



THE QUAD

Volume 4

Issue 2

THE QUAD

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EDITORS' NOTE

As we go throughout our lives, we take much for granted, accepting assumptions and assertions without giving them a closer look. Often important questions about the truth, implications, or applications of a position go completely unaddressed. In some ways this is similar to the experience of many students, these two editors included, who have walked into an exam only to encounter a question (or several) where one remembers reading about the answer but not the answer itself. Here at college, though many professors do their utmost to cultivate a culture of thoughtfulness, it seems that in the ever-present stew of papers, projects, and social drama – flippancy is almost ubiquitous.

Several student pieces in this issue examine things which many of us take for granted. James Brinkerhoff, in a review of *Redeemed by Fire*, examines the claim that Christianity is “exploding” in China and discusses the much more complicated reality of Chinese Christianity. Chris Wetzel, in a review of George F. Will’s *Statecraft as Soulcraft*, takes aim at the notion that conservatives must always call for a smaller government. Though at one point criticisms are even levied at no-less a conservative icon than Ronald Reagan, campus conservatives would be wise to read the whole review before burning Mr. Wetzel in effigy (or reality). Ben Cox’s review of the “biography” of Cancer, *Emperor of All Maladies*, is a truly educational piece, explaining a disease of which many of us are aware but very few of us understand. Finally, our conundrum writer Doug Smith, in his last issue as a member of the magazine staff, takes a closer look at puzzles and, in the process, writes an essay that manages to pull off a rare combination of playfulness and thoughtfulness.

Dr. Drake’s lecture “Subsidizers or Students, the Difference is Joy,” originally presented at an Evangelical Scholarship Conference event, takes a closer look at the act of learning itself. Dr. Drake’s message, which affirms students who find joy in their education, is one that is near and dear to the heart of almost all who have worked to produce this issue of the magazine. In our book reviews, our lecture, and even the uniformly excellent stories and poems, the editors of every section have sought to compile pieces that allow the reader to engage with a broader world outside of the classroom.

As Keely’s brief stint as Senior Editor draws to a close, she is thankful to have learned what being a graciously critical reader truly means through much practice and the constant exemplar of Dr. Messer. Andy Walker’s consistent thoughtfulness, sense of humor, and intellect will undoubtedly bring The Quad to new heights while Emily Perper continues to tug all of the necessary puppet strings. Keely is grateful to all who have trained her up in the way she should go this semester, particularly Dr. Messer, and she looks forward to reading future issues, hopefully on the rolling lawn of a New England graduate school or at least on a fireside couch with a few cats.

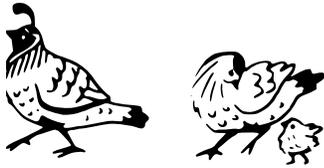
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CONUNDRUMS



ITALY
ALISON ANGELL



Eyes closed in the warm lemon grove,
I said, "This is a poem,"
although I didn't know when it had started,
or how it would end.

The bride in beige linen
escorted through the warm courtyard
to the altar where she stood,
simple and silent, was one as well.

It was a poem when we caught a train
with no markings, a path with no sign –
and it was even a poem
when we were upgraded rooms.

Our cheeks warmed in the glass factory
as we watched a man blow down the pole
to its incredible weighted end,
then snip off warm dollops

which shattered at the floor,
the pieces of which were all little poems
waiting to be swept up
and melted together.

Despite adoration of her first alma mater, Alie Angell's ('08) university allegiance is also now pulled by her second, St Andrews. There, like Kate, she met her prince.

REVIEW: THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES

BEN COX

Few diseases inspire as much terror and dread as cancer. Modern medicine has essentially eradicated most epidemics – small pox, polio, tuberculosis – however, despite a century of research, cancer is still one of the leading causes of death. In many senses, cancer research has been a war; it has involved the efforts of not only the sharpest medical minds, but of large government institutions, pharmaceutical companies, and marketing teams. In fighting an enemy, especially one as elusive as cancer, knowledge is power. The better we know the history of the fight against cancer, the better we can understand the disease and move forward in finding a cure. This is precisely the aim of Siddhartha Mukherjee in his book *Emperor of all Maladies*. An oncologist himself, Mukherjee provides a unique perspective of someone who has been battling on the front lines. His historical account is frequently interrupted by tales of his own patients, which serve to provide a humane context to what otherwise might be dry history. Indeed, this book reads much more like a novel than a historical account. Mukherjee's easy, yet articulate writing style presents the war on cancer in such a way that the scientist and the non-scientist can derive equal enjoyment. He writes of cancer not as an inanimate force of opposition, but rather as an old adversary, with whom he is intimately familiar. His work is not so much a history of cancer as it is a biography.

Cancer is unlike any other disease in that its cause stems not from an external pathogen, but from within human cells themselves. Normal cells have the ability to grow and multiply; this function allows the human body to grow, repair, and adapt. Cancer cells are identical to normal cells except they cannot stop growing. Mukherjee points out that in many ways cancer cells are superior to normal cells: "They grow faster, adapt better. They are more perfect versions of ourselves." These perfected cells continue to grow and divide at the cost of human life. Eventually, they spread to other parts of the body, a process known as metastasis, which leads to widespread cancer and very little chance

of survival. In most diseases, the problem is the invasion of some foreign agent; in cancer, the problem lies within ourselves.

Mukherjee is quick to debunk the common assumption that cancer is a recent phenomenon in human history: "we tend to think of cancer as a 'modern' illness because its metaphors are so modern. It is a disease of overproduction, of fulminant growth – growth unstoppable, growth tipped into the abyss of no control." In reality, cancer is an ancient disease. The first mention of cancer occurs more than 4500 years ago, in ancient Egypt. Cancer continued to appear in the ancient world, as recorded by Herodotus, Hippocrates, and Galen, though it was apparently a rare disease. If cancer is such an ancient disease, why is it so

The Emperor of All Maladies
Siddhartha Mukherjee,
Scribner, 2010.

common now? Recent statistics estimate that one in three women and one in two men will develop cancer in their lifetimes. It is easy to view this rise in cancer incidents as a product of modernity; perhaps the chemicals and pollutants from industrialized society have increased the number of carcinogens to which we are exposed. While he does not deny an element of such environmental factors, Mukherjee points out that part of cancer's rise is simply due to the lack of other diseases. Medicine has taken away the threat of tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and cholera – diseases that were once leading causes of death – resulting in an increase in life expectancy. Most forms of cancer are late in onset; cancer cells that mutated in a person's twenties may not metastasize until they are in their fifties or sixties. Thus an ailment that once afflicted a small minority has become an epidemic simply by a lack of competing diseases.

The fight against cancer has been a bloody battle. Mukherjee describes the various approaches that doctors have taken over the years. With the rise of penicillin and anesthesia in the nineteenth century, surgery became the preferred option. Tumors were excised by skilled surgeons in order to remove the cancerous cells. Often, however, the removal of a tumor did not cure cancer, but rather delayed



its invasion. In order to completely eradicate the cancer, surgeries became increasingly complex and invasive. William Halsted, one of the leading surgeons at the turn of the twentieth century, advocated the radical approach: excise more and more tissue in order to rid the body of cancer. In addition to the gross deformations such surgeries left, many patients relapsed back into cancer. Halsted failed to understand the idea of metastasis; if the cancer has already spread to other parts of the body, than such radical surgeries are useless. If it has not metastasized, then a simpler surgery will suffice. Despite studies in the early twentieth century which disproved the success of radical surgeries, this was the dominant approach to cancer treatment until well into the 1950s.

The next wave of cancer development came from a small back room laboratory in Boston Children's Hospital, run by Sidney Farber. Farber approached cancer from a chemist's perspective; he sought to chemically block cancer cells from growing and dividing. The 1940s had seen a dramatic increase in drug manufacturing, and Farber used several of these drugs to treat children with leukemia. These children were his ideal subjects: neglected and shut away in the cancer ward, society had essentially already pronounced them dead. The children and their parents were desperate for any new medicine that might be a cure. In a series of experiments that would make the present FDA blanch, Farber managed to pinpoint several chemicals that could be used to inhibit the growth of white blood cells. While most of these patients eventually relapsed back into cancer, this was the beginning of modern day chemotherapy.

While Mukherjee points out the great advances that come from mavericks such as Farber, he also demonstrates the need for large, institutionalized efforts in fighting cancer. The fight against cancer is something which takes the efforts of more than a few brilliant doctors. Farber realized this and with the help of a few celebrities, managed to develop The Jimmy Fund, so-named for the poster child. He also teamed up with Mary Lasker, a political and marketing genius who used her various connections to pressure Washington to fund cancer research. The net result of her efforts

was several government institutions, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), dedicated to cancer research. She was also involved in cancer propaganda, spreading the fear of cancer in the common man – which not only led to citizens living healthier lives – but also increased the public outcry for cancer research. Institutions such as the NIH attracted the best medical minds and led to new developments in chemotherapy as well as our understanding of cancer. Mukherjee notes how in recent decades cancer research has focused on the genetic aspect of cancer: cancer is caused by mutations in the human genome which allow unrestrained cell growth. By understanding the genes that are mutated, scientists may be able to find ways to induce normal function of these genes, thereby curing cancer.

Mukherjee is quite exhaustive in his treatment of contemporary cancer research, as well as the preceding history. He is able to step outside of his own experience on the frontlines of the cancer war and evaluate the progress made thus far. He notes the gradual but steady increase in cancer survival over the past few decades. This increase may not seem like much, but it inspires hope that research is moving in the right direction. Mukherjee is optimistic that the recent breakthroughs in molecular genetics will fuel more effective treatment options. He cites several recent examples where these techniques have been used successfully.

Mukherjee's book is useful for both the scientist and the layman. He helps to sort through the smoke of a century's struggle against the disease, providing his reader with a clear sense of where cancer research has been and where it is going. Siddhartha Mukherjee truly speaks to a generation, many of whom will probably develop cancer at some point in their lives. The stories of his patients provide relatable examples to those struggling with cancer and serve as a reminder that despite the large institutions of cancer research, cancer, like all diseases, is fought one patient at a time. It is their stories that served to inspire Mukherjee and continue to inspire doctors everywhere. 

Ben Cox once hosted "Chauvinism Day" with his freshman hall and their sister hall. It wasn't a pretty sight.

SUNRISE

LAURA HERMESMANN



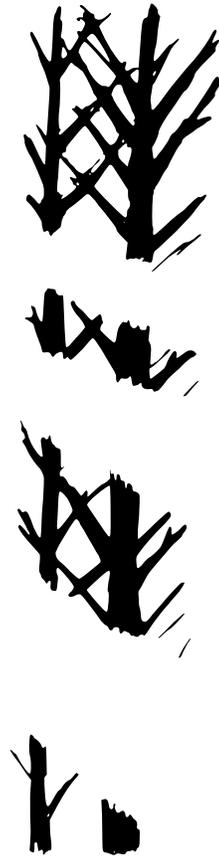
Even being in the sun is enough to say
“You exist.”

First there was nothing, and then we saw
a shining pool cradled in pine trees –
silver, and laughing with light.

Time, Your own creature,
crawled steadily on yesterday’s haunches –
still bleeding stars under a fading moon
and moving slow forefeet into today.

Yet as dawn shrugged silver shoulders
the light rolled down her back like a cape,
filling the sky with glorious morning.

There was the sun, spinning prisms into dew-lit grass
warming our shivering bodies
and drawing out meager words –
what we had –
to call it “beautiful,”
our only thanks.



BIG GOVERNMENT CONSERVATIVES

CHRIS WETZEL

In 1983, Ronald Reagan was in the White House, Republicans controlled the Senate, and America was said to be in the midst of a conservative revolution. That same year, a little-known book of modest size was published with the claim that there were next to no conservatives in the United States if that term was properly understood. “I will do many things for my country,” wrote George Will in that volume, *Statecraft as Soulcraft* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), “but I will not pretend that the careers of, say, Ronald Reagan and Franklin Roosevelt involve serious philosophical differences.” Many who today consider themselves conservatives may, at this point, be preparing the wood for the burning of a heretic. They would be far better served to withhold judgment until hearing Will’s argumeant. In this small, unassuming book, he has produced what deserves to be thought of as one of the great works of American political philosophy, not merely American politics.

Will propounds a number of theses throughout the work, but much of the book is a refutation of Justice Felix Frankfurter’s statement, “Law is concerned with the external behavior and not with the inner life of man.” Most Americans, Will says, consider such a statement “not only true, but a truism.” He contends, however, that it is neither, and is in fact “radically wrong.” Modern liberal democratic societies have proceeded on faulty philosophical presuppositions about the state and about man. Part of the problem is that philosophical presuppositions are not a fashionable topic of conversation in an age and a nation that places a premium on “practicality.” Will quotes Daniel Patrick Moynihan who speaks in a very revealing way about that subject:

I have served in the Cabinet or sub-Cabinet of four Presidents. I do not believe I have ever heard at a Cabinet meeting a serious discussion of political ideas — one concerned with how men, rather than markets, behave. These are the necessary first questions of government. The Constitution of the United States is an immensely intricate judgment as to how

men will behave, given the circumstances of the time in which it was written. It is not at all clear that it is working well, given the circumstances of the present age. But this is never discussed.

This is an immensely illuminating statement about how American government operates today. That modern politicians are more concerned with markets than men does not bode well if viewed from an historical standpoint. Essentially, this is a divide between two ages of philosophy. The ancients, whose works are critical sources for Will, judged the nature of man as an individual, then sought to make large numbers of men into the kind of people who work for the common good of society. By contrast, the modern age, beginning with Hobbes and Locke, judges the nature of society, and seeks to create an environment where men can gratify their individual desires. It is not surprising that a philosophy which seeks individual self-gratification is “concerned with the external behavior and not the inner life of man.” But, Will argues, such an attitude is powerless to create a healthy society.

In Federalist No. 51, James Madison advocated, “the policy of supplying by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives.” In other words, Madison believed in a political equivalent to Adam Smith’s economic “invisible hand,” which turns the self-interested actions of individuals into producers of a common good. The problem with a political analog to this economic principle is that the economic good (prosperity) is material, while the political good (virtue) is metaphysical. The metaphysical calculus is not so straightforward as the material. In economics, one must produce a product that fulfills someone else’s desires in order to fulfill one’s own desire for profit. Virtuous character, however, is not always self-benefitting in any tangible way. In fact, it is often costly in the immediate, material sense. It is therefore doubtful that “opposite and rival interests” can supply “the defect of better motives,” as Madison hoped.

Statecraft as Soulcraft
by George F. Will,
Touchstone 1984.



Will launches an attack on another point of contention between classical conservatism and that which masquerades under the name today. Today's "conservative" is generally one who believes that government does best when it does least, and who says, as Ronald Reagan did, "Heaven help us if the government ever gets into the business of protecting us from ourselves." Will contends that the conservative, properly understood, believes that such is precisely the role of government. Over against Reagan, Will points to Edmund Burke, who said, "Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants, [including] . . . a sufficient restraint upon their passions." This may disturb those "conservatives" who, Will says, are too busy praising Burke to read him. "Strong government conservative" is not, historically speaking, an oxymoron.

Virtuous laws require just, virtuous lawmakers and, in a democracy, rulers are chosen both by and from the people. It is therefore necessary that a polity be composed of citizens who are moral. For this reason, the chief duty of government is to produce a just and virtuous citizenry who will in turn elect virtuous people who will make just, moral laws – and the cycle continues *ad infinitum*. Government, then, has a high and noble task in the mind of the conservative, and is something to be respected and loved, not feared and despised. Will asks, "If a society wills just laws, should it not will the means – the moral prerequisites – to the end?" Republicans and Democrats reveal the lack of any radical difference in their underlying philosophies when they readily agree that, "You can't legislate morality." On the contrary, Will says, "[Government] does so, frequently; it should do so more often; and it never does anything more important."

This leads to another sharp dichotomy between common perception in the present day and philosophical reality. Libertarianism is not, as many believe, the close cousin of conservatism; rather, it is conservatism's arch-nemesis. If government is to be an agent of morality and virtue (as Will's conservatism is), it will largely be concerned with restraint. The ability to gratify self-interest is the great result of liberty; the restraint of such self-interest by virtue is the

great result of conservatism. Burke eloquently put it this way: "The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please. We ought to see what it will please them to do before we risk congratulations." Complete freedom (that is, freedom not circumscribed by virtue) is as dangerous as the complete absence of freedom.

Will's message and thesis may best be summed up in a historical incident that he relates at the beginning of the second chapter. He illustrates the philosophical differences between the (liberal) politics of self-interest and the (conservative) politics of virtue and prudence by the contrast between Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln on the matter of slavery. Douglas states that, "We [Illinois] tried slavery, kept it up for twelve years, and finding that it was not profitable we abolished it for that reason." As Will observes, "With three words – 'for that reason' – Stephen Douglas defined slavery as a matter of price, not principle." He elsewhere "reduced politics to material and economic factors" by saying that the Founding Fathers had left the question of slavery open because they knew that climate, soil conditions, and other factors would make slavery suited to some areas of the country but not others. His quintessential modern politician: politicians should not "impose their own morals on the country" but decide questions as "matter[s] of price, not principle."

On the other side, there is Lincoln, one of the great conservatives, who understood that laws about slavery, like all laws, are based on principles of justice and morality. Observe how metaphysical, how full of the language of virtue, is Lincoln's argument compared to Douglas' materialism:

Zeal for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. . . . I hate it because it deprives our republic an example of its just influence in the world – enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites – causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty – criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest.



In perhaps the greatest speech in American history, Lincoln explicated the Union cause on the basis that America was and is a “nation dedicated to a proposition.” For this reason slavery truly was the main cause of the war and the Union opposed slavery because the nation was dedicated to a (moral) proposition.

Will makes his case from a more recent phenomenon as well. The civil rights legislation of the 1960s are a case in point for statecraft that is soulcraft. As Will himself puts it,

[Civil rights legislation] was supposed to do what it in fact did. It was supposed to alter the operation of the minds of many white Americans. The most admirable achievements of modern liberalism—desegregation, and the civil rights acts — were explicit and successful attempts to change (among other things) individuals’ moral beliefs by compelling them to change their behavior.”

Ironically, the “greatest achievements of modern liberalism” were enacted for basically conservative reasons. Because they desired the moral good of eliminating racism, “liberals” pushed for legislation that would imprint racial equality in the citizenry. This is statecraft as soulcraft, and notably, it was overwhelmingly successful.

This is the case that Will lays out in his book and it is in large part convincing. He draws extensively on the Western political tradition, citing ancients like Cicero, Plato, and Aristotle as well as more recent thinkers like Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, and George Santayana. Americans have long complained that nothing in government changes on a large scale no matter how many times the party in power changes or how much is promised by candidates. Will may well have uncovered one of the major reasons for this undesired continuity: despite some superficial disagreements about specific policies, both parties essentially subscribe to the liberal democratic philosophy of Hobbes and Locke. With the exception of abortion, there are almost no significant issues that self-styled conservatives address on a moral basis.

An example may best illustrate the absence of philosophical disagreement between parties. A large number of

Republicans who oppose welfare (or at least the current model of the welfare system) do so primarily on the grounds that it is too expensive, puts the government in debt, and perpetuates a cycle of poverty. Democrats defend it as being within the realm of fiscal responsibility and laud its provision of material goods to the poor. That is, both parties see it as a strictly economic issue — the debate is about whether welfare works, economically speaking. There is little to no discussion of what sort of behaviors the welfare state encourages or discourages or what kind of people it produces. A conservative critique of the welfare state, as Will rightly argues, would defend it in principle, since common provision is a virtuous ethic that the state wishes to encourage, but would object to some specifics of its operation, such as increasing welfare payments to unmarried mothers if they have more children — since this essentially subsidizes having children out of wedlock. Here, Will may be a bit too strong in his criticism of modern “conservatism,” since there are some who do make exactly these arguments.

Will’s analysis of modern conservatives’ attitude toward government is for the most part equally accurate. It has long been popular in “conservative” circles to lampoon government as a whole and particularly to disparage those who devote their careers to it. It is curious that modern conservatives still eagerly desire social change and like to emphasize “family values,” yet constantly denigrate government and join liberals in agreeing that morality cannot be legislated. By viewing government as a necessary evil, many lose sight of its unique ability to shape the character of a nation and to bring about those societal changes that morally-minded conservatives still desire. However, one point that Will neglects to consider is the possibility that for at least some who distrust government, that distrust may flow from some of the poor soulcraft (such as state-sponsored gambling and the welfare issues mentioned earlier) that recent governments have implemented. Still, his overall point holds true: those who proudly display their scorn for government cannot properly be called conservatives in any historically accurate sense.

Perhaps the most irksome to contemporary thinkers is

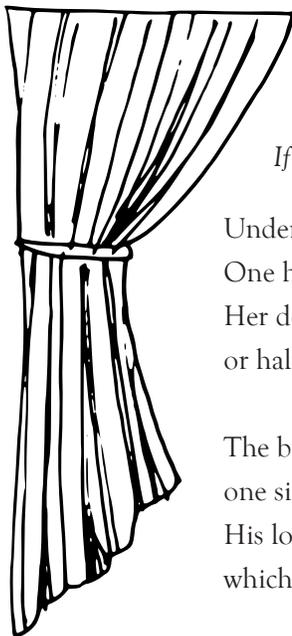


Will's argument about the relationship between libertarians and conservatives. Yet this analysis is quite accurate and easily traceable to the ancients on whose thoughts Will so heavily draws. Plato and Aristotle both exulted moderation and prudence as among the greatest virtues for both citizens and statesmen alike. Controlling and restraining the desires (or as Burke and others called them, "passions") is among the chief duties of both individual man and government. A doctrine of liberty at all costs is not in any way conducive to restraint and self-control; rather it is antithetical to them, especially when coupled with an unhealthy fondness for self-interest. Russell Kirk, in many ways a kindred spirit to Will, has made the somewhat profound observation that conservatism is the negation of ideology. The conservative has no room for ideology because ideologies by definition choose some good (be it freedom, equality, wealth, or something else) as the supreme good to be pursued above all others, promising an earthly paradise that the conservative knows is impossible. Any virtue or good consistently pursued at the cost of other virtues becomes a vice. Libertarianism illustrates this: freedom (liberty) pursued at the cost of other virtues, like self-control, degenerates into chaos and

self-interest. Eventually, the nation has no king and each man does what is right in his own eyes.

In *Statecraft as Soulcraft*, George Will has produced a desperately needed work of philosophy in what Neil Postman calls "the Age of Show Business." Those concerned for the good of this nation would do well to heed Will's call to "conservatism with a kindly face." They must realize that statecraft not only should be, but inherently is soulcraft. The making of law is a moral act and it inevitably affects the morality of the polity for whom the law is made. In the quest to build, rebuild, and sustain a great nation, "freedom" will not be sufficient. It must be circumscribed by morality, which governments can, do, and must legislate. There are few more urgent tasks, for in the words of Will's hero Edmund Burke, "Perhaps the only moral trust with any certainty in our hands is the care of our own time." Q

Chris Wetzel is a junior political science major who is one of the most thoughtful and well spoken young men I know. He has an unquenchable lust for the truth which can make him both a worthy academic adversary and a staunch friend. In his spare time he enjoys playing many IM sports and is also a proud member of the NRA and Future Calvinists of America. -BC



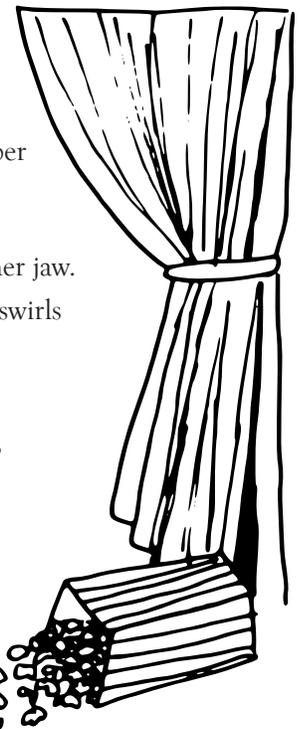
NEW YORK MOVIE

ALISON ANGELL

If you could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint. Edward Hopper

Under a trio of red sconces, an usher leans her blonde head on the wall. One hand supports the elbow of her other arm, whose fingertips rest on her jaw. Her downcast eyes aren't focused on the dark green carpeting with gothic swirls or half-drawn velvet curtain at the door foreshadowing a stairwell.

The bowls of salmon light above have dimmed. Below the colorless movie, one side of a man's hair, thin and almost wet, is all of him that's lit. His long coat weighs down the seat to his left. I cannot tell which one is more alone—but if I had to choose, I'd say the girl.



Alie Angell ('08), spends half her time writing and the other half walking Scottish beaches, proving that a writer's life can, after all, be happy.

REVIEW: REDEEMED BY FIRE

JAMES BRINKERHOFF

I am sure that, if you have grown up in the Protestant Christian world like myself, you have heard many times of the recent “explosion” of Christianity in China. You have heard of underground house churches, smuggled scriptures, millions of converts, and, at times, it might seem that the seed of Christianity has finally found a land of fertile soil where the promised “hundredfold” is, if anything, too conservative. Of course, anything that sounds so utopic this side of paradise is bound to be too good to be true, or rather too simple to be true. This case is no exception. The real story of Christianity in China is complex, messy, inspiring, embarrassing, chaotic, and hardly a story that would make for a good Sunday school lesson.

In his book *Redeemed By Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China*, Lian Xi undertakes a rigorously historical examination of popular Christianity in China over the past century. As a professor of history at Hanover College, Lian Xi has been studying the history of Chinese Christianity for over a decade and his thorough research is evident in this work. The volume of his research is simply overwhelming: from books to missionary periodicals to personal interviews it is evident that Xi has a mastery of his material. Even more important, his material is weighed heavily to first-hand Chinese sources, including books, interviews, and personal accounts, which lend the work even more credibility.

Throughout the book Lian Xi does a remarkable job of presenting the story of Modern China Christianity without any personal feeling or opinion toward or against the faith. Even his recounting of healings, visions, and prophetic words from God are stated straightforwardly. He only questions these things when evidence points against them. Otherwise, he leaves it to the reader to believe or disbelieve whether such events are actual manifestations of supernatural influence, and says very little as to whether the growth of Christianity in China is beneficial or detrimental. Indeed, it would be equally unsurprising to find

that Lian Xi is himself a Christian as it would be to learn the opposite.

In describing Christianity in China over the past century, *Redeemed By Fire* shows that the growth of popular Christian faith in China today had its root in earlier indigenous Christian movements of the Nineteenth Century. Xian Li is especially intent on examining the point where Christianity moved away from being simply a Western missionary religion to become an authentically Chinese religion. Although the work of Western missionaries had found a degree of success, the real explosion of Christian faith, in terms of numbers, only occurred in Christian movements that were initiated and led by Chinese themselves. It was the “indigenizing” of the religion in the first half of the Twentieth Century that enabled the tremendous explosion of the Chinese church in the latter part of that century, when missionary presence in the country was illegal and hence sparse.

Greater independence from missionary oversight and increasing popular support led to a great variety of expression in Chinese Christian movements, and not always for the better. Indeed, throughout the accounts of various leaders and movements within Chinese Christianity I found myself searching with little success for someone, anyone, who would prove to meet some minimum standard for traditional orthodoxy or consistency. It seemed that the most notable and influential of the mass movements toward Christianity were also the most guilty of claims of new divine revelations, extreme millenarianism, miraculous healings of varying credibility, and general chaos and sectarianism.

Take, as just one example, the founder of the True Jesus Church (TJC), Wei Enbo. Enbo founded the TJC in 1917, based upon claims of divine revelation through the Holy Spirit. “After a thirty-nine day fast—discretely one day shy of Jesus’ record—Wei had sightings of Jesus, Moses, Elijah, and the twelve disciples...” Further supposed revelations

Redeemed By Fire
by Lian Xi
Yale, 2010.



from the Holy Spirit detailed the special status of Wei Enbo (newly christened Wei Baulo or Wei Paul), the exclusive salvation of TJC members, and the imminent return of Christ. Much of the power of Enbo's message came from this millenarianism, that is, his emphasis on the impending and apocalyptic second coming of Jesus, somehow always right around the corner. Interestingly, Lian Xi notes that the apocalyptic message was not foreign to indigenous Chinese religion, which also "foretold a period of great cataclysms followed by the coming of a renewed world." In addition to Endo's prophecy, claims of miraculous healings and even divine power over the elements also played a large role in the spread of the TJC. In its simplest form, this was manifest in the promise of general good fortune and health for the converts.

Following the early death of its founder Wei Enbo, the TJC was marked by internal conflict and division among its leaders, with no less than fifteen splinter groups formed within a two decades of Enbo's death. "Most of those breakaway groups led by alleged "heretics" were formed in the wake of power struggles within the TJC leadership." (62) Sadly, each one of these aspects of Wei Enbo's ministry proved to be far more the rule than the exception in the popular movements of indigenous Christianity in modern China.

It is interesting to note that many characteristics of Chinese Christianity are very similar to another remarkable outbreak of the Christian faith. When Christianity exploded into and overwhelmed the Roman Empire in the first centuries A.D. it was, in many ways, a similar mess; the early church was not all as neat, tidy, and orthodox as Augustine's Confessions. To a large extent it too was driven by an over-eager millenarianism, it too had its share of supposedly new "divine revelations," it too offered promises

of immediate divine aid and healing to its adherents. The development of shrines to the saints, for instance, was little more than a carrying over of the pagan practice of healing shrines. Where supplicants once entreated the gods for deliverance from sickness and disease they now prayed to the Christian saints, even presenting small figurines of the body part in distress.

Of course, in the midst of all this, and even through it, the true Christian faith in the gospel and belief in the Word of God was spread to the ends of the earth. Without whitewashing the dramatic problems, inconsistencies, and deviations from orthodoxy in the early church, we are able to also recognize that it did establish the basis for subsequent expressions of Christianity. We can trust that, in all "the mess" of the mass movements in Chinese Christianity over the past century and today, the Word of God is still being proclaimed and believed by many in that country.

Lian Xi's book was not written for a Christian audience, and in part it is for this very reason that I think that Christians would do well to read it. It provides a fundamental foundation for understanding contemporary Christianity in China by examining its roots in the past century, and does so without the bias of a particular brand of the faith or positivist tendency. Perhaps more importantly, for the lay reader, it forces one to take a second look at this religion called Christianity, from foreign and unfamiliar perspective. 

Despite his usual gentleman-like appearance, James Brinkerhoff can sometimes be caught wearing jorts (jean shorts) and sleeveless dress shirts. This good ol' modern-day Cincinnatus is also single. – N.G.

YOU ALWAYS USE TOO MUCH SALT

STEPHANIE CARROLL

My mother-in-law has never liked me. I can't really figure it out. I keep a clean house. I'm not Italian, but at least I'm not Irish. I never get drunk at family parties unlike a certain sister-in-law I know. I know Michael and I didn't date for long before we got married but we were not in a rush because I was pregnant or anything. We were in love and we wanted to keep it that way. I buy her a beautiful Christmas present each year, usually a nice sweater or something new for her kitchen. She likes to cook. I call her every year on her birthday. She'll pick up the phone, thank me for the wishes, and tell me to put Michael on.

I can't get the woman to budge. When she comes to the house, she runs her hands over the tables and the mantels for dust. When she sees that it's clean like it always is, she says, "I can see you spend all your time cleaning. I guess there are not many other things you like to do." No, Adele. Believe it or not, I like other things. I like Pilates. I like to paint. I like to read. I like to go on walks with my husband. I like to be around people that don't hate me. I like to get a tiny bit of approval once in a while even from hags like you.

So when Michael asked me what he thought about his poor old devil of a mother moving in with us I was, well, hesitant.

"Michael, are you trying to kill me?"

"Marie, don't get all. . ."

"Because your mother hates me."

"Marie. She does not hate you."

"Hates me. I don't know what her problem is but for the last ten years she has not been able to stand the sight of me." I look at him in the mirror while he's standing behind me. We're getting ready for bed. He looks so cute when he wears his glasses at night. How could such a horrible old shrew birth a beautiful boy like that. That woman. "She looks at me like she wishes I were at the bottom of the East River instead of here."

"Marie, she's Italian. She's not in the mob. We have gone over this."

"I don't know why you still think I think your mother

is in the mob. You're uncle probably is."

"Marie, she's lonely." He looks so genuine and so sad.

"Oh, Michael I know." I turn off the bathroom light and we go to the bedroom. "I know she's lonely. I mean, it hasn't been that long since Frank's been gone so I'm sure she's not used to being by herself. I just want to know why she can't go live with your sister or with Danny."

"We all talked about it and Anna doesn't have the space in that apartment of hers and Danny has all the kids around."

"But she could take care of the kids."

"Marie." He takes my hand and looks me in the eyes. He is good. "I want her to stay with us."

I look away from him because I know he's got me. I know while I look at him I will forget about what a horrible woman she is and about how miserable I will be when she walks in the door. I will forget that everyday will be like Thanksgiving 2001 when the only thing she said to me the entire day was, "You use too much salt." I know that is going to be my life. But he looks so sweet. He loves his mother. He loves so well. And I'm not heartless, I think.

"How soon would she have to come?"

She moved out of her house in three days. Forty years there and it only took her three days. She must have been packed for months, I think to myself. Michael went down the day after we talked and told me that he would be back on Monday morning. His mother couldn't drive that little truck, that's for sure. I wake up at 4 a.m. on Monday morning and start cleaning. I dust everything. I mop everything. I bleach the coffee maker after I use it. I make up a breakfast frittata and leave a note for Michael just to put it in the oven when they were ready. I make it to work fifteen minutes early. Nervous tension is like crack for me. Not that I know what crack is like. I know I have to watch comments like that when darling Adele moves in.

My day at work is long. I work at a dermatologist's office. That place makes me feel so good about myself. You see all



these people with these awful things on their skin. A whole hell of a lot of acne walks in that door and I sit there happy that I don't look like that. I know that is a horrible way to think, but I can't help the things that come into my head. Sometimes I wish I was a pediatric nurse instead. I would love to see all those kids coming in, even with the runny noses. There are few things sweeter. I love the way they look at things, especially the little babies. Everything they see is new and you can tell that, I don't know, something clicks in their head. They understand something, even though they don't have the words for door, window, nurse, understand. But they see everything.

But I like work. I do. However, the Monday Adele moves in is torture. I think of her running her fingers over my furniture. I think of her criticizing my food. Oh my god, what if she goes through my underwear drawer?

I go through two stop lights to get home. Well, they're close. They're yellow when I hit the intersection so it's not really running a red. But if an officer pulled me over I would just calmly tell him that the dragon lady is moving in and that I need to be home as soon as possible to make sure she doesn't further destroy my life. Then I would cry. I always get out of tickets.

I get home and the moving truck is there. It's empty but the garage is full of cardboard boxes. I guess our cars are homeless now. I park the car and take three huge breaths. I wish I smoked so I could do something to calm myself down. Before it felt like she was visiting but now, with all her stuff here, I realize that this is life. It's like graduating high school. You don't go back. It's too late. Except after high school you have good things to look forward to.

I walk inside and find her sitting on the couch, all small. "Hi Adele! How was your drive? We are so happy to have you here!"

Adele looks at me. She dresses so well, all put together, wearing nice little jeans and a cute little sweater. Not one of the ones I gave her, but this is reality we're talking about. "Marie, how are you." She gets up and gives me a hug. Michael watches from the kitchen, nervous. "Marie, you've lost some weight. I am so proud of you."

I want to kill her. "Oh, Adele. Thank you. Always so sweet."

"Michael said I can live in the guest bedroom but I don't think there's room for all of my furniture back there."

"Mom," says Michael. "You can replace the furniture in there if you want but we can't move everything out here. We talked about this."

"Well, Michael, Marie, I don't see why we shouldn't compromise? We all live here. My furniture is very nice."

Those ugly old lady couches are not coming in here. "Adele, I don't —"

"Mom, do you want something to drink? A little white wine?"

Adele turns and smiles at him. "Oh, my baby boy. You are such a good little host. You're papa would be so proud, my little boy. I'll have something a little later. I want to catch up with Marie first."

I turn to Michael. "Can you bring me a little white wine, darling?"

Everyday I come home she's changed something. I go to Pilates Saturday morning, I come back and she's rearranged my kitchen drawers. "Marie, I don't see how you thought that was functional. This will make much more sense." I come home from work and she's replaced pictures of my mother and my sisters with pictures of Uncle Ralph, Cousin Nina, and a whole slew of Italian relatives that have been dead for years. "We have to remember the dead, Marie. We all die someday." I think she sits up at night and tries to think of the stupidest thing she could possibly say to me. That or it's natural. I'm not sure which is worse.

Then she bought a cat.

I come home on Friday and I hear this little bell ringing. I start to sneeze.

"Hi Adele," I call. I'm not sure where she is.

I walk into the kitchen and there it is, on my counter. Adele stands there, stroking this black cat. It's standing on the counter and eating out of one of my dishes. It's licking my leftover meatloaf. Adele is making all of these little clicking noises and saying, "That's my darling Bianca. Yes,



my baby. I know it's too salty but it's good for you."

I sneeze. "Adele! What is that."

"Marie, stop playing stupid. You know what cat's look like. Even if you didn't go to college."

"Oh my—" sneeze—"God, Adele! You can't just go buy a cat! I'm allergic to cats."

She looks at me with this sweet face like she hasn't done a single thing worth getting upset about. "But Marie. You and Michael are at work all day. I get lonely. I need a companion."

"Marie—" sneeze—"watch a soap opera. Opera. Go to the library and make friends with people at the senior group. You cannot get a cat. We are taking it back."

"That cat was a non-refundable purchase. Bianca will have to stay with us." Adele picks the cat up and holds it to her chest. The cat meows and I think I might actually like the animal. It doesn't seem to like Adele very much. Adele gives me this defensive look, like if you want to take this cat you will have to answer to me first. "She lives here now."

I'm sneezing so hard I can't even think. I want to grab that cat and chuck it out the window but I will not touch that animal. "Adele, I am walking out of this house. I am going to the drug store to get some Benadryll, and when I come back that cat will be gone, won't it."

Adele just stands there, petting the cat.

She wants to kill me.

When Michael gets home that night he tells Adele to get rid of the cat. I hear them talking about it from the bedroom. The next day the cat is gone but I'm still sneezing like crazy. I have a feeling she didn't get rid of it, that it's just hiding in her room somewhere and sometime, when Michael's not home, she's going to unleash it.

That morning Michael and I are getting ready for work. He makes the coffee, I pour the cereal.

"Michael, she's killing me."

"Marie, I know she's tough."

"Michael. I am trying. I am nice. I keep the house clean. I cook for her. I hardly tell her what to do but I had to say something about that cat. That was out of control."

"Ok, that was." He poured my coffee and gave me the cream and sugar. Black for him.

I sit down at the kitchen table. I pour milk into my cereal and stir it up and hope that Adele is still sleeping. I look at him and speak slowly. I want him to understand me. I don't want to get emotional.

"Michael, I don't feel comfortable in my own home. I feel judged every minute that I am in here. I can't come home and feel safe. I know your mother is lonely. I know it's better for her to live with other people. I know you don't want her in a nursing home. I wouldn't put my mother in one, either. But I just, I don't know. I just don't know how much longer we can live like this. Are we supposed to raise kids in an environment like this?"

Michael looks at me over his coffee mug. "Marie, we don't have any kids."

"Oh, thank you, Michael. I'm glad you're here to remind me of things like that."

"Don't get mad at me."

"Then don't say things like that to me. You don't think I'm aware that we don't have any kids? You don't think I think about that all the time?" I find I'm crying and it only makes me angrier. I'm trying to stop and getting red in the face. I breathe a few deep breaths and look at him. "Michael, what are we waiting for?"

"God, Marie. Not now." He comes and sits down next to me. He puts his hand on my shoulder but I don't want him to touch me. Not now.

"I'm going to be late for work," I say. I leave him sitting there.

When I pull out of the driveway and look up at the house, I see the lights in Adele's room. I hope she hasn't been up for long.

"Michael, I would like to have a birthday party." The three of us sit at the dining room table. We're eating Adele's meatball soup. I hate how much I love that soup. But I don't complement her on it today. There are some things I just can't stomach.

"Well, would you like me to get a clown and some



balloon artists? Or maybe we could take you to Chuck E. Cheese.” Michael and I laugh.

“Michael, I am not kidding. Do not treat me like a child.”

“I’m just kidding, Mom. Why do you want a birthday party?”

“Well, it’s my sixty-fifth birthday, which I think is worth celebrating. In fact, I’m surprised I even had to bring it up. I thought you and your brother and sister would have started to plan something by now but I know you’re all busy. Do you like the soup, Marie?”

“Oh, it’s quite the soup.”

“The trick is not to put too much salt in, dear. I wish you would learn. But Michael, I want to show my friends my new home. I think a birthday party would be a wonderful time to have them over.” Oh God. Adele’s friends. The old neighborhood crew. A bunch of sixty-somethings roaming around my house, gossiping with each other, asking for refills of scotch, talking about the Yankees and FDR and how much they want Giuliani to run for president again.

“Well, Mom, that sounds like a great idea.” I flip my head in his direction. I give him a look that I hope says how much I hate this idea and how much I hate him for agreeing. He looks straight at me and says, “What day is best for you, Mom?”

And the next three weeks are filled with planning. One of those cardboard boxes had all of Adele’s china that she insists must be used for the party. “Marie, this is not one of your lazy Saturday barbecues that you’re used to. My friends are coming from out of town and they are used to finer things.” So I spend my evening cleaning china. Then silver. Then crystal. I begin to think that she raided estate auctions because, at sixty-four, she was not really that old.

Then menu selection. Antipasta, salad, soup, sauce, meat, dessert. I thought we were inviting all of Little Italy over to our house. Of course, Adele would not hear of me cooking a single thing. She would spend the entire day in the kitchen making fresh pasta, rolling meatballs, baking up little pastry crusts for baby ricotta pies. She would either banish me from the kitchen or send me to Brooklyn for her

favorite meats and cheese. “Rudy’s provolone is the best. I won’t buy it from anyone else.”

They come three weeks later. All of them. Joey and Nick and Rob and Johnny and Annemarie and Janet and Caroline and Nancy and Danny and Anna and Carl and Carmine. They flood the house with presents and more food and noise. I do not think there is a second when people stopped talking. The house fills with “Did you hear what happened to Gregory?” and “I told Connie it was not a good idea for her to marry that Jewish boy” and “She just doesn’t look the same since her nose job.” I hear them talk about our house. “What a strange color for this room. And what is that painting?” I hear them talk about us. “Now how many children do they have? Really? Why not?”

Adele loves it. She revels in it. I have never seen her more pleased with herself. She wears a blue dress with a sparkly bracelet. She pulls her silver hair back with a clip. She looks bright and young. She floats in among the guests, asking them if they liked the tapenade, telling them what the secret ingredient was for the stuffed mushrooms. “It’s the fresh thyme that really makes them sing.” Then she runs back to the kitchen to check on her leg of lamb and her potatoes. I marvel at the amount of food and the beautiful aromas from the kitchen. I wish she would teach me how to cook like that. She sees me standing looking into the kitchen. “Marie, I do not want your help. This is my party and I want to serve the food. Please, go, clean or something.”

And I don’t know why, but I want a confrontation. I know it’s her party and she wants everything perfect, but I decide I don’t feel like cooperating. “Adele, I don’t want you to talk to me like that.”

She looks up from the roast. “Excuse me?”

I take a deep breath and put my champagne down. “Adele, you talk to me like I don’t belong here and I’m done with it. I’m sorry if you don’t like me. I don’t know what I do that gets you so upset, but I have to tell you, I am tired of it. So go ahead and cook your roast and entertain your guests, but don’t talk to me like that.” I pick up my glass and turn to walk out. “Oh, and I know you didn’t get



rid of the cat. I heard it last night.”

We sit through dinner like nothing happened. I sit and talk with Anna, Michael’s sister. She already looks like she’s had too much to drink. Her face is red. Michael sits next to me, hand on my knee. Everything is delicious. Complements swirl around the table. “Adele, this is beautiful!” “How did you cook the meat like this?” “Adele, you must give me the recipe for this!” “Still got it in you.” “Adele,” I say. “I wish I knew how to cook like you. This is perfect.”

It takes hours to eat all the courses. As we finish the last of the roast and potatoes, Michael stands up and bangs his glass. Time for a toast. For once the noise lessens.

“Mom,” begins Michael. “First of all, beautiful meal.” Uproarious approval. “Mom, I have not met anyone that can cook like you, though my beautiful Marie can certainly put up a tough fight.” I think that’s a compliment. There’s a light laugh around the kitchen table. “You have been such a blessing in all our lives. The way you care for all of us, the way you remember each and every thing about us, really it’s incredible. She knows every teacher I or Anna or Danny or Danny’s kids have ever had. I mean, that’s remarkable. And I think it shows how much she loves us.” Nods of agreement. “Mom, I know how hard it’s been with Dad gone. We all miss him so much. But I have seen you grow stronger in these last few years. You never lost yourself in that grief. If you had, I don’t know what I would have done. We love you, Mom. Happy Birthday.”

We all lift our glasses in a toast. Adele is crying and Michael goes over and gives her a hug. She kisses him on both cheeks and takes his head in her hands. “My beautiful baby boy.” Danny and Anna come around for hugs and kisses too, and crazy Carmine, Adele’s brother, calls out from the end of the table, “Speech! Speech!”

Oh God. Not that. Don’t let her speak.

But Adele, after a few feigned protestations, remains standing at the head of the table. She looks around at everyone. “Oh, thank you all. You are all such wonderful, wonderful people. You have made my day special. I am so glad you all enjoy your meal and I am so glad you were all

able to come and see my new home. Michael, my wonderful baby boy, thank you so much for taking an old woman into your home. I know there comes a time when boys don’t want their mother’s around, but my Michael loves me the way sons should love their mothers. Danny, you too. I haven’t forgot about my first child. My headstrong firstborn. I am so proud of you. And Anna, my beautiful Anna, my girl. You look so much like your grandmother. So graceful My darling children, how I love you.

“And Marie, my daughter-in-law.” Oh God. “Marie, who so graciously opened her home to me in my time of need, who has always been so kind, so understanding, so honest. Marie, I do not understand you.” The room becomes uncomfortable. “Marie, I don’t understand why you agreed to let me stay if you harbored so much hostility towards me. I am truly baffled. But, I will take that as a sign of how much you love my boy Michael, even though you don’t have any children. So thank you, Marie. I look forward to many more years living in your home.”

When the last guest walks out the door, I explode. “Adele! What the hell was that?”

Adele cleans the kitchen; she doesn’t even look at me. Michael is next to me, looking afraid. “Marie, let’s just—”

“No, I’m talking. Adele, how could you insult me like that? Adele, in front of the guests in our home. Why do you have to make me miserable? What have I done to you that makes it so impossible for you to be a little kind to me?”

She looks up slowly. “How come you haven’t given my Michael any children? Why?” She doesn’t blink. “First you take him from me, move him away from the city, and then you leave him without children. He would make a wonderful father, yet you are too busy to have a child. Too obsessed with your own life. Do you realize what you’re depriving him of.”

“Ask him, Adele! Ask him why we don’t have any children! He doesn’t want them.”

“Now Marie, I don’t think we should—”

“Michael.” Adele looks at him, her rubber gloves dripping with soapy water. “Michael, is this true?”



Michael looks between the two of us. I can tell he knows that he will not say the right thing, whatever words come out of his mouth. “Mom, we’re not ready yet.”

“Not ready?” Adele takes off the gloves. “Michael, no one is ever ready to have children. Your father and I were not ready, but when we did, it was the most wonderful thing that could have happened to us. And here you leave poor Marie, poor Marie who always keeps the house so clean, who always seasons her food so well, who looks so

trim with all that Pilates she does, you leave her without a child?” She turns to me. “Marie, forgive me. I will get rid of that cat right now.” Q

Stephanie Carroll is a 2010 graduate of Grove City College’s English department who currently teaches with the Philadelphia Teaching Fellows. This story, written for Dr. Potter’s Creative Writing class, first brought Keely to recognize Steph as the dynamo of wit, intelligence, and grace that she is, but it was Miss Carroll’s gutsy in-class comments on Uncle Tom’s Cabin that sealed the deal.

INTERRED

HANNAH LATER

Round room in a hot-blooded house.
A figure lamentable in acrid repose.
Here is the infection of the bird-song,
beating time in a waste;
here is the dejection of the postulant,
kneeling to silence.

Circle the room —
until heavy bones drag with apathy,
until the only sound you hear
is the roar of an idiot’s fury
signifying death of the bird-song,
and the desperation of the postulant
crying, “Sanctuary.”



Hannah Later thinks the ideal childhood would involve climbing trees and listening to Paul Simon records. Having experienced only one of these things in her youth, she has thus far spent most of her adult life tumbling out of trees and wishing she had diamonds on the soles of her shoes.

STORY OF A FALL

JOANNA LAWSON

I am lying on the ground, he thought, when he finally came to. This observation, although perhaps not one an unconcussed person would take the time to make, was nevertheless very perceptive. And taking into account the heavy jostling Damien Black's brain had just undergone, we must applaud his ability to form a thought with not only a subject and a predicate, but also with a downright factual prepositional clause.

Damien Black's second thought was even more perceptive: *That's the stupidest thought I've had all day*. Whatever else could be said of Damien, he was not unobservant.

How did I get here? was his third thought. He had, of course, fallen. Damien was in the habit of walking, when the mood suited him, and falls are a good deal more prevalent among the ambulatory. *God, I've only been walking for twenty years. One would think I'd have gotten the hang of it by now.*

In fact, he had been walking for twenty-three and a half years. He had first mastered upright mobility at the ripe age of two years and seven months. Luckily for him, he was much better at learning his multiplication table than he was at learning to coordinate his limbs. Nevertheless, his upkeep of the skill was remarkable. There had been a few incidents like the present tumble, but on the whole, he considered himself a perfectly adequate walker.

Damien tried to move.

"Try" had been an interesting word for Damien since the day his fourth grade teacher had made the case that there was no such thing. You either do something or you don't — there is no in-between. In illustration, she had tossed a pencil on the ground. There. Try to pick up that pencil. Damien had puzzled at this for a moment, and then, when he had understood what Mrs. Lodwick was trying to say, he had nodded at her and walked back to his desk. She stood there looking at the pencil which was still on the ground. The incident caused a disciplinary meeting with his parents. Damien's parents explained to Mrs. Lodwick that Damien was unenthusiastic about using words when

he felt they were unnecessary, and then they explained to Damien that even when words are unnecessary for you, they might very well be useful to other people.

What Damien should have said before he walked politely back to his desk was that he understood Mrs. Lodwick. She was asking him — in teacher language — not to give her any bullshit. He was an exceptional fourth grader, especially when it came to understanding not only what adults said, but what they meant. Mrs. Lodwick was telling him that she didn't buy it when Damien had told her he'd "try" to do his homework. Mrs. Lodwick loved homework. Damien had never shared the sentiment.

Despite what his teacher said, the word "try" did have a meaning. And in his particular earth-bound circumstances, it meant that, no matter how much he might will it, Damien had no power over his larger appendages. He thought he could wiggle his fingers, which meant that he wasn't paralyzed, thank God. He hadn't thought he'd landed on his neck, but he hadn't been quite ready to count his chickens yet; at least not until he could count his still-functioning phalanges. It appeared to Damien that he had ten of them — which was a very good sign.

In testing out each of his fingers, Damien found that his hands were still in his pockets. This helped explain why his ribs hurt. He'd landed on them. He had also landed on his face. Several years before the incident with Mrs. Lodwick, Damien had his first experience falling on his face. He'd been hanging upside-down on the jungle gym and, in the process of adjusting himself (an inevitably dangerous undertaking while inverted), he'd slipped. On that occasion, he hadn't had his hands in his pockets, but he had — rather inconveniently — stuck out his tongue on the way down. There hadn't been any broken bones, thanks to the cushion of wood chips that awaited him below, but he did remember with impressive vividness looking at himself in one of the elementary school mirrors as he picked wood off his tongue.

Damien Black was a man who learned from his



mistakes. This time, he'd not only remembered to keep his tongue in his mouth, but he'd also remembered to turn his head as he fell. The result was his right cheek pressed flat against the concrete.

I am lying on concrete, he thought. It was true. Damien forced his eyes to focus. The concrete was of the white sidewalk variety, most likely laid within the last few years, considering the lack of weather wear and softening. It was a very unforgiving concrete – even as concretes go.

He decided to lift his head off the ground. It was a bad decision. No sooner than had he lifted his cheek a few centimeters then little silver worms attacked his sight and a yellow fog exploded in his brain. He put his cheek back on the concrete and watched the little silver worms eat in and out of his vision. Gradually they slowed, then decreased in number, then disappeared altogether.

He decided to start with less vital body parts. Slowly, gently, he removed his left hand from his jacket pocket. He set it next to his face where he could keep an eye on it. There it was, pink and convex against the sidewalk.

Where am I? he thought after a moment. It was probably the best question he'd asked himself yet. The immediate answer was immediately available to him: he was lying on concrete next to five of his functioning phalanges. But this was far from satisfactory. *Where precisely was this concrete?*

Washington Park, he thought. *Alright, let's think*, Damien said to his mind, which was at the very least superfluous, if not plain silly. Minds in general – and Damien's mind in particular – tend to think, whether given the suggestion or not. Think, he told his mind again. *I am in Washington Park. Crap, am I in Washington Park?*

This manner of thinking was why so many of Damien's professors in college couldn't stand him. On the other hand, it was also why he did so well in his classes. He'd never learned to do his homework (despite poor Mrs. Lodwick's best efforts), but he was an incredible challenger of assumptions – his own as well as his professors'. He'd been the worst kind of college student: the kind that doesn't say anything agreeable, but says everything well.

Damien took his eyes off his hand, and looked beyond

it to, well, what? *Trees*, he thought. Grass, bushes, empty squagglled tree branches. White sky. That settled it. He was in Washington Park after all.

My hand is cold, he thought. His hand, the one lying next to his face, was indeed cold. In fact, that was why he'd had his hands in his pockets in the first place. To keep them warm. This led to a second realization. It was cold outside. He sniffed the air. It smelled like November. He meant that it smelled like the promise of snow mixed with chimney smoke and rotting leaves. He did not, however, think all of this in so many words, perhaps because of the residue of yellow smoke in his brain, but more likely because "November" was more concise. Not many valued brevity as much as Damien Black. One thing alone he hated for its succinctness, but all the rest of his loathings sprang from prolixity, from damn verbosity.

God, I hate November, thought Damien. This, too, was a true thought. A truer thought, in fact, than any since his fall.

"I hate November," he said.

And then, he remembered. Her face uncoiled like a snake before his mind – pleasing to the eye, but toxic.

He had been walking through Washington Park because it was the only goddamn honest place in the whole world. It shrank not a centimeter from the inescapable essence of November: cold and bare and empty. Only by feeling the November air on his skin could he numb himself, make the knowledge of the truth shrink and fade. If he got cold enough, he'd think only of his own shivering body and not of the horrible knowledge – God, was there anything more intrinsically evil? – of death. If he could lose memory of the world to the frozen November wasteland, perhaps he would lose her memory as well. Perhaps if the frost bit him hard enough, her image would stop gnawing at his mind.

There had been a tree in his path, with impossibly orange leaves which were still impossibly full on the tree's branches. And one of them had wafted down to him. He had started running, because no way in hell was he about to let that leaf touch him. Orange leaves were the symbol of life truncated, and he was not about to have that forced



down his throat again. She had already done that, three Novembers ago – and every November since. He needed no more reminders that she was gone, that the fire of death consumes all and casts it into cold decay. So he ran, not even pausing to take his hands out of his pockets, to get away from the leaf, to get away from November, to get away from her.

But, of course, there was the sidewalk. He had fallen.

He took the hand next to his face and braced it against the ground. Whether he was ready or not, he would stand. He would stand, goddammit.

He stood. He swayed. He tottered backward off the sidewalk and into the cold grass. He put his hand out, groping. He clutched at a tree for support. He looked up. Brown

branches, orange leaves, white sky. It was, of course, the impossibly orange tree he'd been running from. Orange like her hair, brown like her eyes, white like her skin. And she was gone and November had stolen her. The green days were always too short. Always far too short. Damn brevity.

He let go of the tree. He teetered, backed away from it, turned around, and careened away; bits of yellow fog still clinging to his brain, an orange leaf clinging to his jacket. Q

Joanna is a junior philosophy major who enjoys chilling in Germany with Ecuadorians, Italians, and the occasional Columbian. She prefers it when they don't speak any English.



“VITAMINS AND WORLDS”

BY KIP WHARTON.



Say it out loud: Gingko Biloba, and take your Omega Fish Oils,

Sublingual B-12, C, D, E, Sublingual B-6

Pop them down for multiple good things and take your

One-a-day-multiple, A, Thiamine, Riboflavin, Niacin

Deertongue, Vanilla, Calamus, Cranberry, and Horse Chestnut

And don't forget your Hawaiian Baby Woodrose

And another Gingko Biloba (say it slow) for your thoughts.

All of Kip's thoughts are derivative. He realizes that everything “new” he has said is simply a reminder of something the old Billy Shakespeare said, long ago, before him.

SUBSIDIZERS OR STUDENTS: THE DIFFERENCE IS JOY

DR. JOSHUA F. DRAKE

The following lecture was originally presented as part of Grove City College's Fourth Annual Evangelical Scholarship Conference.

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Before parenting prohibited us, my wife and I subscribed to the Pittsburgh symphony. Regular concert attendance afforded us both a greater and a lesser pleasure. The greater was, of course, the music itself. But the lesser pleasure, which I admit here candidly before friends, was the pleasure of people-watching. I justified this nosey practice by telling myself that, as a teacher of music appreciation, I needed to become more aware of those people who were great appreciators of music themselves. Now, I never had any intentions of letting the lesser pleasure distract from the greater because – I assumed – no one would be doing anything of interest once the music started, leaving me to give my full attention to it.

My assumption proved false as often as it proved true. One night, a pair of venerable ladies held an entire conversation over the top of a Beethoven slow movement. Too old to see, or perhaps too old to care about, the meaningful glares of their fellow seat-holders, these two women wandered into yesteryear together, reminiscing about their college days and – ironically – their own experience in a music appreciation class. Another night, I sat by a man, hardly in his twenties, who had on his arm a beautiful young woman. He wore a suite of clothes to which he was obviously unused and sat uncomfortably in the already-uncomfortable seats beside us there in the peasant's tier of Heinz Hall. His attention was completely fixed all right, though not at all upon the balding conductor nor on the corpulent but animated first violinist. His eyes were set on the lady who accompanied him that night. His arm followed the often-parodied pattern of a careful stretch, a gentle extension, and then a repose on the seat back, before finally sliding down to fall along the bare shoulders of his date. But though she captured his utmost attention for the first movement, the

Adagio was more than his easily-wearied youth could bear. The jocular third movement startled him from his slumber for a moment, but with some effort he regained it in the fourth.

As I took in more and more concerts I became aware that hardly half of the audience showed any enthusiasm about the music at all. Some flipped carelessly through the Rolex advertisements in the concert program. Others studiously read the program notes while music that demanded my whole attention was being played. For them, the music was an expensive background noise to add ambiance to their wholly literary pursuits. For some men, the intermission – not the concert – was the thing, and cigar smoking and wine drinking (legitimate pleasures, of course) were met with great enthusiasm. When the bell sounded to call them back to their seats, they would mutter a few curses to one another, extinguish (but save) the remainder of their cigars, and return to their wives in the booths like inmates returning to their cells after a walk in the recreation yard. All this behaviour was very curious to me and I began to observe it with more attention and no small amount of aggravation, not least because it was distracting me from the music. I had laid down my hard-earned money to buy a subscription to the symphony so that my wife and I could pay close attention to some of the most meaningful ideas ever expressed. I doubted very much that these distracted attendees were simply better at listening than I was and could process with ease music that I had to struggle to follow. Why were they even coming here to begin with if not to listen attentively to great music? Surely if all they wished to do was to don their furs and fedoras, they could do that at home and then prance around in them to their heart's content. Why come and sit idly, clearly without attention,



while Beethoven screamed the glory of God at them for an hour or so? A moment's reflection checked me of my thankless criticism. I should be jolly grateful to the lot of them. If the concert were attended only by those who were interested in hearing great music speak truth to them, it would be so ill-attended as to be economically impracticable. Symphony orchestras, if they are to exist, must be funded both by concert-goers who go to hear music, and concertgoers who go for social reasons. We can't expect to scrape together enough enthusiasts for great music to pay all those folks in the black tuxedos. We probably couldn't even scrape together enough to pay for the light bill at Heinz Hall. But thankfully that is irrelevant. The members of upper-middle class of the Pittsburgh community come out to the symphony for reasons inexplicable to me, but because they do, my ticket costs only forty dollars, instead of four hundred. Of course, if they wanted, they could actually listen to the music too. They need no special training to do so, only a good memory and a long attention span. And it would be no more burdensome to the symphony to play to a room full of attentive listeners than it would be to play to a right mix of attentive listeners and daydreaming business executives. But that is neither here nor there.

Most professors have observed a similar situation in colleges and universities. Wouldn't it be wonderful, we think to ourselves, if we could work at a college where the only students enrolled were students indeed — those whose whole being quivers with delight to learn about the glory of the Lord as it is revealed in our several disciplines? We long for the bygone (but fictitious) days when everyone at college was there solely in the pursuit of learning. Or we long for that utopian institution where zealous and eager students fill every seat, where no one is shopping on Amazon in the back row, and where no one asks a question about "what will be on the test." Well, such institutions do not and cannot exist. Institutions succeed financially because two sets of their enrolled number can coexist happily. I want to talk to you about both of these sets, one of which is itself divisible, and talk about what it really is that sets the two sets apart.

There is a danger, I know, in laying out baldly what most teachers and students know to be true but would never say in so many words. The danger is that in doing so I court the accusation of arrogance. Well, I can set your minds at ease on that front by means of two expedients. First of all, no one presumes it an easy thing to determine whether someone else is a subsidizer or a student. We may know, if honest, which of the two we ourselves are, but knowing the hearts of others is not so easy. The more one knows a person, the better the clues one has by which a determination might be made, but it can never be made with complete certainty.

The second expedient is personal. I am only equipped to give this talk because I have been both a subsidizer and a student myself. I even find myself receding from one to the other when I don't take measures of correction. As a boy, I was a hopeless idolater of grades. As a youth, I was a coasting drifter without a care in the world for studies, and, by God's grace, I was mostly a student when I was at college. But even there, when I wasn't being a student, I was being a subsidizer.

Now, a subsidizer is a very useful thing in a college. Without them, our enrollment would often be too slim to be financially viable, and most of us professors would probably have to move on to other lines of work. There simply wouldn't be room for us all without at least some subsidizers to help the students pay our salary. A subsidizer, simply put, is someone who pays for college but doesn't get from college what college was meant primarily to give. I call them "subsidizers," and not a more offensive term, because they do serve a valuable role for others. They offset the cost of tuition (by virtue of their great number) for the true students, whose numbers are so few and who are so scattered across the globe, that they probably wouldn't be able to come together and finance a college on their own. The subsidizer may be happy or sad, well adjusted and popular, or lonely and isolated. He may leave college feeling very grateful for his four years, or he may leave frustrated. He may go on to gainful employment or to collect the dole. What unites all the subsidizers is one thing — whatever



academic learning he does at college will be incidental to other goals, rather than a goal in and of itself. What makes the subsidizers different from one another, however, is more complicated.

One group of subsidizers we may call the Attendees. Most Attendees are enjoying their college experience, which for them is defined by an ample social life, lots of recreation, leisurely outings with friends, and, of course, attending classes. They do find their main vocation – which is ‘hanging out’ – broken up from time to time with the odd ‘ridiculous’ assignment (for so it must seem to them, who understand college to be a four-year youth camp) but by in large, they spend their time as they did in high school, only with the advantages of proximity to their friends and lack of parental supervision. Some Attendees are less social – holed up in front of their computers or game consoles – but no less convinced that the encumbrances of course work are merely a long pause in the endless video game of college. The Attendee is set apart from the other type of subsidizer because, unless he is remarkably bright, he will get bad grades. How bad these grades are is dependent on a number of variables, but they will be, by Grove City Standards, pretty bad. I observe that there are only a few of this lot at our college, though they do exist. As I was once one myself, I can testify to the limited nature of the fun they are enjoying. I can’t say that it wasn’t fun, but it wasn’t the kind of fun that one pays twenty grand a year for.

The other group of subsidizers, I fear, may be much more numerous here. We may call this group the Grade Grabbers. The name is deceptive because members of this group may or may not get good grades. What sets them apart is that this is what they strive for. They may do this for three reasons. The first is mercenary. They’ve been told, as I was, that if you want to get a “good” job (by which those who say it mean a job that involves a bucket of antacids in the drawer of your fine wood desk) you must get good grades. The second “good” in the sentence of course means an A+. The young person, having learning this irrefragable truth, that good grades lead without fail to a happy employment, then pursues these grades with his whole being.

Another group of Grade Grabbers is nobler. They have observed among their classmates a people unlike themselves, hidden away in corners with books that are not the ones assigned for class, or clustered in groups of two or three in hot debate about some incomprehensibility. This strange group (we’ll be calling them students here shortly) often make good grades, but – and here’s the attractive thing – they seem to have very rich lives. They seem to love all sorts of things and find themselves interested in all types of knowledge. Well, it only follows that to become part of this strange group, one must get good grades. So, this second set of Grade Grabbers, very interested and hopeful to become true students themselves, pursue good grades with all their might, thinking that doing so is identical with learning. They observe that the learned get good grades, so, they assume pursuing good grades must lead to learnedness. They may even learn to parrot some of the talk that the real students use, showing enthusiasm about the things they’ve been told to feel enthusiastic about. My experience suggests that somewhere in their educational background, they’ve even been encouraged in this pretence. Test essay answers that cruelly depreciate those who “think Beethoven is boring” while pointing out how “awesome” he really is are a pretty regular occurrence in my own class, even though twaddle like that is never rewarded there. I can only assume that the students who write that way have learned somewhere in their school days that showing unbridled enthusiasm curves up the grade. Eventually, members of this group may even become convinced that displays of enthusiasm about a subject and good grades on tests are exactly what being learned is – and then cultivate both with alacrity.

The third group of Grade Grabbers gains my deepest pity, however. They are fewest in number, but here at Grove City they number not a few. These poor souls have been convinced that somehow their moral goodness is dependent upon their GPA. Perhaps they have become confused by the equivocal use of the word “good” when applied both to loving one’s neighbour and to an A+. When they receive a lower grade, they feel that they have somehow been bad,



as if moral goodness in the context of their vocation were dependant on the mark they receive on a paper. A C+ feels like a spiritual rebuke to them. For those in this group who may be among us tonight (and I was in that group once too, eyes all full of tears when I missed my first problem in arithmetic) I must pause. God expects faithfulness in our vocations. He does not expect any particular outcome beyond this. And if you are concerned that you have perhaps not been as faithful in your vocation as you should have been, ask yourself if you are thus concerned because of an honest evaluation of your own use of time, or simply because you got a B.

Now any member of the Grade Grabbers is likely at some point not to receive the coveted A+. When he fails to achieve it, panic sets in and he works harder, becomes more likely to blame others for his failure, and probably frets himself into some sort of illness, which he can then use as an excuse to gain advantages over his classmates so that he can finally get the grades he wants.

So much for the subsidizer. But what of the student? We may be tempted to think, as one set of the Grade Grabbers did, that he always gets good grades. The student, however, has much against him when it comes to getting good grades. A student understands grading as an imperfect mechanism by which he can learn about his own knowledge and giftedness in a subject. Where he applies himself diligently, the grade reflects his gifts or his lack of gifts. And since learning about his own abilities and weaknesses is part of the world of knowledge that interests him, he is as happy with the bad grades as he is with the good ones. In the case of the good grades, he can take note that he shows more than average skill in the subject, perhaps using this knowledge to help him better understand his vocation. In the case of the bad grades, he can learn his weaknesses and look to improve upon them in the same way that a man might look to improve his vision by purchasing eyeglasses after failing an eye exam. Hitherto, he had thought his vision perfectly clear.

In any class, however, where a student must sacrifice to mere test preparation the valuable time that he has set aside

for learning, he is at a disadvantage to the Grade Grabber. While the true student was reading Kurt Gödel or John Donne, the Grade Grabber was taking a seminar on test-taking strategies. While the true student was trying really to understand what a paramecium is and why we call it a paramecium and not an anamecium or a hypomecium, the Grade Grabber has stuffed the word – to him a meaningless place-holder – into his short term memory and moved on to the next term on the list. Nor is this disadvantage easily overcome by more thoughtfully designed classes or tests. The current format of undergraduate education makes it too labor-intensive to utterly disallow cramming, and even if we could do it, we would disappoint no few subsidizers upon whom our financial viability depends.

Thus all courses in which mere cramming pays off are disadvantageous to the true student. The true student is unwilling to spend his valuable time by filling up his short-term memory with material he has never seen a context for. But here I must be very careful, for through this observation we unexpectedly meet upon one of the most important things that really sets the student apart from the subsidizer. Give him a list of biological terms and a good, well illustrated diagram, and he is as overwhelmed with joy as Adam himself once was when he first was asked to name the animals. Set him a complex geometric proof to solve and he becomes like his first parent, pruning and tending in the garden of Eden. Ask him to project Earth's rotational speed after sixty-thousand years of tidal deceleration and he is like David, hearing the heavens declare the glory of the Lord. In short, he is much more likely than the subsidizer to see the context for whatever it is he has been given to learn because the joy he finds in those contexts draws him there. Rather than assume the list of terms before him is an obstacle for his short-term memory, he treats the list as another corner of the world he has yet to learn a name for – like a toddler who brings an object to his parents, desperate to know what to call it. The true student is hard pressed to name a favorite subject. He can tell you what he is good at and what he finds difficult, but for him that has nothing to do with taste. His tastes are catholic.



We must also not assume that the student is devoid of social life. His does not take the same form as the social life of the subsidizer, but it is just as robust. In the end, it may be almost as time-consuming. I can imagine true students missing a class because a heated debate about whether Spencer draws his Duessa from Boiardo or Ariosto has crept up during lunch and cannot be extinguished before the 1:00 class. What characterizes the social life of the student, as opposed to the subsidizer, is the nature of the friendships involved. For the Attendee, friends are those who are amusing, who make good jokes, who wear similar clothes, who are interested in sitting through the same Hollywood movies, who like the same video games, and who flatter well while helping one shop for jeans. In short, a friend is someone who will confirm the utter legitimacy of idleness by being co-participant in it. For the Grade Grabber, a friend is someone who will help you in your quest for an A, who will pull the all-nighter with you, who will agree with you as you complain about the impossibility of a course's expectations, and who will generally confirm in you the sense you already have that you must be a good student because you work so hard for your grades. For the student, however, a friend is someone equally interested in all the glories of this life and of the one that is to come. The friendship of the student is characterized by almost constant interruptions of delight about some overwhelming beauty, compelling truth, or convicting goodness. Perhaps also, the friendship is characterized by a sometimes unhealthy criticism of his subsidizing peers or the culture which they produce. He should be grateful, however, for he is indebted to them for their willingness to endure what he enjoys so that he can enjoy what they endure.

The difference between student and subsidizer is at this point appreciable, and we may conveniently describe it as joy. What this joy looks like is rather well known among those who experience it. It manifests itself in the audible gasp from the classroom floor. The gasp comes from a student who has just understood the importance of something said in class — perhaps the relationship of subject matter in mosaics that decorate the apse of a Byzantine church. The

student's joy can be seen in his hot sprint to the library after class. No, he isn't running there so that he can squeeze in a quick half-hour of study before the test in his next class. Instead, the student runs there to try to find a copy of the book — you know, the one with the interesting title in a foreign language — from which the professor quoted, almost as an aside, toward the end of his lecture. We see the student's joy when he follows a literary rabbit trail in his selection of books to read outside of class requirements. He reads Byron's *Childe Harold* and thinks that Byron may have been influenced by Chateaubriand. So he reads René and then someone tells him that René is related to Goethe's *Werther*. So he drops *Werther* in his Amazon cart. The student's joys are not always literary or artistic. He is mesmerized by the beauty of design wherever he meets it. He watches again and again a computer-aided design animation present a machine whose utter simplicity translates the gentle press of a lever into a great work of dominion. The student gets a clutch in his throat during his inorganic chemistry class. The clutch comes because, he learns that some metals, when exposed to hydrogen, "rust" not by turning brownish orange like iron or green like copper, but by turning transparent. "The God who made such a beauty must be a friend to man," he thinks. The student's joy becomes apparent in an entomology class. The student sits in his usual seat, on this day like every day, taking sparse notes on real paper. The lecturer is talking about wasps. He explains that there is a parasitic wasp, common in most of Europe, that will invade ant hills when it becomes aware that the ants living there have, quite unaware themselves, brought butterfly larvae into their nursery by accident, thinking them to be their own. The wasp is not interested in ant larvae — too small for her needs — but the butterfly larvae will do nicely. As the wasp enters the ant hill, she releases a pheromone that causes the ants to attack one another. Meanwhile, the wasp saunters to the nursery, selects a butterfly larva from amongst the ant larvae that surround it, stabs it with an ovipositor and releases a fertilized egg into it, which will live off of the butterfly larva as it develops into a mature wasp. When hatching time comes, ants, butterflies, and wasps



will all emerge from the same hole. The student hears all this, breathless, without writing a single word down, and begins to tear up. She quietly regains her composure and, after the class is over, begins an hour-long search for pictures and video of this phenomenon. She will very likely answer correctly the question related to that wasp on her entomology test. But she will have gained a great deal more for her twenty-seven dollar investment that hour than a mere point on a test.

This is not at all to say that the subsidizer is always unhappy or that the student is always happy. The Attendee, in his fourth hour of video games, or her fourth hour of idle chat about boys, will be enjoying a sort of happiness. The student, when caught in an epistemological crisis after reading Derrida or mystified by lab results that look like holes in a dartboard will be, in a way, unhappy. The first is the happiness that comes when fallen men momentarily evade the glory of a perfect God. The second is the unhappiness that temporarily comes as we try to apprehend the glory of God with our imperfect mortal tools. For the things we study here really are the glory of God. He reveals himself generally in “the things that have been made” says St. Paul. And the student thinks it a very good bargain that for a mere eighty thousand dollars he can spend four years doing nothing else with his time but trying to see as much of God’s glory as he can in the courses he takes and in the peers with whom he takes those courses.

How is it, then, that the same assignment that the subsidizer calls “ridiculous” (either because it is a terrible distraction from talking to his girlfriend or because it is likely to jeopardize his GPA) the student calls a joy? I’m sure we’ve all known what it is like to go on holiday with a teenager. You spend thousands on airfare and housing, turn up at a well-provided cabin near a state park out west, get yourself all unpacked and then boot up for a short hike. But the teenager begins to pout. His cellphone is out of range, the mosquitoes are biting him, his legs are tired, he is hot, or cold, or hungry, or doesn’t like the food. We might begin to level criticism at the state park – that the mosquitoes really are too numerous, the trees are all quite

similar in colour, the streams and the birds are so very noisy, the sunset nearly blinding, and the rock formations are likely to skin our knees. And what are trees and streams and sunsets compared to a riveting conversation with one’s girlfriend of four whole weeks. But it becomes very clear to anyone outside the situation that the teenager is displeased with something that is perfectly pleasing and he is miserable because he has decided to be so. He has bereft himself of joy.

Now, in our context, the subsidizer has found a solution not immediately available to the teenager on holiday. The subsidizer has found small pleasures for himself that have very little to do with his situation. He can hang out with people his own age, or he can meet people of the opposite sex, or he can set to himself the pointless goal of achieving an arbitrarily set GPA, or he can convince himself by means of his high grades that he really must be very clever. An analogous situation occurs when our teenager discovers that the cabin has a deluxe cable package and that his parents (who’ve given up on making him enjoy himself) will let him watch as much as he pleases. The teen holes up in front of the television, enjoying things that he could as easily have enjoyed back home, and misses out on the Rockies. A more industrious teen might bring with him from home his favorite crossword puzzle book and spend his fortnight working them all. He’ll be only a little better than the boy in front of the TV, since he is still wasting an opportunity to see new glories because he is unwilling temporarily to forego familiar ones. To cure either youth is a difficult task. I don’t look forward to having to cure my own boys of their adolescence. But like all works of sanctification, it follows a pretty well-travelled path.

That path first requires divine help. It is really the glory of God that we evade when we decide that because a subject is difficult or because we haven’t immediately apprehended its beauty that it is a drudgery to be taken up only to fulfill graduation requirements. If organic chemistry, or anatomy and physiology, or music theory, or fluid mechanics are ways by which we can better understand the things God has made, and scripture tells us quite plainly that he is



revealing himself through these things, then these subjects are ways by which we can better understand God. The arts and sciences are highly cultivated ways by which we can learn about God. You see now why it only makes sense that we don't wish to have anything to do with them. Without the aid of Christ, we all want to run as far as we can from all of God's revelation, both general and special. That little voice inside us that says "math isn't my thing" or "I don't like science" is the same voice that tells us "you don't really like the God who made all this." We need to petition God to help us to love him as he is revealed through the things he has made. Many of us were once that teenager, holed up in front of the television, and we grew out of it thanks to just such prayers. But sanctification of this sort, like all sanctification, is a work. This means that we must not only petition God for help, but be of some help to ourselves as well.

Like Peter Rabbit, subsidizers need to be encouraged to exert themselves. It goes without saying that the Attendee must then learn what hard academic work is like. But the Grade Grabber must learn this too. Grade Grabbers in the room may now feel inclined to protest. "I studied one hundred and twenty-seven and a half hours for my organic chemistry final. I didn't sleep, eat, or bathe at all during the two days leading up to the test. Don't tell me I have to work harder!" No, the Grade Grabber need not work harder, but he must learn to work as the student works. Most people know how to make up a list of requisite factoids, memorize them and, given enough time, to thereby do it well enough to earn a good grade. This is the work of the assembly line. But the student isn't paying to do this kind of work. He is paying to learn things, not to try to convince others that he has learned things. The hard work that keeps the student

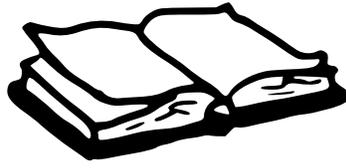
busy is the hard work of real understanding. This may take fifteen minutes, or it may take a lifetime, depending on the subject at hand. And some of the hard work he does is a kind of spiritual warfare. It is a work that we all undertake at various times in our lives when we find ourselves faced with some obstacle or unexpected challenge, hear the temptation to pout and complain, and then decide instead to enjoy ourselves rather than being miserable.

And being joyful about scholarship is a very hard thing to maintain. The work load is fierce. The temptation — to laziness, grade-idolatry, or even premature satisfaction when some greater discovery lies yet ahead — are all great and assail me daily. I can only assume that my own experience is not unusual. I'm tempted to give up my lecture research half-an-hour early in order to shop on the internet, giving license to my covetousness at the expense of seeing more of God's glory and having more of it to show to my students. I'm tempted to see the approval of my Deans, my student evaluations, or my publication record as a proof text for my own wisdom. And I'm far too ready to assume that I've come to an understanding of something that, in fact, I don't understand at all. So becoming a student is one thing. Remaining one is another. Thankfully, the whole process is really a work of God's Spirit on us. For make no mistake about my first analogy. God himself is both composer and performer of the symphony we attend through our several disciplines here. And he has power to rouse an audience not just sleeping through his music, but one literally long-since dead. **Q**

Dr. Drake is a musicologist, hymnist, and professor at Grove City College.

WHAT THE WORDS DID TO ME

KATHERINE ESTES



It's been creeping around again -
That darn EnglishmajorEnvy.
The words have got me moved,
And things are beautiful in the unexpected places
Ever since I read that.
Somehow, language has the power to silence and paralyze me now.
I never thought it – I mean, aren't
Obscure lines that move the soul for those
Artsy crowds? You know, the ones with the slouchy hats,
Sipping tea, breathing earthiness and intellect?
But - their beloved art captures the listeners, not the hardened.
Now every day is for my unstopping – to explore the brilliance
I left there untried.
Yes, and the intrigue only sparked insatiable
Hunger for that terribly-delightful word wrestling.
[See, I really am stuck.]
And I love that I don't have
To settle it first. Frost said that insufficient
Knowledge was the bravest start.
Well, that's me and here's my try.



Katherine Estes finds frequent intake of white chocolate-macadamia nut cookies to be necessary to her health, rather likes the idea of being twenty-two for the rest of her life, and often longs to fill her lungs with Colorado air once again.

AN ENIGMA WRAPPED IN A CONUNDRUM

DOUG SMITH

Earlier this year, the long-term IBM project Watson made headlines for an incredibly successful publicity stunt playing *Jeopardy!* against the show's human champions. This moment could, for many, represent a paradigm shift in beliefs about the extent of a computer's ability to answer real questions. Augmenting a century of stunning advances, the victory made it appear ever more likely that a computer with a database will soon be able to interpret and solve any factual or logical problem faster than the greatest human mind. And so, once again, our advances in science are calling into question whether a part of our traditional domain belongs uniquely to us. Within decades, the recreation of solving puzzles could become a point of humiliation, as computers make short work of even the most convoluted conundrums. Competitive games like chess have survived the revolution of perfect opponents, but not without some harm to our pride. This prospect motivates me to pose one final conundrum: will humans be able to maintain our dignity in puzzle-solving once a machine can, in the blink of an eye, do it for us?

As I applied for the conundrumer position two years ago, I hadn't yet begun to consider this problem. I was still wondering why *The Quad* would publish a puzzle at all. If only a gimmick to get illiterate STEM majors to pick up a copy, it seemed to be working — for me at least. But I couldn't accept that as the sole reason to end each issue with something so different from every other piece. The *Quad* does not publish an advice column, a horoscope, comics, or classified ads. I worried that my crudely logical and numerical problems had no place among such graceful, humanistic works.

To me, a conundrum was just a way for thinking people to pass the time. Adults appreciated a puzzle when it was keeping the kids occupied in the form of a placemat or cereal box, but they, too, fed a huge market of mass-produced crosswords and Sudokus for their own use. It helped to absorb brain energy that might otherwise fall into worry or boredom, while evading the mind-numbing qualities

of television. This industrial view of a puzzle as something fabricated *en masse* and bought for utility made it sound somewhat materialistic, a piece of intellectual chewing gum for casual consumption. We would have little to fear from losing the puzzle to the computer if it were really just our version of a screensaver.

My conception of a puzzle's role in human life contrasted greatly with the archetypal image of an enjoyer of fiction or poetry who elects to spend time doing something a machine would never bother with. Each work of art takes great care and an indefinable human touch. This could hardly seem further from a cold grid of boxed numbers. It would almost appear that the burden for finding humanity in a puzzle lies solely on the writer. To emulate the aesthetic qualities of literary works, I have attempted to give a certain aspect of beauty to the puzzles' results: often a highly contrived, complex situation yields a simple answer, or one related to abstract mathematics (for instance, a puzzle in this issue transforms Sudoku from a vertex coloring into an edge coloring). But the readers, too, must be acting in a human capacity in order for a piece to fit into a literary magazine. Thus, even when the puzzle relates to a mathematical problem, it cannot be a merely mechanical process for those who have studied the topic, but should rather ask everyone to think outside the Sudoku box.

This is not to say that a computer (or brilliant animal) could not solve such puzzles, but that they wouldn't bother under any normal circumstances. When differentiating between man and the rest of creation, Christians often cite the Bible's claim that man is made in the image of God. Many interpret this to include consciousness, as well as certain non-survival abilities, like the passionate skills that produce artistic works. Very few, however, would include in our arsenal the theistic properties of omnipotence or omniscience. Though God may have nothing new to learn, we know for certain that we always will, and that it will take discipline. It is the possession of consciousness, and this knowledge that ours is a consciousness in progress, that gives rise to



the strange trait of pure curiosity – not for acquiring useful new knowledge and skills, as with evolutionary instinct, but for its own sake. While the need to be occupied may single-handedly drive a desk clerk to burn through *101 More Killer Sudokus*, curiosity alone pushes us to pursue and persevere in more frustrating encounters with the less predictable. Only human minds could consider answers as ends in their own right.

The time is imminent when Watson's successors will scoff at the greatest conundrums in history. Yet, behind all the game-theoretic programming allowing these machines to act on their best odds, there must be, in the first place, some code impelling them to act. When we program a machine to do something completely pointless, it nonetheless acts out of pure physical compulsion. Actions taken with neither obligation nor utility in mind, on the other hand, would never arise out of the best self-preservation mechanisms that decades of program development or eons of evolution could cook up. While it is no doubt advantageous to be able to solve real-world problems, smart machines and animals will not expend valuable resources in the absence of an instinctual need to do so. Perhaps a higher primate or advanced computer will, like us, blow off mental steam by

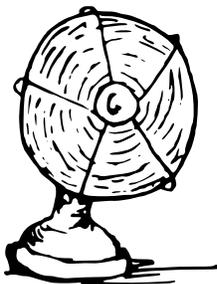
working on a puzzle; still, if it requires deeper thought than will meet that desire, then there is no reason to persist.

Puzzle enthusiasts, conversely, disregard resource constraints and solve a problem for its own sake, overriding any utilitarian programming they may possess. For the past two years, busy readers of *The Quad* have excitedly contacted me to submit answers to seriously challenging and time-consuming conundrums. Even on the brink of finals, they've pushed aside the more urgent and more straightforward knowledge of their textbooks in order to waste time answering an abstract question, simply because it satisfied a burning curiosity that only humans feel. They have proven themselves better puzzle-solvers, in a way, than any machine ever to come, because they did it for no reason that lay outside themselves, no reason other than their uniquely human desire to discover the non-utilitarian. That, or they just really wanted the twenty dollars. Q

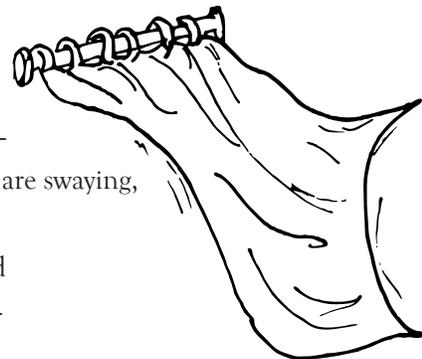
Doug Smith is a senior mathematics major who can't read but enjoys the pictures. He is not worried about Watson stealing all of our conundrum prizes, for even if it became self-aware, what would a computer do with a lifetime supply of chocolate?

SUMMER NIGHT, WITH A FAN ROTATING

AMANDA MARTIN



Nighttime, and my bedroom enfolds me
in its arms and rocks me to sleep.
Papers and feathers and curtains aflutter –
buttons on strings, key-chains on ribbons, are swaying,
A picture-frame knocks heartbeats
against the wall, while the pages I scattered
flicker and sigh. They whisper like water –
whisper like you did, all the nights
I came to you clutching nightmares.



Amanda Martin likes the word "moose."

CONUNDRUMS

I. A physics professor insists on assigning only problems that involve decimals neither in the given information nor in the answer. For two parallel resistors, combined resistance is the reciprocal of the sum of the reciprocals. A student sees that the answer to such a problem is 120 ohms and wonders if he can guess the two original (positive) resistances. Name all 32 possibilities.

II. Fill in the blank to make the analogy true.

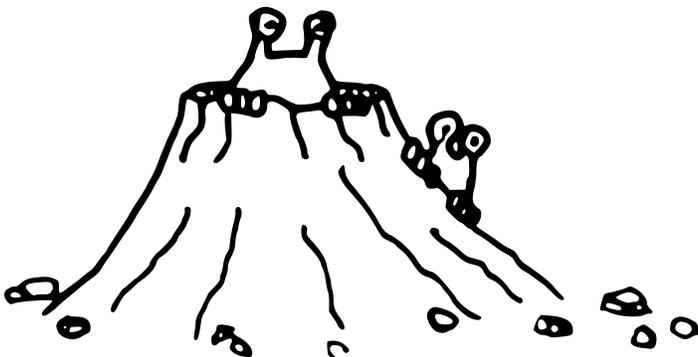
Up : down :: white : white ::: back : forth :: left : right :::: happy : sad :: cruel : kind ::: yes : yes :: lose : find :::: clear : clear :: light : serious ::: easy : _____ :: calm : delirious :::: true : false :: right : wrong :: sad : happy :: short : long

III. A 4x4 Sudoku is a smaller version of the standard 9x9 grid, with the same rules but only 16 boxes to fill rather than 81, and only 4 numbers to use rather than 9. Someone has filled in all 16 of them with the number 1. This is obviously not a valid Sudoku, and there are 56 different reasons why it doesn't work. Divide these conflicts into seven groups in such a way that no square is involved in two conflicts of the same group. (Tip: number the conflicts 1 through 7.)

If you'd like to submit an answer, please email our conundrumer, Doug Smith, at smithdp1@gcc.edu. There will be a \$20 prize for the first correct answer to Conundrum I.

Congratulations to Sion Kim, who solved last issue's Conundrum I. There are exactly one billion arrangements of ten surge protectors. The pattern (1, 2, 9, 64, 625...) follows the formula $n^{(n-1)}$. For Conundrum II, Bruce Stahl first figured out that 50% of the fans should be happy with the outcome.

Due to the impending graduation of the current Conundrumer, The Quad is in need of a new person to devise a conundrum twice a semester. Interested candidates are invited to submit an original puzzle to Doug Smith prior to the end of finals.



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