THE WRITING CENTER REVIEW

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Selected Writings
by Students
of Kent State University's Stark Campus

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There are two kinds of writers: those that make you think, and those that make you wonder.

- Brian Aldiss

Each year the Writing Center Staff of Kent State University-Stark Campus compiles and publishes an academic journal, *The Writing Center Review*, dedicated to showcasing the work of outstanding student authors and their writing abilities. The 2010 edition contains submissions from a diverse selection of disciplines: Biology, English, History, Mathematics and Psychology, written by students at the Undergraduate level.

The Writing Center Staff would like to thank the faculty members listed below who unselfishly volunteer their time and expertise to serve on the various selection committees. Without your presence and professional opinion, our efforts would be even more difficult as all submissions are worthy of recognition.

Professor Greg Blundell  
Professor Moon-Heum Cho  
Professor Pete Dorff  
Dr. Lee Fox  
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Dr. Jane Moneysmith  

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Dr. Brad Shepherd  
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Adjunct Professor Yvonne Williamson

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Congratulations to those student writers whose work is illustrated in the 2010 issue. Our gratitude is also extended to the numerous talented writers who are not recognized in this year’s issue due to publication restraints. We wish all writers continued success.

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Mindfulness-based therapies for the treatment of depression

by Jon M. Cefus

Assignment Description: To write a writing-intensive paper for a course in Abnormal Psychology.

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the published research on the efficacy of mindfulness-based therapeutic interventions in the treatment of depression. Growing amounts of clinical trials support the hypothesis that mindfulness, which is described as paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally, is an effective treatment for psychological mood disorders and their recurrence and relapse. These treatments promote the use of various meditative practices to increase present-moment awareness of conscious thoughts to manage negative experiences more effectively and offer an alternative to antidepressant medications within the context of such psychosocial interventions as cognitive-behavioral therapy. Analysis of the research exploring the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions in the treatment of depression and depressive symptoms has shown it to be effective for adults, older populations (over the age of 65), adolescents, and children.

The Prevalence of Depression

Mental disorders are common in the United States with an estimated 26.2 percent of Americans over the age of 18 suffering from a diagnosable mental disorder annually (Kessler, Chiu, Demler, & Walters, 2005). Of the various types of mental disorders diagnosed each year, 9.5 percent or 20.9 million Americans age 18 or older, have a mood disorder (Kessler, Chiu, et al., 2005), with the median age of onset being 30 years (Kessler, Berglund, Demler, Jin, & Walters, 2005). Unipolar mood disorders include Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and Dysthymic Disorder. Bipolar mood disorders are distinguished from unipolar depressive disorders by the presence of manic (e.g., elevated mood) episodes and include Bipolar I Disorder, Bipolar II Disorder, and Cyclothymia Disorder. MDD, also known as major depression, affects approximately 14.8 million, or 6.7 percent, of American adults annually (Kessler, Chiu, et al., 2005); is more prevalent in women than in men (Kessler et al., 2003); and has a median age of onset of 32 years (Kessler, Berglund, et al., 2005), although it can develop at any age (The National Institute of Mental Health, 2008).

While most people feel sad from time to time, these feelings generally subside within a few days of onset. When these feelings persist beyond a few days and begin to interfere with a person's functioning in daily life, that person may have a depressive disorder.

The Criteria and Associated Features of Depression

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th Edition, Text Revision; DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) provides

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specific criteria that must occur most of the day, nearly every day, for a person to be diagnosed with MDD that include: the person being in a major depressive episode; the person experiencing either markedly depressed moods or a loss of interest in pleasurable activities for at least two consecutive weeks; significant weight loss (when not dieting) or weight gain; insomnia or hypersomnia; psychomotor agitation or retardation; fatigue or loss of energy; feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt; diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness; and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide, or recurrent suicidal ideation without a plan, or a suicide attempt or plan. In addition, the DSM-IV-TR specifies that the person’s major depressive episode is not better accounted for by another disorder and that there has never been a manic episode experienced by the person. One of the key features of major depression is its high rate of recurrence.

Like many other chronic health conditions, depression has an elevated rate of recurrence and, for those who go without proper treatment, relapse rates can reach as high as 80% (Kuyken et al., 2008). The increased risk of recurrence in persons suffering from depression has contributed to the World Health Organization predicting that, by 2020, depression will be the second biggest contributor to illness world-wide (Kenny & Williams, 2007). In addition, depression often takes a chronic clinical course that may be very resistant to treatment with antidepressant medication (ADM) and various cognitive behavioral therapies, with only 58% of one study group meeting the predefined criteria for meeting the recovery threshold (Kenny & Williams, 2007). These facts reveal the need for effective interventions that will minimize the risk of recurrence and relapse for those who suffer from MDD and various other depressive mood disorders. Many patients would prefer not to use ADM in the treatment of their depressive symptoms because of unwanted side effects and have expressed a preference for psychosocial interventions (Kuyken et al., 2008).

Cognitive Behavior Therapy

Butler, Chapman, Forman, and Beck (2006) state that one of the most extensively researched forms of psychotherapy, with 325 published outcome studies as of 2006, is cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). CBT is defined as a therapeutic practice that helps patients recognize and remedy dysfunctional thought patterns. In CBT the therapist directly challenges the patient’s irrational thinking that leads to maladaptive behavior (Singh, Lancioni, Wahler, Winton, & Singh, 2008). CBT is a short-term, and therefore generally affordable, treatment and is commonly used to treat a wide range of disorders, including depression. Individual CBT has been shown to be effective at treating acute depression and reducing the incidence of relapse of depressive symptoms. (Kenny & Williams, 2007). In a recent review of 16 meta-analyses, the authors found CBT to be a highly effective treatment for adult unipolar depression, adolescent unipolar depression, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder with or without agoraphobia, social phobia, post traumatic stress disorder, and childhood depressive and anxiety disorders (Butler et al., 2006). The same study also found that the effects of CBT are maintained for substantial periods beyond the cessation of treatment and that significant evidence was found that shows the long-term effectiveness of CBT for depression, generalized anxiety, panic, and social phobia. Butler et al. also found robust and convergent meta-analytic evidence that CBT showed superior long-term persistence of effects and relapse rates.
half those of pharmacotherapy. It was through a continuing effort to prevent the high rates of relapse in patients with depression that a new group of therapeutic techniques and interventions based on something called mindfulness were developed.

Mindfulness Defined

Mindfulness is an English translation of the Pali word sati, meaning awareness, attention, and remembering (Germer, 2005). In the various Buddhist meditative traditions, mindfulness is a central component and refers to a careful awareness of one's own thoughts and feelings. Mindfulness meditation is a tool that allows thoughts to appear as they will, observing them without judgment (Cefus, 2009). This sense of mindful awareness is a skill developed to help a person to be less reactive to what is happening in any given moment, whether that experience is perceived as positive, negative, or neutral. Most of us are caught up in distracting and often conditioned thoughts about what is happening in the moment. This is mindlessness. Examples of mindless behaviors may include: rushing through activities without being attentive to them; breaking or spilling things because of carelessness, inattention, or thinking of something else; failing to notice subtle feelings of physical tension or discomfort; or finding ourselves preoccupied with the future or the past (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Our sense of suffering seems to increase as our minds stray away from the present moment. A great many people who are preoccupied with the past or the future are in psychotherapeutic treatment for depression or anxiety (Germer, 2005). Depressed patients often feel regret, sadness, or guilt about the past and patients who are anxious fear the future. Mindful awareness is, in essence, a way of being, or a way of inhabiting one's body, mind, and moment-to-moment experiences (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). Mindfulness is largely experiential and can be difficult to define clearly. In order for it to be properly integrated into Western psychology, mindfulness is defined as the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Because mindfulness is about attention, it is universal and there is nothing particularly Buddhist about it. It is an inherent human quality and we are all mindful to some degree from moment to moment. Over the past 25 years, clinical research has documented the effectiveness of one mindfulness-based therapy, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), as an effective intervention for reducing distress and enhancing well-being in persons with a variety of medical and psychiatric conditions (Shapiro et al., 2008).

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

MBSR was developed in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn and his colleagues at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center as an alternative treatment for patients who were falling through the cracks of the traditional medical system. As described by Shapiro and Carlson (2009), MBSR involves an 8-week program of up to 35 participants who meet weekly for 2½ to 3 hours, with a 6 hour silent retreat occurring on a weekend between the 6th and 7th class. MBSR offers a variety of both formal and informal programs that involve intensive training techniques in sitting meditation, body scan (a guided meditation exercise in which attention is directed through body parts, usually from feet to the head), walking meditation, gentle yoga, and other informal daily mindfulness practices. Participants are
required to practice meditation and gentle yoga at home for 45 minutes, 6 days a week for the duration of the program. A didactic approach to teaching occurs each week with participants having time to process their experiences, group discussion of challenges to practice and other insights that may arise, and feedback from facilitators (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). The facilitators encourage the application of the mindfulness attitudes of non-judging, patience, non-striving, acceptance, beginner’s mind, trust, letting go, and nonattachment. Because MBSR has a strong and research-supported history of effectiveness in reducing distress, a group of researchers decided to investigate the efficacy of mindfulness as a possible program for preventing the high incidences of relapse and recurrence in persons suffering with depression.

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy

In the late 1990s, cognitive therapists John Teasdale, Mark Williams, and Zindel Segal, experts in the field of CBT, investigated why people who recovered from a major depressive episode were likely to have more depressive episodes in the future. While there were effective treatments for acute episodes of depression, no therapy had been developed that was effective at preventing the high rate of relapse. With the growing interest and extensive research supporting the efficacy of MBSR, and with the help of Jon Kabat-Zinn, Teasdale and his colleagues integrated CBT with MBSR and developed a formal, manualized therapy called Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT; Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). The focus of MBCT is on fostering meta-cognitive awareness and the modification of meta-cognitive processes that maintain unhelpful reactive or ruminative mind states (Kenny & Williams, 2007). These processes enable a person to see more clearly when negative and ruminative responses are being triggered, which enables them to decenter from these thought patterns. Decentering, which is sometimes referred to as reperceiving, is the capacity to take a detached or objective stance on one’s own thoughts and emotions (Fresco et al, 2007). Processes such as decentering help to foster a person viewing their negative thought patterns as mental events rather than valid reflections of a permanent reality. In MBCT, patients are taught how to cultivate direct experiential awareness, along with an attitude of non-judgmental acceptance, toward whatever is present at this moment, which may include a sad or ruminative mood (Kenny & Williams, 2007). The didactic focus of MBCT is more about understanding the nature of depression than on stress and the stress response as in MBSR, which provides a model of understanding the futile nature of attempting to logically argue away negative thoughts (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). The patient is instructed to see these negative thoughts as just thoughts, which will arise and pass in time if they are not believed to be a static reality that represents the way things will always be. MBCT is typically conducted in groups of up to 12 participants over the course of 8 weeks and is similar to MBSR in that both utilize the practices of sitting meditation, body scan, walking meditation, and various informal daily practices (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). Examples of informal daily mindfulness practices include mindful eating, communication with others, grooming, and even washing the dishes. By consciously bringing awareness and acceptance to our experiences in the present moment, we are better able to use a more adaptive range of skills in coping or attending to the task at hand (Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006). MBCT was developed in order to explore a potential avenue to reduce, or possibly
prevent, the high rate of relapse and recurrence in persons suffering from depressive episodes, and there are growing amounts of research that investigate this claim.

The Research: Investigating Mindfulness

As previously stated in the study by Kuyken et al. (2008), people suffering with recurrent depression experience relapse at rates as high as 80%. Studies exploring the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions are showing great promise at reducing this statistic. One of the risk factors for recurrent depression is the residual symptoms that occur after treatment of an acute depressive episode, with 32% of patients suffering residual symptoms 12-15 months after the resolution of the acute episode; and these persons were at a much higher risk of relapse (76%) than those who did not experience the residual symptoms (Kingston, Dooley, Bates, Lawlor, & Malone, 2007). In a study exploring whether or not MBCT would improve depressive symptoms versus treatment as usual (TAU) for psychiatric outpatients by the end of the treatment and at a 1-month follow-up, Kingston et al. (2007) found residual symptoms reduced during the program and clinical gains were maintained at follow-up. TAU consisted of regular outpatient visits to their psychiatric clinic and pharmacotherapy. While the sample size of the study was small, their initial results show that MBCT may reduce the risk of residual symptoms, and therefore, reduce the risk of recurrent depressive symptoms. In addition to these findings, the study also found that patients liked having another option for treating their depressive symptoms and that the treatment was both time and cost-effective.

In another study exploring the efficacy of MBCT, Kuyken et al. (2008) sought to determine if MBCT provides an effective alternative approach to maintenance antidepressant medication (m-ADM) in preventing depressive relapse and recurrence. One hundred twenty-three participants were randomly selected to receive either a traditional m-ADM treatment or an 8-week MBCT therapy class that included support to taper/discontinue their m-ADM. The study aimed to compare MBCT and m-ADM in terms of cost-effectiveness, quality of life, residual depressive symptoms, and comorbid psychiatric diagnoses. This study further attempted to determine if MBCT enabled patients to taper/discontinue their ADM. Kuyken et al. found that, for recurrent depression, MBCT produces comparable outcomes to those for people using m-ADM in terms of relapse/cost effectiveness and superior outcomes in addressing residual depressive symptoms, psychiatric comorbidity, and the physical and psychological domains of quality of life. Quality of life was measured by way of a self-report measure that assesses subjective quality of life (e.g., “How much do you enjoy life?”). Reductions in ADM usage in the MBCT group were substantial, and 75% of patients in the MBCT group completely discontinued their ADM (Kuyken et al., 2008). Additionally, MBCT showed promise as an alternative approach to m-ADM, with over 50% of the people participating in the MBCT group staying well through the 15 month follow-up period, compared with 40% of those in the m-ADM group. MBCT produced additional gains in the physical and psychological domains of life and may produce incremental benefits in quality of life compared with m-ADM. In addition to the challenge of treating recurrence and relapse in persons suffering from depressive disorders, researchers have investigated the efficacy of mindfulness-
based therapies in addressing the needs of patients who are treatment-resistant.

Kenny and Williams (2007) suggested that depressed persons, described as treatment-resistant, tend to engage in repetitive and passive thinking about their symptoms of depression and, therefore, tend to prolong the symptoms they are trying to reduce. The processes of depressive rumination and high cognitive reactivity to mood shifts, when an experience of low mood facilitates triggers negative thinking in previously depressed patients, have been shown to increase vulnerability to future depressive episodes and are the same as those that maintain depression (Kenny & Williams, 2007). MBCT cultivates awareness and enables patients to see more clearly when these negative and ruminative responses are being triggered, allowing the individual to decenter from such thought patterns and accept that the thoughts are merely mental events rather than valid reflections of reality. In a study of 79 treatment-resistant patients suffering with depressive episodes, Kenny and Williams found that MBCT was an acceptable treatment for patients who have only had a partial response to ADM, standard individual CBT, or both; MBCT appears to be significantly effective at reducing levels of depression, even in those who start with a more severe depressive episode, including suicidal depression.

As the above studies indicate, the growing evidence for the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions is promising, even for those who suffer from recurrent and treatment-resistant depression. Studies are beginning to investigate specific populations to determine if mindfulness-based therapies are as effective in elderly and younger patients as they are among adult populations.

Relatively few studies have emerged that address the question as to whether or not mindfulness-based interventions are effective in addressing the needs of special populations (e.g., adolescents, children, elderly) diagnosed with depressive disorders. One population of concern is those over the age of 65 who suffer from recurrent depression. Smith, Graham, and Senthinathan (2007) found that research has emerged showing the efficacy of CBT for depression, with the potential need for some slight modifications that allows for more socialization into the model of cognitive therapy for older persons (a cohort effect) and an allowance for more therapy sessions to accommodate slower processing and other factors, in populations over the age of 65. In an exploratory study of 30 older adults suffering from recurrent depression, the participants reported benefits from a course that integrated mindfulness meditation with cognitive therapy and reported confidence in their ability to maintain the program after their initial therapy, which was validated by follow-up conducted by the researchers 1 year later (Smith, Graham, & Senthinathan, 2007). This initial research indicates the appropriateness of mindfulness-based cognitive interventions for older populations.

Additional populations of concern in the treatment of depressive disorders are adolescents and children, with the prevalence of adolescent psychiatric disorders rising substantially over the past 50 years (Collishaw, Maughan, Goodman, & Pickles, 2004). Of the psychiatric disorders diagnosed in these younger populations, anxiety and mood disorders, particularly depression, are the most frequently reported, with combined prevalence rates ranging from 9% to 15% in adolescence (Biegel, Brown, Shapiro, & Schubert, 2009). In a study of 74 adolescents age 14-18, Biegel et al. found that MBSR was well tolerated by adolescents, with 75% of the participants
completing the intervention, and the most pronounced change occurring among the MBSR participants with mood disorders. For this study group, the prevalence at a 90-day follow-up was less than half of that seen at pretest in both samples. This number is significant due to the reported difficulty in administering psychotherapeutic treatments to adolescents with mental health problems, who often do not view psychotherapy as a beneficial treatment option, and the relatively low (35% - 40%) number of adolescents that show diagnostic remission after receiving psychotherapeutic interventions (Biegel et al., 2009). The results of this study suggest that MBSR for adolescents may have positive effects on both self-reported psychological experience and clinically significant outcomes that can be sustained over time.

Conclusion

Evidence for the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions for the treatment of depression is growing. Patients in treatment for depression and other mood disorders have expressed a desire to move away from ADM, primarily due to unwanted side effects, and toward more productive and cost-effective psychosocial therapies. With the high rate of recurrence, relapse, and rising levels of prevalence world-wide in persons suffering from depressive symptoms, the need for effective interventions is self-evident. Building on the long history of efficacy in treating depression with CBT and the stress reducing methods of MBSR, the development of MBCT has shown tremendous promise in bringing sustained relief to persons of all ages who suffer from depressive disorders. Although the various mindfulness-based techniques have demonstrated great potential, the investigation of mindfulness remains in its infancy and requires great sensitivity and a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives to highlight the richness and complexity of this intervention (Shapiro et al., 2006). Frewen, Evans, Maraj, Dozois, and Partridge (2008) suggest that future researchers should investigate the connection between mindfulness and how the ability to let go of distressing negative conscious cognition may result in an increased sense of control over negative cognitive and emotional experiences, such as those associated with clinical depression and anxiety disorders. Shapiro et al., (2006) have begun to investigate what the mechanisms behind mindfulness are (intention, attention, and attitude) by attempting to provide axioms, or fundamental building blocks out of which other things emerge, that will increase our understanding of how the interwoven and cyclic processes of mindfulness work. The cyclic process of mindfulness suggests that intention, attention, and attitude are interwoven aspects of a simultaneous process, rather than a linear, stage-like process. Clinical trials suggest that the mechanisms behind mindfulness not only involve relaxation, but important shifts in cognition, emotion, biology, and behavior that work in concert to improve health (Greeson, 2009). A review of the research to date points toward a position supporting mindfulness as an intervention that helps to foster greater attention, acceptance, awareness, and compassion; and that these aspects help to free individuals from suffering, promoting a state of improved health and well-being.

References


An Exploration of Invitational Rhetoric
by Stephanie Gallagher

Assignment Description: Take an aspect of the course (Argumentative Prose Writing) and write a final paper demonstrating what we learned/got out of the course.

Argument can take on many forms and features; there are several different types of arguments, and general ways to get one’s point across. Upon hearing the word ‘argument’, there can be several connotations associated with it, from the knock-down, drag out fights seen in the media, to conversations carried out to get something done, to closing arguments in the courtroom. This writing will attempt to examine argument as rhetoric, argument through Aristotle’s eyes, and our constant fluctuation between the rhetorical argument styles of conquest, conversion, advisory, and invitational and their comparison to a rhetor’s maturity level.

The word ‘argue’ finds its roots in Greek, meaning “to see”. (Notably, not “to fight”.) There are many purposes for argument, including the following: to inform or convince, to make a point, to explore a thought or idea, and to make distinctions. Certainly not an exhaustive list, it is a good place to start. Using an argument to inform or convince someone could be seen in everyday life: on a talk show, in the nightly news, or during election time. Making a point is probably one of the most popular forms of argument as everyone wants to be heard and listened to, and to have their points deemed as valued and acceptable. Exploring a thought or idea through argument usually takes two or more people wanting to arrive at a common ground or solution. Finally, making distinctions through argument is, for example, making the distinction between what is ‘good’ and what is ‘bad’ or unacceptable behavior.

There is no argument without rhetoric. Rhetoric can be loosely defined as finding the best available means of persuasion. According to Aristotle, there are three components of rhetoric that all arguments must have to be successful. Ethos, or character, depends on the credibility or personality of the speaker. This can be seen in, say, celebrity spokespeople because they are someone the audience knows and trusts. Pathos, in rhetoric, deals with the emotions and connections made with the audience. This is most commonly used in advertisements as they invoke emotions in their audience. Logos, or logic, is seen as the message the speaker wants to share, the bottom line.

With that being said, by exploring the types of argument presented in Foss and Griffin’s 1993 article, “Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric”, we can clearly draw a line of rhetorical maturity traced through the following four taxonomies: conquest, conversion, advisory, and invitational rhetoric.

Beginning with conquest—as most people who argue do—the arguer is in for a fight. A death match, even. Conquest rhetoric is what we see on television, what we hear on the radio, and what we mostly see in everyday life. The arguer’s goal is to: secure an idea, claim, or argument as the best, strongest, and most
powerful among competing positions--in other words, to achieve a rhetorical prize. Such interactions produce winners and losers; winners, ideas or beliefs prevail, and losers' arguments or positions are overturned and discredited. The goal of conquest rhetoric, then, is to win an argument more than to affect listeners or to change their image of a subject in some significant way.

(Foss & Griffin 3, my italics)

In a society where winning is everything and our opinions must conform to one side or another, it is easy to see why conquest rhetoric is the most common. In order to conquer our opponent, we must dominate that person with our opinions, sometimes so much that it either drives them away, or they agree in order to avoid further pestering. Obviously, this solves nothing, and the other person’s opinion is deemed invaluable, and certainly not worth considering. Ironically, this is the model we use, and the model mainstream media adopts. Is it the drama of the situation that makes conquest rhetoric so appealing? Perhaps so, even if it solves nothing except one person being right and the other wrong. Such a binary concept is seen in everyday life, one must always pick a side. Republican or Democrat; for or against; right or wrong; yes, or no; black or white; society is constructed in such a way that there must only logically be two sides to every argument and one must choose a side and valiantly carry that flag until their opponent is destroyed. Those who choose to remain neutral, or choose to pick an alternative, are quickly dismissed and crushed along the way of the conqueror’s rhetorical battle.

It can take a lifetime to recover from conquest rhetoric. After all, this is what is socially accepted, and this is the way people act. Conversely, those who do mature from conquest rhetoric and take a step in the right direction may find themselves adopting the conversion form of rhetoric, which is comparable to a sneakier form of conquest. Conversion rhetors are conquerors with a bit more finesse, a little more skill than those who adopt conquest rhetoric:

Conversion rhetoric involves the effort to construct arguments or claims so compelling that they cannot be refused--arguments that are appealing to audiences because of their substance and/or presentation. This rhetoric is exemplified in the discourse of advertisers, politicians seeking votes, and sales representatives. (Foss & Griffin 5)

Thus, the rhetor is presenting an idea with the intention of selling, either a product, idea, or themselves, essentially “conquering” their audience by convincing them, rather than attacking.

The shift to advisory rhetoric can be seen as an enormous change, as it is a more compassionate form of argument; its rhetor argues from the heart, and with its audience’s best interests in mind. Through experiences and their own life lessons, the advisory rhetor attempts to persuade their audience, but is open to suggestions and may be open to change their own opinion: Although rhetors who employ advisory rhetoric seek change in their audiences and see it as beneficial, they do not insist that such change occur. Such rhetors see themselves as helpers ‘of the actualizing forces’ of their audiences. Because they do not insist that others adopt their positions, advisory rhetors listen to the perspectives presented by others, consider them seriously, and even may adjust or reverse their original
positions as they take them into account. (Foss & Griffin 6)

And so, advisory rhetors have the audience’s best interests at heart, yet still try to persuade. They can be seen in parents, teachers, or coaches, often adopting the role of mentor in order to guide their audience, rather than convert or conquer them.

Finally, at a rhetor’s most mature stage - a difficult feat to achieve by anyone in any means - is the invitational rhetoric. Invitational rhetoric should be seen as the highest goal in argument, the highest taxonomy that one can master. Invitational rhetoric completely deconstructs the entire notion of arguing and persuading, viewing it as an attack, rather than a well-intentioned conversation. This is because the mere act of persuading is seen as, “an act of violence in that it violates, damages, or abuses the inherent value and integrity of the self…any intent to persuade is an act of violence…[w]hen we seek to change any other entity…we invade and violate the integrity of that person or thing and our own integrity as well” (Foss & Griffin 8). Therefore, attacking someone in such a way will eventually turn them off not only to the one trying to persuade them, but also to their argument. Taking that idea further, any view the rhetor holds can be discounted in such an assault, as the rhetor loses credibility with the audience if they feel they are being attacked. Also, the rhetor sometimes does not understand that he or she does not have power over the audience, unless the audience relinquishes power unto the rhetor. Therefore, the rhetor really does not have the control to change the audience, only the audience holds such power, should they choose to do so.

And so, argument as we know it has become dismantled. Instead of attacking or influencing, argument should be seen as a gift, an offering of opinion, rather than a persuasive mechanism. But one may ask, how does one accomplish anything by ‘offering’ an argument? The two ways presented in the article are modeling and the external conditions for change.

Modeling is something we are all familiar with, we use modeling more often than we think we do. Modeling presents an example to another that is beyond words; it is a presentation of argument. The strongest example available for modeling would be the parent/child relationship. Not to be confused with advisory rhetoric, modeling within the relationship between parents and their children is used when parents would like their children to behave, to act or speak a certain way, or to teach them how to carry themselves. Children, who are especially impressionable, pick up on their parents’ behaviors and depending on how the parents act, their children will more than likely pick up on a good deal of their character traits. Basically, the main idea of modeling is arguing by example. Certainly modeling is not closed off to parenting. If, say, I would like my girlfriends to shop at the clothing store in which I work, I would wear the clothes from that particular store and perhaps throw in some information on some of the sales the store is running (because, I have not yet perfected my transition to invitational rhetoric, and by talking about the sales the store is running, I could be seen as getting a little too close to persuasion). With that being said, invitational rhetoric permits that I ‘model’ the clothes in order to allow my girlfriends to decide whether they want to shop at the store or not.

Invitational rhetoric cannot survive without the external conditions for change. One cannot be argued, modeled, or persuaded without having the opportunity to change. If someone is being attacked within any of the three aforementioned taxonomies and do not have the external conditions for change, that is, they are not in an environment that allows such to occur, the
rhetor will be wasting his or her time. External conditions for change operate in conjunction with safety, value, and freedom. Safety allows both the rhetor and audience to find a common ground, and have a common understanding:

Rhetoric contributes to a feeling of safety when it conveys to audience members that the ideas and feelings they share with the rhetor will be received with respect and care. When rhetoric establishes a safe context, the rhetor makes no attempt to hurt, degrade, or belittle audience members or their beliefs; audience members do not fear rebuttal of their most fundamental beliefs or retribution because they hold them. (Foss & Griffin 13-14)

When all members of discussion are in such a safety zone, they are given an opportunity for change and for their voices to be heard. Value within the external conditions for change establishes each member’s worth within the conversation, and freedom “is developed when rhetors do not place restrictions on an interaction. Participants can bring any and all matters to the interaction for consideration; no subject matter is privileged subject matter, and all presuppositions can be challenged” (Foss & Griffin 15). With these three components intact, the line between the rhetor and audience is most often blurred, if nonexistent. Both must have the external conditions of change in order to accomplish a successful argument.

After examining the taxonomies presented in the Foss & Griffin article, we can apply this to societal norms of argument. Some may stay in conquest their whole lives, bullying others into conforming to their beliefs and ideas. The most popular and most often adopted style of argument, conquest rhetoric contains strong held opinions and frankly, a whole lot of immaturity. Conversion and advisory take a step in the right direction, and it is my opinion that most people fluctuate between these three throughout their lifetimes. Because invitational rhetoric is not seen as socially accepted, and the fact that it is so hard to get a grip on, speaks volumes in the maturity reached in argument styles, however, it is not unattainable. By following the ideas presented within the article, people in society would have a much better understanding of argument and persuasion, and perhaps get more accomplished. This is solely up to the rhetor. Examining argument from Aristotle’s time all the way through how we argue today can help one to re-examine their own argument style, and which they see fit as acceptable in their own lifestyle.

Work Cited

The Educated Lion
by Kara Kuhs Carowick

Assignment Description: Write a paper based on any element of the assigned readings.

From the moment of conception, Queen Elizabeth I of England was thrown into a pit of blood-thirsty animals. Her father Henry VIII had denounced the holy Catholic Church in order to marry her mother, Anne Boleyn, with the sole purpose to produce a male heir. When Anne gave birth to a girl there was little enthusiasm and Henry felt humiliated that God had not blessed him with a son. He already had a daughter and Henry had little use for another. The future of the princess was not very promising after her mother's execution. It was not customary to educate a bastard child in the formal teachings of the day. It was only by the grace of God and the twist of fate that young Lady Elizabeth was blessed with loving governesses and tutors to see to her education and a love for the arts.

Elizabeth's first nanny or Lady Governess in the day was Margaret Bryan. She was well known for being the care taker for King Henry VIII's children. It is evident that she cared deeply for Elizabeth and was concerned for her welfare. In August 1536, Margaret “found that the young child's needs were being neglected” (Jackson) and wrote to the chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, complaining of the economic displacement of Lady Elizabeth’s household since the change of her status. She writes:

Now, as my lady Elizabeth is put from that degree she was in, and what degree she is at now I know not but hearsay, I know not how to order her or myself, or her women or groom. I beg you to be [a] good lord to her and hers, and that she may have raiment, for she has neither gown nor kirtls nor petticoat, nor linen for smocks, nor kerchief, sleeves, rails, bodystychets, handkerchiefs, mufflers, nor begins” (Rusche).

Margaret “Muggie” only cared for the young girl three short years when Prince Edward became her new charge in 1537. She passed over responsibility to Katherine Champernowne.

Katherine Champernowne, or “Kat” as she was commonly called by Elizabeth, was not only the future Queen’s second governess but her first tutor. Kat herself was highly educated and from the beginning she understood that she played a vital role in young Elizabeth’s future. With the absence of her mother and the lack of attention from the King, it was up to Kat to see to her upbringing. Kat laid a stone foundation starting with an “elaborate code of politeness and subservience to her elders” (Jackson). By the age of five or six, Elizabeth had such a confident grasp of reading and writing of the English language that Kat started her instruction in Latin.

Lady Elizabeth and the future king, her younger brother Edward, lived together at Hatfield House, twenty-one miles from London (Hatfield). Elizabeth never hesitated to draw from the fountain of knowledge that lay in the walls of her estate when Edward started his instruction. It was on many occasions that the young girl called upon Edward’s tutors for assistance. Jean
Belmain, the French tutor, was no exception. He helped Elizabeth perfect her already proficient grasp of the language (Jackson). When clergyman Richard Cox was appointed in 1544, he took Elizabeth under his wing and taught both children the conjugation of verbs, parts of speech in Greek and Latin and challenged the children to conquer the captains of ignorance.

It was not until John Chelle replaced Cox that Elizabeth got the recognition that she deserved. Chelle was a well known scholar and skilled classical linguist; he emphasized the importance of the Holy Scriptures first, followed by the greats like Aristotle, Plato, and Demosthenes, just to name a few (Anthology). By the time she was eleven, Chelle had picked up on the child’s high intelligence and extraordinary memory. Elizabeth had displayed potential in Latin, Greek and French; he wanted to take her education one step further and suggested that Lady Elizabeth be given a private tutor of her own.

A young and ambitious Cambridge student, William Grindal, was appointed to tutor Elizabeth. “Elizabeth benefited from Grindal’s scrupulous, attentive training which was infused with a world view of English Protestant humanism which focused on learning Latin and Greek” (Jackson). Unfortunately for Elizabeth this arrangement didn’t last long. In 1548, Grindal died of the plague and Roger Ascham was put in his place. He served as her tutor from 1548 to 1550 when Elizabeth agreed to let him go (Anthology).

By the time Elizabeth became Queen in 1558 her education had served her well. She had a firm grip of her teachings and a fondness of the arts. One of her pastimes was to translate classic works into English like *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, write poetry, and attend plays at court.

The Queen loved the theater so much that she formed her own company and on March 10th 1583, Elizabeth signed the order and Queen Elizabeth’s Men was formed. Sir Francis Walsingham was given the job to invade other play houses for the best performers. Three of the leading companies lost their leading and star actors: The Leicester’s Men, The Sussex’s Men, and The Oxford’s troupe (Luminarium).

Entitled The Queen Elizabeth’s Men, the largest company of this time totaled twelve members, and was twice the size of its English predecessors. The group was unique among their peers that they were a “deliberately political company in origin and their repertory appears to have followed the path no doubt pointed out for them by Sir Francis Walsingham” (Luminarium). The company largely preformed in the winter months at court and in the warmer seasons they toured the smaller towns of the realm. Between 1592 and 1593, the London theatres were forced to close due to the bubonic plague to which the company never recovered. However, after the closing of her company, the Queen remained a patron of the theater and play writers such as William Shakespeare, who did well under her reign.

In the last ten years of Elizabeth’s service, the play writer performed thirty-two times at court making the economic benefits considerable. After the Globe was built in 1599, Shakespeare produced and refined all his works before taking them to the Christmas festivities at Whitehall or Hampton Court. With the help of his sovereign, William Shakespeare took his place among the great patronage playwrights of his time.

Queen Elizabeth was not to have the education of a prince. Nevertheless, because of the insistence from her beloved Kat and the willingness of her brother’s tutors, Elizabeth proved herself more intelligent than the typical Englishman. Her studies provided her with a permanent linguistic self-confidence that served her well.
throughout her reign, making her an educated lion feared throughout the world.

By the time Elizabeth ascended to the throne, she had gained a love for the theatre and used it to her advantage both politically and on a personal level. Many actors and play writers benefited from her support and the works became popular with gentry and lower classes alike.

Work Cited


The Contradicting Factors of Race
by Richard D. Rice Jr.

Assignment Description: To analyze the concept of “race” in terms of your own life and experience.

On the 29th of September 2009, I was asked to define my racial identity. While attempting an honest internal exploration of this subject, I found myself at an impasse. Repeatedly, I stumbled on a word that was considered to be simplistic, yet proving to be problematic. I cannot define my racial identity, if I cannot adequately define what differentiates “race.” As a society, we have attempted to define “race” by skin color, genetic make-up, cultural environment and racial identification tags (blanket statements or verbiage intended to segregate one group of people from another). I have found that these social attempts to define race do not support each other, but rather they are contradictory.

Though we may try, no human being can be defined by his or her outward appearance. Skin color is as superficial as the clothes on my back or the color of my hair. To define race in any manner is to create division, and for race to be defined by a person’s skin pigmentation is superficial and ignorant. The variations of skin color, within a single classification of race, are too numerous to create an absolute definition. More importantly, there would be no significance. America has a preconceived notion that skin color represents our ancestral roots when in fact, this could not be further from the truth. To look at me, I am considered to be a Caucasian male. In addition, the skin color of both my father and mother reflect the same racial identification tag, Caucasian. However, my father’s grandmother was an Apache Indian, while his grandfather was of German decent. In similar fashion, my mother’s grandmother was Creole (French and African), while her grandfather was of Irish decent. Obviously, my ancestral heritage somewhat contradicts my skin color.

I recognize that our genetic makeup has a role to play in skin pigmentation. Nonetheless, skin color is not a guarantee that an individual descended from a particular corner of the globe. In her essay “Three is Not Enough”, Sharon Begley quotes geneticist Luca Cavalli-Sforza of Stanford University saying, “the more we learn about humankind’s genetic differences, the more we see that they have almost nothing to do with what we call race” (Begley 271-272). In addition, Sharon Begley makes reference to Richard Lewontin, a population biologist of Harvard University, “who found that there is more genetic difference within one race than there is between that race and another” (Begley 271). Using myself as an example, to place a check mark next to my identification tag, Caucasian, could be contrary to my ancestral roots. Recently my brother shared a story with me about Anne Thompson, an African-American woman...
who while applying for financial aid, placed a check mark in the box indicating her race as African-American. She was then accused of falsifying legal documents due to her skin pigmentation. Ms. Thompson’s skin pigmentation reflected the racial identification tag, Caucasian. Be that as it may, Ms. Thompson is a descendent of Africa who had relocated to America and acquired dual citizenship. Therefore by definition, she is African-American. This speaks to the false preconceived notion that a group of people can be defined by their skin pigmentation. However, if skin color is the differentiating factor for race, then I racially identify with my racial identification tag, Caucasian. However, the preconceived cultural and ancestral notions that tend to be covered by such a blanket statement, as Caucasian, I do not identify with.

I believe that our cultural background plays a major role in racial identification. In his article, Race and Mixed Race, Ranier Spencer explains that he and his older brother are of mixed descent. (297). Furthermore, he points out that his brother’s outward appearance, hair texture and the fact that his first seven years of life were spent in Germany are all factors that caused his brother to racially identify himself as white (Spencer 297). In contrast, Mr. Spencer notes that his outward appearance and environment caused himself to racially identify “elsewhere” (297). In similar fashion, my social environment, or cultural experiences, placed within me an identity contrary to society’s expectancy of my skin color. In school, on the playground, in the street and in the homes of my peers, this cultural identity was reinforced. Using language as a cultural example, it was not uncommon for me to be called a “nigga,” nor was it uncommon for me to call my closest friends the same. When I first became aware that I was perceived differently because of skin color, I was in the eighth grade and had somehow made it to a “trash can punch party”. The party was outside of my neighborhood, yet my “hood,” that is to say, my extended family or closest friends were there. I was being introduced so I regurgitated my neighborhood greeting, “What’s up nigga?” At that very moment, I was confronted with violence. Thankfully, my neighborhood rose up to smooth out any misunderstandings. The matter was solved peaceably, with a simple explanation of who I was. However, there should not have been a need for me to be explained. I was from the same social environment and had many of the same cultural experiences. I was perceived to be different only because of my skin color. Taking into account my experiences, it is obvious to me that our cultural environment plays a major role in how we racially identify ourselves.

Therefore, if cultural experiences are the differentiating factors for race, I would racially identify with Black America. As a result, my racial identification tag may vary depending upon an individual’s perception.

Our identification tags are largely based on skin color. At the same time, these tags are used as an attempt to define and group us into cultural backgrounds, yet my skin color has never spoken to my cultural background. My life obstacles, social comfort zone, sense of fashion, language, music and favorite foods would be associated with the racial identification tag, African American. Many have described me as the “blackest-white guy they have ever met.” This is usually followed by, “and
it’s not fake either.” I attribute their reaction to my cultural upbringing. During the L.A. riots, sparked by the unjust treatment of Rodney King, I watched in horror as a white male was pulled from his truck and beaten for wrongs he did not commit. In this instance, I came to an understanding. Though I culturally identify with Black America, a stranger will label me according to their preconceived notion of my skin color. In the pressure cooker of racial tension, we as a society tend to group individuals together based on skin color. In the case of the L.A. riots, I would have been labeled a bigot and a racist. This is what my racial identification tag means to some members of society. Those who would pass judgment do not care to know my life experiences, nor would they endeavor past the shallow existence of skin color. My cultural experiences do not make me an African American, nor does my skin color make me Caucasian. Rather, it seems as though my skin color and cultural experiences further fuel the hatred of the narrow-minded and ignorant. In my youth, self-proclaimed neo-nazis labeled me a “wigger,” a “nigger lover,” a “traitor,” and a “sell out.” In addition, members of the black community labeled me as a “racist,” “wanna be,” “cracker,” and my personal favorite “pink floyd.” Furthermore, I have been taken aside by members of corporate America and have been reprimanded for my language being “too black.” These individuals went as far as to say, “you’re white, you need to act like it.” If racial identification tags are the differentiating factors for race, then I have no choice but to racially identify with each individual perception of what it means to be of my particular skin color and cultural background. However, I have concluded that neither my racial identity nor society’s perception of me holds any relevance to my life.

If race is as shallow as skin color, it is then insignificant and of no importance. If race is genetic or biological, then skin color cannot be a differentiating factor. If race is defined by one’s culture, then we are as different as our life experiences. If race is but a means by which we label human beings, then we are as different, and versatile, as each individual thought. The importance and insignificance of race is what we make it. Humanities’ differences are as numerous as the stars. Yet, we are all equally human. With this in mind, does race matter? Skin color cannot define an individual. Rather, as individuals, we define the importance of skin color. Genetic makeup possibly has scientific significance. Yet, it’s not relevant to everyday life unless it is relevant to you. The importance of culture, as a differentiating factor for race, is only relevant to the narrow minded; identification tags are only relevant to the ignorant. Does race matter? The answer is relative. Does race matter to you?

Works Cited


The Cantor Set
by Ashley M. Meinke

Assignment Description: Exploratory writing assignment on an important math object.

1 Introduction

Georg Cantor (1845-1918) defined a “set”, denoted $M$, in his late 19th century work, making a novel statement of the time: “By a set we are to understand any collection into a whole $M$ of definite and distinguishable objects of our intuition or our thought. These objects are called elements of $M$.” Cantor was known for his interest in infinite sets and proved that $\mathbb{R}$, the set of real numbers, are uncountable. The Cantor Set, named after him, is a subset of $\mathbb{R}$ that has many interesting properties. These properties are investigated below.

2 Construction of the Cantor Set

The Cantor Set can be described as the removal of sequences of open intervals from the closed interval $I = [0,1]$. The Cantor Set, denoted $F$, is what remains of this set after the process is completed for every $n \in \mathbb{N}$, where $\mathbb{N} = \{1,2,3,...\}$. We define $F_n$ as the Cantor Set for a specific $n \in \mathbb{N}$. Let us examine how the first few sets are constructed.

For example, remove the open middle third of $[0,1]$. We will remove the open interval $(\frac{1}{3}, \frac{2}{3})$ to obtain,

$$F_1 = \left[0, \frac{1}{3}\right] \cup \left[\frac{2}{3}, 1\right].$$

Note that the length of each interval in $F_1 = \frac{1}{3}$ and that there are $2^1 = 2$ closed intervals. Figure 1 below illustrates this process.
Next, remove the open middle third of each of the intervals in $F_1$ to obtain,

$$F_2 = \left[0, \frac{1}{9}\right] \cup \left[\frac{2}{9}, \frac{1}{3}\right] \cup \left[\frac{2}{3}, \frac{7}{9}\right] \cup \left[\frac{8}{9}, 1\right].$$

Note that the length of each interval in $F_2 = \frac{1}{3^2} = \frac{1}{9}$ and that there are $2^2 = 4$ closed intervals. Figure 2 below illustrates this process.

Next, remove the open middle third of each of the intervals in $F_2$ to obtain,

$$F_3 = \left[0, \frac{1}{27}\right] \cup \left[\frac{2}{27}, \frac{1}{9}\right] \cup \left[\frac{2}{9}, \frac{7}{27}\right] \cup \left[\frac{8}{27}, \frac{1}{3}\right] \cup \left[\frac{2}{3}, \frac{19}{27}\right] \cup \left[\frac{20}{27}, \frac{7}{9}\right] \cup \left[\frac{8}{9}, \frac{25}{27}\right] \cup \left[\frac{26}{27}, 1\right].$$

Note that the length of each interval in $F_2 = \frac{1}{3^3} = \frac{1}{27}$ and that there are $2^3 = 8$ closed intervals. Figure 3 below illustrates this process.

We can show that in general we have closed intervals of the form $\left[\frac{k}{3^n}, \frac{(k+1)}{3^n}\right]$ for $F_n$, where $k = 0, 1, ..., 3^n - 1$ and $n \in \mathbb{N}$.

Also, the total length of each of the intervals in $F_n$ is given by $|F_n| = \left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^n$.  

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Figure 1: Construction of $F_1$

Figure 2: Construction of $F_2$

Figure 3: Construction of $F_3$
Definition 1 The Cantor Set $F$ is the intersection of the sets $F_n$, where $n \in \mathbb{N}$, obtained by successive removal of open middle thirds, starting with $I = [0, 1]$.

By the closed set properties, we know that the intersection of an arbitrary collection of closed sets in $\mathbb{R}$ is closed. The Cantor Set is the intersection of closed sets, so $F$ is closed.

3 Properties of the Cantor Set

This section examines four interesting results for the Cantor Set including the length of $F$, subsets of $F$, uncountability of $F$ and dimension of $F$.

3.1 The Length of $F$

Claim 2 The total length of removed intervals is 1.

Denote the removed intervals, the complement of $F_n$, as $F_n^c$ and the length of these removed intervals as $|F_n^c|$. Denote the length of the intervals in the set $F_n$ as $|F_n|$. Let us look at the lengths of the first few removed intervals.

We know the length of each interval in $F_1$ is $\frac{1}{3}$:

$$|F_1| = 1 - 2 \cdot \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{3} = \frac{2^n}{3^n}$$

$$|F_1^c| = 1 - |F_1| = \frac{2}{3}$$

We know the length of each interval in $F_2$ is $\frac{1}{9}$.

$$|F_2| = 1 - 4 \cdot \frac{1}{9} - \frac{1}{3} = \frac{2}{9} = \frac{2^n}{3^n}$$

$$|F_2^c| = 1 - |F_2| - |F_1| = \frac{2}{3}$$

We know the length of each interval in $F_3$ is $\frac{1}{27}$.

$$|F_3| = 1 - 8 \cdot \frac{1}{27} - \frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{9} = \frac{4}{27} = \frac{2^n}{3^n}$$

$$|F_3^c| = 1 - |F_3| - |F_1| - |F_2| = \frac{4}{27}$$

In general, the length of removed intervals is given by the following:

$$|F_n^c| = 1 - |F_n| - |F_1| - |F_2| - \cdots - |F_{n-2}| - |F_{n-1}|$$

We can also represent this length using the following geometric series:

$$|F_n^c| = \frac{1}{3} + \frac{2}{3^2} + \cdots + \frac{2^{n-1}}{3^n} = \frac{1}{3} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^{n-1}.$$
Then \( |F_n| = \frac{1}{3} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^{n-1} = \frac{1}{3} \frac{1}{1-(\frac{2}{3})} = 1 \).

It is clear that \( F \subseteq [0, 1] \), with \( |F| = 1 \).

We know that \( |F_n| = \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^n \).

We can show that \( \lim_{n \to \infty} \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^n = 0 \).

Consider \( f(x) = \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^x \). It is clear that \( f(x) \) is an exponential decay function.

Figure 4: \( f(x) = \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^x \)

Figure 4 illustrates that \( \lim_{x \to \infty} f(x) = 0 \).

Then, \( \lim_{n \to \infty} \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^n = 0 \).

Since \( F \subseteq F_n \ \forall n \in \mathbb{N} \), we note \( |F| = 0 \).

Since \( |F_n| \to 0 \) as \( n \to \infty \) and \( F_n \) approaches \( F \) as \( n \to \infty \), we see that the length of the intervals are becoming extremely small. In fact, we have shown that the length of \( F \) is indeed 0, even though progressively small intervals remain at each stage of the removal process. For this reason, the Cantor Set is sometimes referred to as “Cantor Dust”.

Since \( F_n \to F \) as \( n \to \infty \), we see that the length of the intervals are becoming extremely small. In fact, we have shown that the length of \( F \) is indeed 0, even though progressively small intervals remain at each stage of the removal process. For this reason, the Cantor Set is sometimes referred to as “Cantor Dust”.
3.2 Subsets of $F$

Claim 3 The set $F$ contains no nonempty open interval as a subset.

Proof:
Suppose $F$ contains a nonempty open interval $J = (a, b)$. Since $J \subseteq F$ for all $n \in \mathbb{N}$, we must have $0 \leq b - a \leq \left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^n \forall n \in \mathbb{N}$.

Taking the limits, we have

$$\lim_{n \to \infty} b - a \leq \lim_{n \to \infty} \left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^n.$$

This contradicts our assumption that $F$ contains a nonempty open interval. Therefore, $F$ contains no nonempty open interval as a subset.

3.3 Uncountability of $F$

Claim 4 $F$ has infinitely (even uncountably) many points.

Proof:
Consider sequences $(a_n)_{n=1}^\infty$, where $a_n = 0$ or $a_n = 1$.

We can create a one-to-one correspondence between $F$ and sequences of the form above.

Let $A_n$ represent intervals to the left of $\frac{1}{3}$. Let $B_n$ represent intervals to the right of $\frac{2}{3}$.

For each $f \in F$, set $a_1 = 0$ if $f \in A$ and set $a_1 = 1$ if $f \in B$. Figure 5 provides an illustration of this idea.

![Figure 5: Intervals A and B](image)

Then depending on which half of $[0, 1]$ contains $f$, we have $f \in A_1, A_2, B_1$ or $B_2$. Set $a_2 = 0$ if $f \in A_1$ or $f \in B_1$. Set $a_2 = 1$ if $f \in A_2$ or $f \in B_2$. Figure 6 provides an illustration of this idea.
Continuing this process, we see that each element \( f \in F \) creates an infinite sequence \((a_1, a_2, a_3, \ldots)\) of zeros and ones indicating how to locate \( f \in F \). Then, every one of these sequences corresponds to an element in \( F \). We know that the set of sequences of zeros and ones is uncountable. Therefore, \( F \) is uncountable.

### 3.4 Dimension of \( F \)

An informal definition of dimension states that the dimension of a point is 0, the dimension of a line is 1, the dimension of a square is 2 and the dimension of a cube is 3.

**Example:**
- A single point: no change \( (3^0) \)
- A line segment: triples in length \( (3^1) \)
- A square: a \( 3 \times 3 \) square, 9 copies of the original square \( (3^2) \)
- A cube: a \( 3 \times 3 \times 3 \) square, 27 copies of the original cube \( (3^3) \)

The “size” of the new set is determined by raising the magnification factor to the dimension of the set. Figure 7 illustrates what happens to these sets when magnified by a factor of 3.
Let us magnify the Cantor Set by a factor of 3.

We know $I = [0, 1]$.

After magnification, $I = [0, 3]$.

Denote the magnified intervals as $M_n$.

$M_1 = [0, 1] \cup [2, 3] = F \cup [2, 3]$  

Note that $[0, 1]$ and $[2, 3]$ have the same length. In this case, we have 2 copies of $F$.

Then, if $x$ is the dimension of $F$, we should have $2 = 3^x$.

$\Rightarrow \ln 2 = \ln 3^x$  

$\Rightarrow x = \frac{\ln 2}{\ln 3} \approx 0.631$

Figure 8 compares this result to the sets we have mentioned above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number of new copies when magnified by a factor of 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Point</td>
<td>$3^0 = 1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Segment</td>
<td>$3^1 = 3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square</td>
<td>$3^2 = 9$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cube</td>
<td>$3^3 = 27$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>$3^x$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This idea of a fractional or noninteger dimension is the idea behind a “fractal.” Fractals are similar in structure to the Cantor Set and share many of the same properties.

4 Conclusion

The Cantor Set is an interesting mathematical construction which challenges our intuition about subsets in $\mathbb{R}$. This paper examined significant properties of the Cantor Set to illustrate its unique structure. While the Cantor Set is important to set theory, it plays an important role in other areas of mathematics, such as fractals. David Hilbert, a mathematician, describes Georg Cantor, the founder of the Cantor Set: “No one shall expel us from the paradise that Cantor has created for us.” We can thank Georg Cantor for the study of this fascinating set.
5 References


The Ironically Beautiful Face of HIV/AIDS

by Sandra R. Dent

Assignment Description: To write a response essay for the Honors class, AIDS: A Global Catastrophe regarding Rebekka Armstrong's presentation—if attended—on living with the affects of HIV/AIDS and being a former Playboy Bunny.

According to the comments appearing in a December 1, 2009 Canton Repository article, she was too muscle bound, looked like a man and was a role model not suitable for our local society’s genteel sensibilities. Having witnessed the work and effort involved in allowing for Rebekka Armstrong’s appearance, one would hope collective heads were lifting up from their places in the sand. One would hope.

A first impression produced a self-assured, raspy-voiced, enormous blue-eyed, muscular woman, in outwardly healthy shape. A strong, confident handshake and a look straight in the eye, never wavering belied the fatigue that must have been present. It was as if being greeted by a long-unseen friend. She noticed everyone and everything. As soon as a new person entered the room she immediately acknowledged their presence without ignoring anyone already introduced. The girl could work the room.

Her story was told with a style of poignant humor, producing uneasy laughter from the audience, as if a person with HIV/AIDS could certainly not possess a sense of humor. Look closely, the pain is there, emotional, physical memories a person of forty-three years should not experience. Self-derisive, she was honest, forth-coming, apologizing for nothing. She took full responsibility for her actions, blaming no one. She dealt stealthily with lapses of memory by taking steps backward—a rewinding of sorts—and then moved forward continuing with her story.

She is a powerful, beautiful person who has decided to take immeasurable challenges given her and turn them into something meaningful. She has exposed herself in more ways than just a Playboy Bunny, she has set herself up intentionally as a target for everyone’s preconceived notions, biases and prejudices. She faces all this so that potentially one unknown person in her audience could be informed, comforted and acknowledged for who they are; someone wanting information. Not just any information, but lessons to live in a world of hate with the muscles to withstand the criticism of a community of the brain-dead and perhaps be the next to carry the single torch of knowledge.

Bravo, Ms. Armstrong, Bravo.
“A Heaven of Our Misery”: William Blake’s Pre-Marxist Critique of the Industrial Revolution

by Troy Cherrington

Assignment Description: Apply a particular critical perspective (I chose Marxism) to a work. Use at least two secondary sources.

If writers and artists can be said to have a goal outside of creating art, then it is to reflect and comment on the human condition, and the human condition cannot be understood completely if socioeconomic circumstances are disregarded. During the Industrial Revolution in England—wherein, along with the French revolution, we find the roots of the Romantic Movement in poetry in general and the roots of the poetry of William Blake in particular—socioeconomic circumstances were in a dynamic state. This essay will analyze William Blake’s reaction to the Industrial Revolution, and the changes in human life that accompanied it, as expressed in poems from his collection Songs of Innocence and of Experience, and argue that Blake’s poetry shows a keen awareness of the socioeconomic conditions that would later inform Karl Marx.

Stillinger and Lynch define the Industrial Revolution, and show its temporal situation in relation to the Romantic period:

The ‘Industrial Revolution’—the shift in manufacturing that resulted from the invention of power-driven machinery to replace hand labor—had begun in the mid-eighteenth century with improvements in machines for processing textiles, and was given immense impetus when James Watt perfected the steam engine in 1765. (3)

The change from wind, water, and hand labor to mechanized labor destroyed the home industry. Home industry embodies what Marxists call “unalienated labor.” Unalienated labor is labor from which the laborer is not disassociated—labor that is not only the production of objects, commodities, but a projection of the self, meaningful to the laborer. In his Economico-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844 Marx asks, “What, then, constitutes the alienation of labor?” and he answers: First, in the fact that labor is external to the worker, that is, that it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work,
therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel well but unhappy, does not freely develop his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. (136)

Stillinger and Lynch say that during the change from hand labor to mechanized production, common lands, “which had provided the means of subsistence for entire communities” were divided and privatized (3). Rural laborers, who were either being replaced by cheaper, faster machines, or whose means of subsistence were being stolen from them in the process of privatization, went to the cities and towns to find work in the mills. Stillinger and Lynch give Manchester as an example of one such city, saying that its “population increased by a factor of five in fifty years” (3). Stillinger and Lynch say that these changes meant that “the population was increasingly polarized into what Disraeli later called the ‘Two Nations’—the two classes of capital and labor, the rich and the poor,” (4) or what Marx would call the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. With a greater number of laborers working in factories, alienated labor became the norm for the industrial capitalist society whose center was the city.

Stillinger and Lynch also describe, albeit briefly, what life was like for the proletariat in the city and the country: those who stayed in the country “remained as farm laborers, subsisting on starvation wages and the little they could obtain from parish charity” (3-4); in the cities, the proletariat provided exploited workers with “inadequate wages and long hours of work under harsh discipline and in sordid conditions” (4). The profusion of labor available in the cities, combined with the basic capitalist aim of gaining the most profit at the least expense meant that whole families had to work, including children.

Blake seems to have been very aware of the transition from pre-privatization country life, associated with home industry and unalienated labor, to city life “with,” say Stillinger and Lynch, “the factories of the cities casting a pall of smoke over vast areas of cheaply built houses and slum tenements” (4). In Songs of Innocence the reader will find a profusion of natural imagery. One example of such a blooming poem is “The Laughing Song.” In this poem, Blake describes nature as laughing and being joyous:

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy
And the dimpled stream runs laughing by,
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it. (1-4)

Let us try to understand the relationship that is given expression in this poem between human joy and nature. Nature, as this poem’s first stanza shows us, feels compassion. It is a companion to us in our emotions. Line three, by using the word “our,” makes it clear that our laughter is common, shared between people and shared with nature. The word “our” is inclusive, communal. In this first stanza, the most basic and powerful expression of joy—laughter—is woven with nature to the extent that nature laughs with us.

The second stanza further ties nature and human beings by introducing characters by name:

When the meadows laugh with lively green
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily,
With their sweet round mouths sing Ha, Ha, He. (5-8)
In the third stanza, the connection between nature which can be tied to country life and to home industry, is stressed even further:
When the painted birds laugh in the shade
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread
Come live and be merry with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of Ha, Ha, He. (9-12)
The image of a table spread with wild cherries and nuts is hyperbolic and figurative. Blake uses the image to express his opinion that nature is the provider, not mills and cities, not the bourgeoisie. Nature, says Blake, will provide us with what we require to be happy. Nature, country life, home industry will provide for us, and we will be joyful. Blake invites us to come live in the country and be merry. The feeling of joy and of connectedness in this poem mirrors—though Blake may not have been aware of it—the feeling of wholeness that the hand laborer, the craftsman whose work and creation is a part of himself, experiences.

"The Laughing Song" is only one of many poems in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* that depicts nature in this way. Amongst those other poems are "The Ecchoing Green"—a poem that depicts nature as the proper setting for the drama of birth, aging, and, finally, death—and "Spring," a simple poem about new life that ends with the lines "Little boy / Full of joy" (10-1).
In contrast to these poems of natural abundance and joy are those poems wherein Blake utilizes images of corrupted nature to criticize human failings and the church, such as "The Sick Rose," "My Pretty Rose Tree," and "The Garden of Love," and those which depict the city, and industrial capitalism. For the purposes of this essay, I will not dwell on the poems of corrupted nature, since they do not deal with my subject very directly. However, I will return to "The Garden of Love" later. Amongst the poems that depict the city and industrial capitalism are both of "The Chimney Sweeper" poems, which I will discuss later, and "London."

"London" is a vivid depiction of the horrors of life in the industrial city:
I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow
And mark in every face I meet Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice; in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Every blackning Church teare
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse (1-16)

For Blake, life in the city is unpleasant, to say the least. There is no laughter here: only cries, bans, sighs, and curses. The city is dirty, and not only dirty, but bloody. The walls of the church have
been blackened by the smoke which issues from the factories. There is no joy, only "woe." I do not believe that Blake was aware of alienated labor and unalienated labor, but I do believe that Blake observed the differences that existed within the circumstances wherein these two states of labor existed. In the city alienated labor prevails and people are miserable, whereas in the ideal rural setting labor is unalienated and there is joy. Blake himself was a craftsman, whose labor was unalienated, having illustrated and published his own writings.

"London" is an example of a poem that contrasts city life (industrial capitalism and alienated labor) with country life (home industry and unalienated labor), but "London" in fact contains numerous indictments of capitalism's corrupting influence that will be familiar to Marxist thinkers.

Throughout *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, Blake places a special emphasis on the emotional and physical well-being of women and children. In "The Laughing Song" we have Mary, Susan, and Emily, and in "London" we have the harlot. In the collection, Blake famously claims to be "Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul." The world of capital is the place of men, who, according to classic patriarchal gender roles, possess quantitative values of rationality and logic, removed from qualitative concepts of morality, spirituality, emotion, and intuition. Blake, working within patriarchal ideology, sees women and children as belonging to the qualitative as opposed to the quantitative. If one wishes to show the two contrary states of the human soul, it is best if one deals with those who have some engagement in the qualitative spiritual life. Contrary to common patriarchal binary favoritism, Blake valued the qualitative over the quantitative, as is made clear in Stillinger and Lynch's introduction to him, called, simply, "William Blake," from Volume D of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. They quote Blake as saying, "The nature of my Work . . . is Visionary and Imaginative" (77). Capitalism, however, values the quantitative over the qualitative.

In his article, "The Romantic and the Marxist Critique of Modern Civilization," Michael Löwy addresses the Romantic perspective concerning quantitative thinking:

The central feature of industrial (bourgeois) civilization that Romanticism criticizes is not the exploitation of the workers or social inequality—although these may be denounced, particularly by leftist Romantics—it is the quantification of life, i.e. the total domination of (quantitative) exchange-value, of the cold calculation of price and profit, and of the laws of the market, over the whole social fabric.

(Original italics, 892)

In other words, the Romantic poets, Blake included, abhorred quantification and commodification. Löwy goes on to say that the connection between Romanticism and Marxism "is particularly striking in relation to the crucial issue of quantification," and that "the criticism of the quantification of life in the industrial (bourgeois) society is central to Marx's youthful writings" (original italics, 897).

If we observe the two poems that I have thus far given, we can see that they illustrate Blake's valuation of the qualitative over the quantitative. In "The
Laughing Song,” everything is free and flowing. The subject of the poem is laughter, human happiness, which cannot be quantified. The poem utilizes figurative language and personification, which itself defies linear thinking. The very act of writing a poem, creating art, is to embrace the qualitative, an act that creates dissension in a capitalist society.

In “London,” Blake is fighting quantification by using figurative language, by writing a poem, and by illustrating the effects of quantification. At the beginning of “London” Blake says that the Thames and the streets are “charter’d”. In William Blake: The Complete Poems, editor Alicia Ostriker notes, “The charters of London were ancient guarantees of the city’s liberties. B.’s use is ironic” (888). The city is not at liberty. It is subject to the quantitative thinking that rules capitalist society. Blake’s choice of words may also be a pun on the word “charted,” meaning mapped, that is, understood quantitatively.

Blake also rails against quantification in the form of law and social convention. Laws try to quantify human behavior and experience. Law is the quantitative opposition to justice, which is qualitative. In line seven, Blake refers to bans, or rules, wherein he hears the “mind-forg’d manacles” (8). These bans (laws) are the products of the mind. This is not the mind of the imagination, but the mind of rationality and quantification, as opposed to the heart, the emotions, the intuition.

Marriage is another form of social regulation, quantification, and Blake condemns it in line 12. Ostriker notes, “The harlot to whom a young man resorts may infect both him and his family. But all are victimized by the deadening institution of the ‘Marriage hearse,’ which prohibits free love” (888).

The “Marriage hearse,” a social rule, the product of quantitative thinking, is, according to Blake, a greater threat to human well being than emotional and sexual freedom. The harlot herself is the victim of capitalism. The woman cannot make a decent living in the city, where labor is cheap and abundant, and so she turns to prostitution. The woman’s body and time have exchange value; she is a commodity, an object.

In lines 11 and 12, the soldier’s sigh becomes blood which runs down the palace walls. Quantitative thinking cannot grasp this statement; it is logically impossible. In order to grasp the meaning and significance of Blake’s words the reader is forced to resort to the imagination and intuition, the agents of qualitative understanding.

The image of the soldier’s blood running down the walls of the palace is Blake’s indictment of imperialism and colonialism, which is the natural result of capitalism. In her book, Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide, Lois Tyson writes:

Capitalism’s constant need for new markets in which to sell goods and for new sources of raw materials from which to make goods is . . . responsible for the spread of imperialism: the military, economic, and/or cultural domination of one nation by another for the financial benefit of the dominating nation with little or no concern for the welfare of the dominated. (63)

Stillinger and Lynch say that during the romantic period “the British Empire expanded aggressively” (4). Blake’s sighing, dying soldier could have been one who helped to oppress the people of India, and was killed in an uprising, or he might have been fighting the French after the revolution. But, regardless of
who he was fighting, Blake’s dying soldier was fighting because of capitalism, either because of English or French expansionism. The soldier is only another commodity, another object to be used for the accumulation of capital. In Blake’s view, the king and the government are only the agents of capitalism, as is the church.

Tyson says that Marx called religion “the opiate of the masses” (59). Marx understood that religion, Christianity in particular, keeps the oppressed passive by telling them not to be violent, and by promising them eternal paradise after death if they obey the church. In Songs of Innocence, Blake critiques the church, and the false consciousness that its ideology generates, more acutely, and more vehemently, than any other aspect of industrial society.

In “London,” Blake uses the image of the “blackning Church,” in line ten, which he finds appalling, to illustrate how the church is corrupted by industry and capital. The ideals of the church are corrupted by capitalism just as the walls of the church are blackened by industrial pollution.

Blake’s belief, shared by Marx, that the church and state are agents of capital, is best illustrated in the poem “The Chimney Sweeper” from Songs of Experience. In “The Chimney Sweeper” we find our little worker outside in the snow. “A little black thing among the snow:/ crying weep, weep, in notes of woe!” (1-2). The Child is covered in soot from his work. He has clearly worked much already today. He offers his services, but he has a speech impediment, like many young children, and his words come out not as “sweep, sweep,” but as “weep, weep.” His pronunciation is more fitting considering his woeful tone. Blake and the child are telling us to weep for the loss of innocence, to weep for the abuses of our children at the hands of the heartless bourgeoisie. This child, like the soldier and the harlot in “London,” has been commodified, objectified, quantified. He or she is not a human being, but a commodity with an exchange value.

Blake then asks where the child’s parents are. Why aren’t they caring for their child? Why aren’t they fighting to change the system that is brutalizing their young one? Blake writes, “Where are thy father & mother? say? / They are both gone up to the church to pray” (3-4). Instead of taking some action based upon an ideology that has concrete usefulness in the living world, they have allowed themselves to be pacified by the promise of heaven in the world hereafter. The church assists the bourgeoisie in oppressing the proletariat by creating false consciousness. Instead of resisting and demanding workers rights, the child’s parents are praying. The parents are the proletariat that has been pacified by the church and allows the continued suffering and commodification of children and workers in general.

The child tells us the rest of his story:

Because I was happy upon the heath.
And smiled among the winters snow:
They clothed me in the clothes of death.
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy. &
dance & sing.
They think they have done me no injury:
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
Who make up a heaven of our misery. (5-12)
The child was once happy in the country where he had time to play in a pleasant setting, where the child’s family made enough money that he didn’t have to do this dangerous, unhealthy work, where one’s work is an extension of one’s self. The child says next that he is happy, which we know to be untrue. In times of financial hardship we are told that we should be happy to have work, no matter how miserable that work is. The bourgeoisie tells us, and itself, that workers are happiest when working; that is what a worker’s life is for. The child is echoing the false consciousness of the capitalist society in which he/she lives. The dance the child is doing is the dance of death, the song he/she sings, the song of woe.

The child then smashes the false consciousness of her/his elders. “They think they have done me no injury: / And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King / Who make up a heaven of our misery.” God (the church) and the priests (who ought to know better) and the King (the state) have helped in the commodification, the quantification of human beings, including women (the harlot) and children. The God which is being praised is the God of capital. And if God is capital, then the king has power only because of socioeconomic circumstances. We see here the rumblings of revolution. The King does not serve the people. He claims to serve God, but when he says God he really means capital. He has turned his back on both the people and on true faith. Does he deserve to rule?

The very sort of pacifying message that the church tells the proletariat is echoed in Blake’s ironic poem “The Chimney Sweeper” from Songs of Innocence. In this version of the poem, a child dreams that he and his chimney sweeper companions are locked in black coffins. In his dream, an angel comes and releases them. They then run down to a river and bathe. The angel tells the child that “if he’d be a good boy, / He’d have God for his father & never want joy” (19-20):

The poem concludes:
And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho’ the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm.
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm. (21-4)
Part of what establishes the poem’s irony is its shared title. I have shown above that “The Chimney Sweeper” from Songs of Experience is a powerful social critique that makes many of the same socioeconomic observations that would later inform the work of Karl Marx; particularly, the role that is played by organized religion in the oppression of the proletariat. By placing the two poems at odds with one another, we can see that one is ironic and one is an honest statement.

There is a thin line between innocence and naivety. The child in this poem has a dream, but a dream is not real. Dreaming is a passive activity, not like Blake’s active vision and imagination. If this version of the poem does anything, it illustrates the appeal of the church’s message, the comfort that is offered, which is powerful indeed. Innocence is blessing, says Blake, but it can be blinding; the world does not always respect innocence, and frequently betrays the innocent.
Blake offers us a spiritual option in another poem from *Songs of Innocence* called “The Divine Image.” Blake begins the poem by telling us that:

To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
All Pray in their distress:
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness. (1-4)

This poem would, at first, seem to support the church’s assertions that we see made in the *Innocence* “The Chimney Sweeper,” and see critiqued in the *Experience* “The Chimney Sweeper,” but later in the poem Blake’s true message comes clear. He writes:

For Mercy has a human heart
Pity, a human face:
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

These divine virtues which will save us from oppression and pain are enacted by, and embodied in, human beings. We are the ones who will set the children free and do the will of God. People, not some abstract religious principle but flesh and blood human beings, are the purveyors of mercy, pity, peace, and love, unquantifiable virtues that can save human beings from oppression, commodification, and pain.

I believe I have sufficiently shown that William Blake reacted to the social changes which took place during the industrial revolution in much the same way that Marx eventually would. Marx and Blake decried the same problems that arose as a result of technologically advancing industrialism in a capitalist society: the alienation of the working class, the encouragement and spread of imperialism, and general social disease. It is also clear that Blake suggested a similar balm for these ills, namely human responsibility for mankind now, as opposed to abstract religious answers beyond the individual and the present. I suggest, in light of the common perspectives between Marx and Blake, that Blake can be understood as a pre-Marxist, or proto-Marxist. The observed similarities between Blake’s and Marx’s social thinking also illustrate that Marx did not exist in a social vacuum; that is to say, Marx was not the only thinker dissatisfied with capitalism and industrialism.

In closing, I urge the reader to remember that the industrial revolution is continuing, and that the observations of William Blake and Karl Marx continue to be relevant. Indeed, writers and artists can fulfill the role of social commentator, as Blake did, and the very nature of the written document allows the meaning of the ideas contained therein to travel through time and maintain their force and potency, especially if the world outside has not changed so very much.

**Works Cited**


Separation on and after the Western Front

by Hilary E. Brentin

Assignment Description: Develop a paper on a theme in All Quiet on the Western Front.

Of the many possible themes that one can find in Erich Maria Remarque’s 1929 novel All Quiet on the Western Front,¹ one that emerges early and remains strong throughout is that of separation. There are six major distinctions of separation in the novel: between soldiers and authority; soldiers and civilians; young and old men; enemies; soldiers and their futures; and between soldiers and themselves. The type of separation that one would expect to be the strongest—between enemy soldiers—is in fact the category of least antagonism. This essay follows the theme of separation through the novel, with emphasis on separation of self.

Paul Bäumer, the narrator, is eighteen years old at the start of the war. The conflict with authority is first mentioned regarding his recruitment. Paul’s school teacher, Kantorek, fills his students’ heads with romantic visions of the glory of war (9). Men like Kantorek, with no idea of what war is like, nonetheless promote the unrealistic romance of battle and lead unsuspecting boys to death. These authority figures had the trust of young men, who believed they were wise. This belief is “shattered” when the boys enter the war; Paul’s conclusion is that the older generation is not to be trusted, for the older men had built a world view that crumbles with the “first death” the young soldiers witness (11).

Doctors are also authority figures that are not to be trusted. When Paul’s friend Kemmerich, who has had a leg cut off, is dying in an army hospital, he pleads with a nearby doctor to help. The doctor replies heartlessly, “How should I know anything about it, I’ve amputated five legs to-day” (31), and surgeons amputate “at the slightest provocation” (244). Paul refuses chloroform when he is wounded for fear his limb will be removed, and the attending doctor intentionally worsens the wound to test Paul’s self-control (245). Additionally, doctors use the war as a cover to perform experiments on soldiers with no fear of reprisal; soldiers at the hospital where Paul stays are bullied into submitting to surgery for flat feet and emerge from the operating room crippled for life (262).

The most vivid example of separation from authority is represented by Paul’s superior officer during training, Corporal Himmelstoss. He is a prime example of the brutality of military authority towards the troops, which causes separation among ranks. Himmelstoss singles out Paul and three

¹Erich Maria Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1929).
of his friends for persecution. Among his punishments: Paul has to make the corporal’s bed fourteen times in a row, clean the mess hall with a toothbrush, clear snow with a hand broom and dust pan, and stand at attention in the bitter cold (22-3). Himmelstoss humiliates and works Paul and his friends to exhaustion; this is made even more unfair by the fact that he has not yet been to the front. The army gives men like Himmelstoss—who had been insignificant in civilian life—a sudden opportunity for power, which they wield ruthlessly (43). Despite this inhumane treatment, Paul recognizes that without it, he would not have survived so long at the front, and that it brings him closer to his fellow soldiers (25-26).

Older soldiers, however, are also separate from the young ones who do not have families of their own. These married soldiers with children, so Paul believes, have some semblance of stability and normalcy to cling to while away from home, and have a better chance of re-integrating once the war is over. The war is only an “interruption.” Paul, a young, unattached soldier, is unable to “think beyond” the war, as there is no continuity for him (19).

On the front lines, the soldiers become “wild beasts,” filled with irrational hatred towards the enemy. The desire to live separates German soldiers from French, English, and Russians (113). It is this self-preservation instinct that causes Paul to kill a French soldier at the front lines (219). After calming down, Paul tries to save the man, but it is hopeless. It takes the man a long time to die; as the man suffers and finally expires, Paul realizes that they are in the same situation, and repeatedly calls him “Comrade” (223-7). He discovers photographs of the Frenchman’s family, correspondence, and name—Gérard Duval—as guilt steadily consumes him (228-9). Only when Paul thinks of his own survival again, as night approaches, does the guilt fade (229). When he returns to his friends, they comfort him by saying it could not be helped, and killing is what he is supposed to do (231-2).

Nonetheless, this experience opens Paul to the idea that all soldiers are in the same situation and their differences are trivial compared to their shared daily experience of fear and boredom in the trenches. While he guards Russian prisoners of war, he concludes that an enemy soldier is more of a friend than a superior officer (196). Only “a word of command” makes these men Paul’s enemy, and could as easily make them allies (195). This separation between German, French, English, and Russian soldiers is only a façade.

Examples of separation between soldiers and civilians occur multiple times while Paul is home on leave. He finds that he has to downplay the horrors of war to fit in with his family and neighbors. People ask him questions about the front to confirm their own ideas about war, and do not want to hear the answers Paul would give, if he could put his feelings into words (167). His mother, the only one who does not ask questions, is dying of cancer and he doesn’t want to worry her (163, 166); his father wants him to wear his uniform around town (166); old men in a bar dismiss Paul’s opinion about military strategy by saying Paul “know[s] nothing about it” (169). Despite Paul’s frustration with the inability of civilians to listen and comprehend him, he himself perpetuates the sanitized view of war by not telling the truth about what he has seen, especially when he visits
Kemmerich’s mother. She wants to know if her slain son died in pain, but Paul cannot bring himself to tell her that her son lost a leg and indeed died an agonizing death (182-3).

Not only is he unable to connect with anyone other than fellow soldiers, peace time is meaningless for Paul now. He cannot help but come to the conclusion that he is forever separated from the future he would have had without the war. Though he would like to be normal and forget the war, he cannot, and thus civilian life is “so narrow;” he cannot understand how trivialities like school and work “can fill a man’s life, he ought to smash it to bits” (171). When Paul thinks of peace time, he “doesn’t see anything at all” (87); the war has caused him and his generation to become a “wasteland.” (19)

Above all, Paul experiences separation from himself – that is, the person he used to be before joining the military. He mentions feelings of self-alienation throughout the novel, but it is when he enters his old room while on leave that this is most apparent. Paul’s pre-war self is “preserved” by the room, which is filled with books that he expects to temper the effects of the war and bring back his old self (172-3). They do not; he waits to feel differently, but the books are only “words, words, words” and do not speak to him anymore. His only source of identity, which he “cling[s]” to, is his identity as a soldier (174-5).

During his military training, Paul is made “hard, pitiless, vicious, [and] tough” (25). When he and his friends blindfold and beat Himmelstoss, the transformation is complete; though they rebel against an authority figure, they use his methods to do so (48). As soldiers, young men relinquish their individuality for the state (21) and purge themselves of emotions that do not belong in battle (139-40). They become like animals at the front, acting on instinct, for that is all that can prevent death (140).

Paul, speaking for all young soldiers in World War I, experiences separation from authority, civilians, the older generation of men, his future, and himself. The only separation he does not feel is that between enemies; his exposure to enemy soldiers proves to him that they share more than he ever will with a non-soldier. Paul believes he will never be able to heal these fractures that were caused by the Great War; the person he became to survive the war is out of place in peace time. In this way, the most important type of separation Paul and his young peers feel is from themselves.

Works Cited

Arrant Authors: Connections of Sex and Scholarship Between Infamous Literary Women in Early Twentieth Century Europe

by Lisa A. Noble

Assignment Description: Write a research paper for Women in Europe.

Immediately following the repressive Victorian era, the early twentieth century brought an influx of talented and free-spirited women into the European literary scene. From the country estates of England to the salons of Paris, women threw off the mantle of sexual oppression and developed a rare atmosphere of openness and support for one another. Unfortunately, they were not yet widely accepted by the male dominated literary world at large; however, the sense of connection amongst the female authors was a key factor in allowing a pivotal body of feminist scholarship to survive. These friendships and associations between many female early twentieth century European literary figures created a safety net which encouraged honest authorship about female sexuality, while providing a buttress against harsh external criticism and sporadic public censure.

While there were several forms of fellowship which occurred between these women, including the custom of writing letters which were often treasured for years after they were written, the most popular kind of support practiced was the Parisian salon. Ostensibly viewed as a madcap, insubstantial social fling, the artistic salon was in truth a vehicle for many writers and painters to see and be seen. It also served as a meeting ground for people of like minds and sexual interests, providing a safe place for homosexual and bisexual men and women to freely express themselves without fear of reprisal.

An early enthusiast of this trend was Gertrude Stein, an expatriated author and artist of the United States who had moved to Paris in 1903. Born in Pennsylvania in 1874, Stein experienced her first failed love affair with a woman while she was still in college, which inspired her to begin her writing career for therapeutic purposes. A sense of stagnation in her life in New York pushed her into following her brother, Leo, to Paris, where they opened a small art

studio and began to gather together an impressive group of fellow Bohemians. Among the regular attendees were Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, and a young woman named Alice B. Toklas. Stein was instantly smitten with her. Within a few short years, Alice had moved into the studio, and Leo had moved out. For the next thirty-nine years, the two women would remain steadfast companions.

Stein initially received scant literary acclaim for her writing, but in later years, she was lauded for her book entitled The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. This is a misnomer, however, as the story was more directly about Stein. After her death in 1946, her lifelong companion, Alice, was quoted as saying, “Gertrude was always at home through the language, but I was at home only through her.” When Toklas died in 1967, she was buried side by side with Stein, in the same tomb.

One of Alice’s sources of comfort after the death of Gertrude was the salon hosted by Natalie Barney, another expatriated American. Much like Stein, her weekly soirees began by 1910, and continued for nearly sixty years. An author in her own right of such notable works as Quelques portraits-sonnets de femmes in 1900, and Aventures de l’esprit in 1929, Barney’s salon was a hub of literary activity in Paris. Among her regulars were men such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, and T. S. Eliot, as well as legendary Frenchwoman Colette.

Perhaps Barney’s most notorious affair was with Renée Vivien, originally known as Pauline M. Tarn. As a writer, Vivien was known for her use of the rarely found eleven syllable line (hendecasyllable). Extremely prolific for her short decade as a published author, Renée was able to print more than twenty volumes of work, averaging two per year until her death in 1909. Conversely, Barney’s list of works numbers less than a dozen over a sixty year period, and with only two exceptions, are published in French. Unfortunately for Natalie, though, both the relationship and Vivien were short-lived.

Natalie Barney, however, was immortalized in Djuna Barnes’ popular book entitled The Ladies Almanack. A symbolic “Who’s Who” of the Parisian literary arena, the Almanack satirized Barney’s entire salon entourage, including such notable figures as authors Radclyffe Hall and Mina Loy. Not all of Djuna’s work possessed such a light hearted nature, however. Like Stein, Barnes was an American born author who relocated to Paris after attending college and working in the States for a few years. From this time period, one of her early works, called The Book of Repulsive Women, is considered her

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5 Richardson. "Natalie Barney."
debut of lesbian-themed writing, and is filled with dark poetry and drawings. Undeniably, Barnes’ comprehensive body of work that addresses lesbianism is one of the most thought-provoking collections available, in spite of the fact that she is widely quoted as denying her own homosexuality. Instead, she claimed that she simply loved one specific woman, Thelma Wood, but was not a lesbian.

Some critics suggest that this postulation stems from a fear of being categorized strictly as a lesbian author, with no other literary identity. Although not pigeonholed into lesbian circles, Djuna Barnes has certainly posthumously become widely acknowledged as a feminist icon.

Another notorious attendee of Barney’s salon to reach iconic status was Sidonie Gabrielle Colette, more widely known as just Colette. She was notorious for her stage shows, at such venues as the Moulin Rouge, in which she would share passionate kisses with her female costars while in a mime costume. Her books were full of romance and lust but they were only a mere shadow compared to the tumultuous relationships she endured throughout her life. At twenty years of age, she was married to her first husband, a man named Willy who was fifteen years her senior. He encouraged her to write her first stories, a series of semi-autobiographical tales about a young girl’s sexual exploits with other girls in school. By the time she was forty-five, she’d had dozens of affairs with men and women, was well into her second marriage, and was having a scandalous affair with her eighteen year old stepson.

Middle age, however, did not slow Colette down at all. By 1927, she was known as France’s greatest female writer. The 1930’s brought her membership in the Belgian Royal Academy and a new husband, Maurice Goudaket, while the 1940’s saw her election to the Académie Goncourt and the Légion d’Honneur. Some of her most popularly enduring work came after World War II, while she was in her seventies. These include L’Etoile Vesper (The Evening Star) and Le Fanal Bleu (The Blue Lantern), as well as her most well-known book in the United States,

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12 Witherbee. "Djuna Barnes."
13 Moyes. “Barnes, Djuna."
Gigi, which was made into a movie starring Audrey Hepburn. Throughout her eighty-one years, she published more than fifty books. Colette was so loved by the French people that when she died, after the Catholic Church denied her a Christian burial, she became the first woman writer to be honored by a state funeral.

Although not a part of the artistic salons in any way but reputation, Radclyffe Hall was an iconic author for lesbian and feminine rights during the early twentieth century. Her infamous book, The Well of Loneliness, chronicled the passions of a teenage girl who had an affair with an older woman. Even though it was not her first book addressing lesbianism, it captured the attention of the London magistrate Sir Biron, who decreed that all copies of the volume were to be destroyed because of its obscenity. The book’s notoriety was due in part to the nature of the subject, but also because Hall considered the main character to be a “sexual invert.” This controversial concept, made popular by Havelock Ellis, identifies homosexuality as irrepressible for those whom are born into the wrongly sexed body. Hall, who lived with her companion, Una Troubridge, for twenty-eight years, as well as indulged in numerous other affairs with women, placed herself firmly in this category. So, as a sexual invert, Hall viewed herself as a man in a woman’s body, unable to change her feelings of attraction for women. In later years, Hall’s espousal of this idea earned her almost as many detractors as supporters. The trial and verdict created an uproar in and out of literary circles, but effectively curtailed Hall from any other controversial or acclaimed publications for the remainder of her life.

In order to show solidarity within the literary community, a local celebrity attended Hall’s trial with the intention of testifying on her behalf. Virginia Woolf, as well as many of her fellow literati associates, was prepared to take the stand in defense of The Well of Loneliness and publicly denounce the obscenity charges against Radclyffe Hall. In spite of this, her appearance seemed to be on principle alone, as Woolf was known to have a somewhat low opinion of Hall as an author. Less flamboyant than many of her contemporaries, Virginia came from an intellectual background, and learned a great deal about literature at a very young age. While in her late twenties, Woolf became a founding member of the Bloomsbury Group, a collective of such

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17 Ibid.
21 "Hall, Radclyffe." Britannica Biographies.
22 Parkes. "Lesbianism, history..."
authors as Lytton Strachey, E.M. Forster and Roger Fry.

Never widely viewed during her lifetime as a lesbian writer, Woolf primarily wrote essays, literary criticisms, and a unique form of stream of consciousness fiction. Nonetheless, one of her most famous works, entitled *Orlando*, is both autobiographical and an homage to a woman named Vita Sackville-West, who was her lover from 1924 to 1928. The book not only addresses such forward thinking concepts as gender identity, it also explores both Jungian and Freudian themes in its use of collective unconscious and symbology. On a more personal level, the book was a thinly veiled attempt to both honor Sackville-West and entice her back.

Combining internal and external dialogue, poetry, and prose, Virginia’s final novel, *Between the Acts*, illustrates her continued desire to push the boundaries of her writing. Unfortunately, unable to cope with self-doubts and bouts of depression, she lined her coat pockets with stones, and drowned herself in a river, so *Between the Acts* was not published until shortly after her suicide in 1941. Also published posthumously were her diaries and letters, which offered a glimpse into the inner sanctum of her thoughts and perspectives. These represented two of Woolf’s most prolific areas of written work, numbering more than six full volumes of each.

A favorite correspondent as well as intimate friend of Virginia’s was Vita Sackville-West, although Woolf was by no means her first female lover. Vita married her childhood suitor, Harold Nicolson, under what can be considered “open marriage” terms. During their lives together, both Harold and Vita consistently partook in same-sex consensual extramarital affairs. One of her first long term relationships with a woman began in 1918, with her childhood friend, Violet Keppel Trefusis. The relationship was to last for years. During the early 1920s, Sackville-West and Trefusis were notorious for running away together for months at a time. Nevertheless, all through her periodic absences, she would maintain a daily letter writing habit back home to Harold, which always eventually led to the women being followed and brought home by Vita’s husband.

After the end of her affair with Violet, Vita wrote her autobiographical novel *Portrait of a Marriage* as an effort to assuage her homosexual desires on paper instead of in life. By 1924, she

26 Women’s History. “Virginia Woolf.”
30 Ibid, pg. 131-134.
had joined the Bloomsbury group and begun to pursue Virginia Woolf. While their intimate relationship seems to have only lasted about four years, over the next eight to ten years, three of her bestselling novels were subsequently published by Woolf's company, Hogarth Press. By the early 1930s, however, Vita seemed to have settled down, and spent her remaining years writing books and columns about gardening.

There are at least two more women in particular that are noteworthy. First is a woman named Annie Winnifred Ellerman, but more widely known by her pen name of Bryher. She, too, was one of the revelers at Gertrude Stein’s salon in Paris, and unapologetically lesbian. Before her death in 1983, the prolific author had written uncounted poems and pieces of fiction, but she was most notorious for her lifelong affair with Hilda Doolittle, whom also bears mentioning. Ezra Pound’s insulting slash of Doolittle’s name during the editorial of her piece, Imagiste, pushed her to permanently shorten her pseudonym to H.D.

Conflicted about gender issues her entire life, H.D. had tumultuous marriages, as well as affairs with both men and women, and even spent a few years in therapy with Dr. Sigmund Freud. It was only late in life as well as after her death that she attained any real recognition as a writer within the literary community.

In essence, however, H.D. was not alone in receiving a lack of critical acclaim or acknowledgment during her prime writing years. Many of the women from this interconnected net of authors were panned by critics as not being as talented as their male peers. For example, in 1915, Virginia Woolf’s close friend and Bloomsbury Group fellow, E.M. Forster, said in a review of The Voyage Out, “Mrs. Woolf’s success is more remarkable since there is one serious defect in her equipment: her chief characters are not vivid. . . . Mrs. Woolf’s vision may be inferior to Dostoieffsky’s... but she sees as clearly as he where efficiency ends and creation begins.” Even as recently as 1949, her critics said that she failed: “There is a crucial fault in Mrs. Woolf’s grasp even of this tradition, for she comprehends it one sidedly, and perhaps in much too feminine a fashion, not as a complete order but first and foremost as an order of sentiments.” It wasn’t until the 1970’s that recognition of her literary acumen became consistent.

Brutal criticism of this network of authors did not stop with Woolf. Gertrude Stein was told at one point that she was essentially un-publishable. Even Radclyffe Hall suffered at least one harsh critique: Virginia’s disparaging comments about Hall’s writing ability during the obscenity trial, in which she is quoted in one notable essay as saying she doubted Hall’s qualifications as an

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31 Women’s History. “Virginia Woolf.”
32 Mazzucco-Than. “V. Sackville-West.”
34 Zilboorg C. Hilda Doolittle.
35 E.M. Forster. Daily News and Leader (reprinted in Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, Vol. 5 with permission of King’s College, Cambridge and the Society of Authors as the literary representative of the Estate of E.M. Forster), April 8, 1915.
36 Philip Rahv, “Sketches in Criticism: Mrs. Woolf and Mrs. Brown.” Image and Idea (copyright 1949 by Philip Rahv; copyright renewed © 1976 by Betty T. Rahv, as widow of the author; preprinted by permission), New Directions, 1949, pp. 139-143.
37 Maurer. "The Unconventional,
author because she was “too polemical”\textsuperscript{38}.

Still, most of these female literary personas offered one another support, encouragement and fellowship within their group, instead of competition. They gave one another connection, and in some cases, companionship. In spite of the obscenity trial, or the scathing reviews, they managed to bolster one another in a free expression of sexuality, both on the page and in life; regardless of cultural expectations about marriage, child rearing, or education, these women found solidarity with each other, and left behind a literary legacy much richer because of it.

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\textsuperscript{38} Parkes. "Lesbianism, history..."

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The Writing Center Review, a multidisciplinary 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 highlight excellence in writing representing the various disciplines at Kent Stark, which has included in the past such diverse subjects as Anthropology, Communications, Geology, History, Psychology, and Sociology, to name a few. These assignments may then be used in classrooms, in the Writing Center, and by individual students as guides for achieving excellence in writing. Although students are permitted to submit as many papers as they like, the Writing Center Review is only able to publish a maximum of one submission per author per edition.

If you are interested in having a writing assignment considered for publication in the Spring 2011 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, Summer, or Fall 2010 class (Please note: anything written in the calendar year of 2010 is eligible).

2. Ask a professor, either the professor who assigned the work or your academic advisor, to nominate your work for consideration. The professor needs to sign his or 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.

4. Please include a copy of your assignment requirements in the envelope along with your submission form. If you are unable to find the requirements, write down as much as you can recall about the assignment.

5. Fill out the form on the reverse side completely. Submissions with incomplete forms will not be accepted.

6. Place submission form in an envelope. Address envelope to the Writing Center, MH202. Please note: you must include an electronic copy of your submission, either in the envelope or by email to writing gst@kent.edu with “WCR Submission” in the subject line. Place envelope in the fourth floor faculty mail box, or drop it off at the Writing Center.

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