Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs
Duquesne University
600 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15282
www.duq.edu/spiritan-division

Judith R. Griggs, Ph.D., Founder and Publisher
Uhuru Hotep, Ed.D., Managing Editor
Rosalie Granato, Editorial Assistant
Busola Odubayo, Editorial Assistant
Margaret Zangara, Editorial Assistant

Gussin Spiritan Chronicle
Robert & Patricia Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs – 2013-14

Vol. 11, No. 17
# Table of Contents

**2013 Essays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUCTOR: SUSAN KELLEY</td>
<td>Morgan Fochler A Perfect Day for Bananafish</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Marino The Line Between Crazy and Bold: An In-Depth Look at Symbolism in the Yellow Wallpaper</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hannah Marvin The Yellow Wallpaper</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malinda W. O’Clair Yellow Wallpaper is More Than Just a Decoration</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aleyda Virgin What Lies Behind the Bars</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INSTRUCTOR: SEAN MARTIN McMurry Acimando The Value of Play in Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jonathan Anker Capital Gains Tax</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leigha Ferenc The Yellow Wallpaper</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avril Hamner The Importance of YouTube</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily Hultz The Significance of Gun Reform in the United States</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUCTOR: AMANDA MATSON</td>
<td>James Bader The Efficacy of Jurassic Park as a Work of Science Fiction</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cara Ryan Green Day’s Symbolic Use of “September”</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kyle Deloras O’Connor’s “World” on the Green Keeper</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courtney Brommen The Path to Heaven via “Owl Creek Bridge”</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John LoMura Good Vibrations: Rehabilitation Through Music</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fr. Bill Christy, C.S.Sp. First Years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gussin Spiritan Division Chaplain</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2014 Essays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUCTOR: JOHNNY KATHY</td>
<td>Jamie Bird Learning from Memory in the Poetry of Li-Young Lee</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mario Galati Lead, Liquor, and Guitars</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Katie Magliocca Pollution and “Going Green”</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patrick Marx Preparing for the Future: Unemployment and Its Negative Effects</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teddy Morganess Franking and the Marvellous State</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUCTOR: SEAN MARTIN</td>
<td>Gestion Cooper “Bash Dull,” the Grotesque, and Societal Changes</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kenna Gubler “Bash Dull” and the Effect on Girls</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryan Gates College Admissions and Inequality</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abbie Robert V. A Diagnosis of Schizophrenia in “The Tell-Tale Heart”</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richard Sec Global Warming: Finding a Practical Approach</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUCTOR: AMANDA MATSON</td>
<td>Donal Conley The War on Soda</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caroline Dietz The Effect of Wind in John Steinbeck’s Doubt</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alex Gladstone Induced Scale Deserialization Along American’s Courses</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charlie Hambrick Arkansas Speak Louder Than Words in John Steinbeck’s Doubt</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elisa Smith Cock of Iron</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fletcher Swanson Bolzano: A God-Like Figure in Cat’s Cradle</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Young The Hunter Becomes the Prey</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
human development is rarely smooth and steady. If we were to demonstrate our development with a graph, it wouldn’t show a constant rise with incremental growth but rather it would visualize times of rapid increase followed by periods of consolidation. It’s clear that children go through growth spurts in their physical development, but all of us continue in that same way after childhood in our emotional, intellectual and even spiritual development. We experience times of quick ascent followed by a plateau where we process and integrate that growth.

The growth process isn’t always pleasant either. Growing pains become cyclic as we have our very selves stretched and expanded. Sometimes these are times of wonder and excitement and other times they are periods of uncomfortable struggle. The athlete knows that the way to increase strength is to tear the muscle fibers and to allow them to heal stronger than they were, sometimes the tear comes from joyful play and sometimes from hard training.

For many of us, first years are experiences of rapid growth. Grade school, high school, university, career, marriage, parenthood – in all of these the first year is a time of steep ascent. In my role here at Duquesne University as a chaplain and counselor, I have observed that the most marked growth most often comes in the freshman year and it is wonderful to witness. I’m reminded of Walt Whitman’s poem Song of Myself, especially the opening lines:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.  
I loafe and invite my soul,  
I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

Our Gussin Spiritan Division students in this first year of University ascend rapidly in self-discovery. They come to know themselves and celebrate that knowledge and communicate that to the world, singing themselves. They give expression of themselves in their academic work where they are pressed to offer and defend their own insights and critical analysis. But even more so they sing themselves to their friends and peers by revealing themselves beyond the clichés of labels and cliques of high school. They realize and reflect their discovered selves.

Here at Duquesne they develop an independent viewpoint, their own assumptions, and in expression of those assumptions invite others to assume what they assume. It is a time of risk. Putting forth your own self, your own ideas, is to share your very being. In self revelatory essays and conversations, they are passing the very atoms of their good to others, sharing the newly discovered self and being vulnerable to others.

Our students loafe and lean and are given the time to grow. Of course the school work is demanding, but they have plenty of time to discover themselves. Dorm life is an incubator of this growth. The rubbing and tumbling friction of life, roommates, friends, classmates and professors; expose our students to others and to themselves. They learn just as much in the dining hall as the classroom. And like the spears of summer grass they observe (the late night conversations, the books read, the notes taken, the tests – passed and failed) their own growth is organic and untamed.

So welcome and read on. Witness what we here in the Gussin Spiritan Division have witnessed and give testimony to – that this freshman year is a year of great ascent in the growth of these men and women and a vital part of the future song that they will continue to sing of themselves for many years to come.
Fall 2013 Essays
A Perfect Day for Bananafish
Morgan Fochler

In J.D. Salinger’s “A Perfect Day for Bananafish”, a young man emotionally fatigued from war meets a three-year-old girl at a beachfront hotel in Florida. He tells her the tale of the life of a bananafish, which was so gluttonous that it would over eat and die. The young man, Seymour, then goes back to his hotel room and commits suicide. In a symbolic sense, Seymour is like the bananafish because he was so overwhelmed with emotion that the thought of a peaceful life back at home was too much to take in, and this conflict was so intense that it caused him to lose the will to live.

Throughout American history, thousands of soldiers have fought in various wars and come home to find that the terrors that they had faced on the battlefield have come back to haunt them. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the result of observing an event that is too horrific to be seen by a normal person. This psychological infirmity has been the reason for numerous cases involving depression, insomnia, and suicide, and it is a major problem war veterans face today.

In World War II, PTSD was not considered as serious as it is today. General George Patton was known for not accepting battle fatigue as an excuse to discontinue serving. He believed that soldiers suffering from PTSD were not worthy of space in medical centers because they “did not have the guts to fight”. With more understanding of psychological diseases, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is now treated in a more serious way than it was seventy years ago.

As a victim of this ailment, J.D. Salinger was affected for the rest of his life by the terrible things he had seen landing on Utah beach in Normandy. Being one of five hundred and sixty three that were left standing out of his regiment of three thousand, the author had witnessed true horror. This would lead to classical works such as “The Catcher in the Rye” and the collection of short stories, “Nine Stories”, which included “A Perfect Day for Bananafish”. Both of his publications would include death and/or loss of innocence.

Stephanie Habelow, in an article on neurobiology, states, “People suffering from PTSD experience paranoia, flashbacks and generally have difficulty engaging in normal daily activities.” (Paragraph 2). In Seymour’s case, it was extremely difficult to readjust because he had no one to understand what he went through and all the hardships he had faced, while surrounded by a society that suffers from greed and self-absorbance.

In the story, the young veteran made a connection with Sybil Carpenter, a three-year-old girl, who at the time was also staying at the hotel. Salinger wrote that while Seymour was at a social event, he would seclude himself from the rest of the population, play the piano, and converse with the children. One day, while spending time with her on the beach and in the ocean, he says to her that it is “A perfect day for bananafish”. He then explains the life of these creatures, which would go into their holes as normal fish, eat too many bananas, and die because they became too enlarged to escape. Seymour called this “banana fever.”

This tale is an analogy used to describe the many soldiers that would go to war as normal men, and then come back home to find that they could not fit in with the rest of society. These men witnessed terrifying scenes of battle so traumatizing that they had to be admitted into mental health hospitals. As told in this short story, Seymour was prematurely released from care by his mother-in-law, and this could possibly be the reason that he is so overwhelmed with his surroundings. But, as seen in many cases, even if one seems to have made a recovery, they will never be the same. As Seymour spends more time with Sybil, he is yearning to regain some of his innocence, and to express the burdensome emotions that he bears. He finds that she and her clear conscience seem to be the only outlet to rid him of his constant hellish memories of war.

By the time he had ended his tale about the fish, Seymour’s thoughts had driven him to the point of insanity;
he could not take any more. The situation was so severe that after returning from the beach, he would take his own life. While the bananafish were in the hole, they would eat all of the bananas that were offered. This symbolizes that while soldiers go to war, they slowly collect all of the experiences that lead to their stress. As they keep taking in all that is happening, they cannot rid themselves of the traumatic events, and they soon reach the point where they cannot escape the constant flashbacks and paranoia, or their “hole.” Like the bananafish, Seymour had his own case of “banana fever.”

As Seymour Glass tells the story of the bananafish, he is making a subtle reference to his own self-conflict and his struggles with post-war depression. When he says that the fish swim in, indulge themselves on bananas, and become “so fat they can’t get out of the hole again”, he means he and his fellow soldiers will never fully recover from their military service.

**Works Cited**


her brother and “husband” are physicians and both have been giving her medication. “So I take phosphates or phosphites—whichever it is, and tonics, and journeys, and air, and exercise, and am absolutely forbidden to “work” until I am well again.” (TYW, Line 12) Questions that arise just from this statement: What is she sick with? Is it a psychiatric disease? If so, is her brother and husband truly who she says they are?

That is simply an introduction into the madness. She later describes the house that she is in. She says it is “The most beautiful place!” and “There was some legal trouble” and that “the place has been empty for years.” (TYW, Line 19-22) It leaves the reader with the question; Why a summer vacation home would have been left vacant for years? This is where the reader truly begins to question what the narrator presents them with. Even though her “husband” John is a physician, he treats her more as a patient than a loved one. “I have a schedule prescription for each hour in the day; he takes all care from me, and so I feel basely ungrateful not to value it more.” (TYW, Line 30)

One of the most shocking statements that the narrator makes that leaves the readers stunned was: “It is fortunate Mary is so good with the baby. Such a dear baby! And yet I cannot be with him, it makes me so nervous.” Out of nowhere, she brings in two characters that the reader is unfamiliar with, Mary and the baby. This further complicates things. What makes the incidence stranger is that Mary and the baby aren’t mentioned again in the story, leaving the reader wondering over those two lines.

Irony plays a large role in this short story. Dramatic irony is used extensively in The Yellow Wallpaper. For example, when the narrator first describes the bedroom John has chosen for them, she notes the room’s bizarre features, like the “rings and things” in the walls, the nailed-down furniture, the bars on the windows, and the torn wallpaper. The room was once used as a nursery. Even this early in the story, the reader sees that there is an equally plausible explanation for these details: the room also had been used to house an insane person. With this thought in mind, it only helps support that this is the most believable theory.

Situational irony refers to moments when a character’s actions have the opposite of their intended effect. For example, John’s course of treatment backfires, worsening the depression he was trying to cure and actually driving his wife insane. Similarly, there is a deep irony in the way the narrator’s fate develops. She gains power and insight only by losing her self-control and reason.

The narrator’s description of the yellow wallpaper itself is possibly the largest incidence of symbolism in the short story. “The color is repellent, almost revolting; a smouldering unclean yellow, strangely faded by the slow-turning sunlight. It is a dull yet lurid orange in some places, a sickly sulphur tint in others. No wonder the children hated it! I should hate it myself if I had to live in this room long.” (TYW Line 37) As she further indulges herself with the yellow wallpaper, she discovers that at sometimes, she can see a figure “trapped” behind the yellow wallpaper itself. “The front pattern does move—and no wonder! The woman behind shakes it!”

After staring at the paper for hours, she sees a ghostly sub-pattern behind the main pattern, visible only in certain light. Eventually, the sub-pattern comes into focus as a desperate woman, constantly crawling and stooping, looking for an escape from behind the main pattern, which has come to resemble the bars of a cage. The wallpaper may represent the structure of family, medicine, and tradition in which the narrator finds herself trapped. Wallpaper is domestic and humble, and Gilman skillfully uses this nightmarish, hideous paper as a symbol of the domestic life that traps so many women.

The narrator finally identifies herself with the woman trapped in the wallpaper and is able to see that other women are forced to creep and hide behind the domestic “patterns” of their lives, and that she herself is the one in need of rescue. The horror of this story is that the narrator must lose herself to understand herself. She has untangled the pattern of her life, but she has torn herself apart in getting free of it. An odd detail at the end of the story reveals how much the narrator has sacrificed.

During her final split from reality, the narrator says, “I’ve got out at last, in spite of you and Jane.” Who is this Jane? Some critics claim “Jane” is a misprint for
“Jennie,” the sister-in-law. It is more likely, however, that “Jane” is the name of the unnamed narrator, who has been a stranger to herself. Now she is “free” of the constraints of her marriage, her society, and her own efforts to repress her mind.

The information given from the narrator in *The Yellow Wallpaper* leaves the reader to question almost everything the narrator presents him/her with. Through various hints and examples that lead to a final climax, it is clear that the narrator was insane.

**Works Cited**


Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the author of “The Yellow Wallpaper,” was a well-known female author who was prescribed the “Rest Cure” in 1887. She was sent back to her home where she sat in solitude for three months to make certain she was cured. Gilman was allegedly healed from her mental disease and shortly after wrote, “The Yellow Wallpaper,” based on her experience (Gilman). In the story the narrator goes through many situations, which cause her to be perceived as mentally ill. Throughout the story the narrator’s unstable state causes difficulty for the reader to identify if her baby was just a figment of her imagination.

Like Gilman, the narrator was put on the rest cure. In the 1800s American neurologist Silas Weir Mitchell created the rest cure, to treat anorexia nervosa. Anorexia Nervosa is a disease that causes people not to want to eat, creating massive weight loss and sensitivity. The cure was said to give support to people going through this mental disorder, and keep people alive and out of asylums. The rest cure typically lasted six to eight weeks, and required complete isolation from family and loved ones (Science Museum).

Silas Weir Mitchell believed that a person who was put on the rest cure would be cured physically and morally. He thought that removing the patient from the lethal home atmosphere that caused them to become this way and putting the patients in an isolated place would force them to heal themselves. He believed that the rest cure patients, who were majority female, should listen to their husband’s medical opinion as well. In that time women were told what to do by the male figure in the household and no one could tell them otherwise. Many could argue that the rest cure does not have any positive influence on the mind at all (Science Museum).
The problem with the rest cure is the effects during the break. Many women say that they experience clinical depression as a result of going from being completely active, to having no interaction at all. A woman said that standing up to brush her teeth was the best part of her day. Since the narrator was prescribed the rest cure her circumstances made her feel depressed and more mentally unstable than before. In “The Yellow Wallpaper” the narrator speaks of her baby but many can argue its existence.

Another reason that Gilman spoke about the baby is because the narrator could have been imagining a baby all along. When a person partakes in the rest cure, they start to imagine people and objects that are not really there, as she does the entire time with the wallpaper. She sees moving patterns and a woman who is trapped within the walls.

The narrator may have always wanted to have a baby of her own and because of her unsound mental state she could have imagined the baby. When women have a strong desire for a child of their own, they start to pretend that they have one, when in reality they do not. Especially coming from a mentally unstable woman, like the narrator, she could have made him up completely. She speaks about her baby being with “Mary.” To a reader, the existence of the character “Mary” is unknown as well.

Mary could be her baby’s nanny or caregiver while the narrator is on the rest cure. Mary could also be a nurse that works at the house/hospital, and the narrator made her out to be the nanny in her head where she is living during her medical retreat. It is difficult to believe that Mary is a nanny to the baby, but because of the narrator’s unhealthy condition it can go in either direction.

Another reason it’s hard to understand if the narrator’s baby is real is the narrator could have gone through postpartum depression. Postpartum depression is very common in most recently pregnant woman. Symptoms of postpartum depression can include, lack of energy, negative feelings towards a mother’s newborn, strange sleeping patterns, thoughts of death or self harm, and lack of interest in the baby (Postpartum Depression).

This is crucial because when some women became pregnant the amount of estrogen they produce post pregnancy is nowhere near the amount during pregnancy. Because of this, the narrator could have just recently had her child delivered and become depressed from the birth. This could be a reason she is undergoing the rest cure. “It is fortunate Mary is so good with the baby” (Gilman). The narrator only speaks of her child for a short time. If she was not experiencing depression because of her birth she could have spoken about her baby with more concern. She only mentions the baby once and gives no name.

Not only could the narrator have experienced postpartum depression but also a miscarriage. There is a lot of mental symptoms that come along with having a miscarriage, like disbelief, anger, and in some serious cases, depression. Depending how far along the narrator was the miscarriage could have been hard to get over and move on from. All of these emotions could have easily driven the narrator into a deep depression causing her to need the rest cure.

It is fascinating that the narrator only speaks of the baby once in the entire story. She is more interested in the. Because of her actions it is hard to believe that there is a baby in the house at all. The narrator could have experienced multiple traumas causing postpartum depression, to miscarriage imagination, or imagine she was a mother.

Works Cited


Charlotte Perkins Gilman chose the color yellow for the wallpaper in her story, “The Yellow Wallpaper.” This wallpaper means a lot more than simple wall decorations, it is a symbol for men.

The story begins with a description of a summer home that the narrator is being brought to for a supposed medical condition. The narrator is told by her husband and doctor not to worry about her condition for it will only make her condition worse. Perkins Gilman is showing through the eyes of the narrator that men with power ignore women’s right to equality. By John, the husband, stating this, he is representing all men, as they are superior to women by society’s standards. This sets ideas in motion for her entrapment within the wallpaper as the story continues to move forward.

The narrator states, "I never saw a worse paper in my life," she is already setting the scene of the wallpaper’s hideous looks”. This wallpaper represents the barrier that men place in front of women. The narrator explains that the patterns on the paper are simply overwhelming to the viewer. In relation to the life of women, it is clear that as women progress in their fight for equality, men allow very little to no change.

From this room, the narrator states that there are two windows she peers out of. Upon clear inspection, Perkins Gilman portrays everything seen though this glass as opportunity for women. Prior to the narrator’s peering out the windows, she is warned by her husband and doctor not to believe everything she sees. This is Perkins Gilman’s way of stating that women see the acts of men and understand what they do outside of the household. By the narrator’s husband, John, stating that she should not worry about these people simply reinforces the idea that men think women cannot do as men do.

As the narrator sits alone in her room, she is instructed that she mustn’t perform any work whatsoever. This simply adds fuel to the fire in the fact that women were not allowed prove their worth in the working world. The narrator states, "Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good.” Through the story, Perkins Gilman is trying to say to the male population that women should have the opportunity to do the same work as man.

As the narrator’s condition worsens and the story progresses, the narrator begins to see a shadow in the wallpaper. As the person runs back and forth behind the patterns, the designs represent bars that trap this shadowy figure. This shadow represents the narrator and the rest of female society trapped within the world of male dominance.

As the text reaches its climax, the narrator becomes very concerned for the trapped shadow behind the patterns that keep her from the real world. In an effort to help the shadow find a way out of the wall, the narrator begins to tear at the paper. Considering Perkins Gilman’s purpose for the wallpaper is to represent the barriers that women face in their fight for equality, the narrator’s actions symbolize the efforts and the distance that women have come thus far in that era. However, it is also clear that there is still pieces of paper left on the wall that is just out of reach of the narrator. These pieces of wallpaper represent the goals that women are still working towards in the future; such as an equal right ruling for support by the law, the right to vote in all states for all offices, the right to work equally amongst men, and so on. This is a truly brilliant way of showing how far women have come and what to expect in the future.

Once John returns and finds the damage that the narrator had done to the room, he faints and falls to the floor. By this point in time, the narrator is crawling on the floor around the perimeter of the room, pulling off every little piece of paper she sees. John happen to fall directly across her path. In order to continue “creeping” around the room, the narrator must step over him. Perkins Gilman’s goal here is to convey the idea that the narrator is now
superior to John as she is above him. With the wallpaper peeled off the walls and the barrier finally broken, the narrator can now feel a sense of satisfaction for overcoming a major barrier between the sexes.

Throughout the entirety of the novel, it is clear Perkins Gilman had a very big idea. Symbolizing nearly every action and basically the entire setting to not only place the narrator in a room that she cannot find a way out of, but also placing the narrator as a representative of the female population, and the fight for equality among the sexes. Showing how the wallpaper itself is not simply a wall decoration, but also the barrier that women bare looking for the rights and respect they deserve. Clearly the color yellow means more than weakness and illness, but rather a color that holds the key to the world desired by nineteenth century women.

Works Cited


---

**What Lies Behind the Bars**

**Ansley Virgin**

*The Yellow Wallpaper* represents the daily struggles that many women experienced years ago. Women were often put on the rest cure, which led to mental health issues or reinforced existing ones. These extensive measures often-led patients to take drastic actions. In Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s story, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, she illustrates that the narrator was trapped in her life by the use of bars on the windows. This point can be seen through her marriage, being secluded to a single room, and her mental state.

In *The Yellow Wallpaper*, the narrator describes an elaborate mansion, secluded from society, in which she and her husband, John, will be staying for the summer. As the story progresses it takes a strange plot change. The room in which the narrator is staying only has one bed and no place for her husband to sleep. The furniture is nailed to the floor, and bars cover the windows. It was previously used as a nursery. John has sentenced his wife to the rest cure; she is forbidden to leave her room. The rest cure involved isolation from society as well as bed rest.

The symbolism that Gilman uses throughout her story, like the bars on the windows, can represent many different situations. Gilman illustrates how the narrator is related to an infant throughout the story. Patients of the rest cure were force-fed a milk-based diet and ultimately reduced to an infant state (Rest Cure). In the story, the narrator mentions how, “Mary is so good with the baby,” and that she is upset that she “cannot be with him.” The bars on the windows can be compared to the bars surrounding a crib. The narrator is treated as an infant with very little responsibilities; she finds herself being imprisoned within her own room (Wang). The “rest cure” limits the amount of activity she able to do. This not only confines her to her room, but keeps her confined to her bed.

For the time period that *The Yellow Wallpaper* describes, women were inferior to their spouses. The bars over the windows in the story represent how the narrator is not only trapped in her room, but she is trapped in her marriage. The thoughts that women had often did not matter and were disregarded. In *The Yellow Wallpaper*, the narrator expresses concern that she is sick; however, her husband and brother who are physicians did not, and she must keep her feelings to herself. Women in this time period were often uneducated and viewed with little credibility. Throughout the story, the narrator is trying to escape the yellow wallpaper; however, she could really be trying to escape the tight reign of her husband (Greene). The lack of input that
the narrator has in her marriage could drive her insane. At the end of The Yellow Wallpaper, the narrator steps over her husband after he had fainted. This is symbolic for her finally taking control over her own life and having a choice in what she does.

The “rest cure” forced the narrator into solitary confinement, which is often used on mentally ill patients. The lack of social interaction could lead one to mental illness. The bars also represent how the narrator is trapped within her own mind unable to escape her own thoughts. These thoughts are prevalent in her hallucination of moving wallpaper.

The narrator believes that there is someone trapped behind the yellow wallpaper and by ripping off the wallpaper she is tearing down the bars to release the trapped person. By doing this, the narrator is releasing the person trapped, because she is unable to escape the room that she is in. By being secluded from society and forbidden from tending to any physical activities, the narrator has become uneasy in her stay at the mansion. When the narrator is able to escape from the secured room, she has torn off all the wallpaper and mentally secured her freedom.

Gilman wrote The Yellow Wallpaper as a novel; however, many believe that it is based on a true story, hers. Dr. Weir Mitchell sentenced Charlotte Perkins Gilman to the rest cure in 1877 after the birth of her daughter (Martin). Gilman suffered from postpartum; her doctor believed she was clinically depressed. Many believe that Gilman was the narrator. After finally breaking out from behind the bars that kept her in a conformed life, she was breaking her silence and talking about the rest cure. Charlotte Perkins Gilman took pen to paper and informed the nation of the side effects of the rest cure.

The struggles that women such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman waged became a stepping-stone in their journey to gain independence and freedom. The Yellow Wallpaper expresses the importance of this journey.

Work Cited
arguments can be made for both work and play in the classroom, evidence indicates that well-designed play is the most efficient way for young children to learn.

Play is a crucial learning process that is important to a child’s education. Dr. Jill Englebright, professor of early childhood education and the Director of Assessment at the University of Houston-Victoria, states that children “learn best in an environment that allows them to explore, discover, and play” (1). For the purposes of pedagogy, play must be characterized in five ways: it should be “intrinsically motivating, freely chosen, pleasurable, non-literal, and actively engaging” (Hughes 6).

The secret to helping young children succeed is to keep their spirit of creativity and playful learning alive and active, incorporating play as a major part of the curriculum: “Curriculum is what is to be taught and how to teach it and it is based off of what children should and need to learn” (Frede 2). There are many variations of early childhood education curricula. One example is emergent curriculum, which is a relatively new methodology in early childhood classrooms.

This curriculum focuses on exploring what is socially relevant, intellectually imaginary, and personally engaging to children (Grinder 3). In the early years of a child’s education, it is more important to incorporate concrete and hands-on activities, because their development is determined by their learning experiences (Grinder 3).

All of us learn in our own way, but there are two primary ways that children interpret information, each can be classified as two specific learning styles: visual and auditory. Visual learners learn from what they see, whereas auditory learners depend on hearing and speaking as their main way of learning. It is essential for an auditory learner to use their listening and repeating skills to sort through the information that is sent to them (Hughes 37).

If a student is sitting in a traditional classroom, either visual or auditory learning approaches are typically used. When children play in the classroom, they are both visually and audibly gaining knowledge. Furthermore, kinesthetic learning occurs in the play setting when the student engages in physical activity rather than listening to a lecture or watching a demonstration (Robb). Closely related to kinesthetic learning is tactile learning, which allows children to interpret information through the sense of touch. The combination of many types of learning in play activities stimulates a greater range of neurological growth factors, which stimulates brain development.

According to child psychologist David Elkind, some teachers give kindergarteners homework in addition to the work sheets they must fill out during class time. This tends to result in poor performance and incomplete work. Conversely, in an interactive classroom, children are gain vital information and concepts while taking care of classroom plants and animals, experimenting with sand and water, drawing and painting, listening to songs and stories, and engaging in dramatic play. Children who engage in these age-appropriate activities will benefit greatly in the long run (Elkind).

Play is not only beneficial in the classroom, it helps students develop social skills, allowing them to interact and learn about teachers and classmates. Playing with friends during the school day teaches children to share and respect others. Through games and activities, the child gains knowledge, and develops confidence and self-esteem. Play benefits children and helps them feel good about themselves: “Good play offers children success” (Logani). In most cases, sitting and doing a written assignment will not be as effective as participating in a physical form of play.

Perhaps the most important benefit of play for childhood learning is the element of fun. Enthusiasm and energy can be just as important as concentration and discipline in a classroom environment. Educational play activities are more likely than tedious written activities to engage the students, appeal to their curiosity, and encourage active participation and discussion. All early childhood education institutions should make imaginative play a central part of the curriculum.

Works Cited


http://www.ehow.com/list_7347542_tactile-activities.html


---

Capital Gains Tax

Jonathan Anker

Did you know that almost everything you own and use for personal or investment purposes is a capital asset? Capital gains and dividends are benefits you receive because of something you have done, and they are the building blocks of a strong economy. The last thing we need to do is raise taxes if they will endanger capital formations, which is the transfer of capital from individuals, organizations, or government for business use, or net additions of capital stock such as equipment, buildings and other intermediate goods.

President Obama stated in his State of the Union Address that “It is our generation’s task, then, to reignite the true engine of America’s economic growth -- a rising, thriving middle class” (White House). As a country, we want to make sure that middle and upper class families have incentives to keep saving. Over the last couple of years, we have not done so. We also have to make sure that we have tax incentives in place to keep people investing, so that we can grow our private sector economy as much as possible. We need to keep capital gains and dividends at a low rate and coupled. Not only is this good for corporate America, it is good for senior citizens and the middle class. By doing this over the long term, America will become a saving nation, which will boost our private sector economy.

So why do we want to boost our private sector economy? Because we want reinvest in industries that pay dividends, such as energy producing industries. We also have a national deficit nearing twenty trillion dollars (Brillig). One way of chipping away at that debt is by creating more jobs, and growing the private sector is a great way of doing that. Government spending is simply not
sustainable with a stagnant or struggling private sector. The reason for this is that government spending depends on private sector income, mostly through taxes. Income taxes, customs duties, corporate tax, and consumption tax depend on activity in the private sector (Jamaica Observer). If the private sector is stagnant, there should not be an increase in government spending.

So how does growing the private sector help our employment problems? According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the federal agency responsible for compiling employment data, the U.S. economy has seen twenty-two consecutive months of private-sector job growth, beginning in February 2010 (BLS). During that period, the number of jobs grew by almost 3.16 million, or about 143,000 per month.

In 2011, the number of private-sector jobs rose by about 1.83 million (if you count from the January amount to the December amount) or 1.92 million (if you count from December to December). In both ways, the increase in 2011 represented the highest one-year total since 2005, when the number of private-sector jobs increased by either 2.22 million or 2.31 million, depending on the time period used.

Capital gains and dividends are about savings and investing in our real estate economy, in our intangible assets, and in our stocks and bonds. The worst thing we could do as a country is jeopardize capital formations by raising taxes. We need to make sure that middle and upper class families have the incentive to keep saving. We have to make sure those capital gains and dividends are kept coupled rather than separated. We also need to focus on our private sector economy.

Works Cited

HOPE FOR THE MOTOR CITY?

LEIGHA FESMIRE

A little over half a century ago, the Motor City was a booming metropolis - the fourth largest city in the United States, with nearly two million citizens. Today, a shell of what it once was, the city is stifled by unemployment, crime, and major debt. Detroit was a city built on the prosperity of the auto industry, and it thrived as long as that industry boomed. But, with the downturn of the auto industry, many businesses closed their doors. Detroit now faces many problems. One of the biggest is city finances, which has been close to bankruptcy for years. Another problem is Detroit’s physical size. For a city that has shrunk in population, the geographical area remains the same, causing many problems. Detroit needs to take drastic measures to change its economy and population disbursement. If not, it is bound to be impoverished in the near future.

Detroit has the more violent crimes per 100,000 people than any major city in the country, and the second highest murder rate. This is not surprising, as on average it takes 58 minutes for police to respond to calls. This makes the violent crime solve rate only 8.7 percent (ABC News). Drugs and violent crimes are synonymous in the city of Detroit; where there are drugs there are guns.

As violence in a city grows, urban youth are more susceptible to gangs and violence. When young men and women join gangs, they tend to bring the violence into the school systems, disrupting the learning process and making schools less safe for everyone. This causes many students to avoid school. In a study by the Detroit Mayor’s Office, their findings concluded that “in 2009, 19.1 percent of Detroit high school students and 27 percent of 11th graders reported not going to school because they felt unsafe at school or on
their way to or from school; this rate was 5.0 percent for high school students in the U.S.” (Bing).

When students choose not to go to school, they cannot positively contribute to the community. Students that drop out have a higher chance of getting caught up in Detroit’s massive drug trade. Most of the youth violence coincides with neighborhoods with high poverty levels and low levels of academic achievement.

One major commonality effecting many of the issues that faces the city is the sheer size of the city. Many neighborhoods that were once full now may have 10 or 15 households, while the rest of the houses in the neighborhood are abandoned, used as crack houses, or have been leveled. The city’s housing market has suffered a great deal in the past decade, and it is estimated that “47 percent of properties are delinquent on paying their taxes (ABC News). The city has hired demolition crews to level abandoned houses.

The term to describe Detroit’s housing situation: “Chocolate City, Vanilla Suburbs.” This is term has its root in the 1960s and 1970s when “white flight” took place after the urban rebellions. Many people are surprised at how much racial segregation that still exists in Detroit today, a symptom of racial tension and misrepresentation that poses many different risks, including educational setbacks and increasing employment.

The city that once was the symbol of American industry filed for bankruptcy on July 18, 2013; they claimed $18 billion in unfunded liabilities. In March 2013 the city appointed Kevyn Orr as Emergency Manager for an 18 month term. Under his supervision and guidance, with approval from Governor Snyder and the city, Detroit filed bankruptcy - the largest municipal filing in history. According to ABC News, they city owes money to over 100,000 creditors and the retirement system is underfunded by $3.5 billion. This is due in large part to the decline in the auto industry, population loss, and gross mismanaged finances.

Once known for its $5 a day salary (a respectable wage at the time), Detroit now has the highest unemployment rate in the country. Filing for bankruptcy means “shedding municipal workers, selling off assets, raising fees and scaling back basic services such as rubbish collection and snow ploughing” (The Herald). Many of these services have already been cut. For example, the city doesn’t light certain neighborhoods. Edward Helmore of The London Observer (a former Detroit resident) stated: “The resurrection of Detroit will not happen overnight. No city better illustrates an economist's nightmare scenario - collapsing industry triggering a rapid decline in population to the point that there is no longer a tax base to meet ever-increasing pension and healthcare costs, or the money to maintain services.”

With that being said, the bankruptcy is not going to solve Detroit’s economic problems. It will help the city stabilize and pay down what the city owes to creditors. Detroit needs people to move there and start businesses so that money will start to flow in. People are needed to raise the tax base, thus creating more jobs and taxes for basic city necessities like lighted streets, emergency responders, and a better schools system.

In spite of Detroit’s many problems, thousands of residents are determined to do whatever is necessary to bring the city back: “There’s plenty to work with. Detroit is the city that put the world on wheels. A city with rich cultural heritage, ethnic traditions and a legacy of innovation. The middle class was born here. Detroit built the Arsenal of Democracy and the first expressway to help expand it. It’s a city where bold ideas become real and set the example for the world. It’s time. Time to think big” (Detroit Works Project). This quote sums up the strength that the city has and how it is going to reinvent itself in the future. If this level of optimism can be paired with positive action, the Motor City might just have a chance.

Works Cited


---

**The Importance of YouTube**

Annie Harner

It is hard to know where to begin when logging on to YouTube.com. The possibilities are endless when searching for different topics to view on this innovative social media site. Some may think that YouTube is compiled solely of amateur video clips that are created for nothing more than a cheap laugh (Freeman and Chapman 208). However, the site holds a wide range of material, available in a free, easily customized format: “Unlike common TV shows which are framed in genres and formats, YouTube is chaotic, left to the idiosyncrasies and caprices of the users” (Pace 217). It is up to the viewers to search for whatever they may be interested in. The site offers thousands of videos that are all uploaded for the purpose of communicating an idea, making YouTube one of the most successful tools to convey an important message. Although its content is often crude or absurd, YouTube can also be used positively as an outlet for many noble aims, such as inspiration through personal stories, health awareness, and education.

Personal stories can be found throughout YouTube: “YouTube presents stories that can be extremely subjective, showing individual experiences and ideas that are sometimes almost incomprehensible for a viewer” (Pace 219). One specific video features seventeen year-old Zach Sobiech, who was told that he had a rare, terminal bone cancer called osteosarcoma.

After the diagnosis, Zach came up with the unique idea to document the final days of his life. Zach’s 22 minute-long video was uploaded through YouTube, and has attracted almost ten million views. The creator of this video successfully uses YouTube as a platform to show Sobiech’s journey through this life-threatening illness.

While not everyone can truly understand what it is like to have cancer, Zach’s message gets passed along with each click of YouTube’s featured “share” button, encouraging viewers to ponder important life lessons about hope, family, gratitude, and living a rich life. The YouTube upload was undoubtedly a smart move in the effort to share Sobiech’s story of courage and optimism.

The site can also be used as a way to inform the public of health-related issues. Those who promote health awareness are always looking for new ways to communicate life-saving information, and since “YouTube is one of the most frequently viewed Internet sites, where more than 100 million videos are viewed daily” (Ache 389) it seems to be a
perfect way to express different health awareness ideas: “Although individuals search for cancer information for different purposes, information gathered in a more active manner—such as searching YouTube—can be influential in decision making” (Ache 389).

YouTube is a site that has a vast amount of information compiled for the viewers, and all visitors have to do is search for a certain keyword. Kevin A. Ache and Lorraine S. Wallace from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine compiled research to discover how many people were searching YouTube under the topic of HPV vaccinations: “The most important finding of this study was that 75% of the reviewed video clips portrayed HPV vaccination in a positive light” (391). This is great news for those who want to stress the importance of the HPV vaccination. The videos that portray vaccinations in a positive way encourage the viewer to get vaccinated: “Of note was the fact that the number of HPV vaccination video clips posted on YouTube had increased by more than 100 over the past year alone” (391).

The research provided proves that YouTube is an evolving site, and the number of videos on a specific topic can rapidly increase. If there are greater numbers of videos on a topic, that means there is more information available to the public to inform them about an important health issue. The more views a video has, the more likely it is to be shared, an important factor in the world of healthcare.

“YouTube videos can also be very useful in the health education field. With the rapid changes occurring in the field of health, it is particularly important that educators who are teaching health-related content have access to engaging and relevant resources to provide to their learners” (Burke 3). Videos are available that address various diseases, which offers students a visual aid in understanding what a particular virus or bacteria may look like. Furthermore, because of the clever teaching methods technology has to offer, different forms of technology have become increasingly more evident in all kinds of classrooms: “Use of innovative video technology resources such as YouTube can be integrated to provide relevant and targeted information to supplement college course content, create a sense of ‘classroom community,’ and enrich the learning environment for all students” (Burke 1).

YouTube is a resources for many things. Whether it is for education or purely for entertainment, the videos the site offers always have purpose. Primarily, YouTube serves as a means of expression for personal stories, health promotion, and educational uplift. It may be hard for some to believe that there is more to YouTube than silly videos shot from a cellphone, but people should be open-minded to all the great things the site has to offer. When applied properly, YouTube is a powerful tool for positive change.

Works Cited


The Significance of Gun Reform in the United States

Emily Noftz

American citizens have had the right to own and carry firearms since December of 1791 when the Second Amendment to The Constitution was enacted, stating: “the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed” (Madison). The founding fathers added this Amendment to guarantee that American citizens are able to protect themselves and their families. While many present-day Americans use guns responsibly for both recreation and personal protection, a number of them abuse this constitutional right by using guns to commit violent crimes. In fact, 11,078 of the 16,259 homicides that occurred in 2009 involved firearms, indicating that the United States has a serious gun control problem (United States National Vital Statistics Report). The United States needs to enact new gun ownership reforms that require all firearms dealers to run potential gun owners through the background check system, all mental health professionals to input mental illnesses into the proper government databases, and all concealed carry permit holders to go through proper training.

The Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act passed in 1993 eventually led to the creation of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System that enables firearms dealers to immediately check every gun buyer’s eligibility to purchase a firearm based on their criminal record. While this act appears to be a concrete way for the government to screen the sale of every gun in America, this is not the case. One problem is that not every gun sale goes through the system. Many prospective gun owners choose to purchase their guns at gun shows, where the government does not require background checks.

Private sales, or the sale of a firearm between two individuals that do not have federal firearms licenses, are also a problem because they don’t require background checks either. Requiring both the sale of guns between private parties and the sale of guns at gun shows to run background checks on potential gun owners would help to ensure that guns do not fall into the wrong hands.

There is also a problem with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System and its efficiency. The database has the potential to flag people’s background checks if they have been declared mentally ill, but this rarely occurs. An article published by National Public Radio reports that, “the database lacks millions of records that it needs in order to be effective.” States aren’t reporting mental illnesses and inputting them into the database because of patient confidentiality. This is a problem because people who are mentally ill are able to purchase guns. Lori Haas, whose daughter Emily was injured in the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting says, “[she thinks] that those states are doing a disservice to their citizens. They’re not doing what they can to protect public safety and to keep firearms out of the hands of potentially dangerous people.” The gunman from the shooting in which Haas’ daughter was injured had been receiving intensive mental health care for years, but he wasn’t in the system. If he had been, perhaps he wouldn’t have been able to purchase the gun that he used to kill 32 people and wound 17 others. This is one example that supports the idea that requiring all physicians and psychologists to report mental illnesses to a specific database has the potential to save lives and reduce the amount of gun violence that occurs (Brady).

Another factor that contributes to gun violence in America is a lack of training. According to the United States Government Accountability Office, law-abiding citizens in 41 of the 50 states can easily obtain a permit that allows them to carry a concealed weapon with no training (Gun Control: States Laws’ and Requirements). While every state requires citizens to pass a test in order to receive a driver’s license, very few of them require citizens to pass a test to hold a license to carry a deadly weapon. Ed Kantor, public information officer for the Washington City Police Department, states that, “the number one recommendation I
would make... is to [require] a firearms safety class from a professional instructor” (Kessler).

Tiger McKee, American journalist and veteran firearms instructor, declares that “if you own a firearm, you need training.” In an article he wrote for The American Rifleman, McKee reports that firearms training courses not only teach people gun safety, but they also cover basic non-firearm defense techniques. In these classes, students learn to create distance and change the attacker’s mind, discouraging them before any weapons need to be fired. This idea of de-escalating crisis situations and deterring crime before it happens is crucial to keeping the United States safe. If every firearm owner who carried a concealed weapon were required to have this training, fewer citizens would be involved in accidental shootings and shootings related to self-defense (McKee).

The United States government needs to enact these new gun ownership reforms if it wants to save the lives of its citizens. In order to gain the support of the American people as a whole, both the liberal and conservative parties, need to focus less on taking away firearms from law abiding-citizens and start focusing education and screening. By ensuring that the people’s Second Amendment rights won’t be infringed upon, the government will easily be able to pass new gun ownership reforms that have the potential to make the United States one of the safest countries on the planet.

Works Cited


THE EFFICACY OF JURASSIC PARK AS A WORK OF SCIENCE FICTION

JAMES BADER

S cience fiction novels often represent the worries of scientific advancement at their time of publication. The effectiveness of a science fiction novel is defined by the novel being centered on some scientific aspect, often newly found, that is arguably moral or immoral. This argument of morality is accomplished through the use of doubt and fear.

Michael Crichton’s Jurassic Park addresses many issues surrounding biotechnology, which, twenty-three years after the novel’s publication, are still controversial subjects. Jurassic Park is effective as a science fiction novel because it offers insight into and extrapolates outcomes of certain technological developments. Specifically, Crichton offers insight into the morality of synthesizing or duplicating life in a laboratory.

Cloning is a topic frequently in the news and on peoples’ minds. Recreating life, stirs emotions in nearly everyone. An article in Social Science & Medicine discusses the various problems surrounding cloning, such as the stage at which an embryo is considered life, and biotechnology in general. While surveys show positive attitudes towards science and new technology, these surveys also show skepticism about motivations and the applications of this
new technology, demonstrating concern especially over privacy and ethical issues regarding biogenetics (Shepherd).

A 2007 article written on the status of cloning a decade after Dolly the sheep was created, details the legislation banning cloning, which was called “incompatible with human dignity” (Caulfield). However, many scientists thought, and still think, cloning can be used beneficially to synthesize tissue for human implants, and more. The ambiguous ban leaves more questions than it answers, such as: What is compatible with human dignity? Where would the line that separates ethical and non-ethical cloning be drawn, if anywhere? Is it really fair to sacrifice one embryo for cloning an organism designed to support another? (Caulfield).

In Jurassic Park, John Hammond’s character uses ancient dinosaur DNA to create previously extinct organisms. Hammond hires researchers from the universities in order to turn a profit. Initially the first visitors are in awe, especially paleontologist Alan Grant and botanist Ellie, who dream of the information to be gained from research, demonstrated when Grant says, “[The cloning of dinosaurs] changes everything” (Crichton 93).

By the end of the novel, however, the dinosaurs overcome the biological and physical restraints Hammond and his team have in place. The technology the scientists created proceeds to wreak havoc on the park, its human inhabitants, and eventually, the world at large. The surviving witnesses are disgusted, anxious, and frightened, particularly about future consequences not yet foreseen. Towards the end of the novel, Grant and Ellie, as well as the government, are concerned about migration of dinosaurs towards the mainland.

Crichton’s insights into cloning found in Jurassic Park successfully develop the novel as a work of science fiction. The paralleling of cloning dinosaurs to modern cloning instills fear in the reader by closely mirroring events that have already happened: discovery and monopolization of the biotechnology of cloning, followed by questioning of the surrounding ethical principles. Then a nightmarish outcome is one that is realistic, and could occur in the near future.

Despite the fact that Dolly was not created until years after its publication, Jurassic Park had already put a bioethical voice into the back of society’s mind. The concern for the ethics of cloning was what initiated the laws that banned it. Crichton’s novel, published twenty three years ago, is partly responsible for a worldwide legislation banning this field of research. This clearly shows the impact of Jurassic Park as a science fiction novel.

While the biotechnology evolution pushes onward, Jurassic Park helped to slow it down, if only for moment. The novel causes the reader to at least question cloning. Perhaps in the near future, Crichton’s imaginative world will be all too real, and previously extinct organisms will be exhibits in zoos.

Works Cited


Green Day’s Symbolic Use of “September”

Ciara Bryan

“Wake Me Up When September Ends” by Green Day is one of the band’s most successful songs. It was written to share singer Billie Joel Armstrong’s emotions about his father’s death; he lost his battle with cancer in September of 1982 when Armstrong was just 10 years old. The song also sympathizes with those who suffered through the 9/11 tragedy. Armstrong uses the month of September as a symbol for how he felt about his father’s death, as well as how people felt after losing their loved ones on 9/11.

Armstrong chose September because that is the month his father died and also when 9/11 happened. But the change in the season also represents his emotions during that time of his life. Armstrong writes, “Summer has come and passed / The innocent can never last” (Armstrong 2). The cold after a nice, warm season of summer represents the approaching sadness that Armstrong had when his father died. When a loved one passes, the emotions grow deeper as time goes on just as the fall gets colder as it continues. Summer was pleasant and warm, and everything was fine before his father died and before 9/11. Then, the change of the season brought the cold, and with the cold came the tragedies. This also represents a time of mourning for Armstrong.

The cold also shows the way Americans feel about the acts that occurred on September 11, 2001. The cold represents the feelings of those victimized because as more vital information emerged about the situation, those hurt were reminded of what they lost; the cold symbolizes tragedies continuing to get worse. For many Americans, personally affected or not, this was a very hard time. None want to be reminded of the troubled times endured by the United States during that September. So in this sense, the lyrics, “Wake me up when September ends” (Armstrong 3) relate to the state of depression many Americans faced during that dark month, and their desire for the month to be over because of the pain they suffered and remembered every day.

The next lines include the lyrics, “Drenched in my pain again / Becoming who we are” (Armstrong 9-10). This speaks to the realization that all the pain humans suffer and the hardships they face make them stronger and shapes them into more resilient human beings. The loss of Armstrong’s father hurt him, but he knew because of this he would grow into a better man and he needed to accept himself growing into that man. The relatives of the victims of the 9/11 tragedy felt this way too. Spouses had to move on with their lives without their loved ones and children had to experience life on their own without the presence of a parent.

In the song, Armstrong uses the phrase, “Ring out the bells again,” (Armstrong 17) which has more than one meaning. Bells are typically used in a church to signal death. The ringing of bells in the song refers to those played at his father’s funeral. But it can also represent Armstrong’s feelings that are reemerging as the anniversary of his father’s death nears. In a Rolling Stone interview, Armstrong describes the emotions he had while performing the song during a Green Day concert on the 30th anniversary of his father’s death: “That was weighing on me. We finished that set with ‘Wake Me Up When September Ends.’ It was a pretty heavy night” (Clinch).

Just as Armstrong’s feelings reemerge around the time of his father’s death, so do the emotions of Americans that were affected by 9/11. In the lines, “Ring out the bells again,” the bells show the acknowledgment of the survivors’ sadness. Every year on the anniversary of 9/11, people gather around the memorial erected in honor of those killed and are reminded once again of the disaster that occurred. Using September as a symbol in “Wake Me Up When September Ends,” Armstrong compares the way he dealt with his father’s death with the way people felt after losing their families and friends on 9/11. Armstrong tells us that it is possible to go on and to live despite death, and “become
who we are” in the best way possible; impacted by tragedy, but not controlled by it.

Works Cited

O’Connor’s “Misfit” as the Grim Reaper

Kayla Dolison

The characters in Flannery O’Connor’s “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” can be analyzed many different ways. The Misfit is a major character in this story who plays a role in the fate of the family. The Misfit represents the Grim Reaper; he personifies death. He does this through the way he dresses, the car he drives, and his unwavering determination.

Bobby Lee, Hiram, and The Misfit all dress in dark clothing. When they step out of the car, their attire is what stands out first. “One was a fat boy in black trousers and a red sweat shirt, the other had on a blue striped coat and a gray hat, and the driver had on blue jeans and a black hat and gun” (O’Connor 13).

Black is the color that often represents death and/or evil. All three of these men are dressed in dark shades because they are bringing death upon the family. The color of their attire is foreshadowing that the Misfit will be taking their souls. People also wear black to funerals to show respect for the dead. The characters, then, are also showing respect for the family who is about to die.

The Misfit, wearing his “black hat” and carrying a black gun, represents the Grim Reaper, who is always depicted in a black cloak and holding a black scythe. Both the dark clothing and weapons symbolize death. Just as the Reaper carries the scythe, The Misfit carries the gun to kill whomever he is “coming for.”

The car that The Misfit drives also represents death. O’Connor describes The Misfit’s car as a “big black battered hearse-like automobile” (13). A hearse is used to transport the dead. This implies that The Misfit is not actually there to save them; he is there to literally and figuratively carry them to their deaths.

As the family watches the car coming towards them, it appears to move slower and slower the closer it gets. This image parallels that of the Grim Reaper, who does not walk, but slowly glides as he is coming for you, making no sounds (BMJ). The hearse-like vehicle that is slowly coming around the bend is representative of how the Grim Reaper glides toward his victims.

When The Misfit gets out of the car and approaches the family he doesn’t say a word, he “looked down with a steady expressionless gaze to where they were sitting and didn’t speak” (O’Connor 13). Staring without speaking is another representation of the Grim Reaper; he never talks to his targets. This incites fear in the Reaper’s and the Misfit’s victims.

The Misfit came to do a specific job, and just like the Grim Reaper, he cannot be talked or bribed out of it. Throughout the story there are many times when the grandmother begs for her life, and she is the only one to do so in the family. She says, “I know you wouldn’t shoot a lady!...Pray! Jesus, you ought not to shoot a lady” (O’Connor 20-21). But no matter how many times one pleads, the Grim Reaper never gives in because the person’s fate is already sealed. The Reaper simply collects him; in its eyes the person is already dead (Stylianou). This is how The Misfit saw the grandmother, so when she said, “I’ll give you all the money I’ve got,” he coldly replied, “There never was a body that gave the undertaker a tip” (O’Connor 21).

- 23 -
grandmother paying him really would not matter because she is already dead to him.

In O’Connor’s “A Good Man Is Hard to Find,” The Misfit represents the Grim Reaper because of his dark attire and weapon, his hearse-like vehicle, and his unwavering determination to accomplish his mission. The family’s fate is sealed when The Misfit shows up to “save” them.

Works Cited

---

The Path to Heaven via “Owl Creek Bridge”

COURTNEY DRENNEN

The short story “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” by Ambrose Bierce describes the hanging of Peyton Farquhar a Confederate sympathizer caught trying to sabotage the Union railroad. As he is dying, he hallucinates that he is escaping from his death but soon realizes that it was all just his imagination. In the story there is a sequence of events in which heaven is symbolized in three different ways: the natural sunlight, Peyton’s wife and home, and the blinding white light.

The first step in Peyton’s journey to heaven occurs in Part III when he imagines himself surfacing from a river. He feels “his head emerge; his eyes [are] blinded by the sunlight” (Bierce 206). It is said that when people are close to dying they see a bright white light; this is often believed to be God opening his world to them. The white light that Peyton sees is not just sunlight, it is God’s light showing him the way to heaven.

When Peyton feels “his head emerge,” he is entering the afterlife (Bierce 206). He is “blinded by the sunlight,” which is when God opens the gates to welcome him into heaven (Bierce 206). An article on near-death experiences in *The New York Times* states, “many say they enter a tunnel of darkness and move towards a bright light” when they are near death (Keller). It can be expected that the bright light will move out of vision if one is recovering from the experience; for Peyton the light only gets brighter, symbolizing his imminent death.

The next step in Peyton’s journey to heaven is leaving his “guardian angel,” his wife, here on earth. When he enters through the walkway of his home and sees his wife, her “flutter” and her “fresh” appearance along with her “smile of ineffable joy” and “attitude of matchless grace and dignity,” he characterizes her as angelic (Bierce 208). Perhaps Peyton’s wife is like an angel as stated in Psalm 91, Verse 11, “for he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways” (Bible Gateway).

Peyton’s wife was his protector on Earth, but now that he is dead her job is over. He is leaving the real world and entering heaven, where God himself will protect him. In the Bible, the Second Book of Peter, Chapter 1, Verses 11-21 state, “And God will open wide the gates of heaven for you to enter into the eternal Kingdom” (Bible Gateway). This verse suggests that people enter God’s Kingdom through a metaphorical gate just like the one Peyton sees. When he walks through the gate, it symbolizes him entering heaven and accepting God’s offer of eternal life.

The last step of Peyton’s journey is to leave the physical world and begin his afterlife in heaven. This happens at the end of Part III when “a blinding white light blazes all about him with a sound like a shock of a canon” (Bierce 209). During this moment, Peyton is succumbing to
a violent death. He is officially entering into the afterlife and leaving this world, but he still remembers his corporal life. In the Bible, Exodus Chapter 19, Verse 13 states, “No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live. When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain” (Bible Gateway). This shows that the “shock of the canon” that Peyton hears is the sound that calls him to heaven.

When “all is darkness and silence,” God is taking away Peyton’s pain and suffering (Bierce 209). Revelation 21:4-8 says, “He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever” (Bible Study Tools). Now that Peyton is in heaven everything is silent and God can protect him from evil, or “darkness,” and keep him safe. It is because God is shielding Peyton from pain and evil that he can remember the good parts of his life: memories of his wife and home.

The sequence of events in Peyton Farquhar’s hanging on the bridge that lead to his death symbolizes heaven in three ways. The steps he takes to enter the Kingdom of God lead him on his journey to heaven. What Peyton really sees is God’s light guiding him, with the gate and walkway as its entrance. The blinding light and the “darkness and silence” are symbols of Peyton’s official entrance. Now that Peyton is in heaven, God will protect him and his wife no longer needs to be his “guardian angel.”

Works Cited


their own heads, scratched themselves, rocked, screamed, hit others, spit and were verbally abusive. Results showed that both groups responded well to music therapy: not only did the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) group have a drop in harmful behavior, but those without also saw a decline.

“The major finding of the present study was that vibroacoustic music reduced challenging behavior in individuals with ASD and developmental disability. The finding was demonstrated in BPI ratings, behavior observation analyses, and assistants’ ratings. In all cases, the effect sizes were moderate to large” (Lundqvist 395).

Brain Performance Index (BPI) ratings measure certain cognitive functions in the brain during and after activity. In patients afflicted with autism, vibroacoustic therapy significantly decreased self-injurious behaviors as opposed to those without ASD. Researchers on this case believe that it acts in accordance with specific frequencies, mainly 40-44 Hz, because it is just barely detectable as opposed to being too soft or with too much vibration. Behavior Observation Analyses (BOA) were done on both groups as well; the VAT method proved to be beneficial for all patients in the study.

Considering all of the data collected over two sessions, with over 20 patients in both ASD and Non-ASD categories, the research indicates that vibroacoustic therapy is a viable and effective method for assisting those with challenging behaviors. Staff that worked with both sets of patients stated that “Use of vibroacoustic music would be of benefit in the everyday life of individuals with challenging behaviors” (Lundqvist 398).

Many institutes have started using these vibroacoustic chairs in group sessions and one-on-one evaluations. Researchers have found them to be especially helpful during times of conflict. “For instance, going to bed had previously been a moment of opposition, conflict, and clash. However, after the staff started to allow the person with a challenging behaviors to have a moment in the music chair before going to bed this time of day became free of conflict and turned into a moment of joy for the individual concerned, and a moment of relief for the staff” (Lundqvist 399). Vibroacoustic therapy has provided a new and more holistic approach to treating patients with autism.

Works Cited


Fall 2014 Essays
In "Wordsworth and Current Memory Research," Beth Lau argues that William Wordsworth’s poetry “is preoccupied with the role of memory in individual life” (675). The literary scholar Renate Lachmann extends this idea to all literature when she argues that literature is a “mnemonic art par excellence.” In literature, Lachmann claims, writers reveal the workings of the art of memory, which involves people creating mnemonic constructions in an attempt to recapture the past.

Li-Young Lee’s poem “This Room and Everything in It” shows the importance we attach to memory by revealing its connection with the fear of loss and love. Lee explores his theme with a speaker who attempts to develop mnemonic connections between objects and emotions so that he can retain the memory of an intimate experience with his wife. As he attempts to use objects as symbols for his emotions, the speaker expresses concerns about committing to memory that which he fears losing. The speaker’s attempt to practice memory as an art, however, takes him out of the moment, and he forgets what he hoped to remember. The poem develops connections between themes of love and mortality as the speaker struggles to commit every detail to memory. Through dramatizing the speaker’s struggle, the poem becomes a dramatization of the pointlessness of the desire to create memories, and it connects this desire to the ultimate forgetting that is death.

Lee’s poem reveals both the importance of memories and the work they require. At the very beginning of the poem, the speaker announces his intentions:

Lie still now
while I prepare for my future,
certain hard days ahead,

when I’ll need what I know so clearly this moment.

I am making use
of the one thing I learned
of all the things
my father tried to teach me:
the art of memory.

I am letting this room
and everything in it
stand for my ideas about love
and its difficulties.

In these stanzas, the speaker identifies the need memories serve as a source of future comfort. In addition, Lee provides readers with a very practical account of what the art of memory involves. The speaker tells his lover that he intends to use mnemonic devices to attach his feelings and emotions to everything in the room.

Lee’s poem reveals the difficulty of creating memories, and it suggests that the effort we take to create memories can have negative results. While the speaker works to develop mnemonic constructions that attach his feelings to objects, he starts to get distracted by what is going on around him in the moment:

And one day, when I need
to tell myself something intelligent
about love,
I’ll close my eyes
and recall this room and everything in it:
My body is estrangement.
This desire, perfection.
Your closed eyes my extinction.
Now I’ve forgotten my idea.

In this poem, memory, love, and lust come together to create an overwhelming situation for the speaker. He is unable to create a memory of an idea that he wanted to remember forever. The speaker is trying to remember an intimate moment with his wife. His effort to create a memory takes him out of this moment. When he focuses on the moment instead of his effort to create a memory, he gets distracted.
While he tries to construct a memory, he is overwhelmed by everything happening around him, which makes it harder for him to remember. The speaker expresses frustration when he cannot remember, since the whole idea of taking himself out of the moment was to make sure he could remember. His plan fails and the memories start to fade. He is losing everything he feels he needs to remember.

Frustration is only one of the negative associations with memory that Lee develops. Loss enters into the poem after the speaker comes to the realization of the possibility of losing his memory and thereby losing his love. At the end of the poem, Lee connects the struggle to create memories with the ultimate loss, death:

my idea
has evaporated . . . your hair is time, your thighs are song . . .
it had something to do
with death . . .
it had something
to do with love.

By trying to create new memories, the speaker is trying to keep his love alive, but the result is that he forgets whether his thoughts were about love or death.

By connecting memory to loss and death in "This Room and Everything in It," Li-Young Lee provides an interesting example of poetry's preoccupation with the role of memory in everyday life. Through this poem, readers experience the desire, effort, and loss that accompany peoples' attempts to create a memory. The primary tension expressed in the poem is that the more the speaker tries to remember, the more he forgets. As a result, Lee's poem teaches us that people should stay in the moment instead of trying to recreate it or memorize it.

Work Cited


---

**LEAD, LIQUOR, AND GUITARS**  
**MARIO GALATI**

In 1993, grunge musician, Kurt Cobain of the band Nirvana, the man who surfaced Grunge music into American culture, performed a song “Where Did You Sleep Last Night.” To most of Generation X, Cobain’s cover of this song was their first introduction to a musician by the name of Lead Belly. Lead Belly was a performer of the Depression era, a guitar player, whose life featured back-alley knife fights, hard liquor, women, and performances from prisons in the South to prominent venues in New York City during the era known as the Harlem Renaissance. As evidenced by Kurt Cobain’s covering his song, Lead Belly’s influence as a musician continued long after his death; however, his most profound influence may be as a cultural icon. Lead Belly is the archetype of the outlaw rock-and-roll lifestyle that continues to influence our culture today.

According to a biography that appears on the website of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Huddie “Lead Belly” Ledbetter was born in Mooringsport, Louisiana on January 20, 1888. His father was a sharecropper who traveled the bayou in search of work. Huddie began playing the accordion at age fifteen, and he quickly moved on to master the guitar, harmonica, piano, and violin. In time he came to be known as the “King of The Twelve String,” because he had mastered the twelve-string guitar. He could play the melody with his fingers while playing the bass lines.
with his thumb. While his hands were busy playing the guitar, Lead Belly might sing or play the harmonica as well.

Lead Belly’s musicianship and mastery of multiple instruments, however, is only part of what helps make him the archetype of the rebellious rock star. As chronicled at the Lead Belly Foundation website, Lead Belly continually had run-ins with the law when he wasn’t playing shows. In 1915, when he was twenty-seven years old, Ledbetter pulled a pistol during a fight in a ballroom in Harrison County, Texas, and he was sentenced to serve time on Harrison County’s chain gang. Lead Belly slipped off, escaped the chain gang, and returned to his rising music career.

This run-in was not a one-time thing. In 1918, he fought and killed a man in Dallas. He was sentenced to serve thirty years at the state prison in Huntsville, Texas, but, amazingly, in 1925, “he wrote a song asking Governor Pat Neff for a pardon. Neff, who had promised at his election never to pardon a prisoner, broke his promise and set Huddie Ledbetter free.” Lead Belly later found himself imprisoned again for fighting, this time at the Angola Farm prison. His mastery of music once again provided the key to his freedom. Lead Belly played a personal show for the warden, and he was set free, again.

Ledbetter’s nickname points to another aspect of the outlaw rocker archetype. Lead Belly’s relevance to today’s pop culture is evident from his biography appearing at the Badass of the Week, a website that writes the biographies of historical and cultural figures. According to the author of this website, Ben Thompson, there are two theories about how Ledbetter earned the nickname “Lead Belly.” One is that it refers to his impressive strength, Ledbetter “was tough as hell, built like a wall of iron and muscle and capable of swinging an axe or shovel with twice the strength of any other inmate.” The other theory is that it refers to Ledbetter’s heavy drinking; he was famous for his ability to hold down the most volatile moonshine. Whatever the true reasoning behind Ledbetter’s nickname, both theories add to his persona of the hard-fighting, hard-drinking, guitar-playing, rock star.

Lead Belly’s musical accomplishments were wide-ranging and influential. He had an ability to recall up to 500 songs from memory, which he could play at shows on request. He also wrote songs, many of which were written in prison, that have become folk music staples (“Lead Belly Biography”). These include “Goodnight Irene,” the song that won his freedom from prison, twice.

His songs recount his escapades with liquor, women, and prison. Despite being a criminal, Leadbelly even wrote songs for children. In recounting the stories of his life, Leadbelly incorporated field tunes and chain-gang cadences. As a result, in his music, all elements of his life came together to create the tall tales that continue to influence our culture’s image of the outlaw rocker.

While on a European tour in 1949, Lead Belly was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s disease, and he died on December 6, 1949. The music that Lead Belly wrote and left behind was not his only legacy. He also provided an archetype grounded in a mythology that recounts his exhilarating outlaw moments.

While he was an accomplished musician who heavily influenced modern music, what Lead Belly left behind was also cultural. His adventures and the tales surrounding his life from prison, to back-alley knife fights, to hard drinking and escaping chain gangs gave shape to the persona of the outlaw rock star that continues to appear in American pop culture. The continued celebration of his life on websites such as Badass of the Week suggests that Lead Belly will remain relevant as a musician and a cultural archetype for many years to come.

Works Cited


Pollution and "Going Green"

Katie Maglionico

In today’s society, “Going Green” is a new movement that aims to make this world a cleaner and safer place to live. This movement teaches people that everything society does has an impact on the environment, and this impact can be good or bad. The “Going Green” movement calls us to focus our attention on the entire ecosystem we inhabit and encourages us to be aware of how our everyday actions impact the lives of humans and animals.

In recent years, the "Going Green" movement's focus on the environment has meant a focus on how our everyday actions are contributing to climate change. While climate change is an important concern, I think this movement should also encourage people to think of the environment in other ways. Air and water pollution are two key ways that our everyday actions impact the environment.

If the point of the “Going Green” movement is to create a cleaner and safer world, more awareness should be raised about how air and water pollution effects people in their everyday lives. "Going Green" initiatives should help people understand that reducing or even stopping pollution can make their daily lives and the daily lives of others better. The efforts people take to reduce air and water pollution in their local environments will create healthier communities. In addition, these actions will help people address global challenges such as climate change and a growing demand for clean water throughout the world.

Air pollution from power plants using carbon-based fuels has a frightening and destructive impact on the earth's climate. Throughout the U.S., carbon pollution is causing several long-lasting changes in the earth's climate. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), carbon pollution contributes to changes in the earth's climate that include rising global temperatures, rising sea levels, increased heat waves and drought, and changes to the ozone layer that absorbs most of the ultraviolet radiation that reaches the Earth from the sun ("Air Pollutants"). This pollution, however, also impacts the health of millions of people.

In addition to impacting the earth's climate, air pollution is deadly to the citizens of the U.S. Due to changes in the climate caused by air pollution, for example, there has been an increase in the range of ticks and mosquitoes, which are known to spread Lyme disease and West Nile Virus ("Air Pollutants"). In addition, every day, due to air pollution, people breathe in toxins that can be fatal.

According to a 2012 EPA report on air pollutants, air pollution contributes to an increase in ground-level ozone, which is created when sunlight interacts with the toxins emitted by emissions from power plants and other sources, such as automobiles. Increased ground-level ozone seriously affects people with impaired respiratory systems, but it also affects healthy adults and children. Breathing in polluted air can trigger a range of health problems, such as chest pain, coughing, congestion and throat irritation; exposure to toxic ozone for a modest six to seven hours can significantly reduce lung function and induce respiratory inflammation. The EPA reports that “[r]ecent studies have provided evidence of partnership between the ozone levels and increases in hospital admissions for respiratory problems in considerable amounts of U.S. cities” ("Air Pollutants"). In addition, the EPA reports a 2004 study showing that power plant emissions contributed to over 24,000 deaths a year.

Along with air pollution, water pollution is very dangerous and damaging to peoples’ health. According to the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), polluted water is the world’s biggest current health risk; it threatens both the quality of life and public health throughout the U.S. ("Water"). In a recent report, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a list of nine diseases that are associated with polluted water: Giardia, Legionella, Norovirus, Shigella, Campylobacter, Salmonella, Hepatitis A, Cryptosporidium, and E. coli ("Water- Related Diseases..."
and Contaminants in Public Water Systems"). People experience these diseases by being exposed to water contaminated by pollutants that have been directly or indirectly released into the water without being treated to remove dangerous chemicals.

Most people are made aware of water pollution and its dangerous effects as a result of industrial accidents. For example, on January 9, 2014, a tank at Freedom Industries storage facility with the chemical designation Methycyclohexane Methanol (MCHM) leaked into the Elk River, which supplies drinking water to residents of Charleston, West Virginia ("2014 West Virginia Chemical Release"). According to a report on the incident prepared by the CDC, approximately 10,000 gallons of liquid containing MCHM leaked from a storage tank located near the banks of the river. An undetermined amount of the liquid entered the river and was taken into the local water system. Nearly 300,000 residents were affected, state and federal agencies declared a state of emergency, and they ordered one sixth of West Virginia's population to not drink or use tap water for any purpose other than flushing toilets. Industrial accidents, however, are only one source of water pollution.

A separate report from the CDC identifies numerous sources of water contamination, and many of the sources they identify are the result of everyday activities, including local land use practices, manufacturing processes, sewer overflows, and wastewater releases ("Water-Related Diseases and Contaminants in Public Water Systems").

In addition to causing diseases and contaminating local water supplies, water pollution contributes to a growing threat facing human populations throughout the world. According to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), global water supplies are facing unprecedented demands as a result of growing populations, changing climate, and a modernizing world. As stated in the report, “Water use increased at double the rate of population growth in the 20th century, and by 2025 an estimated 1.8 billion people will live in regions with absolute water scarcity. Currently, 884 million people in the world do not have access to a safe source of drinking water, and 2.6 billion people are without access to adequate sanitation facilities" ("Project on Global Water Policy"). Citizens of the U.S. do not currently have a problem accessing safe drinking water. However, if we continue to allow our water to be contaminated, we will be contributing to a worldwide problem that people are already find difficult to solve.

Although air and water pollution are growing problems, there are actions we can take to reduce them. In its report on air pollutants, for example, the EPA reveals that governmental regulations that reduce air pollution have an impact on public health. One study cited by the EPA found that deaths associated with air pollutants had been reduced from the 24,000 deaths a year reported in 2004 to an estimated 13,000 in 2010 ("Air Pollutants"). This study attributed the reduction to strong state and federal regulations that enforced stringent emission controls. These regulations had a dramatic impact on reducing air pollution. A more recent report from the Clean Air Task Force shows that reductions continue; however, over 7,500 deaths each year are still attributed to fine particle pollution from U.S power plants ("Death and Disease from Power Plants").

By “Going Green” we can not only save the world; we can also save and preserve the lives of thousands of people. Public health can be greatly improved if we take action to reduce air and water pollution, and the actions we take to improve the air and water in our local environments can help address global problems such as climate change and the growing scarcity of clean water.

To encourage people to take the steps necessary to save the world, the “Going Green” movement should emphasize the impacts that local action can have on improving peoples' health and the quality of peoples' everyday lives.

Works Cited

<http://www.catf.us/fossil/problems/power_plants/>.


"Water."


Preparing for the Future:

UNEMPLOYMENT AND ITS NEGATIVE EFFECTS

PATRICK MARX

Once we are out of college, we expect that most of us will get full time jobs. However, times are getting harder and good jobs aren’t always available. In his overview of a report by the Economic Policy Institute, Jordan Weisman at Slate, an on-line magazine, reveals some of the challenges we might face in the near future. Roughly 8.5 percent of college graduates between the ages of 21 and 24 were unemployed and the unemployment rate for all college graduates over the age of 25 is a higher-than-normal 3.3 percent. The EPI also found that a total of 16.8 percent of new graduates are “underemployed,” meaning they’re either jobless and hunting for work; working part-time because they can’t find a full-time job; or want a job, have looked within the past year, but have now given up on searching. We expect that our Duquesne education will prepare us for the future, and we do not expect that our future will include unemployment. However, we may find ourselves unemployed or underemployed when we leave college. If we do, we need to be prepared for the problems that might result, which can be a lot more serious than a lack of money. Blake J. Turner, a psychiatrist at Columbia University, notes that “[r]esearch on the physical and mental health consequences of unemployment has been quite consistent in showing that unemployment has substantial and often severe effects on health” (213).

Below I discuss the serious mental health problems that can result from unemployment. Given how serious these problems can be, I propose that Duquesne University’s Career Services Center find ways to help students prepare to deal with the problems that can result from unemployment.

Research has shown that unemployment can affect an individual's mental health, and these effects can be more or less severe. Although it is serious, depression is probably the least severe mental health problem that can result from unemployment. In a report from their study that followed 7,000 unemployed Australians over a seven-year period, Peter Butterworth and his colleagues at the Centre for Mental Health Research at the Australian National University note that surveys in the U.S. have found that unemployment “was a prominent risk factor for both major and minor depression” (1014). Butterworth's study built on this finding, and he concluded that the depression resulting from unemployment could affect people even after they had found work (1019).

Participants in their study who found work that was not challenging, demanding, or rewarding continued to experience depression. For some their depression became more severe. In fact, Butterworth suggests that remaining unemployed might have been better for the mental health of those who got certain types of jobs (1020). He concludes that this finding "runs counter to a common belief that any job offers psychological benefits for individuals over the demoralizing effects of unemployment" (1020).

Butterworth's findings make me think hard about the Economic Policy Institute’s underemployment statistics mentioned earlier. As students who may one day experience
unemployment, we need to understand depression and how taking certain types of jobs can increase or reduce it.

Suicide is a more serious problem that can result from mental health issues related to unemployment. Studies show that unemployment can contribute to suicide, but only if the unemployed person is already experiencing other mental health issues. Alison Milner and her colleagues at the University of Melbourne conducted a meta-analysis of research on the cause and effect relationship between unemployment and mental health issues. They sought to determine what researchers have learned about whether unemployment causes mental health problems or whether mental health problems cause unemployment.

These researchers do not find that unemployment causes mental health problems; instead, they conclude that "there is... evidence that people with impaired mental health are likely to lose their jobs or experience future unemployment" (909). They also point out, however, that unemployment is a major suicide risk factor for those who have existing mental health disorders (915). Given that unemployment is a real possibility for recent graduates, students who already have mental health issues should be made aware that unemployment is a major suicide risk factor.

We may not want to think about it, but we face the reality that we may find ourselves unemployed after college. This can be bad enough, but once we recognize that there is a connection between unemployment and mental health issues such as depression and suicide, we understand that unemployment could be something extremely harmful.

I propose that Duquesne University’s Career Services Center should develop a class that teaches the mental health effects of unemployment. If we are able to institute a class like this at the school, students can better prepare themselves for their future after graduation. The university wants to see their students succeed in college and after graduation. This class if properly structured could benefit some members of our student body and further advance Duquesne’s mission to provide an education for the mind, heart, and spirit. In addition, this program could provide another opportunity for Duquesne to be a national leader. Once this program begins, other universities will recognize it as beneficial to their students as well.

Works Cited


Fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, involves using chemicals to remove natural gas from shale rock that is located deep below the ground ("Enormous Potential through Fracking"). Recently, the process of obtaining this gas is causing problems to arise. Some groups have nothing but positive things to say about fracking; others say that it needs to be completely stopped.

Fracking in the Marcellus Shale has caused a significant boost in the economy (Skreekumer); however, according to scientific research (Rozell and Reaven) and
award-winning documentary films such as *Gasland*, chemicals used when fracking are starting to resurface in local drinking water and the drilling activities are causing many other issues. Instead of completely putting a stop to the process of hydraulic fracturing, the environmental and health issues caused by fracking should be properly addressed and corrected.

Currently, there is no environmental agency or branch of an existing environmental agency solely dedicated to supervising what occurs at fracking sites and what chemicals and materials are utilized. Creating an agency devoted to regulating hydraulic fracturing would ensure that tens of thousands of people would keep their jobs, while also ensuring that there will be significantly less contamination of local water and less pollution of areas surrounding natural gas wells. As citizens, we should encourage our elected officials to create the type of agency we need to protect our future.

The increased production of natural gas from shale deposits has had a profound effect on America's energy resources and a significant positive impact on the economy of communities in which shale gas is extracted. According to *Energy From Shale*, a website devoted to spreading "the good news about fracking," the United States produces 20 trillion cubic feet of natural gas every year.

It is estimated that the Marcellus Shale region alone contains over 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, which means that the Marcellus Shale formation holds enough usable natural gas to not only provide for the people of Pennsylvania, but to make this state into a national exporter of energy. Pennsylvanian shale deposits are often described as "oceans of natural gas," and the Marcellus Shale has the most expansive shale basin in the country.

According to the Marcellus Shale Coalition, which represents the interests of industries related to natural gas extraction in Pennsylvania, natural gas can be used in the home to heat, cool, cook, and could even be used as fuel for motor vehicles in the near future. The Coalition describes the Marcellus Shale fracking boom, which began in 2008, as a "savior" to the economies of Northeastern and Southwestern Pennsylvania. The Coalition claims that 240,000 jobs have been created indirectly and directly through Marcellus Shale fracking ("The Marcellus Shale"). These jobs are in the drilling industry and industries such as transportation, service, construction, and information services.

The economic benefits of shale gas extend beyond local communities. A statement from the White House Council of Economic Advisors last year claims that "Every barrel of oil or cubic foot of gas that we produce at home instead of importing abroad means more jobs, faster growth, and a lower trade deficit" ("How Fracking Has Helped the U. S. Economy"). This statement emphasizes perhaps one of the biggest benefits of Marcellus Shale fracking: the U. S. is becoming less and less dependent on foreign oil, causing the trade balance to improve. David Kargbo, a researcher in the College of Engineering at Temple University, contends that thanks to the jump in U. S. oil production, the U.S. trade balance has fallen from $2.87 trillion to only $34.3 billion. The supply of natural gas in the U.S. is also reliable. The complicated delivery system has never interrupted as has happened in the past to fossil fuels imported from overseas ("How Fracking Has Helped the U. S. Economy").

Shale energy seemingly came about at a perfect time for the many people and businesses suffering from the depressed economy. The United States’ utilization of oil production is a huge gift to the American economy by not only generating thousands of direct and indirect jobs, but also greatly reducing the U. S.’s need for foreign oil. However, these economic benefits could soon come to an end if nothing is done about the environmental and health issues that the unsafe practices of hydraulic fracturing are causing.

Although Marcellus Shale fracking has seemingly done nothing but good for the U.S. and the economy, many critics say that it has ruined parts of the country Fracking introduces toxins into the environment, and long-term consumption of the type of toxins produced by fracking have been shown to cause cancer, birth defects, and disorders of the nervous system (*Gasland*). Surprisingly, an amendment to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 exempts hydraulic fracturing from regulation under the Safe Water Drinking Act (Rozell and Reaven). Critics contend that this exemption means that gas companies can inject any
unknown toxic chemicals into underground sources of drinking water without reporting to the government first. This shocking fact means that likely nothing is being done to protect people from drinking water contaminated by fracking chemicals. This is an especially pressing issue for residents of Western Pennsylvania.

In addition to contaminating drinking water, fracking can cause major issues for the communities in which fracking occurs. As noted by Rozell and Reaven, researchers for the Department of Technology and Society at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, “In recent years, shale gas formations have become economically viable through the use of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing. These techniques carry potential environmental risk due to their high water use and substantial risk for water pollution.”

The process involved when extracting natural gas uses substantial amounts of resources. For example, each gas well requires at least four hundred tanker trucks to carry water and other materials to and from the well site, and it takes anywhere from one to eight million gallons of water to complete each fracking job. The amount of water is just one concern; the number of trucks is another. Small, rural communities experiencing a "fracking boom" often lack the resources to repair the damage to roads caused by increased traffic from heavy trucks. In addition, the development required for new well sites, such as cutting new access roads, can cause long-term harm to the natural environment. This damage can end up hurting areas whose economy relies on outdoor activities such as hiking, hunting, or fishing ("Natural Gas Plays in the Marcellus Shale"). Pennsylvania has many communities like this.

The future is in our hands, and we need the government’s help to protect it. The natural gas industry has generated billions of dollars in revenue and created millions of jobs. Natural gas provides the cleanest burning fossil fuel, and it has the potential to reduce harmful emissions generated by oil and coal. Though that sounds like a perfect scenario, there are many serious issues related to the natural gas industry: contaminated drinking water, pollution created during the process of extracting gas, and damage to local infrastructure and the natural environment. Instead of completely putting an end to hydraulic fracturing, however, we should seek a compromise that addresses the environmental and health issues caused by fracking.

Government can address the issues with hydraulic fracturing in many different ways, but the most logical seems to be creating a branch of an existing agency or a new environmental agency to make sure that gas companies follow all regulations. There are existing government agencies charged with environmental protection, but the size of the challenge posed by fracking indicates the need for an agency dedicated solely to regulating shale gas extraction. The Marcellus Shale is the largest shale basin, but it is only one of fourteen shale gas basins that have been identified in twelve different states.

A new agency would need to establish a branch in each of the different parts of the country where shale basins are being penetrated. As citizens, we should encourage our elected officials to create an agency to regulate natural gas drilling. If we do not, then all of the hard work being done to develop the positive aspects of an alternative fuel source may create damage to people and the environment that we are unable to repair.

Works Cited


“Barbie Doll,” the Grotesque, and Societal Changes

Gaston Cooper

For centuries, the Grotesque has been used to communicate complex ideas through art and literature. Wolfgang Kayser, one of the most respected experts on the subject, defines the Grotesque as “the estranged world,” “a play with the absurd,” and “an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world” (Kayser 187-8). Marge Piercy applies the ancient concepts of the Grotesque—concisely paraphrased as alienation, absurdity, and exorcism—to challenge contemporary gender stereotypes in her poem “Barbie Doll.”

The protagonist of “Barbie Doll” experiences alienation when “in the magic of puberty, a classmate said: / ‘You have a great big nose and fat legs.’” This insult causes her to feel estranged from her world, in spite of her generally happy life up to that point. She is “healthy, tested intelligent, / possess[ing] strong arms and back, / abundant sexual drive and manual dexterity,” but these qualities are overshadowed by her peer’s jab and her expanding social paranoia. Her upbringing has made her vulnerable to criticism and in her mind, “everyone saw a fat nose on thick legs” (Piercy).

Rebecca Albright explains that the death of Piercy’s character is the ultimate result of her alienation: “she succumbed to society’s pressure for perfection and committed suicide just to be considered beautiful and feminine” (Albright). Albright also indicates that the poem reflects the problems of girls throughout the world: “they are still pressured to meet a standard for beauty and behavior which society has created for them… it seems that they will never outgrow past ideologies which dictate how they should look and behave” (Albright).

As Martin explains, literary absurdity reflects the illogical nature of human actions (176). In “Barbie Doll,” the subject of the poem receives contradictory advice that only makes her frustrated and suicidal: “She was advised to play coy, / exhorted to come on hearty, / exercise, diet, smile and wheedle. / Her good nature wore out / like a fan belt. / So she cut off her nose and her legs / and offered them up.” In an absurd twist, the guidance she receives only intensifies her self-destructive thoughts, eventually leading to suicide.

The third aspect of Kayser’s definition of the Grotesque amounts to a kind of exorcism, exposing and confronting demonic aspects of the world. The message of “Barbie Doll” challenges the evils of scrutiny and shallow judgments, especially in terms of gender roles and appearance. This poem serves as a cautionary tale, a warning to adults that the way they raise children can have serious consequences.

Works Cited


Peggy Dunn Bailey, n.d. PDF.


Unreasonable expectations about female beauty have created problems for centuries, receiving criticism from a range of writers and theorists. Marge Piercy’s poem “Barbie Doll,” for instance, describes a girl who is ridiculed for her appearance. From those comments comes a downward spiral that ends with her killing herself in an attempt to look “perfect.” “Barbie Doll” represents the fragile nature of a young girl’s self-esteem, showing that one comment can lead to self-doubt, self-loathing, and self-destruction.

At the beginning of the poem, the girl is just as healthy and “normal” as any other child. Once a classmate says, “You have a great big nose and fat legs,” she imagines that everyone sees only “a fat nose on thick legs” when they look at her. Daniela Tempesta addresses this common problem, providing three reasons why girls should not compare themselves to others. Her first reason is that it is damaging to their sense of self, causing envy, lower confidence, and depression.

In “Barbie Doll,” the girl becomes frustrated because she is told to “play coy,” but also “exhorted to come on hearty, / exercise, diet, smile and wheedle.” The contradictory advice indicates to her that there is no solution to her dissatisfaction.

Tempesta’s second point is that “what you are comparing yourself to is inaccurate information,” based on false images from advertisement and entertainment media. For example, the popular YouTube video “What Guys Look for in Girls” shows young men claiming that they only like “girls who know how to cook, girls who don’t wear makeup, and ‘petite girls’” (Grier). While gender stereotype reinforcement through advertising, entertainment media, and social media like YouTube is often criticized, the messages are strong and frequent enough to make girls like the character in “Barbie Doll” hate themselves for not matching the desired type.

The last phase of the downward spiral that girls can face when dealing with society’s vision of perfection is self-destruction. Towards the end of the poem, “her good nature wore out / like a fan belt. / So she cut off her nose and legs.” Her “happy ending” only comes when she is laid out in a casket as a “perfect” corpse. While this poem may seem dramatic, risky behaviors and even suicide are part of the cult of beauty. Statistics show that 90 percent of people have a mental illness at the time they commit suicide, and that illness is usually depression (Caruso). The inability to meet societal expectations is a major cause of depression in people of all ages, and self-harm often follows.

Examining “Barbie Doll” and the pattern of self-doubt, self-loathing, and self-destruction reveals the pitfalls of social expectation and how even one word can impact a young person. The fate of the protagonist in “Barbie Doll” is shared by girls throughout the world, and it is up to the adults to end this dysfunctional cycle.

Works Cited


College Admissions and Inequality
Evan Lecher

From grade school to high school, students encounter discussions about freedom of speech, equality, and fair play. However, some colleges institute preferential treatment based on race, ethnicity, gender, and other non-academic factors. These biased admissions policies are unfair to students who do not fit the privileged demographics, and insulting to the students who are admitted only because of non-academic criteria.

The SAT is one of the primary academic diagnostic tools used in the university admissions process. However, many college administrators are trying to get rid of SAT test requirements, not because they doubt the validity of the test, but because they believe that such a move would improve racial and ethnic diversity. In "SAT Serves a Useful Purpose," George Will responds to Richard Atkinson’s desire to drop the SAT. Will declares that the SAT serves as “equality of opportunity,” and should be kept for the admission process. Furthermore, Atkinson’s assumption that the SAT reduces racial and ethnic diversity seems to indicate an insulting belief that certain types of students cannot gain admittance on their own merit.

In "Cutthroat Admissions and Rising Inequality: A Vicious Duo," Professor John Quiggen addresses a similar problem with colleges accepting students on the basis of race, ethnicity, or gender rather than academic achievements. Quiggen argues that a student’s chances of getting into an elite college are slim to none unless the student comes from either a wealthy family or minority background. He states that there is inequality in the college admissions system and refers to “wrongheaded policies” that include a range of criteria having no bearing on the student’s academic potential.

In "Race, College Admissions" Walter Harrison, former Vice President for University Relations at the University of Michigan, explains that he knows first-hand that a point system based on high school grade point average, standardized test scores, relationship to alumni, and race determines how the University of Michigan judges who gets accepted. Harrison challenges the race criterion on the basis of both ethics and practicality. One might even go further and claim that relation to alumni should also be eliminated from the criteria.

Students across the U.S. are challenging admissions policies that they believe are unfair. For instance, Heather MacDonald addresses the issue in "Half Baked: UC Berkeley’s Diversity Machine Loses Its Mind over Cupcakes.” MacDonald describes a bake sale staged to protest questionable admissions practices. The goods were priced by race and gender as a symbolic criticism of racial and gender profiling in the college acceptance process. Gibor Basri, the Vice Chancellor of Equality and Diversity at UC, Berkeley did not appear to comprehend the nature of the statement, demonstrating a “misguided interpretation of the bake sale as ‘placing a higher value on white students’” (MacDonald). The satire was lost on Basri, but it sparked a debate that may result in potential change.

While some students are beginning to question admissions practices, greater action will be required to change the system. In addition to their unfairness to the students who exist outside of the targeted demographics, these non-academic criteria for admissions imply that certain students are incapable of succeeding without manipulating the system in their favor. Such an attitude is an insult to dedicated scholars who are capable of fair competition with fellow students of any race, ethnicity, or gender.

Works Cited
A Diagnosis of Schizophrenia in “The Tell-Tale Heart”

BRIAN NEWES

Literature has portrayed various mental disorders for centuries, but the scientific study of abnormal psychology is relatively new. By analyzing mentally ill characters through the lens of modern psychology, readers can gain new insights into human behaviors. For instance, The DSM-5 (the primary reference source for abnormal psychology) states that schizophrenia is characterized by “delusions, hallucinations, and disorganized behavior” (Schizophrenia). The undiagnosed narrator of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" appears to suffer from schizophrenia, as seen through his hallucinations, paranoid delusions, and erratic actions.

It is clear from the first sentence of the story that the narrator is insane, but he attempts to prove he is not. At one point, he spends over an hour sneaking into his victim’s bedroom, and questions if "a madman [would] have been so wise as [him]." His quest to validate his sanity ironically causes him to obsess over his hallucinations and "the idea of his madness" (Gargano 179). When he hears his intended victim’s heartbeat growing louder and louder, it "heighten[s] his agony and [intensifies] his delusions" (Gargano 179). He becomes more anxious after the murder, imagining that someone may have heard the thundering heartbeat.

After the murder is complete and the police investigate a report of a loud yell, the yell that the narrator let out while committing the murder. The police do not mention the booming heartbeat, even when the narrator hears it coming from below the floorboards where he hid the corpse. He becomes paranoid that the police know his sin, and recalls that he could “bear those hypocritical smiles no longer.” His suspicion that the police are toying with him causes his paranoia to increase, furthering his idea that they "are mocking his own horror“ (Shen). In this moment, he believes the police are pretending not to hear the beating heart when, in actuality, the sound is only in his mind.

The auditory hallucinations escalate into paranoid delusions of a conspiracy, finally resulting in highly disorganized behaviors. He begins to “foam, rave, and swear” every time he hears the heart. He swings the chair and "grat[es] it upon the boards” that hide the corpse, and he "pace[s] the floor to and fro with heavy strides.” His bizarre behavior comes to a climax when he finally gives in to his insanity and admits to his crime. He declares his madness as "it is the beating of his hideous heart” that makes him confess.

After analyzing Poe’s narrator with the tools of modern psychology, it appears that the character would be diagnosed with schizophrenia if he were a real patient in a modern facility. Literature like “The Tell-Tale Heart” goes beyond a mere tale of terror because it can be seen as an early attempt to understand and portray the complexities of mental illness. In this way, such stories may deserve a place in the history of psychology.

Works Cited


Men in today’s society are still generally expected to be providers, keeping the family safe and financially stable. A man is expected only to have Yang attributes like assertion, competitiveness, and courage, with little emotional development: “Hyper-masculine men are more likely to be physically and emotionally abusive to their partners” (Gender Identity). The result of men trying to keep up with stereotypes is devastating: “A three-year study of healthy, middle-class boys and concluded that many of them are depressed, confused, isolated, and vulnerable” (Cromie). Another “recent study shows that teenage boys commit suicide at five times the rate teenage girls do” because of the “lack of emotional development” (Health). The influences that are assumed to make men strong and stable are obviously not enough.

Although women’s role in society is changing, many people still believe women should stay at home, cook, and take care of their families, all while looking like fashion models. Studies show that hyper-feminine women are more likely to accept physical and emotional abuse from their sex partners (Gender Identity).

These stereotypes also hold women back from opportunities, as indicated by a survey that found that “among Fortune 500 companies, only 90 had women as their chief executive officers” (Health). These facts seem to support the theory that strict gender role reinforcement creates problems for both sexes, reducing complex human beings to stereotypes that may not reflect their true natures or help them to achieve health and happiness.

While humans are influenced from birth to adopt gender roles, it is not necessary for them to follow these societal influences. Although most humans are not hyper-feminine or masculine, most people have anxieties and inhibitions about their femininity and masculinity due to societal influences (Gender Identity). However, if a new model were followed, one that focuses on individual self-discovery and the development of both Yin and Yang qualities, a new stage of societal development might be reached.

Works Cited

Overpopulation also exacerbates environmental issues. The population is constantly growing, which results in more people needing to consume water, vegetation, and energy. Increased traffic elevates greenhouse gas producing emissions, and so does energy production. As the human population passes the seven billion mark, greenhouse gases will increase as people burn more fossil fuels and clash over land and resources.

One of the main debates on the subject of climate change revolves around icebergs and sea levels. Icebergs in both poles are melting, causing the sea levels to rise. These icebergs used to reflect the Sun’s harmful rays, but since these icebergs are melting, the water is absorbing the heat, causing the ice to shrink. Since the early 1990s, the sea levels have been rising 0.14 inches every year, and at this rate it will only increase as greenhouse gases are produced (National Geographic). This is widely considered to be the best evidence of global warming, although some reports state that certain icebergs have increased in size by up to 50 percent (Hawkins).

The cause of global warming has been debated for the past decade. There has not been a consensus confirming that global warming is definitely caused by humans, and some predictions about global warming have been proven wrong (Hawkins). While the cause is difficult to prove beyond a doubt, many scientists urge people to follow the "precautionary principle," observing that a definite answer might come too late to reverse the damage.

At some point, the topic of climate change became economic. Reduction of greenhouse gases means changing industrial practices, and that means risking profits. Any subject of global concern tends to create a battle between at least two factions. However, the consequences of failure are too great when it comes to the rising sea level and natural disasters that could result from global warming. The wisest approach is to follow the precautionary principle and act as though climate change is caused by human overpopulation, consumption, and pollution. At the very least, global change could improve the planet by reducing pollution and stabilizing resources. The only certainty is that the current trend cannot be maintained.
One of the reasons the government should deter soda consumption is because it contains unhealthy, potentially harmful ingredients. High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS) is one of the most common ingredients in soda; many consumers see the word “corn” and think it’s healthy. However, HFCS is a genetically modified, chemically engineered sweetener that soda companies use in place of regular sugar because it’s a cheap alternative – a dangerous substitution since HFCS contains mercury, a poisonous metal.

Phosphoric acid, another unhealthy ingredient, is used to prevent the growth of molds inside the cans while maintaining a crisp, distinct taste. However, studies have found that it causes tooth decay, promotes kidney stones, and that “athletic teen girls who consume colas have five times the risk of bone fractures” (Singleton).

Obesity in the United States is at an all-time high, due in part to the over consumption of soda. Consumers pair their meals with the drink and use it as a snack, which results in numerous extra calories. Studies have shown that “those who drank sugary drinks were more likely to be obese than those who did not” (Harvard). If the government were to tax this cheap, easily accessible, unhealthy beverage consumers would be less prone to buy it. The most beneficial aspect of government taxation would be lowered obesity rates.

There have been a few attempts to get rid of soda by limiting the amount a person can purchase, or by setting limits on its ingredients. But it’s clear that the only feasible solution is taxation; doing otherwise would result in abuse (over-consumption) and nationwide outrage, as made evident by a previous attempt in New York City when large sodas were temporarily banned. Limits and bans are not feasible, but national taxation is a possibility.

One of the most notable and successful taxations of soda was recently passed in San Francisco; it applies to “any nonalcoholic, sweetened drink with more than 25 calories per 12 ounces” (Baires). The generated tax revenue funds programs that improve food, health, and nutrition awareness in the area, endeavors that have reduced the consumption of soda by 31 percent (Baires). There have been similar but unsuccessful attempts in cities like

---

**The War on Soda**

**Donal Conley**

Since the late 19th century, soda has been a staple of the American diet. Originally carbonated water was considered healthy, as it contained various vitamins. However, in the 20th century beverage companies began to include drugs, which were eventually made illegal, and as the 21st century progresses, companies continue to add copious amounts of sugar and chemicals to hook customers (Oatman-Stanford). Today, as health concerns and obesity rates increase, it is essential that the American government informs citizens of the adverse effects of soda’s ingredients and, since an outright ban is unlikely to work, that they tax its sales nationwide.
Richmond, California, where the proposal was passed but eventually turned down by the American Beverage Association. The taxation of soda in San Francisco has been a first step towards a healthier country, but there is still more that can and should be done.

The United States should start by informing citizens of the adverse health effects of soda’s ingredients. Units on beverage nutrition should be included in grade school physical education courses. Additionally, an anti-soda campaign, much like the effective anti-smoking campaign, could persuade with television and print ads that inform and discourage the habit.

But simply informing the public isn’t enough; the government should take what San Francisco has done on a small scale and implement a nationwide tax on soda sales. Just as San Francisco has modeled, the revenue could fund health awareness programs and likely decrease obesity and misinformation. Additionally, as the cigarette tax has proven, taxing soda might make consumers less inclined to spend on higher prices. If done country-wide, this one change could improve the health of countless Americans.

Although limiting or banning soda would be a step towards a healthier United States, taxing it would be a leap towards this goal. With the nation’s obesity rates at an all-time high, it’s important that consumers limit their soda intake. Having a tax on the beverage would only benefit consumers, and could possibly remove this staple from the American diet.

Works Cited


Wind is an effective device utilized to highlight conflict in a literary piece. Wind as a precursor of conflict is evidenced at three points in John Patrick Shanley’s play, Doubt: after the initial accusations against Father Flynn, during Flynn’s sermon on gossip, and after the final confrontation between Flynn and Sister Aloysius. As a literary device, wind is used to emphasize the points of greatest conflict between the play’s protagonist and antagonist.

The stage directions indicate the “sound of wind” (Shanley 24) after Sister James and Sister Aloysius raise the initial accusations against Father Flynn, suggesting that there is rising tension between the characters. This is emphasized when “Aloysius pulls her shawl tightly around her” (Shanley 24), as if to protect herself from the impending drama that she is about to unfold.

This mention of wind follows a tense conversation between Aloysius and James regarding how to handle their suspicions. Sister James prefers to report the incident to their superiors, but because Aloysius thinks, “men ruin everything” (Shanley 22), she has no other choice but to take action herself. In this scene, the wind indicates that the conflict between the characters has been set into motion.

In Act Five, wind again accompanies the build-up of tension and conflict between the characters when Aloysius and Flynn discuss the previous evening’s storm. Here, Father Flynn references how frightening it must have been to lie alone in the wilderness, hearing the howling night wind. The quick response from Sister Aloysius that it would be frightening, “If one lacked faith in God’s protection” (Shanley 26) progresses the rising tension by
subtly yet directly hinting to Flynn that she believes he has done something wrong.

Following the confrontation with the Sisters, Father Flynn delivers a sermon in Act 6 that relates to wind. He shares a story about a woman who gossips and confesses to feeling extremely guilty afterwards. Flynn uses his sermon to illustrate how easily one’s words, like a powerful wind, can cause uncontrollable damage.

Similarly, the woman’s lines, “I don’t know where [the feathers] went. The wind took them over” (Shanley 37) illustrates the notion that Flynn had attempted to isolate the repercussions of the Sisters’ words. The nuns, however, had already spread the conflict by raising the issue, confronting him, and speaking with Donald’s mother about their suspicions. The “wind’s” irreconcilable damage was done.

The Vatican’s website describes wind as “a fundamental event in the revelation of the Holy Spirit.” In the context of Doubt, the Holy Spirit can represent the ultimate truth. Wind, as a literary device, disrupts both literally and metaphorically. In this play, wind is utilized to forebode the rising conflicts between characters and to represent the notion that “the beginning of change is the moment of doubt” (Shanley Preface).

**Works Cited**


---

**Industrial-Scale Desalination Along America’s Coasts**
**Alex Gladkov**

The future shortage of potable water is not as well-known as that of oil, yet it is at equal risk of running out and therefore is a problem that must be addressed. The water crisis will continue to increase in urgency primarily due to climate change, rising populations, and infrastructure inefficiency. When taking the pertinent factors into consideration, the only viable solution is desalination, which is a molecular filtration process that removes sodium, chlorine, and other ions from sea water and other sources. This solution is especially suited for U.S. coastal cities since it is these regions, regardless of their location, that are most adversely affected.

As defined by the 2030 Water Resources Group, the term “demand” refers to an “unconstrained demand, or the projected water requirements if efficiency is unchanged and the policy environment is static,” while “supply” is defined as “natural constraints and infrastructural capacity.” A study the group conducted concluded that by the year 2030, the gap between supply and demand would be critical. The results of the study highlight the need for an effective resolution to the problem, and desalination could very well be the answer.

The largest demand for water is the agriculture sector. Irrigated agriculture (farming that requires water) consumes over 34 million acre feet of water per year (USGS). The solution to this nationwide concern *seems* to be clear: lessen the impact of irrigated agriculture on the water supply. However, there are several reasons why this isn’t possible, especially within the needed timeframe.

There is an abundance of evidence proving that it is unreasonable to expect such widespread policy change
and infrastructure overhaul in the agriculture sector. Public ignorance of the issue is one obstacle, and without a communal force demanding change, reform is unlikely. Another is the difficulty of managing the reform of 2 million individual farms, 97 per cent which are operated by family households (“Social”). These farms are unlikely to accept industry reform as a solution due to cost and time constraints.

Instead of looking to the agriculture sector, innovation in desalination technology has proven it to be a viable solution. Perforene, a material with the thickness of an atom, has the largest potential impact on the desalination industry. While Perforene can be used for a variety of projects, it is perfectly suited for and is much more effective at desalination than traditional filters. This would reduce clogging and increase filter lifespan, significant factors in the filtration process of desalination plants. Technological advances, make desalination a compelling option to fight water shortage (“Perforene”).

Desalination is already used in other countries, particularly those crowding the Mediterranean Sea, such as Israel and Egypt. In fact, due to the scarcity of natural water, most of Israel’s potable water comes from desalination. Yet even in non-desert regions, desalination has been shown to work exceedingly well. For example, Australia possesses several desalination plants, one of which is owned by the public and a corporation.

Desalination is best for coastal states, and not just because they are located by massive amounts of saline water. More importantly are the environmental factors: many coastal regions, specifically those around the Sierra Nevada region, are in a constant state of drought with very few solutions. The Sierra Nevada mountain range has seen a severe reduction in snowpack retention, keeping just 25 per cent of normal snowpack above 6,000 feet and even less below 6,000 feet (Holthaus). This severely affects the surrounding region since snowmelt supplies up to 75 per cent of the region’s freshwater. By using desalination, the state would be able to shift its focus from the unreliable and strained ecosystem to a consistent supply of potable water, regardless of adverse environmental factors like global warming.

Overall, desalination could be vital to the sustainability of equatorial coastal regions such as California, Texas, and Arizona. New technological advancements have made it a feasible solution to an increasingly desperate problem and future innovations will only advance the practice. It must be acknowledged that traditional methods of meeting demand aren’t enough and a solution is needed.

Works Cited


Actions Speak Louder Than Words in John Shanley’s Doubt

MARIANNA MANFREDI

In his play, Doubt: A Parable, John Patrick Shanley writes several stage directions to convey how his characters show control. Father Flynn starts as an authoritative figure but slowly becomes subordinate to Sister Aloysius as the accusations against him intensify. Shanley uses positioning (sitting and standing) to show how Father Flynn gradually loses his authority to Sister Aloysius.
In the beginning of the play, Flynn has power over Sister Aloysius. The stage directions state, “They come in and sit down. Father Flynn takes sister Aloysius’s chair. He’s sitting at her desk” (Shanley 27). At this point, Flynn thinks he’s going to have a frivolous meeting to share his opinions with the sisters, so he automatically believes he should take an authoritative stance, both literally and figuratively.

Through this display of confidence, it is clear that Flynn feels there is no questioning his power; therefore, he can sit wherever and do whatever he wants. This is proven by Aloysius’ lack of a response to his assumptions: “She reacts, but says nothing” (Shanley 27). At this point in the play, Flynn feels like he has full control over Aloysius.

As the plot gets more complex, and as Sister Aloysius’ campaign against the priest begins, Flynn’s control comes into question. Aloysius makes the first move against his authority when she says, “I am not accusing you of anything, Father Flynn. I am asking you to tell me what happened in the rectory” (Shanley 33). When she confronts Flynn with what he might have done, there is a slight downshift in his authority.

At this moment, Flynn stands and argues with Sister Aloysius, attempting to gain back the ground he lost. By standing, Flynn is trying to equalize the power struggle between them. Flynn then tries to flee while the control is evenly divided; leaving the room would show that he doesn’t answer to anyone. However, this attempt fails.

Just as Flynn is about to storm off, “Aloysius’s next words stop him” (Shanley 33). She strikes a blow: “There was alcohol on his breath…when he returned from his meeting with you” (Shanley 33). Sister Aloysius will stop at nothing to rid the convent of Father Flynn and, in this moment, he finally understands that. No matter how much he denies, he cannot win this fight. When he turns slowly towards Aloysius, it signals that she now has the power over him. He then exhibits complete surrender when he sits back down. She is in control.

At the moments where Flynn sits and stands, his movements seem to be subconscious acts to assert authority; trying to leave can be thought of as an involuntary attempt to gain dominance over Aloysius. Peter Collet, expert in the study of body language, states, “Most unconscious tells are linked to negotiating emotions to feelings like anxieties, embarrassment, and insecurity.” Shanley uses “unconscious tells” to signal how characters express authority through nonverbal communication (Galloway). Flynn’s involuntary body movements parallel these expressions.

Work Cited


Cask of Irony
ELLEN SANIN

Edgar Allen Poe’s “Cask of Amontillado” tells a story of Montresor, who wishes to seek revenge on and kill his friend Fortunato. Throughout the story, Montresor and Fortunato dialogue back and forth, but Fortunado is drunk, so he does not understand much of what is going on and Montresor takes advantage of him. According to critic Anna Sheets Nesbitt, this story is “distinguished by the subtle irony that pervades many levels” and the “use of dialogue between the protagonist and antagonist” (299). Poe uses irony in Montresor’s dialogue to convey that what appears to be a trusting relationship is really a facade.

Fortunado has a cough throughout the story, so Montresor warns him about the mire in the cave in the
attempt to show that he cares about him. In order to establish this sense of trust, he warns Fortunado that his cough will be aggravated by the catacombs that “are encrusted with nitre” (Poe 259). However, by using the word “mire,” Montresor is also building a level of irony. Mire means soft, wet ground, which is what Fortunado believes he is talking about, but mire also refers to an unpleasant situation that is hard to get out of, which is what Montresor is leading Fortunado into.

Montresor uses flattery to persuade Fortunado to enter the cave with him, causing Fortunado to believe that Montresor actually respects him and his talent for wine tasting. However, Montresor is trying to deceive him; he says, “And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own” (Poe 259). By flattering him, Montresor is further establishing a sense of trust with Fortunado. More importantly, he is trying to convince him that he is indispensable, even though he means the opposite. Montresor explains to Fortunado that other people do not think he is the indisputable best at wine testing, which causes Fortunado to want to prove his knowledge and skills. Montresor is building Fortunado up to feel that he is important to society, which is something that Montresor wants to ultimately take away from him.

Montresor enjoys Fortunado’s reaction to his implication of irony. Fortunado says, “I shall not die of a cough,” to which Montresor replies, “True—true” (Poe 260). Montresor knows that he will be the one to kill Fortunado; the cough will not be given the chance. Additionally, Fortunado tells Montresor that he is drinking to the dead souls that surround them, to which Montresor replies, “And I [drink] to your long life” (Poe 260). Again, he knows that Fortunado’s life is nearly over at this point, so Montresor is celebrating that his plan is nearly complete. His rejoicing is mocking the fact that Fortunado does not know that Montresor is toasting his death, not his life.

Throughout the story, Montresor tells Fortunado that he is concerned about his health and suggests that they leave the catacomb. “Montresor actually refers to Fortunato as ‘my friend’ and ‘my poor friend’ six times, and seems to be giving him multiple chances to escape his fate” (Delaney). However, because Montresor has made him feel essential for the task, Fortunado is determined to keep going. After Montresor again suggests they turn around and return to town, Fortunado replies, “‘Enough… the cough’s a mere nothing…’” (Poe 260). He is too proud to turn back and Montresor knows this, which is why he suggests they leave in the first place. He purposefully builds up Fortunado’s ego at the start of the story so that he would later deny wanting to leave the catacomb. This puts the blame of Fortunado’s death on Fortunado himself.

The final sense of ironic dialogue comes while Montresor barricades Fortunado behind the wall. Fortunado starts to sober up, and although he eventually realizes that the situation is not as it seems, he still hopes that it is all a trick. Montresor seems to enjoy the fact that Fortunado is catching on, and taunts him. By saying “Amontillado” repeatedly while burying Fortunado, he is indirectly letting Fortunado in on the irony that he has been using him the whole time, and clueing him in to the boasting that brought his demise (Poe 262).

Throughout the story, Montresor uses irony to trick Fortunado so he can carry out his revenge. He doesn’t lie outright, but instead uses distinct word choice and aversion so that Fortunado cannot solve the riddle. Irony and deception often go hand in hand, which shows that not everything can be taken at face value.

**Works Cited**


Bokonon: A God-Like Figure in *Cat’s Cradle*
Fletcher Swanson

In Kurt Vonnegut’s *Cat’s Cradle*, several characters can be analyzed in biblical terms. In particular, Bokonon, who plays a major role in the lives of the residents of San Lorenzo, and can be considered a God-like figure. Bokonon is shown to be God-like because he offers a higher purpose for the San Lorenzans and he uses religious law to distract them from their hopeless lives.

One way Bokonon represents God is by offering a higher purpose to the people of San Lorenzo. Like God, Bokonon has their best interests in mind, but that they might not necessarily understand. For example, Bokonon tells the dictator of San Lorenzo to outlaw Bokononism, the religion that he created, so the practitioners will find it more worthy and meaningful. And just as God sacrificed his son for his followers, Bokonon makes a sacrifice: he trades his “life” in society for one in the wild so the San Lorenzans would believe him to be an outlaw. This shows Bokonon’s “heartbreaking necessity of lying about reality and the heartbreaking impossibility of lying about it” (Vonnegut 189).

Bokonon is also akin to God because they both create paths for believers to follow. The Bible reads, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths” (Prov. 3:5-6). The San Lorenzans are similarly expected to trust only Bokonon’s teachings, a system of beliefs that offers them hope by pointing out life’s ironies. By outlawing his own religion, Bokonon creates a path of beliefs for the San Lorenzans’ to follow that allow them to focus on something other than the misery in their lives. Without this path they would have no higher purpose.

Bokonon realizes that in order for religion to be appealing, it would be best if its’ practices were forbidden. For example, it prohibits the San Lorenzans’ preferred physical intimacy: rubbing the soles of one’s feet against another’s. By outlawing this act, Bokonon almost ensures that it will be done. Signs posted throughout the island state, “All foot play will be punished by the hook!” (Vonnegut 61), which hangs people for both minor and major offenses. Bokonon rarely but occasionally executes people so the fear of the hook remains real; if no one was ever executed his threats, and the religion, would seem meaningless.

Both Bokonon and God use religious law to distract people from misery in their lives. Christians believe that in order to get into Heaven you have to follow the laws of the Bible: believers go to church to worship, but fear that if they don’t they will go to Hell. Many examples in the Bible show the consequences of disobeying religious law, such as the statement, “Because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when His righteousness judgment will be revealed” (Rom. 2:5).

Bokononists and Christians both emphasize following religious laws in order to provide structure in peoples’ lives. Bokonon keeps citizens’ attention on their fear of an ultimate punishment rather than what’s happening in the present. The people are so distracted by these laws that they don’t focus on the day to day misery of not having enough food or supplies.

In Kurt Vonnegut’s *Cat’s Cradle*, Bokonon represents God by offering a higher purpose for the people of San Lorenzo, and by using religious law to distract them from their hopelessness. Both God and Bokonon can be seen as shepherds in the way they care for their people: “Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs and carry them in His bosom” (Isiah 40:11).

Work Cited

---

**The Hunter Becomes the Prey**

**MICHAEL YOUNG**

Throughout her short story, "Good Country People," Flannery O'Connor uses several different literary techniques to illustrate the relationship between her two main characters, Hulga Hopewell and Manley Pointer. One of the most important is the recurring symbolism of a hunter/prey relationship. Throughout much of the work, Hulga assumes herself to be in control and more intelligent than Manley, who, as one of the "country people," appears to be uneducated and easily manipulated. These preconceived notions about Manley lead Hulga to undergo a transformation from a self-perceived, intelligent "hunter" to slow-witted and vulnerable prey.

In the beginning, Hulga sees herself as more intelligent than everyone else, especially Manley. Upon first meeting him, Hulga tells her mother to "get rid of the salt of the earth" (O'Connor 8). By saying this, she assumes that she knows enough about Manley that she can cast him as inferior. Because of her tendency to view him this way, Hulga not only lets her guard down, but she also attempts to go on the offensive and assert power over him. He is able to see right through her plans, however, and turns them against her.

Hulga considers herself to be the "hunter" of the story even though she has been hunted throughout her life. This can be seen through her physical weaknesses, particularly her leg, "which had been shot off in a hunting accident when [she] was ten" (O'Connor 3). But it is how the leg came to be the way it is that is central to Hulga and Manley's relationship. The act of hunting requires one who is dominant and one who is to be defeated. At the onset, Hulga believes herself to be the hunter, but Manley, during his "chase" of Hulga, recognizes this immediately and is able to shift her role. This is symbolic because Hulga is the vulnerable animal in the story that is hunted and eventually defeated by the cunning Manley Pointer.

Aside from her obvious handicaps, Hulga is afflicted with other weaknesses that lead Pointer to prey on her. These vulnerabilities include the fact that she is "squint-eyed" (O'Connor 5), which supports the fact that she is insecure and easily overpowered by someone who is confident, handsome, and clever. This could also refer to her short-sightedness during her failed attempts to analyze others. Manley is able to sense this about her almost immediately, as if he were sniffing out his prey.

Hulga is also handicapped by a metaphorical blindness that keeps her from seeing reality. Her being "[blind] by an act of will" and the fact that she "means to keep it" (O'Connor 2) indicates that she is satisfied with her ignorance and has no intentions of changing. Author Melita Shaum, in her literary critique of the story, refers to this as "an emblem for the inversions and blindnesses she has willed upon herself" (7).

Manley Pointer's "hunt" begins when the two meet outside of Hulga's house after dinner. The description of the pair represents the hunter/prey relationship: "He was gazing at her with open curiosity, with fascination, like a child watching a new fantastic animal at the zoo, and he was breathing as if he had run a great distance to reach her" (O'Connor 11). At this moment, the "chase," which resulted in Manley's sweatiness and labored breathing, has brought him to his victim and has effectively turned the tables on her. By comparing Hulga to a zoo animal, an image is evoked of a trapped, defenseless creature. This description accurately portrays Hulga's physical and mental predicaments.

Hulga's final transformation comes when she realizes for the first time that she does not possess supreme intelligence; she was tricked by a boy whom she believed to
be weaker than her. Because she thought so little of Manley Pointer and never imagined his capabilities, the experience is particularly traumatic; he is able to turn Hulga’s plans of victimizing him against her. Melita Shaum writes, “He lures her by way of her own vanity into crossing boundaries from the world she thinks she knows and claims to be a master of, to one both unpredictable and revelatory” (7).

The revelation, of course, is that Hulga’s extensive education and advanced degree does not translate to dominance over people. That is why O’Connor’s line, “true genius can get an idea across even to an inferior mind” (12), seems to refer to Hulga as the superior, but is actually revealing her to be the inferior, as it is Manley who emerges the victor.

Works Cited

# Table of Contents

## Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fr. Av. Christy, C.S.Sp.</th>
<th>Our Lady of Sorrows Division Chaplain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 Essays</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### INSTRUCTOR: SUSAN KELLEY

- Morgan Fochler  A Perfect Day for Bananafish ........................................ 5
- Peter Marino  The Line Between Crazy and Bold: An In-Depth Look at Symbolism in the Yellow Wallpaper ........................................ 6
- Hannah Mowod  The Yellow Wallpaper ............................................................................ 8
- Nicholas W. O’Clair  Yellow Wallpaper: More Than Just a Decoration ................................. 10
- Ansley Virgin  What Lies Behind the Bars .............................................................................. 11

### INSTRUCTOR: SEAN MARTIN

- Mallory Accamando  The Value of Play in Early Childhood Education .................................... 12
- Jonathan Anker  Capital Gains Tax .................................................................................. 14
- Leigha Fesmire  Hope for the Motor City? .................................................................................. 15
- Emily Noftz  The Importance of YouTube ........................................................................ 17
- Mallory Accamando  The Significance of Gun Reform in the United States ................................. 19

### INSTRUCTOR: AMANDA MATSON

- James Bader  The Efficacy of Jurassic Park as a Work of Science Fiction ................................. 20
- Ciara Bryan  Green Day’s Symbolic Use of “September” .................................................. 22
- Kylee Delanian  O’Connor’s “Misfit” on the Ol’ Times Repeater .................................................. 23
- John LaMarca  Good Vibrations: Rehabilitation Through Music ......................................... 25

### INSTRUCTOR: JOHN DAWSON

- Jamie Bird  Learning From Memory in the Poetry of Li-Young Lee ........................................ 29
- Mario Galati  Lead, Liquor, and Guitars ............................................................................ 30
- Katie Maglionico  Pollution and “Going Green” ................................................................... 32
- Patrick Marx  Preparing for the Future: Unemployment and Its Negative Effects .......................... 34
- Teddy Mermigas  Fracking and the Marcellus Shale ................................................................ 35

### INSTRUCTOR: SEAN MARTIN

- Gaston Cooper  “Barbie Doll,” the Grotesque, and Societal Changes ......................................... 38
- Kenna Gubler  “Barbie Doll” and the Effect on Girls .................................................................. 39
- Evan Lecher  College Admissions and Inequality .................................................................... 40
- Richard Sec  Coexistence of Gender Roles ........................................................................... 42
- Abner Roberts  V. Coexistence of Gender Roles .................................................................... 42
- Michael Young  Global Warming: Finding a Practical Approach .............................................. 43

### INSTRUCTOR: AMANDA MATSON

- Donal Conley  The War on Soda ......................................................................................... 44
- Caroline Dirr  The Effect of Wind in John Shanley’s Doubt ................................................... 45
- Alex Gladding  A Diagnosis of Schizophrenia in “The Tell-Tale Heart” .................................... 46
- Ellen Sanin  Cask of Irony .................................................................................................... 48
- Fletcher Swanson  Bokonon: A God-Like Figure in Cat’s Cradle ........................................... 50
- Michael Young  The Hunter Becomes the Prey ....................................................................... 51
Staff

Judith R. Griggs, Ph.D., Founder and Publisher
Uhuru Hotep, Ed.D., Managing Editor
Rosalie Granato, Editorial Assistant
Busola Odubayo, Editorial Assistant
Margaret Zangara, Editorial Assistant