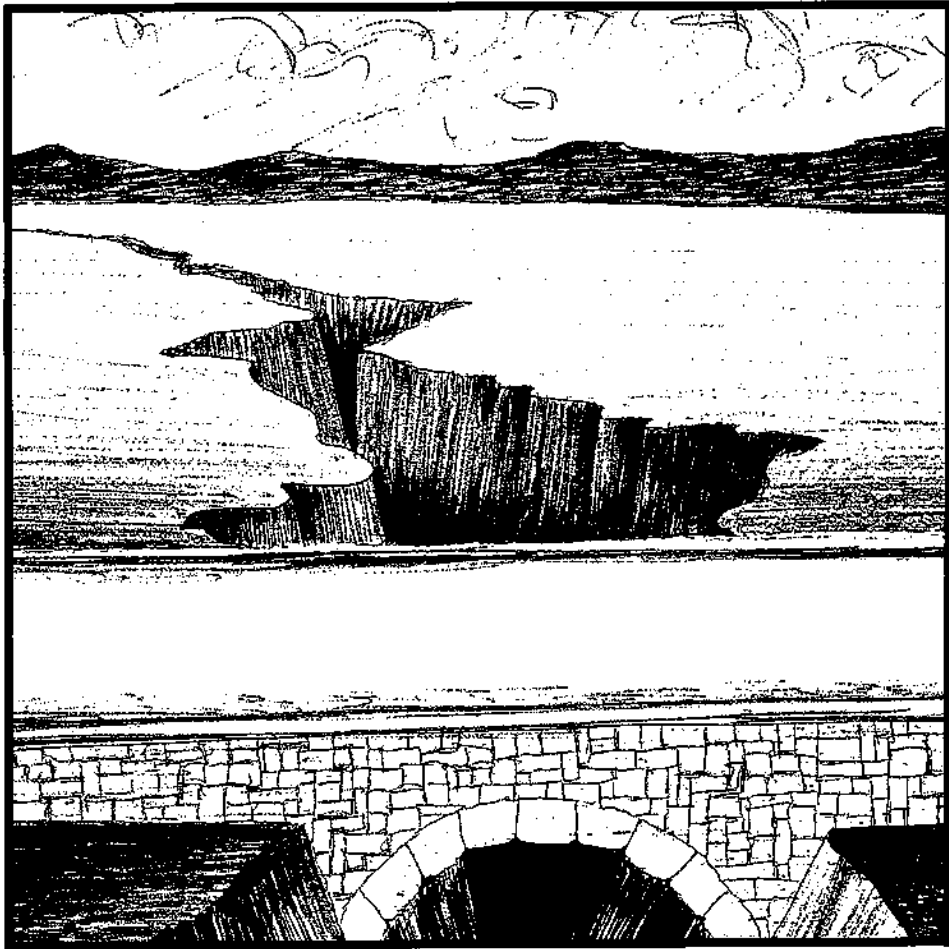


FORUM

MAGAZINE



1989

FORUM
MAGAZINE

Volume 10

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FORUM

EDITOR

Kathleen Klaus

ASSISTANTS TO THE EDITOR

John Handscomb

Lenore Navarrete

ART DIRECTOR

Maureen McGuire

LAYOUT PRODUCTION

Nina Lee Guise

PUBLICITY

Jill Jasuta

Michele Wojciechowski

PROSE BOARD

Mark Bowerman

Megan Curran

Diana Everett

Sharon Finley

Nina Lee Guise

Mary Gray

Jill Jasuta

Doug Muenzen

David Trainor

Michele Wojciechowski

FACULTY MODERATOR

Dr. Daniel McGuiness

Cover illustration by MAUREEN McGUIRE.

Student reading produced by DOUG MUENZEN.

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FORUM MAGAZINE
c/o Writing/Media Department
Loyola College
4501 N. Charles Street
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FROM THE EDITOR

We at FORUM are pleased to present to you the 1989 edition of our magazine. As you can see our magazine has undergone a facelift and we certainly hope that you like our new look.

The pages of FORUM feature non-fiction prose that will take readers to the shores of New Jersey and on safari through Kenya. We have also included the prize winning essays from the spring 1988 writing contests, and a variety of artwork to showcase students of the Fine Arts Department.

I wish to extend my thanks to Mary Atherton and Janet Headley of the Fine Arts Department, Loretta Bartolomeo, Dan McGuiness, and the entire Writing Department for all of their support. Thank you to the families, friends, and roommates who kept us sane when deadlines were nearing, Sarah Glenn, Mark Broderick and Dean David Roswell who encouraged us to put our creative minds to work. Most importantly, I would like to thank my dedicated staff who, along with E.B. White, believed "a writer, like an acrobat, must occasionally try a stunt that is too much for him."

We hope that you find FORUM to be a delightful magazine, one for reading quietly by the window in the dorms or under the shade of an evergreen tree.

Kathleen Klaus,
Editor

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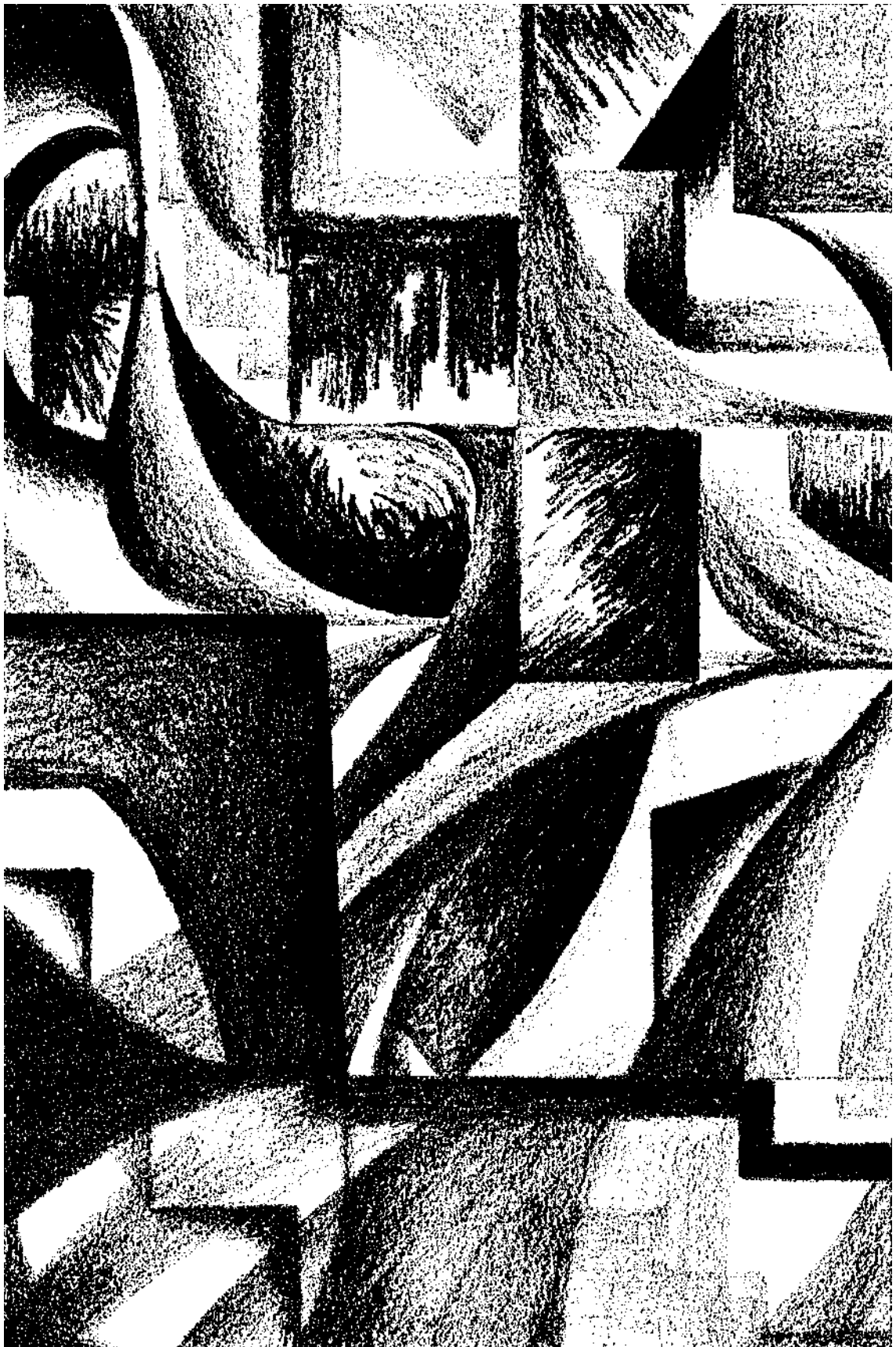
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*"A perfect writer would make words sing,
dance, kiss, do the male and female act, bear
children, weep, bleed, rage, stab, steel, fire
cannons, steer ships, sack cities . . ."*

Walt Whitman



A Simple Way Of Life

by Nipa Doshi

The humid air chokes my lungs as I take my first step off the plane and into the surrounding blackness. It takes me a moment to breathe again. This time the air smells stale and wet. I begin my trek downward and notice that a haze covers everything, not the early morning fog that lingers softly, but the haze on a hot, sultry afternoon that reduces everything to a weary waviness. With my last step, I feel the warm earth underneath me, and I know where I am. I am in India.

Every few years, my family and I visit my birthplace, India. It is funny. My parents are always eager to go. My father is able to see his brothers and reminisce about their childhood mischief. Mom is able to catch up on the latest gossip around town via Grandmother. My brother, on the other hand, comes reluctantly. He hates missing out on the summer to live somewhere where most of the people speak little or no English. Then, there is me. I am always hesitant. I have high hopes and great enthusiasm, but something within me holds me back.

We usually arrive early, before dawn. The streets are deserted as our taxi speeds over the bumpy road to the home of my two uncles. When we reach the old, slate blue bungalow, it seems to have decayed to an unrecognizable state, but then familiar drowsy faces peer out the windows to welcome us just as the first rays of the sun emerge.

My parents scurry from the car to greet my oldest uncle. In the customary fashion, they bow and touch the feet of my uncle, then of my aunt. Respect is inherent in the Indian way of life. My brother and I, weary from our twenty-two hour flight, watch them bow. I have rarely shaken hands, let alone touched feet. I feel awkward. With a gentle prod from my mother, I mimic her movements and bow. I do not mind bowing, but I am exhausted and I do not really know why I am bowing.

The first week is always tiring. We sleep in cool air conditioning that bars us from the unbearable heat outside. When I am awake, I watch the crowds that pass outside the dilapidated house from an upper window. The bumblebee rickshaws hurry, the jingle of bells on bicycles ring, the flippity-flop of sandals scratches the abrasive street. As I watch the crowds rushing forward, I feel detached because I am above the crowd watching them and not participating, not in the crowd and not looking. Occasionally, a passerby glances up to where I am. Sometimes,

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the face smiles. More often I meet puzzled faces. Perhaps it is my garb, a T-shirt and faded American jeans, so unlike the flowing saris and long tunics which are more likely to be worn by a young girl. Perhaps they are startled that I am watching them, studying them. Anyhow, they quickly forget. They quicken their pace and head toward the train station not bothered by me.

The months pass slowly. The days are long and hot. We are forced to visit during the hottest season because only our summer vacation allows us to go for three months at a time. However, the weather does not hinder my father's insistence that we see the land. One summer, we view the Taj Mahal, the Himalayas. Another summer, we enter the ancient caves of Bhuddist monks and the palaces of maharajas that no longer reign.

Much of our travel is by car. We pass small villages, and if we stop, crowds of tots and adolescents rush to greet us with their outstretched hands. I am overwhelmed. I cower. I have never seen so many poor children. I have never even seen any homeless where I live. I turn to my parents. They are also taken aback even though they have lived in this country. Our guides tell us to pay no attention to the hungry mob because once the tattered children have seen one child receive a coin, another horde comes swarming. I can understand this, but I cannot ignore these forlorn wanderers. Yet, I can do nothing. Even with the small amount we give them, they cannot live as we do. I know I will never be able to live as they do. The soiled, upturned faces and their large eyes plead with me. I walk away, staying close to my mother's side. If I had not lived in the United States, I might have been one of those deprived children.

All of our time in India is not spent touring. Visiting distant relatives and my parents' old acquaintances occupies much of our time. I remember one day quite clearly. We had just arrived at the home of my parent's best friends, considered relatives. Haggard from our tiresome journey, I ask to freshen up. As I am about to go to shower, my new aunt hands me an outfit made especially for me. She begs me to wear it since it is my first day at her home. I do not really remember her, and she has not seen me since I was a crawling infant, yet she makes a special effort to make me feel at home. I feel a special warmth and respect toward her. After I bathe, I find Auntie waiting for me. She comes bearing more gifts. This time, she presents me with shiny, silver anklets and matching bangles worn by most young girls in India. Her gestures are touching. In her own way, she is trying to make me feel as though I belong, hoping that I can fit into the Indian way of life.

A S I M P L E W A Y O F L I F E

Sometime later, we embark on a journey to my parent's former home to meet some of their old friends. I do not know what to expect, but what I see is quite a shock. We enter a dark gulley and push through a moldy, wooden door that is hanging askew. We tread into a cluttered courtyard. Towering up above, there are balconies with lines strung across to dry the daily laundry. I can hear sounds of daily living, the clanging of pots, yelling between mother and daughter, and chattering of young children at play. We step into the dimly lit lift that jerks spasmodically as it carries us upward. I cannot believe my parents once lived here. We reach our destination and alight in the compact cubical. My father leads us forward. We reach an open doorway, and Dad, in the Indian tradition, yells in to see if anyone is home. With that, he steps in the door.

As I enter, I realize that this is not an apartment but only a room with an adjoining room behind it. It is sparsely furnished with a bed which doubles as a sofa. A tall, locked cabinet rests in a corner. A few chairs and a small, wooden table complete the room.

Rushing out of the other room, a tiny woman with a tremendous voice welcomes us. She finds a comfortable spot for each of us to sit; then she settles down on the floor to catch up on lost time. Just as she is about to start, she leaves for a moment and returns with trays of food — one for each of us. Each is loaded with expensive, Indian delicacies. I begin to decline, but she does not take no for an answer. I eat some because I do not want her to feel rejected. My parents and she recount memories while my brother and I listen politely, restless to leave. Our visit, or rather my parents' visit, comes to an end. We are ready to leave when our gracious hostess places a box in my mother's hands. She gives us a present even though we have come to her home. It is a polished, silver box meant for the entire family as a reminder of our visit to her. I have never been a part of such benevolence. I see now that she is genuine because she cares enough to go to the trouble of getting a present for my family.

Our days grow numbered and our final two weeks are spent where we began, my uncle's home. My uncle is my father's youngest brother and he is a doctor. His duties are endless. He may be working in his infirmary just downstairs, struggling with his children over their English homework, or rushing out in the middle of the night to examine an ailing patient. Every Saturday, his clinic is open to all, free of charge. I admire his dedication as do his many patients. Doctors are revered in India. Medicine men have the ability to give life in a country where disease and sickness are ready to pounce on any unsuspecting soul. Many of the patients are truly devoted to my uncle, one man in particular.

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Every morning during our stay, an elderly gentleman clad in the traditional, white dhoti, khaki vest and cap arrives at the front door. He is there to lug the doctor's black bag and other essentials down to the closet-sized infirmary. He performs this gesture so he can be the first patient in the office every morning. Actually, he is a hypochondriac. The gentleman visits my uncle to assure himself that he is in working order which he undoubtedly is each and every morning. I have a deep respect for my uncle. He has visited the United States and has even considered establishing a practice in America, but my uncle feels his calling is back in India with his family and friends. My uncle gave up a world of affluence to live in a country where destitution exists as a way of life.

I must admit that we have seen many sights. I have viewed the splendor of the Taj Mahal, the Himalayan mountains, and the great land. The generosity and hospitality of the people in India is overflowing. They open their homes and their hearts without thinking twice. Haggling street vendors, ragged coolies, forlorn housewives, overworked doctors have few material possessions, but that does not stop them from reaching into their hearts and making anyone feel at home.

The word India, to many Americans, conjures up vivid images. The graphic photographs in magazines of poor and starved children and the shots of the paper shacks and grass huts that line the grimy, traffic-congested streets flash on television, between the ice cream and designer jean commercials — the only glimpse of the downtrodden country. To many, India is a decrepit, utterly stark place. I have seen India's poverty and despair, but I have also seen another side of India, where generosity and tenderness also exist. Oppression and kindness have intertwined, forced to live side by side to unsophisticate its innumerable disciples. For I no longer see only the destitution; now, I envision a simple India and a simple way of life.

*"I don't know enough,"
replied the Scarecrow
cheerfully. "My head is
stuffed with straw you
know, and that is why I am
going to Oz to ask him for
some brains."*

*"Oh, I see," said the
Tin Woodsman. "But after
all, brains are not the best
things in the world. "*

*"Have you any?"
inquired the Scarecrow.*

*"No, my head is quite
empty," answered the
Woodsman, "but I once
had brains, and a heart
also; so having tried both
of them, I should much
rather have a heart. "*

L. Frank Baum



Redeemer

by Bill Marella

In 1771, Benjamin Franklin began writing his autobiography which, when published, turned literature's time-worn appearance versus reality theme on its ear. Writers, until that time, had only considered the theme in one light. The world was full of appearances, and the protagonist of the story had to try and find the reality beneath the facade. But Franklin said, "One does not dress for private company as for a public ball," and he felt that was as it should be. Discussing humility, Franklin wrote, "I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the reality of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the appearance of it." To Franklin, the cultivation of appearances, the shaping of our selves, is all there is for us to do. Hilda Doolittle, in her short "Tribute to Freud," says once walking to the corner of Notre-Dame-des-Champs she saw someone's "face" come off. "I shuddered to see a face from the inside, but I was much more afraid of that bare flayed head waiting there, faceless." Franklin would not have feared the bare faceless head because he knew in 1771 that appearances, or the masks we wear, are our only reality.

Franklin used his *Autobiography* to solidify the appearance he wanted to project down through history, and did so by creating a persona. He conveniently left out of his life's story, his several illegitimate children, his carelessness with money during the early years of his marriage, and his gluttony. However, he is perfectly honest in so far as he tells the reader he is deleting these transgressions.

He writes:

I should have no objection to go over the same life from its beginning to end, only asking the advantage authors have of correcting in a second edition some faults of the first. So I would also wish to change some incidents for others more favorable.

The "second edition" he speaks of is the persona he creates of himself in the *Autobiography*. He redeems himself in this "second edition" of himself, and this is probably how he will be remembered.

In my own writing, in 1988, I also redeem myself and the people in my life, but not for the reason Franklin does. Mine is a much more personal reason.

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For a class I had to write a character sketch of some family member, and I sat at my desk smoking for some time, trying to pick a subject. I thought of my parents and of my aunts and uncles, considering interesting features about them. Finally I decided on something. I wrote:

I always admired my Uncle Hink's hands. I want hands like his when I get to be sixty. They are as thick as telephone poles and as rough as tree bark. He has been a construction worker since he was sixteen, and the years of curling his fingers around nails and the handle of a hammer have swollen the stringy muscles in them. A lifetime spent with wallboard and sandpaper have dulled his fingerprints and calloused his palms.

All this is true. Hink does have strong hands. I do admire them. A few paragraphs later:

The smoke from his cigarettes has scarred his throat. When he speaks, his words are not heaved up by tired and tar-sticky lungs. They are pulled up by a heavy chain. His words lay coiled in this chain for a moment. He considers his speech before sharing it, wanting his words to be as precise as the measurements in the office buildings he constructs.

Much of this is untrue. His voice does have the gravity I conveyed in the passage above, but he does not consider his speech. He curses in mixed company, makes countless ethnic comments unselfconsciously in the presence of people of the ethnic groups he slurs, and voices opinions based on the blank stare of the simpleton.

I think his words begin in his mouth, not his mind. His tongue slicks over nicotine-stained teeth, finding phrases caught in the gaps between, and these phrases clump together like the fibers of a blood clot to form sentences which slip out from between his lips, disturbing everyone but Hink—he does not hear himself speak.

I continued my sketch:

He asks me, "Are you ready for college?" I look at him with eyes placed too close together on my face, I think, and I squint because the sun is blinding me. It is four o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun is low on my face. He puts a bottle of beer in my hand and lights a cigarette. I look around. My parents are sitting under the picnic umbrella eating raw vegetables in cream cheese dip. My grandmother is at the edge of the pool dangling her feet in the water. My older cousins are playing bocci on the grass. "Well?" he prompts me. "I'm nervous," I tell him.

R E D E E M E R

"I'm afraid to leave home." He shifts his weight to his left foot, and his head blocks the sun for me. I see him clearly. He puts his hand on my shoulder and squeezes. He says, "I want you to remember what I'm telling you, because it will make your life much easier." He pauses to be sure I'm listening. I nod. "Home is where your feet are."

The content of this scene is a blatant lie on my part. This never happened. True, the background setting for this touching family reunion scene is grounded in reality. There was a family reunion at my Uncle Gus's house in New York two weeks before the beginning of my freshman year, and Hink and I did exchange words there.

But Hink had far too much to drink that afternoon, and sitting on lawnchairs on the porch in the yard he took a beer from an Igloo cooler and tried to push it on me. "Drink this," he said. I thanked him but said no. "Take it, Bill. Have a beer with me. You're old enough." I thanked him again and explained that I'd already had two. "Well, have another one then. What's the problem?"

My father was standing nearby, and he came over. "I think he's had enough, Hink," my father said.

"Oh, like hell he has. He's a big boy." Hink leaned forward in his chair again and held the beer out to me. "He wants another one. Don't you, Bill?"

"No, thanks."

My father put a hand on Hink's shoulder. "That's enough, Hink," he said.

Hink shoved himself out of the chair, shaking my father's hand away. He glared at me. Spit flew from his lips as he grumbled through his teeth. "Little shit's going to college, and all of a sudden he's too good to share a drink with his family. Oh hell!" He smashed the beer bottle against the house and stalked inside. My father followed him in. I watched the puddle and the glass, then moved down to the pool.

This was not the man who told me, "Home is where your feet are."

I wrestled to a blank piece of paper the identity of a drunken, thoughtless, violent man and recarved it with the tip of my pen. I redeemed my uncle through my writing, correcting, in this second version of his person, the faults of the first, changing some incidents for others more favorable.

I feel that literature has three purposes. First, it is a mirror our world holds up to its own face. In his mirror we see clearly where and who we are and what we've done.

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Secondly, literature is a vehicle for the philosopher or moralist to show the world how it should live. John Winthrop put it best when he wrote to the early American settlers in *A Model of Christian Charity*, "We must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill." By this he meant that Americans, as the "new men," would begin civilization anew and serve as a model for the rest of the world.

The third purpose of literature is the one I utilized in my character sketch of Hink. Literature can console us. We cannot make our lives work in the empire of reality, but we can subject our lives to the power of art, then shape and hone that art to our satisfaction. I can take a difficult situation in my life and play God with it. I can mold and alter real life in my fiction, which makes that real life so much less threatening, simply because I can exercise a certain amount of control over it.

"Home is where your feet are," is a good piece of advice I discovered on my own, far too late to do me any good in handling the transition from high school to college. There were no men in my family wise enough to give me that advice. There were none strong enough to allay my fears of an alien lifestyle. I've never had a positive role model.

I created one in my writing, and writing about it helps me put it in rational perspective. By shaping my Uncle Hink into that positive role model, I lament the reality of his person, but leave my writing far less intimidated by him than when I sat down to it.

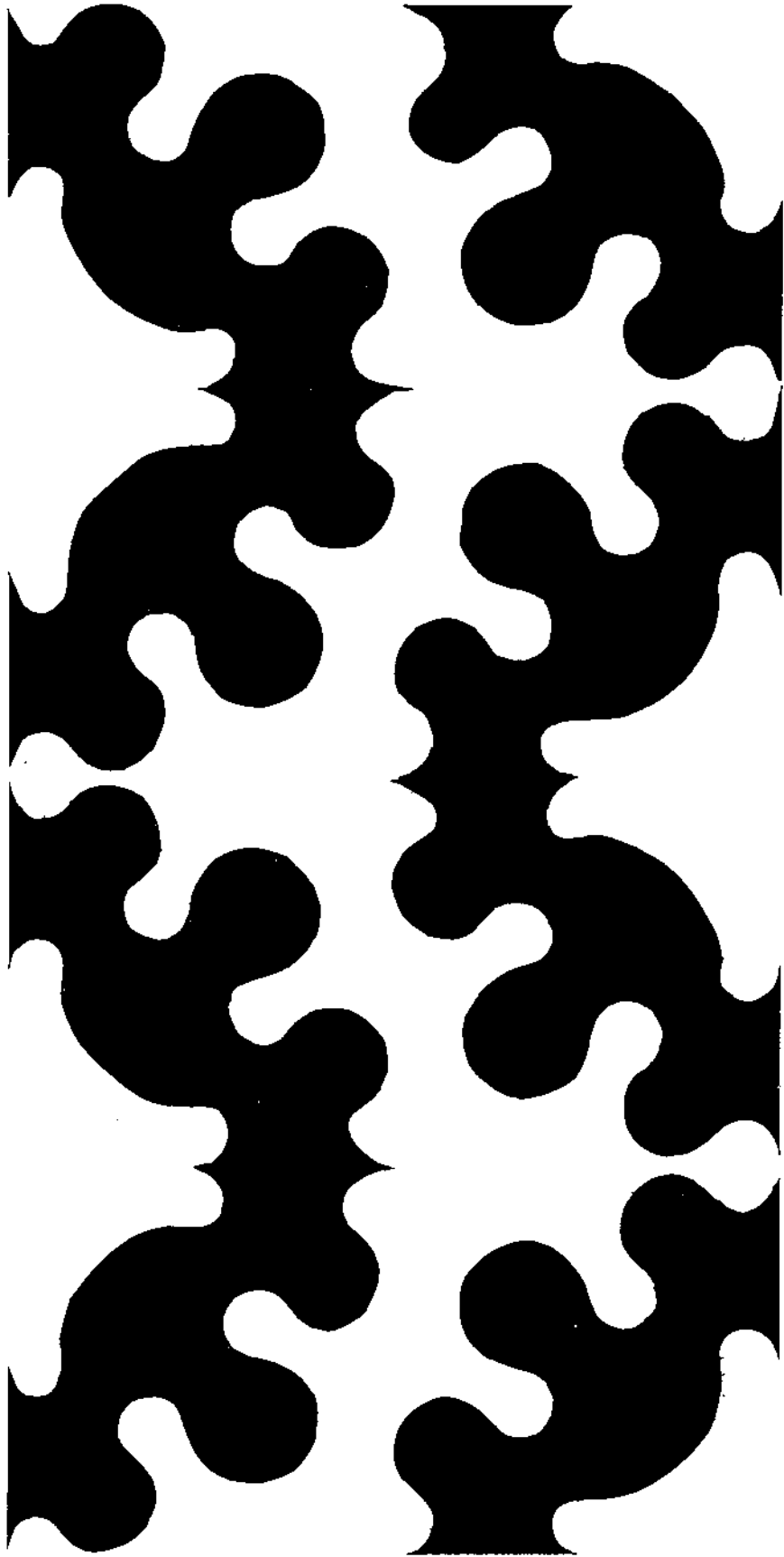
Fictionalizing events in my life gives me the opportunity to view them objectively, with vision unimpaired by the hot bite of chaotic emotion. In creating personas for the people I write about, I find myself rewriting the past, distorting the facts, exaggerating, lying for effect. For me this is more of a coming to terms with a ghost than a denial of something organic. Correcting the mistakes made in my life dilutes them into something wispy, something I can comprehend and accept.

The redemption I have referred to comes from the reader. The reader knows only what I tell him, and if I write well I create a living, breathing, flesh-and-blood character which is just as real to the reader as the original person is to me. To someone who reads my character sketch of Hink, he appears a kind, wise, salt-of-the-earth type. To the members of his family, Hink appears an intoxicated, violent fool.

Franklin said we are the sum of the things we appear to be.

I agree.

"The 'me' I create on paper is no less real than the 'me' that does the creating," I say I said I wrote.



*"Take an object.
Do something to it.
Do something else to it
....."*

Jasper Johns

Black

by Elaine Koukoulas

The women sit in the shade of the cypress trees in groups of four or five. Flashes of light glitter randomly as the sunlight hits the gold bands on the gnarled hands that pull and work on the white thread nestled in their laps. Occasionally, one will look up and smile at something that was said, revealing a gap-tooth smile or a gold coated tooth. It is a mystery to me as I watch them, how they can look so content. The heat of the day is stifling, causing beads of perspiration to gather around my temples, yet they sit uncomplaining and relatively motionless swaddled in black cotton and wool. The black cloth which covers their hair, their body and their legs, signifies that they are widows. They will wear this garb everyday as a symbol of mourning until they too are dead.

Only the noise from the traffic on the nearby beltway and the cries of the school children across the street remind me that I am in Essex, Maryland, not the remote village of Malona, Greece. For it is actually my grandmother and her two Greek neighbors that I am watching, as they sit under the apple tree in her front yard. Yet they jar the memory and revive the childhood recollections of women in black, since they are a mirror image of women who live thousands of miles away.

She stops crocheting as I approach with a glass of water and ignoring the liquid, she takes my hand in her strong one and pulls me onto the bench beside her. Only then she quickly gulps the water and begins to work again, humming softly under her breath. Her fingers deftly twist the thread again and again, until the repetition and the speed make me dizzy and cause my eyes to water. Seeking relief, my eyes wander over her entire figure and come to rest on her face. Etched in the lines on her face are tales of hardship and loss but there is no sorrow in her eyes. Why then does she wear black? I wonder. As I sit and ponder, I grow confused and my confusion leads to frustration which leads to anger. "Why do you always wear black?" I demand harshly in Greek. She smiles a sad smile, shakes her head and presses my hand.

"I wear black," she says slowly, as if explaining to a child, "out of respect for your grandfather. Black is an affirmation of life. My way of showing that he is alive in my memory."

Her answer surprises me. Wearing black is not the mindless custom that I had thought it was. My grandmother had a legitimate explana-

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tion for her behavior that, to her, made perfect sense and did not need to be questioned. I, however, was not as convinced. I had always thought that black was symbolic of the rejection of life.

Because it indicates the absence of light and color, black is linked with night and darkness. It is the color of death, of mourning, sorrow and evil. Black connotes mystery. In medieval times, it was said that ' the devil appeared as a black animal or a dark complexioned male in black clothing. Superstition has it that tearing a black hen in half at a crossroads on the stroke of midnight will summon the devil. Black magic is evil while white magic is virtuous. Witches and vampires wear black. In the Bible, it is the black sheep that goes astray. The black plague brought decay, sickness and suffering to man. A black day is one that brings disaster. Black is always the color of the villain, the lawless cowboy, and the pirate.

But perhaps black does go beyond the negative aspects of death, decay and gloom. Black is symbolic of germination, of new life developing and of renewed life. Black is the color of the earth. The soil is representative of fertility and productivity. The earth is the womb of the world from which all life springs. More precious than silver or gold, the land sustains and supports man. By providing him with food it keeps him alive. When he dies, man returns to the earth, "Ashes to ashes and dust to dust." Man becomes one with the earth, so that even in death, he nurtures life. In ancient Greece and Rome, black animals were connected with the earth goddess. The earth goddess, to the ancient Greeks, was what we would call mother earth or mother nature. Mother is the title given to a woman who has created life, who has borne a child. Motherhood represents a generative capacity, an ability to produce being out of seeming nothingness. The continuation of life is assured through reproduction. Medieval alchemists noted that the "black stage" of their work, in which an original substance was burned, led to decomposition and destruction, but also a change. The product of the "black stage" gave rise to a "white stage" during which a new, purified substance was obtained. Black resulted, not in an end, but a beginning. The foundation of something new.

Thus, throughout time black has been a part of human experience. Black evokes emotions that are a response to life. Darkness elicits fear and loneliness. Night ends man's day with confusion. We stumble around in the dimness, blinded by the absence of light. Night is also a time when the activity of life ceases. The earth slips into death-like slumber except for the predatory animals who rely on the darkness to hunt and kill. Black is silent and therefore lonely. Space is endless and cold and black. As in a black hole, man is afraid that he will be sucked

B L A C K

up and his existence will be void. Terror and desolation are natural human feelings. The way that man responds to black proves that he is alive. He is thinking, he is feeling, therefore he is living. Man uses black to label his fears, to give them a concrete existence so that he can control them, overcome them, and prevail.

My eyes focus again on my grandmother's hands which cut through the air in short, rapid motions. They are good hands, the strength in them still evident despite the swollen nodules of arthritis in the joints, just as her inner strength shines from within her time-ravaged body. Black is shade, it is rest, and it is peace. Black signifies strength, her strength, her ability to survive and accept her existence with serenity and contentment.

*"Life is what happens
to us while we are
making other plans."*

Thomas La Mance

The Pineapple Town

by Colleen Caine

Memories from my childhood keep this place as alive in my mind as yesterday. Through the centuries this place has been the playground of the rich and famous, but to me it is a hide-away that I've returned to every summer since birth. It is called America's First Vacationland, but I know it as my only vacation place. The world remembers it as the place where the America's Cup was held. I, on the other hand, remember going sailing on the bay in my uncle's small sailboat. It is a place filled with history. On every street corner there stands a colonial house, old church, or secret garden. For me, its history can be seen in the family photos hanging on the walls of the den. Each year on the Fourth of July (a famous date in American history but in my family it is the date of our famous New England Clam Bake) my family gathers in Rhode Island to celebrate my grandfather's birthday. And each year a photo is taken to commemorate the occasion. These yearly photos are perhaps a trace of the change and growth that occurs not only with the people, but also with the place.

Even before this tradition of taking pictures began, there was still a great sense of history tied between my family and this place. Newport is where my father spent most of his life. Every street corner, store or playground has an "I remember when" story tied to it. Even today when we pass Narragansett Avenue we still see the houses my father lived in—just on that one street. Every time a neighbor would move my grandfather would buy the house and the whole family would move across the street, two houses down, or up the block—it didn't matter just so it was on Narragansett Avenue. One year I went through one of the Archie Bunker-type row houses with my aunt and my father. I was fascinated by all the family history they told me. There was the time when my aunt lured my father into a closet by telling him that his lost toy was inside and then slammed the door, locking him inside, or how my uncle and my father used to jump up and down on their beds, or the time my father put my aunt on top of the refrigerator and then wouldn't let her down. These stories, though many years old, could very easily be about my brothers and me. As I continued my tour through the old house I realized that though the people may grow and change, the memories from a place remain constant.

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I have found remembrances of the magical places my father used to take my brothers and me. Even the names of these places are enchanting: Cliff Walk, Ocean Drive, the Viking Tower, the Monkey Chair, Bailey's Beach, and Brick Market. Perhaps my favorite was Cliff Walk. It is four miles of wandering paths that overlook the Atlantic Ocean on one side, and elegant mansions on the other. These were once the homes of such families as the Vanderbilts, Kennedys and Firestones. They have names like Marble House, The Elms, The Breakers, Rosecliff and Chateau-Sur-Mer. These monuments stand as a tribute to a bygone era. This era was called the Gilded Age or The Age of Innocence. People were used to having every whim fulfilled; the more extravagant, the better. Everything was overdone, but never outdone. Today, however, it is just a simple seaside town where the most extravagant whim may simply be children asking their parents for money to get a vanilla cup from the ice cream man on a hot summer's day at the beach.

The one thing that still remains the same, however, is Ocean Drive. It too faces the Atlantic Ocean and from it you can see sailboats, fishing boats, and the many beaches. My memories of this place are of bicycle riding along the rocky cliffs that overlook the water below. Ocean Drive was also the first place I saw a lighthouse. The people who live there allowed us to go up to the top and watch all the tall ships go by. I still remember how exciting it was to be up so high over the water and how the sun reflected off the tower of the lighthouse.

The mystery of Newport, though, is an ancient tower whose origin is unknown. It is a tall, circular tower with no roof and six pillars supporting it. There are no walls, only archways created by the pillars and along the top are small square windows. Many believe the Vikings constructed it, but it has never been proven. Another theory is that it is a windmill built by the Revolutionary traitor, Benedict Arnold.

Still another secret is that of the Monkey Chair which is located in a secluded section of town. Only a few select people in the world know about this special chair. Legend has it that if you climb up to the top, sit in the stone seat and concentrate really hard, your wish will be granted.

Over the years these enchanted locations became nothing more than daydreams. For now I have very different memories of this place — shopping in the seaside marketplace, outings at the beach, going to the movies with my cousins, seagulls, New England accents, baptisms, funerals, weddings, and graduations.

Today the town is still the same, but it is invaded by tourists trying to change it. There are more restaurants, hotels, malls, and traffic jams. Everyone wants an "ocean view." I've watched this place change from a playground for the idle rich to a Navy town to a tourist spot.

THE P I N E A P P L E TOWN

I think that the colonial symbol of the pineapple, which stands for hospitality, is fitting for this place. Carved wooden pineapples hang over doorways of many of the houses as proof of the town's hospitality. It has welcomed me for many years and every year welcomes new people who have discovered this "first vacationland" called Newport. Over the years I have grown and changed, just as Newport has, but I will always know it as a Pineapple Town.



The Last Temptation Of Christ

by Cyndy Bystry

Martin Scorsese's film, "The Last Temptation of Christ," is flowing with religious content although fundamentalist Christians criticize it as a production "lacking any serious theological vision."

According to James M. Wall of the CHRISTIAN CENTURY magazine the movie presents a mishmash of words gleaned from popular culture's assumptions about the man called Jesus. Fundamentalists across the world have protested against the film and its portrayal of a weak messiah who succumbs to temptation in a dream sequence near the end of the movie.

The controversial film, released this past August by Universal Pictures, is based on the novel by Nikos Kazantzakis. The protesting is rooted in part on Kazantzakis' novel appearing on the Catholic church's "Index of Forbidden Books." These books are considered dangerous by the Vatican. Kazantzakis's novel first appeared on the list 35 years ago.

Martin Scorsese, the main target of much of the criticism, says he produced the film, a 16 year quest, to get closer to God. His quest to make the film was personal as well as universal and paramount. He grew up in an American - Italian family. He told Richard Corliss of FILM magazine that they enjoyed life and put the church in a certain perspective. Out of anyone in his family Scorsese said, "I was the one who took the church seriously." He also wanted to show that the supernatural and the natural exist on the same plane.

When asked by Corliss if the film portrayed Jesus as God or as a man who thinks he's god, Scorsese replied, "He's God. He's not deluded. I think Kazantzakis thought that, and I know I believe that." Scorsese said he has always taken Jesus' message of love very seriously. The film has made a lot of people think, for the first time in a long time, about Jesus and his message of love, said Corliss.

So far, most of the people who have spoken out against the film have not seen it. Director Franco Zeffirelli called the movie "damaging to the image of Christ. He cannot be made the object of low

fantasies." Fundamental evangelist, Jerry Falwell called for a boycott against MCA, Universal's parent company. He claimed: "Neither the label 'fiction' nor the First Amendment gives Universal the right to libel, slander and ridicule the most central figure in world history."

Scorsese pointed out that, "Ninety-nine percent of the people who are complaining have not seen the picture." Scorsese was once an altar boy who at one time wanted to be a priest. To him the film is no frivolous matter. Kazantzakis' Jesus, he said, is both human and divine, in accordance with Christian teaching. Scorsese was interested in the author's approach that the human part of Jesus would have trouble accepting the divine.

As an artistic expression, the film follows in the tradition of previous Scorsese films. Robert Phillip Kolker of the University of Maryland, in a study of Scorsese's earlier pictures, notes that "Scorsese is interested in the psychological manifestations of individuals who are representative either of a class or of a certain ideological grouping; he is concerned with their relationship to each other or to an antagonistic environment . . . (and finally) there is no triumph for his characters." (*A Cinema of Loneliness*, Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 162) Scorsese's Jesus follows in this tradition, there is no resurrection, and Jesus toughs it out to the end.

Harlan Jacobson, of *FILM* magazine, looks at Scorsese's compulsion to make films "that scratch away at the contradictions of the soul." The first question Christ grapples with in both Nikos Kazantzakis' novel and the film is "Was he nuts?"

Jesus is presented early in the film as a weak and pathetic collaborator who builds crosses used by the Romans to execute Jewish rebels. A shocking occupation for the "messiah," this is, as biblical history dictates, not his true calling. Whether it's the "claws of God" tearing into Jesus' brain or epileptic seizures in the desert, the film portrays a tormented soul. However once Jesus leaves his carpentry and begins to preach, the pain and the attacks stop.

It's like taking a dancer who had been forced to wear heavy construction boots and setting them barefoot on a stage. Of course their feet will be free to dance and be free of the pain. Whether Scorsese intended to or not, he touched on the oppression of people who have missed their calling.

FILM magazine (Oct. '88, pp. 32-33) compares Scorsese's Christ to Johnny boy Robert De Niro in "Mean Streets," Rupert Pumpkin (De Niro) in "King of Comedy," and Jake LaMotta (De Niro) in "Taxi Driver," asking himself "You talkin' to me?"

THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

"Christ is shaken from the same tree as all of Scorsese's previous nuts, all caught up between being and nothingness. Is it no big deal to think that you have the right stuff in the Age of Miracles and so declare it?" stated Jacobson.

Jesus is depicted as struggling with his divinity. The voices he hears in his head he thinks are Lucifer. He cannot believe they are telling him he is the Son of God.

Of all the controversial "Jesus" films "The Last Temptation of Christ" is the most controversial of them all. Monty Python's "Life of Brian" is the blasphemous British film which is always offensive — to any type of fundamentalist. But it is meant to be extremely funny and entertaining. "The Last Temptation of Christ" is not meant to be taken that lightly, and that is where people react differently towards it. Jean-Luc Godard set the birth of Christ in a gas station in contemporary France with the movie, "Hail Mary." The movie was banned in many states and from television.

In fact there are at least 29 "Jesus" movies that have been made over the last 72 years of film history. The topic is as old as the New Testament. The topic, however, does not seem free for interpretation.

In the most organized effort of resistance, Donald Wildmon, Methodist minister and head of the American Family Association, is sending out 2.5 million mailings protesting the film and has scheduled spots on 700 Christian radio stations and 50 to 75 TV stations to protest. "In the twelve years of my current ministry, I've never seen anything like the response to this movie," he said.

In the beginning of October, French police rounded up about 40 people for questioning in connection with a fire that injured possibly more than 10 people at a Paris theater showing the film. The South African government censor board banned the film after receiving what it said were "hundreds" of protests against the film. The board said that the only other films to create such opposition were "Jesus Christ Superstar" and Monty Python's "Life of Brian." They were banned and only viewed quietly in small art houses years later.

A 49 year-old man in N.Y. drove a bus into a theatre showing the film in Ithaca. He turned himself in to the police saying the film had upset him. He was held on \$ 15,000 bail. Stockholders were encouraged to sell their stock in MCA, and protestors drove with their lights on August 22, 1988. The last week of July, the Rev. R.L. Hymers Jr., a Christian extremist in the Los Angeles area, staged a demonstration near the home of MCA Chairman Wasserman in Beverly Hills. Wasserman is Jewish. An actor portraying Wasserman stepped repeatedly on the back of an actor dressed as Jesus and carrying a heavy cross. An airplane banner

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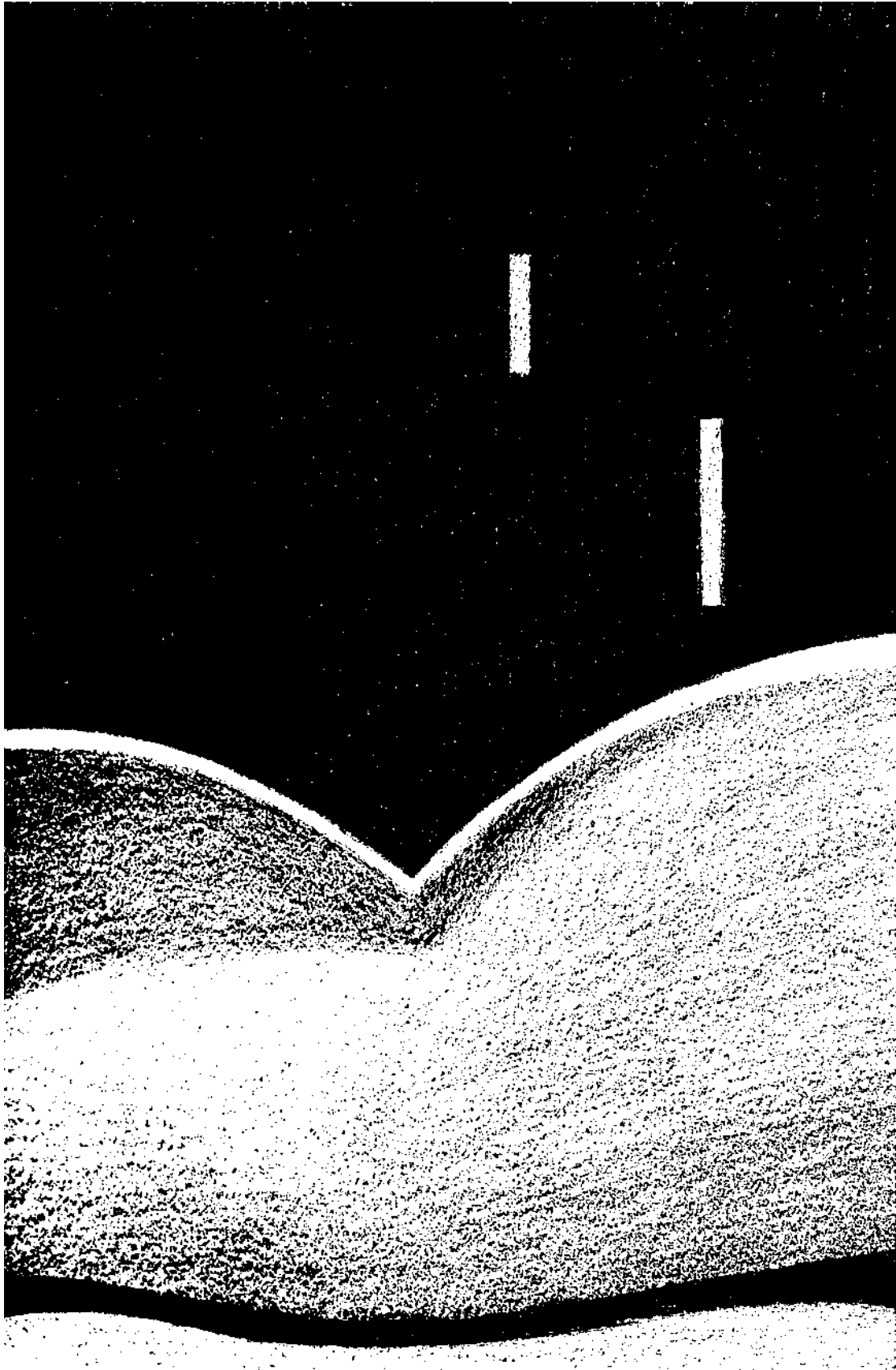
overhead read, "Wasserman Fans Jew-Hatred W/Temptation" and a crowd chanted, "Bankrolled by Jewish money."

As a way of trying to quiet things down, Universal has inserted a disclaimer in the movie stating that it is fiction and making Scorsese available for interviews stressing his religious sincerity. This has not stopped the protests which have taken on a healthy life of their own.

There is a response to these negative responses as well. Liberal churchmen have been trying to avoid criticizing the film, expressing that the freedom of interpretation is on Scorsese's behalf. Reverend Eugene Schnieder of the United Church of Christ said fundamentalists' fears are exaggerated because 'people who go to the movie are going to come out bored and leave before it is over."

The Rev. Paul Moore Jr., Episcopal Bishop of New York, called "The Last Temptation of Christ" "theologically sound." He did agree that, although the lovemaking scene may offend some, "Remember, it's a dream. This is yet another portrait — a work of art — which emphasizes certain aspects of Jesus." The Rev. William Fore of the National Council of Churches sees the film as "an honest attempt to tell the story of Jesus from a different perspective."

"The Last Temptation of Christ" is not boring, it is in fact entertaining, with scenes of a very serious nature as well as actually funny excerpts, and a Christian-rock sound track by Peter Gabriel. Rich in theological ponderings, Scorsese's film touches upon such issues as the creation of the idea of God by humans out of an anthropological need, or the creation of Christianity by the prophet Paul.



*"How can I tell what I
think until I see what I
say?"*

E.M. Forster

The Art of Language

by Leslie Pessagno

Picasso takes bits of thick colored liquid and strategically places them on a plain white canvas with a paintbrush. The end product—"Guernica"—a symbolic representation of the horrors of war.

Nureyev and Jude dance the ballet piece "Two Brothers" at the Mechanic Theatre. The charming and humorous little piece shows sibling rivalries and taunting, as well as the deep bonds of love between brothers.

Hemingway writes *The Old Man and the Sea*, and fashions the ocean into a symbol for a woman—sometimes bad and sometimes good, sometimes placid and sometimes dangerous, always unpredictable.

Two lovers hold a conversation where the words and gestures carry far more intimate meaning than the mere groupings of vocabulary and syntax. The lift of the eyebrow, the coy glance from beneath lowered lashes, the slight slurred emphasis on a word, transform a subject predicate combination into an artwork no less fantastic or significant than any painting, ballet, or novel.

Painting, music, and writing are consistently recognized as being stimulating to the mind and to the emotions. Written language, such as prose and poetry rife with symbolism, is seen in the same way, but spoken language and body language are rarely viewed as art, even though they can be just as full of hidden meanings and double entendre as anything else popularly viewed as art.

Flirting, for example, when done by masters of the form, can be considered with awe. The sentences fly back and forth, twisting around and caressing each other like lovers in a fencing duel. First, the opening move—the man slides into a seat beside an attractive woman and booms, "Hellooo!" with a big puppy grin on his face.

"Hi," she returns, barely glancing at him, but she parries his overeagerness easily which puts him on guard. He now knows that this is no easy prey.

"Uh, hello," he says, more cautiously, now wary of his opponent, but still wanting to press on. "What are you drinking?"

"Just some soda," she replies, looking at him more closely, turning slightly toward him now that he has approached her level of play. "I don't like alcohol much."

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Feeling that he has scored a point, the man advances once more to an aggressive stance. "Me neither...it makes me do things I might regret." He emphasizes his point by sliding his hand next to hers on the bar and maintaining eye contact. A daring maneuver on his part, and extremely well executed.

However, he is dealing with a master. "Well, we wouldn't want *that* to happen," she says, her voice dripping sarcasm. She turns slightly from him.

Accepting defeat, but happy that at least she is still talking to him, he drops to the level of polite conversation — "My name's Bob. What's yours?" — exactly where she wanted it to be. This duel obviously goes to the woman, but the man made a valiant showing, and if he continues to perform well she may agree to spar with him again, perhaps at dinner on Friday night. The words taken at face value present an insignificant conversation. It is the meaning behind the words, shown through vocal stress and body movement, that conveys the actual message of: "I'm interested in you, would you be interested in me?" to which the reply is "Maybe, if you don't push too hard." To simply say these things straight out would take all the fun out of it; would destroy all the mystery and secretiveness in the courtship ritual. It would be like Picasso saying, "War is awful" instead of painting "Guernica."

Flirting often involves quite a bit of lying (all in the interest of keeping the game exciting). For example, the tradition of playing hard-to-get involves pretending disinterest in order to entice a potential suitor into greater interest. In her essay "On Boxing," Joyce Carol Oates says that, "Boxing is, after all, about lying. It is about cultivating a double personality." Well, people seeking a little companionship with a member of the opposite sex are not the only ones to adapt boxing techniques into artillery. Just as the art of music has several subdivisions, such as classical, jazz, rock n' roll and new age, so language takes on many different modes, one of which is the art of lying, or, even better, the art of deception. Politicians have been known to say something like, "My opponent is a supporter of thespians." While it may be perfectly true that their opponent supports actors, some might assume that a thespian was something awful. The candidate thereby gains support in such a way that his opponent cannot accuse him of anything without appearing to insult the people. What's he going to say? That his opponent shamelessly took advantage of their stupidity? That is a surefire way to get votes.

Out and out lying is sometimes used, but this is a base art and can easily be turned back on those who use it, unless they are extremely good at it. Before the presidential election of 1988, one of Dukakis'

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aides spread the rumor that Bush had had an affair. The lie was pathetic and only served to put Dukakis in a bad light and to get the aide fired. Amateur writers shouldn't try to begin with a two thousand page novel and amateur liars shouldn't practice in a major political campaign. In both cases the would-be artist only makes a fool out of him/herself.

Another subdivision of the art of language is slang. Slang terms arise when some expression or word has grown too common or too trite and we seek a new way to say it. It is the playful production of something new where nothing new was necessary—it is only that we do not like the old word any longer. Our store of words is constantly growing and changing, just as our store and variety of paintings increases with each successive generation. New styles of painting are constantly created, used by a growing number of people, and then discarded in favor of something new. Slang words and expressions are constantly created, used, and then replaced with new ones when they become *pas*. Yet the old words still retain a distinctive and pleasurable flavor, just the same as a painting by Renoir.

These slang expressions also give us different ways of saying the same thing, though each expression has its own nuance of meaning. To say that someone has "passed away" is quite distinct from saying that they "bit the dust." These expressions, while they both indicate that someone has died, say two very different things about how you felt toward this person. Slang is vital to the language and to our humanity itself. In the movie version of George Orwell's novel *1984* it is clear how removing the slang from language and hence decreasing vocabulary can help to bridle emotions and turn people into better machines. The common expression used in the film was "good." To express something bad you called it "ungood." Something very, very bad was "double-plus ungood." Eventually, the government sought to remove the "ungood" concept from the language altogether, along with such words as liberty and justice, because the concepts the words represented, the emotions they touched on, were dangerous. It could be seen in the actors' faces, the difference between the concept *bad* and the term ungood. With no vehicle to express these concepts revolution would be impossible. Words have *power*. Power to sway the emotions of masses of people.

Hitler was a master of language. So was Martin Luther King, Jr. Words, properly crafted and well-used, can stir an entire nation into enough of a furor to start a world war, or promote racial equality and peace. Mere words are stronger weapons than our ancestors (who began accompanying simple arm gestures with expressive grunts) could ever have imagined. Suzanne D. Langer in "The Cultural Importance of Art"

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says that "art is the spearhead of human development, social and individual." Language is what has taken us above the level of animals. The arm movements of primitive man signified, at first, such simple concepts as cut, break, strike and crush, but they were symbols for something and allowed us to begin down the road of abstract reasoning and logic. We say that this painting "means" this—that it is supposed to convey this idea, this emotion. Is that not what language consists of? the communication of individual thoughts and feelings?

Language is like a Haiku. In a Haiku the first line must have five syllables, the second line seven, and the third line five again. It must be no more than three lines long. Within these strictures it is perfectly free. It is true that there are definite rules and guidelines for speaking, but that does not make it any less of an art. The fact that it is a medium which requires so much care and precision only serves to enhance its beauty.

*"Writing is easy. All you
do is stare at a blank
sheet of paper until
drops of blood form on
your forehead."*

Gene Fowler



To Terri

by Anne Kimerlein

Images that flash before our eyes
and are gone too soon—
that panda bear,
a poem,
The Giving Tree,
a yellow rose.
We'll remember
a bubbling pixie
whose joy in living and compassion
touched us all.
For a fleeting moment
you entered our lives
and we'll remember you
with love and smiles.

Mr. A. and the Crimson staff

As I approached Our Lady of Mercy Church on that cold January afternoon in 1986, the frigid air whipping across the parking lot was not the only force that chilled me. Terri's death had brought a chill over the entire town. As I entered the church, I felt the warmth engulf me, not just the warmth of being inside the four walls of the building, but the warmth and compassion of all the people within. The same warmth and compassion Terri had shared with all of us in her life, we now expressed for her in her death.

Entering the church, I glanced around to see almost every pew filled with Terri's relatives, friends, classmates and admirers. As I sat down with my mother and sister, the pall bearers entered carrying the casket covered with beautiful flowers. The six men were only barely men, all of them had only recently graduated from high school. They were much too young to be doing this. Each of them, dressed in their trenchcoats and peacoats, carried on their faces a look of despair, sadness, and emptiness after the loss of such a friend. I stood, in shock myself, grasping my mom's arm as I watched my older brother Ed carrying the casket. Throughout the weekend leading up to Terri's funeral he had worked so hard to be strong. He put his needs behind the needs of others and concentrated on being there for everyone else, especially his girlfriend,

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Susan, who was Terri's friend. But now, although among his friends, he was alone. This was the time at which he had to face what had happened and he began to feel it for himself. This showed in his look of confusion, disbelief, and incredible loss: a look I had never seen before and will never forget.

Glancing around again, I spotted Tracy, Terri's younger sister, who I had been in classes with for several years. She looked confused, obviously very upset, but unsure of whether to show her feelings or to hold them inside. With her were Terri's parents, both very torn apart by the tragic loss of their child. Terri's mother is a slight woman, no more than five feet tall, weighing no more than 110 pounds, and has a gentle way about her that her daughter had inherited. Today she looks smaller, thinner, and more fragile, her face pale and sunken, her body quivering.

As the salutatorian of her graduating class, an editor of both the yearbook and school newspaper, a member of the drama club, the cheerleading squad, and almost every other club in the school, Terri knew everyone. She was also a member of two honor societies and shared her time and intelligence with others through peer tutoring. Her cheerful smile brought out her bubbly personality to anyone who met her. Terri was an intelligent, caring, helpful and compassionate person who would never do anything to hurt anyone or anything and had done nothing but good in her life. She was studying to become a doctor to help others when she was killed in a skiing accident on a poorly marked trail.

Why should such a wonderful person, so young, so promising, with so much to give to our world, have to die at such a young age? This is a question I have found myself asking, as well as have, I'm sure, many others. It seems so senseless that Terri, or any person with as much potential as Terri, should have to have their life cut short while many, less worthy of a long life, should be allowed to live. Often a criminal kills innocent people, even tremendous, giving people, and is allowed to live a long life. Those who cheat to get ahead often live at the expense of those they cheated to get what they wanted. How can such unfairness be explained?

One theory that attempts to explain why bad things happen to one person while good happens to another is the theory that God gives people what they deserve. This is often useful when bad things happen to bad people. In this theory we may keep a good image of God; He is only doing what He must to those who deserve it. Also, at the same time, it encourages doing good in our world and avoiding sin. But Terri

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did good and avoided sin. Therefore, in this theory, she did not deserve to have a bad thing, her death, happen to her.

Another theory has to do with the story of Abraham in the Book of Genesis. God was testing Abraham's faith in Him, as He has sometimes claimed He is testing ours. God could not have been testing Terri; she was killed instantly and did not even have a chance to prove her faith. Who was He testing, then? Everyone who knew her? It must be obvious that many people do not pass these tests. As a result of Terri's death, my brother Ed has almost completely lost any faith he had had. His girlfriend, Susan, also lost her faith, and is only now, after two years, beginning to gain it back - slowly. Ed feels he'll never have faith again.

Thornton Wilder, in his book *The Eighth Day*, offers another theory on why God ends our lives as He does. Wilder proposes that God has set each of our lives into a pattern somewhat like a tapestry. Some of the threads (our lives) are short, some long, some knotted, and from our point of view they seem random, but from God's they join to form a great design. Those threads that are shorter or knotted are not that way because they *deserve* to be, but just because they are part of the pattern. In this way, some people actually feel privileged to suffer, privileged to be a part of God's beautiful design. Is this where the "world to come" comes into play? A place where those good or innocent people, whose lives happen to be short or knotted, are compensated for the unfairness in our world? Maybe so. Many people believe that when an exceptionally good person dies, it is because God wants that person to be with Him in heaven, and maybe one could look at Terri's death this way. But is the God we are taught to believe in really that selfish? That world, unlike ours here, is everlasting. Why would God be in such a hurry to take Terri from this world into His?

All of these theories rely on God as being all-powerful. Some people try to look at God as being both all-powerful and all-good. This simply does not work. In the Book of Job, God is seen as being all-good; He is not all-powerful. He has done His best to create our world to the point at which we are now, but He cannot control the laws of nature. Some things just happen for what seems to be no reason — by nature, and nature is not prejudiced to good or bad people. It is just easy for people to blame God. When something tragic happens, we need someone to vent to — someone to blame — and because God cannot fight back, He is an easy target. But if we can get beyond blaming God or questioning Him as to *why* things happen that He has no control over, we could turn to Him for help and support after the tragedy has struck.

There are things in life that are beyond our control, or anyone's control. We must learn to stop trying to control these things or

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expecting someone or something else to control them. Pain and death are two of these uncontrollable parts of life and we must move beyond the question of *why* they happen and try to concentrate our strength on *how to cope* with them. Immediately following Terri's death, Susan was able to concentrate on coping. In delivering the eulogy at the funeral, she focused not on why this horrible tragedy had happened, but rather she stressed that Terri was going to a place suited for her. Later, this could no longer suffice as a complete answer for her, and she began to question why. And now, after her period of questioning, she is gaining back her faith and beginning to look to God for guidance and a way to cope.

When Ed finally began to go beyond questioning why Terri's death happened, he discovered a way to help him cope without the guidance of God. He shared this in a letter he wrote to another close friend of Terri's. In the letter, he explains that life and love thrive on each other, and run side by side. When the life ends, you are left with all this love without its life companion. The love must go somewhere, so you spread it everywhere — to your family, friends, and strangers, as well as to flowers and the cat. Now that love has a place to go and you think of who that love used to be for every time you see these things. You also know that the person who pulled this love out of you would be proud of all the places their love has spread. This letter helped its recipient and anyone else who read it deal with Terri's death a little better, regardless of their faith.

These are all possible ways of figuring out why a tragic death such as Terri's happens, or ways to cope with such a tragedy. It is impossible to choose one correct answer, for every person deals with tragedy in different ways, but each person can choose one or several answers that are helpful or comforting. There are answers, explanations, and ways to cope, as long as we are willing and able to accept them.





Field Studies In Kenya

by Kristine Caggiano

Three zebra, shaded by an acacia, watch us with mild curiosity. Their stripes stretch down to their bellies, telling us they are Grant's zebra. The green and gold grasses to our north tuck under Mount Suswa like an old carpet and obscure the zebras' grazing heads. We bubble over the top of the landrover, positioning ourselves for better shots. We have seen close to a hundred zebra by this time, yet we toss off our lens caps and beg Meredith to stop the rover one more time. She does, leans her elbow on the window, and asks us whether the zebra's stripes are white on black or black on white. Some of us decide they are white on black because of the zebra's black muzzle. If white were the base color, we rationalize, the muzzle would be pigmented white and pink. We nod, satisfied with ourselves, content with our answers. Then she asks how the stripes have benefited these animals ecologically. We are silent, realizing that despite our diverse and often in-depth biological backgrounds, we are still students learning every day.

There are twenty of us altogether from across the nation, New York to California. Our interests, goals, and backgrounds vary, but the one thing we have in common is our applications to a unique program for the summer. The School for Field Studies out of Northeastern University runs courses for credit in such varied parts of the United States as Hawaii, Alaska, and off the coast of Massachusetts. Students can also choose to spend a month in the rain forests of Australia or on the plains of Kenya.

We arrive in Kenya at 6:10 a.m., June 18. Some of us haven't slept for over twenty-four hours because of flight problems, short lay-overs, and, of course, excitement. Maybe we are even a little anxious too. We are going to be living in another country for a month under what the school calls primitive conditions. We will be living in wood huts on the ranch and in hiking tents on safari. We will not have plumbing or electricity. We will have to follow sterilizing procedures such as boiling water to kill parasites and disinfecting our hands in permanganate before we eat. We are to have been vaccinated against such diseases as yellow fever and typhoid, and we must take antimalarial medication during our stay.

I step off the plane behind Mandy. It is dark, just before sunrise, and the cool morning air eases through my windbreaker, chilling my

over-tired, groggy body. But the Kenya air on my face is as refreshing as mountain air. Before me, the horizon is an orange line, wider and brighter in the middle. "We're here!" Mandy breathes.

The plane stops a few yards from the terminal, and we must walk up a long steep ramp. Our rucksacks are being tossed onto trolleys waiting to be wheeled into the baggage claim area. At customs a man asks how long my visit will be, where I will be staying, and for what purpose. His English is so poor I hope he has heard my answer correctly. To answer the final question I must lie. Alex was almost denied her visa when she said she was visiting Kenya as a student. The Kenyan embassy assumed she would be a student at the University of Nairobi and demanded many different forms of proof. Also, research does not seem to be tolerated very much in Kenya, so we cannot tell them about our intended work on the ranch. We had been assured that Wildlife Ranching and Research Ltd. is allowed to conduct research, but those who have granted that permission quickly take it away. "Tourist," I say. He stamps my passport; I have thirty days, according to the visa.

An old white bus takes us to the ranch. By now the sun is high, but muffled by clouds. I wonder how warm the day will get, feeling the heat from the floor of the bus through my shoes. Some days at home I can tell by looking at the sky's color how warm or cool the air is. Here, the sky looks like snow. We are driving on the left side of the road, and every time we turn I gasp slightly, thinking we are going to crash. The land looks like farm country out west in the United States. Along the road we see crops, a GM dealer, and a chicken farm. Men are walking to fields, replacing the men walking back from them. In the trees marabou storks (relatives of the vulture) leer at us, as though wishing the bus would break down right here.

At the ranch's gate a Kenya native waves to our driver. He is tall with very thin legs. Dressed in khaki pants and a beige shirt topped with poncho-like material, he carries a bow and arrow in his right hand. Gesturing to the gate keeper, our field director Paul tells us the man is an askari, a hired guard. Bandits have trespassed on the ranch, viciously attacking one of the workers. Now each house has its own askari, and our campsite has at least three. The askari opens the gate, waving as we pass through.

The dirt road before us is narrow and rutted, suffering from flooding and the passage of roving vehicles during the rainy season. The grass is high on either side, hiding creatures, but occasionally we see triangular golden ears or spiraling horns. In the distance there are two long houses, dark, shaped like the Swiss Family Robinson's tree house. From this far we can't determine of what they are made, but through the binoculars I see they have grass roofs.

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Herds of zebra (our professor says "zebra" with a soft "e"), hartebeest, and gazelle welcome us to our new home. With binoculars I see giraffe necks rising over trees. We stop for a moment to watch two vervet monkeys jump branches. They are gray with black faces and have long arms and legs. They run a few feet when we get out of the bus but stop if we do not move any closer. As we step forward, they run a few feet, stop, and watch us again. Eventually they become bored and disappear into thick brush.

From the center of the camp I see Mount Lukenya to the north and the Ngong Hills to the west. I am told Kilimanjaro is to the south, though we will not see it.

Butterflies and birds are the most obvious inhabitants of the ranch. Rob is looking up names and descriptions of each bird he sees in a field guide. He has already seen the African hoopoe, a brown and black bird with a comb on its head. I have seen superb starlings, their sapphire wings catching the small amount of sun's rays and reflecting them like a mirror.

When we stop to observe a termite hill, I stand still and listen. Voices carry an amazing distance. It is as though the air is thinner and clearer here than in the States to allow faster and more efficient passage of sound. It reminds me somewhat of being in a valley where sound is reflected and returned to my ears. As I watch a herd of zebra with my binoculars, I almost expect to hear the switching of their tails.

The campsite, close and rectangular, consists of a three-sided lecture hall, three gravity showers, four outhouses (in Swahili, "choo"), three huts ("bandas"), and seven tents. We live four to a banda, two to a tent. I stay in the banda called Kongoni (hartebeest) with Kara, Gwen, and Jeanne. Every morning we are up at 6:30 to do chores. I awake a little after six, listening to the askari finishing their guard duties and Sterling the goat dragging his untied rope through the grass. The air is cool and damp, but the sleeping bag is too warm. We all wake sleepy and hot, shivering as we change.

As the sun rises, I wash my face at the sink on the hill. It is the same sink I brush my teeth in by kerosene light every night. In this sink we scrub our clothes with a brush, a thin trickle of water, and New Blue Omo.

After our chores and breakfast we attend our instructor's lecture. The lecture hall is also the dining hall; it is a three-sided wood structure with a roof. One of our earlier studies is giraffe ecology. On the east wall is a skeleton of a giraffe. One of the first questions tossed to us is, "How many bones are in the giraffe's neck?" Without looking at the skeleton we know most mammals, including the giraffe, have seven cervical vertebrae.

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After our three hour lecture and lunch, we go out in the field. Less than a week has passed, and we know the major grass on the ranch is Themeda (red oat grass). We spend one day identifying our resident giraffe population with a book of photos and notes on certain coat patterns. One giraffe, Nick, has a playboy bunny-shaped blotch on the base of his neck. We can now spot both Thomson's and Grant's gazelle, impala, and hartebeest. We can point out and discuss the differences among the *Acacia drepanolobium*, *Acacia xanthophloea*, and *Acacia seyal*. The acacias are distinguished from other trees by their thorns which sometimes exceed three inches. Their branches are, for the most part, concentrated around the top of the tree. *Acacia xanthophloea*, the fever tree, is all through the campsite. This tree is found in areas where water collects from runoff. It is called the fever tree because in places where it flourishes malaria is common. The increased appearance of malaria is probably from the increased numbers of mosquitos in the damp area. The *Acacia seyal*, the tree most involved in our research, has sharp white spines; and its leaves are fern like, small, and bipinnate. We pick two branch pairs, on opposite sides of the tree, and clip the thorns from one member of each pair which have been chosen for height from the ground (high enough that gazelles will not feed on them), length of stem, and leaf quality. We wonder just how protective the thorns are against herbivores, specifically the giraffe. Understanding the giraffe's feeding behavior allows for greater ease of setting up an area that is best equipped to feed the species being conserved.

The giraffe is a good subject for study because it is strictly a browser, its diet consisting entirely of leaves. It also eats at a height generally inaccessible to other animals like the impala or gazelle which browse on leaves but, as grazers, also add grass to their diets.

Standing on chairs we carry from the lecture hall, we measure the lengths of branches clipped by previous SFS students and compare them to earlier measurements taken over the months. We find that on the whole, clipped branches are browsed upon more heavily than undipped, but undipped branches are still eaten. The plant's defense is not entirely perfect, yet it works well enough. I have not seen a leaf-bare acacia, so I assume the thorns are annoying enough to cause the herbivore to move on to another tree after a few minutes of browsing.

Wildlife Ranching and Research Limited is an experimental game ranch, the only one of its kind in Kenya. Native animals (hartebeest, gazelle, zebra) are raised and bred on this forty-four square mile ranch, and the surplus is slaughtered for consumption. The instructors and workers hope this type of ranching will help combat hunger while conserving species at the same time. Every Tuesday night the cropping

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vehicles move across the ranch. One worker does most of the shooting, and he always seems to catch the animals right behind the eye. We never see or hear shooting, but we do visit the slaughterhouse some nights. Only about ten animals are shot: one zebra, a few gazelle, and hartebeest. Our instructor dissects a hartebeest and a zebra, showing us the differences between ruminant and nonruminant digestive systems. The ruminant, with its four-chambered stomach, makes much more of its food by ruminating (cud chewing) and, with this process, extracts every bit of water from digested plants. The nonruminant is not as efficient with its water absorption. Because it loses more water, it is also less able to adapt to the challenging environment of the arid Kenya grasslands.

After seven years of operation, the ranch appears to be much more economically and productively well-off than a comparable cattle ranch would be. Native animals require no veterinary attention, very little water, and are immune to local diseases and parasites. Cattle, on the other hand, haven't adjusted to the Kenyan environment well at all. They are susceptible to parasites and suffer during drought. And, some feel, they contribute to the process of desertification by trampling vegetation on their way to and from water holes.

After two weeks on the ranch we head out on safari through towns like Narok, Nakuru, and Naivasha. They differ from each other in size and modernization of people. Otherwise, the buildings are similar with fluorescent blue or mint green fronts, the inside rooms as small as an American bedroom. Woolworth's, the major department store, is only the size of a living room and kitchen together and sells, for the most part, boxes of sugar cookies, juice, record albums by local groups, cosmetics, and various kinds of soaps, including the only detergent used in Kenya—New Blue Omo.

Foreign exchange contributes to the economic well-being of most cities and towns. Nairobi, with its hotels, travel agencies, markets, and restaurants, does not appear to be a very poor city. Narok caters more than Naivasha and Nakuru to tourists. It is a fairly affluent town, not nearly as affluent as Nairobi, but the people look healthy, the children happy. In Narok we stop at a food store. Inside there is just enough room for the counter, the two women behind it, and Meredith, our interning instructor. Behind the women are shelves of vegetables, bread, and boxed items—more sugar cookies. The variety of each item is limited, and Meredith buys the last three boxes of UHT milk. UHT is remarkable. Without refrigeration it can remain drinkable for months, perhaps years, as long as the carton is unopened. The milk stays good even in the desert.

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Two boys, around nine years old and wearing navy blue uniforms, cross the street to approach us. The smaller one pushes the other gently between the shoulder blades. The tall boy stops and turns to the other, his back hunched. The other giggles and pushes him again. Very slowly and deliberately the taller boy asks, "Do you have the time?"

Kara checks her watch. "It's one o'clock." The boy watches her for a moment. The other stands to the side and behind him.

"What is your name?"

"Kara." The boy mouths the word, feeling out the syllables.

"Thank you. Goodbye." They hurry away, giggling.

"You speak English very well," Kara calls after them. The boy smiles over his shoulder.

Some towns we stop in don't have names. We pause in each just long enough to get sodas and refill the water bottles. We fill up the gas tanks in a station next to a small stand in which boxes of orange drink and stems of sugar cane are sold. As we wait Mandy collects a crowd of children. Her back faces us, her blond crimped hair swinging like a horse's tail. The children mimic her movements. She is teaching them hand jive. When she returns to the rover, the children follow yelling, "Kwa heri!" (Swahili for good-bye).

After six hours in a landrover we welcome any place where we can get out, stretch, and buy something to eat and drink. We stop at Naivasha and, before we leave the rovers' vicinity, Paul recalls when the men in one of these towns offered him three cows for his female intern. He pats Meredith on the shoulder and says he hopes to get a better deal for her.

In a store the size of a grocery store aisle back home, I buy postcards, thanking the woman behind the register in Swahili as a sign of respect, "Asante sana."

She glares at me and says, "You're welcome." With the look of someone with a grudge, she pushes the change at me. As I leave the store, I try to use tunnel vision to block the people on either side of me out. It does not work. I still see the twisted arms of polio and leprosy reaching for us. Others nearby do not have the strength to beg, but sit propped up against a building, wrapped in loose hooded clothes, leaving an unidentifiable limb visible. Some students toss a few shillings, but there are so many open palms.

As we move further away from Nairobi and its surrounding towns, the road becomes less passable. Two landrovers sustain flats. We spend the first night of safari in a rain forest in the Rift Valley. As we drive a leopard crosses in front of the rover's headlights. The moment is so brief I almost doubt I have seen it. As we set up the tents vervet monkeys

throw things at us from the trees. Rob and Al have their tent up first, and once they have gone to help someone else, the monkeys in the trees let excrement fall onto the tent.

When we have the camp set up, thunder sounds and rain begins to fall. Mary and Jeanne have been flooded out of their tent. We cook dinner under left over tarps, plastic sheets placed under the tents. As the rain eases the vervets run through our site, stealing food scraps. Across the campsite a little girl is crying. She has fallen into a patch of stinging nettles. Sitting on branches, the vervets pause from eating and listen to the girl's cries. Exhausted from a long day, I retire to my tent, its green walls making me feel claustrophobic. I listen to Paul playing the harmonica while trying to keep a fire going with kerosene. As I fall asleep I hear persistent crunching noises, then I am bounced off my sleeping bag. The vervets are screaming and crying. Students are stirring in their tents. "It's okay," Paul says. "It's okay. Lightning struck a tree. It fell a couple of yards away."

We break camp at 6 a.m., heading for the Mara. By the time we arrive there we have been towed and pushed from holes and ruts as deep as I am tall. The Mara is grassland that seems to stretch forever. Its sky is different from the one on the ranch. This sky is as light and clear as a painting and meets the grass on the horizon as though signaling the end of the world. And it could be. This is what I imagine would lie beyond civilization: paradise before the edge, the fall. The leading landrover struggles across the plains like a pioneer with ceaseless energy, climbing boulders, emerging from ditches, exploding dust furiously.

An acacia grows on some tracts of grass, its bare branches open and curved like an umbrella. A fish eagle regards us haughtily from the very top branch. It looks like the bald eagle, with brown plumage and a white head. The eagle is one of many birds of prey we have seen. They coast through the air above the plains, their cries penetrating like those of abandoned babies.

Well into the Mara, we are greeted by herds and packs of wildlife. Cheetahs play for our cameras, dodging in and out of their den. Wild dogs allow us to drive through their pack. Impala bucks tangle horns on the road before us. A lone lioness walks regally away from us, disinterested, just as we imagined she would. Elephants stir like great shadows, pushing and pulling on the trunks in a clump of trees.

On safari we meet the Masai tribal people. Six short houses made of mud and wood are arranged about a center of mud and manure in the Masai village. The people are curious about Kara's blond hair, saying that it is plastic. We laugh to ourselves; looking around at their village

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we wonder how could they know what plastic is? It is easy to forget that the Masai do some business in Nairobi, selling their jewelry.

I recognize one warrior who wears sunglasses and a safari jacket over his tribal robe. He hitched a ride with one of our rovers from the outer part of the Mara yesterday. I remember thinking how out of place this spear-bearing warrior looked sitting in the back of a flat bed rover, atop rucksacks and sleeping bags. He is the same warrior who, in return for taking pictures with Rob's camera, tried to teach John and Rob how to throw a spear. Our guys are not nearly as coordinated as the Masai. The women smile proudly as we photograph their beautiful children. Both men and women wear multicolored robes typical of tribal people, though many men also wear khaki or plaid shorts.

Once the Masai people come to know us fairly well they try to sell their jewelry. This is the same jewelry sold in the cities by merchants chanting, "Genuine Masai, genuine Masai! You buy this? You are my first customer of the day. Special discount for you. I give this to you for three hundred shillings." But the Masai people sell their goods at fair prices, and even if the charge is a little too high we will pay it. In the cities we may haggle for a small item for nearly twenty minutes. I have a disagreement with a Masai when he feels I should give him my watch. Peter, a ranch worker traveling with us, translates the conversation between us. He says the Masai feels it would be a nice gesture if I gave him my watch. I smile, shaking my head, and the warrior laughs.

We separate into small groups in the village, trying to communicate. We do well enough to buy some beaded jewelry and learn how to say goodbye in Ma. I take pictures while Gwen gives piggy-back rides to the children. An old Masai woman grabs my arm. She laughs, pointing to my mouth. I smile, not understanding, and she laughs even more. She points to my mouth, then at her toothless grin.

As we leave the village, I see Paul in front of us, his arm around a warrior's waist, the warrior's arm around his. He has won the warrior's respect by speaking almost perfect Ma and perfect Swahili. Now they have become friends. As satisfied as I feel, I still wonder how long the Masai will exist as a tribal people. They are so few now, and land seems to be disappearing at an alarming rate for agriculture, parkland, cities, and villages. At first it is amusing to see a digital watch on a warrior's wrist, but is that an omen of what is to come?

Back at the camp I write in my journal, but somehow the written word does not reflect the feeling that I have experienced something wonderful and unique. I could say, "Gee, that was great," but it does not present the full spectrum of thought and emotion. That is what safari does to you. Altogether, the animals, the landscape, the air, and the

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Masai make you feel as though you have gained a new sense. You feel a bit wiser, a little more superior than people at home. It is as though a great secret has been entrusted to my care. When I watch the elephants, I am aware of how tuned my senses are. I see everything at once, without needing to focus or concentrate.

Kenya has an artist's palette all its own. My eyes take in the colors, seeing how each leaf and blade of grass adds to the entire picture. The sun-warmed roan antelope hides are like fallen autumn leaves scattered on the grass. Only zebra can be called obvious, but by sticking out they blend in. The black and white coats act as background, allowing the movement of smaller gazelle to appear. The colors, no matter how light or deep, are rich, contributing to the entire landscape. They are the tones of the earth, entirely natural, existing for thousands of years, and, we hope, for many thousands of years to come.

The night is a time for lone reflection. By lantern light I sketch what I remember of the water buck. The scent in the air reminds me of a hay stack, and I would be able to relax thoroughly if hawk moths weren't getting caught in my hair. The sky is dotted with so many bright stars; the only constellation I can recognize is the southern cross, but I watch it intently this night and look for it every night after.

Safari is an experience for the ears as well. At times the wind is louder than any other sound. It seems especially loud at night, sifting through the grass and tree branches. When you cannot see the animals your ears pick up the sound of a herd moving through the grass and a random snort or two. During the day you notice how much noise a kicked rock makes. If you sit quietly you can hear a butterfly land. The elephants are almost silent, but occasionally when we find a clump of trees we hear a tree being pushed until it falls. It is amazing that something so large could be so quiet. At night you can hear hyena's screams in the distance. They are drawn into our camp by sounds of bush pigs eating in the garbage pit. I forget we are not supposed to have food in our tents until I see a shadow of a nose running along the wall of mine. I remember then that I have Cadbury chocolate bars stashed away. I see the nose shadow linger in the area of my pack and am tempted to open the tent's flap to look at the hyena. I hear the rush of air from his nose hitting the tent wall. Suddenly feeling cold and damp, I hope he loses interest in the chocolate and goes back to the pit. He does.

We visit hippo river in the morning. We have done this once before and hope this time a hippo will emerge from the water. Instead, all we see are nostrils blowing water like whale blow-holes and ears twitching off drops of water. On one embankment of the river I see cat tracks, lion I think. Woven among the pawprints are markings suggesting a

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gazelle has passed through as well. The tracks wind together, minute details of a missing scene. I follow them, my heart anxious for my own discovery of the encounter's finale. I touch the mud; it is still soft and wet.

"Fresh?" Kara asks.

"I think so." I really don't know. Kara and I follow the tracks while the others study fungus on a tree.

"How far are the rovers from here?" she whispers. I shrug nonchalantly but am thinking the same thing. The tracks go over the embankment, and I cannot yet see the river's shore. Kara and I pause. Do we really want to see? We walk on further, eyes straining to see the river's edge. Nothing. The mud below is disturbed, and I cannot see a single track. I am disappointed; I had imagined looking over the edge, my eyes meeting the lion's infamous amber eyes.

As we explore the Mara on our final day of safari, we are fighting disappointment. We had come to this country expecting plains filled with wild animals from the zebra to the elephant. Alex says all she wants to see is a rhino, any rhino. Paul says don't count on it. Both the black and white rhino and the elephant have suffered tremendous losses to their numbers from poaching. We have seen only one herd of elephant with five individuals. We have not seen a single rhino. Preserves like Rhino Rescue are devoted to saving and protecting rhinos. Still poachers manage to get into these guarded areas and slaughter some of the remaining members of this dwindling species.

Poachers hack off rhino horns because, ground up, they are sold as aphrodisiacs. They pull out elephant tusks for their ivory value. The ivory is made into trinkets and sold to tourists in the city. I have heard estimates that poachers kill as many as 100,000 elephants each year in Africa, and there are only about 700,000 herds left. If something is not done soon in twenty years or so there will not be a single remaining wild elephant.* We have all vowed never to buy ivory, knowing how it has been acquired. We also know that the more ivory people buy the more elephants will be killed. We refuse to contribute to these animals' extinction.

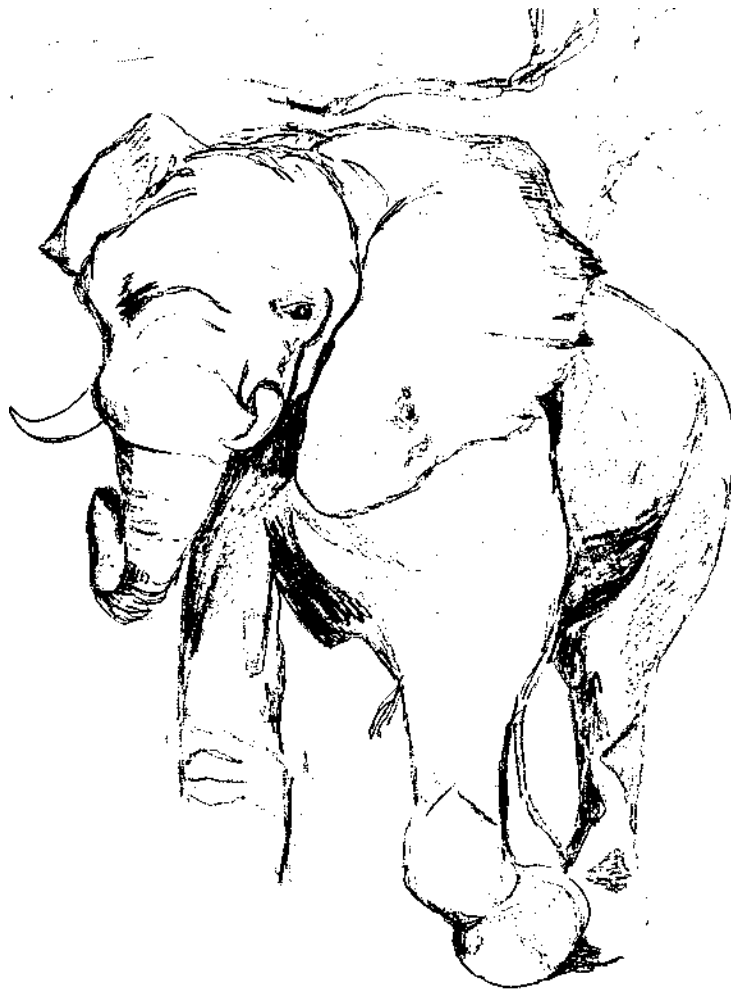
Our nine-day safari is supposed to be an extension of the lecture hall with classes and research, but the instructor who is supposed to teach us about elephant behavior is ill and has been flown to Germany. We fear she has a parasite in the lung phase. We feel badly for her, but we are enjoying the safari's relaxing atmosphere. Even so, we still have an occasional lecture. Meredith has spoken on the ungulate and construction of its leg and hoof, and Toni has described differences among various species of plants and animals. We continue to use what we

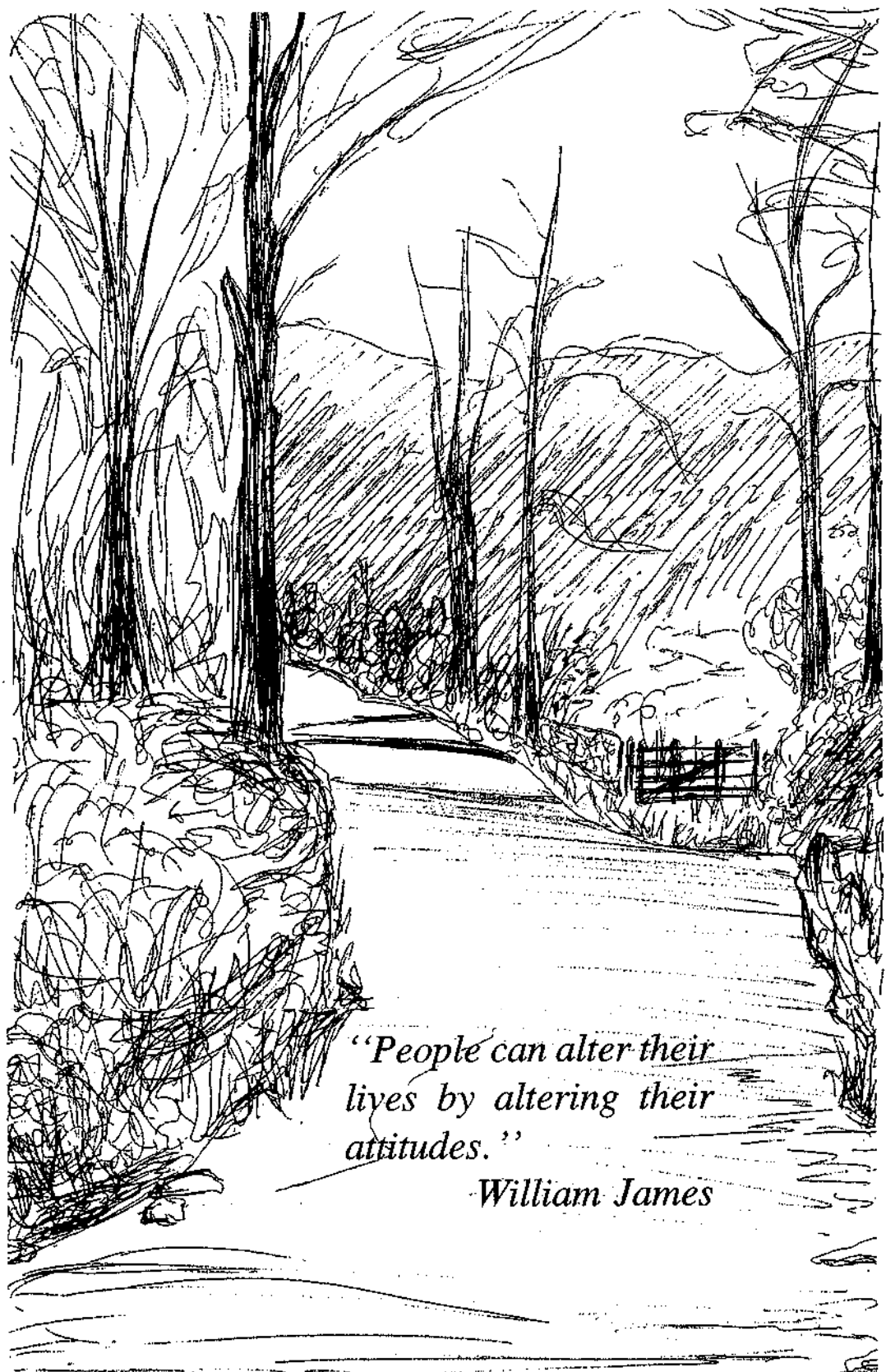
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have learned of Kenya's ecology. We understand the need for conservation while being aware that the growing population of people also need somewhere to live.

We know that by the time we head home on British Air flight 68, we will have learned more in this one month than we have in some semester-long classes. Every sense is played upon during this learning process. As we breathe in the Kenyan air, and squint in the equatorial sun, we take pictures of possibly the hundredth zebra we have seen.

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*“People can alter their
lives by altering their
attitudes.”*

William James

A Question of Scruples

by Michelle Meade

The question read:

"Would you say anything if, during a business lunch, an important client made a bigoted remark?"

My laughter stopped. My enjoyment of the game *Scruples* began to evaporate as I tried to answer a flip, "Of course," but somehow I couldn't...

I couldn't keep from smiling. The feel of the cool, vinyl seat against my shorts-clad legs was as exhilarating as the light breeze that poured in the open window of the old pick-up truck. It was the bright, sunny August afternoon that made me feel great just to be alive. The Virginia air was clean and fresh and the sky was a bright expanse of blue, unmarred by clouds.

"So, where 'ya from?" The question came from the driver of the pick-up. My younger sister and I met him briefly that morning at the pool and when he saw me walking from the cabins back to the pool that afternoon, he offered me a ride.

"New Jersey," I replied as I stared at his curly, dark hair shoved under an old baseball cap and his clean-shaven face. "How about you, how far do you live from here?"

"Oh, 'bout twenty minutes away. 'Come down here every now and again to go swimmin' and do some fishin'," he said glancing my way. I quickly stared out the side window.

The pick-up was approaching the turn-off for the pool, the ride was about half over. I wanted to say something brilliantly witty but all that came out was, "It's a gorgeous day. Is the weather like this a lot down here?" I couldn't believe I said something so stupid and cliched: But he just gave me a smile and while turning the truck onto the dirt road he replied, "Most of the time. But this summer been 'specially nice."

I stared out the front window, not knowing what else to say. Slowly I was able to make myself relax and enjoy the silence. I sat back and closed my eyes for a second, absorbing the smells of the surrounding scenery and the feel of the wind in my face. At the sound of another pick-up approaching I opened my eyes. We were just rumbling past it with no trouble at all when I heard the curly-haired fellow next to me say, "I wish those niggers would stay off the road."

I was appalled. I stared straight ahead, wide-eyed, not saying a thing. When he stopped in front of the entrance a minute later I got out, mumbled "thank-you", then gave a forced smile good-bye.

I looked around me. It was still the same bright, sunny day but somehow I felt colder. I was angry at myself for not making a biting retort at his remark, but I was also confused. What could I have said?

As I walked through the entrance, which led to the pool, and laid down on a towel in the grass, my mind began arguing with itself. One side of my mind pointed out that in the United States we have freedom of speech and people can think and say what they want. The other side screamed, "How can he call anyone that? How can he even think that?" It argued that this is the eighties and this guy isn't more than five years older than I am. Why does that attitude still exist in my generation? I thought our nation was finally growing out of that mentality.

But even though that bigoted attitude annoyed me, what really angered me was my own silence when confronted with it. I hid behind silence to avoid making what would be a controversial comment to someone I barely knew and would probably never see again. I didn't even question why he thought that way. I simply tried to avoid the poison that lurked in those words.

In a way, that is what society teaches us, to ignore people's prejudices and pain, to avoid examining the problem until it overwhelms us. But my mind would not accept this as an excuse. I had to reexamine my beliefs and their ramifications.

In the musical *South Pacific* it is sung, "You have to be taught to be afraid of people whose eyes are oddly made or people whose skin is a different shade, you've got to be carefully taught. You've got to be taught before it's too late. Before you are six, or seven, or eight, to hate all the people your relatives hate. You've got to be carefully taught." This is true to a large extent. It is so much easier to just accept the biases of our parents and relatives than to think and make judgments for ourselves.

I thought about my own parents. They have their own preconceived notions about people in various ethnic groups but they didn't expose my mind to them when I was a child. I am grateful for that. My parents knew that their sometimes harmful generalities were not based on fact but were rather stupid irrationalities that they were taught by their own parents and couldn't discard. Instead they taught me something almost as bad—silence when faced with the biases of other people.

I suppose that lesson of silence was well intentioned. It would be easier to get along in the world if I didn't go around telling people

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exactly what I thought of their opinions. Children's speech can be very blunt and offensive and for their own safety sometimes it is better for them to have their tongues curbed. But as I grew older follow-up lessons were never given. I was not taught strategic ways of showing my distaste or outright disgust for someone's attitude. So I've always kept hiding behind silence and civility.

A couple of years ago some friends of the family bought a second house in town for the purpose of renting it out to make more money. A few weeks ago I heard that they planned on selling it because it was such a problem to rent it out. The problem wasn't in finding decent, hard-working people who wanted to live there, it was in finding decent white people who wanted to live there. When my mother told me this I was so disgusted that I wanted to pick the lady up and shake her. What right did she have to deny a family access to a good town and school system? Who did she think she was to decide who fits into a neighborhood and who doesn't? But I've yet to tell the woman how I feel about her bigotry. After all, she is my mother's friend not mine.

There are many excuses I try to give myself for hiding behind silence. Sometimes I feel that it is not my place to question the attitudes of others, especially my elders. At other times I'm afraid that I would be rejected if I tell people what I really think of their attitudes. I'm not sure I fully understand why this matters so much to me. Nobody likes being scorned but that isn't enough of a reason for silence. Someone must break the silence and the only one I can look to is myself. Silence is a great tool to avoid making enemies and ignoring possible confrontations. Most of the time it is taken as approval. Silence doesn't expand people's minds or challenge their ignorance. It is simply taking the easy way out.

... I just couldn't take the easy way out by giving the expected answer to the question. Too much had happened. It was too important. This time the voice was impatient as the question was repeated:

"Would you say anything if, during a business lunch, an important client made a bigoted remark?"



Freedom?

by Joan O 'Hara

As I stroll down the long white stretch of beach, lazily dragging my feet through soft, cool powder, the sun presses down on me, making me drowsy and weak, and I look out over the vast Caribbean Sea. It lies there, almost perfectly still, as if it were a strip of the sky which had been draped over the land like a bedsheet. The only movement is that of the rippling tide which tip-toes in with uncertainty until it is quickly sucked back into the sea. Spots of sunlight glisten on the water's surface, springing about nervously like the tiny luminescent fish below. The sea seems so fragile, so "other-worldly" — and it is just that, another world, one which I will soon enter.

I must look like a creature from one of those 1950's horror films. The suction of my diving mask stretches my face into distortion, and my mouth, swollen with the mouthpiece of the thin black snorkel, resembles a fully developed cyst; my large webbed feet flutter behind me, and my breath echoes in my head like a vicious wind pouring through a cavern. But the water is soothing as it washes over me. I think of the warm milk my mother used to give me when I couldn't sleep at night.

Suddenly, a band of violet flashing before me slaps me out of my intoxication. I look around and realize that I am swimming within a cloud of sergeant fish. There are thousands of them; the mass is so dense that I can see nothing but this rainbow of fish. Yet, as I reach out to touch them, they scatter, I graze not one of them. In whatever direction I move they are there, so close that I believe I can feel the vibration of the water as their tiny fins quiver. And then they move on.

Indulging in similar flirtations with needlefish, sand rays, nurse sharks, and barracuda, I finally encounter the creature I'd been looking for, the sea turtle. He glides along the ocean floor, not stirring a grain of sand, as if he were an apparition, not of this world. Yet, he is not god-like, awesome and to be revered; instead, he is graceful and assuming. As he rises, moving effortlessly through the shafts of sunlight, he pays no attention to me. There is nothing around him; neither fish nor coral structures can be seen. Nothing restrains him or hinders his procession. He appears to be completely free.

And for a fleeting moment, I believe that I too am unbound. As I observe the vast expanse surrounding me I feel that I can explore its

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depths forever, and forever it would be! I remember learning about the ocean in high school geography — 12,000 feet in depth, more than a thousand times the terrestrial living space. Then I bring my head to the surface, spit out my snorkel, and take a few deep breaths of the chilling air of reality. I'm out in the middle of the sea! My parents look like Lilliputians on the very distant shore and I am reminded of my limitations. I could not survive in the ocean for more than a day, for I am not equipped as its inhabitants are. Although I may swim among the reefs for hours on end, my "flesh feeling what the fish scales know", as Jacques Cousteau once said, I would not have fish scales, nor would I ever develop them! If by nothing else, I am bound by nature.

And isn't that always the case? Yes, men are bound by other men in slavery, prohibited by discrimination and limited by social class and economic structure; however, all of these restraints can be overcome, as history will show. True lack of freedom goes much deeper. We are bound by our biological needs. We must nourish and shelter ourselves in order to survive — this is fundamental. Before we can do anything, we must fulfill these necessities, and we can do nothing that would put that fulfillment in jeopardy for any prolonged period of time. We must live up to our biological standards. We must also live up to our psychological standards, which are in fact, in Freudian terms, the standards of our society. In other words, we are bound by our consciences. Because we so desire the love of others, we choose to conform to society in one way or another in most cases. With rare exception, people inhibit many of their deepest drives and instincts in order to gain acceptance. So, not only are we restrained by our biology, we are restrained by our society and in turn by ourselves.

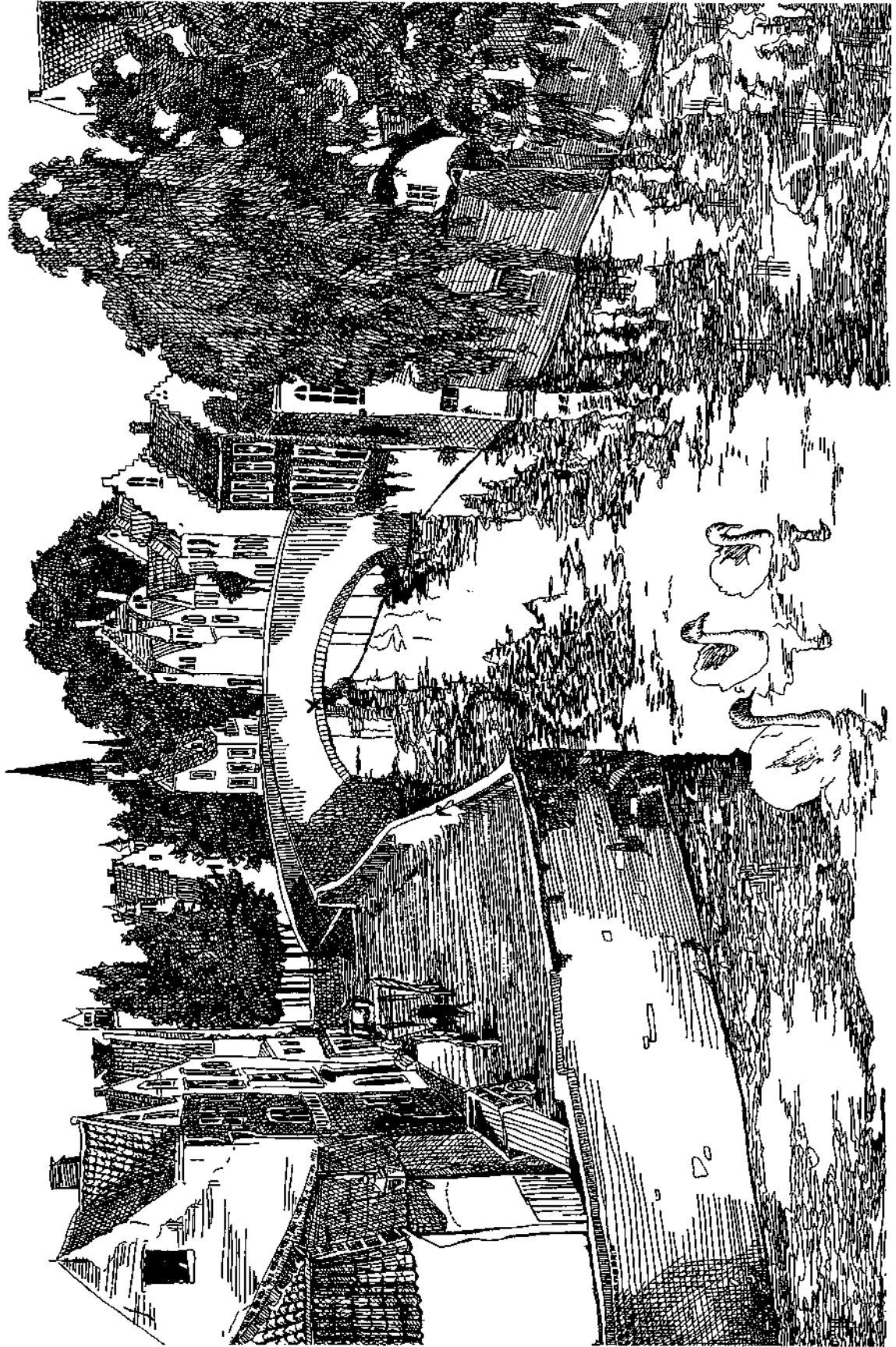
Yet there is a part of us which no man or force of nature can restrain, and that is our imagination — we have the freedom to dream. In our minds, we have no boundaries, we can go anywhere in this world (or any other) and we can do anything. Although we may think we are physically free, as I do in the Caribbean, that can never be. But as long as we have our imagination, our capabilities are endless.

Provided one doesn't completely lose touch with reality (as some do), he may bring his dreams into our realm of awareness. Where would we be without our literature? Hemingway, Poe, Orwell. These men, some of the greatest minds of our time, give to us the products of their imaginations. What they conceive when watching a sunset, listening to Schubert, or simply closing their eyes is translated into words for our appreciation. Our art, too, is a physical projection of the fruits of imagination. This is especially evident in the bizarre images of surrealists, such as Salvador Dali, whose works are completely rooted in dreams.

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But the imagination is not a medium solely in the aesthetic sense, for it may also prove quite practical. Philosophies of government, for example, developed in the minds of such great thinkers as Voltaire, Marx, and Plato. Also products of imagination are the growth of nations, the recession of disease and countless inventions throughout history. So, you see, quite often imagination is the seed of reality. For flying with the birds, soaring to the moon, illuminating the black of night, and, yes, swimming among the fish as one of them, were once man's pipedreams! Yet despite all the potential dreams may possess, it is often nice to sit back, without purpose, and simply let them flow — freely.

I now imagine that I have seen the great depths of the sea; eighty foot Manta Rays of the South Pacific which dance gracefully among the coral with such majesty and the beautiful Beluga whales singing their eerie songs have welcomed me. In my mind, I can explore this sea forever, becoming a part of it, finned and scaled. Yet I now must return to the shore from which I came and bid farewell to the setting sun.



Little Italy

by Craig Ey

It's four o'clock in the morning and Baltimore is peacefully asleep under a clear, star-filled spring sky. Nancy Azzaro quietly leaves her Eastern Avenue rowhouse and ventures out into the crisp pre-dawn air. The buxom, fiftyish woman walks with confidence through the streets of Little Italy to the kitchen of St. Leo's School.

Inside, she is greeted warmly by about ten women, all over 60, who have already started creating little pieces of culinary artwork known as raviolis. Azzaro takes her place beside the women as they prepare for what could be a record-breaking St. Leo's Church supper/fundraiser crowd. Yesterday, the men of the neighborhood set up more rows of picnic-style tables than ever before in preparation for the many hungry stomachs in search of *real* Italian spaghetti or ravioli dinners.

This energetic preparation is happening in a neighborhood that fifteen years ago could barely break even on such an event. Little Italy is a neighborhood that has fought a battle for survival and has won.

The residents of this twelve-square-block ethnic community located on the eastern edge of Baltimore's Inner Harbor have had to learn to deal with a whole new situation--change through gentrification.

Little Italy, generally speaking, has never had to deal with the forces of urban change. The narrow, rowhouse-lined streets have been pillars of consistency in a city that seems to change with each decade. In the eighties, the neighborhood, once an Italian compound shielded from the outside world, has received a crash course in the unlikely threat of gentrification, a modernization of the area by private citizens searching for urban life.

Nancy Azzaro is the current president of the Little Italy Community Organization (LICO). This group, started in 1974, has become an important political and social body. In fact, the neighborhood can no longer function without such a group. "People here want to have a say in community projects. We're learning how every day," Azzaro says with a huge grin.

This neighborhood is booming both economically and physically. Property values have risen by almost 100 percent as an area once considered undesirable has become prime real estate. Also, the neighborhood's claim to fame, its restaurant business, has nearly doubled its profits in the past fifteen years. Many of the older restaurants have

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expanded while at least four new Italian eateries have appeared in that time period.

"Little Italy for the first time in its history is big business. There are great opportunities here for investors. Around Baltimore, Little Italy is now known as an untouched gold mine," Azzaro says while standing proudly in front of her newly-renovated nineteenth century rowhouse.

Despite the good business fortune of the area, the neighborhood is divided. It is not a violent, particularly bitter division, but rather it is a division between the past and the future, the old and the young.

Of the neighborhood's population of about one thousand people, the old Italians, many of whom were immigrants, have a slight majority. The old here are tied to the old country, Italy, because they or their parents were born there. The families first settled in this neighborhood in the early part of this century. Most of them were laborers on the city's docks. Some, when they saved enough money, opened modest Italian restaurants to serve the type of food they had grown up eating, and Little Italy was born.

For years, only Italians bought and sold the little formstone and brick rowhouses in the neighborhood. Now they are being bought by a different group-young urban homesteaders. This group includes Italians who grew up here, moved away to the suburbs and now are back, and non-Italians who have moved here to enjoy urban life. These outsiders generally have the resources to renovate the houses. This is the chief paradox in the area. The newcomers are making Little Italy look better than ever, but this drives up property value and increases tax rates.

"Taxes have gone up and it makes it tough for the poor people here," says Vincent Pompa, who is now in his seventies and has lived on Exeter Street for his entire life. "Some people are just barely making it."

Nancy Azzaro agrees.

"The old are afraid of rising tax rates and just the scary feeling of change. Their friends are dying and strangers are filling their homes," she says.

Rising tax rates always becomes an issue when a neighborhood undergoes gentrification. In Little Italy, however, the problem is magnified because of this neighborhood's large elderly population. For instance, a normal formstone rowhouse on Fawn Street was assessed in 1975 to be worth \$30,000. In 1987, it was put on the market for \$97,000 and sold at that price. This is a leap in value of over 200 percent. Many of the old here are paying three times as much in property tax as they were fifteen years ago.

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Tax rates are not the only concern of the old here. They are uncomfortable with the entire new order in Little Italy.

The owner of the Little Italy Pizzeria, who requested not to be named, came to Baltimore from Sicily in 1956. He is in his late fifties and has seen all of the changes in the neighborhood over the years.

"Baltimore is worse now than I have ever seen it. I can barely make a living. I used to make a goddamned good living, but I can't now. It's that simple," he says while running his fingers nervously through his jet black hair.

It is true that places like the Little Italy Pizzeria have suffered the most from neighborhood changes. It is a neighborhood hang-out that certainly would not attract outsiders. The vinyl seats are worn and covered with silver tape. The paneling on the walls is scuffed and scratched, and a poster of Marlon Brando, at least twenty years old, greets everyone who walks in.

What has happened to this old lunchroom parallels what is happening painfully, fading away while making room for the young. Another example of the deterioration of the old neighborhood is the decline of the only drug store in Little Italy. Kelly and Poggi's has been on the corner of Exeter and Stiles Streets since 1860. According to some residents, the little apothecary shop, which has been operated by Mary and Julia Poggi for about forty years, has not been doing well.

The sisters, both of whom were never married, sit in the empty shop on a spring afternoon. The shop is very small with no room for more than two customers at a time. Old, scratched wooden cases contain over-the-counter drugs, various kinds of aspirins and ointments. Hardwood floors that haven't been buffed in what appears to be a half century give the store a cheap, unmistakable ancient quality. Now well over seventy, the sisters seem guarded and hesitant to talk about the good times or the bad times the neighborhood has seen.

"The neighborhood is not as close anymore. I don't know some people that live here now," Julia Poggi says. "There was a time when everybody in the neighborhood knew everybody else. Most people at one time or another bought things on the cuff (personal credit). Friendly faces are becoming more and more scarce down here."

Despite the gradual fading out of the older people and their businesses, they are still highly respected in the neighborhood, and the Italian spirit is, largely because of them, alive. Their symbol is St. Leo's Roman Catholic Church.

Opened in 1881, St. Leo's was the first Catholic parish in the area that would serve Italians exclusively. Like a goliath sentinel, St. Leo's

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to this day guards Little Italy. It is one of the true symbols of the past and, thus guards the ethnic heritage of the neighborhood. Its current 500 parishioners are more than 90 percent Italian.

"St. Leo's is still the center of the neighborhood for the old people," says Vince Pompa. "To them, it's much more important than any political community associations."

Even the haven of St. Leo's is not beyond change, however. The current parish priest of the church is not Italian. Father Doug Carroll is the first non-Italian parish priest in the 107-year history of St. Leo's.

To the elderly Italians here who have celebrated mass in their native tongue at St. Leo's for most of their lives, Father Doug, who is of Ukranian descent, is a big change. "I fit in great here because of my dynamic personality," the 34-year-old New York native jokes. In many ways, the bushy-haired, moustached priest who came to this parish two and a half years ago is a perfect example of what is happening to Little Italy. It is becoming less of an Italian neighborhood.

While taking long, methodical drags on a Marlboro, Father Doug wavers between serious conversation and bursts of levity. He is obviously comfortable here.

"The neighborhood is becoming less ethnic, but, as far as I can see, the people don't *really* mind. They really do understand that it is a necessary process if the neighborhood is to survive," he says with a characteristic grin. "After all, they've embraced me!"

The old are more willing to accept outsiders than ever before. In fact, it is hard to find anyone who will criticize the newcomers. This was not the case fifteen years ago. In Gilbert Sandler's book about Little Italy, *The Neighborhood*, many of the residents spoke of the importance of keeping Little Italy totally Italian. One woman was quoted as saying, "If I could I would build a wall around Little Italy to keep it the way it should be—one hundred percent Italian." That was 1974. In 1988, the older residents seem resigned to the fact that Little Italy, due to the lack of Italian immigrants, must integrate.

"The people here are a little stuck in the past, but that is understandable," Father Doug says. "That is not unique to this neighborhood."

Many of the businessmen in the area have proven they are not stuck in the past and are in fact anticipating the future. Nick Vaccaro, the owner of an Italian bakery, and the Chiapparelli family, the owners of one of the oldest restaurants in Little Italy, are among them.

Vaccaro represents the middle ground between the old and the new. He represents the old in that he grew up on High Street and is a graduate of St. Leo's School. He represents the new in that he is a young man of 35 and a proponent of change.

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Vaccaro's pastry shop may have made the biggest changes of any Little Italy business in the past ten years. In 1982, they turned their modest little pastry shop, which had been on Albemarle Street since 1956, into a large and elegant bakery and eatery.

Today, if one stands at the corner of Albemarle and Stiles, he can see the new Vaccaro's on one side of the street and the old Vaccaro's storefront on the other. In effect, old Little Italy is on the right, boarded up and left to die, while new Little Italy is on the left, prospering. Vaccaro's has crossed the road--they've changed with the neighborhood instead of standing still.

Nick Vaccaro, who has been operating the business since his father retired four years ago, is a very energetic man. His success in operating the store speaks for itself. He is not sorry to see the neighborhood change.

"The neighborhood has changed for the better in the past fifteen years," he says. "Fifteen years ago nobody wanted to come down here. The city was a mess."

"I remember as a kid watching the city burn around us during the (1968) race riots. When people ask if it's better now, I have to laugh."

Vaccaro understands why the old are so conservative, but he also understands why the young want to move here. "The elderly remember a time when the neighborhood was totally Italian. Everybody knew everybody," he says while wrapping canolis for a customer. "The young live here, but they don't have the same kind of attachment to the neighborhood as the residents once had.

"I can see why they want to live here. The houses here are relatively cheap compared to the rest of the Inner Harbor area, and our taxes haven't gone up that much."

Vaccaro speaks of the fact that "Americans" are moving to the neighborhood in greater numbers making it less ethnic. ("American" is the title given to all non-Italians down here as if the Italians were never really a part of this country.) "Whenever a house goes up for sale on the open market, which is rare, it is bought by an American. I don't mind, but I think it saddens the elderly. They want things to be like they used to be," he says.

Although optimistic about the future of Little Italy, Vaccaro is still nostalgic about the past. "I remember when real families lived here with children. Today, there are only a few kids. Children are really the true test of a neighborhood. Nowadays this is a bad place to raise kids. There are no schools nearby and no place to play. You'd get run over nowadays if you played on Stiles Street like I used to," he says while emphasizing his words Italian-style with his hands.

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Children are noticeably missing from this neighborhood. St. Leo's School, which taught grades one through eight, closed in 1981 due to declining enrollment. Some families who had remained in the neighborhood moved out because of the school closing. Another important part of old Little Italy was gone.

Like Nick Vaccaro, Louis Chiapparelli along with his brothers Buddy, Charles, and Nicki sees a good future for the new Little Italy and the Chiapparelli family-owned restaurant. The restaurant is one of the most visible signs of Little Italy's post-renaissance business boom. Two and a half years ago, Chiapparelli's bought out their neighbor and competitor, The Roma, and expanded from 200 to 450 seats. The clientele and profits have doubled.

"I feel wonderful about this city and this neighborhood. It makes me mad when people put it down," 60-year-old Louis says between taking phone calls for reservations. Louis is the host at the restaurant. His brother Buddy runs the business end and his brother Nicki is a chef. Another brother, Charles, does a little bit of everything.

"Sure I remember the neighborhood years ago. I remember how close we all were. What a lot of people are missing is that we're still close. I still can't walk down the streets here without being stopped a hundred times by people wanting to catch up on the latest gossip. The new people are nice too. You just have to give them a chance to become a part of the neighborhood," Louis says.

Louis is a small, nervous man. He constantly puffs on a non-lighted cigar and runs his fingers through his thinning gray hair.

"Ever since I was a young man, people were saying that Little Italy was in trouble, that we couldn't possibly survive. That was hogwash, and it still is. I have no doubt that Little Italy will be here long after I'm gone. We've had our ups and downs, and right now we're on the biggest up I've ever seen."

It is true that the neighborhood is on a financial "up" and shows absolutely no signs of deterioration. But will Little Italy remain a truly ethnic urban neighborhood or will it simply be a small part of town where Italian restaurants are located?

"It all depends on whether or not the young Italians who grew up here stay to carry on the traditions," Louis says. "I do see the Italian population getting older, and, yes, the young are still moving out."

Roland Keh, a manager of Chiapparelli's, is one of these young people. Although only half-Italian, Keh grew up on Stiles Street and attended St. Leo's School. He is marrying and moving out of the neighborhood in May.

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"Everybody has to leave home some time," Keh, 24, says. "If I would have stayed here, bought a house here, it would have been like I was still living at home. That's the way it is here. Among the Italians it's one big family with no privacy."

Keh, like most of the residents, does not feel threatened or is not particularly bitter about the movement of outsiders into the neighborhood.

"Everybody knew it was going to happen. We're lucky really. Some ethnic neighborhoods went from middle-class to low-income areas. Ours went from middle-class to upper middle-class. The old people are the only ones who regret the yuppie-types moving in. The rest of us, especially the business people, are breathing a sign of relief. Little Italy could have been another Pimlico."

The newcomers generally fit Keh's description of them as "yuppie-types." They are mostly childless and have enough income to make a commitment to one of the old houses (renovation sometimes costs more than the house). Despite Nick Vaccaro's claim that they are not attached to the neighborhood, these "Americans" have become the spokesmen for the neighborhood. They hold the political future of Little Italy in their hands.

Nancy Azzaro is Italian, but she did not grow up here. In fact, she has only been here for five years. In 1982, she and her husband moved here from the suburb Severna Park. They've beautifully renovated a corner rowhouse on Eastern Avenue.

Shortly, after moving in, Azzaro, a hair-dresser, became dissatisfied with the condition of the neighborhood, both physically and politically. It was then that she decided to run for president of the LICO.

The LICO was started in 1974 but never actually held much weight. It had a poor record of being on what is now generally considered to be the wrong side of most issues. For instance, they were vociferously opposed to *all* of the Inner Harbor development plans, which were devised in the late seventies. The restaurants, oddly enough, joined in this fight against development.

Today, the LICO has become a very important organization largely because of Nancy Azzaro's efforts. She has proved to a generally closed neighborhood that they must fight in the open political arena.

They learned this lesson through the construction of the high-rise apartment and condominium building Scarlett Place. In the early eighties when Scarlett Place was being planned, the neighborhood was not very well organized and, thus, had no say in the project, which is located on the western side of President Street. The residents of Stiles Street were angry after the construction of the building, because it totally cut off their view of the harbor.

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Now, thanks to Nancy Azzaro, no more development will occur without Little Italy's consent. "We need to have a say in what is going on in our own neighborhood. After all, the residents of Fells Point have power. Why shouldn't we?" she says in a burst of emotion.

She has not only had to fight the outside enemy as president of the LICO. She has also on occasion had to fight the residents themselves. Before she became president some of the residents and some of the restaurants were dumping garbage onto the sidewalks and into the alleys. Inevitable problems like rats and stench began to arise.

"Whenever I saw somebody dumping trash, I would warn them. Then if they didn't clean up their act, I called the city and had them cited," she says while showing before and after pictures of the area. "Now we no longer have a trash problem."

Most of the residents have rallied behind Azzaro.

"Nancy is an asset to the neighborhood," Nick Vaccaro says. "She has a whole lot of fire. We finally have a spokesperson with some *fire*."

It is true that Nancy Azzaro has alleviated fears and has at least partially united the neighborhood. The St. Leo's fundraising church supper on this warm spring afternoon illustrates this new union.

St. Leo's School hall is filled to capacity with people of all nationalities. Outside a line of about one hundred people forms.

What is interesting about this is that a St. Leo's spaghetti and ravioli dinner is a part of old Little Italy. It has nothing to do with the modern aspects of the neighborhood, yet the interest is still there.

"If you want to see what Little Italy is all about come to any St. Leo's supper," Rose Strollo, a 75-year-old lifetime resident, says.

"Anybody who lives in Little Italy, Italian or not Italian, young or old, will be there. The smell of that wonderful sauce attracts them!"

Serving the record crowd are the old women of the neighborhood. They never run out of energy even if they've been up since 4 a.m. Working beside these matriarchs of the old neighborhood is the proud newcomer Nancy Azzaro.

*"If I had to tell what the world is for me
I would take a hamster or a hedgehog or a mole
and place him in a theater seat one evening
and, bringing my ear close to his humid snout,
would listen to what he says about the spotlights,
sounds of the music, and the movements of the dance."*

Czeslaw Milosz

Autumn: The Ocean

by William Wysock

4:45 a.m. The bright green numbers on the digital clock split the darkness. It's time to begin another workday in Point Pleasant, New Jersey. In the distance, the first pale rays of light slash the sky, broadcast from the still hidden sun. Slowly he gets dressed, knowing that this will be another rough day on the ocean. The drive to the wharf is quick, hastened by the good fortune of beating every light in town. It is warm for this time of year, a positively balmy 53 degrees. But he knows that as soon as the dormant seaborne winds rise from the southeast it will turn much colder.

This is how the day begins for Richard Floriani, up before dawn every day from March through November, preparing for his long run to his lobster pots, thirty miles off the New Jersey coast.

"Captain Rich," as he is known among his fellow lobstermen, has been working the New Jersey lobster grounds off the Jersey coast for twenty-one years. Despite all his years on the ocean, however, he now dreads the arrival of autumn, the "unwanted season." While the spring brings hope, promises good weather and the possibility of a large catch, the fall holds a dreariness. There is an aura about it that wants to say "time is running out." On the ocean, autumn is no longer a "pretty" season. It is an ominous foreboding of the long, perhaps unending winter to come.

Inland, autumn is seen as a season of wonder and beauty. All creatures of the world are busily preparing for the oncoming winter. Squirrels and chipmunks rush here and there, gathering nuts for the winter. Birds migrate in arrow formation. Shooting across the sky they are one of nature's great fascinations. Leaves turn color and fall, covering the landscape with a mosaic of brilliant red, chocolate brown, and burnt orange hues. But on the ocean the colors are different, weaker, dulled.

The sunrise in summer is an orange blaze, stretching west, red, then electric blue to the horizon. The autumn sunrise is no longer the fireball, but jaundice-yellow, reaching west in gray, fading to black. The ocean, not the clear, shimmering summer green but a dark gray shield, neutralizes the waning rays of the sun. Twinkling specks of light, emanating from the summer sun, dance no longer. They are but pale ghosts of their former existence. These are the visages of autumn. The changing season even dulls the lobsters. The bright greens and blues

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become a slate of gray, marked only by their faded yellow claws. These color changes accompany their annual deep water migration, bringing the lobster season to an end.

On land the signs of autumn, leaves falling and animals gathering food, provide assurance that spring will return and that autumn should not be feared. For the lobstermen, however, there is no assurance, only worry. This year there is a foreign element added to the oceanic season. Many lobstermen, including Captain Rich, aren't sure if they will return to the lobstergrounds next season. They are being buried under rising equipment and maintenance costs. Several families have been forced out of business. Autumn used to mean tallying profits, arranging winter vacations and planning for the future. Now, instead of signaling the approach of the "off season," autumn is a time of anguish over finances and fear for survival.

It's hard to imagine Captain Rich fearing anything. A tall man, he fits the mold of the lifetime seaman. Beneath his squinting eyes, his bearded face is streaked with ruts from years of wind and salt spray. His hands are rough and knotted from the ropes, buoys, traps, and the drying salt water. He is a picture of every lobsterman in his yellow stained chest waders. He has weathered the roughest storms in his twenty-three footer, the *Sarah K*. Named after his father's mother, the often overhauled *Sarah K* has survived five decades of service, never once stranding Captain Rich or his father.

His knowledge is incomparable. He works the tides expertly, knowing the coastline like the back of his hand. "With the migration patterns of the lobsters permanently ingrained in his memory, he can outthink the lobsters themselves. With his experience and equipment, many lobstermen consider Captain Rich unbeatable. When almost everyone else is shut out, he manages to come home with at least four or five catches. He has endured many trials during his time on the ocean. He has worked through damaging algae blooms and weathered the worst storms undaunted, adapting to everything that "Mother Nature" can throw at him. But now he faces an unnatural enemy.

In 1986, the U.S. Government authorized use of the "110 mile dumpsite." Public and chemical waste ships are now permitted to dump their cargo at a specified site 110 miles offshore. The government said that the site was environmentally safe, that the waste would fall beyond the continental shelf into the deep ocean where it would not threaten the coastal ecology. They were wrong.

Subsurface currents carried the waste onto the continental shelf and into the breeding grounds of the New Jersey lobster population. Summer lobsters, in 1987, were found dead in the traps while live ones

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were discolored due to oxygen depletion. Some were covered with lesions and holes burnt through their exoskeletons. The catch declined sharply, as if thousands hadn't returned from their winter migration. The lobstermen organized immediately, protesting against continued dumping, but they were too late. With money already tight and no new income, several families sank into a sea of red ink. Others pressed on, not knowing whether they could survive another season like 1987.

Captain Rich is one who remained. He returned to the lobster grounds the following spring to find the lobster population decimated. Another overhaul of the *Sarah K* put his budget under great strain.

"I used to enjoy working during fall, before the dump opened," he says, "but now, it is different. With every day, I can feel the end of the season approaching. It's no fun anymore, it just feels like work."

"Work" is harder than ever. Waking up in the dark he feels the cold dampness of the wharf as rats scurry about. He knows the bleakness of the season. The weak morning sunlight sets the tone, straining to light the gray ocean, an ocean resembling rolling hills rather than summer's flat plain. Lifting the traps he struggles against the rough ocean. The chilling winds sting his wet hands as he pulls empty traps from the polluted depths. At day's end, for the long run home, he leaves in the twilight, arriving under the black, starless skies. Six days a week the routine is the same. "I used to be proud of my work, then I thought I was accomplishing something. But now it feels empty. It may all be for nothing, but I've got to keep at it, just so I can come back next year. If there is a next year."

This is the new autumn on the ocean. Not a time of peace and beauty, but a time of anxiety over an uncertain future. There is still dumping at the 110 mile site, and it doesn't look like it will soon stop. The autumn holds no assurance that life will return to the sea floor; rather, an eternal winter may set in, spreading from the ocean as it snuffs out all life along with the New Jersey lobsters. Meanwhile, the real victims face the harsh reality of this autumn. The New Jersey lobstermen hope for a miracle, which may never come. For them, autumn is no longer to be welcomed, it is to be feared.

*"Every belief provokes
doubts. The artist also
persists in doubting,
always investigating
with his own means."*

Gina Pane

Talk With The Animals

by Marion Closs

Human beings, the most highly evolved of all primates, like to fancy themselves superior to the other life forms on the developmental growth chart. Translation: man prefers to think of himself as smarter than other animals. One skill which man can possess is language. This ability to manipulate words and sentence structure into something meaningful offers us a method of communication unavailable to other lower species. What happens, then, when gorillas and chimpanzees begin to converse in the fifth most commonly used language of man — American Sign Language?

The thought of teaching language to lower species is one which has intrigued psychologists and scientists for decades. The first projects of this type were met with great doubt and ridicule. They were not overwhelmingly successful, and the actual intelligence and ability level of apes came under question. However, with growing evidence in favor of the apes, new programs and different methods of teaching were formulated. These are increasingly more and more successful, and the thought of conversing with a gorilla is now accepted as possible.

The first psychological experiment in which apes were confronted with the English language took place in the early 1950s. Two psychologists attempted to teach their subject, a chimpanzee named Viki, to speak. After much work over six years, she was only able to say "cup" and "up," as well as poor utterances of "mama" and "papa." The pursuit of spoken language among apes was left behind, with the conclusion that their vocal apparatus is not physically capable of making the necessary shapes and sounds of speech. However, the question remained, although chimps are anatomically unable to form the sounds, could they still be intelligent enough to learn language? This became the focus of new research, and strides were soon made.

The first large-scale experiment began in 1966. Two psychologists named Allen and Beatrice Gardner addressed the issue of ape potential versus ape performance. They postulated that apes did in fact have the intelligence to learn a language, but lacked the means of expressing what they had learned. Their twelve year study working with a chimpanzee named Washoe produced many significant results. Since it was obvious that Washoe (and her fellow species-mates) could not verbalize our language, the Gardners decided to teach her American Sign Language,

or ASL. This is a manual, gestural language, used primarily by the deaf and speech-impaired. It does not require voice but rather relies on hand motions and configurations. Since apes are intelligent animals and chimpanzees in particular have good manual dexterity, Washoe seemed to be a logical choice of subject. A third factor did play a key role in the Gardners' decision to use chimps — their sociability level. Chimps have a strong ability to form human attachments, a trait which the Gardners believed to be necessary for successful language acquisition. The study began when the Gardners were given a healthy baby chimpanzee to be used in their study. They named her Washoe, after the county where they were working, and immediately began to use only ASL while in her presence. This was the decided method of schooling, after considering two other possible ways. A suggestion had been made to use both signed and spoken English in her training, but it was felt that Washoe would soon learn to recognize voice commands and pay less attention to the actual signs. The other alternative considered was to speak the language among the staff, thereby removing the qualification that all staff members be fluent in ASL, and use only signs when dealing with Washoe. This too was rejected, because the Gardners felt that Washoe would learn "that big chimps talk and only little chimps sign, which might give signing an undesirable social status." Once all of the preliminary guidelines were established, the Gardners began a game of imitation, which was eventually to become Washoe's vocabulary lessons. At first, Washoe merely acted on her innate ability to parrot back the motions and gestures of her trainers. It was not until her sixteenth month with the Gardners that she began to connect the signs she was creating with the objects which they represented. From this point on, she made rapid progress. Washoe could actually give the name of an object presented to her, with no motive other than to communicate. She was no longer initiating commands or attempting to get something; she was now simply commenting on the object in front of her. Three interesting stages became clear. First, just as a speaking infant babbles nonsense words, Washoe began to "babble" with her hands. This is an obvious sign of early language acquisition, both spoken and signed, and it clearly indicated progress. The second event was the onset of a temper, complete with screaming and yelling hands. The connection between Washoe's feelings and her accompanying signs indicated that she was aware of her available means of communication and was able to use it appropriately. Finally, Washoe began to transfer word meanings from the situation in which she learned the sign to other similar situations. For example, she learned the sign "more" in relation to being tickled. However, she eventually made the transfer of "more" to include

other objects which she wanted more of. Likewise, she learned "open" in relation to the big lab door, but was soon able to apply it to bottles, hands and drawers — anything that she wanted opened. This is definitive proof of higher order cognitive processes as well as evidence enough to state that Washoe was indeed learning the American Sign Language. The Gardners published their initial findings after working with Washoe for twenty-one months. At this point, she had thirty-four clearly defined, well understood signs. They had indeed proven that two-way manual communication was possible between man and ape, but with their success they opened many new questions which were, as of yet, unanswered.

The issue was no longer "*Is it possible?*", but rather, "*What is possible?*" Dalbir Bindra stated the problem as:

The main questions about how far the naturally languageless ape can learn a human language and use it in a human way have not changed.... They still remain to be answered. Fundamentally, these questions concern what an ape can do and would do with a human language in comparison to what the human child can and does.... We need to know a lot more about the language competence of the ape and of the child under comparable conditions. The question is answerable, but not yet answered.

This was the commonly held opinion of most psychologists towards the issue of apes and Sign Language use. It was fascinating to read and study, but too many questions remained concerning *potential*. Then, in July of 1972, Penny Patterson met Koko, and the answers began to fall into place.

In 1970, Penny Patterson was a graduate student studying nonhuman primates at Stanford University. Inspired by the Gardners, she had hoped to continue their work, utilizing the same methods. Project Washoe had ended after six years. Washoe had ultimately acquired 130 signs, but, psycholinguists agreed, Washoe did not possess *language*. Fascinating though they may be, the results were not definitive. Penny decided to try again, "pursuing the ultimate question with the ultimate animal," the chimpanzee. Those plans changed when Penny met Koko, a one year old, desperately ill baby gorilla. Gorillas are not as dexterous as chimpanzees are and questions existed concerning their intelligence not being as high as the chimp's. However, Koko was all that was available to Penny and so the project began. After being nursed back to health, Koko's progress proceeded faster than any existing research. Penny is still working with Koko today, and their years together have been well documented. The strides they have made

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have greatly benefitted psycholinguists, learning theorists, behaviorists, and developmental psychologists. Koko's use of sign language has opened up an entirely new field of research and her story is indeed amazing.

Unlike Washoe, Koko did not learn sign language through imitation. Because her hands were larger and not as nimble, Koko's fingers were molded into the appropriate shape. She was then rewarded for each of her own attempts that came close to the correct formation. She quickly picked up the language, using a vocabulary of 645 signs after six years. Unlike Washoe, Koko was able to manipulate this knowledge in order to produce startling new insights into the cognitive processes of nonhuman primates. Science has now redefined the gorilla's potential language ability and is only beginning to realize the depth of their thought processes. Koko has taken the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test repeatedly (in Sign), scoring slightly below that of an average human child. This does not even take into account the existing culturally biased questions. Given the choice of: a) spoon, b) hat, c) house, or d) tree, to answer a question about where one would seek shelter from the rain, Koko naturally responded "d," which was marked incorrect. Similarly, when asked to pick something good to eat, Koko chose a flower rather than an ice-cream sundae which was again marked wrong. Nonetheless, the test shows that her intelligence is quite close to that of a child's, thus the information gained through working with Koko's Sign Language can be applied to assisting children learning sign.

It is fascinating to hear of Koko's exploits. She has learned to lie her way out of situations where she has been bad, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the way that language can be twisted around. Koko has also learned extremes, and she is well aware of what is good and what is bad. She has developed favorite insults, the worst being "dirty bad toilet devil." She understands guilt, and knows when she deserves punishment. For example, one time Koko and her playmate, a fellow gorilla named Michael, tore the legs off of a doll, but only Koko was scolded. Knowing that she was only half guilty, she insulted Penny and stormed off. Penny insists that she enjoys the tiffs which she and Koko have, taking them as flashes of Koko's perkiness and intelligence. Koko is also able to empathize with others, sharing their emotions and feelings, and responding appropriately. She once signed that a passing horse was sad, and when asked why, explained "teeth." The horse had a bit in his mouth, which Koko thought might be uncomfortable. Another time she signed "me cry there" pointing at a picture of another gorilla resisting a bath, which Koko also detests. Koko has grasped the concept of past and future, and is able to sign the correct

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tense. She is now learning to work with a computer generated voice, including a keyboard of colors and symbols. She is able to type with one hand while signing with the other—an ambidextrous and bilingual gorilla! The study is now focused on Koko's understanding of sentence structure and grammatical fluency.

The use of American Sign Language has opened new doors of understanding. It has facilitated our communication with lower life forms, and allowed us a glimpse into their thought processes. Psychology has learned information which would never have been possible without Sign Language. Clearly, it can be extremely useful far beyond its place in the deaf culture, and its role in psychology will only continue to expand.

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A Moment In Time

by Rosemarie Serio

As an Olympic year, 1988 has offered the world new athletes and new athletic records. Extensive training as well as the dedication each competitor brings to a particular sport becomes evident. But aside from the hard work and money invested to accomplish the goal, each participant brings hope and pride reflecting the true spirit of the Olympic Games. Not only do the Games signify a series of global sports competitions, but they represent, in a concrete form, the goodwill and sportsmanlike characteristics shared by athletes from every corner of the world. Amateur athletes representing the United States have traditionally been supported by homeland businesses and corporations. Recently professional American athletes have begun to cross the lines of tradition in order to compete. This may result in a better overall showing by the Americans and merit a larger number of medals won, or else weaken the Olympic spirit. The question before the International Olympic Commission is whether or not to open the Olympics to professional athletes.

Until the late Roman Period, gods and heroes were the only competitors, serving as role models for human beings. Legends dictate that a number of heroes are responsible for the institution of the Games. Take for example Pelops, who held the first chariot race; Hippodameia, who founded the foot race for girls; and Herakles, who was the first to define the length of the stadium at Olympia by having his brothers race each other.

The Games were reorganized after the Dorian invasion when the worship of the Olympian Zeus as supreme deity was instituted. From 776 B.C. until the thirteenth Olympiad (728 B.C.), the "stadion" or single-course race was the only contest held at the sanctuary, and the Games lasted one day. Wars ceased for the duration of the Games. Sports gradually added and still in existence today, include pentathlon and wrestling starting in the eighteenth Olympiad (708 B.C.), boxing, beginning in the twenty-third Olympiad (688 B.C.), and "pankration," a combination of boxing and wrestling started in the thirty-third Olympiad (648 B.C.). As the number of contests increased (in the Classical Period it reached eighteen), the length of the Games also grew gradually from one day to five days. Logically, the number of athletes participating also increased.

A change in Greek life occurred in the last quarter of the fifth century and is reflected in the architecture and in the life and character of the sanctuary of Olympia, as well as in the spirit of the Games. The main sanctuary was finally separated from the Games area. This change coincided with the appearance of professional athletics. It is at this point that many philosophers recalled the past and saw the deep change that had occurred in the athletic ideal. A number of athletes were criticized because their main concern had become the continuous, one-sided training and diet that would yield powerful muscles. This would allow them to reap victories while travelling among sanctuaries. Euripides, Aristophanes and Socrates observed the danger of putting body before mind and proclaimed, "There are ten thousand evils in Greece, but nothing is worse than the race of athletes."

At this same period the shrine became a political arena where rivalry among cities influenced officials to make promises to athletes in return for the security of as many victories as possible. Would we be naive in thinking this tradition has become obsolete in our modern Games? Some nations promise large sums of money in return for awards at today's Olympics. They send the finest athletes available, professionals, to bring back medals and fame to their countries.

Participation in the Olympic Games, as in all the other Panhellenic or local games, was not open to all. Competitors had to be Greeks until the Roman takeover when this rule was waived. A "supra-national" atmosphere in conjunction with the internationalization of the games became standard in the second century A.D. when Roman citizenship was extended to all inhabitants of the Roman Empire. From that time on foreigners have laid claim to Olympic victory. It is exactly this "supra-national" character that survives in the modern Olympics reorganized by the Greek state of Athens in 1896, after a break of fifteen centuries.

The powerful youths and trained men who won the prizes at Olympia were undoubtedly the select few. These were men who had been improving their physical powers by a specific method of human physique development for many years. This training was not limited to the gifted few but practiced by all. There was therefore no distinction between amateur and professional athletes. Amateurs, by definition, could not endure such rigorous training. Selection of competitors was based upon the extent of the training athletes had undergone. Only those who had prepared well were worthy enough to compete at the stadium at Olympia. In this sense, with these historical facts considered, these athletes *were* professionals because the strict judgments of the Games' officials deemed characteristics of professional athletes necessary for competition.

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The revival of the Olympic ideal in 1896 sprang from two phenomena: the study of Greek literature and excavations at ancient sites. The philosophy behind the modern Olympic ideal was defined by Frenchman Pierre de Coubertin. A result of his close study of modern educational systems and those of ancient Greece, was used to reform the educational system of his own country. Coubertin added features necessary to meet the new historical situation and the desires of mankind. These features include the international nature of the Olympics, the introduction of new sports, and the right of all to participate without racial, religious, political and social distinctions. Social distinctions can be interpreted and applied to the modern Commission's cause. For athletes, a social distinction is made between the amateur and the professional.

The Olympic ideal embraces two activities, the Olympic movement and the Olympic Games. The broader Olympic movement embraces every kind of sport and has "supra-national" character, calling people of all ages and every level of sporting attainment. The ideal "sport for all" meets with worldwide approval. American professionals have remained excluded from this notion, yet other countries have always relied on this aspect of tradition to fully finance their athletes' training. Their Olympic athletes are professionals. All Socialist governments establish careers for their citizens. The Soviets pay athletes to train for the Olympics and capture medals in conjunction with fame and pride for the U.S.S.R.. American professional athletes establish their own careers, as do all other working Americans, because democratic governments issue this ideal.

The individuals participating in the Olympic movement gain more than mere physical exercise. They learn to value effort, to respect other athletes, to conduct themselves honorably in competition, to dedicate themselves to a purpose, and to contribute positively in the immediate and broader social context. They acquire confidence and discipline.

How can America deny her professionals the Olympic experience? What about the athletes who need to declare a career and begin reaping some financial benefits from their sport? These professionals certainly should not be discouraged from competing in the Olympics when they have already become totally committed as athletes. Professionals decidedly are not involved in the Olympics for financial reasons, even if benefits are expected after the results are in print. The paychecks earned by professionals could become necessary, as the American government lacks sorely in support. Amateurs use the Olympic Games often as a stepping stone to a professional career in sports, even sports broadcasting. Mary Lou Retton and Bart Connors have certainly proven

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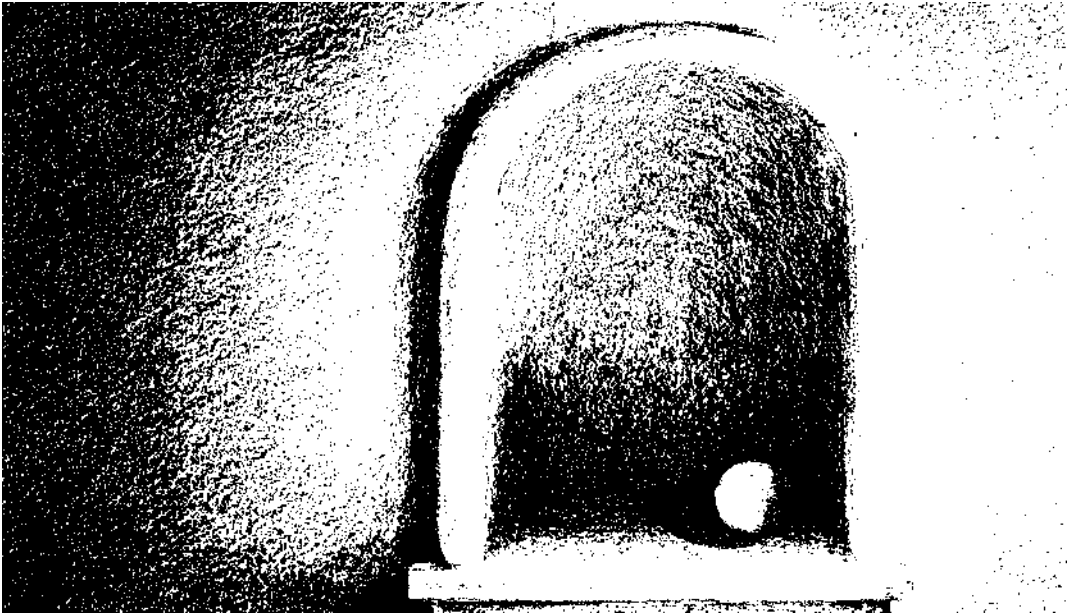
that once-Olympic medalists can easily slip into distinctly different career patterns.

Many Olympic champions reap a good deal of money from doing commercials. Not only do these athletes get paid but they become very well-known. Professionals are already famous and for this reason could not exploit the Games the way amateur American medalists sell themselves to promote various products. Along with the face and name of the athlete, and the specific product, the Olympic dream is sold daily.

The media coverage of the 1988 Summer Olympics was extensive and often critical of American participants, constantly comparing the medal count of the United States versus that of the Soviet Union. The U.S. placed third overall with ninety-four medals. The U.S.S.R. came away with one hundred thirty-two medals, fifty-five gold. Soviets fund one hundred percent, while American support amounts to one-tenth of that percentage. The more support allotted, the better the training available, making a better athlete. Although capturing medals should not be the most important aspect (symbolizing concretely the pride, work, and dedication of the athlete), athletes enter with a positive attitude to give their all and win. They have a challenge and a goal.

The 1988 Summer Olympics did witness a professional tennis competition, highlighting the famed names of Mecir, Mayotte and Edberg, Graf, Sabatini and Garrison. Tennis is the only sport now which can boast an all-professional line-up. Americans spiced the competition "favorably," even capturing a few medals. The only tennis players the U.S. offered competed as professionals and quite successfully.

Approximately ninety-two years ago the Olympic Games regained recognition as an open invitation to the world's athletes. Coming together as the ancient Greeks did, athletes would compete in the name of their respected countries. Sporting events of all types have evolved and become exciting spectacles of the Olympics. Countries participating in this classic world confrontation send their finest athletes into these games with pride and dignity. Yet in the midst of the fanfare, a question has broken the surface of dependable tradition. Today's Olympic conflict is whether or not to allow American professional athletes to join the competition where once only amateurs were accepted. The International Olympic Commission should permit and encourage professional American athletes, along with well-trained amateurs, to compete in the Games. This action, eliminating the advantage other countries have, would give Americans a fair representation in the Olympics.



*"A prudent person
profits from personal
experience, a wise man
from the experience of
others. "*

Dr. Joseph Collins

Holding Hands

by Nini Sarmiento

We were sitting at the kitchen table, Dad and I. Sitting in silence after the phone call came that morning. Anda, my grandmother, was dying my uncle had told us. There was little we could do being thousands of miles away, so we just sat, Dad in a stupor and I unable to find words of comfort. I didn't reach for his hand, afraid of breaking the silence with my touch. I could see him hurting inside though, hurting so bad. No tears had fallen but his eyes were full of sadness and despair. It scared me seeing Dad that way. For a brief moment I felt unsafe, lost among all the emotions in that room—anger, hopelessness, anxiety, fear, and frustration. It felt as if the man beside me was a stranger and not my father.

The stillness between the two of us was broken when Dad shifted in his chair, the wood scraping against the tile floor. He cleared his throat as if to begin a sentence but the silence remained, the words were unable to unite into meaning for him. He tried again, and then again.

"What do you want to say, Dad? What are you feeling, thinking inside?" I wanted to say to him. I remained quiet though, giving him time to put it all together for himself.

That day Dad told me a story about when he was a little boy, seven or eight years of age. He and his best friend, Reginald, were going to the annual festival in the province. Reginald's father had promised to take the two of them weeks in advance and the day had finally come.

As they approached the festival site the three of them could see their fellow villagers parading around in their best attire. Bright, cheerful colors of red, blue, yellow and green filled the crowded spaces like pieces of a mosaic. It was a time for celebration, a time for going all out for oneself, a momentary escape from the hardships many of the farmers and their families had to face.

Vendors sang songs to sell their goods and wares, young girls giggled to capture the boys' attention and children whined for the sweet, sticky desserts that lay on the tables in the marketplace. The aroma of roasting lechon, its fat dripping fuel into the open fire, the spicy crayfish boiling in huge pots of water and the small pieces of beef marinated in soy sauce and vinegar cooking on the grill drew them in with an almost intoxicating effect.

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They wandered around at first just taking in all the activity around them, unsure of even where to begin. They filled their stomachs to their hearts' content, practically to the point of gluttony, and finally left the marketplace to try the games of chance.

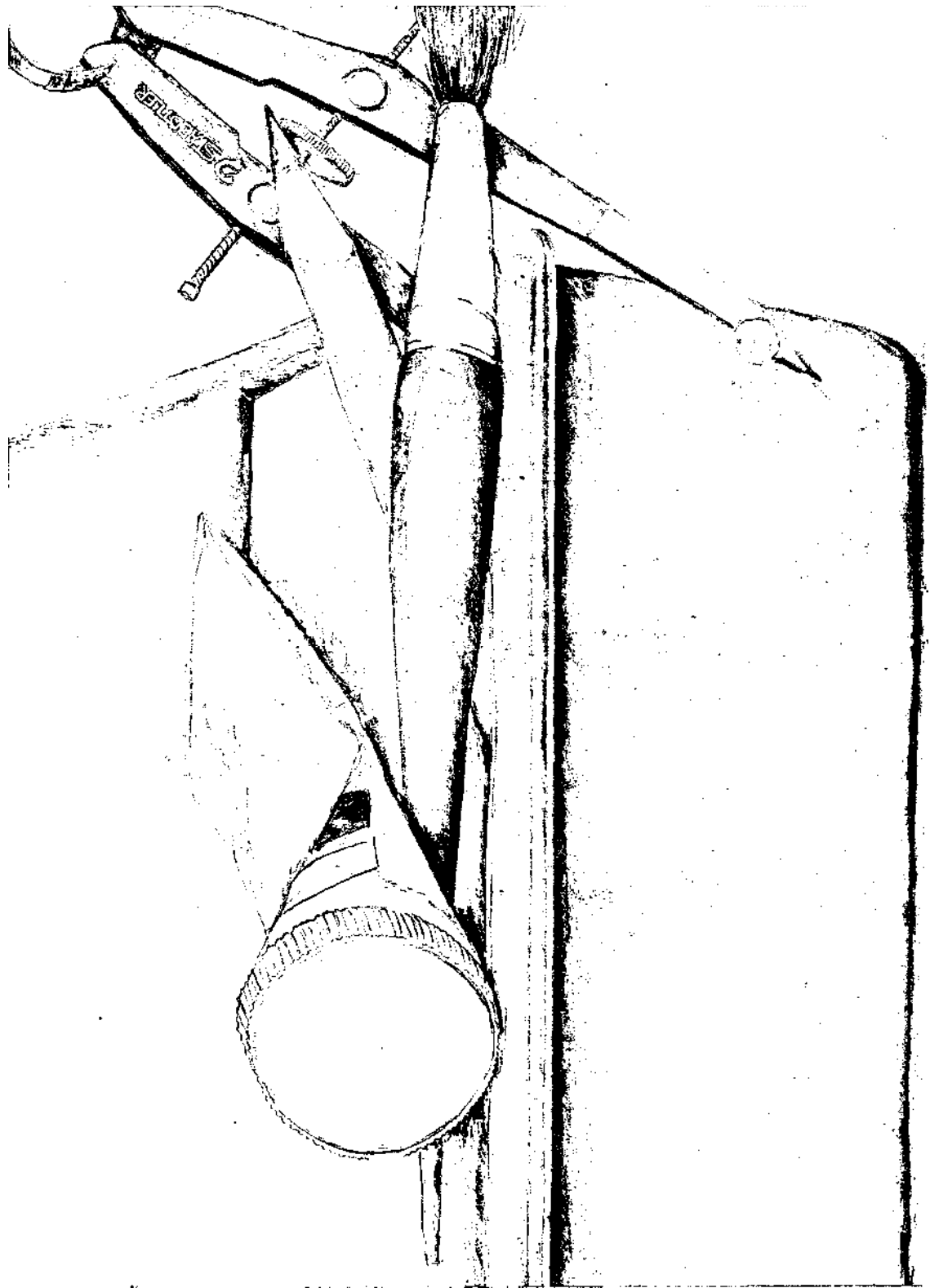
Dad and Reginald were too small to play the games successfully so they stood on the sidelines as Reginald's dad displayed his strength and skill to win the boys prizes and the admiration of the crowd that had gathered. Dad felt so proud that Reginald's father had also taken his hand as they walked away from the booths and the applause of the bystanders. Dad felt so happy inside, he said, it had been a long time since he felt that good.

They wandered about for another hour or so. Dad had promised Anda he would be home before dark so he could feed the animals. They had one more sticky ensamada roll and listened to the speeches the ambitious young men of the village gave to their elders about improving their situations in life. The speeches were of little interest to Dad but he stood there firmly holding on to the hand of Reginald's father, not wanting to let go.

When they reached the house Anda was sitting on the wooden bench outside, waiting for her little boy to come home. He said his "thank yous" and "goodbyes" and stood by the edge of the dirt road and watched Reginald and his father walk away, hand in hand. He stuffed his own hands into his pockets, the warmth that was there for those few hours at the festival was gone.

He turned and headed for the animal cages, ignoring the questions Anda had asked about his day. He reached for the feed for the chickens but when he began to lift the cage door latch he began to cry. My dad missed his father so much at that very moment.

Anda died two weeks after my uncle had called us. Dad could not fly home for the funeral since we were too far away. For weeks it seemed as if things were never going to be the same for my family. Dad had grown so quiet, he withdrew himself from us for a while and it hurt. The image of that seven or eight year old boy standing by the chicken cage kept coming to my mind, and I learned to be patient and to survive on the fact that we were going to get better, not just Dad but all of us. We just had to be there to hold his hand.



ABOUT THE STAFF . . .

MARK BOWERMAN (class of 1992) is an English/philosophy major from Baltimore.

MEGAN CURRAN is a sophomore accounting major minoring in classics. She is from Ellicott City, Maryland, and wishes to pursue a career in law.

DIANA EVERETT, a junior management major, is from Columbia, Maryland. After graduation, Diana will seek employment with a large corporation in the Baltimore/Metropolitan area.

SHARON FINLEY (class of 1991) is an English major with a minor in writing. She is from Alexandria, Virginia.

MARY GRAY is a senior writing/communications major who aspires to be a novelist. She is originally from Ridgewood, New Jersey.

NINA LEE GUISE (class of 1989) is an advertising and philosophy major hoping to prosper in a career of law and writing.

JOHN HANDSCOMB is a junior English/writing major from Ellicott City, Maryland.

JILL JASUTA (class of 1990) is a communications major who hopes to be involved with print journalism in the future. She is originally from Westfield, New Jersey.

KATHLEEN KLAUS is a junior English/writing major who looks forward to a career in the literary field.

MAUREEN MCGUIRE, a senior from Baltimore, has a combination major in studio arts and art history. After graduation she hopes to attend graduate school and receive a master's in fine arts.

DOUG MUENZEN is a junior writing major from Basking Ridge, New Jersey.

LENORE NAVARRETE (class of 1990) is an English/writing major who would like to combine her interest in literature with her interest in social justice for a future career.

DAVID TRAINOR is a senior English major who is originally from Philadelphia.

MICHELE WOJCIECHOWSKI is an English/writing major. A junior at Loyola, Michele hopes to learn to speak French and pursue a career writing comedy.

CONTRIBUTORS

AMY ALLEN is a senior communications major with a minor in fine arts. Her hometown is Norfolk, Virginia, but she hopes to find a job in the Baltimore area after graduation.

CYNDY BYSTRY is a junior majoring in communications with an advertising/public relations concentration. She is also pursuing a minor in fine arts. Cyndy wishes to combine her talents in writing and art in her future career.

KRISTINE CAGGIANO, a senior writing/biology major from Staten Island, New York, plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career in science writing.

COLLEEN CAINE is originally from Potomac, Maryland and a freshman communications major.

AMY CHEN, a senior English major from Baltimore, has taken fine arts courses both here at Loyola and at Maryland Institute, College of Art. She plans to continue her studies in art after graduation.

MARION CLOSS is a junior psychology major originally from Newport News, Virginia.

SINCLAIR CLUNAS has a B.A. from St. John's in Annapolis and is pursuing a B.A. in fine arts from Loyola.

LISA DEBORDE is a sophomore transfer from Penn State, currently majoring in math and plans to take fine arts courses at Loyola.

NIPA DOSHI, author of the prize-winning essay, *A Simple Way of Life*, is a native of Baltimore. Presently a sophomore at Loyola, she has declared her major as biology.

CRAIG EY is a senior communications major who is presently studying abroad in Belgium. His essay entitled *Little Italy* was the spring 1988 media prize-winner.

ANNE KIMMERLEIN, a sophomore marketing major from East Greenwich, Rhode Island received the core course essay prize (spring 1988) for her piece, *To Terri*.

CONTRIBUTORS

ELAINE KOUKOULAS, a Loyola sophomore, is the author of *Black*, another spring 1988 prize-winning essay. A resident of the Baltimore area, Elaine is majoring in biology.

BILL MARELLA, a writing/English major, is a sophomore originally from Ridley Park, Pennsylvania. Bill's work has previously been published in **Forum**.

MICHELLE MEADE, originally from Cranford, New Jersey, is a freshman majoring in psychology.

JOAN O'HARA is the author of the spring 1988 prize-winning essay *Freedom?* and a sophomore originally from Masapequa, New York.

LESLIE PESSAGNO is a freshman from Reisterstown, Maryland, who is as of yet undecided on a future career.

NINI SARMIENTO, a Loyola junior, is a communications/publishing major from Oxon Hill, Maryland.

ROSEMARIE SERIO, class of 1992, is originally from Wilmington, Delaware. She is the author of *One Moment in Time*.

WILLIAM WY SOCK, a communications major with a concentration in journalism, is a sophomore whose hometown is in Shrewsbury, New Jersey.

