

Wide Angle
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Mission Statement

Literature and film continually reimagine an ever-changing world, and through our research we discover our relationships to those art forms and the cultures they manifest. Publishing continuously for the duration of each semester, *Wide Angle* serves as a conduit for the expression and critique of that imagination. A joint publication between English majors and faculty, the journal embodies the interdisciplinary nature of the Department of English at Samford University. It provides a venue for undergraduate research, an opportunity for English majors to gain experience in the business of editing and publishing, and a forum for all students, faculty and staff to publish their best work. As a wide-angle lens captures a broad field of vision, this journal expands its focus to include critical and creative works, namely academic essays, book and film reviews, and commentaries, as well as original poetry, short fiction and non-fiction, short films and screenplays.

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Carlson Coogler

Alice Munro's "Wigtime": From Value Constructed to Constructing Value

Alice Munro's short story "Wigtime" begins *in medias res* with the awkward meeting of old childhood friends. After this initial meeting, Margot invites Anita to her home. Though the narrator tells the story of their relationship in a non-chronological order, this period of time, as the two sit talking at Margot's house, frames the story as a whole and seems to be the narrative present. The reason for the tension between Anita and Margot becomes clear only with the layering of the pieces of their past. As a teenager, Margot had an affair with the town's married bus driver, Reuel, to whom she is married in the narrative present. Anita, who had been attracted to Reuel, resents Margot as a result. Though Margot talks about Reuel in the present, he does not appear in the concurrent scenes. Indeed, while in their childhood Reuel has verbal authority, he is silent and absent at the end of the story when Anita and Margot sit talking at Margot's house. This redefinition of Reuel is a significant part of the progress of the narrative as gender roles from their pasts are created, questioned, and overthrown. The framing of the past with the present is important because it emphasizes who has narrative power. This essay examines the development of gender roles chronologically in order to show how the development of Margot, Anita, and Reuel follows a gendered transfer of power as the females—who begin as commodities with values constructed by others—obtain voices with constructive value.

If gender is performed,¹ Teresa, Reuel's first wife, constantly performs femininity. When she lets Anita and Margot into the store, she knows and fulfills her roles, smiling "like a hostess, edging around the cash register, holding a cherry-red quilted satin dressing gown tight at the throat" (Munro 247). Teresa's role is to be a hostess, not to handle money; she stays away from the cash register as if skirting a snarling dog. She appears in a dressing gown because her identity is a cosmetic one and because her beauty is the result of a constant process. She has thin, dyed hair, drawn-on eyebrows (249), and a mouth that looks "as if it had been cut with scissors" from a red pencil (247). Yet, this creation of beauty is neither convincing to the girls nor alluring to Reuel. "He always uses protections"

1. See Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*.

even though Teresa's constant references to fertility and miscarriages emphasize that she wants to be a mother (254). In this way, he rejects her femininity.

When Reuel drops off Anita and Margot at the store after the school day, the diction and syntax reveal more explicitly who Teresa is: "But indoors Teresa was full of chat" (254). The "but" does not refer to a difference between Teresa out of the shop and inside the shop; "but" contrasts with Reuel, who has returned from the outside world. The lack of commas in this description is particularly revealing. "Indoors" is not simply her location: "Indoors" is part of her identity. She is "indoors Teresa" who "marvel[s]" at Anita and Margot's "courage" in walking outside in the freezing weather to go to school (248). Similarly, "chat" emphasizes her ineffective voice. "Chat" is generally superficial, repetitive language, and Reuel largely ignores this "chat." Because Teresa is foreign and does not have a complete mastery of the English language, her voice is ineffective. The narrator equates Teresa with stereotypical femininity: she has a cosmetic and "indoors" existence, voicing meaningless "chat" to a man who does not care to listen.

When the narrative returns to the past, the narrator codes Reuel as male. Unlike Teresa, who remains inside the home, Reuel is a busdriver, an image of mobility that contrasts with her stationary domesticity. When he is home, he stays in the garage, away from Teresa's presence and questions. On the bus filled with mostly teenage boys, his authority is unquestioned. "Nobody challenged him, ever, about anything he did," even when he contradicts his own rules (251). Though Anita and Margot think that he is "queer-looking" (251) because of his red hair, his body is masculine, "tall," and "striding" (249). His appearance causes numerous discussions between the two girls; close physical proximity to him yields a feeling of "controlled desperation along the surface of [Anita's] skin" (251). His attitude towards women is stereotypically cavalier and insensitive: he uses Teresa's wedding dress that was "made out of her mother's lace tablecloth" as "rags" (254). Besides having the satisfaction of destroying a cherished image of Teresa's femininity and of their relationship, cutting up the wedding dress demonstrates his dominance over Teresa. This dominance, drawn along gendered lines, extends to Anita and Margot. When they mimic his vulgar song, he says that the song is not fit for ladies because "a girl saying certain things is not like a man saying them" (258). In the past, therefore, his voice is more powerful than Teresa's, Anita's, or Margot's.

In contrast, Margot's femininity depends upon her value as an object. Every morning at her childhood home, Margot takes turns doing chores with her mother, as her father "drove them all hard" (247). This detail of her life makes Margot exchangeable with her mother and describes Margot as if she were an animal, owned, and worked. The extent to which her father owns her is apparent in his reaction to her affair with Reuel. When Margot refuses to come home, her father does not threaten Reuel's or Teresa's life, instead he comes to the store and destroys Reuel's property because Margot is his property. In her essay "Women on the Market," Luce Irigaray explains the process by which a woman becomes a

commodity. Because “the work force is thus always assumed to be masculine, and ‘products’ are objects to be used” and exchanged, women become objects (800). For her father, Margot’s value is in her use as an object capable of labor. This status as an object defines her in traditionally female terms.

Other language and actions challenge this role, however, making Margot’s character more ambiguously gendered. Indeed, the narrator describes her with contrasting gender-signaling adjectives. Her “bold lassitude” in movement implies both a man’s confidence in movement and the exhaustion that a usually stationary woman, such as Teresa, would feel from that exertion (Munro 251). The look that would sometimes “come over her large brown eyes” was both “defiant and helpless” (251). When Reuel lectures them for mimicking his bawdy song, she looks “demurely and cynically at the back of his head” (259), resisting and submitting with the same gaze. Unlike the boys who were too afraid to challenge Reuel’s authority, Margot challenges his authority both in her silence and in the act of mimicking him. *Mimicry*, Luce Irigaray argues in “The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Female,” is one of the only avenues of resistance women have against a male-dominated narrative. *Mimicry* allows a woman to “convert a form of subordination into an affirmation, and thus to begin to thwart [the male-dominated discourse]” (“Power” 795). By mimicking the song, Margot does what no boy on the bus dares to do: challenge Reuel’s authority. This challenge is traditionally feminine and un-feminine.

Anita thinks that Reuel “wasn’t fair” to chastise them for mimicking but still feels “ashamed and regretful” (Munro 259). This response codes her as female at the same time that it shows Margot’s more masculine response. However, with time, Anita’s actions also become ambiguously gendered. Margot and Reuel’s affair catalyzes this transition. When Anita hears the gossip about Margot and Reuel, she feels upset at not being the one who was “chosen” to be “pinned down by a man and his desire and the destiny he arranged for her” (263). Anita’s imagination of the circumstances of the affair emphasizes Margot’s femininity. Indeed, it is this “scandal” that Anita imagines “turned [Margot] into a woman” (262). In Anita’s mind, womanhood is the result of being “desire[d]” and “chosen” (263) by a man. This reasoning fits with Irigaray’s conception of the woman as an object in a marketplace. Because value results only from comparison, a man’s comparing and approving eye is a requirement for being valued as a woman: “commodities among themselves are thus not equal, nor alike, nor different. They only become so when they are compared by and for man” (Irigaray “Women” 803). In this system, a woman becomes a woman—an object desired, owned, and valued—only when she is a satisfactorily “mimetic expression of masculine values” (804). In response to Reuel’s implicit rejection, Anita decides to become a nurse. This decision is, in Irigaray’s conception of the marketplace as a male world, an act of defiance towards men. Although a nurse is a traditionally female role, the reality of a male-dominated work force suggests that a woman who works is, to some degree, male.

However, nursing, for Anita, is only “second best” to being given a story by Reuel like Margot (Munro 263). The narrator juxtaposes this thought with the present situation and Margot’s question, “Do you want to know? [...] Do you want to really know how I got this house?” (263). With this invitation and the resulting explanation, Margot becomes her own storyteller. She tells Anita that she received a tip that Reuel was being unfaithful, bought a wig to disguise herself, followed him, and found him with a young girl. She notes that his rental car may have been from Kincardine—ironically the location of Margot and Reuel’s first romantic escapade. Angry, she does not speak to him but instead leaves a series of accusatory notes: “You better watch yourself, you could end up in jail”; “Perverts never prosper”; and “Shame” (268). She carefully composes each note, and each strengthens her verbal authority over Reuel. She even throws one away that she thought sounded “hysterical” because the notes are not about emotion but control (269). When he returns to the house, Reuel “naturally” felt sick “after those notes” (270). Margot wins the promise for a new house out of the ensuing arguments, and “wigtime” becomes a word of control: a reminder of what she knows and of the trouble he would be in if she exposed him (270).

As a word, “wigtime” represents the complexity of Margot’s new verbal authority. By their nature, wigs change someone’s appearance. Though the wig did not change the appearance of her gender, the power in their relationship transfers from him to her. Still, “wigtime” is not exactly the same thing as a wig—it is a verbal reminder of the wig. As such, the threat of “wigtime” is more than just the reminder of a past physical occurrence; it is a speech act which reminds Reuel that Margot has continual control over him in the present. Though a wig works only when it is worn, the threat of a word hangs constantly and hauntingly. “Wigtime” emasculates Reuel by enforcing him to submit to Margot. In an odd way, gender is performed on him rather than by him by “wigtime” because he is emasculated by the words Margot speaks.

Judith Butler’s afterword to *The Scandal of the Speaking Body* by Shoshana Felman helps explain the power of “wigtime” as a speech act. Butler explains that gender is intimately connected with speech because speech acts are just as performative as acts of the body: “Performative speech acts are forms of doing, often spoken ones, and they draw upon the body to articulate their claims, to institute the realities of which they speak” (Afterword 113). Though Butler, here, may refer to the ability of one’s own voice to determine aspects about one’s self, her logic suggests the power of another’s determining voice. If “performative speech acts are forms of doing” and someone’s action can change another’s identity, could not also words “institute the realities of which [another speaks]” for someone else? Butler’s understanding of a promise, “the speech act that is understood to compel the body to comport itself, in constancy, toward the other,” further explains the power of “wigtime” (Afterword 118). Reuel’s agreement to provide Margot a house means that “if he got balky about something later on,” like the color of the brick she wanted, she could wield “wigtime” with resulting physical consequences

for the house (Munro 270): “I still say it once in a while, whenever I think it’s appropriate,” Margot adds (270). “Wigtime” silences Reuel through compulsion, creating a physical space—that is, the house—and a space in the discourse for Margot’s story.

Margot’s speech is powerful, removing agency from Reuel. Not only does he submit to the power of “wigtime,” he is also subject to her critical and appraising eye. Teresa, now in an insane asylum, thinks that Reuel is going to meet her in Halifax. Margot’s sarcastic comment, “lucky her,” does more than emphasize Teresa’s pathetic longing (274). She has appraised him the way that she and Anita were appraised, and she has found him so lacking in value that only insane women would want him. When in the past, Reuel silenced her mimicking, in the present, Margot’s speech acts remove Reuel’s value.

After listening to Margot’s story, Anita marvels that someone could “turn love and betrayal into solid goods” (271). Ironically, Anita engages in a similar action with her relationships. After leaving her husband, Anita begins to see multiple men. She recounts these men’s names, “putting names one upon another as if to pass the time, just as you’d name great rivers of the world” (272). As the list builds, so does her “accumulating satisfaction” (272). Anita describes her sexuality in terms similar to Irigaray’s description of the polygamist impulse in males. This impulse is the desire to “have them all. To ‘accumulate’ [women], to be able to count off his conquests, seductions, possessions, both sequentially and cumulatively, as measure or standard(s)” (Irigaray “Women” 801). This polygamist tendency contributes crucially to the objectification of women because its fulfillment requires that men exchange women (799). Correspondingly, Anita’s own polygamous behavior in a sense makes the men, whose names mean as much as the names of rivers, into objects. Margot may be exchanging “love and betrayal” for a house, but Anita is in a similar sense turning men “into solid goods” (Munro 271).

Two motifs represent Anita’s and Margot’s overarching character development from objects to tellers of their own stories. Because Reuel exerted so much authority over their past lives, he must become an object in their present stories. The busing motif helps challenge his masculine identity. Reuel’s occupation seems to emphasize his mobility and thus his masculinity, but buses actually suggest the opposite. In driving the bus, Reuel is stuck in a constant loop, driving someone else to school but himself returning to his starting place. He may travel miles, but he returns to where he started at the end of the day. He may take “children to school and senior citizens to see the blossoms of Niagara,” but his own mobility is a trick (Munro 245). This circularity is embedded in Reuel, challenging his masculinity and representing his tendency to repeat sexually predatory behavior.

The second motif is the house. The narrator encourages the reader to understand Anita and Margot in the context of their physical and emotional homes. In her past, Anita lived in “a drafty shell of a brick house” with a mother who disapproved of Margot (246). Anita called Margot’s childhood house

“crowde[d] and confus[ing]” (246). In the present, however, Margot lives in “a new house overlooking the harbor” with a pool (244). As her story reveals, Margot’s verbal blackmailing of her husband results in the building of the new house. Just as Margot’s character has developed extensively, so her homes have altered drastically. Significantly, Anita’s home is not described. The present Anita, an independent woman with a medical degree and many sexual conquests, has no place in the sort of feminine, domestic space of her disapproving mother.

As the story ends with Anita and Margot “fairly happy” and “not ready yet to stop talking” at Margot’s house, the narrator emphasizes the depth to which they construct the value of themselves and others through their speech (274). Whether or not this ability to construct value sufficiently replaces the feeling of being “chosen,” however, is uncertain. Although Reuel chooses Margot, he also rejects her by cheating on her. Anita says that “she would rather have been pinned down by a man and his desire and the destiny that he arranged for her” than to have become a nurse (263). As children, they “could never be deeply unhappy, because they believed that something remarkable was bound to happen to them [...] love and power of some sort were surely waiting” (253). As adults, the power they have is not what they expected. It is not the result of a man’s love but a power over a man or men. It may be “second best” (263), but there is still something “bright” about their lives as they sit and talk (274). Watching the harbor, they keep talking as they did as children to “sp[in] the day out a little longer” (254-5).

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Alyssa Duck

Inverse Re-Appropriation of Patriarchal Paradigms in Anna Lætitia Barbauld's "Washing Day"

Anna Lætitia Barbauld's "Washing-Day" is a uniquely female punctuation in the spectrum of male patriarchal poets who traditionally define the era of English Romanticism. The poem vividly juxtaposes the socially inculcated Romantic patriarchal paradigm with a humorously delineated social critique of the gender system and relations of eighteenth-century England. By the re-appropriation and reversal of patriarchal symbols to fit a uniquely female context, Barbauld's poem presents and critiques the female hysteria of washing-day traditions and the gendered cultural suppression that is their impetus. The poem's re-appropriation of the form, meter, and symbolism of a male-defined poetic tradition both exposes the exclusion of authentic, non-archetypal women by the patriarchal nature of poetic tradition and presents a unique female epic that recognizes and memorializes women marginalized by patriarchy.

The poem begins by ironically aligning itself with the mode of English epic poetry, a historically male-dominated form from which the washing-women who populate Barbauld's poem are traditionally excluded. This immediate deflation of the high symbolic within the poem's epic form quickly identifies "Washing-Day" as a mock-epic poem that will celebrate and question the cultural codes under which both traditional epic poetry and the lives of the washerwomen operate.¹ The poem's meter also lifts Barbauld's domestic verse to epic² scope by announcing its participation in the English metric pattern of iambic pentameter and by invoking the Muses in the first line. This invocation, however, is markedly ironic, juxtaposing epic formalism with the plebeian subject material of the poem's title. In contrast to the wise Muses who populate the majority of traditional English epic poetry, the Muses of Barbauld's poem "are turned gossips" (line 1). Barbauld's Muses contrast starkly with the Muses of traditional Romantic poetry.³ Barbauld does not invoke the muses as explicators of fate or as an inspiration to literary success; her invocation of the Muses alerts readers to the mock-epic

1. For an in-depth analysis of the influence of Milton and other English epic poets on Barbauld's literary process and poetic process, see Robert W. Jones's "Barbauld, Milton and the Idea of Resistance." *Romanticism: The Journal Of Romantic Culture And Criticism* 9.2 (2003): 119-140.

2. Or, as I note below, Shakespearean

3. See also John Miles Foley's "Man, Muse and Story: Psychohistorical Patterns in Oral Epic Poetry." *Oral Tradition* 2.1 (1987): 91-107.

status of her poem. Barbauld's Muses introduce the juxtaposition of epic and domestic—the elevation of the domestic as well as the deflation of the epic—that saturates and drives the poem.

As a phrasal unit, the poem's first line suggests that the appearance of the Muses in her poem implicates their demise: "The Muses are turned gossips: they have lost" (1). This enjambment raises the following questions, to which Barbauld responds with the remainder of her poem: What did the Muses lose? How and why did they lose? By becoming human women and trading the archetypal for the factual and domestic, they have lost the majority of their divine attributes. In a larger sense, as human women living under patriarchal authority, they have lost the capacity to live as autonomous individuals. These Muses differ strikingly from the archetypal Muse of male Romantic poetry. Barbauld's inverse re-appropriation of the archetypal patriarchal muse for her mock-epic exposes both its unrealistic nature and its marginalizing implications for all women, particularly female writers of poetry. Barbauld, here, exposes the marginalization of the human woman by the patriarchal ideal of the Muse: the earth-abiding female has no realistic Muse upon whom to call; she is not considered worthy to call on a Muse or to complete the poetic/prophetic duties with which a Muse would traditionally assist. Barbauld's inverse re-appropriation of the image of the Romantic Muse deflates the mythic Muse into a Muse of domestic life, who is invoked not to inspire poetry or explicate heavenly decrees but to pass gossip around town or in her highest capacity to play a superstitious role as a deflector of rainstorms. Barbauld's deflated Muses expose the absurd impossibility of the Romantic Muse while creating an inverse Muse upon whom the domestic washerwoman—marginalized by patriarchy—can call for aid and inspiration.

Barbauld's creation of this domestic Muse implies the coalescence of the domestic and the epic in "Washing-Day." Rejecting the universal validity of the male Romantic epic, Barbauld presents an epic to which both she and a washerwoman can relate. Barbauld presents a muse and an epic of the domestic accessible to domestic women, for whom patriarchal epic poetry lies outside the realm of lived experience. Barbauld's domestic epic protests the patriarchal assumption of an educated male audience. Critic Vassiliki Markidou explains:

[Barbauld's] distinctly 'domestic Muse' [...] will assume an active position. She will 'sing' of an inconsequential domestic ritual: washing day [...] her inspiration will spring from a distinctly female tradition, thus breaking away from the male, patriarchal canon. The poet thus establishes a linearity of female oral discourse as opposed to the stock, male, written one and underscores its origins. (22)

Barbauld's domestic epic, therefore, appropriates both the image of the Muse and epic poetic form for integration into a female-oriented domestic discourse

alien to male Romantic poets but accessible to the washerwomen alienated from traditional Romantic verse.⁴

This re-appropriation of the traditionally male in the female sphere is also evident in the trans-generational transaction of knowledge that occurs between matriarch and child in the poem. Lines fifty-eight through sixty-nine in particular delineate the subversive vein of matriarchal power inherent in the patriarchal gendered system of domestic labor. The poet’s childhood recollections of interactions with older women are primarily comprised of the passing of both intellectual and physical nourishment: the older women fed and cared for the child as well as passed on knowledge, folklore, and personal histories to the child. This matriarchal transaction of distinctly female knowledge starkly contrasts the traditionally male knowledge passed patriarchally through philosophical discourse and male epic poetry. The matriarchal influence on the children is an intellectual one. Despite the physical and mental exhaustion imposed upon them by patriarchy, the washerwomen achieve some degree of power through their ability to shape the intellectual development of their children. This evident female power, which manifests itself primarily through oral tradition, mirrors Barbauld’s similarly subversive transferral of female knowledge through her poetic process. This transferral of uniquely female knowledge is also Barbauld’s aim, and despite the patriarchal tradition under which she operates, her work is invested with a similar degree of subversive matriarchal power.

Barbauld’s poem clarifies, however, that this degree of power is not substantial enough to assure her freedom or individuality under patriarchy. The poem’s subject—the ritual purification of linens—is representative of patriarchy’s ritual purification of women through culturally enforced meticulous maintenance of femininity. One clear example of this maintenance is, of course, the practice of washing-day, one among many perennial domestic duties relegated to females. The gender-enforced ritual purification of linens parallels the patriarchal ritual “purification” of women into male-defined archetypes. The performative, gendered act of laundry approaches universality of scope, touching every woman in the village. Washing-day is a clear presentation of a universalizing, monotonous task that patriarchy utilizes to reinforce the subordination of the feminine and repress female individuality. The ominous epitome of this universalizing subordination is the final diminishment of the washerwomen to the appendage that allows them to do the work: “hands employed to wash, to rinse, to wring” (76). This metonymy, which subtly distills the women’s worth to their usefulness to patriarchy, mirrors the marginalizing mechanisms of the society.

Barbauld continually implies, however, that this state of female marginalization is neither natural nor sustainable: on washing-day, “[...] the very cat, / From the wet kitchen scared, and reeking hearth, / Visits the parlour,—an unwonted guest”

4. See also Tülin Ece Toson's “Women Writers and Rewriting Epic as a Female Genre.” *Interactions*, volume 21.1-2, 2012, pages 79-93.

(16-18). The reaction of the natural world to the subjugation of the female is one of confusion and disorientation—the cat, representative of the natural and animal world, knows that something elemental is disrupted by the proceedings of washing-day. Nature, traditionally closely symbolically aligned with the female and the feminine, senses its subjugation and expresses discontent. Barbauld here inverts the traditional patriarchal claim that nature dictates and applauds the strict relegation of women to uniquely domestic duties. Archetypal nature is here reappropriated as an ally, rather than an oppressor of women, who expresses discontent rather than approbation at their consignment to domestic duties.

This consideration of the potential unnaturalness of enforced domesticity leads Barbauld's speaker to consider its root. The speaker's recollection of her childhood woeful propensity to "ponder much / why washings were" (78-79) suggests both her distaste for the ceremony and a potentially deeper interrogation into the impetus of the ritual. Barbauld clarifies in lines thirty-three through thirty-nine that the washing-day rituals are one manifestation of a set of manifold domestic demands mandated by the husbands of the washerwomen. Followed to its natural conclusion, then, Barbauld's subversive declaration of nature's discontent at the unnaturalness of enforced domesticity must be extended to imply that, at its root, is the unnaturalness of the subjugation of the washer-women to the domestic demands of their husbands. Barbauld addresses this unnatural subjection directly: "—But grant the welkin fair, require not thou / Who call'st thyself perchance the master there [...]" (33-34). As an autonomous unit of meaning, this line reminds both the washerwomen and the reader that they should not "require" a reminder as to both the cause of their unfortunate labor and the identity of their master. This master is, of course, the husband who requires their labor as washerwomen and who may or may not simultaneously require the "study swept," a "nicely dusted coat," and the "stockings mended" (34-37). This line shows a subtle subversion, however, in its reflexive appellation of the man as "master": it is not the washerwomen who call their husband "master there," but the man himself (34). The man looms as an ominous absence. This absence reflects the traditional male absence from traditional female labor and presents the husband as a godlike, managerial figure who seems more closely allied with the anxiety-provoking rainstorm than the muses or the washerwomen.⁵

The simultaneous absence and implied looming presence of the husband pairs with the lack of a female epic tradition of domestic omen-interpreting Muses to impose upon the washerwomen a state of immutable anxiety. This state of banal anxiety is epitomized in the women's nervous anticipation of an imminent washing-day thunderstorm:

Uninterrupted, save by anxious looks
Cast at the lowering sky, if sky should lower.
From that last evil, O preserve us, heavens!

5. See also Michael McKeon's "Historicizing patriarchy: The emergence of gender difference in England, 1660-1760." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, volume 28.3, 1995, pages 295-322.

For should the skies pour down, adieu to all
Remains of quiet. [...] (20-24)

Woman is here reduced by her enforced lack of knowledge and her compulsory preoccupation with imminent banalities to a state of constant anxiety about natural phenomena that exert control over her yet lie outside the domain of her understanding and her power.

While Barbauld mourns this debilitatingly nervous state, she also caricaturizes the heightened melodrama of the weekly ritual. The poem’s epic form immediately casts into comparison the description of the “disasters” which occur on washing-day with those of traditional epic poems such as the *Aeneid* or *Paradise Lost*. Barbauld’s washing-day is prone to

[...] sad disasters,—dirt and gravel stains
Hard to efface, and loaded lines at once
Snapped short,—and linen-horse by dog thrown down,
And all the petty miseries of life. (25-29)

Barbauld parallels the cosmic proportions of the tragedies of traditional epic poetry with the petty domestic tragedies to which fate and “the heavens”—actualized, here, as the washerwomen’s culturally gendered identities and the unpredictable possibility of rain—expose them. Lines thirty through thirty-three extend this comparison, stating that “Saints have been calm while stretched upon the rack, / And Montezuma smiled on burning coals; / But never yet did housewife notable / Greet with a smile a rainy washing day.” The authentic female experience of the washer-women is here raised to the epic status of archetypal male poetic figures, both gently deriding the melodrama of the washing-day proceedings and recognizing their quotidian experience as equal to those of the heroes of the romanticized patriarchal epics.

Despite Barbauld’s consistent elevation of the washerwomen to an epic poetic status transcending their patriarchal role, Markidou notes, “Barbauld at the same time supports the containment of reproductive heterosexuality within the confines of marriage for the female sex” (23).⁶ Barbauld recognizes both the oppressive nature of eighteenth-century marriage and the unlikeliness that the washerwomen would be able to escape its heavy implications. Barbauld refers to the washerwomen as “Ye who beneath the yoke of wedlock bend, / With bowed soul [...]” (9-10). Barbauld’s presentation of marriage as a yoke suggests that the institution is an unnatural burden placed upon the women by outside forces and designed to guide and manipulate them for purposes other than their own. This line presents marriage as the culturally binding impetus enforcing their banal daily labor and trivializing the potential of female individuality. Despite this misfortune, however, the omnipresence of the washing-day duties in the poem clarifies that

6. The tension between feminism and tradition is an aspect of Barbauld's work that bears further study. Penny Bradshaw's "The Limits of Barbauld's Feminism: Re-Reading 'The Rights of Woman'" is a fascinating exploration of Barbauld's seemingly contradictory juxtaposition of often non-feminist ideological principles with her own extensive poetic and political activity.

the women are unilaterally unable to access life outside the patriarchally dictated domestic realm that they inhabit. In fact, the only female deviations from this domestic realm mentioned in the poem are the brief references to the young girl's questioning attitude toward the practice of washing-day and the last line's allusion to the poetic work of the poem's female author.

Indeed, the patriarchal ubiquity of Barbauld's culture weighs heavily upon her work. In this patriarchal system of female labor, a woman's failure to complete her gendered work is a dire event. The "yawning rents" (37) in a sock left undarned "Gape wide as Erebus" (38), ominously equating the woman's failure to perform adequately her domestic duties to the perils of the underworld. Although Barbauld's comical intentions are clear in this simile, the idea has a solid foundation in the cultural implications of the period. The deep self-integration of patriarchy is also evident in Barbauld's several subtle dismissals of her own work. These self-diminishments show a feminine insecurity in the ability of an individual whose culturally mandated role lies among the washerwomen to write, particularly to write epic poetry. The poem's epitaph, quoted from Barbauld's great literary predecessor Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*, introduces the musical terminology of "pipes" while summoning Barbauld's poem to Shakespearean weight and scope. While Barbauld's invocation of Shakespeare as an ironic counter-figure to the satiric female muses who open the poem summons her to the level of the epic, her connection of her verse with the "childish treble" of the Shakespearean epitaph and the "pipes" on which only children express creativity diminish the sense of the legitimacy of her work. Barbauld's link between the children's musical play and the creation of her verse and removes her poetic credibility closer to that of the children and the washerwomen than to that of her Shakespearean Muse.

This consistent juxtaposition of the epic and the humble, which represents both the washerwomen and Barbauld's verse throughout the poem, coalesce in the poem's final image. This image, which presents Barbauld's verse alongside both the play of children and the elements of the universe as a series of bubbles, alternatively strengthens and diminishes the scope and credibility of her authorship. Barbauld utilizes the plurality of associative meaning inherent in the image of bubbles, drawing upon imagery as domestic as that of the suds of washing-day to imagery as technologically oriented as that of Montgolfier's sensational invention of the hot-air balloon. Markidou argues that the image also solidifies the presence of the matriarchal power inherent in the oral tradition of the washerwomen, noting that "[...] it is precisely in the image of the bubble, with which Barbauld brings her poem to its closure, that the fusion of domesticity and imagination becomes strikingly evident; for the bubble conveys both the idea of washing and cleaning the household and an ethereal, fairylike, imaginative setting" (26). Markidou also notes that the versatility of the image reflects Barbauld's creative process, linking this ethereal upward-moving process of the

imagination to Montgolfier’s hot-air balloon: he argues that bubbles “[...] come in all shapes, exactly like poems. Barbauld also refers to Montgolfier’s colourful balloon in order to emphasize the free, upward motion as well as to first link it to the bubbles and poems, and then associate it with the notion of freedom for the female writer through the act of creating poetry” (28). The parallel images of the bubbles and the hot air balloon suggest an upward-moving freedom and imply that the poetry will transport the poet, in some intellectual sense, away from her banal domesticity.

This intellectual transport both implies and deflates the patriarchal Romantic tradition under which Barbauld lived and wrote. Barbauld’s statement that “earth, and air, and sky, and ocean hath its bubbles” (85) recalls a similar statement of Shakespeare’s in *Macbeth*. Barbauld’s incorporation of Shakespearean references as book-ends to her mock-epic serves to raise her poem to a similar status and to deflate patriarchally appropriated Shakespeare to the realm of the domestic. Shakespeare’s “bubbles” of cosmic implication are here deflated to the play of children bored by washing-day.

Barbauld subtly equates “the sports of children and the toils of men” (83) through the poem’s poetic structure, as the children’s bubble-making is equated to Shakespeare’s epic play and Montgolfier’s hot air balloon. Indeed, to the domestic woman implicated in the poem, Shakespeare, technology, poetry, and children’s play are all equal in cosmic importance. Barbauld, however, subtly places herself above the average domestic woman—despite her alliance with them—by her self-conscious incorporation of her status as poet into the end of the poem. The progression of bubble-like entities grows in scope, presenting Barbauld’s verse as the highest of these: “Earth, air, and sky, and ocean, hath its bubbles, / And verse is one of them—this most of all” (85-86). The image of the bubble, therefore, justifies as well as diminishes the scope of the writing. The implications of “verse” as the superlative of the bubble’s qualities emphasize both the fragility and the importance of the verse. The list of entities that “hath its bubbles” contains only members of cosmic import, and the import of the members grows successively. By situating her verse at the end of this list, it “most of all,” Barbauld suggests both that the “earth and air and sky and ocean” are as fragile an entity as the verse of a marginalized female and that her verse equates with or surpasses the monumental elements preceding it (85). Barbauld recognizes that her verse, like her female status in a patriarchal society, is a complex and fragile thing—a perilous female endeavor as well as one of monumental intellectual and individual value.

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Abby McMurry

Power and Profit Before People: *Catch-22*'s Critique of Post-World War II America's Complacency

The United States emerged from World War II as a dominant world power because of its pivotal involvement in both the European and Pacific theaters of the war. However, before the foundations of its power could be solidified, the United States was forced to defend itself against Communist aggression in Europe and Asia. The 1950s became an era characterized by American involvement in the Cold War, but what often remains hidden behind the country's efforts to preserve its newfound grandeur are the moral compromises made to get there. Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* reflects the exploitative "climate of post-war America" (Robertson 41). Heller affirms, "The elements that inspired the ideas [of *Catch-22*] came to me from the civilian situation in this country in the 1950s" (qtd. in Robertson 41). The satirical representation of the American bureaucracy and capitalism in the novel shows the extent to which the post-World War II United States concerned Heller. Heller criticizes post-war Americans' complacent attitude toward sustaining power and gaining profit at the expense of the individual through the voices of characters who dare to question the moral complacency of *Catch-22*'s military bureaucracy and Milo Minderbinder's syndicate.

With the fear of Communism spreading after World War II, Senator Joseph McCarthy used his political and bureaucratic authority to initiate crusades against internal threats of Communism in the United States. Heller satirically re-creates the McCarthy era to become a "unified criticism of American [bureaucratic] political life" (Robertson 42). Captain Black and Group Headquarters, comparable to McCarthy and his fellow investigators, reveal the "chauvinist and illiterate suspicions of the McCarthy era" (42). Heller criticizes the bureaucracy through his depiction of *Catch-22*'s military officers and their often-fabricated suspicion of intellect. Captain Black believes that the corporal teaching the education sessions is "subversive [simply] because he wore eyeglasses and used words like *panacea* and *utopia*, and because he disapproved of Adolf Hitler, who had done such a great job of combating un-American activities in Germany" (Heller 34). Heller makes his satire evident when Captain Black ironically chooses an assistant intelligence officer, Chief White Halfcoat, who "could barely read or write" (43). During the McCarthy era, many educators were also unrightfully targeted "for refusing to

answer security investigations,” and “dismissed for taking the Fifth Amendment about their association with [...] [suspicious] organizations” (Robertson 45). Heller utilizes satire to condemn Captain Black’s contempt toward the corporal and to imply that the leader of the military bureaucracy, such as McCarthy and his House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), may have had an ulterior motive behind accusing intellectuals as being subversives. Captain Black does not select his assistant based on intellectual capability, but he seeks to remove any challenge to his existing bureaucratic authority.

Yossarian also proves to be a threat to the authority of Captain Black and Group Headquarters when he probes the corporal with unanswerable questions. His questions, “Who is Spain? Why is Hitler? When is Right?” (Heller 34), sound incoherent, but the reaction of the military leaders indicate otherwise. The bureaucracy of military leaders are “alarmed, for there was no telling what people might find out once they felt free to ask whatever questions they wanted to” (35). Yossarian’s questioning shows a developing understanding of the absurdity of the war in which he is being commanded to fight. Colonel Korn responds by creating a favorable environment for the military bureaucracy, where “the only people [who were now] permitted to ask questions were those who never did” (35). Both the corporal and Colonel Korn realize this rule makes the education sessions irrelevant, but, disturbingly, they have no additional concerns. Similar to Captain Black’s distrust toward the corporal, Colonel Korn’s sudden eradication of education is also meant to condemn bureaucratic leaders’ attempts to solidify their power. By discouraging further education, the soldiers’ freedom to question the Catch-22 of their service in the war and the “Snowdens of yesteryear” is diminished (35). Comparably, McCarthy’s crusade was seen as an attempt to ensure his bureaucratic position and the reign of Republican government (Robertson 45), even if it inhibited the freedoms of individuals who merely had the intellectual ability to question the current state of the American democracy. Captain Black and Colonel Korn are characterized as a testament to McCarthy and other bureaucrats’ paranoid pursuit to preserve their authority at the expense of people’s freedoms.

Heller is also critical of the intrusive nature of McCarthy’s crusades and the American bureaucracy through the satire of Captain Black’s “Glorious Loyalty Oath Crusade.” Like McCarthy, Captain Black implements loyalty oaths against those he suspects to have “Communist-inspired” histories (Heller 47). According to Joan Robertson, these oaths are “taken to absurd lengths” (47) for satirical purposes: “one of the more sinister aspects of McCarthyism was the violation of privacy that resulted from the [crusades]” (43). The oaths’ consequences are seen as Milo observes the mess hall:

At the far end of the food counter, a group of men who had arrived earlier were pledging allegiance to the flag, with trays of food balanced in one

1. I rely on class discussion with Dr. Geoffrey Wright for this precise description.

hand, in order to be allowed to take seats at the table. Already at the tables, a group that had arrived still earlier was singing “The Star-Spangled Banner” in order that they might use the salt and pepper and ketchup there. (Heller 11)

By making acts of patriotism requirements for the soldiers to avoid starvation, Heller insinuates that McCarthy ironically discouraged rather than encouraged patriotism through his crusades. Patriotism becomes an empty action done for soldiers “to get their pay from the finance officer, to obtain their PX supplies, [and] to have their hair cut by the Italian barbers” (113). Captain Black attempts to characterize his oaths as pure in intent, but the invasive nature of his crusades becomes clear when he tells Milo, “The men don’t *have* to sign Piltchard and Wren’s loyalty oath if they don’t want to. But we need you to starve them to death if they don’t” (114). By implementing harsh sanctions, Captain Black forces loyalty oaths to become a chore and simultaneously detaches the soldier from a sincere display of patriotism. If Captain Black were concerned with the loyalty of his soldiers instead of maintaining his bureaucratic power, he would desire sincere loyalty and patriotism from his soldiers. Instead, Captain Black illogically believes, “The more loyalty oaths a person signed, the more loyal he was. [...] It doesn’t matter whether they mean it or not” (113). The satire surrounding Captain Black’s loyalty oaths and their effectiveness intends to show that McCarthy’s oaths similarly did little to relieve Americans’ fears of Communism. Captain Black’s and McCarthy’s crusades are “motivated not by any genuine patriotic feeling,” but “by the desire to become ‘a man of real consequence’” (Seltzer 306). In this way, Captain Black and McCarthy echo the mindset of many bureaucrats in the 1950s. Power is found in claiming the title of a bureaucratic position rather than fulfilling its responsibilities.

Heller also speaks for the identities of the innocent people that were publically destroyed during the McCarthy era by showing the effects of the military bureaucracy’s investigation of Chaplain Tappmann. Group Headquarters exhausts the Chaplain with questions, yet when the Chaplain asks to hear his charges the officials reply, “We don’t know yet. [...] But we’re going to find out. And we sure know it’s very serious” (Heller 380). The government officials conclude absurdly and incorrectly that the Chaplain is both linked to forging Washington Irving’s name and stealing Colonel Cathcart’s plum tomato. For satirical purposes, Heller intends for both accusations to appear petty compared to the weight of the violence occurring outside of Group Headquarters. Yossarian jokingly reflects Heller’s criticism when he states that Group Headquarters is tirelessly “after a forger named Washington Irving. They’re not interested in murders” (300). The Chaplain stealing a plum tomato and hiding papers inside is not only impossible, but also a “reference to the famed Hiss pumpkin [incident]” (Robertson 49). During the McCarthy era, Alger Hiss was convicted of hiding film in a pumpkin and possessing copies of other government documents. However, the length of the trial and the

uncertainty of the evidence lead to criticism of the HUAC led by McCarthy. Robertson recognizes, “Between 1947 and 1953, the FBI conducted 4,722,278 security checks, most of which turned up nothing” (44). The similarities between Hiss’s situation and the Chaplain’s trial serve as a criticism of the HUAC and other FBI agents who spent countless time on crimes as ambiguous as the Chaplain’s while disregarding other subversive or inhumane actions.

Heller criticizes the flawed morality found at the core of the American bureaucracy in the 1950s further by capitalizing on the negative ramifications of the Chaplain’s accusations. After accepting his charges, the Chaplain begins his moral decline by questioning his faith and lying to get into the hospital (Nagel 103). However, the Chaplain vows, “I’ll stay here and persevere” (Heller 451), and he accepts a state similar to Franz Kafka’s Herr K. or Albert Camus’s Sisyphus. Leon F. Seltzer acknowledges, “The [bureaucratic] system depends on the cooperation of the oppressed with the oppressors,” and any other action “cannot but disintegrate [the system]” (309). Heller fits the “traditional satiric plot [which] tends to be [...] cyclical” (Nagel 101) by portraying the Chaplain as being entrapped by false accusations. Despite the absurdist type of hope the Chaplain finds in his perseverance, the satire surrounding his investigation and the circularity of the Chaplain’s situation suggests that he, like McCarthy’s suspects, is a victim of the bureaucratic system.

Just as the hunger for power often overcame the moral inclinations of bureaucrats in the 1950s, the profitability of capitalism in the United States has historically had the ability to consume entrepreneurs in an unethical pursuit of attaining personal wealth. In *Catch-22* Heller uses the character of Milo Minderbinder to expose the dangerous profit-mentality of capitalism. Milo becomes “the bull’s eye of the author’s satirical targets” (Seltzer 293) when he bases M&M Enterprises and the syndicate on capitalistic ideals. The origin of M&M Enterprises in itself is Heller’s critique of businessmen in the United States that benefit selfishly from capitalism. It “stood for Milo & Minderbinder, and the & was inserted, Milo revealed candidly, to nullify any impression that the syndicate was a one-man operation” (Heller 253). Milo insists to Yossarian that every member of the syndicate has a share, but Heller shows the mentality of a capitalist in a critical light through Milo’s reaction to the major from Minnesota. When the major asks to receive his share of the syndicate, Milo writes “the words ‘A Share’ on the nearest scrap of paper [...] handing it away with a virtuous disdain” (369). Alarming, Milo’s falsities toward the members of his syndicate “won the envy and admiration of almost everyone who knew him [...] and, as a result, his stock had never been higher” (369). Seltzer claims this reaction suggests Milo believes “business [...] [is] like a bond that never reaches—nor is intended to reach—maturity. It exists for its own compulsive sake and all its profits” (295). The irony behind the approval of Milo’s handling of M&M Enterprises is Heller’s attempt to show that capitalists, and those that benefit from capitalism, are able to disregard ethical

business for the sake of a making a profit.

Heller’s critique of Milo’s corrupt capitalistic ventures is also seen in the way Milo handles business with his own squadron. In order to be loyal to the syndicate, wartime enemies included, Milo prefers “the bombing of his own outfit rather than breach a deal he had with the Germans” (Scheckner 204). Milo justifies his actions by telling Yossarian, “I just saw a wonderful opportunity to make some profit” (Heller 255). However, the reaction of his squadron is intentionally shocking to readers. Heller notes that Milo escapes persecution from the squadron when “he opened his books to the public and disclosed the tremendous profit he had made” (259). Appalled by Milo and his squadron’s complacency with the bombing, Yossarian reflects Heller’s criticism of capitalism’s insensitivity toward the individual when he declares, “You’re dealing with the enemy, that’s why. [...] People are dying. Look around you, for Christ’s sake!” (256). The idea that Milo can convince his squadron that bombing the squadron is profitable is as ridiculous as his attempt to sell chocolate-covered cotton to the squadron in hopes of rebounding his business.

True to his interrogative character, Yossarian critiques Milo for selling chocolate-covered cotton when he questions, “But it’s indigestible. [...] It will make them sick, don’t you understand?” (264). Milo is aware, yet he is blinded by his ambition. He sees nothing morally wrong with this life-threatening attempt to make money. When Milo attempts to feed his squadron inedible food, Seltzer suggests Heller aims to stress that Milo’s “ruthlessly capitalistic commitments do not, and cannot, support life” (295). Seltzer also notes that Milo, as with the bombing incident, “has firmly convinced himself that for the syndicate’s well-being the men should be willing to risk theirs” (295). Milo possesses a common characteristic found among the United States’s affluent capitalists that Heller aims to condemn. The capitalist mentality is insensitive to humans, and even the closest comrades and business partners are susceptible to mistreatment.

Yossarian also realizes that all of Milo’s ventures were “an ideal arrangement for everyone but the dead man in Yossarian’s tent” (Heller 255), which lends to a culminating critique of American capitalism. Throughout *Catch-22*, Yossarian “believes none of [what Milo says about] the official propaganda about war’s purposes” (Scheckner 204), and he stands virtually alone. Each time Yossarian exposes a moral or logistic flaw in Milo’s syndicate, Milo appears to be unable to understand the repercussions of his actions. Heller “gave [Milo] [...] a mental [...] simplicity that, to my mind makes him a horrifyingly dangerous person” (qtd. in Seltzer 300). By characterizing Milo in this way, the capitalist system’s effect on the United States is emphasized. For example, when Milo appears to have the slightest moral inclination to help Yossarian find Nately’s whore’s kid sister, he is almost instantaneously distracted when he learns about the profits available in the tobacco business. Yossarian pleads for help, but “Milo was deaf and kept pushing forward, nonviolently but irresistibly, sweating, his eyes, as though he were in the

grip of a blind fixation” (Heller 411). Seltzer notes Heller’s intention in developing Milo’s character to believe that the “battle will be finally won only when war too is controlled not by government but by [exploitative] industrious individuals like himself” (297). Through the character of Milo, Heller infers with satirical disdain the future repercussions a capitalistic mentality could have on the United States.

Perhaps the most morally distressing implication of the portrayal of bureaucracy and capitalism in *Catch-22* is their influence on the United States’s cultural values. Yossarian voices his anguish as he observes the ideals of the military bureaucracy and Milo’s syndicate: “When I look up, I see people cashing in. I don’t see heaven or saints or angels. I see people cashing in on every decent impulse and every human tragedy” (Heller 445). Whether Heller intends for his satire to facilitate correction is unclear, just as Yossarian’s fate is unclear. Yossarian jumps out of a door to escape the war, but “Nately’s whore was [still] hiding just outside” (Heller 453). However, the ambiguity of Yossarian’s escape and the cyclical-ity of *Catch-22* seem to be a warning for Americans in the 1950s. Regardless of the Cold War’s political and economic demands, Americans have the potential to recreate a version of the very hell they are trying to alleviate by continuing to be content with a culture that places power and profit before people.

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Laura Ann Prickett

Virgil's Use of Persuasive Rhetoric in the *Aeneid*

Two individual definitions from Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* define *rhetoric* as both "an ability to see the available means of persuasion" (37) and "a representation of the mind" (30-36). Defining *rhetoric* as persuasion provides a clear framework for understanding how a person is convinced of his or her beliefs. Such a definition explains how the Roman people were convinced of their unique identity through Virgil's use of rhetoric in the *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* is Virgil's attempt to represent all of what Augustus thought the Roman mind should consist: power, pride, and piety. Virgil compiles legends to craft the heroic story of Roman origin found in the *Aeneid*. By connecting common Roman legends, Virgil chooses content with which his readers are familiar. This familiarity gives him the freedom to interpret legend in a way that reinforces Augustus's politics. Virgil demonstrates his rhetorical power through his epic as he persuades his Roman readers to accept the *Aeneid*'s version of the ideal Augustan Roman mind as their own.

In *Virgil: A Study of Civilized Poetry*, Brooks Otis explains that Virgil began the difficult task of documenting the origin of the Roman people as a tribute to Caesar Augustus. The guidelines of this task included reinforcing the quintessential Roman identity and outlining Roman myth and history as Augustus wanted it to be known (Otis 243-244). By hiring someone to write an identifying Roman epic similar to the Homeric epics, Augustus was using the arts to emphasize Roman patriotism and support for his own authority (Otis 244-255). Virgil makes his goal of pleasing Augustus explicit in Book Six when he adds a description of Augustus as one of the greatest Roman leaders of all time. Virgil writes of Augustus:

Here is the man, he's here! Time and again you've heard his coming
promised – Caesar Augustus! Son of a god, he will bring back the Age of
Gold to the Latian fields where Saturn once held sway, expand his empire
past the Garamants and the Indians to a land beyond the stars, beyond the
wheel of the year, the course of the sun itself, where Atlas bears the skies
and turns on his shoulder the heavens studded with flaming stars. Even now
the Caspian and Maeotic kingdoms quake at his coming, oracles sound
the alarm and the seven mouths of the Nile churn with fear. Not even
Hercules himself could cross such a vast expanse of earth (VI.913-924).

Virgil gives Augustus a more extravagant description than he gives even King Romulus or King Numa, two men commonly regarded as Rome's greatest leaders.

The description of Augustus serves as a specific fulfillment of the job for which Virgil was hired. Virgil's description of the emperor attempts to persuade the Roman people that Augustus is connected with the great rulers of Roman history and with the gods. This rhetorical description aims to promote loyalty to and reverence for Emperor Augustus in the hearts of the Roman citizens who read or heard the epic.

Though it is known that Virgil was dissatisfied with his work upon his death, he was able to create what no one else could: an epic poem that is "both ancient and civilized, both Homeric and Augustan" (Otis 244). By tracing Roman heritage from within the plots of the Homeric epics to the contemporary imperial reign of Augustus, Virgil illustrates the development of the Roman mind. Because the work achieved immediate popularity upon completion, one can assume that Augustus was pleased with the final product of Virgil's literary labor. The *Aeneid's* survival suggests that the emperor viewed the epic as an accurate depiction of what he desired for the Romans to think about themselves. His successful use of Aristotelian rhetoric in representing the Augustan mind (Aristotle 30-37) prepared his audience to accept the Augustan mind as their own (Aristotle 36).

Virgil reiterates the idea that Roman success is preordained by fate when he leads Aeneas to the underworld to witness the greatness of Roman leaders and their successful ventures throughout history. Fate's sovereignty is crucial to the formation of the Augustan mindset, because belief in fate justifies Augustus's residence on the throne. W.A Camps argues that, as a consequence of accepting Augustus's task to trace Rome's development, Virgil created the *Aeneid* not only to distinguish the Roman identity but also to support Augustus's political opinions in domestic and foreign policy (96-104). Virgil includes no explanation of Roman failure or corruption in his description of Aeneas's descendants from the underworld. Virgil even portrays Brutus—the man who destroyed the monarchy and would seem to be a threat to Augustus's claim to the empire—in a positive light. In doing so, Virgil intentionally skips over the negative connotations associated with the rule of the Tarquins and reassociates them with a powerful Roman military. With this brief version of Roman history, Virgil focuses only on the positive aspects of Roman identity, removing the negative connotations associated with different periods of political history and unifying all Romans under the term "patriot" (VI.948). As a result, the representation of the Augustan mind that Virgil creates is centered around the positive feelings of success and power that accompany Roman history. As a result, it is easy for Virgil's audience to accept these positive feelings as their own and subsequently to accept the Augustan mind as their own.

Furthermore, Virgil uses Aeneas's meeting with Anchises in the underworld as an opportunity to persuade the Roman people of their own greatness. In *A Companion to the Study of Virgil*, Nicholas Horsfall discusses the persuasive

nature of Virgil’s characters’ speeches. Horsfall suggests Virgil’s work becomes more persuasive with the rhetoric of his characters (186-187). Using this logic, it is easy to understand why Virgil used the deceased Anchises to speak of the destiny of Rome. Anchises’s vision of his own legacy was designed to give the Roman contemporaries of Virgil a sense of their mighty history as being predetermined by a supreme being. Anchises’s location in the underworld gives him an automatic connection with the supernatural. Because he has experienced the supernatural afterlife, Anchises has rhetorical power over his audience in discussing the supernatural. Virgil then uses the rhetorical power of Anchises’s perspective from the underworld to convince his readers of the appropriate attitude towards Rome’s fate. Anchises’s excitement for his successors persuades contemporary Romans to feel the same excitement in their own history and in their own destiny. For this reason, Virgil traces Rome’s lineage from Aeneas’s last-born son Silvius through the Roman monarchy and the Tarquin downfall to the revolution led by Brutus that established the Republic and finally to the modern reign of Augustus (VI.874-984). Virgil distinguishes the Roman national identity by Anchises’s use of memorable language. For example, in describing Roman achievements, Anchises tells Aeneas, “our brilliant Rome will extend her empire far and wide as the earth” (VI.902-903). Anchises is claiming that the glory of the Roman empire is inevitable, and the pronoun “our” identifies each Roman as having a stake in that glory.

Beyond providing a description of Rome’s magnificent origin and destiny, Virgil was concerned with each Roman citizen’s individual identification with the state. Using the *Aeneid*, then, he sought to create a distinctive, unifying description of the Roman identity. In order to complete this task, Virgil was faced with grand expectations for connecting Roman legend, history, and society. In understanding the significant impact of his work on the Roman national identity, Virgil had to choose carefully the means by which he would represent the Roman Augustan mind. Virgil knew that his representation would not only attempt to persuade his audience of what it means to be Roman but also of what Augustan wanted them to believe it means to be Roman. Therefore, the narrative agency with which Virgil chose to write the epic was vital to the success of his rhetoric. By choosing to approach the epic from third person, he was able to write with presumed omniscience regarding each event and character. If the reader can believe the narrator knows everything, the reader is more likely to believe that what the narrator says is true. Therefore, Virgil’s version of Roman legend becomes the only authoritative version of Roman legend, the only “true” version of Roman legend. Furthermore, through choosing to trace the actions of only one character, Aeneas, Virgil allows the reader to identify solely with that main character. As a result, every decision that Aeneas makes or emotion that Aeneas experiences becomes an event or emotion that the reader also experiences. This singular character development is what allows Virgil to persuade the Roman

people of their own identity. As the Romans identify with the character Aeneas, they become like Aeneas in their perceptions and decisions regarding Rome.

One means by which Virgil causes his audience to identify with Aeneas is through emotional appeals, or *pathos*. One specific use of this *pathos* that identifies the reader with Aeneas is through tracing the development and outcomes of his relationships. In describing the loss of Aeneas's wife Creusa (VI.915-933), Virgil connects the reader with Aeneas's painful sacrifice. When Aeneas claims that it is "brutal fate" (VI.916) which has torn Creusa from his side, Virgil plants a small seed of guilt within the Roman mind as they are made complicit in Aeneas's sorrow. Because the Romans understood that Aeneas experienced the pain of the loss of his wife so that he could start their civilization, they are indebted to Aeneas's self-sacrifice. Consequently, since Aeneas is the epitome of what it means to be Roman, real Romans must also deny themselves and be willing to sacrifice anything for the sake of Rome. Another relationship that identifies the reader with Aeneas is his love affair with the Carthaginian Queen Dido. Aeneas not only sacrificed his own feelings for Dido for the state of Rome, but he also forced Dido to sacrifice her own feelings for the state of Rome. As a result, Dido's broken heart led her to suicide. In the story of Dido, Virgil shows the Roman people that other people and other nations, even those beloved, would suffer because of Rome. By Aeneas's determination to found Rome, Virgil makes it clear that Rome's perseverance was also inarguable. Virgil proposes to the reader that the perseverance of Rome's empire depends on the perseverance of each individual Roman. Finally, like Aeneas's relationship with Creusa and Dido, Virgil uses Aeneas's relationship with the young Pallas to identify the reader with the epic hero. The vengeance that Aeneas seeks against Turnus for killing Pallas (VI.1081-1113) uses relational *pathos* to remind the reader of Virgil's earlier description of what it means to be Roman. In Book Six, Virgil summarizes the Roman identity in Anchises's words to his son, "But you, Roman, remember, rule with all your power the peoples of the earth – these will be your arts: to put your stamp on the works and ways of peace, to spare the defeated, break the proud in war" (VI.981-984). When Aeneas avenges Pallas and breaks Turnus's pride with his sword, he fulfills the Romanic identity that Anchises prophesied. Once again, Virgil subtly reminds readers that they, too, must fulfill this prophesy to be considered true Romans.

In the piety of Aeneas Virgil also affirms that a true Roman is primarily religious. When he attributes the Latin epithet *pietas* to the Roman founder Aeneas (I.11), Virgil also establishes religious observance as a characteristic of all true Roman citizens. Virgil develops Aeneas's piety by describing his self-denial, religious observance, and adherence to the will of the gods. By opening the epic with Aeneas's remorse for his own personal loss (I.167-286, II.1-16), Virgil creates the foundation for a character that is more concerned with the honor of his country than with his own personal honor. As Virgil describes the pain Aeneas

feels for the loss of his wife, his friends, and his homeland (II), he develops the protagonist to be a man who has denied his own desires in order to pursue what was best for his people. This characteristic separates Virgil’s hero Aeneas from any of the Homeric heroes. By separating Aeneas from Homer’s self-honoring heroes, Virgil emphasizes the selflessness of the Roman identity. Virgil also uses Aeneas’s observance of religious practices to persuade the Roman people of the religious nature of their identity. Aeneas’s description of his dedication to carrying the household gods and to following ceremonial precedents in Book 2 (II.877-886) gives evidence for his own devotion to the deities. Virgil uses Aeneas’s devotion to persuade the Roman people to pursue their own religious devotion no matter the circumstance. Virgil completes his characterization of the pious Roman people by showing Aeneas’s complete adherence to the will of the gods. Whether divine will carries him away from his honor and his homeland (III.1-23) or forces him to break the heart of a woman he loved (IV.378-494), Aeneas is determined to undergo suffering and follow the course the gods dictate for his life. Through the example of Aeneas, Virgil is able to remind the Romans that each citizen should follow Aeneas’s example and be willing to devote his life to the will of the gods no matter the circumstance.

Applying piety to politics, Virgil connects Aeneas’s religious observance with the founding of the state of Rome. Aeneas did not choose his destiny for himself; his destiny was chosen for him by fate. Aeneas has no choice but to submit to his role in founding Rome (I.240-244, I.248-267). Because the gods are also seeking the will of fate, as Zeus explains in Book Four (IV.271-285), Aeneas is also subservient to the will of the gods (III.193-210, IV.438-452). At the end of Book Three, Aeneas even tells Dido, “God drove me to your shores” (III.826). By developing Aeneas as a religious zealot who is subservient to fate and who is fated to be the seed of the Roman people, Virgil combines Roman religion with the Roman state. By unifying Roman religious and political institutions, Virgil suggests that, when Romans obey the government, they also obey the gods. Such a combination was vital to the Augustan identity as it created a sense of imperial identity embedded in religious observance. Not only was this new combination of government and religion a way for Virgil to instill in the Roman people loyalty to Caesar Augustus, but it also served as a means for Virgil to persuade the Roman people that the gods had anointed Rome’s dominance.

Virgil places foreign relationships in his narrative of Roman origin in order to spread Augustus’s political influence. He weaves Augustus’s foreign policy through his character and plot development in order to persuade his audience to accept Augustan policy as their own opinion. For example, by stemming the Roman seed from the legend of the Trojan War hero Aeneas, Virgil represents a defensive Roman identity. After all, Troy was defeated. For Virgil to connect Rome to Troy, he is suggesting that the Roman people must learn from the mistakes of their Trojan ancestors. Because of Troy’s downfall, Romans

understand the necessity of self-sufficiency and caution toward outside influence. For Augustus to maintain his political power, it was necessary for the people to possess a strong belief in Roman independence. Therefore, it was necessary for Virgil to include in his Aristotelian representation of the Augustan mind. By placing the Roman seed within a Trojan—a hero of a people that failed—Virgil establishes the persevering nature of Augustan Romans. Virgil understood the nature of war enough to recognize that the Romans would not always be victorious. For the people to identify with success and perseverance in spite of failure is essential for Virgil’s political epic.

Virgil intentionally follows Homeric epic style and uses the Homeric character, Aeneas, to create respect for Rome’s Greek cultural foundation and continued Greek influence. Augustus encouraged Virgil to emphasize a respect for the Greek tradition in order to justify the empire’s Hellenization and cultural connection to Greece (Otis 244). In his book, Camps argues that Virgil also uses Aeneas’s relationship with Queen Dido to establish evidence for the existing conflict between Rome and Carthage (Camps 95-96). Furthermore, Camps argues that Virgil’s description of Priam’s death in Book 2 is analogous to Pompey’s murder and was inserted into the narrative in order to connect the reader’s impression of recent events to an experience from the distant past (Camps 97-98). In doing so, Virgil quelled resistance to Augustus by reminding the Romans of the fate of those who opposed the emperor. Virgil also seems to use the conflict between Aeneas and Turnus to suppress any dissatisfaction within the Roman populace. When Virgil depicts Turnus and the other original inhabitants as being unwilling to submit to the will of the gods by refusing to merge peacefully with Aeneas’s men, Virgil is reminding his audience of the impracticality of rebellion. Applied to the reign of Augustus, Virgil consequently represents the ideal Augustan Roman as submissive to imperial authority.

The *Aeneid* is a perfect example of Aristotle’s definition of rhetoric as persuasion. Virgil sculpts a clear representation of what Augustus needed Romans to think of themselves – that they were a powerful, pious, and patriotic people who were rooted in the ancients and fated by the gods to succeed and expand. Through developing an entertaining epic with a relatable hero, Virgil uses pathos to encourage his readers to accept his definition of the Roman identity as their own. Virgil writes in such a way that enables each Roman reader to identify himself as Aeneas— dominant, self-sacrificing, and devoted to Rome. With the creation of Aeneas as the archetype for Roman identity, Virgil defined what it means to be Roman on Augustus’ terms. The *Aeneid* as a work of rhetoric, then, inspires loyalty to the empire and loyalty to the Emperor Augustus.

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Emily Sanders

"No End in Sight"¹: The Anti-Hero and the Futility of War in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*

In Joseph Heller's controversial novel, *Catch-22*, the protagonist, Yossarian, is a morally and physically weak character, the epitome of an anti-hero. An anti-hero is a "principal character of a modern literary or dramatic work who lacks the attributes of the traditional protagonist or hero" ("Anti-hero"). The absence of these qualities is often echoed by a lackadaisical attitude towards them by "modern man," allowing the author to create a satirical work by ridiculing the absence of those qualities in modern culture. Satire is "[...] a prose composition [...] in which prevailing vices or follies are held up to ridicule" ("Satire"), and Heller uses it in *Catch-22* to expose the problems in society, specifically those revolving around humanity's response to war. Through his portrayal of Yossarian as an anti-hero, Heller satirizes the commonly held perception of the hero and illustrates the futility of war, implying that modern society is both lacking moral standards and involved in brutal and senseless conflict.

The historical context of *Catch-22* is important in understanding the satirical nature of the text. Alfred Kazin claims in *Bright Book of Life: American Novelists and Storytellers from Hemingway to Mailer that World War II*, the war about which Heller writes, "will always seem unreal" (81). This disconnection from reality that Heller experienced in the war is reflected in his writing. In *Catch-22: Antiheroic Antinovel*, Stephen W. Potts describes Heller's background in the war: Joseph Heller was a bombardier in World War II, which is the same position Yossarian holds in the novel (1). Heller's early experiences in the war were marked by baseball games and trips to Rome. But that changed during Heller's thirty-seventh mission. The assignment was a "bombing run over Avignon" that went very wrong (1). His plane nosedived, and he was flung against the ceiling (2). Potts describes a scene from Heller's time in the war: "When the plane leveled off [...], he heard the sobbing voice of the co-pilot: 'Help him! Help him!' 'Help who?' asked Lieutenant Heller. 'Help the bombardier,' came the reply. Heller experienced a deathly chill. 'I'm the bombardier,' he replied at last" (1-2). This eerie scene from Heller's life may have prompted the often surreal events within *Catch-22* and sparked his disillusionment with war, leading to his use of satire.

1. See Heller, *Catch-22*: "There was no end in sight. The only end in sight was Yossarian's own" (16).

Heller did not begin writing *Catch-22* until 1953, during the height of the McCarthy Era and the Cold War (Potts 3). The Cold War was marked by “[. . .] ideological, political, and economic tensions from 1945 to 1989 between the USSR and Eastern Europe on the one hand and the USA and Western Europe on the other. The Cold War was fuelled by propaganda, undercover activity by intelligence agencies, and economic sanctions; and was intensified by signs of conflict anywhere in the world” (“Cold War”).

The Cold War sparked the McCarthy Era, a glorified “witch-hunt” in which “persecutory investigation” was used against “(suspected) Communists” (“McCarthyism”). “It was a time of red-baiting and blacklisting” (Potts 3), and it was in this setting that Heller wrote *Catch-22*. By this time, other war novels had been written, but while “grit[ty]” and “realistic,” they still were concerned with exalting war (2). *Catch-22* was revolutionary in that it was one of the first works to critique war, especially World War II, a “sacred” war in American history.² *Catch-22* is the “great anti-war book” to come out of World War II (qtd. in Buckley).

Heller executes this radical critique of war by first criticizing heroism. Lilian R. Furst and James D. Wilson state in *The Anti-Hero: His Emergence and Transformation*, “on the one hand the modern world seems to have abandoned the possibility of heroic endeavor all together; and on the other hand, we seem to have lost faith in the validity of the ideal itself” (vi). It is clear that Heller is part of the latter group. While *Catch-22* contains stories about traditional heroes, such as Nately or the controversial figure of the soldier in white, the story also ridicules them: Nately is portrayed as naïve, and the only reward for the soldier in white’s dedication to the war is death. Heller critiques the idea of heroism as something that is in its nature illogical. For Heller, the rational reaction to war is not bravery and heroism but cowardice.

Heller’s irreverence for war is portrayed through Yossarian, the anti-hero, who is cowardly, morally lacking, and unpatriotic. Yossarian’s cowardice is exhibited both at the beginning of the novel and at the end. In the beginning, Yossarian tries to “spend the rest of the war in the hospital” (Heller 8), by complaining to the doctors of a pain in his liver (7) even though he is not sick or injured. The novel closes as Yossarian attempts to flee from the war (453), exhibiting cowardice and the exact opposite of heroic action. The traditional hero is courageous and bold; Yossarian’s deficiency in these qualities reveals Heller’s satirical purpose: to reveal flaws within society by displaying them inside the heightened emotional state of war.

Heller also depicts Yossarian as a character who, for the most part, lacks scruples. For example, in the beginning of the novel, while avoiding his duty by

2. I rely on class discussion with Dr. Geoffrey Wright for this description.

pretending to be sick in the hospital, he is assigned the task of censoring soldiers’ letters (8). Instead of doing his job responsibly, Yossarian turns it into a game, making “war on articles” one day or delivering “death to all modifiers” the next (8). He even censors someone’s entire letter and inserts his own message in its place (8). Another example of Yossarian’s immorality is the “bizarre” scene in Rome (412). Yossarian witnesses a gang rape, a beating, and a robbery, yet he does nothing to aid the victims, even after admitting in the case of the robbery that “he knew he could help the troubled old woman” (416). Instead, Yossarian “hurried away in shame because he had done nothing to assist her” (416). Potts explains that “he does not have sufficient moral courage to intervene” (104). Yossarian is implicated as an anti-hero even more severely because, in this instance, although he acknowledges that he has the power to help the old woman, he does not. After his walk through Rome, Yossarian arrives at another gruesome scene: the death of Michaela, the young maid that Aarfy raped (Heller 417). Again, although Yossarian acknowledges that what Aarfy did was wrong, he does not call the police, even if he is content to threaten Aarfy with their impending arrival (418). Yossarian is morally deficient as well as complacent about his faults.

Yossarian’s most telling flaw is the way he questions his country and the war in which he participates. He constantly questions why people are trying to kill him. Heller writes, “There was no end in sight. The only end in sight was Yossarian’s own” (16). This fact is what drives Yossarian’s actions throughout the novel. Yossarian is more focused on avoiding death than on serving his country or any sort of higher cause. Traditional heroes always have a motivating force, but for Yossarian, if that force does exist, it is simply fear of death. When speaking to Dunbar while in the hospital, Yossarian says, “The hot dog, the Brooklyn Dodgers. Mom’s apple pie. That’s what everyone’s fighting for” (9). However, Yossarian does not actually believe this; he states, “There’s no patriotism [...]” (9). This contrast is displayed again in the differences between Yossarian’s and the men’s opinions of Appleby, “a fair-haired boy from Iowa who believed in God, Motherhood and the American Way of Life, without ever thinking about any of them, and everyone who knew him liked him” (18), but Yossarian says outright that he hates Appleby (18). In this way, Heller further solidifies Yossarian’s position as an anti-hero by showing his disdain for patriotism.

In the novel, Heller’s opinion of patriotism is presented when Nately’s old man asks, “What is a country? A country is a piece of land surrounded on all sides by boundaries, usually unnatural. [...] There are now fifty or sixty countries fighting in this war. Surely so many countries can’t all be worth dying for” (247). Heller is intimating that society’s views on patriotism are warped. The idea of serving one’s country in war is absurd because there are so many other soldiers out there trying to serve their country as well, and they cannot all be right. Kazin says, “The book moves by Yossarian’s asking sensible, human, logical questions about war to which the answers are madly inconsequent” (83). When Yossarian asks

Clevinger, “Am I supposed to get my ass shot off just because the colonel wants to be a general? [...] The only reason we’re going is because that bastard Cathcart volunteered us,” Clevinger’s response to Yossarian is that “we have no right to question [orders]” (Heller 123). Yossarian is protesting going to war because it is merely a means for achieving ambition. Colonel Cathcart “wants to be a general,” and so Yossarian must fight in the war (123). Yossarian is not fighting the war for his country; he is instead being forced to fight it because of one man’s desire for glory. Heller’s satire reveals the flaw in the institution of war: once involved in a war, it is beneficial to stay in the war to advance individual position. War cannot be about an ideal, such as patriotism, if it is merely a means to gain social standing. Ghosh addresses this point in “War and the Pity of War: Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*,” where he says that “the novel demonstrates the impersonality and callous inhumanity of modern warfare where ‘courage, bravery, liberty, love of country, and other human virtues are all a joke, a hideous cover-up for the urge toward self-advancement, the will to power and simple craziness’” (52). In this way, Heller shows the contrast between a traditional war hero, who follows orders, and Yossarian, the anti-hero, who questions them. Heller’s work satirizes the traditional conception of the hero in war by making his main character a morally bankrupt, cowardly soldier who doubts the validity of his country and the war he is fighting.

This illustration of Yossarian as an anti-hero and the use of satire in relation to war have a social impact beyond the literary sphere. Alfred Kazin writes,

The [London] Times correspondent began his dispatch—‘It is my duty to describe something beyond the imagination of mankind.’ This became the only serious and honest view of World War II as, by the Fifties, the liberal intellectual’s image of it was demolished by so many uncovered horrors, [...] that ‘the war’ soon became War anywhere, anytime—War that has never ended, War as the continued experience of twentieth-century man. (81)

Catch-22 turns war into a giant force that imposes itself on all of humankind. It is not something to be glorified but something to be feared. Although *Catch-22* is a novel about World War II, its satirical nature allows it to transcend becoming shelved as just another war novel. Potts suggests that *Catch-22* is “encyclopedic in the number of issues it touches on,” from heroism to patriotism to war (9). Kazin insists that “the urgent emotion in Heller’s book is thus every individual’s sense today of being directly in the line of fire” (85). The novel holds the idea that war is a personal “nemesis” (85) and contends that the only correct response to the idea of personal warfare is overwhelming horror. This is shown by his depiction of Yossarian, the anti-hero, as the only character to express that horror. It is only by looking at Yossarian as an anti-hero that one can understand Heller’s satire of war; through Yossarian he not only mocks war itself but also demonstrates the only logical reaction to war.

Through Yossarian, Heller’s satire exposes the problems in modern society. He reveals that war is futile and that the only rational response to war is fear. Heller condemns the perception of the hero and illustrates the pointlessness of war, indicating that society today is both lacking critical ethical values and is involved in brutal and senseless conflict. Heller’s satire applies to society today because, just as Yossarian observes in *Catch-22*, there is “no end in sight” (Heller 16). The infinite cycle of war has not halted. Humanity has not exhibited Heller’s rational response to war but has instead rushed headlong into it, welcoming wholeheartedly organized killing and meaningless, futile conquest. The United States in particular has latched on to the idea of manifest destiny, the God-given right to make war on all the peoples of the earth in the name of “the Red, White, and Blue.” The American people should be wary of this philosophy because it excuses an illogical and unjustifiable crime: war itself.

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Samantha Smith

Angels, Monsters, and Gazing in *The Birds*

In 1963, audiences found themselves gazing in horror at chaos in a dark theater filled with the screeching of birds. Then and now, Alfred Hitchcock's classic *The Birds* leaves moviegoers looking warily at the sky for signs of disaster. Since the height of his career in the 1940s, countless scholars have used Hitchcock's works as litmus tests for film theories concerning narrative cinema. Laura Mulvey developed her groundbreaking gaze theory in her examination of *Vertigo* and *Rear Window*. Tania Modleski, a leading Hitchcock scholar, built on Mulvey's ideas, contributing her own bisexuality theory for female film viewers. The purpose of this essay is to continue in the tradition of understanding Hitchcock from a feminist perspective. To do so, I will combine the two theories mentioned above with Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's classification of the female image in literature into either "angel" or "monster."¹ In *The Birds*, the two young women competing for the heart of the male protagonist, Mitch, exist in a structural binary of angel/monster based on their relationship to Mitch as an agent of patriarchal society. The controlling power of Mitch's active gaze and the gaze of the camera create and sustain the identities of the two women in order to ensure that their actions align with societal expectations of "woman" as defined by the patriarchal order. Their demises, either mentally or physically, are a direct result of their relationships to the patriarchy's wishes.

Melanie Daniels's image is one of ideal female beauty. If the audience could not establish this for itself, Hitchcock makes it clear in the opening scene. The camera follows Melanie walking across the screen in a panning shot to the tune of heads turning and young boys whistling. The moving action of the camera deliberately objectifies Melanie by this watching. Not only is Melanie beautiful, she is trouble. She has what feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey describes as "to-be-looked-at-ness," given to her by the male eye of the camera (62). Mulvey translates Sigmund Freud's assertions about sexual scopophilia² into the terms of film, specifically pinpointing the power of the camera to "take other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze" (59). But this power is entirely "ordered by sexual imbalance," in which the male/active looker

1. The dichotomy of angel/monster will be expanded upon later in the character readings of Annie and Melanie.

2. *Scopophilia* is defined as the "desire to look at sexually stimulating scenes especially as a substitute for actual sexual participation" (Merriam-Webster).

inflicts his gaze on the female/passive image (Mulvey 62). Mulvey specifically cites Freud's work on the curious scopophilia of children in gazing upon and understanding bodily form and function. Melanie's first admirer is a young boy, who whistles as she crosses the street. He is followed closely by Hitchcock's cameo, in which the director himself holds the door open for Melanie at the pet shop. The full range of masculinity, from a young child to the then sixty-four-year-old director, is present to control the woman's actions.

Until Mitch gives her a name by recognizing her in the pet shop, Melanie's identity remains a mystery. He presents the audience not only with her identity but also with her reputation. She is a reckless heiress who recently, to Mitch's obvious disgust, escaped justice for her crimes. His ability to look on her and name her fulfills his role as Mulvey's active male in control of defining the film fantasy in accordance with his desire. In doing so, he is acting as an agent of the patriarchal order that Melanie's rebelliousness has defied. Melanie does not have the ability to name herself because she is a woman, nor does she have the ability to create success for herself, and yet she tries to accomplish both. In the opening scene in the pet shop, Melanie ineffectively attempts to obtain a bird for which she has been waiting. She discovers that the bird, despite its due date, has not yet arrived. She sends the shop girl away to gather more details on the bird's arrival. In the woman's absence, Mitch enters, interested in lovebirds. Melanie commits a vain attempt to prank Mitch by posing as the shop girl. She weaves among the birdcages, moving inside and outside their confinements as loosely as she moves over society's line of expected behavior. Mistakenly identifying different species of birds, Melanie has no idea that her ignorance is not only obvious to Mitch, but he also finds her humiliation amusing. Spoiling her attempt at creating her own identity, he reveals that he is aware of Melanie's true identity because he is the lawyer that recently prosecuted her in court. She is forced to be exactly what he says she is. Melanie is frustrated at her inability to self-define and decides to enact another form of creativity on Mitch by delivering a pair of lovebirds to his house, unnoticed.

This trick, too, is destined for disaster. Mitch catches her in her getaway boat, ruining the surprise. Choosing to overlook the minor case of breaking and entering, Mitch meets her at the town dock, smiling at his success. Despite her manifold attractions, Melanie cannot accomplish any goals because Mitch, proprietor of the justice system, constantly interrupts her petty endeavors with his identifying gaze. Without this gaze, she would lack meaning in the logic of the film because she would have no identity. Mitch's gaze establishes and sustains Melanie's identity in his own terms.

Mitch is justified in his gaze by his position as societal protector of justice. As a criminal lawyer he is a morally higher figure than Melanie. Mulvey recognizes this as a pattern in Hitchcock films, citing *Vertigo* and *Marnie*, male protagonists who are, respectively, a policeman and a rich man of society (65). Mitch is

similarly “exemplary of the symbolic order and law” (65). He is a deliverer of justice, a criminal lawyer, and a substitutive family patriarch who believes in the ability of society to identify, seize, and punish perpetrators of the patriarchal order. Melanie’s notorious reputation (as disclosed by Mitch) makes her one such perpetrator. Throughout the course of the film, the audience learns a slew of Melanie’s former crimes against the natural order: she is an heiress and thus she is financially independent, she is unmarried and thus she has no domestic obligations, and she has a reputation for jumping naked into famous foreign fountains and otherwise making the front page of the tabloids through scandalous deeds. The summation of these crimes is that Melanie is not adhering to the code of femininity scripted to her by her sex.³ Melanie Daniels is dangerous to the natural order, and as such she deserves Mitch’s watchful gaze to keep her from repeating her trips over the line. His fantasized attraction to Melanie is underlined by revulsion to her moral inadequacies.

This tension between fantasizing and disgust points to a psychoanalytic formulation of the masculine primal fear of castration. For the male, the female signifies, as Mulvey explains, “sexual difference, the visually ascertainable absence of the penis [...] on which is based the castration complex essential for the organization of entrance to the symbolic order and the law of the father” (444). This sexual difference is imperative for the male to retain power over the female. In order to state firmly his difference, Mitch surrounds himself with females, collecting them in Bodega Bay—his mother, his sister, Annie, and now Melanie. However, his latest acquisition challenges this difference by her refusal to adhere to the symbolic order. Melanie engages in masculine acts (diversion, pranks, holding wealth) in an attempt to stretch the limbs of her female creativity. It is this “fear of sameness and erasure of differences” that David Humbert pinpoints as the catalyst for fear and aggression in the film (94). Mitch’s gaze over Melanie is one part erotic attraction and one part sexual fear of sameness. If Melanie can become masculine, Mitch could hypothetically become feminine. This possibility is too threatening to Mitch’s ego, and thus Melanie must be carefully contained by his gaze.

Annie, Mitch’s ex-girlfriend turned school marm, has a precarious position in this arena of gazing. She is not the ideal beauty that Melanie connotes. Although she is female, she does not necessarily possess “to-be-looked-at-ness” in the same way that Melanie does. Hitchcock displays this contrast in the birthday party scene, shortly before the birds attack. Seconds before they swoop into the party, Annie counts to three. She is spinning a blindfolded child for a game, but gazing intently at Melanie and Mitch talking together on the hill. The camera pans down from the couple as Annie counts “one...two...” and arrives on Annie at “three.” She is the oddity, the outsider wandering blindfolded in a cruel game.

3. As a point of reference, Hitchcock gives the audience an obvious example of a woman who adheres to the code of womaness in Annie.

The birds attack and drive the party inside the house for shelter. Mitch, in the foreground of the shot, stands just outside the doorway of the house, gazing at the sky. Beautiful Melanie and homely Annie stand facing each other in the middleground, separated from Mitch by the line of the doorway. In the background the children and other adults huddle to nurse their wounds. The camera zooms in on the doorway, leaving only the disembodied shoulder of Mitch's tweed coat. It focuses on the women, who are separated from each other as well. Annie stands confined within the shape of the bookshelf behind her. Melanie, too, is encased in the rectangle of the window beside the bookshelf. The comparison negatively tips towards Annie. She does not attract the male gaze because the symbolic order has firm control over her. She stands before the books, the tradition of knowledge, while Melanie is backed by the soft light of the window. "That makes three times," Annie says. Though her meaning is concerned with the number of bird attacks, the repetition of "three" reminds the viewer of her isolation from Mitch and Melanie. After speaking, Annie turns and disappears into the mass of weeping children behind her. Melanie turns towards the camera, which zooms back out to encompass both her and the watchful Mitch, still gazing into the sky. Once she no longer has Mitch's romantic attention, Annie nobly accepts her place outside of Mitch's desire yet remains in Bodega Bay to watch lovingly over his family and raise "little Mitches" in her one-room schoolhouse. Through the course of the film, rather than being watched, Annie watches Mitch watch Melanie. She is what Tania Modleski describes as the female audience member caught in a bisexuality of the gaze (59).

Modleski argues that the female spectator is constantly confronted with two desires (65): she can "overidentify" or identify more than the male spectator with the passive female object while simultaneously perceiving the object through the gaze of the active male subject (65). In this way, she is inherently bisexual in that she is both a masculine gazer and a feminine object (65). Annie identifies with Melanie as a love interest for Mitch because she sees Melanie through Mitch's gaze. It is a comparative gaze that places the two women firmly in competition for Mitch's desire. As Mitch and Melanie descend from their intimate moment on the hill and rejoin the birthday party, the camera moves to a reaction shot from Annie. Here the audience watches Annie watch Mitch watch Melanie. Similarly, returning to the parlor scene, Annie's face dominates the frame in the extreme foreground as she watches Melanie on the telephone with Mitch. Annie's look is inseparable from Mitch's presence or his absent presence. Humbert argues that the love triangle places Melanie and Annie in the position of doubles (93). The repetition of sounds in their names, Annie and Mel-annie, serves to reiterate his point (Humbert 93). As doubles, Annie's gaze upon Mel-annie is a comparative gaze. In the look, Annie notices the similarities and the differences outlined by Mitch's desire, the force responsible for the women's contact and furthering relationship. Once Mitch desired Annie. Now he desires Mel-annie. What does

Mel-annie have that Annie does not have? For his argument, Humbert returns to the parlor scene. At the sound of a loud thump on the door, the two women rise to investigate. Annie opens the door to reveal the dead bird that has just crashed blindly into the house without explanation: “They then turn to face each other,” Humbert writes, “each the mirror image of the other” (94). The more the two women recognize their rivalry, the more their differences are erased (Humbert 94). This erasure of differences causes the same problems for Annie as it does for Mitch, but for a different reason.

For understanding the depths of the Mel-annie/Annie binary, it is helpful to turn to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s “The Madwoman in the Attic.” Gilbert and Gubar ascertain a pattern of female images in masculine literary history. The pattern is the binary of the angel-woman/monster-woman as dominant representations of the female in literature. Quoting Hans Eichner, Gilbert and Gubar give an example of the angel-woman with a passage from the novel *Wilhelm Meister’s Travels*:

She [...] leads a life of almost pure contemplation...in considerable isolation...a life whose story cannot be told as there is no story. Her existence is not useless...she shines like...a motionless lighthouse by which others, the travelers whose lives do have a story, can set their course. She is an ideal, a model of selflessness and purity of heart. (815)

Annie’s life of “pure contemplation [...] in considerable isolation” leads her into a one-room schoolhouse in the isolated bay town of Bodega Bay, where she dutifully enlightens the little citizens, mostly in the form of song. On her hill overlooking the small town, she “shines like a motionless lighthouse” to which her students, Mitch and Melanie, come and go in the course of their significant actions. As the “model of selflessness and purity of heart,” Annie sacrificed the life she possessed before she met Mitch to follow him to Bodega Bay. Even though he is no longer faithful to her, she remains pure of heart in her fidelity to him, telling Melanie that she still likes him “a hell of a lot.”

Finally, the angel-woman’s “key act” is her sacrifice for those entrusted to her care, “for to be selfless is not only to be noble, it is to be dead” (Gilbert and Gubar 817). Accepting Gilbert and Gubar’s rule of sacrificial death as the angel-woman’s fate, I would argue that her doom is associated with her bisexuality. Modleski argues that in order for females to be allowed to perceive in both feminine and masculine ways, it must also be accepted that men have the ability to perceive by way of both sexes. If females can be both male and female, males must also be both male and female. “This is less a problem for *women*,” Modleski writes, “than it is for patriarchy” (65). Male bisexuality associates him with the female and threatens to remove him from his position of power, his “natural” place (Modleski 65). To be bisexual is equally as terrorizing as being castrated in the view of the heterosexual male because the two are essentially the same. Annie cannot be allowed to continue to perceive bisexually because her ability to do so challenges

Mitch's pure masculinity. She must be eliminated. Since she is in the full control of the patriarchy, her sacrifice is a willing act to uphold its values. This is why Edgar Allan Poe described the angel-woman's death as "unquestionably the most poetic topic in the world," (qtd. in Gilbert and Gubar 817); her death is beautiful because it is a direct extension of the patriarchy's wishes. As the birds swarm around Annie's house, she throws herself in front of Mitch's sister, protecting his interests, and dies the horrific yet poetic death of the angel-woman. This surrender is "the ultimate shrine of the angel-woman's mysteries," in which Annie establishes her place as tragic saint (Gilbert 817). Her martyrdom allows Mitch to abide comfortably in the pure masculinity he will need to subdue the monster-woman.

Enter Melanie: "For every glowing portrait of submissive women enshrined in domesticity, there exists an equally important negative image that embodies the sacrilegious fiendishness of [...] the 'Female Will'" (Gilbert and Gubar 819). Melanie's attempts at female creativity echo characteristics of masculine significant action and give her "the mysterious power of the character who refuses to stay in her textually ordained 'place'" (Gilbert and Gubar 819). This female creativity is defined in the terms of her attempts to act as sexual aggressor to engage Mitch, self-determine her identity, and otherwise participate in actions traditionally ascribed as masculine. This creativity underlines Melanie's assumptions that she is exempt from the rules of the social order, to which Mitch so loyally ascribes, by virtue of her position as an independent heiress (Humbert 92). In her rebellion she possesses both "deformities meant to repel" and "powerful and dangerous arts" (Gilbert and Gubar 820). She is at once attracting and disgusting.

In the pattern of masculine literary history, Gilbert and Gubar recognize female arts as "trivial attempts to forestall an inevitable end" (821). In the monster-woman's refusal to adhere to a social contract, she is expelled from the symbolic order (823). Despite all of Melanie's feminine wiles, she cannot escape the retribution for her rebellion. Like Pandora, Melanie's curiosity drives her out of the living room and the protection of Mitch and slowly up the stairs towards the harrowing sound of birds. Standing at the door, Melanie has one last chance to submit to Mitch's protection and return to the lair of domesticity, but her pattern of significant action drives her forward. She opens the door and steps into the room, drawing the attention of the ravenous birds inside which descend upon her in a fury of reckoning. In response to her threats against the masculine symbolic order, the camera's gaze emaciates her body during the attack. Her image, "stylized and fragmented by close ups" (Mulvey 445) becomes "diabolically hideous and slimy" in the true image of the monster-woman as her own blood runs down her face and hands (Gilbert and Gubar 820). Like the birds, the masculine gaze takes complete control and demands Melanie's formal surrender. She falls to the ground unconscious and must be rescued by Mitch. In the loss of

her consciousness and the resulting loss of her sanity, Melanie becomes excluded from the community and reinscribed in her appropriate female role.

Gilbert and Gubar’s angel-woman/monster-woman dichotomy competes with Humbert’s Annie/Mel-annie double. The tension between likeness and difference between the two women parallels the same tension between Mitch and Melanie and generates the same attracting disgust. Stemming from Mitch’s castration complex, Annie’s source of repulsion comes from what Gilbert and Gubar describe as the result of male-generated disgust for the monster-woman:

The sexual nausea associated with so many monster-women helps explain why so many real women have for so long expressed loathing of (or at least anxiety about) their own [...] female bodies. The “killing” of oneself into an art object—the pruning and preening, the mirror madness [...] -- all this testifies to the effort women have expended not just trying to be angels but trying *not* to become female monsters. (823)

Annie’s disgust, according to Gilbert and Gubar, is the result of patriarchal control over the angel woman.

At the same time that she looks at Melanie with the camaraderie of doubleness, Annie uses Melanie as a mirror to censor her own image against that of Melanie’s. In their doubleness, she works against the erasure of difference, cementing the angel-woman/monster-woman dichotomy to retain her own divinity and Melanie’s damnation. Why? Annie, as the bisexual spectator, is an active agent of the masculine symbolic order working to ensure its continuance. Both Mitch and Annie find themselves repelled by Melanie because of the castration complex. Mitch’s repulsion related directly to his fear of castration, while Annie’s is an indirect result of that fear. Ultimately, the symbolic order emerges victorious. Annie is entombed in her saintliness. Melanie is contained in her insanity. Mitch retains complete control over sexual difference.

The psychoanalytic feminist theory presented in this essay is relevant to understanding how women, traditionally, have been depicted in narrative film in order to be controlled. Women who attempt to participate in acts that have traditionally been ascribed as “masculine” (in this case self-definition and sexual aggression, i.e., the monster-woman) must be controlled by the active male gaze in order to quell the fear of castration experienced by the watching male. By defining her through the male eye, and thus forming her into the male fantasy, the woman can be controlled. However, in that fantasy, there exists an abiding disgust for the woman’s masculinity. The fine line between revulsion and erotic attraction must be walked by the masculine figure, eager to assimilate the woman back into society in whatever way possible. Women who adhere to their “textually ordained place” are rewarded by exemption from the erotic male gaze but are subjected to viewing through that male gaze (Gilbert and Gubar 819). This creates in the angel a bisexuality: she is female, looking through the eyes of a male at another female. She over-identifies with the female, relating to her not only as another woman

but also as an erotic fantasy. This bisexuality, however, reminds the male of his own bisexuality, challenging his masculinity. It must, therefore, be eliminated in order for the male to continue to act as an arm of the patriarchy in delivering the monster-woman to her position in society. The angel-woman must sacrifice herself, becoming a poetic martyr. This leaves the fate of either categorization of women doomed to failure in a patriarchal society. So long as men have eyes, women will be angels and demons. So long as women are angels and demons, they will be dead. These two stereotypes and their formation through the male erotic gaze must be broken down before women will be able to survive on their own terms.

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Carlo Chiarenza

Teaching Cinema as a Visual Language

In 1970, just out of Graduate School, I started my academic career at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. The Chair of the Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese was an older man, British, and very conservative. He used to wear his academic gown in the classroom and did not respond very well to my suggestion to offer a course on Italian cinema. While I was still enthusiastic about the graduate courses I had taken with Roland Barthes, René Girard, and Jacques Derrida and was still eager to pass along my theories of the verbal and visual languages, the Chair was still very firmly convinced that the “moving pictures” were a mere Sunday entertainment that you could once in a while afford, provided you didn’t have papers to grade. For sure, they did not belong in academic curricula.

It took me two years, and many secret meetings with young colleagues from French and English, to have a course on European Cinema and Literature approved by the college’s curriculum committee. The following year, feeling strong because of the high enrollment in the course and taking advantage of my Chair’s sabbatical, I also had a course on Italian Cinema approved. It was joined, in the following years, by courses in French, Spanish, German, and Russian cinema. Meanwhile, all over the U.S. and Canada, film courses started to mushroom, mostly offered by the departments of English and of Romance languages. While this might sound like an ideological victory and the happy ending of the story, it was actually just the beginning of a much more fierce fight.

First, the departments of Film and Electronic Arts all across the country perceived the literature programs’ new interest in film as an unwanted invasion of their territory. No matter that they never did, nor ever intended to, approach film from a historical or a critical point of view. Still, in the never-ending war for enrollment and in the unforgiving logic of the numbers, they had a point: the first students to migrate towards the new courses were precisely their students who, curious to find out what was hidden behind the rules of the mechanical reproduction of reality, were discovering the existence of magical and unexpected new worlds, such as Neorealism, Nouvelle Vague, Poetical Realism, and so forth, as well as authors such as Jean Renoir, Federico Fellini, Francois Truffaut, Ingmar Bergman, and Michelangelo Antonioni, in addition to theorists such as Siegfried

Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, Béla Balázs, Christian Metz, and Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Second, still in the 1970s, those warring against the teaching of cinema by the language and literature people found an unexpected ally in the professional film critics. Their argument was that literature, far from enriching the new visual medium, was in fact a contamination. Andrew Sarris, for example, noted petulantly that the literary establishment, having at long last discovered the film, was trying desperately to claim it as its own, but that such efforts were futile: “No serious scholar of the film is too concerned with the sudden conversion of the litterateurs” (116).¹ In other words, the literature professors better stick to their obsolete discipline and make way for the Cultural Revolution.

Since then, things have certainly improved quite a bit, and today there is no institution of higher education that, in addition to the traditional departments of Film and Electronic Arts, doesn't have a series of courses on national cinemas, usually taught by literature faculty. Often cross-listed, such courses are now an integral part of the humanities. Some of the central questions concerning the teaching of cinema, however, are still very much unanswered today as they were forty years ago. First, it still seems to be a strict rule that literature professors should limit their offerings to their “national cinemas,” implying that cinema should be taught solely as it relates to its historical, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Second, there is the eternal question of the relationship between cinema and literature: in a way, one can understand Andrew Sarris's passionate attack against the litterateurs. The problem is that Sarris thinks and writes as an American film critic, and his models are American films. And while it is a fact that American cinema is rooted deeply in cinema, it is also true that European cinema's roots are profoundly grounded in literature. And this needs a bit of an explanation.

In general, American screenplays have strict rules concerning the development of the action, the revelation of the quest of the hero and the role of the villain, and the obstacles that the hero will face on his pursuit of the inevitable happy ending. I am aware that this is a generalization, but it is also true that this is what an audience, including the majority of undergraduates, would expect. On the contrary, and still generalizing, European screenplays have no rules and often, to the disappointment of the audience and of our undergraduates, no happy endings—or worse, no endings at all. On the first day of class, I use the example of two vaguely similar films: one Italian, *Bicycle Thieves*, and the other American, *The Pursuit of Happiness*. Both stories revolve around a hero, accompanied by his son, who desperately tries to regain his job and with it his dignity and the admiration of his son. In the American film, after many misadventures, the hero succeeds in his quest, but in the Italian one, the “happy ending” is moved to the very beginning, when the hero finds the job that can give

1. See *Focus on Blow-Up*, edited by Roy Huss, Prentice-Hall, 1971.

him back his role as a father and husband. The rest of the film is a vain journey across the city in a fruitless attempt to find his stolen bicycle, without which he will lose his job. Of course he will not find it, and the ending is left open for every frustrated spectator to construe.

Besides underlining the structural differences between American and European cinema, this example helps to demonstrate what I have called the “literary roots” of European cinema and to affirm the contribution that a “literary reading” can offer to a class on cinema. I believe that it was Erich Auerbach who said that every fiction is modeled on two essential stories: a journey within the self to the discovery of knowledge, such as for Ulysses, or a journey within time and space as a means to reveal the social and historical realities surrounding the hero, such as for Aeneas.² The films I have mentioned above belong to the two models: *Bicycle Thieves* is a journey around a city and its institutions, designed to expose the degradation of a nation that just came out of a devastating war. *The Pursuit of Happiness* is a journey around a city to the rediscovery of the fundamental values of the self.

Of course, much more could be said about the contributions that literary structures, or myths, can offer to the teaching of cinema—and also about the contributions of all the other “sister arts”—because when you teach cinema, you automatically teach literature, history, politics, the visual arts, and anthropology. To clarify this fully would take the writing of a book—or, as an alternative, a course on cinema, no matter its national origins.

2. See Erich Auerbach, *Ok guku<Vj g'Tgrt gugpvc vkp'qhtTgc rky'kp'Y guwt p'Nka'gtc wt g*, Princeton University Press, 2003. For the story of Ulysses, see Homer's *Qf {uugf*; for the story of Aeneas, see Virgil's *Cgpgkf*.

Lee Keenan Farquhar

Teaching Film Production

I love teaching film production. Well. . . most of it. I could do without equipment problems, budget struggles, and facility limitations. Let me restate. I love teaching film production students. In my four years of teaching production courses in the Journalism & Mass Communication Department, I have seen my fair share of wonderful (and, at times, less-than-wonderful) student films, but the thing that never changes is the energy and creativity of film production students. They are of a different breed from your typical student.

Film production students are exploding with creativity. Ideas simply flow from them, so much so that early portions of each semester are devoted to focusing them! However, creativity and enthusiasm can get you only so far in creating a quality film. There are other qualities that film production students must possess or acquire. In the end, great production students have three main qualities: 1) Creative energy, 2) Craft expertise, and 3) Confidence.

I should point out that, at the start of their time in college, very few students have more than creative energy, and that's okay. That, for the most part, represents the need for instructors. Students need to learn how to harness that creativity, focus it, develop it, and ultimately realize it in the form of a film. That brings us to the typical stages of the film production student.

Take the entering freshman: here the creativity is untamed. There may be experience with cameras and editing software, but there is often so little structural foundation in place that the creativity is always at risk of running amok. As I reflect on this stage, the example that comes to mind is a group of students who were working on ideas for a five-minute film. They had three weeks to pull it off, so they needed to pull together an idea and script rapidly. In reality, part of the assignment was simply to get them thinking pragmatically about projects. The group came up with about a dozen ideas for their story. From that list, their selection was a Civil War film. The idea was tremendous, filled with everything from a gunfire-filled battle scene to soldiers fleeing a fight on horseback. Ambitious, yes. Something that could actually be completed in three weeks? Not so much. Students at this level are continually biting off more than they can or should chew for any one project. Inevitably, they came to the realization that grandiose ideas are great but are also often impractical.

In the second stage of development, students begin to develop craft expertise. They begin to hone their skills of focus (along with their technical expertise). They begin to distinguish what matters from the unnecessary, what is doable from what is improbable, what is important to the story from what is distracting. They begin to balance creativity and pragmatism. Once here, their shortcomings typically come up when they are “sent out” to shoot (and later edit).

A few semesters ago, a group of students at this level was working on a scene for a romantic comedy set in an apartment: a simple setting with relatively few actors. The students certainly had the skills to produce the scene, but they lacked confidence in their decision making. They were never sure about directing the actors, shot selection and framing, and even last-minute script changes. In the end, the students, instead of confidently making choices, simply shot everything. They essentially ended up shooting several versions of the scene. There were so many takes, from so many angles, with so many variations of the script, that editing became a nightmare. These students still wanted someone on set to tell them, “Yes. That is right. That is good.” They lacked confidence.

Sometime down the road, after some unknown number of projects and classes, the young filmmakers move from unconfident students to truly independent producers. They take ownership of their own projects in a way that they never have before. This is the ultimate reward for a teacher and represents the quality in film production students that I call confidence. The student has married creative energy with craft expertise so regularly that she has developed the confidence necessary to lead a production team and actors in a specific direction. It is at this point that I essentially become an executive producer, overseeing the students’ projects while letting them conduct the day-to-day decisions. I mentioned that this is a rewarding stage for an instructor, but it is also the most rewarding for the student-producer, who has made so many strides from those earlier days of raw creative energy.

So, to restate, I love teaching film production students. Helping them move from raw, creative energy toward full-fledged, confident filmmakers is incredibly rewarding. I love both the challenge of those early days, struggling with equipment and software, to those final classes where they confidently develop ideas, focus their teams around wonderful storytelling, and produce superb content. The growth of the student has significance for the classroom work, of course, but the development is much more profound than that. Students in film production, over their years, are really building life skills. They learn how to be creative yet measured and energetic yet professional, and, in the end, they come out as well-rounded graduates, capable of living and working in the professional world. It is a truly worthwhile journey for both student and teacher.

Film Across the Curriculum: Commentary

Abigail Kawell

Film in the Academic Spectrum

The study of film has always had to fight for a place in academia. It is often considered vapid, mainstream entertainment, more fit for a Friday night with friends than for the classroom. I, like most Americans, have been exposed to cinema for longer than I can remember. Most Western audiences probably already consider themselves experts in the field of film. My first class forever altered the way I view the medium. Film is a kind of entertainment, but it can accomplish this only by being deeply entrenched in the culture, history, and psychology of the audiences it charms. Because of this, film not only deserves a place in academia but also becomes a part of nearly every aspect of the academic spectrum.

Film is art. Writers provide a story and a certain level of character development. Casting directors take these word sketches and color them in with human beings, who then influence the characters with their new perspectives and physicality. Costume, makeup, and set designers add another layer of artistic meaning with color, texture, and depth. Cinematographers alter the way in which the story is viewed by maneuvering the camera: close-ups convey significance; high- and low-angle shots affect the way we emotionally receive the characters. Over all of this is the eye of the director. He or she is the one crafting and telling a complete story.

Humans are visual animals. We have learned to associate significance with certain colors, motions, textures, and depths. But we also focus on the auditory. Music and sound often move us at a subconscious level, speaking to our oldest and deepest fears and passions. Film is the unification of the artistic powers of painting, still photography, music, and theater. Each of these media has had hundreds or even thousands of years to develop. This is why cinema has been able to evolve with such radical speed: it is able to borrow from the rich history of its influences. Film is not only a form of art; it is also the unification of almost every artistic form that precedes it.

Film is psychology. It conveys messages to us that the conscious mind misses. A low pulse of music, too subtle to notice, causes the mind to prepare for danger. A shadow falling across an actor's face fills an audience with distrust or dread. The camera itself can display a character as heroic or demonic just by the degree of the angle. As bright lights, motion, and color enchant the eyes, a deeper level of

communication is happening between the physical body and mind of the audience member and the emotional experience onscreen. Audience members experience rushes of adrenaline, cringe in their seats, fall in love, and sob openly in response to an entirely fictional world.

Because of its complex layers of physical and emotional manipulation, film has worked its way deeply into the American way of life in just over one hundred years of existence. The reason for this is that it provides a fictional world that presents non-fictional issues. The emotional payoff of a romantic film is controlled and free of consequences. Horror films allow us to confront a stylized version of our fears. Action and fantasy films provide a vicarious life of power and wonder.

Film is history. The study of cinema includes the invention of acting techniques as old as the theater, as well as the art of still photography, but, in essence, the history of film spans only about 120 years. Because of this, film history provides a detailed snapshot of one era of world history. Hollywood's rise to greatness was a direct result of World War I. The recurring character of the femme fatale, or "deadly woman," stemmed from men's reactions to the powerful women who flooded the workforce during World War II. Each genre is invented and affected by the social environment that surrounds it.

Cinema shows us what we want to see. Mainstream cinema is characterized by the desire to reach paying customers. Whenever audiences respond with approval, Hollywood responds with more of the same. Because of this, mainstream films throughout the years become a timeline of cultural values and ideas that display and explore an accurate moment of history frozen in time. With film, it is possible to share the perspective of an audience now long forgotten.

Film is collaborative. While this may be apparent, it is another aspect that contributes to making cinema unique among the arts. Other art forms can include collaborations, most often between similarly talented artists, but cinema requires artists from across the disciplines to unite their talents in a close work environment. Each artist's work is directly affected by that of others, and each film requires an amazing spectrum of talent and specialization in order to come to fruition. Because of this, films can be read from a greater diversity of perspectives than most other media. The word *cinematography* means "writing in motion and light," but this does not begin to capture the full spectrum of media that combine to become what we familiarly title "the movies."

Lighting, blocking, acting, storyboarding, writing, composing, editing, costuming, and directing are only a few of the many aspects of each and every film. The specialized techniques they require are seen in mainstream movies, as well as in art-house films. Students of film are able to see that beyond the layers of commercial film is an incredibly complex network of talented people who must analyze every detail of their work.

The study of film has done so much more than open my eyes to the wonders

and mechanics of cinema. It has deepened my understanding of so many other areas of study, some of which had previously interested me, and others of which I discovered through the camera lens. The study of cinema offers a new and entirely relatable perspective on so many other fields. Teachers and professors habitually use films, both commercial and documentary, to help their students absorb new ideas. If history is to be believed, films will continue to evolve along with society and will remain relevant and relatable to students in almost every field of academia.

Bridget Rose

Oliver, Mary. *A Thousand Mornings*. New York: Penguin Press, 2012. 96pp.
\$24.95 (hardcover).

Two epigraphs—one from Carl Jung’s *The Red Book*, the other from Jonathan Cott’s *Bob Dylan: The Essential Interviews*—introduce Mary Oliver’s most recent collection of poems. This juxtaposition will not surprise faithful readers of Oliver, who have come to appreciate her ability to find meaning, emotion, and spiritual insight in ordinary and unlikely places. Oliver published her first book of poetry in 1963. Twenty-one more collections have followed over a fifty-year span, including 1983’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *American Primitive* and 1992’s *New and Selected Poems, Volume I*, which won the National Book Award. *A Thousand Mornings*, published in October 2012, is filled with images we have come to expect from this poet: forests, foxes, and flowers, as well as her beloved (late) dog Percy. While reading this new collection, I felt as if I were walking with a friend through the Provincetown woods that have inspired Oliver for decades.

A self-proclaimed private person, Oliver prefers to speak to us through her poetry. Like her mockingbird, she sings of her “[. . .] true self, / which of course [is] as dark and secret / as anyone else’s” (“Mockingbird” 29-31). Now in her seventy-eighth year, Oliver remains attentive to the smallest of details, and her poetry is increasingly rooted in the musings of an aging poet. The shadow of death hovers in the sadness of the luna “who lives so / briefly” (1-2) in “The Moths, the Mountains, the Rivers,” and in the song of the angels at Blake’s bedside (“Blake Dying”). Oliver, however, will not allow us to descend into pity for her or for ourselves. In “Good-Bye, Fox,” the wise old fox, a long-time friend and subject of Oliver, chastises her for fussing too much over the meaning of life: “we just live it” (17), he says. Never one to take herself too seriously, Oliver absorbs the fox’s barb with an acknowledgement that she must not simply write about the world but must continue to live in it. She appears to have the fox’s admonition in mind when she considers the nature of prayer in “I Happened to Be Standing.” She asks, “Do cats pray [. . .] / half-asleep in the sun?” (3-4) and, “Does the opossum pray as it / crosses the street?” (5-6). Eventually her musings give way to a moment of appreciation as she simply listens to the wren’s song with her “pen in the air” (29).

The poems in this new collection continue to be infused with spiritual

underpinnings that were perhaps most evident in Oliver's 2006 collection, *Thirst*, which has been both celebrated and criticized for its explicitly religious imagery and tone. It was written after a period of silence following the death of acclaimed photographer Molly Malone Cook, Oliver's partner of over forty years. This imagery and tone reemerge in *A Thousand Mornings* but with a difference. Rather than using such overt Christian symbols as the Eucharist or a New Testament Lesson, Oliver weaves an Eastern thread through many of these new poems. In "The Gardener" she asks, "Have I lived enough? / Have I loved enough? / Have I considered Right Action enough [. . .]?" (1-3). Right Action is part of the Eightfold Path, the means by which Buddhists believe we can cease striving, be released from suffering, and ultimately attain Enlightenment. This ethical imperative is rooted in simple compassion, especially toward those living things that are smaller than we are or that go easily unnoticed. Hence, in "Was It Necessary To Do It?" Oliver reprimands a thoughtless individual: "I tell you that ant is very alive! / Look at how he fusses at being stepped on" (1-2). While there is a touch of whimsy in this rebuke, Oliver is much harsher on humanity collectively for our failure to act rightly. In "The Morning Paper" she challenges us to "Read one newspaper daily" (1) and to confront the injustice we see there: "What keeps us from falling down, our faces / to the ground," she asks, "ashamed, ashamed?" (10-11).

Failure to notice is the unpardonable sin for Oliver. Only those readers willing to heed her summons to pay attention—both to the beautiful places ("Traveling") and to what emerges from a rotting stump ("Stump Rot")—will be drawn into her world. Readers who are not seduced by her lyrical descriptions of the natural world or her deeply spiritual devotion to nature may be quick to look away. She is consistent and unapologetic in what she offers in *A Thousand Mornings*: an invitation to join her on a pilgrimage. "Every day I'm still looking for God" (1), Oliver writes in "On Traveling to Beautiful Places." This collection invites us to join her on the journey and to find God "by whatever name" ("Traveling" 8) wherever we go.

Alexandria Da Ponte

December's Windows

Half-opened windows shaded by blinds of flies. Tables tossed to the ground with birds perching above. Chairs casting dark images across the room. Sadness fills the trees in the trashcans that slam and turn off the lights of the calendar. Dirty, worn shoes stuck in the murky water after trying to step over coffee cups strewn across the floor.

Prisoners of winter wade from the murky pond and wander to an outlet that looks like a chamber. There are plates of keys in front of a creaking door. A stairway becomes clear and leads to a view where the moon is on a podium.

From the podium the moon booms down in a voice that shakes the ground, "Open the windows of December." Feet are loosened from the gloomy waters and strangers become brothers while picking up thrown tables. All clatter and chaos cease as the moon illuminates the streets. The light forces the trashcans to release their hold on the suffering trees. The feet once tied to the ground dance in jubilation and the streets burst with laughter.

Suddenly a mighty exhale from the podium and the window slams. Silence. Suddenly a large inhale swallows in a fresh breath of a new year as the windows of January awaken.

Short Story

Hayden Davis

Altered

People think any shit-heel amateur with a needle can come in and put Bettie Page on your bicep. Well, it's never been like that—we have a word for that shit-heel, and the word is *scratcher*. Skins look at me, with the sea serpent running down my arm and the rings jutting out of my eyebrow, and they see a scratcher. But even in BOB'S TATTOOS AND PIERCINGS, unarguably the shittiest tattoo parlor on the boardwalk, with Judas Priest blaring from the speaker system and implied pornography on the walls, we're professionals. This is Hawaii, with the strictest tattoo laws of any state except maybe Oregon, and even BOB'S has standards. I might not go to church, but I follow strict safety regulations and register with the state. I wear latex gloves and open a new pack of needles for every skin, in front of them, where they can see it. No scratchers in BOB'S, the island, or the state of Hawaii—because that shit's a federal offense.

Skins, they don't understand this. They save fifty bucks by going to BOB'S, with the ten-foot plastic shark hanging outside like we're Joe's Fucking Crab Shack, and they don't need an appointment. Today is a Saturday in August, so Bob and I are the only ones working when this skin walks in. I only look up because she's alone, and skins *never* come in without an entourage, unless they're regulars or live on the island. Bob, though, he could read her—he's been doing this for twenty years, a good eighteen more than me. Bob, he can read skins like you and me read books—if he were out here he'd tell you that this is her senior summer and that she's down here with her best friend, whose aunt paid for the whole trip. It's probably bullshit, but if Bob says, “divorced mother of three,” that's all you think about while you're tattooing her. I can only tell broad strokes: here we have a thin white girl, who'd be pretty except she looks like she's been stretched out too much. She's new skin, for sure, pure untouched little beach behind my neighborhood. She doesn't belong in a place like this, and to me that makes her special.

“Hi,” she says, coming up to the desk. “How much is a tattoo, a small one, on my back?” She's apologizing with her voice, saying, “Hi, I don't really know what to do, here? Talk me through it.” I feel her eyes traveling over my skin. I hear Bob lurching around in his office, like a troll under a bridge. I tell her about the upfront cost, how we charge extra based on color and detail, and I give her a form to fill out, so she doesn't sue the shit out of us if she changes her mind. “Do

you already know what you want?" I ask. We have four colossal books filled with popular designs, but teenage skins always know what they want.

Before she can answer, though, Bob staggers out. He's an intimidating dude—big, ugly beard, little eyes. He usually does the custom jobs, cleans, and scares off chickenshit skins. He comes out now and badgers Julia (that's what it says on the form) about how bad it hurts, how long it takes, if she's sure she won't hate the design. "Most women say," he says, tugging his beard, "that it's the worst pain next to childbirth." No one says that.

The skin seems pretty confident for a teenager who came in here all by herself. "I want a tattoo on my back for my brother."

"Okay you tell Joey here what you want. Then we'll talk about the price and how long it'll take, cool?" I don't know why Bob does this runaround; maybe when he got his first ink, no one warned him how addicting it could be. When I started my apprenticeship, I spent every spare dollar on tattoos. I liked them, I liked the feel of the needle jabbing my arm, and I liked looking like the artists in the shop. I blend well, and it seemed like something I had to do—working without it'd be like working naked.

Once we talked over the design and what it would cost (a grey wolf, less than she expected), I put her in the best chair, right by the desk. It was a really classy old dentist chair, with red cushioning and with the best irons to work with (it was Paul's chair, usually, but Paul only works three days a week and also fuck Paul). I show the skin some sketches of wolves, and I connect to her ideas as best I can, and we get to work.

"Lie on your stomach," I say, lowering the chair. She does this. I put some alcohol on her back and rub it in, cleaning the skin. Slowly I pull the thin strap of her tank top down until it dangles loosely from her arm. I begin to draw the wolf with marker, so I'll have an outline for the actual tattooing. Most tattoo artists, at this point, will start asking questions, hitting on the college girls and humoring the drunks who come in here wanting a hibiscus or a surfboard or—my personal favorite—a bible verse. That's not me. If the skin wants to talk, they're allowed to, but I'm the artist, and they're the canvas. Some of them get nervous and like to get chatty, but the clear division between us never goes away. This is my business—most of the people I hang out with have ink, and everyone at BOB'S does. I'm not part of the subculture or the alternative generation or anything like that; it's never been about that. We're just people who like covering our bodies and don't go to church.

I show the skin her wolf with a mirror; she asks me to alter it a bit and I do. Then I put on my latex gloves, open a new package of needles in front of her (because BOB'S is a classy joint), and I start up the iron. Most of the irons in the shop are electronic two-coils, but the ones at Paul's station are pneumatic, and it's a much smoother experience: lighter, less painful, and easier to clean. The skin gasps a little at that first penetration—the needle piercing the skin and injecting a

drop of ink, then again and again and again 150 times per second—but she soon gets used to the rhythm. The shaggy edges of the wolf start to form as I move the iron up and down. I pause and wipe off the marker, to make sure everything looks right, then, I keep going. The bushy tail materializes followed by the long, lean legs, bent slightly.

This is when the skin—Julie, I think—starts to ask me the basic questions, and I answer them passively. I do this because I like art and tattoos; I’ve lived on the island my whole life. She tells me things I don’t ask about—she’s from Ohio State, she’s here visiting family, she’s never gotten a tattoo before. Adorable.

“So this is for your brother?” I ask, because what the hell, I still have some shading to do and I might as well deal with a sob story. Drunk driving, I’m willing to bet. Skins love remembering someone as an excuse for ink; it lets them express themselves while covering their ego.

“He’s at the Cancer Center in Mānoa,” she says. “They do clinical trials there, and that’s his last shot, really.”

I’m surprised, but I nod. “I’m sure he’ll appreciate this wolf.”

“I hope so. He always wanted a wolf tattoo. He wanted to be cool, show it off on the beaches.” She snorts a little. “Tattoos.”

I wonder if she’s making fun of me and my art. “Why a wolf?”

“I don’t know. He just always wanted one, and now he won’t be able to. So I’m doing it.” She pauses for a second, and all I hear is Paranoid by Black Sabbath and the electric whirr of the tattoo machine.

“Andrew.” I know it’s his name, but I still don’t know what to say. This is why I don’t ask these questions. Outside, people are walking along the boardwalk, going home or to a hotel. I am a robot, an extension of the tattoo machine in my hand, a *macrocosm* of the iron in my hand. That’s a word that a skin wanted on the back of his neck, and after I looked it up I started using it everywhere. Skins think they’re *macrocosms* of their tattoos, which is hilarious. They’re just things I create.

But things with Julia get weird, because the next thing I say is “How old is Andrew?” My hands are apparently separate from my mind, which is apparently separate from my mouth. And she tells me about him, about how they grew up playing in the rain and how the hospitals filled his throat and veins with tubes and how he was barely a person anymore, how weak he was from radiation and chemo and how he’d already given up. And I can’t read people like Bob, but by the time she’s done I can see the life she had, how hopeless it was. The tattoo is finished. More than finished, it’s revised, shaded, and a part of the skin, but I don’t want the skin—Julia—to leave. So I fire up the pneumatic again and start writing ANDREW in small letters right below the wolf. Normally skins—customers—who want memorial tattoos ask for big flowing letters and a date, but I know that’s not what Julia wants. It could get me fired, taking creative liberties that never

entered the skin's mind, especially if it costs them extra. I know that. It's simple, and doesn't take me too long, but it buys me a few more minutes.

But getting ink is painful enough when I'm not adding on shit, so I tell her we're done. I turn off the machine, and we sit and talk before I go get Bob. She likes the wolf, I think. She doesn't acknowledge the lettering. Maybe in her mind it's been there all along, or she thinks it's my little way of saying, "Sorry for your upcoming loss," and she's being polite by not mentioning it. I guess I sit and talk, which I haven't done since my sister moved away. It's the weirdest thing—I tell her about how my dad, discharged from the navy, had anchors and hearts faded into his skin from far-off lands. I tell her about how I haven't seen my sister in years, how I spend my days here and my nights watching my TV. I say the word *macrocosm*, and it's not something I use in conversation outside my head.

I start to insinuate that she should stop by where I live, see the beach that no one ever goes to behind my neighborhood if she's going to be in Hawaii for a while, but she smiles kind of sad, and I remember that she's a skin and I am an artist, like Bob. Right, Bob. I poke my head in his office where he's sketching something, and he glares at me with his little eyes. "You should've been done an hour ago." I don't tell him about the lettering, but for some reason I tell him about Andrew at Mānoa, how sick he is, and how I want to take this job out of my salary. Bob sighs and waves me in, asks me to shut the door. It's cool in his office, which used to be a big closet. "Joey," he says, "we get skins in here every day wanting the name of their grandma on their shoulder. Why are you buying this job? To get laid?" He kind of shakes his head, and for some reason, I feel like he's telling me buying a customer a tattoo is the worst pain next to getting one, next to childbirth. I giggle nervously, because at this point I must be out of my mind.

Bob doesn't notice. "Look, before we made skins fill out those forms, a lot of them would come right back in weeks later, before their vacation ended, and want the damn thing removed. Kids and sober adults, thinking you can just erase it like a magic marker." He leans back in his chair, and the whole room creaks. "I'm not letting you pay for this job, Joey. You're buying a skin you don't like a picture she won't want when Andy dies, and soon you'll be wasting your whole damn salary on free jobs. That's how artists get fired, and that's how artists lose their license and become scratchers." I know he's right, even if the kid's name is Andrew, not Andy. And maybe the skins are right when they come in and look at my eyebrow rings and my sneer and see a scratcher, because I'm doing a damned dirty job, covering people up like me. Bob's right; Julia won't want her tattoo in a couple weeks.

"I will," Bob says, standing up, "let you charge her half. Out of your paycheck. And after she leaves, put the irons in the autoclave and take the day off."

Julia just shrugs at the cheap price, like she did the name ANDREW on her back. I put plastic wrap over the wolf, and tell her to keep it out of the sun and not to pick at the scab for the first three weeks. She laughs nervously. "My parents are

going to kill me. I didn't think about that until now.” It's a line we hear a lot. In my head Julia has nothing on her body but a hundred angry wolves, all fighting each other across her skin, but she's still not covering anything up. That's not her. No, she won't ever get another tattoo, and she'll go to college and try to cover up whatever it was she was trying to forget. It is a Saturday in August, and the skin returns to the boardwalk while I sit here and sterilize myself.

Drew Pomeroy

Looking Back

There's a kind of compression
brought to my childhood home

and my favorite climbing tree
with thick limbs and glossy leaves.

The rooms were bigger
branches higher –

As I'm squinting,
my father's favorite gesture,

he had the bad eyes
not me –

the words are getting smaller,
and as I open this book

I watch my hands
slide between the pages,

turning with every spell
of heavy weather.

Drew Pomeroy

That Old Barn

I've come to his old barn
with the reason to clean
every dirty square inch 'til
I can see bones of what
it used to be –

his red boards bled out years
ago with the purpose of this place
and the horses hauled off
unbridled on every license plate
and state-shaped billboard.

If only I could find a saddle,
spurs and something stubborn
enough to stick around while I found
his old tools, rusted in their skin,
and that tractor – I might be able,

one year, to call this place something
clever like the Kentucky Koal Mine
or The Bourbon Barrel of Fish,
but that could be why
no one is here now.

Audrey Ward

Ptolemy's Plum

Smooth, star-speckled skin
Of ripe cosmos dances round
Earth: her vital pit

Poetry

Audrey Ward

Quantum Rules

1. (You sit in a chair and trust you won't slip through
probabilities
to the floor of the universe.
Also the universe has no floor.)

2. Warm skin rippling over muscles and tendons
is frozen energy,
uncertain atomic arabesques:
fisted power.

3. If you look and measure,
you ascertain the probable universe.
(But particles
do not like to give you
certain secrets.)

4. Who looks and measures
you, sitting there
in your uncertain secrets,
your frozen energy,
your warm skin?

(Did you make these rules by looking?)

From the Editor's Desk

Megan Burr

In Defense of “Bad” Movies

I have a confession to make: I love “bad” movies. I absolutely adore some of the films that make critics cringe. When I look around on Netflix™, a romantic comedy that features Albert Einstein [*I.Q.* (1994)] excites me more than *On the Waterfront* (1954). Is that necessarily a bad thing? After all, what makes a film “good”? What makes a film a “film”? Is it a director who fought for his or her vision despite all odds, making it on a lower-than-low budget? Is it dazzling cinematography that astounds the audience with incredible detail? Is it a story that is as powerful and moving as it is Oscar bait? I think not. At the heart of it, I believe that a film can be called a *film* when even one person a) derives enjoyment from it and b) thinks about it long after he or she has left the theater.

In terms of entertainment, it is my belief that one of the greatest joys one can experience in life is shouting at a movie with friends. Any film can be subjected to running commentary for comedic effect, but, in my experience, the worst movies make for the best commentaries. *Mystery Science Theater 3000* (1988-99) used this principle to power a television series for more than a decade. Within the show, a mad scientist subjects a janitor, Joel Robinson, to terrible science fiction movies in attempts to drive him insane. To maintain his sanity, Joel and his robot friends do running commentaries on all the films. The success of the show suggests that a bad movie can be made great if viewed at the right time with the right people.

Consider, for example, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975). When it was first released, it was less than successful. Now, however, the film has the longest-running theatrical release of all time. Why? It is certainly not what many would consider “great cinema.” The songs are fairly repetitive, the dialogue, at times, borders on atrocious, and the acting is campy to an amazing extent. My belief is that *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* holds this esteemed record because of its effect on audiences. In the 1970s, the film was not just an entertaining movie; it was a celebration of all things out of the ordinary. It made people realize that they were not alone. The people who dressed up (and still dress up) as the characters onscreen and acted out the movie for friends and strangers while the film played behind them did so because they wanted to feel a connection that they previously did not think possible.

Even movie theaters that do not still regularly show the film often screen it for Halloween. Birmingham's Alabama Theatre is one such place. I have attended their annual Rocky Horror Masquerade Ball three times now, and I intend to go back next year. This is not because I like to sit in awe of the cinematic techniques used in the film, nor is it because I like inevitably getting hit in the head with stale bread thrown by someone who forgot to toast it. It is because I thoroughly enjoy seeing firsthand the effect a film can have on a community, both in entertainment value and cultural impact.

As a Film Studies major, I regularly find myself analyzing films based on various elements of *mise-en-scène*, partly because I enjoy it and partly because I cannot help myself. Because of this, I try to watch obscure or critically panned films whenever I can. After all, when you watch a film such as *Rear Window* (1954), you expect to find something of critical worth. But critical analysis of *Mega Shark Versus Giant Octopus* (2009) is like the Spanish Inquisition: no one expects it. No matter how terrible some films may seem, directors, screenwriters, production designers, and composers put effort into deciding every single detail.

To prove my point, I recently saw *Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters* (2013). The film might have topped the box office in its first week of release, but some are already calling it the worst film of 2013. Even so, the film is rife with analyzable material. The costumes alone made me long for my film notebook. Hansel and Gretel's clothing, while composed of an admittedly anachronistic amount of leather, mirror each other, emphasizing their closeness as siblings. Additionally, Gretel wears pants throughout the film and gives herself masculine qualities while also donning a corset, which establishes both her more feminine characteristics and her ability to withstand pain. This can all be determined within five seconds of seeing the duo onscreen: just imagine the kind of analysis someone could get out of the whole film if they gave it a chance.

So, my choice in films might not be what some would consider high quality. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the more elite critics probably consider some of my favorite movies to be the lowest of the low. But that does not mean that these movies are any less worthy of being called *films* than those suspiciously well-received ones with 97s on Rotten Tomatoes™. A movie by any other name would still be as entertaining and impactful. A movie is a film, and a film is a piece of cinematic history. There is no changing that.

From the Editor's Desk

Caroline Harbin

The Milk of Irrationality¹

The BACHE series is a premiere event for the English major, so I regularly attend to hear writers as they share their work and offer insights into the English discipline. When I heard that Brazilian poet Salgado Maranhão and his translator Alexis Levitin were coming to Samford, I planned to go enjoy an hour of poetry. At 7:00 p.m. I walked into North Divinity 302, prepared for a light, enjoyable reading.

After the first few poems, it was apparent to me that Maranhão's poetry features recurring imagery of the female body. "Blood of the Sun (Flat Lands)," the first poem in *Blood of the Sun*, uses imagery such as "tear the hymen" (15), "fertilizing stone" (23), and "of memory ovulate" (95). After his reading, a student in the audience asked why the imagery of the female body appears so often in the text.

And this is when my light, easy poetry reading evaporated. A light, easy reading of poetry? Nonexistent. I should have known better.

In response, Maranhão said² that poetry is irrational and, because of this irrationality, it is very feminine. Since poetry is feminine, then it only makes sense that he includes this female imagery to create a more feminine poetic. He elaborated further by saying that women, such as his mother, sisters, and aunts, have been very important in his life, so this imagery speaks to him as a poet on a personal level.

In a state of confusion, I—as any well-trained feminist—immediately took offense. Did he just say irrational is feminine? Is poetry feminine by nature? What does this mean for me as a reader, poet, and woman?

While I still believe the term *irrational* is offensive to women and femininity, I can take away more from the discussion after divorcing myself from this terminology. I do not agree that poetry is irrational, but I think that poetry can be feminine. In theorizing *écriture féminine*, women's writing, French feminists, such as Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray, examine women's writing as a style rather than a gender-specific identification.³ For instance, critics could argue that

1. The title refers to Hélène Cixous's idea of "white ink," a term for women's writing, in "The Laugh of Medusa." The title also refers to a moment in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* when Lady Macbeth observes that her husband is too filled with "the milk of human kindness."

2. I want to highlight that the following is an interpretation of Maranhão's words and is not a direct quotation. Levitin translated the poet's answers, and I am now paraphrasing Levitin. I am relying on my interpretation of Levitin's translation into English.

James Joyce is a feminine writer, which sounds odd because he is male. Feminist critic Judith Gardiner explores women's writing in women's autobiographies that tend to be nonlinear and cyclical, which does not deny an internal logic but rather manifests a logic different from the past masculine writing (185). In this way, Maranhão is correct when he says poetry is linked to femininity, but I disagree that it can be whittled down to a simple signifier such as *irrational*. From this time on, I am going to exchange his terminology for the word *nonlinear* as this is less controversial and less offensive.

In its simplest form, poetry distorts while also serving as a medium to communicate through unconventional images. The main function of art, as Viktor Shklovsky argues, is to break the *habitualization* of the reader's perspective and allow the reader to re-see a common idea or experience from a fresh perspective (16). Poetry is a community-driven act as the poet enters into a dialogue with the reader and society. While prose traditionally operates on rules of grammar and linear logic, which links it to masculinity, poetry tends to abandon grammar and to operate on nonlinear logic, which links it to femininity. Whether by accident or careful thought, Maranhão is not as wrong as I first believed because poetry is oftentimes feminine. But I think that both prose and poetry are flexible enough to pull from each other, creating an androgynous form of writing, which has yet to be fully explored. Since the advents of Modernism and Postmodernism, the lines between prose and poetry have blurred, creating an overlap between the two. Furthermore, men have controlled poetry, oral and written, and it has not always been nonlinear, as seen in *Beowulf* or in a Shakespearean sonnet.

Now I will respond to his later argument: his poetry is feminine. While Maranhão may implement a nonlinear or cyclical logic, the mere presence of the female body does not create a feminine text. His argument falls apart very quickly from here. From the time of Petrarch and Dante, male writers have used women and the female body as a muse for their work. But to say that writers such as John Donne or William Shakespeare are feminine writers because both use the female body as a metaphor is absurd. Male writers have been writing about women's bodies since before women's rights; therefore, our phallogocentric culture defines and frames the female body and imagery.

In a phallogocentric culture, the penis is the prime sexual organ, while the vagina is merely the recipient and does not desire sex unless the penis, or the male voice, is present. Women, as sexually independent beings, have been grossly misrepresented in Western culture and literature. In "The Laugh of Medusa," Cixous addresses this exact problem and argues that women's writing must address women as sexually independent in order to restructure the phallogocentric

3. French Feminists are often referred to as "essentialist," which means being female and feminine is always linked to the body. American Feminists tend to be constructionist, which means they argue that femininity has nothing to do with biology but rather with the dominant culture (Rivikin 766-69).

world. By crafting the female body outside of the traditional woman—a body only responding to male desires—women can find their identity separately from their relationships with men. Her argument makes Maranhão’s use of the female body hard to see as feminine because he cannot change his machismo culture or his biology, which follows both the American and French feminist logic. He is male in a male-dominated society; therefore, whether one is a French Feminist or an American Feminist, his society or sex shapes his perspective, which is not bad but unavoidable. But his male biology in a patriarchal society does mean that his use of the female body cannot mean the same thing as when a woman in a patriarchal society writes about the female body. The female perspective inside a patriarchal society is the unwritten perspective upon which Cixous calls, and it is the unwritten female perspective that embodies *écriture féminine*.

In many ways, *écriture féminine* celebrates the difference between femininity and masculinity, exploring missing links in literature and various types of logic, as well as upholding their relationship to one another. While my goal is not to make femininity and masculinity the same, I do want to explore where these terms overlap and blur together, leaving room for movement for both genders to define themselves. *Écriture féminine* could allow men to be more feminine and women to be more masculine through their writing if desired, allowing their logic to define their gender placement. But, American constructionists reveal that French feminists place too much emphasis on the female body and biology, which endangers gender equality. Ultimately, one’s culture defines femininity and masculinity more than biology, which favors a constructionist argument.

After consideration, I think much of modern poetry is feminine, relying on stream-of-consciousness to link thoughts and images into an argument or experience as in a surrealist poem. Poetry is not prose and actively works against conventions of grammar and syntactic units, which leads to a break from traditional masculine prose. Yet, in this push against prose, I think poetry is at risk of becoming too dissociated. People read poetry because it makes them feel something, whether or not it is masculine or feminine. In comparison, I think poets such as Elizabeth Bishop or Sharon Olds return to the masculine tradition, planting the reader in a direct, linear world. To revitalize the functionality of poetry, I think poetry should move toward a more androgynous form, either discarding or blending the terms masculine and feminine. A Poststructuralist society cannot see these terms as binary or permanent identifiers of male and female but rather as a shifting continuum.

Although I was initially angered, the BACHE series challenged me in an unexpected but important way. Society must keep talking about women’s rights through this transition into a new gendered power structure, where both genders have an equal and important voice. We should collectively seek to define femininity and masculinity as well as the difference between prose and poetry. The study is one of struggle and uncertainty. As many find, it is easy to say

something that is politically incorrect, but sometimes we need to loosen our words so we can finally discuss what everyone is thinking and questioning. Let's enter into a truthful dialogue, both the linear and nonlinear, prosaic and poetic. Let's start talking and exploring forms. What is femininity to you? What is poetry to you?

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From the Editor's Desk

Ryan Plemmons

A Night with the Oscars

Watching an awards show where the fashion is as important as the awards themselves seems like an unlikely place to find topics for academic discussion. Nevertheless, I sat down and tried to find something interesting to say regarding this year's Oscars. After all, it is one of the biggest nights of the film year. The show got off to a bad start when Seth MacFarlane, who depends more on raunch than on wit for his humor, stepped on stage and proceeded to sing crudely sexual songs and reflexively laugh at his own silly jokes. Couple that with the constant stream of tedious speeches, and this year's celebration of the "best films of the year" was almost unwatchable. Unfortunately, there is too little emphasis on the actual films that the Oscars supposedly celebrate, and great films are often overshadowed by their stars. While the blog forums and gossip magazines provide a legitimate format for a discussion of celebrity culture, I think that a formal dialogue about the Academy Awards should shift the focus away from the celebrities so we can talk about the films, and the rest of this piece will avoid the actual events of Oscar night in favor of the films themselves.

Each Oscar year, it seems that a few of the nominees will have something in common, whether a common actor such as Kate Winslet in 2008 (*The Reader*, *Revolutionary Road*) or a shared theme such as 1950's *All About Eve* and *Sunset Boulevard*, which dealt with the pressures of life as a performer and the fleeting nature of celebrity. This year was no different. The common theme for the 2013 Oscars was the moniker "based on a true story," with films that dealt with American history. Whether that setting was Civil War America in *Django Unchained* and *Lincoln*, or the 1970s (*Argo*), or the post-9/11 intelligence community in *Zero Dark Thirty*, each film generated a great public debate by critics, bloggers, and fans alike. More importantly, each film was either praised or condemned by how well it represented historical "reality." For instance, *Django* was roundly criticized for using the "N-word" over one hundred times; the film also received criticism for its hyper-violent content (ranging from the fictional "Mandingo fights" to the gory, climactic shootout). *Lincoln*, on the other hand, garnered praise for its seemingly realistic portrayal of President Lincoln in the last days of his life, and *Zero Dark Thirty* was derided by the United States Congress for its

claim that torture tactics helped the United States catch Osama Bin-Laden. But is all this talk of historicity useful when discussing the quality of any of these films?

Not really. When the focus of these films becomes how successfully they reenact history, the importance of a film's aesthetics is largely ignored. Quentin Tarantino's screenplay for *Django* (which won Best Original Screenplay) was a quirky, campy romp celebrating spaghetti westerns and blaxploitation films of the 1970s. Regrettably, the excellence of the writing was quickly dismissed as Tarantino's screenplay was judged by bloggers and critics alike for its nearly constant stream of racial slurs. Instead of discussing the film's aesthetics or relationship to film history, the public discussion centered around the offensiveness of Tarantino's dialogue. This overblown reaction reminds me of the recent attempt to remove all traces of racism from a recent edition of *Huckleberry Finn*. Critics of the work have become so obsessed with preserving political correctness that they took it upon themselves to censor Twain's novel and protest Tarantino's film. Such interference is inappropriate and creates a repressive environment where works can be censored for not adhering to certain moral codes. Not only is such censorship inappropriate, but these complaints also make aesthetic evaluations of these works nearly impossible.

This is not to say that such racial slurs are appropriate for everyday use. However, if such language appears in the context of a piece of art, no subject or word should be off limits. Plenty of other recent classics (HBO's series *The Wire*, Scorsese's *Goodfellas* and *Taxi Driver*) along with many of Tarantino's other films (*Pulp Fiction*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *Jackie Brown*, etc.) use similarly offensive racial epithets. And yet, because these other works were not set in Antebellum America, there was no backlash from the American public. Instead, critics and fans celebrated these films for their aesthetic brilliance and forgot about whether the film offends cultural sensibilities. Unfortunately, the discussions about *Django* are more related to whether or not the film is politically correct, and such conversations overshadow any constructive dialogue about the film's artistic merits.

Like *Django*, *Lincoln* and *Zero Dark Thirty* sparked a public discussion that had little to do with either film's aesthetic quality. Both films claim to be "based on a true story": *Lincoln* garnered wide praise for its realistic performance by Daniel Day-Lewis (who won Best Actor) and its complicated look into the political realities of passing the Thirteenth Amendment, while *Zero Dark Thirty* received harsh criticism for not taking the history of the manhunt for Osama Bin-Laden seriously. As with Tarantino's screenplay, the critical focus shifted away from aesthetic assessments of each film and became an exercise in determining truth. The rub, then, is that films that claim to be historical somehow need to be more truthful and historical than films that are pure fantasy. What people often forget is that *Lincoln*, *Django*, and *Zero Dark Thirty* never claim to be documentaries. In fact, their identity as feature-length, narrative films means that they are *inherently*

fictional. The very nature of film is one of illusion, because the images we see are not actuality, but static pictures that *appear* to move in front of our very eyes. Editing itself is trickery, as disparate takes are molded together in a way that only appears to be reality. In our desire to fetishize and set up standards of historical accuracy, we lose sight of what these films are, which is a combination of storytelling and illusion. Ultimately, our collective desire for films to document history as it actually happened is hurtful to the aesthetic evaluation of film.

How fortunate, then, that another of this year’s nominees, *Life of Pi*, has good advice to give to these fidelity-obsessed critics. As its fantastical story unfolds and concludes, viewers are given a darker, “truer” version of what happened, where the majestic tiger never existed and where the hero of the film (Pi) resorts to cannibalism in order to survive. The film provides both viewers and the man hearing Pi’s tale with both versions of reality and allows us to accept either the stark reality or the satisfying fantasy. Needless to say, both the man interviewing Pi following his rescue and the viewers watching the film choose the fantasy as the better option to believe. That is, in a sense, what film is: a conscious choice of directors, actors, and viewers to reject reality for a more gratifying illusion. Of course, these tests of historical accuracy will not stop any time soon, but the sooner we accept the fictional nature of narrative film, the sooner we can begin to talk about these films for their aesthetic and cultural value.

Adam Quinn

Religious Education and Artistic Expression in Ciaran Carson's Poetry

One of the most interesting legacies of the Northern Irish Troubles has been the separation of the education system into Catholic and Protestant schools.¹ While these schools are not exclusively Catholic or Protestant, they do reflect a divide between Catholic and Protestant communities that is mirrored by separate neighborhoods, social structures, and political ideologies. "Maintained" schools are explicitly linked to Catholic churches and are managed by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools. "Controlled" schools are directed by the state Education and Library Board but are primarily represented by Protestant churches. Although recently established integrated schools have been surprisingly successful, 95% of students in Northern Ireland still go to church-affiliated schools. Most of this separation is self-imposed: parents choose to send their children to religious schools.² Unfortunately, segregating education systems is a dangerous way to reinforce religious, social, and political divisions.

Religious education has had a profound effect on the artistic expression of Northern Ireland's poets. Belfast native Ciaran Carson writes about the ways religious education has shaped what he sees as his role as a poet. In his 1989 poetry collection *Belfast Confetti*, Carson explores the ways both Catholic and Protestant communities use classroom knowledge to shape communal identities. For knowledge to be useful, it has to be written down for others to see. In Belfast, this writing appears publicly as graffiti. Carson writes, "at times it seems that every inch of Belfast has been written-on, erased, and written-on again" (*Belfast* 52). Graffiti wrests education from the religiously controlled space of the classroom and recasts it as a communal exercise carried out in the public space of

1. The Northern Irish Troubles began in 1969 with the Battle of the Bogside and ended in 1998 with the Good Friday Agreement. Conflict in Northern Ireland occurred primarily between Nationalist Catholic forces, who believed that Northern Ireland should become a part of the Republic of Ireland, and Unionist Protestant forces, who believed that Northern Ireland should remain a part of the United Kingdom. Today, although significant progress has been made in the peace process, fundamental social divisions still exist between Catholic and Protestant communities. For a history of the Northern Irish Troubles, see *Making Sense of the Troubles: The Story of Conflict in Northern Ireland* by David McKittrick and David McVea.

2. "Northern Ireland Summary Data." *Department of Education of Northern Ireland*. Deni.gov.uk, 2012. Web. 1 April 2013.

the city. The walls of Belfast act like chalkboards in a classroom, making Belfast the city an organic part of Northern Ireland's educational system.

Education, by its nature, can never be ideologically neutral. It will always occur within a cultural context that influences how knowledge is interpreted and applied.³ In the case of Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland, this cultural context becomes an identity. As a poet who was raised Catholic, Carson writes, "we were brought up to accept the Crown but not believe in it [. . .] its dominion had no power to extend beyond this temporal world" (*Star x*). In this example, the "Crown" means something completely different to a student from a Protestant school and a student from a Catholic school.⁴ A Catholic student would derive his or her identity from opposing the Crown, while a Protestant student would derive his or her identity from supporting the Crown. Each community incorporates these biases into its education systems and teaches them as legitimate forms of knowledge. Because each community interprets facts differently, classroom knowledge (traditionally understood to be objective) becomes a culturally specific type of knowledge.

Carson explores this contrast in the education system by examining the use of dates. Whether they go to a maintained, controlled, or integrated school, Catholic and Protestant students both learn the same dates. However, dates carry very different meanings for the identities of each side. Carson begins to reflect on the year 1969 in the poem "Queen's Gambit" but is soon overwhelmed by "any God's amount of Nines and Sixes: 1916, 1690, the Nine Hundred Years' War, whatever" (*Belfast 35*). Each date—referencing the Battle of the Bogside, the Easter Rising, and the Battle of the Boyne⁵—is remembered as a moment of Nationalist Catholic martyrdom. For Unionist Protestants, they represent a complex history of aggression and fear.

Dates are also graffitied on walls all over Belfast. While looking at graffiti in the poem "Schoolboys and Idlers of Pompeii," Carson expects to find "messages, curses, political imperatives" but instead discovers "mostly names, or nicknames" (*Belfast 52*). As he reads the familiar "Remember 1690" or "Remember 1916," Carson pulls out an unfamiliar subtext: "Remember me. I was here" (*Belfast 52*). By transitioning from remembering dates to "Remember me," Carson makes the

3. See Foucault's discussion of the means of correct training in *Discipline & Punish* 170-194.

4. The "Crown" here refers to the British monarchy, seen as a symbol of colonial oppression for Irish Republicans and as a symbol of national pride for Ulster Unionists.

5. The Battle of the Bogside was a Catholic community riot in Derry, Northern Ireland that lasted three days. The British military was eventually deployed to restore order. The Easter Rising was a failed Irish Republican insurrection attempt in Dublin. The leaders became martyrs for the Irish Catholic cause when they were executed by the British government. The Battle of the Boyne was a battle fought over the throne of England between the Catholic King James and the Protestant William of Orange. William eventually deposed James and imposed Protestant rule over Ireland. The Battle of the Boyne is the controversial subject of annual July 12th parades by the Protestant Orange Order in Belfast.

act of writing a function for expressing identity. This identity is individual and communal; it expresses a personal desire to be remembered as well as a communal definition of what it means to live as Protestant or Catholic in Belfast.

In the end, Carson recognizes that for lasting reconciliation to take place between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, they must find a way to integrate their taught histories. Although reconciliation must ultimately happen in the space outside the classroom, education is intricately linked with the communal identities of each side. Critic Carol Tell is optimistic about the students' ability to transcend cultural limitations through education. She writes, “students, sent out into the world in order to test their knowledge, must ultimately balance ‘book learning’ and ‘street smarts’” (92-93). According to Carson’s framework, one way to do this is through the act of writing poetry. Carson enters into dialogue with the city’s graffiti artists through poetry. Ironically, the people spray-painting graffiti on the walls of Belfast are engaged in a similar linguistic exercise as Carson. Despite their differences, Carson hopes that the shared act of writing may be prove to be a medium for future Catholic-Protestant reconciliation.

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From the Editor's Desk

David Rodriguez
Managing Editor

Seeing 2.2

Think of what a wide-angle lens is. Though it produces an image enlarged and stretched, what it *is* is a simple glass oval. *Wide Angle* is the same: it is not the image, but the object producing the image. With issue 2.2, *Wide Angle* presents the widest range of work both in terms of its productive output and its technical lenses. It reminds us that how we see is just as important as what we see. You see me—recognize me, do not recognize me, read something from my figure, interpret words that I say and write, bring what I am into what you know—and through this seeing or sensing you process on the surface, deciding what I am by what you do and do not see. You have seen your classes; you have seen your professors; you have seen your campus: what has this revealed about what they are? What does looking at a syllabus tell you? Why does your professor wear a tie? How is the grass in the front of campus always green?

Perhaps paradoxically, you learn something deep from examining these surfaces. In fact, we spend the majority of our time in the Howard College of Arts & Sciences carefully crafting linguistic surfaces so that we may reveal or conceal what we know or do not know. The Canadian poet and classicist Anne Carson delivers to us a character, in her most recent work *Red Doc*>, who has been anointed with a perceptual ability after a traumatic wartime experience:

[...] he

says you can see the future
you're a prophet / no I see
Seeing I am the god of this
I see Seeing coming /

what's that like / all white
all the time / what do you
mean / I mean the whole
immediate Visible crushed

onto the frontal cortex is
nothing but white without
any Remainder [...]¹

Think of it: how often are we blinded by bright white seeing “Seeing”? I am often blinded by what is quite literally “all white” every time I open my word processor,

1. Carson, Anne. *Red Doc*>. New York: Knopf, 2013. p.63

and sometimes by the end of filling it with words I am not sure if the small black I am seeing on the pages actually amounts to much more than a document to be seen by a professor, marked on a bit, and then to be put away and never seen again. Seeing “Seeing coming,” either what we expect to see, what we expect our professors want to see, or what we think our peers want to see immobilizes us and makes us blind, intellectually dishonest, and dull.

Each of us, though, has the ability to appraise what we are seeing. We can take a step forward through a consciousness and not get caught up in surfaces, at first, but learn to return to them with eyes guided like a drill into an invisible wall-stud. If *Wide Angle* is to have one purpose, I would posit that it is to make room for the student and the professor to see, feel, appraise, and then make seen so that the process can begin again within someone else.

Having a space, such as *Wide Angle*, that is both academic and extra-curricular encourages this way of seeing. We all read and view narratives of various kinds inside the classroom, but, of course, we also engage with an even wider range outside the classroom—perhaps even with more energy. As much as I love TV shows such as *Nathan for You*² or graphic narratives such as *Subnormality*,³ I hesitate to expect to encounter them inside the classroom. And yet, with a space such as *Wide Angle*, we could write about these texts and project their seeing into a sphere at once academic and personal.

Dean David Chapman, in issue 2.1, shared his memory of a bygone era of film; he presented a vision of himself, very much informed by his positioning in a world of film today, that has been developing over time to a point where he is now able to lift the blindness of seeing and present a deeper view of the narratives of his past. Also in that issue, English major Taylor Burgess meditated on seeing *Vertigo* for the first time, weighted by its universal praise and apparent status as “the greatest film ever.” His commentary is an experiential account of the personal and academic strains running through the back of his mind at once (not to mention the film running in front of his mind) as well as his awareness of how these three were woven together to create his unique viewing of the film. We have also published poems by an English professor, Dr. Julie Steward, in issue 1.1, who has used *Wide Angle* as the medium for her own extra-curricular work and her own perceptual development.

In this issue, we present the work of alum Drew Pomeroy, who has departed Samford to study writing in graduate school. He returns in the form of two imagist-influenced poems that are a way of seeing suggesting each individual’s slow, careful appraisal and the establishment of these images and their personal implications within each reader’s own inner perceptual field. Sophomore Audrey Ward contributes two poems inspired by her own scientific seeing: both poems

2. *Nathan for You*. Comedy Central. 2013. Television

3. Rowntree, Winston. *Subnormality*. *Virus Comix*. N.p.. 2007-2013. Web.

<www.viruscomix.com/subnormality.html>.

defamiliarize us not just with their fresh content, but through a scarce minimalism in one and by playing with form in the other in a simple and yet radical way, by text flush right instead of left. In another formal experiment, Sophomore Alexandria Da Ponte has written a prose poem pushing familiar bounds we spend so much time carefully defining. Also in this issue, Bridget Rose, Director of the Academic Success Center, reviews the newest book of poetry by Mary Oliver, whose introspection supplements the work of the poets published here. Wide Angle’s first published short story, by Hayden Davis, is a narrative as concerned with this internal/external visual split as the poetry. The protagonist(s) deal with this problem of seeing embodied: a tattoo artist attempts to interpret what he sees in an unlikely client, and the struggle with his rigid schema of the artist/“skin” dichotomy begins to alter him on the inside as he alters the client on the outside.

The critical work by students in this issue is an example of this re-vision process directly. All of the essays were conceived under guidelines for classes—perhaps an attempt to conform to what a professor wanted to see—and then were expanded and revised to become the excellent, personal, and new essays we have now. Emily Sanders and Abby McMurry give historical contexts to *Catch-22* grounded in the text’s “American-ness” Laura Ann Prickett similarly contextualizes the rhetorical force of the *Aeneid*. Three essays by English majors all examined gender and femininity in three texts that probably could not be more dissimilar: Carlson Coogler provides her second contribution to the journal in an essay analyzing an Alice Munro short story, Samantha Smith looks at *The Birds* and the complex roles of the women in the film, and Alyssa Duck reads Barbauld’s “Washing-Day” as a radical text in the face of the patriarchal poetic paradigms that came before her. Giving these writers the space and time outside of class to develop a new perspective on a paper they perhaps may never see again is precisely what *Wide Angle* is meant to do: to teach students and faculty to see what they write in a new way, and to give an opportunity for the work to be seen by others.

This is a new meaning for the wide-angle lens referenced in the title of the journal. Not only does our lens capture the critical and creative work of students and faculty, but it also represents a new way of seeing what is so common—our academic work, schedules, and campus—cast into a wider personal-academic vision. Through the introspective and critical space that *Wide Angle* has begun to develop, we gain the ability not to be blinded by seeing “Seeing,” but to guide our eyes towards the bits of our worlds that matter to us, and finally, to share them.

CONTRIBUTORS

Carlson Coogler is a University Fellow and a senior double-major in English and Pre-Medicine with a minor in Biology.

Alyssa Duck is a junior double major in English and French. Her interests lie primarily in the fields of poetics and critical gender and race theory.

Abby McMurry is a University Fellow and a first-year Biochemistry major.

Laura Ann Prickett is a University Fellow and a first-year double-major in English and Political Science. Her literary interests include Edith Wharton and Gender Studies.

Emily Sanders is a University Fellow and a first-year major in Global Studies.

Samantha Smith is a University Fellow and a senior English major with a concentration in Film Studies. She plans to take a gap year and then pursue graduate studies in English.

Carlo Chiarenza earned his PhD in the Humanities in 1973 from The Johns Hopkins University. From 1970 to 1988, he taught Italian and Comparative Literatures at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. In 1988 he left UBC to accept the position of Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission in Italy. In 1999, he was assigned the George Graziadio Distinguished Chair of Italian Studies at the California State University in Long Beach. He retired in 2010 to follow his wife, Serena Simoni, who now teaches in Political Science here at Samford University. Dr. Chiarenza currently teaches a course on “Politics and Cinema” at Samford.

Lee Keenan Farquhar, assistant professor in the Journalism and Mass Communication Department, joined Samford in 2009. Prior to arriving at Samford, he completed his doctoral work at the University of Iowa. His professional experience is primarily in radio and television broadcasting. He has also worked as a freelance videographer, shooting video for Kansas State University and MTV. Dr. Farquhar teaches video production courses at Samford, with particular emphases in producing television news for the Samford News Network and the Film Production program. His research interests are social media, identity, and social psychological theories. His current research projects focus on the relationships between Facebook use, social anxiety, self-monitoring levels, and religiosity.

Abigail Kawell is a University Fellow and a junior English major with a concentration in Film Studies, as well as a minor in Spanish. She currently serves as Secretary for the Samford University Film Club.

Bridget Rose is Director of the Academic Success Center and Instructor in the Core Curriculum; she has been teaching Cultural Perspectives at Samford for over 10 years. After completing her BA at the University of Mobile (with a double major in English and Sociology), she earned a Master of Theological Studies degree at Samford's Beeson Divinity School. When she is not reading or reviewing the poetry of Mary Oliver, her research interest centers on the early third century Christian martyr, St. Perpetua.

Alexandria Da Ponte is a junior English major. Her interests include the orchestra, as well as worship music and leadership.

Hayden Davis is a University Fellow and a sophomore English major.

Drew Pomeroy is a Samford English alumnus. He is currently working on an MFA in Creative Writing at Spalding University.

Audrey Ward is a University Fellow and a sophomore English major with a minor in World Languages and Cultures.

Megan Burr is a sophomore English major with a concentration in Film Studies. She currently serves as Treasurer for the Samford University Film Club and as Web Editor for *Wide Angle*.

Caroline Harbin is a senior English major and currently serves as Creative Writing Editor for *Wide Angle*. She plans to pursue a Masters degree in Education from Samford University.

Ryan Plemmons is a University Fellow and a junior English major with a concentration in Film Studies. He currently serves as Vice President for the Samford University Film Club and as Film Editor for *Wide Angle*.

Adam Quinn is a University Fellow and a sophomore English major. His research interests include modern and contemporary Irish literature. He currently serves as Literature Editor for *Wide Angle*.

David Rodriguez is a senior double-major in English and Psychology and currently serves as the Managing Editor for *Wide Angle*. He plans to pursue a doctorate in English from SUNY Stony Brook.

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