

THE

Summer 2010

QUAD

of Grove City College



THE QUAD

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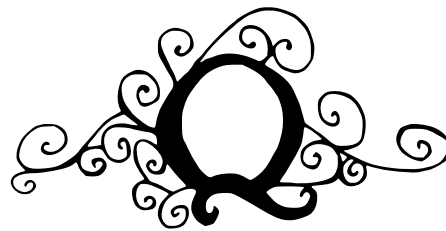
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EDITORS' NOTE

Alienation is a fitting word to describe the state of human relationships in our post-Eden society. Intimate friendships are hard to find, stable marriages are few and far between, and many of us have witnessed tender affinity disintegrate into cold ostracism time and again. We all have our reasons to explain why humans just cannot get along; why people act the way they do to things they do not like. Retaliation is often the response to a deep-seeded alienation that manifests itself in various ways and at various times and places.

Humankind forfeited community, wholeness, and peace with God, man and nature when our father Adam fell in the garden. Yet God is merciful to his creation in spite of such rebellion, and in the midst of the present chaos, we somehow catch glimpses of how things should be, and perhaps one day will be once God has fully redeemed his creation. We will finally experience belonging and know for the first time our intended place [*Homelessness*, Lee]. We will be able to fully engage our neighbors and family rather than settle for the superficial [*Suburbs*, Buddemeier]. Race and skin color will cease incite discrimination and hatred [*Let a Man Through*, Schlaudt]. And the marginalized will finally find a voice and speak [*Education of a British Protected Child*, Walker].

We are indebted, once again, to our highlighted contributor, Dr. T. David Gordon, for allowing us to publish his book review, *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision*. With this piece, we complete our first installment of *Scholar's Armchair*, the section which features the scholarship of a faculty member over the course of one volume. We hope you enjoy this addition.

It is with a bittersweet enthusiasm that we present you with this issue of *The Quad*. We are sad to see our seniors leave and wish them the best and God's protection. Thank you all for your dedication, creativity, and hard work; it has truly been a wonderful experience.

I would also like to say good-bye as the Senior Editor. There are few seasons in life on which I can look back at its conclusion and see such undeniable personal and intellectual growth. My time with the members of *The Quad* as been one of those seasons. Thank you Dr. Messer for your guidance, wisdom, and friendship; I am not the man I was at the beginning of the year, in part, because of you. Thank you Hannah Schlaudt for your support, patience, and words of sanity in moments of absurdity. It has been a pleasure working alongside you and I wish you the best as the next Senior Editor.

Thank you readers for your ongoing commitment to this publication; we are doing this for you. We are grateful to the administration, as always, for backing our efforts, in particular Dr. Richard Jewell and Mr. Jeff Prokovich. To Dr. Vincent DiStasi we owe a great debt of gratitude for always seeing to the successful printing of this magazine. Thanks also to the TLC printing staff for the hours you spend literally putting this publication together. And last, but not least, thanks to Dr. Collin Messer: you have been a father-figure to us all.

Have a wonderful summer and happy reading,

Peace,

Justin R. Olson
Senior Editor

Hannah Schlaudt
Junior Editor

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The Quad is available online at www.quadmagazine.org

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Restoring Poetry

Dear Editor,

Mr. Mayo's apology of poetry, "Poetry as an Act of Recovery," was quite helpful in showing what poetry *should* be. Yet, it would have been instructive to add some practical suggestions regarding what a poet can do to bring about this restoration; I, however, don't pretend to offer any here. At least as it regards the greater poetry canon, it seems higher forms of poetry (poetry which appreciates the beauty of word and the union of humanity—the dulce) are practically excluded. To go about a restoration of the canon would require society's adherence to a critical school which actually understands why said higher forms are simply better than contemporary forms. This would require a change in society's philosophy of art, a seemingly unrealistic goal but a goal of the Christian nonetheless. Mayo's title brings to mind Makoto Fujimura's philosophy of art as redemptive and healing. Here the purpose of art is to glue back together the broken aspects of society through the message of the Gospel, through Christ. Yet, just as our call as Christians to create justice on this earth is frustratingly impossible in any tangible sense, so is our call to create good art which stands against all the momentum of secular art, or what might be termed non-art (I apologize for making this dichotomy and realize that secular art, if it be truly art, is actually not secular, at least in the colloquial sense). Another clarification is warranted here too: the purpose of restoring the poetry canon is not the goal of writing good poetry, and neither is it the mere worship of beautiful words. Rather, the purpose of producing good art or good poetry is the same purpose one has in mind when comforting the sick, visiting the widow, and listening to the depressed; the purpose is to restore. In sum, restoration of man is achieved, in part, through the restoration of art. This is why restoring poetry is so important.

Appreciative of good essays,
Kip Wharton

With Fond Regards

Dear *The Quad*,

Though I am a big fan and longtime reader of *The Quad*, I was very disappointed by the Conundrum puzzle found in the last issue. For the past three years that I have been receiving *The Quad*, I have looked forward with great excitement to the Conundrum puzzle. Recalling long evenings doing puzzles with my sister and grandfather over summer vacation, doing the Conundrum has been, in some ways, the best part of my semester.

Unfortunately, over the last several years I have noticed that the conundrum section has become less and less challenging. While I have repeatedly attempted to point this out, my protestations have been ignored. The magazine employees at the distribution table have acted like they do not know what I am talking about. The head editors will not return my emails. Dr. Messer has told me to stop coming by his office to talk about it. Like a modern day Cassandra, my cries have been ignored.

Let me be frank. Recent conundrums have been sub-par. The Conundrum in the Spring issue was an embarrassment. While I understand that *The Quad* is meant for the general campus, the conundrum section is supposed to be a puzzle. *A puzzle*. How can you call something a puzzle if it is *not puzzling*?

To make matters worse, the Conundrum puzzle was accompanied by an embarrassing illustration of an owl that made a mockery of our United States Olympic team. What will the owl mock next? Our brave troops? Disgusting.

I cannot stand for this any longer. Cancel my subscription to *The Quad*. I won't be stopping by the table either.

Hermione Smith

TO J. ALFRED PRUFROCK

RACHEL VAN TIL

Today we watched the news,
With spoons still blending cream and coffee,
I heard the chaos of worried war announcers,
Ticking words and emergency-laden scripts
As they played like a radio from somber, made-up faces.

Could it be folly to acknowledge
Then ignore impending apocalypse?
Ignorance, to laugh at history
And the solemn or insidious
Pen of Darwin, or Marx, or Nietzsche?

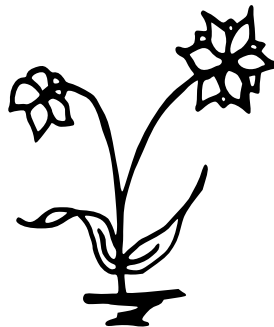
As if I didn't recognize my tenuous impermanence
But despite a family suicide
And a childhood spent visiting funerals
I stand wide eyed and confused against a world of angst
Which gradually back-slides from a world
Of brazen televised voices
To the world of smudged ink scrawled
On corners of old menus, or the backs of wrinkled napkins
A world where all men suffer the death of emotional
resilience

Be that as it may,
We will still go visiting and we will attend the theatre
Decked, as it were, in black.
Let me knot your tie, my dear
Help me clasp this strand of pearls

Your hand strays into your inside coat pocket
And toys with fixation the pack of Marlboros
You have measured out your life in cigarettes
Shortening with assurance your chain of days
Watching from the bench on the park sidewalk
Man against man, malevolently eye his fellows

Yet there is hope beyond hope
In the irrational faith of a woman's unexplainable love
I am free
To play for you on the piano Mozart's *Requiem* or Vivaldi's
Four Seasons
To cradle your chin in my hands
Kissing with my fingers your world-weary jaw
And with careful mermaid fingers smooth away
From a cold and care-creased forehead,
The dark waves of thought beneath which you drown.

*Rachel Van Til is a sophomore English major who can't get past her delight
at the color of pale turquoise or the click of heeled shoes on tile floors.*



HOMELESSNESS

RACHEL LEE

The evening sky dimmed as the African sun set, casting purplish hues on the horizon. My homesickness vanished as the glorious sound of singing voices filled the air. Instead of joining the crowd in worship, I gazed around me in an effort to take it all in. Patterns of birds and floral prints caught my attention; I marveled at the headscarves, stripes, and hand-me-down T-shirts from America. The smell of human body odor mingled with the pungent charcoal fires burning in the distance filled my nostrils. Occasionally, a curious child (or a grown man with about as much restraint as a child) would run up to touch my skin or stare intently at my face. This tested my patience, but I tried to put myself in their shoes, their brightly colored plastic shoes.

We had traveled nearly two hours to get to this camp on the border of Rwanda and the Congo. My heart beat along with the steady thumping of the drums. Excitement rose up in me. I was thousands of miles away from Ashburn, Virginia, thousands of miles away from all that I had ever known.

I don't know why, but I have always had an affinity for stories about pioneers. There is something rather enticing to me about leaving the familiar and venturing out into the unknown. Growing up, my best friend Sarah Lewis and I would play *Oregon Trail* in her cool, dark basement, acting out the different parts of our journey westward. Occasionally her little sister Angela would join us. All three of us wore homemade dresses that Mrs. Lewis (a seamstress in her own right) had sewn by hand, replete with matching aprons and bonnets. Most of the time we'd get so absorbed in our own version of the game that we'd abandon the computer and make up our own story line. Angela was little enough for us to boss around, and if she got too annoying, we usually killed her off voluntarily. "Angela, you died of pneumonia. Go upstairs."

I think I first took an interest in pioneers when my

second grade teacher assigned us the book *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. That single book sparked my interest in all things "colonial": covered wagons, hardtack, log cabins, rag dolls, etc. My childhood games consisted of things like "one-room schoolhouse" or "escape from the Indians". My lively imagination had little trouble turning our backyard into the "Big Woods" of Wisconsin circa 1870 or a covered wagon trail. I imagined myself a pioneer girl trying to make a home for myself in an inhospitable land.

I grew up suspended between two starkly different cultures and felt like an outcast in both. Both my mom and my dad emigrated to the United States from Seoul with their parents in the 1970s, and I grew up in a home that was an amalgam of Korean and American culture. We dressed like Americans and listened to Janet Parshall's "America" on the radio, but we ate our meals with chopsticks, and had rice available 24 hours a day in our convenient counter-top rice cooker. My mom tells me that my first language was Korean, but I hardly remember that. I do, however, have clear memories of the Korean church our family attended for the first eleven years of my life. I was the only kid there who didn't speak fluent Korean. Somehow, even my younger brother Nathaniel managed to speak it better than I.

Sometimes I would respond to older members of the congregation in English because it was the language I was most comfortable speaking—the older women of the church would click their tongues at me disapprovingly and ask me to recite things in Korean to them. Because my comprehension of the Korean language was near perfect, I had little difficulty understanding their chiding. Unfortunately, my verbal skills were sorely lacking. As I stumbled over my words with my limited Korean vocabulary, they'd raise their voices dramatically and (I think) jokingly ask how my parents could've raised such an incompetent daughter.

It didn't seem fair. I knew how to say "I love you"



(sadang he) and I could say “Our father, who art in heaven” (Hananim Abuji). It wasn’t my fault those things were not particularly useful in everyday conversation. My inability to speak Korean well was a combination of my strong will (I refused to attend Korean school on Saturdays—were not five days of regular school a week sufficient?) and the urging of my proud paternal grandfather, who insisted my parents let me speak English at home so that I wouldn’t speak with an accent like him when I grew up.

At school, though, as well as out playing in the neighborhood, I spoke English all the time because my friends were white. We used to hold beauty pageants with our Barbie dolls on Monica’s back porch, or play house with Paige’s American Girl dolls (until I decided to give Samantha a haircut and Paige’s mother never invited me back). I remember inviting them over to my house once and noticing for the first time the curious expressions on their faces as they looked around our foyer. A plaque hung on the wall. It was 1 Corinthians 13 in Korean. Paige asked me what it said. I lied and said I didn’t know. Just then my grandmother burst into the foyer, like a busy mother hen—arms flapping, adjusting her apron and fixing her hair which was slightly disheveled from her rigorous cleaning frenzies. Stern, and in no way reserved, she scolded my friends in loud and broken English for not taking off their shoes upon entering the house. Startled out of their wits, Monica and Paige quickly unshod their feet and were herded into the kitchen. Monica (a little blue-eyed, blond-haired girl) wrinkled her nose.

“What is that smell?!” It took me a while to realize she was referring to the pot on the stove. It was one of my favorite meals *kimchi chigae*, a stew made from fermented cabbage. Did she think it smelled bad? I had rather liked the smell of it. Embarrassed by the sudden awareness of the strangeness of my own family, I ushered them quickly upstairs to my room away from any offensive smells or loud grandmothers.

If there was anything I wanted to be more than a pioneer, it was an orphan. Right about the time I began reading the *Little House* series, I picked up the *Boxcar Children*

books and *Anne of Green Gables*. Secretly I hoped that I too was an orphan, that I had been adopted into my current family. I wanted to run away from home and go solve mysteries with Benny and Violet or perhaps find a new family just like Matthew and Marilla. Prince Edward Island would be a lovely place to live. But I had to wait until my parents broke the news to me. In my mind, they were trying to be sensitive, not wanting to break the news to me until I was old enough to handle the idea of being adopted.

Mom relates to me the time my impatience wore out and I began peppering her with questions about the events surrounding my birth, in an effort, I suppose, to coax the information out of her.

“Mom, if I was adopted, you’d tell me, right?” I said with all the subtlety of an eight-year-old. We were sitting in her room as she folded laundry.

“You’re not adopted, Rachel.”

“It’s okay, Mom, you can tell me . . .” I said reassuringly.

“Rachel, you’re not adopted. Look at this picture, see there’s me holding you right after you were born . . .”

Mom didn’t mean to squash my dreams.

I got over my disappointment rather quickly, but looking back, I think I just needed a reason, an excuse really, to explain why I felt so out-of-place in my own life. Perhaps that’s why I gravitated towards my books. Reading helped me make sense of life. It also provided me with an escape from my life. Only recently have I realized the irony in my choice of reading materials as a kid. I read about pioneers and orphans—people who left their homes by choice or necessity and had to create their own reality in a new place. I hadn’t traveled much at that time or even left home for any length of time, but I *was* a pioneer! I was blazing my own path in life, one that my parents hadn’t taken, trying to figure out who I was and where I belonged in the midst of competing cultures.

“Where are you from?”

Even when I am asked this today, I am not always sure what the person is asking. Are they asking me where my family lives? Where I live right now? Are they asking me because I am Asian and they want to know which Asian



country is my country of origin? It may sound funny, but this is really the split-second dialogue I have inside my head.

The truth is, I don't know where I'm from. I have no history to claim as my own, to help explain who I am supposed to be. I can close my eyes and try to imagine myself as an American settler moving out west, but that little daydream comes to a screeching halt the moment I try to picture myself wearing a dress and bonnet. Like a bad rendition of the Sesame Street song "One of these things is not like the others..." I just don't belong in this story. At the same time, when I try to envision myself living in rural Korea with my ancestors in the early 1900s, I find I can't relate. They're washing their clothes by hand in the river, climbing windy mountain steps to offer sacrifices to their ancestors at the Buddhist temple

Going to Africa my sophomore year in college was probably one of the most significant moments in my life. It was the first time I had ever left the country of my birth and been away from my parents for more than a month or so. Even though I missed home terribly, I think I was actually relieved to be so far away from Koreans *and* Americans. For the first time in my life, I was legitimately out-of-place. I was not African but this felt better than being somewhere I thought I was *supposed* to belong and still feeling like I didn't quite fit.

The Congolese refugee camp stretched out for miles. From where I stood on the embankment facing the crowd I

could see white rooftops standing out from the lush greenery of the surrounding Rwandan hillside. Our interpreter pulled us aside and told us that the kids we saw here had been born in the camp. They had never known any other home. These refugees had been evacuated from the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and were now "homeless." They had no real identity in either country. They were not allowed to move into Rwanda and live as citizens in an adopted country, but neither could they return to their homes in the Congo. It was not safe. Essentially, they did not belong anywhere. I gazed into their worn faces and saw that these people knew (far better than I did) the feeling of rejection, of not belonging.

The sound of earnest singing, an eruption of harmonies and pleading voices filled the evening sky. As far as I could see, these worshipers had nothing, yet they had hope in something unseen. Homelessness had left their hearts empty and longing for a better place. I glanced over to my left and saw an elderly man in a well-worn but tidy suit, head bowed, arm upraised, silently entreating heaven. His worship reminded me, in a moment, how far we both were from Home. **Q**

Rachel Lee is growing in her awareness of the beautiful ways in which the frustrating and painful moments of her life are being used as avenues of glory. Home is now one of her favorite places and she is so thankful for her family. She still enjoys kimchi chigae, but will try not to eat it when you're around.

SUBURBS: A MODEL FOR THE FAMILY

JACOB BUDDEMEIER

I think I have lived in that profane world of the middle class, one way or another. If you live the “American Dream” then you certainly live in the suburbs as well. My neighbors and their neighbors wave to one another, know one another’s business, and teach their dogs to “take a dump” on the adjacent lawn. Mr. Pretzmen, next door, mows his lawn bi-weekly. I remember my mother waking up to his dog’s bark and threatening to shoot it with a water gun. Every Saturday Mr. McCormick rakes his leaves in the autumn, shovels his snow in the winter, and washes his ‘55 Thunderbird in the summer. It’s comforting to watch these people. It’s comforting to know everyone else is doing exactly the same thing. I can’t imagine a more comfortable neighborhood. I can’t imagine more meaningless relationships.

But such is the world of today. The relationships of commerce and relationships of convenience that leave us unscathed in the suburbs have become a model for all others. We talk when we must, borrow when we need, and bond while bringing our trash cans to the street. My neighbors hardly give anything, and we hardly give anything. Sometimes I clean their gutters or shovel their driveways, but I don’t know their stories. Well, I know their “deal”: There’s the war veteran, the obnoxious neighbor, the man between eighty and death, and the neighborhood adolescent. The thing holding us together is actually our neighborhood. We find solidarity by maintaining our middle-class positions.

In the 1989 film *The ‘Burbs*, Tom Hanks and his cul-de-sac neighbors find commonality over investigating their new neighbors the Klopeks, who do not abide by the social laws of the suburbs. In describing the Klopeks, Art (the obnoxious neighbor) says, “I’m telling you these people are Satanists. As I sit here, they are Satanists. Look, look, the world is full of these kind of things—black masses, mutilations. Mutilations. The incubus, the succubus . . .” There are two things going on here: a transgression against social

rules and the bonding that grows out of a common goal. I am most interested in the bond that grows out of an accurately depicted neuroticism. Hanks and his neighbors become friends almost solely by their investigation of the Klopeks, sparked by the disappearance of the neighborhood “old man.” Children are the perfect example of this sort of bonding. They have few identities by which to diversify or link themselves—no job, no education, and no socioeconomic status. Who they are makes no difference; the simple act of playing is reason enough to interact. Similarly, an attack upon their suburban identity must occur before Hanks and his neighbors are willing to relate to one another. This doesn’t bother me too much. Frankly, I don’t have the time to feel obliged to relationship by geography or the middle class. There simply isn’t enough time in the day.

The ‘Burbs is my favorite film. My cousins, John and Jason and I get together to watch it every other month or so. I’m surprised but relieved John and Jason found some peace in their brotherhood. They are my collective opposite, and they are each other’s. John dropped out of college to join the Marines and Jason lives an urban dream while I sit high and mighty at a Christian college. We rationalize according to our own values, speak different dialects, and listen with our own filters. Our stubbornness is our most connecting temperament. Nevertheless, when we gather to spend some time in one another’s presence and watch this film, we laugh collectively anticipating the next punch line.

But familial relationships are more than this: more than a shared experience, more than mutual real estate watching, more than collective film watching. Or so I hope. I like the idea of an intrinsic reason to relate. I like the idea that we are stuck together, one way or another, but I fear that simply isn’t true today.

It’s waned more recently, our movie watching. John is married, and Jason is an urbanite. I go to college six hours




away from my family, from my parents, from my aunts and uncles. I'm 21, and I have my own community here at school which is now expanding to Philadelphia, Oregon, and Pittsburgh. I have this community based on a more tangible commonality — we have our own culture and interests and partake in rituals to bring us closer together. We smoke a cigarette. We have a meal. This summer I drove to Cleveland from Philadelphia to spend just a weekend at a gathering and I frequently pay \$40 parking tickets in Manayunk for similar reunions. I hope to retain these friendships for life. I'm constantly enlightened and fulfilled in the presence of these friends. My friends are not my cousins.

I'm confused in this respect: Why do my friendships sound like family and why do my consanguineous relationships sound like relationships of convenience? A kinship bond is a bond every culture recognizes. We have a reason to know and relate that needs no explanation. But I am no longer comforted by the thought of losing college and gaining family upon graduation. I wonder where the significant shift in relationships occurred?

I hope my family is still interconnected—that is, one person's decision affects another and one member's heartache is the whole family's heartache. This obligation to communicate to one another across space and time is essential to maintaining my familial relationships. When we stop being interconnected, we have merely relationships of convenience. When I no longer feel distressed about a

family member's situation, and it seems foreign, something in the relationship has changed. When I no longer feel compelled to call my parents and tell them my whereabouts or a critical event in my life, there's a disconnect. If we think of ourselves as single units, something removed from the extended family, or pay attention only to our consanguinity and not our affinity, our communication will reflect only those relationships.

My cousin is not my obnoxious neighbor. I don't want to wave at him passively and wait for something fantastical to happen so we can bond over it. To treat our kinship as a relationship of convenience or reciprocation is to relegate it into the cheap relational space where our neighbors reside. The relationship is no longer sacred. We might as well pass each other on the sidewalk and give a kind nod. I'll teach my dog to defecate on your lawn, and you can borrow a beer. Next time we leaf rake, let's make a single pile. Certainly our kinship relationships begin without consent, and our continuation of these is ultimately a choice. But if the relationships are only a choice, then we are anybody. I am the family man and you are the war veteran. I'd like to fight against the idea that our familial relationships are purely reciprocal and look for a reason more intrinsic. Sometimes things are just right and need to be retained—let us not lose that bond most basic to the inconveniences of now. 

Jacob Buddemeier doesn't believe in altruism, but is a Servant Leader, more or less.

FEAR OF SUMMER

AMANDA MARTIN

W*ake up, wake up. This is the day you dreaded.*

I open my eyes, peer through the sunlight at my alarm clock. 5:18 a.m.

Jessica is still asleep, which doesn't surprise me. We stayed up till three o'clock last night, talking. (Three o'clock. Two hours ago.) I can't even remember what we talked about. Possibly food, and whether or not ducks have knees (Jessica swears they don't), and how much fun it is to say the name *Julio*. And we talked about the summer evenings we spent catching fireflies under the trees, the night air thick and warm around us. I said we should do it again; Jessica said it wouldn't be the same. She was right.

Being my older sister has put Jessica in the habit of being right. I tell her not to gloat too much. Anyway, I suspect she's wrong about a duck's knees. How else do they walk?

She looks odd asleep, slightly curled in the bed beside me, vulnerable and serene without makeup. For two years she intimidated me; once she got a job (a real job, entailing an actual career), she seemed so confident. She seemed so old that I thought we wouldn't have anything to talk about, but I worry about stupid things. Always have.

I get up—softly, softly. The bed sags, the floor creaks, the door moans, the sheets crinkle as Jessica turns over, and then I'm free. I shut the door behind me, lean briefly against it. Two hours of sleep. Well, I've taken finals on less.

I want to see how far I can stretch this day before I break.

5:30 now. I make tea. We're running low on milk, so I skip that aspect of the tea experience, and wander outside to sit on the rock in the front yard. I can hear the ocean sighing and the gulls mewing even from this place. It reminds me of home: standing by the mailbox, listening to traffic flow past my house. Hundreds of commuters make a river sound.

But there's no traffic for miles. These six days have

been slow, quiet, perfect. I didn't expect so much happiness. I've gorged myself on it for days and hours, as though I'd starved before this feast.

I drink my tea. I think about toast.

Jessica emerges with a mug of coffee. "Morning," she says.

"Hey."

"Up long?"

I glance at my phone. "An hour, I guess." It's almost seven o'clock.

"Want some toast?"

I want to stay out here forever. With my back to this cottage, preferably, because it's hideous (but cheap and serviceable—that's why we rented it). I want to listen to the wind-chimes thrum and sparkle and the surf crash and the seagulls shriek. I like the way everything smells right now, and I like the way my skin feels in the sunlight—scoured and clean, sweet with the tang of aloe.

I wish the earth would stop turning, just for a moment. I wish I could lie here forever with the sunshine lapping over me and the salt spinning cobwebs in my hair.

"Toast sounds great," I say, because it does, and we go back into the house and look for bread.

8:06. Breakfast finished, we wander around the house. I wash my face and change my clothes and Jessica makes an effort to brush her hair. Jessica tries to be well-groomed, even when it doesn't matter. I myself haven't washed my hair for a week. It's become its own story: coarse, bristling, stiff with salt, smelling of chlorine and seaweed, itchy in a friendly way. When I run my fingers through it, it stands straight up on my head. I wish it were three feet long right now, so the wind could fling it out behind me. But it's approximately three inches long instead. Spiky, not sweet.

And then it's 9:12. The sun is hot and bright. Jessica is reading outside, slowly turning the pages of a thick and intelligent-looking book. If we were in the Middle Ages, I'd



be married and she'd be dead by now. Neither of us would be reading.

"Let's go to the beach," I say.

We gather chairs, blankets, towels, sunscreen, bags of belongings and a large umbrella. Jessica makes sandwiches, and we pack those too. We wobble to the beach with our gear in tow, avoiding the rows of other beachgoers and the piles of their belongings, and set up camp in a clear, sandy stretch of the shore. I sit down to read, but my book annoys me. I disapprove of the author's grammatical decisions.

"I'm going to pace in the surf and recite poetry," I say.

Jessica glances up from her book. "That's so pretentious."

"I'm pretentious," I say. "Pick a poet. Not Shakespeare."

"Longfellow."

"Someone good."

"Keats."

"Better. But maybe not suitable for the occasion."

Jessica grins. "Pick your own poet, if you plan to reject all mine."

I don't bother to pick a poet. I like to think I'm not as pretentious as I could be. Instead I turn a cartwheel (*almost* perfect) that wets my hands and feet in the incoming tide. Then I wade into the water until it reaches my waist, tugging me forward like an eager child. Seashells and small pebbles shift beneath my feet. The ocean is blue beyond blue. It shimmers in the distance, shines clear as glass as it surges around me. The foam etches patterns of lace along the sand.

Happiness is a feral creature: it pounces unexpectedly, devours you whole. It's not just a creature in the dark places, although I've found it there. *This is the day you dreaded.* The pinnacle. The last day.

It's nearly 12:30, and time is running out. This evening we'll wash and fold our laundry, cram it into our suitcases. We'll tidy the cottage, sweep the floor, clean out the refrigerator. Tomorrow morning, I'll wash my hair. I'll scrub every inch of the bathroom. We'll take everything away when we leave this place. I'll have memories, I suppose, and time will make them hazy and sweet. But I won't have

now. Every moment of now fades into the past with each heartbeat, and I can't keep hold of it.

I sweep my hand across the surface of the water, send a plume of it gleaming into the air.

"Boo!" says Jessica, appearing by my side and ducking me headfirst into the water. Should have expected that. I thrash to the surface, but she's already swum further out into the sea, and now she's treading water and laughing.

2:54. We stagger back to the house, dripping, all our beach-gear sandy or wet, our sides aching with laughter. My head hurts, my eyes sting—I feel empty and relieved, as though I've cried for hours, and my heart is hollow glass, filled with light. This is the last day. Jessica will go back to work soon, back to her business clothes and long hours, and I'll go home.

3:36. More tea, more coffee. Jessica twists her engagement ring on her finger, and the laughter grows more subtle in her voice as she speaks of David. "Do you love him?" I ask—the phrase so worn, so lacking, but so necessary—and Jessica looks up, smiling, glad for the opportunity. "Yes," she says. "So much."

When we were little, we played house sometimes. This is just another step forward, another step away from childhood, and Jessica treats it as such. She's so calm, always.

If you don't move forward, everything else will move on without you. Every moment is the pinnacle: you pause, high on the Ferris wheel, surveying everything that came before and everything that might come, and then you move again. You descend.

4:17. We're hungry again already. We wash up the mugs, still talking, but not about David anymore. "If you could live anywhere, anywhere at all, where would you live?" Jessica asks.

"Here," I say. *Now.* "What about you?"

"Maybe Venice," Jessica says. She laughs, shrugging. "Is there anything left to eat?"

Not much. Just the food that sank to the bottom of the refrigerator, but that's enough. We make an odd meal: salsa on crackers, an apple each, toast with cheese and jam. Jessica talks about David again, about her dreams for the



future, and then, looking at her hands, she names her fears. We all have those, but hers seem so removed from mine.

I don't want to think about my past or my future: the job I never got this summer (an inbox full of rejections, every trip to the mailbox a disappointment); my parents' remarks ("how are you enjoying this life of leisure?"); countless hours spent watching internet videos of people falling down or speaking Klingon or dancing in competitions, kittens sneezing and dogs sleepwalking into walls. I don't want to think ahead to a new dorm room, a new roommate, new professors, new classes. And Alex—I suppose I'll have to see Alex again, in less than a week. (Love is stupid, the plot so predictable. We haven't spoken two words to each other since we broke up, and I still think about him with every single breath.)

I want to be empty, empty, empty. I want to be the Stephanie of this moment: bedraggled, skin raw but sea-clean, talking to my sister like a responsible adult, without any responsibilities at all.

My stomach is full of glass.

6:49. Twilight. We go back to the beach and lie in the sand. No blankets now, no umbrella. Jessica and I have never had a night like this before. We'll never have one like it again. These pleasures don't repeat themselves.

The first stars appear, pale and shy in the dying sunlight. We haven't talked for awhile, but Jessica stirs, and I know she's content, savoring the ebb of the day. The warmth of the evening fades; the sunlight drains from my body.

"I didn't want to be this happy," I whisper.

Jessica eases herself up on her elbow to look at me, but her face is shadowy, and so is mine.

"I didn't want—a point of comparison. I didn't want to have this much happiness to hold up against the next moment of sadness. I was so afraid of this summer: the pinnacle

of the year, the moment of stasis. When everything stops moving, I see how far I've slipped behind. Everyone else advances—everyone's always advancing—and I'm so tired of standing still, afraid to step forward."

Jessica runs her hand through my short, stiff hair. "Don't you think you'll be this happy again?"

"I don't know."

So good at finding sadness, and clinging to it even when it cuts my hands.

"This day—you know it was only what your mind made it."

This was the day you dreaded—and loved—before you even came to it. You made it the pinnacle, the last day to enjoy. And while you tried to suck the marrow out of it, it sucked the marrow out of you.

"There will be other days. Lots of other days."

"I know." So many days, and I so afraid of them.

"You have to take the happiness with the sadness. You can't have one without the other. You *need* the contrast."

"I know." And I hate it.

"Stephanie." She's quiet for a moment. "You are my sister, Stephanie. My dear, wonderful friend. That won't ever change."

The words make my breath jump in my throat—so unexpected, so generous. I catch them in my hand, touch them to my mouth, try not to choke on my reply. "Thank you, Jessica." Thank you. Thank you.

And all the resistance leaves me—I'm limp and empty now. I lie down again, nestling deep into the sand, and let the day spin and spin and spin into night. **Q**

Amanda Martin loves ducks, and tends to squeak (with joy) when she sees them.

OF LIONESSES

FAITH THOMPSON

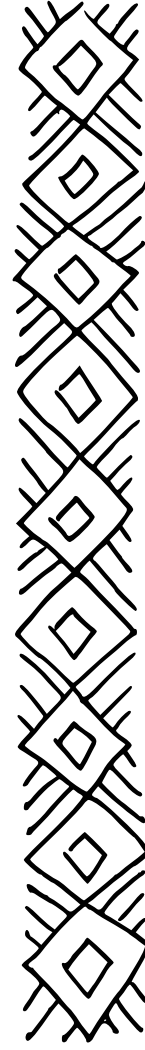


She ambles down our streets in woman boots,
Runs here, runs there in womanly pursuits.
She knows us each by name.
But up her sleeves, she's hiding lion claws.
She walks beneath the weight of lion laws.

The world wants only lionesses here,
Fierce women of no heart but ample fear,
Piss-pitiful and tame.
But what real beauty can there ever be
In borrowed skins, savannah-born debris?

The desolate and unforgiven west
Sighs and trembles. Yet it does its best
To swallow, to reclaim
The sun's warm, slowly ripening embrace.
Our lioness, mistaking gall for grace

And callousness for strength, cries out to see
The light fade, for her hungry vanity
Must rest with it, and shame –
The shame of what she is and what she's been –
Steals down beneath her fur, and touches skin.



Faith Thompson is a female with her own lion-ish tendencies.

THE PRESENT MOMENT

NATALIE GREGORY

William Faulkner wrote, “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.” Contemporary writer Salvatore Scibona proves our modernist predecessor true in his novel *The End*, as he takes his readers time-traveling through Elephant Park, an Italian immigrant community in Cleveland. In the span of a few paragraphs, we watch thirty years flit away, then the next chapter takes us back twenty years into the past, and an entire section of the book remains trapped in a single day—one agonizing day in August 1953. Through the novel’s five sections, Scibona deliberately plays with our notions of the past, the present, and the future. Time is a major theme of the novel. Despite our best intentions and struggles against time, we find ourselves ensnared in its circular flow, just as Scibona’s characters do. Through the lives of a baker, a jeweler, an old abortionist, and other characters, *The End* illustrates how the future inescapably and violently becomes the past.

Scibona begins *The End* with a distinctively Italian-American cadence and turn of phrase as he describes Rocco the baker as “a man in the shape of lightbulb” and “an unremarkable Christian.” The reader follows this silken line of description after description—what he looks like, what he does, how he came to Cleveland, who his family is—and the back story blossoms into present story. Right away Scibona blurs the distinction between past and present, because what happens today is always contingent on what occurred yesterday. For twenty-nine years Rocco opens his bakery every day, even on Sundays and holidays, until one day in August 1953, when he receives news that his estranged son has died in war. The past catches up to Rocco. He closes the store for the first time in almost three decades, so that he can go to New Jersey to bury his son. Along the trip, which contains echoes of *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Rocco undergoes moments of mental clarity, self-delusion, epiphany, and finally disillusion. At fifty-three years old, he

can no longer see what will become of the future. Just as Scibona skewers the reader’s concepts of time, in Rocco’s section he calls into question our own subjective perceptions and convictions.

The End is also about the constant tension between idealism and reality as the characters struggle to cope with their everyday lives. At the center of the novel lies Mrs. Constanza Marini, a widow who performs abortions in the basement of her home. She has projected her desires unto reality and suffered disillusionment years before Rocco

The End
Salvatore Scibona
Riverhead Trade, 2009

opens his bakery. Having abandoned God and hope, she places her faith in her own willpower, not in vain, hollow ideas. Her section is the most challenging to read, and her

character is the most cerebral and complicated of Scibona’s cast. From 1928 until 1953, she plots and manipulates to ensure that her illicit profession survives in the hands of a trustworthy heir.

At first it might appear that Scibona supports Mrs. Marini’s worldview, intelligent and secular, instead of that of the superstitious and religious Rocco. Scibona, however, does not deny the effects that ideals and desires have on the real world. Whether or not ideals exist or can be achieved, he leaves up to the reader, but regardless they cannot be dismissed. We find that Mrs. Marini is a woman who is constantly haunted by memories of her family and of her late husband, Nico; they appear to her as ghosts and visions, but she is wise enough to dismiss the conjurations of her subconscious for what they are. Nevertheless, whenever the proud Mrs. Marini believes herself free of the past—which Scibona condemns—the uninvited ghosts appear again. For forty years, Marini avoids the truth, and the truth is that she still desired the ideals she could never attain.

The End is an uncomfortable novel, comparable to its modernist predecessors Faulkner, Hemingway, and Fitzgerald in its themes, its well-crafted prose, and its careful



storytelling. It is not a novel to read at night, particularly if your mind is prone to go on existentialist insomnia trips. It is not a happy novel, but it is a good one. At the core of *The End*'s overlapping themes is what it means to live—to exist—as a human being. The jeweler, nameless throughout the novel, desperately seeks to be noticed by others, to be recognized and called by his name; then he can “become real, to exert force in the physical world.” Ciccio, a student of Jesuit priests, meanwhile wonders in the wake of tragedy if “being real” is an illusion. That is, to be purified and redeemed from sin, as the priests say, would inherently sinful humans have to cease to be themselves? Rocco sees family as the homespun purpose of life, “therefore to have no family is to be dead.” All of Scibona’s characters are searching, yearning, struggling for strands of definite reality to justify life. As Mrs. Marini thinks claims, that reality is a disappointment compared to the ideals we seek. “There was a you I had in mind for three years . . . that idea you . . . You were not what I had expected.”

The danger with projecting our desires onto reality is

that we create phantoms that cannot fulfill us. Scibona tells us that we will chase them nonetheless—whether they exist or not—or else, like Costanza Marini’s ghosts of her buried desires, they will haunt us. He also deliberately plays with the novel’s title; *The End* finishes in the past, because for Scibona time is cyclical, with no true “end” or ultimate purpose for human history. As Christians, we ultimately have to disagree with the worldview Scibona presents in *The End*, but he does raise themes that we must tackle. We believe that ideals exist outside of ourselves, in the transforming power of a Savior, but the world we live in is clearly fallen and far from ideal. The goal God moves us towards in history is the return of Christ, when all will be redeemed, but until then we must live in the world. In the present moment, *The End* teaches us about the undying nature of the sins of our past—and how dangerous it is if we disregard them. Q

Natalie Gregory is a junior English major who likes drawing, bird-watching, and serenading boys.



The “Holy Spirit’s fire” descended
 Through plastic and industrial-yellow insulation into
 Trailer decorated with Liquor menagerie upon
 My father’s machinehands
 He is an unsuccessful Cain every night before cracked Couric
 (Jack Daniels on the tv rocks to the 70’s carpet)
 Slender am I for a bruising
 “I am not Able!”

Some days Kip Wharton can identify with the speaker in “A Study of Reading Habits” by Larkin.

WHAT I TALK ABOUT WHEN I TALK ABOUT RUNNING

JOSEPH RETUCCI

Haruki Murakami has the rare distinction of being a Japanese marathon-running, Kafka Prize-winning writer whose literary style borrows equally from Chandler, Balzac, and Kafka, and whose novels occasionally share titles with Beatles' songs. He offers more insight into what, exactly, running marathons and writing fiction have to do with each other in his recent non-fiction memoir, *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*, whose name paraphrases a short story collection by another one of Murakami's literary influences, Raymond Carver. *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*, while not a literary breakthrough, provides in solid, conversational prose an accessible account of Murakami's literary and athletic achievements, while occasionally highlighting philosophical anecdotes and insights from a man who is simultaneously anomalistic and shockingly normal.

The memoir is true to its title, in that it is not so much about running as it is Murakami's experience and thoughts on running, as well as how these experiences and thoughts have shaped him as a literary figure. "Most of what I know about writing I've learned through running every day," says Murakami. Because he only began disciplining himself in long-distance treks to maintain health during long periods of physical stillness that accompanied his serious writing, Murakami constantly parallels these two aspects of his life. He first began writing after a Yakult Swallows baseball, with the seemingly spontaneous thought "You know, I could try writing a novel." At that point, he shared a dream with many would-be novelists, except Murakami actually sat down and wrote a novel. In similar fashion, he chose running because it required no special training, equipment, or team members, then consistently put in the sweat and mileage until he was able to run marathons regularly and even complete

a sixty-three mile ultramarathon.

Focus and endurance, Murakami claims, are his two most important elements of as a novelist. Unsurprisingly, these elements propelled his skill as an athlete as well: "I don't really stretch much before running, but I've never been injured, never been hurt, and haven't been sick once.

I am not a great runner, but I am a definitely a strong runner." Focus and endurance serve as a subtext for the entire book. Considering a

major reason for his life efforts, he says "It suits me." This simplicity describes his character fully—through his story, Murakami works and trains in order to grow as an artist and as a man, but he chooses these areas of growth almost arbitrarily. In this sense, he seems like any directionless, modern man, yet he is constantly appealing and intriguing because he actually remains loyal to his efforts and learns deeper truths through them. Mentioning his habit of sitting down at his desk and staring every day even if he had nothing to write—a technique he borrows from Raymond Chandler—Murakami reflects on the personal strength required to create literature: "I understand the purpose behind his doing this. This is the way Chandler gave himself the physical stamina a professional writer needs, quietly strengthening his willpower. This sort of daily training was indispensable to him."

Age serves as another unifying theme in *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*. Murakami—now in his late-fifties—did not even begin serious running or writing until his mid-thirties, and relies on consistency and regimen to stand any chance against his earlier achievements: "I'm getting to the age where you really only do get what you pay for." His age shows in both his tone and the insights he includes. Analyzing the utility of the body, he notes that


What I Talk About When I Talk About Running
Haruki Murakami
Knopf, 2008



“Your knees are your weak point.” Growing prudent in his years, he relishes Mizuno shoes and their simple functionality: “I like the fact that this brand of shoes doesn’t have extra bells and whistles . . . They have no gimmicks, no sense of style, no catchy slogan.” Still, he avoids bare pragmatism, as he enjoys the misty beauty of Lake Saroma during his brutal ultramarathon, and later comes to realize the ostensible impracticality of true wisdom and humanity:

“Whether it’s good for anything or not, cool or totally uncool, in the final analysis what’s most important is what you can’t see but can feel in your heart. To be able to grasp something of value, sometimes you have to perform seemingly inefficient acts.”

This memoir, then, allows Murakami to consider his inefficient trials and triumphs, and reflect about the value that they have imbued in his life. His honest, first-person narration of these reflections will intrigue and delight

those interested in running, writing, Murakami, or some combination thereof. Admittedly, some of his remarks on pain and discipline echo of locker room platitudes. Also, his writing style—though as smooth and conversant as that of the best of contemporary writers—favors straightforward colloquialism to embellished diction, and personal introspection to any grander philosophic scope. These techniques seem especially lacking when unsupported by the originality and imaginative plots of his novels. Murakami bravely reveals that writers themselves are rarely as lively as their literature, but his bravery may come across as bland to those who are not intrigued by his insights, comments, and astonishing work ethic. Those shortcomings aside, Murakami does deliver a thoughtful autobiography, and although it lacks some of the originality of his fiction, he handles personal nonfiction with poise and boldness. 

Joey Retucci is the somewhat elusive book reviews editor for the Quad. He occasionally finds ‘inspiration’ for his work while in physical combat with the magazine’s Senior Editor.



DANDELION

CAITLIN FRIIHAUF

In late August, when summer’s lost her thrill,
our cold tools appear—
capricious spade and apathetic spear—
with fickle blade we shear and pluck at will.

But come April, with icy birth, stark sting
and infant wisps of light,
this yellow token in the bitter night—
enough to make the soul quicken and sing.

Caitlin Friihauf can’t wait to get back to the beach house, Journey’s End, this summer—see you at the sea!

“LET A MAN THROUGH”

HÄNNAH SCHLAUDT

At first glance, Ernest J. Gaines’s novel, *A Gathering of Old Men*, would appear to have a cliché plot about racial tensions in the South after the turn of the century, with an average white sheriff, a white Baptist preacher, a group of stubborn black men and their snarky, devoted wives, and some riled Cajuns out to avenge their own. A reading based upon the critical theories of Mikhail Bakhtin, however, reveals that in *A Gathering of Old Men*, Gaines intentionally uses *heteroglossia* (literally, “many languages”) to uncover the fluid complexity of racial relations in the South. Gaines also employs the *carnavalesque* to create a situation in which his old men can challenge their traditional place and restrictions within society, gain voices of their own, and claim manhood for themselves.

The plot of *A Gathering of Old Men* is a fairly simple one: a Cajun farmer is shot by a black man, and both the whites and blacks of this Southern community come together to claim justice, tell their stories, and fight through the tensions of finding a voice in this world. At the end of the day, the black men have asserted their masculinity and their individual voices in a new manner, and the Cajun men have learned a bit of humility through bloodshed and impotence. Humor and local dialects are major vocal threads in the novel, allowing Gaines to disarm the tension between his reader’s perspective and the voices of his narrators as he undermines and reestablishes in a complex manner, one faithful to reality, assumptions about race and interracial interactions.

A Gathering of Old Men is what Bakhtin called a “second line novel.”¹ A second line novel is a variation of the novel form that employs heteroglossia—literally “many languages,” which establishes the “entire social, cultural, and ideological context of the novel”—and “draws its most important energies directly from the diversity of styles,

discourses, and ideologies that inform society as a whole.”² Within the novel, there is a heteroglossic chorus of disparate voices, and the concert they create helps to highlight themes and issues of significance. The second line novel is usually comedic as well. Bakhtin clarifies the connection:

Comedic style . . . is based . . . upon the stratification of common language . . . It is precisely the diversity of speech, and not the unity of a normative shared language, that is the ground of style.³

With comedic overtones, a host of varied narrators, and a style highly influenced by oral literary tradition, *A Gathering of Old Men* lends itself easily to Bakhtinian analysis under this second line novel definition.

Gaines structures his novel in a manner immediately reflective of this concept of heteroglossia. Each chapter is narrated (in a manner much akin to storytelling) by one of the characters on the periphery of the main conflict. Since he avoids only giving direct voice to the central figures in *A Gathering of Old Men*, Gaines uses these voices to reflect the stratified and multifaceted nature of reality in social interactions and lends to his plot the added depth of heteroglossia as he allows each perspective to raise its voice in polyphony with the others. Joseph Riehl, in his review of *A Gathering of Old Men* for *MELUS*, writes,

It is made complex by the technique of multiple points of view . . . The voices dominate, not the places or the actions. This device, the multiple points of view, works well for Gaines’s purpose. He aims to show, as completely as possible, a whole society, tiny and isolated though it is, inclusively reacting in all its parts to the murder.⁴

This outline of vocal polyphony in the narrative

² Ibid.

³ Charles Kaplan and William Davis Anderson, *Criticism: Major Statements* (Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2000), 429.

⁴ Joseph Riehl, Untitled Review of *A Gathering of Old Men*, *MELUS*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Varieties of Ethnic Criticism (Summer 1984), 83.

¹ M. Keith Booker, *A Practical Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism* (Longman Publishers, USA, 1996), 110.

A Gathering of Old Men
Ernest J. Gaines
Vintage Books, 1983



structure is merely the first layer of heteroglossia in *A Gathering of Old Men*.

Gaines does not only use the interactions of many voices to depict the stratified and complex racial tensions in the South; he also allows carnival-like energies to create a forum wherein the black men can come together and voice their personal pain and experiences, transgressing against the previous social hierarchy together in a heteroglossic revision of the reality recognized by their community. The concept of carnival in Bakhtin is, according to M. H. Abrams, a

flouting of authority and temporary inversion of social hierarchies . . . a mingling of voices from diverse social levels that are free to mock and subvert authority, to flout social norms . . .⁵

The uprising of the old black men in this community is a blatant snub at authority and social order, as each man claims to have murdered the white man, and tells his bitter stories of justice long unmet to back his self-denunciations. The concept of the carnival as drama in which there is no audience, or as Sue Vice describes it, quoting Julie Kristeva, “carnival ‘is spectacle, but without a stage,’ in which the participant is ‘both actor and spectator’ . . .”⁶; everyone partakes in the carnival. Hence, the community participation in this carnival—as fundamental to the structure of this novel—invites the reader to participate in the dialogue and enter into the carnivalesque upheaval of the old social order.

When the news of the murder is first spread, a white woman, Candy, initiates this carnivalesque stand against social hierarchy by claiming that she did it, so as to protect the identity of the man she suspects is actually responsible. Her status as a privileged white female of good standing in the community gives her voice the authority to begin this defiant chorus: “Now is their chance to stand.”⁷ But

ultimately it is not with the assertion of female voices that Gaines is concerned. Gaines uses Candy’s voice to open the floodgates to the polyphonic laments and cries for rights of the black men of this community. Each man, armed with a shotgun and his story, takes a stand and takes a turn dominating the narration. Though Candy may protest:

“Nobody’s talking without me.” . . .
 “This time we have to, Candy,” Clatoo said.
 “Just the men with guns.”
 “Like hell,” Candy said. “This is my place.”
 “I know that Candy,” Clatoo said. “But we don’t want you this time.”⁸

Clatoo is decisive (perhaps for one of the first times in his life) and, as the dominant voice, seems to speak for Gaines: Candy is not part of this carnival, though she may have been the catalyst for it. This is her place—she is a single white woman and dominance over her social interactions is her usual mode of operation. But this time, the black men are overturning the order and speaking out, dominating the situation, actively claiming their manhood within society for the first time. They do not want her this time. This carnival is just for the black men with guns.

Gaines’s own voice as the author seems to be almost entirely absent in the layers of the community voices. His control over the narrative, however, is consistent. Each narrative is told in first person by a different narrator (each somewhat detached from the conflict) in an immediate manner, letting the reader hear each narrator’s thoughts and individual perceptions of the action surrounding them. This is, in a way, a storytelling technique particular to Gaines and his writing career, reflecting a strong authorial control over the story and the voices therein. Gaines began writing first as a young boy, when folks in the community would dictate their letters to him. He found that most people could not write a substantive letter, and would supplement their dictation by writing narratives for them about the seasons, the people, and the daily occurrences in their community. If they liked what he said, it would be kept as the body of the letter. If they did not like his

⁵ M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 8th ed. (Thomson Wadsworth, 2005), 63.

⁶ Sue Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin* (Manchester University Press, UK, 1997), 149.

⁷ Ernest J. Gaines, *A Gathering of Old Men* (Vintage Books, 1983), 18.

⁸ Op cit., 173.



commentary, they would laugh at him and make him start over again. Since then, Gaines has been to be intent on writing his fiction as a way of continuing to tell the stories of the old folks. In an interview with Anne Gray Brown, Gaines confirms this:

You know, I think I'm still writing those letters for those people. There's an 'I' there. I'm still trying to write the letters for the old people. I think so. Because I can't think of anything else to write about . . .⁹

As a result, Gaines's authorial presence through commentary in *A Gathering of Old Men* is nearly absent, but his control over the language is definite. He is writing the stories of the illiterate heritage from which he comes. His control of the language—without letting his own voice intrude—is, in the words of Bakhtin,

. . . as if the author has no language of his own, but does possess his own style, his own organic and unitary law governing the way he plays with languages and the way his own real semantic and expressive intentions are refracted within them.¹⁰

His vocal repertoire is refracted into the voices of the people whose stories he is telling. Thus, Gaines as a man with his own voice remains actively absent from this novel.

The complexly intertwined nature of manhood and having a legitimate voice is one of Gaines's primary concerns throughout *A Gathering of Old Men*. As Gaines allows the various men to be the primary narrators of the story, he contrasts the historical silence of black manhood with the carnivalesque eruption that occurs at the site of Beau Boutan's murder, in the black quarters. The white men who help narrate at points, or are active voices in the conflict, are disconnected from and cold to the need for voice with which these black men are struggling. They are representative of the dominant cultural voices and have never had a need to assert their manhood within the discourse of their

society.

The black men, however, have never had this privilege. In her commentary, Mary Ellen Doyle explains:

Before their stand . . . [t]hey speak to whites rarely, respectfully, about neutral or trivial topics, never in daring or open truth. . . . They do not see themselves as 'men,' assume they cannot be, because never in their long lives have they been allowed to be or asserted a right to be men.¹¹

As a result, when the white sheriff, Mapes, shows up, asking questions of the black men who have gathered in defiance of their oppressed status, his words frequently take the form of a challenge: "Well, ain't somebody go'n say something?"¹² He dares them to talk like men, since they are willing to bear the guns and claim the responsibility of murdering a white man. His sarcastic urging that they speak out—to transgress social boundaries—is perhaps ironic as he is a leading member of the dominant social discourse. The carnival of voices that follows Mapes's arrival is the first true dialogic situation in which these black men have ever been able to participate.

These men are gathered to protect the only one in their community who they feel has the right to call himself a true man—Mathu. He is the only one with a legitimate claim to manhood, having won their respect years earlier when he asserted himself against a white man in a fistfight. The white people all assume that Mathu is the only one who would have the determination required to act and pull the trigger:

To him [Mapes] Mathu was a real man. The rest of us wasn't.
"I did it, Sheriff," Mathu said.
Mapes nodded. "I know you did it," he said.
"You're the only one around here man enough.
But I have to hear it from one of them."¹³

The black men respond to this insult by turns, each

⁹ Anne Gray Brown, "The Scribe of River Lake Plantation: A Conversation with Ernest J. Gaines," *Southern Quarterly* (Fall 2006), 13.

¹⁰ Mary Ellen Doyle, *Voices From The Quarters* (Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 431.

¹¹ Mary Ellen Doyle, *Voices From The Quarters* (Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 176.

¹² Gaines, *A Gathering*, 171.

¹³ Op. cit., 84-85.



claiming responsibility for the murder. Two of these conversations are especially representative of the voicing of their manhood that takes place in this upheaval of social mores. First is Clatoo:

“That’s been my trouble,” Clatoo said.
 “What,” Mapes said. Mapes was looking at him the way white folks do round here, looking at him hard.
 “I ain’t had no trouble with the law,” Clatoo said.
 “Meaning?” Mapes said.
 “I’m old,” Clatoo said.
 “Meaning?” Mapes said.
 “About time I had li’l trouble with the law before I died,” Clatoo said.¹⁴

Clatoo’s need to have “li’l trouble with the law” is driven by his need to assert himself within society, instead of just accepting the dominant discourse of his society. The carnival is the upheaval necessary to make him speak out and be a man in the eyes of the whole community.

The second exchange capturing the heteroglossia asserted in this carnival is between Mapes, Dirty Red, and Johnny Paul. Dirty Red says,

“I don’t see how come y’all won’t let a man get—”
 “Shut up,” Mapes said. “You and nobody in your family ever done a thing in this world but worked hard to avoid work.”
 “Till today,” Dirty Red said. He looked at Mapes, with his head cocked a little to the side . . . “Today, I—”
 “You trying to cut in on me when I’m talking to you?” Mapes asked him.
 “Looks like he’s doing more than just trying,” Johnny Paul said, from the other side of Mapes.¹⁵

Mapes is edgy and uncomfortable when he discovers that his dare has been met by these black men, who are suddenly willing to assert themselves in deliberate polyphony. The very nature of this carnivalesque situation is rooted in the multiplicity of voices raised, each asserting an individual

perspective (and [hi]story) that holds equal validity to that of Mapes, the white man. Order is turned upon its head as the black men claim their voices.

The other whites also are perplexed as to how they ought to respond to this new, *dialogic* order (as opposed to the previously upheld *monologic*). They complain: “How long is this charade going on?” Miss Merle snapped back at Mapes.¹⁶ Her use of the word *charade* indicates that this whole situation is a dramatic one, purging the community of long-suppressed emotions in this culture’s social order. This is carnival, and here the black men can lay aside their mask and reach new levels of being previously denied them. Keith Clarke describes this process:

Black men engaging in intimate acts of storytelling and listening catapults *Gathering* into the realm of “speakerly text,” where a polyphony of voices conveys not only the individual and collective pain, but also resistance and transcendence.¹⁷

Their stories hold legitimate weight here in the carnival; it may be a charade, but it is a charade of real pain and memories unburdened.

Beau Boutan’s family, known for their clannish wrath and their propensity to lynchings, is somewhat influential in the white social order of this town. But once the old black men legitimize their grievances by speaking out and carrying their guns, like true men, the Boutans are faced with a reality more complex than the one they used to dominate. Both the black men and the Boutans have grievances and rights to justice; both have suffered bloodshed and deprivation. This overturns the one-sided cause the Boutans supported—that of the whites’s supremacy over the claim to manhood by the black men—and unveils a dialogic reality where each voice has equal right to an audience and to compassion.

Gaines demonstrates this in two ways. He allows the

¹⁴ Op. cit., 86.

¹⁵ Gaines, *A Gathering*, 87.

¹⁶ Op. cit., 128.

¹⁷ Keith Clark, “Re-(W)righting Black Male Subjectivity: The Communal Poetics of Ernest Gaines’s *A Gathering of Old Men*,” *Callaloo* 22, no. 1 (Winter 1999), 199.



reader to see the Boutan family's anguish at the murder of their son through Gil Boutan, Beau's more modern, educated younger brother. The grief there is real, and the overturning of the old order by this carnival is a sort of profaning of the family's absolute unity—something seen by Fix, Beau's father, as sacred. Family loyalties are compromised when Fix's old-order perspective (the native son is murdered, vengeance must be dealt) clashes head-on with Gil's educated viewpoint (the South has left the era of renegade justice and lynchings; leave this to the law to sort out). Gil's voice is raised against that of Fix, their voices clash, and Fix finally ignores Gil in an attempt to shame him publicly. Gil's voice of progressivism stands as an equal with Fix's vocal racism. Gaines allows heteroglossia to persist.

The final scene in the novel is a comedic shoot-out between the horribly inept representatives of the law, the few and determined white rabble out for black blood, and the old black men with shaking hands and weak eyesight. The real murderer—a young black man named Charlie Biggs—returns to the scene and comes clean just prior to the shootout. Charlie makes the boldest claim yet to black manhood:

"I'm a man," he said. "I want the world to know it. I ain't Big Charlie, nigger boy, no more, I'm a man. Y'all hear me? A man come back. Not no nigger boy. A nigger boy run and run and run. But a man come back. I'm a man."¹⁸

His speech, given to the white sheriff and his deputy, and to the crowd of black men with their shotguns, is the

climax of vocal assertion of manhood in *A Gathering of Old Men*. Claiming responsibility and claiming suffering, his action may have damned him, but it has damned him as a man and he wants the world to know it. The entire black community is at his back now, as Clatoo comments: "This everybody's fight. . . . It ain't go'n be no lynching here tonight."¹⁹

Charlie's provoking speech and the communal response of the black men riles the Cajun men (friends of Beau who have come to the quarters for their revenge) and fire is exchanged. The resulting deaths—minor characters whose voices are not essential to the plot—end up evening the score of grievances. At court—outside the bounds of the carnivalesque—the judge is ultimately unable to do anything except restrict these men's access to firearms in the future. Order is restored in a new dimension, and they are treated as men deserving justice and having the right to speak their piece.

This is no longer the white-dominated world of the antebellum South; society is dialogic now. Carnival gave these black men their voices and blood gave them the impetus to speak and act. These black men, armed with stories and articulate voices, have passed into manhood and realigned their society's orientation from being monologic to being heteroglossic. They can now all say with Charlie, "Let a man through."²⁰ Q

Hännah Schlaudt's seven year old twin brothers think they are real men. They abide by a code called "the Twin Commandments."

¹⁹ Op. cit., 195.

²⁰ Op. cit., 193.

¹⁸ Gaines, *A Gathering*, 187.

LEARNING TO PRAY

RACHEL WERNER

As a Christian, I rarely see beyond the external expressions of Islam. Even the five pillars (confession of faith, prayer, giving of alms, fasting, and pilgrimage) are all physical expressions of what can be a very spiritual religion, though I don't often think of it as such. In *The Translator*, Leila Aboulela paints the Muslim faith in an attractively spiritual, trans-ethnic light. The main character, Sammar, is a Sudanese widow working as a translator for a secular Islamic scholar at a Scottish University. Sammar's employer, Rae, understands the external significances of Islam, along with some key philosophical underpinnings. Yet Sammar's faith, being both personal and deeply spiritual, transcends these things. Rae observes that "she was heavy with other loyalties, full to the brim with distant places, voices in a language that was not his own."

Some of the book's most striking moments come when Sammar's culture and faith sharply contradict the culture and faith trends around her. While everyone else in Scotland seems to be feasting their waists away during Christmas and New Years in celebration of joy and plenty, Sammar strictly honors the fast of Ramadan, remembering her total dependence on Allah for sustenance. When in Scotland, Sammar lives alone in a cold apartment building, whereas in Sudan, she lives in a 24-hour heat wave in a house with her aunt, cousins, nieces, and nephews. Even though European culture doesn't look twice when a single woman spends time alone with a single man, Sammar wrestles with "the idol of Reputation" that she grew up with as a Muslim.

In these, and numerous other examples, Aboulela communicates her belief that, while the truth of the Muslim faith can touch anyone regardless of race or religious history, Eastern culture such as Sammar knew in Sudan truly is superior to Scotland's western culture. Rae, the novel's token white person, expresses this belief when he says, "Loneliness is Europe's malaria . . . this is not so

hygienic a place, don't be taken in by the idols it makes of itself. You might even come to feel sorry for it, just a little, not too much, for there is no injustice in this decay. I am anxious that when you go back home you will realize that I am much cruder than you, that I am not as you think me to be." Aboulela's loyalty to the superiority of Muslim culture

is apparent even in the style of her writing. While her book is in English, her writing is markedly different from that which one expects from an American or British novelist.

At times her grammar and syntax are too perfect, causing not only the characters but the narrative voice itself to take on the aural characteristics of non-native English speakers. Her characters' precision with the language marks their lack of comfort and familiarity with it. Thus even the English language reflects the stiff, coldness of Westerners as Aboulela perceives them.

Aboulela's descriptions of Sammar's life in Scotland are sad and depressing. The world she paints seems gray and dismal. Yet each memory of Sudan that Sammar shares with Rae sparkles with color and character. Some of the most interesting characters in the book are relatively minor figures that Sammar interacts with when she returns to Sudan, such as the young neighbor girl, Nahla, who complains to Sammar about the difficulty of planning a traditional Muslim wedding. By contrast, Rae's descriptions of his life and family history are as bleak as winter in Edinburgh. Despite his status as an Islam scholar, his life is typically Western. He works hard, goes home to his apartment, and sees his daughter and in-laws during the holidays. Aboulela crafts her depiction of Rae in such a way that the most interesting parts of his life are those which intersect with the Eastern/Muslim world.

While Sudan may have difficulties (Sammar's aunt regularly curses the government because of how often the power goes out), its people have a superior spiritual understanding: "Allah's sharia was kinder and more balanced

The Translator
Leila Aboulela
Grove Press, 2006



than the rules people set up for themselves.” Interestingly, Aboulela chooses words that specifically refute the idea that Islam and Christianity have much in common as religions: “Ours isn’t a religion of suffering . . . not a religion of pathos, not a religion of redemption through sacrifice.” Clearly Aboulela considers Islam to be both different from and superior to Western Christianity. Even in a broken and imperfect world, Sammar finds comfort and strength in her religious identity. From the fast of Ramadan to her regular prayers, Sammar’s Muslim faith is a foundation of meaning and virtue no matter where she is in the world.

By contrast, Aboulela presents Scotland’s traditional Calvinistic Christianity as “dour and oppressive.” Rae complains that the only real value he learned in the church was “the value of pretending that all was well when it wasn’t.” When Sammar remembers her childhood faith, she recalls the comforting words of the Qur’an: “I take refuge in the Lord of daybreak . . . I take refuge in the Lord of humans.” While Aboulela makes a worthwhile point about Calvinists’ tendency towards legalism, her choice of contrasts against Islam sharply ignore grace-filled teachings in the Bible that Calvinists treasure, among them passages in the Psalms that communicate comfort and peace similar to Sammar’s Qur’an verses. Here Aboulela takes a frustratingly selective view of Christian teaching, yet Christians are often accused of the same selectivity in their representation of the Muslim faith.

As a Christian reader, I was surprised by the way this

Muslim woman interpreted my religion. When Sammar imagines the conversation she would have with her brother Waleed if he found out she loves Rae, she realizes that disappointed as he would be that she was interested in “a foreigner,” his primary concern would be the possibility that Rae still held Christian sympathies. A European would be bad enough, but a Christian would be a total travesty. Waleed’s view seems shocking to a Christian reader, but if the roles were reversed, and the book featured a Christian man’s outrage that his sister would be interested in a Muslim Middle Easterner, no Christian would look twice. Why am I as a reader, then, shocked to find that Aboulela takes her religious loyalties as seriously as I do mine?

The Translator offers Islam from a Muslim’s perspective; something Christians rarely hear unless they seek it out. Aboulela’s ability to present the Muslim view of Western culture and of Westerners such as Rae in an engaging and challenging way is both laudable and enjoyable. Her beliefs and arguments are cleverly communicated in the thoughts and words of her main character, Sammar. Though clearly biased towards the Eastern world, Aboulela’s story of the tensions between East and West, faith and culture, provides a thought-provoking view into the faith of the modern devout Muslim. **Q**

Rachel Werner is a sophomore English major who loves chai tea and big museums. She hails from the only state in the nation associated with the phrase, “You have died of dysentery,” and is sometimes homesick for the end of the Trail.

THE EDUCATION OF A BRITISH PROTECTED CHILD

ANDREW WALKER

In the United States, even the most socially conscious can view the plight of Africa, and Africans themselves, in the abstract. Television documentaries about terrors in Zimbabwe, petitions to stop the genocide in Darfur, and academic articles about the horrors of the slave trade serve an important role in educating us about the plight of the continent and calling us to action. On the downside, this glut of information can cause us to view Africa as a faceless, black mass of misery, populated by savage monsters that needlessly oppress their weak but noble compatriots. Though our attitudes towards the continent are compassionate and concerned, we oftentimes speak of Africans as if they have no diversity of character, no culture, no thought, literature, or philosophies beyond their relationship to us. In *The Education of a British Protected Child*, Chinua Achebe does not seek to give a voice to Africa, but to make his own voice heard. In his collection of seventeen essays, Achebe discusses a dizzying range of topics, from literature to African politics to his own life. Throughout his collection, Achebe seeks to define and reform our notions about what it means to be an African, a writer, and a human being. Though sometimes confusing, his conclusions are complex, challenging, and edifying.

If anyone is qualified to discuss the subjects covered in *The Education of a British Protected Child*, Chinua Achebe is. Achebe broke onto the literary scene with the novel *Things Fall Apart*, and that novel, combined with his later works, *No Longer at Ease*, *Arrow of God*, *Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah*, established Achebe as a master of African literature. The recipient of multiple fellowships and teaching positions, Achebe has lived an expansive life, travelling across the entire world and accumulating a dazzling array of accomplishments.

The Education of a British Protected Child
Chinua Achebe
Knopf, 2009

The essays found in *Education* divide into three categories: political writing, literary criticism, and autobiography. Though every essay in the collection shines, each category has standouts. “What Nigeria Means to Me?” is a heart-breaking study of the early hopes that accompanied the birth of the Nigerian nation, as well as the crippling disappointments that followed. Achebe’s commentary details his own transition from enthusiastic participant, to jaded critic, to saddened exile. “We are the parents of Nigeria, not vice versa,” he writes. “A generation will come, if we do our work patiently and well and given luck a generation that will call Nigeria father or mother. But not yet.” Achebe’s unique narrative voice and his love of nuance stand out throughout this essay.

“Spelling Our Proper Name” presents a literary critique of James Baldwin that utilizes aspects of Achebe’s experience as an African and as a man of letters. Achebe praises Baldwin eloquently, noting that “few writers have understood the ways of oppression or written more memorably about them than James Baldwin.” However, Achebe also gently chides Baldwin for his insecurities about African culture and his own identity, recounting stories of great African kingdoms that were devastated and dehumanized by “civilized” invaders.

In “Recognitions,” Achebe discusses what it is like to be recognized in America, and the decidedly different types of recognitions he and other African authors have received. One amusing story details a Nigerian cab driver, who refused to allow Achebe to pay for a ride. “I told him [the cab driver] I was not paying, that my publisher was paying, and that my publisher was very rich,” Achebe recounts. “He still shook his head and said that Chinua Achebe’s friends cannot pay in his cab!” This autobiographical essay is written




lightly and beautifully and is my favorite of the collection.

In this collection, the categories of politics, literature, and autobiography are seldom mutually exclusive. Chinua Achebe is most powerful when he blends these different approaches. In “Africa’s Tarnished Name,” Achebe savagely combines literary criticism and political history. In this *tour de force*, Achebe begins with an examination of Africa’s relationship with Europe, moves towards a treatise on colonial literature, stops to attack the myth that Africans were as responsible for the slave trade as Europeans, and culminates in a vicious deconstruction of Joseph Conrad. Though I did not always agree with Achebe’s conclusions, I found myself frequently moving from vehement opposition to his rhetoric to humbly accepting much of it. In the titular essay, “The Education of a British-Protected Child,” Achebe combines autobiography and history to study British colonialism in Nigeria and his own complicated relationship with it. His experiences in the British educational system combined intriguingly with his concluding thoughts about the nature of language, power, and identity demand a thorough rereading.

Achebe is a skilled writer, creating beautiful prose that is simple, clear, and powerful. Occasionally though, his

skill is coupled with righteous anger. Though this anger is often justified, some readers may find it overwhelming. Indeed, his suspicions of everything European, from simple linguistic phrases to abolitionist crusades, is a tad extreme. This type of commentary, in which most things are ultimately political, is especially intrusive in Achebe’s discussion of literature, where skill or beauty of writing is frequently ignored. Given Achebe’s own literary talent, this attitude is surprising. Though Achebe always writes powerfully in this collection, he still clearly bears many deep and painful scars.

The essays in *The Education of a British Protected Child* are a complex lot. Though many readers will often find themselves disagreeing with Achebe, he deserves to be read by anyone with a serious interest in literature and Africa. Chinua Achebe’s discussions of Africa, literature, and his life are messy, nuanced, inflammatory, and enlightening. Their beauty and complexity reveal the richness, individuality, and value that African literature already holds. 

Andrew Walker is a sophomore Political Science major. Though he currently takes classes at Grove City College, what he really wants to do is run a small lawncare business in Florida, Georgia, or Alabama.

AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A CHRISTIAN?

PHILLIP GRUBER

I spent many hours reading in Edinboro University, a state university near Erie, last summer. During that time I noticed that Grove City's and Edinboro's libraries devoted roughly the same amount of shelf space to Christianity even though the secular school's library is five stories taller than Grove City's. Still, the state school had more or less everything Grove City had related to Christianity, perhaps more on some topics, except for one genre: defenses of the faith. Grove City's library features shelves and shelves of Christian apologetics and similar systematic literature, and the state school has few, if any. Certainly I should not have expected a secular college to be interested in justifying a belief system it did not support, but Grove City's proliferation of apologetic books (owing, no doubt, in part to the research needs of HUMA 201 students) show that Christians and outsiders are asking different questions about Christianity based on their perceptions of the faith.

Few outsiders convert to Christianity on the basis of intellectual arguments alone; the great majority are moved by personal experiences and perceptions passed on by family members and friends. The problem today is that many outsiders regard Christianity negatively. David Kinnaman, the president of the Barna Group, which studies Christian culture through polling, interviewed outsiders across the United States to understand why these perceptions are so negative. Similar previous prescriptions to rejuvenate Christianity, Kinnaman notes, have relied mostly on personal experiences open to charges of casuistry rather than quantitative data, which Kinnaman presents. *unChristian* presents his findings and offers his prescription for honestly changing negative perceptions of Christianity.

Kinnaman contends that the widespread unChristianity of the church has disgruntled many people, especially those between the ages of 16 and 29, the age group he

focuses on in the book. Kinnaman's insight into the way this age group thinks is a major strength of the book, which is understandable considering he is a demographic researcher. Unfortunately, Christians have work to do if they want to gain respect from members of this age group, who generally view Christians as hypocritical, too interested in conversion, hateful toward homosexuals, sheltered, too political, and judgmental. He writes, "We have become famous for what we oppose, not who we are for;" most disconcertingly, the church is not known for love. Christians to some extent deserve the negative perceptions people have of them. Most outsiders, the data shows, have attended church at one time, many have made significant commitments to Christ, and many have tried church and left because they have been offended by the conduct of professing Christians.

While his chapters on homosexuality and politics offer no special insight, Kinnaman is at his best when assessing the charges of hypocrisy and salvation fixation. His data confirm that young Christians are not living differently from young outsiders, joining their non-Christian peers particularly in the unraveling of sexual morality. While some relaxations in mores in the past century have helped Christianity's image (giving up the old alcohol-and-playing-cards sham, e.g.), many people in our generation do not take self-discipline seriously. The charge of hypocrisy also gains significant traction from the vibrant culture of legalism still oddly prevalent in American churches, which compounds the problem by causing Christians to feel morally superior while acting the same way as outsiders. Christians do not think about the way their advice sounds to other people: one single mother told Kinnaman, "Everyone in my church gave me advice about how to raise my son, but a lot of the time they seemed to be reminding me that I have no husband—and besides, most of them were not following

unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity . . . and Why It Matters
David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons
Basic, 2007



their own advice.”

Kinnaman’s antidote to hypocrisy is transparency, by which Kinnaman means something more than “being real,” a term that betrays its user’s inflated sense of his or her spiritual authority and uniqueness of insight. Christians must be willing to confront and confess their sins (without enticing others to sin); Christ should be changing our lives, but we should remember that the remission, more than the omission, of sin is what makes Christians different from non-Christians. The goal of transparency, Kinnaman writes, is restoration of relationships with other people: we cannot disregard people’s opinion of Christianity simply because we know what Christians are “really like.” We cannot bring the life and stasis of Christ to people unless they recognize us as humble.

If I was initially defensive, if I tried to suggest that many people who are animadvert on Christianity are ignorant of its content, if I hoped that some intemperate letters to some editor were the main cause of the widespread disgust with my faith, Kinnaman’s grace-filled, thoughtful orthodoxy quelled my opposition and won my respect. Writing about a problem that is at once so obvious and so easy to miss is a difficult task, but Kinnaman has some notable insights about renewing the body of Christ. He writes with the unobtrusive skill of a copywriter; a few officious usage miscues aside (in one anecdote he writes that a hotel clerk apparently not afflicted with pica “consumed” a book), his writing draws attention to his content rather than his style.

Kinnaman concludes that the church can become more Christian by placing more emphasis on relationships, creativity (which, to his credit, has nothing to do with drama, paintings, or “praise and worship” music), and service. He notes that gaining someone’s respect often takes more work than Christians are willing to do, but his research shows people’s minds can be changed about Christianity. At times he seems close to abandoning evangelism, but his stance is simply realistic. People will not listen to the gospel if they believe they will be hurt by accepting it.

Lest his readers think him a lone voice calling for renewal, Kinnaman has recruited a number of pastors and Christian nonprofit leaders to explain at the ends of the chapters what they are doing to counteract the negative

perceptions he describes. The insights in these sections are like limestone rocks in topsoil, rare in the sample but abundant in the broader environment. The commentators mostly restate Kinnaman’s points in more banal prose and sometimes echo the very obsequies Kinnaman criticizes. Readers who are concerned that Christian leaders may be unaware of the negative image of Christianity may find these sections heartening, while readers looking for an extension of Kinnaman’s argument can skip them.

An easy response to this book is that Kinnaman is trying to co-opt the tactics of modern liberalism, which has successfully sold itself as the compassionate alternative to abusive, Republican Christianity. When, in high school, I first began to think seriously about the church’s renewed emphasis on love, relationships, and hating the sin while loving the sinner as a corrective to political sloganeering, pushiness, and moralizing, I was perplexed. This seemingly softer Christianity seemed mostly an attempt to catch up to secular liberalism or to transform Christians into middle school girls. While secular liberalism is trendy among the leaders of mainline denominations, it makes poor orthodoxy, and what I thought was Christianity was not even conscientious conservatism—it was brutish, moralistic traditionalism narcissistically expressed. When mishandled, a focus on relationships and service can make the church even more effeminate or untheological than it already is. Abandoning Gopher Prairie Christianity, however, does not mean being weak or succumbing to liberal relativism. Easy solutions such as posting greeters in every vestibule to say hello and shake hands are not even enough: every major-brand sit-down restaurant offers basically the same thing. As Kinnaman shows, faithful Christianity is something deeper. While he is clear that Christians can never be perfect, he is equally convinced that the church can be a more effective instrument of grace. **Q**

Philip Gruber once held a lengthy conversation with Christopher Marlowe in a dark alley in Youngstown, Ohio. The English playwright had apparently been living among the Assiniboine in Manitoba since his strange disappearance in 1593 and had briefly come out of hiding to appear in a biographical statement about someone else. Gruber promised to donate his bio to the crusty yet eerily persuasive quadracentenarian, reasoning that at least Mr. Marlowe had asked nicely—or at least had not required him to sign the deal in blood.

WHERE MEN WIN GLORY

DR. SAMUEL S. STANTON, JR.

Jon Krakauer should return to climbing mountains. Jon Krakauer has reached the apex of investigative narrative on the lives of adventurous people. So, either Jon Krakauer has authored a dud, or he has authored a tributary masterpiece. Upon completion of *Where Men Win Glory*, *The Odyssey of Pat Tillman*, readers may be left clueless to make this assessment.

Two things clearly emerge from this work. One, Krakauer has a strong dislike for the neo-conservative regime led by former U.S. President George W. Bush and believes that the Bush administration was involved in trying to mislead the family of Pat Tillman and the public at large regarding the true nature of Tillman's death. Second, and most importantly, Pat Tillman was a remarkable human being.

Krakauer does a quality job of explaining the nature of the Taliban movement and general fundamentalist Islamic growth in Afghanistan. The nature of the relationship between Cold War and post Cold War political machinations that led to the growth of the Taliban is clearly explained in a manner that will be accessible to most people who have not devoted a great deal of energy to the study of Central and Southwest Asian politics and socio-economic development. This is a true bright spot for this book and Krakauer includes clear explanations of the fractured nature of the population of Afghanistan and the cultural practice of institutionalized vengeance that created a myriad of hurdles for political organization of the country. This informational exercise is well done and serves as the narrative background for the real story Krakauer wants to tell—the life of Pat Tillman and the deception of the U.S. government regarding his death. It is not informational work without fault, however, as Krakauer incorrectly touts Hamid Karzai as “one of the CIA's most trusted mujahideen commanders,” during the 1980s. Many readers may consider this digression into

the political background of Afghanistan to be filler material to add pages to a book and indeed is a departure from the normally singularly focused nature of Krakauer's work that readers of *Into the Wild* and *Into Thin Air* have come to expect from the author.

As stated above, based on Krakauer's narrative of Pat Tillman's life, Pat Tillman was a *mensch*. The older man, who is still wild at heart and has memories of the freedom of youth, will think back fondly to moments of trying his strength, agility, and mental prowess against nature and against his fellow man. The younger man will ponder whether or not he too is capable of such energies and excitement in his life. Everyone will be

drawn into the story of Pat Tillman, a man living freely, living in his moment, drawn on by a rare combination of intellectual curiosity, desire to test personal physical capacity, and true compassion for humanity. Well, not everyone—for those who believe that men should be more emasculated and sedate, Pat Tillman will not be a heroic figure.

A man of loyalty to family, friends, and employer (he passed up much more lucrative contract offers to stay with the Arizona Cardinals during his NFL career), Pat Tillman was a man who saw a job that needed to be completed for the citizens of his country and believed he was capable of helping to complete it. To the end of serving his fellow citizens and the needs of the country, Pat Tillman gave up the NFL and monetary wealth to enter the U.S. Army. Tillman also passed up the opportunity for special treatment and celebrity status in the military, purposely subjecting himself to norms of enlisted military life. It is an unfortunate truth that this man of quality died at a young age, but this is also an unfortunate truth of military life. What makes this even more unfortunate is that from reading this narrative we will be left with little doubt that Pat Tillman died without Christ. The greater shame of the loss of Pat Tillman is not,

Where Men Win Glory,
The Odyssey of Pat Tillman
Jon Krakauer
Doubleday Books, 2009



to this reader, the loss of the life of another soldier. It is the lost soul of Pat Tillman that is now beyond salvation.

To Krakauer the greater problem is that Pat Tillman died of fratricide. To die in military service is a noble thing. To die in a hostile situation in the service of your country carries greater nobility. But, to die because of a mistake takes away the glory. “Not so fast, my misguided friends,” cry those who have been in combat. Death because of mistake sometimes just happens. It is unfortunate, but tactical failures occur and people die from friendly fire. Combat zones are dangerous places; dying because of a mistake does not diminish the fact that you were there serving, fighting a battle on behalf of your country. So, no glory is lost to Pat Tillman because he died in a friendly fire incident. Why then were Pat Tillman’s family and friends so upset? Because they were initially told that the death was in combat and then later told that it was friendly fire-related.

Krakauer takes aim at the Bush administration and the military claiming a cover-up of the truth, or at best failure, to tell the truth on the part of the U.S. government, throughout the book readers will find statements such as “E-mails, memos, and other documents that might have shed light on the cover-up were conspicuously withheld.” Knowing the truth about Jessica Lynch (that she wasn’t greatly mistreated and did not replay the Alamo prior to her capture when the convoy she was in came under fire and was broken up), it is not hard to conceive of the story being told of Tillman as a combat hero was told to deflect potential negativity regarding the war away from the administration. Krakauer takes time in his narrative to inform us of the Jessica Lynch affair and of other concurrent combat failures and mishaps.¹ The U.S. Army was not forthcoming about the details of Pat Tillman’s death, and the Bush administration was not forthcoming with details. However, both the Army and the Bush administration kept stating for weeks what a hero Pat Tillman was in his death.

Was Tillman’s death by friendly fire covered up or glossed over by the Army and the administration? Krakauer

and Tillman’s family claim that they were lied to and that the government covered up the truth in an attempt to positively spin an unpopular war. According to Kevin Tillman, Pat’s brother, “Revealing that Pat’s death was a fratricide would have been yet another political disaster during a month already swollen with political disasters, and a brutal truth that the American public would undoubtedly find unacceptable. So the facts needed to be suppressed. An alternative narrative needed to be constructed . . .” The Army for its part says that it was being methodical in its investigation. The administration generally did not offer any explanation of its initial stance on Tillman’s death. Who should you believe?

Personally, as a former soldier, I feel that it does not matter. Tillman’s death was heroic because he was there. Regardless of how he died, from Taliban, Al-Qaeda, or U.S. Army gun fire, he was there, he was serving, and he was *mensh*. As Krakauer notes, “it wasn’t a tragic flaw that brought Tillman down, but a tragic virtue.” Tillman died doing the right thing for the right reasons. It is an unfortunate fact that his death was fratricidal.

As a Christian, I sympathize with the family of Pat Tillman; they lost a loved one, and they desire to know as much as possible about what happened. They were also struggling with the fact that they had no faith upon which to rely to comfort and solace in this time of loss. Oh what a better day it is when a Christian dies, gone to be with their Savior, destined to heaven. Oh how sad that day was when Pat Tillman died, killed by friendly fire, dead, really dead—no eternal life in heaven to come.

I would recommend this work to anyone interested in understanding what drives a man to choose a career that puts his own life at risk for the sake of doing the right thing. Men may win glory in the fight, but men of Tillman’s ilk do not choose the fight for the glory. Krakauer does a masterful job capturing this fact in this work. As a reader, you may very well disagree with the portrayal of the Bush regime as schemers covering up the nature of Tillman’s death, but you will not be able to fault the quality of Krakauer’s prose. All readers will be led in a very clear and able manner to

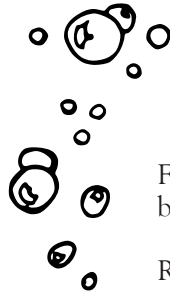
¹ Chapters 22-25 of *Where Men Win Glory* is dedicated to telling the story of the Lynch affair and the failures of recognizing friendly forces on the ground in Nasiriyah, Iraq in the last two weeks of March 2003.



understand the inner drive of Pat Tillman. All readers will be clearly and frankly told of the events that led up to Pat Tillman's death and clearly and vividly have those deadly moments portrayed. Krakauer once again tells a great tale, provides primarily accurate coverage of important events, and has written a book that will pull emotions from the

readers. Did Krakauer author a dud or a masterpiece? I am still unsure, but he authored a book that is worth reading. **Q**

Dr. Samuel S. Stanton, Jr. is currently an Associate Professor of Political Science at Grove City College, specializing in the study of development politics and violent political behavior. He is one of academia's worst nightmares—an educated redneck.



UNBLINKING EYES

TIFFANY SHIEBLER

Fish are not chatty companions,
but they make sobering pets.

Refusing to offer welcoming meows,
or wagging tails,

fish sit placidly where you place
their cramped world.

When you peer into the still, murky tank,
they gaze back with beady eyes,

lidless eyes, wide with surprise
or sensible defiance.

And if you look through those unblinking eyes,
our warped world will shock you too.

Disproportionate figures scuttle past
in nauseating chaos,

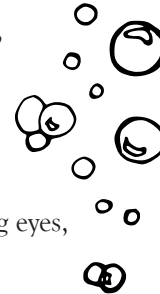
making your gills pump rapidly for oxygen,
and your fins beat wildly for control.

You shrink away from thick fingers,
as they tap earthquake greetings.

In here, muffled voices babble nonsense,
in one-sided conversations.

Yet you stare back blankly at the grotesque faces
smiling through the glass,

and say with a straight face,
"You're ridiculous."



Tiffany Shiebler has recently become pet-less for the first time in her life, but would like to dedicate this poem to her future beta fish, Ralph II.

JUSTICE: WHAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

LUKE JUDAY

In 1884, four sailors from the British ship *Mignonette* were trapped at sea in a lifeboat after their ship wrecked. They consumed what food they had in three days. On the fourth day they caught a turtle and ate it slowly. After that, they ate nothing for eight days. The four men were close to death from dehydration and starvation. One of them, a cabin boy with no family, drank seawater and became ill. One of the men suggested they draw lots to see who should die, but another protested and no lots were drawn. Finally, one of the four men offered a prayer and stabbed the cabin boy with a penknife. The other three subsisted on his flesh, until one morning they were rescued (“as we were eating our breakfast” according to one of the sailors’ diaries). Upon returning to shore, they freely admitted to the cannibalistic killing, and were tried and convicted.

By his own utilitarian logic, the sailor who killed the cabin boy should be forgiven for choosing to save three lives rather than none. But the repulsion of the jury and the reader reveal that our conception of justice is not entirely about utilitarian calculus. The question would also have been different if the four sailors had all agreed to draw lots. Would the other three be justified in the killing if it were freely agreed to by a contract? These and other questions fill the pages of Michael J. Sandel’s new book *Justice: what’s the right thing to do?*

Michael Sandel’s critique of John Rawls challenged thirty years of Rawls’ philosophical dominance in the discipline of political theory. But Sandel is no cloistered raving genius. The Harvard professor and former Rhodes Scholar has a knack for bringing erudite controversies down to an engaging and relevant level. *Justice* is a written version of his popular Harvard undergraduate course. Sandel takes a notably Socratic approach to the problems of public life,

looking at both hypothetical and historical situations like the one above and taking seriously the gut reactions of his readers.

Rather than surveying the history of political thought or constructing a complex argument for one particular theory, Sandel seeks to inspire in his readers a fascination with the ethical dilemmas societies face and provoke them to examine their moral judgments. He provides real and

hypothetical situations, pushes his readers to discern what is right, and then deftly swoops in to explain why the readers feel the way they do. He

Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?

Michael J. Sandel

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009

examines three historically prescient explanations of what justice is in society: social welfare, freedom, and virtue. These strains of thought help explain the ethical conflict inherent in his examples.

Sandel’s approach is helpful because Americans operate in a chaotic milieu of ideas and arguments, torn by conflicting values with a variety of philosophical genealogies. The United States, from its founders to its modern politicians, is an essentially liberal nation, with the left-right divide a sort of family feud within liberalism (and the words “liberal” and “conservative” grossly misused). Both sides are heavily influenced by the utilitarianism of the nineteenth century. Arguments from public virtue have been largely confined to marginalized strains of social conservatism as Americans seek to maintain their strong view that individual views of what is right ought not to infringe on the public square.


In the end, Sandel comes down hard on both those who believe communities can be governed by concerns of social welfare and those who believe individual views of the good can be separated from the public square. He advocates a view of justice that encompasses public virtue, in line with the classical tradition of Plato and Aristotle. He allies with thinkers like Alisdair MacIntyre, Michael Oakeshott,



and Hannah Arendt on the right and Michael Walzer and Charles Taylor on the left. He disagrees with John Rawls, Friedrich Hayek, and other proponents of liberalism in both its left-wing and right-wing versions.

Sandel provides a promising vision of a society where moral engagement is possible on significant social issues. Though largely a liberal himself (in the modern American sense of the word), Sandel exhorts liberals to abandon the paralyzing and philosophically empty rhetoric of moral neutrality. He rightly points out that you cannot argue for abortion by saying that religion should not interfere with politics. If an unborn baby is a person, killing that person should clearly be wrong. It is no answer to say abortion is merely a matter for one's private beliefs. The same holds true of same-sex marriage. Rather, Sandel says, liberals who truly wish to defend abortion and same-sex marriage must engage conservatives on the moral level with reasons grounded in the purposes of childbirth or marriage. This earns him the praise of George Will, who claims: "Michael Sandel, political philosopher and public intellectual, is a liberal, but not the annoying kind."

The book's strengths mirror its weaknesses. *Justice* is a tremendous introduction to the most pressing questions in political theory and a challenging call to the average American. For someone interested in a deeper understanding of politics than mere partisan polemics, but without time to read Plato or John Rawls, Sandel's book is perfect. On the other hand, its simplicity leaves significant pieces out. As an argument against liberalism and utilitarianism, *Justice* will be unconvincing to anyone who has read even a mediocre defense of either. Such readers would be better off reading one of Sandel's more academic works (e.g. *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*).

Overall, *Justice* is an excellent work. Sandel succeeds brilliantly in the attempt to make deep philosophical conflicts accessible to a popular audience. The examples he comes up with make *Justice* a fascinating and worthwhile read. Readers interested in learning more can also enjoy Sandel's actual lectures at the book's website: www.justice-harvard.org. 

Luke Juday is a senior majoring in life (specifically collective life). He still refuses to walk on the lower quad.

“UPON THE KING?!”

JUSTIN R. OLSON

In the words of Flannery O'Connor, “A good man is hard to find,” especially when the burden to “preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States of America” has to fall on his shoulders. Thankfully, American presidents have not made it their habit to alter the Constitution on political or ideological whims, although more maybe wished they had tried. The Constitution, as our nation’s most sacred document, provides for our national security and our individual liberty. While many presidents have maintained a critical awareness of the limits of their power, extraordinary circumstances, like war, create exceptional contexts that muddy the clarity of those limits. Scott M. Matheson, in his book, *Presidential Constitutionalism in Perilous Times*, reminds us that history is filled with such unprecedented moments and that American Presidents would do well to consider how they might respond before such situations arise.

Matheson’s book is a diagnosis and a prescription. As a diagnosis, it outlines the challenge that presidents confront in ensuring security and liberty in the face of national security threats. As a prescription, the book advocates a commitment to presidential constitutionalism. He defines this as the presidential duty to perform his “responsibilities within the separation of powers framework and to meet national security threats with commitment to constitutional principles, especially when individual liberties must be reconciled with security needs.” Matheson presents his new ideas as a rubric for future presidential decision-making as well as makes a lasting contribution to constitutional law through a unique blend of historical and constitutional analysis. Finally, he seeks to offer a thoughtful indictment of former President George W. Bush for his recent abuses of the constitution.

In the first chapter, Matheson argues that presidents are largely responsible for balancing security and liberty

during a national crisis. Other branches of government have a lesser role. Congress, while it has the power to call the president to account outside of impeachment, habitually concedes to executive decisions because it does not have sufficient resources, information, or courage to perform the task. Courts, in the long run, provide accountability through judicial review and equilibrium by virtue of their distance from partisanship; yet, they are impotent during an emergency. Furthermore, both of these branches have historically tended to affirm executive action. In short, presidents are the most competent to respond to emergencies because of their “ability to act quickly and decisively.”

Matheson continues by describing five existing frameworks that outline the nature of presidential responses to national concerns given the separation of powers framework and the need for the preservation of individual rights. During a crisis, no president uses one approach exclusively; rather, he resorts to a combination of the five at various times and in response to different situations. The first, *executive supremacy*, is derived from an interpretation of the constitutional language in Article II that “vests” the executive authority in the President. It holds that the President has every constitutional right to act by virtue of his or her position as Commander-in-Chief, and can therefore transgress statutory law when necessary. Such potentially unlawful actions are aimed at preserving the nation and affirm the role of the executive to act, outside the direct approval of Congress, in times of crisis. The second, *political branch partnership*, insists the executive only act in conjunction with the legislated approval of Congress. This means that the President executes policy consistent with current statutes or seeks to gain legislative approval for actions that are outside the scope of current laws. The third, *judicial review*, is perhaps the most detached approach for legitimization. Courts can either condone or condemn previous

Presidential Constitutionalism in Perilous Times
Scott M. Matheson, Jr.
Harvard University Press, 2009



presidential actions with rulings, but the need for a real “case and controversy,” guarantees that Judges and Justices will not find themselves in the thick of a crisis. The fourth, *retroactive judgment*, seeks formal Congressional sanction for previous presidential actions. Many times, the immediacy required in a situation does not allow for a president to work with Congress initially and is, therefore, forced to act without their expressed consent. Retroactive judgment allows a president to receive this consent *post factum*. While in many cases a rubber stamp, the legislation that comes out of such situations is vitally important for guiding future presidents, who may find themselves in similar situations. The fifth, *extraconstitutionalism*, holds that the president may set aside the Constitution in order to respond to the direst national emergencies. Theoretically, such a drastic measure is aimed that the preservation of the Constitution itself. Yet, historically such actions are often condemned by both Congress and the Courts. Condemned or not, the Constitution does not include any Lockean prerogatives and thus, any action outside its purview is considered extraconstitutional.

Matheson devotes much of the text to an historical analysis of how former presidents manifested these approaches during specific moments of national crisis. He illustrates how presidents have and have not demonstrated a commitment to his new framework of presidential constitutionalism. He begins with Abraham Lincoln’s decision to suspend *habeas corpus* without Congressional approval, use military tribunals extensively, and issue the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln assumes important significance for Matheson, since as he states, Lincoln “define[d] the issue of executive constitutionalism because he was the first president to use emergency executive power in wartime on a significant scale and sustained basis.” The other examples that Matheson references are “Woodrow Wilson’s enforcement of the Espionage Act of 1917; President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s evacuation and internment of West Coast persons of Japanese descent during World War II; President Harry S. Truman’s seizure of the steel mills during the Korean War; and President George W. Bush’s torture, surveillance,

and detention programs following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.”

None of these presidents passed Matheson’s test with flying colors, but he argues that they taught us valuable lessons. For example, the way in which Lincoln suspended *habeas corpus* in Maryland at the onset of the Civil War was, indeed, considered extraconstitutional. The question at the time, and today, was whether or not he had the authority to do so without congressional approval. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney condemned Lincoln’s actions in *Ex parte Merryman*, but Lincoln ignored the ruling. Lincoln rationalized the suspension of the writ because Congress was not in session and expediency required immediate action. Despite the questionable nature of his decision, however, Lincoln went before Congress once it had assembled and asked for retroactive approval. So, in spite of the extraconstitutionality, Lincoln’s legacy to future presidents was that the executive “could act to the extent of the federal government’s power, with the intent of seeking legislative support for actions that had to be taken before Congress could act.” Stated otherwise, he combined elements of executive supremacy, political branch partnership, and retroactive judgment, to implement his war-time strategy. If we look beyond his dismissal of *Ex parte Merryman*, Lincoln gave us one picture of how presidents could ensure security without forfeiting liberty indefinitely while acting within a constitutional context of checks and balances.

Coming to his discussion of former President George W. Bush, Matheson is much more critical. According to Matheson, the “Bush executive power doctrine” bypassed enacted law, stating that it could “act unilaterally without seeking statutory authority” based upon Commander-in-Chief powers. Matheson said that the Bush administration demonstrated this theory by completely disregarding federal and international law – sanctioning torture and harsh interrogation techniques. Bush took a similar approach with the detention of “enemy combatants.” Under Commander-in-Chief powers, the Bush administration also justified denying writs of *habeas corpus*, judicial review, and council to detainees. In other words, Bush claimed the



prerogative to determine who an enemy combatant was, and by extension, who could be denied *habeas corpus*. This assertion was struck down in four Supreme Court Cases, *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* (2004), *Rasul v. Bush* (2004), *Hamden v. Rumsfeld* (2006), and *Boumediene v. Bush* (2008). It was not until Democrats regained control of Congress in 2006, that Congress stepped in to challenge the actions of the administration. In comparison to Lincoln, Bush did not necessarily take more drastic measures. The real break that Bush made with precedent, however, was that he had gone “further in claiming executive powers *independent of Congress*” (emphasis added) and that he was unwilling to seek any kind of sanction from Congress of his particular actions. A case could be made that the Congressional act, passed on September 14, 2001, called *The Authorization for the Use of Military Force Resolution*, gave Bush the license to do what he did. Yet, this assumes that Congress in fact believed Bush could disregard statutory law to implement this piece of legislation. Only Bush asserted that.

Matheson’s analysis is impeccable, and he gives a thoughtful argument for his new approach. For Matheson, the “Bush executive power doctrine” was a case-in-point failure to follow presidential constitutionalism. Bush’s actions serve as a warning call to all future presidents to learn from his mistakes. The solution, according to Matheson’s suggested approach, puts weight on the personal choices of the President himself. The constitutionally sanctioned strength and flexibility of the presidency during such times and the limited powers of the other branches during emergencies put much at the personal discretion of the leader himself.

Such an approach, however, is a double-edged sword. Matheson’s interpretation of the division of labor between the governmental branches forces him to place a heavy burden on the conscience of the President. The President

must limit himself by intentionally seeking out Congressional support and by respecting Judicial Review during national crises. When necessity behooves him to act prior to Congressional sanction, the president himself must burden his own conscience with the need to seek retroactive judgment from Congress. At this point, Matheson loses his audience. Our Presidents are not Henry V incarnate, and we cannot echo Shakespeare’s words, “upon the king!”¹ For, our nation is, at least in principle, ruled by laws and not men.

Matheson’s thesis is troublesome because we don’t trust our leaders. His final words ring hollow: “Let liberty lie in the hearts of the President of the United States and in the hearts of the people who elect them.” In America, we have historically trusted our Presidents as accountable executives and not as wise monarchs. Nevertheless, Matheson forces us to ask ourselves, “is it possible to put faith in our leader’s sense of duty to uphold his Presidential oath?” The sanctity of the Book upon which the President swears would have us think so, but the scandal, abuse, and ambition of Washington gives reason for hesitation. The truth of the matter is that we would feel much more at ease were Matheson to call us to a renewed commitment to congressional watchfulness over Presidential ambition. We might call it Congressional constitutionalism, and at the very least it would not shove the burden of constitutional fidelity upon the shoulders of one man. A good man is hard to find. The balance-of-power framework, contrary to the analysis of Matheson, exists so that we do not have to place our primary trust in the conscience of the President during perilous times. **Q**

Justin R. Olson wouldn’t mind if Henry V were president of the United States, if only to listen to his weekly national broadcasts on YouTube; he’d take Shakespearian verse over politically correctness any day.

¹ Henry V, Act 4, scene 1.

JUSTIFICATION: GOD'S PLAN & PAUL'S VISION

DR. T. DAVID GORDON

Over fifteen years ago, I favorably reviewed Wright's *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*, and expressed a desire that he would continue to publish more.¹ Little did I know at the time how abundantly that desire would be satisfied. Many books later, another has appeared. This book is primarily about justification; but there are other theological and exegetical matters in the book, so my review (after introductory comments) will be in two parts: general statements of a theological and exegetical nature, and specific comments about justification. Readers only interested in justification, and not interested in how Wright's other positions inform his views on justification, may skip to the second section.

Introductory Matters:

The form/structure of the book

Many consider this to be a reply to John Piper's *The Future of Justification: A Response to N. T. Wright* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007). In a sense, this is true, because Piper's work is referred to in the first sentence of the book, and there is a brief portion of the book (pp. 64-71) in which Wright indicates five exceptions he takes to Piper. But Wright has chosen not to structure the book as a point-by-point rebuttal; but rather as what he calls an "outflanking exercise" (9, 31) in which he attempts to express himself again on his own terms, in hopes that his own view will be judged compelling on its own merits. One may reply to one's critics however one wishes. But some of John Piper's allies will wish that the book had not side-stepped some of the particulars of Piper's reasoning, but addressed them more explicitly and in greater detail.

¹ N. T. Wright. *Climax of the Covenant* in *Westminster Theological Journal* 56, no. 1 (1994): 197-201.

The book falls into two parts, Introduction and Exegesis. In the first part, there are four chapters, one about the importance of the matter, another about "rules of engagement," a third about First-Century Judaism, and a fourth about Justification. In the second part, there are major chapters on Galatians and Romans, an intervening chapter on Philippians, Corinthians, and Ephesians (yes, Wright considers Ephesians and Colossians to be "thoroughly and completely Pauline" [p. 43]), and a final, concluding chapter.

General (favorable)

There are a number of points Wright makes that are true and helpful, for which I am grateful. I will only mention briefly those I judge to be most important.

Wright's commitment to *Sola Scriptura* refers not only to *results* of exegesis, but also to the *method* of exegesis; a submission to the narrative *form* in which Scripture comes to us, a submission to the actual rhetoric or argumentation of a given Pauline epistle (49, 247), and even a submission to Ephesians and Colossians as part of the Pauline canon (43, 141-176).

Wright correctly pursues understanding the "underlying narrative" of Paul's gospel (34-35, 59, 82, 250). Wright appropriately works from a biblical-theological perspective, always looking for the underlying narrative behind Paul's thought.²

² Such an approach is commendable, but not new. Biblical theologies were written by John Owen (1661), Jonathan Edwards ("A History of the Work of Redemption," 1773), Stuart Robinson (*Discourses of Redemption*, 1866), and, especially in the late-19th and early twentieth century, Geerhardus Vos (*Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*, 1948 (not to mention Meredith Kline). Cf. especially John V. Fesko, "On the Antiquity of Biblical Theology," in *Resurrection and Eschatology: Theology in Service of the Church, Essays in Honor of Richard B. Gaffin Jr.*, ed Lane G. Tipton and Jeffrey C. Waddington (Phillipsburg, P&R, 2008), pp. 443-477.

Justification: God's Plan & Paul's Vision
N. T. Wright
Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009



For Wright, Romans 2, 4, and 9-11 are essential to (not parenthetical to) Romans as a whole. Romans 1-11 is a unit, that flows out of Paul's repeated interest in what it means that the Gospel comes "to the Jew first, also to the Greek" (1:16). Therefore, those chapters that address the relation of Jew and Gentile in the Gospel moment are far from parenthetical in Romans; they are, in some senses, its central purpose. Wright's thoughts on Romans are rich with insight on this point, and they dovetail nicely with his similar comments about the centrality of Jew/Gentile issues in Galatians.³

Paul's theology is eschatological. Helpfully, Wright recognizes the eschatological nature of Paul's proclamation; that in Paul, aspects of the end-time have irrupted into the center of time.⁴

Faith, works, and the Spirit.

Throughout, Wright states his desire to recognize a greater role for the Holy Spirit in Paul's thought (e.g., 10, 11). This is all well and good, but he often implies that the "tradition" has omitted this. Wright appears to be unfamiliar with the Westminster Standards, where the Spirit has a very prominent role, especially in those chapters that address the *ordo salutis*, such as chapters 13 and 14.

Wright recognizes the importance of the Jew/Gentile situation for Paul's "problem" with the Law; and also recognizes the importance of the visible people of God on earth; that soteriology and ecclesiology are intertwined in some way. But this is also old.⁵

General (less favorable)

Finally, and helpfully, Wright defines what he means by "the covenant."

"Here we have it: *God's single plan, through Abraham and*

his family, to bless the whole world. This is what I have meant by the word *covenant* when I have used it as shorthand in writing about Paul. . . . The "covenant," in my shorthand, is not something other than God's determination to deal with evil once and for all and so put the whole creation (and humankind with it) right at last."⁶

This clarification regarding Wright's "shorthand" is much appreciated. In my judgment, Wright's "covenant" then is virtually identical with what the Reformed tradition has ordinarily called "the covenant of grace" (WCF 7:3), and is neither worse nor better than the common convention (except that, by employing a different convention, he misled some of us until this recent clarification was made).

I would still argue that such a definition of "covenant" uses a biblical term unbiblically, something Wright warns against on pp. 81-82 of the this volume. Biblically, a *berith* or a *diatheke* is always an historical treaty of some sort, enacted in space and time with particular parties; it is not an eternal purpose or decree. Both Paul (Gal. 3:17) and Stephen (Acts 7:6, 30) could cite the number of years that passed between the Abrahamic and the Sinai covenants, so for them, a "covenant" is not an eternal or prehistorical plan; it is an actual, ratified-in-space-and-time treaty.

Related, Wright somewhat more clearly grounds the Abrahamic covenant in its own underlying narrative, that of the spread of human sin narrated in Gen. 3-11.⁷ Referring to Rom. 5:12-21, Wright says, "The force of the Adam-Christ contrast grows directly out of the long argument concerning Abraham, since God's purpose in calling Abraham, as we have seen, was to deal with the problem created through Adam." (226). However, Wright still appears to be uncomfortable with discussing the work of Christ in Adamic terms (note he refers to the "Adam-Christ contrast," not the "Adam-Christ typology," despite Paul's use of *typos* in Romans 5:14), a discomfort that was not apparent in 1992 when he wrote *The Climax of the Covenant*.⁸

³ For which I argued in "The Problem at Galatia." *Interpretation* 41 (January, 1987): 32-43.

⁴ This is surely right, and surely helpful, though again, not at all new. It reflects the emphases consistently encountered in the writings of Geerhardus Vos and Herman N. Ridderbos.

⁵ Stuart Robinson wrote a book just before the American War Between the States entitled *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel, and the Idea, Structure, and Functions Thereof* (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1858).

⁶ *Justification: God's Plan & Paul's Vision* (Downers Grove, IVP, 2009), pp. 67, 95 (emphases his).

⁷ And Wright acknowledges that there are numerous biblical "covenants," in the plural (99, 133, 216-17 et al.).

⁸ *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), esp. Chapter Two, "Adam, Israel, and the Messiah."



For Wright, Christ is the “representative Israelite,” but not necessarily (and not explicitly) the representative human. It remains unclear to me whether or in what manner Wright understands Adam to be a type of Christ; we can surely hope that his forthcoming volume on Paul will relieve the unclarity.⁹

Pistis christou, in Gal. 2:16 as “the faithfulness of Christ.”

Wright depends here on the fuller argument of Richard B. Hays,¹⁰ and I concede that their viewpoint seems to be the scholarly consensus today. Space does not permit a thorough examination of that viewpoint here,¹¹ but the view faces three considerable difficulties. First, it requires the admittedly-ambiguous genitival expression to be the only place where Paul says anything at all about Christ’s faithfulness. That is, while Paul unambiguously has many statements about *our* faith in Christ, he nowhere unambiguously says anything about the faithfulness of Christ, unless in these ambiguous expressions. Second, the view depends heavily on the argument that if *pistis christou* means “faith in Christ” in Gal. 2:16, Paul’s statement there is redundant, because the purpose clause also speaks about being justified by faith in Christ. But redundancy, especially redundancy for emphasis, is a perfectly common semantic reality,¹² and one which Paul employs precisely when discussing faith, such as at Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (παντι τῷ πιστεύοντι), to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν), as it

is written, “The righteous shall live by faith (ἐκ πίστεως).” Third, one can easily concur in the various arguments Hays makes about the narrative substructure of Galatians while reaching an entirely different conclusion. Hays argues that Christ is presented in Galatians as the “hero,” to use the language of narrative analysis. Hays then argues that this means that *pistis christou* must also be descriptive of some virtuous character or work of Christ, an entirely plausible theory. But another-equally-plausible-theory exists. It is entirely plausible that the rhetorical reason for presenting Christ to the Galatians as a narrative hero is so that the Galatians will put their *faith* in him. That is, Hays may be entirely right that Paul presents Christ in heroic terms; but perhaps Paul does this so that his audience will put *their* faith in that redemptive hero. I can see no *prima facie* reason why Hays’s conclusion is more plausible than this.

Regarding his references to the Christian confessional tradition, regrettably Wright is nearly disastrous here and elsewhere. His comments in this area are unclear, unsubstantiated, erroneous, and therefore misleading. The unclarity appears in such expressions as “many Christians” (10), “some Christians” (11), “conservative churches” (44). Here as elsewhere he refers to the “tradition,” and occasionally the “great tradition, from Augustine onward” (102, cf. also 24, 98, 213). This failure to identify in the confessional literature what specific error is being refuted, coupled with an unwillingness to substantiate the claims by such citations is regrettable if not inexcusable. It is fine for Wright to do exegesis, and simply to overlook the tradition of confessional literature if he so chooses. But if he refers to it, it seems to me that he must do so with some attempt to substantiate his claims. As it actually turns out, he could not substantiate his claims, because his claims are mistaken.¹³ Here are two examples:

Reducing soteriology to justification

¹³ This is the substance of Carl Trueman’s critique. Cf. “A Man More Sinned Against than Sinning? The Portrait of Martin Luther in Contemporary New Testament Scholarship: Some Casual Observations of a Mere Historian.” Unpublished paper presented at Tyndale Fellowship in Cambridge in 2000. <http://www.crcchico.com/covenant/trueman.html>.

⁹ In Herman Ridderbos’s study of Paul, the second chapter was entitled “Fundamental Structures.” In these, Ridderbos outlined eight such structures, structures that deeply informed all that Paul said. Four of these eight were directly related to Adamic Christology. Bishop Wright is not at all required to concur with Ridderbos; but it is odd that he does not recognize and refute his claim, if he disagrees with it.

¹⁰ *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:14-11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), itself a re-working of his dissertation, originally published in the Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series in 1983.

¹¹ I address the matter somewhat more fully in the forthcoming festschrift for David F. Wells.

¹² Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and their Meaning* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983): 154.



That is the trouble with the great tradition, from Augustine onward: not that it has not said many true and useful things, but that by using the word “justification” *as though it described the entire process from grace to glory* it has given conscientious Pauline interpreters many sleepless nights trying to work out how what he actually says about justification can be made to cover this whole range without collapsing into nonsense or heresy or both. (102, emphasis his)

What confessional tradition has Wright read? The Westminster Confession, for instance, not only distinguishes various aspects of this “*process from grace to glory*,” it has entirely separate chapters on Effectual Calling (X), Justification (XI), Adoption (XII), Sanctification (XIII), Saving Faith (XIV), Repentance Unto Life (XV), Good Works (XVI), and Perseverance of the Saints (XVII). That is, “justification” in the Westminster standards is, at a minimum, one of *eight* parts of that process. The Westminster standards are part of the “great tradition, from Augustine,” and they simply have not done what Wright claims, but just the opposite. For them, justification is no more part of the *ordo salutis* than seven other specified aspects thereof.

Focusing more on individual salvation than on corporate salvation.

Wright again and again states that Paul has been misunderstood by those who ask of his letters: What does this say about “me and my salvation?” (10, 13, 15, 76). Wright refers to this as the “geo-centric” reading of Scriptures, and consistently challenges it. But the Protestant confessional tradition can hardly be accused of such individualism. Note, e.g., WCF 8:1– “It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man . . . : unto whom he did from all eternity give *a people*, to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.”

Bishop Wright still seems bashful about substitutionary atonement. At the conclusion of his lengthy discussion of Romans 4, he refers to its concluding words: “who was

handed over for our transgressions and was raised for our justification,” and rightly observes that here “the echoes of Isaiah 53:5, 12 should be unmistakable” (223), leading us to think that Wright is very close to affirming substitutionary atonement here. Yet as he moves into chapter 5, he is hesitant to affirm substitution at the critical 5:12-21, instead speaking only negatively about perceived misunderstandings, and affirming only a likeness between Jesus and Israel, rather than between the two Adams:

We note in particular that the ‘obedience’ of Christ is not designed to amass a treasury of merit which can then be ‘reckoned’ to the believer, as in some Reformed schemes of thought, but is rather a way of saying what Paul says more fully in Philippians 2:8, that the Messiah was obedient all the way to death, even the death on the cross. Jesus Christ has been ‘obedient’ to the saving plan which was marked out for Israel. He has been the faithful Israelite through whom God’s single-plan-through-Israel-for-the-world is now fulfilled (228)

What “saving plan” could Israel have achieved, even if she had obeyed her covenant duties? Within the terms of the Sinai covenant-administration, would an obedient Israel have achieved anything other than temporal prosperity for herself in Canaan? In this context, why is “obedient” related to Israel, and not to Adam? And why is “obedient” or “obedience” in quotation marks? Note Wright:

(T)he purpose of the Messiah . . . was to offer to God the ‘obedience’ which Israel should have offered but did not . . . Israel had let the side down, had let God down, had not offered the ‘obedience’ which would have allowed the worldwide covenant plan to proceed (105).

First, the “covenant plan” succeeded anyway, without her obedience, but that is beside the point. Would her obedience have atoned for human sin? Would she, as a nation, have been raised from the dead, guaranteeing the resurrection of others? Had she been entirely obedient, how would such obedience have overturned Adamic sin



and death? What is *not* said here is almost astonishing. Why does Wright appear to resist saying what is so obvious in a passage like this: that the Messiah offered the obedience “which Adam should have offered but did not”? While he rightly concedes that there is human sin in Genesis 3-11 as the “backdrop” to Genesis 12, Wright seems almost steadfast in his refusal to relate “Abraham’s seed” to the woman’s “seed” in Genesis 3. Why could he not have said—indeed, why *did* he not say, this:

Jesus Christ has been ‘obedient’ to the saving plan which was disclosed to Eve even in the midst of the curse, when God pledged to put enmity between her seed and the serpent’s seed, and even solemnly warned that in their future warfare her seed would be “bruised” in his victory over the seed of the serpent. Christ’s obedient death on the cross in Romans 5:12-21 is the “bruising” of Genesis 3; yet his resurrection is the crushing of the serpent’s head.

Wright does indeed affirm that the Messiah “represents his people, now appropriately standing in for them, taking upon himself the death which they deserved, so that they might not suffer it themselves” (105). But in the next sentence he says “This is most clearly expressed, to my mind, in two passages,” and he cites Rom. 8:3 and 2 Cor. 5:21 (which he earlier denied to be germane to God’s people in general, but only to the apostles, cf. WSPRS, pp. 104-05), and in a footnote refers to Gal. 3:13. But why not Romans 5:12-21? If one is looking for a Pauline text that “clearly” expresses representation or substitution, Romans 5 would surely be it.

Wright takes σπέρμα (*sperma*) in Galatians 3:16 to mean “family.” While this would suit his purposes (to speak, ecumenically, of one happy family), it misses Paul’s argument (who sides with the LXX translation for using the dative singular rather than the dative plural, and then says, “who is Christ.”) Paul argues that God’s plan to rescue the world through Abraham’s “seed” is *not* through his “seeds” collectively considered, but through the one *particular* seed, Christ.¹⁴

¹⁴ Lexically, the much-more-common Greek word for “family” or “clan”

The Bible on its own terms

This is certainly an admirable goal, but two points need to be made. First, there is utterly nothing new about this. When Calvin spoke of “natural sense” interpretation, he was insisting on what later came to be called “Grammatico-Historical exegesis,” an attempt to understand biblical texts within their cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts. While all attempt to do this, one must be naive to think he achieves it. To understand N. T. Wright, or the New Perspectives on Paul in general, one must understand the post-holocaust exigencies that drive it. As Peter Stuhlmacher (approvingly) said: “We must also keep in mind the apparent goal of these authors to make a new beginning in Pauline interpretation, so as to free Jewish-Christian dialogue from improper accusations against the Jewish conversation partners.”¹⁵ Indeed, as Wright himself has said, “Third, it follows at once that justification is the original *ecumenical* doctrine.”¹⁶ Since faith in Christ distinguishes Christians from Jews, and since *sola fide* distinguishes Catholics from Protestants, the New Perspectives on Paul, and Wright as a participant therein, betray an unmistakable

in the LXX is πατριάι (*patriai*). While comparatively rare in the NT, it appears 172 times in the LXX, so it is a well-known word, and is ordinarily translated “clan” or “family.” (In the NT it is used only 3 times—Luke 2:4; Acts 3:25, and Eph. 3:15). Similarly, one could employ φυλή (*phylea*) if one desired; since this term is common in the LXX (410 times; it is less common in the NT, appearing 31 times, twice in Paul, at Ro. 11:1 and Phil. 3:5). Note that in the very-germane LXX of Gen. 28:14, both terms appear, σπέρμα for Abraham’s “descendant/seed,” and φυλή for the “families of the earth”: “And in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed (καὶ ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐν τῷ σπέρματι σου).” Similarly, in the earlier pledge to Abraham in chapter 12, God had pledged that: “I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed (ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς).” Thus, Paul had ground to realize that at least the LXX translators of Moses made an effort to distinguish σπέρμα from φυλή, whereas Wright’s translation makes them equivalent. Paul painstakingly (some even argue artificially, since the Hebrew zera is a collective noun) makes the point that God would bless the world not through Abraham’s corporate/collective descendants or family, but through his single seed: “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ.” (Gal. 3:16).

¹⁵ Peter Stuhlmacher, Donald A. Hagner, *Revisiting Paul’s Doctrine of Justification: A Challenge to the New Perspective: With an Essay by Donald A. Hagner* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001), p. 34.

¹⁶ “New Perspectives on Paul.” (10th Edinburgh Dogmatics Conference: 25–28 August 2003), p. 12, emphasis his.



agenda to interpret Paul in such a manner as to reduce the prominence of these doctrines. Yet is one really hearing Paul in his own terms if one describes justification as an “ecumenical doctrine,” fourteen centuries before the Western church divided between Catholic and Protestant, ten centuries before the Great Schism separated the Eastern church from the Western church, and even a half-century before Christianity was separated from Judaism by the synagogue-ban of A. D. 94? The church of Paul’s day had not yet experienced any formal divisions, so how can we be “hearing Paul on his own terms” by calling justification an “ecumenical doctrine”?

Justification

Since the book is primarily about justification, a few more-detailed comments are in order here.

Rom. 2:13

Wright insists that Romans 2:13b is a statement about reality: “the doers of the law shall be justified.”¹⁷ This view, however, faces two substantial (in my opinion, insurmountable) exegetical difficulties. First, it requires us to understand Paul here as saying the opposite of what he says in the very next chapter of Romans: “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight” (Rom. 3:20). Second, it requires us to divorce 2:13b from 2:13a: “For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” Paul’s reasoning here is “not A but B.” Such reasoning only makes sense if the two sides of the contrast are logically similar. Here are two examples:

I am not ordering a turkey sandwich, but (am ordering) a ham sandwich.
I am not flying to Denver, but (am flying) to Dallas.

What would not make sense is this: “I am not ordering a turkey sandwich, but am flying to Dallas.” Therefore, either both 2:13a and 2:13b are referring to actual reality,

the actual reality that will occur at the judgment; or, alternatively, both 2:13a and 2:13b are referring to hypothetical reality, the hypothetical question of the condition on which the Law justifies (if any). The latter interpretation makes perfect sense, especially contextually. Paul simply reminds here that the judgment of God, about which he has been speaking, will come upon the Jews no less than the Gentiles (“For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law,” 2:12), because, after all, the Law requires doing-not-merely-hearing. The Jews at Sinai were different from the Gentiles only by *hearing* the Law; not by *doing*, and are therefore no more immune from God’s judgment than Gentiles, even by the Law’s own standard. But the alternative view would be catastrophic for Wright: “The hearers of Law (the Jews) are not justified.” If this were a statement about reality, we would surely shut down all synagogues and require Christian churches to remove Torah from their *lectio continuo* also. If “those who hear the law are not justified,” then the last thing anyone would want to do is hear the Law. And, in our post-holocaust setting, I am confident this is the last thing Bishop Wright would want to suggest that Paul was saying. But the Bishop cannot have it both ways. 2:13a cannot be hypothetical and 2:13b actual; either both are hypothetical or both are actual, otherwise we have the turkey sandwich/flying to Dallas problem (and the straightforward contradiction with Romans 3:20).

Oddly, Wright appears to think he may have been the first to have attempted to affirm both justification by faith and judgment by works. Indeed, he says that the idea of judgment by works would be “anathema” to many:

(T)he idea that Paul would insist on such a judgment at which the criterion will be, in some sense, ‘works,’ ‘deeds’ or even ‘works of the law,’ has naturally been anathema to those who have taught that his sole word about judgment and justification is that, since justification is by faith, there simply cannot be a final ‘judgment according to works’ (p. 184).

¹⁷ An insistence shared by many of the so-called Auburn theologians.



But Westminster affirmed both that justification is by faith and that judgment is according to works. All of chapter 11 of WCF addresses justification by faith, and then WCF 33:1 says:

God hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world, in righteousness, by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, ... all persons that have lived upon earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their *thoughts, words, and deeds*; and to receive according to *what they have done in the body, whether good or evil*.

What is new is not the doctrine of judgment by works, but Wright's conflation of justification by faith into judgment by works ("his sole word about *judgment and justification*"), so that, effectively, we get justification/judgment by faith/works. It was not self-evident to the Westminster divines that "judgment by works" necessitated believing in "justification by works." For them, one might very well be judged and condemned on the basis of the works one had done, while also being acquitted by the works of another, in whom one's faith is placed.

Justification and the "lawcourt." I have criticized Wright's view of "righteousness of God" elsewhere¹⁸ because his idea that "righteousness" means God's covenant faithfulness does not, in my opinion, do justice to the deeply forensic nature of the δικ-*language* in the Bible. Happily, in this volume, he frequently refers to the "lawcourt" as an essential semantic domain for the "righteousness" and "justification" language in Paul (12, 67-8, 90, 100, 134, 183, 251, et al.). Regrettably, he still believes that "righteousness" also means God's fidelity to the covenant; and worse, thinks this is somehow obvious:

And unless the scholars of any time had lost their moorings completely, drifting away from the secure harbor of ancient Jewish thought... nobody would have supposed that 'God's righteousness' was anything other than his faithfulness to the covenant (178).

But the Psalms frequently declare "God's righteousness" to be his judicial uprightness whereby he will judge the world rightly one day:

Psa. 9:8 and he judges (κρινεῖ) the world with righteousness (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ); he judges (κρινεῖ) the peoples with uprightness.

Psa. 50:6 The heavens declare his righteousness (τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ), for God himself is judge (κριτής)!

Psa. 58:1 Do you indeed decree what is right (δικαιοσύνην), you gods? Do you judge (κρίνετε) the children of man uprightly?

72: 1 Give the king your justice (τὸ κρίμα σου), O God, and your righteousness (τὴν δικαιοσύνην σου) to the royal son! 2 May he judge your people with righteousness (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ), and your poor with justice (κρίσει)!¹⁹

Each of these texts, and more like them, reside in "the secure harbor of ancient Jewish thought." Scholars did not and had not "lost their moorings," then, when they interpreted "God's righteousness" as something other than "covenant faithfulness." They were well-moored in the ancient Jewish thought when they thought it was his judicial righteousness, by which he held his creation accountable to him. Those moored there might have thought just the opposite of Wright, that "nobody would have supposed" that "God's righteousness" was anything *other* than his judicial uprightness.

Wright re-iterates here his view that "justification" in some sense means to be the covenant people of God (12, 116, 121, 122, 134). The later Protestant confessions employed the doctrine of "adoption" to discuss being part of "God's family" (WCF 12:1). Wright wants to affirm "family" language, but not by employing "adoption" language. Much more fatal to his view is his common suggestion that to be justified means to be part of the covenant community. Israel was plainly God's covenant community under the Sinai covenant. Yet this did not prevent her from being judged to be *unrighteous*, nor did it prevent her from being severely judged, at times capitally, whether by

¹⁸ "Observations on N. T. Wright's Biblical Theology With Special Consideration of 'Righteousness of God,'" in *By Faith Alone*, ed. Gary L. W. Johnson and Guy P. Waters (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), pp. 61-73.

¹⁹ Cf. also Ps. 96:12-13; 97:9



snakes, Assyrians or Babylonians. Israel plainly enough was *not* justified, but *was* the visible covenant people. Not a single Gentile died when the fiery serpents were the agents of God's judgment in Numbers 21; every individual who perished under God's judgment there was a member of the covenant community. Indeed, *only* they who were members of that community were subject to such acts of temporal judgment.²⁰ The "worthless men" who were parties to the Phinehas covenant were hardly justified; David, the violent "man of blood" was surely party to the covenant God made with him, yet was not permitted to build God's house. Wright's virtual equation of justification and membership in a covenant community is a severe liability in his thought, here and elsewhere.

What I did not notice when I first reviewed *The Climax of the Covenant*, but have come to notice since then, is that what distinguishes Wright's supporters from his detractors is how they fill in his blanks. Wright somewhat frequently makes statements that could be understood in more than one way, by not expressing explicitly the inferences to be drawn from what he says. His supporters assume the best, and "fill in" these blanks in an orthodox manner, whereas his detractors "fill in" these blanks differently.

An example here is Wright's frequent statements about the lawcourt background to the "righteousness/justification" language in Paul, statements that please me greatly, because they are not present in all of his works. However, often these very statements actually refer to "the lawcourt metaphor," not the lawcourt (e.g. 12, 68, 251). Now, what does he mean by "the lawcourt *metaphor*?" Is this a throw-away term, from which we should derive no conclusion? Or, does he mean by this to suggest that we only figuratively/metaphorically appear before God as judge; does he mean to deny that humans actually appear before God as their judge one day? Note the ambiguities in this kind of language:

It is the utterly appropriate metaphor through which Paul can express and develop the biblical

understanding that God, the Creator, must 'judge' the world in the sense of putting it right at the last-and that God has brought this judgment into the middle of history, precisely in the covenant-fulfilling work of Jesus Christ, dealing with sin through his death, launching the new world in his resurrection, and sending his Spirit to enable human beings, through repentance and faith, to become little walking and breathing advance parts of that eventual new creation (251).

Everything here depends upon what "judge" means (and Wright puts it in quotation marks, as though "judge" itself were figurative for "putting it right at last," an equally-inscrutable term), and what "utterly appropriate metaphor" means, etc. His supporters assume that he means nothing heterodox by such statements; his detractors express concern about them. I am neither a supporter nor a detractor; my published material on Wright has been both favorable (my review of *Climax of the Covenant*) and unfavorable (my thoughts about his understanding of *dikaiosune theou* in *What Saint Paul Really Said*). But I think the distance between his supporters and detractors is due not to what he *says* but to what he does *not* say, and how different parties fill in those blanks.


Perhaps such mis-understanding is the price paid for those who begin with the assumption that the traditional categories are all wrong. Once such an assumption is made, one is compelled, effectively, to invent new nomenclature with new definitions, definitions that have not been worked out carefully over time. In such a circumstance it is inevitable that misunderstanding will take place-not only between author and reader, but between one reader and another reader. As I mentioned earlier, as an example, it appears in this volume that Wright defines "the covenant" in a manner that is similar (identical?) to the traditional expression "the covenant of grace." But if he means the same thing, why use a different (albeit similar) term? Does the choice of a different term imply a difference in substance or not? Readers do not (and ordinarily cannot) know. Several times in this volume Wright indicates that he is frequently misunderstood, and he wonders, candidly, whether this

²⁰ The nations around Israel were only judged when/because they attacked Israel; otherwise, Yahweh left them alone.



is because he is unclear or whether his detractors are unsympathetic. I suspect the answer is both. His detractors fill in his blanks unfavorably; his supporters fill them in favorably; but he is responsible for the blanks. When he employs terms as no one has employed them before, and yet without indicating necessarily whether this is intended or not, substantial misunderstanding will take place.

N. T. Wright, like the rest of us, is a work in progress. For example, he resisted understanding the *dikaioisyne* language as forensic in *What Saint Paul Really Said*, yet affirms the lawcourt background here. I have tended, therefore, to give him the benefit of the doubt before, assuming that he couldn't say or clarify every point in every essay or book. I take the same approach here, but he will not get the same free pass in his next book, the major book on Paul that he mentions several times here. Especially in that volume, he will be expected to deal with Romans 5:12-21 in some constructive manner, and/or to argue for why he rejects as foundational the Adamic Christology affirmed by such Pauline interpreters as Herman N. Ridderbos. Similarly, he will be expected either to omit negative references to "the tradition," or, as Carl Trueman has suggested, to substantiate those claims with actual citations from the confessional tradition. He will be expected in that volume

to reconcile his understanding of Romans 2:13 to Romans 3:20, or, failing that, to completely re-do his understanding of judgment/justification by works. If he can do these things (and several others), I will be the first to say so, but I doubt he will be able to accomplish it. His own agenda, his post-English-civil-wars and post-holocaust ecumenical setting, drives his thought so profoundly that he has difficulty hearing Paul on his own terms, despite his effort to do so. Paul's church was not yet riven by what has separated the church in subsequent centuries; and to hear him on his own terms we must not construe him as though our circumstance were his. 

T. David Gordon is Professor of Religion and Greek at Grove City College, where since 1999 he has taught courses in Religion, Greek, Humanities, and Media Ecology. Prior to that, he taught New Testament (primarily Pauline studies) for thirteen years at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in S. Hamilton, MA; and for nine years he was pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church in Nashua, NH. Dr. Gordon has contributed to a number of books and study Bibles (his notes on John's gospel appear in the New Geneva Study Bible and the Reformation Study Bible), and has published scholarly reviews and articles in journals such as New Testament Studies, The Westminster Theological Journal, Interpretation, and Journal for the Evangelical Theological Society. His popular articles have appeared in periodicals such as Modern Reformation, Tabletalk, Decision, and Lay Leadership. He recently wrote Why Johnny Can't Preach: The Media Have Shaped the Messengers.

SCIENCE

NATHAN CARTAGENA

Introduction

Have you ever wondered what “science” actually is? This field of inquiry, which is frequently personified as a living person or organism, finds itself the recipient of both immense praise and criticism. For example, Modernists such as John Dewey, a famous American philosopher and educator from the Pragmatist tradition, claim that society would be infinitely better if only its citizens and leaders would begin implementing the scientific method to solve, literally, all of their problems.¹ The late Richard Weaver, a highly acclaimed Southern Conservative from the University of Chicago, refrains from giving such approbations of science. Instead, he stresses the importance of recognizing that sciences fascination with particulars has contributed to numerous significant losses in society, such as the ability to recognize the necessity of abstract concepts.² Clearly, in order to consider intelligently the claims of thinkers such as Dewey and Weaver, one must have a grasp of the demarcation between science and non-science. Furthermore, one must recognize limitations and difficulties within the field of science to understand the legitimacy of praises or criticisms attributed to it.

In his lecture *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*, Karl Popper, the famed philosopher of science who espoused the doctrine of theory falsification, endeavors to accomplish such a feat. In the first half of his lecture, the British philosopher attempts to establish the demarcation between “science” and “non-science.” Science, according to Popper, is marked by the active endeavor to falsify theories through experimentation that, at a minimum, could theoretically produce findings that would refute the theory in question. Therefore, scientists always tentatively hold to theories or sets of theories. In addition, Popper maintains that falsification rests on the belief that science

does not proceed from observations to theories³, but rather creates theories in order to know what to observe and how to interpret those observations. Only when scientists have a theory to test can they enter into the observation process, and earnestly attempt to falsify their theory. Armed with these two tenets, Popper proceeds to demonstrate how one may use them to solve the logical problem of induction, which, since the time of Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711-1776), has been rightly identified as one of the most significant internal problems in science. Whether or not he succeeds can only be determined a full examination of Popper’s lines of argumentation.

The Demarcation of Science: Falsification

Popper begins his lecture by discussing a problem that began plaguing him in the autumn of 1919: What is the difference between science and non-science? As he explains, “I wished to distinguish between science and pseudo science . . .”⁴ Popper notes that he rejected the prevailing view that science is distinguished “by its empirical method, which is essentially inductive, proceeding from observation or experiment.”⁵ He recounts reflecting upon four paramount theories during this time, all of which fit the prevailing demarcation of science, but only one of which had a markedly different component: its capacity truly to be refuted. Unlike Marx’s theory of history, Freud’s psychoanalysis, and Alfred Adler’s “individual psychology,” all of which seemed to find confirmation of their claims regardless of the observations, Einstein’s theory of relativity could be confirmed or refuted by one experiment.⁶

³ Because Popper does not make a distinction between a theory and a hypothesis in his article, no such distinction shall be made in this paper.

⁴Karl Popper, “*Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*,” in *Scientific Knowledge: Basic Issues In The Philosophy of Science*, ed. Janet Kourany (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1998), 177.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ That this is not actually the case cannot be discussed within the confines of this paper. For critiques of Popperian falsification see Pierre

¹ See Dewey’s essay, “Science and Society.”

² See Weaver’s book *Ideas Have Consequences*.



The impressive thing about Einstein's theory is the risk involved in a prediction of this kind. If observation shows that the predicted effect is definitely absent, then the theory is simply refuted. The theory is incompatible with certain possible results of observation This is quite different from the situation I have previously described (the three other theories), in which the theories in question were compatible with the most divergent human behavior, so that it was practically impossible to describe any human behavior that might not be claimed to be verification of these theories.⁷

Popper maintains that his reflections upon this distinction led him to formulate the view that "the criterion of the scientific status of a theory is its falsifiability, or refutability, or testability."⁸ Popper goes on to elucidate his doctrine of falsification by providing seven conclusions pertaining to truly scientific theories. The fourth and fifth conclusions are particularly germane for understanding what Popper believes falsification entails.

Popper's fourth conclusion asserts that "a theory which is not refutable by any conceivable event is non-scientific. Irrefutability is not a virtue of a theory (as people often think) but a vice."⁹ Three concepts in this statement require further explanation: refutability, conceivable events, and irrefutability not being a virtue or a theory. By "refutable" Popper is thinking in terms of rejecting a theory as soon as observational evidence is found that contradicts what the theory predicts. An example of this can be seen in Popper's statements about Einstein's theory. If Eddington's eclipse observation had not corroborated with the predictions of Einstein's theory of relativity, then Einstein's theory should have been rejected. Again, Popper believes it only takes one contrary observation to "refute" or falsify a theory. That being said, Popper does not think that a theory must be tangibly falsifiable the moment it is proposed. The phrase

"any conceivable event," allows theories to have scientific status so long as they are theoretically or conceivably falsifiable. As Popper explains, "The criterion of falsifiability . . . says that statements or systems of statements, in order to be ranked as scientific, must be capable of conflicting with *possible*, or *conceivable*, observations."¹⁰

These two concepts aid one in understanding why Popper claims that "Irrefutability is not a virtue of a theory . . . but a vice." If it is not possible to even theoretically disprove, falsify, a theory, how could one ever know if the theory was wrong? This, according to Popper, is the type of deceitfulness one associates with the fraud of mystics. "It is a typical soothsayer's trick to predict things so vaguely that the predictions can hardly fail, that they become irrefutable."¹¹ In other words, a theory that dismisses the basic need for fallibilism, where one at least acquiesces to the possibility of being incorrect given the pressing reality of the seems/is distinction, something recognized in traditions as varied as Platonism and Pragmatism, is problematic. To deny room for fallibilism, according to Popper, is either intellectual hubris or intellectual ignorance, neither of which can be tolerated.

In addition, Popper also implicitly maintains that "irrefutable" theories commit the fallacy of affirming the consequent when they attempt to confirm their theories. If my theory is right, Marx or Freud would say, you should expect X to happen. X happens. Therefore, they would claim that in this instance their theory has been confirmed. The problem with this can be seen in the famous example of a wet road.

Suppose a person asserts the following proposition, "If it rains, then the road will be wet." Upon observation, one finds that the road is indeed wet. Does this confirm that it rained? No. The road could have become wet by a myriad of causes. Someone's sprinkler on the front lawn could have shot water into the road. Water used to wash a car could have streamed from the driveway onto the road. It is even possible that the sewage system is backed up, and unfortunately is overflowing onto the road. It is for this reason that

Duhem's *The Aim and Structure of Physical Theory*, Imre Lakatos' "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, and Thomas Kuhn's *The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change*, pp. 320-339.

⁷ Popper, *Conjectures*, 179.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, 180. Emphasis added.

¹¹ *Ibid.*



Popper implicitly maintains that irrefutable theories seek confirmation in a fallacious manner.

Popper's fifth conclusion consists of the logical implications of his fourth conclusion: "Every genuine test of a theory is an attempt to falsify it, or to refute it. Testability is falsifiability."¹² If science is essentially the attempt to falsify ones theories, and falsifiability can only truly be done through performing tests that possess the ability to supply contradictory findings, then science and testability are profoundly related. Several important observations can be made from this conclusion.

First, Popper believes testability and refutability are one and the same. This is the logical outworking of Popper's fourth conclusion. This idea is expressly stated in one of Popper's comments regarding the non-scientific nature of the theories of Freud and Adler. "The two psychoanalytic theories . . . were simply *non-testable, irrefutable*. There was no conceivable human behavior which could contradict them."¹³ Second, and most importantly, Popper believes science is only being done when those performing tests concerning a theory are "genuinely" involved in actively attempting to falsify the theory. Science is not taking place if individuals are actively attempting to confirm a theory. According to Popper, scientists make observations for the sole purpose of finding evidence that contradicts what their theory predicts. Science only tentatively holds to its theories. There is no certainty outside of refuting theories. Every theory that has not been refuted is to be viewed in a probabilistic manner. Therefore science is not capable of committing the fallacy of affirming the consequent. Instead, it utilizes the logical law known as *Modes Tollens*. The form of this law is as follows:

- 1) If p, then q
- 2) \sim q
- 3) Therefore, \sim p

It is reasonable to view *Modes Tollens* as the logical expression of his view of falsification. Indeed, this view

of demarcation and scientific methodology is universally recognized as "Popperian Falsification."

Logical Problem of Induction

Approximately half way through his lecture, Popper turns his attention from presenting his view on the demarcation of science to how he believes falsification solves the logical problem of induction.

I have discussed the problem of demarcation in some detail because I believe that its solution is the key to most of the fundamental problems of the philosophy of science But only one of them—the problem of induction—can be discussed here at any length.¹⁴

Popper recounts his first encounter with David Hume's perplexing problem regarding the logic of induction. Hume inquired whether there are any sound logical arguments for believing that what has been true of the past will also be true of the future. Hume concluded that no such arguments existed. As Popper explains, "Even after the observation of the frequent or constant conjunctions¹⁵ of objects, we have no reason to draw any inference concerning any object beyond those which we have had experience."¹⁶ In other words, unless nature is uniform, one cannot maintain that future observations or experiences will be like previous observations or experiences. As Hume explained, any attempt to demonstrate that nature is uniform ends up assuming the uniformity of nature, and therefore is a circular and invalid argument.¹⁷

Popper goes on to discuss that as he reflected on Hume's finding, he realized that Hume's refutation of the logical idea of induction posed a serious problem for the inductive methods utilized in scientific research. Indeed, Popper rightly contends that Hume has demonstrated

¹⁴ Op. cit., 181.

¹⁵ Hume demonstrated that individuals are never able to perceive the causal connect between any two events. They only perceive that they are "constantly conjoined." This accounts for Hume and Popper's discussion of science in non-causal terminology.

¹⁶ Quoted in Popper, *Conjectures*, 181.

¹⁷ For example, how is one to answer the following question: How do you know that the processes of nature will act in the same manner that they currently are a few moments from now? If one responds by saying because they always have, one is assuming what the quest has requested demonstration of, the uniformity of nature.

¹² Op. cit., 179.

¹³ Op. cit., 180. Emphasis added.



that “theories can never be inferred from observation statements, or rationally justified by them.”¹⁸ Yet Popper claims not to find Hume’s explanation of the human acquisition of true knowledge satisfactory. According to Popper, Hume’s response must contend that “we obtain our knowledge by repetition and induction, and therefore by a logically invalid and rationally unjustifiable procedure.” Popper contends that if this is the case, “. . . even scientific knowledge is irrational”¹⁹ However, Popper wonders if there might not be a second method of acquiring knowledge. This method, as Popper explains, utilizes his principle of falsification.

Popper’s Solution to the Logical Problem of Induction

Faced with a major epistemological crisis, Popper recalls that he sought to determine if it might be possible for humans to obtain knowledge by a non-inductive procedure. Popper claims he found such a solution by turning Hume’s view on the human acquisition of knowledge on its head. According to Popper, repetition is the result of man’s propensity to expect regularities, and subsequently to search for them.²⁰ “Without waiting, passively, for repetition to impress or impose regularities upon us, we actively try to impose regularities upon the world...This was a theory of trial and error—of conjecture and refutation.”²¹ Perhaps the most important component to this understanding of acquiring knowledge is that interpretation of the world is logically prior to the observations of similarities. Indeed, Popper quickly recognizes the ramifications this has upon one’s understanding of science.

. . . scientific theories were not the digest of observations, but that they were inventions—conjectures boldly put forward for trial, to be eliminated if they clashed with

observations; with observations which were rarely accidental but as a rule undertaken with the definite intention of testing a theory by obtaining, if possible, a decisive refutation.

It is important to note two aspects of Popper’s statement. First, Popper is clearly teaching that the construction of a scientific theory always takes place prior to any observations that are made. Einstein, according to Popper, did not derive the theory of relativity based on observations. Instead, he first established a conjecture about the concept of relativity. He then presented his ideas and watched as others made observations to see if they would be refuted.

The above reference to Einstein’s methodology reveals that Popper’s belief in refutation after conjecture directly correlates to his attempt to ensure that his doctrine of demarcation is consistently applied to all truly scientific theories. This is the second point to note. Popper proclaims that science always attempts to refute its pre-observational theories. This belief helps to further unpack his demarcation for science.

Popper continues his lecture by restating his belief that the solution to the problem of demarcation must also solve the logical problem of induction. The reason for this, according to Popper, is that the logical problem of induction is simply another outworking of the problem of demarcation. In order to substantiate this claim, Popper begins by representing the logical problem of induction.

. . . the logical problem of induction arises from (a) Hume’s discovery . . . that it is impossible to justify a law by observation or experiment, since it “transcends experience”; (b) the fact that science proposes and uses laws “everywhere and all the time” . . . (c) the principle of empiricism, which asserts that in science only observation and experimentation may decide upon the acceptance or rejection of scientific statements, including laws and theories. These three principles, (a), (b), (c) appear at first sight to clash; and this apparent clash constitutes the *logical problem of induction*.²²

This second expression focuses on the inability to move

¹⁸ Popper, *Conjectures*, 181.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ This echoes Francis Bacon’s statement that, “The human understanding is of its own nature prone to suppose the existence of more order and regularity in the world than it finds. And though there be many things in nature which are singular and unmatched, yet it devises for them parallels and conjugates and relatives which do not exist.” See point 45 of Bacon’s *Novum Organum*.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, 182.

²² *Op. cit.*, 183.



from a given number of finite observations to a universal law based on these. Science, of course, continually asserts that such laws exist. When one evaluates how science establishes such claims, it quickly becomes evident that it does so by the principle of empiricism. Thus it seems that the three principles clash.

Yet Popper maintains that these principles only “appear” to clash at first sight. According to Popper, the apparent clash between principles (a) and (c) disappears when we realize that science does not espouse to certainty, even when it comes to “laws” of nature: “But in fact the principles (a) to (c) do not clash. We can see this the moment we realize that the acceptance by science of a law or of a theory is tentative only.”²³ In this statement, Popper makes room for the falsification of theories. By its very nature, falsification does not allow for certainty except for those theories which have been refuted. According to Popperian falsification, these theories will never be correct. All other theories are not to be viewed as proven, but merely unfalsifiable as of yet. Therefore, science is open to the rejection of any laws or theories on the basis of new evidence.²⁴ Popper goes on to explain how this allows for the preservation of the principle of empiricism (c). “So long as a theory stands up to the severest tests we can design, it is accepted; if it does not, it is rejected. *But it is never inferred, in any sense, from the empirical evidence.*”²⁵ Thus Popper believes that the combination of the doctrines of falsification and conjecture, as compared to inductive inference, avoid and solve the logical problem of induction. If science only attempts to conjecture and falsify, and subsequently does not use observations to infer theories, then it appears that it has solved Hume’s age-old problem. As Popper explains:

Hume showed that it is not possible to infer a theory from observation statements; but this does not affect the possibility of refuting a theory by observation statements This solves the problem of the alleged clash between the principles (a), (b), and (c), and with it Hume’s problem of induction.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid. Emphasis added.

A Brief Evaluation

Having provided an explanation of Popper’s attempt to solve the logical problem, an evaluation of his methods and conclusions are in order. The first point to note is that neither Popper’s first nor second statement of logical problem of induction explicitly reference how it relates to the issues surrounding the uniformity of nature. This does not pose a significant problem during the first presentation because of the nearly explicit connection between this and Hume’s statement on induction. Perhaps, however, this silence should have served as a warning, for the second presentation phrases the problem of induction in a manner that essentially disregards the reality that the uniformity of nature is at the heart of the problem of induction. This lack of recognition in his second formulation appears to have led Popper to provide a solution to a mere sub-point of the problem, the problem of inductive inference, and not the core. This leaves Popper’s arguments and solution open to at least three major criticisms.

First, how can one hold to falsification without assuming the uniformity of nature? The same experiment which reveals observational statements that refute a theory one day may not do so the next day. Unless one can be certain that the observational findings will not be in a state of flux from moment to moment, one cannot assume one has truly falsified a theory for certain. What may be false one moment could turn out to be true the next. Clearly then, Popper’s assertion concerning the relationship between Hume’s claim about inductive inference and falsification is wrong. Popper is right to maintain that inductive inference and falsification are not the same. As he explains, inductive inference is open to both the fallacy of affirming the consequent and the logical problem of induction. Yet falsification while not being affected by the former problem by its very definition does have severe problems with the logical problem of induction. Unless science assumes that which it cannot prove, the uniformity of nature, there are no rational grounds for believing what science “ascertains truths” through falsification.

Second, because Popper’s arguments do not address




the core logical problem involving the uniformity of nature, he does not address the crux of the problem. Therefore, he only succeeds in providing a solution to one of the logical out workings of the problem of induction. Popper has shown that one cannot confirm or justify a theory by inductive inference. However, just because falsification does not make inductive inferences during the process of constructing theories, this does not logically entail that it has solved the entire logical problem of induction. This is a *non sequitur*. Furthermore, one may inquire how different inductive inference really is from inference through falsification. In both cases science would appear to be making inductively based conclusions. This logically leads to the previous criticism: falsification requires the uniformity of nature.

Third, Popper asserted that he was not satisfied with Hume's conclusions on how humans obtain knowledge. Instead of saying that our knowledge is merely habit based and uncertain, Popper claims that falsification allows for the construction of theories which can be shown with certainty to be false. This occurs if observations refute what the theory predicts. When this claim is examined in light the

problem of the uniformity of nature, two problems arise. First, how can we have certainty through falsification if we still do not have certainty about the uniformity of nature? Second, how can humans ever have epistemic justification for their belief in scientific theories? Has Popper really led his audience to firmer ground than Hume?

Conclusion

Karl Popper presented a lecture on the philosophy of science with the intention of accomplishing two tasks: providing the demarcation of science and showing how this demarcation solves the logical problem of induction. Upon evaluation of Popper's arguments and conclusion one finds that Popper, by not discussing the problem surrounding the uniformity of nature, only solves a sub-point of the problem. Therefore, Popper's conclusions do not address the crux of the age-old problem; the logical problem of induction remains unsolved. 

Nathan Luis Cartagena is a Senior Christian Thought and Philosophy major who loves reading, philosophizing, drinking sweet tea, eating chicken and rice, watching films, and telling whoever will listen that he is married to his former babysitter.



MUSING IN THE MARGINS

BENJAMIN COX

I mused in the margins of a leaf
 To turn and take and trace with cold clammy hands
 The veins of vitality,
 Long drained of saving sap.
 Empty channels echo from once coursing rivers
 Now dried, now frail, now broken
 Crisp cracking is the only babble they make.
 And then, Aeolus, that great pneumatic force, attacks
 Wrecking these ruins, breaking bits to sow in fields of trees.
 A skeleton is scattered, a relic is no more,
 But jagged remembrance.

Benjamin Cox is a sophomore molecular biology major who derives a great deal of enjoyment from writing poems in the margins of his SSFT notes.



MUSE

ON MARY CASSATT'S *BREAKFAST IN BED*

KEELY BREEN

"Breakfast in bed." He speaks to me in soft casual tones,
Like watercolors dabbed upon sorrow's canvas pores
With hesitation. He knows that even the lightest brush strokes
Are liable to be absorbed in its gray.

"Cup of tea." He places it softly on table's edge
Like a vial of normal life, raised to parched, life-lacking lips
Hesitantly. He knows that even this meager offering I will reject
As I have every morning since the birth.

"Toast and jam." He offers them with atrophied intent
Like vows murmured according to custom
With hesitation. He knows that the soft will grow stale,
As they have every morning since the birth.

"Here's your babe." He whispers in self-conscious nonchalance,
Like purpled-red apple skins whose sheen brazenly hides decay
With light hesitation. He knows that this is not my babe,
As he has every morning since the birth.

"Snug in bed," he says and tucks the soft child
Under my languid arm, so I clasp her to my reclined body
With hesitation, to my exhausted body
With soft desire, to my exhausted soul.

"She is yours," he says, and looks at me with tear-soft eyes
The child looks at me but
"She's not mine" I say to him softly,
With no hesitation

This old child. She is no babe.

Where is my infant? Where is this child's brother?
Where is that child who nestled in my arms five days ago,
That child with heartbeat far too soft
With breathing far too hesitant?

He is gone.
And Grace is not sufficient.

Keely Breen loves ceramic mugs, vintage handbags, all things nautical, and believes that life is best lived and words best crafted after the hour of 1 am.

CONUNDRUMS

I. An avant-garde composer has developed a new method for creating his controversial music. He takes a snippet of a famous piece and then randomly divides it up into parts, each a certain number of measures long. All players begin at the same time, and each repeats his or her piece over and over until everyone comes to the end of theirs simultaneously. Last week he divided ten measures of Beethoven into parts of two, three, and five measures; this song lasted a total of thirty measures. This week, the composer chooses thirty measures of Vivaldi. How long is the longest piece of music he could make out of this?

II. What do the following words have in common?

apology, before, bound, cool, downhill, dust, fast, fine, left, mean, off, oversight, pitch, quantum, strike, trim

If you think you have the answer to one of the conundrums, please email it to Doug Smith at smithdp1@gcc.edu. There will be a \$20 prize for the first correct answer to the first conundrum.

Congratulations to the last issue's winners, Nick Freiling (who found FTTTTFTTTT) and Dani Sisto (who found FFFFFTTTTF and TTTTTFTFTT). No one guessed it, but the most energy-efficient machine is the heater. Whether one chooses fire, a radiator, or even a fan, all energy used eventually becomes heat.





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