

FORUM

WINTER 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.

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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 "Imminent Extinction" by Jill Busam, winner of the Writing and Media Award for the Outstanding Essay in a Major Course, Spring 1985, and the essays by the four winners of the Writing Core Course Essay Awards, Spring 1985: Christine Crumpton, Vaihayasi Pande, Eric Salehi, and Michael Stewart.

SHOCK TREATMENT

Mr. Hyde was pale and dwarfish, he gave an impression of deformity without any namable malformation, he had a displeasing smile...but not all of these together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing, and fear with which Mr. Utterson regarded him.

Thus we are introduced to Edward Hyde in Robert Louis Stevenson's Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde. But anyone who saw any of the old late show movie versions of this Victorian classic remembers well that the man had a humpback, hairy jowls, a low forehead, and ugly, protruding teeth. How, one might object, can the Mr. Hyde of the book inspire terror unless he is shown to be hideous? I submit that the excellence of Stevenson's story is that we are specifically told that the character is not visibly deformed. The foulness within him is ineffable and therefore all the more terrifying. And yet this does not mean that Hyde is not concretely described. Stevenson uses precise language to relate the character's detestability and the reaction he invokes in others.

Note that Stevenson made his point without using superlative language, whereas Hollywood and modern literature continually bombard us with it -- either by exaggerating the grotesque with tubes of ghastly makeup or by making endless references to the "greatest," "scariest," and "bloodiest" things in the world. This indicates that superlative language in modern English is in danger of becoming impotent. The modern tendency is to continually keep one's attention by coming up with "bigger and better" expletives and superlatives, as if what is being expressed is not important or exciting enough.

The overuse of profanity as a superlative is one of the most widespread forms of weakening the intensity and urgency of what one is trying to say. Like any other superlative language, profanity must be used judiciously and

delicately in order to be effective. I recall vividly the first time I heard my father swear. For the first ten years of my life I could not remember having heard him once use a profane word (in English, at least). Therefore, when he slammed down a wrench in the garage and yelled "damn!" in my presence, he communicated one thing to me: an anger and frustration, the intensity of which I had never before witnessed in him. We all have several words we reserve for such occasions. For very religious people, using "Christ" or "God" in an expletive adds a real sense of desperation, and perhaps unholiness, to the situation. When we hear someone cry, "Goddamn it," we understand that this person has reached a point where he is driven to violate his normal train of behavior. Of course these words are taboo; they must be taboo, must remain forbidden, for only then can they truly apply to unnatural circumstances. When they offend, it must be remembered that their author is communicating the offense he feels in the most direct way he knows. It is for exactly this reason that profanity must be recognized as legitimate English and used properly. I'm sorry, but "H-E-double toothpicks" simply does not tell me that you are mad enough to fight, and "Oh, fudge!" certainly doesn't sound like much above a whine. Profanity is language, expression at our disposal. I know of no major English-speaking poet today who would settle for a word that did not relate exactly what he felt; profanity is no exception. The true writer draws from every word of his language he can recollect, and "moderation be damned."

Heretofore I have discussed how the use or neglect of profanity affects the speaker's ability to communicate. But there is another angle to this; namely, the effect that overusing profanity has on a listener. While I am distressed by a refusal to swear, I am much more concerned with overusing profanity for the simple reason that a seldom used term may have great impact on the listener, whereas one that has been beaten to death may lose all its power to communicate.

We have all seen the small, noisy dogs that yap loudly and boldly as we pass by, then run when we shake our fists. Such are the incessant purveyors of profanity, who either must think that everything they utter is profoundly intense or feel insecure enough to have to constantly threaten and shock us with bad words. As with the dogs, the end result is that we become uniformly insensitive to everything they say. For example, consider the case of a friend who is trying to explain to you the incredible size of the fish he caught last Saturday. He tells you that it was "the biggest mother----ing bass" he ever saw. Maybe. But after hearing "biggest mother----er" half a dozen times you begin to suspect this guy's hyperbole. You get the impression that the storyteller has a very limited store of adjectives, regardless of what you think of his word choice, and a narrow vocabulary usually reflects a narrow mind. By now, the fish's size has become a dull concept.

Just as Stevenson would not have characterized Hyde as an "ugly son-of-a-bitch," he would have avoided describing him as "the most awful, meanest man I ever met." Being a skillful writer, he recognized such language as commonplace and ineffective. As superlatives are increasingly connected with catch-phrases, or with otherwise ordinary ideas, the impact they carry wears thin. One can find bookstores filled with the work of lesser writers than Stevenson who must fall back on accounts of "dark-eyed beauties" and the "horrific features" of "supremely evil" villains. These characters do not interest me in the least. The sad part of it is that I would not be able to recognize the "supremely evil villain" if I saw him around my house. He would be such a tired concept I would not be able to give him due respect, and something that is truly evil, not to mention supremely so, ought to stop me in my tracks.

Finally, the use of superlatives is associated with social position and is consequently restricted to use in certain social circles. What if Mr. Hyde had been portrayed simply as "a most disconcerting gentleman"? I doubt that he would be remembered at all. Similarly, if he had been characterized as

"one mean mother-----," he would not have held the fascination of so many readers for so long. But suppose he really did fit the description of "a most disconcerting gentleman"? This description is usually dismissed today as a trite euphemism. We would, therefore, hesitate to use it whether it applied to him or not. Many people avoid using terms like "most disconcerting" because they feel they are too big, or too pedantic, for conversation. This results in the same limitation we found to swearing, from the other end. Polysyllabic words are just as valuable as cuss words, and likewise must be employed if one is to have an effective vocabulary. I should be able to choose my words according to their propriety in a given situation, regardless of their reputation as four-dollar or four-letter words. And if I cannot call a pejorative epithet a pejorative epithet, it's a damn shame.

Eric Salehi

THE VIRGINIA OPOSSUM: THE GREAT AMERICAN MELTING POUCH

Bill Murray, popular culture-vulture and professor of hilarity, stated, "Our (American) forefathers were kicked out of the world's best countries," and, "we (Americans) are mutts and mongrels and proud of it." However, when our forefathers -- Jefferson, Adams, Washington, and Franklin -- picked an American symbol, they chose the Bald Eagle, a bird which symbolized the royalty and religious overtones that they had just fought against. Ben Franklin suggested the Wild Turkey as a substitute, but the Virginians -- Jefferson, Adams, and Washington -- ignored him and the Virginia Opossum. Unlike the Bald Eagle, the Virginia Opossum symbolizes the true character of America. The opossum is truly American because it is the only American marsupial. The eagle fails to symbolize the American nation because it is a common animal. The eagle has served as an emblem of Belshazzar of Babylon, the Caesars, Charlemagne, Holy Roman and Byzantine emperors, Napoleon, the Russian Czars, and Austrian royalty. Even Mexico, America's poor southern neighbor, uses the eagle on its national seal. President Reagan must deliver his State of the Union address standing in front of the image of a bird used by a banana republic such as Mexico. One could imagine the grin on the President's face if he had to give the same address standing in front of the Virginia Opossum.

America was founded in part as a religious haven. The Constitution of the United States provides for a separation of church and state. The opossum, as a true American symbol, is a strict constructionist where the law of the land is concerned. Protestants, Catholics, Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists, Jews, and Scientologists can scorn, eat, and run over this totally secular animal without damaging their civil rights. The eagle, however, violates the Constitution because it is an ancient religious symbol. In Hebrew and Christian tradition, the eagle represents the flight of the soul to Heaven.

Above all, America was founded and settled by survivors. Americans take pride in the Protestant Work Ethic or Yankee ingenuity, which allows them to rise above the most trying of all circumstances or play it down and dirty when the cards are stacked against them. The opossum is American because it is a survivor. The Bald Eagle is not. The opossum's adaptability allows it to survive and thrive in the middle of New York City's Central Park, at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, on the campus of Loyola College in Baltimore, hanging from an oil rig outside of Houston, or in a dumpster behind a Miami shopping mall. The rolling highlands of Maryland, the valleys of Virginia, the mountains of West Virginia, the hills of Tennessee, the swamps of Florida, and the bayous of Louisiana are locations the opossum calls home. The Bald Eagle is a frail aristocrat who can live in only a few Western states and Alaska. The opossum uses Yankee ingenuity to escape its enemies by "playing possum." The Bald Eagle is a sheltered noble who must rely on government protection from farmers and gamekeepers who used to shoot possums or put out poisoned carrion flesh as bait to kill them.

The opossum insures future generations by using a form of the Protestant Work Ethic as applied to the honored American institution of motherhood. The opossum has a large brood, from ten to twelve in a litter. Hanging from its tail, the opossum births its babies and then goes right back to the task of finding food, much like the wife of a sodbuster on the prairie of Nebraska who would have a baby in the morning and be out plowing the fields in the afternoon. In contrast, the Bald Eagle lays only one or two eggs at a time. Since the eggs have a high mortality rate, something like one out of every two laid, a minute amount of DDT is enough to endanger the whole species. When this frail aristocrat lays its eggs, it must have a nurse or nanny to nurture and protect the unborn eagles. The second a Bald Eagle lays an egg in its cliff-side nest in Alaska, naturalists with binoculars and radios appear. Marlin Perkins and his trusty assistant Jim then helicopter to the nest site and wrap the eggs in a Mutual of Omaha blanket until they can be placed in an incubator at

a government-funded research laboratory located at the University of Alaska.

The opossum is a melting pot that reflects America's diversity of form and function. Ruddy pink claws support it and function with the aid of a human-like thumb which allows for Edison-like inventiveness when opening jars, cans, and refuse bins. The claws help the opossum to find insects, rodents, and trash. The opossum can nourish itself on rotten eggs, rancid meat, and decaying vegetables and is tough as stated in the respected American adage, "when the going gets tough, the tough get going." The Bald Eagle, however, is not tough. Rodents and fish are the only nourishment it can use, and when the food chain is upset, the Bald Eagle cannot adapt and dies. The Bald Eagle robs carrion from smaller birds of prey such as hawks and falcons. The omnivorous opossum does not steal food but will attack much larger animals than itself, such as dogs and cats.

In 1782, the United States of America adopted a spread-winged Bald Eagle brandishing the arrows of war and the olive branch of peace as the central motif on its seals. In 1782, the United States of America might have done better to adopt a Virginia Opossum: the unique, secular, surviving vermin that truly exhibits America's industry and toughness. The spirit of America rides on the wings of eagles officially, but in truth is tucked away in the warm pouch of a native marsupial.

Mike Stewart



TRAGEDIES OF JEALOUSY

When someone wishes to wax poetic on a subject larger than himself, he quotes Shakespeare. From Act III, Scene 3, of Othello:

"O Beware my lord of jealousy;
It is a green-eyed monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on: that cuckold lives in bliss
Who certain of his fate, loves not the wronger;
But, O damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly
loves!

Typical of Shakespearean tragedy, Iago's warning of the destructiveness of jealousy remains true-to-life centuries later. I, an eighteen-year-old girl in twentieth century Baltimore, ruined a fictitious hero in sixteenth century Venice. As Othello was jealous of his beloved Desdemona, I allow society's ideals and self-doubts to activate a sublimated jealousy of my best friends. What keeps me from smothering them all one by one (or collectively with a queen-sized pillow) is that I recognize the feelings as irrational. The twinges of jealousy I feel toward my friends are based upon exaggerated and imagined emotions.

Vindictive Iago victimized my Shakespearean counterpart by exaggerating his insecurities. Othello, a rugged black soldier, could never integrate into the fair city of Venice with its refined white senators. One would think he was the only Moorish general in town. Othello failed to remember people are only people, even in Venice. The politicians he wanted to emulate had weaknesses which were, if not the same, at least comparable to his own. I, at times, fail to remember my goddess-like friends have Achilles' heels which cause them to feel jealous twinges too. The green-eyed monster often appears in areas of common insecurity. The most common instigators of jealousy between females are males. In our sexually-oriented society, the male a female dates becomes a measure of her attractiveness. All the girls want to be seen

with Joe Stud, the best looking and most popular guy in school. The girl who goes out with him is envied, her position constantly challenged. Competing for God's gift to women tends to bring out the feline in females, especially when the competition is among friends. I know my claws came out for sharpening when my friend Tammy and I both liked the neighborhood hunk, Jeff.

Jeff was everything an eighth-grade girl could fall for -- 6'3", blonde hair, blue eyes, a candidate for Mr. Physique. A line of girls fell like dominoes for him, knocking each other out in quick succession. In this spirit, one becomes defensive and insecure. Doubting my chances of standing up to the competition, I looked with green eyes toward Tammy. Tammy was everything a ninth-grade guy could fall for -- petite, blonde, funny, unintimidating. She was everything I wanted to be.

Tammy was oblivious to my jealousy, as she was experiencing the same doubts about her power to allure. She would complain about what appeared to her to be legitimate concerns: her weight, hair, freckles, and inability to "handle" herself around guys. As her friend, I would assure her she had nothing to worry about-- she was an attractive, intelligent, and loveable person. As my friend, she returned the favor, assuaging my doubts and dismissing my exaggerated insecurities. Fortunately, our competitive natures did not affect the strength of our friendship. We continued to support each other long after we concluded that Jeff was a jerk.

Poor Jeff, whose ego was inflated to incredible proportions while two girls were vying for his attention, was unaware he was an object to be won to reassure the egos of his suitors (or was it strictly id?). He wasn't worth having, only pursuing. When calmly evaluated, the qualities which flare my jealousy aren't worth having either. The characteristics I envy are not as beneficial in my friends' lives as they are in my imagination.

Take, for example, the life of Lisa D.. Lisa is another of those cutesy blondes — California tan, Diet Coke figure. What is really nauseating is that she has the intelligence of a brunette. With such a combination, she is bound to succeed at everything she does, even a part-time job.

Lisa was a seasoned pro by the time I applied at McDonalds. She had worked there two months and loved it. In return all the managers loved Lisa. She worked hard, taking the job very seriously. Lisa thought of it as a hamburger joint. It really is not surprising that Lisa became crew chief and bin runner while I slaved over a greasy register. From that register I watched Lisa wrapping the forbidden food, telling the guys to run twelve and six, and calling cheese counts. I smoldered with suppressed jealousy. I wanted that power, that attention.

I wasn't the only counter girl thinking this way. Half the crew was jealous of Lisa. Rumors circulated about her rapid rise through the ranks. All the managers sure did love Lisa. The rumors reached her boyfriend, definitely not helping a relationship strained by too many weekend nights spent at McDonalds instead of the drive-in. Her school work also suffered. When these pressures finally cracked Lisa's rather substantial defense system, I was the friend to whom she turned. I could best understand the injustice of the situation. I could best understand the stupidity of their jealousy.

When I thought about the case logically, I did understand. Had I wanted to I probably could have been as successful at McDonalds as Lisa. Today I could be a manager like she is, struggling with catty counter attendants, a possessive boy friend, and a full college course load. Even in my jealous fits I knew I didn't want that, but I did have the ability. I possess most of the enviable attributes my friends do. During my fleeting, irrational moments of insecurity I consider the sparkling personalities, dazzling looks, remarkable intelligence, and general wonderfulness of my friends' to be admirable traits, unobtainable to a girl like

me. Then somehow (it does not take much) my self-confidence is restored and my real borderline egotistical nature reveals itself. I can carry on a conversation with a rock. I can walk around in public without a bag over my head. I lived to tell about freshman year in college. I have been described as "nice" by someone other than my mother.

However, what best proves to me my worth as an individual is that I have managed to attract such talented people and keep them as friends. It would be difficult not to be jealous of them. My friends represent to me what is best in human beings, the cardinal virtues and then some. Hopefully, they also represent parts of me.

Christine
Crumpton

MEN AS A SPECIES OF WILDLIFE IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

Men are animals. Really. They belong to a hybrid strain of the animal kingdom originating from the deepest, most dense jungle of Africa and spreading its population to the noisy jungles of most urban bars. Men move in packs. From bar to bar; in and out of office buildings together; they even band in unified groups on the weekends to bring some sensibility to an inert desire to kill each other and execute their anxieties on a bounded playing field.

Take typical Ed who stands at a local bar, beer in fist. He is wearing a starched plaid button-down shirt, slightly baggy khaki pants, and worn loafers. He casually scans the bar, letting his eyes linger over prospective prey, and remarks to his friends, "I'm an animal. Even when I'm not an animal, I'm an animal because the women treat you that way." Ed personifies the typical male animal. He wears his clothes cut to proportion: the placard in the yoke of his oxford gracefully falls between his muscular shoulder blades; the loosely belted slacks gently drape over jogger's thighs, skier's knees, and raquetball player's calves. The loafers bear careless scuff marks where toes, roughened by long saunters down sandy beaches, have dashed themselves against the leather. With a cold draught, Ed practices the male religious rite: cocktail philosophy. Each round of beers brings a stronger desire to discover a meaning to life. "No experience is a bad experience if you put it to good use," Ed informs his buddies as he waves to a blonde who once graced his side with her presence. "There are two lessons to be learned from each experience," Ed comments. "Learn the right one first."

It's the keen edge on which Ed's philosophy rests that separates not the men from the boys, but the men from the women. Men live in a separate reality of their own and regardless of how important a woman thinks she can become to a man, time and time again she will find herself falling off that rocky peak upon which a man seems to precariously balance himself. In the man's world there are priorities. His

image. His stomach. His game. Ed distinguishes himself from his look-alike buddies, saying, "There are three things in life: a dog will always be your best friend; a woman will never make up her mind; and I'll take a Clark bar over a Snickers any day." What hope is there for a female in a man's world when men prefer companionship that sheds and embellish certainty only upon gastric discriminations?

Men not only vocalize their palatable fantasies, they develop the art of eating to a science. Steve stands a towering 6' 4" and looks at the world through alarmingly innocent baby blue eyes. Steve has had one hand in the pretzel basket all night and the other hand wrapped comfortably around an icy mug. He casually winks at a bobbed red-head whom he thinks has been giving him the eye and turns to tell her "if you eat your pizza from back to front you will always know what your last bite will be." Meanwhile the red-head is positive Steve is making comments to Ed about her, but little does she know that she would be twice as attractive to him at this moment if she were wearing an apron and had flour caked on her arms, all the way up to her elbows.

The final plane in the male mentality is found outside the bar scene, on the playing field. It is the ultimate detachment men have made from the rest of the world. It is their proving ground. Nothing is more important to a man than a refrigerator full of cold beer, four or five rowdy and drunk friends in tattered college jerseys and sweatpants, and an entire afternoon of televised football. Evening game highlights are rolling on the bar television behind Ed, and from the corner of his eye he has managed to catch a clip of his favorite team. The fact he couldn't find his car keys in an empty room earlier is now immaterial to his keen observational powers when scores are being televised. He seems to sense the action and obediently turns to watch the numbers flash by. Steve and the rest of the gang remind Ed of a 1:05 p.m. Sunday kick-off of the next "big game." Ed nods. "There are plenty of brewskis in the 'frig," his nod seems to say. Football: it's action-packed, fun-filled, and

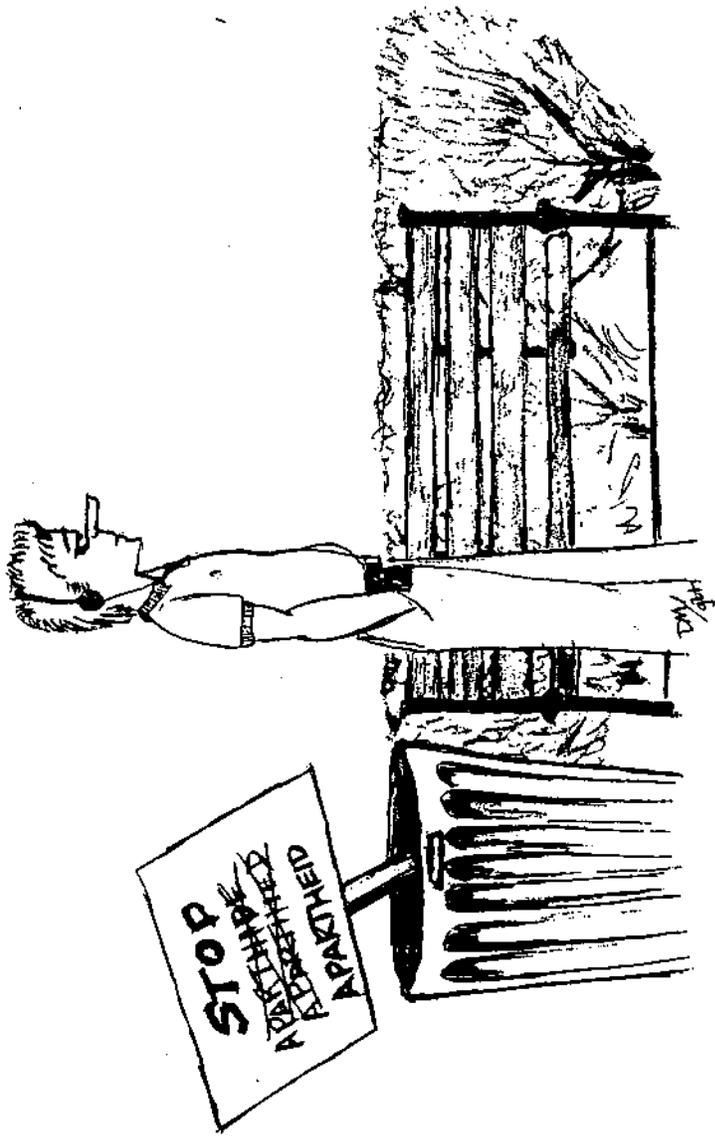
adventurous; a suspense-filling drama. "I don't have one favorite team, I watch a bunch," Ed belts out while his friends slap him on the back and chuckle in agreement.

But Ed is distracted by movement from the crowd and he watches his former blonde walk out of the bar on the arm of another man. His friends all turn and watch her leave. Preserving his image has suddenly become priority number one for Ed. At this point, the true beauty of the male ego is realized. Men have the power to supercede all emotional feelings by simply laughing at everything which strikes them the wrong way. "Lucky I let that one go," Ed says a bit too loudly to his pals. "When they get a boyfriend, well then they are a toy friend, because once they're hooked, their goose is cooked." This brings Ed and all those around him to a state of hysteria. And nothing in the world would make any of them trade places with the man who just walked out with the blonde in tow.

It is getting late and the boys at the bar have found themselves alone as the bartender yells "drink up" and begins sweeping aside the remnants of another Saturday night. Facing the finality of the evening, the male spirit rises to the occasion as Ed indulges his cohorts. "Saturday night is laid back, boys, but Sunday..." This is all the assurance the bank of wild men need to carry them through the long walk out of the bar. Mock wrestling each other all the way to the door, the pack tosses verbal jabs in the air.

"I just have to learn to keep the horsepower under control," Ed yells as he ducks a left hook into his side. "Horsepower?" another buddy shouts. "Horsepower?" Laughing and slapping each other on the arm, the men fall out into the dark night, egos intact.

Carolyn Davis



WHY JOHNNY CAN'T PROTEST

As I sat down to write this essay, I found few issues that really move me. I considered the drinking age, but both sides have good arguments, and mine, because I am a minor, seem rather self-indulgent. I considered apartheid, but I do not know enough about South Africa to argue intelligently. Indeed, I found myself to be a young American without a cause. A young American without a cause. I pondered this for a moment. From Tom Jefferson to Tom Hayden, dissent has been the norm amongst young Americans. What has happened to me and my generation? We sing along with Roger Daltrey that "people try to put us down," but in reality they don't. In fact, we are courted by almost every political party and candidate and by most of the Fortune 500. I stared at a poster on the wall saying, "Impeach President Nixon" -- a relic from a brother who now practices medicine in Pennsylvania. My generation, I thought, does not protest. We have been molded by our revulsion against the excesses of the previous generation, by a lack of effective leadership in our own times, and by the precarious nature of the American economic situation.

I thought of Kent State, and of Columbia, of Watts, of Berkeley. I thought of the Chicago Seven and of the Catonsville Nine. Although they recall very little for those in my generation, they still arouse a certain amount of controversy when brought up in our conversations. College campuses from Bates to the University of Santa Barbara have held sold-out seminars featuring the Timothy Leary and G. Gordon Liddy debate for five years. We usually support the radical position. However, we picture the sixties peace-freak as a smelly, long-haired type protesting the war on a college exemption, taking drugs until his brains turn to Wheateena, his actions far in excess of what the situation demanded. My generation senses that the violence of the protests and the riots only provoked more violence, and that little was settled as a result. We take the other extreme. The ballot is our main weapon, a weapon which often rusts in its scabbard, and

it takes three weeks of planning to get fifty people thirty-five miles for a demonstration.

Our apathy is only partially attributable to a rejection of extremism. Poor leadership also comes into play.

The leaders of youth in former generations had strength, power, and charisma. John Kennedy, his brother, Bobby, the Reverend Martin Luther King and even Malcolm X all had a certain fire, a strength, and a powerful command of the English language. Who can forget, who was not inspired by the 1960 Inaugural Address, or the 1963 March on Washington speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial? Today, even at best, we have men like Teddy Kennedy and Jesse Jackson, the former reiterating his brothers' actions and words, the latter an electrifying speaker who cannot rally the members of his own race once his words cease. At worst, we have men like Louis Farrakhan and Jerry Falwell. The former is a radical xenophobe who wants to build statues of Adolf Hitler, who attempts to terrorize reporters who disagree with him, who asks anyone with a differing opinion to please leave the country. The latter, on the other hand, is a country preacher with the largest collection basket in the world, who would like to give puritanism another try in America, who would also ask anyone with a differing opinion to please leave the country. The men have charisma, but their messages are just too radical, too eccentric to bring America's youth out of the security of the middle. The only level at which leadership of today's youth is effective seems to be the local level. This is exemplified by the election campaign of Maryland's own Helen Delich Bentley. Of the one hundred and fifty campaign workers on her staff, more than eighty of them were twenty-one years old or younger. And what were her campaign promises? Social justice? Peace? No. Rather, she promised that there would be jobs at the end of college, under a Republican administration and a Republican Congress.

Economics may well be most responsible for the silencing of dissent amongst America's youth. Karl Marx

made it clear that revolt would not be possible amongst people whose situation was getting worse, but rather amongst those whose situation was getting better. This was assuredly the case in the sixties. The student of this era could easily find a job when he graduated. The country was still in the midst of a post-World War II boom, technology was expanding, and job positions were going for want of warm bodies to fill them. The standard of living almost doubled in the twenty years from 1945 to 1965, and the job market increased from seventy million in 1946 to over one hundred million in 1966, this pace accelerated by the war in Indochina. Students who found themselves protesting the secret bombings one year could easily find themselves young executives at Pratt-Whitney or Boeing or Dow Chemical the next. With guaranteed jobs after graduation and with a childhood of the highest standard of living in the world behind them, the temptation to protest what were seen as injustices and to push for lofty ideals must have been great. But, as the sixties and early seventies were fecund for revolt economically, so are the late seventies and the early eighties a sterile time, with twenty percent inflation and ten percent unemployment. It is easy for us to just sit back, to live with the problems in the world, to hope that our share is still there when we get up to bat.

I will not deny that there is still protest going on in America or that some young Americans are marching or making waves. But, by and large, the college campus of 1985 is halcyonic compared to the college campus of fifteen years ago. The Indians believe that all human existence is cyclical, that what has happened will happen again and again. Perhaps our children will be the protesters of tomorrow, as loud and as angry as those of the sixties. Twenty-three centuries ago, Aristotle spoke of the bleak future of the youth of Athens, continually engaged in protest. Yet Greece survived, in spite of all the protests. Only history will judge how we do in our age of non-dissent.

Andrew R. Arthur

HOPELESS PURSUIT OF A HAPLESS CAUSE

Idiot savant. That is what my family calls me. My line of eccentric pursuit -- the Civil War. Ah yes, the Civil War. Everybody is said to have an irrational or insane side to them. Well, mine is the Civil War and ante-bellum South. I cannot really explain why I got hooked on the Civil War, but I do know the reason why I am interested in it. I first became interested in the Civil War after I read Gone With the Wind. Since then I have read it about sixteen more times. My interest in this subject has become so fanatical that I have this crazy notion that if I learn as much as there is to know about the Civil War, I will be able to re-live it. That ought to make you sit up and take a good look at me again and wonder whether I am what I seem.

The history of the world spans five thousand years or so, and it seems odd that I should pick four piddly years to become interested in. I think the reason is that, in John Jakes' words, the Civil War was "the greatest redefinition of America in the shortest time." James McPherson also believed this and stated, "It settled what sort of nation America would be." Indeed it settled the fact that America would be an undivided nation composed of 3,628,066 square miles -- 3,628,066 square miles that have great importance in the world today.

Perhaps you could understand my interest in the Civil War and pre-war South if you looked at it from the romantic angle that I employ -- life before the Civil War in the South was relaxed and peaceful. In the words of Margaret Mitchell, "There was a glamor to it, a perfection and completeness and symmetry to it like Grecian art." It had its own slow charm and grace, which, in turn, gave it an aristocratic air. The Southern people lived comfortably and extravagantly too. It was a lost era; an era of solidly yet gracefully built mansions; an era of parties, balls, and dances; an era of taffeta, satins, and silks; an era of soft-spoken ladies and blustering gents, all too breathtaking to be forgotten.

The lifeblood of the people was the land. It was a culture that sugar built, a culture that snuff built, a culture that rice built, and, above all, it was the kingdom of cotton. Cotton was very important to the Southerner because it provided them with their food, their clothing, their money, their homes, and their extravagance. Additionally, it lent them that undefeatable courage, that unbreakable pride, and that unforgivable arrogance. Cotton was not only cultivated by the aristocrats but by the small-scale farmers too. Called Crackers, they made up the greater proportion of the population of the South. Nevertheless, it was the cotton that was the very foundation of the aristocratic culture. In the words of Margaret Mitchell, "Cotton was the heartbeat of the section, the planting and picking was the diastole and systole of the red earth. Wealth came out of the curving furrows and arrogance came too -- arrogance built on green bushes and the acres of fleecy white."

Everything about the old South had a note of wealth and lavishness: avenues of cedars, lawns of Bermuda grass and swirling stairs that led up to the sprawling white mansions, French colonial-style pale pink stucco houses, and towering, brick townhouses. In the imposing gardens there were gnarled cedars, white starred magnolias, gaunt pines, gently-draped fronds of Spanish moss, and swaying palmettos. The houses were graced by ladies dressed in watered silk frocks, carrying palmetto fans. Yes, the Southerners certainly did live extravagantly and with a lot of taste too! Never again was such an extravagant and utterly dream-like culture to be established though the British came close to it in their lives as Sahibs in colonial India. Certainly nothing like it can be found in America today. It is depressing the way the world changes. They say that a change is always for the better, but that is not so in my books.

I know that my view of ante-bellum South is romanticized, and it applies to only twenty-five percent of the population. I am so caught up in the charming side of the Southern life that I have lulled myself into ignoring that it differed in the opinion of the Northerner and the Southerner.

Some Southerners believed that slavery was the epitome of happiness and that a slave could not lead a better life. In the words of George Fitzhugh, "The negro slaves of the South are the happiest, and, in some sense, the freest people in the world... The free laborer must work or starve. He is more a slave than the negro, because he works longer and harder for less allowance than the slave, and has no holiday, because the cares of life with him begin when its labor ends. He has no liberty, and not a single right." The Northerners stretched the truth the other way. "The slaves in the United States are treated with barbarous inhumanity... they are overworked, wretchedly clad and lodged, and have insufficient sleep. They are often made to wear around their necks iron collars armed with prongs..." said Theodore Weld. The truth of the matter, in my opinion, was somewhere in between. Whatever the truth may be, the glorious culture of the South rested precariously on this institution and with the Emancipation Proclamation the culture toppled, never to be re-built again.

I should touch on the actual war. What makes the Civil War different from other wars in my eyes? What makes me view this war sentimentally? I find the Civil War a very tragic war. It is not often that brothers fight brothers in a war. Even President Lincoln had two brothers-in-law fighting on the Confederate side in the Civil War. Love and War by John Jakes shows how two families, one from the North and one from the South, formed a close bond of friendship and even marriage and tried to maintain it through the war. They even engineer an escape from a Confederate prison. The Civil War also signified the end of a way of life for the Southerners. After the war the South was in a state of utter destruction. T.S. Eliot once stated that the Civil War was an unforgivable destruction of a civilization. The signing of the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House signified the end of a civilization, a civilization that had disappeared as the guns of the American Civil War were stilled, gone with the wind, slumbering now in the depths of history. It has been replaced by the hard, matter-of-fact, competitive, glittering and glistening age of today. Of course, one must pretend to be naive and believe that it was a question of culture versus

progress and that the South was backward and the Civil War brought progress to the South. I personally believe -- to hell with progress.

Actually, I am not alone. The Civil War seems to hold an undying fascination for people all over the world. The Civil War took a larger number of American lives than any other war Americans has ever fought: about six-hundred and twenty thousand lives were lost to both sides. As you may have gathered (I hope so!) I sympathize with the Confederate side of the war. I sympathize with an intellectual and artistic culture composed of landed aristocrats, lawyers, doctors, and teachers; a culture with none of the brashness of the nouveau riche or the ugliness of being modern; a culture whose people possessed the spirit to put up a brave fight. This war, so tragic, had a romantic side, too. As in the case of the Light Brigade in that famed poem of Alfred Tennyson, there was a prevailing sense of doom. As much as I regret it, the fact is that none of the admirable characteristics of the Southern culture ever did rub off onto the America we have today.

I say with all modesty that I have not learned all there is to know about the Civil War. Much to my disappointment, I cannot re-live the Civil War, and it is buried too deeply in the past to get more than a glimpse at it. So much for quixotic notions. Life is real, and there is no avoiding that.

Vaihayasi Pande

MEETING THE MONSTROUS ENEMY

I came to Baltimore with preconceived ideas on cockroaches.

"Cockroaches are huge in the city," said my grandmother ominously, leaning over my half-packed suitcase, "and since you're moving to an apartment at college, your roaches will probably be monstrous." Mammy didn't receive her information from personal experience: she had never gone to college, had never lived in an apartment, had never even slept in a bed other than the old four-poster on the second floor of her brick house.

I suppose Mammy based her image on the information presented on television. After watching thirty seconds of a chubby, middle-aged woman jumping around the kitchen shrieking, "Eeek! Roaches!" even I had the impression of a large and frightening creature. I had also seen drawings of cockroaches: crude representations of seedy creatures checking into a roach motel, but not checking out.

It was the city cockroach described in these ads that had me worried. I had survived encounters with "dunkelbuchs," the cockroach's country cousin. "Dunkelbuchs," loosely translated from Pennsylvania Dutch as "dark bug" or "shadow beetle," grow up to 1-1/2 inches of shiny black ugliness. But these bugs care little for people and were content to enjoy life alone, underneath the bags of turkey feed. Although these bugs prickled the hair on my forearm, even I would not go so far as to call them "monstrous."

I was initiated to the trials of city life and apartment dwelling two weeks later, on September 19. I was ignorant at first; I did not realize that I was watching a cockroach climb over my roommate's sweater. I would hardly have called the bug "monstrous." It was as long as the first knuckle of my pinky and light brown in color. Its body length was nearly doubled by two antennae, weaving back and forth over the

sweater's washing instructions. The bug itself appeared rather wimpy in comparison to the industrial strength species I used to find in the feedroom.

Instead of jumping on the nearest chair like the housewives in Raid commercials, I stepped closer for a better vantage point. Just as the daily pace of Baltimore is more frantic than that of Bally, so is the pace of each area's cockroaches. I realized this as soon as the critter hurled himself off the table and began racing across our hardwood floor. While the black bugs I found at home were sluggish and stunned by light, the apartment cockroach seemed built for speed. His three pair of legs carried him under the rug before I could find a chair to jump on.

That night, I thought about the resident cockroach. Although he wasn't as scary as my grandmother had warned, neither was he as romantic as the verse-writing archy. Archy was the live-in cockroach at the home of poet Don Marquis. As Marquis slept, archy would steal out and type his philosophies on Marquis' typewriter.

Archy's late-night habits are typical of his breed. Cockroaches, or Blattidae to my Biology major roommate, are nocturnal creatures that spend their evening searching for food. This left me with two options: keeping the lights on for twenty-four hours a day or cleaning the kitchen. I cleaned. Cockroaches live underneath floor tiles and in the cracks of walls. I resolved not to spend any time in the cracks of walls.

If I wanted to avoid cockroaches entirely, I would also have to avoid bakeries, groceries, office buildings, restaurants, hotels, flour mills, libraries, and homes. The cockroach's tendency to eat anything ranging from food to bookbindings allows it to adapt to each of these habitations. With over 2,000 species, the cockroach can also be found outdoors, living under stones and leaves, or under the loose bark of rotting logs and dead trees.

Even assuming a perch on a chair in the middle of the kitchen is not safe from these critters, for some species have developed wings. This genre is more prevalent in the southern states. Not to be outdone by the South, the North boasts the Croton cockroach, named after the Croton waterworks system of New York City, where they were first found.

Cockroaches have not always flourished in American society; they are another set of immigrants. They were first introduced to Europe on trading vessels from the Levant, then later to the United States. They can now be found in large numbers in every region of the country.

Although I tried to convince myself that our cockroach was singular, an exiled radical from the apartment next door, I knew in my heart that cockroaches are not loners. For every one seen, it can be assumed that there are thirty or forty others waiting behind the wall for a report from their lone scout. Cockroaches reproduce rapidly, too, laying sixteen eggs at a time several times throughout the year. These eggs are carried in a leathery capsule affixed to the abdomen of the female.

Despite staggering odds against him, man seems determined to eradicate this pest. The English suggest placing treacle on a piece of wood floating in a broad basin of water, a sweet invitation to death by drowning. Not finding any treacle in the apartment, I opted for a more American method of extermination: roach motels and cans of Raid. These, however, were expensive, and the results temporary.

Joseph Miller, from York exterminators, assured me that the easiest way to get rid of cockroaches was not to get them. After serious prodding, Miller further explained that a home's baseboards and cabinets could be sprayed with a fatal chemical. This lasts almost eight months, but the apartment will smell like chemicals for a year. This method is also costly, ranging from \$120 to \$200.

I was beginning to believe that cockroaches were one of the earliest inhabitants of the world. I was also beginning to believe speculations that even nuclear war would not be the end of these creatures. Extermination seemed hopeless.

Mimi Teahan, fellow cockroach sufferer, lists several ways not to kill cockroaches. "Spraying the roach with Final Net won't kill the wimpiest cockroach. Aqua Net might kill cockroaches; it's pretty potent stuff." Mimi is a believer in "Neighborly Extermination": "I scream till one of the guys next door comes over to help," she proudly reports.

Kevin Bultman, whose apartment boasts serious infestations, swears by the manual squish method. This involves little more than an open palm and a slow cockroach. While it lacks style, it can easily be fit into a college budget.

Kyran Hurley takes a sportsman's pride in killing cockroaches. After finding a cockroach, Hurley sprays a ring of first aid spray around the unfortunate insect. He then lights the ring, laughing as the cockroach searches for escape. Bored with this, Kyran squirts the cockroach itself, an act that causes the cockroach to explode.

My cockroach was not so fortunate as to fall prey to such creative methods of extermination. My cockroach made the mistake of making an appearance in my sink. I pushed it down the drain, then flipped the switch for the garbage grinder. Even my cockroach couldn't outrun the greedy jaws of the sink.

My apartment has been cockroach-free ever since. Apparently the brutal death scared off the forty other members of the commune. I almost hate to disappoint my grandmother.

Sandra L. Moser

LIVE
AID



MODERN-DAY PROMETHEUS

"It's not the way it used to be," lament the melancholy moralists of the present age. The past is idealized in their minds: the more remote the era, the finer its ethical quality seems. This is why, if asked to reckon the difference between, say, the religious piety in ancient Greece and the irreverent agnosticism of today, most would mourn that there just is no comparison. But, gods or not, we do have morals today, and we have our own heroes, much like the mythical adventurers of the Greeks. One Greek myth in particular strikes a note of similarity with a certain present-day battle being fought by a real hero. The myth is the tale of how Prometheus saved mankind, but the hero of this story is, oddly enough, a Rock and Roll artist named Bob Geldof.

According to the early Greeks, the gods created mankind, frail and helpless in a world of many dangers. The Titan Prometheus, with no concern for himself, twice defied the arch-god Zeus to aid the human race. First, he traveled to the sun in heaven and lit a torch in order that he could give mankind fire as protection against the elements and animals of prey. As his second gift, Prometheus arranged for humans to get the most favorable portion of animals-sacrificed to the gods. The Titan slew an ox and, cleverly disguising the edible parts in the hide and the bones under a layer of fat, asked Zeus which he preferred. When Zeus chose the bones, the matter was decided forever: humans were to keep the best parts to eat. In this way Prometheus proved himself, as least to the Greeks, as the ultimate benefactor of mankind.

What Prometheus did was to lift humanity out of a state of existence marked by meekness and weakness, by lives barely sustained, and by the absence of any human dignity. Yet in reality the problem remains unsolved, for even today in Africa countless thousands of people are starving to death. Though fatal and tragic beyond words, the crisis is essentially simple. The people need food. Without it they are reduced to the same sort of state the Greeks imagined for

pre-historic mankind. And the solution requires a hero, like Prometheus, to offer selfless aid for those in need.

A feat such as this is not easily achieved. In the case of Prometheus it proved downright torturous. Because the Titan allegedly "gave to mortals honor not their due," Zeus condemned him to be chained indefinitely to Caucasus, a "joyless rock," and to have his flesh perpetually picked apart by a great "eagle red with blood." The martyr willingly accepted his fate, knowing that he had been right in his act of compassion.

A similar story unfolds around a slightly more modern iconoclast-savior who, though of a humbler stature than Prometheus, carries on in the Promethean spirit. Rebel Rocker Bob Geldof was moved to pity one night while watching a television special about the African plight. Inspired, he wrote the lyrics for the song "Do They Know It's Christmas?" during a twenty-minute taxi cab ride. Geldof put his private and professional life on hold and enlisted the help of Britain's top Rock and Roll artists, collectively called Band Aid, to make the forty-five. None of the performers were paid for their efforts; as Geldof guaranteed, 100% of the proceeds from the single went to famine relief. That one song raised over \$10 million and sparked other charity projects around the world, including USA for Africa, Northern Lights, and many others.

The greatest of all these projects was once again a product of Geldof's organizational genius. The man assembled the world's most famous performers of contemporary music, performers like Paul McCartney, Mick Jagger, Tina Turner, The Who. On July 13th, 1985, this barrage of talent exploded on the world in a dual concert taking place alternately in London and Philadelphia. Again no one but the hungry reaped any profit. The event raised over \$60 million, a figure nothing less than astonishing. Quite a stunt for one man to pull off, and it was indeed by the will of a single man that the stunt was ever attempted. Bob Geldof's Band Aid Trust is presently considering or committed to the

purchase of water-drilling equipment to irrigate the land, various agricultural projects including reforestation, medical aid, and the purchase of trucks and trailers to transport food and supplies. Yet even with all of the practical ramifications, the most amazing thing about the event, for the most part, is that, as Pete Hamill said in Rolling Stone magazine,

. . . for one day, at least, the Live Aid concerts in Philadelphia and London welded together popular art and humane politics, using the power, energy and invention of rock & roll to accomplish something of practical social value. For that single day, a group of the richest, most spoiled and safest human beings on the planet assembled in concert to try to feed another group of human beings, a group that has been ravaged, humiliated and imperiled. This is no small thing.

It is as if Geldof, playing the part of the mythical Prometheus, had convinced all the gods of Olympus to bestow on the African people an honor not clearly "their due," the fire of hope, the vital gift of food.

He is now being nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Like Prometheus, notably wise and compassionate yet humble and selfless, Geldof has worked around the clock eight days a week since well before Christmas, not earning a dime for himself, only to benefit the African people. Clearly a Titan in his own right, the man deserves the prize. He maintains the Promethean spirit even down to his song, which demands that we "say a prayer to pray for the other ones," and that "we let in light, and we banish shade."

He has actually accomplished something far greater than Prometheus' feat: besides procuring about \$100 million thus far for the Africans, Bob Geldof has in fact set in motion a trend of salvation. Aiding him in his crusade, performers and fans of Rock and Roll from around the world have pulled together to pull it off. Everywhere, caring individuals give for charity like never before.

We do have morals today. We are our own heroes. The moral manner of the human race has not been diminished by the passage of time at all. Therefore, the next time someone says, "It's not the way it used to be," it should indeed be an occasion for thanksgiving.

Geoff Camphire

A SPECIAL LOVE

When he died, my uncle Louie was only forty-four. Many of you are probably saying, "Gee, that's sad for someone to die so young." But we thought we were very lucky to have this man for forty-four years. Louie was special. He had Down's Syndrome. All Down's Syndrome patients look alike. Louie had small, slanted, hazel eyes, and he was all of 4' 10". He had a pudgy little build, and he always wore suspenders to hold up his pants. Not many outside my family knew Louie, but those who did realized he was the glue that held our family together.

Louie was one of seven children. My mom, the oldest, was followed by six brothers. My mom and her brothers are each very different, but all seemed to have the same affection for Louie, and each showed it in his own way. Jack, the fun-loving golfer, constantly threatened to make Lou his caddy. Rhody, the financier, is slightly more serious. Yet even at fifty Rhody was still taken care of by Louie. Louie made sure he was up on time for work and always warmly dressed. My Uncle Joe was Louie's buddy. He got Louie everything he wanted, not necessarily what he needed, but all the things Louie enjoyed, like lunch at McDonald's or a few new batteries for Louie's many radios. These four brothers lived together their whole life and never thought of having it any other way. They lived in bachelorhood in a large brick house in Riviera Beach. Louie did not have a want or need that was not taken care of immediately. My uncles bathed, fed, and gave more love to that little guy than I would have thought possible.

Even though Louie never learned to read or write, he understood people. Louie's source of understanding and knowledge was a big heart. This heart had a special place in it for each member of our family. As a child, Louie was small, and he didn't learn to walk until he was five, but he was always very sensitive to everyone's needs, feelings and moods. Whenever there was an argument, and there always are in big families, Louie came to the rescue. Sometimes he

would save the day with a smile or a joke, but more often he would say something like "I don't like that, you creeps!" He had the great ability to make us sit up and look at ourselves. I remember one time when Jack and Rhody disagreed over Reagan's candidacy. It went from a calm discussion to a heated argument. Louie came into the room and suggested that Lawrence Welk was a better candidate. Everyone was taken by such surprise, we couldn't help but agree, in laughter. It's funny, but most families would have considered Louie too much trouble, and he would have been institutionalized. My family could not have been prouder of Lou's sensitivity and his "small" accomplishments than if he had been a Rhodes Scholar.

I now realize the importance of "small things." There was not a day in my life when I didn't walk through the white framed front door of Louie's house without his greeting me with a kiss, a hug and a little chuckle. Louie always invited everyone into his own special room, the family room. Because it is in the front of the house, Louie was "the butler" in the sense that he always greeted everyone at the door. The family room has a hardwood floor, green Early American furniture, and shelves filled with Louie's favorite collectibles. Louie had over five hundred radios. He collected everything from Rolls Royces to Coke bottles, as long as they played music. Radios were Louie's way to keep in touch. He listened loyally to baseball games and always knew the score for "his boys." It became a competition within the family to buy the best and most unique radio for every occasion, especially October 11th, the biggest day of the year, Louie's birthday. Any occasion was Louie's excuse to have everyone in the family down for ice cream and cake. We had birthdays for even those who would have rather forgotten that they were once again a year older. Louie never missed a birthday, and I can't remember a Christmas that wasn't filled with gifts, food, and laughter.

Most growing families seem to go their own way, but because of Louie my family only got closer. Even after Louie's death, he still keeps the family close. On the day

Louie died, I stood with my uncles in the white, sterile Intensive Care Unit. I watched him lying there motionless, but I knew he wasn't lifeless. I felt a piece of me go with him, but an even bigger piece of him stayed here. He gave life to my family. I watched as my Uncle Paul, a priest, left Louie and began to pray for the person in the next bed. As we stood there, I cried, but somewhere deep inside me I knew that heaven was finally heaven for my grandparents because Lou was with them. My family is stronger and I think I am too because we knew Louie was a gift. My family lived Louie's life on the inside, and although in his death we found grief, we also found each other. We rediscovered the bonding that had been Louie's gift to our family.

If you're lucky, when someone close to you dies, they leave a piece of themselves with you. Louie was too special ever to be forgotten, and I feel grateful that he was the glue that joined my family together.

Bridget Byrnes

MY TWIN, MY SELF

"Carl, I mean Eric. No, you're Carl, aren't you?"

"Yeah, I'm Carl."

"Ok."

The above conversation has been repeated more times than I can remember. Sometimes I wanted to shout, "I'm Carl! I'm my own person. Why am I only seen as a twin?" However, while I sensed the confusion of others in distinguishing my separate identity, I, too, was confused. I realized I had been doing what I accused others of doing: being insensitive to my separateness. For instance, I often took it for granted that Eric would agree with me in any argument. Or I felt compelled to follow any plans Eric might make. I resolved that twins must make a special effort to define their individuality.

Unfortunately, many people are convinced that this individuality is defined once they have figured out which name belongs to which twin. I recall the countless times Eric and I would be named captains to pick teams because the other kids said, "They are the same anyway." Similarly, many casual acquaintances or lazy relatives, the ones I see only during holidays, will ask me, "Eric got an A on his test and you got a C? How can that happen? You two are twins!" But, strangers are the worst. The instance that bothers me most occurred on an otherwise wonderful evening. Eric and I were returning with friends, each of us tired and subdued, from a U2 concert at the Capital Center in Landover. As Eric drove us down 695, we listened to the echoed vocals, atmospheric keyboards, and jagged guitars of U2's "Indian Summer Sky." Suddenly, the urgent wailings of Bono, U2's lead singer, were interrupted by the distant wailings of a siren. As the familiar red light swirled in the rear view mirror, I glanced at the speedometer. Eric was slowing the car from 65 to 55 mph as the policeman motioned for us to pull over. The state trooper seemed to enjoy writing up the

ticket. Suddenly he looked at me, and then at Eric, and then back my way. Finally, he smiled and said, "You two really shouldn't drive so fast. You should keep each other in line. I should give you both a ticket. Twin tickets!"

I'm sure many people fantasize about the pleasure of having a twin, but few have imagined how difficult it can be to feel like half a person. You may ask, "What does it mean to be half a person?" It is a sense that others have decided that you will share your slot in life with another person. Eric and I are compatible, but I do not think we could comfortably share a wife or a toothbrush. Also, I believe it is unlikely that we will live in the same house, or even in the same neighborhood. We will more than likely take separate vacations and choose different tax shelters. The feeling of being less than a whole person is not exclusive to twins. It can be caused by living in the shadow of an older brother who has been very successful in all endeavors. However, twins are a special case because they really share much of life. Unfortunately, many mistake the partnership of twins as a union that should never be broken. For instance, Eric and I have twice shared awards. In the fourth grade, we received the Good Citizenship Award for the Lower School. Similarly, in the eighth grade, Eric and I were presented with the Most Improved Award for intramural basketball. I presume that those who presented the awards were wary of singling out one of us. Many people seem to have the misguided perception that twins are somehow offended or hurt if they are not always treated exactly the same.

However, I do remember many times when I have been as excited or anxious for Eric as I would have been for myself. For instance, during exams, I could never relax if I knew the material because I was concerned that Eric might not know it as well. Eric always received good grades, but I still felt as nervous for him as I did for myself. I had a sense that I could control my own destiny, or math exam, but not Eric's. That bothered me because I felt no matter how well I did, if Eric did not also do well, I would not be satisfied.

Thus, much of my feeling of being half of a whole was self-imposed. I often recall an incident from my younger days. The day is a blur. Eric and I, with the aid of our new friend, Andre, had just built a "fort" of seemingly epic proportions with cardboard building blocks. Soon after, the nursery school class sat Indian-style upon the carpeted floor for the daily milk and cookie break. Some children ravenously devoured their cookies while others nibbled and savored, seeming to find pleasure in being the last to finish their snack. As I wiped my mouth with my sleeve, I became aware that a teacher was leading Eric out of the room. I obediently followed. But as I reached the door, I was informed that I was to remain in the room and that Eric would be in a separate class. I became wildly upset and rebelliously scattered the cardboard fort we had built. I spent the remainder of the day quietly fingerpainting in the corner.

If a twin is to have others recognize him as an individual, he must first draw a clear distinction between himself and his twin in his own mind. My epiphany occurred early in my sophomore year of high school. I realized that either consciously or unconsciously I tended to link Eric and myself as one and found myself, in casual conversation, referring to "we" instead of "I" when making social plans. This pattern continued when I decided to attend a sophomore dance and assumed my brother would join me. When it dawned on me that he had no such intention, I considered cancelling my own plans. Fortunately, I realized the danger in such reasoning. As I entered the dimly-lit gym with silver streamers covering the familiar rafters, I felt a pang of nervousness. I was never quite comfortable when attending dances before, but this was different. For the first time in my life, I felt conspicuous in my solitude.

It was neither meaningful nor honest for me to search for an identity for the sole purpose of being different than Eric. Stephen Jay Gould, in his book *The Flamingo's Smile*, writes that Siamese twins often have "ambiguous feelings of autonomy." Obviously, Eric and I are separate individuals

biologically, but we do have an altered sense of self. I mean there is another person with my set of genes! Believe me, it can be odd to wake in the morning and see an identical twin walking around. Sometimes I find myself wondering what Eric thinks and how he perceives events, sights, and sounds. I used to ask him his feelings about something so I could avoid the same response. Such behavior was infantile, but useful. It made me realize how ridiculous it is to try to be someone I'm not. Two of my best friends, Chris and Matt Rossi, are twins. Chris recently said, "I think I used to look for differences between me and Matt that may not have been there. I kind of tried to force the issue that we are different by separating myself from him for a while. That was wrong. It may have served a purpose in that it made me realize that Matt and I are alike. I realized that Matt and I could be similar and still separate."

Thus, I simply had to come to an understanding of who I am. Like many people, regardless of whether or not they are a twin, I am full of insecurity and self-doubt. Many times I wish I was not so shy. I sometimes have difficulty thinking of things to say when having a conversation with a girl I have just met. My biggest fear is the seemingly unending "dead spot" during a telephone call when neither of us says anything for up to seven or eight seconds.

However, instead of facing my fears, I simply refrained from allowing myself to risk rejection by others. I rationalized that Eric would always be there for me, so there was little reason to try and meet new friends. I did not feel a need to put out the effort to form new relationships. When I became aware of my behavior, I was able to correct it and truly begin to live my life as an individual.

I was pleasantly surprised to discover that although we never discussed the situation, Eric had gone through a similar process of adjustment. Once this metamorphosis had occurred, I found that my brother and I still spent the majority of our time together, solely out of our mutuality of interests and deep friendship, not out of need. The confusion

of others, which used to irritate me, became nothing more than a minor annoyance. This was a small price to pay for the privilege of having my best friend, companion, and confidante available at all times.

Carl Saiontz

IMMINENT EXTINCTION

In 1885 railroad workers across the United States shut down the lines and began the nation's first strike. The resulting Knights of Labor victory over the railroad's owner, millionaire Jay Gould, marked the start of the organized labor trend. Before the development of such unions, individual laborers had virtually no input concerning their wages, working conditions, or hours. Workers formed unions because they saw that their effect on management was much more powerful as a group. Unions reached their peak in 1935, when The National Labor Relations Act, requiring employees to bargain with unions, was passed. But since 1945 the unionization trend has shifted downward, and there is no indication that this pattern will reverse. Even current attempts by the Teamsters Union and the Association of Flight Attendants to recruit women and other traditionally ununionized groups have proved ineffective in slowing this trend. There is one simple explanation: labor unions are becoming obsolete.

Statistics provide a technical proof. Union membership has declined 3% since the 1940's. Unions now win less than half of the elections that determine whether workers want to be organized or not. Unions, are voted out of companies three-quarters of the time, losing the representation of approximately 950 companies since January 1984. The reputation of unions in general has taken a beating. The International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots are currently facing charges of harassment. This includes an allegation that a union member threatened to firebomb a chemical tanker that later experienced a series of explosions while docked in San Francisco. The U.S. Government has recently taken action against three federal union leaders. The three were asked to resign their jobs or face charges that they violated the law forbidding federal employees from partisan political activity by soliciting funds for Walter Mondale. According to a recent Gallup Poll, union officials are one of the least trusted groups of people in the United States, second only to used car salesmen. A study by

professors at Cleveland State University indicated that even sons and daughters of union workers consider unions impositions on the natural order of business. It is clear that recent trends are definitely anti-union. The question is, why?

Workers' main reasons for accepting unions were hopes for better conditions and wages, and to express their desire for representation within the company. Unions have been successful in many regards. Since 1880, the length of the average workday has been reduced from ten to eight or fewer hours, and the work week from six or seven days to five. Overtime, paid vacations, and paid holidays have only come into existence since the development of unions. Medical and dental insurance are also now paid for by most companies.

But unions cannot claim all the credit for these advancements. Two other factors have played a part in assuring that labor gets its fair share: big government and big business. Big government, whose existence came about with the enthusiastic support of labor unions, has now become a strong competitor, furnishing workers with many of the same provisions they receive from unions. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration watches for poor working conditions. Currently in the works at OSHA are actions to restrict the handling of benzene. Benzene has been proven to be a possible cause of leukemia in workers. Laborers' wages are regulated by minimum wage laws. The wage is now set at \$3.35 an hour, with actions pending to reduce the minimum wage for teenagers in the hopes of decreasing unemployment overall. The U.S. Department of Labor passed the employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 which imposes and interprets the pension-related responsibilities of employers. In addition, The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission acts on behalf of workers who feel they are victims of discrimination. The Pennsylvania Human Rights Commission currently filed suit against True Temper Corporation on behalf of Maria Faffaro, who felt she was a victim of sexual discrimination.

Big business has also taken an interest in its employees. Owners of large corporations have found that establishing some lines of communication with employees results in a trusting and more productive work force. There has been an increasing concern for the morale of employees in major corporations. Thirty-percent of all non-union companies currently have some sort of grievance system whereby employees can raise complaints against management, policies, and conditions. These systems have been shown to result in a more harmonious, responsible and trustworthy work atmosphere, according to a study by Professor Fred K. Foulkes. Many of these grievance systems resulted in policies that regulated the freedom of company managers far beyond the reach of any union negotiating effort. The Savings and Loan Data Corporation of Cincinnati established an employee-assistance program, which, in addition to handling grievances with the company, provides professional counseling for its workers. Data Corporation's President, Stephen E. Clear, said the improvement in morale was immediate and remains so even though the company now has twice the number of employees. An added bonus is that the company saves approximately \$4,000 a year on each employee and has been and has been able to expand, benefiting both employees and management. More companies are following this lead, and workers are finding that they can get along just as well without unions--maybe better.

The unions' effectiveness as a protector has recently been called into question on several different fronts. Unions are being forced to realize that they have outpriced their workers. The UMW, which at one point was able to charge more than thirty-percent over normal market rates for their members, now sees membership decreasing. Ultimately, as the UMW's past record shows, this tactic pushes wages too high for the company to afford and forces workers to the unemployment line. If a company can't pay, unions strike. If the company still can't pay but accepts the union's demands just so they can resume production, then it is only a matter of time until the game backfires. Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corporation has been negotiating with the USW since

November of 1984. Wheeling-Pittsburgh is currently nursing a deficit of \$509 million. The USW is demanding, along with wage and benefit increases, the control of a large portion of newly-issued stock. These are the demands they are making on a company which has not reported a profit in ten of the past eleven quarters and hoped to use the new stock to pull themselves out of debt. In the end, the workers may be the ones who lose out when the company is pushed to the point of bankruptcy or is forced to eliminate problematic areas of the company by shutting them down.

For the most part, unions say that workers benefit from the higher wages unions can extract from companies. Unions do generally succeed in obtaining higher wages for members, but there are many exceptions each year. The United Auto Workers claimed victory in big bold letters after their 1984 negotiations with General Motors won a 7% pay increase over the next three years. With workers' average hourly compensation already at \$22.60 maybe this can be called a victory. But when the price tags on American cars go up and more imports are appearing on the roads, the UAW and its members may see that this victory is only short-term. Strike pay for workers can't touch the salaries that most unionized companies pay their workers. After a strike lasting almost a year, British coal miners recently voted to return to work, although the corporation still refuses to give in to union demands. The miners have gone a year without pay only to return to the same jobs they left.

Givebacks are another part of the negotiating game. When unions find themselves in too deep, realize that they are asking more than the company can give, or find that they are losing jobs for their members, they turn to givebacks in an attempt to save face. Union officials will return some of the benefits they previously gained for their workers in order to gain some other type of benefit. This bargaining technique only forms a more complicated circle which succeeds in prolonging the time until serious steps must be taken. Yet union leaders claim the giveback phase is only temporary, reflecting the economic recession. They say once the

economy picks up unions will be back in full swing. But what they fail to realize is that along with the changing economy comes a changing marketplace. The companies which have been extracting givebacks from unions are faced with more problems than the recession. Foreign goods are becoming more and more appealing on the American Market and the government decreased regulation leaves many American companies with less market power. The game of passing along labor costs to the consumer just will not work in the competitive marketplace anymore, and bargaining with givebacks is only masking the real issue.

But givebacks are not the only problem with the union system. Unions have latched on to two long-standing complaints of workers and told them unionization is the answer. Unions profess, "We are anti-discriminatory, we protect everyone," while at the same time, assuring their oldest members, "Your jobs are the most secure." It is true that most unions now accept anyone regardless of their sex, color or religion, but the level of protection is linked to the calendar, and the opportunity for advancement on the basis of individual achievement is blocked by unions' seniority rule, which itself hints at discrimination. Job security goes to those who got there first, not necessarily the most qualified. The well-skilled, hard-working newcomer will feel the brunt of the union's problems soonest.

Today's unions are in terrible trouble. Attempts to recruit new members are failing while more and more old members pull out of unions. The unions are losing the respect of the public while at the same time workers are finding their demands met outside of unions. Workers are finally getting stung by the consequences of outpricing and givebacks. Union anti-discriminatory and seniority policies are contradictory at best, maybe even discriminatory. The anti-union trend is gaining momentum, and its path leads in one direction: imminent extinction.

Jill Busam

GUILT

"Oh God! Oh God! I can't believe I was so stupid. I wish I was dead. I wish someone would just put me out of my misery. I don't believe I did this to her. It's totally my fault! I'm such a jerk. I must have slept right through the alarm."

Why do I feel so much guilt?

I am surrounded by guilt twenty-four hours a day. I wake up feeling guilty for the "horrible" things I did the day before and, as the day progresses, I become even more guilt-laden. The guilt of the day before is compounded with fresh guilt. This cycle keeps compiling and adding to my misery. Even when I go to sleep to escape the real world of guilt, I find my dreams permeated with it. Guilt seems to be inescapable in my life.

No matter when the "crime" takes place, the guilt is always in the "now." Guilt still remains from my ex-girlfriend's unanswered phone calls over the summer; guilt anticipates my future plans to increase the size of my glassware collection at the expense of the cafeteria. Even as I am writing this, I am feeling guilty that I didn't start it earlier and that it isn't better.

The circumstances surrounding the crime matter little to me. It is hardly worth mentioning that I was having surgery when I didn't do my English term paper. It's of no importance that the only reason I wrecked my father's car was to avoid a pedestrian who had wandered onto the road. There is no excuse for being late for my grandmother's birthday party, even if I had only stopped to take my neighbor to the hospital. Guilt remains, regardless of the circumstances.

It doesn't even matter if the incident is my fault or not. If it happens, I will feel guilty about it. I feel guilty about skipping school to go to an Orioles game and just as bad

when I am truly sick. I am guilty about turning in bad assignments and getting good grades on them, and almost as bad about turning in good assignments and getting bad grades on them. I am guilty when I am right. I am guilty when I am wrong.

My guilt can be traced back to my early schooling with the nuns. My parents, like all parents, wanted what they thought best for their children, a Catholic education. This, they thought, would teach discipline and reinforce the Catholic ideals. As a young child in elementary school, I learned about the three R's: reading, writing, and arithmetic. I also learned about the two G's": God and guilt. The nuns made it perfectly clear from the beginning that mankind was a race born to be guilty. We are responsible, they used to say (and probably still do, I suppose), not only for our own sins but also for the Original Sin of Adam and Eve. They told us that man has created all evil in the world and that we are all responsible for the pain and suffering that exist.

Guilt also stems from the responsibility I feel toward my family and relatives. As a member of a very large and close-knit family, I am responsible to my brothers, sisters, and parents as well as to my numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. The sheer multitude of relatives makes guilt an everyday occurrence, and since my family is very close, it is nearly impossible to hurt only one person. If I break a promise I made to my cousin Kelly to pick her up from work, then it will affect both her and my aunt, who will have to go and get Kelly herself. In turn, my parents will become upset with me for hurting my aunt and my cousin. My one mistake, then, incurs not just guilt but "superguilt."

My neighborhood instills guilt. I was raised in a small, suburban neighborhood where everyone seemed to know everybody else's family. Guilt prospered. If I did something wrong on Thursday, by Friday everyone in the neighborhood knew about it, including other parents, who would remind my parents of all my past and present misdeeds to the point

where even if I hadn't done something wrong, I knew it was only a matter of time before something would come along for which I would be guilty. Even the demographics were against me. My family, though far from being the richest in the neighborhood, was also far from being the poorest. My parents were forever reminding me that there were many kids in the neighborhood not as fortunate.

My parents, my family, my teachers and my neighbors placed a burden of guilt upon my shoulders, not maliciously, but because they thought it best for me, and they would have felt guilty if they had given me any less than the best.

The phone felt cold and hard. As I picked it up, my head throbbed. "I'm sorry, Theresa. I can't believe I did this to you. I'm so sorry. I'll be at work in 5 minutes."

"It's okay Tom—really. This is your first time late. Don't worry about it."

Don't worry about it--ha!

Thomas Goode

WALTER COMMUTES

The road to Cathy's house climbs and winds relentlessly. My nephew, Walter, and I pass an abandoned mansion, cross a narrow wooden bridge, and finally emerge from the trees, blinking in the direct morning sunlight. Upon arrival at his baby-sitter's, he politely greets each of the large, sleepy dogs in the driveway with a big grin and a morning hug. I fidget with my keys and eye my watch while he trails behind me up the steps and into the house. Cathy usually has "Sesame Street" on the screen and a generous welcome for Walter. After I kiss him "goodbye," however, I sometimes catch a look of uncertainty in his eyes that tightens my stomach. For a minute, I remember, or reexperience, my own childhood fear of separation from family. That look of hesitation reminds me that Walter is not just another commuter. Walter is only three.

Walter was born into a weak family structure. His birth revived hope in the troubled marriage between his parents. His father demonstrated unprecedented commitment during Walt's first few months of life. He seemed to enjoy the company of his wife and son even more than the Town Tavern. I watched my sister mature, as she learned selflessness in only a few weeks of sleepless nights and colicky afternoons. She began to compromise a full night's sleep and a peaceful meal to a higher calling: motherhood. It was an unfair challenge for such a tiny, inexperienced person, but for a while it looked as though Walt might save the marriage.

Two and a half years later, the legalities complete, Walter finds himself the son of a single mother who must work full-time. He claims the devotion of several aunts and uncles and two fanatical grandparents. He has had several well-qualified babysitters, but I think he knows that none of us belong to him. Aunts and uncles always have to go home, the babysitter has her own family, and Mom spends most of her time at work. He missed out on the child's blissful delusion that his mother is his personal possession.

Walter expresses gratitude alarming in a three-year-old. He learned early to respond "Thank-you" (at first pronounced "Gangku") upon receiving a gift. He quickly began expressing gratitude in other situations. Once he fell into a fit of crying because of a painful diaper rash. His mother tried every possible consolation fruitlessly because Walter lacked the vocabulary to explain his discomfort. Finally, on a hunch, she pulled off his diapers and sat him in a tub of cool water. His eyes and cheeks still inflamed from his ordeal, he smiled up at her and sighed, "Gangku, Mommy!"

When the following Valentine's Day arrived, Walter's mother bought him some books. Later, when he was two, he admonished his mother for buying him a few books on Valentine's Day. "You bought these for me?! You didn't have to do that, Mommy!" He began to notice the chores she did for him. One day on the way to the laundromat, he spotted his sheet tangled amidst the dirty clothes. "Is that my sheet? What's my sheet doin' there?" His mother responded that she intended to wash it. "Do you wash my sheets?!" He beamed and thanked her, barely able to contain himself.

Walter noticed what Mother did for him and strove to do more for himself. Watching him develop, sometimes I imagined that right from birth he had assessed the difficulties of his situation and set out to adapt to them. Within months of learning to walk, Walter began climbing out of his crib in the morning to wake his mother. If he rose too early, he headed to this toyroom to play for an hour or so before waking her. One morning Walter overslept, so Mommy did too and arrived late at the office.

The family noticed how Walter managed to bring out the best in his mother. Finding the life of a single parent ungratifying, she suffered periods of despair and irritability. In the morning he greeted her with a bright "Hello, Mommy!" He challenged her silence with his natural charm. I can remember one Saturday that she lay sick in bed, while two-year-old Walter attempted to entertain himself. Lacking even a thread of patience, she raised her voice to every

question. Walter responded with greater congeniality. He never backed away from her anger. He seemed to know exactly when to melt her with a "Gangku" or "I love you, Mommy."

Walter craved responsibility. Without being asked, he started clearing the table after dinner and carefully placing the dishes in the sink. He loves to play "helping." On Saturdays and evenings, Walter may be found sweeping the kitchen floor (and the living room chairs and the front door and the cat) with a broom twice his height, sponging his mother's car while she sprays, or pulling weeds with Grandma in her flower bed. He works so diligently that she can overlook an iris or two stamped into the ground.

He knows how to work a bathroom now, too--"potty trained" early, he brushes his teeth and combs his hair faithfully. Last winter he overheard me asking my sister-in-law to toss me a napkin to wipe his nose. He took us both by surprise when he reached in the bib of his corduroy overalls, pulled out a tissue, efficiently solved the problem, and then put the tissue back.

Walter perceives a need for self-sufficiency because he sees a possibility that someday no one will have the time to watch him. His care is divided among several, none of them always available. He has to say "goodbye" to Mommy everyday at 7:30 a.m., to me at 8:45, and to Cathy at 5:00 p.m. He despises being left behind by anyone. Even when his mother is with him, whenever I leave, he sounds the request "Can I go 'wish' you?" His voice raises in pitch and wavers. He asks to go along because he is not sure who will stay. At three, being alone is already a conceivable reality to him.

In the evening after work, I return to the babysitter's, paperwork-weary and indifferent to everything. The sight of my curly-headed nephew, affectionate and inexhaustible, cheers me. Grateful that he lacks the experience to discern artificiality, I force a smile. For all of his premature

maturity, he ought not to have to understand my moods as well.

"You're going to the fair tonight, Walter!"

"Are you goin'?" he cracks.

"No, I'm going to a concert tonight."

"What's a concert?"

"It's when you go to this place and a girl on a stage sings to you."

"Can I go wish you?"

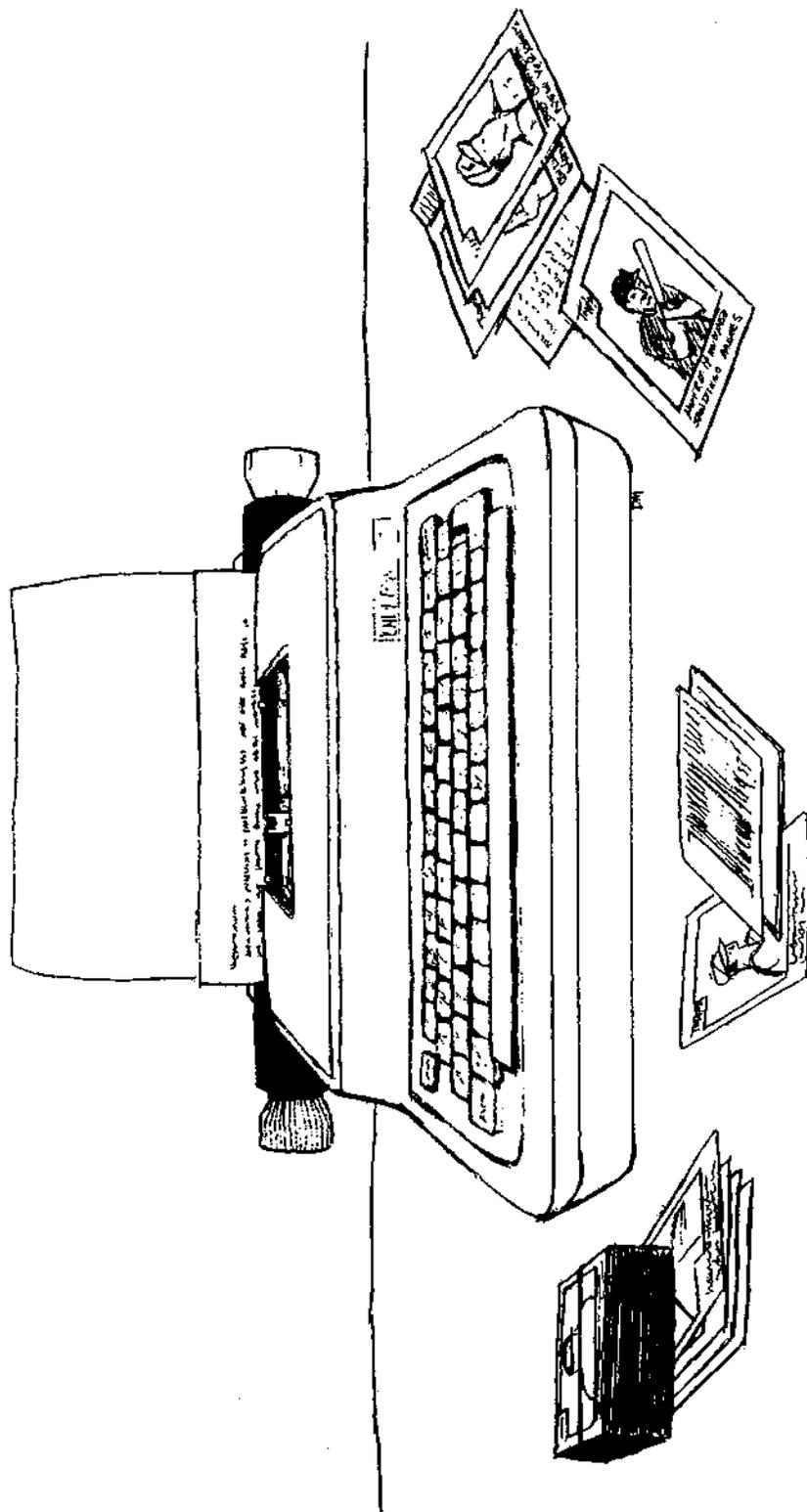
"No, you're going to the fair."

"Is my mommy goin' to have this girl sing to her?"

"No, Walter, tonight she's going with you."

I cannot recall making plans for a Friday night as a small child. When I was three, weekends were just two days almost like the other five, but Walter commutes. Monday morning Walter will be up at dawn, dressed and fed, and back into the rush-hour traffic.

Donna Congedo



OUT OF LEFT FIELD

I used to have two grandmothers. One lived with us. One didn't. The one that didn't would visit us on Thursdays to go food shopping with my mother. Her husband, my grandfather, had recently died, and she had no other way to get about. But the shopping was really just a necessary overture to plopping herself down in our kitchen chair, with a package of Kents and a shot glass of bourbon, to wait for my brother and me to return from school.

On these Thursdays I felt a strange need to perform, mussing my hair and fixing my cherub smile before I waltzed loudly through our back door. The five dollars she gave us had nothing to do with it, I don't think.

My mother was strangely torn on these Thursdays as well, not knowing whether to treat my grandmother with the dignity accorded a guest or the familiarity due a family fixture. Did she serve dinner in the dining room or the kitchen? Did she allow us to walk around in our stocking feet? These questions were resolved in time, but I don't think my mother ever resigned herself to the displacement of my grandmother's presence, a two-fisted aberration in our row house continuum, flicking off random ashes and despair.

Like a poet embracing haiku, my mother was perversely thankful for the row house restrictions on domestic expressions, arranging furniture with an eye to conserving space, then buying with an eye to filling it. If my mother's handiwork couldn't sprawl, it could at least rotate, and every holiday found the family carting down cardboard boxes from the attic. She had centerpieces and door hangings for every occasion. She anticipated Christmas in July and Easter in November, sticking and dabbing at styrofoam balls until she'd fashioned Christmas angels, Easter eggs. My live-in grandmother just smiled at her daughter's folly, and wiped the kitchen counter.

One day during the summer I was arranging a team of baseball cards on the aqua green field of our living room carpet. The Fourth of July decorations had come down so I felt somewhat liberated in my new-found elbow room. The '73 Padres had just about taken the field, and I was only debating who to place in left field. The caroms were tough off the coffee table, so the guy couldn't be a slouch with the glove. Bent over in my managerial stupor, I couldn't warn my grandmother in time. I couldn't pull my first and second basemen out of harm's way. And I couldn't remember that this grandmother, the visiting one whose unsure feet were unused to my quiet games, was never to be yelled at. All for the sake of two creased baseball cards, and Padres at that.

Such petty defensiveness, I think, today. Now that the cards are stored away, am I as irrefragable, as possessive of anything else? My friends, my time, my food? None of these--only writing.

Once the analogy is fleshed out, it makes perfect sense; I've simply traded one pursuit for another. The same time I took in arranging and rearranging baseball cards I take in arranging and rearranging words, sentences. Attention to positioning. Attention to syntax. If I lacked a player then, I lack the vocabulary now. And I'll buy and I'll trade until I find it.

I used to disdain kids who'd attach baseball cards to the spokes of their bicycle wheels. Such wasteful and empty noise. Or kids who would buy a pack of cards and throw all but the Orioles away. I could see the value in the Russ Nixons, the Chico Salmons, the obscure journeyman ballplayers who fulfilled a need, my need. So too, so much of today's writing is verbal bombast, bureaucratic jargon; cards in spokes with no attention to nuance or precision.

Best of all, my shag rug games were never subjected to the vagaries of the real: the freak injuries, mental errors, rainouts. My players always maintained their picture card poses. Despite the stats and bios on the back of each card, I

could have easily had Brooks Robinson pitching the seventh game of my World Series (though even then I had some respect for precedent and propriety). So, in writing, I can turn the volume of existence up and down. I control tone, character, action, and arrive, finally, at a stability that can only be wished for in life. Writing is the perfect and preconceived word; the compliment that had sounded too hollow at dinner, the apology that had sounded too wooden over the phone.

I think my old baseball cards are up in the attic, nestled between boxes labeled "Christmas, Dining Room" or "Groundhog Day." My mother insists that I save them, that they'll be worth a lot some day. I don't know. I don't care. I don't covet what I collect or what I write. It fills an immediate need, and then it doesn't.

Dale Simms

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