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The Way of the Golden World: Ovidian Myth in Congreve's *The Way of the World*

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Though his epic poem *The Metamorphoses* had been of considerable literary influence in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Ages, Ovid's star began to fade through the 18th century. The Augustan Age was indeed a great time of translation, but classical literary interests gravitated for the most part away from Ovid's satirical verse and towards more weighty sources such as Homer and Virgil (Brown 123-4). Still, one of the most influential English translations of *The Metamorphoses*, Garth's 1717 edition, was a product of this climate that was growing increasingly cooler towards Ovid. The Garth translation was the contrivance of several eminent Augustan literary figures including the dramatist and poet William Congreve. The fingerprints of Ovid and the literature of antiquity are all over Congreve's oeuvre: aside from his work on the Garth edition of *The Metamorphoses*, Congreve also translated parts of *The Iliad* and composed an opera based on the Ovidian tale of Semele that was an eclectic mix of several stories from both Ovid and Homer (Solomon). In *The Way of the World*, Congreve's

Ovidian influences are on full display and offer a biting commentary on the London society in which the play is set while being wholly attentive to the power dynamics intrinsic to relationships of love and lust in a way similar to Ovid in *The Metamorphoses*. As Ovid populates his fields with the transformed bodies of those on the wrong side of a power deficit, Congreve populates his contemporary London with the loveless monsters of society, leaving the lovers in his play to negotiate their way around a similar fate.

Ovid's chilly reception in 18th century English literature seems to have much to do with the more antic nature of his verse as opposed to the somber and momentous poetry of Homer and Virgil. The Doctor of Henry Fielding's *Amelia* (1751) is quite blunt on the waning opinion towards Ovid: "What can be a more strange, and indeed unreasonable Opinion, than to prefer the *Metamorphoses of Ovid* to the *Aeneid of Virgil*?" He receives the response, "…you shall not persuade me it was ever the opinion of any Man" (quoted in Brown 123-4). However, the general playfulness of Ovid's *The Metamorphoses* lends itself to Congreve's tone in *The Way of the World*. For the most part, Congreve's comedy is lighthearted, with allegorical character names, farcical plot elements, and baudy humor, characteristics that are more reflective of Ovid than the serious nature of *The Iliad* or *The Aeneid*. Thus, Lady Wishfort can openly flirt with a servant disguised as a nobleman, and the foolish Witwould and Petulant can admit to having arguments that nearly lead to brawls for the sake of just wanting to contradict each other—not necessarily the hallmarks of the serious, high-brow literary stylings of Homer or Virgil that were so venerated in the Augustan Age. Furthermore, *The Way of the World* is ultimately satirical in nature, much like *The Metamorphoses*, and both fiddle with the social conventions of their own contemporary worlds. However, Congreve and Ovid do not only share a playful and satirical outlook. Congreve fits his characters into patterns of Ovidian myth throughout *The Way of the World*, as the tales of Apollo and Daphne and Orpheus and Eurydice are subtly, but thoroughly, interwoven into the relationships of Mirabell and Millamant and the Fainalls respectively.

Congreve makes certain that the myth of Apollo and Daphne is on one's mind at the beginning of Act IV of *The Way of the World*, by providing clear assurance that the tale is on the mind of Millamant, the lead female character, as well. She recites the line "Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train" (293), the opening phrase of Edmund Waller's 17th century

pastoral poem *The Story of Phoebus and Daphne, Applied*, which places the Ovidian myth in an updated pastoral setting and describes Thyrsis' chase of Sacharissa as a parallel to Apollo's chase of Daphne. In poem and myth alike, the objectified female resists her passionate lover and flees through the countryside. Three love-chases occur simultaneously, with the couples of Thrysis and Sacharissa and Mirabell and Millamant functioning as surrogates to Apollo and Daphne in Waller's poem and Congreve's play respectively. While Millamant, like her female counterparts, offers resistance to her lover's amorous pursuits in *The Way of the World*, her reasoning differs emphatically from Daphne's and Sacharissa's. This is perhaps best evidenced in Millamant's song in Act III:

> Then I alone the conquest prize,
> When I insult a rival's eyes;
> If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
> That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me. (285)

Since *The Story of Phoebus and Daphne, Applied* is undoubtedly on Millamant's mind, it is safe to assume that the correlations between the closing image of Millamant's song and Waller's poems are far from coincidental. *The Story of Phoebus and Daphne, Applied* ends with Thyrsis, the surrogate Apollo, unsuccessful in his attempts to possess his Daphne, but in the process of his chase, he catches the eye of every "nymph" aside from Sacharissa. In this way, Thyrsis, "acquiring unsought praise, / He catch'd at love, and fill'd his arms with bays" (vv. 19-20), and receives the love of many young women. Millamant wants to ensure a different ending to the lover's chase. While the pursuer of Waller's poem falls into the arms of many, unable to get *one* but rewarded with *some*, Millamant flees Mirabell with the hopes that the chase will only make Mirabell desire her more instead of driving him to others who love him as well. In this way, Congreve is meditating on the power dynamics involved in gender relations that Ovid is so attuned to throughout *The Metamorphoses*. Millamant is desperate to ensure that in her desired union with Mirabell, she is able to retain some semblance of power. Millamant's power is derived from the idea that Mirabell cannot escape his feelings for her. "I would give something that you did not know I could not help it" (275), Mirabell tells her in Act II, conscious that her awareness of his feelings enables her in some way to control him.

Daphne's flight from Apollo in the first book of *The Metamorphoses* is rooted in

Daphne's longing to maintain her virginity, and while Sacharissa's motivations are unclear in Waller's poem, it is unquestionable that she does not reciprocate Thyrsis' feelings for her. The 'chase' in *The Way of the World* is altogether different: in an effort to heighten her own power in their relationship, Millamant constructs a preconsummate situation in which Mirabell needs to chase Millamant before he can ensnare her. The predatory overtone of the Ovidian myth is modulated in *The Way of the World* to accommodate Millamant's desire for an eventual union with the situational predator, becoming a 'prey' that deliberately encourages the hunt, doing so with an awareness of the power differential intrinsic to marriage in the society Congreve imagines in his play. In Act IV, as the lovers launch premarital negotiations, Millamant says:

> And d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I'm
> married; positively I won't be called names.

> **MIRABELL:** Names!

> **MILLAMANT:** Aye, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of the nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—I shall never bear that! (296)

To possess power in a union is to be able to name both the union and the other individual what they will, a concept that is central to the myth of Apollo and Daphne. Daphne herself is impermeable to such naming; as John Dryden translates for the 1717 Garth edition of *The Metamorphoses*, "the name of bride / She shuns, and hates the joys, she never try'd" (21). In the myth, Apollo, overcome by lust, chases Daphne through the country until she seeks the assistance of her father and is turned into a laurel tree. Apollo chooses to interpret Daphne's transformation as her acquiescence to his idolatry and fulfillment of his chase; while her transmogrification into the laurel can easily be read as symbolic of Apollo's failure to possess his desired, Apollo is able to transpose its symbolic meaning to that of a personal victory. Thus, the laurel tree is emblematically linked with individual triumph:

> My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree:
> Be thou my prize of honour, and renown;
> The deathless poet, and the poem, crown,

> Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
> And, after poets, be by victors worn. (24)

Congreve's analysis of the power dynamics in marriage owes much to Ovid's take on power in the Apollo and Daphne myth. In a patriarchal society such as Congreve's contemporary London, power in any gendered encounter gravitates naturally towards the masculine. By refusing to allow Mirabell to call her what he chooses, Millamant establishes her desire to be, in marriage, more than just one of Mirabell's possessions.

Earlier in *The Way of the World*, Congreve demonstrates that the power dichotomy in intergender relations is not necessarily weighted to the benefit of either man or woman, but instead, at least in the case of Mirabell and Millamant, dispersed equally. As Mirabell tells his lover in Act II, "Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant. For beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms, your glass is all a cheat" (274). The relationship between Mirabell and Millamant is thus based on mutual necessity: it is only with Mirabell's attention that Millamant can be considered beautiful, and Mirabell cannot hope but love Millamant as he is overcome by her beauty. Power is not tipped to either side of their relationship, as both need the other. The negotiations between Mirabell and Millamant in Act IV show that both are aware of the social and marital conventions of the London society that Congreve depicts and the dangerous pitfalls that are associated with a power deficit in marriage. Thus, Mirabell and Millamant seek to guarantee that their own wants and needs can be sustained even after marriage. Millamant wants to make sure she can write to whomever she wants to and to dress as she pleases, and Mirabell's conditions (which are phrased as a legal document) specify that Millamant not wear masks, take on a close confidant to gossip with, or wear corsets while pregnant (297-8)— stipulations meant to safeguard marital happiness for both parties. In this regard, Mirabell and Millamant forge a partnership in their eventual marriage that can hopefully displace the power differential that plagues other marriages in their cosmopolitan London society.

Congreve's ideas of the power dynamics intrinsic to romantic relationships are naturally adumbrated with overtones of Ovidian transformation – those on the business end of a metamorphosis in Ovidian myths are naturally on the wrong side of a power gradient as well. While Ovid populates his landscape with transformed individuals who angered or

in some way provoked the Gods in a violent or sexual manner and were metamorphosed into everything from trees (Daphne) to spiders (Arachne) to waterfalls (Niobe), Congreve populates his upper-class London society with figures like the Fainalls and Lady Wishfort, who were scorned by love and who became emotionally disfigured and transformed into monsters. Mirabell and Millamant, in the shadows of characters such as these, look out for their own interests and the continued sustenance of their relationship; if both are happy and satisfied, their love has a better chance to survive, and they can resist the transformations experienced by the Fainalls or Lady Wishfort.

Of those transformed by the marital and social conventions of Congreve's London in *The Way of the World*, none are perhaps as damaged as Mr. and Mrs. Fainall. Their allegorical names are indicative of their perspectives in the play, as both feign love to the other's face, but when separated, express their absolute disgust for their spouse. In Mrs. Fainall's first appearance in the play, she discourses on mutual hatred, the ultimate state of marriage, a conversation she ironically has with her husband's mistress. In Act II, Mrs. Fainall's words, "'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us; and that the man so often should outlive the lover" (266) are indicative of the inconstancy of love that *The Way of the World* and Ovidian myths are so attentive to, portraying love as a fluid instead of a permanent concept that is liable to facilitate a transformation in the very nature of the lover. While Mrs. Fainall and her husband simulate affection in conversation, such affectations are merely a thin veil which hides their true feelings for each other: Mirabell claims to hate her husband "Most transcendently; aye, though I say it, meritoriously" (267), and after Mrs. Fainall's exit, Fainall repines, "Am I not imprisoned, fettered? Have I not a wife?" (270). There is no question that the Fainalls are cognizant of each other's true emotions, while the affectations they express to each are more burlesque than true sentiment. Thus, Mrs. Fainall is able to discuss her husband's hatred of her freely, as she is aware that any indications of warmth are mere social performance. The Fainalls are exactly the type of people whom Mirabell and Millamant are attempting to avoid becoming through negotiating their own happiness in marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Fainall are transformed, through a marriage in which love has died, into cold and cynical beings.

Mrs. Fainall's lamentations towards marriage at the beginning of Act II are tinged

with the Ovidian influences that pervade *The Way of the World*. She tells Mirabell:

> Men are ever in extremes, either doting or averse. While they are lovers, if they
> have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable. And when they cease to
> love (we ought to think at least) they loathe; they look upon us with horror and
> distaste; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as such, fly from us.
> (266)

Mrs. Fainall addresses the two modes of man: the lover who cares about his inamorata, and the uncaring man who ends up disdaining his former love-object. The fear of this latter man hinges on his unloving face, the indicator of the emotionally detached and uncaring man. This notion is resonant of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice from Ovid's *The Metamorphoses,* a central tale of the poem that was translated by Congreve himself for Garth's 1717 edition. The fundamental horror of the Orphic myth is derived from the moment that Orpheus turns to face his beloved while leading her up from the Elysian Fields to the temporal world. Orpheus was warned that doing so would lead to Eurydice's second death, but he cannot help but look at his love, an action he immediately regrets. As Congreve translates:

> His longing eyes, impatient, backwards cast
> To catch a lover's look, but look'd his last;
> For, instant dying, she again descends,
> While he to empty air his arm extends.
> Again she dy'd…. (317-318)

As soon as Orpheus looks at Eurydice she dies again, and thus the sight that Orpheus sees when he attempts a furtive glance at his lover is the stone-cold and unloving face of the dead. This episode in *The Metamorphoses* is a direct correlative to Mrs. Fainall's speech at the beginning of Act II—the emotional crux of both moments is the lover's fear of looking back at an object of love and seeing an inexpressive face that does not, or cannot, reciprocate the lover's feelings. This unrequited love is what drives Orpheus to spurn the female gender and Mrs. Fainall the male; the overwhelming anxiety of the lover is not to be loved back. By not isolating her marriage as situationally unique in her contemporary London, Mrs. Fainall suggests that the transformation of the male lover from amorous suitor to stone-faced and unloving husband is socially endemic. Such an idea further illuminates the necessity of the premarital negotiations between Mirabell and Millamant. By clearly addressing what they

personally require before engaging in marital union, the lovers are attempting to avoid becoming like the Fainalls. Mirabell plainly establishes exactly what he needs to stay happy in his marriage in an attempt to gain assurance that he will avoid the imprisonment and fettering that Mr. Fainall claims to have in his own marriage.

Upon losing Eurydice for a second time, Orpheus renounces the female sex altogether and escapes to the fields of the world above to live in an all-male environment. Congreve seems to imagine Mrs. Fainall as a gender-inverted Orpheus, who at the cold, indifferent face of the beloved wants to retreat into a homogenously-gendered community. Thus, the outcome of Eurydice's second death mirrors Mrs. Fainall's desires expressed when she first enters the play. As Congreve translates in *The Metamorphoses*:

> And now his yearly race the circling sun
> Had thrice compleat thro' wat'ry *Pisces* run
> Since *Orpheus* fled the face of womankind,
> And all soft union with the sex declined. (318)

Orpheus' flight from the female gender is parallel to Mrs. Fainall's disdain of the male race that leads her to imagine an alternative and female utopian community in which she can escape the influence of men such as her husband. In Act II, she tells Mrs. Marwood, "if we will be happy we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves" (266), an attempt to recruit her husband's mistress to her escapist fantasy. Though Mrs. Fainall's Orphic imaginings of an alternative female community cannot be realized, her desire to flee from a heterogendered society at the sight of her husband's unloving face is a direct mirroring of the fate of Orpheus after losing Eurydice for a second time. In contemplating such an ideal, one is reminded of Baudelaire's series of "Femmes damnées" poems which depict a unified feminine subculture clearly isolated from men. Baudelaire writes in "Femmes damnées: Delphine et Hippolyte":

> Comprends-tu maintenant qu'il ne faut pas offrir
> L'holocauste sacré de tes premières roses
> Aux souffles violents qui pourraient les flétir?
>
> Now do you understand you do not need to give
> The sacred offering of roses of your youth
> To one who'd wither them with his tempestuous breath? (vv. 26-28).

This poem and Mrs. Fainall's speech approach this separated female community with a lens similar to Orpheus in his exodus from heterosexual love following Eurydice's second death – escapism driven by a dearth of true appreciation from the opposite sex.

Ovid's *The Metamorphoses* was of unquestionable influence to William Congreve in his play *The Way of the World*, and much of this influence resonates with Ovid's commentary on the dispersal of power in gendered relationships. Many Ovidian myths follow the same paradigmatic progression of a god's expression of his or her inalienable power over a human being, resulting in the human's metamorphosis into another form. *The Way of the World* focuses on such an idea while changing the setting from the fields of the Golden Age to cosmopolitan London. While the setting has changed, the importance of a character's expression of power has not, as both Ovid and Congreve populate their chosen landscapes with metamorphosed beings transformed by power. Within a marriage in Congreve's London, the scramble for power is the transformative force that changes idealistic lovers into impassionate monsters. Mr. and Mrs. Fainall are the products of such posturing in marriage: Mr. Fainall views himself as being imprisoned for having taken nuptials, and Mrs. Fainall desperately searches to create an alternative, communal female society where she and others can escape masculine influence. It is the lovers of the play, Mirabell and Millamant, who attempt to avoid such an Ovidian transformation. While their prenuptial negotiations in Act IV resonate more with the images of a business meeting than of romantic love, it is precisely through such a professional colloquy that any aura of affection, love, and even happiness, can survive in their marriage. Congreve's imagined early 18th century London is one that is rife with unhappy marriages and skepticism about love, but it is the outwardly unromantic transactions between the play's lovers that offer the only prospect of happiness that will last past the final curtain.

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Hunting in Medieval Literature: Satisfaction of Conquest or Thrill of Pursuit?

Katherine Correa

In the medieval period, hunting was a pastime reserved exclusively for the nobility. While hunting in ancient civilizations was the primary way of obtaining food, furs, and other useful animal parts, hunting among medieval nobles was viewed as an invigorating sport and as a means of entertainment. Since the hunt for an animal and the pursuit of a lover share several characteristics, namely, the chasing of an elusive subject, the strategic combination of stealth and audacity, the perseverance of enthusiasm, and the triumph of finally attaining a trophy, the hunt is used repeatedly as a symbol for the pursuit of a lover in medieval literature. In this study, I propose that just as hunting moved away from its utilitarian function and became a method of self-expression, so too the "hunt" for erotic love became, in the medieval period, less about gaining a marriage partner and more about satisfying forbidden passions.

In Anglo-Saxon literature, hunting provides a twofold opportunity for a male warrior: one, to assert his strength over a male of equal strength, and two, the chance to earn fame by bringing home a trophy, or souvenir to commemorate the conquest. For example, after defeating Grendel in the epic poem *Beowulf*, Beowulf triumphantly drags Grendel's arm home to mount in the mead hall. Hunting in medieval literature, however, suggests a radical break from this view of hunting as an exertion of male strength and trophy-winning. While it was undoubtedly a triumph for a medieval hunting pack to kill the desired animal (especially a cunning one), such texts as "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" and Sir Thomas Wyatt's "Whoso List to Hunt" strongly suggest that the thrill of pursuit, not the satisfaction of conquest, is the real incentive to hunt in the medieval period.

The more challenging the hunt, however, the more likely that members of the

hunting party would be hurt, and the higher the chance that valuable hunting hounds would be killed. At this point, one might be tempted to ask, why hunt an animal one cannot be sure of winning? Simply because with the risk of hunting comes the thrill of pursuit. Just as raising the gambling stakes higher adds to the exhilaration during a game of cards, so the pursuit of a wilder animal makes the chase all the more energizing, no matter what the outcome of the hunt as is shown in both "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" and "Whoso List to Hunt."

Sir Thomas Wyatt's poem "Whoso List to Hunt" expresses the lamentations of the poem's speaker who cannot capture the hind he is pursuing because it belongs to Caesar, or the king. In the medieval period, the king, as chief nobleman, owned vast tracts of land on which he would keep collared deer specifically for the purpose of the hunt. Anyone found trespassing on the king's land would at the very least have his hands cut off and at worst be hanged. Yet it is interesting to note that the speaker's reason for ceasing to hunt this particular hind (or metaphorically, woman) is not because she does not belong to him, and not even because "the vain travail hath wearied [him] so sore" (v. 3) but because the hind (woman) warns him that "wild…[am I] to hold, though I seem tame" (v. 14). In other words, the speaker only gives up the chase when the woman resists his advances, that is, when the thrill of pursuit is gone, because the beloved (the hunted) has outwitted the hunter and has escaped. Until this point, however, the command "*Noli me tangere*" (v. 13), or "touch me not," had been a teasing dare rather than a deterrent.

According to rumor, Sir Thomas Wyatt was infatuated with Anne Boleyn who, at the time, was more than an object of interest to King Henry VIII. Thus, "Whoso List To Hunt" also represents a very dangerous infatuation with an unobtainable woman. While Wyatt could have been beheaded for his interest in Anne, he instead found her all the more beautiful and enticing because she was forbidden fruit. Additionally, although Wyatt knows he can no longer "hunt" Anne, he asserts in "Whoso List to Hunt" that he will continue to dream of her and pursue her in his mind, a sign that he cannot bring himself to part with the thrill of an impossible consummation.

Any reader attempting to link the particularly phallic nature of hunting weaponry with male supremacy and the hunt should be cautious, as the hunter in "Sir Gawain and

the Green Knight" is a woman. This is not to say that women do not assert themselves by hunting; on the contrary, the question the reader must ask now that the gender of the hunter has changed is, "What is common to both males and females that is being expressed through the hunt?" In medieval courts, it was not uncommon for the line between chivalry and open flirtation to be crossed blatantly. As one textbook source phrases it, courtly love was "love at a distance, unconsummated by sexual intercourse. It was love without touching, a kind of sex without sex, and only as such was it ennobling" (Kagan 260). Although this kind of antagonistic love was maddening at times because full conquest could never be attained, such love was also liberating because male and female desire was finally being recognized as the motivation for love, contrary to the typically rigid religious schema of the time which was cautious of desire and passion, and condemned it.

In "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," a knight bedecked in green visits King Arthur's court at Christmastime and requests that someone play a game with him. Sir Gawain, reputed in Arthurian legend as an upstanding knight, offers to play the game and is asked to appear at the Green Chapel in one year's time to have his head cut off, which is the condition of the game. On the way to the Green Chapel, Gawain rests at the castle of Lord Bertilak de Hautdesert who is the Green Knight in disguise. To test Gawain, Bertilak sends his wife to seduce Gawain while Bertilak is out hunting. Again, the connection between the thrill of the chase and the exciting dangers of seduction are boldly tied together in this text.

In "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," three animals are hunted – the deer, the boar, and the fox. It is no surprise that Lord Bertilak is able to bring home "such a number / of does and other deer one might doubt it were true" (vv. 1322-33); it seems obvious that the hunt of a timid and gentle animal is no challenge, just as loving someone who reciprocates one's love is easy. By the same token, Bertilak's wife gently invites Gawain to pursue her, but when he refuses to give her more than a kiss she retreats, leaving him alone. On the second day, Bertilak hunts a boar, an animal known for being particularly vicious and so tough that "the barbs [of the arrows] on his brows would bite not at all" (v. 1458). It is no coincidence that Bertilak's wife's demands that Gawain sleep with her become more intense on the second day, and no matter how many times Gawain rejects this pursuit, the "barbs" of his rejection bounce off the tough skin of his pursuer.

Finally, on the third day, Bertilak hunts a fox, a clever animal, which could outwit the hunter and get away easily. The fox, the ultimate challenge, also brings the greatest thrill and symbolizes the greatest temptation to illicit love. While Gawain, of course, as the epitome of chivalry, restrains himself from "hunting" or being intimate with Bertilak's wife, he cannot help himself from viewing her in terms of a ripe young doe: "short body and thick waist, / with bulging buttocks spread; / more delicious to the taste / was the one she by her led" (vv. 966-9). Again, while Bertilak's wife is not entirely sure of winning Gawain, the "trophy," and Gawain knows he can never have Bertilak's wife, there is still the thrill of intrigue that accompanies the forbidden.

Interestingly enough, since hunting, passionate love, and reading were reserved for the nobility during the Middle Ages, this medieval idea of a kind of erotic, passion-driven love was not fully understood by mainstream England until Shakespeare's time when humans were constantly depicted as victims whose hearts were "hunted" by desire, to the point of cliché. In Sir Philip Sidney's "Astrophil and Stella," a sonnet cycle which chronicles the development of a love relationship, the mythological figure of Cupid shoots his "darts of Love" (v. 6) at the beloved in a way that is characteristic of a hunter in pursuit of prey. Count Orsino of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* also alludes to this theme: "O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first, / […] That instant was I turned into a hart, / And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds, / E'er since pursue me" (I, i, 18-22). In the majority of English sonnets at this time, the poet is quite clear in communicating his dilemma: though he desires the beloved, he almost needs the mistress to be cruel to him in order for him to be able to continue writing. This idea, while seemingly revolutionary for this literary period, seems to be borrowed from the medieval mindset that the most exciting love is also the cruelest.

In conclusion, one is led to ask, "What are the consequences of this illicit yet exhilarating courtly love?" In fact, "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" examines the dual consequences of such a conquest through a metaphoric description of the process of dismembering the hunted animal. While it would not have been altogether uncommon for the Pearl Poet to paint such a graphic description, the violence of this process is so graphic that it seems reasonable to surmise that the poet had deeper intentions. For example, the dismemberment of the deer is quite grisly: "Then they broke open the belly, the bowels they

removed / […] they grasped then the gorge, disengaging with skill / the [esophagus] from the windpipe, and did away with the guts" (vv. 1634-37). The preparation of the boar is also bloody: "First he hewed off his head and on high set it, / […] brought out the bowels, burned them on [coals] / and with them, blended with blood" (vv. 1610-11). Such blood and guts seem to foreshadow not only the "dismembering" or failure of Gawain's once-perfect reputation, but also the dismemberment of Arthur's kingdom as occurs in "The Day of Destiny." A similar parallel can be made with the kingdom of Henry VIII which crumbled because Henry beheaded many intellectuals and court members out of jealousy or suspicion (though he did not behead Wyatt). Thus, the texts seem to suggest that courtly love has the potential to bring about great destruction.

Medieval courtly love, then, is a strange paradox. While it frees human beings from the economic constraints of obligated, arranged marriages, while it allows both men and women to express their desires, and while it knows no religious or class bounds, it also turns the group project of hunting into a very individual one that forces the individual to make a deadly choice between tradition or the present, between loyalty to one's king and society or to one's self and one's desire. Such a choice is not one that bears light consequences. And so, while medieval love can be considered a revolutionary breakthrough for its time, the literature of the period accurately paints the chaos that often ensues when love, and not reason, is the hunter.

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Meaning and Measurement

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The question of whether or not a message can or does contain intrinsic meaning is of great depth in philosophy and great breadth in pertinent fields of interest. However, it is my belief that with a few simple arguments and a little introduction to some technical concepts, one can develop a rather convincing case against the notion of intrinsic meaning. It will be my goal to present such arguments and show their embodiments in the world of modern physics, specifically in the concept of measurement.

1. Meaning

In his monumental Gödel, Escher, Bach, Douglas Hofstadter divides all messages into three layers:

> **Frame Message** To understand the frame message is to recognize the need for a decoding-mechanism.

> **Outer Message** To understand the outer message is to build, or know how to build, the correct decoding mechanism for the inner message.

> **Inner Message** To understand the inner message is to have extracted the meaning intended by the sender. (166)

If a message is to contain any intrinsic meaning then it must exist within at least one of these levels or perhaps spread across any combination of levels. In either case, these levels must have some objective existence if they are to support any meaning. That is to say, we must be able to meaningfully and objectively talk about these layers in regard to a specific message without resorting to a specific interpretation. However, we will find that one runs into a problem here because, as I will attempt to show, these layers cannot be defined without referencing a specific interpretation.

The first flaw (if one can really call it that) is with the concept of the frame message. The concept of a frame message assumes that there exist certain features that a message can have that signify it as being a message, as opposed to just a plain-jane object. In our everyday dealings with messages, this seems reasonable. A message always has some repeating pattern or aesthetic quality that distinguishes it: books have text, repeating characters; language has words, repeating sounds; and even electronic data has repetition in the form of 1's and 0's. This last example is of particular importance.

The binary code (1's and 0's) of electronic information is really just another way of writing a number. As normal people, we are used to writing numbers in the decimal system, or "base-10" system. This means that we keep track of numbers using 10 digits, namely 0-9. Each of these digits corresponds to a number zero through nine. If we want to express a larger number than nine, we must add a second digit to the "ten's place". Then for numbers larger than ninety-nine we must resort to a third digit in the "hundred's place". Every time we run through all ten digits (0-9) in a place value we have filled up its capacity and must add another number to the next highest place value. This should all be familiar from early education.

The only difference in binary is that for convenience we develop it so it only requires two symbols: 0 and 1. Accordingly it is called a "base-2" system. So a single digit can only represent two numbers: zero and one. Then we have filled that place value and must go on to the "two's place". So the number two is represented as "10" and the number three as "11". After filling the first two place values we must move on to the "four's place". Thus the number four is represented by "100", five as "101", six as "110", and seven as "111". Larger numbers will require the "eight's place" and so on. This allows us to express all numbers with just two symbols. These symbols could be the colors black and white as they are in some barcodes, 0's and 1's as we have show here, or even lit and unlit light bulbs. Any two symbols will do.

So what if we make our two symbols two different elements, say sodium (Na) and chlorine (Cl)? Then we could make a binary number by just placing a whole bunch of sodium atoms and chlorine atoms next to each other in a line. We could even stack such lines side by side into grids, or even stack such grids into a cube of sodiums and chlorines. In fact, doing so would produce a grain of ordinary table salt! That means that every grain of table salt could

be interpreted as a binary number, and since binary numbers can be messages (as they are the form of all electronic messages), every grain of salt is a message.

Now it is important to note that salt in particular has such a regular structure that most grains of salt probably represent the same number. However, this process isn't limited to these elements. One could use any n elements to represent the n digits of a "base-n" number system. Consequently, one can interpret any object to be a number, whether it be a rock, paper, a pair of scissors, or even a dog! Again remembering that numbers can represent messages as they do electronically, this means that all objects have the same structure as a message, and that means that there can be no such thing as a distinguishing frame message. So that's one level we can cross off of our list.

As we will soon find out, the outer message is subject to a similar lack of existence. To understand this we will refer to secret codes. Remember those secret decoder rings you use to pull out of the cereal box when you were a kid? If you played with them enough you might have realized how they worked. Anytime you wanted to write an A you wrote a B. Anytime you wanted to write a B you wrote a C. And so on, all the way to Z which you wrote as A. Your secret code just involved offsetting the alphabet by one letter. If you had a particularly good decoder ring, it might have been able to do a few different codes. This often just amounted to offsetting the alphabet by a different amount, say two letters. So A would become C, B would become D, and so on. The best of these decoders could provide twenty-five such codes, corresponding to the twenty-five possible offsets of the alphabet.

This type of secret code is called a Caesar Cipher, named after Julius Caesar who used it (with a shift of three letters) to secretly talk to his subordinates. However, Caesar didn't realize there was a big flaw in the secret code that made it not so secret: it contained an outer message. It contained methods to decode it. For this reason, today's governments do not rely on it, which is why it is found in a box of cereal. The problem lies in the fact that the entire message is all shifted by the same amount. So any messages with two A's will have two of some other letter in place of them. In language, there are certain letters that come up most often like S and E. So you can break the code by finding out which letter occurs most often in the message, assume that letter is supposed to be an E, figure out how much it had to have been offset by, then unoffset

the entire message by that amount. There is a chance this might not work, in which case you assume the most repeated letter was supposed to be an S and try again. Due to the natural patterns in a language, you can usually crack such a code in very few attempts.

So just to be clear, let's look at the problem again. The main issue is that the entire message is offset by the same amount, so it preserves the same patterns as the language it is coding. These patterns provide the outer message, the means by which to decode. In normal written English, similar patterns provide the clue that the message is in English and should be read as such. The question then becomes whether or not we can erase this outer message, these patterns. As it turns out, we can.

To do this, all we have to do is offset each letter by a random number of letters. So the first letter in the message might be offset by one letter, then the next letter might be offset by five letters, and the next by two, and so on. The important part is that each offset amount is completely random. In doing so, we erase all the distinguishing patterns of normal written language, and create an effectively random mishmosh of letters.

For someone to be able to decode the message, they would need to know the exact amount that each letter was offset. So we could make a secret key that was the same length of the message and where each place contained a number corresponding to the offset for that position in the message. Each position can be offset in twenty-six possible ways (each letter can be mapped to one of the twenty-five remaining letters, or remain unchanged). Since we really only have ten digits to work with (0-9) it's more convenient to write our key using letters instead of numbers. So the letter A in the key would mean don't offset that position, B would mean offset it by one letter, C would mean offset it by two letters, and so on.

This is such a good form of coding that it was used very often during the world wars, especially by Soviet KGB spies. Each spy had a pad, each page of which was a different secret key (random list of letters). To write their message, they did the corresponding offsets and sent the result to their fellow spy(ies) who had the same pad. They knew to use a certain page for the key for certain days. The security of this method relies on the assumption that you don't use the same key over and over again (otherwise it would become predictable/crackable) and that once you use it you make sure no one else gets access to it. To achieve these aspects,

the KGB keys were printed on ash-paper that would quickly burn and leave no trace of the key. For obvious reasons, this method of secret coding is known as the "one-time pad".

When people discovered this secret code, they wanted to know how they could crack it. However, Claude Shannon, the father of information theory, was able to mathematically prove that it was impossible to crack. Given any coded message, there is an equal probability that it could represent any message of that length. That is to say, the coded message contains no information about the decoded message. In essence, there is no outer message.

By making a slight modification to the classic procedure, we can generate a profound result. Include a single blank space as a "letter". Also include both upper and lower case letters, as well as all punctuation marks, and possibly characters for line breaks. This generalization is not difficult to implement. In doing so, we can code any written document. The same procedure can be generalized to arbitrary languages and alphabets. The catch to this is that any written document can also be interpreted as a coded message and we can generate a key that would decode that written document to make it any other written document of the same length. So any book you've ever read could be "decoded" into any other book of the same length (or shorter by just decoding the extra text as empty space) by this method!

This same coding and decoding method can be applied to any message, since all messages can be reduced to written glyphs. One way to do this for an arbitrary message is to display it electronically, whether through a text document, an image, a video, a sound file, etc. Then just write out the 0's and 1's that correspond to those documents. The result of this analysis is that no message has a predisposed outer message. There are decodings that could create numerous different sensible decoded messages out of any given message. So we can cross the concept of outer message off of our list. Messages cannot have an objective outer message.

The only possible meaningful layer left is the inner message. Surely we can't strip messages of their inner meanings. Evidence for that lies in the fact that you are reading this paper right now. However, our attack against the outer message has implications for the inner message as well. It means that no message has a unique inner message. You can interpret a message, in the words of Steve Perry of Journey, "any way you want it". So while we can't deprive messages of having an inner meaning, we have shown that they have infinite equally

fair-game interpretations. If the fact that our coding method depends on the decoded messages having the same length bothers you, just realize that you can interpret just a few characters as many words or many characters as just one word. If you doubt that, just go watch a foreign movie with subtitles and notice the sometimes drastic differences in length between the same sentence in both English and the foreign language.

The result of this rather technical analysis is that no message can contain an objective meaning, and furthermore that anything can be a message. Accordingly, anything can be interpreted as anything. Objective meaning is completely absent from all objects. So where is the meaning then? Does the interpretation contain all the meaning? Not quite, because you can express an infinite amount of things in any given language/interpretation. In the case of the one-time pad, the key doesn't look any different than the coded message, and could rightfully be a coded message itself. Every key could decode tons of messages and every message could be decoded tons of ways. However it is when you bring together a key and coded message that you get a unique result. In general, it's the combination of the message and interpretation together that create the meaning. The meaning is in the context.

2. Measurement

The analysis provided in the previous section is reasonable for meaning in regards to traditional messages. However, most people would probably argue that it doesn't strip everything of having an objective meaning. That is to say, real objects still have objective properties that could be referred to as their meaning, independent of interpretation. For example, there is a green cup on my desk as I write this paper. Although one could argue over how different eyes may see the color green, no one could deny the fact that the cup reflects light whose wavelength is approximately 550nm. Nor could they deny the fact that it is sitting on my desk, assuming of course that they trusted me or came to see it themselves.

People would also readily accept these facts as objective realities of the cup. Even if we all left the room, the cup would still be on the table and it would still be green, assuming that there is nothing in the room capable of moving or recoloring the cup. So perhaps then there is such a physical objective meaning in this sense. However, various interpretations of modern physics would say otherwise. In fact, you might say that as a student of modern

physics, that I would be such a person that would deny these seemingly undeniable facts.

Before moving on, I should warn the reader that much of what follows will be based on interpretation. Ironically, and echoing my point, there are many equally valid interpretations of quantum physics, each with its own view of the true nature of reality and meaning. In the process of learning I have continually changed my own beliefs in this regard as a result of learning about new phenomena. I have gone from some of the most stubborn interpretations to some of the wildest. Since a discussion of such interpretations and their various technical provisions could be (and has been) the topic of many books, it will have to suffice for this paper to only explore one such interpretation. Specifically, one that best represents my current beliefs which I should also note are not very well-defined in many aspects. Though if it is any condolence to the reader, the represented interpretation is the same as or at least similar to the one that many of the fathers of quantum mechanics held. Furthermore, there are sources that would claim it is the most widespread interpretation (though there is a huge amount of disagreement even within it). Also, let it be clear that no interpretation of quantum mechanics can do away with everyone of the many strange non-classical aspects.

In short, quantum mechanics says that all the properties that a system possesses can be wrapped up in a nice little package called a "state". There are many ways to represent this state, and depending on the nature of it, certain representations make more sense than others. One such representation is that of a vector, which is a straight line starting from the origin (0, 0, 0, ...) to some arbitrary point $(x, y, z, \ldots)$ where the number of coordinates depends on the dimension of the space. Another representation is through a function, which is a possibly curvy line drawn on an x-y grid. There are a lot of technical details and requirements, but one need not worry about those. Just knowing about such representations of the state is enough, along with the fact that everything of importance can be formulated regardless of the way you represent it.

Let us consider the system corresponding to a particle in a box. If the state really contains all that can be said about the particle, as quantum dictates, then we would expect it to contain information as to how much energy the particle has, where in the box it is, how fast it is moving, what direction it is moving in, whether or not it is spinning, and so on. The shock lies in the fact that the state doesn't contain all this information. Yet, quantum

mechanics provides stunningly accurate results, so what gives? The result is that these attributes just can't be real properties of the system. There are physicists who maintain that they are, but such an interpretation has plenty of extremely strange properties as well.

Instead of providing real values for a particle's position, the state only provides the probability that we will find it to have a certain position when we try to measure it. Quantum mechanics provides the math behind that process. It provides a little mathematical tool corresponding to a position measurement and tells you how to apply that to a given state to determine what results you will get with what probabilities. Every measurable quantity has such a little tool corresponding to it. The key part is that they all work on the same state.

So if we want to figure out the probabilities of finding the particle moving at certain speeds/directions (the technical term is the particle's momentum) then we apply the corresponding mathematical tool to the state. What is striking is that it is being applied to the same state as when we want to measure position. If we represent the state as a function (called a wavefunction) then the position tool only cares about the height of the function at various points. The momentum tool, however, only cares about the slope of the function at various points. So each tool interprets the wavefunction in a different way, yet it's the same wavefunction that they interpret. Extending this idea, all properties of a system are the result of interpreting the wavefunction in different ways.

Quantum doesn't stop here. There are many interesting and relevant phenomena. For example, a state that has a well-defined position (that is when you measure the position you can expect to get a value within a certain small range) has a very poorly defined momentum (you will get a random value from a huge range). This is what is often referred to as the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, mathematically stated: $\Delta x \Delta p \geq \frac{\hbar}{2}$. So the more meaningfully we can talk about position, the less meaningfully we can talk about momentum, and vice-versa. A nearly identical relation holds true for many different pairs of properties. So the state appears more or less meaningful depending on how you choose to interpret it. A result that follows somewhat from the Uncertainty Principle, and somewhat from other laws of quantum mechanics is that a particle cannot have a perfectly defined position or momentum. So there is no such thing as a particle at point X. There will always be some

probability that it is somewhere other than X. Thus, in terms of our classical picture, most of the properties we are used to associating with a particle aren't even realistic; a particle can't really have them.

A lot of jargon has been thrown at you in a short amount of time so it would be a good idea to pause and sum up all of the significance. According to quantum mechanics, a system doesn't have all the well-defined real properties we are used to attributing to it. These properties are not given to it until we measure them. Furthermore, each type of measurement serves to interpret the same thing in a different way. So in *some* sense, if a tree falls in the forest and nothing hears it, it doesn't make a sound. But that would really be a naïve phrasing. It would be more appropriate to say that it is meaningless to talk about the concept of sound in such a setup. The important thing to take away is that a system doesn't have the intrinsic meaning we are used to applying to it. Moreover, the way we measure it determines what meaning we give to it.

The similarity to meaning in messages is astounding. The meaning does not objectively exist, it is dependent upon an interpretation, and furthermore it is the context of a message (state) and an interpretation (measurement) together that give rise to meaning (physical attributes). So a lot of power is behind the act of measurement. Not surprisingly then, measurement itself is the center of one of the biggest problems in quantum mechanics, aptly named, the "measurement problem". The question is how can one model the act of measurement. There are many ways that people have tried to do this, all with their own problems. We will consider one popular model and its consequences. That model is known as wavefunction collapse.

According to the principle of wavefunction collapse, when we measure a system, the state of that system collapses to a wavefunction that is well-defined for the property and result we measured. In the case of properties like position that can't be perfectly defined, this implies that we just can't make a perfectly accurate measurement. So let's take the property of spin for example. Certain particles can spin about various axes and can only be spinning up or spinning down about any given axis. There are states that correspond to a particle having the well-defined property of spinning up about a given axis. So if we measure the spin along that axis for system in such a state, we will always find that it is spinning up. However, these

states are not well-defined for other axes. So if we measure the same particle's spin along some other direction we will get spinning up or spinning down with certain probabilities. Wavefunction collapse then says that after we make that measurement, the state will collapse to the state corresponding to spinning up or spinning down along that direction depending on which one we actually get as a result.

There is something subtle and unsettling about this procedure. In mathematics it is what is called a discontinuous procedure. In plain terms, some big change happens instantly. For example, bending a twig is a continuous process, the more you push the more it bends, all in a fluid smooth manner. However, breaking a twig is discontinuous, it just instantly snaps. In general, physics doesn't like discontinuous processes. In fact, even a twig snapping is continuous in classical physics if you take care of all the details. So this presents a possible issue for wavefunction collapse.

The issue is made definite when one considers what is known as the Schrödinger equation:

$$i\hbar\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\Psi = \hat{H}\Psi$$

Ψ represents the state of the system, $\hat{H}$ represents the mathematical tool for measuring total energy, $\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\Psi$ represents the change in the state with time, and the $i\hbar$ is just a technical detail. Whether or not you understand the equation isn't important. I only include it because I find it as visually pretty as it is meaningful. The consequence of this equation is that quantum states evolve unitarily. Unitarily is a technical term for a process that is continuous and has a number of nice specific mathematical properties that make it pretty to work with. If we represent our state as a vector, then this means that as time passes the vector just rotates around nice and smoothly. The important point to take from this is that the evolution is smooth and deterministic. If you know the state at some specific time, then Schrödinger's equation tells you exactly what that state will be at any other given time. The catch is that it only applies to closed systems with no external influences.

This last catch is very intriguing. It is often proper to consider the entire universe as a closed system (since there is nothing beyond right?), but that causes a dilemma. How then can you explain the probabilistic discontinuous wavefunction collapse resulting from measurement (the sharp random changes) when the closed system is supposed to evolve smoothly and predictably? One answer is that the universe isn't closed. In which case, something about measurement is external to the universe.

Somehow we measurers have some external presence and from there we probe into the universe with our pointy sticks to make measurements on things. Other possible solutions include splitting up the universe into a ton of parallel universes whenever a measurement is made, as well as yet other solutions. In our case, let us rest with the former.

If this is the case, then it would explain why from our point of view there are such sharp sudden random changes. It would also allow for the philosophical theorizing of the consciousness existing in some world outside the universe. Such an evocative idea is worth pursuing if only for its beauty. In which case, we should note that by measuring, we really screw with the wavefunction of the universe. This messing with the wavefunction is exhibited in an experimental phenomenon called the quantum Zeno effect.

According to Schrödinger's equation, an excited atom (meaning it has a lot of energy and is bouncing around) will unitarily decay into a ground state atom (a tired atom without much energy). Again, by unitarily we mean nice and smooth and gradual. The problem is that a measurement of energy can only result in an "it's excited" response or an "it's in the ground state" response. So if it's somewhere in between, when we measure it, it has to collapse onto one or the other with a certain probability. If we measure it soon enough from when it is excited, it will most likely collapse onto the excited state. In which case, it now has to start all over again unitarily decaying back to ground. If we keep measuring it, it has to keep starting over from the excited state, i.e. it can't decay. This is the quantum Zeno effect, named after one of Zeno's paradoxes that claims motion is impossible because if you freeze an object at any time it is in one precise spot, and is never in between or moving from one point to another.

In regards to how this affects the atom, the poor little thing can't relax if we keep measuring it! How dare we! All it wants to do is get some stability in the ground state. We act like the kid who keeps his friends up at the sleepover party by slapping them whenever their eyes start to close. So maybe we should refrain from measuring anything and just let things evolve unitarily.

Now we have come full circle with Hofstadter's work. This is the concept of Zen. Properties are illusions of the senses, of measurement, and probing in any way is seen as more destructive than letting things just be. With that, I send you off to form your own opinions. There is far more to be learned than what can be represented in any paper. I hope that this one has served

to implicitly ask more questions than it even attempted to answer, and furthermore that it provided ample evidence into why I believe on many levels that there is no such thing as objective meaning.

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Looking In

Lozana Mehandzhiyska

Organized by The National Gallery of Art in Washington, and curated by Sarah Greenough, the exhibition *Looking In: Robert Frank's The Americans* celebrates the 50th anniversary of the publication of Frank's work. The accompanying catalogue bears the same title: *Looking In*. This shared title reflects both the exhibition as a retrospective of Frank's seminal work from the late 1950s, and the catalogue as an insight into the very nature of this work. If looked at in the context of the socio-political conditions of its time and with the perception of photography—common then—as essentially a tool for documentary and storytelling, *The Americans* might appear to be merely an embittered social commentary. Because of the implications of its context, Frank's work is bound to raise social awareness, but the impact of his images goes much deeper. The background information included in the exhibition along with the rich manuscript material and critical essays published in the catalogue, allow us to appreciate the work from a different perspective. It is the artist's personal attempt at looking into the "culture born here and spreading elsewhere" (Frank 362)* and revisiting established traditions through his own vision of the role of photography. *[all references are to the catalogue]

The organization of the critical essays in the catalogue introduces the life and work of Frank from the perspective of his relationships to others: his parents, wife and children, friends, teachers, colleagues, publishers, curators, and critics. The essays, separated into chapters such as "Robert Frank and Edward Steichen," "Robert Frank and Gotthard Schuh," "Robert Frank and Walker Evans," and "Robert Frank and Jack Kerouac," demonstrate the importance of human relationships to Frank's working process – relationships essential to the conception, execution and organization of *The Americans*.

The collection of 83 photographs comprising *The Americans* was selected from the voluminous body of work produced during Frank's road trip across the USA in 1955-57

sponsored by a Guggenheim fellowship. Over the years, critics have repeatedly tried to place these 83 images in categories in order to make sense out of Frank's sequence using themes of American culture such as nationalism, politics, racial segregation, social alienation, and consumerism. While the images are certainly not impartial to these issues, they continue to resist general categorization and remain intentionally ambiguous. If looked at from a different perspective, from the perspective Greenough and the contributing authors of the catalogue take on Frank's life—the perspective of human relationships—the images retain a visual power and vitality undiminished by the years of social change. Rather than simply preaching the realities of social injustice and inequality, Frank's sequence of images can be reconsidered as an exploration of the relationships between individuals, between the individual and society, between the individual and the environment, between the photographer and his subjects, and finally between the viewer and these subjects.

The timeless quality of Frank's images lies in their ability to successfully interweave the particular and the universal. They are about the particulars of American reality: the road and the desert, the cars and the movie stars, the televangelist and the black preacher, the rodeo and the casino. But they are also about the individual experience of being on the road, the human perception of fame, religion, entertainment, and all things that "concern us all" (Schuh 145) beyond the present time and national borders. The images therefore defy a single interpretation and encourage the construction of multiple subjective narratives deriving from the perspectives of the subjects, the photographer, and the audience. The figures looking intently into the space beyond the frame of the picture, the figures turning their backs towards the viewer, the blurred and eccentric, literally off-center compositions of many of the photographs in *The Americans* reveal Frank's personal belief that the role of photography is to ask questions rather than make statements. He saw photography as something more than documenting facts, and he firmly opposed the popular notion at the time that it was a medium accessible to anyone.

In a statement for *U.S. Camera Annual* from 1958, Frank describes the attitude towards photography which informed the creation of *The Americans*: "looking at a contemporary picture magazine makes it difficult for me to speak about the advancement of photography, since photography today is accepted without question, and is also presumed

to be understood by all—even children. I feel that only the integrity of the individual photographer can raise its level" (51). Frank developed this attitude largely in reaction to his relationship with Edward Steichen. Stuart Alexander's essay "Robert Frank and Edward Steichen" explores the connections between Frank and Edward Steichen who was one of the most revered figures in photography at the time and curator of the photography galleries at MoMA. Steichen's friendship secured exposure and professional recognition for the young photographer. He included Frank's work in prominent exhibitions and wrote one of the letters of recommendation in Frank's application for the Guggenheim fellowship. Steichen encouraged Frank to get closer to his subjects and to "begin probing beyond environment into the soul of man" (Steichen 49). Frank embraced this new approach to his work and it is particularly evident in his images of Peruvian Indians and Welsh miners photographed during his extensive travelling in the early 1950s.

However, having thoroughly explored Steichen's perspective on the role of photography, Frank was "now ready to reject" it (Alexander 49). Steichen's preoccupation with using photography to make grand statements about humanity and to group images using universal themes "at the expense of the artist" (Frank 51) was largely criticized by the emerging generation of younger photographers. Frank contributed work for Steichen's major exhibition at MoMA, *The Family of Man* in 1952, but doubted the validity of Steichen's motives for the exhibition. The exhibition was conceived as a way to promote the capacity of humanity for solidarity and compassion after the horrors of the Second World War. Frank and other serious photographers were not yet ready to forget the realities of the war years and, more importantly, Frank saw the role of the photographer as an artist and not merely as "an illustrator of themes" easily "understood by all" (Alexander 52).

Gotthard Schuh, whose relationship to Frank is discussed in Martin Gasser's essay "Robert Frank and Gotthard Schuh," grasped this mature direction in Frank's work. In a letter, he commented on the maquette of *The Americans* which Frank had shown him in the summer of 1957:

> How little remains in these views of what we knew and loved in your previous
> work. No smile, no flower, no vegetation, no beauty….I do not know America
> but your images frighten me on account of the visionary watchfulness with which

you depict things that concern us all….Your book is sure to be unfairly judged in that the power of its imagery will be forgotten in the heat of discussion. How far your work lies from complacent irony. You never resorted to the cheap grotesque which would have been all too easy with such material. Your imagery is the fruit of passionate earnestness. (145)

These words would prove prophetic regarding the critical and public reception of *The Americans* two years later when the book was published in the US. But they also illustrate Schuh's deep understanding of Frank's intention to create something not necessarily "understood by all," and resistant to obvious categorization. Frank's contact sheets reveal photographs of "white" and "black" signs of water fountains and waiting areas he encountered in the South (Greenough 122). These, if printed, would have risked falling into "complacent irony" and "cheap grotesque." Frank's final selections for the book, though, reveal his matured artistic choice to address the issues of human interaction "that concern us all" without relying on clichés and overt messages. He acknowledged the shift of focus in his own work after *The Family of Man* exhibition: "I had used up the single beautiful image. I was aware that I was living in a different world—that the world wasn't as good as that—that it was a myth that the sky was blue and that all photography was beautiful" (Frank 151). These words betray the bittersweet process of maturation of the artist who had by now experienced life beyond the middle class complacency of his Swiss home and family business, beyond the charms of Paris and the wealth of London and New York. The still fresh memory of the war, the Welsh miners, the Peruvian Indians, and the trip across the country proved to Frank the inadequacy and pretentiousness of the popular photography style of the 1950s, championed in publications such as *Life* and *Look*, which could be bought at stands in New York, such as the one portrayed in *Metropolitan Life Insurance Building—New York City*, 1955. Life beyond the *Life* of New York was more complex and multi-faceted than popular photography, shielded by an everlasting blue sky, dared to show.

Besides Gotthard Schuh, the other highly influential figure in Frank's life was Walker Evans. In a draft for an essay on *The Americans*, Evans offered the same depth of insight that Schuh had into Frank's creative process:

Frank's photographs may remain untranslated to these licensees who will instantly recognize this photographer's intellect, his ungentle poetry, his ferocious wit and his educated morality. As for those whose eyes have been corrupted by the

picture press and by the fatuous copies of the "beautiful," they may be dismissed forthwith, unless, precisely, a book like this one will shock them into a little issued [pencil insert: "visual"] awareness. (158)

Jeff Rosenheim's essay "Robert Frank and Walker Evans" explores the relationship between the two artists, and the enormous influence of the older photographer on the career of the younger man. Commissioned by the Department of Agriculture, Evans was a pioneer photographer who documented the quality of life in the American Southwest during the Great Depression. He encouraged Frank to undertake his own road trip, and secured the Guggenheim grant for Frank by editing his application, writing a letter of recommendation, and voting for him as a member of the Guggenheim Foundation board. Evans' *American Photographs* was the only book Frank took with him on his journey across the country.

However, the personal styles of the two photographers were by no means similar. Evans was interested in the power of monumental objects, architecture and still images, frozen in time. Frank photographed mostly human subjects, and was fascinated by the effects of movement captured on film. Evans preferred large format cameras, whereas Frank shot with a small 35mm Leica. Despite these formal differences, both artists rejected Steichen's sentimental view of photography, and shared a preference for work informed exclusively by the photographer's own intellect and sensibility. In a written statement he produced for an exhibition of his work in early 1956, Evans expressed the ideas on photography that both he and Frank shared:

> Valid photography, like humor, seems to be too serious a matter to talk about seriously. If, in a note, it can't be defined weightily, what it is not can be stated with the utmost finality. It is not cute cats, nor touchdowns, nor nudes, motherhood, arrangements of manufacturer's products. Under no circumstances is it anything ever anywhere near a beach, in short it is not a lie, a cliché—somebody else's idea. It is prime vision, combined with quality of feeling, no less. (155)

Informed by the theories of Frank and Evans, the exhibition catalogue opens with the image of *Barber Shop Through Screen Door—McClellanville, South Carolina*, 1955. This image (number 38 in the sequence), a conscious reference to Evans' photograph of a barber shop from Atlanta, 1936, included in *American Photographs*, marks the connection between the two artists, but is also a definitive statement of Frank's imperative in his work to re-visit

and re-see the American context through his own personal vision. The screen door separates the photographer from the interior of the barber shop, but it also separates the viewer from that interior, thereby underscoring the subjectivity of the position of both photographer and viewer. In her essay on the Guggenheim fellowship, Sarah Greenough analyzes this position by comparing Evans' analytical approach towards his subjects to Frank's intuitive mode of work. Evans worked hard to get to know his subjects and to photograph them from an objective perspective, while Frank was seeking to "capture his experience of the emotional tenor of people's lives" (Greenough 123).

This interest in the emotional rather than the sociological or documentary perspective explains the intimate quality of pictures portraying the South in unconventional ways. To represent Beaufort, South Carolina, Frank selected the image of a black woman in a field, smiling against the illuminating sunset. In *St. Helena, South Carolina*, Frank photographed pensive black men at a funeral. These images, while acknowledging the specifics of the American context, also combine universal human emotions with the intimacy of Frank's perspective. In choosing these particular photographs as representative of the South, as opposed to other more obvious allusions to the realities of racial tensions, Frank fulfills Schuh's and Evans' visions of his work, as escaping the "complacency" of the "grotesque" and the cliché. To justify his choice of certain images, Frank openly commented that his work is "personal and, therefore, various facets of American society and life have been ignored" (Frank 316). From the very beginning, *The Americans* project was conceived as a personalized revision of the "material that is already there" (Frank 362)—the American context and photographic tradition. In his application for the fellowship, Frank stated his "very simple intention": "I wish to continue, develop and widen the kind of work I already do, and have been doing for some 10 years, and apply it to the American nation in general" (362). This statement reveals Frank's intention to apply the concerns of his previous work to the American milieu.

The personalization of the project continued to grow once Frank was "on the road." In McGehee, Arkansas, he was arrested for no other reasons than he was a foreigner and a Jew travelling in a car with a New York state license plate. The humiliation of the whole episode left a permanent mark on Frank's consciousness. In a letter written shortly after this event, Frank tells Evans how he experienced first-hand the "raw reality of American racism,

the nationwide fear of communism, the cruel realities of standard police activity in the American South and the harassment of foreigners during the mid 1950s" (154). This incident encouraged Frank to make his project even more personalized. He wrote in a letter to his parents "I am working very hard not just to photograph, but to give an opinion in my photos of America.…there is a lot that I do not like and that I would never accept" (156).

However, despite these resolutions and this experience which was recorded in multiple images on his contact sheets, in the editing process for the book, Frank showed tremendous maturity and development of style in creating something that transcended mere overt criticism of social injustice. This becomes especially clear if the relationships between individual images within the very carefully arranged order of the book are taken into consideration. Even images which appear to have very obvious messages, such as *Trolley—New Orleans*, 1955 (fig.1), gain greater power if considered in the context of the sequence. The image, hanging on the wall next to it in the exhibition, and printed on the page across from it in the book, is *Canal Street—New Orleans*, 1955 (fig.2). If the existing social alienation among people of different gender and race is explicitly physical in the order of the trolley passengers separated from each other by the bars of windows, then the alienation among the individuals in the congested street crowd is explicitly emotional, imprinted in the looks on their faces. The second image allows us to see the Trolley in the larger context of the human condition and the existing and imagined barriers between people which Frank acknowledged early in his career with images such as the series documenting life on the streets of London.

The ability of *The Americans'* photographs to transcend their exclusively American context through their order in the book is further illustrated by the linking of the portrait of the black preacher, kneeling by the Mississippi River in *Mississippi River, Baton Rouge, Louisiana*, 1955 (fig.3), with the following image of *St. Francis, Gas Station and City Hall—Los Angeles*, 1956 (fig.4), and finally with the dramatic shaft of light illuminating three crosses in *Three Crosses on Scene of Highway Accident U.S. 91, Idaho*, 1956 (fig.5). The American context of the highway, the Los Angeles street, and the Mississippi River does not diminish the universality of the questions religion raises in our lives, which Frank had addressed earlier in his images from Spain, such as Iron/ Malaga, 1952. Another particularly striking pair is *Covered Car—Long Beach, California*, 1956 (fig.6) and *Car Accident—U.S. 66, between*

Winslow and Flagstaff, Arizona, 1956 (fig.7). The first photograph alone can be looked at in the context of consumerism and a fixation with material wealth because of the setting, and the shiny, luxurious feel of the illuminated cover on the car. The formal repetition in the composition of the following image creates a more dramatic context for the car which as an object of consumerist culture, turns into an instrument of death. The human tragedy of the second image complicates the initially obvious reading of the preceding image. The artist's choices—how to frame the images, which images to keep, which to reject, and how to arrange them in a cohesive whole—reflect Frank's belief in the importance of the artistic sensibility for the achievement of a powerful impact using the photographic medium.

In his 1985 movie *Home Improvements*, Frank states that "I am always looking outside, trying to look inside, trying to say something that's true, but maybe nothing is really true. Except what's out there. And what's out there is constantly changing" (323). This statement reveals the essence of *The Americans* as "looking inside…what's out there" and trying to record a personal reaction, a personal truth about it; but it also acknowledges the multiple possibilities for the interpretation of the truth. The relationships between the photographs in the sequence and the relationships between the subjects within the pictorial space of Frank's images bridge the particular and the universal, and allow for such multiple interpretations of the truth. And whereas critics at the time had seen Frank's images as carrying a single message of distrust, criticism and denial, these accusations have had no permanent resonance in the serious art scene. The established photographers of the day praised Frank for his extraordinary achievement and curators honored him with exhibitions. "Younger people…embraced the book with a cultlike following" and "photographers in Washington, D.C., in the 1960s made respectful pilgrimages to the library of Congress to study *The Americans*, which was then almost impossible to obtain" (Paul Richard, 316).

Work Cited

Greenough, Sarah. *Looking in: Robert Frank's The Americans (expanded edition)* with contributing essays by Stuart Alexander, Philip Brookman, Michel Frizot, Martin Gasser, Jeff. L. Rosenheim, Luc Sante, and Anne Wilkes Tucker. Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 2009, published in association with Steidl, Germany.

Images

Fig.1 Robert Frank, *Trolley – New Orleans*, 1955

Fig. 2 Robert Frank, *Canal Street—New Orleans,* 1955

Fig. 3 Robert Frank, *Mississippi River, Baton Rouge, Louisiana,* **1955**

Fig.4 Robert Frank, *St.Francis, Gas Station and City Hall—Los Angeles,* **1956**

Fig.5 Robert Frank, *Three Crosses on Scene of Highway Accident—U.S. 91, Idaho,* **1956**

Fig 6. Robert Frank, *Covered Car—Long Beach, California*, **1956**

Fig. 7 Robert Frank, *Car Accident—U.S. 66, between Winslow and Flagstaff, Arizona*, 1956.

Love's Story

Christina Marini

"…And they lived happily ever after." Your mother gently closes the big fairytale book, tucks in the corners of your freshly washed sheets and kisses you on your forehead. "I'll have that 'happily ever after' one day," you think to yourself. But what really happens after the perfect fairytale wedding? After vows have been exchanged and the last bit of cake has been devoured by some gluttonous great-aunt? Somehow, this fairytale formula has become a template for many of today's novels and movies that end with a wedding scene or an engagement between love-struck couples who have overcome some dilemma in their romantic relationship. For this reason, critics have questioned the source of this generic formula and its effect on the definition of love in a post-modern world.

Tying the knot between romantic love and marriage took decades of hard work. It wasn't until the 19th century that love served as the foundation for a happy marriage. This new norm resulted in a courtship period followed directly by marriage. In this sense, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* serves as a groundbreaking literary work. From an historical standpoint, *Pride and Prejudice* was one of the first texts to openly illustrate this connection between love and marriage, and has become a template for the "happily ever after" we continue to dream about.

This essay attempts an analysis of love through a variety of texts as a way of assessing the origin of the fairytale formula and its embodiment in today's society. Each of its three sections is a dialogue between a central text or texts and other relevant works: ***Part 1*** centers on Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; ***Part 2*** centers on Dubravka Ugresic's "Steffie Cvek in the Jaws of Life"; and ***Part 3*** focuses on selected poems by May Swenson and D.H. Lawrence.

Part 1: Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* has become a template for modern fiction because of the fundamental changes it made to the definition of romantic love. Although the general

plot of *Pride and Prejudice* may now seem trite, it was highly original for its time. The new focus on romantic love as necessary to happiness in marriage changed love's definition and reflected a gender difference in the idea of love. Austen highlights the tendency for love to be a woman's concern especially since her text is written from a female's point of view. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (Austen 1). This opening line is highly ironic with regard to the context in which Austen is writing. Her text revolves around women who are looking for love and marriage. A woman is now solely preoccupied with love and how to fabricate her own happy ending. If love is the main ingredient for marriage, security, and the opportunity to have children, she will take the matter much more seriously.

Austen's contemporary Stendhal illustrates this female fascination with love as well. Although Stendhal chooses to focus on the emotions behind love rather than on a specific relationship or courtship, it is interesting to apply his ideas about emotions to the social norm he chooses to disregard. In his text *On Love*, he admits that female preoccupation with love is directly related to the same courtship process that Austen illustrates in *Pride and Prejudice*. "Ninety-five per cent of her daydreams are about love, and from the moment of intimacy they revolve about one single theme: she endeavors to justify the extraordinary and decisive step she has taken in defiance of all her habits of modesty. A man has no such concern, but a woman's imagination dwells reminiscently on every enchanting detail" (Stendhal 138). Because love is now the foundation for marriage, women are naturally going to "daydream" about all aspects of love and intimacy. Austen's choice to have the female protagonist narrate the novel is a brilliant literary technique used to convey this reality on multiple levels.

Stendhal also asserts that a woman's power comes from love. Each woman ultimately has the power to give herself to a particular man, but once she does, she becomes vulnerable because she loses her power. "Since love casts doubt upon what seemed proven before, the woman who was certain, before intimacy, that her lover was entirely above vulgar promiscuity, no sooner remembers that she has nothing left to refuse him than she trembles lest he has merely been adding another conquest to his list" (Stendhal 138). This fear accounts for women's preoccupation with love and underlines Victorian courtship.

Austen's fictional women clearly fit into Stendhal's paradigm because of the pressures

of courtship that ends in marriage. Although we don't venture into Lydia's mind, readers are aware of the negative social consequences possible if Wickham doesn't agree to marry her. Lydia loses both her power and virginity to Wickham simultaneously. The fear that consumes her family is, in Austen's opinion, a displacement of the fear Lydia should have been feeling for herself. Lydia was perhaps too naïve to admit to the fear that Stendhal asserts in his writings, but as a woman of the courtship era, she should have been afraid for her own reputation, as well as her family's good name. Because she has lost her virginity, her value as a love object has greatly depreciated. Love's new significance as an important ingredient for a successful marriage would have left Lydia to die an old maid.

Austen's characterization of her protagonist also contributes to the change of love's former definition. Elizabeth Bennet is one of the first intelligent, outgoing, and witty literary heroines; she is feminine without being passive and ignorant. Elizabeth challenges Mr. Darcy with a totally new kind of relationship. "I have therefore made up my mind to tell you, that I do not want to dance a reel at all—and now despise me if you dare" (Austen 38). Elizabeth acts as a foil to Mr. Darcy's aloof and mysteriously dark nature: Elizabeth compensates for his seeming lack of character with her outgoing personality and ambitious nature. She changes him for the better and in return he overlooks her family's reputation and lack of good fortune. Love is therefore defined by its transformative ability. Through love, women have the power to change a man for the better. In return, he will promise to marry her, support her, and give her the fairytale ending most women desire.

Cosmopolitan's 1960s article by Barbara Bross and Jay Gilbey "How to Love like a Real Woman" exaggerates Austen's portrayal of the lovely Elizabeth Bennet in order to provide its female readers with both a philosophy to live by and a way to insure the presence of a man in their lives:

> A woman's strength lies in her ability to give without taking. She gives men rest and strength and tranquility because she gives them an antidote to the dog-eats-dog world in which they earn their living. For, when they come home, they can stop thinking in terms of what's-in-it-for-me. And – miracle of miracles – she will find how even the most selfish man is magically cleansed of his selfishness if he lives with a woman who is wholly unselfish. Far from taking advantage of her, he will become transformed into a human being who can also give without asking for

anything in return. (63)

Crediting a woman's love with transformative power based on an unselfish nature mirrors the power of Elizabeth's love for the once conceited Mr. Darcy. "Such a change in a man of so much pride, excited not only astonishment but gratitude—for to love, ardent love, it must be attributed…" (Austen 197). Elizabeth's giving nature and personality has won her the heart of the proudest man in the novel. In return for his moral uplifting, Mr. Darcy overlooks Elizabeth's shortcomings and decides to love her. *Cosmopolitan*'s spin on Austen's idea is one example of how *Pride and Prejudice* has come to serve as the fairytale foundation for many women today.

Ironically, "How to Love like a Real Woman" ardently clings to a Victorian ideal at the heart of the 20th century feminist movement; it encourages resistance to change, and draws upon "happy ending" classics such as *Pride and Prejudice* to promote the modern usage of old ideals. "I say to women: Don't become a man in skirts. Don't fight. Don't argue. You are the stronger sex because he feels he must constantly prove his superiority. Whereas you need not prove anything. It is enough that you are there…quiet…unshakable…always ready to give. That is your strength" (63). This excerpt praises Elizabeth Bennet's refined characteristics as a Victorian heroine. She challenges Darcy, but she never argues with him; she uses wit and charm for her defense against enemies such as Miss Bingley. Her refinement is praised in an attempt to quiet the radical feminists.

Refinement and modesty are prominent characteristics in the women we are meant to idealize in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Lizzy and Jane are the two characters in particular that Austen clearly wants her readers to hold in high regard by the end of the novel; after all they both receive a happy ending and a husband. Creating this parallel, Austen promotes an air of modesty regarding a woman's position in love which, in accordance with the Victorian ideal, includes a woman's refinement. Yes, love is a woman's battlefield, and her beloved is a complicated text that she must delicately decode; however, she must proceed with tasteful refinement. Both Elizabeth and Jane do not outwardly show their interest in Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley respectively until the men show interest first.

This complication is clearly enacted in Jane's ongoing drama with Mr. Bingley; she

is characterized by her timid nature and reserved emotion. Both of these elements contribute to her beauty that makes her desirable. Mr. Darcy, however, admits that Jane's lack of emotion and display of partiality towards Mr. Bingley causes him to disregard her interest. This misunderstanding accounts for a great part of the novel's plot. In the end however, Jane is rewarded for her feminine modesty. "Jane could have no reserves from Elizabeth, where confidence would give pleasure; and instantly embracing her, acknowledged, with the liveliest emotion that she was the happiest creature in the world" (Austen 258). It is only after Mr. Bingley's proposal that Jane shows the full range of her emotion.

Robin Norwood's *Women Who Love Too Much* depicts women who lack the feminine refinement of Lizzy and Jane. Number five on Norwood's list that identifies behaviors of women who love too much echoes Austen's writing. "Almost nothing is too much trouble, takes too much time, or is too expensive if it will 'help' the man you are involved with" (Norwood 19). This category describes women who go out of their way for men without setting any limits or boundaries for themselves. Norwood's examples include buying a man clothes to improve his self-image; financing a man's expensive hobbies to promote better usage of his time; and finding a man a job. All of these gestures, however, are self-serving. Rather than helping the man out of love, women are simply trying to mold him into a being they deem suitable.

These examples break Austen's modesty and refinement rules. They also contradict the positive transformative power of love that Austen illustrates in Lizzy's and Mr. Darcy's relationship. In Norwood's examples, "loving too much" means loving for selfish reasons. Although Norwood's work is of a very different nature, it is interesting to find similarities in context between such writing and classics like *Pride and Prejudice*. Norwood's 20th century self-help book is one of the many examples in which elements of love's definition in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* have been manipulated to reinforce a traditional view of women's role in romance.

Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* altered the definition of love by depicting it as a significant variable regarding happiness in marriage. Austen's characterization of Elizabeth Bennet as both protagonist and narrator of the work sculpts a new type of heroine who is valued for her witty and reserved nature. Elizabeth Bennet has therefore become a model for all women to follow if they desire to live "happily ever after." These changes in the definition

of romantic love and their new importance for marriage have been reinterpreted by modern thinkers and writers to fit the needs of society or personal agendas.

Part 2: "Steffie Cvek in the Jaws of Life," Dubravka Ugresic

Ugresic's 21st century novella "Steffie Cvek in the Jaws of Life" is a satirical response to the template Austen creates in *Pride and Prejudice*. Ugresic questions the fairytale syndrome of romantic literature and its impact on women in society. Love's definition, rather than being modified or reinstated, is actually called into question all together. Ugresic uses Steffie's experience to illustrate the confusion created by the discrepancy between this utopian literary fairytale and actual reality. Ugresic ultimately claims that this wide gap between the "happily ever after" and real life causes women to become passive subjects like Steffie who don't know who they are, or what they want out of love. Ugresic's symbolic reference to the accounts of many troubled women in love as the material for her writing emphasizes her attempt to make a statement about women in general. "Patchwork quilt, patchwork shirt, patchwork skirt—no matter what the garment, patchwork is universal, democratic" (10).

Ugresic's satirical tone is most clearly illustrated in her section titled, "Topstitching by the Author." "Topstitching" is a term that refers to the particular sewing technique used on a garment's edges or hems. It helps the article of clothing stay together and also gives it a decorative flare. It isn't unusual for topstitching to be done in a fancier thread and is usually referred to as a decorative touch. Ugresic creates a comparison between a seamstress's topstitching on a garment and an author's ending to a typical romance novel. Both are intended to create an appearance that is pleasing to the eye and that neatly wraps up loose ends. Ugresic writes the happy ending of a typical romance novel for Steffie but counteracts this idea with her own version of reality, "That's how I'd have happyended you, Steffie dear, if I were a real writer. But I'm afraid I'm one of those pitiless 'true to life' writers. Or worse. I have to keep sewing, Steffie, your loose ends can't be tied up just yet. I'm so sorry, but don't worry, we'll soon get to the end of your story—when I put down my needle and thread after all, you will have the most beautiful dress at the ball" (Ugresic 51)! Ugresic is not about to let poor Steffie get off that easily because real life is not a fairytale.

The striking similarities in plot between Ugresic's hypothetical "happy ending" and

Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* serve as evidence for Ugresic's satirical tone regarding the definition of love from romance literature. Although Austen's novel is a literary classic, elements from its plot have been extracted and exaggerated in order to provide a basis for an entirely new genre. The widespread popularity of this romance genre is precisely what Ugresic is mocking and questioning. The fictional producer Steffie falls in love with at Mallorca is similar in character to Mr. Darcy. The manner in which Steffie approaches him also echoes Elizabeth's Victorian refinement and charm as well. "He is divine, simple and indescribably divine, dear Steffie, and you have no choice but to fall in love with him at first sight. He is handsome, gentle, thoughtful, intelligent, though somewhat subdued. You notice that right away, of course, but you don't want to ask him what's troubling him. You are afraid" (Ugresic 47). Steffie approaches him with the same modesty we have seen in Jane and Elizabeth Bennet. Of course, the short vignette also ends in a marriage which constitutes a "happily ever after."

Rosalind Coward's excerpt from *Female Desires* is a critique of popular romance from a scholarly point of view. Although the nature of their works is quite different, Ugresic and Coward hold a similar viewpoint regarding popular romance and its origin from classic novels such as *Pride and Prejudice*. "The qualities which make these men so desirable are, actually, the qualities which feminists have chosen to ridicule: power (the desire to dominate others); privilege (the exploitation of others); emotional distance (the inability to communicate); and singular love for the heroine (the inability to relate to anyone other than the sexual partner)" (Coward 190). Mr. Darcy and the fictional male from Ugresic's hypothetical "topstitching" both demonstrate these characteristics. Mr. Darcy's emotional distance and inability to relate to anyone but Elizabeth is perhaps what makes him so appealing to thousands of female readers. The fictional filmmaker is clearly intelligent, privileged, and powerful. Both Ugresic and Coward make the claim that these desirable male characteristics in romantic fictions are the same qualities that oppress women in a patriarchal society. Could it be that women's adoration of such a romantic ideal ironically fuels their own oppression? Ugresic manages to get her readers to think about this possibility, but does not provide an answer.

Coward's critique also makes the observation that romance fiction never questions love itself. Literature in this genre will only question the misperceptions that stand in love's way. "The obstacles come from the outside, from material circumstances or misunderstandings. The

work of the narrative is to remove these misunderstandings and obstacles, one by one" (Coward 190). The obstacles Steffie encounters are of a different nature. Steffie's troubles come from her insecurities about herself and love. The obstacles that stand in her way are her depression and her confusion about the nature of love itself. Ugresic uses domestic pieces of advice before each chapter as a way to convey her satirical tone regarding the protagonist's dilemma. Clearly, none of these formulaic tidbits will help poor Steffie. "You've been careless and sat on the grass in light clothes. Don't worry, you can get those stains out! Dissolve a little rubbing alcohol in some bottled water and dab lightly" (Ugresic 31). Steffie's issues are deeply-rooted within her existence. No amount of rubbing alcohol can eliminate her "stains."

In Ugresic's opinion, the modern split in literature between romance fiction and female fiction has caused women to become "happyended" or never to find what they are searching for. She demonstrates this idea through her characterizations of Emancipated Ela and Marianna. Emancipated Ela, as a representation of female fiction heroines, never finds exactly what she is looking for. She is compared to the wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* with vicious teeth that rip men apart. Marianna's advice to Steffie, however, is meant to symbolize the romance fiction genre: "…maybe I've got a one-track mind, but a guy's the most important thing in a girl's life" (Ugresic 20). Ugresic does not portray Ela or Marianna in a positive light. In doing so, Ugresic attempts to reject love's definition from both genres and to create her own. This third genre is intended to supply her readers with a new definition of love that avoids both extremes. "All this relentless stitching made it possible to affix a third genre, one with a similar story line. Which *fairy tales* she had in mind her readers can see for themselves" (Ugresic 101). Ugresic urges her female readers to interpret love's definition on their own without clinging to a feminist or romantic point of view.

Ugresic clearly raises many questions regarding the definition of love and its role in romantic and female fiction. As an author, she proposes the idea that women's adoration of romance fiction and the "happily ever after" syndrome may contribute to their own oppression in a patriarchal society. Steffie's encounters with the truck driver, the "He-Man," and the Intellectual are all far from functional, and depict the protagonist as a passive-oppressed female. Although the author raises these touchy questions and their relation to the way love is defined by society, she fails to answer them.

Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex* attempts to give clear-cut answers to the questions Ugresic poses regarding the definition of love. Firestone makes the claim that Ugresic provokes her readers to think that "a book on radical feminism that did not deal with love would be a political failure. For love, perhaps even more than childbearing, is the pivot of women's oppression today" (Firestone 247). Firestone supports the idea that love is a cornerstone of women's oppression due to the patriarchal culture we subscribe to. Because of the way love has been gendered, a woman's sole purpose is to fall in love, get married, and have children. These goals must be put before all others, therefore stopping her from contributing to society in other ways. "Men were thinking, writing, and creating, because women were pouring their energy into those men; women are not creating culture because they are preoccupied with love" (Firestone 248).

Gender roles in love can be traced back to Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Austen's depiction of love as an important factor in marriage helped create the gender gap we see in love today. This irony further illustrates Ugresic's "Steffie Cvek in the Jaws of Life" as a satirical representation of works such as Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Making such comparisons allows readers to view Ugresic's work as an attempt to question love's definition in contemporary culture because of love's foundation in yesterday's ideals.

Part 3: "Because I Don't Know" and "Neither Wanting More," May Swenson;

"The Mess of Love," D. H. Lawrence

These selected poems by D.H. Lawrence and May Swenson depict the mess we have made of love by intellectualizing its nature and its relationship to marriage, and, at the same time, applaud love's ambiguity and mystery. They question the need to define love, and they reflect the changes in romantic love's definition that date back to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. They even propose the idea that the modern definition of love is based on a cultural illusion.

May Swenson's "Because I Don't Know," is not a satire like Ugresic's novella; however, it does make an honest point about love. If you think about love itself as an allegorical subject of Swenson's poem, her writing takes on an entirely new meaning:

> You've become a dream of ripe
> raspberries, in summer country: deep, dark

red lips, clean, gleaming generous smile.
Who owns you? I don't know. I'll hide you
away in my dream file. Stay there. Don't
change. I don't know you – and had better
not. Because I don't know you, I love you. (75)

Love is being compared to a dream. The lack of knowledge about this dream makes it much more intriguing in the speaker's mind. The speaker asks love to stay undefined in her own dream file. Swenson's assertions cause readers to question what would happen if we did know everything about love. What would happen if there was a general consensus regarding the definition of love in society? Would love lose its romantic and mysterious appeal? Would passion and romance become extinct ingredients of love's definition? These questions provoke feelings in the reader that promote the passion and ambiguity involved in romantic love.

Swenson's "Neither Wanting More" conveys a similar theme. This poem challenges the reader to take an intellectual step away from the phenomenon of love. Its speaker asks the reader to stop thinking about love and start feeling it: "Neither wanting more/Neither asking why" (74). The language of her poem is sensual and descriptive. Her constant reference to bodies, touching and holding, is meant to provoke the reader to feel the emotions. "Neither Wanting More" in conjunction with "Because I Don't Know" critique how society's quest to define love has actually taken away from its meaning. This quest can be dated back to Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* which openly "ties the knot" between love and marriage. According to Swenson, love's established role in a social institution has taken away from the mystery and ambiguity of its emotional essence.

"The Mess of Love" is D.H. Lawrence's response to the modern definition of love as well. Lawrence also notes the separation of passion from love that Swenson illustrates in her poetry. The intellectual attempt to turn love into something logical has served to ruin its beauty:

The moment the mind interferes with love, or the will
        fixes on it,
or the personality assumes it as an attribute, or the ego
        takes possession of it,
it is not love any more, it's just a mess.
And we've made a great mess of love, mind-perverted, will-
        perverted, ego-perverted love. (472)

Lawrence dates this problem at least back to the time of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* when the link between love and marriage was solidified. Since Austen's time, society has idealized love because of its key role in marriage. This link puts pressure on people to fall in love in order to get married and climb the normative steps of life. Such pressure takes away from love's delicate nature and place in one's heart.

Stevi Jackson's "Even Sociologists Fall in Love: An Exploration in the Sociology of Emotions" makes the same argument, but in a less artistic manner. According to Jackson, the institutionalization of love in marriage and family life has become an integral part of the definition of romantic love. Thus, love actually has become a part of the social order. "Far from being just a personal, private phenomenon, love is very much a part of our public culture. We are surrounded by representations of love in what is deemed 'great' art and literature as well as in soap opera, popular music and fiction and advertising. The pervasiveness of love as a representational theme is related to its institutionalization in marriage and family life" (Jackson 202). Love is now defined as a culturally constructed emotion rather than as a strictly individual experience. The subjectivity involved with love comes from an individual's inner personality as well as one's social role and gender. Swenson's and Lawrence's poetry highlight the diminished emotional component in love's definition because of its tie to marriage. Jackson asserts that the emotion associated with love today is socially constructed because of this same bond between love and marriage. From a sociologist's point of view, our emotions are a product of our culture, thus causing love to be a socially scripted experience.

Jackson's work as a sociologist raises questions similar to those posed in Lawrence's and Swenson's poetry; however, the nature of their writing is entirely different. These poets argue that love should not be intellectualized. Love's mysterious power and passion are emotions that must be felt and not analyzed in academic or philosophical essays. Jackson's writing on love, although similar in argument, is one of the sources Lawrence would credit with "making a mess out of love." Jackson discusses love's definition in great detail, as well as the difference between love and "being in love." He admits that all we can know about love as an experience comes from literature. "There is thus no way of exploring love except through the ways in which it is talked and written about" (Jackson 207). Lawrence and Swenson

would agree with the limitations Jackson acknowledges, but they would also politely ask him to refrain from doing so. All of the discourses discussed in this essay together attempt to fabricate Love's story—a story that continues to be written and written about.

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The Leadership Problem at Jamestown

Kyle Blackmer

The early struggles of the English colony at Jamestown have been well described in both primary and secondary sources. For various reasons, including troubled relations with the Indians, limited supplies, and high mortality rates from disease and malnutrition, the settlement fell far short of achieving its goal of profit. All of these factors were hindrances to the prosperity of Jamestown, but no one of them was fully responsible for the colony's early failures. Rather, these problems were magnified, and sometimes caused by Jamestown's main shortcoming: ineffective leadership. This lack of competent leadership and a disciplined governmental structure crippled the colony and nearly caused it to be abandoned on several occasions. The struggles of incompetent leaders and the critical flaws of more capable ones often put the colony at great risk.

In order to understand the problems of Jamestown's leadership, it is helpful to recognize its initial obstacles. Perhaps the greatest setbacks for the settlement originated even before the colonists had landed. English expectations of the New World proved to be far from accurate, and many of the settlers' goals were based on pure speculation. Many settlers expected to arrive in a land sparsely inhabited by completely savage beings with no sense of civilization. The English planned on taking advantage of these awestruck natives whom they believed to have had no previous contact with Europeans, and who would forfeit their land and sovereignty immediately. English agricultural ambitions were much too lofty as well, as the settlers believed that the latitude of Virginia created a Mediterranean climate that would yield crops such as olives, figs, and oranges. And myths about a Northwest Passage and great gold mines distracted settlers who were focused on exploration and discovery for instant profit.[1]

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1 Richard Hakluyt (the younger) "Discourse of Western Planting," in *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580-1640*, ed. Peter C. Mancall (Boston: Bedford Books, 1995), 48-52.

Richard R. Beeman states that these unrealistic goals of quick success were unreasonable in Virginia, but he also cites leadership and labor as the major sources of Jamestown's crisis. Although his article, "Labor Forces and Race Relations: A Comparative View of the Colonization of Brazil and Virginia" does not focus exclusively on Jamestown, it does provide interesting insights into the problems of the English in their North American settlement. Beeman mentions that the first mistake the English made was to trust a private company to organize the colony. This is problematic, however, because the British used similar if not identical models elsewhere with great success.[2]

That being the case, Beeman looks instead at the character of Jamestown's laborers as a possible source of the problem. According to Beeman, the English were hardly suited for the difficult manual labor needed to establish a colony in the wilderness of Virginia. They were more concerned with looking for gold or passages to the Pacific than they were with producing the means of survival. Beeman blames this "underemployment" on a "surplus of derelicts and idle noblemen." This was the result of two things: the continued habit of poor labor quality in England, and the lack of motivation present in the communal system of Jamestown. Beeman claims that workers were lazy because they lacked individual incentive and reward.[3]

This was not only a problem for the laborers, but also an obstacle for the colony's early leaders. As Karen Ordahl Kupperman correctly states in her book *The Jamestown Project*, nearly all of the leaders of the settlement were military men, chosen for their ability to organize and instruct soldiers. This presented a dilemma, however, as the settlers whom they were to lead were not soldiers. The leaders' militaristic and regimental organization was not effective in motivating the settlers, most of whom were either degenerates forced to travel to America or rich nobles with desires of becoming wealthier; both of these groups were unaccustomed to manual labor.[4]

The English would quickly pay for their ignorance and arrogance in underestimating the natives as well. During the settlers' first night in the New World, they were attacked by

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2 Richard R. Beeman, "Labor Forces and Race Relations: A Comparative View of the Colonization of Brazil and Virginia," *Political Science Quarterly*. 86 (1971): 609.
3 Richard R. Beeman, "Labor Forces and Race Relations," 629.
4 Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 8.

a group of Indians and several of the colonists were wounded. Clearly, the native warriors were not going to kneel before their English counterparts without a fight. Furthermore, the Powhatan civilization was far from the simple savagery that the English imagined. In his *The Generall Historie of Virginia*, Captain John Smith gives a detailed account of the complex native: "There is yet in Virginia no place discovered to be so Savage, in which they have not a Religion, Deere, and Bow, and Arrowes." The natives had not only religion, but also effective techniques of warfare and agriculture.[5]

Other false expectations also proved harmful to the English. The colony wasted a great amount of time and resources on poor agricultural practices and futile exploratory missions. Not only was the climate of Virginia badly suited for many of the products that Hakluyt suggested, but also the land on which Jamestown was established was swampy and terrible for agriculture in general. This poor choice of location and the time and money wasted because of the settlers' incorrect assumptions led to a great lack in supplies and food.[6]

Kupperman focuses on how these circumstances led to a cycle of psychological and labor issues among the settlers in her article "Apathy and Death in Early Jamestown." She states that starvation was the main killer of the colonists; out of six thousand people who traveled to Jamestown between 1607 and 1624, only twelve hundred survived until 1625. But many documents exist portraying the "idleness" of the settlers; why would people facing starvation do nothing to save themselves? This, Kupperman claims, was a psychological issue among the settlers. The people of Jamestown were dying because they were lazy and apathetic; almost all of them suffered from malnutrition. Anorexia caused many to lose their appetite and to become lethargic, sore, and bedridden. This became a cycle as the settlers became more and more malnourished since no one was growing food. Although Kupperman states that this indifference could have been "overcome by forced activity," the colony often lacked the leadership to help the people overcome their psychological obstacles. Thus, Kupperman blames not only the psychological state of the settlers, but also the absence of assertive leadership within the colony.[7]

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5 Captain John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*, in *Captain John Smith: Writings With Other Narratives of Roanoke, Jamestown, and the First English Settlement of America*, ed. James Horn (New York: Library Classics of the United States, Inc. 2007), 291.

6 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America* (New York, 2005), 56.

7 Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Apathy and Death in Early Jamestown," *The Journal of American History*, 66 (1979): 24-40.

In "The Labor Problem at Jamestown, 1607-18," Edmund S. Morgan tries to answer many questions about labor patterns in early Jamestown. Morgan alludes to the fact that while strong leadership maintained order within the colony, labor was not an issue. He specifically mentions Captain John Smith, Gates, and De La Warr as men who took command and provided stability for short periods of time. While Smith was one of the initial settlers and leaders of Jamestown, Gates and De La Warr were military men sent to rescue the colony after Smith departed in October 1609.[8]

Though these men were able to create short-term success, Morgan states that Sir Thomas Dale was able to establish a more lasting stage of prosperity, "By enlarging and enforcing the colony's new law code" known as the "Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martiall." This adherence to the new law may have played a major role in changing the pattern of Jamestown's success, but codes of law had been implemented before, and furthermore, these new "Lawes" were primarily focused on making sure that the settlers lived piously and attended church twice a day. Dale did, however, enforce stricter laws in terms of the demeanor of the settlers and their obedience and attitude toward authority. This may have led to greater respect for the leadership, but laws had been made before and leaders such as Smith had been respected. Additionally, workers were laboring for about the same amount of time each day as they had in the past. Settlers worked for less than eight hours in the summer and less than six in the winter. Morgan attributes much of the colony's struggles to an undisciplined and unmotivated labor base, but his article raises more questions than it answers regarding the failures of early Jamestown.[9]

Andrew Fitzmaurice gives arguably the most useful description of the leadership issues in Jamestown in his article "The Civic Solution to the Crisis of English Colonization: 1609-1625." Fitzmaurice's opinions about Jamestown's problems are similar to Beeman's views. Fitzmaurice claims that the struggles of Jamestown were due to the individualistic nature of the Elizabethan era settlers and leaders. The unwillingness of all parties involved in the settlement to come together to work for the common good, and their preoccupations with petty individual goals were what caused so many problems in Jamestown to be exacerbated.

8 Edmund S. Morgan, "The Labor Problem at Jamestown, 1607-18," *The American Historical Review*, 76 (1971): 595-611.
9 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It*, 181; Edmund S. Morgan, "The Labor Problem at Jamestown," 595-611.

This is comparable to Beeman's claim that the settlers before 1609 didn't work hard because they were greedy and had no incentive. Fitzmaurice states correctly that the fortunes of the colony did not truly change until after the Virginia Company was deposed and replaced by the British government.[10]

Each of these historians offers an important critique of Jamestown's early leadership. Pieces of the arguments of Beeman, Kupperman, Morgan, and Fitzmaurice together create a strong narrative of the settlement's leaders' problems, and provide a clearer idea of how and when these issues were resolved. Overall, the leaders' unrealistic goals and false expectations put them at an immediate disadvantage. Their inability to motivate and discipline the greedy and lazy settlers effectively led to a cycle of lost and wasted money, limited supplies, malnutrition, and high mortality rates.

The process of establishing a prosperous colony was clearly a long and complicated one. The seven-man council appointed by the Virginia Company to govern the colony was a weak start. This entity did not command the central power and authority necessary to overcome the colony's problems. Not only was the structure of this leadership inadequate, but also several of the council's members were either unfit to lead or possessed fatal character flaws.

Captain Christopher Newport was one of the first leaders of the colony. Overall, Newport did little good for the colony. Several major failures on his part contributed greatly to Jamestown's early struggles. Newport was one of the worst culprits who pursued unrealistic goals and focused on short term advancements. Newport was an advocate of explorations in search of gold mines and a Northwest Passage. This mentality not only wasted large amounts of resources, but also impacted relations with the Indians. John Smith recounted an instance when Newport's goals put trade relations in danger by giving the natives too much in exchange for any information on gold mines. Newport's focus on short-term goals led to great loss for the settlement and his inability to lead caused many problems for Jamestown.[11]

Edward Maria Wingfield was another original member of the council and also a weak leader. Wingfield was the first President of Jamestown; his only additional power was

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10 Andrew Fitzmaurice, "The Civic Solution to the Crisis of English Colonization: 1609-1626," *The Historical Journal*, 42 (1990): 26.
11 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It*, 112-113.

the deciding vote on any issues on which the council was split. Wingfield was guilty of poor planning and improperly rationed the supplies of the colony while Newport was on a voyage to boost the colony's store. During a time of great famine and starvation in the colony, Wingfield was a corrupt leader who hoarded food from the settlers. In his own "Discourse," Wingfield tried to justify his actions, but eventually the council relieved Wingfield of his post and had him imprisoned.[12]

The next noteworthy leader was a much more qualified one who brought the colony greater fortunes. Captain John Smith became one of the most significant and successful leaders of Jamestown. Although he wasn't born into a noble family, Smith achieved high rank and great fame through his distinguished military service and heroic exploits. This separated him from the other leaders of the colony, who earned their power largely based on nobility, and several of them despised him for it.[13]

Smith held several positions in the colony before earning the honor of the presidency; arguably, the most critical of these posts was that of Cape Merchant. While occupying this position, Smith's responsibility was to negotiate trade with the Indians. Ultimately, because the settlers had not successfully established their agriculture, it was Smith's duty to provide the colony with food. On one occasion while trading in Kecoughtan, Smith acquired over forty bushels of corn nearly single-handedly, and brought them to the desperate settlement. "With sixteen bushells of Corne I returned towards our Forte: by the way I encountred with two Canowes of Indians," who traded to him "near thirtie bushells." This lifesaving feat demonstrates Smith's skill in negotiation and trade with the Indians.[14]

Smith's leadership was also enhanced by his knowledge of the land in Virginia gained from his extensive travel which was probably greater than that of all the other leaders combined. This is evidenced by the many maps he created over the course of his ventures, and by his accounts in *The Generall Historie of Virginia.* Smith's knowledge of the land and the

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12 Edward Maria Wingfield, "A Discourse of Virginia," in *Captain John Smith: Writings With Other Narratives of Roanoke, Jamestown, and the First English Settlement of America*, ed. James Horn (New York: Library Classics of the United States, Inc. 2007), 962-965.
13 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It*, 35.
14 Captain John Smith, *A True Relation*, in *Captain John Smith: Writings With Other Narratives of Roanoke, Jamestown, and the First English Settlement of America*, ed. James Horn (New York: Library Classics of the United States, Inc. 2007), 9.

Indians was so great that he was able to collect invaluable details of Indian village populations. "The Paspaheghes…have not past 40. The river called Chickahamania near 250. The Weanocks 100. The Arrowhatocks 30. The place called Powhatan, some 40." This information could help the colony in numerous efforts including trade and defense against attacks.[15]

Smith was also a positive leader inside the walls of the fort. After Newport's departure, Smith set the colonists to work rebuilding and fortifying Jamestown. He led the men in clearing trees, rebuilding the store and church, and beginning the planting process. Smith was not only feeding the colony, but also teaching it to feed itself.[16]

Maybe one of the most important facts about Smith was not what he did, but what he refrained from doing. James Horn says it best in *A Land As God Made It*:

> Smith was a pragmatist. What was needed were not elaborate schemes to create another colony to the south or pious projects to convert the Indians to Christianity but rather sufficient men and resources to meet the military threat posed by the Powhatans.[17]

Smith did not focus on the empty promises of gold, lost colonists, a Northwest Passage, or civilizing Indians. Rather, he attempted to create a greater level of stability within the colony through trade, agriculture, and defense.

However, Smith had a critical flaw. He was easily the most capable and best leader the colony had had up to this point, but despite his many successes, he was hated by several other powerful figures in the settlement. Smith made enemies by opposing new settlements up river from Jamestown which he believed would create hostilities with the Indians. Leaders like Ratcliffe, Martin, and Archer, were against Smith, and even George Percy said that Smith was "unworthy," and that he wished "to take all Mens Authoreties from them." Overall, Smith's ambitions of maintaining his authority within the colony and his uncanny ability to make enemies of his colleagues led to his shortened tenure as Jamestown's leader.[18]

As a result of sustaining serious injuries and burns in October 1609 when his powder bag "accidentally" exploded while he was sleeping, Smith was forced to return to England to

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15 Captain John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia*, 68.
16 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It*, 81.
17 Ibid, 151.
18 Ibid, 168-169.

recover. His relation with Virginia was ended, and once again, the colony was left without strong leadership. The Virginia Company had sent men the likes of Lord de la Warr, Sir Thomas Gates, and Sir Thomas Dale to lead the colony out of its derelict state, but each man's voyage was delayed by many months. Jamestown had fallen so low after Smith's departure, that there were even rumors of cannibalism. Only a strict government and firm leadership could bring the settlement back from the brink of destruction.[19]

Just in time, de la Warr arrived in the Chesapeake Bay in June 1610 with supplies and reinforcements. De la Warr made quick changes to transform the colony into a militaristic operation. Settlers were organized into small groups in which they worked and ate at scheduled hours, and military men appointed by De la Warr led these militias. Lord de la Warr's term was shortened, however, when he fell ill and was forced to return to England.[20]

De la Warr's militaristic style of government was continued under the leadership of Sir Thomas Dale. A military man himself—he had fought alongside Gates in the Netherlands—Dale was accustomed to strict martial law, obedience, and authority. Although martial law was viewed in a very negative light in England, the desperation of the colony justified the constrictions of militaristic organization. Dale's "Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martiall" demanded changes in the demeanor of the settlers, their habits of idleness, and their respect for authority, and threatened severe punishments for those who disobeyed or broke the laws. As article 1.15 of the law states, "No man of what condition soever shall barter, trucke, or trade with the Indians, except he be thereunto appointed by lawful authority, upon paine of death." The severity of the punishment applied to the seemingly innocent act of trade shows the strictness of Dale's methods. Ralph Hamor claimed that this was necessary in his *True Discourse of the Present Estate of Virginia*. "Sir Thomas Dale hath not bin tyranous… Indeede the offences have bin capitall and the offenders dangerous, incurable members, for no use so fit as to make examples to others." Hamor clearly favored Dale's methods, but Smith had kept order and established prosperity without these harsh means.[21]

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19 Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 250-257.
20 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It*, 180-181.
21 Karen Ordahl Kupperman, The Jamestown Project, 257; William Strachey, comp., "The Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martiall" (London: 1612), http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/jamestown-browse?id=J1056 (accessed December 6, 2009); Ralph Hamor, *A True Discourse of the Present Estate of Virginia,* in *Captain John Smith: Writings With Other Narratives of Roanoke, Jamestown, and the First English Settlement of America,* ed. James Horn (New York: Library Classics of the United States, Inc. 2007), 1139.

Dale differed greatly from Smith in another way, for his militaristic nature did not restrict itself to his policies exhibited in the "Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martiall." Dale's relationship with the Indians was completely opposite to the way that Smith negotiated with Wahunsonacock. On one occasion, the Englishman Captain Samuel Argall took Pocahontas hostage and demanded the return of captured Englishmen and weapons from the Powhatans. When Wahunsonacock refused to negotiate, however, Dale acted by taking a small army to meet the great Powhatan, destroying villages, stealing corn, and slaughtering Indians on his way. This was how Dale handled quarrels with the Powhatans. The "indiscriminate killing" and method of total war that he employed set him far apart from Smith and would have devastating consequences when the Indians used similar tactics in 1622.[22]

Sir Dale's advocacy of creating additional settlements also proved detrimental. While Captain John Smith had prohibited the establishment of a settlement upriver, Dale supported it and proposed the building of centuries throughout the region. He even suggested a new capital be built fifty miles from Jamestown at Arrohattoc. This stance was also affected by his policy toward the Indians, because he wished to force Wahunsonacock further inland by dispersing the English across more land. Although the creation of more settlements allowed for greater production in terms of agriculture, it also created a widespread population that was difficult to defend from attacks by the Indians. The Powhatans took advantage of this vulnerability in 1622 when they killed one quarter of Virginia's settlers.[23]

It can be said that Dale's enforcement of martial law, his strict organization of labor, and the increase in agricultural production that resulted from his expansion of the colony, led to a much greater level of prosperity and stability than Virginia had ever experienced. But, even though he himself left the colony long before the Massacre of 1622, his actions and policies did great harm to the relationship between the English and the Indians. His wars and territorialism built up tensions that culminated in that great destruction of English lives and property.

Perhaps the task of establishing, organizing, and leading the Virginia colony was an unrealistic expectation for the Virginia Company and the men they chose to lead. Maybe

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22 James Horn, *A Land As God Made It*, 212-215, 260.
23 Ibid, 198; Edward Waterhouse, *A Declaration of the State of the Colonie and Affaires in Virginia* (London: 1622), 14-22.

Richard Beeman was right in his skepticism about the decision to allow a private company to run this venture. Clearly, there was no one man who was able to lead Jamestown to lasting peace and prosperity; that may have been asking too much. Even the most competent leaders were unable to live up to this task. Although Captain John Smith's leadership saved the colony from destruction on several occasions, he struggled to keep the support of his colleagues. And when Sir Thomas Dale demanded strict obedience and nearly authoritarian militarism that led to increased production and greater self-sufficiency, relations with the Indians plummeted. Through the years at Jamestown, it became apparent that no leader could maintain a prosperous stability.

The blame must then fall on the authority of the Virginia Company. While under the authority of the Virginia Company, Jamestown Colony never fulfilled its anticipated success. Virginia didn't meet its potential or gain stability until after the company was removed and authority was assumed by the British government. Although the problems that caused Jamestown's early failures were widespread, each problem was intensified by the reality that Jamestown's leaders were either seriously unfit or critically flawed. The problems of leadership created turmoil in Jamestown and led to the overall failure of the colony.

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Partners in Damnation

John Miller

In literature as in life, great leaders rarely work alone. For every king, there is an advisor; for every conqueror there is a lieutenant. In some texts, these characters serve merely as confidantes for the hero, but in other works these "second-in-command" personalities often exhibit great heroism or villainy in their own right, and stand alone as memorable and developed characters. At times they even stand in contrast to the hero, acting as a foil to highlight the hero's triumphs and flaws. The relationship between the hero and his lieutenant often illuminates much about the work's themes and character motivations.

This sentiment holds true for literature in which the hero is less than altruistic. In John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*, the hero is literally a fallen angel: Satan, the epitome of evil and sin. Though he spends most of the poem as a lone operator, the poem soon begins with a dialogue between Satan and Beelzebub, his first lieutenant. Though confined to a brief appearance, Beelzebub's role helps to reveal Satan's character and demonstrates his corrupting influence. Beelzebub is the agent through which Satan solidifies his hold over the demons of Hell, providing the illusion of democracy, while secretly carrying out Satan's master plan of action.

In Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* or, *the Whale*, we see a different relationship between the monomaniacal Captain Ahab and his reluctant first mate Starbuck. While Ahab is ready to forgo responsibility and reason in order to hunt the white whale that has crippled him, Starbuck is a moderating force who unsuccessfully attempts to persuade Ahab of a different course of action which would avoid destruction. While providing a noble contrast for the twisted soul of Ahab, Starbuck also struggles with his role as Ahab's lieutenant, torn between doing his duty for Ahab and doing his duty to the crew. Finally, his decisions make him complicit in the ship's ultimate destruction.

Though these captain/lieutenant relationships differ, they are common in their function and their duty. Not only do the lieutenants serve to accentuate the qualities of their

captains, giving insights into their inner character and motivations, but also Beelzebub and Starbuck each serve a monomaniacal captain intent on revenge against an unfathomable omnipotent force. Either by co-conspiracy or simple failure to act, both Beelzebub and Starbuck allow their respective captains to lead their charges to a disastrous conclusion.

In *Paradise Lost*, the first dialogue is between Satan and Beelzebub who are chained to a fiery lake in the midst of Hell. As characteristic of many epics, the story starts in the middle, beginning just after Satan has already lost the grand battle of Heaven. In his vain attempt to take God's throne, Satan has led a third of Heaven's angels to ruin. Though deep in despair, Satan has not lost his willpower or hatred of God, exclaiming that "We may with more successful hope resolve / To wage by force or guile eternal War (I. 120-1)." This desire to pick up the banner of war in another futile attempt illustrates Satan's character as a vengeful and unyielding personality who cares little for his soldiers. This narcissism and monomania betray him as a being of faulty and ultimately selfish reasoning.

Though he might have been content to rail against God in open warfare for all eternity, Beelzebub's response to Satan illuminates the futility of such actions. Beelzebub believes God to be "Almighty, since no less / Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as ours (I. 144-5)," bringing to light the shortsightedness of Satan's impulse to attack again. He even thinks God might have some other purpose in mind for them, either in punishment or in thralldom. Beelzebub's response already reveals much about both characters. Beelzebub is cast as the wiser and more deliberative of the two, and is exactly the sort of lieutenant that beings like Satan require. By contrast Satan is rash and vengeful, immediately considering another assault when experience has proven his force insufficient to combat the hosts of Heaven.

In response to Beelzebub, Satan adopts a more insidious plan of revenge. Chafing under the idea that God may have some larger role for the rebellious host, Satan resolves that "If then his Providence / Out of our evil seek to bring forth good, / Our labour must be to prevent that end, / and out of good still to find means of evil; (I. 162-5)." If direct revenge is impossible, Satan is comfortable with spite against God, which not only taxes the efforts of the fallen legion, but also yields no real reward. This change in tactic shows that Satan is not immune to reason, but also shows the grand extent of his vengeful nature and sense of pride.

Beelzebub is complicit in this idea, and later becomes an accomplice in Satan's efforts to convince the other fallen angels of his plan of action. The failure, or refusal, of Beelzebub to see the flaws in this line of logic suggests that the demon, despite his wiser temperament, does not function as a challenger to Satan, but instead is mostly an agent of Satan's machinations, speaking his piece but upholding his chief's goals and ambitions. Beelzebub acts less out of self-interest and more out of loyalty to Satan, a proper lieutenant. This belies the one-sidedness of their relationship; Satan would only pick a loyal subordinate like Beelzebub to be his second-in-command. Beelzebub is the ideal lackey to someone like Satan: useful for his persuasiveness and wise insight, but unswervingly loyal and willing to put Satan's desires above his own. Beelzebub's excessive use of honorifics such as "O Chief of many Throned Powers (I. 128)" and "Leader of those Armies Bright, (I. 272)" reinforces Beelzebub's subservient position.

In Book I of *Paradise Lost*, Beelzebub serves mainly as a contrast to Satan and as his confederate; however, in Book II, Beelzebub more fully inhabits his role as Satan's lieutenant during the debate. After Moloch and Belial deliver contradictory arguments about the best course of action, the fallen angel Mammon speaks out against both war and hoping for forgiveness, citing the futility of fighting God and the torment of continued subservience to God whom they hate. He argues for improving their lot in Hell, saying "We can create, and in what place soe'er / Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain / Through labour and endurance (II. 260-2)." This plan receives immediate applause from the assembled demons, appealing to their sense of greed and fear of retribution. However, such a course would deprive Satan of his revenge.

Therefore, Beelzebub rises to speak, condemning Mammon's plan as expanding the kingdom of God, since they are still under his yoke, in a sense building their own jeweled prison. He puts forth Satan's plan, proposing the corruption of God's works where possible, starting with the newly-created Earth. However, Milton acknowledges this as Satan's plan, saying "Thus Beelzebub / Pleaded his devilish Counsel, first devis'd / By Satan, and in part propos'd (II. 378-80)." Beelzebub is eagerly and perfectly serving his role as Satan's proxy in debate, using his invaluable gifts of persuasion to sway the legion of vengeful and forlorn fallen angels.

Satan's utter lack of participation in this "debate" process makes this democracy an illusion. Quite clearly, the dictatorial chieftain Satan, could enforce his plan of action just by announcing it. However, he goes through this farcical debate secretly using Beelzebub as his representative. His abstention suggests that he reviles this democratic process of debate and voting, refusing to level himself in rank to the other fallen angels by deceptively giving them equal voice. This would be consistent with his role as former archangel. Therefore, Beelzebub serves perfectly as Satan's confidante, to promote his interests in this quasi-Parliament of demons.

Through this speech, Beelzebub again builds his characterization as Satan's lieutenant in more than just title. He adopts the same logical reasoning that Satan does for their disobedience, and in fulfilling Satan's wishes in debate acts as an extension of Satan's will rather than as an autonomous individual. However, like Satan and the rest of the fallen angels, he makes the fundamental error of misjudging God's motives, projecting his own fears and paranoia upon the supreme Creator. Combined with the seductiveness of his "devilish" proposal, Beelzebub moves the plot forward by consciously promoting Satan's agenda, bringing all the legions of fallen angels under his captain's sway.

In contrast to Beelzebub's unquestioning loyalty, Herman Melville presents a different relationship between chieftain and lieutenant that ultimately achieves similar results in his whaling novel *Moby Dick*. Captain Ahab is presented as a monomaniacal leader who can think only of revenge, much like the Satan of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. His quest brings ruin to his entire crew, and his second-in-command is complicit in their destruction, aiding the mad designs of his superior rather than putting a stop to them.

His first mate Starbuck, however, is very different from Milton's Beelzebub. Lacking the demon's unquestioning loyalty, devious motives, and empty reasoning, Starbuck is described as "uncommonly conscientious for a seaman, and endowed with a deep natural reverence (124)." His thoughts of his wife and child temper any recklessness, and his refusal to work with sailors who are foolishly fearless shows wisdom beyond his thirty years of life. As a lieutenant, his disdain for foolish risks makes him a valuable officer. "For, thought Starbuck, I am here…to kill whales for my living, and not to be killed by them for theirs; and that hundreds of men had been so killed Starbuck well knew (125)." Unlike Beelzebub who has reached the lowest point of his

existence, Starbuck still has much to live for even when his voyage reaches its end.

Starbuck's cautious attitude understandably strains his relationship with the mad Captain Ahab, who has functionally usurped the whaling ship *Pequod* in pursuit of Moby Dick, the white whale who took his leg. In no uncertain terms, Ahab makes clear his desire to "chase him round Good Hope, and round the Horn…and round perdition's flames before I give him up…to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out (177)." Placed at odds with his commander by this attitude, Starbuck says, "I came here to hunt whales, not my commander's vengeance. How many barrels will thy vengeance yield thee even if thou gettest it, Captain Ahab? (177)." Unlike Beelzebub, Starbuck is not complacent concerning his captain's mad vendettas against forces of nature too powerful for comprehension.

Therefore Starbuck is in place to question Ahab, the tragic hero of the narrative, and in doing so accentuates Ahab's madness and single-mindedness. As a man concerned with safety and business, Starbuck is disheartened to see Ahab subvert the mission of the *Pequod* and re-purpose it for his vain chase. Ahab exhibits the same self-destructive pride as Milton's Satan. He claims to Starbuck, "I'd strike the sun if it insulted me (178)."

This immediately sets the stage for the conflict between Ahab and Starbuck which Melville explores in their private thoughts about each other. Starbuck is exasperated at being bested in reason by Ahab. Worse, he knows that the quest will end badly for Ahab, saying "I think I see his impious end; but feel that I must help him to it (184)." Unfortunately, Ahab's demise means his as well. Ahab is similarly wary of Starbuck whom he knows is barely under his control. This is especially dangerous because Starbuck is legally and morally justified in removing Ahab from command for usurping the ship from its original purpose. Even in their private thoughts, the conflict between captain and first mate is evident, poisoning their working relationship as the Pequod continues to sail towards oblivion.

This conflict reflects much upon Ahab's character and the condition of his psyche. Though single-minded in his quest for vengeance, Ahab's interactions with Starbuck reveal that he is not delusional. He understands the whole of his situation and what a risk it is to reveal the true nature of the voyage to the crew. His plans to keep Starbuck under his sway

are logical and work even as Ahab becomes more maniacal. His scheming nature bears some resemblance to Satan's machinations in *Paradise Lost* when he subtly convinces his legion of demons to support his plan and later, when he corrupts Eve with the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Even though he methodically plans to keep Starbuck from mutiny, Ahab never considers removing Starbuck for insubordination. As the ship does find and hunt whales during the course of its voyage, thus fulfilling its mission, Ahab would probably be in the right to detain Starbuck if he were openly rebellious. If Ahab were truly insane, he would probably detain Starbuck even without justification. Starbuck's continued freedom and autonomy aboard the *Pequod* reveals that Ahab has respect for his first mate, and that he retains enough of his mental faculties to know that he needs Starbuck for basic ship duties.

The conflict with Ahab also sheds light on Starbuck's inner struggle with his moral obligation to the crew. He knows from early on that Ahab's vendetta will lead to ruin, yet does not take command to save the ship. Though Ahab takes measures to avoid giving Starbuck adequate excuse to mutiny, Starbuck still has ample opportunities to relieve Ahab of command and save the voyage. However, he is restrained from action by the thought that finding the white whale is unlikely, considering their term at sea and the immenseness of the ocean. Nevertheless, certain events convince Starbuck of the unfitness of Ahab's command. Ahab is at first content to let the *Pequod*'s store of whale oil leak out and even threatens Starbuck with a musket when he protests. Ahab demonstrates his full usurpation of the ship when Starbuck protests about the owners' concerns over the lost oil. "Owners, owners? Thou art always prating to me, Starbuck, about those miserly owners, as if the owners were my conscience. But look ye, the only real owner of anything is its commander… (517)." Yet despite all these incidences of madness, Starbuck stays reluctantly loyal and allows Ahab to maintain control of the ship.

Later Ahab's madness reaches its peak during a typhoon when he refuses to put up lightning rods. After they pass through the storm, Starbuck goes to Ahab's cabin to give him the good news and has a moment of clarity. "I come to report a fair wind to him. But how fair? Fair for death and doom,—*that's* fair for Moby Dick (558)." At this point, he picks up a musket and contemplates shooting Ahab thereby ending the chase that will destroy them all.

Starbuck knows for sure that Ahab will lead the crew to disaster. Even though he reasons that by killing Ahab he would save the lives of thirty men, he cannot bring himself to kill Ahab, and replaces the musket in its rack.

Starbuck reveals his true character; he knows that death is almost guaranteed if Ahab continues his course. However, paradoxically, Starbuck's strong sense of duty prevents him from doing what is necessary and saving the ship. Deeply conflicted, Starbuck considers that ending his captain's madness would also be the ultimate sin. However, in not performing the deed, Starbuck practically resigns himself to never seeing his wife and child again. His inaction has damned the ship, and at this point Starbuck is definitively complicit in Ahab's betrayal of the crew. Like Beelzebub, Starbuck ultimately follows his captain to ruin, even though he is aware of the impending disaster.

The last noteworthy exchange between Starbuck and Ahab occurs late in the novel in the chapter titled "The Symphony." Ahab talks to Starbuck about his life and regrets. He has been sailing for 40 years, and has not experienced truly what it means to live on land. He remarks on his wife, and how little he's truly seen of her. "Wife? – rather a widow with her husband alive! Aye, I widowed that poor girl when I married her, Starbuck… (591)." Starbuck makes a final attempt to convince his captain to abandon the chase and sail home, for Nantucket, but Ahab is fixed on his course of destruction. We finally witness Ahab's humanity as he talks about his regrets and woes. It's much like Ahab's final confession, with Starbuck as his confessor.

Though maddened, Ahab does have respect for his first mate as he tells him to stay on the *Pequod* so he can return home. This would explain why Ahab has not moved against Starbuck for insubordination. Perhaps Ahab sees a younger self in Starbuck who has much to live for. This encounter deepens their relationship, giving it some semblance to that of a father and son. At this point, the conflict between Ahab and Starbuck is mostly ideological, as this scene shows none of the hatred and contentiousness of their previous interactions.

On the surface, Satan of *Paradise Lost* and Ahab of *Moby Dick* are very similar. Both are captains who pursue revenge with obsessive precision, and ultimately doom their followers. However, their complexities and intricacies are brought out by their lieutenants, Beelzebub and

Starbuck. As seen through their limited interactions, Beelzebub is an extension of Satan's will, providing wisdom but ultimately acting as the agent of Satan's grand designs. His role in rousing the demons to approve Satan's plan for revenge shows Satan as the sole ruler of the legions of Hell, fixated on nothing but his petty revenge upon God and his creation.

Starbuck serves a largely opposite role, by acting as the sole voice of reason on the doomed expedition. He questions Ahab and his motives, trying his best to moderate and dissuade the maddened captain. However, his relationship with Ahab is more than contentious, and it helps to reveal Ahab's wounded psyche and buried humanity. However different from Beelzebub, Starbuck is still complicit in the destruction of the *Pequod*, even when he is certain that Ahab will lead the ship and her crew to ruin.

Though only lieutenants, Starbuck and Beelzebub share in the failures of their captains. As surely as Starbuck sinks with the Pequod, Beelzebub is cast from heaven and turned to evil alongside Satan. Like good lieutenants they largely assist their captains, though at times questioning the wisdom of their motives. They are partners in the damnation of their commanders, both accentuating the evil and monomania of Satan and Ahab, and at the same time helping them along on the path to utter ruination.

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The Enigmatic Prioress: Pious Nun or Hypocritical Woman?

Christina Illig

The Prioress of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* is a puzzle to deconstruct due to a variety of contradictions and complexities in her character. Some literary critics view the Prioress as the complete antithesis to what a prioress should be while others grant her a near saintly status. It seems impossible to have such a divergence of opinion about a single character, but this difference is most likely the result of the many narrative voices present in *The Canterbury Tales*. There is a need, however, to separate one's study of the Prioress from the opinions of Chaucer the Pilgrim. The Prioress needs to be viewed in terms of what she herself says in her "Prologue and Tale" as opposed to her character sketch drawn in Chaucer's "General Prologue." It then becomes clear to the reader that the Prioress is neither the "anti-prioress" nor the saint-on-earth that critics depict her to be.

Throughout her tale, the Prioress repeatedly expresses strong anti-Semitic beliefs. She often refers to the "cursed Jues" and declares that "Oure firste foo," the Devil, "hath in Jues herte his waspes nest" (vv. 558, 559). It is rather ironic that the Prioress, a supposedly holy woman, would be so vehement and hateful toward any individual or group. Upon stating the brutal punishment the Jews will incur for their involvement in the child's murder, the Prioress quotes a common proverb: "Yvele shal have that yvele wol deserve" (v. 632). Clearly, she is aligning the Jews with "yvele" and proclaiming that she views their punishment as just in accordance with their crime. Despite the seeming incongruity of a prioress being so prejudiced, it is an incongruence that can be explained in an historical context. During the time of this pilgrimage, anti-Semitism was a common, if not encouraged, practice among Gentiles in England. If we read "The Prioress's Tale" in its historical context, then it becomes possible to think that the Prioress is merely acting in a way similar to her contemporaries.

However, the Prioress's anti-Semitism is particularly virulent, exceeding the usual prejudicial views Gentiles had of Jews at the time. It appears that the Prioress is rather rancorous toward the Jews for unknown reasons, and this deep-seated rancor suggests that the Prioress is not the completely pious woman she is supposed to be.

The Prioress's character is also complicated by her evident education and its effects as related in her "Prologue and Tale." Throughout the text there are subtleties that allude to the Prioress having an advanced education. In her prologue, the Prioress not only refers to Biblical texts, but also alludes to Dante's *Paradiso* (Ridley 438). In her prologue, the Prioress lauds Mary saying, "For somtyme, Lady, er men praye to thee, / Thou goost biforn of thy benyngnytee, / And getest us the lyght" (vv. 477-479). This "light" will lead the Prioress to redemption. This passage, as claimed by Ridley, is highly reminiscent of a stanza in Dante's *Paradiso*, in which the speaker, praising Mary, states, "Your loving kindness does not only aid / whoever seeks it, but many times / gives freely what has yet to be implored" (XXXIII, vv.16-18). There is a similarity between the Prioress's statements and the text of *Paradiso* that cannot be coincidental; the Prioress is clearly a highly educated woman who has read the works of Dante. However, it is important to note that such an allusion would be lost on the majority of her fellow pilgrims. Why, then, would the Prioress make such an allusion in her prologue? It is impossible to answer this question without looking at the next stanza of the prologue.

Despite being clearly well-educated, the Prioress describes herself in the next stanza in a very different manner: "My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful Queene, / For to declare thy grete worthynesse / That I ne may the weighte nat susteene" (vv. 481-483). Judging from the evidence that the Prioress is well-educated as well as a high-standing member in a holy order, there is no reason to doubt her ability to tell a worthy, honorary tale about Mary. Yet, the Prioress insists on being self-deprecating. This suggests disingenuousness in the Prioress's character. She claims to be an inferior and humble woman unable to tell an acceptable tale, yet she has just alluded to the works of Dante—works only a member of an educated elite would have read at this time—in the previous stanza. I believe the Prioress would like to appear to be a humble and pious woman, since this would be fitting to her vocation. Hence, she actively downplays her knowledge in the prologue suggesting that she is "But as a child of twelf month oold, or lesse, / That kan unnethes any word expresse" (vv. 484-485). Yet, what

she expresses by alluding to Dante, is that she is intellectually and socially superior in a way that her audience cannot recognize.

In addition, throughout her tale, the Prioress makes many references that suggest she is knowledgeable about secular practice both economic and governmental. In the opening lines of her tale, the Prioress notes that her story is set in Asia, in a "Jewwrye" (v. 489). This ghetto, according to the Prioress, is "Sustened by a lord of that contree / For foule usure and lucre of vileynye" (vv. 490-491). Clearly, the Prioress has an understanding of economics, knowing not only the meanings of usury and the making of shamefully excessive profits, but also the import these practices have on a person's societal standing. It is evident, therefore, that the Prioress is well-versed in secular economic practices as well as those of the Catholic Church. In her tale, when discussing the punishment the Jews received for murdering the little boy, it becomes clear that the Prioress is also acutely aware of governmental practices. First, she aptly describes the role of the provost in the sentencing of the Jews. She then states, "Therfore with wilde hors he dide hem drawe, / And after that he heng hem by the lawe" (vv. 633-634). This is significant for two reasons, the second being more striking than the first. A prioress, being a female religious figure, would be rather unacquainted with secular government law. Yet, the Prioress knows both the law and that the punishment meted out to the Jews is in accordance with this law. Secondly, the story, as aforementioned, takes place in Asia. The Prioress' knowledge of secular things, therefore, extends not only to her own government, but to the governments of other countries on other continents. Clearly, the Prioress is either well-traveled or extremely well-versed in the practices of other courts. Either consideration is rather striking considering her status and vocation. The Prioress's knowledge of secular practices suggests she was once intimately acquainted with these practices, having been either a member of the royal court or well-traveled. Either suggestion would necessitate a certain degree of wealth prior to her entry into the convent.

In addition, when the Prioress celebrates the innocence of the little boy, she describes him as follows: "This gemme of chastite, the emeraude, / And eek of martirdom the ruby bright" (vv. 609-610). It is striking that the Prioress, a woman who should be the antithesis of materialism, describes the child in such worldly ways. She compares him to the finest gems—gems a prioress should not and would not be overly familiar with, suggesting a certain degree of materialism.

When discussing the Prioress's character, it is also necessary to discuss the themes of her tale in which she often refers to the child's innocent nature. For example, when speaking of the child, the Prioress says, "O martir, sowded to virginitee, / Now maystow syngen folwynge evere in oon / The white Lamb celestial" (vv. 579-581). Later, there is also mention of the child's "litel body sweete" (v. 682). Granted, the child is only seven years old, and most likely, he does not realize he is being antagonistic when he boldly sings *O Alma redemptoris mater*. Therefore, he could rightly be described as sweet and pure. Yet, there is an overarching connection between the Prioress's prologue and her tale that needs to be addressed. In her prologue, the Prioress states:

> Wherfore in laude, as I best kan or may,
> Of thee and of the white lylye flour
> To telle a storie I wol do my labour;
> Nat that I may encressen hir honour,
> For she hirself is honour and the roote
> Of bountee, next hir Son, and soules boote. (vv. 460-466)

The Prioress clearly states that she is not telling her tale as a means of increasing Mary's honor. Rather, she is telling her tale simply as a means of praise and worship. Similarly, the child in "The Prioress's Tale" says of *O Alma redemptoris mater* that "I wol it konne Oure Lady for to honoure" (v. 543). There is a clear parallel, therefore, between the Prioress's goal for her tale and the child's goal in learning this song. Yet, unlike the child, the Prioress cannot be viewed as innocent or sweet. Although the boy succeeds in honoring Mary, (for Mary does promise to retrieve the child and take him to heaven), it is necessary to consider whether the Prioress succeeds in her goal. She tells a tale that is part of a genre called the Miracles of the Virgin meant to depict the wonders of Mary and the rewards she offers to her devoted followers. Yet, in this tale that she tells to honor Mary, the Prioress spends more time demonizing the Jews than she does praising Mary. As a result, although the Prioress means to tell a tale that reflects the generally accepted views and beliefs of a prioress, she in fact tells a tale depicting her own personal hatreds and hypocrisies.

Lastly, in determining the Prioress's character, it is necessary to examine her character sketch "The General Prologue." However, it is important to remember that this sketch is

generally one-sided, being the opinion of Chaucer the Pilgrim. Therefore, it is necessary to separate objective detail from interpretation when considering this character sketch. From "The General Prologue," the reader learns a physical description of the Prioress—she smiles often, wears an elegant cloak, and carries ornate rosary beads. Although Chaucer the Pilgrim also describes the Prioress as being a graceful woman with good table-manners and the ability to speak elegant French, he also states, "And peyned hire to countrefete cheere / Of court, and to been estatlich of mannere, / And to ben holden digne of reverence" (vv. 139-141). Chaucer the Pilgrim, therefore, suggests a type of ingenuity connected to the Prioress's character. She imitates courtly behavior, rather than religious practices. Yet, at the same time, Chaucer the Pilgrim praises the Prioress's love of little animals, neglecting to realize that the Prioress's dogs eat better than some human beings. In addition, this character sketch makes absolutely no mention of the Prioress's anti-Semitism which is an essential feature of her persona. For the most part, the character sketches of "The General Prologue" are insufficient and incomplete because Chaucer the Pilgrim often misinterprets or ignores an important aspect of a pilgrim's persona, thereby misleading the reader. It is best to disregard the Prioress's character sketch in "The General Prologue," and simply determine her character based on what she says in her "Prologue and Tale."

Despite the Prioress' seemingly unholy or unreligious nature, she is aware of the devotion a member of a religious order should practice. When she introduces the Monk in her tale, the Prioress says, "This abbot, which that was a hooly man, / As monkes been—or elles oghte be" (vv. 642-43). Although regarded as an off-handed statement, the phrase "or elles oghte be" is very important. It suggests that the Prioress is aware of corruption within Holy Orders and knows that religious members should avoid such corruption. Yet, she herself in many ways is corrupt, or at least not the ideal prioress. She vehemently hates the Jews, is too aware of secular practices (suggesting a lack of propriety on her part), and appears to be rather hypocritical. Yet, despite this apparent hypocrisy, false modesty, and suggested impropriety, the Prioress is on a rather long pilgrimage, one that she would not want to make unless she had a real religious calling to do so. This action of pilgrimage does point to a sort of religiosity on the Prioress's behalf which leads the reader to believe she is not the antithesis of holiness that many critics describe her to be. Yet, she is also not the devout prioress other

critics have acclaimed her to be. She occupies a middle ground, being both slightly religious and slightly corrupt. After all, the Prioress is human, and therefore not perfect. It is hard to determine whether the Prioress is more religious than corrupt or more corrupt than religious. The complexities of her character make such determinations overly ambiguous and nearly impossible to decipher, and maybe beside the point.

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La Flor Tijuana Mexico, by David Campmier

Penelope to Odysseus

your gray-blue eyes
although shrouded in mist
reveal to mine
where you've gone
steering through the seas of time

listen to me
as soul sails unto soul
around the red sun —
a restless wind with wandering streams
wrapping into one

       Katherine Correa

Circle of Love

The linking of blue-green gazes gives life to a spark;
Under the fluorescent haze of a gin and tonic
Two flames on a journey of love do embark,
Pulled with a magnetism that is charged and ionic.
Stars blink time away as lovers smile, warm in the night's embrace.
A kneeling knight, protected by armored hope, steals her air,
And with bated breath, the rings of promise each take their place,
While the halls of their home soon fill with cries of the children they
bear.
As tides change with the moon, so skin wrinkles with the sun,
Roots turn gray in a sea of black, as lips mouth their fears,
Desperate clasps of hands unclench when the chemo's done.
Watch as a descending coffin takes with it tears.
The soul dies in whispers to the sound of a drum
As the passionate heart to its grief does succumb.

       Elina Kats

The Cost of Time

Crinkled, weathered photograph,
all scarred and bent in half.
A tell tale sign of days long passed,
of magic moments, both first and last.

What happened to the games we played?
catching robbers, dancing, house charade?
When did shooting across the sky
in ships of wood and cotton
morph into you shooting up with
piercing metal both alone and forgotten?

Time weathers away the tips of mountains,
molds away the inner tree
and likewise, Time tore apart the "we' in both you and me.

What happened to that disarming smile
that promised mischief all the while?
It lingers yet in faded shadow on a face with eyes of woe,
a strong steel chin and harsh lines etched into sorrowed skin.

You yell at me, I scream right back
as Fear runs thick between the cracks.
Brick by brick, a wall is laid
as callous hearts watch friendships fade.

Until finally, a House of stone is built,
a sanctuary from our guilt.
Filled with people, all alone.
Separate rooms all separate tombs.

Within this Box I slowly write,
and with you in yours, my soul can't fight.
so I say goodnight to those who listened,

and ignored the tears that surely glistened.
with a final breath I say goodbye,
To that lasting friendship gone awry.

Elina Kats

Idled Industry **Cara Lynch**

The Everyday Tools of Vermeer's Reality

Martin Vladimirov

One way art historians try to decipher the works of Dutch masters from the 17th century is by tracing the history of objects that appear in their paintings. Their goal is to present a convincing narrative explaining why an artist has painted a particular scene, and their evidence includes documentation of an artist's inventory, ethnographic descriptions of the era, and genre analysis using commonly occurring symbols. This approach to art history has become prevalent in the past thirty years, and originated with French Structuralism initiated by the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (Emerling, 2005). Saussure created a linguistic system in which a word has two meanings: it is a *signifier* (the form and phonetics of the word); and it is a *signified* (all the symbolic meaning that a word carries). These two elements are linked by a *referent* which is the actual object in the real world.

Saussure's ideas became popular not only in the field of linguistics, but also in the fields of literary and art criticism. One critic to use such ideas was Michel Foucault who paid great attention to the idea of symbolism in objects. In his analysis of Velasquez' painting *Las Meninas* in his book *The Order of Things*, Foucault furthers Saussure's argument. According to him objects always leave traces which constitute the structures of multiple narratives weaving a piece of history. Foucault's work has motivated art historians to move away from the classical approach of perceptionalism which accentuates the role of the viewer's immediate reaction to a work of art. Instead they have sought to create a coherent system of symbolic interpretations behind the scene on the canvas. In this system, objects are loaded with metaphorical significance as they partake in the formation of a genre. Although this approach has become common in the recent interpretation of Johannes Vermeer's works, this paper diverges from such a view, and attempts to introduce a new angle to the conservative method of perceptionalism.

Decorative Objects of Reality

In his paintings, Vermeer often depicts domestic, everyday settings that reflect the life of affluent middle-class households. Indeed, the Dutch artist himself lived in such a household; two years after his death in 1675, an inventory of his possessions was made, and many of the luxury objects listed appear in his works. Among them are the famous Spanish chairs with the lion heads, oriental carpets, richly embroidered tablecloths, and curtains "woven in the southern Netherlands in the late 16th century" (Karafel, 1996). In fact, Vermeer's own home served as his studio. This is not surprising: Dutch society in the middle of the 17th century had become extremely wealthy due to extensive trading with the Orient. Notably, the Dutch East India Company, established in 1602, brought back all kinds of goods ranging from spices to fine textiles. A middle-class Dutchman could afford an elaborately decorated house. Karafel cites one Dutch merchant saying "My home is my ornament, my house is my best costume" (Karafel, 1996).

From the inventory found in 1675, we see that Vermeer shared this sentiment. Musical instruments, jewelry, and valuable glass and textiles speak about his lifestyle, emphasizing the importance of worldly pleasures. Vermeer used these objects in his paintings to give the impression of a bourgeois home. But the impression is illusory and the environment not entirely realistic. In Vermeer's settings, objects no longer served merely as naturalistic representations of reality, but take on metaphoric meaning. Vermeer's new concept is not obvious in his paintings but rather implied by the use of subtle hints which transcend genre interpretation.

Keys

Keys were an important part of every Dutch household. At first glance, they are simple objects that complete the composition of a painting. However, art historians have suggested that beneath the natural identification of the key as an everyday object, there is a deeper, metaphorical meaning. According to structuralist ideas, the key becomes the *referent* of a multiple number of signs. In his article "A Key to Vermeer?" Peter L. Donhauser analyzes Vermeer's masterpiece *A Maid Asleep* (fig.1) in relation to the almost invisible presence of a key in the door lock. The painting often has been interpreted as a genre work symbolizing the sin of Sloth and a hedonistic dedication to pleasure, but according to Donhauser the central placement of the key suggests another

narrative. He reminds us of the x-ray graph showing an earlier version of the painting which depicts a man standing behind the door with a dog in the doorway. The presence of an empty chair in the foreground, and the wall painting in the background showing Cupid removing his mask allude to a genre interpretation of the Bordello character.

The key becomes a symbol of fidelity, and the unlocked door in Vermeer's work suggests that the maid has been involved in lustful activity. Albrecht Dürer's woodcut *Glorification of the Virgin* (fig.2) also includes a key, but this time as a phallic symbol (Donhauser, 1993). In the lower right corner of the woodcut depicting the enthroned Virgin surrounded by saints including St. Catherine, patroness of virgins and brides, a putto is hitting a shield with a pair of keys, while next to him, a rabbit, a common symbol of fertility, is jumping. Similarly, Jan Steen's *The Harpsichord Lesson* (fig.3), which reveals an old, hideous man pointing at a young girl playing the harpsichord, extends the sexual metaphor of the key. On the wall between the piano and the man and below a painting displaying cupid lying next to a sleeping Venus, Steen has placed a chain of keys. Again, keys allude to sexual interaction in terms of their phallic symbolism and the painting's implied passion (Donhauser, 1993).

Keys also illustrate duty and responsibility as in Nicolas Maes' painting *Old Woman Praying* (fig.4). Here an old woman sits at a table with her eyes closed and her hands clasped together. On the table, bread signals both modesty and the Christian idea of bread as the representation of Jesus' body. In the foreground a cat claws at the tablecloth in an attempt to climb up the table. In the western tradition, cats often are associated with the devil and often are called Lucifer because of their stealthy nature. Here, the cat's presence may allude to criminal activity such as robbery. Such an interpretation corresponds directly with the image of the keys hanging on the wall to the right of the table. Usually in the home of the bourgeois class, the maid was responsible for the security of the house. Maes' genre image conveys the connection between the servant's duty and her religious piety.

Steen, Maes, and other 17th century Dutch masters mainly have concentrated on the creation of genre paintings. However, a similar interpretation of Vermeer's work would underestimate its depth. If we re-examine the key in *A Maid Asleep*, we will notice that it carries more than just a genre meaning. The word "key" in the structuralist notion of the

signified could be defined as a tool which links different spaces. In everyday experience, keys open doors, and doors lead to new space previously invisible. When we stand in front of a closed door, we usually have a preconceived notion of what lies beyond it. Yet, we can never construct in our mind a perfect image of what we are going to see – we can only guess.

Vermeer's painting arouses a similar feeling in the viewer. The half-open door and the short corridor in the background imply the existence of another space beyond. This sensation is created by the stream of light coming from the left side of the corridor. The ray falls exactly on the key in the door lock reflecting off its surface. The importance of the key is even more pronounced if we follow an orthogonal to the vanishing point. It passes through the key hole and then finishes just beneath a mirror hung on the back wall of the corridor in a full frontal perspective to the viewer. Thus, the eye of the viewer, the key, and the mirror become the three points on a line that connects three different spaces: the room where the viewer stands; the room where the maid sleeps; and the corridor where allegedly a man peeks through.

The creation of a continuum of space through one single object is even clearer in Samuel van Hoogstraten's work *View of an Interior or The Slippers* (fig.5). Here the artist has gone a step further in accentuating the optical illusion. Again, Hoogstraten has painted three separate rooms; each of them is marked either by a doorway or the depiction of a door. The linking object between the different spaces is again the hanging keys in the door lock of the last room. Their placement is also critical. They appear just beneath the vanishing point which surprisingly coincides with a painting on the wall that is clearly inspired by the work of Gerard Ter Borch. It shows a young woman in an elaborate silk dress, Ter Borch's trademark. The spatial continuum here introduces a fourth dimension. As with Vermeer's painting, there is an allusion to three different spaces: the doorway of the viewer; the intermediate corridor signalized by a ray of light coming from a window to the right; and the last room connected by the keys. The fourth spatial dimension is invisible to the viewer but is implicitly revealed not only by Ter Borch's painting, but also by the slippers in the doorway.

On the one hand, Hoogstraten has placed the painting as a literal illustration of an invisible scene to the right of that last room. The viewer becomes an eavesdropper trying to hear what is going on in the last room of the corridor. On the other hand, the slippers, in

the framework of Foucault's structural analysis, represent the trace of an event that took place shortly before the depiction of the scene. Somebody has passed by the two doorways, then has taken off his/her slippers and has joined the narrative of the painting. The slippers, similar to the keys, imply the presence of another person. Thus, these two objects signal a change in spatial conditions. This transformation of space becomes the record of the passing of time. The simple object of the key not only serves to create a new space, but also becomes the link between the past and present. By unlocking the door to the room with Ter Borch's painting, the viewer witnesses the action at the moment. Yet, at the same time, the unlocking of this same space and the removal of the slippers speak of a past event – the event of somebody crossing the doorway. It's even more interesting that this is probably also the person taking part in the scene in Ter Borch's painting at the present moment.

Letters

Since letters in the 17th century were mainly used for documentation, their appearance in the domestic setting of Dutch 17th century art may seem illogical. Nonetheless, we have to take into consideration the fact that once The Netherlands gained independence in 1648, Dutch provinces developed at a very rapid rate. Not surprisingly, the literacy rate in Holland at the time was the highest in the whole continent (Vergara, 2003). The female literacy rate of less than 50% at the time did not prevent many Dutch painters of the period from depicting women who were reading or writing letters. In fact, in middle-class homes, women who did not go to work were engaged predominantly with the activity of exchanging letters (Vergara, 2003).

Structuralist interpretations of Dutch paintings depicting the reading of letters carry strong amorous connotations. Often, women, usually alone, were shown reading or writing letters in intimate settings. The presence of a maid further accentuated the existence of a love relationship since maids were very often interpreted as messengers of love. In order to reveal the meaning of love in their work, artists often placed a seascape painting on the wall. A good example is Gabriel Metsu's masterpiece *A Lady Reading a Letter* (fig.6) in which a young lady is seated by a window reading a letter, while a maid is drawing a curtain to reveal a seascape depicting stormy waters. Such a painting might allude to a problematic situation in the relationship of a couple. A calm sea, on the other hand, might allude to a harmonious and

successful love story. Another indicator of a love narrative is the expression on the woman's face. The slightly open mouth, the pale skin and the upright position of the subject often symbolized distress, disappointment, or even desperation. When these facial expressions are more vividly presented, the genre interpretation may serve better as an explanation of the meaning of a certain painting. However, in the case of Vermeer, a genre interpretation is not so clear.

Vermeer produced at least six paintings with the letter as the main focus. Three of them, *A Girl Reading a Letter by an Open Window* (fig.7), *Officer and Laughing Girl* (fig.8), and *Woman in Blue Reading a Letter* (fig.9) were created in the span of four years. A number of art historians, among them Daniel Arasse and Lisa Vergara, have speculated that these three images are intricately connected. They have suggested that the girl in all of them is the same one (Vergara, 2003). Vergara has further interpreted the three paintings as the narrative of a common love story. The first painting of the trilogy identifies the beginning of courtship; the second depicts the flirtation; and the third shows the result – marriage, and possibly pregnancy. In a sense, Vergara refutes Nannette Salomon's idea expressed in "From Sexuality to Civility: Vermeer's Women" that "Vermeer's painting…muted the sexual narrative and moved the image along the spectrum from denotative toward its ultimate connotative state" (Salomon, 1998).

Instead, Vergara builds a structural analysis with multiple layers to explain why the three paintings comprise a sexual narrative. She points to the x-ray image of *A Girl Reading a Letter by an Open Window* which shows a painting of Cupid on the wall behind the young girl. Vergara also suggests that the appearance of ripe fruits on the table further corresponds with the ripening sexuality of the young girl who must have already been the object of courtship. *Officer and Laughing Girl*, executed a year after the first painting, again depicts the girl from the first painting. The setting is also similar. The military officer is sitting on the same chair that was empty in the first image. The couple is sitting by the same window, but, instead of a picture of Cupid, there is a map which, according to Vergara, appears in the third painting of the sequence, *Woman in Blue Reading a Letter*, executed two years later. This last painting "represents the progress of love promised by the earlier episodes: the young letter reader has matured into a woman…" maybe into the wife of the cavalier (Vergara, 2003).

Although evidence of such a love narrative does not exist, the similarity between the

room settings and the facial features of the woman in all three images may not be coincidental. The idea of a genre narrative told by the three consecutive images is striking not only from the perspective of symbolism. As with the key, Vermeer constructs a new sense of space and time that transcends the frame of a single work. The temporal span of the production of the three paintings corresponds to the period in which the narrative can take place. The everyday tool of connection in this case is the letter which is no longer just a sign of intimacy in a love relationship, but an object that leads us through different stages of one and the same event – the courtship of a lady. The letter defines the existence of intimate correspondence in the first painting. Moreover, the empty chair below the window in the background implies an invisible presence. Later, in the second painting, the emptiness is filled by the Officer who becomes the *addressee* missing in the first painting. Finally, the third painting unifies the previous two by capturing the change in the social status of the young woman. Again, she is reading a letter in a similar posture, but now her figure is isolated from the background, accentuating her expensive blue garment and the vanity objects on the table including a jewelry box, a book, and a pearl necklace. The map and the chair in the background, which have appeared in the previous two paintings, serve as indicators of a time-space shift in which one and the same room transforms from a setting for courtship into the home of a rich, married couple.

In this sense, the letter, which is a simple everyday object used as a means for communication between people, becomes our tool for recording changes in our lives. *A Girl Reading a Letter by an Open Window* brings us back to the past. The haunting reflection of the young girl's face alludes to a dreamy atmosphere of a flashback. Indeed, an x-ray image has shown that Vermeer has shifted the image of the reflection to make it more frontal than the position of the girl's head would enable us to envision (Snow, 1994). By pulling the green curtain aside, the servant invites the viewer to participate in the intimate act of self-observation. Witnessing the act of reading a letter in front of a reflecting mirror indirectly gives us an insight into the girl's internal struggle which we are not allowed to see directly – a vision of her past.

Mirrors

People have always considered mirrors extraordinary objects as they are drawn to their reflected image by their sense of curiosity. Our minds are unable to perceive the world

around us because of the limited capacity of our vision. But by looking in a mirror, we not only get a clearer idea of the shape of things, but we also come to comprehend how other people view us. Mirrors often surprise us as they project an image of our physical features which is different from the image we have of ourselves. Sometimes, we can capture changes in our appearance or psychological state. Mirrors also help us realize our physical position in space relative to other objects in our background; they capture reality as a photographic instance. Consequently, the surface of a mirror becomes the canvas of a painting in which the content is solely determined by the particular placement of a mirror in a concrete space.

After the structuralist revolution in the 1960s, art historians moved away from the discussion of the optical qualities of mirrors. Instead, they focused on their metaphorical meaning. Allegorical interpretations of 17th century Dutch paintings view the mirror as a symbol of vanity. In both *Woman with a Pearl Necklace* (fig.10) and *A Woman Holding a Balance* (fig.11), Vermeer depicts a young woman, surrounded by vanity objects such as jewelry boxes, books or expensive fabrics, facing a mirror. In Gerard Ter Borch's *Woman at a Mirror* (fig.12), the artist presents the main subject of his painting in the process of her toilette. All of these activities signal a symbolic message implicitly critical of vanity and worldly desires. This theory seems especially relevant in the discussion of *Woman Holding a Balance* which shows a young girl holding a weighing balance in front of a mirror. The back wall reveals a painting of the *Last Judgment* which corresponds metaphorically with the balance. As Jesus weighs souls, so the woman weighs gold.

However, such a linear interpretation seems mistaken since a closer examination reveals that the scales are empty. It appears that in the act of balancing the scales, the young woman is, more correctly, in a state of moral self-reflection. Vermeer further stresses the importance of the scales for the overall meaning of the painting by placing the balance just below the point where all of the orthogonals merge (fig.13). Two of them cross the painting diagonally, vanishing exactly at the bottom and top half of the mirror. In this way, the mirror and balance are bound by a strong visual link as our gaze moves from the right bottom side to the top left side of the painting. Vermeer successfully both attracts our attention to the mirror on the wall, and creates the optical illusion that we, as viewers, participate in the scene. By placing us inside the scene, Vermeer escapes a strictly genre interpretation of the painting. Instead, his depiction of an

everyday scene creates an intimacy which transcends its moral connotation.

Only five of Vermeer's thirty-five paintings include a mirror, and there is a visible reflection in only one painting – *The Music Lesson* (fig.14). As one might expect, what we observe carries great significance (Arasse, 1994). The image depicted in the mirror reveals Vermeer's attention to the motif. Placed over the virginal, the mirror reflects the face of a young woman during her music training. Her head is tilted diagonally towards the figure of a man who, watching the girl attentively, leans his arm on the virginal. The mirror also reflects (fig.15) a portion of the oriental tablecloth and part of the painter's easel, and serves two main purposes. Because of its ebony frame which echoes the frame of Roman Charity in the painting right next to it, the mirror obtains the status of picture-within-the-picture (Arasse, 1994). Furthermore, it gathers together important elements from the whole composition: the table, the girl, and the easel. The last object implies the presence of the painter who is producing the scene in front of him on the easel. The mirror unifies the painting in this way because it reveals the two otherwise invisible subjects of the picture: the girl at the virginal and the actual painter in his studio. That is why *The Music Lesson* is not a simple interior scene; it is the representation of this scene being turned into a work of art. The girl and the man in the painting, rather than being a couple engaged in an amorous relationship appropriate for genre interpretation, are simply models posing for the painter. Yet, the existence of the easel does not correspond directly to the usual motif of the painter reflected in the mirror. Here Vermeer creates a deeper, more theoretical level that does not translate literally either through genre or through the surprising effect of optical illusion.

This deeper significance of the mirror's placement is connected to the creation of a fourth dimension. If we observe the position of the mirror carefully, we will notice that the vanishing point falls on the lower right corner of the reflection where the easel is depicted. Thus, Vermeer suggests that the position of the viewer and the painter overlap. Consequently, *The Music Lesson* reveals an intricate connection among four different perspectives. Vermeer has painted the scene of a girl during her music practice, which is observed by an invisible viewer standing on the opposite side of the room. The image of the easel reflected in the mirror, though, refers to another, fourth figure in the scene – that of Vermeer, himself. However, the fact that the perspective of the viewer and the painter coincide makes the

painting inaccessible to us standing before the canvas (Arasse, 1994). The reason is that the reflection of the easel and the image of the girl's face create a coherent visual line that cannot be broken by the external viewer. As a result, the mirror again serves as the tool that links two different spaces that function on one and the same continuum. Nonetheless, it "establishes a gap between the painter (who is painting) and the beholder (who is watching)"(Arasse, 1994). In temporal terms, the mirror establishes the existence of an eternal presence that we as spectators can view but never take part in.

Counter-Genre and Vermeer's Everyday Reality

Dutch artists have admired the qualities of the mirror throughout the centuries. Jan Van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Wedding* (fig.16) is a strong example of how mirrors can serve as a way of creating art within art. As in *The Music Lesson*, the immediate visibility of the painter in the reflection constructs a variant of the self-portrait genre. The originality of Van Eyck's method surprised his viewers who wondered how it was possible to paint an image in a reflection with such precision. The acute realism in Van Eyck's work takes on an almost religious quality as the mirror represents a god-like view of the Arnolfini couple. Such an interpretation is not far-fetched as we can distinguish scenes from the life of Christ on the circular ebony frame of the mirror. It's as if God is witness to the sacredness of this event.

Similarly, in the *Allegory of Faith* (fig.17), probably the most metaphorical of Vermeer's paintings, the mirror is contained in a crystal orb which hangs enigmatically from the ceiling (fig.18). Its surface reflects the play of light and color on the tiled floor and the closed shutters of the windows in Vermeer's studio. Art historians sharing the structuralist view have suggested that the orb comes from an earlier etching by J. C. Jegher from 1636 (fig. 19) which shows an angel contemplating a ball reflecting the sun and the crucifix placed nearby.

However, a purely religious interpretation diminishes Vermeer's theoretical approach towards painting. Instead of loading his works with semiotic connotations, Vermeer played with the notion of realism. From this point of view, he was far ahead of his contemporaries. Instead of copying the scene in front of him literally, he constructed an additional dimension to the reality depicted. He drew the implied viewer of the scene into the context of the painting, thus creating a separate space beyond the one depicted on the canvas. As a result,

Vermeer created a plot line not only through the history of the objects in the painting or through their semiotics, but also through the tool of the chronotope. According to Mikhail Bakhtin who introduced the term, a chronotope embodies "spatial and temporal dimensions fused together into one concrete, thought-out whole." Furthermore, in the artistic context, "time...thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible" and affects the space by creating a separate perspective for each element (qtd. in Smith, 2009).

Bakhtin, inspired by Einstein's *Theory of Relativity*, attempted to apply the idea of the inseparability of time and space to the notions of literature and art. He defined *genre* as essentially a chronotope, a specific correlation of space and time. That is, a given type of space serves as a setting for a given type of story or pattern of behavior. However, using everyday settings for his paintings, Vermeer decodes his chronotopes with real objects placed inside an interior. His specific placement of a key, a letter, or a mirror in his paintings creates links between multiple perspectives from which the scene can be observed. These different spaces also constitute distinct temporal characteristics; they enable the artist, by revealing an instance of the everyday life in a middle-class home, to depict the passage of time. Past events leave their trace on the scene at the present moment. We as viewers enter the painting, and secretly peek through a curtain or a door into a room where everyday life transcends its banal nature. This instant frozen in time unlocks the subtle truth about human reality independent of its historical period. Ordinary, mundane objects of our everyday life provide our connection to both the external realities beyond our private space and past events which determine our present perceptions. Vermeer shows us that they construct each moment of our existence, and by focusing on these instances we can better comprehend the essence of reality.

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Fig. 1 Johannes Vermeer, *A Maid Asleep*, c.1656-7, Metropolitain Museum of Art, New York

Fig. 2 Albrecht Dürer, *Glorification of the Virgin*, The Metropolitain Museum of Art, New York

Fig. 3 Jan Steen, *The Harpsichord Lesson*, c. 1660, Wallace Collection, London

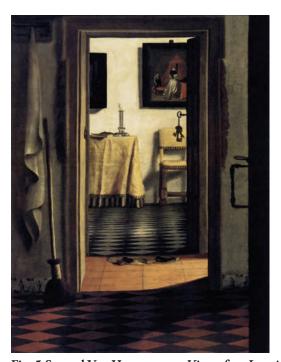**Fig. 4 Nicolas Maes, *Old Woman Praying*, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam**

Fig. 5 Samuel Van Hoogstraten, *View of an Interior or The Slippers*, 1654-1662, Louvre, Paris

Fig. 6 Gabriel Metsu, *A Lady Reading a Letter* **c. 1662-1665**

Fig. 7 Johannes Vermeer, *A Girl Reading a Letter by an Open Window***, c.1657-8, Gemäldegalerie, Dresden**

Fig. 8 Johannes Vermeer, *Officer and Laughing Girl***, c.1660, Frick Collection, New York**

Fig. 9 Johannes Vermeer, *Woman in Blue Reading a Letter***, c.1660-2, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam**

Fig. 10 Johannes Vermeer, *Woman with a Pearl Necklace***, c. 1664, Kulturbesitz, Berlin**

Fig. 11 Johannes Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance***, c.1665, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.**

Fig. 12 Gerard Ter Borch, *A Woman at a Mirror,* **c. 1650, Rijksmuseum**

Fig. 13 Orthogonals

Fig. 14 Johannes Vermeer, *The Music Lesson*, c. 1662-4, The Royal Collection, Windsor Castle

Fig. 15 Johannes Vermeer, *The Music Lesson* (detail)

Fig. 16 Jan Van Eyck, *The Arnolfini Wedding*, **c.1434, National Gallery, London**

Detail on the mirror

Fig. 17 Johannes Vermeer, *Allegory of Faith*, c. 1670-4, Metropolitain Museum of Art, New York

Fig. 18 detail on the orb

Fig. 19 J. C. Jegher after Erasmus Quellinus *Capit Quod Non Capit*, from Willem Hesius, *Emblemata sacra de fide, spe, charitate*, Antwerp, 1636, National Gallery of Art, Washington

The Role of Molecular Biology in Support of the Theory of Evolution

Wendy Podany

The science of evolutionary biology has been developed through the use of a variety of fields including comparative anatomy, embryology, archaeological evidence, and, most recently, molecular biology. Molecular biology employs the analysis of DNA and other genetic material to trace the evolutionary history of species and the origin of the very first life forms. There are now four main subfields of molecular biology: the comparison of mitochondrial DNA; the tracing of chloroplast DNA; the use of homeobox genes; and the use of haplotypes. These tools enable the biologist to study similarities in DNA that show specific evolutionary patterns.

Mitochondrial DNA is particularly useful because its maternal inheritance can trace back the DNA of organisms to that point in time when the mitochondrion evolved as an organelle in eukaryotic organisms. In fact, mitochondrial DNA has been used to trace the evolutionary history and geographic distributions of the first Homo sapiens. Chloroplast DNA is used to trace back plant lineages to that point in time when the chloroplast began to evolve as an organelle within an archaebacterial cell, and is useful in illuminating the first few steps of evolution at the autotrophic level. Homeobox genes are found in all organisms. Developmentally, they are the foundation of many organisms, and the number of identical homeobox genes in particular species demonstrates a close relationship between the two species. Homeobox genes are especially useful because of their function in the design of phylogenetic trees and species classification as well as in genetic studies of developmental evolutionary biology. Haplotypes are also very useful because they show a close relationship among organisms based on a comparison of recombination frequencies and polymorphisms in a particular gene. Biologists can use a haplotype map to ascertain relationships among conserved haplotypes in order to detect associations among various human diseases.

The field of molecular evolution began in the 1960s and 1970s with the rise of molecular biology. Protein sequencing and nucleic acid sequencing were instrumental in the development of this field, and as time progressed, the usefulness of molecular biology and evolutionary studies became evident. As a consequence, research in the field increased, and more sensitive instruments were developed which allowed for finer detection of details about the genomes of particular organisms. For example, gel electrophoresis provided insight into the heterozygosity of individual DNA samples, and Polymerase Chain Reaction [PCR] techniques allowed for the isolation of relatively pure sampling of such DNA. These tools sparked the rapid development of molecular evolutionary biology, in particular its four subfields, which use these tools for exploration and development.

Mitochondria are metabolic organelles found in eukaryotic cells; they are unique because they carry their own DNA and have the ability to replicate independently of the cell. Mitochondria have a genome of about 16,500 base pair [bp] which exists outside of the cell nucleus (Ingman, et. Al 2000). For several reasons mitochondrial DNA is commonly used instead of nuclear DNA in constructing phylogenetic trees. First of all, mitochondrial DNA is inherited maternally which allows for the direct tracing of a maternal genetic line. As a result of this maternal inheritance, there is no genetic recombination; this allows for a more straightforward tracing of genetic material from mother to offspring. Another characteristic of mitochondrial DNA which encourages its wide use in tracing evolutionary lineages is the abundance of mitochondrial DNA found in each organism, making it possible to conduct studies with fewer samples.

Mitochondrial DNA was one of the first genomes to be sequenced in its entirety, a feat which was completed relatively recently. This accomplishment has allowed for emerging evidence in the field of population genomics, and is a tool especially useful in tracing human populations and the origin of Homo sapiens. Some of the evidence supported and proven by mitochondrial tracing is the theory of the emergence of the human population from Africa. Through mitochondrial analysis and tracing, there has been an identification of a 'mitochondrial Eve' (Wilson and Cann 1992). The dating of this DNA has placed this first individual at about 171,500 years ago, a date in congruence with the theory of the evolution of Homo sapiens from the continent of Africa and the subsequent migration of the population.

A similar study of molecular evolution is the study of chloroplast DNA and its relationship to the evolution of autotrophic species. Chloroplasts are the photosynthetic centers of autotrophic cells. They contain the light-capturing pigment chlorophyll, and are centers for the production of energy using sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide. Chloroplasts, like mitochondria, contain their own DNA, and are thought to be descendents of a cyanobacterium which was engulfed by an archaebacterial host cell. It is commonly believed that the gradual integration of the chloroplast as an organelle of the eukaryotic host cell was the result of a symbiotic relationship between the cyanobacteria and archaebacteria. The ancient chloroplast (cyanobacterium) provided energy for the eukaryotic host cell, and the host cell provided some type of protection for the cyanobacterium. There can be anywhere from 1 to 900 chloroplasts per plant cell (Clegg 1993). The chloroplast has a circular genome, ranging in size from 30kbp to 200kbp. The content of the chloroplast genome is highly conserved. Throughout most of evolutionary history, a majority of the ancestral genome of chloroplast has been lost, as seen when the genome of cyanobacterium is compared with that of the chloroplasts found in land plants and algae. These genes have either been transferred to the nuclear genome of the archaebacterial host cell or lost completely. The chloroplast genome contains genes that control its own division, and such genes are homologous to the bacterial genes, making chloroplasts semi-autonomous organelles partly responsible for their own metabolism and division.

Studies of chloroplast DNA inheritance examine why there has been transference of chloroplast DNA into nuclear DNA. Possible reasons include the prevention of mutation and increased fitness that could result due to recombination which occurs at the nuclear level. This movement of genetic material within the plant cell is only one area of research into chloroplast DNA and its relationship to molecular evolution.

Current applications of research into chloroplast DNA include the possibilities they hold for the development of transgenic crops which would be resistant to pesticides and herbicides. Such genetic manipulation may involve chloroplast DNA versus nuclear DNA. Further research can also aid in studies of the chloroplast genome of dinoflagellates, perhaps leading to the treatment of human parasites such as plasmodium, a malaria-causing parasite. The origin of the chloroplast's structure is not terribly mysterious; however, the still-evolving

plant genome provides keen insight into the diverse nature of plant evolution, and suggests key evidence needed for future innovations in the field of botany and husbandry.

Homeobox genes provide a broad area of evolutionary molecular biology which focuses on a common set of genes found in all organisms, the quantitative analysis of these genes, and the degree of relatedness as the result of such similarities. Hox genes are only one category of homeobox genes; however, they are the most widely known and are one of the most extensively studied areas of homeobox genes. Hox genes control the transcription of all cells in early development and therefore act as master determinants of cell fate, organism growth, and development (Holland and Fernandez 1996). Though few in number, these hox genes control most of the development and appearance of the body plan of complex species.

Modern knowledge about the nature of hox genes and their instrumental role in this development has been established in particular through experimentation with Drosophila melanogaster. Experimentation with the mutations of hox genes has demonstrated the role of segmentation of these genes. One such experiment involves the antennapedia gene. When mutated, this hox gene produced feet in the antenna region of the fly. It was through this and other experiments that the extensive role of hox genes was first ascertained, opening up homeobox genes for further studies in evolutionary and developmental biology.

In an examination of the development of hox genes and their transference between species, scientists look at their maintained integrity and duplication between species. Generally speaking, the number of hox genes increases if the organism is more complex. In the evolution of invertebrates to vertebrates, hox gene duplication occurred twice. There is a cluster of about 10 hox genes on one chromosome of the Drosophilia melanogaster whereas there are 4 clusters of about 10 genes each on 4 different chromosomes. Hox genes in mice and humans are remarkably similar in number and arrangement since they are both members of the Mammalia family.

Hox genes are very much conserved throughout evolutionary history. For example, since the divergence of the mouse and fly from a common ancestor about a half a billion years ago, the homeobox sequence of the mouse and fly have maintained many similarities. A specific use of the analysis of homeobox genes in current evolutionary research is in the study

of the evolution of the eye. In 1994, the Swiss biologist Walter Gehring conducted a study examining the development of the eye in different species and found that there are distinct similarities between the hox genes which control eye development in species which have eyes, causing Gehring to conclude that all eyes had one common evolutionary origin (Holland and Farnandez 1996).

Finally, haplotyping is a technique used in the analysis of genetic variation and human disease. A haplotype is the occurrence of a set of polymorphisms along a single chromosome. The frequency of polymorphisms on a haplotype depends on the evolutionary history of the population, recombination frequencies, and the evolutionary selection or deselection of particular advantageous or disadvantageous traits. If particular alleles are found to be in adjacent sites to one another more frequently than expected, they are said to be in linkage disequilibrium [LD], and the result of LD is that specific combinations of these alleles are conserved across particular haplotypes (Bell 2002).

The use of this information is useful in the study of the human genome because it is suspected that those genetic variants located physically near one another are inherited closely as groups, and such suspicions cause scientists and physicians studying the human genome to apply such theories to cracking the code of the human genome. A comprehensive catalog of the genetic information of various genetic populations has been constructed known as the "HapMap" which is used in the research of the genetic component of human diseases, and provides information for the further expansion of pathology, immunology, and epidemiology. Unlike homeobox genes, haplotypes are far more sensitive to geographic differences among populations, and therefore are able to show differences between not only species, but also populations. This sensitivity is particularly useful in contemporary studies of populations, and indicates certain markers that can show early signs of evolutionary change in current species. It also provides particular details about genomes which can help in the treatment of disease, and further the field of genetic manipulation and engineering.

Molecular biology is a rapidly evolving field which has already yielded many useful empirical results in the past few years. Each aspect of molecular evolution science explores a particular aspect of evolutionary history: mitochondrial evolution delves into the maternal

evolution of particular species, aiding in the tracing back of the human ancestry; chloroplast evolution has helped in the outlining of the evolutionary nature of the chloroplast as well as the complex and constantly evolving nature of the plant genome; homeobox genes examine the connection between all species and the evolution of particular traits in the evolutionary history of life on earth; and, finally, haplotypes are able to detect evolutionary changes at the population level and provide analysis of the changes of geographically separated populations, as well as noting the conservation or loss of particular genes and their connection with variation in species.

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Constantin Brancusi: *The Beginning of the World*

Natalie Simpson

"What is real is not the appearance, but the idea, the essence of things."

- Brancusi

Constantin Brancusi was a Romanian artist, a sculptor primarily of stone, wood, and metals. In keeping with the development of modern art, he departed from traditional representational styles, refining his sculptures to the point of the abstract, as he sought the very root and origin of form. "Reality lies in the essence of things," he said, "and not in their external forms. Hence, it is impossible for anyone to produce anything real by merely imitating the external form of an object… The artist should know how to dig out the being that is within matter, and be the tool that brings out its cosmic essence into an actual visible essence."[1]

This quiet spirituality can be felt in his work which seems to seek a kind of transcendence in pure forms, uncomplicated by decoration or overwrought design. The quiet space he creates invites the viewer to introspection and provides a brief shelter from the buffeting of everyday life. Like Nietzsche, Brancusi believed in establishing a reconnection to that which is true and personal for the individual and in experiencing that truth to the utmost. He wanted to remind the world that art can and should be a "direct source of joy and beauty."

My first impression of *The Beginning of the World* (fig. 1) was one of simplicity, cleanliness, smooth lines and textures. It is peaceful, calm, and centering. The organic ovoid form of an egg rests in prominence, glowing against a dark background and the pale arms of its pedestal. In this presentation, the dark of the background and light of the foreground match each other for a pleasing and thought-provoking effect.

The marble egg seems suspended between the dark and light planes, perfectly balanced

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1 aidanharticons.com/articles/constantin%20Brancusi.pdf.

in the still center, casting its reflection on a fragile disk. The mirror is metal, but appears transparent as glass, bringing to mind a motionless pond. The pedestal holds the egg up like a holy relic upon a dish. The eye follows the vertical movement from base to egg, and this verticality creates a strong impression of grounding and center. At one moment solid and earthy compared to the delicacy and luster of the egg and metal disk, the pedestal suddenly seems hollow as I sense the egg's heavy warmth. Complementary aspects of straight line and curve, and the vertical and horizontal become apparent from a distance. The geometric forms of rectangle, square, circle, oval, and even triangle are present in all three elements of the piece.

At first the title, *The Beginning of the World*, might seem too grandiose for this small, self-contained piece. But how else would a world come into being but through the fragile vulnerability of a newborn? The egg, primeval symbol of birth, fertility, and the earth, contains a hidden world within its fragile shell. It is the essential origin of every living thing, bearing the miraculous potential of life. It is a spiritual symbol of Brancusi's heritage also, as seen in the intricately decorated eggs of Romania at Eastertime. This egg, so highly polished, was sculpted with much care, as the Creator crafted the Earth. The pearly glow of the white marble is like the purity of spirit with which human beings are born.

The egg rests on a disk much as clay would sit upon a potter's wheel, waiting to be sculpted into form or vessel. The egg finds its own reflection in the cool, mirrored surface in the same way we relate to the world through our own experience. How limited is that perspective! Brancusi shows us that the separation between us and full reality is as thin as that reflecting disk; yet, we are as unable to see past our own reflections as look through that sheet of metal. Perhaps if we could, we would see what truly holds our world up.

The base of the sculpture in the shape of a cross conveys a suggestion as to what that force might be. Perhaps a new world was born with the Crucifixion, the moment of greatest transcendence and greatest despair. The play of shadow and brightness seems to express the struggle of good and evil, with the human soul suspended in constant conflict between the two. Unlike most pedestals, this base is an essential part of the piece as it contributes to the direction, symmetry, and proportion of the whole.

Egg, pedestal, and disk hint at the human form as well with vertical, horizotal, and

rounded lines. The head, as the seat of reason and thought, is separate from, yet supported by, the transitory frame of the body to which it is connected through the sympathetic, reflective medium of the heart. The brain (egg) floats in a still, silent world, governing the body and shaping ideas that are born from incoming impressions of the outer world. The heart (disk) acts as intermediary, connecting the mind to emotive feelings that make it possible to relate to other human beings. The body (pedestal) is the basis of our physical existence on the earth. Connected to the will, it allows us to manifest our thoughts and emotions through action.

Modern art expanded our awareness from the commonality of public experience to the individuality of personal experience. Artists drew on this source of creativity to express the endlessly multiple points of view and interpretations of reality. Brancusi does not portray events but combines shape and form into a harmony that sets off an unconscious train of thought and feeling. As in modern literature, a solid vision of reality fades, and the seemingly disparate forms combine effortlessly with no limitation of standard or style. Brancusi's *The Beginning of the World* has revealed to me the artist's vision of an overarching reality; the beauty of form found in the symmetry of the natural world; and the possibility of an exploration into my own mind through a single artwork. It gave me a feeling of calmness in the stability of natural order, and also of vulnerability in the enduring fragility of that order. Each form is infused with meaning to reveal its inner significance,[2] and the "conversation" between shapes and materials gives expression to Brancusi's quiet consideration of essential meta physical issues.

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2 Description of piece on ArtStor website.

Fig. 1 Constantin Brancusi's *The Beginning of the World*, c. 1920, 30x30x20

Strengthening the Roots of a Rotting Yam

Paola Burburan

Who are you? Where do you come from? Who is your father? These questions asked throughout Homeric literature express a perpetual curiosity with the stranger's identity. Post-modern literature poses these same questions; however, they are not directed at the stranger, but at the self. Curious of its own identity, the post-modern world reflectively inquires – *Who am I?* One contemporary idea suggests the answer may be found in language. The very title of Wallace Stevens' poem "Men Made Out of Words" affirms this possibility. Stevens asks, "Where should we be without the sexual myth, / the human revery or the poem of death?" He argues that without the *myth*, the words that compose it, or the language from which the words are extracted, humanity would not exist, or rather it would exist, but without a purpose, destiny, or legacy.

Derek Walcott wrote of such a race – one whose existence seemed insignificant after the loss of its language and hi*story*. The purpose of his modern epic, *Omeros*, is to return to these people their story. Appropriately nicknamed *The Epic of the Dispossessed*, *Omeros* relates the sufferings of the black inhabitants of the Caribbean island, St. Lucia. Reduced by a gruesome past of slavery and further disheartened by their status as part of a British Commonwealth, the blacks of the island have been taught to be silent by domineering despots. Walcott manifests the pain of their subjugation in a festering, incurable wound borne by a native ex-fisherman Philoctete, the namesake of Homer's Philoctetes who also suffered from a festering wound. Only when the silence is broken and Philoctete reconnects with his story, does his wound heal, exhibiting the importance of language to the identity of a people.

The reader first learns of Philoctete's gangrenous wound in Book 1 where Walcott reveals that a rusted anchor carved a deep cut into the leg of the previously able-bodied

fisherman causing infection, pain, odor, and shame. The poet consciously selects the anchor as Philoctete's injurer. When one examines its most literal role, he realizes an anchor and chain restrain a ship from motion just as a ball and chain restrain a slave. By their overbearing weight, the anchor and the ball keep a ship in its place and a man in his social rank. Thus, the anchor embodies the affliction of Philoctete's enslaved ancestors. Walcott wants his reader to know that this is not just an anchor, it is a *rusted* anchor. The harsh environment has eaten away its surface leaving it decayed and forgotten, just as the suffering had sapped the strength of the slaves fighting their racial battle. Philoctete tried to carry the decaying anchor but faltered under its great weight; it left its mark on him. He tried to overcome the ancient torment but it proved stronger than he; instead, he would be burdened by an incurable sore to remind him of his suffering. Its odor would bring him shame, causing him to experience the humiliation of his predecessors.

Philoctete was fully aware of the wound's significance, and later on in Book 1 he ponders it more intimately:

> He believed the swelling came from the chained ankles
> of his grandfathers. Or else why was there no cure?
> That the cross he carried was not only the anchor's
>
> but that of his race, for a village black and poor,
> as the pigs that rooted in its burning garbage,
> then were hooked on the anchors of the abattoir. (Walcott 19)

The simile of the swine and the slaughterhouse puts into perspective the true status of the black natives of St. Lucia in particular, and the black race in general. Here, Philoctete envisions his people as swine, some of the most contemptible creatures in the animal kingdom. Burdened by feelings of inferiority and neglect, his people travelled the most humble paths of life. Just as the despised pigs surrendered their worthless selves to the slaughterhouse, the natives, sickened by insignificance, allowed their oppressors to feed on them, hoping to find a new sense of meaning in their suffering. But as all "Empires are swinish" (Walcott 63), the reader is aware that Philoctete sees his wound as more than just a physical injury: it is a manifestation of the painful subjugation of his race, for which, he understands, there is no immediate cure.

Ma Killman, owner of the No Pain Café and nurse of Philoctete's wound, claims her grandmother knew a root that would treat the cankerous sore, but she cannot remember where it grew. Her pondering incites Philoctete to contemplate the cure:

> Where was this root? What . . .
>
> could clean the branched river of his corrupted blood
> . . . What did it mean,
>
> this name that felt like a fever? Well, one good heft
> of his garden-cutlass would slice the damned name clean
>
> from its rotting yam . . . . (Walcott 19-20)

Here, the modern curiosity about personal identity is underlined. The interrogative mood heightens the sense of doubt, while the blankness of the breaks in the poem allows time for wondering. An incredulous Philoctete questions the cure. *Where was this root?* Where was the cure for his ancestors' sufferings? Where could their lost story be found? Walcott kindly provides an answer which he skillfully hides in a question. He makes a direct association with language by writing, "What did it mean, this *name…?*" A name in its most basic sense is a word, with a meaning, which belongs to a language. It is also the most concrete connection to one's identity; therefore, the name, the word, the language gives meaning to the individual. Philoctete wants to know the name, and, more importantly, the meaning behind it. He seeks the deeper, linguistic bond to his people. Unfortunately, Philoctete's connection to his identity is so frail "one good heft of his garden-cutlass would slice the damned name clean from its rotting yam." The roots of the yam signify the roots of the black race, from which its identity grows. They are rotting just like the cankerous wound because there is nothing to nurture them. The history of the natives is obscured by silence.

If a story is never retold, or if a language ceases to be spoken, it is forgotten. This is precisely what occurred with the natives of St. Lucia. Muted by their oppressors, they lost their history, their language, and the essence of who they were as a people. They were suffocated until even their mumblings became a silence that lasted for centuries; this same silence was the pain that stung Philoctete's sore. In Chapter IV of Book 1, Philoctete tends

to his yam garden located on an abandoned estate littered by rusted cauldrons once used to boil sugar – remnants of his history. The decaying, forgotten scenery sets the tone for the harrowing event Philoctete experiences. As he walked through the yam beds that sprouted in this forsaken territory

> . . . he felt a mole-cricket drill
>
> his sore to the bone . . .
> . . . behind the bars
>
> of his rusted teeth . . .
> a scream was mad to come out; his tongue tickled its claws
> on the roof of his mouth, rattling its bars in rage. (Walcott 21)

To fully understand the extent of Walcott's ingenious metaphor, one must first learn what a mole-cricket is. The mole-cricket feeds on the roots of plants, just as the whites fed on the roots of the black race for centuries, resulting in a pain so profound it "drills to the bone." Driven frantic by the agony of his rotting history, Philoctete wants to let out a scream but refrains. This is the ultimate representation of the strength of the silence that fettered Philoctete and his people. His scream is depicted as a raging, untamable passion to fight back; his tongue is a wild beast clawing its way out of his mouth. Despite this rage and passion, all the dissatisfaction is caught "behind the bars of his rusted teeth." The force of silence over Philoctete is so powerful, that he cannot open his mouth to utter a single word of contempt. No matter how much the beast shakes to be freed, he remains locked away, and eventually surrenders to his captors. Envious of the other yams in the garden that stand tall and bear ripe fruit, Philoctete uses his cutlass to chop down all the plants, cursing, "You all see what it's like without roots in this world?" (Walcott 21) He is frustrated by the inequality between the yams, or the races. While some roots protrude through the depths of the soil to support the stem of the race, his were eaten away. He cuts them down to show symbolically how other ethnicities feel to be without a past.

What pesticide could be used to prevent the mole-cricket from destroying his yam? By Book 6, Ma Killman finds the repellant – an exotic plant. Its seed was carried from Africa in the stomach of a swift which grew frail in travel and died on the shores of St. Lucia. With

time its body decayed, allowing the seed to sprout from it. With the brief anecdote of the swift, Walcott wittily allows the cure to originate from the disease itself. Philoctete's racial wound will be healed by a root that grew in the soil of his African ancestors; thus, he is reconnected with the beginning of his story. Because of this connection, the weed resembles its patient in many ways. Ma Killman describes the odd weed:

> . . . the wound of the flower, its gangrene, its rage
> festering for centuries, reeked with corrupted blood,
>
> seeped the pustular drops instead of sunlit dew
> into the skull, the brain of the earth, in the mind
> ashamed of its flesh, its hair. (244)

Like Philoctete the flower had a wound that festered and reeked. It too was caused by centuries of rage and suffering felt by the black St. Lucians who were always forced to settle for the worst, for the "pus" rather than the "dew." The plant's gangrene began to spread until it seeped into the mind and taught it to be shameful of personal identity, of skin color, and of African features. It grew in a graveyard, under the shadow of a tall cedar, and like the natives, strove to survive under impossible conditions. However, Walcott provides some hope: "As the weed grew in odor / so did its strength…" (239). In analyzing these lines, the reader embraces Walcott's message of salvation – as the death, darkness, and suffering intensify, the weed, the race, will grow stronger.

Ma Killman finally absolves Philoctete of his suffering by preparing a bath from the root of the exotic weed. Appropriately, she bathes him in a rusted sugar cauldron taken from the abandoned estate. Once again, Walcott meticulously selects the objects he weaves into his text. The words "root" and "basin" have a particular significance when related to Philoctete's personal identity. The root of the plant is equivalent to the roots of his people, while the sugar cauldron is representative of his forgotten history. Thus, Philoctete is cured of his ancient wound, one he's possessed even before the scrape of the anchor, as he feels the warmth of the cure soak into his skin and revitalize the roots of his identity. For the first time he is allowed to embrace who he is as an individual without shame, thereby, curing his perpetual anguish. By the conclusion of Book 6, a very different Philoctete emerges. It is Christmas, and no longer

burdened by the sore on his leg, Philoctete dances with his close friend Achille. They are not celebrating a holiday forced upon them by their oppressors, but rather they are celebrating a tradition of their African homeland. As he dances, Philoctete is reminded of the yams he had destroyed and begins to weep:

> . . . All the pain
>
> re-entered Philoctete, of the hacked yams, the hold
> closing over their heads, the bolt-closing iron,
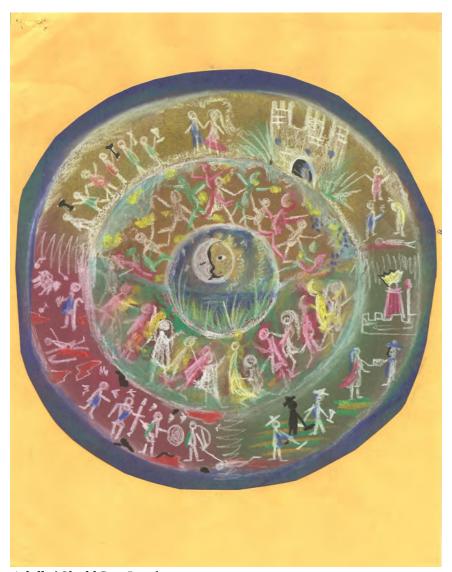> over eyes that never saw the light of this world,
>
> their memory still there although all the pain was gone. (Walcott 277)

In his moment of elation, Philoctete is reminded of all the souls of his people who did not live to rejoice in the celebration of their traditions and identity. Although his wound was physically cured, the memory of its infliction would always cause his heart to ache. And so Philoctete cried for the deceased members of his race and for the hacked yams.

By observing the evolution of a single character in Walcott's *Omeros*, the reader is witness to the contemporary struggle to find one's identity. A silent race without a history, roots, or language suffered through centuries of subjugation, yearning to rediscover its meaning. It was Walcott's hope that by composing this modern epic he could return to the natives of St. Lucia their legacy and so help to strengthen the roots of their rotting identity. He created for them Stevens' "myth, the human reverie" through language so necessary for their identity. Was he successful? Prior to his healing, Philoctete posed the question – *Who am I?* At this stage of his journey, he was just a "damned name" that could be "sliced clean from its rotting yam by one good heft of a garden-cutlass." His name meant nothing more than an incapable fisherman with a festering wound. Once he listened to the words of his ancestors and soaked in the extract of his roots, he knew who he was. By the end of *Omeros*, the name *Philoctete* meant imperishable strength and pride in a people.

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Achilles' Shield **Cara Lynch**

The Journey to *Where the Wild Things Are*: Three Works, Three Authors, One Max

Drew Facklam

Maurice Sendak, Spike Jonze, and Dave Eggers: three artists telling one story in three narrative styles. Sendak, the first to document the story of a boy named Max and his wild companions, wrote and illustrated *Where the Wild Things Are* in 1963. About forty years later, Sendak asked Spike Jonze, an experimental and critically acclaimed director, to create a movie version of his story, so Jonze, in collaboration with his friend Dave Eggers, produced a screenplay for Jonze's film *Where the Wild Things Are*. In late 2005, Sendak asked Eggers to write a novel which would depict the original story and recent screenplay (Goodman 1-3). But, these versions of Sendak's story were not meant to be carbon copies of each other. In an interview with Rolling Stone magazine, Eggers explained that writing *The Wild Things*, the title of his novel, was "a good chance to create my version of the story…So Maurice has his version, Spike has his version and I would be able to take it in the direction that I wanted to go" (Goodman 1).

In all three works, Max evokes different emotions in his initial fight with his mother (in the movie and novel, this argument includes his sister); in his relationships with the "wild things" on the island; and in his eventual departure from his imaginary land. The varying presentations of these situations create three very different depictions of childhood. None of these versions is simple, and none seems to be solely for children. All three narratives refuse to answer fully any questions the audience might have concerning the artists' perceptions of what it is to be a child, what it is to make a mistake, and what it is to forgive.

This uncertainty might make the audience uncomfortable. At the time of its publication, Sendak's book was considered by many as unsuitable for children – it was too

frightening, too dark. People prefer children's stories with happy endings – stories that have simple, good characters who make minor mistakes and who are never guilty of intentional cruelty. The challenge of Max's story is that Max, his family, and his "wild things" at times are cruel or deeply and irrevocably hurt. They fear persecution and end their stories in an uncertain and unsatisfying manner. Max is not saved from the complications of his life. Although all three works end with Max enjoying a warm and delicious dinner at home, his return doesn't cancel his need to apologize, his continued fear of loneliness, and his confusion about his place in the world. Sendak, Jonze, and Eggers are fully committed to portraying the worries of childhood as well as its joys; its perplexities and certainties; and its immorality and innocence. That is what makes each story compelling, connected, and a realization of Sendak's original truth.

In an interview with NPR, Sendak explained the ideas that inform his writing: "I don't do it for children, I don't write for children." He writes and illustrates with "a kind of fierce honesty to not let the kid down…to not let the child be dealt with in a boring, simpering, crushing of the spirit kind of way…I know the truth." The "truth," Sendak comments, is "the fun of destruction. Just the fun, and strength and ego of destruction…. I wasn't going to lie to the readers." Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* is filled with dark imagery and frightening monsters, including Max, who as Sendak's illustrations show, are engaged in destruction and passion every step of the way (*A Conversation with Maurice Sendak*).

Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* begins with Max who "wore his wolf suit and made mischief." He builds unruly forts with a hammer, some nails, and a couple of sheets, and chases his dog with a fork-sword. Max's facial expressions reveal his emotions; sometimes he's happy, but often his tilted grimace reveals his anger. A drawing signed by Max which depicts his simple home hangs on the wall in his stairwell. There is also a sketch of a googly-eyed, sharp-toothed, horned monster – an indication that Max's "wild things" already inhabit Max's mind. When his mother calls Max a "WILD THING!" Max answers, "I'LL EAT YOU UP," and he is sent to bed without dinner. But Max's mood quickly recovers as his room starts to expand and flora begins to grow as Max enters a whole new world created by his imagination, a world free of everyday problems. Taking an imaginary boat left especially for him (his name is cleverly printed on its side), Max travels "in and out of weeks and almost over a year to where the wild things are". The

"wild things" who "roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws" stand menacingly over Max, until a look in Max's eye proves that he is "the most wild thing of all."

These are not the cuddly, cute images of wild creatures that so often crowd the pages of many children's books. However bug-eyed and furry they are, these creatures are in no way friendly or loving. Instead of being attacked, Max is appointed king. He begins his reign with a "wild rumpus" in which the creatures run and play in their secluded world until Max commands them to stop and sends them to bed, as he was, without dinner. Max and the giant beasts sit together, looking dejected and lonely, despite their close quarters. But Max finally realizes that he wants "to be where someone loved him best of all" and decides to leave because he is so hungry. The "wild things" chase him down the beach exclaiming, "Oh please don't go—we'll eat you up—we love you so!" Max sails away smiling, and eventually reaches his room to "find his supper waiting for him…and it was still hot."

This story isn't particularly comforting, and in many ways, it can be interpreted as disturbing or mean-spirited. Max, who doesn't perform one redeemable action throughout the entire story, avoids the terrors of his beast companions. He comes home to find all is forgiven; his desires for both imaginary fun and beast-like behavior have momentarily ended, and he eats the dinner he may or may not have deserved. As Sendak explained in his NPR interview, children are not always the sweet, innocent creatures so often depicted in stories. Sendak also explained that his own childhood was tainted by guilt about his friends and family who had died in the Holocaust and his parents' inability to communicate anything but horror stories to him. He explains that his clearest memories of childhood are of his father telling stories about his friends being murdered in Germany. Sendak explained how angry he was and how he hated his parents for much of his youth.

Max, like Sendak, is filled with anger. His actions are neither easy to understand nor excusable, but in the end he is forgiven because he is a child. Sendak's story was an instant classic; children everywhere gravitated to his unique illustrations and understanding of the power of one's imagination and the wildness of childhood. When asked about his legacy as a teller of children's stories, Sendak answered: "I want to give it away. I want to give it away to young artists

who are as vehement and passionate as I was" (*A Conversation with Maurice Sendak*).

Spike Jonze's movie adaptation of *Where the Wild Things Are* is true to Sendak's original purpose. Like Sendak, Jonze doesn't care about those childhood stories that are easy to recover and easy to romanticize. He wants his audience to remember those childhood moments that often are uncomfortable to remember, yet are so real, so tangible. In a manner similar to Sendak's illustrations of his characters' grotesque expressions, Jonze's Max sometimes reveals overwhelming emotions which dominate the pace of the movie despite the speed of the camera's movement which follows Max's frantic pace. This technique, which often frames incidents in the plot, makes the emotions of such a turbulent child real. The story becomes understood not through the necessity of a strong setting, rise in drama, or climax and resolution, but through the arc of Max's emotional struggles. The audience experiences things the way Max does and rarely observes the narrative from outside the action. Max's emotional struggles are more heart-rending since it becomes clear how small he is in the world of grown-up promises and wild landscapes. Even in Max's fantasy world he is much smaller than his surroundings; his emotions and various personae often are larger than the character himself.

Both Sendak and Jonze are most interested in Max's inner struggles. But, Jonze deviates from and adds to Sendak's original text by adding another layer to Max's real and imaginary worlds – Jonze adds a family. In Sendak's story, Max's family is personified by his mother who is never drawn. She simply yells at Max, tells him to go to his room, and eventually leaves him a warm dinner. But Jonze adds personal and poignant moments with a loving and sad mother, and a confused and annoying sister who doesn't help Max in time of need. These family dynamics become clear in the opening scenes of the movie. Max is truly loving and affectionate towards his mother as he lies on the floor under his mother's desk as she reads to him one of his stories she's saved on her computer. Jonze's perspective creates a warm and touching scene. But after several awkward and sad moments between Max and his sister, and after Max sees his mother with her presumed boyfriend, Max becomes a "wild thing" as he trashes his sister's bedroom with buckets of water and runs into the night after a fight he's had with his family before dinner. Sendak's Max is mischievous, but Jonze's Max is much more complicated: Jonze's portrayal is a reflection of Max's ability to perceive both the

complications and problems of the adult world and the intensity and imagination of youth.

Jonze further complicates the "wild things" themselves. They are not the simple beasts of Sendak's drawings but real characters whose emotions mirror those of Max, his sister, and his mother and who force Max to face the feelings he tries to escape. Unlike Sendak's simple escape from an island with its monster inhabitants, Jonze's escape is almost a Freudian reflection of the conscious and subconscious desires of both Max and his family. Max's intense anger and sadness is vividly shown in his tears and rages and brutally manifested in the violence among the "wild things."

My own experience with the movie proved how disturbing the experience was for children in the audience who ranged from four to ten years old. They were, for the most part, angry, nervous, and confused, and at one point, one child was so upset that he, like Max, continually demanded his parents' attention. Finally, he yelled, "This movie makes me so mad, we have to leave right now!" He and his parents promptly left the theater. The children's emotional responses were so strong and so unexpected (especially to the children themselves) that the audience became as tense and as emotional as Max. Jonze expects much from his audience; he expects the self-reflection and awareness that we so often discuss as an aspect of literary and artistic works in the post-modern world. Jonze wants his audience to realize that although they would prefer to remember childhood as a simpler time, children's emotions are just as significant and intense as those associated with adulthood: Max's emotions are as real as his mother's, his sister's, and ours. They become so real in the movie that they shape the audience's perception of the action and of the characters. Sendak creates an imaginary world for Max, but Jonze creates a real one. And in that world Max struggles to rectify his misdeeds against his mother and sister.

Jonze's only shortcoming is his inability to create well-defined motives for the personalities of his "wild things." They seem to be a jumble of the personalities and emotions that dominate Max's life and in many ways end up lost or confused. In *The Wild Things*, Dave Eggers uses the "wild things" to create an imaginary world in which Max becomes conscious of how these creatures mirror his own life and of how he truly grows from this knowledge.

Eggers creates Max's world of imagination using a series of events that leads to his

eventual escape. In order to attack his sister's creepy friends, Max builds a snow fort with such a sense of purpose that it seems as if he is morally obligated to conquer this loathsome group. He places a stick with hat atop the fort to signal his stronghold: he "was satisfied that it truly almost looked like a flag—a flag raised for a great nation and before a glorious and necessary battle" (20). When his sister's friends crush him inside his very own fort, Max realizes that "it was his job, at that moment, to pay Claire (his sister) back…for allowing her friends to nearly kill him" (30). Max considers his actions legitimate, part of a grand plan he carefully executes. His fantasy and reactions to disappointment go hand in hand; yet, the fantasy is not merely playful. Often, it is a genuine reflection of his responses to real life problems. The issue is that many times Max cannot control his strong emotional responses. He expresses regret after flooding his sister's room, and contemplates never being forgiven for biting his mom during an argument and running away from home.

Eggers' "wild things" are the strongest manifestations of Max's serious and even dangerous fantasy. Max's first perceptions of these creatures are filled with comparisons to himself: the teeth of these immense monsters are "as big as Max's hand" (109) and the only animal who "was just a little bigger than Max" (107) becomes the "wild thing" Max identifies with most. Carol, the leader of the wild pack, represents the intense love Max thinks he deserves until he realizes that such uncontrollable passion is the anger and frustration he feels within himself. In many ways, Carol's actions mirror Max's story: he creates a "wild thing's" fort with a joy and seriousness similar to Max's and he destroys the fort – an uncontrollable reaction to Max's fears and frustrations – in the same way that Max floods his sister's room in response to his feelings of rejection. Max plays the role for Carol that Max's mom so often played for Max. Like Max's mom who cares for Max, Max tries to take care of Carol, but like Max, Carol's emotions cannot be contained and he escapes to an island. Carol commits all sorts of unforgivable acts: he destroys the "wild things'" home; he rips off another "wild thing's" arm; and he tries to eat Max when he attempts to leave the island.

Yet Carol, like Max, acknowledges these horrible actions: he's "afraid knowing he could never take back what he'd done and what Max had just seen. He turn[s] away and walk[s] into the woods" (260). But Max as king and protector of the "wild things" feels a deep sense of love and forgiveness despite the terrible nature of Carol's acts. Even though

Max realizes he must leave the island and face his real life problems, his final moment with Carol is one of true tenderness. As Max sailed away, he looked "in Carol's face" and "saw only sadness. There was no more anger, no more want, nothing but sorrow and regret" (280). Max, "knowing it was the only thing to do, howled. The howl sounded like forgiveness, and this was all, it seemed, Carol wanted" (281). Carol seeks the same affirmation from Max that Max seeks from his mother, and in the end, Max's relationship with Carol teaches Max how much real love begets forgiveness. When Max reaches home, he finds his mom sleeping on the couch, waiting for him: "He stood above his mother for some time, knowing her now, really almost knowing her now, happy to watch her rest" (285). Eggers' Max shows a conscious desire to grow and learn from the reprehensible acts he believes he has committed in order to become a more empathetic person.

Each of the three story tellers, Sendak, Jonze, and Eggers, took something from his own life and wove it into his work: Sendak enjoys the passion and frustration of childhood; Jonze places that childhood in a richer context and gives Max a greater depth of emotion; and Eggers creates a more reflective Max and more dimensional "wild things" who explain Max's love for serious fantasy and the role it plays in his life. Eggers reminds us of our paradoxical need to both escape from and conquer our unresolved feelings. Each of the three narratives is haunting in its own way, and all reflect in some way the complexity of childhood.

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Loneliness and Tragedy: The Dark Side of Female Identity

Kathryn Jorge

No individual's identity is completely static; it is constantly being formed and reformed throughout a lifetime. Yet what are the consequences for a woman of having an identity that is so fluid she cannot find a firm place in society? The result may be deep isolation: she is misunderstood by loved ones and dissatisfied with the world around her. For although we acknowledge and sometimes celebrate the dynamics of identity, without that firm sense of self, such a woman finds only loneliness and, ultimately, tragedy. Zohara in David Grossman's *The Zigzag Kid* and Eri Asai in Haruki Murakami's novel *After Dark* are two such women. Though Zohara fully embraces changing identity and Eri Asai cannot sustain all of the changes demanded of her, both experience personal tragedy.

Zohara is at first an unknown and shadowy figure. Though she is the deceased mother of David Grossman's protagonist Nonny Fauerberg, she initially occupies few of her son's thoughts and is never spoken about. However, as the novel progresses, Zohara is revealed to be anything but insignificant – her colorful life and memory affect all of the major characters in the novel, even from beyond the grave. For all of her beauty and daring in life, Zohara is an exceptionally lonely character. Her life is one of constant transitions, not limited to societal roles or characters, but extending to her very personality. She transforms from a melancholy and bookish child to an extroverted and wild adult; she turns from contemplating death to wildly embracing life; and she manipulates the fictive worlds and characters she creates in her mind so as to get what she wants from real people in real situations.

Is it any wonder that such a woman would be a remarkable con artist? There is nothing static about Zohara in any way. When asked about the lack of a mirror in her bedroom, she responds simply: "I just don't want to see myself, there's nothing to see!"

(Grossman 221). A mirror reflects a concrete representation of the viewer not only physically but also psychologically. Seeing one's reflection implies a sense of permanence about one's self: the person looking back is still essentially the same person no matter how the physical appearance changes. Zohara is correct – there is nothing for her to see in the mirror. She changes so frequently and so thoroughly that not even she can grasp her own self.

Zohara completely defies categorization. She is not solely a child, a woman, a daughter, a wife, a mother, a criminal, or an heiress. In fact, she is none of these. She can adapt to any situation, from mingling with British soldiers to duping deposed kings to living ascetically on a lonely mountain with the cop who arrested her. Her father, Felix, emphasizes to Nonny that people could not help but be drawn to her. However, "Only Zohara was Zohara," her mother Lola firmly states to Nonny (Grossman 277). This is the only thing definitive about her. Zohara is a category unto herself. And this is the hardest concept for Nonny – and even more so, his father – to grasp.

Yet that fluid identity, so useful in Zohara's criminal career, pushes others away from her as much as they are attracted to her. When her classmate remarks, "Forget about her, she doesn't belong anywhere. Just pretend that she fell from the moon," he demonstrates that he has given up on making any stable connection to Zohara (Grossman 222). He not only excludes her from their group but also denies her inclusion in human society by claiming she is not even of this world. His response, which he advocates to others, is to simply "forget about her." She is so in flux that a connection with her peers is well-nigh impossible.

But this distancing is not limited solely to those around Zohara. Zohara herself maintains a distance from those around her. Zohara can only be Zohara – she cannot fit herself into conventional categories unless she has something to gain in return. The romance with Nonny's father is Zohara's only attempt to settle into a role for the long-term, ostensibly out of love for her husband and her unborn child. Unsurprisingly, she cannot hold out. Zohara grows dissatisfied with everything around her, including her husband. She hoped that "he would walk alongside her in the sky – walk, not crawl! But look at him! How could he ever understand a person like her!" (Grossman 283). Nonny's father, for all his dashing feats when young, is like the others in her view: he categorizes, he includes and excludes, he does

not transcend classification. She thought she had found a kindred soul, but she was mistaken; he does not understand her and she cannot understand him. Their Eden becomes her Hell; the relationship becomes increasingly strained, especially when she spends long periods of time away. She definitively breaks contact when she claims: "I am not alone. I have myself and my gun" (Grossman 284). Her husband is no longer company: she has pushed him away completely. Despite her claim, Zohara **is** alone.

The novel does not question that an early death is Zohara's ultimate fate. It is likely that she always knew she would die young. Why else would a child celebrating her sixth birthday, "when they raised her high for the year to come," announce that "she had decided to die exactly twenty years from the day" (Grossman 218)? Zohara lives her life completely on the edge, vivaciously flouting society's expectations and even the law. Her protean identity – the only quality that remains unchanged about Zohara – does not allow her to remain in one role for too long. There is nothing to see in that mirror; she cannot create a genuinely stable and fixed identity either for her husband or for herself. When the adrenaline and the glamour of the criminal life has dimmed for her, what else is left? As Nonny narrates:

> She already knew, already felt that she didn't belong here or anywhere else, and sometimes she would gallop to the jagged edge of the mountain, to the edge of the cliff, and look down to the vastness calling her to fly down, like an anguished bird, to speed herself out of her life like an arrow released…. (Grossman 295)

Her fate is sealed by her failed attempt to live with Nonny's father. She cannot bear being trapped in a world that dissatisfies and excludes her, which demands from her some firm sense of identity that she can neither create nor obtain. Death is the only means for Zohara to be freed "like an arrow released" from this tense trap of isolation. But death is not frightening or sad to Zohara; she had been thinking about it since she was a little girl. One cannot be afraid of death if one is jumping across buildings and exchanging bullets with the police. Most significantly, though, it is Zohara's choice. She could have chosen to live, but would she be truly living? Would she be happy? Most likely not. There is no road for her that does not lead to tragedy.

Nonny, writing years later, admits he still does not and possibly will never fully grasp who his mother truly is. His received descriptions of her from those who knew her seem vague

and unreal. Zohara is no Lola Ciperola. Lola, Zohara's mother, is an extraordinary actress. But she deals with masks and temporary changes; these are roles for her. Lola knows who she is, whom she loves, what she wants. She can alter her appearance with clothes, make-up, and exaggerated gestures. But underneath it all, the self she would see in the mirror is "a plain old woman." "At home she was a woman of flesh and blood who spoke with a slight accent and made humorous comments around things, and had a pretty face and a supple body and age spots on her hands and a slightly wrinkled neck…" (Grossman 194-195). She can claim with confidence that Nonny need not follow in Zohara's footsteps, that he can make his own choices.

Nor is Zohara like Gabi, the only mother figure that Nonny has ever known. Gabi knows she is overweight and unattractive, that she has faults and cannot help but love Nonny's father (even after years of waiting). And she accepts this. Gabi bemoans her appearance but she never laments or changes her identity. Nonny cannot exclude Gabi from his world as others (and for a long time, he himself) had excluded Zohara: "But she's so unlike Zohara, I mused, and thank goodness for that. She's from real life, not the cinema" (Grossman 278).

All the characters in this novel are permanently marked by their relationship to Zohara. As Felix says, it is "impossible not to love Zohara" (Grossman 223). But Felix does not pull any punches for Nonny's sake when he states:

> And she was strong, Amnon, strong like only very beautiful people are.
> She was even, how to say it, cruel. Maybe she did not know her own power
> or understand the danger of beauty. There were some whose lives were ruined
> because of her, and she played with them until she was tired and tossed them
> away. (Grossman 227)

Nonny, Felix, and Lola accept Zohara's choices and appreciate the relationship they had with this remarkable woman. Only Nonny's father refuses, as he had earlier, to understand Zohara and her choices. While the others recognize her protean nature and the loneliness she felt, Nonny's father solely sees Zohara as the beautiful love of his life and is stung by his own sense of abandonment. This is alleviated when Felix bluntly states: "She was very special. I know you really love her. But enough. You must try to forget the dead. Life goes on" (Grossman 304). Yet even her memory conflicts with the world that all the other

characters live in. Even in death, Zohara must be kept out of the way.

As with Zohara in *The Zigzag Kid*, the reader is not immediately introduced to Eri Asai in the beginning of Haruki Murakami's novel *After Dark*. All we know of her is that she is Mari Asai's pretty sister and that she has something to do with why Mari is frequenting a dangerous part of Tokyo late at night. Yet Eri's presence hangs heavily over the novel's action even when she is not physically present. Where would the novel begin if Eri had not first introduced Mari to Tetsuya Takahashi on that less-than-stellar double date? It is unlikely that Mari would have ever left Denny's.

However, Eri's identity possesses a different kind of fluidity than Zohara's. If Eri were to look in a mirror, as she would need to do for her modeling career, she would see herself as everyone else sees her: a pretty image, nothing more. She lacks that firm sense of self not because her personality resists such stability, but because the outside world has so firmly latched on to her appearance, demanding that she change to fit others' demands, that she never have the freedom to do what she wants. "You seem to have a good, strong grip on yourself," Korogi says to Mari (Murakami 202). Mari may be young, but she has some bedrock sense of self that others can recognize, categorize, and connect to. No one would say this of Eri; it would get in the way of their ability to shape and mold her as they please. Eri is just a face and body; she is isolated because her identity is so malleable and incomplete, and she cannot fit into any other category beyond the superficial one of "beautiful."

In every conversation about Eri, no one ever mentions what she likes or dislikes, what personality quirks she has, what movies and music she likes, what dreams and fears she has, or what plans she has for the future. These questions are all put to Mari, but never to Eri. She seems more like a template or object, used and reused repeatedly to promote products in magazines and television. Yet how can she develop a firm sense of self when this state is precisely what society – including her parents – demands of her?

When awakening in the TV world, Eri thinks to herself: *"I'm a lump of flesh, a commercial asset"* (Murakami 139). Eri recognizes that she is bound up in these relationships of manipulation and finance in which she is merely an object. She knows that what matters is her appearance as though she were a lump of clay to be molded by an artist, instead of a person

who makes choices for herself. She becomes "[s]uddenly…far less sure that she is herself" when she reflects on how she views herself on a psychological and emotional rather than a physical level (Murakami 139). She is less sure of herself because she is confronting her true dilemma: she has no concrete self, only a malleable image.

This introspection, however, is thwarted by Eri's circumstances. Mari emerges out of her isolation through actual contact with other people. Throughout the novel, she speaks with people and becomes part of a network contained within larger, concurrent, overlapping networks. At the end of the night, she no longer feels so alone and is ready to reach out to others in turn. Eri does not have this luxury. She has wholly and deliberately separated herself from human contact through her self-imposed sleep. Eri cannot converse with any loved ones or doctors; thus, she cannot make a connection with anyone. This lack of conversation follows Eri into the strange TV world where Eri is completely alone; no matter how loud she yells or pounds on the screen, no one can hear her in the "real" world. Even the narrator/reader (referred in the text as "we") cannot communicate to her since "all that we, as pure point of view, can accomplish is to observe – observe, gather data, and, if possible, judge. We are not allowed to touch her. Neither can we speak to her. Nor can we indicate our presence to her directly" (Murakami 132).

Like the reader, everyone around Eri follows this credo. However, Eri's loved ones do not have the reader's excuse of being bodiless and voiceless. Eri's family can speak to her, touch her, show that they are present to her in some physical or vocal way, but they do not. They follow the doctors' recommendation that they leave her to wake up on her own.

Mari cannot bear the situation so she leaves the house and Eri behind entirely. Instead of reaching out to Eri, Mari too leaves her alone in her sleep for about two months. Eri's bizarre experience in the world behind the TV screen becomes a metaphor for a deep isolation manifested in a supernatural form. Yet Eri is lonely even in this strange place; once she awakens on the other side of the screen, no one is there. While she was asleep, the creepy Man With No Face had been fixated on her, but he disappears from the narrative completely once Eri wakes up.

For all her beauty, Eri is just as unreal and uncanny as that vanishing voyeur. Neither

has a clear identity, nor do they talk or interact with any other person. Though the Man With No Face vanishes, one lonely woman remains – a woman whose beautiful face leaves her with no sense of self, no opportunity for connecting with someone like her wide-awake sister: "… it is impossible for her to pass through the transparent glass wall and return to this side. Some kind of agency or intent transported her to that other room and sealed her in there as she slept" (Murakami 185). She can pound on the wall all she likes, but Eri cannot break through.

This wall had, of course, existed before her self-imposed sleep. Takahashi perceptively notes to Mari, "I'm not included in what's going on here. She's sitting right in front of me, but at the same time she's a million miles away…This *layer*, some kind of transparent *sponge* kind of thing, stands there between…" (Murakami 151). Eri has had this problem for a considerable amount of time. The difference is that her disconnect is becoming more obvious and much more dangerous. The extreme step of putting herself into a deep sleep finally demonstrates that something is wrong. She is "in a deep, deliberate state of sleep as if her entire body has been enveloped in warm wax. Clearly, something here is incompatible with nature" (Murakami 31-32).

The wax metaphor suggests that Eri is separated and shielded from the rest of the world, undisturbed by contact or communication. Yet this same imagery also indicates Eri's own feeling of objectification: she is packaged and preserved for everyone to admire. She is a man-made thing – albeit, a pretty one – unable to connect with others. Underneath that lovely sleeping countenance is an unstable identity in peril. Eri is terrified, especially as "the meaning of her physical self" is cyclically "eroded" when "[t]he contact point in the circuit connecting the two worlds" breaks up towards the end of each night (Murakami 187). She wants to escape, but cannot: the screen is in her way. Her horrified thought that *"No one knows I'm here. I'm sure of it. No one knows that I am in this place"* is, unfortunately, true (Murakami 141).

Mari dismisses Takahashi's report that Eri had been "popping every kind of pill you can imagine" during their so-called chat, "munching 'em like nuts" as she downs Bloody Marys (Murakami 148-149). A problem is acknowledged, but no one deals with it, for no one realizes that Eri is desperate at this point; she has cut herself off from the people who want so

much of her. Her retreat into further isolation will never solve the real dilemma.

Eri is not wholly to blame for this predicament. She has been expected to answer others' demands unquestioningly – to be the good daughter, the pretty model – and has never had a chance to assert her own identity as Mari has. From an early age, Mari has the leeway to do what she wants. Her parents may have picked out roles for them – "the elder sister, Snow White; the younger sister, a little genius" – but Mari does not adhere to these expectations (Murakami 69). She is intelligent, but she has chosen her own path. Eri, on the other hand, was pigeonholed early in that lonely and exalted category of "beautiful." As Takahashi frankly explains to Mari:

> You're the kid sister, but you always had a good, clear image of what you wanted for yourself. You were able to say no when you had to, and you did things at your own pace. But Eri Asai couldn't do that. From the time she was a little girl, her job was to play her assigned role and satisfy the people around her…At one of the most crucial points in her life, she didn't have a chance to establish a firm self. (Murakami 156)

In constantly changing her identity to satisfy others, Eri satisfies no one, least of all herself. Yet Eri does not know any other way of living and interacting with others; she is not Mari, who is confident enough to spend the night in a dangerous part of Tokyo. Nor is she like Kaoru, the owner of the love hotel who talks openly about her past and can hold her ground against mafia thugs. Fulfilling other people's wants is all that Eri knows. Stuck in the world behind the television screen, she screams, *"I hate this! …I don't want to be changed in this way!"* Her identity is so fluid that even when isolated, she keeps changing and reforming at the risk of losing herself entirely. There is no one who can tell her what to change into, but what is she then, when no one is around? Her escape into further isolation results not in peace but terror: "[H]er intended scream never emerges. All that leaves her throat in reality is a fading whimper" (Murakami 140).

Both Zohara and Eri are exceptionally lonely figures. While their isolation stems from different sources, they are each so remote, even from those they love and who love them in return, that they can no longer find a place in this world. As a young Zohara shrieked in fright, "There's no fence, there's no fence around the world, what if we fall off?" (Grossman

221) The open nature of the world, with its endless variations and possibilities, is terrifying. To cope with this uncertainty, individuals compartmentalize people, events, and objects. They seek connections with other people to form an anchor to this constantly changing world.

Haruki Murakami noted in an interview: "There are many distractions and many flaws. And instead of being happy, in most cases we are frustrated and stressed" (French). The "many distractions and many flaws" of this open world bear down heavily upon all of the characters. Most take comfort in the fact that, as Murakami claims, "at least things are open" in this terrifying and stressful world: "You have choice and you can decide the way you live" (French). But both Zohara and Eri choose to take themselves out of this world entirely. This is a difficult decision, but it is theirs to make.

Fiction is a bridge that allows the reader to make connections. Grossman believes: "I'm writing fiction because this is the only way I have to understand myself and to understand other people ("NOW with Bill Moyers"). Nonny, as the narrator of *The Zigzag Kid*, speaks retrospectively, adding his own adult experience to this seminal event of his life, still seeking to understand himself – and also his mother. In a similar fashion, the narrator/reader ("we") of *After Dark* were completely uninterested in Eri Asai, yet "we" continue to check on her throughout the night, breaking even the objective stance of pure point of view to try (if futilely) to reach out to her. Through these novels, therefore, the readers make a desired connection with these women, though the women are unaware of it. And this in turn invites the readers to look at themselves. These novels ask uncomfortable questions that require deep thinking. What about your own sense of self? Is your identity too rigid, or – like Zohara's and Eri's – too fluid? Are you isolated? Do you understand and connect with the people around you or do you treat them as if they were "nothing much more than a wall with human features that could respond…now and then as necessary"? (Murakami 150). We know about Zohara and Eri, but "what about you?" the reader is asked.

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Carbon Footprinting and Its Application to Australia

Melissa Boo

The concept of a carbon footprint is a relatively new idea in environmental impact assessment. It has been popularized by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Kyoto Protocol, and the well-known documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. However, questions have been raised by scientists and citizens alike as to what exactly constitutes a carbon footprint, and how appropriate it is for quantifying environmental impacts. This paper aims to clarify the definition of a carbon footprint, and to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the national and international use of the carbon footprinting system.

The current concern with carbon emissions is due to the increased confirmation and awareness of human-exacerbated climate change. The United Nation's IPCC gathers scientists from around the world to evaluate the extent of climate change, and to find solutions for the reduction of the negative impact on the environment caused by human activity. Much of this impact is linked to greenhouse gas emissions which include carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride (Matthews et al. 2008). Carbon dioxide emissions, largely due to the fossil fuel-dependent technology employed by developed and developing countries were chosen to be the focus of mitigation efforts. The significant environmental impact, large quantity of emissions and the feasibility of its management make carbon dioxide an important consideration for many political and business regulations (Matthews et at. 2008).

Carbon footprints are a tool used to quantify carbon dioxide emissions (Wiedmann and Minx 2007). The concept of footprinting can be linked to Georg Borgstrom's 1976 idea of "ghost acreages," a measure of agricultural carrying capacity. A contemporary of Borgstrom, William Rees, proposed that environmental concerns ought to be accounted for in planning

and design; he referred to these concerns as "regional capsules" and, later, "ecological footprints" (Cranston et al. 2008).

Today, the terms ecological footprint and carbon footprint are often used to quantify a person, region, business, or country's impact on the environment; however, it is important to realize that they are not interchangeable terms. An ecological footprint is distinct from a carbon footprint because it measures the amount of land utilized for obtaining inputs and absorbing waste in the subject's production process or lifetime (Cranston et al. 2008, Kitzes et al. 2008, Matthews et al. 2008). A carbon footprint, however, lacks a fully standardized definition. It may be measured two-dimensionally as area, as an ecological footprint is, because it is based on an amount of land, or it may be measured three-dimensionally as a unit of mass (oftentimes, tonnes). Carbon footprints can include exclusively carbon dioxide emissions, or they may include the carbon equivalents of other greenhouse gases emitted (Wiedmann and Minx 2007). There is also uncertainty over what processes should and should not be included in carbon footprint analysis; measurements can be taken exclusively for on-site emissions or they can be incorporated into the "cradle to gate" analysis of emissions. While a broad evaluation may grossly underestimate carbon emissions, a detailed analysis can raise the problem of double-counting emissions. Proper mathematical analysis can reduce the error of double-counting along the production chain (Matthews et al. 2008, Wiedmann and Minx 2007).

Because there is no standardized, regulated definition of a carbon footprint, it is important to define the parameters of a carbon footprint analysis each time one is conducted. Some frequently used and widely accepted models are: 1) process analysis, better known as life-cycle assessment (LCA); 2) environmental input-output analysis (EIO); and 3) hybrid EIOLCA (Matthews et al. 2008, Wiedmann and Minx 2007). An LCA is a bottom-up method of carbon footprinting that includes the emissions of all the processes that go into the production, transportation, on-site emissions, and disposal of a product or goods. This "cradle to grave" or "cradle to gate" approach is best used for small-scale analysis for business or a product. EIO analysis evaluates carbon emissions top-down, which automatically establishes the boundaries of the analysis by having an end in mind. EIO is helpful for looking at establishments with sectors, like a large corporation or a region. An EIOLCA method is most commonly used, as it takes into account both lower order and higher order processes

(Matthews et al. 2008, Wiedmann and Minx 2007).

Neglecting inputs and disposal can significantly underestimate carbon emissions. For example, scientists have looked at one method of carbon footprinting which uses tiers to estimate emissions for businesses. Tier 1 looks at on-site emissions, Tier 2 is for energy inputs, and Tier 3 totals emissions up to the production gate. Often when this method is used, only Tier 1 and 2 are calculated, which two-thirds of the time results in the neglect of over 75% of all emissions. Scientists also suggest an additional fourth tier which would include "delivery, use, and disposal." This study of tier analysis is one example of the potential for carbon footprint manipulation to underestimate an entity's impact and evade responsibility (Matthews et al. 2008).

The manipulation of results is only one potential weakness of the carbon footprinting system. Without a standard definition, carbon footprints can be hard to compare due to the use of different calculation techniques and units. For example, some sources may use carbon equivalents of other greenhouse gases, while others only include carbon dioxide emissions. Also, most footprinting methods, especially EIO analysis, assume that there are constant prices, quantities, processes and outputs although there may be changes with time (Wiedmann and Minx 2007). The lack of definition can also lead to misinterpretation by readers and laypersons unfamiliar with the flexibility of the term.

However, the carbon footprint's ability to quantify environmental impact is also beneficial to laypersons, governments, and corporations alike. As long as the method of calculation is understood, carbon footprints are a useful tool for comparisons over time or across entities. After all, it is the method of choice for the IPCC. Carbon dioxide measurements are also useful for carbon sequestering methods; "going carbon neutral" by sequestering emissions is a growing trend for businesses and institutions (Wiedmann and Minx 2007).

Carbon footprinting on a national scale helps provide information to draw up regulations about greenhouse gas emissions, as well as "alert humanity to the necessity of living within the regenerative capacity of the biosphere" (Hammond 2006). Footprints are used in international agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Asia-Pacific Partnership

on Clean Development and Climate, to establish and distribute environmental responsibility (Kitzes et al. 2008, Hammond 2006). Australia presents a unique situation for carbon footprint analysis: the country is an isolated island, giving it clear ecological boundaries and evident imports and exports (Lenzen and Murray 2001). And with the resources of an entire continent available, it makes an interesting case study of the management of per capita and national carbon dioxide emissions.

As of 2001, Australia was said to have the highest per capita land clearing rate and greenhouse gas emissions (Lenzen and Murray 2001). The 2007/2008 Human Development Index (HDI) Report reports Australia as having a per capita carbon footprint of 16.2 tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2004. While this was not the highest footprint that year, it is comparable to the world's greatest carbon dioxide contributor, the United States, with a per capita carbon footprint of 20.6 tonnes in 2004. Yet, despite its high per capita footprint, Australia makes up only 1.1% of the world's total emissions (HDI 2007/2008). Evidently, Australia's low population allows each citizen to be responsible for the emission of a large amount of carbon dioxide while still keeping the nation's carbon footprint comparatively low. Hammond concluded in his evaluation of national carbon footprints that "…sparsely populated countries such as…Australia…can be seen to live well within their carrying capacity," despite its ongoing development and use of fossil fuels (Hammond, 2006).

Studies have also shown that there is generally a positive correlation between income and carbon dioxide emissions (Cranston et al. 2008, Cohen and Vandenberg 2008, Hammond 2006, Lenzen and Murray 2001). As of 2004, Australia was ranked third on the HDI, indicating a high level of income per person (HDI 2007/2008). The availability of disposable income leads to greater consumption of goods, services, energy, and leisure activities (especially travel), which in turn produces a larger amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, opponents of carbon regulation measures argue that regulating carbon dioxide emissions will increase prices and reduce personal wealth (Cohen and Vandenbergh 2008). There will have to be a tradeoff between production and carbon regulation if current policies and practices continue, and this may result in a small decrease in wealth (Matthews et al. 2008 Hammond 2006). However, the benefit of regulation must be realized; the negative effects of climate change, such as an increased

frequency of severe storms, altered weather patterns, flooding, and other disasters will be much more costly to countries, businesses, citizens, and to an individual's general well-being than an alteration or reduction in superfluous consumption (Cohen and Vandenbergh 2008). Studies have also shown that individuals can quickly adapt to new economic conditions and recover from the initial dissatisfaction of income loss (Cohen and Vandenbergh 2008). Indeed, monitoring and managing carbon dioxide emissions can even help businesses evaluate the effectiveness of production methods and direct them toward more cost-efficient options (Matthews et al. 2008).

Despite the flaws of the carbon footprinting system, it is still a useful tool in quantifying and evaluating an entity's contribution to climate change. Focusing on carbon dioxide emissions provides a comparable figure to monitor emissions over time and across groups. Carbon footprints are especially helpful in looking at countries' contributions to climate change; carbon dioxide is a major waste product of fossil fuel energy and other activities of industrialized countries. Australia exemplifies the importance of looking at both individuals' emissions and the country's emissions in deciding on the responsibility a country has for climate change. Once carbon footprints are evaluated, proper management and reduction techniques can be employed, such as the Kyoto Protocol. Right now carbon footprints lack an official definition, but with time, experience, trial and error, this new process can be perfected into a valuable environmental assessment tool.

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