

FORUM

SPRING 1986

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

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the Spring 1986 edition of the Forum. For those of you not familiar with the magazine, this issue marks the end of the Forum's 10th year as Loyola College's non-fiction literary publication. Forum represents every Loyola student's little-known opportunity to have essays recognized by peers, published, and distributed across campus.

With the expansion of the Writing/Media Department, the proposed major in Communications, and the continued emphasis on writing across the entire Loyola curriculum, part of Loyola's reputation in fine writing rides on the success of such publications as the Forum and Loyola's fiction magazine, the Unicorn, in showcasing the artistic abilities of our fellow students. For this reason, the Forum staff works very hard to solicit the finest pieces of non-fiction prose available from the campus.

As editors of the Forum, we try to encourage the submission of quality essays from not only the Writing Department, but from all of Loyola's student body and its faculty. The submissions that are included in the magazine represent what we feel to be the most substantial pieces of writing that still appeal to a wide, diverse campus audience. In a sense, every Loyola student is part of the Forum.

Without further explanation, we, the Forum staff, present for your approval the Spring 1986 Forum. We hope that you enjoy reading this edition as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you.

Dave Simms
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FORUM

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The Center for the Humanities at Loyola College has funded awards for outstanding writing in the English, Foreign Languages and Literatures, History, Philosophy, and Writing Departments.

Forum is pleased to include in this issue the essays by the four winners of the Writing Core Course Essay Awards, Winter 1986: James L. LoScalzo, Ann Philburn Craig Spencer, and Greg Spiegel.

THE CULT OF SQUEEGEE

The Cult of Thuggee was a criminal religious society which flourished in Uttar Pradesh and in Deccan in south central India in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries after the collapse of effective Mongul rule. The term Thug (from the Sanskrit sthag, meaning "to conceal") was given to the disciples of the Cult of Thuggee. The Thugs worshipped the goddess Bhavani, another name for Kali, and constructed a myth to justify the practices of the cult.

According to the myth, the demon Rukt Bij-dana ate the first men as they were created. Kali sought to save mankind by killing the demon, but each drop of blood spilled from Rukt Bij-dana created a new demon. 87 Kali, weary from her struggle, bestowed the rumal or handkerchief (symbolic of the work of strangulation) upon those who would kill the last demon. Kali, then commanded that they and their descendants kill all men not related to them, leaving the Thugs free to rob, maim, and kill until 1831, when Captain William Sleeman declared a "war" on the cult, which ended in its total extermination in 1882 when the last known Thug was hanged. The term "thug" later came into the English, denoting any cut-throat or ruffian.

The Cult of Thuggee may be defunct, but "thugs" still exist and have formed a new cult: the Cult of Squeegee. These "Squeegee thugs" have flourished in downtown Baltimore, since the summer of 1983 after the breakdown of youth employment and common sense in the area. The name "Squeegee kids" (from squeegee, the instrument used to soap and scrape grime and dirt from automobile windshields) was given to the disciples of this cult. Squeegee thugs worship the head of George Washington, the symbol engraved on the quarters and dollars they hustle from drivers stopped at red lights.

A rationalization for this activity was constructed by invoking the name of Adam Smith, the chief capitalistic deity. The free market principles of Smith handed these

thugs the squeegee (the symbol of the Protestant Work Ethic and entrepreneurial spirit) for a capital outlay of about \$3.09 and given them license to dirty and smear car windshields, endangering their lives and causing accidents. They also felt free to abuse drivers verbally until Mayor William Donald Shafer of Baltimore declared "war" on the Squeegee thugs.

Squeegee kids claim that if their form of dollar-worship is denied, then they will have to sell drugs, break down parking meters, and rob and mug other Baltimoreans who are strangers to the cult. Defenders of the cult, such as Baltimore City Councilman Kweisi Mfume and Roger Simon, a columnist for the Baltimore Sun, say that this war against the cult is racist. They point to the vote on a bill to ban such cult activity as further proof: eleven white members of the City Council of Baltimore voted for the proposed bill to ban such activity and seven black council members voted against it. The Mayor's forces, headed by Councilman Frank X. Gallagher, refuted charges of racism, saying that the press played the racist issue up and that it became a political ploy by Mr. Mfume. Police Commissioner Bishop L. Robinson said, "I introduced the bill, and I thought that the intent of it was clear. I introduced the bill in the best interest and safety of the children . . . The idea that this is a racist bill is a cop-out. It just so happens that I am black."

The "Squeegee Wars" have nothing to do with race. The victims are not unemployed blacks or automobile drivers. The real victim is the American automobile.

P. J. O'Rourke of Car and Driver says that "automobiles are egalitarian, strangers to sexism, belong to no race, have no political opinions, are free from egoism, passion, prejudice, and stupid ideas about where to have dinner." The fact is that the automobile has certain rights in American society which cannot be violated by anyone, rights that stem from the huge impact, both economic and social, that the automobile has had on America. In 1900, automobile manufacturing was an insignificant industry in the nation; by 1920, it had become a huge industry. By 1960, the auto industry had

become a major force in the economy, employing one out of seven persons in industry-related motor transport. In 1960, one business in six depended on the manufacture, distribution, and servicing of automobiles. The United States Government depends heavily on motor vehicle taxes. In 1932, these taxes amounted to \$990 million dollars; in 1950, \$7.5 billion; in the 1960's \$11.5 billion.

These fees were used to create the extensive network of highways and roadways that now exist. Pedestrians do not pay the taxes required to build and maintain the roads they are now walking. Economically, the roads belong to the automobile. The car allows the industrial worker and white-collar employee to live in suburban and rural areas where living may be more comfortable and rewarding. The car owner takes pleasure trips to resorts, hotels, motels, cabins, and restaurants. The car symbolizes personal freedom, the freedom of unrestricted movement at will, a big enough boost for capitalism to keep Adam Smith's "invisible hand" in continual motion.

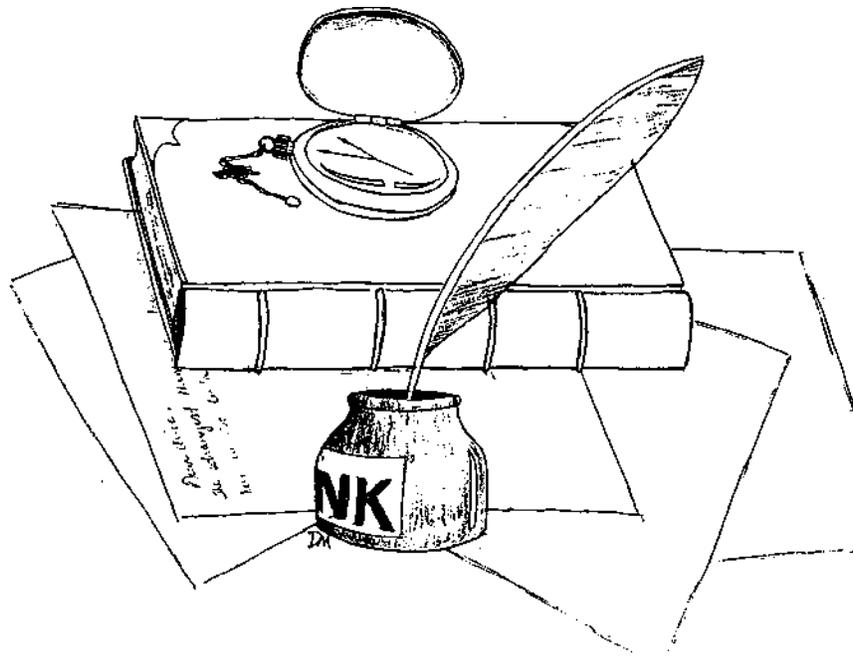
If economics gives autos the primary use of the roads without undue interference by pedestrians, then sociology gives the automobile the right of respect and freedom from damage that the ultimate symbol of a capitalistic society founded on the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness deserves. Happiness in the Lockean sense means secure private property. The car is the ultimate totem of private property. Attacks on a car are attacks on private property. Attacks on private property are attacks on the pursuit of happiness, which constitutes an attack on the Constitution and American capitalism!

The Cult of Squeegee victimizes the automobile. Traffic in Baltimore is usually heavy, and a driver must stay alert to prevent accidents. O'Rourke insists that pedestrians are nuisances because, after all, they are easily damaged: "Try this test: hit a pedestrian with a car. Now have the pedestrian hit the car back." But Police Commissioner Robinson says that besides threatening their own well-being,

the squeegee kids can cause accidents. And as the Cult of Squeegee runs in and out of traffic, bending over the hoods and windshields of cars stopped at traffic lights, they violate the automobile's right as private property by physically abusing cars. This writer was driving down Paca street in April of this year in his father's Saab 900 Turbo: it had only 9,000 miles on the odometer; it was brand new and clean. When the Saab stopped at a light, a thug approached and began to smear and grime an otherwise clear windshield. The thug in question was sternly ordered to "get off the car!," but he continued to abuse this sacred totem of private property anyway. When the light changed, the thug demanded ransom. When refused his bribe, he kicked the rear quarterpanel causing significant damage.

The Squeegee Cult violates the basic rights of all Audis, BMWs, Chevys, Fords, Hondas, Lamborghinis, Mazdas, Nissans, Plymouths, Renaults, and Volkswagens. The Squeegee Cult should be banned and banned now! In the nineteenth century Thugs claimed, because of their religion and caste, that they were being treated unfairly, but they were violating human rights. In 1985, thugs claim they are being treated unfairly, but they violate automotive rights.

Michael Stewart



CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER

Who wants to read a traveler's guide? Only the traveler. But certainly not an intelligent one. For what's more lackluster than an extended line of factual trinkets--stay at a hotel that claims "F. Scott Fitzgerald did it here," swim in some deep bay, the coast's first and only nudist beach. Single? Then spend a steamy evening at the pub, the island spot for cheap drafts.

Such pedestrian baubles hardly move the intelligent traveler, that individual who, for certain, would prefer fictional jaunts to an island, a desert, a street corner, an unexplored planet. Anything imaginary will do. That is anything sprung from a mind so like his own it could be his own invention.

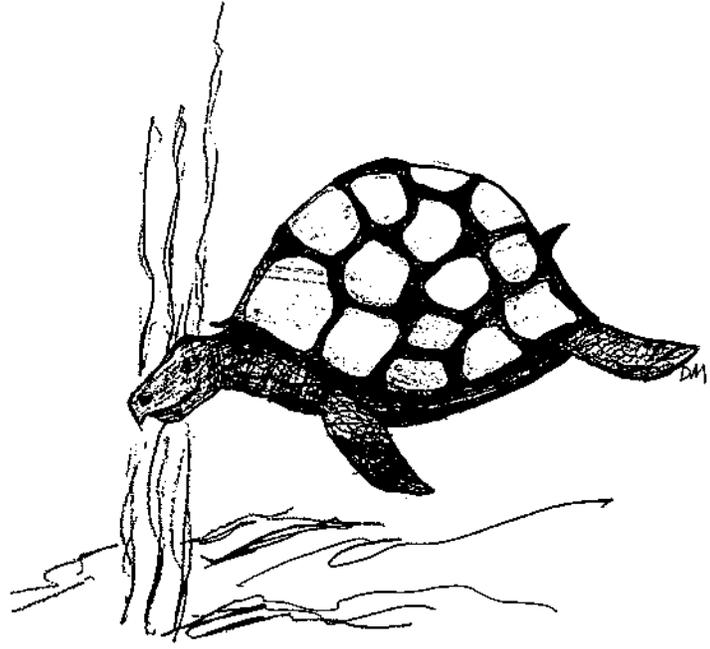
I imagine the inspired traveler as Alice. Falling through that shafted tunnel, unable to stop herself from falling, not knowing where she was falling to. Or if she was falling to, as if her falling had a direction. And the whole time she wandered through the mysterious wonderland, she had no control over her experiences. Or her height for that matter. Having no bearing on her location, Alice had to resort to the deadest of all dead reckoning--she could only keep going, continue to move--whether on in particular was a diagonal, vertical, or horizontal movement. She "learned by going where she had to go."

My mother grew up in England just after the war. She never had any stories about the war like her father did. Her uncle, the one whose armchair no one dared sit in, was called "off" by the family. It had something to do with the steel plate put between his eyes after a bullet had been removed. He must have been like the caterpillar, as he sat with his pipe, uttering a few cryptic words, now and again. But Uncle Jimmy was one of those things that a family kept quiet about. And you kept quiet around him. The children were used to that, though. My mother's early memory was a dark, silent place. A bomb shelter. The only communication

between the families that shared a shelter was poetry. In those days, people learned by rote, repeating, like parrots, what had been said. So, in times of stress, it was second nature to spit something from the back of the mind. Reciting a rhythm made them forget, drowned the spiralling drop of missiles, the drone of whining planes.

I always wanted to be there. Or in Ireland when the bombings were by day and night, so I could hear my great-grandfather talk about fairies, the little people that stormed his sod house, stole from the woodpile. Of course, what's imagined is better than any real explanation. And trips through wonderland bring us back to the truth. I wanted to chase a white rabbit, to say where I've been.

Jane M. Satterfield



AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY: AN INVESTIGATION OF PROPOSED MECHANISMS FOR SEA TURTLE MIGRATION

Long before man learned to use instruments and complex calculations to navigate his boats around the world, the sea turtle was locating tiny islands in waters with no visual landmarks. For years, the ability of these organisms to swim a thousand miles to lay their eggs at ancestral nesting grounds has perplexed the scientific world. Marine biologists have tried to pinpoint the mechanism responsible for this incredible capability, but despite a quarter of a century of experimentation, the full story has yet to be uncovered.

The sea turtle's life cycle is complex. Adult turtles are found feeding in the shallow coastal waters of tropical and subtropical regions. Upon sexual maturation, turtles experience a strong tendency to migrate to remote islands for nesting (Sumich, 1980: 247-253). Such islands are generally more free of predators, providing a suitable environment for egg laying. The turtles embark on a six to eight week journey of up to 2000 miles to return to the ancestral nesting grounds, where, presumably, they were born (Carr, 1965). Mating takes place in the surf outside the island, though this particular encounter serves to fertilize eggs for the next reproductive season. The female then comes ashore and digs holes in the sandy beach where she deposits 50-100 eggs. Ultimately, she returns to her feeding ground. She will repeat the reproductive cycle every 2-3 years, always returning to the same nesting site to lay her eggs. When the eggs hatch, the hatchlings instinctively dig themselves out and head directly for the sea. These juveniles then journey to feeding grounds until they reach sexual maturity and begin the cycle again.

For the sake of brevity, this paper investigates navigation as it applies to the Atlantic population of the green turtle—Chelonia mydas; the conclusions drawn, however, may be applied to other species of sea turtles.

Chelonia is a herbivorous species whose adult life is spent in feeding grounds on the east coast of Brazil. The turtles swim 1400 miles to a nesting ground called Ascension Island located midway between Brazil and Africa (Carr, 1965). The island is only eight kilometers wide. The south Equatorial Current flows past the island to Brazil in a westward direction. It is assumed that hatchling turtles catch this current and passively drift to feeding grounds in Brazil (Baher, 1978: 773).

Investigation into the turtles' navigation ability has been concentrated in accordance with a few select theories. Unfortunately, too much emphasis has been placed on some speculations, while other plausible explanations have been ignored by scientists. One of the major theories which has gained wide acceptance is that of olfactory imprinting. This theory holds that hatchling turtles can imprint on chemical substances at their natal beaches, and when sexually mature, they remember and recognize such cues; they are thus able to locate their nesting grounds. Experiments have demonstrated that turtles do possess the capability to recognize chemical differences in natural waters. Utilizing classic operant conditioning techniques, researchers showed that turtles responded to low levels of phenol ethanol to receive a food reward, with responses still exhibited a year later (Tangley, 1984: 354). Very recently, Grassman (1980) tried to demonstrate that turtles could be artificially imprinted. He collected eggs at oviposition from nesting grounds in Mexico and transferred them into containers of sand from a proposed nesting site--Padre Island, Texas. The turtles were hatched and then released at this site. Later, when 4 month old turtles were allowed to choose from solutions of Padre Island water and other samples of untreated water, they exhibited an obvious preference for the Padre Island solutions. Such experimentation closely parallels research on salmon homing, lending support to turtle imprinting theories in an indirect way. Hasler and Wisby (1951) showed that fish are able to discriminate between highly-diluted substances from two different streams. Hasler (1960) then conducted a series of experiments verifying that young salmon do imprint to organ-

ic odors of a home stream and are able to discriminate the olfactory cues of their own stream when they return as adults. Tagging young salmon from two streams and examining which streams the fish returned to, as adults, produced astounding results. Plugging the nasal sacs of such fish did, in fact, lead to random choice of streams. With such knowledge, artificially imprinting fish to new streams has met with great success (Ort, 1970: 308).

Experiments illustrating olfactory acuity in turtles, as well as highly developed nasal epithelium, are not surprising either. Fish olfactory organs have detected as little as 2-3 molecules of a substance contacting the olfactory epithelium at one time (Ort, 1970: 190), and concentrations of 3×10^{-20} of 2-phenylethanol alcohol have been detected by young eels (Hasler, 1960).

All of this is supporting evidence that turtles have the capability to imprint. However, there may be some question as to whether they actually exercise this ability. In the artificial imprinting experiment on the Padre Island turtles, it is not conclusive that adult turtles would respond as the 4 month old juveniles did; this remains to be seen when the turtles imprinted in 1980 attain sexual maturity (usually 10 years after being hatched). There are behavioral and physiological indications that offer even stronger grounds for the imprinting theory. For example, when a female turtle is preparing to make her nest, she makes repeated stops at various locations in the backwash of the surf, pressing her snout against the sand (Carr, 1965). Although this behavior could possibly be tactile, most probably it is olfactory in nature. Physiological support comes from one researcher, Yuki Morris (in Tangley, 1984: 355-356), who has related how levels of corticosterone (a hormone associated with imprinting behavior in birds) indicates hatchling turtles' receptivity to imprinting. Birds receptive to the process exhibit low concentrations of corticosterone. Similarly, the levels in turtles are at their relative lowest just after the hatch and during the 3-5 day period after hatching, prior to emergence from the sand.

Physically, a chemical gradient establishment in the migratory route is theoretically possible because in the South Equatorial Current there exists a strong thermo-cline which allows chemicals to diffuse horizontally. Using models, Carr (in Tangle, 1984) demonstrated that concentrations of organic solutes from Ascension Island could be theoretically high-enough to reach Brazil. Even if one assumes, therefore, that turtles can and do imprint, it cannot also be assumed that this is a primary guiding mechanism in the turtles' migration. Intuitively, it seems highly improbable that turtles could be guided on a 1400 mile journey by mere olfactory cues.

It had been suggested that migratory organisms such as the turtle could learn a sequence of olfactory stimuli to which they had been imprinted as young and be able to return by remembering this route as an adult (Hess, 1973: 188-189). But Hasler (1960) points out that organisms following an organic olfactory gradient would become adapted to the odor, and with such low concentrations present, it does not seem likely that turtles could detect enough difference to be able to know if they were headed in the right direction. The only possibility is that the turtles could use olfactory cues in the South Equatorial Current periodically, but swim at a different depth so that adaptation to the odor would not be as strong (Baer, 1978; 771). Again, when one looks to the fish for a parallel, it seems that salmon only recognize their home stream after being guided to the general vicinity by another mechanism (Hess, 1973: 308).

The major shortcoming of the olfactory theory, that smell cannot conclusively guide the turtles 1400 miles through the ocean, forces one to look for either another guiding mechanism or one which works in concert with the olfactory system. Carr (1965) investigated the possibility of passive drift in ocean currents. He hypothesized two possible migratory routes for the green turtle. They could swim northward, catching the westward flowing North Equatorial Current which becomes the Gulf Stream Current. Ultimately, they would make a clockwise circle to the west coast of Africa where the South Equatorial Current could be caught to

Ascension Island. Conversely, turtles could swim south from Brazil to catch the West Wind Drift to South Africa. They could then catch the northward flowing Benguela Current and join the South Equatorial Current to Ascension Island. Carr realized the obvious temporal and climatic problems with such a theory.

Since turtles frequently surface in order to breathe, researchers have also looked to visual orientation as a navigational guide. Ophthalmological and anatomical studies indicate, however, that *Chelonia* is extremely myopic out of water (Ehrenfeld and Kock, 1967). This puts an end to any theories that turtles use the stars for navigation. Additionally, such information would seem to contradict one of Carr's theories (1965) that turtles could spot an island from miles away by sighting birds converging above the land mass. However, it is Carr (1974) who in later studies offers the most probable mechanism: the sun compass. He theorized that turtles use the sun as a beacon to remain on latitude. At their migratory departure in December from Brazil, a turtle would head directly into the rising sun in an east by southeast direction. At night, turtles could rest below the South Equatorial Current or passively drift eastward in the Equatorial Counter Current. During the 8 week journey, the sun moves northward. Thus, the migratory route forms a gentle arc, curving to the southeast from Brazil, and to the northeast toward Ascension Island. According to this theory, turtles from northern residences in Brazil would depart first. Clearly this theory is extremely promising, for it takes into account the timing of the journey, the equatorial location of Ascension Island, celestial positioning, and the ocean current patterns.

Again, evidence from research concerning other animals--namely fish and birds--supports a sun compass theory. Hasler (1960) demonstrated that white bass use the sun for navigation in an open lake experiment. Additionally, he showed that salmon could exhibit a compensation mechanism for the azimuth of the sun. For example, when fish from the northern hemisphere were transferred to the southern hemi-

sphere, they made proper adjustments for the azimuth of the sun as if it were in their true home. It seems as long as the sun is visible, regardless of the time of day, fish can compensate for the solar azimuth. Therefore, Hasler concluded that fish also possess an internal clock. To account for open sea migration, he suggested that salmon might accumulate a certain temperature budget where they are swimming as they follow a sun compass. When the thermal budget is exceeded, a fish might correct its heading by taking another angle to the sun. This last hypothesis could easily be applied to the turtle's situation.

There may still, however, be a problem with even the sun compass theory. Fish cannot navigate on overcast days (Hasler, 1960), birds utilize some mechanism other than the sun, and there is an indication that turtles rely heavily on the sun for general orientation (Ehrenfeld and Carr, 1967). Although very little research has been done in the area, theories that the earth's magnetic field serves as a navigational guide seem extremely promising. Experiments have indicated that turtles may have an internal magnetic compass in depths in excess of 180 meters. When magnets were fixed to turtles in such a way so that they pivoted freely, turtles showed a lack of orientation (Baher, 1978: 885-886). On the other hand, magnets fixed in position produced orientation paths deviating 90° from the home direction. Less recent experiments on pigeons produced similar results: dissection of the birds led to the discovery of a small unilateral structure in their skulls composed of magnetite, a substance with magnetic properties (Walcott, 1979); testing demonstrated that pigeons responded to magnetic storms and anomalies with the reduction or loss of navigational abilities. Scientists have since found magnetite particles in sea turtles, supporting such a theory (Tangley, 1984: 356).

Obviously, the turtle's navigation mechanism is much more complex than researchers have considered. Still another possible theory focuses on auditory guidance cues: perhaps the sound of the breakers could guide the turtles in the final stages of their journey (Mrosovsky, 1972). Support-

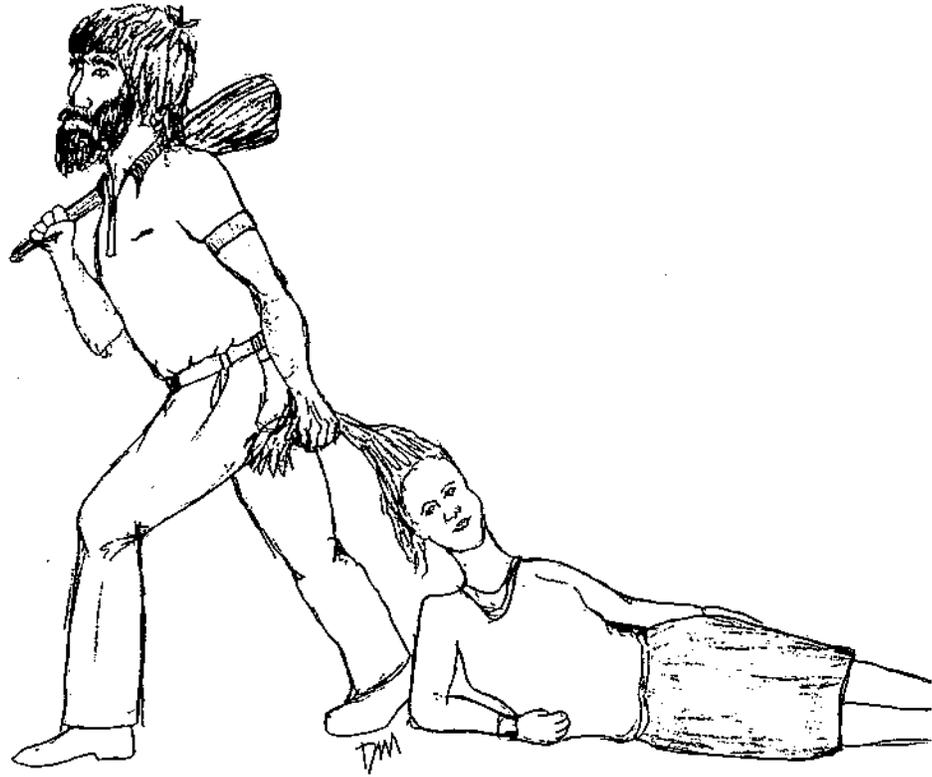
ing such a theory is Stuart (in Street, 1976: 16-20), who has shown that salmon use the current and sound vibrations in some stages of their homing journeys. Memory of physical environmental features such as speed of current or temperature could be an orientation cue as well. An even more simplistic hypothesis is that virgin females follow the more experienced females to nesting grounds (Tangley, 1984: 356).

Fortunately, many advances are being made in this area of marine biology. New equipment in the form of sonic and radio transmitters which simultaneously monitor ocean temperature, depth, current velocity, and the animal's speed, internal temperature, and compass heading are becoming smaller and more precise. Perhaps these will overcome the shortcomings of prior tracking efforts. Also, a technique using "living" tags is replacing older methods in which tags fall off as turtles grow; such tags are light plastron tissue removed from the undersurface of a turtle and grafted onto the darker carapace (Tangley, 1984: 356).

Hopefully, new technical breakthroughs will soon unlock still further secrets of the miraculous journey of the sea turtle.

Lisa Fabijanski

(Full list of references available from Forum upon request)



MY BOYFRIEND, HAIRY

Tom Selleck's moustache makes him seem sexy. Kenny Roger's beard only amplifies his image as a rustic, countrified, out-doorsy man. I'd never picture either of them any other way. But when my clean-cut, all American-type boyfriend announced his own aspirations for a moustache, it was like picturing Howdy Doody smoking a cigar. Something about it just didn't click, and I had to struggle to keep from discouraging him there on the the spot.

Instead I said nothing. Ross is prone to stages where he'll do something just for the gratification of adding it to his list of achievements. Just a week earlier, Ross had told me that now his beard was so thick he had to shave every single day. I said, "Mmm, hmm." Later he repeated it, just to make sure that I knew that I was dating a real man. I took the moustache announcement rather lightly, assuming Ross would spend a week trying to conquer "growing facial hair" before he moved on to blaze other trails.

A month later I grew impatient. I began referring to him as Scratch Man. I scratched my nose whenever he tried to kiss me. I carried my Daisy shaver over to his house and left it on his dresser. My subtle hints were not enough. One day I couldn't take it anymore. "That thing always has stuff stuck to it." I said while we were eating some brownies.

The powdered sugar that had caught on Ross' moustache poofed out in a cloud as he huffed, "I like it."

"But it's blonde and you can hardly see it, and it hasn't grown in two weeks."

"But it's different," Ross said. Different was about the last thing it was. The moment Ross began his moustache, I noticed shadows on the upper lips of four of his friends.

Perhaps my distaste for his moustache was instinctive. Excess hair is every girl's natural enemy, and on her face it's

about as welcome as crabgrass. We shave and wax and tweeze and shock and dye in an attempt to rid ourselves of the nasty stuff. We endure the torture of eyebrow plucking and the searing smell of bleach on our upper lips just to camouflage a few hairs for a few days. Women with too much facial hair end up in side shows billed as the bearded woman. Something about it is unnatural. Women need their faces clear of all intrusions so they can create shadowed eyes, rosy cheeks and an even complexion. So I, as a girl, was naturally predisposed to dislike facial hair. That still didn't explain why Ross was so determined to allow this painfully slow, barely perceivable growth to continue under his nose.

It certainly wasn't any great masterpiece of a moustache, with long curled and waxed ends. In fact, it hadn't changed much in appearance from the day he started growing it. Ross looked pretty much the same as always, and he had always looked pretty much the same. Always. There wasn't much opportunity for variety in his very male life. While I spend an hour in the bathroom to get ready for the movies so I can sit in the dark all made up, Ross just combs his hair and is ready to go. He looks nice, but he looks the same. And what choice does he have?

He could borrow some of my makeup and join the ranks of Boy George and Michael Jackson, but, like all boys, Ross knew before he knew the alphabet that boys didn't wear makeup.

And boys don't fix their hair. They don't curl it; they don't dye it. They just let it grow. But not too long! Then they'll look like girls.

Girls can vary their height by one or four inches simply by stepping into a different pair of shoes, but the poor male is forced to endure his God-given height. Men's shoes rarely have a heel of more than an inch and a half, and I think elevator shoes went out of style a few years back.

The limitations of style make shopping a joyless task for men. Pants, long or short, a sweater or shirt with optional coat and tie--here we have the man's wardrobe, with its biggest variation, the width of the lapel. The option is to buy more of the same or nothing at all.

After twenty-one years of waiting for variety, it's no wonder Ross had little regard for the actual appearance of his moustache. Who cares if he didn't look good with a moustache--at least he looked different.

Three months later when he looked in the mirror each morning he looked the same. He decided to shave off his moustache. The plight of the generic male won Ross my sympathy. I cancelled the fireworks I had planned for "moustache removal day" and opted for a more somber ritual. Ross and I stood before the mirror, I with a champagne bottle, he with a razor. When the last hair had been removed and rinsed forever down the drain, Ross, stared at his face in the glass. "How do you feel about tatoos?" he said dreamily. I gasped. He winked.

Jill Busam

THE MYTH OF INTELLECTUAL EVOLUTION

While going through old family pictures at a Thanksgiving reunion, I found a letter in a 1955 newspaper complaining of ubiquitous additives in food, especially sugar and monosodium glutamate. It struck me that today's consumers often think they are the first generation to be inundated with chemicals in their food, and that we are often unaware of how people lived before us. A few minutes later I found a kindergarten report card from 1941 which read: "The purpose of education is the growth and development of the whole child. We believe that the whole child goes to school and that the development of physical excellence, moral character, and effective social traits, is as important as growth in the traditional school subject." Modern educators often say the same thing and think that they are being terribly innovative.

People often think they have a terrific new thought when it has actually been thought many times before. As my father says, "Every generation thinks it invented sex." Another example is the Golden Rule. Many think that Jesus was the first to say, "Do to others as you would have them do to you," but Jesus was probably aware of Rabbi Hillel's writing in the first century B.C.: "What is hateful to yourself, don't do to your fellow man." The Mahabharata, written around 200 B.C. in India, says, "Do naught to others which if done to you would cause you pain." In the fourth century B.C. Plato said, "May I do to others as I would have them do to me." In the fifth century B.C., Buddha told his followers to "hurt not others with that which pains yourself." Confucius said in the sixth century B.C., "What you don't want done to yourself, don't do to others." In the sixth or seventh century B.C., Zoroaster instructed his followers, "Do not do to others all that which is not well for oneself." And surely the thought goes back much farther than that, to the time when mankind first wondered about concepts like goodness.

Or take the size of the universe. Most of us think that the ancients had no conception of it. But Ptolemy said that the universe is so large that the entire earth can only be

considered as a mathematical point in comparison. The Greeks not only knew that the earth is round, but they knew its circumference within a few thousand miles. We too often underestimate those who went before us.

When my English class discussed the Book of Job, the teacher said that it was written around 400 B.C., making it one of the newest books of the Old Testament. Since most Bible scholars date Job at around 4000 B.C., making it the oldest book in the Bible, I guessed that the publisher had accidentally left out a zero, so I looked at the book, and it had more than one clear reference to 400 B.C. I asked my teacher why such a relatively recent date. "Because Job is the product of sophisticated thinking. It obviously couldn't have been written in 400 B.C."

I disagree. The Book of Job is about one of the oldest moral dilemmas existing--the problem of pain and suffering. The first Cro-Magnon man whose brother was killed by a wild boar must have sat in his cave, wondering why.

There seems to be a common assumption that human intelligence is on the uprise, and thus that the ancients were less intelligent than we are. This seems reasonable in the light of Darwinian evolutionary theory, but the facts do not bear it out. We have Arrhenius, Curie, Einstein, Pauling, Hawking, and others. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had Copernicus, daVinci, Galileo, Shakespeare, and Newton. The sixth through fourth centuries B.C. had Confucius, Buddha, Pythagorus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Archimedes. No one can say that the members of one group were more intelligent than members of the others. Einstein developed relativity, and Bohr founded quantum mechanics; Galileo founded astronomy, and Newton founded physics; Pythagorus founded mathematics, and Socrates founded philosophy.

The ancients showed ingenuity no less than that of modern man. Around 55 B.C., Lucretius wrote a poem in Latin called On the Nature of the Universe in which he de-

duced that nothing is ever created out of nothing and nothing is ever annihilated (Lavoisier, 1789); that matter exists in the form of invisible, indivisible particles which he called atoms and that there is empty space between these atoms (Dalton, 1803); and that all objects would fall at the same rate in a vacuum (daVinci, 15th or 16th century). He also said that physical traits are inherited from both parents and that different "seeds" control different characteristics. Some of these, he said, may be passed down for several generations before exhibiting themselves. (Mendel, 19th century).

The ancient Egyptians have been criticized for lack of intelligence because they made no significant progress in over three thousand years. Yet they built great structures with great ingenuity. Today's engineers can only wonder how the Egyptians moved a 290-ton stone block onto a pyramid 3600 years ago. But it seems logical that the conservative mindset which made Egyptian civilization so long-lasting did so by making it unchanging. This, and not low intelligence, may be responsible for the lack of progress.

Going back even further, the Magdalen cultures from 30,000-17,000 B.C. exhibited strong spatial relations perception in their highly realistic cave paintings of animals. A circle of stones was apparently the base of a structure 1.8 million years ago, and stone tools (the most survivable kind of relic) over 2 million years old have been found. If man's brain is changing, it changes extremely slowly. So slowly, in fact, that the currently popular evolutionary theories of plateau periods interspersed with evolutionary spurts of growth during ages of high competition would seem to suggest that there has most likely been no major change in the human brain for thousands of years.

"In the last 30,000 years," says Gordon Childe in Progress and Archaeology (1945), "no really significant bodily improvement is recognizable in human skeletons . . . We cannot even say that men have grown taller; for some Cro-Magnon men stood 6 feet high." Certainly changes in the brain would not require changes in the body, but why should

the brain evolve and not the body, when the body is apparently so much simpler and thus more easily improved? Childe goes on to say that "the progress that archaeology can confidently detect is progress in material culture, in equipment." He does not mention any progress in humanity itself.

Then why, you may ask, did these civilizations of tens of thousands of years ago not build great, lasting monuments to leave evidence of their intelligence? Perhaps they did. Almost nothing lasts ten thousand years, though, so we shall probably never know. Or, perhaps, there were not enough people to make cities and governments feasible. Still, you may ask, why did no ancient civilization make such great advances in science as we have? The answer is that, as Newton said, we can see as far as we can only because we are standing on the shoulders of giants. Science is self-propagating and thus grows exponentially. Only recently has this exponential rise become noticeable.

It is unlikely that humanity has changed in the past several thousand years, perhaps even in the last 30,000 years. We might be better educated than people of three thousand years ago, but probably only marginally more intelligent, if at all. Our assumption that we are intellectually superior comes from ignorance, not knowledge.

Philip Goetz

WAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

A clear crisp note echoes throughout the academy. Roses and one-hundred dollar bills shower down onto the stage as my fluglehorn and I carry the note--one long and melodic high C sharp pierces through the air. I hear the thundering clapping of spectators as they call my name, "Maureen, Maureen! Get up!" I sit up suddenly, wide-eyed and startled, only to see my roommate towering over me, hands on hips and eyes blazing. "That damn alarm has been ringing for twenty-five minutes! Would you please GET OUT OF BED!!" Okay, okay, so I've done it again. Perhaps my favorite hobby, sleeping, has led me to my hatred of waking up, the most dreaded event of my day.

Why is morning the worst time of the day you ask. To tell the truth, I just don't know. Perhaps I was having a great dream--I was just presented with a check for ten million dollars for winning the Pennsylvania Lottery. Perhaps I refuse to face reality--I am safe from Fr. McCoog's Modern Civilization test. Those six chapters on the Enlightenment can wait . . . Maybe I'm just plain old lazy. Whatever the reason, there is no apparent cure.

No one quite understands my sleeping habits. Both my family and friends are puzzled as to just how one person can sleep so much, and, as a result, jokes are often made at my expense. Two years ago, my family spent their vacation at my uncle's camp in the mountains. Now, I don't know what popped into their minds when the word "vacation" was mentioned, but, in my mind, the word "vacation" is the equivalent of relaxation, which, in turn, is the equivalent of sleeping. Which is exactly what I did--nineteen hours a day. Upon returning home, my older sister Trish presented me with a book entitled, appropriately enough, Sleep Less, Live More. My family shook with laughter and waited for my reaction. Unamused, I went to bed. But the ribbing did not stop there. To this day, when I do anything that does not require my eyes to be shut (playing the piano, for example), my dad kiddingly warns me not to make too much noise, less I wake Maureen.

Yet, even as they joke at my expense, my family and friends continue to be offended at my not-so-friendly morning attitude. In my eighteen years of sleeping and waking on this planet, I have yet to find a single good reason to speak or even acknowledge another's presence during the early hours of the day. Furthermore, I will never cease to be amazed at the utterly stupid and inane questions and comments human beings ask one another after arising from a sound sleep. As if they couldn't wait until lunchtime! My mother never failed to ask me the same question every morning before school: "Do you have to work today, Honey?" And every day as I ran out the door, already five minutes late for homeroom, I would answer through clenched teeth, "Yes, I do!" I continued to fume all the way to school, furious because my mother knew I worked every day. Megan, my friend, would further my agony by greeting me with a sunny and cheerful smile and a slap on the back--"Hey, Mo! How ya doin'?" She was smart enough not to stick around for an answer. Mr. Kennedy, my homeroom teacher, was callous when it came to my mental state. Staring straight at me, he would call "Maynes, Maureen?" When I didn't answer, several of the more understanding students would kindly inform Mr. Kennedy that I was indeed present, thereby saving me numerous detentions as a result of being marked absent. Even just recently a new friend of mine cheerfully inquired one evening whether I would care to join her for breakfast the next morning. Before I could even reply, she had a change of heart and muttered something to the effect that she might just as well eat alone.

Fortunately, quite a few other people are afflicted with the wake-up hostility besides myself. We are easily recognized by our over-all appearance. In general, we are not affected by the weather--we give no thought to clothing. Our apparel might consist of an Irish sweater and a pair of cotton shorts, topped off with hiking boots and a strand of pearls. Perhaps you will see us in our six-foot six-inch brother's Levis with a mauve silk blouse and a purple, green, blue, yellow and gold bow tie to complete the picture. Our hair is either tousled from sleep or wet from the "at-least-pry-your-eyes-open-shower." We notice nothing and stop for nobody, and, as

a result, we are the cause of numerous accidents, including the one at the red light where stood the grocery-laden little old lady we just didn't see.

Many of the non-afflicted, the ones who awake with a smile on their face, a twinkle in their eyes and "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning" on their lips, consider us cold and unfeeling. Those morning people, who undoubtedly wear matching socks, right-side out, feel we have no morals. Soooo . . . we might happen to injure our pet goldfish Boris when we slam-dunk the alarm clock into his home. So, the only time they catch us smiling in the morning is after they just stubbed their toe on the dresser. They have to accept that our personalities are just not controllable after waking. As the day grows older, the sun shines brighter, and our eyes adjust to the light, we warm up - we become as warm and feeling as their own mothers.

Maureen Maynes

RESPECT FOR THE ROAD

It's 7:00 A.M. on a rainy Monday morning, and I am beginning to question the driving capabilities of my fellow commuters. Five minutes ago, some maniac tried to make a U-turn in a two lane boulevard and damn near hit me. Now, I'm stuck behind some inconsiderate jerk who didn't put his left turn signal on until he entered the intersection. "No wonder there are so many accidents on the road today," I murmur to myself. Just last night on the news, the state police announced that the number of fatal accidents has risen 10 percent over what it was last year. Of the 613 people killed, 52 percent died because of drunk driving or speeding. These fatal mistakes represent two of America's top killers; however, society is attempting to fix these problems through tougher penalties, sobriety checkpoints, and driver education classes. I would like to know what society is doing to correct the problems that caused the other 48 percent. Each day, I see people making senseless maneuvers that result in accidents. Drivers have no respect for the road, or for the act that they are doing. People become inconsiderate, overconfident, ignorant, and, quite frequently, inattentive when they get behind the wheel of a car.

Many drivers only think of themselves when they're on the road. They refuse to play the driving game as a team, preferring to obstruct traffic, endanger innocent lives, and aggravate fellow drivers. Yesterday, while I was attempting to enter the beltway from on-ramp #29, I was greeted by a wall of cars, lined bumper-to-bumper and moving slowly forward. "Surely, one of these fine people will slow down just enough to let me in," I whispered to myself. However, this was not the case. I waited ten minutes before the line of cars broke and I was able to enter. As it turned out, none of the selfish pigs got any further than I did: we all had to wait for a tree to be cleared from the highway. Once the roadmen cleared the way, traffic began to flow again at its normal pace, with the exception of one irresponsible trucker. He may have been running late, or just trying to harass me, but he pulled his 22 ton rig up behind my one ton car and started

flashing his high beams at me. I became enraged at this man and began to tell him what I thought of his driving through sign language. However, a realization came over me. This man had the ability to grind me and my car into the asphalt, and here I was further aggravating him with sordid hand signals. My next two moves were rather predictable: I placed both of my hands on the steering wheel and shifted to another lane. And as the "King of the Road" sped by, I felt relief, for the gun pointed at my head had been laid down, at least until another mad trucker came along.

The pressure applied to me by this highway terrorist was biting, but many people are not intimidated by other drivers. The sightseer, for example, completely disregards the existence of other cars on the road. They set their own trudgingly slow pace and, amazingly, ignore the fifty-and sixty-car-long lines behind them. Last Sunday, I got behind a sightseer on Harford Road who slowed down to analyze every house, tree, and cow he passed. Cars began mounting up behind him, yet he continued to stare over the top of the door, seemingly fascinated with everything he saw. When the people realized that this man had no intention of pulling over, they let their impatience control their actions. Some attempted to pass the snail, even on hills and curves. Others turned into side roads with the hope that they would lead to a familiar place. Yet I stayed behind the man, gambling that he would turn off soon. He did, and it came as no surprise to see him turn left into a driveway even though his right-hand blinker was on.

While this man was only thinking of himself, many don't seem to think at all when they're driving. Simple concepts like slowing down in adverse weather conditions don't register in their minds. A couple of autumns ago, my friend and I were returning from the inner harbor when a sudden snow storm hit. Yet, even with a slippery layer of snow on the road, people continued at their normal--ten mile per hour over the speed limit--pace. One lady tried to stop her car at a yellow light by slamming her brakes on. He slid into the intersection and caused a five car pile-up, backing up traffic

for ten blocks. A man in a furniture truck tried to make a left hand turn going 20 mph and slid into a light post. And a fire truck, of all things, was drifting down Calvert Street, denting and knocking over everything in its path. I was utterly amazed at the havoc created by an inch of snow, all because people refused to use common sense. Another time, last March, I was in an accident with a person who would have had trouble spelling "common sense," much less using it. I was proceeding through a flashing yellow light when this degenerate pagan, clad in a black leather jacket and torn blue jeans, came bolting out of a minor boulevard, totally ignoring the flashing red light, and ran his "chopper" into my car. I held back my urge to kill him and asked why he didn't stop. He responded, "I didn't know I had to stop at a flashing light, man. I thought it meant to go slow." I think most people know by now that the color red means to stop. But I guess you can't expect rational decisions to be made by a person who wears a bandana and posts Harley-Davidson patches on his jacket.

For every unknowing driver, there must be two who think they know everything about the road, even though they they don't. This kind of person can be a real danger to himself and to others, just by being overconfident in himself as a driver. My cousin Larry, a guy who loves to go fast, follows very closely behind the slower cars on the road. He contends that there is no need for a distance cushion between cars, as long as the driver reacts quickly. About a month ago, Larry was driving me to work in his Triumph. We got behind a delivery truck, and he set his car no more than four feet from the truck's bumper. Obviously, with a nine foot high piece of metal staring us in the face, we couldn't see anything up ahead, not even a stoplight. As Murphy would have it, there was a stoplight, and it had just turned red as the truck approached it. At the sight of the truck's brake lights, Larry stomped on his brakes and the Triumph stopped about two inches from the truck. My heart was jumping like a rabbit, my hands clinging to the dashboard, yet Larry sat there with a smile on his face. It will take an accident to make him realize that, at such close range and such high speed, he is

playing with fractions of seconds and is destined to lose. My Uncle Joe is another doubter of physical laws. He has never worn a seat belt, calling them uncomfortable and useless. After I watched a film of a crash dummy smashing through a windshield during a 20 mph accident, I asked Uncle Joe what he would do if he were in a collision. He replied confidently, "Why, I'll hold myself in the seat by bracing my arm against the dashboard." I tried to be logical and explain to him that "the bracing method" had, unfortunately, been tested many times and has not worked yet, but he wouldn't listen. People like Uncle Joe are not convinced that they are wrong until they've been in an accident. And sometimes they don't live to change their ways.

Most people, however, go through life without having their flaws exposed by an accident, thus making them complacent and therefore inattentive while driving. Instead of devoting all of their concentration to the road, they find more interesting things to do, watch, or think about. My parents' friend, Fred Kalais, always looks at the person that he's talking to, even when he is driving. Last summer, he drove his wife and my family to Pennsylvania in his Chevrolet Caprice. The entire way, he kept turning his head over his shoulder to talk to my dad, who was in the back seat. He made everyone in the car a nervous wreck, allowing the Caprice to drift across the center line each time he took his eyes off the road. By the time we got to Pennsylvania, I had seen my life flash before my eyes so many times that I got bored with it. The mental scars were severe enough to make us swear we would never ride with Mr. Fred again, even though he did get us home safely. My neighbor, Billy Stone, was not as lucky as we were. Because of his inattentiveness, he nearly died. While driving along Long Green Pike, Billy attempted to unwrap a Milky Way bar. When he took his eyes off the road and his hands off the wheel to tear the wrapper, his Chevelle hit a ditch, somersaulted in the air and collided with a pole. Billy was confined to a hospital bed for six months with internal bleeding, all for a 35¢ candy bar.

The problem with Billy, Mr. Fred, and most people is that they think they can enjoy certain freedoms in the car just as they can at home. Often, on my way to college in the morning, I see drivers indulging in Danish pastries or sipping hot cups of coffee. Last Tuesday, I was thoroughly entertained by a man with a cup of coffee, trying to cross his car over a speed bump. Predictably, the gentleman ended up wearing more coffee than he had swallowed, and his dancing act had Michael Jackson beat.

If people aren't eating or drinking in their cars, they're grooming themselves. At stoplights, the rear view mirror instantly converts into a vanity mirror. Drivers slip off their driving gloves to comb their hair, pick their teeth, straighten their tie, or apply make-up. Of course, the rear view mirror also serves as a hanger. My aunt has more dice hanging from hers than you'll find at a Las Vegas crap game. Naturally, the only things she sees when she drives are "snake-eyes" and "boxcars" swaying from side to side.

For the parents on the road, no added distractions are needed. The children and the family dog draw plenty of attention with their constant commotion. I admire anyone who can concentrate on the road while two boys wrestle in the back seat and a dog wanders nervously through the car.

If you don't have any home made distractions, you can always go out and buy some. Stereo-cassette players are flooding the market, and mobile phone sales are skyrocketing. Even car televisions are available for breaking up highway monotony. Just imagine clicking on cruise control, easing the seat back, kicking up your feet, and watching "The Cosby Show" or "Hill Street Blues," all while making time on the road.

Yet, there is a problem with melding together the chore of driving and the luxury of home life: it kills people. Complacency is not limited by geography. If the number of fatal accidents in Maryland seems high, just imagine what it must be like in California, or New Jersey, or in America as a

whole. Safety on our roads is lacking, and things are not going to get any better, at least, not until everyone can afford a chauffeur to watch the road.

Craig Spencer

MILTON'S GARDEN

"I am a very strong man. I am a primitive man," Milton jabbars in crackly Russian English. He stands amidst upwardly-mobile Columbia Christmas shoppers with weighted brows, who cast a side-look at this dusty Yoda-like figure five feet three inches tall. He carries a grocery bag full of turnips in one hand and a cup of Coke in the other. When I decline the Coke, almost still full, he offers me a muddy turnip.

"I'm not crazy about turnips, Milton, but thanks," I reply. He offers me a song instead. Rejection again stirs in my stomach, but fails before it reaches my lips. I can refuse a muddy turnip, but I would not silence Milton's heart.

He selects either an old Russian song that he has translated into English, a Spanish ballad about distanced lovers, or a Hebrew prayer for health and an honest living. His eyes dance and his mouth curves into a fiendish grin. Milton's voice resonates as I shift self-consciously.

One must forgive the shoppers who smile in condescension as they pass. Milton does present a spectacle in the entrance to a gift store in the center of a regional shopping mall. He seems to have toddled right out of someone's imagination. He is the troll under the bridge or one of the seven dwarfs or Rip Van Winkle. His large ears stand out from his large, round head, barely covered with short white hairs. His eyes burn within his weather-worn face; his remarkably sturdy frame and his mud-caked trousers link him to his usual environment. Beyond the encasing glass of the shopping mall, he tends his garden.

Milton boasts of hollowing caves and building mountains. I never took his tales literally until I visited his garden.

One morning, I spotted him from a distance, scuffling toward the automatic doors at the Giant. He was dwarfed by the crowd which streamed past him on both sides. I knew with certainty that I could rush past him, too, unrecognized.

On the other hand, I had an unplanned day before me. I had the time to see his face light up when he placed me as the "Senorina Italiana" who worked at the corner store. I had the time to buckle him in my car and drive him to his garden.

Instead of a garden, I found the fortress of his old age, constructed over twelve or more years. Intertwined wire, scrap boards, old clothes, plastic bags, children's toys, and other refuse composed the walls and ceilings of Milton's paradise. Carefully hewn pathways wound around tiny mounds where four radishes or a bunch of parsnips were planted. A worn, dirty shag rug softened the floor of the southern cave. "That one's the warmest," Milton offered. I learned that Milton lives comfortably with his wife in an apartment nearby, but each day he rides the bus to his plot to work this land, one of several perfectly square parcels rented to suburban Columbians who wish to garden.

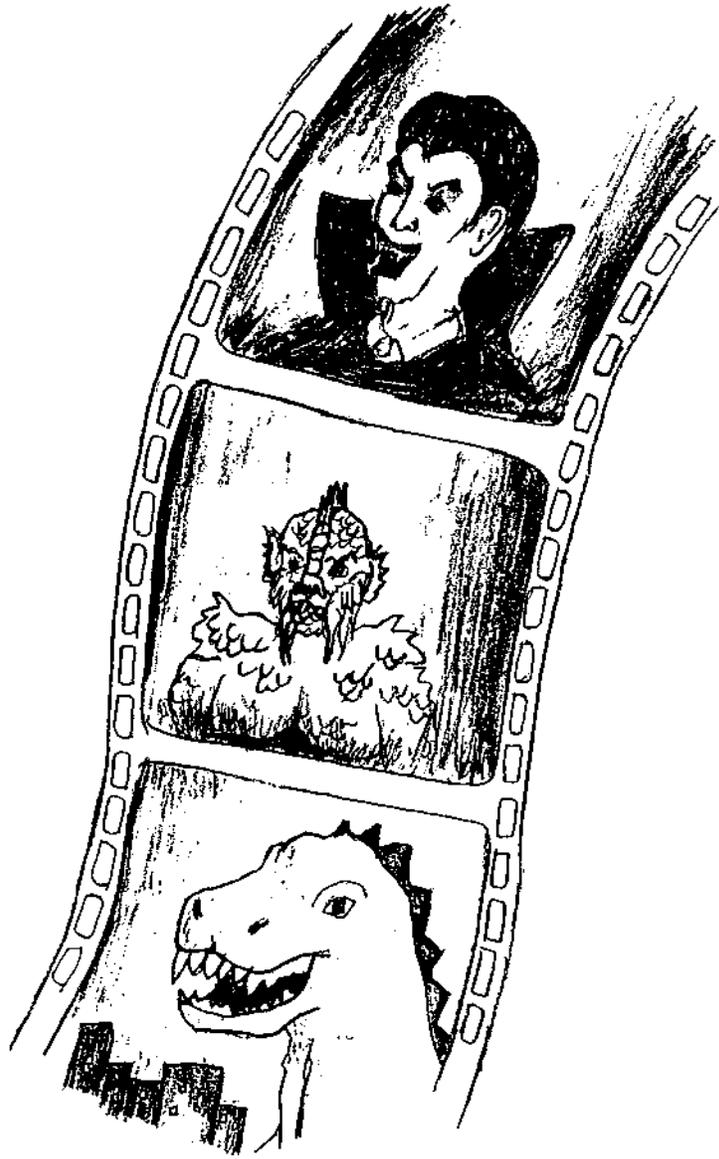
Milton tends his land, and when the other gardeners take to warmer pastimes in the autumn, he tends theirs too. He showed me the garden adjacent to his and explained that a Japanese family had rented it the previous spring. "They've given up on it now. It got too cold for them. They aren't as strong as I am." I noticed that his fence had grown larger and his pathways now extended into the neighbor's plot, dividing plants already withered from the second frost. He called it "volunteer work," work that reflects the heritage of stewardship from his Jewish faith and deep devotion to "Mother Earth" from his Russian nationality. He explained, "I get all of this free (including a Coke at the mall and a hamburger at the sub shop) because I do so much volunteer work." He reiterated, "I am a very strong man. I dig lakes and build mountains."

I have learned to forgive myself and all of the other suburbans who cringe inwardly when Milton approaches, grinning from ear to flappy ear. We smile knowingly as he passes by. We have learned to value what we know and smile knowingly at what we do not. We do not know what it is like to build a paradise, one step at a time, everyday for twelve

years. We will never know what Milton felt as he stood on the deck of a Russian naval cruiser and watched a companion ship disintegrate into cinders before his eyes. We never struggled for bread during a crushing Russian winter, or stayed a Jew where Judaism was despised. We have not escaped a totalitarian regime and struggled for independence in a foreign culture and a foreign tongue, and, at least not yet, have we learned to grow old and still burn from within.

Milton's eyes burn with the survival of decades. One cold afternoon my Dad and I found him lying on his side, scraping the earth with a small stick. He was practically coated with mud. He had difficulty getting to his feet, because he pulled a ligament in his left knee. He had slowed, but not stopped. "I am lucky that you came. You can take me home, because I have finished my job." I could not tell what his job was for that day, but I little doubted its significance. Milton has reservoirs of wisdom that I have scarcely the sense to admire.

Donna Congedo



**IN LOVING MEMORY OF DOUGLAS JAMES ASHBY,
"DR. FRICTION" JULY 27, 1967 - DECEMBER 8, 1985
WHAT HAPPENED, BUDDY?**

The imagination is an eye, a marvelous third eye that floats free. When we are children, the eye sees with 20/20 clarity. As we grow older its vision begins to dim. The boundaries of childhood imagination narrow with rationalization and maturity. By the time we gear up for the drivers license and the high school diploma, the tunnel has all but closed. The job of the horror movie is to burst through the walls of that tunnel vision for a while and to provide a single spectacle for the third eye. The job of the horror movie is to make us, for a little while, a child again.

The horror movie dances its way to the center of your life and finds the secret door to the eye of the imagination -- the imagination that was free as a child but locked up during maturity. What type of horrors open your door? Spiders? Fine. You shall have spiders, as in Tarantula, The Incredible Shrinking Man, and Kingdom of the Spiders. What about the gross-out? You shall have Regan vomiting in the priest's face in The Exorcist or the terrible raw-looking inside-out monster in John Frankenheimer's Prophecy crunching off the helicopter pilot's head like a tootsie pop. How about snakes? That shut-in feeling? Heights? Or ... whatever there is.

The melodies of a horror movie are simple and repetitive; they are emotions of terror, fear, horror and sometimes panic. But once the evil monsters, with their frozen snarls and their twisted faces, have been vanquished and the credits roll against a clear blue sky, there is a magic moment of reintegration and safety. Absurd as it may seem, the movie, Earth vs. The Flying Saucers, is a precise example. It's the end of the movie. The last evil saucer has been shot down by Hugh Marlow's (the hero) secret weapon. This weapon is an ultrasonic gun that interrupts the electromagnetic drive of the flying saucers, or some sort of agreeable foolishness. Loud-speakers blare from every Washington, D.C. street

corner: "The present danger. . . is over. The present danger . . . is over. The present danger is over." We cut to a California beach, magically deserted except for Hugh Marlow and his new wife (who is, of course, the daughter of the crusty old military man who died for his country). They are honeymooning. "Hugh", she asks him, "will they ever come back?" Marlow looks sagely up at the sky, then back at his wife. "Not to such a nice world", he says comfortingly. They run hand in hand into the surf, and credits roll against a safe blue sky. The worst has been faced and now the danger is over. It is the same feeling you got as a child when the roller coaster stopped at the end of its run and you got off whole and unharmed.

The first movie I remember seeing as a child was Creature From the Black Lagoon. I knew when I was watching that the creature had become my creature; I had bought it. Even to a seven-year-old it was not a terribly convincing creature. I did not know then it was good old Ricou Browning, the famed underwater stuntman, in a molder latex suit, but I surely knew it was some guy in some kind of a monster suit . . . just as I knew that later on that night he would visit me in the black lagoon of my dreams, looking much more realistic. He might be waiting in the closet, he might be standing slumped in the blackness of the bathroom at the end of the hall, stinking of algae and swamp-rot, all ready for a post-midnight snack of small boy.

My reaction to the creature on that night was perhaps the perfect reaction, the one every director who has worked in the field hopes for when he or she uncaps the lens: total emotional involvement, undiluted by any real thinking process. You understand that when it comes to horror movies, the only thought process really necessary to break the mood is for a friend to lean over and whisper, "See the zipper running down his back?".

My enjoyment of terror, as opposed to whatever creatures from black lagoons might have been living in my own mind, began on an afternoon in October in 1977. I was in a

movie theater in Rockville, Maryland, with my best friend Peter. I had just turned ten and received a "D" on my report card. Peter convinced me not to tell my parents about the "D" and to go see our first "forbidden" R-rated movie, Friday the 13th. Two minutes into the movie, a young couple gets slaughtered right before your eyes, sparing no detail. Peter retreated, screaming as he ran up the aisle. I sat petrified, unable to move for the next hour and forty minutes. Once the credits began to roll, I remember wondering how I could have had so much fun being scared. The answer seems to be that we make up horrors to cope with the real ones. I had taken fear in one hand and used it to destroy itself, a trick akin to pulling oneself up by one's boot straps. For a little while the deeper fear, the reality of my parents reaction to the "D" on my report card, had been excised. It would grow back again, but that was for later. For now, the worst had been faced, and it wasn't so bad after all. It is that feeling of reintegration, arising from a field specializing in death, fear, and monstrosity, that makes the horror movie so rewarding and magical. That, and the boundless ability of the third eye to create endless dream worlds and then put them to work like a child.

Whenever I run into someone who claims, "I don't go to any of those movies; none of it is real," I feel a kind of sympathy. Such skeptics simply can't lift the weight of fantasy. The muscles of the imagination have grown too weak. In this sense, kids are the perfect audience for horror. The paradox is this: children, who are physically quite weak, lift the weight of unbelief with ease. They are jugglers of the invisible world -- a perfectly understandable phenomenon when you consider the perspective from which they must view things. Children deftly manipulate the logistics of Santa Claus' entry on Christmas Eve (he can get down small chimneys by making himself small, and if there is no chimney, there's the letter slot, and if there's no letter slot, then there's always the crack under the door). The devil (big guy, red skin, pig feet, tail with an arrow on the end of it ...), Ronald McDonald, the Burger King, the Keebler elves, and the list goes on.

Seen in this light, even Disney movies are mine fields of terror. The animated cartoons, which will, inevitably, be released and re-released until the end of the world, are usually the worst offenders. There are adults in the world today, who, when questioned, will tell you that the most frightening thing they saw at the movies was Bambi's mother being shot by the hunter. It is the parents, of course, who continue to underwrite the Disney procedure of release and re-release, often discovering goosebumps on their own arms as they rediscover what terrified them as children . . . because what the good horror film (or horror sequence in what may be billed a "comedy" or an "animated film") does, above all else, is knock the adult supports out from under us and tumble us back down the slide of life to childhood. There our own shadow may once again become that of a mean dog, a gaping mouth, or a dark beckoning figure.

Perhaps the supreme realization of this return to childhood comes to us in David Cronenberg's marvelous film of horror titled The Brood, in which a disturbed woman is literally producing "children of rage" who go out and murder the members of her family, one by one. About halfway through the film, her father sits dispiritedly on the bed in an upstairs room, drinking and mourning the death of his wife who was the first to feel the wrath of the brood. We cut to the bed itself . . . clawing hands suddenly reach from beneath the bed and dig into the carpeting near the doomed father's shoes. So, we allow Cronenberg to push us down the slide; we are four years old again and all of our worst surmises about what might be lurking under the bed have turned out to be true.

Last November, ten years after my initial viewing, I had the opportunity to see Creature From The Black Lagoon again (not on television, with any dramatic mood that has been built then broken up by advertisements for the "Ginsu", K-Tel disco anthologies, or Ronco's "Mr. Microphone". thank god) but intact, uncut . . . and even in 3-D! As a result, I had the chance to experience the weird doubling back in time that I believe most parents experience only at the Disney films they

take their children to see, or when they read their children Winnie the Pooh books, or perhaps when they take them to the Shrine, or the Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Ten years later, I knew that the creature was really good old Ricou Browning, the famous underwater stuntman, in a molded latex suit, but the suspension of disbelief, that mental clean and jerk, was just as easy to accomplish. When the weight of disbelief was up there, the old feelings came flooding back just as they did when I took my girl-friend's baby brother Joey to his first movie, a re-release of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. There is a scene in that film where, after Snow White has taken a bite from the poisoned apple, the dwarfs take her into the forest, weeping copiously. Half the audience of little kids were also in tears; the lower lips of the other half were trembling. The set identification in that case was strong enough so that I was surprised to find myself in tears as well. I hated myself for being so blatantly manipulated, but manipulated I was, and there I sat, blubbering into my five days' worth of whiskers over a bunch of cartoon characters. But it wasn't Disney that manipulated me; I did it to myself. It was the kid inside who wept, surprised out of dormancy and into schmaltzy tears . . . but awake, at least for a while.

During the final two reels of Creature From The Black Lagoon, the weight of disbelief is nicely balanced somewhere above my head, and once again director Jack Arnold places the symbols in front of me and produces the old equation of the fairy tales, each symbol as big and as easy to handle as a child's alphabet block. Watching, the child awakes again and knows that this is what dying must be like. Dying is when the Creature from the Black Lagoon dams up the exit. Dying is when the monster gets you.

In the end, of course, the hero and heroine, very much alive, not only survive, but triumph. As the drive-in projector flashed its "GOOD NIGHT AND DRIVE SAFELY" slide on the big white space (along with the virtuous suggestion that you "ATTEND THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE"), there was a

brief feeling of relief, almost resurrection. But the image that remains forever after is of the creature slowly and patiently walking its victims into the Black Lagoon; even now, I can see it peering over that growing wall of mud and sticks. . . its eyes. . . its ancient eyes.

Every since that cold November afternoon I have viewed the horror movie as something bright, shiny, and strange. I use it as a way of awakening the child inside me, the child who never dies, but only sleeps ever more deeply. It is a chance to burst the walls of age, so that for a moment at least, a dreamscape of wonders and horrors stands forth as clearly and with all the magic reality of the first ferris-wheel you ever saw as a child, turning and turning against the clear blue sky.

James J. LoScalzo

A PLAYGROUND OF MEMORIES

There was a time when the forty-five acres of land just behind my house was any child's fantasy playground. Once alive with tall hardwood trees and a running creek, it is now only a slab of land destined to be the site of a new housing development. As the construction moves gradually toward my house, assaulting the natural dogwoods and mountain laurel, so too does it invade a part of me. I experience all sorts of intense emotions: anger, frustration, and a sad longing for the past that can only be soothed by my initially fleeting, now clear recollections of my childhood -- the blissful and carefree days of swinging on the tire swing, catching frogs in the muddy creek, and going out on our eventful snipe hunts. As a result of these pleasurable reveries, the deluge of mixed feelings has become instead a calm stream of acceptance. It is my memories of the past that help me to accept the changes I experience today.

My memories help to appease growing pains because they have made me realize that although things in the material environment do change, their images and their meaning for me will remain unaffected. To see my backyard woods assaulted by tractors and bulldozers clearing space for a new housing development both infuriated and saddened me. "How dare they invade my land," I thought, staring at the ten or so houses already built. I cringed at the artificial yellow glare of the tractors clashing with the natural backdrop of the autumn leaves. But soon the pleasurable days of my childhood spent in the woods flooded my memory and sent me into a comforting reverie.

Since the time I was six, the woods was where I spent most of my time in perfect contentment. My brothers and I spent our summers building tree forts in the tall trees, swinging wildly from tire swings, skipping stones across the creek, and catching bullfrogs at the water's edge. Whenever the neighborhood children got bored or restless, the woods were always the place to go, no matter what time of the year it was. It was our own little world, a place of carefree child-

hood innocence. Always conducive to creativity, it was where we pretended to be members of secret societies, then devised elaborate initiations into them. The trees became the keepers of our tree forts, which we constructed with all types of pulleys to pull the buckets of food, frogs, or toys up into the fort. On the tire swing our imaginations really went wild. On it we could fly up, over the tall trees, across Annapolis, to Istanbul, then back again all in one swing. We would jump high in the air, then land on the ground of some far away country -- whatever our imaginations had dreamt up that day. Of course, all the while, we never strayed from the security of the woods. My mother always said that she could easily tell where her children were roaming and gallivanting on their imaginery missions because our white cat was usually following us. She was our companion during our fantasy travels. All mother had to do was to look out the window and spot the little white ball of fur in the midst of the greenery to know that her children could not be far from this beacon. Parents had no qualms about letting their children play in the woods, for even they could be seen roaming the well-trodden trails on sunny weekends.

As I wander through the thirty or so acres where I spent my youth, I come across construction markers, scraps of lumber, and broken glass. Although I can no longer see the trees and trails of yesterday, I can still hear the looming laughter of children at play -- and smile in spite of it all. I enter the fields and roomy chambers of memory where there are the treasures of countless images. The new-fallen leaves dance in the crisp air, then glide ever so slowly to the hardening earth below, painting it the fiery colors of autumn as cool breezes carry the cries of children, hallooing from tree forts, skipping through the muddy creek, and leaping over the moss-covered banks. With little effort from my imagination, I spy children running down the once long and winding paths, curiously peeking out from behind trees, and concocting all sorts of mischiefs, games, and riddles -- how to catch those leeches in the creek, where to hide from Jack Weld, or where to go on that next snipe hunt. Echoes of the secret passwords, affording us entrance to our forts and hideaways, linger amid the

few remaining trees at the construction site. Like Ebenezer Scrooge being taken back in time by the Ghost of Christmas Past, I, too, see before me the scenes of my childhood. Atop Pine Hill, our favorite sledding hill, there is a ringing in the air -- voices of children singing Christmas carols and yelling to one another during the chilling sleigh rides. The faint scent of menthol coughdrops still permeates the winter air. The sites of our eventful snowball battles may be paved over with concrete, and a prefab home may now stand on the spot where we dug up our Christmas tree one year, but the sights, sounds, and sensations of my woods are still securely rooted in my mind. I recall the time I fell at least ten feet out of one of the trees that I was climbing, and the immense terror surges through me once again. The tremendous snap of the wood giving way under me pierces the silence of the scene. Pointed spikes of the splintered bark scratch and tear my delicate skin as my head spins in a whirlwind of panic. The cuts and scrapes have now disappeared, and our once awkward, little impish bodies have grown and healed, yet the numerous encounter with picker bushes, some injurious falls from the tire swing, and an occasional ill-fated sledding excursion will be forever imprinted in my mind. Knowing that these memories will remain unaffected has helped me to accept the inevitable changes that the construction has brought.

The material environment has changed, and it is my memories which have consoled the sense of loss I feel. I have come to realize that it is the memories and the meanings associated with them, not the actual material object that matter. Initially, I was possessive of the woods, outraged that anyone dare trespass. Even as children, we were always suspicious of others who did not frequent the woods as often as did we. But, as the construction has been a bitter reminder that the woods are not permanently mine, it has become apparent that the memories of the woods are entirely my own.

The remembrances of the past have provided me with the security to let go of the visual world and hold on tightly

to the special unseen images and feelings I have within me. These are the possessions I will carry with me out of this transient life, not the material trees of the wood, or the creek, or Pine Hill. I recall skipping rocks across the creek, having creek jumpin' contests, and balancing on logs in the swampy part. Screeches of children splashing through the creek, catching frogs, and cheering their little stick-boats downstream stir in my ears. I remember sliding down Pine Hill on big, plastic garbage bags (taken when mother wasn't looking). When we returned home, we would be scolded first for coming in late, then for taking the garbage bags, then for tracking dirt and mud into the house. But we didn't mind this rather stern reprimand, for it was all worth it. The construction has cut down my initial-etched trees, filled the once ever-moving creek, bulldozed the acorn trails; yet it has not destroyed my capacity to cherish this special place and the life that I experienced in it.

Back in the area of dense trees, deep green ivy, and thick underbrush near the entrance to my neighborhood is the foundation of an old farmhouse. As youngsters, we would explore the decrepit brick fireplace and the crumbling foundation, pretending to be the famous Marco Polo, Sherlock Holmes, or James Bond. I, the girl, was always Maxwell Smart's raven-haired assistant, "Agent 99." The farmhouse is said to have belonged to the farmer who owned the land even before my neighborhood was built. I cannot help but think that the children who might have lived in this house might also have had a tire swing near the creek. Maybe they, too, would swing up, over the swampy part, then jump, yelling all the while, to land safely on the mossy bank just beyond the mud? Maybe they had secret meeting places built in the hovels of rock and soil, and after coming home late for dinner, were scolded for tracking dirt into the house? Perhaps, too, they saw the construction destroy a part of their woods to make room for our houses, the tennis courts, and the pool? Now it is my turn to resign myself to the inevitable changes. I may never again sled down Pine Hill on a spine-tingling sleigh chase, or throw mud patties at my brothers from across the creek, or fly on the tire swing, but the chil-

dren moving into the new houses will probably roam the two or three acres that should remain of the woods. They will experience the same wonders that the woods showed me as a child. As I resign myself to the changes, so too must I surrender my childhood, save the memories.

And, as I brood over these memories, I come to perceive the woods in a new perspective. Everyone knew that the trees served the practical purpose of buffering the neighborhood from the noise of Route 2. The woods provided Christmas trees in the winter, a lovely place to walk in the spring and fall, and a nice place to picnic in the summertime. But few perceived the true beauty and meaning, the actual lessons of life the woods so beautifully afforded.

We all screamed and some gagged in horror the day we witnessed a snake swallow a live frog whole. Yet, whether I knew it or not, I was never made so clearly aware of the concept of death then on that day. I learned early how to bury the remains of a few baby rabbits and the many birds that the cat would leave behind. We fashioned a little cross made of twigs over the graves because that was what was on Grandma's grave.

As a child, it was difficult to develop a sense of faith or hope. But to see the seasons change, to see things apparently die and stagnate in the winter and then become alive once again in the spring was to learn that rejuvenation is possible. Thinking back to the time when I was lost in the woods for almost an entire day with Jack Weld, a neighborhood friend, makes me realize that hope was within me even at the young age of nine. After crying and crying, fearing for our very lives, I remember feeling a spark of confidence that we would be found, and eventually we did find our way home.

So here I stand, in the midst of construction at first only rumored, then only faintly heard from out on my back porch, and today clearly visible before me. With each house that is built up, so too arises another challenge to accept, yet I have my memories to help appease the pain. They are my

security blanket which enables me to let go of a part of my childhood and to see my surroundings in a new perspective. For today, I perceive my woods to be in a light more luminous and colorful than the most flashy neon sign and louder than any noise the tractors and bulldozers can ever make.

Ann Philburn

MAMMY'S MISTAKE

A cold breeze snaked its way through the broken corn stalks, twisting in and out of the straight rows like a fleeing cockbird. I was walking up the driveway, my red hands forced into the deepest corners of my pockets, and I thought the air smelled vaguely of burning leaves.

The old house came into view slowly, impressively, towering above the sloping driveway and adjacent shed. A rusty washline ran from the shed to the house, and as the wind played jumprope with the wire, it clicked a steady beat against the orange bricks of the house.

I stopped at the old black-barked cherry tree and watched my grandmother's house.

Mammy was sitting on the enclosed porch in a smoothly-worn rocker that creaked. An open magazine was in her tilted lap—Reader's Digest, most likely, or maybe Better Homes and Gardens--but her eyes were focused on the skyline. She was thinking about canning, or her garden, and when she began to doubt her own memory, she rose to check the facts in her journal.

Mammy got a new journal every Christmas from the Gift Gas Company, embossed "A Gift from Gift's--Season's Greetings." The old journals were stacked neatly in a corner of her porch. Mammy's life was recorded between the black covers. Nothing went without documentation: not the Sunday rainfalls, not the harvest dates, not the poundage of picked tomatoes, not the rising price of butter, not the black walnut cake with vanilla icing that Mammy had baked for Thelma's funeral.

Thelma had died early in October. She was Mammy's sister-in-law; she was only fifty-two. Thelma had thought she had heart problems for years--her family thought she had nervous spells. "Thelma's such a complainer," reported my

grandmother. "She's always bellyaching over one pain or another."

Thelma decided to go to the doctor despite her family's scoffing. She had her eight children to think of--and with both a wedding party and a baby shower coming up, Thelma didn't think she could afford to be sick. Thelma's husband drove her to the hospital for tests. The hospital had prepared a waiver that listed the test's mortality risk at fifty percent. Thelma's husband signed the waiver and then went home. He had built a new house and wanted to landscape the lot. He wanted to surprise his wife.

"Such a stupid test," mused Mammy, "and in the end it didn't prove anything at all." Mammy believed in flu shots; she didn't believe in doctors. Mammy had never had a problem that couldn't be cured by a little complaining. "Look at my knee," she would command, hoisting her skirt to reveal the discolored and grossly swollen joint, "but I can walk well enough." To prove her point, she would limp exaggeratedly across the porch, then throw herself back into the rocker. It wasn't often that she would forget her audience and jump to the kitchen, spry as a dateless teenager, to answer the telephone.

Mammy had little respect for people who believed in doctors. Once her grandson broke his wrist. "So what did you go to the doctor for, Mark?" she demanded when he showed her his white plaster cast. "You've fallen off ladders before. Your dad fell off a roof when he was twelve, and he never wanted to be babied.

"Mark broke his wrist, Mabel," snapped Mark's mother. "It was fairly obvious he had to go to the doctor's."

"Oh," said Mammy, "you took him."

Mammy didn't like her daughter-in-law. Mammy could only shake her head and whisper about this woman, this woman that LaVerne had picked to marry, this woman who

would live next door to her for almost two decades. Mammy was a farm wife: she raised two children, milked forty cows, butchered hundreds of chickens, and still managed to have a hot dinner on the table by seven every evening. This woman, however, left the barn after three days and retreated to the house to play with paintbrushes. Mammy once confided to a friend, "Linda was teaching her painting in Canada for three days this week. She left without even making breakfast cakes for LaVerne, so I invited him over for lunch this afternoon. He can always eat over here."

Mammy couldn't understand what her son had ever seen in this girl: her hair was too long, she didn't clean enough, and when she did clean, she threw away the wrong things. Linda would go to the attic and throw a year's worth of trash out the window. Two stories down, on the sidewalk, Mammy would scurry like a pack rat: picking up an old dress here, a cartoon box there, and carting it all back into her house.

After two weeks, Mammy knew she was losing her son to this spunky blonde painter. She tried to keep a tight rein. Every morning at 4:30 Mammy was on the sidewalk, banging pans and whistling to get her son awake. As Mammy explained, "Linda doesn't care about the cows. She'd let LaVerne sleep all morning." Later, after the milking was finished, Mammy would invite her son into her kitchen for pie. She didn't invite his wife.

Finally, after seventeen years of talking in the kitchen, the only room that wasn't connected to Mammy's side of the house, Linda packed up her husband and her children and prepared to move out from under the oppressive rule of her mother-in-law.

The first full moving van had left by 10:30 in the morning. Mammy watched the procession of furniture from her porch. As her son tried to maneuver the refrigerator through the narrow door, Mammy jumped from her chair in front of the window and scampered to her kitchen. Her husband was sitting in a high-backed yellow chair pulled close to the

counter, his thin frame hunched until his head almost touched the radio. He was listening to the news, his breath coming raggedly, white spittle building up in the corners of his thin mouth. The radio reaffirmed his sense of doom, and his shoulders sagged with each report.

Mammy found the weekly newspaper on the cold radiator. She folded it under her arm, went back to her rocker, and stubbornly kicked the pages in front of her. The refrigerator was already on the truck. She read the obituaries, then turned to the menu listing for the Boyertown School district. Outside, Mammy saw her granddaughter race her younger brother to the car.

Mammy never thought about her grandchildren much. They got socks for Christmas, a card for their birthday, and a lecture when they weren't seen in church. Once the granddaughter had broken two ribs and called for help. Mammy didn't accept the reversed charges. "I didn't want to pay for it," she said later. "If it was important, I figured she'd call back."

Mammy dropped the newspaper into her lap.

It was almost 5:30 when the last truckload started down the driveway. Mammy was in her rocker, bored. The cows had left the day before.

She got up slowly, stiffly, then opened her journal to record the number of truckloads it had taken to empty the house next to hers. When she was certain they weren't coming back, she checked to be sure they had locked all the doors and windows. They had.

Sandy Moser

JESUS' PROCLAMATION AT NAZARETH AND WHY IT SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN

Luke, in writing his Gospel, had both the luxuries of hindsight and Mark's account as a referential foothold. As such, an uncompromising consistency in presentation should have been well within his grasp. Luke should have been particularly covetous of this consistency in that his intent was less to render than to instruct and convert. In light of this, Jesus' initial pronouncement confronting his native Nazarenes seems all the more out of character, both for Jesus and Luke.

Luke had well established by Chapter 4 that recognition of Jesus' messianic mission hinged solely on grace. This was not a thing arrived at by the shepherds or Simeon or Anna, but a thing received. Their initiation into the mystery, it would seem, was based less on particular merit than on chance, being in the right place at the right time (or, if we are to assign to God his due, being made to be in the right place at the right time). This is well in keeping with Luke's overall trust--that merit plays no part in our acceptance into the Triune complex. Why then, in proclaiming himself the "fulfillment" of Isaiah, does Jesus, in effect, pull the rug out from underneath grace?

Viewed objectively, Jesus at Nazareth is certainly in his element. He has reached full maturity. He is preaching. In a synagogue. On the sabbath. He is reading from a text that specifically anticipates him. Why, then, does he tip the scale, so to speak, with his self-conscious addendum to the text, precluding the working of grace? Why does he confront the Nazarenes with their ignorance, their insistence on the obvious, when he has just spoon-fed them the obvious? Must we assume that grace is arbitrarily granted, or worse, categorically granted, as Jesus condemns the whole of Nazareth simply for their being his hometown? Most sobering of all, is Jesus perhaps grandstanding a bit in baiting the people, anticipating their objections, then slipping quietly away?

The thought of Jesus grandstanding is absolutely antithetical to even the casual reader of Luke. One has only to recall his disguise on the road to Emmaus, his silence before Pilate, or his rebuking of the exorcised demons for proclaiming him the "Son of God." Luke even prefaces the Nazareth incident with Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, the greatest test of Jesus' humility. During that trial, Jesus had reminded himself that one "must not put the Lord your God to the test." And yet, Jesus' confrontational stance at Nazareth seems almost the result of a petulant curiosity, holding the Nazarenes up to a fire that is destined to burn them. He even invokes Elijah and Elisha, asserting that "no prophet is ever accepted in his own country." But since when has Jesus stood on precedent?

Jesus' bold-faced statements at Nazareth seem particularly inconsistent with his penchant for parables, which spring from indirections and subtlety. As any ersatz shortstop knows, the hardest ball to field is the one hit right at you, and, at Nazareth, Jesus had hit one of the hottest and hardest.

One parable, that of the prodigal son, strikes me as especially relevant to our discussion of Jesus' proclamation at Nazareth. No matter how often I hear it, I can't help but feel sorry for the older son, the one who'd done his time in the fields with a sort of workaday faithfulness only to see some profligate upstart steal his hard-earned thunder. While I can accept that the remaining son is due no particular acknowledgment of his loyalty simply by virtue of his proximity, the rewarding of the younger son still seems, by extension, a perverse punishment, a slap in the face of constancy. The father does act graciously, bending over backwards to accommodate the younger son's parting and return. In fact, the only character deserving of censure in this story is the younger son, and then only in the beginning when he mistakenly asserts his merit.

While we can't assign any particular characteristics to the people of Nazareth vs. the people of Capernaum, we can

at least posit some subtle similarities between their situation and the preceding parable. The Nazarenes are like the elder son: proximate, attentive, and reprimanded by implication. Those in Capernaum are like the younger son, benefitting from Jesus' compassion because of a perceived distance. However, in our analogy, Jesus doesn't quite meet the standards of the gracious father, who had merely reacted to his sons' demands, petitions, objections. Here, in proclaiming himself the "fulfillment of the text," Jesus tempts the Nazarenes, the elder sons, with their inheritance; then, presuming their guilt, he shows them the door.

Dale Simms



OGRE ON THE RANGE

Jim Boyle is a fifty-two year old, tall, worn-out man. His vulture-like face always has a white, two-day growth on it, and he always looks tired and sick. His face is usually twisted in an expression that reveals an irritation with the human race. Jim brings an air of gloom around him that makes people want to leave his presence, maybe because he is usually whining like a baby or yelling like a madman with his favorite catchy slogan, "Get off my property!" He also has a nasty habit of interrupting to discuss his current financial situation.

Jim is the owner of a cheap, par-three golf course near Ellicott City, Maryland. To him, the course is another Pebble Beach; to the public, it is one step above an abandoned putt-putt course. I was hired the first day I arrived because everyone else quit. On that day, I asked for, and I got, \$4.50 an hour; however, I deserved \$4.50 for the work and \$10.50 for the mental abuse I suffered.

Perhaps my new boss was jealous because I was a harder worker than he. Whatever the reason, he had a warped satisfaction in seeing me screw up. While driving his precious, frail ride-mower, I saw him screaming at the top of his lungs as he stumbled down a hill towards me. From the shocked look on his face and his trembling hands, I wondered if the Russians had just launched a nuclear attack. No, something more important: I had left the gas cap off the mower. He was very upset. He nearly pushed me off the mower as he cursed at me from the top of his lungs. As he steered the tiny contraption away, I thought to myself, "Before I leave, I'll return the favor."

Jim thought my work was never right. This inexperienced man (he doesn't know how to golf, much less run a course) said that I didn't know the correct way to change cups on the green. I also seemed to collect range balls in the jeep in the wrong direction. According to Jim, the correct direction is clockwise, not counter-clockwise. He began timing me

with a stop watch to make sure that I watered the greens for the specified time of five minutes each. He insisted I tilled the traps incorrectly; they all had to be done again. Yet two golf pros there said that his methods were wrong anyway. My contempt for Jim peaked.

Although he is a contemptible and egotistical man, when it comes down to it, he is a coward. I feel a touch of pity for anyone who needs me and four other employees to throw an old lady off a golf course for picking up a stray range ball. He can suddenly grow quiet and back away if someone has had enough of his abuse. When his ex-wife had had enough, she simply attacked him in public. He took his frustrations out on me.

I developed certain ways to keep my high-paying job and my composure throughout this ordeal. For instance, I did what he said no matter how ridiculous or dangerous it was. I was told to drive a jeep to the gas station. The only problem was that most of its engine didn't function, it leaked an unidentifiable liquid, and the clutch was missing. I did what he asked, but I was almost killed trying to maneuver that crippled machine down a major highway. I didn't even complain when he told me to go into the range area and collect golf balls, even though golfers enjoy aiming at targets, and they were striking balls that sailed inches over my head. With the increase of these crazy tasks, my hatred began to blend with a realization that this man was a fool.

Avoiding Jim became my top priority. If he walked into the clubhouse, I would make my exit. Furthermore, I stopped making suggestions to him. He helped me build a fence to stop range balls from flying onto a green and knocking-out golfers. A good idea, yet a screen four-feet high would save only very small golfers. Had I tried to make him aware of this, he would have been insulted, and he would have criticized me for such a stupid suggestion. Therefore, communication between us became rare.

The day finally came to quit and go to college, but two work days before I was due to leave, he fired me. Here was my chance to release all of my frustrations on him. As I walked into the crowded clubhouse, the conversation abruptly stopped. I could feel the tension as all eyes focused on me. I felt as if I represented everyone in the room. I thought of the obligation to tell him what other employees, and even customers, didn't dare say. I had nothing to lose. When I walked up to the counter, I noticed his trembling hands. The guilt and fear in his pitiful eyes told me that he expected a vicious outburst. I looked in his eyes and just shook my head. I walked out of that clubhouse with my last check in hand and a little class in place of satisfaction.

Dan Dearborn

PROCRASTINATION

"Never put off till tomorrow, what you can do today." When the ever resourceful Ben Franklin uttered that famous phrase some time ago, he seemed to lack a complete comprehension of the Art of procrastination. Procrastination isn't just putting off a few household chores until they don't get done, or scribbling down chicken-scratch late Sunday for an overdue assignment that receives an F. Rather, it is a precise art that is practiced by many, but wielded well by only a select few. Procrastination is evaluating precisely how long a particular task will take to complete and then completing it at the last moment possible with a beneficial result. Even though the general trend is to label procrastination as an incurable disease, or a sin to be avoided, the true procrastinator enjoys distinct advantages over the incessant early-bird.

Often it seems as though laziness is the reason why common tasks are delayed until the last minute, when actually, it's the true procrastinator implementing a clever piece of strategy. Academic assignments are generally delayed a few days so that he can absorb all the information possible about the assignments, thus enabling him to complete his tasks much more efficiently. For example, in my computer science class, we are generally assigned to write a program on Tuesday which is due the following Tuesday. Well, the early-birds who begin the program immediately and finish it on Thursday lack the knowledge gained in both Friday's and Monday's classes. At first this seems trivial, just missing two classes. After all, it's nice to get an early start on a program that's due in a mere seven days. But, computer science is such a broad and expanding field that we usually learn something new in every class that helps us to make our programs run much more efficiently. So, by waiting a few extra days, the true procrastinator can absorb some extra information that enables him to write an up-to-date program. Now, keep in mind that school isn't the only place where a true procrastinator strategically waits until the last minute. It happens right at home too. Take, for instance, the second weekend in November, when almost all of the leaves have vacated their

branches. Everyone in my neighborhood realizes the leaves must go or the grass will die. So they hurriedly break out their Hefty trashbags and fourteen-year-old rakes with some of last year's leaves still stuck to them and begin the monotony. They work all day Saturday raking and bagging; some even work Friday night, only to discover on Sunday morning that their perfect lawn has been plagued again by yesterday's problem. So some, frustrated and refusing to be beaten by the trees, rush out to begin the drudgery all over again, while others decide to worry about it next week, since kickoff is in about twenty-five minutes. The true procrastinator never has this problem. Watching the same people rake away their weekend every year, I've found a better way to cope. I don't even look at my lawn until late Sunday afternoon. Then it is cool out, the one o'clock football games are over, and most important, all the leaves have fallen. So I rake and bag the leaves once, and my lawn looks the same on Monday morning. Plus, I never have to go to school on Monday complaining about what a rotten weekend I had or how tired I am. From these examples it's obvious that a little strategic procrastination has advantages over being the early-bird all the time.

Since the true procrastinator is strategically finishing tasks at the last second, he generally becomes very good at handling tension and pressure-filled situations. For example, once I was struggling with an extremely difficult history test that was divided into two parts: identifications and an essay. Usually on this type of test the identifications are simple and quickly answered; then the majority of one's time can be spent on the heavily-weighted essay. Well, the identifications were so hard that, until the teacher announced there were only ten minutes remaining in class, no one had realized how fast the time was slipping away. Soon after this announcement, the procrastinators among the class became quite obvious. In these situations all the time, they were obviously relaxed, intensely planning, and making overall good use of the time remaining. Now the early-birds became painfully obvious, too, in a completely opposite manner. Since most of them had never finished an assignment less than three days before a deadline, they panicked when they realized they

were extremely pressed for time. Some were biting their fingernails, a few were shaking in their seats, and most of them were begging for more time instead of using what little time they had. Obviously, the professed procrastinators emerged with much better grades than the tense early-birds.

Again, school isn't the only place where procrastinators handle tension and pressure-filled situations better than early-birds. For instance, I remember one Christmas when my Mom was especially happy that I was a procrastinator. It was 11:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve, and I had just gotten home from my last-minute shopping spree. I began telling my Mom about the presents I bought and who they were for when suddenly she realized that she had forgotten to buy someone a present. She couldn't understand how she could have forgotten someone, since she had checked her list over and over again since Thanksgiving when she had finished her shopping. Well, all she could do was panic about what to do now since the stores were closing in about twenty minutes. While she frantically wasted away the little time remaining, the procrastinator in me reacted. I immediately jumped back into my car, arriving at the store with ten minutes remaining until closing time. I quickly located the present my Mom had forgotten to buy and left the store with a comfortable two minutes to spare, not to mention that the present was fifty percent off the original price. As I arrived home, I saw that my Mom was so busy worrying about what she was going to do, she hadn't even realized that I had left. When she noticed that I had purchased her forgotten present at half price, she thanked me for being a calm procrastinator. Since I was a procrastinator, I was able to deal effectively with the tense situation at hand as opposed to my Mom, who could only worry. It's obvious that the procrastinators always have the upper hand on the early-birds in times of crisis.

Even though there are many good reasons for procrastinating, the fact that whatever you've been delaying might not have to be done anyway is definitely the best reason for procrastinating. If just one unpleasant task that the true procrastinator hasn't started yet anyway gets cancelled for

any reason, it's enough to make one procrastinate forever. When I was in high school, my English teacher assigned the class a paper which nobody really wanted to do: there were only two weeks left in the school year, and it had to be a paper about yourself, which most people don't like to write anyway. Well, most of the class got started on it and were almost finished that week. The following week when class met again with that teacher, he said that he had changed his mind, and we didn't have to hand the paper in. Naturally, the procrastinators were using their time to absorb and incubate and hadn't even begun writing yet, while the early-birds of the class had wasted countless time writing a defunct assignment. One night, I was supposed to go to work on my night off to clean the offices for a big meeting that was planned for the next day. I kept delaying it, and then, finally, when I was about to leave, my boss called and said that the meeting was cancelled and there was no need for me to go. Boy, what a relief that was! Whenever something you don't feel like doing is cancelled, you're happy; if you've been putting that task off for a long time, it makes procrastination even more worthwhile.

So the next time somebody starts quoting Ben Franklin at you and tells you how terrible it is to procrastinate, try to remember a few of its good points. Extra information can always be learned just by waiting a day or so. In an unexpected time of crisis, I'd rather have a calm procrastinator than a panicky early-bird trying to help me. Last, remember how much time and trouble is saved when tasks get cancelled unexpectedly. Procrastination isn't a disease, it's a gem. And, since almost everybody has a little bit of the procrastinator in them, we all might as well learn to use it to our advantage. Yes, some people will continue to say the early-bird catches the worm, but who wants a worm anyway!

Greg Spiegel

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