



Write on, Sister

Winners of the 2008
Merry Ann DeVaney Sauls
Academic Writing Contest

**Nominees and Winners in the 2008
Merry Ann DeVaney Sauls Academic Writing Contest**

Composition - Essays employing sources

Paige Burton, "What Are You Trying to Say, President Johnson?" Dr. Stubblefield
Alicia Carney, "Panopticism: An Evolution of Disciplinary Power," Dr. Perkins
Maggie Mae Nase, "Education ADD . . . Is That a Word?" Dr. Stubblefield
Second Place -Ellie Rempel, "Veiling Freedom," Dr. Stubblefield
First Place - Eyre Salé Hassinger, "Women in Advertising," Dr. Stubblefield

Composition - Essays not employing sources

Samantha Peterson, "Blake Island," Dr. Pivak
Tanne Stephens, "Beautifully Crazy," Dr. Pivak
First Place - Alicia Carney, "For the Love of Woman," Dr. Perkins

Fine Arts

Mariya Ivanova, "Weyden's Piece Compared to Fouquet's Piece," Professor Haverstic
Ellie Rempel, "What Are Children Watching?" Dr. Andrews
First Place - Alyssa Christenson, "The Art of David," Professor Haverstic

Humanities

Monica Parker, "Longtime Companion," Dr. Emery
Ellie Rempel, "Silent Force," Dr. Stubblefield
Sara Stone, "My Last Duchess," Dr. Perkins
Second Place - Sarah Drury, "From Hilarious Clarity to Serious Obscurity," Dr. Pivak
First Place - Kayleigh Bauer, "Glory before Death," Dr. Pivak

Social Science

Kellie Griffin, "Cinderella: What Impact Does She Really Have?" Dr. Teitz
Amanda Winter, "Themes and Values Representative of the Second Century A.D.," Dr. Rivard
Second Place - Kayleigh Bauer, "Revolution on the Farm," Dr. Wang
First Place - Sarah Patterson, "Sex and Lies," Dr. Teitz

Creative Writing

Maureen McCracken, "Life Is(n't) Like the Movies," Dr. Emery
Ashley Solis, "Ginsei Bumi Raison," Dr. Emery
Melissa Winter, "A Winning Season," Dr. Emery
First Place - Ellie Rempel, "Invisible Enemy," Dr. Emery



Kayleigh Bauer,



Paige Burton



Alicia Carney



Alyssa Christenson



Sarah Drury



Kellie Griffin



Mariya Ivanova



Maureen McCracken



Maggie Mae Nase



Monica Parker



Sarah Patterson



Samantha Peterson



Ellie Rempel



Eyre Salé Hassinger



Ashley Solis



Tanne Stephens



Sara Stone



Melissa Winter



Amanda Winter

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**Organized by the Cottey College
Writing Across the Curriculum Interest Group
Dr. Don Perkins, professor of English, chairperson**

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Contents

Composition - Essays employing sources

First Place

Eyre Salé Hassinger, "Women in Advertising," 1

Second Place

Ellie Rempel, "Veiling Freedom," 4

Composition - Essays not employing sources

First Place

Alicia Carney, "For the Love of Woman," 8

Fine Arts

First Place

Alyssa Christenson, "The Art of David," 12

Humanities

First Place

Kayleigh Bauer, "Glory before Death," 14

Second Place

Sarah Drury, "From Hilarious Clarity to Serious Obscurity," 17

Social Science

First Place

Sarah Patterson, "Sex and Lies," 19

Second Place

Kayleigh Bauer, "Revolution on the Farm," 24

Creative Writing

First Place

Ellie Rempel, "Invisible Enemy," 27

First Place

Composition Essays employing Sources

Women in Advertising

by Eyre Sale Hassinger

There are “two ways a woman can get hurt” according to Jean Kilbourne: “advertising and violence.” In her book, *Can’t Buy My Love: How Advertising Changed the Way We Think and Feel*, she explores the various ways advertising contributes to the unequal treatment, and even abuse, experienced by women at the hands of mainstream American culture. Advertisements act to both create and manipulate cultural beliefs for maximum profit at the expense of those they target. As a female myself, I could strongly connect with Kilbourne’s insights to the media portrayal of women in advertising. I’ve felt the effects of cultural attitudes enforced by media ads and struggled alongside my peers to understand and overcome the self-defeating concepts they push. Since reading Kilbourne’s essay, I’ve come to agree that modern women’s issues can never truly advance in a society that is desensitized to the degrading advertisements that bombard us on a daily basis.

The influence of advertisements is practically inescapable, as they are an integral part of American culture. Ads chew up our personal insecurities and spit them back at us in cultural context we can relate to. Adrian Faiers, a writer for the *Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, states, “Throughout our lives, focus groups and market research are used to explore our weaknesses. Advertising... [is] used to exploit them.” Ads answer the fundamental question of the human experience: “I don’t fit in, so is there something wrong with me?” Yes, advertisers say, and for a bargain price, the solution is yours. The sheer volume of advertising makes the induction into their values even more difficult to avoid. According to Kilbourne’s research for her book *Deadly Persuasion*, one individual is exposed to up to 3,000 ads daily. Ignoring advertisements isn’t effec-



tive because their subliminal messages slowly taint one’s own thoughts through repetitive conditioning. Escaping the influence of advertisements requires a strong sense of self few people can achieve.

The beauty industry has mastered the art of exploiting insecurity. This booming business plays on the anxieties women feel in a sexist, male-oriented environment by convincing them their feelings of powerlessness stem from some sort of personal flaw. Modern beauty implements a highly unrealistic, unhealthy, and fanciful beauty standard to hook and secure a consumer base. Author Lori Duin Kelly writes, “Ads... actively and deliberately create anxiety around issues of women’s appearance and capitalize on that anxiety with an array of products that promise perfection. The inevitable failure that follows such an impossible offer creates even more self-doubt and anxiety, thereby perpetuating the cycle of buying and self-loathing on which marketing relies.” Of course, it’s the woman, not the product, who is blamed as inadequate. Women become caught in a viscous circle that begins with feelings of inadequacy and ends with feelings of failure.

Even in the more “liberated” modern times, women’s bodies are seen as sexual objects. Advertisements crank out images of scantily clad females and tack them onto the most irrelevant products, from butter, to paint, to condominiums. Women are sexualized and objectified to no longer human, but slabs of meat to bait the lizard-brain. The American Psychological Association task force defines sexualization as “when a person’s value comes only from her/his sexual appeal or behavior, to the exclusion of other characteristics, and when a person is sexually objectified, e.g., made into a thing for another’s sexual use.” Sexualized ads aren’t just silly, perverse messages to ignore but the enforcement of an attitude that normalizes treating women as less than human. As Jean Kilbourne writes, “Ad’s don’t directly cause violence... [but] objectification and disconnection create a climate in which there is widespread and increasing violence. Turning a human being into a thing, and object, is almost always the first step towards justifying violence against that person” (428). The public does seem to be desensitized to real, serious forms of exploitation. So much sexual harassment in the workplace, schools, and streets goes unreported and unchecked because it’s seen as just another part of the female experience. Women are sex machines, so “shouldn’t be surprised” when clothing or makeup compels a stranger to make a pass at her.

Advertisements help create an atmosphere in which women are degraded from all sides. Women are conditioned to question their worth and undermine their self-esteem; men, to view women as the sex objects our culture insists they are; other women, to compete for the attention that gives illusory power. Many women suffer serious side effects from the hostility and emotional desolation of this environment. According to research by Renee Engeln-Maddox for the *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, exposure to media portraying “attractive” women, meaning underweight models subjected to heavy doses of beauty products, is linked to eating disorders, low self-esteem, and depression. In correspondence to the “thin ideal,” anorexia has risen to one of the leading mental illnesses in America. Plastic surgery and cosmetic reconstruction are two blossoming fields of “medical science” gaining popularity and sapping enormous sums of money. Humans typically don’t work against the instinct for survival unless they are rewarded for doing so, as women are in a society with a distorted perception of women. It is a sick society where women mutilate themselves in order to be seen in a positive light.

Young girls are not immune to the effects of sexualized advertising, even if most of these ads are directed towards an older audience. Adolescent girls are in an important stage of development, and, lacking a strong sense of self, often look to the advertisements that surround them for guidance. The girls see promiscuous, emaciated women selling their bodies, and the positive response of the audience. The girls learn that “beauty” is a way to draw much wanted attention. In *The Washington Post*, Adelaide Robb, director of inpatient psychiatry at the Children’s National Medical Center, reported that children as young as twelve have been admitted for eating disorders caused by the desire for “popularity.” Clothing companies are recognizing and cashing in on the sexualizing trends. According to *The New York Times*, Abercrombie & Fitch introduced a line of thong underpants for 10-year-old girls printed with phrases like “Wink Wink” and “Eye Candy.” It is not a normal or healthy phenomenon for young girls to put on an air of adult sexuality. These girls grow up already accustomed the degrading attitudes that keep women silent and subservient, limiting their ability for empowerment and self-discovery later in life. And while young girls may not understand the implications of sug-

gestive themes, adults certainly do. Adults who allow or contribute to the sexualization of young girls have failed the evolutionary concept of strengthening and advancing future generations.

Advertising inflicts the most damage on society by directing females’ efforts to empower themselves in all the wrong directions. According to popular media, sex and seduction are a woman’s greatest power. But what do these really get her? She reduces herself to an object under the omnipotent eye of the Male Beholder. The more women buy into this method of “empowerment,” the further they lose themselves and the ability to live their own lives. Author Angela Davis reported a mission statement made by *YM* magazine, a popular fashion and “self improvement” magazine for teenage girls. “*YM* is not just another magazine,” their spokesperson said, “it is social survival.” Third world countries must find this mode of survival very strange. While many people struggle to find enough food to feed their families, American women will starve themselves for attention, pay money to have their bodies cut into more “sightly” shapes, and spend fortunes on carcinogenic cosmetics. Popular culture doesn’t seem to understand what constitutes being alive. Endless resources are allocated towards active forms of self-oppression, while elsewhere, others struggle for real survival. Worst of all, women are blinded to the opportunities their own society can offer them and suffer needlessly. So much more can be accomplished when women stop undermining their own potential.

It is not the advertiser’s responsibility to be “politically correct” in all the advertisements they issue. However, if advertisers are going to invade so much visible space, audible airwaves, and time in our everyday lives, they need to understand the impact they have on society and act responsibly. Human beings are susceptible to the power of suggestion, giving ads great leverage over social trends. That’s not to say the consumer is powerless. One of the benefits of living in a democratic, capitalist society is the freedom of choice. As consumers, we are the ones who have the power. If we discriminate against the companies that hurt us with degrading advertisements, they will have no choice but to change their marketing strategies. We do not have to accept the garbage we are force-fed.

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Second Place

Composition Essays employing sources

Veiling Freedom

by Ellie Rempel

As Americans, we live in a country that was founded on the ideals of freedom of religion; a place where diversity is our bond. Riding on the public bus, one can sit next to a Jew, a Christian, a Muslim, or a person of any religion or ethnicity who may choose to express their cultural or religious identity through the clothing and symbols they wear. Even as a nation of immigrants, America has struggled with tolerating difference and though no resolution makes everyone happy, especially with issues of religion, the best answer has never been to suppress and limit expression. In a world with such diversity, total removal of an individual's previous religious and cultural identity from the public sphere is simply politicians covering their eyes and refusing to move forward into a more multicultural view and tolerant public life. Policies that eliminate diversity, especially from the classroom, are harmful because they plant the idea that different is wrong. France is currently struggling with its own diversity and is in the midst of a raging debate over the ban on Muslim headscarves in schools and in the workplace. The official law was passed in 2004 to prohibit the Muslim headscarves and other large religious symbols from France's public schools (Sciolino). Lawmakers and supporters argue largely that the headscarves are a violation of France's strict secularism. The terrorist attack in the United States on September 11th brought renewed attention to Muslim immigrants and though the ban is not an American issue currently, America has struggled with tolerating difference. The French commitment to secularism is setting an example of intolerance and banning religious symbols is a violation of basic rights.



Those in favor of the ban stand strongly on France's regulation of secularism that keeps the public sphere undivided by religion. France has long strived to keep religion fully out of the public sphere and those in political power have little opposition to the ban. France has a unique policy of secularism, yet similar bans are spreading over Europe and some politicians predict that the ban may become a law adopted by the European Union. The devotion to secularism goes beyond a law and into French tradition as *The Irish Times* reports,

At its best, the Separation has guaranteed state neutrality in religious matters and protects the right to believe or not, to practice or not. In French, the word *laïcité* connotes something more powerful than the English "secularism." It has been elevated to the status of founding myth, on par with *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.

The concept of French secularism dates back to 1905 and is the way France has chosen to avoid the controversial issues that arise when religion meets government. Bernard-Henri Levy with the *Sunday Times* believes that, "religion should have no place in civil affairs nor in the state." Levy says that secularity is directly linked with liberty and that this means "maintaining a distance between all spiritual or community affiliations in the public arena, thus making all equal and the same in civil life." Levy continues to support the public sphere as a place where all can co-exist without symbols that translate beyond religion into difference. Supporters feel that as French citizens, the Muslims are expected to adhere to the traditions and laws of France. They believe that secularity offers the freedom to create an individual public identity as first and foremost a French citizen. Those in favor stand behind the extreme distance of church and state and firmly believe that the veils are a clear violation.

Though supporters argue that secularism is a vehicle for tolerance, in truth, with extreme measures such as the ban they are saying that it is acceptable to judge someone by what they wear. By eliminating what makes someone different, schools are teaching children they can be equal as long as they all look the same. Elaine Sciolino writes: "[the ban is] a move that underscores the broad public support for the French secular ideal but is certain to deepen resentment among France's large Muslim population." Many claim that secularism is a level of equality that will aid assimilation, yet Muslims feel targeted by the legislation which is in turn

keeping them at a distance. The Muslims are not the first major religious group to be targeted by laws supporting secularism. The Irish Times reports that the enforcement of the law has not always been positive as when in the early 1900's the law was used to persecute Catholics. France has a history of abuse of the law to quiet the rise of religion beyond the privacy of home, church, and private schools. What is most disconcerting about the current situation is that "politicians say openly that Islam is the target" (Schofield). Even if the policy of secularism does have its merits, it is being blatantly misused to target a single group. With any major restriction of a private matter such as religion, those in power can easily overstep the boundaries in an effort to control a large group which challenges their way of life. Unless one can identify a direct threat to the general welfare, limiting clothing based on ethnic and religious origins is misguided and a violation of human rights.

Secularism enforced by a government silences religion despite guaranteed freedoms and leaves many feeling targeted and alienated. The French policy of secularism is working against its intended goals of equality and is the force responsible for hindering the integration of the Muslims. The unwelcoming nature of the ban is causing many Muslims to turn inward, further hindering the assimilation into the culture. In America, a nation with extreme diversity supported by the Constitution, many groups are still not offered equal opportunity. Though religious freedom is protected, even in America, groups such as Muslims have been targets of unwanted attention. Not long ago in our history, African Americans were denied an equal education. Now, school officials are feeling threatened by children exercising their rights and wearing religious symbols. If exclusion happens under a constitution that is so open, of course a policy as narrow as Secularism will easily target minority groups. When choosing secularism, one is choosing avoidance over tolerance. France has fallen into the habit of silencing difference out of fear of what others might do to its carefully balanced order. Though it is unreasonable to expect a country such as France to overnight adopt a new policy that is more tolerant of multi-cultural views, to simply accept something as tradition does not make it anymore right. Just because the idea of secularism has worked in the past and has a deeply rooted history does not mean that it should be accepted without question.

Secularism is intended to bring people together with a sense of equality un-tinted by religious affiliation, yet the concept has been misconstrued, and as a result, many children are suffering. The Iran News Agency writes that "[the government] should come and speak with the young children who have been denied an education by the French state and authorities and hear their experiences of victimization." Though the children will have an opportunity to attend private schools, they are being denied the right to a public school education which is an important part of the integration. School is where the basic lessons of tolerance are learned and to punish students for their parents or their own religious decisions is unfair. Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy sees that "some Muslim girls will be placed in private schools, setting them even further apart from the mainstream" (Cesca). By being forced into private schools, enforcers of the ban are creating a lasting impression that these students are different and need to be separate. Instead of creating a united France, the ban will simply "push the people apart" (Dilanian). Also, there should be caution when singling out an ethnic group in a fearful manner. There should be concern about laws being passed against a single religion in a way that is almost too reminiscent of the Holocaust. Barbara John says, "I would never say that this is the beginning of a new Holocaust. But this is how it starts" (Schofield). France's single minded secular vision is misguided, discriminating, and an un-effective way to control the Muslim population.

Supporters of secularism often feel that the public sphere should be free of the oppression that many religions impose. Levy and others who support the ban promote it as a way to free Muslim women from the oppression of tradition as many see the veils as a symbol of women's oppression. Levy says that the veil is "not a symbol of piety but of stigmatization" that tells these women "that wearing the hijab is a sacred commandment, has her believe that the hijab is a privilege and that her body is a source of sin, her sex is a blemish." He, along with others, sees the veil as holding Muslim women back and a representation of the oppression of their sex elsewhere. France is trying to "[funnel] Islam toward being a more acceptable religion for France" and is in effect saying that their religion is wrong (Schofield). Supporters of the ban continuously emphasize that symbols carry beyond faith and creates a stigmatized identity. Is the way to solve the conflict to pass

laws against what Muslims have been taught to observe, tell them they are wrong for what they believe? Many Muslim women are oppressed, but the place to look isn't at those who have left their homes and immigrated to a new country seeking greater freedom. Matthew Schofield, for the Knight Rider Tribune, writes, "These are Muslims who came for economic reasons; not to destroy France, but to find a better life in it." Banning something with the hope that it will solve a deeper conflict is not only ineffective but leaves many victims along the way. Many governments recognize the value of separation of church and state, yet limiting a person's expression of freedom is separation of individual and religion and is beyond the right of a government's restriction of religious expression.

By removing symbols, many claim that they are freeing people from the oppression of religion, but that is beyond the government's responsibility. In France, the ban has become a vehicle to target the growing fears that the Islamic headscarf represents. Supporters claim that the ban is not anti-Muslim and the veil is a symbol of women's oppression so by removing the veil they are offering Muslim women more freedoms. However, is stripping a woman of her right to wear a symbol of cultural identity freedom? Though few would argue that a young child wears the veil on her own accord, many older girls make the conscious decision to wear the veil to respect their heritage and who wear the scarf by choice, so no longer is it a clear symbol of oppression. Middle school and high school aged students usually make their own decisions about the symbols they wear. Bans such as the one in France is a step backward and a restriction of liberty.

Wearing religious symbols in public is not a matter that should concern others beyond the individual herself. Ken Dilanian for the Philadelphia Inquirer interviewed a French-born woman who said, "This is a personal decision, a matter of faith. In no way do I feel inferior because I'm wearing the veil. It is a piece of material, and it shouldn't bother anyone." Many of the women say that the veil is strictly a personal choice. In support of their choice to respect their religion, protesters said, "Neither our father nor husbands forced us. We chose the veil" (Inskeep). Beyond school aged children, the law will extend into the workplace. Many are rightfully appalled with the laws passed that permit women to be fired for wearing the hijab and children kept from school. Groups have formed such as the "As-

sembly for the Protection of the Hijab (Protect Hijab) [which] is campaigning to ensure the religious rights of Muslim women in Europe and across the world to practice their religion without prejudice" (News Agency). Law makers need to consider the women who simply wish to respect their religious and cultural duty. Not only in France are laws being passed to prohibit religious symbols, but all over the world people are silencing personal religious and cultural expression. The symbols are not what hurt people; it is the fear of recognizing difference.

Displays of intolerance such as the headscarf debate have caused concern outside of France. The Philadelphia Inquirer reports that opposition to the ban is coming from "the Vatican, the Anglican Church and the Bush administration's ambassador for religious freedom, who called the wearing of the head scarves 'a basic right that should be protected'" (Dilanian). Many people beyond France feel strongly that the ban is an act of intolerance toward the Muslim population that is beyond the proper line of government interference in private matters such as religion. These important laws are sending messages out to other countries, and those in opposition such as Baroness Sarah Ludford fear that "France, and other countries like Germany tempted to go down the same route, need to revise their rigid and intolerant attitudes in the interests of diversity and integration" (News Agency). Countries with once tolerant views are being tempted by path of secularism. Dilanian quotes Abdel Hdkim Sefrioui: "France needs to move toward the American model of multicultural tolerance." Though tolerance of religion is part of public American life, it is still something that must be constantly protected. Mr. Tariq Abdul-Wahad on NPR's "All Things Considered" said, "America has been founded on freedom of religion which is an intricate part of American's Constitution. So it's really night and day" (Inskeep). Are the Muslim's basic rights being protected? Those in favor say yes, that the Muslims right to observe their religion has not been denied them (New York Times). By eliminating religious expression in school, technically one can still hold personal beliefs that are untouchable by any bans, yet few will argue that silence equals full religious freedom and that basic rights, if not denied, then are dangerously close to being violated.

France is an influential power and singling out Muslims sets the tone that it's acceptable to target a single group. Though it is unreasonable and

impossible to encourage France to simply become more like America and ignore their previous commitment to secularism, one must look at how beneficial the policy is serving with in the current conflict. France's Muslim population is comparable with the proportion (11%) of African Americans in the United States (Dilanian). France is struggling to "integrate a large Muslim minority, some of whom are fundamentalist and anti-democratic, into the world's most aggressively secular liberal democracy" (Dilanian). In the midst of the legislation and protests, France is working hard to preserve tradition as well as accommodate the ever growing number of Muslims but they are attempting to do so in a way that is violating the rights of a large ethnic group on the basis of tradition.

A child deserves to learn without judgment being passed by her peers or the school based on her religion or ethnicity. Eventually it will be impossible to mend the rift that is worn by the idea that difference is dangerous. The French ban is a policy passed that secluded the group of people it was supposedly intended to bring closer to French culture. France posses one of the highest concentrations of Muslim immigrants and to ask the Muslims to completely abandon their past is to show intolerance to difference. The veil may be a symbol of oppression, but is that any better than being oppressed by a government? Under what is being labeled as "security measures," innocent people are being labeled and excluded. The concept is like arresting someone to keep them safe. The idea is fine, the outcome is effective, yet what message is it sending when the victim is put in jail for protection while the group that attacked her is still on the streets? We cannot forget that fear can mask itself as caution and give people the false impression that sameness is safe. A basic human right has been tragically lost when a voice is silenced for simply being different.

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First Place

Composition

Essays not employing Sources

For the Love of Woman

by Alicia Carney

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).



I

“I can sense quite a bit of myself in you,” she said through the door. I know I don’t look it and you’re not going to believe me, but there are things you need to hear now and it appears I’m the one who gets to do the talking. Now I know you’re scared, girl, and you have every right to be. It’s no easy task, becoming a woman, especially when you haven’t got many examples to follow. But it’s not something any of us can help for long, and you’re just making it harder on yourself to insist on staying locked up in the powder room.

Now you’re not going to bleed forever and you’re certainly not going to bleed to death, so dry those tears and unlock the door so I can come in. We’ll sort this out together. I’m not expecting you to take my every word to heart, but give it some time to rattle around before you swear off every last scrap of blessed femininity God’s given you. You’re a woman now - there’s no going back.

I was twelve years old that day when my nanny told me I had become a woman, whether I liked it or not. My own mother had always been brazenly feminist in her approach to life and career; as a captain on a popular regional airline she was able to demonstrate her forward thinking on domestic life

by simply not having one. So I grew up under the virtuous wings of Leloni, my Lelo, a great bumbling mass of head and heart worn on her sleeves along with the morning’s baking ingredients. On that particular morning I had awoken to find, with significant alarm, that my menstrual cycle had begun. Living in a small mountain town with mostly younger children as playmates, the idea was entirely foreign to me. I legitimately thought I was living my last day on earth, and in the bathroom no less.

Lelo wasn’t aware that I had never been introduced to the nuisances of my gender. Once she understood the cause of my startled shrieking, my dear nanny saw it fit to congratulate me. I could interpret nothing less but that my closest caretaker was rejoicing in my demise, and thus her freedom. I shrieked louder.

Almost certain that I had at least developed an interest in the various specimens of young masculinity about town, she then attempted to comfort me with praises of how I could now experience the excitement of being pursued by the male gender. The joys of being attractive, what fun to be desired... and oh by the way, you’re body will start changing in other ways too. Hips and breasts were all intimidating enough by Lelo’s proportions; I sincerely doubted my own ability to function under such weight and girth. And what was going to happen down there?

At this point I no longer feared my death. In fact I decided that I would like nothing more than to prevent this woman from emerging out of my perfectly functional body, and death seemed to be a perfectly logical solution. It was then that I locked myself in the bathroom and waited, thinking how horribly unfair it was that my body had changed for the sole benefit of boys. Suddenly it was all their fault. They wanted breasts, not me. They wanted hips, not me. Beyond that I was less inclined to think about what it was that they wanted from my body, but nevertheless I had made up my mind. I would henceforth renounce my womanhood by separating myself from everything that defined femininity. Most especially, I vowed to never fall in love, never get married, and never ever have children. I couldn’t imagine allowing my own daughter to experience such atrocity, and told Lelo as much.

“Girl,” she said softly, “I would have given anything to see my daughter become a woman.”

The unpleasantness in my abdomen grew as I realized the full weight of what I had just said. Five years prior, Leloni had come to us looking for part

time work after her own daughter passed away from leukemia. I realize now that our relationship had started out as a simple distraction from her pain; later I grew into a more permanent substitute for the little girl, forever six in Leloni's heart.

"Every woman was once a little girl," she continued. We are not all that different, you and I. The little games we play, pretending to be beautiful princesses in need of rescue by our brave knights, turning around and saving our princes when their backs are turned to danger... these are real things that real women do. We both want the same things you know.

I won't be the one to tell you that you can be anything, girl. That's not how it works, and I know. I was told that I could be anything, and so I tried to be everything. I got lost; I needed more direction than that. I broke myself down trying to be what everyone else thought I could be, because I never knew what I wanted to be. It wasn't until my little girl got sick that I realized what I wanted to be was a mother, and by then it was almost too late.

And I am most certainly not going to tell you that you can do anything a man can do, because you can't. I know your mother tries, and she's succeeded in many ways and I'm happy for her happiness. But girl, "God created man in his own image... male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27). So don't you sit there and tell me that you don't want to be a woman, cause for one thing you don't have a choice, and for another, you should be proud to be a woman of His creation. You were put here on this good earth for a reason, and if He wanted you to do the things a man does, He would have made you one.

To be a woman is to be a walking contradiction. You're strong and you're vulnerable, you're quiet, calm, composed and professional and you're wild, passionate, reckless and carefree. You're logical and you're emotional. You're virtuous and you're forgiving. You're mysterious and you're friendly. You're curious and you're accepting. You laugh and you cry, you whisper and you shout, you soothe and you sting. To be a woman is to be lost, sometimes. But one of the greatest gifts God will give to you is someone else who can find you – who wants to find you, and bring you back.

There is a great difference between men and women, girl. Life can be lived in many ways, but a life lived without love is not a life worth living. Love is what men do, and many of them are very

good at it. But we as women are the lucky ones. Love is what we are, girl. You have a great many gifts to offer the world, but you must never forget that without love, they are empty. Do all in your life with love and you shall have no regrets.

I wish I had listened to her then. Really listened. There have been times when I think back on her words and feel angry, because it all sounds too good to be true. And yet I realize that her words seem empty to me only when I have not acted in love. I do have regrets. After only nineteen years I have regrets, which gives me reason to be reluctant about growing up. My own childhood experiences have left me with a fractured view of love at best, so the prospect of becoming a woman whose every action and thought and care is deeply rooted in love is something I have come to doubt. There are times when I firmly believe that I am incapable of such all encompassing, selfless love, and this belief has extended to many of the personal limitations I put on myself as a woman.

As I grew older I found less value in her time and care; consequently I did not allow myself to remember the value of her companionship. In the end she moved away to care for another young girl in a broken family. By that time we were respectful of the differences between us, but our relationship was strained. I had been exposed to a lot of liberal ideas in the public school system; some of them I followed freely, but most I supported in order to maintain superficial friendships. She began to age very quickly in my eyes, and her words, the very words I had not long ago absorbed like water into the core of my being, were tainted with a flavor of rust – the taste of "old-fashioned".

Still, throughout all my foolish rebellions Lelo never permitted herself to injure my dignity, although my mother had resorted to such measures because she no longer understood this girl who was supposed to be her daughter. It hurts me to consider, for the first time, how deeply I must have injured Lelo, consciously cutting myself from the elements of her pride. She will never know, but my distance was for her benefit. Or at least, that was my considerate intention. I knew I would never live up to her standards; I could never become the extraordinary woman she saw within me, and so I never tried. That way, I figured, she would never have the chance to be disappointed in my failure.

My Lelo was an extraordinary woman simply because she let herself be one. The years have in-

creased the distance between us, and she has not traversed the landscape of my mind in a long time. But the memories are still sharp, and likely always will be. I cannot deny her influence in many aspects of my life. Had I not been so afraid of her perfect femininity I am sure that these words would be pouring out of a woman's heart, and not my own disoriented and tangled center. Seven years ago she told me I was a woman, but I have not yet felt like one.

II

"I remember the first time I knew I was a woman," she had said later. I remember these words so well. I remember the feeling of wanting to dive into them, to enter her body, live in her memories, to know "woman". By that time many people had told me that I was a woman but I couldn't believe them. They all had words about what it meant to be one, but none had said what it felt like. For all I understood being a woman was just like being a young girl with an added quarter cup of blood every twenty-eight days, and there was nothing to love about that.

No, girl, not that kind of love. Remember, I said love is what we are. That kind of love, or lack of love according to your purposes, that kind is selfish. Selfish love doesn't make you a woman. I never understood why they all think your cycle is the beginning. It doesn't make sense how every distinction between a girl and a woman is diminished to the very first time her body struggles through its proper function. Being a woman is a process; there's more emotional stuff to it than any physical change anyway.

Now you listen to me, girl. The best way for you to experience your own value is to have it demonstrated through someone else. You probably don't understand that now, but someday you might and I wanted to tell you now in case I forget later. Of course, if you do in fact want to become a woman, you'll have to start by taking back your oath against boys cause it'll be close to impossible without them.

It was in college, I think. Oh, I'd had enough boyfriends before, and I'll even allow myself to say that I'd been in love once or twice. But with Patrick everything was different. At first I was confused, I felt so childish around him. He took such an interest in my life that I felt invaded. He craved to know every detail about everything that made me who I was. He was almost more interested in all of the em-

barrassments in my life than the accomplishments. He convinced me to reveal every hurt I had ever experienced, and every joy I had ever wanted. I was afraid of his interest; I couldn't understand why he wanted to know me. After all, the girl I pretended to be was so much better. She was whole and strong and brave and intelligent, while I was a broken and vulnerable coward who had more than a fair share of foolish notions. But he drew me out from behind my mask, and every time I tried to run and hide he would pursue me as far into myself as I could go.

This was an intimacy I had never experienced. This was romance, girl. Classic, Disney princess romance applied to my life. I was the princess in need of rescue from my inhibitions, and he was the prince who loved me, who wanted me badly enough to fight myself for me. When he looked into his future, he couldn't picture it without me. I was irreplaceable. He saw the person concealed within my body as someone beautiful, passionate, courageous, kind, and gentle... He saw a woman within me.

My very existence dissolved into turmoil. The same words I had been using, the same phrases that appeared to satisfy everyone else... suddenly nothing I could say was good enough to express myself. For the first time, it wasn't enough for him to know that I loved him. I wanted him to feel it. I needed him to feel it. But in order to achieve this connection I would have to draw out the woman within me, wear her on my sleeves until we merged into one. I had to become everything that he thought I already was. I think it took me so long to become a woman because I didn't want to be one alone. Patrick understood that, and he waited for me. That's when I really knew.

This was all a bit much to process at twelve. I have such a desire to bring Lelo back now, to hear the words exactly as she said them and not as I remember them. I have reached a point in my own life where I am beginning to experience the type of love and intimacy she described to me all those years ago. There have been moments before when I felt that I had finally "become" a woman, only to find later that I was still the fumbling awkward teenager that Lelo left behind. I wonder if she would be able to look at me with that same patient pity and explain to me that my time has indeed come, or that it is not here yet. Thinking on her story now I imagine that my time is close, because I am feeling and experiencing many of the same things she described to me.

I would venture to say, however, that many women never actually feel completely, one hundred percent “womanly” all of the time. Perhaps there isn’t a single moment that defines the transition from girl to woman. Perhaps it is merely a process marked by several momentous occasions: your first cycle, your first crush, your first kiss, your first orgasm, your first job, your first house, your first child, your first grandchild, your first wrinkle. Or perhaps the journey to womanhood is a subtractive process, marked by the occasions that strip away the protective layers of our hearts: embarrassment, insult, rejection, disappointment, failure, pain, grief, fear, loneliness, and judgment. Perhaps we will not understand or appreciate our ultimate femininity until the very end, when we have experienced every bittersweet conclusion: a last cycle, a last child, a last dance, a last laugh, a last sunset, a last meal, a last kiss, a last touch, a last word, a last prayer.

I don’t suppose I will ever understand what it means to be a woman as well as Lelo did. I may never be able to mark a beginning, a specific moment to define my transformation. I may never fully transform. But in revisiting her words and her

memory I have at least come to understand a bit more about love. Love is something that happens, not only something you feel. It happens in our firsts and it happens in the things that expose us and it happens in our lasts. If we embrace the love that happens, despite all circumstances, we can embrace our femininity. We can draw out the women within us by accepting love as often as we create it.

“To be a woman is to be lost, sometimes,” Lelo said. To love a woman is to find one.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

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First Place

Fine Arts

The Art of David

by Alyssa Christenson

Both Donatello and Michelangelo were master sculptors of their time, which can certainly be recognized in the execution and completion of their respective sculptures of David. Both sculptors, Michelangelo and Donatello, use the image of a nude David from the biblical story of David and Goliath to represent specific ideals and stand for specific messages. Though each piece is considered to be from the time of the Renaissance, each sculpture was considered a groundbreaking piece in two separate environments that were in many ways worlds apart.

Donatello's bronze David was a piece that was originally commissioned between the 1420s and 1460s by the Medici family and was placed within the Medici palace (Davies et al. 2007, 533). At this time in Florentine history, Florence was recognized as being in a fairly stable and peaceful state with the Medici family essentially ruling Florence in everything but name. Donatello's piece was especially ground breaking at this point in history because, as well as including other classical elements, such as David's contrapposto stance; this piece is often recognized as being the first life-sized, freestanding nude since antiquity (Davies et al. 2007, 533). Though there are many classical elements about Donatello's David, there are also a number of elements about the piece that are very curious, and in many ways leave an open possibility to sexual suggestion. For instance, the David is represented in a contrapposto stance his form is incredibly youthful; much more so than is usually used in classical nude pieces, creating a languid and almost smugness to the piece's general emotional affect. In addition to the pose of the figure, one is also struck by the general youthful softness and nakedness of the figure's



body. Donatello's artistic choice to place the broad-brimmed hat and knee-high boots emphasizes this soft nakedness of youth that some might consider as sensual and even sexual. In addition, the feather on the dead Goliath's helmet runs right up the side of young David's leg up to his inner thigh insinuating sexual connotations. Furthermore, the overall attitude of Donatello's David, holding a sword much too large for him, standing on Goliath's head, and still grasping a stone, exudes a playful and impassive attitude, a very different attitude than one would expect after the terror David is supposed to have faced. Ultimately, I believe that this depiction of David represents the attitude of Florence at this time of the Early Renaissance. A time at which, the arts were, in many ways, being reinvented under the generous patronage of the Medici family as well as an attitude of cultural pride and celebration, Donatello's David was not only commissioned by the Medici's, but kept in private away from the eyes of the people of Florence (Davies et al. 2007, 534). Historically, much like Donatello's David was kept behind the walls of the Medici palace so often was the Medici's political rule over Florence. Ultimately, in many ways, Donatello's David became a symbol of the time and people of Florence, as well as how they viewed the world as they knew it.

Michelangelo's marble David was a piece created for the Florence Cathedral and commissioned in 1501. During this time of High Renaissance, Florence was going through times of transition and, to a degree, was experiencing turmoil as well (Davies et al. 2007, 565). After the death of Lorenzo de' Medici's death in 1492, the rise of Girolamo Savonarola led to the expulsion of the rest of the Medici family and the "Bonfire of Vanities." Savonarola's consequential death in 1498 led to the rise of Florence's Republic (Davies et al. 2007, 565). Michelangelo created the 18-foot marble David to sit atop the Cathedral and look over Florence, but after seeing the piece the patrons and the city of Florence believed the piece to be too beautiful to be placed somewhere it would never be seen. So instead, it was placed in front of the building that housed the head of the Florentine government. Michelangelo's David was particularly significant because even more than Donatello's David, the piece became an emblem and symbol for the city of Florence (Davies et al. 2007, 566). Therefore, it is particularly significant how much after classical antiquity Michelangelo's David is modeled. Much like Donatello's model this

David demonstrates the contrapposto stance, yet the body itself is incredibly different. Michelangelo's David demonstrates the heroic, superhuman perfection, through the defined and swelling form, which Michelangelo derived from the classical sculpture of Rome. In addition to the classical perfection the David's form possesses, one can also see the Hellenistic elements, which influenced Michelangelo in nearly all his creation. The Hellenistic element of the David is largely found in its incredible tension and potential for motion. Much like Hellenistic sculpture of the ancient Greeks it appears as though the David is caught in a freeze-frame of the narrative and given a moment David will burst forth from his stony prison to complete his mission and defeat Goliath.

While both sculptures demonstrate an incredible amount of naturalism to the human form, they show incredibly different psychological elements. Where Donatello's David appears to be playful and at rest, Michelangelo's David, as he seems to nervously finger his slingshot, seems incredibly stoic and tensed for action in a paradox of motion. Though he appearing at rest, if called on it appears he could at spring into action to defend the walls of Florence. It

is no surprise that Michelangelo's David was recognized by Florence not as a triumphant hero, but as a guardian of the city (Davies et al. 2007, 566).

In the end, we as analysts, art historians, and, even more simply, as admiring onlookers are captivated by these two pieces, both called David, for different reasons. Yet, though these pieces in many ways are incredibly different, there are a few ways in which they are undeniably similar that reaches beyond time and place. And, though each David is reaching out from a different time, full of different people, events and from under the hands of different master artists, they both speak. They both speak from the beauty and skill from which they were executed and lead us to humanity and hope of possibilities. In addition, through these pieces, we find a great diversity, depth, and influence, which capture us in the essence of life and living.

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First Place

Humanities

Glory Before Death

by Kayleigh Bauer

Welcome to Warriorship 101: Reaching Valhalla with Valor. As a profession, warriorship is unusual as it does not ensure its own continuity through success; warriors seem to be in a profession that seeks to end itself. Whether by destruction of foes or the defending of one's society, the warrior is always seeking to eliminate the need for his job. We may wish that we could live in a time of peace in which a warrior would be obsolete, but "this unreliable world" sometimes requires the use of violence for the sake of serenity (1622). This is not an easy profession to join of one's own free will, but if a person should so wish to fill the apparent need for defenders of all that is to be loved, he or she might as well know how to fight the good fight. Here we learn from the example set by the greatest ring-giver to ever shank a Swede: Beowulf of Geatland. In all matters of combative knowledge, or hero Beowulf was a giant among men; battle choreographers of today have as much to learn from him as did the foot-soldiers of ancient history.

"So. The Spear-Danes in the days gone by/ and the kings who ruled them had courage and greatness./ We have heard of those prince's heroic campaigns" (1-3). The opening lines for the epic poem of Beowulf's escapades explain why a warrior is remembered: for courage, for greatness, and for heroism. It is not every soldier on the field who can have "the strength of thirty/ in the grip of each hand," and it is understandable that each man and woman will fight in a way to optimize his or her personal strengths. That said, certain personal characteristics are essential for anyone who cares to be of any use on the battlefield. Such attributes include physical stamina (can you swim for days in a full set of armor?), resourcefulness (what do you do when your



sword fails?), an aversion to surrender, and, some might argue, royal lineage (but by this point we've all got a share of blue blood).

A warrior's job, at its most basic definition, is to defeat the enemy. Sometimes the enemy will be small and part of a larger threat, but the villains of epic narratives are always enormous and monstrous. At the end of the hero's career, it will be the victories over giant, man-eating things that will be remembered, so it is imperative that any soldier worth his salt know how to bring down a beast who might be twice as big as a Viking and three times as mean. By far the best method, as demonstrated by Beowulf in his struggle with Grendel, is the Right Arm Removal Tactic. The RART is especially useful in situations where swords are ineffectual, or when the head is too high off the ground for easy decapitation. Seasoned warriors of considerable strength might be able to deploy this method by merely grabbing hold and hanging on, but Battle Newbies will undoubtedly have to settle for employing ropes or enlisting the help of several able-bodied comrades. The results of the RART leave the instigator at a clear advantage as the opponent is left short one limb, short one weapon, off balance, bleeding profusely, and readily prone to infection. Removal of a leg could arguably achieve similar results with the added bonus of inhibited mobility, but hip joints tend to be more difficult as a result of size and the gravity of the beast above. Battle strategists often suggest decapitation as the surest way to end the monster, but, because this is such popular knowledge, most foes will take measures to protect their Command Central. Disarmament is often enough to bring down the monster.

Battle regalia may vary from soldier to soldier, but certain pieces are essential to any Warrior's ensemble. Helmets are nearly always present, serving both protective and decorative purposes, as are shields and sturdy footwear. Swords are the epitome of classic weaponry and have survived for thousands of years as a symbol of power and skill. It is impossible to be a pansy with a sword. That said, the sword is not the end-all-be-all of badassery, and the truth is that even the best blades can fail. Even for Beowulf:

*It was never his fortune
to be helped out in combat by the cutting edge
of weapons made of iron. When he wielded a
sword,*

*no matter how blooded and hard-edged the blade,
his hand was too strong, the stroke he dealt
... would ruin it.” (2682-7)*

Having so much strength that one might damage the sword is not really a concern for most people, but it should still be taken into consideration by all that backup plans are necessary for when the allegedly fail-proof blade does, in fact, fail.

Swords might be optional, but armor is fundamentally indispensable for combat. As humans we are naturally little more than lumpy flesh on fragile sticks; but since we have the knowledge and ability to give ourselves protective coverings, by all means, we should use it. Our noble hero recognized the importance of armor and wore full regalia to every skirmish and scuffle, even for those confrontations which required swimming. “[Beowulf] would surely have perished/ [...] had the strong links and locks of his war-gear/ not helped to save him...” (1550-30). For a warrior, not wearing armor is taking unnecessary and wasteful risks in an already dangerous profession.

Success as a warrior is pretty much determined by three factors: how many foes you defeat, how many battles you survive, and how many allegiances you form. To accomplish these goals, a warrior might travel great distances and seek out challenges far from home. When going about these adventures abroad, it is very important to remember decorum and courtesy for the people you are assisting. Be sure to ask permission from the local authorities before taking out the scourge of the mead hall and then graciously accept any gratitude after the victory. Gifts given after the battle serve to further one’s heroic career and continue the triumph over evil. However, once the battle and subsequent formalities are finished, it is vital that the hero returns to his own home to fight his or her own wars and slay his or her own dragons as Beowulf does after the Danish affair.

Warriors may be violent by nature, but they are not altogether lawless or without decorum. An example of such a more is the disgrace associated with returning home without the king. Wiglaf, Beowulf’s most loyal comrade, declares that “[a] Warrior will sooner/ die than live a life of shame,” just before joining his fearless leader for the final clash (2890-1). Wiglaf also proclaims:

*I would rather my body were robed in the same
burning blaze as my gold-giver’s body
than go back home bearing arms.
That is unthinkable, unless we have first
slain the foe and defended the life
of the prince of the Weather-Geats” (2651-6).*

Warriors will also tend to prefer action to inaction, holding fast the ancient blood-feud traditions of life for life. “It is always better,” Beowulf says, “to avenge dear ones than to indulge in mourning” (1384-85). Certain standards and codes of honor are what separate valiant knights from assemblages of brigands.

In modern times, nations tend to keep enormous, multi-billion dollar military forces with the idea that more troops make for better security and bigger armies mean safer civilians. However, relying on sheer quantity might not be the wisest. King Leonidus of Sparta, a warrior on a level of Awesome almost equal to Beowulf, understood this when he brought his small troop of 300 Spartans to face the Persian invasion of millions. Other generals doubted his seemingly piddly force, but the difference was clear before the battle even began. A rich concentration of trained soldiers is far more effective than a fleet of drafted tradesmen, so much so that Leonidus can justifiably smirk at the other general’s army and say, “You see, I have brought more soldiers than you have”(300). Beowulf also knows the merits of a small armed force, and took only 11 comrades with him to face the dragon. It is said that “the prince of rings was too proud/ to line up with a large army/ against the sky plague”(2345-7). Whether such tactics truly stem from pride or from shrewd battle-smarts, both Beowulf and Leonidus made decisions that potentially spared great numbers of civilian lives.

“For every one of us, living in this world means waiting for our end. Let whoever can win glory before death. When a warrior is gone,/ that will be his best and only bulwark”(1384-89). No one can call warriorship a clean job, or an easy job, or even really a practical job; but at this point and at every point we have been at so far, war has been a reality and fighting has been a necessity. For as long as there will be warriors, there will be warriors dying. Hrothgar puts it best in his farewell to Beowulf:

*Do not give way to pride,
For brief is your strength is in bloom*

*but it fades quickly; and soon there will follow
illness or the sword to lay you low,
or a sudden fire or surge of water
or jabbing blade or javelin from the air
or repellent age. Your piercing eye
will dim and darken; and death will arrive
dear warrior, to sweep you away. (1760-68)*

Death will come for us all at our time; if we are going down, we might as well take a foe out with us on our way out. If you feel so inspired by this point to go forth and pursue the life of a hero, then good luck and God's speed. May you destroy many a mead bench when you reach the Shining Cathedral in the Sky.

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Second Place

Humanities

From Hilarious Clarity To Serious Obscurity

by Sarah Drury

The single most important element lost from the novel *Northanger Abbey* in its film adaptation is humor resulting from the novel's witty satire. Although there is still some humor present in the film, it is not nearly as strong as the novel's, and some of it is actually of a different type. In the novel, the main source of humor is satire achieved through the revelations of incongruity. Catherine Morland's situation and life as a heroine is incongruent with the lives of heroines of the then-popular Gothic novels, her perceptions of life are incongruent with reality, and readers' supplied knowledge is incongruent with the characters'. These cleverly detailed incongruities are what cause the satire to succeed by aiding the reader's recognition and realization of the satire's presence. However, in the film, the shown incongruities of Catherine Morland's story and life as a heroine are significantly lessened by the alteration of several important aspects, making the satire in the film much less effective.

One such alteration is the omission of clear connections and distinctions between Catherine's story and those stories being satirized. In the film, the only mention and slight explanation of the Gothic novels being satirized is found when Catherine and Henry are conversing about Ann Radcliffe's novels during their woodland stroll. The connection between the sensational Gothic novels and Catherine is shown through scenes depicting Catherine's wild imaginations. But again, this is much less effective because it is confusing to viewers as to whether these imaginations are scenes from a book, or merely Catherine's own original daydreams. The scenes of her fantasies are exactly that – her fantasies, not an-



other person's written work. So the whole connection between Morland and sensational novels (like the Gothic) is altered, the result of which is the alteration of the focus of the film's satire. The novel's satire of certain genres of novels becomes the film's satire of readers' responses to those genres, not the genres themselves.

There are other, more subtle changes than the previously mentioned, which connect the story to that type being satirized, instead of allowing a clear, humorous distinction between them. The novel's satire consists of telling a story, and informing readers how unlike a type of story it is. But the film's satire consists of minimizing the differences between the story types, which is not nearly as humorous as the first satire. The drama of the story is amplified in the film, giving the impression of melodrama. This is humorous to a degree, but when a clear distinction between the occurring melodrama and that being made fun of is absent, it becomes much more serious than humorous. An example of amplified drama in the film is the film's conclusion, in which Henry becomes disinherited for marrying Catherine, and then they marry and raise a family. That, in and of itself, is not terribly dramatic, but when compared to the novel, it becomes obvious that it is more dramatic. Henry was not disinherited in the novel; he merely disagreed with his father, then his father conceded and grudgingly approved the marriage. Henry being disinherited is dramatic and appears to be positively and seriously portrayed in the film, not satirically.

Added sensationalism is another alteration of the film which seems to obscure the novel's clear satire. One area of the film that was sensationalized is the appearance of *Northanger Abbey*. It was a low, modern-looking structure in the book, but the film turned it into the very thing that the novel specified it as not being: a massive stone building, tall, dark, and having prominent Gothic windows. Other sensationalism in the film can be found as well. For example, when Henry and Catherine are driving to the abbey in the film, he affirmatively answers her question about the presence of vampires in the abbey. Up until this moment, he had been joking with her about all the "horrors" of *Northanger Abbey* (the trap doors, secret panels, etc.) but his expression immediately became more serious at the mention of vampires. His seriousness is reflected also by the tone of his voice as he thoughtfully and cautiously says that there "is a type of vampirism" at

Northanger Abbey. Then, when he is at Fullerton explaining his father's conduct and his mother's death to Catherine, he refers back to his previous statement of vampirism at the abbey, causing the film to conclude with a much more sensational implication of General Tilney's treatment of his wife than that found in the novel. In the novel, General Tilney's behavior towards his wife is comparable to that of murder, not vampirism. Obviously, vampirism is more sensational, and appears to reflect more harshly on General Tilney, allowing Henry's complete disinheritance to be more believable. Vampires were not once mentioned in the novel as relating to the abbey or the General, but vampires were quite often mentioned in Gothic novels.

The alteration of the relationship between Henry and Catherine in the film also contributes to the film's ineffectiveness as a satire. Instead of portraying Henry to be an older, teacher-like figure to Catherine, the film portrays him as more of a lover than a teacher. Almost all of his important "teaching" moments found in the novel, such as when he informs her about Bath, discourses on her improper use of the word nice and on his broad literary knowledge, are either completely omitted or changed so that they show Henry to possess and disclose only about half of his knowledge to Catherine. He is also shown in the film to be closer to twenty years old than his twenty-five years in the novel. Because of these alterations, Henry seems to be more equal with Catherine in regard to age, knowledge, insight, and seriousness. Their relationship seems to be driven more by attraction than their desire to teach and to learn from each other, as it was in the novel. The passionate, yet awkward kissing scene at the end of the film reinforces the given impression of their relationship being more romantic and passionate than it was in the novel, which significantly lessens the division between Catherine Morland's story

and that of other Gothic heroines. She becomes like them in the film, by having a romantic lover who is more willing to accept her as she is, instead of being completely contrasted to them by having a lover who was older, wiser, and wishing her to become more grown up.

Another alteration that similarly causes the film to be less distinguishable from the stories it is poking fun at is the recreation of Catherine's character. During several of the film scenes detailing her imaginative fantasies, she is incredibly flirtatious with the villains of her fantasies and always faints. Catherine's flirtation is never mentioned in the novel. In fact, Catherine's lack of flirtation is shown in contrast to Isabella's flirtatious acts. Neither did the novel mention Catherine's fainting. Gothic heroines typically fainted, but the Catherine Morland of the novel was a calm, hardy lass for whom fainting was not a frequent occurrence. Catherine's character is also much bolder and less willing to learn in the film than she is in the novel.

Although the film had reasons for its alterations, it did not succeed in retaining the novel's humor because it did not retain elements of the novel that were essential components of the novel's successful satire. By incorporating the alterations of main characters, relationships, settings, and given information, the film lost many distinctions between what it was satirizing and what it was itself. It became what it itself was satirizing.

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First Place

Social Science

Sex and Lies

by Sarah Patterson

It seems that the task of defining marital infidelity is a complex one because many scholars believe that societies around the world share a common condemnation of adultery while others argue that what defines marital infidelity varies by culture. Marital adultery is defined by Wikipedia (2007) as “voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a partner other than the lawful spouse”. According to Wikipedia, there are several definitions for marital infidelity because what constitutes an act of unfaithfulness varies within and between cultures, rather than on the presence of sexual behavior. On the other hand in their article, “Attitudes Toward Nonmarital Sex in 24 Countries”, Widmer and Treas argue that cross cultural opinions on marital infidelity are not so diverse, stating that they found “considerable agreement across cultures on the rightness and wrongness of nonmarital sex” (p. 10). Widmer and Treas (1998) cite statistical data refuting such claims of cultural diversity and their relation to differing opinions on sexuality. The findings of their study showed that all the countries included in the sample shared relatively similar attitudes toward nonmarital sex. For example Widmer and Treas (1998) state that “an average of 66% for all 24 countries” described extramarital sex as always wrong (p. 4). Due to the diverse opinions and norms of infidelity throughout the world’s cultures these research findings are limited to those within the United States. Furthermore, marriage has evolved with the rest of societies and cultures throughout the world and is different in many ways from those of previous generations. To avoid any research variations, this paper will focus on strictly the causes and consequence related to marital infidelity in America today.



What could push someone to marital infidelity? Just like many other elements of the human psyche, we may never be able to grasp a perfect understanding of why people commit marital infidelity. However, researchers have shed some light on the subject, providing several theories and hypotheses with supportive research findings in regard to the psychological causes of marital infidelity. In her article “Reflections by Glass-Causes of Infidelity”, Dr. Shirley Glass (2007) states that understanding why people cheat is a large and complex task that “requires a willingness to explore individualistic vulnerabilities, relationship factors, and the social-cultural context” (p.1). Glass continues on to state that the majority of the mystery lies in the difference of men and women. She describes men as more likely to separate sex and love in their extramarital involvements, and women as connecting sex to love. Other reason for marital infidelity cited by Glass (2007) were those describing individualistic vulnerabilities such as one “looking to escape life’s many pressures, seeking admiration or acceptance, enhancement of self esteem, or reclamation of fading youth” (p. 2). Glass describes that the causes of infidelity are hard to pin point but seem to the result of either individual, social-cultural, or relationship issues. These causes will be discussed in more detail further on in this article.

Adding on to Glass’s claims, the article “Big-Five Personality Differences of Cheaters and Non-Cheaters,” by Tricia Orzeck and Esther Lung (2005) presents findings also stating that marital infidelity may be the result of individual personality differences. In their article Orzeck and Lung explain their study which examined the differences between cheaters and non-cheaters. Using “Goldberg’s (1990) ‘Big-Five Personality Factors’: Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect-Openness,” Orzeck and Lung compared questionnaires of one hundred and four participants who volunteered for the study (p. 1). The results revealed statistically significant differences between cheaters, as well as between the group’s perceptions of themselves and their monogamous partners. Orzeck and Lung (2005) suggest that marital satisfaction could be positively correlated with emotional stability, stating that “cheaters may seek out more stable partners if they perceive their monogamous partners as being less psychologically adjusted than they are” (p. 8). Based on their research findings, Orzeck and Lung conclude that

married couples who are more similar in personality tend to be more satisfied, and therefore less likely to encounter issues of marital infidelity (2005, p. 7). Orzeck and Lung hypothesize that marital infidelity may be largely connected to certain personality differences.

Because men and women have been found to differ in significant ways, pin pointing particular gender differences will allow the causes and effects of marital infidelity to be further dissected. Roger Hock (2007) notes in his text book, *Human Sexuality*, that men and women see and hold different expectations and wishes when it comes to relationships. Though such differences may be considered by some to be merely stereotypes created by society, evidence supports their existence none the less. Hock explains that great deal of research has concluded that men and women, especially in intimate relationships such as marriage, seem to be speaking different languages when it comes to expressing emotional needs and expectations.

Though Hock supports that a healthy sex life in marriage increases monogamy and happiness, it also states that sex does not make or break a marriage, stating “[o]ne of the most common stumbling blocks in a marriage relates to fundamental gender differences in communication styles” (Hock, 2007, p. 395). Hock (2007) states that relationship problems are not usually due to sexual dissatisfaction, but result more from neglecting certain emotional needs. From Hock’s statements, it is suggested that infidelity could be a result of sexual frustration, but is more often a sign of a bigger problem within the marital relationship. Perhaps, it can also be hypothesized that men and women who are not receiving respect or appreciation in the marriage may be more likely to commit infidelity.

Hock is not the only one who believes there are many other important components beyond sex that make a marriage successful. In her article, “The Effects of Infidelity on a Relationship,” Antoinette Manigault (2002) suggests several emotional reasons attributing to extramarital sex, including one partner feeling inferior or superior, seeking excitement, boredom, aging, jealousy, and extrication. In the article “Types of Infidelity,” Carol Tibaldi (2006) gives similar explanations for infidelity including “mid life, or pre-midlife crisis, low self esteem, lack of love and attention given to a spouse, anger, boredom, marrying too young, peer pressure, opportunity, disappointment in the marriage and as

a way to end a marriage”(p. 1). Tibaldi goes on to explain that many people cheat for their own selfish reasons or because they may hold anger or resentment against their spouse.

After exploring particular emotional or psychological causes of marital infidelity, it has been discovered that several of the hypothesized origins suggest individual or relationship problems. Examining some biological origins regarding marital infidelity, the article entitled, “The Orgasm Wars,” F. Bryant Furlow and Randy Thornhill (1996) states that human beings were not created to have only one sexual partner and that there are certain evolutionary reasons behind infidelity. Like true evolutionary theorists, Furlow and Thornhill explain that men are biologically driven to be quantitative lovers in order to ensure the survival of their genes, and describe women as qualitative lovers, seeking mates who will provide food and protection. Furlow and Thornhill (1996), hypothesize that male body symmetry correlates with various sexual issues, even infidelity stating that:

[m]ales who most inspire high-sperm-retention orgasmic responses from their sexual partners don't invest more in their relationships than do other men. Some studies show that symmetrical men have the shortest courtships before having sexual intercourse with the women they date. They invest the least money and time in them. And they cheat on their mates more often than guys with less well-balanced bodies (p. 39).

In their article, Furlow and Thornhill (1996) conclude that more attractive men have a higher chance of committing infidelity than less attractive men. It is also stated by Furlow and Thornhill that the women who engage in infidelity “retain less sperm from their husbands, and often experience copulatory orgasms during their trysts, retaining semen from their secret lovers” (p. 37). Interestingly enough, Furlow and Thornhill argue that women who commit infidelity biologically “crave” the sperm of their secret lover. Furlow and Thornhill blame infidelity on gender differences created by biology, stating that men are programmed to have different sexual patterns and desires.

A few major causes of marital infidelity relating to psychological, social, biological issues have been examined, allowing proposed effects of adultery to be more understandable. Moving on to the suggest-

ed effects of adultery, Antoinette Manigault (2002) discusses in her article, "The Effects of Infidelity on a Relationship," the seriousness of marital infidelity and its effect on those involved. Manigault states that when it comes to marital infidelity, "[t]he aftermath is usually longer than the actual affair," (p. 1), and discusses the short and long term effects of infidelity. Manigault says that parental conflict can create a tense and hostile home environment, even after the affair is over. Trust is obviously broken within the relationship, but depending on the situation, infidelity could create mistrust and a strain within the home. Manigault (2002) affirms that a "[l]ack of trust may cause constant suspicion and interrogation," (p. 1), and that disappointment in the actions of a parent or guardian can lead to resentment in children, possibly causing long term psychological damage or future relationship problems.

Manigault continues on to state that infidelity causes low self-esteem in one's partner which can transpire into self-criticism or even depression. Furthermore, she claims that infidelity has also been found to be a large attribute of low self esteem in children as they may blame themselves for their parent's problems. Manigault (2002) states that "[c]hildren begin to question their worth when they witness a parent's infidelity" (p. 1). She also mentions several abnormal behaviors that can develop in children who are involved in situations of marital infidelity. For example, Manigault states that girls may develop obsessive compulsive disorder, as they look for some control over their lives. Girls may also be unable to trust men in the future because of the infidelity of their fathers or, "may have hostile feelings towards men because of what they witnessed mothers endure when they were children" (Manigault, 2002, p. 2). Manigault continues on to state that "[b]oys who witness infidelity may have low respect for women as their father did for their mother" (2002, p. 2). Boys may learn from the actions of their fathers that it is ok to have a lower respect for women and may grow up to commit adultery as well. Furthermore if their mother was the adulteress, boys may develop trust issues or resentment toward women.

In continuation of particular emotional effects of marital adultery, it is suggested by Roger Hock (2007) that many sexual problems are psychologically related as strong emotions such as stress, fear, and depression activate responses of the nervous

and endocrine systems (p. 236). Emotional distress that can come as a result of marital infidelity can possibly lead to anxiety issues and sexual disorders such as a loss of arousal, inability to reach orgasm, reaching orgasm too rapidly or too slowly.

Supporting previous claims connecting emotional distress and adultery, in her article, "Types of Infidelity," Carol Tibaldi (2006) describes several consequences of infidelity including "depression, lost trust, anxiety, an overwhelming feeling of loss" (p. 2). Though Tibaldi describes the consequences of marital infidelity similarly to previous writings, her personal attitude about marriage survival stands out as a positive one. In her writings, Tibaldi (2006) approaches infidelity recovery with a sense of optimism by stating that "[e]ven though over 60% of relationships may have a cheating spouse during the course of a marriage, 50% of marriages survive infidelity and some even improve because half the couples that go through infidelity are moved to re-evaluate their marriage and made the changes necessary to improve their relationship" (p. 1). Tibaldi is suggesting that hope still exists for couples dealing with acts of marital infidelity.

Marital infidelity is cited as one of the major causes of divorce in America today. For example, a 1997 study by Kristina Gordon found that over half of the marriages that experience infidelity ended in divorce (Wikipedia, 2007). In her article "Types of Infidelity," Carol Tibaldi (2006) describes divorce as "[t]he most serious consequence of infidelity" (p. 2). In many cases of divorce many people ask "what about the children?" Each year, over 1 million U.S. children learn that their parents are divorcing (Henslin, 2007). There is no doubt that family plays an important role in the life of a child. Family is one of the most powerful institutions of socialization that establishes our basic values and beliefs (Henslin, 2007). Our family provides the lenses by which we see the world and ourselves. In reflection of such statements, we can conclude that infidelity and divorce may create significant negative consequences in the family unit, and the life of the child. The article "Should You Stay Together for the Kids?" by Kien Walter (2000) presents statistics regarding psychological and emotional effects of divorce. Walter's article states that "[c]hildren of divorce suffer depression, learning difficulties and other psychological problems more frequently than those of intact families." (2002, p. 2). It is suggested by Walter that children in divorced homes are more

likely than children raised by both parents to experience emotional problems, both during childhood and adulthood.

Some say that divorce scars children, making them depressed and leaves them with insecurities that follow them into their adulthood. The article "Divorce and Fatherhood" by Lawson and Thompson (2004) explains reported behavioral changes in preschool and school-age children such as bed-wetting, hyperactivity, aggressiveness, and withdrawal (Original work published 1999). Furthermore, fathers found behavioral changes in preadolescent and adolescent children such as drug and alcohol use, becoming sexually active, becoming violent, joining gangs, and skipping school. It is suggested that infidelity can create a messy divorce, making post divorce relationships often bitter and hostile. It is not difficult to imagine that divorces carried out in such a manner are usually more emotionally strenuous on the individuals and the children.

A particularly interesting source suggests that the causes and effects of marital infidelity should be thought of as dependent on one another, rather than two separate entities. A 17-year longitudinal study performed by Denise Previti and Paul R. Amato assessed whether extramarital sex precedes or follows decreasing marital happiness. Previti and Amato estimated the correlation between marital happiness, divorce proneness, and extramarital sex in order to determine whether it is the occurrence of extramarital sex that causes a marriage to break down, or if it is the deterioration of a marriage that pushes spouses to seek alternative sexual partners. The results of their study indicated that "divorce proneness predicts the occurrence of EMS," and that "EMS lowers subsequent marital happiness, increases subsequent divorce proneness, and increases the odds of divorce (Previti and Amato, 2004, p. 1). Previti and Amato conclude from their findings that marital infidelity and divorce make up a vicious cycle, stating that both are a cause and a consequence of marital deterioration.

For most, the term "one and only" entails remaining faithful and true to one's spouse. However, research seems to show many Americans as lacking this image of fidelity. In their article, "Big-Five Personality Differences of Cheaters and Non-Cheaters," Tricia Orzeck and Esther Lung (2005) report that "50% of men continued to engage in sexual and/or emotional extramarital relations while 40% of women engaged in similar relationships" (p. 2).

Such statistics lead one to wonder what changes take place after we say "I do" that would drive so many Americans to cheat? It is true that each marriage is unique and therefore, the internal mental processes of an infidel cannot be simply classified. No situation is black and white, especially when it comes to the complexity of one that involves infidelity. This paper presented a few hypothesized causes and consequences related to marital infidelity in America today. This research indicates that the causes of marital infidelity can involve a wide variety of individual or relationship issues such as emotional deprivation, sexual dissatisfaction, communication difficulties, and personality or gender differences. The presented consequences of marital infidelity, like divorce and long term emotional and psychological pain, were also stated as subject to vary with each situation.

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Second Place

Social Science

Revolution on the Farm

by Kayleigh Bauer

Since it's humble beginnings a few thousand years ago, agriculture has changed the world of human beings by fostering society and the development of civilization. Now that the process of cultivating food has evolved into an almost industrial field, people are attempting to change agriculture to better fit with the world and those that live in it. Modern intensive agriculture produces much higher yields than the old-fashioned farming can claim, but farmers and consumers alike are now wondering if such progressive methods are really the best way to produce food.



Intensive agriculture is defined by “the permanent cultivation of fields,” which is made possible by the use of techniques such as plowing, fertilization, and irrigation. Anthropologists believe that the cultivation and domestication of plants and animals probably began in the Near East around 8000 BC and then transpired in various other locations (such as China, Africa, and The New World) over the next 2000 years or so. Lewis Binford and Kent Flannery have a theory regarding the creation of agriculture as “a desire to reproduce what was wildly abundant in the most bountiful or optimal hunting-gathering areas.” As population density increased and people moved to slightly less-habitable places, they might have attempted to compensate by reproducing the environment from which they had just moved. Mark Cohen suggested that, with the number of people growing and the amount of uninhabited land shrinking, foragers would have had to either expand their collection to less desirable plants or make an effort to protect and possibly plant the desirable plants. Perhaps, Cohen also suggests, agriculture began simply as a way to get

through the dry season and avoid starvation while the meat was lean. (Ember)

The key element to intensive agriculture is the permanence it allows (or rather, requires). Societies that practice intensive agriculture have the highest population densities, the largest and most permanent communities, a high degree of craft specialization, and a large number of full-time political figures. Ember and Ember address this point in their book:

If our society did not have very productive intensive agriculture and animal husbandry, we would not have towns and cities, thousands of different full-time occupations (hardly any of which are involved in food-getting), a centralized government, or many other characteristics. (93)

In the United States, less than 2% of the population is involved with food production since agriculture and processing have made it possible for consumers to be “market foragers” who hunt and gather in the supermarkets. (Ember, 93) Because people no longer have to go out and search for food, they can focus their efforts on creating careers and civilizations.

The techniques employed by intensive agriculture also allow for factors other than the natural environment to determine what sort of food should be available in a given area. Farming in the Imperial Valley of California, for example is made possible by irrigation and so “technological and social and political factors rather than environmental factors mostly determine what kind of food-getting can be practiced in a given area.” (Ember, 97)

Of course, modern intensive agriculture does have some problems. One of the most prominent is the chemical dependence on pesticides and fertilizers, which has been a controversy for decades. Considerable differences in wealth and social stratification are also characteristic of agricultural societies, as is the frequent occurrence of food shortages. Food shortages are often a result of farmers producing crops solely for markets and thus focusing on high-yield plants over drought resistant and hardy species. Also, commercial farmers usually have one-crop concentration instead of a diverse selection. Diversity offers protection against weather fluctuations, plant disease, insect pest invasions, and changes in market demand. (Ember, 305)

The process of cultivating food has become in-

creasingly corporate and it's lately been apparent that our intensive agricultural system might be a bit too intensive. Columnist Jim Hightower asserts that politicians have taken over the agrarian industry, which is meant "by its very nature... to be... small-scale and local." "America's food system," Hightower writes, "has been industrialized, conglomeratized[,] and globalized." Farms are commercializing and becoming comparable to factories as "the high art of cooperating with nature" is abandoned in favor of economic gain. "This is food we're talking about, not widgets!" says Hightower, referring to the disconnected and money-driven mindsets of the "lobbyists, lawyers, and economists" that run the system. Crops are being treated with "pesticides, sex hormones, antibiotics, genetically manipulated organisms, artificial flavorings and color, chemical preservatives, ripening gas, irradiation... and so awfully much more" in hopes of unnaturally high production rates. Rather than being "the product that nurtures us (in body and spirit)," food is now becoming "just another commodity to fatten corporate profits." (Hightower)

However, consumers everywhere are responding to this industrialization of edibles in what could be called the Organic Revolution. Organic farming is essentially returning to the basics of growing food, without the use of chemicals and sometimes without heavy machinery. People worldwide are "reconnecting with local farmers... to de-industrialize, de-conglomeratize, de-globalize—de-Wal-Martize—their food systems" in an effort to feed their families in a way that is better for everyone. (Hightower)

While most organic consumers buy with the immediate health of their family in mind, a large portion also feel justification in knowing that the farm workers benefit from not being exposed to pesticides. Be that as it may, organic farming is a difficult business and not without its own flaws. As the business expands, more and more organic farms are becoming commercialized and while they still do not use harmful chemicals in the production, some of the labor required of the field and processing workers defeats the purpose of humanitarian food. The process of the industrialization of farming began in 18th century England as land became "a source of profit rather than a way of life." (305) Farmers lost their close relationships with workers as the farms grew and labor became just a cost of production as the focus of agriculture was shifted

from the local consumers to the mass market. Now, even some organic farms are growing into giant conglomerations and the laborers are often suffering from just as much strain as on standard industrial farms.

With labor being such a major cost factor for agriculture, organic farming is considerably more expensive than standard methods. In her article, "Hard Labor," Felicia Mello notes that, "in a conventional field, one worker can spray weeds with pesticides at a cost of \$30 per acre" while "organic farming requires crews of laborers for weeding that can cost up to \$1,000 per acre." Not only is the work expensive, it's tremendously arduous and difficult—sometimes to the point of being crippling. Workers often suffer from musculoskeletal problems from working in stooped positions and performing tedious tasks. Wages are also a source of controversy for the farm laborers, especially in the avant guard sector of organics. Profits are difficult to come by for the small organic farmers, so farmers rarely find themselves able to pay their workers more than minimum wage; health benefits are almost non-existent for the demographic. One farmer agreed that the insurance was something that really should be required but then pointed out that he couldn't even provide it for his own family. The greatest irony of the agricultural business seems to be that the organic farm workers can't afford to buy the very items they help to produce.

"It wasn't supposed to be this way," notes Mello. The organic movement that began in the 1960's was supposed to be "a wholesale alternative to industrial agriculture," but as organic farms become more industrialized and giant conglomerations are taking over the industry, the relative benefits of organic farming are being marginalized and depleted.

The debate over the treatment of farm workers has offered the false choice "between access to affordable healthy food and decent living standards for those who

grow it," but it might be possible to satisfy both needs. Especially considering the 80% or so of the money in the food system that goes to "marketing, processing, and distribution" compared to the 20% spent on production. The real choice might lie between the importance of the workers and "all those layers of cellophane and brightly colored boxes." (Mello)

"Farmers need to see it can be done," says Jim Cochran, regarding the success he's had with bal-

ancing concern for his workers with the progress of his strawberry farm. As the “only California organic farmer to negotiate a union contract with his workers,” Cochran offers benefits and above-minimum pay, as well as elevated rows “to ease the strain of weeding and picking.” Cochran admits that his labor costs are considerable, but he takes measures such as processing, packing, and distributing the berries himself to offset debt.

Intensive agriculture was probably the greatest factor to encourage the origins of civilizations, but the current system is in danger of falling apart or becoming as commercial as the shoe industry. “It’s not just on the backs of organic growers to fix this thing,” says Gail Feenstra of the Sustainable Agriculture program at the University of California. “It’s going to take a long, slow shift from a system that’s hierarchical, with a few people controlling the resources, to one that’s more disaggregated.” Consumers will have to “vote with their food dollars” for humanitarian organic food in order to indicate to those who control the industry that the buyers care about the welfare of the workers as well as the welfare of their own families.

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First Place

Creative Writing

Invisible Enemy

by Ellie Rempel

“Turn left,” said the cool female voice coming out of the dashboard. Thank God for GPS, thought Rowan as she turned onto a narrow dirt road. She had been at a conference for the mountain branch of MauteArte, a media company based out of L.A., and had decided to extend her stay. A relaxing vacation in a quaint village tucked away in the Rocky Mountains was what the brochure had promised and was just the escape she needed. The trip had also been highly encouraged by her best friend Grace. Nothing had seemed to fall back into place after the divorce and over coffee with Grace she had come to very depressing realization of what a purposeless disaster her life had become. Rowan was only twenty-seven, but felt the past eight years had been a lifetime.



Rowan was once confident and strong and had dreamed of becoming a big name in law. That was before she met Evan. They met the fall of their sophomore year and were married within the year. Rowan switched to something more practical when she realized Evan had no intention of supporting her through law school. She did what she needed to keep him happy. It took her three years to realize he didn't love her, but it took five to realize she didn't love him back, not anymore. The divorce had been messy despite the mutual agreement and Rowan wasn't prepared for the emptiness that followed. What had she done with her life? Almost thirty and she hadn't done anything that mattered. Evan had been right. Nobody would remember Rowan Mad-dock.

“You have now reached your destination,” said the dashboard and Rowan slowed to pass the cemetery. Her thoughts quickly shifted to staying on the road as she navigated past the small cemetery and down the snow packed hill that descended

into the heart of the small town. At least there was a coffee shop.

It was a Tuesday afternoon in January and Rowan was the only customer. “Grande skinny latte,” she said to the girl behind the counter and heard something mumbled from under the counter. Rowan stopped digging through her purse for her Luis Vuitton wallet. “Excuse me?” she said, wondering what was wrong.

The girl stopped her search for more cups to say, “Oh. I just asked if you are having a good vacation.”

“Actually, I just got in,” Rowan said as she put a five on the counter. She had been to the same coffee shop in L.A. for three years and never once had she been asked anything but what size she wanted. “Is it that obvious I'm a tourist?”

The girl behind the counter just laughed. “Only 675 people live in city limits and let's just say that the town isn't really the hot ticket for real-estate these days. You can spot a visitor pretty easily,” she said through her permanent smile and mouthful of braces.

Rowan struggled to pin back a mass of dark curls and wasn't quite sure how she felt about being the cause for amusement. She was a force to be reckoned with in a conference room, but with small talk she floundered, awkward without her suit and briefcase to protect her. Coffee girl just smiled and handed over the latte, started wiping the counters, and humming along with the radio. Rowan couldn't help asking, “Why don't people come here anymore?” She had never been very good at controlling her curiosity.

“Well, there is a warning out from the health department. Some people are sick

and they're not sure why,” coffee girl said casually and then added, “Don't worry! City people are just paranoid.”

“Is it really serious?” Rowan asked pushing out of the armchair and gathering up her hat and gloves.

Coffee girl shrugged, “It's got people really down, but I bet the flu is worse than this. Stomach sick, delirium, headaches mostly, but it's just that time of year, ya know?” No. Rowan didn't know. Coffee girl continued, “Everyone gets sick. The state people are just nervous 'cause there's so many.” She started organizing the sugar packets on a far table.

Great. The brochure hadn't said anything about some mutated disease. No wonder the car rent-

al people had looked so surprised when she said where she was headed. One would have expected something like this to be big news, but then again, maybe not. Whatever the situation, Rowan was already there and couldn't leave before morning. She could survive a day. One day would be alright. Yes, only a day. She thanked the girl who nodded and kept humming as Rowan zipped up her coat and stepped outside.

The temperature had dropped quickly and the cold cut through her fashionable but highly impractical coat. She climbed in her car, hit the seat warmers, and set off to find her hotel. The "hotel" turned out to be a large house with a sign tacked next to the mail box with peeling yellow and green paint that spelled out P-i-n-e E-y-r-e. "Only one day," Rowan said as she carefully trudged up the icy walk, dragging her suitcase behind her and latte still in hand. Abby Brown opened the door to find a very wind blown Rowan digging frantically in her purse for the internet confirmation. "Mrs. Maddock, I'm so happy you made it safely!" she said throwing out a solid hand to shake Rowan's mitten.

"It's just Ms.," Rowan said uncomfortably and Abby kindly smiled.

Abby was a lovely woman with her silver blond hair in a long plait and wore knitted shawl that fell around her soft shoulders. "Please, come in dear. You look frozen," she said grabbing Rowan's bag and leading her into the warm house.

She put a cup of tea in Rowan's free hand and patted the seat next to the fire place. Rowan learned that Abby was a widow and her husband had died in a tragic skiing accident years ago and had decided to open her home to guests because she got lonely. The women talked until the pot of tea was gone and Rowan asked to be shown to her room. She needed to tell Abby that she would not be staying, but that could wait until morning.

The next morning Rowan walked down the stairs and finally made her way to the kitchen. She found a place setting for one and a note scrawled in spidery script on the rose china plate.

*Rowan dear,
I had to tend to an emergency. Please make yourself at home. Scones are in the basket, tea kettle on the stove, tea bags in the pantry. I will be back around noon.
- Abby Brown*

So much for leaving this morning, thought Rowan as she filled the kettle and took a seat at the

kitchen table. She wasn't going to worry about this mystery illness until after she had eaten something. Anyway, Abby looked healthy as a horse so Rowan might as well enjoy the morning. She took her cup and a cranberry scone and settled down in front of the large picture window that looked over the frozen river.

Eventually she heard the sound of the garage door followed by footsteps coming up the stairs. Abby looked like she had aged twenty years during the night. Her eyes were red from crying and shadowed with dark circles from not enough sleep. Abby busied herself with pounding the dough that had been rising and Rowan waited, uncertain of what to say. Abby's voice was surprisingly calm as she said, "Last night a little boy, Lucas, died. A sweet little boy. Oh dear me, and he was only six years old. Poor, poor Helen..." her voice trailed off.

Finally, Rowan couldn't help herself. "What happened?" she asked, anxiously tapping her foot on the linoleum.

"The sickness," was all Abby could say as she dabbed at her eyes with a tissue.

God, the coffee girl said it was nothing, but now someone had died because of it. She had to leave right away. She shouldn't have come at all. "Mrs. Brown, thank you so much for your hospitality. I will be happy to pay for any inconvenience, but I really have to go. My office called and I've got to get over the mountain today," she said while calculating the soonest she could possibly fly out.

Of course the office hadn't called. She didn't have any cell phone reception within 30 miles of the town, but Abby didn't need to know that. "Oh dear, oh dear," said Abby as she shook her head and sat down at the kitchen table. Her eyes welled up again as she said, "Rowan, they quarantined the town in order to prevent the spread. No one can leave."

Rowan couldn't quite comprehend what was happening and sunk into the seat next to the old woman. She finally managed to ask, "How long?"

Abby kept shaking her head, "I don't know. I don't know anymore than you." Abby forced a smile and patted Rowan on the back as she stood. "You look flushed. Here, let me fix you a cup of tea," she said as she walked over to the stove. "Don't worry dear, it will be fine."

Fine? What did that mean? What could "fine" possibly mean in this state of catastrophe? Rowan composed herself to ask, "Do you mind if I make a call?"

"Oh dear, the phone lines have been down since

yesterday because of the snow.”

Rowan gave a weak exasperated laugh. This really couldn't get any worse.

The next week passed in a haze as Rowan tried to keep to herself in an attempt to limit possible exposure as more cases surfaced. One night she finally asked, “Abby, how many people are sick? I need to know,” as she tugged at the curls at the nape of her neck.

“Oh dear, I stopped keeping track after sixty. More than that now, I suppose. Oh, it's all the children that break my heart,” she replied as she stared at the empty cup in front of her.

“And they have no idea what's causing it? Where are the doctors in this? The county has locked us up, but where are the examinations? They seem to have forgotten about us,” Rowan said, her voice getting higher.

“They stopped giving examinations after fifty. It was getting too expensive to just be telling people they don't know what's wrong,” Abby said as she put her tea cup in the sink. “I'm going to lay down for a rest. My head has been giving me fits today, but feel free to use the television upstairs in guest room #5. Good night dear.” Abby pushed in her chair and left the kitchen.

Rowan couldn't settle the knot in her stomach. She couldn't even stand. This little town in the mountains was costing too much money so they had been trapped with this invisible enemy with no defense. Nobody cared. The state was willing to let a town wither away to save the cost of some medical tests. Unfortunately, Rowan knew it was only going to get worse. She realized that after waiting for days to hear any news, any hope at all, they had been left for dead.

Eventually, Rowan turned off the lights and went upstairs to find the television. Anything that would distract her from the terrible situation she was in would be more than welcome. The only channel that came in clearly was PBS which was having a classic movie showcase of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. A movie about poor, unsuspecting victims being poisoned didn't make her feel any better so after about thirty minutes, she headed off to bed.

The next day came and Rowan was still overwhelmed with revelations of the night before and needed to get out of the house. She figured that even though she didn't have any family, someone should still know that she wasn't coming home anytime soon. After a few minutes, she remembered that the coffee shop she had visited on the first day had wire-

less internet and promptly set off towards town.

From: Rowan Maddock <rmaddock@gmail.com>
To: Grace Richards <soccermama508@yahoo.com>
Subject: A problem

Grace,

We have been quarantined. This means I can't leave and will obviously miss my flight. I need you to call work and tell them I won't be in. Don't worry, I am fine. Not sick at all. My battery is dying so I have to go. Love- Rowan

Once her e-mail was sent and her third latte had disappeared, she decided she needed to go somewhere, or as far as she could go with the quarantine. She hadn't driven since she arrived because the town was easily accessed on foot, but she needed a drive to clear her head. She remembered the cemetery she had passed on that very first day as she climbed into the rental. The cemetery wasn't far from the residential part of the town, as it was perched up on the hill; it overlooked the mountain village and ran up against a forest of pine.

Rowan walked down the rows of crumbling headstones, some so old that the date had been lost in time. She wondered how old is this cemetery? as she lightly touched the head of an angel statue that was marking a child's grave. Some graves were merely marked by a large rock or a tree stump. This forgotten death was much less upsetting than the despair plaguing the town below. Dusk brought with it an unbearable chill that forced Rowan to follow her trail though the snow and back to the car. When she returned, a silhouette of Abby shone through the kitchen window. Rowan left her icy boots by the door and turned the corner to find Abby looking weak. “Here, you sit down,” said Rowan, taking the tea pot from the old woman's hands.

Abby nodded and seated herself on one side of the small table. “What have you been up to today?” she asked.

“Oh, just went up to the cemetery. Needed a change of scenery.”

“There is another cemetery on the other side of town. The one you saw is the old cemetery and most of those graves date around the late 1800's. This used to be a town for mountain men and miners,” she said, proudly gesturing to some distant time. “Rowan dear, I'm just tuckered out and am going to turn in early.”

That night Rowan lay in bed and couldn't rid her thoughts of cemetery. The movie from the

night before also kept coming to mind. Over and over, rolling in her mind. Cemetery, graves, arsenic, graves cemetery, arsenic... and suddenly it all made sense!

The phone lines were still down, but early the next morning Rowan squeezed through the coffee shop door and struggled to keep the cold outside. Rowan picked a couch in the corner and noticed that coffee girl wasn't working. With latte in hand she set to work.

From: Rowan Maddock <rmaddock@gmail.com>
To: Grace Richards <soccermama508@yahoo.com>
Subject: PLEASE HELP!!!!

Grace,
Are you still friends with Rob from Wyoming? The one who works with the dept. of environmental quality? I would ask him, but he owes you- remember Vegas. Anyway, my cell won't work and the phone lines are down.
IMPORTANT! I need an arsenic test on well water on the west side of Pine Ridge. We are quarantined so they will need to be cleared by the Department of Health. Please hurry Grace!
-Rowan

She was running on a hunch, but that was all she had. She remembered something from her freshmen year of college about arsenic getting into the ground water from old cemeteries and she couldn't believe she hadn't thought of it sooner. She could be right, but then again, she could be making something out of nothing in desperation for some kind of answer. Either way, the message was sent and in the hands of Grace. Grace could do it. She had always been the dependable one.

There was nothing left to do but go back to take care of Abby and wait. Waiting was always the hardest because it meant that Rowan wasn't the one in control. Too familiar a feeling. Her fate was hanging in the balance, but no matter what happened would anyone miss her? Except for Grace, no one cared about her. No one would remember Rowan Maddock.

By night fall, Abby couldn't climb out of bed and was too nauseous to even take a cup of tea. "Grace, please hurry," Rowan said in a quiet voice as she shut the door behind her. Rowan had never been very religious, but she started praying and figured God wouldn't mind because the prayer wasn't for herself.

Three very long days passed with regular visits to the coffee shop and the only word from Grace was

in an e-mail which said, "Rowan, trust me." Rowan was furious. Did Grace really think that three words would make this go away?

Then the day finally came when Rowan walked out of the shop and saw a circle of cars around the community building. Reporters, townspeople, and some very official looking people with suits and badges were all filing out. "What's happened?" she asked a stout woman who was teetering precariously on an icy step.

"We're free!" the lady said, throwing an arm into the air and clambering to regain her balance. Free? Rowan needed more confirmation, she needed to be sure. Her heart was racing when she stopped to listen to a man telling another, "Well, I'll be damned! It was the water all along that was making them sick. No one ever stopped to think why it was only the west side of town."

The other man asked, "But why?"

"You know that old cemetery? They used arsenic way back then to preserve the bodies and now people been sucken' it up in their well water for God knows how long!"

Then a voice she hadn't heard in ages rose over the excited voices. "Rowan! Rowan, honey! You're okay!" Grace said as she rushed to embrace her friend.

"You're here! How are you here?" she said.

"Oh, you can't believe that I would sit at home and bake cookies when you were stuck here! Nathan can handle the girls for a couple of days."

"So, it worked?!? You saved us!" she said as shock and relief flooded over her.

"No Rowan, it was you. I just made a call," she said, hugging her again.

Had Rowan been right? This time it wasn't her suit and her briefcase, it wasn't her title, it wasn't Evan. For the first time in eight years she had done something right. The doctors and the medicine the town needed were finally coming. Abby would get better and no one else would get sick. She had done that.

Rowan just stood there, stunned, and then she felt her friend's gloved hand in her own. Grace smiled and said, "Come on. You look like you need some coffee."

As they walked the boardwalk toward the shop, Rowan kept thinking, it was so simple. Why hadn't anyone else thought of it? There could be a big case waiting. Maybe it wasn't too late for law school. Maybe someone would remember Rowan Maddock after all.