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## 2012 Essays

**Introduction**

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Some years ago I came across a bumper sticker that read: If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.

I took that bumper sticker back to Ethiopia, and it still hangs in the house where I lived. It has become a motto and a source of inspiration for all of the Spiritans now living there.

In every country where we Spiritans work, providing formal school-based education is a vital part of our mission. We were sent to teach and to model a different way of thinking and living from what the people traditionally had. It is a way of thinking and living based on the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, our mission includes opening hearts and minds to a fuller understanding of life and all its possibilities, which includes formal education.

No matter where we live or under what conditions, we all can have a vision of something better. I recently saw an example of this in the movie October Sky. In the movie, a high school student had a dream of something better. With the inspiration and encouragement from one of his teachers, he found the strength and resolve to bring his dream to reality. Students coming to Duquesne University have this same dream to a lesser or greater degree. We all have dreams, whether we come from a farm, the inner city, or the backwaters of Africa or America. Ignorance of our capabilities limits our dreams in many ways. But those of us who have the capability and the means to help others brings their dreams to reality have a moral obligation to do so.

Opening minds and hearts to a greater vision of life and its many possibilities is certainly important in the Third World, and it is no less important in the United States. This is why the philosophy and driving impetus of Duquesne University is such a vital part of our Spiritan mission. To the extent possible, each of us is called to help our fellow travelers along the path of life. The Gussin Spiritan Division is an integral part of this process and in line with the mission of the University...”by serving students through commitment to excellence...through profound concern for moral and spiritual values...we serve God.”
The Cowardice of Terrorism

Joseph Crosby

What is this terrorism we hear so much about today? “Terrorism” is defined by Merriam-Webster.com. as “the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion.” To most of us, this word has a negative connotation, making us think of attacks on unarmed civilians, violent revenge, etc. There are many ways to get a point across to one’s opponent, but terrorism should not be one of them. It is a tactic for cowards.

Terrorism causes many repercussions, both physical and mental, and it is often rooted in the ancient “eye for an eye” mentality. However, as Mahatma Gandhi said, “An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.” Martin Luther King, Jr., agreed and added that “It is immoral because it seeks to humiliates the opponent rather than win his understanding. It seeks to annihilate rather than to convert.” If violent acts turn into a never-ending cycle, then peace will never be realized.

Terrorism is “sucker punching.” It strikes when it is least expected and is intended to do as much damage as possible. In most cases, it is used when fighting a dominant opponent who is powerful and thus able to impose his or her will upon others, who naturally feel oppressed. Often, the militants among the oppressed are too weak militarily to confront their adversary, so they resort to terrorism. Clearly, it is cowardly for an armed terrorist to attack unarmed (and most likely, unsuspecting) civilians. Even if the act of terrorism results in the death of the terrorist, what he has committed is really a form of murder-suicide. Most people around the world would agree that if a war must be fought, it should be fought between trained, professional military forces and not with the tactics of terrorism.

One of the effects of these “sucker punch” tactics is to perpetuate animosity between opposing groups. Sometimes religious extremist commit violent acts in the name of their chosen religion, which gives all the followers of that faith a bad name. Terrorists will always be heroes to their own people; they will always be accepted back into their own cultures. Osama Bin Laden, for example, supposedly lived in Pakistan for ten years, down the street from Pakistan’s equivalent to West Point. Clearly, someone in the Pakistani establishment knew his address.

Most, if not all, Muslims would say that Osama Bin Laden was not a good Muslim and that he has given their religion a bad name. In a similar way, many Christian Crusaders raped and pillaged in the name of Christ. The Crusaders’ goal was supposedly to liberate the Holy Land and spread Christianity. In the name of God, they did things that the Bible condemns. It is hard to persuade people to accept your faith when you are so clearly being a hypocrite. No religion condones raping, pillaging or killing others. If the objective is peace, then there is a problem with their logic because there is usually a peaceful way to resolve most conflicts.

Some of the many reasons nations resort to war, as opposed to rational discourse, are pride, lack of patience and a simple unwillingness to work with each other. The opposite qualities – humility, patience, and cooperation – are needed to live a good life and are referred to in various “holy” books as virtues. In the New Testament, the Christian part of the Bible, patience is called one of the “fruits of the spirit.” Galatians 5:22-25 states, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

According to the Qur’an, Allah (God) said, “And We made from among them (the Children of Israel) leaders, giving guidance under our command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.)” (al-Sajdah 32:34). Many violent radicals claim to be good Muslims, Christians, etc., but they disregard their religions teachings and do whatever they want. The biggest effect of terrorism is the death toll.

One of the most monumental acts of radical violence in this current age took place on September 11, 2001. According to CBS News, on September 10, 2009, the death toll from the World Trade Center attacks reached 2,751 known victims. Hundreds of others died on September 11 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, while others died at the Pentagon. Countless lives have been lost at the hands of terrorists around the world. Ireland, Italy, Germany, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Colombia and Mexico, among others, have all experienced terrorist attacks.

Terrorism is cowardly; it demonizes an enemy and justified a vicious cycle of violence. These are also the effects of war in gen-
eral. Terrorism, however, is an especially vicious form of violence and should be completely abandoned.

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Taking Food Seriously
Michael Hast

Mark Bittman, a journalist and author specializing in food for the past 30 years, comments on America’s changing thoughts about food in his article, “Why Take Food Seriously? Because Your Life Depends On It.” Bittman encourages healthy changes in the way we eat and better thinking about our food choices. Bittman uses the rhetorical strategies of ethos, pathos and logos to effectively inform his readers of Americans’ detrimental eating habits and our changing attitudes toward food.

Ethos is a tool authors use to present themselves as experts. “The Greek word ethos is related to our word ethics or ethical, but a more accurate modern translation might be image” (Edlund). Credibility is an attribute readers expect; they need confidence that the information being imparted is factual. Bittman displays his credentials when he points out that “as a food journalist and author for 30 years,” he has been in an ideal position to observe the interactions we have with food (779). His long experience as a food journalist gives him unique insight into our dietary practices and qualifies him to voice his opinion about our eating habits. Readers rarely have complete confidence that any given source is credible, which is why Bittman’s use of ethos to establish his credibility provides readers with reassurance that the information he imparts is accurate and meaningful.

“Bittman notes that early involvement in cooking can give young people greater confidence.”

Secondly, Bittman utilizes pathos, “often associated with emotional appeal” (durhamtech.edu), to argue that our thoughts about food are changing. Bittman cites experts on the Food Network to bolster his argument that we are changing our views about what we eat. He appeals to America’s love of celebrities, noting that professionals such as “the Food Network’s Emeril, Rachael, Mario and Bobby” have “created a buzz based on celebrity that [has] grabbed not only the middle-aged and the young but also the very young” (781). Many people adore celebrities, copying their diets, workouts routines, clothes and cars; some people even want to live the same elaborate lives of their favorite celebrities. Seeing celebrities cooking on television and connecting with people through good, healthy foods leads viewers to think “if they can do it, why can’t I?” This supports Bittman’s argument as readers realize they are now part of a nationwide movement, and therefore feel motivated to keep reading his article.

Equally important is Bittman’s appeal to his readers’ emotions (pathos) as he illustrates that multiple generations are involved in changing their eating habits. He connects emotionally to his readers by showing them that even young children are cooking and learning to take care of their health. This even affects parents as they consider the need for their children to develop healthy eating habits. Bittman notes that early involvement in cooking can give young people greater confidence. As children learn healthy cooking and wholesome food selection skills, the nation will become

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
healthier and happier. These represent positive changes that readers want to hear about.

Finally, logos, meaning “the clarity of the claim, the logic of its reasons and the effectiveness of its supporting evidence” (durhamtech.edu), is the third important part of Bittman’s argument. Through logos, he connects logically with his readers, using facts to persuade them. Instead of citing numerous boring statistics, Bittman summarizes the negative progression toward convenience by stating, “[... ] from the 1950s on, the majority of the population began contentedly cooking less, eating out more and devouring food that was more detrimental to their health, until the horrible global slop served by fast-food and ‘casual dining’ chains came to dominate the scene” (Bittman 780).

By condensing what might have been illustrated through lengthy annual comparison statistics and charts of food consumption, Bittman keeps his argument conversational. At the same time, he persuades his readers, using simple facts to build credibility for his main point. He shows the development of America’s poor eating habits to establish the severity of the situation before he returns to his positive outlook on our relationship with food. Bittman makes use of logos as a persuasive tactic by including incontrovertible facts concerning the way Americans interact with food and by presenting them in a manner that is casual and easy for the readers to understand.

Bittman utilizes ethos, pathos and logos in his article to describe gradual changes in America’s dietary tendencies over the last fifty years. He establishes his credibility and knowledge of the topic using ethos, then pulls on the emotions of his readers by discussing common problems in a friendly, conversational tone (pathos) and lastly presents the readers with facts to demonstrate his point (logos).

The way we have eaten in the past does not have to determine the way we eat today, tomorrow and in the years to come. Ultimately, our food choices will affect us for the rest of our lives. Some people will continue their poor eating habits and end up in hospital beds with obesity-related health problems. Others will join a positive, health revolution and become healthy people, living long and happy lives. The choice is ours — do we want to stay on a diet of harmful, fatty foods or adopt a pattern of eating wholesome, healthy meals? The healthier nutritional path is, as Mark Bittman points out, the road that many Americans are now choosing.

Works Cited

W orks Cited
savings per bulb. This also reduces the level of pollution ... (Chellappa et al.-II). For instance, when electricity is generated by coal burning power plants, the plant releases carbon dioxide and other ecologically unsafe gases that trigger climate change and result in smog. This also exacerbates respiratory illnesses. If Duquesne students limit their use of energy by shutting their lights off when they leave a room, it would save the campus plenty of energy and money.

Phelps (36-42) indicates that fluorescent lamps change the bulk of the input energy to visible illumination better than incandescent lights. An original incandescent 100 watts bulb with a tungsten filament can convert just two percent of its energy input to observable white light, while typical fluorescent bulbs convert an estimated 22 percent of their energy input to white light. The higher cost of a fluorescent bulb is compensated by the limited energy used over its life time. Therefore, these bulbs are cost effective. Compared to an incandescent bulb, a fluorescent tube is superior in terms of light diffusion. In properly designed fluorescent bulbs, brightness can be more uniformly distributed than an incandescent filament, which is not diffused. This is because the bulb is bigger, reducing the distance between the source of light and lit surfaces (Wong 44-52; Nuzum-Keirn, and Sontheimer 556-560).

“Not many discoveries have captured our imaginations more than the invention of the electric light bulb.”

According to Shea, even though fluorescent illumination was not well-liked in the past, new development in bulb structure has enhanced CFLs’ popularity (30–33). Incandescent bulbs rely upon Thomas Edison’s design principles. Electricity is conveyed through a tungsten wire, which generates light and heat. In CFLs, electricity runs through gases and a token level of mercury. With this new technology, it is time to move away from Edison’s outdated design principles. It is time to move toward a more energy-efficient technology and abandon harmful incandescent bulbs. This is why Duquesne administrators should take charge and lead by example. If Duquesne switches to fluorescent bulbs, other universities may follow changing their campuses into more eco-friendly communities, too.

Generally, fluorescent bulbs are eco-friendly and should be adopted by all universities. With the array of benefits connected with CFLs, most governments are encouraging consumers, both institutions and individuals, to adjust their lighting systems to save energy and money. When selecting which CFL to purchase, university administrators should remember that different kinds of lights are effective for different purposes. The lights with the best quality have the best color-rendering index (CRI). For the finest light, it is recommended that a university select CFLs with a CRI higher than 80. Moreover, “daylight” or “soft white” lights have the best natural color. If a learning institution is eco-conscious and wants to connect every CFL to a dimmer switch, it should purchase a specially labeled bulb because not all brands have that capacity. It should be emphasized that the time taken to select the correct lighting for the institution’s needs can profoundly enhance future satisfaction.

If Duquesne University wants to manage its energy needs efficiently, save money and contribute to the greening of our planet, it will switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs.

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The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is an organization that fights to limit the use of tobacco in America, stop young people from smoking, and reduce the death toll from tobacco. This organization supports smoking prevention, helps smokers stop and works to protect people against secondhand smoke. Tobacco-Free Kids also "empowers a tobacco-free generation by fostering youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco" (Greenemeier). The Campaign is known for its advertising and public events. By "supporting governments and non-governmental organizations around the world, they promote and implement public policies to reduce tobacco use" (Greenemeier). The advertisement that the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids calls "Ain't Pretty" is an effective anti-smoking ad because it paints the tobacco companies as self-contradicting, dishonest, and monstrous.

The image of a man with two mouths in the article "Big Tobacco's latest double talk" is disturbing. It uses a "scare tactic" that helps viewer realize what could happen because of their use of tobacco products; it is a very effective an anti-smoking ad. Another excellent way to make an effective anti-smoking ad is to use simple statistics and a direct statement. You need these elements because they are the key to getting the viewer to react emotionally and logically.

Tobacco is a leading cause of American deaths. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) "will [soon] require tobacco companies to include blackened lungs, corpses, crying babies and other disturbing images on their products so that smokers fully understand the risks they're taking" (Novelli). The laws are being changed in order to save the lives of children and young adults. For example, "by the end of September 2012, cigarette makers will be prohibited from manufacturing tobacco products for sale or distribution in the U.S. without the graphic new health warnings" (Novelli). Needless to say, the tobacco companies are not happy about this.

"Despite tobacco company propaganda, tobacco is genuinely hurting the economy."

The tobacco companies target women and girls. Two tobacco companies, Philip Morris USA and RJ. Reynolds, have "launched a new marketing campaign that depict cigarette smoking as feminine and fashionable, rather than the harmful and deadly addiction it really is" (Greenemeier). They have their cigarette boxes colored pink and black, representing breast cancer with the pink and death with the black. Young women and girls see this as a fashionable and more appealing box. The tobacco companies now call them "purse packs". They are hoping that women and girls will ignore how harmful these products really are, and see the colorful box as something cute. Tobacco-Free Kids explains that "smoking puts women and girls at greater risk of a wide range of deadly diseases, including heart attacks, strokes, emphysema and numerous cancers" (Greenemeier).

Despite tobacco company propaganda, tobacco is genuinely hurting the economy. American taxpayers pay billions of dollars a year for smokers' health care expenses. The businesses and families of smokers are the most affected by this, but everybody pays one way or another.

The anti-tobacco organizations use pictures to make their point because most people will react to a picture, especially children and young adults. A grotesque image of a man with two mouths immediately tells the audience that this person is deceitful and untrustworthy. If the man is wearing a business suit, there's
an implication that he may be someone influential, such as the chief executive officer of a tobacco company. This businessman knows that he is destroying the lives of children and adults with his addictive products, but that doesn't stop him. The ad, therefore, rightly depicts this tobacco-company CEO as devious and untrustworthy.

The man with two mouths symbolizes an entire industry that is manipulative, two-faced and deceitful. Like other businessmen, they are interested in making as much money as possible, and they do not often pay much attention to their victims. In this case, the victims are often children. They are being targeted because the companies know that most adults who are addicted to their products started smoking as children: “The tobacco industry for decades has targeted youth in its marketing campaigns, and studies show that as much as a third of underage youth have experimented with smoking as a result of these marketing efforts” (Greenemeier).

This is an example of how corrupt the tobacco companies are. They know there are huge health risks involved in using tobacco products. They also know that their products cause gum cancer, breast cancer and lung cancer. The opponents of smoking will continue to fight the tobacco companies using numerous methods including public events, social functions and live examples. The fight for tobacco-free kids will succeed.

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A Simple Solution
Dave Thomas

Picture an intense workout, followed by a freezing cold ice bath, and to top it off, a carefully planned meal. That's just the beginning. Now you have to go back to your dorm, do homework and rest for your next class, which is at 8 a.m. tomorrow. This is the life of a college student athlete.

Student athletes are typically the hardest working people in college. They have to balance the strain of being an athlete with taking care of their studies and still try to find time to have fun. To be honest, this puts the student athletes at a major disadvantage because they have so much on their plates that they really can't focus totally on their studies. I believe there is a need to level the academic playing field for athletes, and there is a tool that could do this. The tool is the iPad, an item that does everything from remembering your schedule to taking the place of your textbooks. Because college athletes are at a major disadvantage when compared to other students, all incoming freshmen student athletes should receive complimentary iPads.

College athletes are some of the hardest working human beings on earth. Their athletic tasks consist of working out intensely, learning plays, studying film, sticking to a strict diet, and then recovering. Once these things are done, then it's time for class work. Unlike many high school athletes, college athletes must apply themselves on and off the field. This means they have to pay attention, which is extremely hard after a tiring set of workouts. No matter how good a student or athlete you are, there's no way around the pileup of classes and homework assignments. There are many strains that are placed on college athletes. For instance, after workouts many athletes are exhausted, and the books they carry around only put further stress on their bodies and tire them even more. Also, many athletes have hectic schedules. It's often hard to keep up with classes, and keep every appointment. Athletes unintentionally miss class or do not complete an assignment. These are some of the many stresses student athletes face which
can lead to a decline in their grades and ultimately affect their play on the field, too. They really need some extra help, and the iPad (IPad 2) can provide that help (Herrington).

There are a tremendous number of benefits that would come to the student athletes who receive complimentary iPads. For one, each athlete would have a very detailed planner to store his or her entire schedule, with reminders and footnotes about each day's agenda. Also, the athlete could use the alarms as reminders for scheduled appointments and class times. This would help him miss less class, which would improve participation grades and eventually his overall grade point average.

“The solution I propose would be to lower tuition and to take the money usually spent on the books and put those funds towards the purchase of iPads.”

Not only can the iPad help with schedules and time management, it can also be the athlete's textbook (Watson). With more than four classes a day, the weight of one's textbooks can really add up. Some books weigh over a pound each and with books for four or more classes, plus other school supplies, they can become a hassle to carry around. With the iPad, athletes wouldn’t have to carry anything but their iPad which can record your notes and store all of this on its hard drive. Even though only student athletes will be receiving this technology, the whole school would benefit from this innovation. Since student athletes are some of the most influential people on campus and in the surrounding community, they are held to a higher standard. If their grades slip, it would look bad for the school.

The solution I propose would be to lower tuition and to take the money usually spent on the books and combine that with the money gained by the increase in enrollment. Not only would this be enough to purchase the iPads, it would also be more than enough to make improvements to the school.

The solution I propose is sound. Duquesne University is already a prestigious school. Many people apply each year, but with the high tuition many students just can't afford it. If the tuition were lowered, applications and possibly the enrollment would increase tremendously. Not only could the university receive money from the increased enrollment, it would also receive money that was originally intended for books but is no longer needed because of the new iPads. In addition, the university could also sell its extra textbooks to other universities for extra money.

The iPad is a much-needed tool that can help student athletes improve their college experience and academic performance. iPads can do much to aid athletes, such as set reminders, relieve mental and physical stress and keep their personal calendars and agendas. The iPad would also be beneficial to the university as a whole by leveling the academic playing field between student athletes and other students. Not only that, this could also be a money-saving venture that could help fund needed improvements on campus. iPads should be given to student athletes, not only because it will benefit them, but also because it will improve the entire institution.

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Real-Life Events Spark a Plot for Hayes

Kierra Corcoran

The Terrance Hayes' poem *Shakur* begins by painting a picture of a winter morning, but then quickly shifts to the story of the unfortunate deaths of two drug addicts, inspired by real-life events that took place in 2005. The speaker guides the reader's feelings throughout the poem, using double meanings and soft word choices to reveal both tragedy and beauty. He focuses on real-life tragedies to relay this desired effect to the reader.

At the beginning of the poem, Hayes puts the reader at ease before revealing the tragic deaths. He sets up a peaceful scene, but within a few lines it completely shifts. It starts, "Where the winter morning stretches out / Like a white sheet over lovers the infinite / Has fetched" (Hayes 2-4). The plot takes place on a winter morning; a couple is sitting in their car. Hayes' words when creating this setting puts the reader at ease and makes the situation appear too innocent. On the surface, a snowstorm appears gorgeous: soft and innocent to the eye. The snow, which is described as a "white sheet" (Hayes 3), leads the reader to think about things that are clean, pure and fresh. Although that is how one could describe snow, the actions taking place during the snowfall are not clean or pure. In fact, a snowstorm can be harsh, brutal and dangerous. Hayes creates a peaceful and dreamlike scene, but it will eventually lead the reader into a twisted story with a tragic ending. As a result, the reader is drawn into and engrossed in the unfolding account.

The white sheets represent a shroud, the kind used to cover bodies in the morgue, the same ones that will soon cover the young man and woman. Furthermore, the sheet of snow could be seen as a veil of sorts, literally hiding the couple from police officers and rescuers, keeping them isolated from help. The following is a transcript from the couple's phone conversation with 911 dispatchers:

"Wamsley: 'We’re out by a gravel pit, like 76th and Poppleton. We need some assistance, like, right now.'
911: 'Where are you?'
Wamsley: 'It’s an old abandoned, like, lakefront area where they have cattle. An old (inaudible) pump setup.'
911: 'I can’t help if you don’t know where you are’ (www.wisn.com).

The couple called 911 repeatedly in the hours that they were lost but were never able to clearly identify their location for rescuers.

Hayes' idea for the poem was sparked after hearing of the deaths of Michael Wamsley and Janelle Hornickel, two twenty year old addicts who froze to death in their car. Hayes said in an interview, "Because I believe memory is a form of imagination, my poems are often drawn to and drawn from the well of history" (www.nationalbook.org). Many of Hayes' poems, including *Shakur*, do just this.

Wamsley and Hornickel were both clearly under the influence of methamphetamine during the snowstorm. This is clear from Hornickel's conversation with 911 dispatchers. She told them "she was worried because -a group of people were in her parking lot stringing vehicles into the trees.

Hornickel: 'They’re putting them in trees.'
911: 'They’re taking cars apart and putting them in the trees?'
Hornickel: 'yes.' (www.wisn.com).

The couple is so high and confused that they think they are warm, but in fact, they are freezing and about to die. News reports state that the couple was not dressed for the weather: they had no jackets and she was wearing heels. This was likely due to the fact that, when using meth, one might feel extremely hot, as if on fire, and not realize that they are actually freezing. We find this idea in the lines, "I'm thinking of them and the drug that made / Them think they were warm enough to chill" (Hayes 6-7).

Because of words the speaker uses, it is possible that he meant to represent a recovering addict. He gains the readers' sympathy by using a softer tone. His line, "I'm coming to you live from the halfway out" (Hayes 1) could be a reference to him just getting out of rehab or a halfway house and being on the road to recovery. The word "live" could also represent the speaker overcoming his addiction while remaining alive and sober. The speaker is coming to us "live" because he fought his demons and survived. Seeing the drug addicted couple dead from an overdose is a reminder of his old life and how strong an addiction can be. This is noted when the speaker says, "Because I know staying alive requires pills /And a wicked streak" (Hayes 8-9). With these words, the speaker shows that he has an understanding of the addiction the couple faced, and he may also have a lingering desire for drugs, even though he is clean. The speaker admits it a struggle to stay clean but shows he has the willpower to pull through when saying, "And when you offer your drug, O Ghost, I’ll resist" (Hayes 30). The speaker believes...
he has the strength to resist and will not give in to his demons, providing the reader with a sense of belief.

In conclusion, Hayes was inspired to write this poem after hearing about the real-life story of Michael Wamsley and Janelle Hornickel. He focuses on conveying the realities of drug addiction and makes us realize the struggle addicts go through. Hayes uses word play to link the narrator and the couple. He achieves this by using soft words and assigning double meaning to them. He states, “That is part of what I’m interested in as a poet: how language can be worn and changed” (“Interview”).

Works Cited


RETURNING HOME FROM VIETNAM
Vince D’Onofrio

The Vietnam War not only changed American warfare, it changed the lives of all those who fought. The war was fought in the jungles of Vietnam against US soldiers unfamiliar with the land and guerrilla warfare tactics. American soldiers were forced to adapt to the lifestyle and battle strategies of the Viet Congo (V.C.). This required American soldiers to become familiar with different terrains, obstacles and traps set up by the V.C. These experiences caused many soldiers to have memories that are very difficult to recover from. The dark horrors of war continued to haunt the subconscious of American soldiers long after their return home.

Jim Evans is currently a history teacher at Kennedy Catholic High School in Sharon, Pennsylvania. He experienced more than more than most soldiers during his time in Vietnam. Evans was part of an elite force engaged in special operations known as Deep Blacks Ops. They conducted highly secret missions that only the men involved knew about. Their jobs were gathering intelligence, ambushing Vietnamese camps, calling in air strikes, writing BDAs (Bomb Damage Assessments) and targeting Vietnamese officials, along with capturing prisoners. These missions were highly intensive, carried out at night and lasted anywhere from a few days to five weeks. The longer missions were not only physically grueling; they were mentally straining as well (Evans).

The psychological aftereffects of war had major impacts on the lives of soldiers that served in Vietnam. In Patches of Fire, there are many different examples of how war can affect a soldiers’ daily functioning. Some of the aftereffects were insomnia, flashbacks, mentally disturbing imagery and the inability to find their present lives worthwhile. Post-Traumatic War Syndrome has affected the lives of those who were wounded and those who escaped from near death experiences. Post-traumatic war syndrome, also known as post-traumatic stress disorder, is an illness that continues to disrupt the mental stability of Vietnam veterans (Helzer, Robins, McEvoy).

French writes about how he and other Vietnam veterans sought out different support groups. The support groups were places that exposed hidden memories to get them off their chests. These groups allowed soldiers to talk about their war experiences. This was difficult for many soldiers, but as time passed, it became easier to open up and share their memories. The memories shared in these meetings were the real life experiences that most people who were not in Vietnam could never understand (French).

These flashbacks were not just unpleasant memories from the past, they were dangerous for the soldiers’ family and friends. Flashbacks often cause veterans to act violently if they felt threatened or were in uncomfortable circumstances. And they often damaged family relationships and friendships.

Sleep deprivation is common among soldiers. During most missions, soldiers often only get a few hours of sleep every few days. According to Jim Evans, “As soldiers we were trained to react in our sleep to any form of enemy penetration in case of an ambush. We were taught to sleep light and to attack first, then think.” This is similar to Albert French’s experiences in Patches of Fire.

“There was never any true sleep; we would only get an hour or two of rest on campaigns” (French). After returning home from war,
sleep deprivation often led to insomnia. French writes that sleeping was difficult because his war experiences were relived every night.

Another problem for many ex-soldiers was finding a way to be useful back in the working world. War creates a mentality that would not be understood by those who were not there. It was a challenge for veterans to feel welcome in the work world and it was difficult to hold a normal job. Depression and loneliness are common.

Some of the problems returning Vietnam veterans faced stemmed from their lack of education. Many soldiers went to Vietnam straight out of high school and had no skills that would allow them to advance in the work world. This put a tremendous burden on most veterans, especially those who choose not to go back to school. After the war, Evans went on to graduate from college, then worked several jobs before becoming a teacher.

For soldiers who were POWs in Vietnam, keeping their minds strong throughout their incarceration was important to their survival. One soldier in Voices from Vietnam talks about his time as a POW. “To keep my mind strong and active I would try to recall all my fellow classmates’ names throughout my education. It was amazing how many names I could remember. Life was about ways to stay strong both physically and mentally; these were the only ways to survive this kind of torture. As POWs we learned to live day-to-day and your world became very small. This kind of brain exercise was one reason why after all the years of torture we as soldiers are still able to function in society…” (Denenberg). Keeping the mind sharp helped save many POWs in Vietnam.

Returning home was a challenge for many soldiers. Learning how to live in a society, which is far less disciplined than military life, was a struggle. “I was lucky that both my parents served in WWII and understood the struggles I had after returning from war. It took me about two years to feel like I fit into everyday life” (Evans).

Works Cited


“...their stories of war, honor and bravery should be remembered forever.”

The aftereffects of the Vietnam war changed the lives of many. Jim Evans’ and Albert French’s war stories show that both men struggled but finally returning to society as contributing members. Some veterans were able to adapt quickly, while it took others much more time. Vietnam war veterans saw more than the average man can imagine and their stories of war, honor and bravery should be remembered forever.
during this era; three years before Blackbird was released, the civil rights movement in the United States was at its peak. The highest point in the movement lasted from 1955 to 1965, when Congress finally passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, guaranteeing the basic civil rights of Americans, regardless of race (Cozzen). Therefore, the passing of these acts was crucial in the lives of African-Americans. Their enactment allowed the “blackbirds flight”, meaning the symbolic advancement of African-Americans. The Underground Railroad, spirituals, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speech and the blacks’ experience of being integrated are seen throughout the song.

The first verse, “Blackbird singing in the dead of night” (Beatles) has several meanings. It is known that enslaved blacks had little control over their lives; they were forced to work day and night. They sang spirituals that contained hidden meanings; the songs represented a way for them to connect to one another through their culture and their heritage. Slaveholders did not allow African-Americans freedom of expression like in their home countries, which is why black slaves met at night to “share their joys, pains and hopes” (Song). “The dead of night” (Beatles) is an important part of this verse because in order to find joy, black slaves had to sing in the deepest parts of the night and hide their beliefs to ensure that they did not get caught by their owners. In this sense, the black slaves can be compared to birds: owned, as if pets, and confined to a certain location against their will. The slaves rejoiced and sang songs of hope, regardless of their restricted boundaries. The use of the phrase “dead of night” suggests that they were secretive which relates to a caged bird finding a way to sing even though it is imprisoned. The lyric is also ominous: enslaved blacks were risking their lives to meet in secrecy.

“Blackbird singing in the dead of night,” (Beatles) continues the metaphor that leads into the civil rights movement. The Underground Railroad was an important stepping stone on the path to African-American freedom from slavery, as it helped the slaves flee to free states. Using the Underground Railroad, slaves traveled at night by the light of the moon and hand-held torches. In most cases, the African Americans waded through rivers, lakes and ponds in order to get rid of their scent so that their owners’ dogs could not track them. Once they emerged, a wagon would pick them up at hidden stations and would transport them to a free area. The secret travels were unseen in the “dead of night.”

In the song Blackbird, the repeated phrase, “into the light of the dark black night,” (The Beatles) may be referring to the hopeful events of the civil rights movement. After years of unjust treatment, this movement was a glimmer of hope that all African-Americans prayed for. For them, it seemed as though their suffering would never end, which is why the night was dark.

The best known event of the civil rights movement was the “I Have a Dream” speech given by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963 during the March on Washington. Dr. King, a man who was a leading figure in the release of the “caged birds,” gave a speech that illustrated the dream of being treated equal, the hope that one day race would not matter and that all men and women would be free of racism. The words that he spoke that day were seen as an opening of the cage door; moreover, preaching his hope that one day “all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands” (American Rhetoric). For many, the light was shining brighter, and the cage loosened as they heard the strong words spoken that day.

Dr. King encouraged the people with “sunken eyes” (Beatles) to see what the United States could be like if they took action in their quest for freedom. This lyric’s is used throughout the song because it illustrates the condition that the “caged birds” are in. It acknowledges that they were malnourished and abused during the years of slavery. Their eyes are sunken because of the countless years of having no hope. Therefore, as the civil rights movement evolved, they started to have hope, and opened their “sunken eyes” and began to see what their world could be like as free people.

Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speech told the “blackbirds” to fly; The Beatles’ song contains the same message. The powerful verse, “take these broken wings and learn to fly” (Beatles) stands as an important part of the song because not only does it relate to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s message, but it also suggests that through the years of mistreatment and abuse African-Americans must overcome and take advantage of the freedom they now have. They were going to “learn to fly.”

Almost one year after Dr. King’s speech, the Civil Rights Bill was passed, and all men - black and white – were to be treated as equals (Cozzen). Therefore, the verses, “blackbird fly,” and “take these broken wings and learn to fly,” (Beatles) refers to the freedom that African Americans finally received and deserved after countless years of mistreatment. The metaphor is finished as the “blackbirds” are uncaged:

The Beatles’ song Blackbird contains hidden metaphors of slavery and the civil rights movement. The repeated verses of “Blackbird singing in the dead of night,” “into the light of a dark black night” and “blackbird fly” (Beatles) all suggest what blacks went through in order to gain acceptance. This song conveys the idea that although there is suffering, one must always have hope, and if something is not right then make an effort to change it. As
a result of the civil rights movement, the “caged blackbird” was free and able to fly. At this memorable point in history, the hardships and struggles that African Americans endured for countless years were now a part of the past. The Beatles took a controversial subject and turned it into a beautiful song using metaphors that compared African Americans to a trapped bird.

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Two Poetic Perspectives of War

Emma Lebherz

The poems Cavalry Crossing a Ford, by Walt Whitman and End and Beginning by Wislawa Szymborska both illustrate the theme of war in very different ways. While Whitman portrays the less grave aspect of war, Szymborska portrays the horrible aspects of war. Both poems contain war imagery. In Cavalry Crossing a Ford and End and Beginning imagery of war are present; however, in Whitman’s poem war is glorified, while in Szymborska’s it is depicted as a disastrous aftermath.

Whitman portrays war as glorious; therefore one gets the impression that war is positive. The poem also contains a recurring theme of pride, as suggested by the line, “The guidon flags flutter gaily in the wind” (Whitman 7). This suggests that the cavalry is gaudily expressing their pride and the colors on their flag represent who or what they are fighting for. However, in addition to the theme of pride, the word “gaily” also suggests happiness within the cavalry. One line that illustrates pride and further implies victory is, “their arms flash in the sun — harks to the musical clank” (Whitman 2). This implies celebration and a strong sense of cavalry pride.

Another identifiable feature in Whitman’s poem is a lack of urgency. It reads, “They take a serpentine course,” and “horses loitering to stop to drink” (Whitman 2-4). Both of these lines suggest a lack of urgency, but they also suggest victory. Because it is clear that the cavalry is taking their time, there is a sense of fearlessness, which suggests the cavalry’s sense of pride. If they have been victorious, the cavalry would feel confident in their abilities. Fear is a common and observable association with war; however, because this poem lacks a sense of fear, the suggestion of victory is feasible. Throughout the poem there is a lack of fear, defeat, death and destruction from an opposing force — all common universal associations with war. Even the title, Cavalry Crossing a Ford lacks a negative connotation toward war. Considering all of these aspects, the reader is left with the impression that war is a glorious undertaking.

The theme of war in Szymborska’s poem is handled differently. The title of Szymborska’s poem, End and Beginning, implies disaster. Additionally, the theme of disaster implies defeat. The word “End” suggests finality, while the word “Beginning” suggests rebirth. This poem gains emotional strength because it clarifies what must be done after war. The survivors are the ones who must take on the responsibility of cleaning up after the devastation.

“...the poems further portray the two poets’ very different perspectives of war: glory vs. disaster.”

Contrasting significantly with Whitman’s poem, which is set during wartime, Szymborska’s poem emphasizes the disastrous aftermath of war. One of the first lines suggesting the worst effect of war – death – is, “making way for the carts filled up with corpses” (Szymborska 7-8). The image of a cart piled with corpses not only
suggests defeat, but extensive defeat, destruction of homes, buildings, etc. This contrasts with Whitman’s poem where the image of death is completely absent. Much of the imagery throughout Szymborska’s poem depicts not only disaster, but also defeat. One line reads, “Bridges are needed/also new railroad stations” (Szym- borska 23-24), which exemplifies more than just human death, but environmental destruction. None of this devastation can be easily fixed; it will only happen through a unified effort. The phrase “and takes years” helps to further imply the extensive destruction that cannot be fixed quickly or easily.

The recurrent use of the word “somebody” in Szymborska’s poem, adds meaning to the theme of disaster. The word suggests a community affected by war. These people are the “somebodies” who have to “push” (15), “haul” (14) and have “broom in hand” (26); everybody has a role (Szymborska). These words and phrases suggest that as a result of great destruction, everybody must take part in the reconstruction. Although the word “somebody” represents one person, but because it is used universally throughout the poem, it actually implies “everybody.”

The final lines that suggest disaster are, “Those who knew/what this was all about / must yield to those / who know little / or less than little / essentially nothing” (Szymborska 37-42). This line suggests that those who now face the aftermath of war still lack a true understanding of the real horrors inflicted. “Those who knew” (Szymborska 37-38) refers to the soldiers. Throughout this poem the theme of war and tragedy are present. However, two specific textual examples from each of the poems can further elucidate the poets’ contrasting views of war.

Both poems, Cavalry Crossing a Ford and End and Beginning, paint a vivid picture for the reader. The poet’s imagery help the reader to gain a better understanding of the theme of war in each poem. Whitman writes, “each group, each person, a picture” (5), suggesting that the scene is aesthetically pleasing, a snapshot to be remembered. This also implies a sense of stillness and even laziness, while the phrase, “a picture” implies that the movement throughout the poem was stop-and-go. Other phrases in the poem such as “green islands” (1), “silvery river,” (3) and “brown-faced men,” (4) is picturesque (Whitman).

On the contrary, the phrase, “This is not photogenic,” (16) in Szymborska’s poem quite clearly states the opposite. It implies something too horrible to be photographed. For example, the lines “sofa springs / splintered glass / and blood soaked rugs” (Szymbo- rska 11-13) are not typically thought of as pleasantly picturesque. One often associates these images with death and dying. Many war images focus on victory, power and pride; less often the images are of defeat, destruction and death. These two specific phrases from each of the poems further portray the two poets’ very different perspectives of war: glory vs. disaster.

Perhaps Whitman and Szymborska different backgrounds accounts for their very different views of war in their poems.

Whitman spent time during the Civil War working as a nurse in a hospital for wounded soldiers, whose stories he recorded. Many of these recordings had a major influence on his poems Drum Taps, and Cavalry Crossing a Ford being two of them. These two poems are “priceless to modern scholars’ understanding of Whitman’s experiences during the war” (Price 1). The majority of his time was spent in the hospital and “although many poems are set in charge or battle, he visited the front only twice and witnessed no actual battles” (Price 1). His lack of battle field experience may account for his glorification of war. However, the influence for this poem may have come from one of the wounded soldiers he cared for. After all, “It was in these hospitals, and not on the battlefields, as some of the poems perhaps suggest, that Whitman’s work in Drum Taps was inspired,” and through his poetry he “brought to life the emotions and realities of the Civil War” (Price 1).

Because of his experience as a nurse during the Civil War, and his recording of the wounded soldiers’ accounts, these stories are brought to life in his poems from Drum Taps. It is likely that his personal experiences, or that of his patients’, influenced his poem, Cavalry Crossing a Ford.

Wislawa Szymborska is a well-known Polish poet who “writes about everyday matters, feelings and frustrations with subtlety, sensitivity and reflectiveness” (Gajer 1). Szymborska lived during WWII, when the Germans and Russians invaded Poland. She witnessed destruction of her homeland. Poland was devastated; it was a battlefield during WWII that suffered extensive death and great destruction. Although she was never directly harmed by the war, “Like many Poles, Szymborska became disillusioned with commu- nism” (Szymborska 1). Communism had a large influence in some of her earlier works. There is little information about Szymborska’s experience during WWII; she was “a very private person…[who] wants to be left alone to do what she does best: write poetry” (Gajer 1). However, one can infer that witnessing WWII may have influenced her poem End and Beginning.

The theme of war in both Whitman’s and Szymborska’s poetry is evident; however, each poet presents the theme differently. While Whitman’s Cavalry Crossing a Ford highlights the aspect of glory in war, Szymborska’s End and Beginning focuses on war as a disastrous event with gruesome consequences. Each of these poems portrays the great complexity of war, and how it can be viewed from many different perspectives. It is reasonable to conclude that personal experience with war has influenced both Whitman’s and Szymborska’s works. Though unified by the theme of war, the poems use very different details and imagery to achieve their desired effects.

Works Cited
In his poem, The Same City, Terrance Hayes illustrates that a father's love is not always based on biology, and what is important is that the child is loved. The poem is part of a collection titled, *Hip Logic*, which, Hayes says, “implies a new and maybe strange way of taking in the world” (Callaloo 1075); this new and strange idea is the role of the father.

Within the poem, there are two parallel stories: one that discusses the relationship between the speaker and his girlfriend’s daughter, and one that deals with the relationship between the speaker and his father. The speaker is taking care of his girlfriend’s infant, who is another man’s child. The speaker is the stepfather, which Hayes reveals at the poem’s end, parallels the situation between the speaker and his own father: the latter is not the biological father of the speaker.

The poem is at least partially autobiographical since Hayes was born in 1971 (“Terrance” 1) and said in an interview, “I’d have to actually find the guy, my birth father” (Callaloo 1074). The speaker’s father met his mother in 1974, which also supports the idea that the poem is autobiographical; the speaker says, “this man met my mother / for the first time as I cried or slept” (Hayes 26-27). The word “as,” is used to show that the speaker was alive when the stepfather met the speaker’s mother. Additionally, the poem ends with Hayes’ dedication, “for James L. Hayes” (Hayes 90). Hayes’ own relationship with his father is complicated; he stated in an interview that he would “have to find the guy, my birth father, if I was to ever move poetically, and more importantly emotionally, into a new territory” (Callaloo 1074). Terrance Hayes also stated in an interview that the poem is for his “stepdad-slash-real dad” (Reading 1). Since Terrance Hayes has experience with stepfathers, he can use his own experience to illustrate how he feels about the role.

Hayes’ first attempt to define fatherhood is based upon love and not origins as with the relationship of the speaker and his girlfriend’s infant. The speaker’s girlfriend was pregnant when they met, and gave birth to another man’s child; but the speaker stayed with her. He took the infant in as his own and takes care of this child as much as he can. The poem compares the Biblical story of Joseph and Mary raising Jesus Christ to the speaker’s role as a stepfather as well as his own father’s role as a stepfather. The speaker says, “Think of Joseph raising a son that wasn’t his” (Hayes 15). Joseph, like the speaker, cares for, loves and raises a child as if it was his own; it does not matter that it’s not.

A comparison can also be drawn between the speaker and the infant, and Joseph and Jesus Christ. Hayes perhaps uses this analogy to show that each child should be treated as sacredly as Jesus Christ. Each child should be cared for as much as Jesus was cared for by Joseph, whether it is by a father or a stepfather. Furthermore, the speaker says, “I want to be holy” (Hayes 16), a line that illustrates that he wants his relationship between the infant and himself to be as holy as that of Joseph and Jesus. With this line, Hayes makes it clear that fatherhood should be based upon love and not biology. A father is someone who cares for, loves and raises a child. It should not matter if the child biologically belongs to another man because a stepfather can be a real father. Even though Joseph and the speaker are stepfathers to their children, they still love, care for and raise their stepchildren as their own.

In the poem, Hayes uses the relationship between the speaker and his father to suggest that fatherhood is based upon love. Referring to his father, the speaker says, “this man met my mother / for the first time as I cried or slept” (Hayes 26-27). Upon first reading, one might not understand the meaning of the line, but the word “as,” implies that the speaker’s father met his mother.
too late to be the biological father of the speaker. Hayes also gives support to show that even though his father is a stepfather, he still considers him his “real” dad.

A real father loves, cares for and raises his child, but also acts as a role model. The speaker’s father is his role model because the speaker is going through what the father did. When the speaker says, “I’d get out now, / prove I can stand with him,” (Hayes 5-6) it means more than just literally standing beside his father. This line implies that he can be just like him. “It is a purely physical environment in which actions, appearances, and attitudes speak louder than any words could” (Grassian 158). The speaker wants to show his father that he can stand next to him, literally and figuratively; he is his role model. The father shows that he is a part of this unspoken environment, too; "my father climbed in beside us, took the orange from my hand, /took the baby in his arms” (Hayes 25-26). The father’s actions impacted the speaker more than words ever could. By holding the baby, the father shows that even though the stepdaughter is not biologically related to either of them, all three of them are a real family. They are as worthy as any family because the speaker and the father take care of this stepdaughter as if it was their own, or as important as Jesus Christ was to Joseph. A child must love his father to consider him as a role model, and that is what the speaker did. Stepfathers can be loved the same as biological fathers.

Terrance Hayes does an excellent job illustrating that fatherhood is based on more than biology. Instead of just using one story to explain this concept, he uses two parallel stories that portray the relationships between the speaker, his father and the infant he loves as his own. In The Same City, Hayes beautifully illustrates his view on what fatherhood is truly based upon: love. ■

Works Cited


There are many similarities between music and poetry. Both are expressions of emotion and one way artists express their emotions is by using metaphors. In Kanye West’s 2008 song Homecoming, he uses a girl named “Wendy” as a metaphor for his beloved hometown: Chicago. An examination of the girl’s name reveals that by changing the “e” to an “i”, her name would become “Windy”; this is a reference to Chicago’s nickname, “The Windy City.” In Homecoming, West uses a metaphor to compare his love for Chicago to the love he would have for a girl that he has known his entire life.

West is comparing a girl to this city for a number of reasons. First, he is comfortable in Chicago, the city gives him a nostalgic feeling that could be compared to the comfort he would have with a girl he has known his entire life. He's more familiar with the city than most people, just as one knows a lifelong friend better than most people. These are ideas that nearly everyone can connect with. When a lot of people can relate to a metaphor, it makes it easier for an artist to use it in and not worry about the audience being confused.

West emphasizes his love for Chicago and for Wendy throughout the song. The first line says, “I met this girl when I was three years old. And what I loved most she had so much soul” (West). The first part of this lyric refers not only to a childhood relationship, but also to the fact that he first “met” Chicago as a child. Kanye’s mother, Donda West, wrote a novel titled Raising Kanye. The book describes her role as Kanye’s mother and their ups and downs together. Mrs. West writes, “I left Atlanta to start a new life... Kanye was only three years old” (Raising 50-51). The reader is given the image of a young boy meeting this girl named Wendy for the first time, perhaps at school. The second half of the lyric uses the word “soul” referring to the cultural depth of the city. If someone is soulful, he/she is usually a likeable person.

West also compares his love for Chicago to his love for a life-long girlfriend: “From that point I never blow her off. Niggas
come from outta town I like to show her off” (West). West is saying that he will never forsake his hometown, just as a boy who is in love is not going to forsake the girl he loves. Kanye is promising that he will always be there for his city. If agrees to do a concert, make a public appearance or promises to do anything to benefit the city, he’ll be there. He loves Chicago too much not to. The second half of the lyric is easy to draw a comparison to: when a boy has a girlfriend who he really loves, he is going to show her off to all of his friends, even those from out of town. The song contains images of West introducing a beautiful woman to a group of his friends as well as taking them all out for a night on the town.

Kanye’s love for Chicago/Wendy intensifies throughout the song. Initially he says that the two have never met, later he says he would never blow her off, and in line 14, West says, “When I grew up she showed me how to go downtown” (West). Two met, get to know each other and then built on their experiences together. West and Chicago’s/Wendy’s relationship is taken to a new level in line 16: “and I told her in my heart is where she’ll always be” (West). In addition to revealing West’s love for Wendy/Chicago, this lyric is also a pledge that she will always be with him. His love for both grows over the course of the song.

At one point in the lyrics, Kanye’s relationship with the Chicago/Wendy seems to hit a rough patch. In lines 19 and 20, he says, “(she) knew I was gang affiliated got on TV and told on me. I guess that’s why last winter she got so cold on me” (West). Most people in a relationship would be upset if their lover was involved in a gang. These lines express the idea that no matter how good a relationship is one bad act can put a completely new face on it. Kanye’s love for Chicago, however, cannot be changed.

In line 39, Kanye proves that he will always love them both when he says, “Every interview, I’m representing you making you proud” (West). After what seems to be a rocky point in the relationship, Kanye is still madly in love with Wendy/Chicago. He wants to show the city that he still cares about it, just as a man still loves his woman in spite of troubles in their relationship. He still tries to provide for her, and everything he does, he does for her sake.

Kanye is keeping the promise he made earlier in the song that he’d never forget his hometown. The song ends with the line, “Reach for the stars so if you fall you land on a cloud,” (West) which refers to his wanting to be there for the city, even when it hits hard time.

Kanye West’s popular song Homecoming includes a metaphor comparing a girl named “Wendy” to his beloved hometown of Chicago, the “Windy City.” This metaphor compares his love for Chicago with the love he would have for a girl that he has known his entire life; a girl he will always love.

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**Deceptive Clothing in A Good Man is Hard to Find**

Sarah Przybyl

In her short story, A Good Man is Hard to Find, Flannery O’Connor uses clothing to symbolize that what we wear does not always reflect who we are. The grandmother character in this marvelous story wears nice clothes because she wants give the impression that she is a respectable lady; in fact, she is rude and selfish. Her fine clothes are a façade she wears throughout the story. But it is through her behavior, not her clothes that the readers see her for who she truly is.

“The grandmother has on a navy blue straw hat with a bunch of white violets on the brim and a very blue dress with a small white dot on the print. Her collars and cuffs were white organdy trimmed with lace and at her neckline she had pinned a purple spray of cloth violets containing a sachet” (O’Connor 3).

The grandmother is a woman that cares immensely about her appearance; she considers herself a lady because she wears the appropriate attire. Her clothes allow her to project the image of prosperity, sophistication and respectability. The idea of looking better than you are is a behavior that people have practiced since
the beginning of time. In this regard, O’Connor’s grandmother character puts on false appearances in order to make herself feel superior and to project an image that she wants others to embrace.

Although the grandmother seems good, she really has an evil attitude. It is only after seeing her evil that we really know her for whom she truly is.

Because of her prosperous appearance, she thinks of herself as morally superior to others in her family. She constantly scolds her grandchildren saying that if she was their age she would be more respectful and well-mannered. During all her griping and scolding, she proudly wears her beautiful garments, giving the appearance that she knows best.

She takes pride in her appearance and always wants to be recognized as a lady even in death. “In case of an accident, anyone seeing her dead on the highway would know at once that she was a lady” (O’Connor 3).

It is ironic that she wants to be seen as a lady even in the event of a deadly accident because in many ways she is already dead to her family, who don’t want her on the trip. In fact, she is disliked and ignored by her family. Her daughter and her son-in-law don’t listen to her and when she tries to talk to her grandchildren, she is ignored. Her daughter isn’t even comfortable with her holding her grand baby.

“We must keep in mind that we cannot judge a person simply by how they dress.”

Later in the story, the grandmother proclaims, “Oh, look at the cute little pickaninny!...Wouldn’t that make a picture now? ... If I could paint, I’d paint that picture” (O’Connor 4). The grandmother draws attention to a black child as a spectacle to be exploited. The black child’s beauty is in her simplicity, but the grandmother loves only fancy things and doesn’t see beauty in simplicity. In the end, she is the one who suffers.

The grandmother selfishly sneaks her cat into the car, which sparks her downfall along with the rest of her family. Even after the accident, which she caused by her cat, she pretends to be hurt, saying, “I believe I have injured an organ” (O’Connor 12), so that her son might refrain from yelling at her. She fakes an injury to gain pity and forgiveness. After the accident, she grovels for mercy at the feet of the misfit character. She tries to convince him that he is of the same high status that she believes she is: “You don’t look a bit like you have common blood”(O’Connor 15). She lies to the misfit about his appearance in order to save herself (Margaritis). This is important because she never would have done that with members of her family.

Her damaged clothes also reflect the unraveling of her moral character. “The grandmother reached up to adjust her brim as if she was going into the woods with him but it came off in her hand” (O’Connor 16). This damage to her clothes symbolizes her loss of control and respect that she believed she had. “She stood staring at it and after a second she let it fall on the ground” (O’Connor 16). She realized that her persona no longer matters, that the “lovely lady” image is just a mask, and that the real person shows through beyond her control.

By the end of the story, the grandmother and the rest of her family are murdered by the misfit. But when the misfit met her and then decides to kill her whole family, her fine clothing didn’t matter. Her clothes couldn’t save her.

The grandmother’s clothing in O’Connor’s A Good Man is Hard to Find represents the masks that people sometimes wear to cover their true selves. The grandmother’s real character came out in the end and the expensive clothes she proudly wore didn’t matter after she was dead. The message in this play warns us to not conceal ourselves with false appearances because our true character will come out in the end. We must keep in mind that we cannot judge a person simply by how they dress.

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Most people will fight for their country, but they also look forward to coming home at the end of a conflict. Will James, a character in the film *The Hurt Locker*, is different and believes the complete opposite. For some reason, he loves war and feels that is where he belongs. Perhaps because he is very good at his job deactivating bombs and he enjoys doing it. He is a “one-man person” meaning that he does not need anyone’s help while doing his job. James is carefree; he has reckless disregard for military protocol and basic safety measures. When he is at war, he feels comfortable, but when he goes home he doesn’t feel that same comfort. Usually when soldiers return from war they are excited to be home, but James does not have these same feelings; instead, he thinks about returning to the battlefield. The film never offers a clear reason for James’ desires, but by looking at the contrast, it is clear that though he may love his family, his love of war is much stronger.

Most soldiers can’t wait to return home and see their families, but James is not an ordinary soldier. He has a son at home, but he rarely talks about him to his teammates. Maybe he is trying to avoid talking about him because he misses him, or maybe he doesn’t care. For example, towards the end of the film, Sanborn, one of James’ teammates, shares how much he wants a son and how badly he wishes he could go home to his girlfriend. Then he asks James, how is he able to remain on the battlefield without a break from the killing and dying or seeing his child. James responds by simply saying that he tries not to think or talk about it. This suggests that his family may not be a priority. He enjoys his job and has no desire to go home to his family.

James, however, enjoys the company of Beckham, a kid who sold him DVDs, and when he gets to know Beckham, they play soccer together. He establishes a relationship with Beckham because they both love to joke around which led to their friendship. After seeing this, viewers are probably thinking that James loves children, but I believe he has a stronger connection with Beckham, than he does with his own child. Maybe he just doesn’t like all the emotional confusion that is in “the real world” and would rather just avoid all of it by being away from his family. At war James can be himself and not worry about pleasing anyone. He loves being at war and can’t see himself anywhere else.

“People in battle operate on fear and adrenaline” (Common Dreams). This is how they get through it. When they hear shooting, bombs exploding, and see their friends die, this gets their adrenaline pumping. And now they are not only just fighting for their country, but also for the friends they lost. James loves this adrenaline rush; there is no place like war to bring it on. This is why James prefers the battle field to home. Adrenaline and fear can make you do things you would never imagine doing.

James loves not having to answer to anyone. That is why he is so good at what he does; he goes in with an open mind and since he knows he is the best, he is confident that he can do anything he wants. Chris Hedges, a journalist, says, “Once we adopt an upbeat vision of reality, positive things will happen. This belief encourages us to flee from reality when reality does not elicit positive feelings” (Hedges). James feels that only negative things happen when he is at home, so to get out of that world and all of the problems that come with it, James prefers the battlefield, a place where he feels comfortable; a place where he can be himself. He has grown accustomed to war and it gives him purpose, meaning and a reason for living.

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Redevelopment Committee of Pittsburgh (URCMP) planned to demolish what they thought were useless buildings in the Hill District thereby leaving 8000 people homeless and without jobs (“Hill District”). Two Trains Running is about racism and its ties with urban redevelopment and how the people of the Hill District fought the URCMP.

Urban redevelopment is defined as the rehabilitation of cities by renovating or replacing dilapidated buildings with new housing, public buildings, parks, roadways, industrial areas, etc., in accordance with a comprehensive plan. Unfortunately the residents of the Hill District got the short end of the redevelopment stick. Many African-Americans moved north to cities in the 1920’s but they couldn’t escape he racism. Whites looked down on them and their crowded and dilapidated neighborhoods. According to many who were around at that time, the city really dropped the ball.

Pittsburgh had one of the most catastrophic urban redevelopment programs in the country. The Hill District was targeted because it is close to downtown Pittsburgh and because it is a largely poor and working class black neighborhood.

The play takes place in a popular Hill restaurant owned by Memphis. His restaurant is one of the buildings scheduled to be torn down by the city. This restaurant is Memphis’ livelihood. It pays the bills and puts food on his table. Not only that, the restaurant is a landmark in the Hill District. Everybody eats there. Memphis has worked unbelievably hard to build a successful business. Not only is it Memphis’s livelihood, but it is also provides a livelihood for the people who work there.

The restaurant, moreover, is a place the community goes to connect. In every community, there is usually one place that people go to meet and mingle. People on the Hill have grown old together meeting in Memphis’ restaurant. Now the city was taking that away. In 1943, George E. Evans, a member of Pittsburgh’s City Council, wrote that “approximately 90 percent of the buildings on the Hill are sub-standard and have long outlived their usefulness, and so there would be no social loss if they were all destroyed” (Evans). How can he claim that when he knew nothing about the history of the houses or businesses? To this day, the Hill District has not recovered from URCMP’s horrific redevelopment plan.

Memphis is not the only one being displaced, but like many Hill residents, he refused to be a victim. Memphis states, “They don't know I got a clause of my own ... They can carry me out feet first... but my clause say ... they got to meet my price!” In this statement, Memphis is saying that he is going to control this situation. The city has to deal with him and he will not be a push over.

Sterling, a character from the play who was recently in jail, tries to organize a rally to save the restaurant. He wants to stay and fight.

The African Americans living on the Hill at that time felt they were being targeted due to their race, and they were not happy about it.

Overall, the city could have done a much better job with urban redevelopment. They hurt many people and left many of them homeless. Today, the Hill District is still recovering. During the bulldozing for redevelopment, it was remarked by George Evans that, “The Hill...was completely worn out, like an old pair of shoes that has gone the last mile” (Evans). Many homes, businesses, and playgrounds were demolished never to return.

“After the URA demolished 1,200 homes, reduced the size of the shopping district by 1 million square feet and closed the middle of East Liberty to automobiles, the neighborhood lost hundreds of small businesses, according to one report. In the four decades that followed, it lost more than 4,500 people” (Fitzpatrick).

The city should not have left so many people homeless and jobless. It all happened because the city didn’t believe. The Hill was known in the 1930s and 40s as one of the best Jazz scenes in the country. Hopefully one day the Hill will be a better, safer place for everyone to visit and enjoy all of its great culture and artwork. With Duquesne University moving further and further down into the Hill, will it ruin the culture? No one knows. Hopefully, one day the Hill will once again be the vibrant cultural center it once was.

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Justin Verlander, the Detroit Tigers’ shut down phenomenon, is the most remarkable player in major league baseball today. With his ability to thread his fastball within an inch of the plate, he is the dominant pitcher in the “Bigs.” Verlander’s velocity and accuracy are incomparable to any other pitcher, but his success mainly lies in his extensive baseball knowledge. He is a master of the game when it comes to setting up hitters. He will jam the hitter’s hands with his heater, and then bounce an irresistible curveball at the victim’s feet. His pitches always seem to avoid the barrel of the bat and his strikeout rate is abnormally high at the end of every season when most arms have surrendered to fatigue. Verlander’s ability to keep runners off the base paths allows him to have a consistently low ERA (earned run average). Verlander also gives his team the opportunity to consistently win, allowing a low WHIP rate (walks and hits per inning pitched). Although there is some concern with Verlander’s postseason play, the truth behind his pitching stats shows the baseball world why he is “The Ace.”

“Why Verlander,” some brainless baseball follower may ask. It is because he is an all-around player, the complete package. According to Joe Lemire, baseball writer for Sportsillustrated.com, “Verlander’s average fastball velocity (95.4 mph) has been the majors’ best among starters since 2009.” Although the velocity on a fastball is not the most important feature in determining the greatness of a pitcher, we are able to see one of his dominating stats. There have been a few closers this season who have reached triple digits in their fastball velocity. Aroldis Chapman is one of these exceptions. However, Chapman is only responsible for one inning. Verlander on the other hand started in 34 games during the 2011 campaign, and he threw 251 innings (cbssports). This means that Verlander threw 7 1/3 innings on an average night. His ability to throw this many innings and have his average fastball velocity clocking in at 95 miles per hour is a testament to his endurance. Verlander never gets tired; he always has something left, which causes him to be, at time, unhittable.

As USA Today sports writer Steve Gardner states, “Verlander can hit 100 mph at any point from the game’s first pitch to the last. But it’s not something he necessarily wants to do”. This statement shows that Verlander is not just a good thrower, but a good pitcher as well. A good thrower is someone who winds back and tries to blow the ball past the hitter every pitch. They rely completely on their fastball and lack control. Verlander is the complete opposite. He uses his fastball as his strikeout pitch, but he also uses off-speed pitches to set hitters up. His dominance on the mound stems from his strong control of his pitches, and his ability to paint the corners of the plate. Any good major league hitter can hit a fastball that is belt high down the wheelhouse, but Verlander avoids throwing these pitches too often. In fact, according to baseball analyst Brandon Funston last season’s opponents’ batting average against Verlander was .192. This means that out of every 10 hitters Verlander faced in 2011, less than 2 earned a hit off of him. This ranked Verlander first among all Major League starters with at least 10 games pitched (cbssports).

Behind Verlander in the rankings of MLB starters is Clayton Kershaw of the Los Angeles Dodgers, who posted an opponents batting average of .207 (cbssports). Kershaw was the 2011 National League CY Young award winner whose season dominance was comparable to Verlander’s (cbssports). According to Yahoo sports analysis Brandon Funston however, “Kershaw is more dominating than Verlander.” Funston exemplifies his opinion by showing us Kershaw’s stats from 2011. “Kershaw winning the National League Quadruple Crown of pitching with 21 wins, 248 strikeouts, a 2.28 ERA and a 0.98 WHIP proved to be untouchable.” Funston went on to say that, “Kershaw has the most potential in years to come because of his age”. Kershaw is undoubtedly a top 5 pitcher in the majors, but to rank him above the American League CY Young award winner, Just Verlander, is absurd. Unlike Kershaw, Verlander has to pitch against designated hitters because he is in the American League. Even with his handicap, Verlander had 24 wins, 250 Strikeouts, a 2.40 ERA and a 0.91 WHIP (MLBstats). At age 24, Kershaw might have future potential, but Verlander is 29 years old, the prime of a pitchers career (cbssports). Although Kershaw might one-day post better numbers than Verlander, as of right now, Verlander is the shut down man.

In baseball an ace is the best starting pitcher on the team. Verlander is not only this; he is also the best starting pitcher in the league. When talking about Justin Verlander, one should not consider him an ace; they should consider him the ace. Verlander has the potential to toss a no-hitter every time he takes the mound. He has already thrown two no hitters in his seven seasons (Wikipedia). The only other current MLB pitchers to have thrown two no-hitters are Mark Buehrle of the Miami Marlins, and Roy Halladay of the Philadelphia Phillies (Wikipedia). Last season Roy Halladay finished with 19 wins and a 2.35 ERA (MLBstats). Excluding Verlander, Halladay is the most consistent pitcher in baseball. “You just don’t get an ace when you sign up Halladay, you get a machine, a thoroughbred” says Yahoo analyst Scott Pianowski. Pianowski goes on to say, “Halladay has thrown 233, 250, 239, 246,
225 and 220 innings the last six years.” These numbers are very impressive, especially being in the National League East, arguable one of the best divisions in baseball. Pianowski also compares Halladay to Verlander saying
You get big, juicy counting stats with Verlander, but do the ratio stats line up?
Look at these ERAs before last year: 3.37, 3.45, 4.84, 3.66, and 3.63. He didn’t have a single WHIP below 1.16 prior to the 2011 dream season. The man is terrific, but the sledding is always harder in the American League. He’s only spent one year at this other-worldly level.

“In baseball an ace is the best starting pitcher on the team.”

Halladay is a workhorse, and the 2011 season for Verlander was perhaps an unrepeatable feat. However, Halladay wasn’t even the best pitcher in the National League last season (Kershaw was the Cy Young winner). Halladay has been a consistent pitcher for quite some time, but he pitches against pitchers (typically weak hitters) and Verlander pitches against designated hitters. Halladay is also 6 years older than Verlander so these stats are unfair, as Verlander’s best years are to come. Six seasons ago, Halladay posted a 3.71 ERA, which is incomparable to Verlander’s 2.40 ERA last season when he was 29 years old (Pianowski). With Halladay’s career winding down and Verlander’s career hitting its peak, it is obvious that Verlander is the better pitcher. However, his age and fastball velocity are not the only factors that make him the best. His ball control also plays a vital role in his success.

Verlander didn’t lead the American League in strikeouts last season out of pure luck. He knows how to throw strikes, no doubt about it. The problem with throwing strikes is that hitters are able to hit them so the pitcher be able to put the ball where and how he wants it. Verlander mixes his 100 MPH four-seam fastball with a 95 MPH two-seam fastball, 83 MPH 12-6 curveball, 80 MPH circle changeup and an 89 MPH slider (Wikipedia). By changing his speed and the spin on his ball, Verlander retires hitters consistently, giving his team the opportunity to win every time he takes the hill. Verlander’s strikeout pitch is his 100 MPH fastball, but he prefers to use his wicked curve. MLB writer Anthony Castrovince calls Verlander’s pitching, “unfair” and it is. (MLBstats) The hitters never know what Verlander is going to throw. His pitching motion is so fluent that hitters cannot guess what they must attempt to hit. Just when they start to catch up to his fastball he throws his complex curveball. Verlander is intimidating enough with the velocity on his fastball, but his ability to control pitch location makes batting against him a daunting task. If a hitter crowds the plate he will throw in on their hands, and if a hitter backs off the plate he will hit the outside corner. Verlander is a master of the game; he takes control and uses his baseball knowledge to send hitters back to the dugout.

That is not to say Verlander has no room for improvement. The one phase of the game Verlander struggles in is his postseason play. Verlander’s win and loss record in the playoffs is 3-3 (Palmer). This stat might be the only factor that makes him comparable to other pitchers. Verlander’s mediocre postseason numbers make him seem like an average pitcher when high stakes games are on the line. American novelist James Lane Allen once said, “Adversity does not build character, it reveals it.” In baseball, you are faced with adversity all the time. It is a game of success and failure and one pitch could decide the game. When a game is on the line, the true competitor is revealed and the separation between average and above average players becomes clear. If Verlander is the best, why are his postseason statistics average? “Two of his six starts have been interrupted by rain long before Verlander had reached his pitch limit” (Replacement level). The weather could be a factor that explains poor performance. On the other hand, we must remember that the opposing pitcher has to pitch in the same conditions. Could it be that Verlander is gassed from throwing so many innings during the regular season? Or could it be that his bullpen needs a break so Jim Leyland overthrows him in playoff games? These are all likely possibilities, but it is possible that his numbers would not seem so bad if the Tigers made it to the playoffs more often. Verlander has only made it to the playoffs twice in his seven-year career (Palmer).

During Verlander’s second year in the league, he posted a 1-2 record in the playoffs, facing the Oakland Athletics and the Saint Louis Cardinals (MLBstats). As it was only his second year in the majors and his first time throwing in the postseason, it is easy to see why Verlander struggled and had a losing record. Verlander would again return to the postseason during the 2011 campaign to square off against the New York Yankees and the Texas Rangers (Palmer). Verlander won two out of the three games he pitched (Palmer). The one game he lost came during game one of the ALCS when the Detroit Tigers faced the Texas Rangers, who would go on to play in the World Series (Palmer). The Tigers only lost that game 3-2, so despite the outcome Verlander still threw a quality start (MLBstats). Verlander is the best pitcher no matter what part of the season it is. He has all the skills and the stats to back this claim up. Verlander can face the leagues best hitters, and as he continues to mature as a pitcher his postseason record will soon rise. Verlander is the best ace in baseball.

With velocity, accuracy, intelligence, and an assortment of pitches, it is obvious as to why Verlander won the Cy Young Award. He is the best, yet his personal best is still to come. The

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 24**
intimidation factor he puts on Major League hitters speaks for its self. Verlander will get even better as his career grows old, and one day he will be in the Baseball Hall of Fame. His skill and his will to win are the two factors that separate him from all the other pitchers, and this is why Justin Verlander is “The Ace”.

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aided society by having users express themselves and by sharing information.

Many researchers have noted the important role of community in effective learning in traditional, online, and blended learning environments. For instance, Hsiu, Hung, and Yuen (2010) examined the relationship between students’ perceptions of classroom community and mastery motivation in traditional classrooms that used different classroom strategies. They came to the conclusion that students involved with online and social media, perceived a greater sense of community and reported greater motivation than those in traditional settings. “Social networking can be seen as the practice of expanding knowledge by making connections with individuals of similar interest.” (Manago, 2012)

The biggest problem with social media is Facebook. Facebook was established in 2004, with more than 150 million users worldwide, within the first 4 years. The original audience for Facebook was users affiliated with American colleges or universities, but access is now universal. The problem with Facebook is that information can be accessed by unintended viewers, out of context and into the future, even if the user deleted the material or deleted the account.

Regarding Facebook, users sometimes receive more information than they wanted about others, when viewing information provided by their profile. These concerns might be a result of too much social capital; the problem is that, on social networking sites, people from different social circles mix in the same communication context, which in turn leads to tension. “Whom to trust and what to reveal about yourself suddenly becomes complex issues when the audience is diverse.” (Brandtzæg, 2010)

There have been reports of job applicants being denied an employment because of inappropriate information placed on a Facebook page. In March 2008, Facebook updated its privacy controls so that, by default, access to a user’s profile is limited to others in the same network unless the user actively restricts access to his or her friends. These controls were updated in late 2009. When you access Facebook now, you are able to see: “Name, Profile Photo, Gender, Current City, Networks, Friends Lists, and Pages. This information is considered visible to everyone, to prevent this visibility, users must be aware of it and actively adjust their privacy settings.” (Fletcher, 2010)

Many of the users are unaware of these changes, but still use social media. Young people realize that online communication provides them with a kind of freedom from physical and social limits. Many of them purposely use the Internet to explore the boundaries of social roles and to deepen their relationships with friends. Some may do this, because they perceive the Internet to be more private than other social spaces; online communication is a way to obtain privacy from people in their real-world social networks, like their teachers and parents.

With this information provided, many users claim violation of their first and fourth amendment rights, because of the discipline they received. Companies and universities have their individual policies. Regardless of the policy, the user still feels violated. However, there has been a court decision regarding online social networking.

“New technologies create interesting challenges to long established legal concepts. Thus, just as when the telephone gained nationwide use and acceptance… and when cellular telephones came into widespread use, now personal computers, hooked up to large networks, are so widely used that the scope of the First and Fourth Amendment core concepts of ‘privacy’ as applied to them must be reexamined.” (Petrashek, 2010)

Courts are aware that there are gray areas when it comes to social media. However, as stated earlier, companies and universities expect its employees and students to be aware and abide by its policies. Citizens think that what they post on their wall is private and can only be seen by those who are associated with them. Although this is true; however, to some degree, American is a nation under surveillance at all times. Nothing becomes private on the Internet after it is posted. Even if it is deleted, it can always be traced and can have consequences.

To prevent Duquesne students from becoming statistics, Duquesne should incorporate lessons regarding social media in the curriculum of Introduction to Academic and University Success. Looking at this proposal from a fiscal standpoint would not cost Duquesne significant amounts of money. Based on the university’s mission statement, it would be a disservice to not enlighten students about social media.

Everyone has a different perspective of social media, which can cause problems in college or in the working environment. Duquesne needs to abide by its own mission statement and incorporate these classes in the curriculum. It would be ideal to institute this for the freshman, so they can be aware of the dangers and consequences throughout their years at Duquesne.

Teachers often warn students to be careful what the post on social media sites. Chances are not everyone in the classroom heard that comment and some may fall victim to violating Duquesne policy. By addressing these issues with the freshman, they can no longer claim not being told. Ignorance is not bliss.

Through the incorporation of social media lessons into the Introduction to University, Academic Success, and Research and Information Skills courses, it is likely that more awareness would be spread around campus and incidents would dwindle. Incorporating these lessons would not strain the educators of the course. They would just be adding a lesson in incorporating social media. The course does not have to be long. Within a few class sessions,
the professor can make students aware of the problems, benefits,
and consequences of social media.

The first year can be a trial for Introduction to University and
Academic Success; however, statistics should be regarding social
media. For clarification, the curriculum is not being completely
changed, merely just an addition.

There are too many students who abuse social media,
whether through bullying or sexual harassment, the numbers are
too high. Social media, as stated earlier, can truly be beneficial
once students learn how to use it appropriately. College should be
one of the best times of someone's life; however, it takes personal
awareness to make the right decisions; it helps to be aware of
consequences.

For too long, social media has plagued universities and com-
panies. These issues can be addressed in various ways; however,
the easiest and most fiscal responsible way is to bring awareness to
their corporate users. The corporation and university's legal paper
work would be reduced, but more importantly, their students and
employees are now aware of the limits of social media. Duquesne
is only hurting itself by not incorporating social media into the
curriculum of Introduction to University, Academic Success, and
Research and Information Skills.

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Exclusion Within a Community
Kristina Jaczesko

Family relationships differ in every culture. Some families are
extremely close, while others barely see each other once a year.
Despite the differences, families all have one common bond: they
support each other in times of need. Through the use of charac-
terization, flashbacks and setting, Sherman Alexie creates a sense
of family loss and detachment in his short story, “This is What It
Means to Say Phoenix Arizona.”

Alexie's characters Thomas and Victor, two Native American
men, carry the action. Thomas, unlike Victor, has a strong con-
nection to his native culture. He tells stories that have a spiritual
and didactic quality. His stories give meaning to his life regardless
if anyone truly listens to them or not. He states, “We are all given
one thing by which our lives are measured, one determination.
Mine are the stories, which can change or not change the world.
It doesn't matter which as long as I continue to tell the stories”
(281). Even his name, Thomas Builds-the-Fire, is significant. It is a
metaphor comparing his desire to keep his culture alive to keeping
a fire lit.
Ironically in the past, Victor used to demand that Thomas tell his stories (275). Over the years, Victor grew apart from his family and wanted nothing to do with Thomas’ stories. Being separated from his father and the loss of Thomas’ friendship makes Victor notice his detachment (274). Victor wonders, “Whatever happened to the tribal ties, the sense of community?” He realizes that, “the only real thing he shared with anybody was a bottle and broken dreams” (282). He desires to feel included in something again. Traveling to Arizona helps Victor realize the disconnection between community and culture. On the flight, he takes note of people’s conversations and tells Thomas, “Yeah, but everybody talks to everybody on airplanes, it’s too bad we can’t always be that way” (277). He recognizes a sense of detachment in his own community. When people are not confined to the limited space of an airplane, they do not communicate with each other and as a consequence become disconnected from community.

The journey to Arizona allows Victor to appreciate his family and community ties. The loss of his father forces him to reminisce. He “searched his mind for memories of his father, found the good ones, found a few bad ones, added it all up, and smiled” (279). Despite their issues, “…there still was a genetic pain…” (273). Victor and his father were not close, but they were still family. Reuniting with his father and Thomas gives him a sense of closure and confirms that family and friends are always there and take care of each other.

Alexie uses flashbacks to give insight into Native American culture and his characters. The flashbacks allow the reader to understand how Thomas and Victor identify with each other and their experiences. Thomas understands the emotions that Victor is experiencing. He lost both of his parents when he was younger. The lack of a close family causes Thomas to rely on his stories. He states, “I have only my stories which came to me before I even had the words to speak” (281). His stories allow him to feel connected. For instance, Thomas told the story of his vision at Spokane Falls where he went to receive another sign. While at the Falls, Victor’s father finds Thomas and takes him back to the reservation. At first upset with his vision, Thomas realizes that Victor’s father was his sign. His father showed him that people, “take care of each other” (279). Later in the story, the reader witnesses Thomas following this lesson. In return for helping Thomas, Victor’s father made him promise to watch out for his son. Just as Victor’s father took care of Thomas, Thomas watches out for Victor. This story shows that no matter the circumstances and how distant Victor might be, they are still family with a common bond that allows them to rely on each other.

Alexie uses various settings throughout the novel to demonstrate isolation and detachment from family and culture. The journey to Victor’s father’s trailer in Phoenix creates a connection between Victor and his father. Visiting the place where his father lived and collecting some of his belongings makes Victor feel that he has a part of his father with him. The setting also allows the reader to understand the characters better. The desert symbolizes loneliness and isolation from society. Victor’s father’s choice to reside in the desert gives the reader a better understanding of why he left home. As he drove through the desert, Victor, “felt the emptiness and loneliness” of the bare land (281). Both Thomas and Victor “had been amazed at the lack of animal life, at the absence of water, of movement” (280). It was a surprise to both men when they encountered a jackrabbit for, “there [weren’t] even any bugs smashed on the windshield” (281). Similar to the secluded jackrabbit, Victor’s father was also isolated from society. The jackrabbit allows Victor to recognize the isolation and loneliness his father had been experiencing for years. The use of setting and the symbol of the lonely animal exemplify how one can be excluded in their on society.

In “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix Arizona,” Sherman Alexie uses specific characterization, flashbacks and close attention to setting to demonstrate a sense of loss and detachment within a family and community. At times, a person may feel excluded from his or her own community or family. One may grow apart from their family and forget the importance of their community and their culture. In order to feel connected to one’s society again, it may take leaving to realize the significance of culture, community, and family. By the end of the story, Victor realizes that family and community are always there; he was simply disconnected and needed to be reminded of their importance.

Works Cited
Surfs Up: The Heart of the Wave
Nathaniel Wunderlich

Rising out of the ocean is energy, formed into a beautiful perfect wave. A pipeline wave moves at 15 miles per hour, but can carry enough energy to power a thousand homes for a month (Pure Energy Systems). Even though these waves are unnerving, there are people, pipeline surfers, who live to ride these waves. Pipeline surfers are unique athletes. Balance, precision timing, inner calm, respect and love for the ocean are the attributes that set pipeline surfers apart from other athletes.

A surfer, let’s call him Toby, is faced with many challenges if he wishes to become a pipeline surfer. The first is to stand up on the board. Toby must stand up, lean back, and counter the slant of the wave just so that the board is stable enough for him to stand on. He then must keep the board balanced so he will not out run the wave and wipe out. Keep in mind that all of these tasks must be completed in 3 to 5 second period, which is not easy. Accurate balance and quick reaction time separates surfers from all other athletes.

Timing is another skill a pipeline surfer must master. Toby can see many waves in the distance, but he must learn when to start paddling towards shore to get to a point where the wave will pick him up. The timing depends on the size of the wave, the time of day, the height of the tide, and the distance of the wave. Being aware of these factors is essential to the success of a pipeline surfer.

Another attribute of a good athlete is respect for their milieu. Pipeline surfers have the upmost respect and reverence for the power of the sea. Ed Peace, a six-year surfer and winner of Surf Pulse 2004, says, “Respect the sea (and each other).” This is a great summary of the disposition of a surfer. The connection of surfer to wave is a much deeper than the connection of say, a baseball player to the stadium. While a player respects a baseball stadium, it is man-made. Without humans, the stadium would not exist. But without humans, waves will always exist. Without the surfer, the wave will still barrel into shore. Pipeline surfers respect waves because they know that they are at the mercy of nature, not the other way around. Since the surfer cannot control the wave, they are forced to coexist with it.

“Waves are not measured in feet and inches, they are measured in increments of fear” (Buzzy Trent, sup-surfing.org). The fear and risk in pipeline surfing is greater than other sports. Surfers must confront a force that produces, “thousands of megawatts” of energy (“Pure Energy Systems”). To put this number into perspective, the average household uses around .958 megawatts per month (U.S. Energy Information Administration). Most athletes are faced with the power of another athlete. In boxing, for example, it is human power against human power. When it comes to the might of the ocean, there is no question about which is the greater force.

The skilled surfer realizes the danger, but is still prone to injury. Pipeline surfers are known for their injuries, which come from being slammed down hard against the ocean floor, or from being suffocated while tossed around under water for extended periods of time. In boxing, for example, when one man goes down, the other stops and gives him the chance to get up and continue. Once surfers fall off of their boards, they are unconditionally at the mercy of the ocean.

In spite of its many dangers, the surfing is addictive. Matt Warshaw, a 23 year mavericks surfer, says, “surfing is for life.” What is it about this sport that creates passion, love, and enjoyment, even in the face of danger? For a pipeline surfer the thought of surfing is enough to turn the worst of days into a great day. Once someone gets hooked on surfing, the search for the next wave begins.

Because it challenges the mind, soul, and body, pipeline surfing is truly a unique sport. It offers more than just winning; it offers inner peace. There is no need for million dollar stadiums, thousands of screaming fans, the fact that they are doing what they love makes it all worthwhile.

Works Cited


Nathaniel Hawthorne  
Katie Bargiel

Hawthorne and the Real: Bicentennial Essays and The Cambridge Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne, asks questions about the currency of late-twentieth-century assessments of Hawthorne’s significance. The collections gather numerous responses to the question as to whether Hawthorne is still to be read as an anxious conservative tainted by racist, nationalist ideologies, etc. Critics no longer blame Hawthorne for the way that modernist literature histories worshiped him. New historicists no longer point invariably to the limits of Hawthorne’s moral, cultural, and political consciousness.

Hawthorne’s politics as well as his values are made apparent through his writing. Different sides of Hawthorne have been expressed through his various works. In The Cambridge Companion, Hawthorne reveals a side of himself that is rather preoccupied with social change. Hawthorne and the Real, Hawthorne: A Life portrays a social and personal side of Hawthorne. Therefore, Hawthorne expresses numerous sides of himself through his tone and diction in order to convey different emotions and messages to his readers.

Critics have different views of Hawthorne’s approaches throughout his various works. Overall, Hawthorne elaborates on issues that are still relevant today, stressing their importance. Critics find the drama in Hawthorne’s works to be intriguing as he to some degree expresses the ambivalences of his own culture pertaining to gender questions. Readers today will find him ahead of his time in regards to society’s dreams and contradictions about women’s lives.

Works Cited

Shakespeare’s Sister: An Analysis  
Steve Goth

Virginia Woolf’s essay, Shakespeare’s Sister, examines how unlikely it was for a British Renaissance woman to become a published writer. Throughout this essay, Woolf displays her disgust for scholars who believe that it is impossible for a woman to do anything outside of taking care of her family and working in the home. Women during this period had minimal opportunities for mastering English prose, learning to read, or composing anything comparable to the works of William Shakespeare. By listing her earlier publications, Woolf establishes her credibility, then she uses emotional appeals to help readers to identify with the plight of women from this era.

“...Woolf searches for evidence that links middle class British Renaissance women to a significant publication or play.”

Throughout the essay, Woolf searches for evidence that links middle class British Renaissance women to a significant publication or play. After reading countless histories and interviewing many literary historians, she finds only stories of abuse and neglect. She is distressed by the fact that middle class English
women were forced to marry men their parents chose for them. The article entitled Women in the Renaissance makes it clear that most middle class English women were married by the time they were sixteen years old, and tending to their children and husband’s needs, thus leaving no time for literary pursuits.

Even if there was a possibility that a middle class English woman might learn to read and write, it is highly unlikely that her writing would be published (Wojtczak). In another interview with an esteemed historian, Woolf was told, “A woman’s composing is like a dog’s walking on his hind legs, it’s not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all” (Woolf 850). If a woman did try to write, the final product would be of poor quality and thus a disappointment to her and her family. It is highly unlikely that a literate woman would go through all this trouble to write knowing that the work would never be read or respected in British society. There would be no motivation to write anything significant (“Women in the Renaissance”).

Oscar Browning states, “Not even a nineteenth century woman was encouraged to be an artist” (Woolf 850). Even hundreds of years after Shakespeare, women were discouraged from writing and publishing. After speaking with Browning, Woolf is again frustrated by what she finds. Woolf is saddened by the scarce opportunities for women writers during the British Renaissance. She states that most women had no schooling, and thus no chance of participating in educated conversations let alone writing and publishing. Upon reviewing her research, Woolf concludes that there is no historical record of women writing anything comparable to Shakespeare’s works before or after the British Renaissance. All of the histories she read and scholars she met assure her it is nearly impossible for a middle class woman to write at the level of William Shakespeare. Woolf ends her essay by noting how different British Renaissance history would have been if women had the same opportunities as men.

Works Cited


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In Times of Chaos
Jordan McNally

The victims were in airplanes or in their offices: secretaries, business men and women, military and federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror. "Those were the first words of President George Bush’s address to our nation September 11, 2001. He continued.

On September 11th, 2001, 19 militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda hijacked four airliners and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States. Two of the planes were flown into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania.

President Bush’s historic address is an excellent example of the effective use of ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion), and logos (logic).

In his address to the American people, Bush is extremely empathetic and soft-spoken. However, he is also seeking justice. His calm demeanor and determination are a reflection of his personality and character (ethos). Bush maintained his composure, even though it was an extremely emotional day in the United States. He had to remain calm in this time of chaos in order to display his strength, discipline and composure as a leader. In this address, Bush also uses words like “our” and “we” – to underscore a sense of national unity. This is a technique to connect with his audience, and it is a fine example of ethos because it draws attention to the common bonds all Americans cherish.

Toward the end of his address, Bush acknowledges three different audiences, ranging from most specific to most general: Congress, the American people, and the global community. “I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks.” The President identifies his audience when he thanked the Congress. “And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance. America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against..."
terrorism.” He then broadened his audience by using “we,” which refers not just to Americans, but to our allies as well. Bush uses this tactic to bring all of our allies together to fight the war that he wants fought. He further strengthens his credibility by voicing his respect and thanks to a wide range of people thereby endearing himself to a broad spectrum of people.

“On September 11, 2001, it didn’t matter if you were a Republican or Democrat, black or white, male or female; the only thing that mattered that day was that we were all Americans.”

Bush’s assertion that, “Our country is strong” is a pathos-driven statement because it bolstered a feeling of confidence among frightened listeners. The statement, “Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America” is an example of pathos because it evoked a strong emotional reaction in the listeners. Bush reached out to all people and attempted to bring all Americans together in this hour of need. When Bush said, “America was targeted for attack because we’re the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining,” and, “Today, our nation saw evil – the very worst of human nature – and we responded with the best of America. With the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could,” he focused on America as a nation of heroes, not a nation of victims. This type of pathos appeal was crucial in keeping the listeners’ emotional energy positive, rather than being reduced to simple fear and panic.

In an effort to manage the fears of a nation, Bush needed to address the situation on a logical/logos basis, as well as appealing to emotions. He provides details to demonstrate that logical action is being taken to bring the situation under control: “Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government’s emergency response plans. “ Bush is reassuring the American people telling them that he has a plan to resolve the crisis. He also builds more confidence by stating, “Our military is powerful, and it’s prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington D.C. to help with local rescue efforts.” This is a prime example of logos because he presents a logical, strategically sound plan to help those in need. Bush worked with his advisors to investigate the attacks and to come up with a logical course of action to protect American citizens, punish the attackers, and prevent further tragedies.

President Bush stated emotionally that, “This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time.” He shows his confidence and strength as a leader with his plan to respond to the terrorists: “None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.” On September 11, 2001, it didn’t matter if you were a Republican or Democrat, black or white, male or female; the only thing that mattered that day was that we were all Americans. His 9/11 address was one of the shining moments of his presidency, and the application of classical rhetorical strategy helped him to keep our nation on track on one of its darkest days.

After Thought

As a result of the 9/11 attacks, “the US led the invasion of Iraq in March, 2003, in coalition with the United Kingdom and other nations” (“Iraq War Figures”). Just about a year ago, “The U.S. [withdrew] the last of its troops from Iraq, the final phase in the eight-year operation which cost billions of dollars and many thousands of lives” (“9/11 Attacks”). Now the Iraqis are running their own government. Furthermore, the power of Al Qaeda has dwindled significantly due to American anti-terrorist operations. All of this is due to the U.S. government’s efforts to learn from 9/11, and to prevent a similar tragedy from happening.

Works Cited


The present generation should learn from history or they will repeat the mistakes of past generations. On January 16, 1919, the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was signed. One year later, on January 16, 1920, it took effect making the production, sale and transportation of alcohol illegal in all 48 states. Any beverage with over 0.5 percent alcohol by volume was now illegal (Baxamusa 1). Some Americans embraced prohibition, but it tormented others. Alcohol users saw no harm in alcohol consumption and were enraged that they could no longer legally drink. Also, factories that made alcohol closed and alcohol packaging and transportation companies lost business leaving thousands without jobs. Other industries – like farming – that supplied the raw ingredients to make alcohol also lost an enormous amount of income.

“Some Americans embraced prohibition, but it tormented others.”

Some American citizens, however, embraced Prohibition. Conservative who “kept their bible close to their heart” supported Prohibition. They thought that alcohol destroyed families by provoking bad behavior and violence. By banning alcohol conservatives wanted to reduce the crime rate, lower taxes for poorhouses and prisons, and ensure better community hygiene (Thornton 1).

Although the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol were illegal, that did not stop people from producing, selling and drinking alcohol. Prohibition was not an easy law to enforce. Organized gangs sold alcohol all across the country and the crime rate soared to an all-time high demanding more police officers (Rosenberg 1).

Entire criminal industries arose as a result of Prohibition, and citizens still consumed alcohol despite the consequences of getting caught. The demand for alcohol did not decrease with Prohibition. Albany University’s studies show that “In 1925, five years after Prohibition began the average American over the age of 14 was drinking 32.2 gallons of alcohol a year” (Albany University 1). With the high demand for alcohol, thefts and burglaries increased nine percent, and homicides, assaults, and batteries increased 13 percent (Albany University 1).

Prohibition was a burden to the United States because it hurt the economy and increased crime. Prohibition also sparked unnecessary tension between liberals and conservatives, causing nationwide arguments. Prohibition damaged the economy and took jobs from citizens. It encouraged the growth of organized crime and brought the crime rates to an all-time high. If anything can be learned from Prohibition, it was a bad idea and it should never be repeated.

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Incidents of young football players suffering from concussions have reached a crisis level. Players as young as seven are being diagnosed with concussions because practice sessions are too long, improper equipment is being used, faulty helmets are being worn and improper tackling techniques are being taught. In Gary Mihoces’ article, Parents Weigh Risks of Youth Football Amid Concussion Debate, both Dr. Patrick Kersey and Dr. Stanley Herring agree that parents put their children at risk if they allow them to play football. Kersey and Herring want to make coaches, parents and officials aware throughout the country of the frequency of concussions. Shortening the length of time for contact football practices, implementing safer player techniques and enforcing new laws to protect young athletes, would help preventing concussions.

Coaches across the country are requiring youth football teams to have physical contact practices. Kids enjoy it because they love to hit and tackle other players. Parents do not realize the risks that their children face with these types of practices. Concussions can cause injury to the brain, the brain stem and the spinal cord because of the hits to the head a player takes during contact practices and during games. Some of these injuries can cause lifelong health problems.

Virginia Tech University and Wake Forest University both recently joined efforts to compile research at the Center for Injury Biomechanics. According to their statistics, there are “2000 players in the National Football League (NFL); 100,000 playing college football; 1.3 million in high school and 3.5 million in youth leagues. Although there are less high intensity hits in the youth football programs than in the NFL or college head impact hits still occur at the youth levels” (Mihoces). Pop Warner Youth Football, which is one of the nation’s largest youth football organizations, has over 285,000 participants. “Pop Warner is going to make rule changes to reduce the number of head contacts,” said Chicago neurosurgeon Dr. Julian Bailes, chairman of the board. Contact, such as tackling and one-on-one blocking drills, will be limited to no more than 40 minutes per practice session. Full-speed, head-on drills in which players are more than 3 yards apart will no longer be allowed (Bordow). Youth football leagues are also considering installing a hit count during practices so they will know how many legal hits their players are allowed to make. “We’re doing what’s best for the children,” says, Arizona Pop Warner Commissioner Paul Watkins, “Everybody will be on board.”

The use of improper tackling techniques is another factor that contributes to concussions. Young football players like tackling and blocking with their heads instead of their shoulders. Most of the time, headshots are easier to make and generate harder hits. Many young football players watch these headshots on televised NFL games, but what they fail to realize is that the NFL players are fined tens of thousands of dollars for tackling inappropriately. They simply are not supposed to be hitting that way. Kevin Guskiewicz, member of the NFL’s Head, Neck and Spine Committee, stresses that “Youngsters must be taught how to block and tackle with their shoulders – not their heads…just banning them from playing is not the solution.” According to Guskiewicz, “The word ‘concuss’ means to shake violently. The brain rebounds off of the undersurface of the skull and can be damaged.” Obviously, this should be avoided at all costs.

Measures like the Zackery Lystedt law are being passed to protect players in our youth football leagues. In 2006, Zackery Lystedt, a 13-year-old football player, re-entered a middle school football game after receiving a concussion from a tackle. He later collapsed with permanent brain damage. In 2009, the state of Washington passed the Zackery Lystedt Law forbidding any schools or leagues using state funds or state property from allowing an athlete suffering from a concussion to return to play without medical clearance (Mihoces). There are now 35 states that have similar laws. The NFL is also lobbying for this law to be enacted in every state.

Football is a major American sport with a bright future. With the Washington state law, new regulations set by the NFL, and youth organizations mandating the use of proper equipment, enforcing limited contact practices, and teaching proper techniques, point toward safer football for youth athletes.

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The character Julia in George Orwell's 1984 is a strong and independent woman; she is a different breed of heroine. She is not, however, the best role model due to her antics, one of those being her unconventional love life. Julia quietly subverts the role of the feminist; she breaks free from a totalitarian society by using her appearance and sexuality in unusual ways.

In 1984, there are two types of people characterized by two different ways of dressing: the party members and the proles. The party members of Oceania all wear the exact same outfit, a simple grey jumpsuit. The lower class proles, on the other hand, can wear whatever they choose. The party members do not stand out in any way, and everybody blends in as if they are just parts of a machine. Julia, as a party member, defies what the society represents and does not allow the government to tell her how to dress. The government oppresses its people by telling them exactly how they should eat, act, and dress. In public, Julia wears the grey jumpsuit with the Anti-Sex League sash, because if she did not comply with the standard uniform she would be killed. In private Julia dresses however she wants. When Julia and Winston are together, Julia, "painted her face... Her lips were deeply reddened... her nose powdered... It was not very skillfully done, with just a few dabs of color in the right places she had become not only very much prettier, but, above all, far more feminine" (Orwell 179). Julia is a feminist, for she does not allow the government to tell her how to behave. In this futuristic society the government tries to take away everything that identify women as feminine.

In Orwell's 1984, the government has cast out the concept of sex for the purpose of desire. In a series of Orwell's analytical essays, Harold J. Harris discusses his thoughts on sex by saying, "In the world of 1984... No room for 'soft bed, pots of beer,' or dreams of 'women with voluptuous figures.' All these things, and the sexual desire above all, imply privacy and individualism" (Harris 159). Purity and desire cannot exist in this world for if someone desires another, then focus resides on the individual. In 1984, Big Brother tries to eliminate the individual and turn the focus to the community as a whole.

Women are not only repressed by what they wear in 1984, but also by their love lives. A sexist view that women only exist for the purpose of reproduction is the ideal in this dystopian society. This can be derived from Winston's and Julia's conversation in the woods. When Winston reveals to Julia that his wife hated sex, but forced him to engage in the act anyway, Julia concludes that his wife felt it was their "duty to the party" (Orwell 167). The only reason Winston and Katherine had sex was to fulfill their duty to bear offspring.

In this society it is not acceptable for men and women to have sex if it is not for the purpose of having children. But when Julia has sex, she does it for pleasure not procreation. Julia is a feminist, and as such, she believes she should be in control of her body. Therefore, she feels that she should be allowed to have an affair with whomever she chooses. In 1984 desire is a thought crime punishable by death. Julia's prolific sexual encounters are revealed in the line, "she had had her first love-affair when she was sixteen" (Orwell 165). The women members of the inner party are expected to be pure, and to participate in the Anti-Sex League. Although Julia is a member of the party, she contradicts its beliefs behind closed doors and rebels by tainting her purity. She displays feminist values by doing whatever she wants with her body and refuses to let anybody tell her otherwise. She does not let the government tell her how to live her life. She expresses her feminism through her appearance and sexuality. Though failing to overthrow the government, Julia did what very few people in Oceania attempt to do, which is to say and do what she believed without fear.

Works Cited


In America, we have an enormous selection of foods, but not all Americans make healthy choices. By eating poorly a person can become overweight, which can turn into obesity generating other health risks, including heart and liver disease. Americans are consuming too much fast food which can cause health issues. In the documentary Super Size Me, the lead character Morgan Spurlock eats and drinks nothing but McDonald’s for 30 days. On day one, Spurlock weighed 185 pounds and was in good health. Over the course of the 30 days, Spurlock gained 24 pounds, a 13 percent increase in body mass, and destroyed his liver by eating unhealthy fast foods. He even developed heart palpitations and everyday tasks like climbing stairs became challenging for him. The purpose of the experiment was to show Americans how destructive fast food is for the human body.

“Americans need to make healthier food choices. A convenient and affordable fast food restaurant is great, but its health risks are not.”

Many Americans choose a restaurant like McDonald’s instead of a fancy restaurant because fast food is cheaper. Furthermore, fast food restaurants have good tasting food, fast service, and affordable prices. But these restaurants sell unhealthy food knowing it can cause health problems, but they continue to lure us in by super sizing the “value” meals.

Americans eat fast food mostly for convenience. There is always a McDonald’s close by. Palo Alto Medical Foundation states, “Over 25 percent of Americans consume fast food every day” (PAMF). Most fast food restaurants are open 24/7 or at least most of the day and night, which allows people to eat at their convenience. Most fast food restaurants normally have drive-thru windows that make the process of buying and receiving food easier and faster. The food is typically inexpensive, which attracts large families, teenagers, and people on a budget.

Eating too much fast food is a major concern because it can lead to serious health issues. Most fast food is high in fat and calories. McDonald’s Big Mac, for example, has 540 calories and 29 grams of fat. French fries, on average, have 487 calories and 25 grams of fat and a large cola has 310 calories. That is 1,337 calories and 54 grams of fat for one meal compared to choosing a grilled chicken salad and a diet drink which contains 320 calories and 9 grams of fat. Because the food choices are not healthy, the Palo Alto Medical Foundation says, “someone can consume all of the calories they need for the entire day in one sitting at a fast food restaurant” (PAMF).

Eating a large amount of unhealthy fast food will result in obesity because the fat and sugar digest slower than nutritious food; it slows down your metabolism and makes it easier to gain weight. The article Fast Food: Slowing You Down states that an “excessive fat and calorie packed meal slows down metabolism, it also causes indigestion and upset stomach, prolonged indigestion can lead to conditions such as heartburn, ulcers, constipation and even diarrhea” (Herbal Diet).

Americans need to make healthier food choices. A convenient and affordable fast food restaurant is great, but its health risks are not. Obesity, heart and liver failure, and other health issues are not worth the speed and convenience of fast food.

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The poem, “Pittsburgh” by Terrance Hayes uses metaphors that reflect what the city of Pittsburgh represents to its inhabitants. The poem as a whole is one large metaphor for the city; each line depicts another characteristic that makes people love or hate the city at the same time. Without actually talking about the city itself, “Pittsburgh” uses metaphors to represent the love/hate relationship people have with the city, whether they live here or not.

Pittsburgh is a city made up of many different memorable elements, especially its inhabitants who love hockey, baseball, and football teams, and everything black and gold. Brent Osbourne, a soldier featured in the Post-Gazette article, had an American Flag sewn onto his uniform as well as a Steelers Nation flag he sewed on himself. It is passionate Pittsburghers like Brent that give Pittsburgh its meaning. The most prominent metaphors in the poem, which set up the major themes, show the city of Pittsburgh as “a fat lady,” void of strangers.

The narrator begins the poem by saying, “Pittsburgh is a fat lady jabbering at the bus stop” (Hayes, 1). This metaphor says that Pittsburgh is filled with people who can talk a person’s ear off no matter what the occasion. The narrator also says twice in the poem, “She mistakes me for someone who gives a damn” (Hayes, 26). While the people of Pittsburgh enjoy being surrounded by people and sharing their stories, most Pittsburghers have an “I don’t give a damn” attitude about it.

In the poem, “fat” takes on a number of different meanings. It can signify overweight person, implying that many people in Pittsburgh are out of shape and eat too much. Surprisingly, Pittsburgh has one of the higher percentages of obesity in the country, coming in at 30% (Pittsburgh Today). “Fat” can also mean being abundant and large. Referring to Pittsburgh as a “fat lady” is also a metaphor for how large and rich the city is.

The poem is set at a bus stop, a communal place where people from different walks of life meet. People at a bus stop come together not because they want to, but because they need to get where they are going. People in Pittsburgh often do not want to interfere with other people; however, they need to so they can move on with their day.

In the book, “Writing the Future of Black America: Literature of the Hip Hop Generation” Daniel Grassian explains that, “Identity is first and foremost in many of Hayes’s poems” (Grassian, 149). Hayes is identifying the people of Pittsburgh, labeling them, and saying what they represent. He is argues that a Pittsburgher who does not share their lives with complete strangers cannot be considered a “true Pittsburgher,” because that is part of the culture of this fat, intimate city.

The whole poem is a narration of what makes the city of Pittsburgh great to the people who live there.

The whole poem is a narration of what makes the city of Pittsburgh great to the people who live there. It is a mixture of the people, the sounds, the sports teams, the atmosphere, etc.; the poem is a metaphor for all of these things. When the narrator says, “No one is a stranger in Pittsburgh” (Hayes, 18) it is completely true. At the communal bus stop, people share stories, “jabbering” at each other, getting involved in each other’s lives, even if it’s only for a few minutes.

All of this friendliness is represented in the poem via the metaphors of a fat lady and a stranger. As Osborne said, “Being a Steelers fans is a religion. Some people go to Jerusalem. I go to Pittsburgh” (Post-Gazette).

Works Cited

Vulnerability in Doubt
Garrett Mooney

While in the Garden of Eden, Eve became a victim of her vulnerability; she was tricked by a snake to eat the forbidden fruit (Miano). In John Patrick Shanley’s play Doubt, the setting—a garden—affects the characters. Here Sister Aloysius reveals that she is not as confident as she pretends to be, and Sister James reveals that her beliefs are vulnerable. In Acts IV, VII, and IX, both Sisters are seen as vulnerable, revealing a side that they do not otherwise show.

In Act IV, Sister Aloysius is curious about Father Flynn’s lectures to the boys on how to be a man. She asks Sister James if she has, “ever given the girls a talk on how to be a woman” to which James replies that she would not be “competent enough” (Shanley 18). As they continue to discuss the matter, Aloysius shares that she, like James, would not feel competent to, “lecture tittering girls on the subject of womanhood” (Shanley 18). This is important because until now she has given the impression that she is confident about everything she does. This is also important because this is the first time they are in a new setting: the garden. The reader can assume the garden is a place where she feels most vulnerable, as this is the first time she expresses her doubts aloud.

Sister James also displays her vulnerability to the garden’s lure in Act IV. This is evident when she asks Father Flynn, “is it true” (Shanley 40). It is here in the garden that she first indicates that she does not fully believe Sister Aloysius’ opinions about him. She continues to doubt her true feelings by saying, “I want to believe you” (Shanley 40). Because she admits her true feelings, she becomes vulnerable to Father Flynn and by the end of the scene she decides that she does not believe Sister Aloysius’ accusations.

Whenever Sister James is in the garden, she becomes vulnerable to whomever she is with. In Act IV, Sister Aloysius continues to tell Sister James about her suspicions regarding Father Flynn, and the more she talks the more Sister James accept her opinions. The same is true in the garden scene with her and Father Flynn. At first, Sister James questions whether Sister Aloysius’ claims are true, to which Father Flynn replies, “No, it’s not true” (Shanley, 40). She responds by saying, “Oh, I don’t know what to believe” (Shanley, 40), but as she and Father Flynn continue to talk her belief in him increases. It appears that the garden has the power to increase Sister James’ vulnerability, allowing the person she is with to mold what she believes is the truth.

“Sister James and Sister Aloysius are both victims of their vulnerability.”

The most important garden scene that reveals the characters’ vulnerability is in the play’s final act. Sister Aloysius admits to Sister James that she lied about contacting a nun from Father Flynn’s previous parish. She lied hoping to get Father Flynn removed from his parish. At the end of Act IX, Sister Aloysius exclaims, “I have doubts! I have such doubts” (Shanley 58). This is important because in Shanley’s other works many of his characters, “move towards a bravery and an exploration of personal courage usually signaled by the confession” (Gholson).

Sister James and Sister Aloysius are both victims of their vulnerability. In both cases, they admit doing something they feel is morally wrong (Hornby). Sister Aloysius reveals that she lied in order to remove Father Flynn, and Sister James admits that she betrayed Sister Aloysius by believing Father Flynn instead of her. In the garden, both Sisters confess to behaving immorally.

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It is common for parents to force their dreams on their children. In the mother-daughter relationship, often the daughter is expected to live out the mother’s dreams (Tartakovsky). The mother in Amy Tan’s “Two Kinds” expects her daughter, Jing-Mei, to become something she never wanted to be. This story is close to home for Ms. Tan. On her website, she shares that Jing-Mei’s mother is much like her own. By the end of the story, Jing-Mei realizes she could be herself and satisfy her mother’s wishes, but only after she first gains maturity and learns to appreciate both her family’s and her own values.

The story begins with Jing-Mei being forced by her mother to get a haircut. The haircut is botched and makes her look like Peter Pan. This screw-up is a symbol of Jing-Mei’s future. The new hairstyle represents the mother’s obsession with finding the perfect way for Jing-Mei to become famous—if something failed, she would switch to another. This was the beginning of Jing-Mei’s self-doubt; she thought if she could not become famous quickly, it might never happen.

The Asian pianist that Jing-Mei’s mother sees one evening on the Ed Sullivan show sparks something in her. The pianist represented everything she wanted for Jing-Mei; she decides, without consulting Jing-Mei, that this will be her path. This decision breeds more conflict further straining their fragile mother-daughter relationship.

Jing-Mei was not the only one suffering; her mother sacrifices to buy her a piano. The piano comes to represent all of the sacrifices she made for Jing-Mei; she decides, without consulting Jing-Mei, that this will be her path. This decision breeds more conflict further straining their fragile mother-daughter relationship.

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Much later, long after Jing-Mei failed to become an award-winning pianist, on her thirteenth birthday her mother gave her the piano as a gift. When Jing-Mei refused to accept it, her mother forces her saying, “you could be a genius if you want to... you just not trying” (“Two” 181). After her mother death, Jing-Mei finds and decides to keep several of her mother’s traditional Chinese dresses.

Tan pairs two songs, “Perfectly Contented” and “Pleading Child,” to represent Jing-Mei’s relationship with her mother. “Pleading Child" is short, like her mother’s temperament when she refused to obey her while “Perfectly Contented” is long, representing the time her mother devoted to her. The titles signify that Jing-Mei was a, “pleading child” when she was young and rebellious, but upon finding her mother’s love she becomes, “perfectly contented”.

Realizing that her mother wanted the best for her was a breakthrough for Jing-Mei. It allowed her to let go of her hate and love her mother. Writer Kirsten Hoyte introduces a different interpretation of the story. She believes that it is actually Jing-Mei who is the aggressor in the relationship, and that she should have heeded the mother’s advice (Hoyte). This probably does not occur to most readers; the vast majority will see only a controlling mother and a suffering daughter. Regardless of who was the villain, we must remember that the story is about the conflict between mother and daughter. Jing-Mei may not have been a perfect daughter, but she was never a bad one either. Just like the song, she had two sides.

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Condemnation: Ignorance or Intuition?

Antonio Thompson

The play Doubt by John Patrick Shanley contains numerous references to convictions, often revealed through the characters themselves. The play’s protagonist Sister Aloysius, principal at St. Nicholas Catholic School, explores aspects of this theme. Sister Aloysius has deep convictions because of her traits/attributes, her devotion to justice, and the limits she is willing to push in pursuit of that justice.

“She will confront any issue that she considers inconsistent with her personal view of morality.”

Sister Aloysius exhibits a multitude of traits that reveal her exceptionally strong belief system, one of these being passion. Sister Aloysius criticizes Sister James by proclaiming “perhaps you are wrong. And perhaps you are not working hard enough” (Shanley 12). Though at times she seems like an angry and sinister old lady devoid of feelings, she is actually extremely insightful. She simply holds a strong passion for her role as a teacher. She believes that getting the job done effectively is much more important than being likeable.

Another one of her admirable traits is her determination. She will confront any issue that she considers inconsistent with her personal view of morality. Playwright and Associate Editor of BOMB, Craig Gholson, states that Shanley’s characters exhibit “obsessive passions” (21). After Father Flynn excuses Donald Muller for drinking altar wine, Sister James agrees due to her naivety, but not Sister Aloysius. Richard Hornby of the Hudson Review says that, “she embarks on a quest that only a full confession will satisfy” (470). Sister Aloysius says, “I’ll bring him down with or without your help” (Shanley 35). She claims that she needs no one to back her up in her pursuit of justice. In Greg Grooms’ review of Doubt, he says that Sister Aloysius, “has no evidence to support her charges, to which she answers, ‘But I have my certainty!’” (1). Whether this is foolish or not, it is hard to doubt her sense of conviction.

Sister Aloysius appears to regard justice as one of the most important factors in her life. She has a profound dedication to it, evident by her persecution of Father Flynn, as well as the apparent vise grip she holds on the entire school. It requires conviction to confront and then accuse one’s superiors, but she believes in justice so strongly that she does not hesitate. She refuses to back down, despite her low status in the church hierarchy.

Sister Aloysius’s quest throughout the play is to administer justice. Her quest is so strong that she breaks her own moral code by telling a lie. Sister James exclaims, “I can’t believe you lied” (Shanley 58), and based on Sister Aloysius’ demeanor, she likely can’t believe it either. It may seem insignificant to an ordinary person, but a lie from someone so dedicated to her moral code is completely devastating. The play ends with her “bent over with emotion” (Shanley 58).

Throughout the play, Sister Aloysius demonstrates a deeply rooted faith. Her conviction is made clear through her dedication to justice, and through her sacrifice of one belief for another. Through Sister Aloysius, we gain a basic understanding of what conviction means.

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Higher Education and Social Constriction

Joey Bellisario

When preparing to leave high school, most students begin to research colleges and send out their applications. For them, college is an incredibly exciting journey. These students are eager to expand their knowledge, perhaps in a particular field of study, and to ultimately succeed in life. This group of people thirsts for learning, in most subjects, and excel during their four years in whatever college they choose. In addition to them, I would argue that there is a significant number of students who do not fall into this category. For some, myself included, entering college is not necessarily the most desirable path, but the most "socially accepted" path. Although choosing a path other than college is frowned upon, there are many other ways one can gain knowledge and succeed in life, both socially and financially.

As many know, one is automatically expected to attend college after high school. Although it should not be this way, attending college is socially acceptable. Generally, if one does not choose to attend college after high school, the community may look down upon and consider him or her to be inadequate. I would argue that this is the main reason some students choose to attend college. If this fear of being judged was not hanging over one's head, there may be more students choosing alternative paths. For some, this path could be a technical institution, for others this path could be entering directly into the workforce. I would agree that college is not for everyone and taking advantage of alternative paths can be just as beneficial as college for certain careers.

During my time at Central Catholic High School, there was great pressure to go to college because of the 98 percent college placement rate, with the constant reminder of this statistic, many students, myself included, went on to college because they thought there was no other choice (School). Many of these students are not happy with their choice. Attending technical school is a way for one to succeed in certain career paths such as auto mechanics or electricians without going to college. At technical school, it is not required to take as many classes that one may not be interested in.

For me, I find it difficult to enjoy learning about something that does not interest me. I would argue that many students feel the same way I do. After technical school, one can earn a sufficient salary and make a decent living.

Often, one has an easier time getting a job after technical school than from college. This is because technical schools train people for specific jobs and gives them the specific skill set that they will need. An article in CNN Money states that after only nine months in trade school, one can be guaranteed a job. The article shows statistics from a manufacturing program at the Wilbur Wright-Humboldt Park Vocational School. In this program, five students out of a class of 41 were hired at a job fair before even finishing their nine-month program (Kavilanz). In college, a student nine months into his or her education would never be hired. Technical schools have a 95-100 percent job placement rate, with starting salary around $40,000 per year, jumping to around $65,000 per year in just two years (Kavilanz). With this in mind, some students may feel more inclined to enroll in technical school because of the higher job placement rates. One hears many stories about students who spend a great deal of money paying for college and are unable to find a job after graduating. It is not common to hear this from someone who has graduation from trade school.

If one is not interested in technical school as an option, choosing the path that leads directly to the workforce is another way to go. Although one may face some obstacles in choosing this path, such as struggling to get a high paying job, it can also be extremely rewarding. For more hands-on people, entering directly into the workforce can provide more opportunities to learn as one works. One's career path may move slower, but again, this should not be a huge concern because it is just another social construct students follow. With enough motivation and determination, it is possible for one to move up in their career path.

Doing something that one is interested in, it becomes easier to get up every day and learn, hands on, how to do something. For one to wake up every day and attend academic classes against one's true desires becomes harder and harder. I would argue that this is because one has no career to look forward to in his or her near future. One's intended career could take up to eight years to obtain. Waking up every day, knowing one is on her or her way to a career one will get to soon make the daily task less challenging. To me, this is more enticing than sitting in a classroom and reading a book on how to do the same thing I could physically be doing at a job.

Entering directly into the workforce can also be a viable option for students from lower income families. The workforce also includes military service. The G.I. Bill states that the Veterans Association will pay for a portion of one's education after he or she serves in the military for a specified period of time. If one is...
not inclined to go to college, the VA will cover a percentage of the cost to attend trade school (Post). For lower income families, this alternative is a way for one to attend technical school at a lower cost, and still be qualified for a job after graduating. It is important that one does everything in his or her power to achieve as much as they can in life. The workforce can provide one with a salary, as well as the skill set to thrive in future career paths.

After graduating from high school, I was trapped in the social construct of college. I had no great desire to go, but I did not think I had any other choice that would be “socially acceptable.” Now that I have been at Duquesne University for two months, I am beginning to realize that perhaps college was not the correct path for me to take. I am more of a hands-on kind of person, so attending classes every day and taking notes for hours is simply not what I was hoping for. Even though I knew I was not interested in yet another rigorous academic setting after graduation from high school, I did not know what to do. I decided to just go with the flow and landed here at Duquesne.

My biggest interest is cars: fixing them, buying them, researching them, etc. Writing this paper made me more interested in researching technical schools specifically for automobiles. Reading about trade schools made me realize that I may fit in better and be happier there. Waking up every day to attend classes is a struggle for me because I’m sincerely not very interested. Just reading about the courses offered at these trade schools interests me because they are completely hands-on. I believe that I would not have as difficult of a time waking up every day to go to class where I would be taught, physically how to repair and fix different cars. Looking into the future, I can more easily see myself attending a trade school to become an auto mechanic, rather than spending the next four years of my life mindlessly attending academic classes.

If more students believed that alternative paths would be accepted, there would be less students entering directly into college after high school. This group of students would be more inclined to pursue what they want, whether it be technical school, or entering directly into the workforce. I would argue that this is irrelevant and should not exist. It is unfortunate that so many students are only attending college because they fear they will be judged harshly if they choose an alternative path. What one chooses should not be determined by what is “socially acceptable”, but by what one feels is the appropriate path to success.

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The story of “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman has many references to feminism and the realities of women. It is clear through its textual evidence and its historical context that this is more than a horror story; it is a statement about the way women were treated at the time.

According to Connie Brown and Jane Seitz, authors of “Woman Power: You’ve Come A Long Way Baby,” in the late 1800’s, at the time “The Yellow Wallpaper” was written, “In the covenant of marriage, [the wife] is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master” (Brown/ Seitz, 73). It is clear through textual evidence that the narrator, much like many married American women, was in a very oppressive relationship in an already oppressive society. In a passage at the beginning of the story the narrator describes the elements of her current predicament. She says,

“If a physician of high standing, and one’s own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression—
a slight hysterical tendency—what is one to do? My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing. 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. Personally, I disagree with their ideas” (Gilman, 528).

In this passage it is evident that she is surrounded by powerful male authority figures and feels trapped. Contradictory to her own ideas, her brother, husband, family, and medical community urge her to be quiet and relax. She feels this is not in her best interest or the proper treatment but compiles because she has an obligation to be obedient to her husband. Many times in the story she mentions her husband’s controlling ways. Later she, “tried to have an earnest and reasonable talk with him the other day, and tell him how I wish he would let me go and make a visit to Cousin Henry and Julia. But he said I wasn’t able to go” (Gilman, 532).

She knows that a trip would do her well but because her husband decides what is ultimately best for her, he forbids the visit and she has no choice but to obey his orders. She is so upset and frustrated by her husband’s oppressive behavior that she breaks down and cries while trying to plead with him.

This is a very honest representation of the way women at the time felt: so frustrated and trapped that they could not help but be upset. She hates that she is being dominated and begins to resent her husband for it. The narrator also does not believe her husband loves her anymore. She says that he, “pretended to be very loving and kind. As if I couldn’t see through him” (Gilman, 536). This statement is a representation of the way women during this time period were starting to look at men. They realized that many of their relationships were not actually loving and nurturing ones. Men were simply controlling them and acting like they cared to keep women submissive.

Women during this period realized that they could make decisions on their own and did not need the supervision of a male. The narrator, like American women, began to thirst for independence. She wanted to be alone and wished her husband would “take another room” (Gilman, 536). This suggests that women need freedom and independence to achieve their goals because men would try and stop them. The narrator’s relationship with her husband was not different from a traditional marriage at the time: the men made the rules and the women followed them. This made it easy for women to relate to the character and view her as a feminist heroine.

According to Brown and Seitz, husbands at the time the piece was written, “endeavored, in every way he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead an abject and dependent life” (Brown/Seitz, 73). It was not uncommon for a husband to try to completely tear down his wife in order to make her feel incapable of doing anything without his help. John, the narrator’s husband, does this many times during the story. When the story begins the narrator mentions some concerns she raised with her husband about the house and that, “John laughs at me, of course, but one expects this in marriage” (Gilman, 527). Women expected their husbands to treat them like inferiors. John, like the men at this time, was just trying to keep his wife obedient to him by discrediting her ideas simply because he did not think of it himself. The idea that a woman could be intelligent and make decisions on her own was terrifying to men at this time, so they were very cruel to women in order to remain in control. The narrator states that,

“I sometimes fancy that in my condition if I had less opposition and more society and stimulus—but John says the very worst thing I can do is think about my condition, and I confess it always makes me feel bad. So I will let it alone and talk about the house” (Gilman, 528).

This passage takes place in the beginning of the story and is used to give a characterization of the narrator and her problem. The narrator is in the middle of an original thought but is interrupted by the recollection of her husband’s instructions. Gilman reveals how the narrator has accepted her husband’s authority over her to the point where she has his voice in her head telling her how she should think and behave. Despite this, like all human beings, she cannot help but have her own thoughts and feelings. She even refers to her current state as her “condition” because she has been conditioned to obey her oppressive husband like many women in America. She is constantly looking for her husband’s approval because he has criticized her to the point where she did not feel comfortable doing anything without his permission. He does not often permit her to write in her journal, so she is forced to do it behind his back. Many women relate to the narrator and view her as a feminist heroine because her relationship dynamic was similar to theirs. But narrator had the courage to rebel against her husband’s wishes. She represented what the women of the time wanted, but often did not have the courage to demand.

Women at the time “The Yellow Wallpaper” was written were not in the work force. According to Marilyn Dell Brady, author of “The New Model Middle-Class Family (1815-1930), “Wives in middle-class house holds had to work hard to provide a safe haven for husbands and children” (Brady, 87). It is clear that the narrator thinks of this as her duty, but she does not think of it as an actual job. She mentions that due to her current “condition” her husband has, “absolutely forbidden [her] to work” until [she] is well again” (Gilman, 528). The narrator puts the word work in quotation marks because that is what the men and women in society refer to
it as. Like many women, she desires more out of life.

While she may not be satisfied with her job, she still does it. She mentions that, “it is lucky John kept me here after all; I can stand it so much easier than a baby you see” (Gilman, 532). She has the inherent need to make her home a safe place for her child. It is her job to protect him and she is happy to do it even if it causes her suffering. According to Brady, “Mothers were recognized as the parent primarily responsible for children’s upbringing” (Brady, 89). It was the woman’s job to raise a child and they, “took on new importance as mothers” (Brady, 98).

Another important element in middle-class homes was, “the extreme closeness between the mother and her children” (Brady, 101). The narrator of the story has a new baby and wants to take on the role of the mother, but due to her husband’s oppressive behavior she is not allowed to see her child. She is simply given reports on the child’s condition. She, like all mothers, is worried about her child when he is not around. She yearns for the closeness that mothers experience with their children but it is hindered because of her nanny. Lucile Duberman’s book “Social Inequality: Class and Caste in America” states that, “child rearing is the responsibility of the family, not of the society, and that daycare centers are evil substitutes for parents” (Duberman, 279).

“This is a very honest representation of the way women at the time felt: so frustrated and trapped that they could not help but be upset.”

The narrator in the story never says that her nanny is evil; she actually praises her work but still feels that she should be raising her child and not the nanny. The narrator, when speaking of her child and the nanny says, “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” (Gilman, 529). She recognizes that the nanny is very good at her job but it is not supposed to be her job; it is supposed to be the narrator’s job.

According to circleofmoms.com, a website used by mothers to have questions answered by other mothers, many women experience postpartum depression, or separation anxiety, after giving birth, during which the mother undergoes a feeling of depression anytime she is not with her child and find it hard to think about anything other than her baby. The narrator is experiencing this as well. She wants to be with her child and raise it herself but her husband does not see her fit to mother a child at this time and gives the duty to a nanny. The narrator is a very relatable character for women because she is so honestly portrayed. Gilman accurately embodies the thoughts and fears of females at the time by characterizing the narrator with different commonalities found in women.

In conclusion, it is clear through textual evidence and historical context that the narrator in “The Yellow Wallpaper” is a feminist and symbol for married women. This classic tale seems like nothing more than a horror story at first glance, but as one reads closer it becomes clear that it is much more than that: it is a story of oppression and feminism in a time where such a subject was considered taboo.

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In today's society, parents and children sometimes struggle with misunderstandings. These misunderstandings are caused by a variety of things. For example, a younger child may not understand why their mother or father is punishing them for something they did. This causes stress for both parties as well as creates a more agitated environment. The play Peter Pan by J.M. Berrie provides readers with many examples that demonstrate this array of misunderstanding between adults and children. It offers these readers a glimpse into the mind of a young child caught in this predicament.

In the beginning of this play, there are examples that show readers that within the nursery there is a struggle for power between Mr. Darling and the dog, Nana. The play opens with a discussion between Mr. and Mrs. Darling about keeping Nana. Mr. Darling wants to get rid of Nana because he thinks she is useless. Later on in Act I, Mr. Darling is finally fed up with everyone in the nursery defending Nana and going against him. Mr. Darling states:

“Am I master in this house or is she? Come along. There, there, did she think he was angry with her, poor Nana? Good Nana, pretty Nana. She will come to her kind master, won’t she? Won’t she?” (Barrie, Line 120, p.680).

At that point, Mr. Darling chains up Nana outside even though readers cannot see that. In the article Adolescents and Adults: Why working together seems impossible, Professor Mike Baizerman makes another point that is relevant in this play. He states, “Adults really don’t respect kids, but expect kids to respect them” (Baizerman). Readers can see this in the conversation between Mr. Darling and Michael. Michael refuses to take his medicine and then an argument begins. Mr. Darling starts this childish argument by telling Michael to “Be a man” (Barrie line 73 p.678). Later on in the argument between the two, Mr. Darling responds to Michael by stating the same sentence. For example, Michael and Mr. Darling begin the argument by stating who will take the medicine first. Mr. Darling starts by saying “Father first” (Barrie, line 85, p. 678), which was soon responded by Michael who said, “Father first” (Barrie, line 86, p. 678). This altercation continues until Michael finally takes his medicine. Something that is interesting for readers to observe is the childish behavior that Mr. Darling exhibits throughout this argument with Michael. It is very unusual for a parent to act as immature as Mr. Darling in this situation because parents need to give their children respect in order to earn it. In this particular situation, Michael is giving his father the amount of respect that his father is giving him, which is no respect at all.

In addition to this, Mr. Darling’s behavior warrants no respect. During Act I, Mr. Darling is introduced to readers through his childish antics and his complaining. To readers, Mr. Darling can be seen as a child stuck inside the body of a grown man. For example, after the argument with Michael about his medicine, Mr. Darling thinks it would be funny to put “milk” (which is really Michael’s medicine) into Nana’s bowl. He thinks it would be funny, but the rest of the family thinks otherwise. Another example would be when Wendy tells Mr. Darling that Nana is crying. Mr. Darling, instead of being the caring and concerned father he should be, responds by saying “coddle her; nobody coddles me. Oh dear no. I am only the breadwinner, why should I be coddled? Why, why, why?” (Barrie, line 116, p.679). It could be possible that Mr. Darling has Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD). By definition, “Dependent personality disorder is a long-term (chronic)
condition in which people depend too much on others to meet their emotional and physical needs” (PubMed).

In Act I, readers can perceive that Mr. Darling suffers from DPD. PubMed Health states, “People with this disorder do not trust their own ability to make decisions. They may be very upset by separation and loss. They may go to great lengths, even suffering abuse, to stay in a relationship. Symptoms of dependent personality disorder may include: avoiding being alone, avoiding personal responsibility, becoming easily hurt by criticism or disapproval, becoming overly focused on fears of being abandoned, becoming very passive in relationships, feeling very upset or helpless when relationships end, having difficulty making decisions without support from others, and having problems expressing disagreements with others.” (PubMed). Readers learn in Act I, Mr. Darling does not do very well with work. In fact, he can’t even tie his own tie; his wife does it for him.

Mike Baizerman touches upon a few other reasons why children and adults cannot work together that closely relate to characters in later acts. For example, Professor Mike Baizerman states that “Adults really don’t respect kids, but expect kids to respect them.” It is interesting to note this point in regards to Peter and Wendy’s relationship in Neverland. Peter states that he sees Wendy as a mother, and nothing more. He comes home to Wendy late and always tired from the adventure he had embarked on. In regards to the point stated earlier in the paragraph, readers can infer that Peter is really acting like an adult. It is ironic because of all the characters in this play, Peter is the one who is most against growing up, and yet, he acts like an adult when it comes to dealing with Wendy. In response to Peter’s statement, Wendy becomes angry and feels disrespected. In fact, at this point in time, Wendy most likely does not respect Peter at all.

Within literature and society, many struggles are presented to either readers or other audiences in regards to the level of understanding between parents and children. In Peter Pan J.M. Barrie uses examples to show the readers the misunderstanding between parents and children and its effects on both sides. It shows that different types of misunderstanding can apply to these situations presented within the play as well as offering readers a glimpse into a child’s mind.

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In The Company of Wolves Angela Carter eliminates the black and white categories that are present in earlier versions of Little Red Riding Hood and blends contrary character qualities to paint a more realistic picture of humanity. In both Perrault’s and the Brothers Grimm versions of the fairytale, the identities of the huntsman or the woodcutter are separate from the wolf. In Carter’s tale, however, they are one and the same. Also, in the older versions of the story, Little Red Riding Hood does not necessarily learn a specific lesson from her experiences. She is the same naïve young girl at the end of the story as she was at the beginning; this is in stark contrast to the Little Red Riding Hood of Carter’s story.

In Carter’s version, Little Red Riding Hood embraces her womanhood and uses her sexual advantage to take control of a dangerous situation. Carter’s Little Red ignores the old-age mindset that women must be pure as she uses her sexual advantage to overcome the wolf. The actions of Carter’s Little Red demonstrate a more realistic human condition. By empowering Little Red Riding Hood and giving the wolf an explicitly human manifestation, Carter’s characters are capable of producing a wider range of
emotions and personality traits that complicate the flat characters of previous Little Red Riding Hood versions and demonstrate the raw humanity of the tale.

The conflation of the wolf and the huntsman is the first technique that Carter uses to represent an accurate human portrayal. As Bruno Bettleheim states in his analysis of Little Red Riding Hood and Little Red Cap, “The male, by contrast, is all-important, split into two opposite forms: the dangerous seducer who, if given in to, turns into the destroyer of the good grandmother and the girl; and the hunter, the responsible, strong, and rescuing father figure” (Bettleheim 172). The importance of this is the fact that the two are split. The wolf represents the seducer, whereas the hunter represents the patriarchal protector. They are separate from each other, and it is very much a battle between good and evil.

Both Perrault and Brothers Grimm reference this distinction between the two in their versions. In Little Red Riding Hood this is evident in the wolf’s acknowledgement of the woodcutters in the forest while he is contemplating whether or not he should eat Little Red Riding Hood immediately or save her for later. The wolf, “would have very much liked to eat her, but dared not to do so on account of some wood-cutters who were in the forest” (Perrault 620). Not only are the characters specifically categorized, the wolf goes so far as to fear the woodcutter. He avoids contact with the men in the forest completely. There is no blending between the two; one is simply bad and the other is purely good.

The situation in Grimm’s Little Red Cap is fairly similar though there is increased involvement of the huntsman in this retelling. In this version the huntsman happens upon the wolf while he is sleeping. When he finds the wolf the huntsman says, “I’ve found you at last, you old sinner…I’ve been after you for a while now” (Grimm 623). The narrator also describes the scene where the huntsman rescues Little Red and her Grandmother from the belly of the wolf. As the hunter is about to shoot the wolf he realizes that he can still save the victims of the wolf, so, instead he cuts the wolf open and rescues Little Red and the Grandmother. Little Red fills the wolf’s stomach with stones and when he wakes up he collapses to the ground and dies. The scene ends with Little Red, her Grandmother, and the huntsman celebrating their victory and the huntsman taking home a trophy. After the wolf’s death they, “were overjoyed [and] the huntsman skinned the wolf and went home with the pelt” (Grimm 623). Just like in Perrault’s version there is a distinct separation of man and wolf. The wolf is the destroyer and the huntsman is the savior and there is no overlap. The huntsman even kills the wolf and skins it so he has a prize. The characters strictly adhere to the good versus evil theme.

In Carter’s retelling this distinction is complicated. Angela Carter gives us a character that literally and figuratively embodies both man and beast. The boundary between good and evil is blurred throughout “The Company of Wolves,” but it is most evident right before the wolf consumes Little Red Riding Hood’s grandmother.

“Off with his disguise, that coat of forest-colored cloth, the hat with the feather tucked into the ribbon; his matted hair streams down his white shirt and she can see the lice moving in it. The sticks in the hearth shift and hiss; the night and the forest has come into the kitchen with darkness tangled in its hair. He strips off his shirt. His skin is the color and texture of vellum. A crisp stripe of hair runs down his belly, his nipples are ripe and dark as poison fruit, but he’s so thin you could count the ribs under his skin if only he gave you the time. He strips off his trousers and she can see how hairy his legs are. His genitals, huge. Ah! huge. The last thing the old lady saw in all this world was a young man, eyes like cinders, naked as a stone, approaching her bed. The wolf is carnivore incarnate” (Carter 648).

“Angela Carter gives us a character that literally and figuratively embodies both man and beast.”

Here, the narrator gives a detailed description of the man who possesses many traits that resemble a wolf. Within Carter’s Little Red Riding Hood fantasy, the man is the wolf and the wolf is the man, you cannot have one without the other and Carter leaves nothing to the imagination. There is none of the ambiguity that is inherent in earlier versions of the fairy tale.

By combining the early images of the huntsman and the wolf into the same character Carter attempts to explain that humans are not defined by one clear characteristic. She tries to show her audience that the human condition isn’t static; it is fluid and dynamic. Humans are ever changing, and capable of both good and evil. Carter’s werewolf antagonist is an effective representation of a realistic human character. He is attractive and dashing as the young hunter, but dangerous and seductive as the wolf. This is a far cry from the flat examples of wolf and hunter so distinctly removed from each other in earlier tales.

Carter uses the caricature of Little Red Riding Hood to represent real humanity to an even further extent than she does with the combination of man and wolf. In earlier versions Little Red is a naïve young girl who learns either nothing or very little from
her experiences. In Perrault’s telling the story ends with the wolf eating Little Red. The final words read, “Upon saying these words, the wicked wolf threw himself on Little Red Riding Hood and gobbled her up” (Perrault 621). In his version Little Red makes a mistake and because of it the wolf eats her. There is no room for growth on any level. In the Brothers Grimm retelling Little Red Cap is saved from the belly of the wolf by the hunter but even in this version any personal advancement is minimal and very subtle. Little Red Cap ventures off into the world, she disregards her mother’s warnings, and because of her indiscretion the wolf eats her. This is representative of her inability to cope with the dangers that lurk around every corner in the real world when one is progressing along the path from childhood to young adulthood. The hunter saving her is representative of her rebirth into the world as a young woman who is more capable of handling pressures and is more likely to heed the advice of her elders (Bettelheim 177).

In the second part of the Grimm tale Little Red is harassed by a second wolf and instead of being completely irresponsible she immediately goes to her grandmother who handles the situation for her. While this scenario shows that Little Red Cap has grown up slightly; it also shows that she is incapable of taking care of herself and that she still needs to rely on others to save her. This theme is completely nonexistent in The Company of Wolves.

At the beginning of Carter’s tale Little Red is the same inexperienced young girl as her predecessors. She is easily distracted and quickly succumbs to the huntsman’s charms when she encounters him on the path to Grandmother’s house. She chooses to ignore the warnings about the dangers lurking in the forest and she relinquishes her knife without a second thought, but this is where the similarities end. The major difference with Carter’s Little Red becomes evident during the exchange in which she makes remarks about the wolf’s various attributes. She acknowledges his big eyes, his massive arms, and finally his large teeth. The change in Little Red’s attitude shifts when the wolf responds to her statement about his gigantic muzzle. Instead of being eaten by the wolf at this stage Little Red actually seems amused:

“The girl burst out laughing; she knew she was nobody’s meat. She laughed at him full in the face; she ripped off his shirt for him and flung it into the fire, in the fiery wake of her own discarded clothing” (Carter 650).

In previous versions Little Red succumbs to her fear and is destroyed by it, but in Carter’s adaptation Little Red refuses to play the part of the helpless victim. She blatantly laughs at the wolf because she knows that he has no power over her. Her response to the wolf is crucial because it shows that she is able to adapt to, and ultimately overcome, the pressures of the adult world.

Little Red also acquires another trait that signifies a major transition in her development. She acquires certain wolf-like characteristics that are representative of her embracing her sexuality rather than shunning it. As the flames are dancing around Grandmother’s cabin Little Red ponders the idea of consuming the wolf’s lice, “She will lay her fearful head on her lap and she will pick out the lice from his pelt and perhaps she will put the lice into her mouth and eat them, as he will bid her, as she would do in a savage marriage ceremony” (Carter 650). Clearly eating lice is not considered normal by the average person, but Little Red willingly accepts this possibility. She does not shy away from her encounter with the wolf, and she refuses to be consumed by the dark and corrupt world she has been so carelessly thrown into. Without help from her mother, her grandmother or any other outside source she prevails. She shows legitimate development and progresses from an irresponsible, little girl into a mature and empowered young woman.

This concept of the grown up Little Red is extremely important when considering the idea of a realistic human nature present in The Company of Wolves. The tale ends with Little Red lying in bed with the wolf, “See! Sweet and sound she sleeps in granny’s bed, between the paws of the tender wolf” (Carter 650). Not only has Little Red Riding Hood overcome the wolf she has, at least figuratively, consumed his dangerous nature. By the end of the story the wolf is no longer the dark seducer, rather, he is sweet and tender. Carter includes this in her story to express the idea that it is okay for women to be sexual beings. She removes the white, Christian, male dominance of previous renditions of the tale that focus on the need for innocence and virginity in a girl’s life. This all adds to the influence of the actual human condition. Angela Carter’s Little Red is more human than her previous forms because she is not bound by her innocence and her inability to adapt to the outside world. She maintains her purity while simultaneously embracing her sexuality. She adopts both human and beastly characteristics, which is exemplary of true human nature. No human being is purely good or bad; we are a mixture of both, and therefore capable of acting on both.

A realistic human condition encompasses multiple qualities that are constantly changing. The Company of Wolves accurately portrays human nature because the characters within the story actively exude a wide array of these dynamic characteristics. The mix of man and wolf, and the evolution of Little Red are both effective displays of man’s propensity for change. They show that humans are not fastened by strict categorizations, but are actually able to flourish in almost any situation. In essence, the human personality is constantly in flux and can never be defined by one aspect of society’s expectations. We are constantly challenged by forces outside of our control and our ability to adapt is what makes us truly human.

continued on page 48
One of the darker blemishes on American history was the period from 1890 to the end of the civil rights movement when black people finally received the same rights as white people. While racism was a widely accepted practice, America was filled with many injustices that were ignored. It was a time when black people could not relate to the word “fairness” in their own place of birth. Throughout the civil rights movement, as illustrated in Dudley Randall’s The Ballad of Birmingham, it became evident that it is very unhealthy for human beings to be controlled, and especially in a child’s case as it diminishes their innocence.

Prior to the 1960’s in America, the white population had a severe superiority complex, which can best be described as “inherent feelings of superiority over another person or group of people”. This complex was engrained by the practice of slavery. White people originally had the idea that people who were not white (most commonly black people) were inferior to white people. The majority of white people believed this so strongly that they actually adopted the practice of “owning” slaves, which consisted of capturing black people and enslaving them for personal gain. This concept of controlling black people was most commonly seen throughout slavery, but as Dudley Randall shows in the poem The Ballad of Birmingham attempting to control other humans in even less cruel ways can still have harsh effects.

From the beginning of the poem, Randall establishes the idea of control that the mother has over her daughter. The daughter in the poem asks “Mother dear, may I go downtown/Instead of out to play/And march the streets of Birmingham/In a Freedom March today?” (1-4). This opening stanza immediately stresses the concept of humans controlling one another first in what the little girl is asking, and then why. The daughter in the poem is introduced in an interesting way, saying that rather than going out to play she would rather participate in a march. By wording the line that way Dudley is conveying the message that it would be expected of her to want to play, like most girls of her age, however she would rather go to a Freedom March to take a stand against humans unfairly trying to control other humans.

In his book Alienation and Freedom, author Richard Schmitt states “freedom requires a government that protects civil rights and a society that respects the individual’s privacy” (Schmitt 12). In The Ballad of Birmingham Randall expresses the need for these two things by showing how the government did not protect civil rights, and the mother did not respect the privacy of her daughter to let her be her own person and stand up for what she believed in. In the end, the lack of these things lead to a lack of freedom, which in turn lead to the demise of black people and the girl’s innocence.

It is also important to note that the daughter is not informing her mother, but asking for permission, because although she wants to take a stand for what she believes in, the decision is not hers as her mother must grant her permission in order for her to go. Unlike with the racial oppression seen in the poem, the control of the girl by her mother is with good intentions. White people knew that oppression of black people did not help blacks in any way shape or form, but they supported it anyway, for personal gain. Meanwhile the mother in the story controls her daughter because she thinks it will benefit her safety.

When the girl’s mother responds to her request she does not receive the answer she was looking for. The girl’s mother tells her that she cannot go to the march, because “the dogs are fierce and wild/And clubs and hoses, guns, and jail/Aren’t good for a little child.” (5-8). The key here is the word “good”. Now, based on the relation of the words the mother warns her daughter about (clubs, hoses, guns, jail) it can be determined that “good” is used...
by Randall to mean healthy. Therefore, the mother is saying to her daughter that she is refusing to grant her permission to attend the march because of the danger involved.

Although the mother does bring up a good point about the potential dangers that her daughter would face if she went on the march the mother implies that the dangers “Aren’t good for a little child” (8). Things like jail are not good for anyone, regardless of age.

An important thing to note in the second stanza is Randall’s use of rhyme. In this stanza Randall uses the words of the mother to rhyme the word “wild” with the word that finishes the mother’s answer “child”. The contrast between these two words explains the motives of the mother in the story as she is trying to preserve her “child(s)” innocence from the “wild” encounters of the Freedom March. As Reverend Cheril Goodrich states in her article “Innocence: Connecting to Innocence” a “trait that is so cherished in our children is called innocence”. Rev. Goodrich goes on to say that “the challenge for this millennium… [is to] maintain and keep the quality of innocence in our children while bringing them up and teaching them to become physical beings?” The concept of losing innocence in the poem is further supported by the college textbook Retellings that places the poem in the chapter 11 Innocence Lost categorizing it as a work that highlights a loss of innocence.

According to Goodrich “If [humans] can keep our children innocent, they will heal the world”. Based on Goodrich's ideas one can conclude that by preventing her daughter from attending the Freedom March and sheltering her daughter from the wildness of it, that the mother is protecting her daughter and in turn, potentially healing the world. These may be the mother’s intentions, but as the poem develops her control over her daughter has the opposite effect.

In the next stanza the daughter pleads her defense of the march, saying “But, mother, I won’t be alone/Other children will go with me, And march the streets of Birmingham/To make our country free” (9-12). Along with defending the proposition to participate in the march, in this stanza Dudley also shows the daughter’s desire for independence. The stanza’s most prominent rhyme are the words “me” at the end of line two and “free” at the end of the fourth and final line of the stanza. By rhyming these two words, it makes them stand out more, and shows that not only does the daughter want freedom, but, she wants a part in obtaining it. The daughter is willing and eager to receive her freedom by means of working herself towards attaining it, which shows how much she really cares about it and how important it is to her. The daughter wanted freedom so badly that she is willing to work for it, and as civil rights leader Booker T. Washington once said “Nothing ever comes to one, that is worth having, except as a result of hard work”.

As the mother responds to her daughter’s plea finally by denying her permission, Randall uses a similar rhyme style as the previous stanza. He once again uses a rhyme scheme that he would use throughout the poem, one that rhymes the last word of the second line with the last word of the fourth line, highlighting those words. In this stanza the mother says “No, baby, no, you may not go/For I fear those guns will fire./But you may go to church instead/And sing in the children's choir” (13-16). The highlighted words that Dudley rhymes here are “fire” and “choir” which represents foreshadowing, as although the mother instructs her daughter to go to church to avoid danger, the church is actually the center of the attack later in the poem. Also in this stanza we again see the mother’s attempt to protect her child by preventing her from attending the march, but telling her “[she] may go to the church instead/And sing in the children's choir” (15-16). The mother makes her daughter go to church, to be in the children's choir because she feels it is a safer place for her child than marching the streets.

Despite the fact that many other children would be attending the march the mother still does not give her daughter permission. It is not only because she is a child, but also, because she is a female. As Michael Donnely states in his book Corporal Punishment of Children in Theoretical Perspective. In modern societies, males have been raised to be independent in order to find work or careers. By the same token, females, until quite recently, have been raised to be oriented towards families, rather than work.” (Donnely 230.). When reading the stanza, it is evident that the mother wants her daughter to go to church because she feels it is safe, so the church represents a family for the girl. On the other hand the Freedom March represents the work that the girl wants to do to help gain her freedom, and because she is a girl her mother makes her focus on the “family” atmosphere, at her church.

In the next stanza Randall keeps the same rhyme scheme, but focuses more on contrast and color to send his message, “She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,/And bathed rose petal sweet,/And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,/And white shoes on her feet” (17-20). This is the first time that colors are mentioned in the poem and they are very important. Randall only mentions a few colors in this stanza, or throughout the poem for that matter. First he mentions the girl’s “night-dark hair” (17), and then he describes her white shoes, and her “white gloves on her small brown hands” (19). The only colors mentioned are brown, black, and white, and more importantly Randall notes that her brown skin is clothed in white. As the stanza states the little girl is getting dressed up for church, so the fact that her getting dressed up nicely features so much white clothing shows how in that time period white was an important color. It was a time when white people were the ones who made all the decisions, who made
all the laws and it was a representation of power in America. Randall uses powerful imagery to show how the setting of the poem, Alabama during the civil rights movement, was one that white people controlled not only the laws, but the fashion as well.

The ambitious girl eventually gave in to her mother's demands, and her mother "smiled to know her child/Was in the sacred place/But that was the last smile/to come upon her face" (21-24). Again Randall emphasizes that the mother had thought that she was leading her daughter in the right direction, however as the foreshadowing states the mother's smile would be her last.

After her daughter left for church the mother "heard the explosion" and "her eyes grew wet and wild./Running through the streets of Birmingham/Calling for her child" (25-28). She became worried instantly that her attempts to protect her daughter had the opposite effect, as she unknowingly placed her daughter's life in danger. Again Randall uses the same rhyme scheme, and again he rhymes the same words as he does in the 2nd stanza (the mother's first dialogue), “wild” and “child”, but this time for a different reason.

In the 2nd stanza Randall rhymed “wild” and “child” to explain why the mother was preventing her daughter from going to the Freedom March. The mother commanded the girl against her will to go to church instead of the Freedom March, in order to protect from the wildness and violence of the March. In this 7th stanza however, when Randall uses those same two rhyme words, in the same exact place, he is showing that the mother's control of her daughter forced her "child" into the "wild" and placed her life in danger. By placing them in a different context, and at a later part in the poem, Randall uses the same two words to express two different points with the second one being an ironic effect of the first one.

As the poem comes to an end the mother discovers what she had been fearing and trying to prevent from the very beginning, the death of her daughter:

"She clawed through the bits of glass and brick,/Then lifted out a shoe./[the mother cried] 'O here's the shoe my baby wore,/But, baby, where are you?'" (29-32).

Not only does this stanza confirm the death of the daughter, but it also solidifies the idea of white domination. First off, the girl's mother tried to keep her safe at the beginning of the poem, but in the end the girl died in a church bombing, which it is almost a guarantee that the people responsible for the bombing were white. With the bomber(s) being white it suggests that the black mother wanted to control her daughter for the sake of her safety but the white bombers were in control so the girl's life was ended despite her mother's efforts.

Lastly, Randall again uses color to portray a message in the poem. Randall makes sure to include that the mother could not find her daughter amongst the rubble (leaving the audience with the thought that she is dead) but he does purposely include the fact that the mother did find her shoe. The only other thing mentioned about the shoe in the whole play, is the fact that it is white, when the girl is getting dressed for church. The young black girl wanted to stand up for her rights, and control her own life, but in the beginning her mother controlled her, and in the end the white people controlled all, as in the wreckage of the bomb the white shoe was recovered, but the black girl was not.

Dudley Randall used selective word choice, foreshadowing, and color all to portray the negative effects of being controlled and the damage it caused to a child's innocence. Another tool that he used throughout the poem was the rhyme scheme. From the first verse to the very last one, every stanza had the same (ABCB) rhyme scheme. The first and third lines don't rhyme, but the second and fourth lines do. The significance of this rhyme scheme is the background behind it, and the irony behind Randall using it. In fact, this ABCB scheme is most commonly used in children's poems. By using this child-like scheme throughout the entire poem, Randall effectively illustrates how the control over black people, and children completely diminished the innocence of the young black girl and by the end of the poem the only thing innocent left was the rhyme scheme.

The civil rights era was one of the most important periods in American history. Its rewards are still being enjoyed by the American people today, but they did not come without sacrifice. During the civil rights movement crime was abundant in America. As Dudley Randall highlights in "The Ballad of Birmingham" one of the most damaging things about that time period was how people tried to control others.

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When asked about her favorite childhood memory, my mother said that it was when she was ten years old in downtown Cleveland. She remembers holding her mint chocolate chip ice cream in one hand and her mother’s hand in her other, walking alongside the Cuyahoga River leaving the Flats on her way back home. From the way she described it, I could tell she was proud of that memory. She was proud of a place that is now almost entirely non-existent, with the exception of a Hooters and a couple of abandoned warehouses.

The Flats used to be something special, like to my mother. It was a hotspot for entertainment, which included numerous bars, nightclubs, and restaurants as well as businesses and neighborhoods. The Flats are a lost civilization on the banks of the Cuyahoga, whose ruins can still be seen today. Hopes for the Flats rebuilding lies in people like myself who not only want to see it become something better for the people of Cleveland, but something better for people everywhere. We want to see more people move into the city, not away from it. The city today is trying desperately to get back on its feet. There are measures being taken to move forward, like the addition of the aquarium and the controversial addition of the Horseshoe Casino. Another positive aspect of Cleveland’s West Side is our world-renowned medical institution, the Cleveland Clinic. While this is an improvement, this is not enough; there should be more.

The name “the Flats” comes from the low-lying flood plain separated from the plateau by the Cuyahoga River. The high land is what the city rests upon. The Flats were first used by the railroads to transport shipments from the harbor on Lake Erie. The Flats were a great advantage to the city workers because they held plenty of room for warehouses and railroad tracks. By the end of the 1800’s the Flats was overtaken by industry. Factories, mills, and foundries sprung up from the marshy swampland.

As time rolled on, industry lost importance in not just Cleveland, but in all of the Rust Belt cities. This impacted the Flats dramatically. During the 1970’s and 1980’s the Flats experienced a sort of “Renaissance.” Nightclubs, restaurants, and bars opened up along the river and on streets like Old River Road. At one time, the Flats used to have the highest concentration of bars in the Midwest (Stonebridge, Cleveland). The West Bank of the Flats used to be called the “Powerhouse.” The Powerhouse was originally built to house technology for a cable car system, but was reconstructed and turned into clubs and what was to be named the Nautica Pavilion (now known as Jacobs Pavilion at Nautica). The Pavilion is still used today as a concert hall. The Flats grew from a swamp into what became the center of Cleveland’s entertainment life.

Many problems contributed to the downfall of this party haven, the first being the rise of the Warehouse district. James Renner, a journalist for the Cleveland Independent, says,

“...At that time the Warehouse District — just up the hill from the East Bank — was beginning to flourish, drawing a growing number of tourists and many locals who were put off by the rowdy atmosphere in some of the East Bank establishments. The Warehouse District became the place where the “adults” who had “outgrown” the Flats went to party.” —James Renner (Who Killed the Flats?)

Mr. Renner brings up an interesting subject in his article “Who Killed the Flats?” A businessman by the name of Bart Wolstein, whose name graces Cleveland State’s Wolstein Center, had ideas of building family friendly places. But according to Renner, the mayor at the time, Mike White, was influenced by business tycoons. These business tycoons advised that he should not make any improvements to the Flats until the black population in the area increased. This led to many future projects being laid to rest in 2000. That same summer, five people drowned in the Cuyahoga River near the Flats. The deaths led Mayor White to create the Flats Safety Task Force. The job of this “force” was to search for any imperfections in the business in the Flats area. If they found anything wrong in their safety inspections, they would shut them done. Many bars and clubs failed these inspections. These closures had a major impact on the Flats. The current area, according to the Hastily Made Cleveland Tourism Video, looks like a ghost town. The area is filled with abandoned warehouses, lifeless river walks, and barren train tracks. The time has come for a change, and the first thing that must come back to the Flats is business.

When a city is in trouble, the eyes of the people fall on the mayor. In March Frank Jackson, Cleveland’s mayor, gave a speech alongside Governor John Kasich about a number of issues pertaining to Cleveland and its surrounding suburbs. The main topic of the speech was schools. He did however mention the Flats once in his speech. He gave no details, just that there are ideas for redevelop-
be more distinct plans. Businesses, especially small businesses, are crucial to the redevelopment of the Flats because where there is business there are people. When there is an increase in population, people take notice and the cycle begins. Possible businesses in the flats include nightclubs, bars, and shopping centers that people love to flock to.

Young adults tend to love the club scene, and with T.V. shows like “The Jersey Shore” they will love the fact Cleveland now has nightclubs. Right now, there are few venues in the area for young adults. Nightclubs give not only young adults but people in their 30’s and 40’s a chance to enjoy themselves. People like dancing and with nightclubs and bars out in the Flats, people will have a place to do so.

Renovating bars will be a huge success because it will provide blue-collar workers with a place to have a drink after a long day on the job. Cleveland is filled with blue collared workers who live and work in the city. Bars, like nightclubs, give people a place to socialize and interact with other people. Drinking is part of our culture and alcohol, though controversial, is a good way to bring in customers.

Shopping is another popular activity. Shopping centers such as malls and strips are well liked by many in Strongsville, Westlake, and University Heights. People will love the change of pace brought by a new shopping center. Malls hold many businesses, big and small. The shopping center in the Flats could be comparable to South Side in Pittsburgh. This area thrives because people go there to spend money and have a good time.

In this economy, jobs are in high demand. People would enjoy working in the newly renovated Flats. Bringing business back to the Flats would benefit all of Cleveland. The people of Cleveland would have new opportunities to enjoy downtown, businesses would have the chance to gain new customers, and most importantly it would bring back commerce and people to a dying city. Business is an essential ingredient to getting the Flats and city back on their feet. While Cleveland is at times portrayed negatively in the media, hopefully Cleveland will be able to follow in its footsteps. While Cleveland is at times portrayed negatively in the new it does not stop people from being motivated to rebuild. Cleveland will return to its former glory, and the Flats will be reborn. It isn’t a question of if; it is a question of when.

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