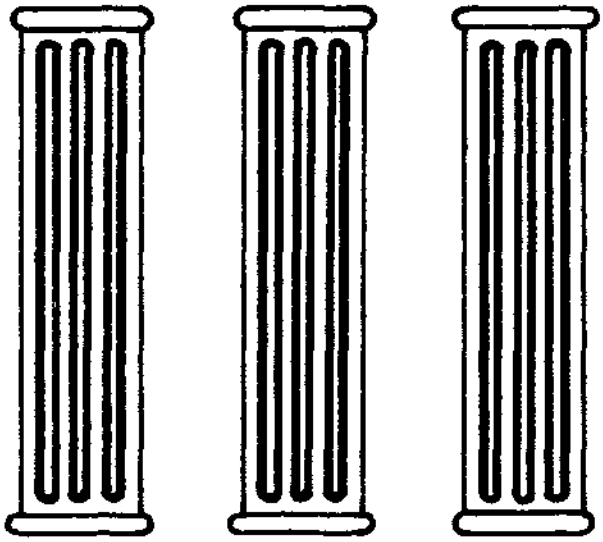

FORUM

Spring 1983

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This booklet continues the tradition of Forum, a cross-curricular publication of non-fiction prose by Loyola students. Forum encourages submissions from students in all classes. If a paper is too technical or specialized, we ask the author to revise it for a broader audience.

FORUM

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A NOTE TO WRITERS

I heard a teacher say the most unpleasant part of his job was informing students they have no talent for writing. To be gentle, yet blunt, to be completely realistic about a student's prospects, he complained, is not fun. I suppose he wanted sympathy. But I was a student trying to unearth and hoard for myself the elusive skills which meant "talent." I was frantic to claim a little talent for myself before this teacher labeled me barren, before he drew on his gentle yet blunt face and said: Now, let's be realistic about you.

A withering thing to say.

Writing students live with the suspicion that they're about to be divided into haves and have-nots: those who can please a reader, any reader, and those destitute cases whose work lacks grace or force or coherence. Criticisms are the signal-markers of the have-nots. Transitions are weak, I've been told. And scope too broad. This word is awkward here. This sentence is vague. This paragraph is uninspired, and even: This paper is slightly better than the last one. The comments are red; they loom up larger and more important than the typing. Each time an assignment was returned to me, branded, I held it in my hands and felt withered. I wanted to rise up and defend myself, saying, "You just didn't know what I was doing." My fellow students, the dumb and the bright, would nod approval.

But criticism cannot be put off like that. The corrective comment, like an orthopedic shoe, graceless and conspicuous as it is, is not itself the handicap. The temptation is to resist criticism, to wear a misunderstood expression and refuse to put on the ugly shoe, as it were. Or to wear it resentfully, with angry, staring eyes, to acknowledge that you've been told you needed it, and no more. Neither face will get you very far. Grit your teeth, I say, and let the corrective comment do its job. Unsightly and uncomfortable as it may be, uninspiring and awkward, it will make you a better writer if you let it.

Sensitivity is natural in a writer; I might even take a clumsy leap and say, it is required that a writer be sensitive

to criticism. Take it personally. If my transitions are weak, then I demand to know, beneath my mild and studious face, how I am ever going to change. If my scope is broad, then I plot to myself — I'll be narrow and see how you like it. If my words are uninspired, I plan to write under a state of extreme inspiration, to see if it works for me as it has for Hemingway and Poe.

If you must go slightly mad in order not to be discouraged, if you find yourself retaliating with evil thoughts, or drinking, or amusing yourself with your own private scribbles, then you must. Because sooner or later you will spot a fault before you turn in the paper, smooth a transition triumphantly in your mind, scratch out an awkward word on your rough draft and choose a brilliant word instead — a small, quiet, brilliant word. Sooner or later you will wrestle with an idea until its scope is true to you, the writer, broad if you are thinking broad, narrow if you are thinking narrow, in either case grounded in careful thought and confidence. Not only will you be able to anticipate criticism, but you will defeat the glaring red marks. Instead of <u>This sentence is vague</u>, you'll see <u>better word</u>, printed small, or <u>perhaps another example here</u>, or <u>very nice phrasing</u>. You will have earned the right to remove the orthopedic shoe, but you probably won't.

Criticism will not wither you anymore. You'll find yourself asking for a critical opinion, and you will be your own critic. You'll ask yourself questions like "Do I really <u>believe</u> this entire argument I've made?" And "Is this elaborate opinion I've created <u>true</u>?" Then, undefeated by the withering opinions of your readers, but ready to clomp onward, rethinking and revising, and with a healthy respect for your own critical face, you can be realistic about your own prospects. Or not, as you choose.

Writing will have become to you a task as small and brilliant as walking.

Laura Brookhart

PANTA REI

At 3 am, as I sat typing the first of two papers due that morning, as I finished and began the next, as the carriage knocked a can of Tab onto the new copy, I knew I would see the sunrise. My roommate woke me at 12 the next day asking, "What happened?" "Let's not talk about it," I begged, "It was a scam." Once again, I had used an "insider's" word with an "outsider," who was left in the dark. As I explained that my all-nighter was a "bad scene," an embarrassing situation, a "scam," I reflected on the patterns of everyday speech. From their shared experience, groups establish a lexicon.

Slang rises to popularity by infiltration of "outsiders" to the inside, who then carry the lexicon to the public. "Insiders" have common background or living conditions — perhaps the San Fernando Valley, or the third floor of Hammerman at Loyola College; the F.B.I, or the C.I.A. The C.I.A. were once the only ones who "86'ed" a file or requested an "update on the scenario." Since then, "outsiders," unaware of the origin of these terms, have incorporated the jargon. My high school classmates would "86" school, but only after receiving an "update on the scenario" in philosophy from the students who had not skipped class with us. Valley Girls surface outside the San Fernando Valley, with dozens of preteens finding school "grody to the max" and Timothy Hutton "tubular." Of course, once "outsiders" have popularized slang, the originators are challenged to create new words.

Linguistic invention perpetuates slang. My quad, for example, invents words, deriving new meanings from existing ones. During the first two weeks of the semester, "toasted" appeared as the word to describe the condition of a roommate as she crawled in from a party Saturday night. "Wastecase," a compound word, was formed as a quadmember lamented her inebriation. In response to the query "Why aren't you studying biology?", Triska replied that she was "on drugs," meaning she was too restless to sit still and study. While somersaulting down the hall, Nini and Triska were told by Ginny to "chill out," that is, calm down.

Slang not only characterizes their conditions of being, but people themselves. "Clown" describes a hyperactive acquaintance, "the circus" his residence, and "juggling" his activities. One girl's boyfriend suddenly outgrew her, as he acquired a new hairstyle, jacket, and dark sunglasses. We called him "Mod."

Occasionally, phrases comprising a lexicon will be shortened. Abbreviated slang saves time and breath, and protects discussion from any eavesdroppers. As one of us prepared to remove a utensil from the cafeteria for future use, she would whisper "D.R.T.," signalling to the others that she was a dining room thief and please keep it mum. An attractive boy would amble by our table, evoking the dreamily sighed "C.B.C." (couldn't be cuter), that forever labelled the boy as a "D.H.C." (dining hall crush). A good friend was called a "C.P.F." (Close Personal Friend). Triska and Nini persisted on holding a water/toothpaste/shaving cream battle while running up and down the hall. They were definitely out of control — "O.O.C." Thankfully vacation arrived since everyone was "F.T.P" (falling to pieces). Seeing her with the same boy twice, we suspected Nini's relationship with him was becoming "H^2"—hot and heavy. Had she fallen prey to "P.D.A.," she would have been told that her public display of affection had "G.T.G.," got to go!

Outsiders become irritated by a code of truncated words, but more can be covered in a conversation when words are sliced, reduced to easily uttered one- or, at the most, two-syllable words. "Ex," "diff," "def," "prob," "caf," "convo," "perf," "rif," "cas," "rettes," "rents" translate to "excellent," "different," "definitely," "probably" or "problem," "caffeine," "conversation," "perfect," "terrific," "casual," "cigarettes" and "parents." Students take "lab," "Bio," "Socio," "Philo," "Stats," "Econ," "Calc," "Chem," and "Polisci." Even the public abbreviates: We address the "Pres," ride the "Metro," spy on Russians with "subs," use "bikes," "autos," "gas."

We even create slang from foreign terms. English evolved through acquisition, but the majority of words are now Anglicized, except those with no single, accurate translation, such as "debutante," "faux pas," "carte blanche," or "a priori." In slang, a word such as "dinero" is thrown

casually into conversation for both humor and to affirm membership in a clique: "I can't go to the game because I'm like no dinero" means "I can't go to the game because I have no money."

As the accent of a geographic region develops, so does slang. Not only does slang unify a group but it is a creative effort to colour language and to vary presentation. A student who tells others he "flagged a test" takes the pain of failure away while adding humor to a sore subject. The cool and popular leader of a clique may demand his followers to "blow this flea trap," showing his ability to enliven "Let's leave." Slang has its fads; the words we find amusing and appropo today may become archaisms, paving the way for the new wave of slang. "Groovy," "hip," "hippie," "cat," "dough," and "grass" have died. Replacing them are "cool," "radical," "dude," "scoots," "kick," "awesome," "sweet," "funk," "thorough," "beat," "totally," and "reefer." And tomorrow?

Heraclitus, the ancient philosopher, summed his vision of the universe in the statement Panta Rei: "All is changing, all is in flux; that which we were or are today, tomorrow we will not be." So our language, so our slang.

Jane M. Satterfield
CA 113/Poetry: The Perfect Word
(Empirical Rhetoric II)

STILL FIGHTING TO OVERCOME

Joan Baez remembered that I offered her popcorn. When I walked backstage after her concert at Merriweather Post Pavillion this past summer, she called to me, "Hey, where's the popcorn?" I had been sitting in the fourth row during her performance, and she glanced down and saw me crunching away. "What's that?" she asked, smiling down at me. Blushing, I called back "Popcorn," offering her the cup. She shook her head, strumming gently on her old acoustic guitar. "Can't sing if I eat that," she said, softly, grinning from ear to ear. "Later," she told me. I nodded, certain that she would surely not see me later, much less share my popcorn with me. But when Eddie Puls, my friend on the Howard County Police Force, asked me if I wanted to go backstage after the concert, I agreed.

I thought about the popcorn as I approached Joan Baez. She faced me, in purple Genie pants, white peasant blouse, and bare feet. She asked for my popcorn immediately. I confessed that it was gone as she clasped her warm hand firmly around my freezing one. She held on for a long moment, staring directly into my eyes. Her hand was very strong. She smiled as she asked my name, her eyes wrinkling at the corners. I did not detain her. I told her simply how beautiful I thought she was, inside and out. I said I admired her writing. She frowned suddenly, asking me how old I was. When I said twenty-one, her hazel-green eyes widened. "And you know who I am?" she asked. I smiled, too captivated by her piercing gaze to answer. "Thank you," she whispered, as she turned to another woman who was pleading for her attention.

I turned back as I walked away and saw her staring after me. She nodded and waved as I followed Eddie.

"Why did she thank <u>me</u>?" I asked Eddie.
"Beats me," he shrugged.
"I should thank her," I added, still in a state of shock.
"What for?" Eddie asked.

I shook my head, realizing that, like many others, Eddie had no idea what to thank her for. He conceded that she gave a beautiful concert. Anyone who has ever heard Joan Baez

sing will admit that she is a magnificent singer with an incredibly crystal-clear soprano range. She can mellow an entire concert hall with raw vocal power. But many fail to recognize that the songs that she sings are often painfully written by Joan Baez herself; as she said herself in her song, "Winds of the Old Days," "The lady's adrift in a foreign land/ Singing on issues both humble and grand." "Honest Lullaby," tells the story of a working mother who wants to spend more time with her child and watch him grow up. She sings, "Now look at you, you must be growing/A quarter of an inch a day/ You've already lived/Near half the years/You'll be when you go away." In "Stewball," she writes of a champion filly, Ruffian, who died on the race track while racing the champion stallion, Foolish Pleasure. She "for some reason or another, became very sad about that," and wrote her tribute to the "little gray mare."

Some issues are more prominent. In "Turn Me Around," Baez writes of Indira Gandhi and asks, "How'd she get that name?" Mahatma Gandhi was a man of peace; Indira Gandhi is a well-known violator of human rights. In "Blessed Are," Joan Baez writes of those who have died for their beliefs. In "Kingdom of Childhood," she sings of the passage of time: "Happiness is temporary, believe me/I know/It can arrive as a shining crystal and leave as the melting snow/Come all you lads and lasses, The Kingdom/of Childhood passes."

The list of songs that Joan Baez has written is almost as endless as the messages she tries to relay. The care she takes with her poetry is evident. Her songs are long, intense ballads. She said, the night I saw her at Merriweather, that she has written over a thousand different poems and melodies, but now her stories are lighter, even humorous. "The intensity leaves you as you age," she called, into her silver microphone. "You learn to relax a little more...To see things with the same deadly eye...But to comment a little more carefully. You go farther in the long run."

Joan Baez has gone too far already in some people's estimation. She has been called an activist, a radical, anti-American. Consider her guilty on at least two counts. She openly admits that her "political philosophy has always been non-violent activism." And if one believes that peace, justice, and freedom are radical concepts, Joan Baez is a

radical in the truest sense of the word. The anti-American tag is wrongly assigned.

Baez was first called anti-American over a decade ago, when, as a flower-child and a creature of Woodstock, she took a stand on the Vietnam war. In 1972, during the Christmas bombings, she travelled to Hanoi to see the human suffering herself. She returned to the United States deploring the war and the wretched condition of the people in Hanoi. She was scoffed at, called a traitor to the flag. The media called her a "red." Many did not take her seriously because of the publicity she received. She had a history of rebellious conduct.

When Caesar Chavez struggled to unionize American agricultural workers, Baez was at his side, singing songs, fasting along with the workers. When Martin Luther King marched for black rights in the early sixties, she marched beside him, singing, "We Shall Overcome." When her husband, David Harris, was arrested for draft evasion in the early sixties, Baez, six months pregnant, went on a nationwide tour, promoting peace, demanding an end to the war, encouraging young men to burn their draft cards. Her open criticism of the United States' conduct during that time earned her the anti-American title. Many government officials referred to her as a wasted, bleeding-heart liberal. Baez fought their comments and bad reviews with direct action. She continued to tour, to speak out against injustice. In spite of her infamy, she earned a faithful following.

Whether or not one agrees with Joan Baez' politics is not the point. The point is that she does not sit still. She recognizes wrongs and, in her way, tries to right them. She uses her power, her fame, her voice, to promote campaigns against war and injustice. She takes chances and travels, donating the proceeds of her tours to the causes she is supporting. If nothing else, she has earned respect because she tries, peacefully, to change what she feels is threatening and, in the process, makes others aware of the problems.

Joan Baez does not stop in the United States. She moves into the world, searching different countries, trying to pinpoint oppression and violation of human rights. She sings of Russia, of a woman who wrote of the indignity of the

invasion of Czechslovakia, who was forced into a mental institution. "Natalia" begins, "Weaver of words, who lives alone in fear and sorrow..." Baez said that, "It is because of people like Natalia, I am convinced, that you and I are still alive and walking on the face of the earth."

Baez has written of the boat people in Southeast Asia who have nowhere to go because she "didn't think anyone else would." In 1979, she founded Humanitas, an International Human Rights Committee, to provide aid to these unwanted refugees. Baez herself adopted a family and went on a world-wide tour, asking others to do the same. The proceeds of her tour were donated to Humanitas. In Southeast Asia she witnessed the indignity of the homeless. In Cambodia, she held a little girl in her arms and sang her a lullaby as she died.

Most recently, Joan Baez has been in Latin America, braving mudslides and threats from right-wing regimes. Her concerts and her messages on human rights were cancelled on technical legal grounds in country after country. In South America, she was treated with tear gas, harrassment, and death threats. Everywhere she was followed by plainclothes police. In Rio, the federal police forbid her to sing. Instead, she walked through the slums, visiting the people. In Argentina and Brazil, she performed impromptu, because her concerts were outlawed.

In Argentina, she met with families of "desaparecidos," people who were detained by police and disappeared afterward. Baez estimates the missing number well over six thousand. She gave the Argentinians a gift; she allowed them their sorrow. She tried to joke, "I have my guitar; do you have your hankies?" Then she said, "They would either smile or break into tears again." When her concert in Rio park was cancelled with nearly ten thousand in attendance, instead of singing, Baez danced. In Brazil, her first concert was cancelled one half hour before she was scheduled to perform. The reason: She did not have a contract. "If I were Frank Sinatra," Baez protests, "it wouldn't have mattered." She marched through the streets singing, leaving people wondering who the "gringa" was who sang so beautifully. In Chile, her filmed voice lessons and audio cassettes were confiscated. She wanted to be arrested as in the old days, but she

feared for her co-workers and her son back at home. She worried that Gabriel, age ten, would not adjust well to seeing his mother arrested.

The stories of Latin America are the ones that Joan Baez told this summer at Merriweather. The proceeds of this year's tour are going to Humanitas once more. A new record would also benefit, she told us, but unbelievably, she cannot get a deal with a record company. She has written dozens of new songs and they remain unrecorded. She performed them in concert. The album title, she told us, would be "Children of the Eighties." Her writing was powerful and convincing. Her voice was as beautiful and strong as ever. But she pointed out she is not writing what the kids want to buy. At the recent Peace Sunday rally in New York City, Baez said, of herself and Bob Dylan, "The kids today think of us as some sort of strange aging myth." If she compromised, wrote pop music, some rock and roll, and cut down on her lyrics, she could get a deal. "I can't stomach that," she said simply. "I need to write something that's palatable to me...I wish the kids would only listen..."

If I could get Joan Baez to listen to me, I would say to her what she said to Bob Dylan in "The Winds of the Old Days":

> Idols are best when they're made of stone
> Savior's a nuisance to live with at home
> Stars often fall, heros go unsung
> And Martyrs most certainly die too young
>
> So thank you for writing the best songs
> Thank you for righting a few wrongs
> You're a savage gift on a wayward bus
> But you stepped down and you sang to us

I listen to her. I know who she is. Perhaps that is why her face registered shock when she learned my age. I certainly am no sixties refugee. Most people at the concert were. Maybe I gave her a little hope.

Valerie Macys
Advanced Prose

TROPICAL RAIN FORESTS OF THE AMAZON: DESTRUCTION OF A PRICELESS RESOURCE

Tropical rain forests, (sometimes referred to as tropical moist forests), are the oldest and most diverse ecosystems found on the earth today. These forests lie in the equatorial areas of over twenty different countries and account for approximately one-twentieth of the earth's land surface. The largest area of tropical rain forest found on the earth lies in the region of the Amazon in South America, particularly in the countries of Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia. Over the centuries this area has evolved into one of the most complicated and fragile ecosystems on the earth, but the advances of civilization and the demands of Twentieth-Century industry have threatened to completely destroy the Amazon rain forest within a mere fifty years. Incredible as it may seem, an estimated 36% of the Amazon rain forest has already been destroyed and each month an area the size of Massachusetts is either converted into farmland or destroyed for a variety of industrial purposes. This translates into an average of 110,000 to 200,000 square kilometers, (approximately 42,000 to 77,000 square miles) per year, or an unfathomable 20 to 40 hectares (approximately 50 to 100 acres) per minute! The ominous words of a National Research Council committee best sum up the situation: ". . . the destruction of these vast ecosystems without the development of ways for replacing them with others equally productive foredooms a large portion of the human race to misery and portends instability for the entire globe by the year 2000."

In order to understand the cause of this tragedy, one must understand both the nature of the Amazon rain forest and the factors which debilitate the forest with such alarming efficiency. Tropical rain forests are so-named because of the large amount of rainfall that occurs throughout most of the year. The sun evaporates enormous amounts of water from the equatorial Atlantic, which, in turn, results in abundant rainfall over the Amazon area. Oddly enough, the soil in this "counterfeit paradise" is extremely nutrient-poor, and the plant life must absorb tremendous amounts of water in order to siphon off the few nutrients available. To compensate for the poor soil, the decomposers in the ecosystem break down the dead vegetation and debris in a remarkably short period of time, allowing for rapid re-absorption of the nutrients back into the system.

One of the chief characteristics of the Amazon rain forest, and tropical rain forests in general, is the tremendous diversity of plant and animal life therein. Despite the relatively small area of land that they occupy, it has been estimated that over 3 million different species inhabit or comprise the tropical rain forests, of which only about 500,000 have been identified and cataloged. Some estimates have suggested that as many as 40 to 50% of earth's 5 to 10 million species inhabit the areas of the tropical rain forests. As an illustration, it is estimated that there are as many species of fish living in the drainage basin of the Amazon as there are in the entire Atlantic Ocean. Theories hold that this diversity of animal and plant life is possible because of the temperate climate which promotes growth and reproduction throughout the entire year. As described by Paul W. Richards, "the tropical rain forest has thus been a sort of evolutionary laboratory in which biological changes have been proceeding uninterrupted by major climatic disasters over an enormously long time."

However, a man-made disaster, deforestation, now threatens the life of the Amazon rain forest and many of the little known species abiding therein. Approximately two-thirds of all deforestation is due to the local practice of shifting agriculture. Impoverished peasants, many of whom are squatters, cut or burn away acres of virgin forest for cultivation. They work the tract for one or two years and, because of the poor soil, must move on to another area and repeat the process. This practice formerly had little impact on the Amazon rain forest as a whole, but the population explosion in these underdeveloped areas has caused a corresponding exponential increase in the amount of damage done. Such practices, though, are not surprising in an area where 93% of the land is held by only 7% of the population and mere survival has become the immediate priority.

Another devastating blow comes by way of the commercial timber industry. Multi-national corporations, seeking hardwoods in particular, have torn into thousands of virgin acres, often with no intention of replanting the same. Whole sections are often clear-felled in attempts to obtain only a few types of trees; the remaining trees are then left as waste.

The cattle industry is fast becoming a major cause of deforestation. Like their poorer counterparts, the cattle farmers also practice a type of shifting agriculture, but on a much larger scale. Their pastures also become unprofitable within ten years, and they move on to clear yet another large patch of forest. Ironically, most of this beef is not utilized by the peoples of the Amazon region; it is exported to the U.S., Europe, and Japan where its cheap price appeals to many fast food-chains.

Urban growth, in general, is another cause of deforestation in the region. The Trans-Amazonian highway not only brought more people deeper into the forest than ever before, but also accounted for the destruction of over 130,000 square kilometers (approximately 50,000 square miles) of forest. The mining of charcoal for steel mills has also contributed to deforestation. Industrial crops, such as palm oil, cocoa, and rubber, have supplanted former forest areas in the region.

The consequences of the loss of the Amazon rain forest and tropical rain forests in general cannot be understated. Deforestation is having dramatic effects on the climatological and hydrological aspects of the Amazon region. At least half the rainfall in the region is due to plant transpiration, and destruction of major portions of the forest could cause a cycle of reduced rainfall that would further disturb the remaining forest. Also, the lack of vegetation has caused severe runoff and erosion problems and is responsible for uncharacteristically high flood levels for the Amazon. Many of the industrial crops depend on the predictable flooding of the Amazon. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources gloomily predicts the eventual collapse of the commercial fishing industry in Brazil due to deforestation. The U.S. is not exempt from the consequences of deforestation. It is believed that deforestation could cause a disruption of climatic patterns and a loss of rainfall across the nation's farm belts. Effects of a reduced oxygen supply caused by the loss of forest area are still not completely understood.

But there are other, less ominous reasons for preserving the Amazon rain forest. Many plans indigenous to the Amazon have proven their usefulness in the pharmaceutical field; others, like the rubber tree, provide natural alterna-

tives to oil-based products. Perhaps, most importantly, the incredibily vast number of species present in the Amazon rain forest could serve as a diverse genetic pool for the developing field of genetic engineering, to say nothing of the aesthetic beauty that these species provide.

Steps, however, have been taken to solve this menacing problem. The United Nations has been instrumental in sponsoring research through several of its agencies — the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNESCO, the U. N. Environment Programme and the World Health Organization. In 1978 the U.S. formed the U.S. Tropical Forest Interagency Task Force, which developed a program of goals for preservation of tropical forest areas. However, the current economic recession has hurt U.S. efforts to implement these goals. Inter-agency rivalries between the various U.N. groups have frequently dulled their well-intended efforts. The future of the Amazon rain forest remains an uncertainty.

Paul Rieger
Principles of Ecology

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WHY?
"Only The Good Die Young"
- Billy Joel

In a meager nineteen years of life Wade Ray Tucker, II, a friend of mine, had paved a promising path. During the last years of his life he had volunteered much of his time to younger children. From coaching the fundamentals of seasonal sports in Parks and Recreation to organizing sandlot games, he loved to work with kids. This virile, strong young man who had been selected for the All-Metro and All-County football teams and had just completed his first year of college on a football scholarship died a senseless death. Why did Wade Tucker have to die this way?

On the first Thursday in June 1978, seniors at my high school were having a pre-graduation party. Wade had just come home from college a few days before. Greg Tolley, a graduating senior, saw him on the lawn as he drove by. Wade, who had graduated the preceding year, knew most of the seniors. When Tolley offered Wade the chance to see some people he hadn't seen for a year, Wade accepted. Wade only took time to write his mother a note stating where he was going and that he wouldn't be home for dinner.

At two o'clock Friday morning his mother woke up. "That's strange," she thought. Wade always came in when he arrived and told her he was home. She decided to get up and check to make sure he was all right. When she opened the door to his room, she was shocked to see that he hadn't returned. "Oh my God. Something is wrong. He always calls when he is going to be past midnight," she mumbled to herself. She woke her husband. By six o'clock Mr. Tucker could wait no longer, and he called the police.

Wade was found dead at noon on Sunday of that same weekend. As it turned out, Wade and Greg had left the party around eleven o'clock Thursday night. Greg Tolley was driving north, heading home, when, for unknown reasons, the car failed to negotiate a curve, crossed over the southbound lane of the road, sailed off the guardrail, and hit the support to a highway sign. The car overturned and rolled down an embankment. Wade lay pinned from the waist down by the

car. Greg Tolley was thrown clear and lay in an unconscious state near the car until early Saturday morning, at which time he started wandering around in a semi-conscious state. It wasn't till approximately noon on Sunday that he wandered up the embankment and walked out in front of a car. The motorist stopped at the sight of the dazed youth wearing blood-stained clothes. All Tolley could say was, "My car is over there." After some searching the motorist found the car and notified the police.

The unwillingness of the police to respond earlier is largely responsible for Wade's death. When Mr. Tucker called at six o'clock Friday morning, the reply was that nothing could be done until Wade was missing for twenty-four hours. Tolley's parents received the same reply. Late Friday afternoon Mr. Tucker went to the police barracks. He was greeted with their stereotype of the young — all youthful guys are rebellious rowdies who grab prostitutes and run to Ocean City. The police had probably received many petty missing person complaints in the past that turned out to be nothing, so possibly the twenty-four hour waiting period can be justified, but they had absolutely no justification for their attitude. They had made up their minds that the two took off for Ocean City, would be home after a couple of days, and nothing was going to change it. Mr. Tucker pleaded with the troopers, stating, "My son didn't take his wallet, let alone a change of clothes. Why and how could he go to Ocean City?" The response was, "Kids today are impulsive; he probably borrowed the money from some friends." Mr. Tucker continued to insist that his son wasn't like that at all. After an exasperating two and a half hours at the barracks, filling out forms and arguing with troopers, Mr. Tucker was totally worn out. As he was leaving, he remarked, "My boy is with the Tolley kid. Why would the Tolley kid miss his own graduation ceremony to go to Ocean City when he was planning on going the day after graduation anyway?"

All those who were close to the family, including my mother, were uneasy. She has a cousin, who at the time held a ranking position in the police force. As a close friend of Mrs. Tucker's, she really thought if she called her cousin and explained that Wade wasn't the stereotype they had labelled him, he would surely be able to get something done. Unfortunately, Mr. Carr, as brainwashed as the other troopers,

said, "Aunt Bonnie, the boys have taken off for Ocean City with some friends or else they are over an embankment somewhere like up at the quarry." Mom persisted but was unsuccessful in getting him to put anyone on the case.

Mom wasn't ready to quit yet. The chief ranking officer at the time lived across the street and down one house, so she walked over to talk to him. As she approached his home, she found he was sitting under a large shade tree in a lounge chair with a cocktail in his hand. His whole attitude was "I work from nine to five, Monday through Friday, and that's all." As Mom had just begun to speak, he rudely said, "So call and tell this to the guys on duty. After all, this is my weekend." My mother was clearly not going to convince the police to change their attitude towards Wade.

All those who cared, family and friends, decided that since the authorities obviously weren't going to do anything, they would. Wade's younger brother, Brad Tucker, and some of his friends combed Ocean City just to prove the police wrong. The rest of the family and friends drove up to the quarry and then all over Harford County. Unfortunately, no one was trained for investigative work, so they didn't really know where to look nor what they were looking for except the car, Wade, and Tolley.

Thus, police negligence also played an inexcusable role in Wade's death. Trained, the police failed to act. During the day three motorists at different times called in reports of a dazed young man stumbling around in a cornfield. Each time the motorist gave directions to the cornfield where Tolley was wandering. No one checked or followed up on these reports. Another motorist reported that the southbound entrance sign to the highway was down. No one followed this lead either. When the police receive identical reports from different sources, one could assume that they would follow up the reports. If any one of the four reports had been checked into, Wade and Tolly would have been found.

Even though the blame can be largely laid on the police, they are not the only ones responsible. Too many of the rest of us are so absorbed in our own little worlds that we don't take a minute of our time out to help the next guy. In Wade

and Tolley's case, a jogger ran along Route 24 Friday and Saturday mornings. Each time he passed by the scene of the accident, he saw the overturned car. On Sunday morning, as he passed by, a crowd of police and spectators had gathered around the fatal scene. The jogger admitted to police that he had seen the car, but rationalized his failure to notify them by saying, "I thought there was no one in or under the car, that it was there as a result of a minor accident and that arrangements had been made for the car to be towed away."

Sure, three motorists did stop and at least called police about a young man wandering around, but how many thousands of people driving by saw Tolley in an obvious state of need and never even took enough time to call the police, let alone stop and offer help? Is it because we don't want to take a little time to get involved that we rationalize, "Well, he's probably on drugs" or "He must be a dangerous character or he wouldn't be out there wandering aimlessly around in the first place?" What does this say about our compassion and concern for others? What does this say about us as people?

As I reflect back, I guess the part of Wade's death that hurts me most is the fact that Wade didn't die until eight o'clock Sunday morning, four hours before his body was found, two and a half days after the accident. The autopsy determined the cause of death as asphyxia. In other words, he suffocated after choking on his own vomit. No part of his body was crushed when he was pinned under the car. If he had been found just four and a half hours earlier, he could have survived the accident. If the police had been willing to change their attitude and had listened to his family and friends, Wade might have been found in time by the people supposedly trained to spot indications of unusual events, such as cars jumping guardrails and removal of highway signs set in concrete. Instead they were all tied up in their bureaucracy and in ticketing speeding motorists, one of whom was Brad Tucker, who was returning home from Ocean City after finding out his brother had been found dead. Unwilling to look for Wade, the troopers were willing to give Brad a speeding ticket.

If the police had been willing to soften their attitude, if they had done a reasonable job of checking into called-in reports, especially identical ones, if a few more people had taken a minute out of their hurried lives, Wade would most likely have been found in time. Wade wasn't perfect; he was human. But ironically he seemed always to have the time to help others no matter what he was doing. Wade's summer employer said, "Even though I've only known Wade for a short time, I could tell he was a class A person by his respect and attitude." Why did Wade have to die a senseless death?

Why?

Bart Kreiner
CA 113

THE LEARNING CONNECTION

What is learning? To the baby, it's crying to gain warmth and comfort. To the child, it's successfully tying both shoes for the first time. To the psychologist, it's the relatively permanent changes in behavior that are the result of past experience. To the student, it's reciting every genus and species of the phylum Arthropoda. Learning may be all these things, but at its core, learning is an active process.

Each individual, from the beaming child with the white-toothed grin of satisfaction to the droopy-eyed student intoxicated from the littered, yellow-highlighted pages of a thick biology text, shares in the dynamic enterprise of collecting knowledge. But learning, like someone's personality, defies easy definition. Compare it to the workings of a self-activiating IBM computer—gathering and sorting, shuffling and rearranging, analyzing and synthesizing. For me, these functions merged as I rewrote a history 101 paper. Learning is a union of several active thought processes.

Revising my bluebook essay on the French Revolution wasn't something I'd eagerly plan for a Friday night, or any night, come to think of it. In fact, I dreaded tossing my meticulous notes off the desk and furiously tearing through the textbook searching out pertinent facts. That paper made me bypass several meals and a good night's sleep because of my churning stomach and whirling thoughts. But it was just this personal involvement that created a situation for learning. I was angry. My original bluebook essay (the one I muddled in class) had the teacher's penciled comments squeezed in the margins and extra blank pages. No grade appeared, but that little voice inside me that never lies hissed, "This rates about a D+. You didn't research or organize the material very well." And I knew the voice was right.

Shocked by my failure and the stirrings of my inner voice, I decided to act. I thought, "What do I care whether or not the killing of three innocent people at Versailles in 1789 was justified?" Edmund Burke, the English conservative, called it a flagrant atrocity, while the reactionary Thomas Paine claimed the killings were inevitable and necessary. Forced to revise, I had to ask which man was right? Which one deserved my support?

Well, as I revised, I began to care. After thinking about it, I did favor Burke's stand. French history (with pictures of the tyrannical Louis XIV and his lavishly clothed court at Versailles scampering through my mind) had always interested me. The incident at Versailles was a crucial turning point for the French and the rest of the world. Therefore, the essay question I had to answer wasn't some petty, trifling matter. Wouldn't I be concerned if three innocent spectators out of 10,000 cheering the Orioles at Memorial Stadium got killed? Of course. The point is, I myself asked the questions, with a firm conviction that human life is sacred. I had a legitimate interest in the material and a solid opinion to express. Like a rigid, tight-lipped lawyer pleading the case of an innocent victim, I had a mission to complete—partly to boost my grade in the course, but mainly to assert and develop my own position.

But what was my case? I would not have swayed a jury beyond a reasonable doubt of the victim's innocence with my gaunt facts and arguments, lacking substance and development. I couldn't argue my case using frivolous knowledge that just sauntered into my head. Without some kind of intellectual stretching, learning could not occur. Out of my basic knowledge and confusion had to grow a revised network of related facts and arguments.

For starters, I borrowed a book documenting the day-to-day events of the revolution from my high school library. I toted the book to the hair salon and faithfully read as my hair obeyed the demands of sixty pencil-thin curlers. My researching didn't stop until I felt satisfied I knew exactly which events took place, what significance they held, and what type of violence we were talking about. I reread my background material, carefully and attentively examining the complex Burke and Paine readings just as I had examined the wiggly green euglena in tenth grade biology. I took notes. Like a squirrel hoarding acorns, I gathered extra information from the source readings, specific teacher comments, previous class discussions, the history text, and the reference book capsules. The guy next door, in favor of the opposing position, dutifully withstood my merciless interrogations and cross-references. I reread my bluebook essay for the fiftieth time pinpointing my weaknesses and expanding the good

points. Did the fact that Louis XVI was lethargic and agreeable belong before or after the claim that all absolute monarchs are potential threats to a revolution? How important was the trampling of the National cockade by the drunken officers? Could the destitute, starving women and children of Paris only get their rights through violence? My mind paddled through these ideas, each fighting for its share of my attention. Each brain cell feverishly searched to hook together a complete circuit of thoughts. I reconsidered and reorganized every jumbled detail and incident. My head was a rubber band stretched back and forth, straining like a slingshot.

Finally, just before I snapped from the tension, everything came together as if I'd solved the Rubik's cube. Each sharp detail, each unfaltering argument, each fierce counterargument stepped into position. Those paragraphs melded into one grand, logical argument. Ideas, smoothly linked and connected one to another, resembled a child's wooden set of beads. This creation, this neatly woven web of ideas, made sense. And I authored it.

A sense of accomplishment is necessary for learning. Without self-satisfaction, there is no growth. When I hurled my last sentence down on the page, I inhaled a tired, final breath. A smile played on my lips. My head dropped forward, catching itself with a jerk. The adrenaline slowed its pace. But this was okay. I knew I had filtered each argument of Burke and Paine, separating the finer points from the coarser, unrelated material. Each paragraph followed the same line of reasoning, like a train on a track, racing to reach its destination, yet pausing to admit fresh ideas and to expel the tired, worn ones. Like a deluxe, remodeled 1903 steam engine displayed for all to see, my paper was a work of excellence.

My original questions, worked through my mental assembly line, produced a complete, well-made product. I had my reward. I'd done my best. The interesting thing, though, was that I not only became an expert on the 1789 incident at Versailles, but I got a clearer picture of myself. Gathering and sorting, rearranging and shuffling, analyzing and synthesizing also alerted me to my process of thinking.

This intimacy, this union of processes, is at the heart of all learning.

The more mental associations I could pull together, links I could join, ideas I could connect, the more complete my learning. There must be units or pegs where knowledge becomes attached and meaningful. To borrow from William James, the more mental hooks one has, the easier it is to hang new material. My personal struggle, mental gymnastics, and feeling of pride were united like puzzle pieces to form a whole experience — learning. To top it all off, as an extra delight, the paper returned to me with a dazzling A+ on the final page.

Kristy Sexton
CA 113

ESCHATOLOGY

Her eyes still watered at the mention of his name even though it had been four years since his funeral. I sat with my aging Grandma in the back seat of our car watching silently as my father searched the Memorial Park lawn for the tree that marked my Grandfather's grave. Grandma watched too. Watching was all her age would permit now. It was Easter Sunday and time to remember my Grandpa with a memorial lily from church. I saw my Dad scooping a small hole in the earth to accommodate the pot which held the flower. He was using a metal spatula that had found its way into the trunk — a surrogate window scraper.

You've got to make sure the pot's in good or they'll run right over them with the mower," Grandma said.

I said nothing. I thought of how my other Grandma always came prepared with hedge clippers and a spade to trim back the grass so the name of her husband wasn't covered. I wondered if any of it mattered.

"What do you think happens?"

"What, Grandma?" I could see her eyes, wet and wide, looking through me.

"Do you think there's...there's a life beyond this?"

The seriousness of her question startled me. I pretended to think it over. I fidgeted in the seat, avoiding her stare.

"Well...Grandma...I..."

"Do you? Do you?" Her voice cracked. A tear fell. I guess my hesitancy startled her.

"Yes, Grandma, I do."

She leaned back in the seat. My Dad soon returned from planting the lily and we drove home — Grandma comforted by a vague assurance, myself troubled by the fact that I had lied.

Clearly, I was not comfortable talking about my beliefs in life after death. Had I been truthful, I would have admitted my doubts, but at this time I feared that honesty would do more harm than good. In retrospect, I can say that I did believe in an after-life, only my belief was so confused and vague I interpreted it as denial. Vagueness of belief in an after-life, even among persons who accepted the teachings of most churches on the subject, is a common finding of Norman Pittenger, author of After Death Life In God. He found that what people say they believe about an after-life and what they profoundly believe are two different things. When death is rarely discussed, most people are unable to articulate their profound beliefs if given the chance, such as I was given when cornered by Grandma that Easter afternoon. Eschatological questions are rarely thought about except, perhaps, when someone dies, but even that is no assurance. I have experienced many deaths—of friends, relatives, even strangers who were my patients in the hospital—and I have yet to know my views. The readings for this paper have encouraged me to reconsider my thoughts.

The "Christian hope" that I aspired to previously was, ironically, the hope that all those hellfire and damnation images of the second coming, painted so vividly by Dante, Milton and contemporary fundamentalists, were indeed fiction. Schubert Ogden's discussion of the need to demythologize the apocalyptic and gnostic myths of the New Testament reflects a welcome view of scripture as an art form. My present eschatological views have been greatly influenced by those of Ogden, Pittenger and Mellert, all process theologians. I endorse the theories they promote because they recognize limitations to what can be known about life after death and relate concretely to life before death. Furthermore, they emphasize this world as more significant than some imagined next one and stress that God, not man, is the central focus in the hereafter.

One of the criticisms levied against those who talk of an after-life is that any discussion can only be speculative. How, indeed, can one know about the certainty of life beyond death unless one has died and returned to tell about it? True, given our advanced medical capability, there have been reports of a "Lazarus Effect" experienced by persons who have survived resuscitation for a cardiac arrest. They tell of

seeing bright light, hearing music and feeling an immense peace. Last words on a death bed give another glimpse into the beyond. I was told that my grandfather's last words were "Oh, what a beautiful morning!," as if he had seen some Eden-like garden or, perhaps, just brightness. Regardless, we still don't really know what happens when one dies.

As a result, I am quite leery of any explanations which presume to have some "inside" information. Traditional discussions of subjective immortality often err by being too confident in their descriptions of what the after-life must be like. Indeed, Ladislaus Boros speaks with a certainty one would expect from a man returned from the dead, especially when he talks of a world in which the blessed and the damned "associate with one another and have the right to talk with God." At the same time, others are too vague. Rahner and Trois Pontaines assert the continued existence of the soul, or, in the latter case, of human reason, but fail to explain how or where that soul or person exists and just what it does for the rest of eternity. Yet, were they to answer these questions, most likely, their answers would throw them into Boros' camp.

The alternative view of an objective immortality advocated by Ogden, Pittenger, and Mellert, resolves this dilemma by first acknowledging that everything cannot be known about the after-life and then by basing like theories on the analogue of the human memory. In his concluding remarks. Pittenger acknowledges that while God values man's contributions to his creative advance. "The exact details, <u>how</u> this may be done are veiled from us; the reality itself is given with our faith in God as cosmic lover." Invariably, faith enters into theological discussion, especially discussions as obtuse as those concerning death. The process theories are singular, however, in the way they look at <u>this</u> world to help explain the next. Ogden bases his entire discussion of God's nature on the fact that "the God affirmed by Christian faith may be said to be in an analogous sense the self of the world." Specifically, he contrasts man's limited capacity for memory (both individual and collective) with the "infallible" memory of God — a memory central to the understanding of objective immortality in process thought.

In the process view, inclusion in God's memory, and, therefore, in the continuing offering of the lure of creative advance in the world constitutes life after death, a far different view from the traditional notion of a bodiless soul roaming with some questionable purpose in a groundless eternity. The process view suggests that the self becomes objectified in God's nature and continues, as part of that nature, with the work of relating the world in a creative-receptive way. In this conception, how one continues to matter after this life is analogous to how one mattered in this life.

Another strength of this theory is its affirmation of the value and significance of the present life on earth. Unlike Boros, who views this life as mere preparation for death—a mask or role that we must shed in order to truly know ourselves and God—Mellert asserts that "what one was during life, especially during the final moments of life, determines what one is eternally." Ogden claims that the entire history of man and all nature is significant in God's eyes. Troisfontaines, however, sees this life as just a part of the continuum of human growth. In a moving personal statement about the loved ones in his memory Pittenger adds:

> I have come to learn that the important thing about those whom I have loved is found in what they have contributed to the ongoing creative advance of God's love in the world. And I have no doubt...that God too values just those contributions and makes them part of his own unending life.

Value of our earthly life can be assumed from God's ongoing involvement and the Christian hope of building the Kingdom of God here and now. One would expect the theories of Boros, Troistontaines and Rahner, which place so much emphasis on some future life in communion with God, to have God as the central focus. Instead, the focus, as expressed by George Dyer, is on man—especially on man's fulfillment as man in the passage through death into the next life. Boros states that man becomes "perfectly 'person'" when he dies, and, with the new awareness that death brings, man decides for his salvation or damnation. Troisfontaines echoes

this position: "At the moment of death then man is freed of his subjection to the world of determinism and restraint. He sees in their full reality God, the world, and his fellow man... in a consummate irrevocable act of freedom he chooses communion or isolation, friendship or hatred." Even Rahner speaks of death as a personal act of man, "an active consummation brought about by the person himself, a maturing self realization which embodies what man has made of himself during life."

In contrast, consider Ogden's precaution that the usual arguments for subjective immortality tend to repeat the sin of Adam, which was to try and be like God, his all-knowing equal. Pittenger also criticizes the man-centeredness of most personal salvation theories. He insists "...it is God who matters supremely. The Jewish-Christian tradition at its best and when most true to its deepest insight is incurable and unfailingly theocentric..." Stated simply, what matters when a person dies is how that person will contribute to the fulfillment of God. Instead of thinking "What's in it for me?", the focus is "What's in it for God and hence the whole of reality?" Paradoxically, the notion of objective immortality — in which the essence of one's contribution in life is immortalized by incorporation into the nature of God — has a lot "in it" for man, while still remaining faithfully God-centered. Mellert states man's fulfillment in God when he says,

> Death...is emphatically not a passing into nothingness. Nor is it a passing to another world in which man continues to experience his self-contained existence as an independent soul without corporeal empirical powers. Instead, it is immanent incorporation into God, in whom each actuality is experienced everlastingly for its own uniqueness and individuality.

Man becomes fulfilled, not by the individual acquisition of an awareness of self and God, but rather by God's receptive inclusion of man as he was in this life in his own nature.

In other words, God remembers. He remembers in a way that far transcends our remembering with seasonal visits

to memorial parks bearing potted lilies. This is the Christian hope I now lean toward. In place of foreboding it gives me assurance and, ultimately, the courage to be honest about what I believe. The next time I find myself cornered in the back seat of a car by a questioning Grandma I will be able to say with greater certainty "Yes, Grandma, I do" and know my heart is speaking too.

Marcia J. McCombe
Theology 202

FOR WHOEVER DRINKS OF THIS FOUNTAIN SHALL FIND LIFE ETERNAL

One of the poet's prime functions has been to guide humankind in the pursuit of its greatest goal: to achieve or at least experience immortality and godliness. Ever since the mythical first man and woman, Adam and Eve, ate of the "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" to achieve immortal life and god-like knowledge, man has striven to conquer death and reach the heavenly bliss of his gods. Both religion and science have often served as sophisticated tools by which humans educated in the doctrines of such higher thought have searched for the passage to their elusive prize.

Any visitor to the exhibition of King Tut's tomb in Washington, D.C. several years ago could not but wonder why so many exquisite jewels, engravings, and sculptures were placed in the abode of a dead man. The ancient Egyptians believed that a man, learned in the will of the gods, who leads a good life will enter a realm of immortal bliss after death and that his tomb should be provided with supplies for that next life. Although the coffins of modern Christians may not contain emeralds and urns of wheat, they almost always are furnished with a cross, the symbol of Christ's victory over death and of the promise of eternal life to good Christians who understand and follow the words of Christ.

Science since the mid-18th century has provided educated man with a process, more concrete than religious belief, by which to aspire to immortality. One of the main objectives of chemistry today is to discover new sources of fuel to support the continued life of man on earth. The biological sciences further refine the goal of chemistry by addressing themselves to the elongation of life through studies of disease prevention and treatment, and genetics. While man's higher intellectual and spiritual studies are directed at the search for perpetuation of the human race, art often guides the common man in his personal search for immortality. The songs of poets offer ordinary men, untrained in genetic engineering or Christian theology, simpler paths to immortality. Poets, disregarding mortal life, inspire men to heaven's eternal joy; others elevate mortal life to quasi-immortal status.

In his later poems, TS Eliot, a convert to Christianity, shared with his readers the new promise for immortality he had found in Christ through his intensive studies of Christian doctrine. Eliot expressed the cross's path to heavenly joy in layman's language, in the vernacular of common experience. In "East Coker," Eliot tells his readers to patiently withstand mortal life and then submit willingly to death, to "be still and let the dark one come upon you which shall be the darkness of God." He assures us that "the end (death) is where we start from." In "Ash Wednesday," Eliot describes the passage from death to immortality as a difficult journey up three flights of stairs (death, purgatory, and heaven, "the Garden"), a journey which takes "strength beyond hope and despair." Despite these difficulties, all men can endure the agony of mortal life, death, and purgatory, and achieve the immortality of the "yew trees" in the "Garden," if only they listen to "the Word," to Christ's commandments, and to His promise of salvation, which Eliot brings to life through poetry.

John Donne also translates the hope of Christianity into an everyman's creed: "One short sleep past, we wake eternally / And death shall be no more" ("Holy Sonnets"); and "as the tree's sap doth seek the root below / In winter, in my winter now I go / Where none but Thee, th'Eternal Root...I may know." ("A Hymn to Christ") By equating death with sleep and dormancy, and immortal life in heaven with morning and with the rising of sap in the spring, Donne simplifies Christ's promise of resurrection to a ray of hope comprehensible to all people.

In his "Sonnets," William Shakespeare offers mankind less religious paths to immortality after death. He assures his readers that they can achieve immortality by living on in their offspring: "Nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence / Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence." "(Nature) carv'd thee for her seal, and meant thereby / Thou shouldst print more; nor let that copy die." Another source, for the common man, of everlasting life after death is "Verse," through which one might live on in the moving lips of readers. Writes Shakespeare: "Not marble, nor the gilded monuments / Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme / But you shall shine more bright in these contents / Than unswept stone." Similarly Edmund Spenser assures the object

of his verse: "you shall live by fame: / my verse your virtues rare shall eternize, / and in the heavens write your glorious name." ("One Day I Wrote Her Name")

Unlike Eliot, Donne, Shakespeare, and Spenser, some poets offer no hope for eternal life after death on earth, but guide man in his search for immortality to a mortal life which proffers divine beauty and godlike abilities to all men. William Faulkner once wrote that man "is immortal...because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's...duty is to...help man endure by lifting his heart, reminding him of the courage and honor...which have been the glory of his past." The poet, then, must take common experience and emotion, and reveal its divine, endurant beauty. Poet George Peele follows this formula in "His Golden Locks": "Strength, youth are flowers but fading seen / Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green."

Yeats advises, in "Song of the Happy Shepherd," "Go gather...some twisted, echo-harbouring shell / And to its lips thy story tell / And they thy comforters will be / Rewording...thy fretful words...till they shall singing fade in ruth." Like Yeats' shell, the poet rewrites the common story of mankind — plagues and famine, war and grief — into a glorious tale to raise man miles above all other creatures on earth.

The poet may also guide man to immortality by revealing to him the divine, everlasting beauty of the mortal world. In Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," the poet longs to leave behind "the weariness, the fever, and the fret / Here, where men sit and hear each other groan," and to escape into the world of heavenly delight of the "immortal Bird," the nightingale. Once the poet reaches the Nightingale's reign, "on the wings of Poesy," however, he feels lost and bewildered and yearns for the earthly beauty he left behind: "I cannot see what flowers are at my feet...but...guess each sweet / Wherewith the seasonable month endows...the fruit-tree wild." Keats teaches, therefore, if man is not capable of true immortality, he may content himself with the divine happiness offered by the sights, smells, and sounds of the mortal world: "the coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine," the sweet scent of grass, and the nightingale "pouring forth thy soul...(in) ecstasy!"

Wordsworth, too, in "Intimations on Immortality," teaches common men that if they view the world of Nature through the eyes of a child, rather than through the clouded lens of a microscope or the spectacles of a wizened man, they can obliterate intimations of death and rejoice in the eternal beauty and divine bliss of Nature: "Heaven lies about us in our infancy ...(Then) Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own / To make her Foster-child (man)...Forget the glories he hath known...Behold the Child among his new-born blisses... The Youth...is Nature's Priest...(Follow) the simple Creed / Of Childhood...Feel the gladness of the May...and see / The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee." Blinding himself to the knowledge of death, man may revel, with the innocence of youth, in the heavenly nature of his new permanent home.

For those who have not studied transduction of DNA through viruses and its uses in recombinant genetics, who do not understand the significance of forming CH_4, from CO for fuel, who cannot comprehend the mysteries of Christianity, there are the poets. For centuries these shepherds of the common flock have guided their wandering sheep toward immortality with simple melodies sung on lyrical instruments. Let the poets remember their role. Should the message of the poet take on as complex and secret a language as those of science and religion, to what predators, to what cliffs and barbed wire fences will the poet's sheep be laid bare?

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