who did all of the dirty, hard work around the plantation. Then again, most of the slaves kept in the house tending to the family’s needs were much lighter skinned than Anna appears to be.

When I first looked at this painting, I assumed that Anna was someone’s property, a house slave. Was it because she was an African woman from a time that denigrated all people of color? Or was it because she was an African looking woman portrayed with no posed smile on her face? What about the simple gold band on her finger...should I assume that she’s a lowly slave woman because there was no diamond setting in that ring? Maybe this is the silence and mystification of which Berger speaks. For all I know, Anna could...
have been an African queen still regal in her captivity. Or she could have been a Black female entrepreneur. There were a few during this period. Maybe she was posed in this manner because this was the only acceptable way an African American woman could be portrayed during this period. If I have chosen to look at Anna and view her as an African American woman, dark, rigid and filled with pain and suffering, then Berger’s statement about the reciprocal nature of vision makes me wonder: what does Anna see when she looks back at me looking at her?

Viewing this art piece “Anna” was like going way back home and being able to talk to and feel some of the suffering that my great great grandmother Joanie must have felt “in her day.” I’m sure that if fifty people viewed this same piece of art, there would be fifty very different impressions of it. John Berger is right. People should be allowed to view art in their own way and feel free to interpret it without interference. John Berger’s statement regarding what we know and believe affecting what we see is very true to me. I know from family discussions that my ancestors were degraded and made to feel less than human, but why have I chosen to believe that there was no joy in their existence and no lightness in their souls? I’m sure my impressions are colored and influenced by what I know. My experience as an African American woman living in a world that still isn’t ready for me simply reinforces Berger’s statements.

As a viewer who chooses to really look at art, I applaud Mr. Berger’s ability to show me that I am not engaged in a passive exercise when viewing art, but in an active interchange of past and future emotions unearthed and brought to the surface of my knowing and my seeing.

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Christopher Reeve once said of Superman, the character whom he portrayed in a series of films:
It's very hard for me to be silly about Superman because I've seen
first hand how he actually transforms people's lives. I have seen
children dying of brain tumors who wanted as their last request to
be able to talk to me, and have gone to their graves with a peace
brought on by knowing that their belief in this kind of character is
intact. I've seen that Superman really matters. It's not Superman the
tongue-in-cheek cartoon character they're connecting with; they're
connecting with something very basic: the ability to overcome
obstacles, the ability to persevere, the ability to understand
difficulty and to turn your back on it. ("Superman Through the
Ages")

The fact that a character carries such weight with our nation's youth makes him a worthwhile subject for
discussion, regardless of his seemingly harmless or silly nature. Author Les Daniels notes that Superman
has been "re-created for generation after generation" (9). Therefore, as he is so popular, and has been, until
recently, solely a corporately owned and produced character, by understanding the various stages of
Superman's existence, one can get an idea of the ways the bourgeoisie uses popular culture to subtly exert
its influence and encourage its ideologies during different eras.

Superman was created with the best of intentions by Jerry Siegel and Joe
Shuster, and his earliest adventures, as produced by the two, reflect that fact.
Superman's creators "reached out to the audience... by dealing with the social
problems of the day. [The first Superman story alone] includes episodes
centered on unjust imprisonment, spousal abuse, and corrupt government
officials" (Daniels 35). Siegel himself remarked that, "...[Superman] was very
serious about helping people in distress because Joe and I felt that very
intensely. We were young kids, and if we wanted to see a movie we had to
sell milk bottles, so we sort of had the feeling that we were right there at
the bottom and we could empathize with people" (35-36). Indeed, both the
Siegel and Shuster households were comprised of lower-class families that
found themselves painfully impacted by the Depression (Catron 25).
Regardless of authorial intentions, however, even the stories created solely
under the direction of Siegel and Shuster, those published between June of
1939 and sometime in early 1941 (65), were informed by the bourgeoisie and
various capitalist ideologies. In fact, the character of Superman himself helps
to reinforce those ideologies during this time period.

Author Harlan Ellison notes that Superman is "the 20th century archetype
of mankind at its finest" (Catron 25). The character's name alone summarizes
his being; he is the Superman, the Ubermensch, all the potential of humanity
fulfilled. The danger in establishing a character as the ultimate person,
however, is that readers can infer all other characters to be inadequate.
Though Siegel and Shuster tackle a variety of social issues with the best of
intentions, their efforts always fall short, as their ideal man embodies a
number of characteristics that advance the cause of the bourgeoisie. As the
readers are to perceive Superman as that which they should aspire to, the
assertion of the authors is that these characteristics, despite the ideologies that
shape them, are admirable. By examining the differences and relationships between various characters and Superman, one can understand how Siegel and Shuster’s works encourage readers to conform to behaviors and expectations favored by, and supportive of, the bourgeoisie.

Much has been made of Siegel’s psychological state-of-mind and its influence on the creation of the Superman/Clark Kent/Lois Lane love triangle. Indeed, considering that as a young man Siegel was, by his own admission, a stereotypical effeminate intellectual who dreamed of a) being a journalist, and b) winning the affections of an attractive classmate named Lois (Catron 27), the implications of the triangle are undeniable.

Superman again represents the ideal man, only now he is, specifically, the ideal Siegel. If only the real Lois and the fictional Lois could see past the feminine exteriors of Siegel and Kent respectively, they would inevitably fall for the Supermen beneath them. Yet in addition to the obvious psychological insights about Siegel one can gain from this triangle, the Superman/Kent/Lane dynamic is important for the insights it can give about the society from which it was spawned. As a product of a bourgeoisie-controlled capitalist society, this bizarre triangle, unsurprisingly, reflects and supports the status quo. The contrasts and relationships between Superman, Kent, and Lane help to reinforce traditional gender roles which serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

By being in direct opposition to the ideals Superman embodies, Kent establishes what a man should not be. Unlike the Herculean Superman, Kent is weak and sickly. Superman faces all challenges with unreserved courage, while Kent’s cowardice is often a source of comic relief. Superman is a man of action, while Kent is an intellectual - a “thinker”. That Kent is a negative role-model is emphasized by the ways others react to his actions; people in general ridicule and chastise him when he behaves in an un-Supermanly manner, while they adore his costumed alter ego. Lane’s love for Superman borders on the obsessive, yet she mockingly rejects Kent’s romantic advances. In her words, the former is “a real he man”, while the latter is a “spineless worm” (Shuster 176). The message is clear; a man should be hearty, brave, and productive, or he will lose the approval of his peers and be unsuitable for marriage. It is surely no coincidence that such men make ideal soldier-pawns and puppet-workers for the bourgeoisie.

Just as Lane’s rejection of Kent helps establish him as a less-than-ideal man, Superman’s rejection of Lane shows her to be an example of an undesirable woman. Lane is a working woman who makes her living in an intellectual realm. She is more concerned with making that living, and a name for herself, than she is in adopting a traditional, feminine lifestyle. Indeed, she has no desire to marry, to produce infant workers, or to maintain a home. She is sarcastic and assertive instead of gentle and submissive. As she does not live up to the behaviors her society expects of women, Lane is unable to attract a “real” man. A “real” woman is docile, maintains a worker by caring for her husband, and produces future workers through her children. Not surprisingly, such a woman better serves the bourgeoisie than Lane. Once again, the character of Superman encourages readers to adopt accepted roles to further the controlling classes’ interests.

One of the earliest Siegel and Shuster stories, an untitled tale about dangerous conditions at a coal mine, is an excellent example of how Superman’s early adventures are more than they appear to be at first glance. On the surface, it seems to identify with the needs of the proletariat and condemn the bourgeoisie, while a closer examination reveals the opposite to be true. Once again, Superman, by contrast and interaction with other characters, reveals what the bourgeoisie expects of a good citizen. Specifically, though it does not initially appear so, the story encourages behavior in immigrants and workers that helps maintain the capitalist status quo.

Stanislaw Kober, the worker whose career is ended due to poor safety conditions at the coal mine in which he works, plays the "bad" immigrant-worker to Superman’s "good" immigrant-worker. Kober’s English is broken, indicating that he is uneducated or, rather, that he lacks an American education. As a result, he is only able to get a menial job working in a coal mine. That position would have provided adequately for his family, yet Kober is now unable
to perform even that simple labor. Kober's description of his troubles summarizes the plight of the worker: "Months ago we know mine is unsafe - - but when we tell boss's foremen they say: 'No like job, Stanislaw? Quit!'... But we no quit - - got wife, kids, bills! So back we go to mine an' work long hours an' little pay... an' maybe to die!" (Shuster 46). The story seems to treat Kober sympathetically. After all, it was unsafe work conditions, not any fault of his own, that led to his injuries and subsequent dismissal. However, Superman reveals the true nature of the text by portraying the ideal immigrant. Unlike Kober, his English is flawless, and his appearance is unremarkable; there is nothing to even hint that Superman is not an American by birth. Nothing, that is, but the extraordinary powers of his Kryptonian heritage. These talents are routinely put to use in the defense of the current system, and are more than able to overcome the simple dangers of Kober's former workplace. The ideal immigrant, then, adjusts indistinguishably into the mainstream, supports the system preferred by the ruling class, and does not allow the mistakes of the otherwise beneficial bourgeoisie to interfere in the completion of his work. There could be no more accurate depiction of what the bourgeoisie would desire from an immigrant.

An examination of Kober's co-workers when compared to Superman also reveals the socially-created contradictions of the coal mine story. Again, as with the poor immigrant, it seems the worker is to be pitied. Yet the miners invariably fall short of the example set by Superman. Their efforts to implement changes in their work environment are fruitless. Despite their best attempts, Kober's peers are unable to save him from a cave-in. Finally, they again fail in a rescue attempt, leaving Thornton Blakely, their employer, and his friends to face a certain death. Certain, that is, if not for Superman. In all of the early stories, Superman plays the part of the Superworker. His powers are routinely described in terms of their superiority over the instruments of the bourgeoisie, and his goals favor the cause of the proletariat. Thus, when he succeeds in all of the efforts in which the workers failed - rescuing Kober, saving Blakely and friends, and spearheading reform within the mine - Superman becomes what a worker should be, emphasizing the inadequacy of the other workers. A good worker does not attempt to improve his work environment, to assist his co-workers (which would diminish his employer's responsibilities in the process), or to serve his employer's needs. Instead, he succeeds in the preceding tasks through the merits of his actions, perpetuating the myth of the American Dream. Furthermore, the bourgeoisie could ask for no better worker than one whose efforts produce results, and who is interested in meeting with their wishes.

The role of the good worker is given greater emphasis through Superman's interactions with Blakely and his friends, who clearly represent the upper class. Furthermore, these interactions also reveal the alleged good intentions and benevolence of the bourgeoisie. It cannot be denied that Blakely is the story's antagonist, and much that he says and does implies he is little more than a heartless villain. Of Kober, Blakely comments, "[he] can thank his own carelessness for his plight! However, the company will be generous enough to pay a reasonable portion of his hospital bills and may even consider offering him a $50 dollar retirement bonus" (46-47). Blakely again seems less than concerned about his workers' welfare when he says, "There are no safety-hazards in my mine. But if there were,-- what of it? I'm a business man not a humanitarian!" (47). Later, believing a disguised Superman is simply a mere worker, instead of the Superworker that he truly is, Blakely refers to him as, "Just a sap" and, "My dull-witted friend" (48-49), very real depictions of classism. Guests at a party thrown by Blakely further this seemingly accurate representation of the selfish, uncaring bourgeoisie. While Kober, one of the men responsible for their wealth, is severely injured in a hospital, Superman discovers them engaged in "laughter, music, and revelry... a gay party [is] in progress" (47). Despite their conspicuous consumption, Superman's plot reveals that there is something more sensitive beneath the thick skins of Blakely and his guests and, therefore, more to the bourgeoisie than might appear at first glance.

After being led down into the mine by Superman, the party-goers' attitudes quickly change. "Ugh! What a horrid-looking place!"
comments one. "Don't tell me people actually work down here!" adds another. "I - I don't like this - - this filthy mine!" says a third (50). Once Superman traps them all within the mine, they completely recognize the error of their ways. One guest addresses Blakely, saying, "You blasted skin-flint! If you'd had the mine equipped with proper safety precautions, we might have gotten out alive!" (53). Blakely himself concedes, "Oh, if I only had this all to do over again! - I never knew- really knew - what the men down here have to face!" (54). Finally, after being rescued by Superman, Blakely tells Kent: "You can announce that henceforth my mine will be the safest in the country, and my workers the best treated. My experience in the mine brought their problems closer to my understanding!" (55). The bourgeoisie, then, is not comprised of heartless, wealthy leaches indifferently feeding off of the proletariat's work. Instead, they simply do not understand the workers' plight, and, if their employees were only industrious enough in their efforts, the bourgeoisie would quickly show just how generous they truly are. The story is an example of false consciousness in action, as it furthers the interests of those in power, while allegedly supporting the cause of the exploited.

Unfortunately, the Superman of Siegel and Shuster would be the high-water mark in the character's history for over forty years. Daniels notes that, "Superman's social conscience was... less in evidence by 1941... Shuster said that as time went by the partners were more 'restricted' in terms of their material, and by 1941 Siegel was submitting his scripts for [editorial approval]" (65). Afterwards, from 1941 to the end of World War II, the character would become just another military pawn, and could routinely be seen threatening racially stereotypical Japanese soldiers or shilling war bonds. Following the patriotic fervor of that time, Superman's stories became increasingly silly, as more and more emphasis was placed on his powers. His enemies changed from corrupt politicians and arms manufacturers to bizarre aliens and absurd sorcerers. The good intentions of Siegel and Shuster were gone, and anything that attracted attention to the flaws of the status quo was forbidden. Finally, in 1988, declining sales led to the creation of a "new" Superman. This one, which appears in various monthly publications today, is much closer to, and in most ways superior to, the Superman created by Siegel and Shuster. Nonetheless, the character is now owned by Time-Warner, Inc., and close inspections still reveal the capitalist ideologies favored by the system that produces Superman.

It can be disheartening to think of a character so universally associated with compassion and decency as just another tool of the bourgeoisie, but there is reason to be hopeful about the future of Superman. In 1948, Siegel and Shuster, dismayed over the lack of profit their creation earned them and over the way control of Superman's direction had been taken from them, sued the company to whom they had sold the character. Though they had a number of legal issues on their side, the creators found their quest to regain ownership of Superman stymied by the deep pockets of their opponent. Eventually, after drawing out the legal battle over years, National Periodicals, Inc., Superman's owners at the time, drove Siegel and Shuster so far into debt that they dropped their suit. The two found themselves blackballed from the comics industry and penniless, a state they endured for close to three decades, as their brainchild survived only as a spokesperson for the company and system that had ruined them.

However, recently passed copyright laws may do much to rectify these injustices, and improve Superman's future. While Shuster passed away in 1992, leaving no heirs, Siegel's widow, Joanne Siegel, and their daughter, Nancy Siegel Larson, were recently awarded fifty percent ownership of Superman, and may produce stories featuring the character independently of Time-Warner. Furthermore, the Siegels are now pursuing legal action that may force Time-Warner to part with a sum equal to half of the revenue generated by Superman products since 1948 (O'Neill 6). Only time will tell what kind of Superman will be created by the Siegels of 1999, but at least fans of the first super-hero can now adhere to the hope that victims of the bourgeoisie will produce a character that better reflects the evils of capitalism instead of one that encourages the status quo.
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Women in the Military
Janette Mance

From the storm lashed decks of the Mayflower to the present hour, women have stood like a rock for the welfare and glory of the history of our country . . . and one might well add: unwritten, unrewarded, and unrecognized.


Throughout our nation’s history, women have played an important role in the military. It has not been until recently however, that women have been able to fully contribute to the military and be recognized for their past achievements in this area. With this new recognition and admittance, many debates and problems have arisen. One of the most common debates surrounds the idea of women in combat positions. Others include the issue of pregnancy, housing, and the physical requirements in order to serve. One problem that has arisen is that of the sexual harassment and rape of some women soldiers.

Today, there is much heated debate about women in the military with valid issues on both sides. Unfortunately, it is rare to hear both sides of the story. Because of this, many people form their judgments without knowing the full implications of those judgments. I have to admit that I was one of those people. I like to think of myself as an equal opportunities advocate. When I chose this topic to write my paper on, I originally planned on writing in support of full female participation in the military including combat positions. After I began the research on my project, however, and started to read and talk to enlisted members of the armed forces, my opinions slowly began to change. I realized that although in theory women in the armed forces seemed like a good idea, there are many obstacles that make that reality very difficult to achieve. In writing this paper I am not proposing that either position is more valid or right than the other. I only hope to present each side in an equal light to help others to understand the issues involved. am not proposing that either position is more valid or right than the other. I only hope to present each side in an equal light to help others to understand the issues involved.

History of Women in the Military

General Jeanne Holm was one of the very first women in the Air Force to achieve the rank of General. Although in retirement now, she still is an important military figure. Her book, Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution, gives an impressive account of the roles that women have thus far played in the military. It was my primary source when researching the history surrounding women in the military. Due to the fact that Holm’s book is so detailed and in depth, I also used a book by Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider entitled Sound Off: American Military Women Speak Out. This book provides a timeline detailing the major points of women’s military history, so when writing, I tried to follow that guideline.

According to Holm,

Women in point of fact, have been serving their country since it began - Molly Pitcher fired her cannon in 1778 without congressional sanction. In the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, women fought disguised as men. In World War One, their medical services were indispensable.
services were indispensable. During the crises of World War Two, when women were necessary to fill the breach in personnel shortages, they acquitted themselves with distinction. (Holm, front cover)

Through every major conflict that the United States has been involved in, women have played important roles. The idea that women who served in the military should be offered the same protection as men did not arise until World War II. In 1941, Congresswoman Edith Rodgers introduced a bill to Congress proposing the establishment of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). Rodgers had in mind those women who had served in World War I and had failed to be compensated for it (Holm 21-22).

Although the Army was the first branch that proposed the idea, the other branches soon followed suit with similar bills to Congress. The WAAC bill finally passed in 1942. This was the first major breakthrough for women in the armed forces, but it was deemed a failure due to the drawbacks that were included. When WAAC was established it did not offer women much. According to Holm, “[m]ilitary women were not entitled to the same pay as their male counterparts, to entitlements for dependents, or to military rank” (24). Due to these shortcomings and many other contributing forces, WAAC soon went under. In 1943, another bill was passed to establish the Women’s Army Corps (WAC). In the WAC, many of the earlier drawbacks of WAAC were resolved (Holm 25).

After the war ended, The Women’s Armed Service Integration Act was passed. Finally there was a permanent place for women established in the military. This particular Act allowed a place in each of the branches for women not only in war time, but in peace time as well. It also provided a quick and convenient way to mobilize women when needed (Holm 113). Many mark the Women’s Armed Service Integration Act as the first major step towards the allowance of women in the military.

After the Integration Act was established, frenzy over the debate calmed down. The war had ended and people were returning to the lives that they once knew before the war began. With the return to traditional peacetime roles after World War II, women again were pushed into the background. Interest in the issues of women in the military did not rise again until the late sixties and seventies. In her writing, Holm states that “except for the uniforms and marching, the indoctrination programs more closely resembled ladies’ finishing schools than military programs” (Holm 181). She also states that “all basic training programs were heavily sprinkled with courses to enhance feminine appearance and bearing” (Holm 181). Throughout World War II women had seemed to overcome stipulations such as these, however in the ensuing years women were again pushed into their traditional stereotyped positions, many military women serving as secretaries to higher ranking male officials. In fact, the chapter Holm dedicates to this is called “The Sixties: Typewriter Soldiers.”

Eventually as the current wave of feminism swept the nation, the Vietnam War and the Equal Rights Amendment, the role of women in the military was once again altered. During the next two decades, battles were being won in leaps and bounds. In 1967, Congress passed a bill that offered more career opportunities for military women. This bill also allowed for equal eligibility for retirement benefits between the genders (Schneider 253). At the time of the acceptance of the All Volunteer Force in 1973, Lt. Sharron Frontiero was winning not only a battle for herself, but for all women in the military. Based on a suit she filed in 1970, the Supreme Court ruled that the same family benefits that extend to men should be granted to women (Holm 290-91, Schneider 253).

Nineteen seventy-five was a key year for women in the military. Many existing policies were changed. The Department of Defense eliminated the practice of discharging women on the basis of pregnancy, due to the influence of the idea of equal opportunity. Another factor included the permission of a leave of absence for men in the event of the birth of a child (Holm 301-2, Schneider 253). Also in that year, President Ford signed into action a bill requiring the Department of Defense to allow women into its service academies. This included the prestigious institutes of West Point, Colorado Springs, and Annapolis.
Weapons training for women also became a requirement by the services (Schneider 254). In 1978, one of the largest steps towards women in the military took place. The Army, Navy, and Air Force finally integrated women into their ranks by abolishing the WAC, WAVES, and WAF (Schneider 254). This action toppled over the barrier that previously led people to believe that although women could serve in the military they had to do so separately, and not alongside men.

With the dawn of the eighties, women were fully integrated into the military. In 1980, the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act was passed. This allowed for women to be integrated onto previously all male promotion lists (Schneider 254). Now with so many battles won, the eighties became a time to take advantage of these new found rights and put them into full effect. Undersecretary of the Air Force Antonia Chayes summed it up by saying:

If I were to sum up the 1980’s for military women it would be: making a states of relative stability and normalcy when all the “firsts” and the pioneering will be behind them; when acceptance and equity of opportunity will be the norm. The challenge now is to chart the course to make it happen. (Holm 381)

This is perhaps where we are today, charting courses to making acceptance and equal opportunity the norm.

The issue of women in the military sparked a hot debate in the eighties. Many questions arose, turning the debate into a gender war. Pregnancy was one such barrier, which has kept women at home for centuries. Lt. Gen. Yerks of the Army was concerned with the idea of military women getting pregnant and the amount of time lost in maternity leave. One senator, William Proxmire, did not buy into the idea. He stated that “Well he (Yerks) should take a good look at the amount of time lost by the average woman in uniform to that of the average man” (Holm 384). Senator Proxmire is referring to how the GAO had found that men lose more time for drug and alcohol abuse than women do for drug and alcohol abuse and pregnancy combined (Holm 384). This debate may explain why in 1985 the armed services began to deny women the option of resigning in the event of pregnancy if they had a service obligation or were needed (Schneider 254).

Why Women Join the Military

Although a place has been firmly established in today’s military for women, the question still arises as to why women wish to be a part of the military. What exactly is the attraction? Many stereotypes accompany a woman as a member of the military. One such woman summed up the stereotypes by stating “There’s alot of misconceptions on the outside about women in the military. It’s either that the females go out with every single male on the base, or they’re gay” (Schneider 3). So yet again with all the controversy, debates, difficulties and stereotypes, why join? This is one question that the authors of Sound Off were interested in. They posed this question to many enlisted women. When these women were asked, their answers did not differ that greatly from those that one would expect to hear from men. Many people believe that women enter the military to fight a battle for feminism, and although this may be true in some cases, there are many other reasons as well. In fact, the Schneider note that “Most military women do not see themselves as pioneers” (5). When asked why they did join, the replies women gave were as diverse as the women themselves. Some joined out of a sense of patriotism, others needed money for school and saw the military as a way to fund it. Just like men, some women entered because they were unsure of what to do with their lives, or to grow up away from the boundaries of their family (Schneider 7). Many joined to see the world and others for a steady job, pay, and future job training (Schneider 12). A quotation in the very first chapter sums it up pretty well: “That’s the first question: What’s an attractive woman like you doing in the Army? I say, “Sir, probably for the same reasons you are” (Schneider 2). Today women make up 12% of the armed forces (Burrelli). Due to all these opportunities and benefits offered to those in the service, joining the military is becoming more and more attractive to
Occupations that Women Fill in the Military

Once Congress decided that more occupations should be opened to women in the military, it was up to each individual branch to see that women were integrated into these positions. With the opening of these positions, many questions arose as to how it would affect the status of the military as it was. Margaret C. Harrell and Laura L. Miller were interested in how these new opportunities affected morale, readiness and cohesion especially. Their book, New Opportunities for Military Women: Effects Upon Readiness, Cohesion and Morale, not only gives valid data on these issues, but also examines exactly how many positions have opened up to women, and how many women occupy these new positions.

In order to do their research, Miller and Harrell selected military units they believed would provide a broad view of the issues. From these units, they chose focus groups in order to find out the opinions of people on the effects of recent changes. The topics focused on gender issues, therefore the groups were divided by gender and rank to encourage free responses. Harrell and Miller also used surveys on a larger number of people to ensure that the focus groups represented the whole. To find out more about the new opportunities offered to military women, the researchers interviewed experts from each branch of the military. Their questions revolved around the extent and effects of the integration of women.

In looking at the data presented by Harrell and Miller, one can see when examining the integration of women into the military that the process is slow, but it is moving along. Gradually, more and more women are moving into occupations previously not allowed to them. Before 1993, approximately 61% of the occupations in the Army, 61% in the Navy, 97% in the Air Force, and 33% in the Marines were open to women. Due to policy changes there was an increase in every branch. In the Army, the percentage rose to 67.2%, in the Navy, 91.2%, in the Air Force, 99.4%, and 62% in the Marines. In total, across all branches of the armed services, the percentage of occupations open to women rose from 67% to 80.2% (Harrell and Miller 12: Table 2.1). According to Harrell and Miller, the reason for the vastly differing numbers is in part due to the interpretation of the new policies within the separate branches of the armed forces. As for the number of women that occupy these new positions, the numbers are still low. In the Army, only 5.7% of the personnel in the newly opened positions were women and in the Navy it was only 2%. It was only 3% and only 1.7% in the Air Force and Marines respectively (Harrell and Miller 12: Table 2.2).

Those occupations that are still closed to women are all combat related jobs. This is one very hot topic today. On one hand, there is the commonly held belief that women are not capable of combat positions. Physically, a woman cannot compare to the man standing next to her, and mentally, killing a person as required too often in combat, may offend her “delicate sensibilities.” There is also the question of the distraction men and women would pose for each other if they were to fight side by side. When looking at it from the other side, there is the belief that if women are willing to lay their lives on the line for their country, why should they not be allowed to? There is also the belief that if our country wishes to achieve full equality between the sexes, all positions, including combat positions, should be open to women.

Both sides of the debate raise valid points. When examining the issue from the point of view of those who oppose women in the military, I believe the question is not dealing with whether or not a woman soldier is capable of fighting, but whether or not she would be endangering the lives of others if she were to do so. Canada experimented with the idea of women in combat and the results found after the conclusion of their experiment are used in the argument opposing women in combat positions. Those who argue this point say:

... the Canadian experience in which women were recruited for the 16 week infantry training course...was identical to the men’s course. Forty-five of the 48 women recruited failed to complete the course. (Burrelli)

According to this experiment, most women cannot
live up to the expectations of a combat position. If we change those standards, would we be compromising our overall combat capabilities?

The traditional gender roles that govern our nation have been in existence since the beginning of the common era. It is difficult to erase such ingrained beliefs. When speaking with one young man who is now discharged from the Army, he made an off hand comment concerning the women in his platoon. He said that the male members of his platoon were sometimes overly protective of the female members. After hearing this I had to wonder how this may affect a combat situation. If a female were in some extreme danger in which the outcome would result in death, and her death were unavoidable, would the men feel compelled by their “protective instincts” to endanger their lives and possibly the success of their mission to valiantly try and save her? This question, of course, is a rhetorical question whose answers would depend on the individuals involved. In considering national security however, it warrants some consideration.

What about the other side of the issue? In much of the reading I have encountered, many service members are for the idea of women in combat although with a few stipulations. According to a story in the Washington Post in 1997, 934 service members were asked what contributing forces influenced job performance. Of those 934, only two listed gender as a factor. According to the same article:

more than half the enlisted men and one-third of the male officers favored allowing women into all combat positions from which they are now excluded. About 80% of the women supported the change, with many believing women should enter combat jobs only on a volunteer basis. (Priest)

The Seattle Times found similar results, stating that:

Army surveys show that women soldiers believe combat experience will help their careers, but they want women to be assigned to combat positions only if they volunteer. And the majority of women soldiers aren’t personally interested. (Walters)

Although these articles provide insight into the ideas of military men and women, when one considers the idea of combat positions based on volunteerism, another problem arises. If we are involved in a quest for equality, should not the same courtesy extend to men? It is obvious that a compromise may be a long time in coming, not only due to the arguments that each side has, but also because women, soldiers and civilians alike are divided on the issues and cannot come to a common consensus.

Sexual Harassment and Rape

One current problem that is constantly receiving media attention is the seemingly ever present sexual harassment and rape of women in the military. Women Soldiers is a book of collected essays centering around women in the military. One essay, written by Patricia Hanna, looks at the stresses in careers of US servicewomen. According to Hanna, “It is impossible to know whether sexual harassment is more prevalent in the military than the civilian world, although it is apparent that it continues to be a considerable stressor for servicewomen” (68). In doing their research, Harrell and Miller found that when surveyed, 4% of men and 6% of the women answered “Yes, Frequently” to the question “Are the women in your unit (are you) being sexually harassed?” Fifteen percent of the men and 11% of the women answered “Yes sometimes.” Twenty-nine percent of the men answered “Yes but rarely,” as compared to 17% of the women. The majority, 53% of the men and 66% of the women, answered “no” however.

Harrell and Miller also found that some women felt that they could not report sexual harassment. One reason was because they felt that such reports could argue that women do not belong in the military. Other reasons included their belief that either nothing would happen or they would be subject to revenge. They also stated that they did not want to destroy the career of an officer, or be known as the woman who destroyed a career (Harrell and Miller 75).

The most well known case involving sexual harassment is the Tailhook scandal. Tailhook is a 38

http://digitalcommons.kent.edu/wcr/vol5/iss1/1
military convention that has been taking place for years. Although it was a well known fact within the military that the attendees could get out of hand in their "partying," the extent was not commonly known until 1991. In 1991, Lt. Paula Coughlin reported being sexual assaulted at Tailhook in an event known as "The Gauntlet." The Gauntlet was a loosely formed group of up to two hundred men who lined the corridor outside the hospitality suites around 10:30 each night of the convention and "touched" women who passed down the corridor. It is estimated that during this three day event 83 women were sexually assaulted. Although it was a well known fact prior to the convention that occurrences such as this would be likely, no steps were taken to prevent such behavior. Eventually the Pentagon investigated the events that took place at Tailhook in 1991. One hundred and forty officers from the Marine Corps and Navy were referred for disciplinary action. None of these cases ever went to trial due to lack of evidence. Most were punished non-judicially within the military. Eventually the careers of fourteen admirals and almost 300 aviators suffered because of Tailhook. Both the Secretary of the Navy H. Lawrence Garrett III and CNO Admiral Frank Kelso, who were present at Tailhook, resigned as a result of the scandal (Frontline).

The Tailhook scandals is at the extreme end of the spectrum. Going back to what Hanna said, it is not known if rape and sexual harassment are more common in the military than in the civilian world. It is unfortunate, but because not all cases are reported it is difficult to find a solution. Some people wish to resegregate the military. Others feel that a move in this direction will only punish the women, who are not the guilty parties. I found a comment made by J.B. Dixson regarding resegregation interesting; "If you're concerned about sparks...get rid of the matches, not the gunpowder."

As our country struggles to overcome the sexist barriers it has constructed for itself, the debate concerning women in the military will continue to rage on. A compromise will not be soon in coming due to the many contributing factors, some of which I mentioned. If I were to propose a compromise, it would be this: Structure the military around those people that are most capable. This does not necessarily mean men. Set universal physical standards and if a woman can accomplish these then she should be able to occupy any position that a man who has met the same standards is allowed to occupy. As for pregnancy, I would suggest offering birth control and a leave of absence in such an event, which are both things the military has already thought of.

The bottom line is, centuries of patriarchy and structured gender roles are not going to be erased in a short period of time. Our best bet as a society is to strive for equality by any means possible. If equality does not seem to be a possibility in some situations, propose a compromise. After all, one must first learn to crawl before one can learn to walk.

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"We’re all angels and heaven is right here,” writes author Richard Hague (24). This sentiment from “Heaven, 1957,” a beautiful piece of prose poetry written about one of Hague’s first spiritual experiences, leads me to this question: What is spirituality? Many people equate it with religion, but in my opinion that is a serious mistake because it greatly limits and eliminates many other possible realms of spirituality. On the one hand, religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, which is highly organized and structured, mostly through various denominations of church (Shepard 388). On the other hand, spirituality is an insightful journey into self discovery and the path one takes to open the soul. Being a spiritual person involves having a strong sense of inner peace and acceptance that comes from “making connections.” I am particularly fond of the definition of spirituality given in a book entitled Conversations With God: An Uncommon Dialogue, by Neale Donald Walsch. Walsch is very confused about religion and the meaning of life, so he has a “question and answer” session with God. To his astonishment, God started answering his questions. When Walsch asked God about religion and spirituality, God suggested to him that “religion encourages you to explore the thoughts of others and accept them as your own, and spirituality invites you to toss away the thoughts of others and come up with your own” (61). While one can find spirituality through connecting with a higher power (God, Buddha, Allah, etc.), nature, the universe, and other people, Richard Hague used nature as his primary source of spirituality. Richard Hague learned a tremendous amount about himself and his spirituality throughout his life, and he accomplished this by passionately connecting with the world of nature.

In Dr. Robert Miltner’s English II class, students were asked to select an issue or theme that they found in Richard Hague’s work. In The Spirit of Hague, Melanie McGinnis combines ideas from Richard Hague’s book of short stories and prose poems, Milltown Natural, with spiritual definitions from a book entitled Conversations with God: An Uncommon Dialogue. Melanie also brings in information from a 1999 lecture Hague gave at Kent Stark to support her claim.

From reading Milltown Natural, it is clearly apparent to me that nature had a very prominent place in Richard Hague’s life. He developed this love of nature fairly early in life. As a child, Hague was always exploring the river, collecting a wide assortment of animals, studying the intricate biology of insects, and leisurely fishing with his grandpa. In “Menagerie,” Hague started “collecting all sorts of diversified animals: an alligator, several different kinds of snakes, beetles, turtles, dogs, numerous insects, and parakeets.” He learned from these animals “that there were alternatives, other ways of being and living” (35). Unfortunately, Hague’s wild curiosity and exploration of these animals caused their untimely demise. At the end of the story, when the alligator dies, Hague finally realizes the unfairness in taking an animal out of its own environment and expecting it to conform with ours. He understands that all animals need to be respected for their own unique qualities. Hague recognizes how imperative it is for each animal to occupy its own special place in the universe, because to deprive them of that place is literally death! Through this epiphany of “connecting” with the animals, Hague developed a new-found respect and admiration for the perfect creation of order in the world.

“Small Bright Things, And Flash, And Glint, And Glitter” is another wonderful example of Hague “discovering” his spirituality through nature. In this story, he recalls getting his “Buddy Holly specials,” referring to his new glasses (26). He finally sees faraway things more clearly. Although he likes this new- found “seeing”, he soon realizes how compromised it is. He receives the “big picture” but misses all of the “little things” that are glaring in front of his face. To rectify this void, he periodically takes his glasses off so that he can, ironically, see more clearly. Isn’t it amazing how people with
perfect vision can walk through life in a constant blur, and people with imperfect vision can see their surroundings with crystal clear sight! Hague connects with nature in this story when he truly starts to appreciate every breath taking detail of beauty in everything he looks at.

Another extremely significant part of Hague’s spirit rests in the infamous Ohio River. It represents some of his most treasured memories and some of his most tragic heartbreaks. Early in life, Hague spent endless days and nights at the river with his grandfather; fishing, and eagerly listening to every word of his grandpa’s fascinating stories. Through these stories, Hague is “afforded a rich and always youthful, even romantic, lore” (“Shitepokes” 8). In his childhood, the river was an endless possibility, an all consuming fortress sacredly guarding his soul. Later in life, however, the darker side of the river is revealed to Hague, when Jackie Finnegan, the love of his life, drowned. This horrible tragedy forever changes Richard Hague. Her death greatly disturbs him and still does to this day. Why? Does Hague ponder how something as beautiful as the river could destroy something equally as beautiful? Does he resent the river for “stealing” Finnegan, the river that “took and held Jackie Finnegan, and still holds her, she whom I never held?” (“Old Woman River” 106). Is Hague terrified of death, and does Finnegan’s death bring him to the awareness that he is a mere mortal who will also die? Unfortunately, I can’t answer these questions and neither can Hague. I can only speculate, as does Hague, concluding that all of these questions have potential validity in comprehending the significance of the river. Many people fear what they don’t understand, and I believe the river and Finnegan’s untimely death represent a huge unknown. Hopefully, given enough time, this spiritual void and confusion about the solemn tone of the river will be replaced with a deeper spiritual awareness and acceptance.

Finally, in my opinion, the “Farm” had the most profound impact on Hague’s spirituality. He is drawn into the farm’s simplistic beauty, as if it were his life’s calling. He finds a calmness and a sense of purpose through his time spent there, admiring the distinct features of the four seasons, planting various kinds of trees, driving around the county getting completely lost in the amazing scenery, fishing with friends, and visiting with family. Hague’s time there is almost a necessity because in the real world, he is getting caught up in the meaningless rush of life and “spiritually, he hunched in fear and exhaustion” (“Mowing The Bald” 119). The Farm is an exercise in finding himself, slowing his hectic, spiritually draining pace, and smelling the roses. Through Richard Hague’s time spent at the Farm, his soul miraculously blossoms and his zest for life is strongly renewed.

Hague has described himself as “partly Catholic” (Demaline), and in “Mowing the Bald” he discusses how he has “taken a hiatus from the formal church” (118), which leads me to believe that religion and church were not at the core of his spiritual development and that nature plays a much more significant role in his spiritual awakenings. His love of the natural world greatly enhances his spiritual being and allows him to, very simply, grow spiritually by “discovering the purpose in everyday events,” (KSU lecture) and that is the “Spirit of Hague.”

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The Comedy of the American Dream
Valli Mullen

In the early 1950s, the American dream was the nation's common heartbeat. Citizens longed for the "ideal" family; most hid their shortcomings. The nuclear family included a mother, father, two children and a pet, all residing in suburbia, USA. Fathers were the breadwinners, and mothers stayed home, cooked, and cared for the kids. Each family included a boy and a girl, the former who always parted his hair to the side and the latter who always wore pigtails. The nation was convinced that if one worked hard enough, he or she could earn enough money to support the family and have plenty of professional satisfaction. Everyone sat down to dinner together nightly, and discussed his/her day, and innocence abounded—even pregnancy was considered a racy subject. But during the last fifty years, Americans realized that their dream of a perfect life was unrealistic, as the film Pleasantville depicts. Comic entertainment, such as The Simpsons and American Beauty, followed suit—deposing the American dream became the most relevant form of humor in America.

In Pleasantville (1998), Tobey Maguire and Reese Witherspoon play siblings who are trapped in a dysfunctional turn-of-the-millenium family. Maguire's character deals with the situation by obsessively watching Pleasantville, a black-and-white rerun from the 1950s in which the American dream directed the script. Witherspoon's character deals with her life by turning to a 1990s distraction: sex. The two are accidentally zapped into the television show by means of a magic remote. They are thrust into the roles of David and Mary Sue Parker, and they begin to make the most of their hiatus—Maguire blends into his role, while Witherspoon begins to teach all of the high school boys in Pleasantville the particulars of sex. Through a record number of special effects, as the citizens of Pleasantville start to experiment with their sexuality, splashes of color appear, highlighting their bodies and their world.

The main comedy of the picture arises from the innocence of the characters clashing with the worldly realisms, and the color transformation of Pleasantville parallels the transition that American humor has taken over the past half-century. Despite the harsh realities of the Depression and World War II that led up to this age, an innocence was assumed during the 50s; today, no subject is too controversial for television. In fact, the main facet of American humor today is the shock between the ideology of the American dream as it supposedly existed earlier this century and the subsequent recognition of reality.

Historians and academics offer definitions which underlie today's humor. In 1937, Walter Blair, whose 60-year study of humor focused on the nineteenth century development of the genre, stated that American humor was neither produced only in America nor contained characteristics privy only to Americans. He offered instead that American humor meant "humor which is American in that it has an emphatic 'native quality'—a quality imparted by its subject matter and its technique" (92). H. R. Haweis, half a century earlier in 1882, had defined the technique of American humor as the three shocks of contrast: business and piety, Aboriginal and Yankee, and the bigness of American nature versus the smallness of Europe (81). Subject matters and techniques such as exaggeration and violence are important, but the shock of contrast remains the essential characteristic that defines American humor.

Louis Rubin, a renowned humor scholar, reasoned the shocks of contrast to a higher level. Rubin recorded in his essay, "The Great American Joke," that the essence of American humor lies in the incongruity between
democracy and reality. Rubin says humor “arises out of the gap between the cultural ideal and the everyday fact, with the ideal shown to be somewhat hollow and hypocritical, and the fact crude and disgusting” (109-10). In the two decades following Rubin’s studies, democracy has best been demonstrated by the American dream, and the shocks that led to humor have accordingly expanded. The American dream was as unrealistic in 1950 as it is today, but citizens held fast to the ideology and denied reality. During the 90s, television programmers and filmmakers began to poke fun at Americans’ steadfast hold on the American dream, and it now prevails as the humor trend of the decade.

Halfway into the century, television programming proliferated, promoting the American dream. Sitcoms such as I Love Lucy, which aired on CBS from 1951-1961, portrayed a family atmosphere, mirroring “real life”—or what the public desired their lives to be like. Lucille Ball’s zany vaudeville reenactments popularized the show. Her real-life husband Desi Arnaz played her on-screen husband, Ricky Ricardo. The couple completed the first vision of their American dream during the second season by having a baby, and 44 million viewers watched the reenactment on television (Claro and Klam 120). United States audiences were waiting to embrace proof manufactured by Hollywood to assure themselves that the American dream was not unattainable.

Even in a post-Lucy, post-Kennedy, post-Vietnam era during which the media experimented with increasing freedom and liberties, the American dream still persisted in sitcom form. Happy Days aired on ABC from 1974-84. Set in the 1950s, the show documented the family life of Richie, the all-American high school boy with his hair parted on the side and slicked down, a varsity sweater, and trivial girl problems. His family sat down to dinner together every night, and most of the comedy in the show came from Richie’s blunders—or from his smooth friend Fonzie’s triumphs. Happy Days was the last sitcom in which the American dream drove the script. As the 1990s rang in, realism began to take over in another form—cartoons.

The Simpsons was the first sitcom to entertain audiences by presenting the American dream and then shocking them with the recognition of reality. The half-hour cartoon started running in 1990 on Fox, featuring an irreverent yellow family. The family, closely modeled after that of creator Matt Groening, is American in composition: father Homer, mother Marge, 10-year-old Bart, 8-year-old Lisa, and 2-year-old Maggie. They reside in Springfield, a suburban city in one of the 48 continental states.

The Simpsons deal with issues similar to those of other sitcoms: school, work, home life, jealousies, mistakes, blunders. But they also shock the viewer by addressing issues that the average American sitcom and the American dream prohibited in discussion: homosexuality, politics, and violence. The Simpsons startle America because they are animated with blue or spiky hair and because they use swearwords. Cartoons were traditionally for children, but The Simpsons deals with and presents issues that are too mature for children. Adults, though, are forced to laugh in agitation—and perhaps even discomfort—as Bart swears or Homer forces his son to sit in front of a billboard bearing scantily-clad women smoking cigarettes to assure himself that Bart is not homosexual.

Bart and Lisa both defy the early American ideal that children are seen and not heard. During the early 90s, Bart, whose name is an anagram for “Brat,” was the poster boy for elementary school troublemakers. His rap sheet in Principal Skinner’s office is a mile long, and he is often the instigator of chaos in Springfield, such as the teachers’ strike or the trouble that leads to the children’s curfew. Bart’s most popular sayings—such as “Don’t have a cow, man”—are overshadowed when he irreverently says, “What the hell, Homer?” to his father. But still, American audiences have to laugh at Bart: his hair isn’t slicked over and he’s far from well-mannered, but his departure from the expectations arouses interest and comedy.

Lisa, although in second grade, seems to have a higher IQ than her ever-bumbling father. When Bart causes the teachers’ strike, she calms herself by watching videos of the school building and reading text books in her “Emergency Strike Kit.” Throughout that particular episode, she chokes up when she can remember only two syno-
As Homer admits to a judge after having his children taken away by the county, he is “probably the last guy who should be a father,” to which his bumbling, slothy idiocy attests. The most shattering fact of all is that Homer does indeed achieve his wildest dreams without having to work towards them. He becomes an astronaut, navigates a nuclear sub, meets the President, becomes a world-famous artist, tackles and captures James Bond, and performs with the rock group Smashing Pumpkins (by taking cannonballs to the stomach as a warm-up act). Although viewers are endeared by his trips to the top, Homer’s adventures defy normal laws of adulthood. Carolyn’s hysterical ranting adds to his dry, newfound confidence. Lester begins smoking pot, which he buys from his next-door-neighbor, secures a job flipping burgers at Mr. Smiley’s, and starts lifting weights to impress his daughter’s best friend Angela, the sultry blond cheerleader. His lust for her reminds the American adage that hard work will pay off. The fact that he is thrust into pay-off situations without the preparation for them is even more appealing to the sense of humor. Americans have enjoyed Homer’s antics for ten seasons, and the animated sitcom opened the door for other media, such as the motion picture industry, to confront the questionable lucidity of the American dream.

American Beauty is a dark, insipid look at the final year of recently-murdered Lester Burnham, played by Kevin Spacey. The film, which premiered in September 1999, is already being touted as the best movie of the year. Burnham seems to live the American dream—he has a well-paying job at a magazine, a beautiful wife and daughter, and a large house in suburbia. But Burnham’s narration reveals that he is trapped in a marriage that is not satisfying and a job that is going nowhere. He has not spoken to his daughter in months, and he is mousy and forgettable. As he tells his wife’s colleague at a party, “It’s okay. I wouldn’t remember me, either.”

Burnham’s wife, Carolyn, played by Annette Bening, is obsessed with success. She listens to self-help tapes and refuses to let herself cry. Her couch is not merely a couch; it is a couch covered with $4,000 Italian silk. Bening’s character represents the ultimate foil of the 90s woman and pokes fun at the American dream housewife when she lights candles at dinner and forces the dysfunctional family to listen to Marvin Gaye.

The movie starts to gel when Lester Burnham sees his daughter Jane’s best friend Angela, the sultry blond cheerleader. His lust for her reminds him of his teenage days, and he laments that he never fancied his life would turn out so pathetically. After Lester decides to take charge of his future, he enthusiastically tells his daughter how he quit his job and blackmailed his boss for $60,000 that day. The scene works comically because Burnham doesn’t care that he is breaking all normal laws of adulthood. Carolyn’s hysterical ranting adds to his dry, newfound confidence. Lester begins smoking pot, which he buys from his next-door-neighbor, secures a job flipping burgers at Mr. Smiley’s, and starts lifting weights to impress his daughter’s best friend. Jane complains that she needs a father who is responsible, a role-model; Lester takes some of his blackmail money and buys his dream car: a 1970 Firebird.

In perhaps one of the funniest scenes in the movie, Carolyn storms into the living room where Lester is lounging in sweatpants, demanding to know whose red car is in the driveway. Lester jubilantly replies, “Mine. 1970 Pontiac Firebird. The car I always wanted and now I have it. I rule!” As Lester reverts further into adolescence, he cares less about his rebellion. He wants only to regress into the time when his dreams were still ahead of him and he had not miserably failed to live up to his and society’s expectations. The subject matter
of the movie is quite graphic compared to works of half a century earlier, but the shock of watching Lester shatter the American dream is today’s comedy at its pinnacle. Fifty years ago, Lester Burnham’s downward spiral would have been viewed as obscene and detestable; today, audiences laugh at the harsh fact that they and Lester never fulfilled their dreams.

During the 1990s, Americans have come to admit that the American dream is not fully attainable. Though they knew as much in the 50s, they forged ahead, pretending that mom and dad weren’t fighting at home, pretending that Billy and Susie were really watching drive-in movies. Half a century later, the assassination of a president, the impeachment of another, the disillusion of war, and the eruption of the information age have forced Americans to resurvey their goals and face the truth. Perhaps American humor relies on the shock between the American dream and the recognition of reality because we must laugh at what would otherwise reduce us to tears. Recognizing that life offers only one chance can be fracturing. Humans despise thinking that they can’t always secure what they want, even with hard work. Americans therefore compensate by supporting the creation of shows like *The Simpsons* and films like *American Beauty*. Such entertainment allows Americans the opportunity to relieve the stress of their pressures and unattainable dreams by laughing at the incongruous realities. Americans are willing to laugh at their mistakes—and never too stubborn to redefine the limits of comedy.

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Tennessee Williams' short story "The Resemblance Between a Violin Case and a Coffin," when read through a psychoanalytic lens, illustrates how family dynamics and the narrator's fear of abandonment structure the text. The narrator's dysfunctional relationships with other characters in the story reveal a pattern of behavior that can be attributed to unconscious sexual desires. Tom's unnatural dependency on his sister, fear of abandonment, and compensation for an absent father result in his fixation and sexual desire for Richard Miles. The domestic and social roles of the narrator help determine his development as a character since they are an integral part of his identity. The text's asexual, or sexually suppressive, nature controls the narrative in that it causes Tom to feel guilt about his own sexual desires, and these desires manifest in numerous sexual imagery and symbols.

The family structure begins to form and shape Tom's fear of abandonment by illustrating the confusion of roles and dysfunctional relationships. The household consists of an extended family which lacks any actively involved adult males with whom Tom can identify and learn his respective role. Because parents of the same sex are traditionally the primary instructors of gender roles and Tom's father is not available, he does not become properly socialized. No relationship exists between Tom and his absent father, who is mentioned only in passing and described as being "a devilish man, possibly not understood but certainly hard to live with" (316). Implications exist about the narrator's parents' problematic marriage, which reveals itself in Tom's mother's singing as "something she only did when my father had just left on a long road trip and would not be likely to return for quite a while" (313). It is important to note that Tom's parents have a dysfunctional relationship because his observation of that dysfunction serves as his idea of what relationships are like. The only other man in Tom's life, his grandfather, is preoccupied and often "mumbling a sermon to himself in the study" (313), thus leaving the narrator's dominating mother and grandmother, from whom he "received no attention at all," to head the household.

Because of these multiple dysfunctional relationships, Tom develops a dependent, almost obsessive attachment to his sister without whom he can survive neither domestically nor socially as he is continually "set upon by the rougher boys of the town" (314). However, when his sister reaches puberty, the narrator's grandmother and mother insist that she adopt the qualities of a "proper lady" and abandon "the wild country of childhood" (314). Bewildered and hurt, Tom views this sudden transition of his sister as desertion and his mother and grandmother as "approving and conspiring to increase it" (314). No longer able to engage in childish activities, Tom's sister is encouraged to partake in more sophisticated endeavors, such as piano lessons, and begins practicing with Richard Miles.

Abandoned by his sister, ignored by his mother and grandmother, and lacking a male role model, Tom begins to fixate on Richard, and this fixation evolves in three stages. The narrator, initially jealous and resentful of Richard for usurping his place as his sister's companion, comes to "dream about him as [he] had formerly dreamed of storybook heroes" (317). Because all of the men in the text are absent or preoccupied, even Miss Aehle's father is "paralyzed," Richard functions as the only available male role model, and the narrator's idolization of him occurs as a result of his compensating for an absent father. The second stage of Tom's fixation with Richard soon develops into a crush "of a shy and sorrowful kind, involved with [his] sense of
abandonment" and because his sister had fallen in love "as always [he] followed suit" (317). By this admission, it seems the narrator has transferred his dependency on his sister onto Richard and, in fact, may be competing with her for Richard's companionship. This sibling rivalry is resultant of Tom's unconscious desire to punish his sister for abandoning him by taking the boy she loves and, in order to avoid future abandonment, he secretly admires Richard and flees from him when a possible confrontation arises. Tom has assumed a passive role in his "relationship" with Richard because he has learned from his role in the family to be passive, living as a male in a matriarchal household second to his beautiful and favored sister.

Finally, Tom's innocent crush on Richard evolves into sexual desire, and since he has transferred his dependency/obsession from his sister onto Richard and he desires Richard sexually, he therefore unconsciously desires his sister sexually. The narrator has successfully substituted his unconscious desire for his sister and acknowledges that "the transference of my interest to Richard now seemed complete. I would barely notice my sister" (319). However, these desires are not felt without shame. Just as Tom watches Richard secretly from his cracked bedroom door and wonders "How...did I explain to myself...the fascination of his physical being without...confessing to myself that I was a little monster?" (319), he also "averts his look" from his sister's beauty and "began to find life unsatisfactory" (316). Without a father to provide sexual guidelines, and because of his view of women as holding familial power, Tom is confused as to what his role in a relationship is. The narrator's "relationship" with Richard both enables him to vicariously have sex with his sister and obtain a father.

Tom is ashamed of his sexual desires and equates the "sensual with the impure" (319) because of the text's asexual or suppressive attitude toward sex. Imagery aids in supporting the overtly asexual nature of the text as in the case of Miss Aehle, who is described as being a "typical spinster" living in a house covered by "moonvines and honeysuckle" as if she covets her virginity. Likewise, the image of Tom's sister being "escorted away" and "addressed in hushed and solicitous voices" (313) suggests a denial of sexuality. As she has sexually matured, she no longer associates with her brother so as to hinder any potential sexual activity. Also, along the same lines, the narrator's aunt remains "the one woman in the world by whom [his] mother was intimidated" (315) due to her beauty and sensuality. Williams mentions Tom's aunt only to make the reader aware of her death, and in this way Williams seems to suggest that all things of beauty and sensuality are destined to die before they can "decline by common degrees in a faded season" (320) just as Richard later dies. Even the title of the story implies suppressed sexuality or the symbolic death of sexual desires. Tom likens Richard's violin case to "a little coffin made for a small child or doll" (318) in the same way that he views his abandoned relationship with his sister as being "put away in a box like a doll" (316) as if his sexual desires for both parties has "died."

Another device Williams uses in the text to perpetuate its asexual agenda is music, which operates as a dichotomy both symbolic of sex and the suppression of sex. Music represents the denial of sex when the narrator suggests that Miss Aehle views "playing little pieces on the piano or scratching out little tunes on a fiddle" as a way to "make up for everything that was ostensibly wrong in a world made by God but disarrayed by the devil" (316). Similarly, the recital symbolizes a failed sex act where afterwards exists a "conspiracy to ignore that anything unfortunate had happened" (323) as if to deny sex and sexuality. The recital scene reads like a dream sequence that symbolizes disastrous intercourse between Richard and Tom's sister. In the narrator's version of the duet, Richard is the "heroic" sexual aggressor who raises his bow, a symbolic phallus, "high in the air" with a machismo "Hah!" that is compared to a "bullfighter daring a charge" and then lowers it to the strings in a "masterful sweep" implying sexual skill. Richard then "edged up closer to her position" and "took the lead from my sister and plunged them into the passage" (323) with the tune of the piano "barely noticeable underneath him" (323). Here, the language and verb use connotes the physical act of sex. When the recital
was finished, they "received an ovation" or orgasm, and Tom's sister "started to rush for the cloakroom," symbolic of female sexual imagery and suggestive of her dissatisfaction with the act. Tom's unconscious desire to punish his sister for abandoning him results in her dissatisfaction or failure to perform in the act.

Clearly, when viewed through a psychoanalytic lens, "The Resemblance Between a Violin Case and a Coffin" illustrates how dysfunctional relationships within a family, and fear of abandonment, leads to the narrator's confused identity and unconscious sexual desire for his sister. The asexual or sexually suppressive nature of the text, whether intentional or unintentional, in fact reveals a number of images and symbols that are overtly sexual in orientation and manifest in the narrator's inability to suppress his desires. Tom's psychological makeup is founded on his dependency and sexual desire for his sister and his dysfunctional relationship with his parents, which results in his fixating on Richard Miles.

Works Cited

Building “A Room of One’s Own”
Kris Shearer

Though published seventy years ago, Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* holds no less appeal today than it did then. Modern women writers look to Woolf as a prophet of inspiration. In November of 1929, Woolf wrote to her friend G. Lowes Dickinson that she penned the book because she "wanted to encourage the young women—they seem to get frightfully depressed" (xiv). The irony here, of course, is that Woolf herself eventually grew so depressed and discouraged that she killed herself. The suicide seems symptomatic of Woolf's own feelings of oppression within a patriarchal world where only the words of men, it seemed, were taken seriously. Nevertheless, women writers still look to Woolf as a liberating force and, in particular, at *A Room of One's Own* as an inspiring and empowering work. Woolf biographer Quentin Bell notes that the text argues:

> the disabilities of women are social and economic; the woman writer can only survive despite great difficulties, and despite the prejudice and the economic selfishness of men; and the key to emancipation is to be found in the door of a room which a woman may call her own and which she can inhabit with the same freedom and independence as her brothers. (144)

Woolf empowers women writers by first exploring the nature of women and fiction, and then by incorporating notions of androgyny and individuality as it exists in a woman's experience as writer. Woolf's first assertion is that women are spatially hindered in creative life. "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction," Woolf writes, "and that as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of women... and fiction unresolved" (4). What Woolf seems to say is that being female stifles creativity. Woolf does not assume, however, that a biological reason for this stifling exists. Instead, she implies that a woman's "life conflicts with something that is not life" (71). In other words, mothering, being a wife, and the general daily, culturally defined expectations of women infringe upon creativity, in particular the writing of fiction. The smothering reality of a woman's life - - housekeeping and child-rearing duties, for example - - distract a woman from writing. Sadly, Woolf notes, even if a woman in such circumstances manages to write anyway, "she will write in a rage where she should write calmly. She will write foolishly where she should write wisely. She will write of herself where she should write of her characters" (69-70). Woolf posits here that an angry woman, writing out of the repression of her everyday life, will be an ineffective writer. Finally, Woolf blames the patriarchal culture, as if the freedom of women writing is "some infringement of [man's] power to believe in himself" (35). She suggests that men resist women writers because fiction by women somehow diminishes their belief in their own works. Woolf's message, it seems, is that women must rail against the resistance of the patriarchal culture and attain some degree of independence and androgyny.

Woolf does not suggest that women write the same as men. In fact, Woolf asserts that "it would be a thousand pities if women wrote like men, or lived like men, or looked like men" (88). Woolf believes that a man's sentence is not a woman's sentence, that the two will be vastly different from each other, though not necessarily one better than the other. Her assertion is that men's sentences are awkward in the hands of women because "the nerves that feed the brain would seem to differ in men and women" (78). This difference of gray matter and neurons would necessarily result in a difference of perspective.
and sentence structure. Woolf suggests that for fiction to be artfully done, there must exist a measure of androgyny, "a plan of the soul so that in each of us two powers preside, one male, one female" (98). In essence, Woolf claims that this state of androgyny would allow women the same freedom to express themselves that men seem to have been inherently endowed with. "The androgynous mind is resonant and porous," Woolf continues, "it transmits emotion without impediment; it is naturally creative, incandescent and undivided" (98). What Woolf overtly states here is that the ideal creative mind is a marriage, or balance, of the supposed female traits of emotionalism with the supposed male traits of productivity and style. What is implicit, however, is that the female mind can be resonant and porous only when undivided. In other words, a woman can write well only when her mind, like a man's, is not forced to choose between gender and identity, or between her art and society's expectations of her. A woman will write with fluidity and resonance only when she has the same freedom of expression as a man.

An additional notion Woolf presents is that women must maintain individuality in their experiences as writers. This intimacy with one's identity nurtures the creation of fiction, but only when written out of one's own personality and not imitated through another's. "Why are Jane Austen's sentences not the right shape for you?" Woolf asks Mary Carmichael (80). The idea Woolf reinforces here is that a woman should find and develop her own writing style, not simply mimic her predecessors. Notice, though, that Woolf does not suggest we glean no stylistic inspiration from women writers like the Brontes and Jane Austen, who paved the way for generations of women writers. "Books continue each other," Woolf says, "in spite of our habit of judging them separately" (80). Continuing something, however, does not mean using the same blueprints or tools during the creative process. What Woolf implies is that every book a woman, sitting in that room of her own, produces will generate books from other women. A degree of mimicry, of course, is impossible to avoid. "A woman writing," Woolf admits, "thinks back through her mothers" (97). The "mothers" here are not only biological mothers who give birth to our physical bodies, but also those women who meticulously scratched their way out of patriarchal constraints and into print; the women who acted as surrogates to birth generations of women writers. Subtle mimicry would seem a natural act under such circumstances, much as a child unconsciously develops personality traits of either parent.

Finally, a woman reading Woolf's book has to wonder if that "room of one's own" is strictly a spatial, physical concept. It is possible that Woolf writes of a psychological construct as a room of one's own, a place one can emotionally go to and write from. Few of us have the luxury of a concrete room of our own, and if we are to be writers, emotional space of our own is the barest necessity. Women who want to write must find some quiet space in their psyches from which they can create. "So long as you write what you want to write, that is all that matters," Woolf encourages, "and whether it matters for ages or only for hours, nobody can say" (106). What Woolf seems to say is that what we create within that space of ourselves, within a single moment, is what matters so long as we do it with an eye toward our own individual, androgynous hearts.

Works Cited

Contributors

Michelle Abraham feels strongly about the topic of the failure of modern day school systems. Her 8-year-old daughter is experiencing frustration due to the current school system. Being empathetic to her daughter’s situation is easy because Michelle herself is a non-traditional student majoring in Psychology.

Carolyn Adelman recently changed her major to English after two years of majoring in Business, so studying grammar must have paid off. Carolyn is currently a junior and not only is she pursuing a minor in Writing, but she is also a Writing Tutor as well.

Robert Berens is a senior English major. Hemingway is one of Robert’s favorite authors. Robert has worked as a tutor in the Writing Center for two years, and in 1999 he received the English Department Award. Robert aspires to be a screenwriter and comedy writer, with hopes of writing television sitcoms.

LaShonda Card is a non-traditional student studying Criminal Justice and Communications. Maya Angelou is her favorite author. When not in school, LaShonda enjoys reading and spending time with her three sons: Charles, Darrian, and Jahleel.

Beth Ann Fisher is a Middle Childhood Education major with concentrations in Language Arts and Science. Beth enjoys writing about psychological and gender issues, particularly in the area of Literature for Young Adults. In addition, Beth devours numerous adolescent novels, particularly those written for young girls. Beth and her husband Mark have two daughters, which, Beth says, is probably why she is so interested in gender issues in young adult literature.

Julie Fisher finds researching the English language to be right up her alley. She is pursuing her B. A. in English, with plans to further her education in graduate school. She hopes to study not only English linguistics but also Intercultural Communication. Julie’s background includes being a campus ambassador and member of the Honors Program and Sigma Tau Delta.

Sam Galluch admits to reading anything and everything between two covers. He is a 20-year-old English major who recently transferred to Ohio University. Originally from Green, Ohio, Sam enjoys playing guitar and writing poetry and lyrics.

Cheryl Householder is a Middle Childhood Education major with a dual concentration in Language Arts and, appropriately enough, Math. Cheryl not only enjoys writing, but also believes that through writing comes better understanding. She would like to thank Dr. Bathi for this wonderful opportunity.

Marianne Jackson, the eldest of seven children, has always sought privacy. Marianne now finds solace through reading and writing about things that are special to her. Marianne is a 50-year-old grandmother who re-entered college just this year.
Jonathan Judy is a senior English major. Jon is strikingly handsome and hopes to write screenplays/comedy with Robert Berens and comic books with J. Robert Novak. Jon loves cats and fish, but not as meals; he is a vegetarian, and believes you should be one, too.

Janette Mance is a second year honor student. Her major is Psychology and her minor is Sociology.

Melanie McGinnis balances her life as a part-time evening student with being a full-time wife and mother of three children. Melanie is a sophomore with an undecided major, who, when not playing with her kids, enjoys reading and writing.

Ali Miltner is a sophomore Art Education major who wishes she could skip LER’s and take all studio classes. Ali hopes to have a Master’s Degree in Art Education by the time she is 25. Though she will start out teaching high school, Ali hopes to eventually teach at the university level.

Valli Mullen, a Pre-Journalism and Mass Communications major, is currently a freshman at Kent Stark. She hopes to work in newspapers or magazines as a writer or editor. She says she found writing The Comedy of the American Dream “dangerous and different” from any paper she had written before and was proud of herself for making sense of the material and interpreting things on her own. Valli also admits to having a few novels brewing in her brain!

Lisa Robinson will graduate in August with a degree English. When not writing, she enjoys bowling, lounge music, and cheap beer.

Kris Shearer is an Adolescent Education/Integrated Language Arts major, who is pursuing a Writing Minor as well. Her favorite literary topics include gender and psychological issues. She is most interested in the works of Anne Tyler, Ann Beattie, Kate Chopin, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Kris and her husband, Kim, have two teenagers: Derek and Kirstin.
Writing Center Review

Submission Instructions for Spring 2001 Issue

The Writing Center Review, a Writing Across the Curriculum journal that contains selected writing assignments by Kent State University, Stark Campus students, is published each Spring under the direction of the Writing Center Staff. The purpose of the Review is to present excellence in writing representing various disciplines at Kent Stark, including Biology, Chemistry, Communications, Geology, History, Mathematics, Psychology, and Sociology, among others. These assignments then may be used in classrooms, in the Writing Center, and by individual students as guides for achieving excellence in writing. If you are interested in submitting a writing assignment for consideration for publication in the Spring 2001 Writing Center Review, you will need to do the following:

1. Select a piece of writing you like. This document must have been written for a Spring 2000, Summer 2000, or Fall 2000 class.

2. Ask a professor, either the professor who assigned the work or another professor with whom you work closely, to nominate your work for consideration. The professor needs to sign his/her name on the proper line of the form.

3. Print one clean copy of the document, without your name anywhere on the document. Your title must be clearly stated on the first page of your document.

4. Make a disk copy of your document using Microsoft Word for a PC—no other programs will be accepted. Put your name, title of document, and phone number on disk.

5. Also, either obtain a copy of the original assignment or write down, in as much detail as possible, the guidelines of the assignment.

6. Fill out the form below completely. Submissions with incomplete forms will not be accepted.

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