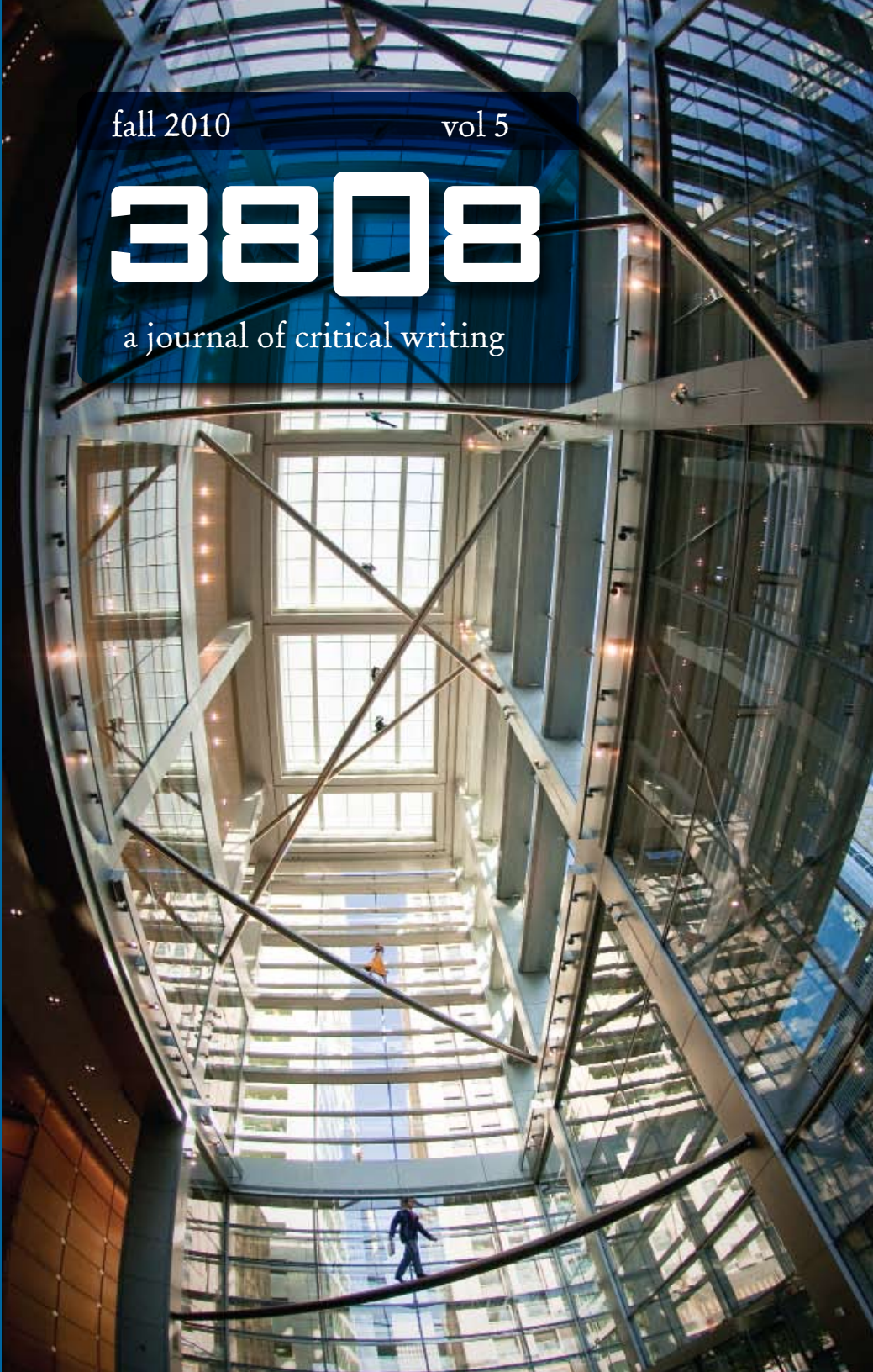


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From the Editors

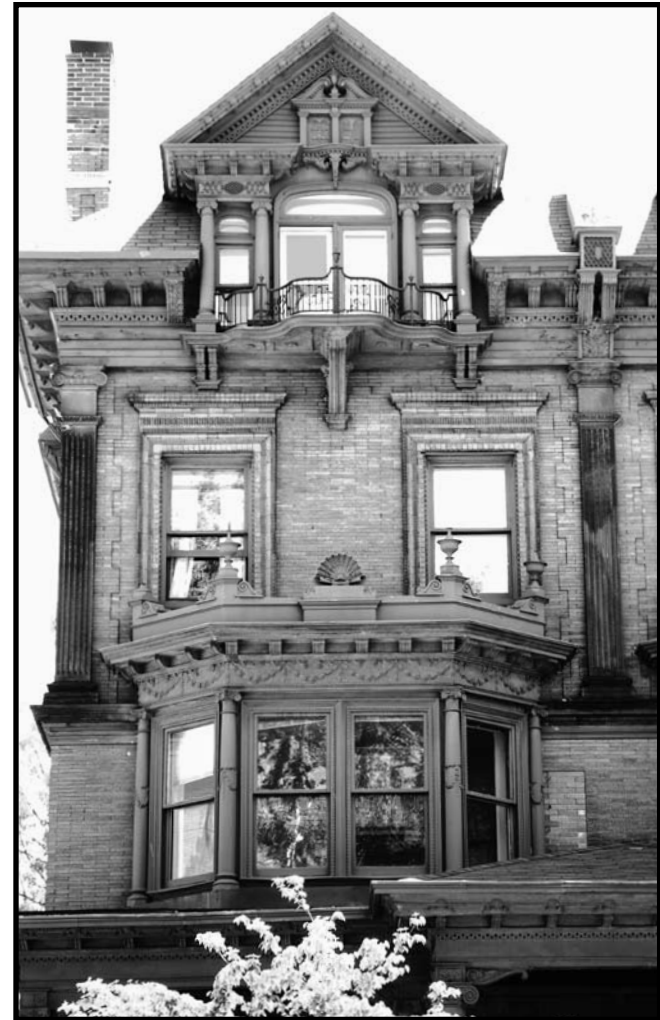
This fifth volume of *3808: A Journal of Critical Writing* offers another collection of outstanding writing by Penn students enrolled in Critical Writing Seminars.

Penn has always been committed to undergraduate writing. Founder Benjamin Franklin, insisting on practical education, saw to it that Penn was the first Ivy to require courses in writing. That history, the presence of that pastness, as T. S. Eliot might say, is with us here, in this volume, and remains central to the Penn education.

To be published in this journal, students' writing undergoes a rigorous process of selection. From the pool of about 2,400 students enrolled each year in our writing seminars, writing faculty and sometimes peers in the seminars nominate students' work for consideration. If the nominee chooses to pursue publication, he or she immediately transforms into an author, and what was once a "paper" instantly becomes a manuscript that is reviewed first by a faculty editorial board and then by a student editorial board, drawn from across the disciplines. Sometimes authors are advised that publication is contingent on successful revision of the manuscript; in most cases, the authors work with peer editors—members of our Writing Center tutorial staff—for final polish.

The 35 exemplary essays in this volume were authored by students representing the four undergraduate schools and a diversity of backgrounds, interests, and topics. Each is, as Franklin might say, worth the reading.

We hope that you will enjoy the work of these promising young writers as much as we do. And we suspect that this is not the last time you will see some of them in print.



About Our Title:

Penn created the Critical Writing Program in 2003 and, as part of the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing, gave us splendid residence in an old Victorian at 3808 Walnut Street—from which this journal takes its name.

Brette Warshaw

Becoming the Perfect Omnivore: Eating as an Art

Two summers ago, I decided to embark upon a mission: I was to teach myself to like every food. I was to rid myself of all food phobias. I was to become the ultimate gourmand. And, after two weeks, I had done it; by eating the foods I disliked the most for two straight weeks (chicken liver, green peppers, swiss cheese, and black licorice), I became the perfect omnivore. I became the girl who could eat anything, order anything, enjoy anything. Why, you may ask? Why would I put myself through gastronomic torture just to be able to eat anything put in front of me? I wanted to become a true foodie: a foodie with no bias, a foodie with no pretense. For me, eating is more than just absorbing nutrients; it is more than chewing and swallowing. Eating is on par with a painting, dance, or a piece of literature. Eating is an art.

Many skeptics of eating's aesthetic and gustatory pleasures say that eating is necessary purely for sustenance. Eating gives us our energy, our vitamins; it gives us the essentials for life. This is a point of view shared by Eighner in his essay "Dumpster Diving." His approach to food is one in which he consumed anything and everything that was edible, eating as much as possible to sustain him until his next dive. He scorned the people who cast out food that they deemed "rotten" or "questionable" (Eighner 400). For him, eating was a matter of survival; what he put in his mouth did not matter, as long as it did not hurt him. Many people also deny that food and eating could have the same artistic value as other forms of artistic expression, such as painting, dancing,

or music. Paintings are on display for hundreds or thousands of years, dances can be recreated, concerts can be played over and over. Yet, a plate of food is consumed within minutes. The taste of food lingers in one's mouth for mere seconds.

However, these arguments aren't necessarily true. The seconds that a bite of food reverberates are packed full with an intensity and complexity on par with the *Mona Lisa*, *Swan Lake*, or Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. A taste of something delicious, say, the perfect brownie, has the power to transport one to the same state of awe and happiness as any other artistic masterpiece. Yes, it is sustenance-but it is so much more than just calories, protein, and carbohydrates. This is a view understood by Lisa Yockelson; in her memoir "Brownies," she discusses her pursuit of a "blissful" brownie: a brownie that "haunted" her (86). She spent years figuring out the perfect recipe for the brownie that she craved. For her, brownies were more than just chocolate, flour, eggs, sugar, and butter; they were about the taste, the experience of eating them. Blending together the perfect combination of these few ingredients is an art unto itself; it takes time, patience, and creativity to create such a masterpiece. In addition, taste is something one must acquire and practice, just like painting or playing an instrument. Being able to appreciate the complexity of a food such as lemongrass soup is a skill one must acquire. Tasting the subtle nuances of food and being able to distinguish individual ingredients is the work of a master: the work of a true foodie.

Instructor: Jane Kauer; Writing Seminar: "Eating Culture"

Akeem Bailey

Has Trance Music Become Global?

According to Robin Sylvan and his electrifying book *Trance Formation*, rave culture is a “global” phenomenon. But the state of being “global” is a very ambiguous one. Scholars tend to define it as something relating to or involving the entire world. Examples range from Fortune 500 corporations like Citigroup, McDonald’s, and Toyota to staple religions like Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. Professor Mauro Guillén from the University of Pennsylvania further defines a global entity as something “fueled by, and resulting in, increasing cross-border flows of goods, services, money, people, information and culture,” such as the Internet, supply chains, or transnational airliners.¹ In essence a global force must both have a worldwide presence and promote the exchange of ideas and people across borders. With this theoretical framework in place we can refer back to our original question: does the current trance movement qualify as a global one? In other words, can a relatively small subculture like rave culture compete with or even compare to multi-billion-dollar corporations, ancient religions, or the Internet? Surprisingly, the answer is yes. Trance culture is a global force.

First and foremost, trance culture is increasingly present in many, if not most, parts of the world. *Trance Formation* does an excellent job navigating the “commercialization” of rave culture in both Europe and the United States, although the author fails to look beyond that.² But trance communities are sprouting up across the entire world, not just in the Western hemisphere. As Jimi Fitz explains in *Rave Culture*:

“[trance] is well developed in almost every country with people with diverse backgrounds... South America, Scandinavia, Japan, Thailand, India, Australia.”³ In other parts of the world, trance is slowly taking hold, creating what subculturalist Timothy Taylor calls “little cultures.”⁴ These little cultures are active across the entire world. Now “[rave culture is] alive and well in Bahrain, China, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador...Taiwan, Turkey, Morocco, Korea, Jamaica, the Ukraine, Cayman Islands, Kenya, Ghana, Zaire, and Zimbabwe....”⁵ Trance music has a functional presence most countries worldwide, thus fulfilling part 1 of our definition of “global.”

Rave culture has also evolved into a worldwide network, on which people can easily exchange ideas. Trance is often hailed as one of the few global music forms because it “generally has no lyrics, and has the capacity to bypass verbal and conceptual distinctions that separate people, and instead unites them.”⁶ Unlike most cultural goods, trance music doesn’t have language barriers; rave culture communicates through BPM (beats per minute), not lyrics, creating very little friction to the exchange of ideas. In other words, trance music can be proliferated across the globe without any unnecessary barriers like translating, dubbing, or subbing. Trance music is part of a global supply chain in which a young techno aficionado can write a song in his bedroom and proliferate it across the world within seconds, due to the “tight interconnectivity of global rave communication networks.”⁷ Goa trance is a perfect example of this. Goa trance is a form of rave music created by the hippie population in Goa, a state on the west coast of India. It’s a variation of trance influenced by “techno and house musics from Detroit and Chicago.”⁸ The Goa Indians took American trance, played with it, manipulated it, and in time developed their own unique style of rave music that has in turn “traveled around the world.”⁹

There’s a certain essence to being global. You must first have a tangible presence throughout most of the world. Trance is global simply because it has a great following in countries ranging from the United States to Uruguay, from Kenya to South Korea. When ravers have exhausted themselves from hours of dancing in Jamaica, another pack of energy-driven men and women are ready to start their nights in Japan. But being everywhere is not enough to qualify as being global. In fact, the essence of being a global force is rooted in cross-border

communication and interaction. The rave network allows its listeners to consume any form of trance they want from any part of the globe. Within minutes a young raver in Turkey can easily access and appreciate a track produced in Taiwan and vice versa. Trance doesn't just entertain its listeners but also encourages them to network. This is the dimension of trance that Sylvan fails to tackle in greater depth. But this is the aspect of trance that makes it global. Trance is a worldwide network. It is an empire: when the sun sets at one end, it rises in another. When the beat dies in one part of the world, it accelerates in another.

Endnotes

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Instructor: Jacqueline Sadashige; Writing Seminar: "Gotta Dance"

Rene Newman

An Unacknowledged Ally

As we wade our way through Lillian Feder's *Madness in Literature* (1980), we find our shins bumping aside the rejected opinions of countless scholars and critics. In her quest to discover and illuminate the experience of mental illness through the pages of literature, it seems that Feder has cast overboard any potential threats to her glory. She begins by belittling Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault, both important figures in the fields of psychology and philosophy. An epic lineup of scholars, critics, and commentators follow suit throughout the book. And perhaps it is her loyal espousal of Freud's psychoanalysis, which she distinctly acknowledges and defines in Chapter I, which prompts her to conclude her volume by challenging the existential psychiatrist R. D. Laing (1927-1989). Feder charges Laing with what seems to be one of her favorite accusations-the oversimplification of psychoanalysis.¹ But an exploration of Laing's theories reveals that it is Feder herself who is guilty of oversimplification. Her misrepresentation of Laing's work ignores the obvious similarities inherent to both her and Laing's perspectives.

R. D. Laing's existential tenets resulted in an approach to psychiatry quite different from mainstream practices of 1960s Western culture. Fundamental concepts from such influences as Sartre, Heidegger, and Hegel provided the foundation of his psychiatric theories, providing the basis for his view of mental functioning as a series of experiences and resultant behaviors (Boyers 4). Our perception of the world is, in

essence, our own personal experience, which is ours alone and cannot be experienced by another. Those experiences produce behaviors, which *are* experienced by others. Interaction among people is an endless cycle beginning with an experience, which produces behavior, which influences experiences, which produce more behaviors (Laing 9). From this foundation arose two central themes of Laing's philosophy: the appropriate treatment of psychiatric patients requires a genuine attempt to relate to their own personal experience which they convey through aberrant behavior, and the person cannot be studied out of context of his environment or external influencing factors-the behavior cannot be separated from the experience (9, 10).

Though she concedes that reason may be found in madness, Feder attacks Laing's *The Politics of Experience* (1967). She accuses Laing of "devaluation of the function of the ego" (Feder 281), which she defines as "the mediation among the manifold expressions of the self..." (17). But to justly evaluate Laing's position, we must look at his definition of ego: "an instrument for living in this world" (Laing 97). Freud's own definition of ego, as written in *The Ego and the Id* (1923), is more akin to Laing's than Feder's: "The ego is that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world..." ("Id, Ego and Super-ego"). Feder criticizes Laing's assertion that people have "developed the illusion that we are autonomous egos" (Feder 281). However, based on Freud's and Laing's concept of ego, Laing is simply asserting that we have become ultra-culturized and focused almost entirely on meeting the expectations and demands of the external world by relying on our egos (Laing 41). Moreover, Feder implies that Laing idealizes a state of ego-less existence (Feder 282). This accusation could not be further from the truth. While Laing does refer to psychosis as ego-loss (understandable if we think of it as experience minus its anchor in reality) that can provide insight, nowhere does he claim that that state is ideal (81). Feder distorts Laing's declaration that "ego-loss...may be for the person involved veritable manna from heaven" (Feder 282) by omitting the end of the passage, where Laing laments that "not everyone comes back to us again" (Laing 97). In a suggestion for the therapeutic treatment of schizophrenia in which a former patient guides a current patient through an episode of psychosis, he emphasizes the importance of the return to reality, to a "new ego" (89). Furthermore, his recognition

of the pernicious characteristic of madness is evident when he describes it as "potentially liberation and renewal as well as enslavement and existential death" (93). Feder also criticizes Laing's "rigid division of mental and social experience into two sharply separated levels" (Feder 282). While Laing does differentiate between the "inner" experience and the "outer" behavior, he is careful to highlight the necessity of the two together: "without the inner the outer loses its meaning, and without the outer the inner loses its substance" (Laing 32, 33). And finally, Feder oversimplifies yet another of Laing's assertions by accusing him of associating madness with transcendental experience (Feder 282). Laing makes this connection, yet specifies that he is "not saying...that psychotic experience necessarily contains this element more manifestly than sane experience" (Laing 95). He simply points out that psychotic experiences *sometimes* offer insight and wisdom. As a psychiatrist, albeit unorthodox, Laing remained interested in the healing of the patient, and ultimately the restitution of a healthy ego.

Feder attempts to use the contents of *Madness in Literature* to refute Laing's theories-ironic considering the similarities that can be recognized in the two works. Throughout her tome, Feder endeavors to "show how the mad protagonists and personae of literature convey the intricate connections between psychic requirements and the social and cultural milieux in which these...are expressed" (Feder xiii). Essentially, both Feder and Laing see madness as inextricable from the external world. Laing speaks of a person fulfilling the assigned role of "schizophrenic" in the hospital (Laing 84), just as Feder points out how some individuals satisfied the expectations of the witch hunters by living out the symptoms and confessions of a "witch" (Feder 110). Laing's proposal for the treatment of schizophrenics-the guided descent into psychosis as a means of therapy, followed by the emergence from madness into a new reality with a repaired ego-parallels both Freud's concept of psychosis as an "attempt at recovery" (Feder 25) and the purpose of Dionysiac frenzy, a recurring theme in Feder's book.² One of Laing's foremost convictions is that the actual experience of the "mad" person must be considered genuinely, rather than simply treating his symptoms (Laing 9, 72). The very basis of *Madness in Literature* champions this doctrine by constantly seeking to illuminate the true experiences of madness, despite popular cultural perspectives throughout history. So instead of tossing Laing into

her sea of outcasts, perhaps Feder should have appointed him first mate.

Notes

1. Feder also accuses Foucault and Norman Brown of oversimplifying Freudian concepts (Feder 32, 281).
2. Feder attempts a circular structure with this theme, which first appears in Chapter II and is revisited in Chapter V.

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Instructor: Stephanie Harzewski; Writing Seminar: “Mental Illness in Literature”

Laura Paragano

Smart Television Is Not an Oxymoron

Released in 1973, *Sleeper* is a classic Woody Allen comedy about a man who is cryogenically preserved and awakened 200 years later to a future where cultural intelligence has become more important than traditional intelligence. Cultural intelligence pertains more to simple subjects in the social sphere, whereas traditional intelligence relates to topics in the humanities and social sciences that attempt to explain humans and their behaviors. *Sleeper* combines the perfect amount of slapstick and sharp one-liners, but the true genius of the movie is that it provides profound sociological insight. Allen’s humor draws upon the belief that technology has begun to undermine traditional intelligence by promoting cultural intelligence—the main argument behind the article “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” written by prominent technology commentator Nicholas Carr. However, the current content of television shows requires cognitive work on the part of the viewer. As television becomes more intellectually stimulating, people have greater opportunities to benefit.

Allen and Carr, each in his own way, attribute television’s increased significance in society to a decrease in traditional intelligence. This can best be exemplified by the rising problem of civic illiteracy among Americans. A survey by Penn Communications professor Bruce Hardy found that only 15 percent of Americans are able to identify John Roberts as Chief Justice of the United States. Sadly, however, 66 percent of Americans are able to name at least one of the judges on

FOX Network's hit show *American Idol*. Hardy asserts that such a shift between civic literacy and cultural intelligence is detrimental to the success of a judicial system dependent upon legitimacy as a source of power. After all, an unknowledgeable populace would hardly find the judicial branch legitimate if they believed Simon Cowell was the Chief Justice. Additionally, Carr elaborates on the irony that resources meant to facilitate our quest for knowledge, in reality, hinder our intellectual capacity to absorb the material. Although Carr's argument focuses on Google as a metonymy for the internet, the principles of his argument hold true for the medium of television. Recent content analyses demonstrate that news reporters on popular news channels focus far less on specific issues and far more on broad themes in the news. This means that the television news programs are producing less intellectually stimulating shows by airing less in-depth discussions. More material is being covered and at a faster pace, but it is discussed at a lower analytical level. The audience has been deceived into believing they are knowledgeable, when in fact they are learning little.

True to Allen's prophecy, cultural aptitude oftentimes holds precedence over more important issues in modern society. While television may not seek to trump opera's value in terms of high-brow entertainment, it is a common misconception that television is "locked in a spiral drive of deteriorating standards," as described by Steven Johnson in his book *Everything Bad Is Good for You*. Carr's argument accounts for only blatant low-brow programs such as Bret Michael's *Rock of Love*. In fact, Johnson defines the growing complexity of television show plot lines as the "Sleeper Curve," after Allen's movie. The Sleeper Curve is the upward trend of the entertainment industry to continually produce more intellectually stimulating material. For instance, satirical soft news programs such as *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* require and produce audiences with a refined level of intellectuality to fully appreciate the political lampooning that characterizes these shows. In a national survey, 52 percent of the audience of these two Comedy Central shows was able to identify Vladimir Putin as the Prime Minister of Russia-as compared to 41 percent of CNN viewers. These shows are popular, attract viewers for their intellectual depth, and educate the masses effectively. *The Daily Show* has received two Peabody Awards for excellence in television broadcasting while *The Colbert Report* has

received the Primetime Emmy, the Peabody Award, and another 11 Emmy nominations. Contrary to what Carr may believe, these shows undermine the thinking that cheap thrills prove the most successful way to make money in the entertainment industry. As the medium of television is evolving, so is the content. People are gaining traditional intelligence while still satiating their lust for culture.

Television has begun to shape what is most important in popular culture today. People now use television shows as a form of cultural currency-knowledge used to be able to socialize with others. It is not uncommon for a student to watch the latest episode of *American Idol* or even *The Colbert Report* to be able to participate in conversation about it amongst friends the next day. The entertainment industry has the ability to determine what constitutes "cultural currency." The once counterproductive industry can begin to spur useful discussions on the state of affairs by encouraging more productive, intellectual television. It is not a moral obligation and sacrifice for society. It is the natural course: the shows are popular and profitable. In this way, television producers should consider exchanging the cultural currency for tender suited for more constructive ends.

Instructor: David Faris; Writing Seminar: "Mobiles and Mobilization"

Eileen Anzilotti

Desire's Tricks

Though it may not always appear so, we have everything we need in our lives. Our desires have the tendency to lead us away from our realities, but in the end, we inevitably return to what we have always had. In Sam Mendes' *American Beauty*, middle-aged Lester Burnham lives a dissatisfied suburban life with his career-driven, apparently passionless wife Carolyn, and their daughter. Frustrated, Lester turns his desire, which finds no outlet in his wife, toward his daughter's beautiful friend Angela. In all of his erotic fantasies, Angela appears surrounded by red roses, symbolizing the potency of Lester's desire. However, the roses are first associated with Carolyn; one of the opening shots of the film shows her handling a perfect red rose from the Burnhams' garden. This mirrored association points to the empty fantasy of Lester's desire for Angela and the reality of his continued emotion for Carolyn. Lester eventually realizes, through acknowledging the lack of substance in his relationship with Angela, that his relationship with Carolyn, difficult as it may be, actually holds real meaning and emotion. Lester's infatuation with Angela illuminates his desire to rediscover his love for his wife, Carolyn.

Undeniably, Lester desires to reclaim his life by reliving his youth, and Angela, as a beautiful young woman, fits perfectly into his fantasies. If one reads the roses, which feature prominently in the film, as Lester's enthusiasm or appreciation for life, then the opening shot that depicts Carolyn as having just clipped a picture-perfect rose from the bush

portrays her as a restrictive, stifling force on Lester's existence. Carolyn embodies the aging he fears. All of Lester's following actions serve as attempts to distance himself from Carolyn. He turns to Angela because of her youth and beauty, so different from the qualities of his wife, and surrounds her with red roses in his fantasies to express his desire for her. Following the beginning of his infatuation with Angela, Lester partakes in behaviors that appear irresponsible and inappropriate for a man of his age and position. He nostalgically reflects on his youth as a time of freedom, and his turning to Angela attempts to reclaim the freedom and masculinity that Carolyn has stricken from his life.

That attempt at reclamation influences many of Lester's actions and desires in *American Beauty*. In the case of Angela, however, his fantasies point to his underlying desire to reclaim not just his youth, but the love he had for the Carolyn of his youth—the young, beautiful, and fun Carolyn that appears in Lester's memories as his life flashes before his eyes. The roses that we so clearly identify with obsession and eroticized desire—symbolized by Angela—are in fact first linked to Carolyn. Her handling of the rose in the beginning of the film reveals that she does, in fact, possess the qualities that, like those of Angela, first attracted Lester. However, because of her career-driven lifestyle, those qualities are not immediately accessible. Lester, in his frustration, will not make the effort to seek them out in her. Instead, he turns to Angela, whose unavoidable beauty relates to the roses that constantly encircle her body in his fantasies. However, he allows his obsession with Angela to continue to the point where she ceases to exist as a real person. She becomes only a fantasy, a projection of Lester's desires that, as the final montage of the film signifies, all point back to Carolyn. When faced with Angela in reality, he sees her for herself and his desire for her evaporates. Consequently, Lester realizes that Carolyn, not Angela, is the true object of his desire.

By watching Lester's desire for Angela run its course, we discover that it served only as a temporary distraction, a substitute for his continuing, albeit buried love for Carolyn. Lester's infatuation with Angela proved itself to be a trickster. Allowing himself to become so immersed in Angela somewhat counterintuitively led him back to his wife, whom he had spent the entirety of the film berating and taking for granted. However, Lester does not find himself in a unique situation.

Rather, he could stand in for anyone who has found themselves so blinded by a desire, like Lester's for Angela, that they forget what they have truly wanted the whole time. In Lester's case, he rediscovers his longing for a meaningful relationship with his wife. Such a realization, however, may not happen for everyone. *American Beauty*, then, serves the purpose of reminding us to "look closer" at the things we may take for granted in our lives. It may take following a false trail of desire for a while, but if we can overcome what we think we want, we will find we want exactly what we have.

Instructor: Kristina Baumli; Writing Seminar: "Spectators, Witnesses, Voyeurs"

Drew Karabinos

The Genocide's First Punch

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda swept through like a tornado, leaving the country in ruins. When the dust finally settled, everyone wondered what possibly could have provoked the Hutu people to commit such vicious acts against the Tutsi. The Hutu were instantly demonized in the world's eye, charged entirely with instigating the massacre. Alan J. Kuperman, however, decided to delve further into this issue. Tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi people had existed since the day Rwanda was founded, but Kuperman wanted to determine what caused the rage of the Hutu people to rise (and ultimately spill over) so quickly. After examining the work of a variety of scholars, Kuperman concluded that the RPF (a Tutsi extremist group) had been provoking the Hutu for decades, and that just as the person who throws the second punch in a fight is usually the one who is caught, so too were the Hutu people wrongfully condemned as the initiators of the mass killing. His research provides much insight into the developments in Rwanda prior to 1994, and offers an entirely new perspective on the causes of the genocide. However, a closer look at the sources Kuperman cites reveals that his bold conclusions are not fully justified.

While many of the quotations included in Kuperman's article are relevant and support his thesis, some are misleading because they are taken out of context. When defending his claim that the Tutsi people were facing only mild discrimination in Rwanda prior to the genocide, Kuperman references a quote from scholar Peter Uvin. "The Tutsi

remained represented beyond the nine percent they were theoretically allocated...in commerce and enterprise,” Uvin proclaims in his article “Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide in Rwanda” (101). This clearly strengthens Kuperman’s argument, but does not tell the whole story. Later in the text, Uvin admits that Tutsi representation in these sectors had indeed steadily “decreased after independence,” and that in times of crisis, prejudice was undoubtedly “a tool used to discriminate against the Tutsi” (101-102). Kuperman does not mention either of these points in his article. Additionally, Kuperman seems to purposefully exclude certain facts that could potentially weaken his arguments. He cites Allison Des Forges, for example, to support his claim that the major attacks against the Tutsi prior to the genocide were out of retaliation. “Each of the five important [Hutu] attacks,” Des Forges writes, “was in reaction to challenges that threatened [the Hutu president’s] control” (101). While Des Forges does say this, she also acknowledges that the Hutu “incited small-scale, sporadic killings of Tutsi throughout this period” and that leaders frequently armed Hutu citizens with weapons and insisted that they assemble for “self defense” (87-88). Again, these facts are curiously absent from Kuperman’s article. In each case, Kuperman provides just enough detail to support his claim that the Tutsi incited the genocide, and leaves out just enough information to concede any counter-arguments.

Additionally, while many of the arguments Kuperman makes to support his conclusions are reasonable, some are hollow because of faulty reasoning. When arguing that the RPF attacks on Rwanda were unwarranted, for example, Kuperman points out that Tutsi refugees in Uganda “faced no significant discrimination or violence for several years prior to the invasion” and that “refugee settlements [in Uganda] were solid and permanent-more village than refugee camp” (80). While these facts may be true, he gives no weight to the fact that when Habyarimana assumed the presidency in 1973, he legally blocked Tutsi refugees from returning to Rwanda. Whether they were treated fairly or not in their refugee settlements, the Tutsi people were still being forced to live in an alien environment away from their homes. Longing to return home is a natural feeling that requires no justification. Additionally, Kuperman points to the repeated refusals of the RPF to make concessions with Habyarimana as proof of the extremist group’s over-aggression (81). Yet even Kuperman acknowledges earlier in his article that concessions

made by Habyarimana were often empty and insincere. He writes that after signing the Arusha Accords in 1993 as a last-ditch effort to make peace with the Tutsi, the president did “everything possible to avoid implementing them” (76). It may be true that the RPF rejected compromise with the Hutu, but a closer look at the circumstances of the time reveals that the group had no real reason to trust that the concessions would be honored.

Fifteen years after the genocide in Rwanda ended, the controversy still lingers as to who is ultimately to blame for the largest mass killing in history. While the Hutu and Tutsi continue to point fingers at one another, Alan J. Kuperman believes his research may provide enough insight to resolve this dispute. But the consensus within the scholarly community suggests that each ethnic group contributed in its own way to the escalating tensions that eventually climaxed with genocide, and that placing the entirety of the blame on a single group would be oversimplifying an extremely complex and intricate issue. Looking forward, perhaps the more important question is not who initiated the genocide in Rwanda, but whether or not the world has learned enough from the atrocity to be able to prevent a crime of the same magnitude from occurring in the future. This matter, if left unaddressed, could have far more serious implications, for a similar massacre in conflict-ridden nations like Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan might not be too far off.

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Instructor: Carla Cue: Writing Seminar: “Justice in Post Conflict Societies”

Angela Qian

From Daddy Queerest to Daddy Dearest: The Centrality of Mr. Bennet to the Romance Plot

If asked to describe the Bennet family in one word, those involved with the 2005 cinematic production of *Pride and Prejudice* would surely reply with the word “loving.” Producer Paul Webster states that “underpinning [the story] is the love that keeps this family together,” and actor Matthew Macfadyen sees the Bennets as “glorious, a lovely family” (*Pride and Prejudice* DVD). However, the novel delineates a clashing, dysfunctional family that evokes no less than “repugnance” in Mr. Darcy (130). Rather than portraying an aloof, unconnected Mr. Bennet who spends his time either locked away in his study or belittling his wife, the director brings to life a concerned and active father whose affectionate jibes at his wife only emphasize his love. This alteration of Mr. Bennet’s character not only makes Elizabeth’s home life seem more harmonious, but it also defines her marriage as a romantic union, rather than a retreat from an unruly family.

The Bennet family is far from perfect. Mr. Bennet, in particular, is “not only an appalling husband but a dilatory father as well . . . careless and negligent of his duties” (Palmer). Though Elizabeth may look up to him, even she recognizes her father’s failings as the head of the Bennet household. Furthermore, Elizabeth is disheartened because Mr. Bennet “abandons . . . [his] children” (Bennett 137) when his talents “might at

least have preserved the respectability of his daughters” (Austen 155). Instead, Elizabeth must act as the father figure and keep her younger sisters in check. She notices Mary’s actions at Netherfield and begs her father to play the guardian role and intervene. It was also she, not her father, who foresaw the evils that might occur should Lydia accompany the militia. Mr. Bennet’s inability to assume an effective parental role and the resulting lack of order and authority in the Bennet household ultimately drive Elizabeth’s marriage to Mr. Darcy. As Nina Auerbach observes, Elizabeth waits for a man to rescue her from the “non-family” her father’s detached and selfish ways have created (328). At Pemberley, Elizabeth begins to see Darcy as the person who will be able to provide her with the respect, attention, and concern that she seeks in a real family. She sees Darcy’s relationship with his sister as “an idealized version of her relationship with her father” (Cohen 28). Because he is the opposite of her rude, apathetic father who finds enjoyment in degrading the wife he no longer respects, in both “disposition and talents” and “understanding and temper . . . [Darcy] would have answered all her wishes” (Austen 202).

In sharp contrast to Mr. Bennet’s depiction in the novel, Donald Sutherland portrays an “attentive, affectionate, and involved husband” who exhibits “kindly indulgence and even solicitousness towards his wife” (Palmer). Wright includes shots of hand holding and kissing to emphasize the tenderly affection between the Bennet couple. Rather than continue the depiction of a man uninterested in his family and locked away in his library, Wright sends Mr. Bennet out to balls with the rest of the family. Mr. Bennet even fulfills his paternal duties by stopping Mary’s embarrassing exhibition on his own, without pleading from Elizabeth. He further demonstrates his concern and love for the family by comforting Mary as she weeps. In addition, Wright uses Mr. Bennet’s mocking of his wife to strengthen his connection with Elizabeth Bennet. By softening his words and smiling as he teases her, the 2005 version of Mr. Bennet exhibits a joking, witty manner quite similar to Elizabeth’s. His gentle jabs at his wife are seen as harmless play, rather than an attempt to put “his wife to shame by deliberately humiliating her,” a tendency in the novel that critic Paula Bennett observes. By removing the presence of a flawed father figure, Wright removes the practical reasons for Elizabeth to marry Mr. Darcy, leaving only the romantic. When Elizabeth

announces her engagement to Mr. Darcy, Mr. Bennet does not lecture her on the importance of mutual respect to a marriage because, in the movie, he does not suffer from a dead marriage founded upon fleeting “youth and beauty” (Austen 155). In the book, Mr. Bennet states, “my child, let me not have the grief of seeing you unable to respect your partner in life” (246). In doing so, Mr. Bennet implies that he is unhappy with his own situation because he has lost all esteem for Mrs. Bennet. Instead, the revised Mr. Bennet tears with happiness when he learns about Elizabeth’s love for Darcy. Such a reaction suggests that his own marriage to Mrs. Bennet is founded upon a love that has remained alive over the years. Thus, in the final scene of the movie, Elizabeth compares the pet names Darcy calls her to the ones that her own father calls her mother. Such associations suggest that Elizabeth seeks to equate her relationship with Darcy to the one shared by her parents. Rather than eschew the family’s dysfunctional dynamics through a union with Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth sees her parents’ marriage as a model of success.

In a time when movies emphasize romance, it is only natural that director Joe Wright should attempt to accentuate the love between Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy. After all, it is the promise of a fairy tale romance, not a relationship of commonplace respect, that convinces a vastly female audience to assume the financial burdens that movie tickets and DVDs render. However, Wright’s reformation of Mr. Bennet’s character also affects the portrayal of other characters and events in the movie. For instance, Lydia’s elopement with Mr. Wickham is blamed entirely upon her caprice and immaturity. However, the book suggests that the lack of involvement on Mr. Bennet’s part in enforcing discipline plays a significant role. The book also shows Mary’s inclination towards achievement and philosophy to be the result of the want of both a companion and a parental figure. But the movie provides no explanation for Mary’s actions, taking away a key insight on Mary’s position as a middle child. Thus, one must evaluate the consequences of Wright’s changes. Is the advancement of romance in the movie more important than explaining the roots of each character’s personality? Is the transformed Mr. Bennet successful enough in emphasizing the love between Elizabeth and Darcy to warrant the loss of dimension in other characters? Such questions are meant for each individual viewer to answer, but one must wonder to what extent the dramatic qualities of the

Miramax production of *Pride and Prejudice* would have been altered if Mr. Bennet’s character had remained consistent with the novel.

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Instructor: Rafael Walker; Writing Seminar: “Jane Austens”

Michael Levenstein

The Futile Pursuit of Certainty

Bertrand Russell once said, “What men want is not knowledge, but certainty.” This has been corroborated by history, though humans have fallen short of fulfilling this ambition. Whether attempting a grand unified theory in physics or the complete formalization of mathematical logic, it is evident that our efforts to attain certainty have failed when compared to our original lofty aims (Nagel and Newman 109-113). Our shortcomings in this matter should come as little surprise. From as early as the 5th century B.C.E., philosophers such as Socrates and Pyrrho of Elis had noted that human certainty was an unattainable feat (Russell). For clarification, “certainty” will refer here to two concurrent principles: 1) that all doubt be absent regarding a particular topic and 2) that there be a *full and total* understanding of said topic-including its nature, structure, content and implications. The attainment of certainty is impossible.

Though counterintuitive, one appeal of certainty lies in its inaccessibility. There exists a well-noted disjunction between what is our psychological predilection toward its attainment and the lack of success which has followed such longings. Modern thinkers such as the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan have concurred with this observation, arguing that while humans can concede the extreme improbability of attaining certainty, this realization does not deter their desire for it, *for we perpetually pursue objects out of our reach*. In *Écrits*, he writes, “there is always a beyond to demand...the result of the exigencies of

need and the demand articulated” (35). This idea appears empirically confirmed not only in the aforementioned examples, but in the work of Daniel Ellsberg, a game theorist who demonstrated that individuals often make suboptimal decisions involving little to no risk when juxtaposed to potentially more beneficial, but uncertain, ones. Between this diffidence and our seeming insatiability, it appears the human “need” for certainty remains a very strong motivation in our behavior and goals. Ironically, according to these scholars, we prize certainty for perhaps the most counterintuitive reason of all: we cannot ever possess it.

A more intractable barrier involves the specific *practical limitations* which doom our ceaseless yet vain quest for certainty. Not only has attaining certainty remained historically improbable based upon evidence of our failed attempts, but it is in fact *practically impossible* to attain. This is because certainty-the simultaneous absence of doubt and possessed total knowledge of a given issue-requires three qualities which are beyond the human realm: omniscience, omnipresence and an infinite existence. In order to be “certain,” an individual or entity would first have to be capable of fully comprehending the nature of a given issue, something which itself should not be taken for granted with humans, as certain concepts evade our powers of comprehension. German philosopher Immanuel Kant writes in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, “Time and space are accordingly two sources of cognition [which]...taken together, are, namely, the pure forms of all sensible intuition [knowledge]” (168). Hence, any concept outside the bounds of space and time is an “unknowable” concept to us. Therefore, even though such entities may exist, we will never have knowledge of them, thereby demonstrating our inability of achieving total certainty, as they would evade our capacities of understanding. Moreover, omnipresence would be required to ensure that no instances arise in geographic space which might counter one’s understanding of a topic, thus making that understanding less than certain. Similarly, one must exist infinitely in duration to ensure that no such conflicting evidentiary instances against a preconception ever arose in the future. Cognitive scientist Douglas Hofstadter notes in *Gödel, Escher, Bach* that because we are incapable of the infinite verification of facts, we are relegated to a state of perpetual uncertainty, forced to extrapolate: “[w]e deal with just two or three concepts...which, though themselves finite, embody an infinitude; and by

using them, we sidestep the apparent problem that there are an infinite number of facts we want to prove” (60). Much like Kant, he agrees that human understanding is far removed from the capacity for certainty.

Hence, we can look to both historical evidence and the three aforementioned qualitative restrictions to arrive at one inescapable conclusion: that certainty is unattainable. Reflectively, we might conclude our longing for it illogical and perpetually insatiable. However, rather than viewing our epistemological limitations with a sense of frustration or inadequacy, perhaps we should understand them via the prism of a Hegelian dialectic. According to the German Idealist, there exists a “tragic fate of the certainty...that aims to be absolute” (455), for nothing short of God-like powers of comprehension will assuage our dissatisfaction in the face of uncertainty. Perhaps it is this realization which offers the most telling lesson of all: satisfaction may never be found until we are content to recognize the limits of our potential, and explore not beyond them.

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Instructor: Rodger Legrand; Writing Seminar: “Language of the Universe”

Ajay Koti

The Anthropological Myth

The nature-nurture debate is one of the most fundamental arguments in discussions of human behavior. Do innate biological mechanisms or societal interactions determine behavior? Two schools of thought debate the issue. Evolutionary psychologists feel that the answer lies somewhere between biology and culture. They concede the limitations of a purely scientific approach in explaining cultural variance, but they still argue that biology plays a role in shaping behavior. Anthropologists, on the other hand, feel that the evolutionary psychology perspective fails to account for the world's tremendous cultural diversity. They also deny the possibility of biological influences, maintaining a strictly nurturist perspective on human behavior. Anthropologists prefer the Standard Social Science Model (SSSM), which attributes human behavior entirely to cultural interactions. But the SSSM is an inadequate model for mind design.

Anthropologists have constructed their model based on the following reasoning. First, they assume that humans are biologically identical. Although each member's genetic code differs, they claim that initial mental faculties are constant across the species. They also assume that cultures are infinitely variable bodies, saying that they “vary from one another arbitrarily and without limit” (Pinker, 1994, p. 421). After building these foundations, anthropologists begin their argument for the SSSM. Humans are biologically identical but behave differently. If behavior were truly dependent on biology, then every human would behave in the same way. Biology must be independent of human behavior (Tooby and Cosmides, 1992, p. 25). With biology out of the picture, anthropologists look to culture. Since culture and behavior each vary infinitely, they intuit a link between the two. The theory claims that any and all behaviors are the results of cultural institutions and social environments (Pinker, 1994, p. 421). The outcome of this theory is a

“tabula rasa” mind design (Brown, 1991, p. 144). Infants are born with “blank slate” minds, equipped only with the ability to learn (Pinker, p. 421). As the children grow into adults, they learn culture; and then culture shapes their behavior (Tooby and Cosmides, p. 24).

However, the SSSM is based on numerous fallacies. Although the claim that all humans share mental faculties is in agreement with evolutionary psychology, the denial of any biological links is simply not true. Modern neuroscience has proved that such links exist with substantial medical evidence. For instance, studies of aphasics have shown that brain damage in certain areas of the brain has profound influences on behavior (Pinker, pp. 34-43). Furthermore, one of the starting assumptions is groundless, invalidating the entire theory. Supporters claim that cultures are infinitely variable, but this is actually not so. Donald Brown has documented that seemingly different cultural traits are linked by more fundamental universal principles (Brown, pp. 130-141). In other words, the differences that anthropologists point to are merely superficial differences. Almost every culture shares a set of universal characteristics, and the superficial differences are idiosyncratic manifestations of those universals. As Brown demonstrated, culture is more of a constant than it is a variable. By the anthropologists’ reasoning, culture is also an unsuitable explanation for varying behavior.

Finally, the SSSM is related to numerous poor research practices in the field of ethnography. As linguist Dan Sperber said, “[Ethnographers] feel that after some months of fieldwork, they are in a position to provide a reasonable if incomplete account of an alien culture” (Sperber, 1985, p. 41). Their expectations of massive differences skew their ability to objectively study human behaviors in different cultures. This fundamental failure of ethnography has been demonstrated in instances like the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which proposed that the Hopi had no concept of time and has been widely debunked (Pinker, pp. 46-54). Consider also the “Great Eskimo Vocabulary Hoax,” in which researchers claimed the Eskimo had dozens of words for snow, or Margaret Mead’s study of teenagers in Samoa, in which Mead was duped by her own subjects (Pinker, pp. 428-429). The integrity of ethnographic research is contingent upon the researcher’s expectations. In each of these instances, the researchers expected to find exoticism to fuel the SSSM model of human behavior. The dependence of the SSSM on

ethnography makes its conclusions questionable and unreliable.

Clearly, the SSSM’s strict nurturist perspective cripples it as a viable theory model for human behavior. We need a theory that avoids the weaknesses of the SSSM, one that includes the biological foundations of behavior and explores the role of culture. Here’s where the strengths of the evolutionary psychology model are demonstrated. Succinctly diagrammed in Pinker’s book, the model claims there are innate behavioral mechanisms in the human brain, attributing their existence to evolution and heredity. Cultural context serves as an “input” to these mechanisms; it stimulates the instinct to create the appropriate behavior (Pinker, p. 423). The evolutionary psychology model even explains cultural variance, using the notion of universal cultural characteristics to explain that the variance is superficial and irrelevant. By comprehensively discussing both the internal and the external causes of human behavior, the model provides us with an excellent alternative to the deeply flawed SSSM.

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Instructor: Jonathan Gress-Wright; Writing Seminar: “Language and Mind”

Yaanik Desai

Substitute Subsidies with Sensible Farm Policy

What do we eat? Where does it come from, and what are the implications? Author Michael Pollan's analysis of the complex American food industry answers these seemingly fundamental- yet widely unasked- questions. In his quest, he explores the dominance of large agribusiness and the disappearance of the American family farm. As he explains, many individual farmers have become victims of an American farm policy that emphasizes over production instead of curtailing it. As a result, prices remain depressed, and farmers face a difficult battle to break even. America should adopt an agricultural policy that blends free market principles with some regulatory protection for farmers.

America should eliminate its direct payment subsidy program. Agricultural subsidies are designed to decelerate the production of crops to prevent drastic price drops. But as Pollan documents in *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, the system actually works against small farmers (and against the supposed purpose of the policy itself) because it encourages them to produce as much as possible- farmers are directly compensated for every bushel of crop they produce (Pollan). The problem, as Brian Riedl of the Heritage Foundation writes, is that "eligibility for farm subsidies is determined by crop, not by income or poverty standards" (Riedl). As a result, America's largest farms, often dominated by agribusiness corporations (think: the Wal-Marts of agriculture), reap the benefits of the subsidy program. Riedl points out that mega-farms "not only have the most land, but also are the nation's most profitable farms because of their economies of scale." On the other hand, it is difficult for small farmers to earn a profit on the subsidy program. Caught in a system that was originally designed to help them, small farmers end up in an ironic and endless loop of low prices. According to the Environmental Working Group, 65 cents of every dollar given out in subsidies went to only 10% of American farms, indicating

that a few large farms enjoy windfall payments from the government while the rest suffer (EWG). The subsidies must go.

However, as Daryll Ray, Daniel Ugarte, and Kelly Tiller of the University of Tennessee point out in the briefing entitled *Rethinking US Agricultural Policy*, simply eliminating farm subsidies and allowing the free market to equilibrate would take time, and such a move could have unintended consequences for farmers. Farming is a business in which it is particularly difficult to respond to the market pressures of supply and demand. Unforeseeable factors like weather and climate can have uncontrollable consequences for yield. Also, since a farmer's product (crop) requires a yearly cycle, it becomes hard to quickly adjust production. The point is that if farmers were suddenly thrown into a bare, free market, they would not likely fare well. The authors of the briefing ran a simulation to model the effects of an immediate withdrawal of farm subsidies. "This simulation demonstrates that the removal of government supports will result in an unambiguous and dramatic reduction in net farm income" (Ray). The authors of the briefing present a way to prevent such a scenario by accompanying subsidy policy change with government-mandated farmland set-asides, mandatory crop stock reserves, and government price supports. The first of this three-pronged initiative would require farms to set aside up to 15% of their farmland every year. The idea is to reduce over-production without direct payments. Rotational land set-asides have the added benefit of keeping soil healthy and decreasing demand for artificial fertilizers. The second initiative would encourage farms to store excess, nonperishable crops in onsite stock houses during years when crop prices are low. Then, during years where the price goes up, farmers can sell their stock. This option modifies the government stock houses initiated in the New Deal and eliminated by Earl Butz in the 1970s. "Handled in this manner, the reserve becomes a genuine price support mechanism," write Daryll Ray and his colleagues. Compliance with the first two prongs is a prerequisite for the final component. When neither the reserves nor the land set-aside keeps prices profitable for farmers, the government would step in with a subsidy.

The system outlined in this paper incorporates familiar agri-economics tools to reverse a farm policy that, for decades, has favored industrial farms over individual American farmers. While the terms of

debate are esoteric and steeped in detailed policy, the consequences of keeping the status quo are dire. If trends continue, taxpayers will keep paying billions of dollars in farm subsidies, while the plight of farmers will go on. One can only hope that Michael Pollan's book has provided a lasting national forum to discuss farm policy, for in the wake of ubiquitous budget deficits and a record-breaking national debt, the impetus for change must come soon.

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Instructor: Thomas Devaney; Writing Seminar: "The Art of Eating"

Gregory Singer

Don't Leave Me Hanging, Chad!

Election night, 2000. With millions of eyes glued to the living room television as politicians projected winners in the battle states, the heated race between then Vice President Al Gore and George Bush mirrored the competitive spirit seen in prior presidential races. Yet, Palm Beach County, Florida, and its one million residents would become the focus of confusion, conspiracy, and question. Counting ballots, recounting ballots, and subjectively examining the orientation of the hanging chads had enveloped national news coverage. My hometown became the epicenter showcasing a flawed election. The vulnerability of the electoral process to inaccuracy and subjectivity tarnishes the foundation of our democracy. Whether observed through Walter Lippmann's lens of the 1920 presidential election or through modern political races, the unreliability of the electoral process to accurately record the interests of the public remains pervasive. The electoral process impedes democratic representation.

To many, however, the electoral process serves as the balance, adapting to and ensuring the honest representation of the unique interests of every American. The checks and balance mechanism inherent in elections effectively highlights its value to our democracy. True representation must be responsive to the majority, and not necessarily the individual. In her analysis of political representation, Harvard professor Jane Mansbridge (2009) found that in the electoral process, politicians "must cobble together a majority by giving as many groups as possible as much as possible of what they want" (p. 388). Subsequently, this aspect of elections prevents the interests of a few from overpowering those of the masses, ensuring that the agenda of the super-wealthy, powerful, and vocal never suppresses the voice of others. The electoral process represents the best way to gain a consensus of the people's will. Moreover, the continuous efforts to adapt the electoral

process to ensure that the hoi polloi can actively influence public policy illuminate a second clear strength. Through the implementation of several “Yes” or “No” amendments and the exclusion of race and gender restrictions, elections have transformed into a far more representative polling of the American public’s views. The evolving electoral process supports the quality, structure, and intent of our representative government.

These claims portray the importance of the electoral process as an effective method of selecting government officials. However, in examining the interaction between citizens and politicians through elections, the limitations of the voting process as a means of representation vividly materialize. Running an effective political campaign requires vague, overarching rhetoric that can emotively connect with voters, their struggles, and their views. As Walter Lippmann (1922) asserts in his investigation of the power of the individual’s opinion, the “blending of many colors” allows politicians to create a façade to gain unanimous support (p. 130). Similarly, Gustave Le Bon (1896), the first to discuss the wisdom of crowds, asserts the “great power of suggestion to...words,” illustrating the power politicians hold over the voter’s perception of the truth (p. 68). Instantly, a vote is won. The historical “soft on communism” campaign embodies this clear impediment of honest voter representation. Politics Professor White (1998) illustrates that in the midst of nuclear tensions between the United States and Russia, Americans, recognizing that any president elected would have to approach Moscow with diplomacy and patience, still “retreated to the confines of the voting booth” to vote for the tough-talking Republicans (p. 8). The image of the more aggressive political party superseded the reality of the situation. Unwrapping this issue and illustrating the power of rhetorical persuasion illuminates the broader inefficiency of the electoral process.

Although the electoral process provides many benefits in selecting government leaders and amendment rulings, the inherent subjectivity of elections impedes its value in truthfully representing the comprehensive views of all Americans. With no forum established to objectively represent voters’ views on every issue, the American public is trapped, electing political party figureheads. Ultimately, the baseless criteria influencing a vote may be as surreal as having 537 hanging

chads decide Republican versus Democrat, Bush versus Gore (State Elections Office). Americans enjoy and tout their freedom to vote, but are *their* voices really being heard? Democracy cannot be accurately defined by our current electoral process. The freedom to vote is choking.

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Instructor: Rodger Legrand; Writing Seminar: “The Business of Image”

Benjamin Horn

Judgmental Synthesis 4

The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche once stated, “And if you gaze for long into an abyss, the abyss gazes also into you.” No one wants to stare into the abyss; no one enjoys contemplating the dark side of reality. For quite a long time, mathematicians could avoid such pessimism when debating the philosophical foundations of mathematics that concerns the question “Is mathematics invented or discovered?” It is a debate that involves Platonists, who believe in “a Platonic realm in which mathematical objects exist”; Intuitionists, who believe that “the integers were the only mathematical objects whose existence was assured” (Tubbs 252); and Formalists, who hold that mathematics “is nothing more than a game played according to certain simple rules with meaningless marks on paper” (Bell 21). Formalists and Intuitionists both hold that mathematics is invented. However, they were forced to confront the limits of their knowledge with the genesis of Gödel’s Incompleteness Theorems. Today Platonism stands as the only constructive philosophy left to mathematicians.

Formalists and Intuitionists believe in the power of human rationality, but their belief is misplaced, for mathematical rationality and inventive power is limited by the Incompleteness Theorems in a similar way to the restrictions imposed on physicists by Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle. These restrictions are discussed by the philosophers Frithjof Schuon and Jean Baudrillard, who both note that Heisenberg’s discovery relativized our knowledge of the physical

world, or in other words discovered that nothing is necessarily certain or true, at least not from a rationalist perspective (Baudrillard 5-6, Schuon 4). To quote Schuon, “Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle cuts the ground from under the ‘objectivity’ on which science has so much prided itself...Everywhere cracks are appearing in the scientific edifice” (4). Maria Tymoczko connects this commentary on Heisenberg with Gödel, saying that “...Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle and Gödel’s incompleteness theorem [both had an impact] not simply on specific disciplines but on the concept of knowledge itself” (287). There is a world sense, a zeitgeist, that the ground beneath our feet is crumbling, that everything is relative, nothing is certain, and so the dreaded abyss reveals itself. Gödel himself discusses in a lecture in 1961 the “nihilistic consequences...in accord with the spirit of the time” (3). Nihilism is defined by Nietzsche as when “there is no answer to the question: ‘to what purpose?’” It is when “the highest values are losing their value” (8). In the case of mathematics, Formalism and Intuitionism, philosophies which rely on the rational human and absolute certainty in mathematics, are losing their value because of what Gödel and Heisenberg discovered, in their respective fields: that such rationality is inexorably limited, that the rational mind cannot determine either certainty or truth.

We argue then, that in the context of the debate Formalism and Intuitionism have become overshadowed by certain aforementioned nihilistic implications. But is Platonism a viable alternative? What makes it so constructive: the simple fact that it manages to escape from the pitfall of the abyss? Is there anything more to recommend it as a mathematical philosophy? With this in mind, we now turn to the essay “Mathematical Creation” by Henri Poincaré, who argues that truly great mathematicians possess an “intuition of mathematical order, that makes [them] divine hidden harmonies and relations” (Poincaré 383). This suggests an either Intuitionist or Platonist mindset, considering the mystical approach Poincaré takes to describe mathematical creation. Reading further, it seems clear that Poincaré is leaning towards a Platonist perspective, as he makes a claim that has been made by many Platonists before, especially GH Hardy: that there exists some sort of mathematical realm, in either the subconscious or beyond, out of which come “harmonious” theorems (Hardy 14, Poincaré 391). It is this numinous sense of beauty that sways mathematicians to the side of

Platonism. Mathematicians are people who, like all others, are swayed by beauty, elegance and harmony. Platonism is a philosophy that makes use of such beauty, as it gives mathematicians access to a reality apart, where everything fits together like a perfect puzzle.

Why does it matter if Platonism presents a more constructive or harmonious view of the world or not? Could it not be that the world is a place where there are limits on our knowledge? Could it not be that Formalism and Intuitionism present a more accurate, if not necessarily positive, perspective on the universe? We argue that it appears presently impossible to effectively prove or disprove Platonism as a philosophy, unless someone can conclusively demonstrate the existence or unfeasibility of a mathematical realm, which seems, at the time of writing, impossible. It then becomes a question of which philosophy presents a more constructive framework under which to operate practically. We therefore argue that it is important that Platonism provides mathematicians with this constructive framework under which to work, because of the nihilistic implications discussed concerning Formalism and Intuitionism. Adhering to these would be a form of “passive nihilism, a sign of weakness...the synthesis of values and goals (upon which every strong culture stands) [would] decompose,...” (Nietzsche 21-22). Until someone, if someone can ever disprove Platonism emphatically, it remains the only constructive philosophy. Platonists, unlike Formalists and Intuitionists, are able to side-step the abyss.

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Instructor: Rodger Legrand; Writing Seminar: “Language of the Universe”

Maia Gottlieb

A Living Market

Walking into the Reading Terminal Market today, a visitor can easily find homemade fudge, oysters, shoofly pie, or any other food that's at all worthwhile. Although the products have evolved since its opening in 1892, the market has always been a key destination for eaters in the Philadelphia area. Currently, there are 93 functioning vendors over 1.7 acres, offering unique products or services. Nothing distracts from the products. There are not multitudes of historical plaques or intrusive freestanding historical exhibits. The information desk provides useful information on vendors and events, but it doesn't push historical brochures on customers. Most people come to the market literally "to market": to buy and sell food. The market is a working structure, providing a necessary function for the city instead of describing a history of working. Reading Terminal Market is most effective as a living market without extensive historical markers.

Some people might disagree, and argue for exhibits that give greater visible recognition to the history of the market. Started when refrigeration was a novelty, Reading Terminal Market was a unification of outdoor markets that had existed for centuries. Named for the train station overhead, the market has endured through depressions and wars, even when the train station itself did not. Even more importantly, this space is only the most recent incarnation of the centuries-old evolution of markets in Philadelphia. The outdoor markets that predated Reading Terminal Market were essential parts of city life from the 17th century

onwards, and they ensured the basic nutrition of early Philadelphians. Proponents of historical markers contend that such a long-standing tradition deserves more physical recognition in the current market. These markers could connect the modern market to its past, and instill awareness in each and every visitor. Such exhibits exist in the renovated convention space next door, intertwining text and pictures on four freestanding displays.

Nonetheless, this point of view overlooks the importance of maintaining a modern market—one that is focused on the future. The market is concerned with profit, not preservation. A market exists to sell things, not to educate people. The history of the market is readily available in books and online. The value of this history is already widely recognized by tourists and locals. Co Co Connecting a physical location to its past is important, and in some cases historical displays facilitate that process. However, in the Reading Terminal Market, awareness of the past is found in the smells of the Dutch Market, the murky view inside of a lobster tank, and the constant hum of conversations in every language. It is found, in other words, through everyday use. The market does not exist as a historical monument or preserved site, but rather as a way to serve the community, as it has always done in the past. This site is a living entity that is not idealized or mummified.

The Reading Terminal Market is only one place of many that better serve the public without historical markers. Too many historic sites have become dusty and unappealing places where signs take the place of people. However, it is each and every visitor, vendor, and tourist who provides recognition of the value of Reading Terminal Market. Places that now attempt to be a museum and a commercial site simultaneously must allow people to recognize the value of each site through their actions, instead of roping them off from blurry pictures of the past.

Instructor: Jessica Lautin; Writing Seminar: "Philadelphia Past and Present"

Jordan Harrison

Pissed Off about Piss Christ

In 1987, contemporary photographer Andres Serrano incited a wave of controversy by photographing a crucifix submerged in urine and entitling it *Piss Christ*. As one would expect, this created quite an outrage in the Christian community. In fact, more than two decades later, people are still angry that Serrano urinated on a crucifix and took a picture of it. Many viewers jump to the conclusion that this photograph is a direct attempt at blasphemy. In reality, however, the story is quite different. Serrano did not intend for *Piss Christ* to be sacrilegious.

At first glance, *Piss Christ* definitely appears to be disrespectful. It is a photograph of Jesus on a crucifix, beneath a pool of urine. In an attempt to explain people's reaction to the photograph, theologian Damien Casey suggests, "*Piss Christ* is indeed blasphemous to the extent that it subverts the sacrificial interpretation of Christ's death."¹ Many people assume that urinating on a crucifix is a denouncement of Christ's sacrifice. One of the most outspoken critics of this work is Dr. George Pell, Archbishop of Melbourne. He went so far as to apply for an injunction against the gallery showing the piece, claiming that the photograph qualified as "blasphemous libel" against Christianity.² Many Christians, like Pell, believe the photograph is so insulting that its public display should be illegal. Because of this photograph, Serrano rose from obscurity to become a prominent artist (not to mention that he sold the piece for \$15,000). This is reason enough for critics to assume *Piss Christ* was just a publicity stunt intended to create controversy. As if that

wasn't enough, even the title is offensive. By using such a crude term as "piss" in the title, Serrano clearly seems to be mocking Christ.

It is easy to see why this photograph would offend many Christians. After all, why would Serrano desecrate one of the holiest of Christian symbols, if not to condemn the religion? However, *Piss Christ* is not inherently sacrilegious unless viewers choose to interpret the photograph literally. Serrano notes, "I have always felt that my work is religious, not sacrilegious. I would say that there are many individuals in the Church who appreciate it and who do not have a problem with it."³ Serrano, a former Catholic himself, explains that while he does not always agree with the Church, he finds Catholicism very intriguing. His work plays into the theme that two contrasting ideas can exist as one. "I am somewhat ambivalent about most things and sometimes even confused...oftentimes we love the thing we hate and vice versa," he says. "My work has often been spoken of in terms of the sacred and the profane. My feeling is that you can't have one without the other." The use of the word "piss" in the title is only meant to emphasize the vulgarity of the urine, in contrast with the crucifix's purity. The ethereal glow of Jesus through a haze of urine is shocking and unsettling to many people. Despite this, the symbolism behind the work suggests it was created for a greater purpose, not just to cause controversy. As Serrano points out, the bodily fluids in his work are a reflection of the body and blood of Christ, a reference to the holy Eucharist. According to Casey, the combination of these two things that do not seem to belong together—Christ and "piss"—holds great significance. Casey asserts that the crucifix is a symbol of Christ's sacrifice and that "sacrifice constructs and protects the identity of the community, whether through expelling its impure elements or by purifying and legitimating lines of descent."⁴ The fact that something

¹ Casey, Damien. "Sacrifice, Piss Christ, and Liberal Excess." *Law & the Sacred* 1.2 (2000), <http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=ltc>.

² Gilchrist, Kate. "Does Blasphemy Exist?" *Art Monthly* (1997), <http://www.artslaw.com.au/publications/Articles/97Blasphemy.asp>.

³ Fusco, Coco. "Shooting the Klan: An Interview with Andres Serrano." *Community Arts Network Reading Room* (2002), http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/09/shooting_the_kl.php.

⁴ Casey, Damien. "Sacrifice, Piss Christ, and Liberal Excess." *Law & the Sacred* 1.2 (2000), <http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=ltc>.

considered completely untainted is immersed in a pool of urine implies that the pure and the profane are not mutually exclusive; they can coexist. Perhaps the photograph implies that Catholicism's opposition to "impure" things is unfounded, but suggesting that Catholicism and impurity can coexist is not necessarily a criticism against the Church. Inflammatory or not, the purpose of the photograph is not to offend but to stimulate thought.

Many artists throughout history have disrupted the status quo by doing something which was previously unheard of. Common practices that used to be considered scandalous are now perfectly acceptable. At one time, portraying Jesus without a halo was deemed blasphemous, whereas today no one would think twice about it. Religion in art has always been, and will likely continue to be, controversial. No matter what the context, people are guaranteed to become very defensive about religion, and *Piss Christ* is no exception. Admirable or not, the artist's motivations do not define the value of a work of art. Instead of dismissing *Piss Christ* as a sacrilege that should never be shown in public, the art community should stop and consider it on a less superficial level. Whatever Serrano's intentions, there is more to *Piss Christ* than a cross covered in urine.

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Instructor: Colette Copeland; Writing Seminar: "Contemporary Art in Philadelphia"

Harrison Lieberfarb

What Lippmann Missed

Psychologists often speculate as to the degree of control that media claim over the human mind. Determining exactly how human opinion forms presents a challenge by itself. The addition of media to the equation substantially complicates a psychologist's task. In the past, authors like Walter Lippmann have argued that media maintain a direct control over how people act. However, the reality far exceeds this ideal. Lippmann's theories oversimplify the way media influence the human thought-process.

Many media authorities disagree with this statement, instead arguing for a simple and powerful relationship between media and public opinion. Much research supports this position. For example, the Payne Fund Studies (1929) concluded that media have a strong effect on the human thought process, especially children's attitudes and behaviors (Ash, 1999, ¶6). They demonstrated that movie watching negatively affects child behavior in a classroom, relative to children who attend fewer movies (¶6). These results support Lippmann's vision of a world characterized by media that exercise autonomous control over people. The study implies that children cannot protect themselves from the influence of media and must ultimately accept the opinions of the programming they watch. More recently, a study conducted by child psychologists Boyatzis, Matillo, and Nesbit (1995) also concluded that media strongly influence the actions of people. The study analyzed the actions of elementary school students who had watched "The Mighty

Morphin Power Rangers,” a television show often termed “violent.” The psychologists found that children who watched the show were seven times more likely to commit acts of violence than a control sample of children (Anderson, Gentile, and Buckley, 2007, p. 26). The relatively recent nature of this study further supports the idea that media still exercise substantial control over their viewers. These average children, who watched randomly selected episodes of “Power Rangers,” imitated the show’s violence in a seemingly robotic manner. Clearly, substantial evidence exists supporting the notion of a strong relationship between media and the control of public opinion.

Despite these studies, a plethora of evidence exists that suggests a different relationship between media and people. In reality, the relationship between media and viewers far exceeds the complexity proposed by Lippmann. The aforementioned studies all seek to simplify the human thought process, and this poses a fundamental flaw. For example, the Payne Foundation Studies surveyed adolescent reactions to movies at a time when film was a novelty (Ash, 1999, ¶8). The novelty of film presents an additional variable: opinion forming is more subject to influence in a foreign environment, and this variable harms the integrity of the experiment. A more credible study, conducted by Wilbur Schramm in the 1950s (after television’s debut), analyzes how television affects children. After countless studies, surveys, and observations, Schramm proposed a three-pronged approach to analyzing how television affects children:

For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For other children, under the same conditions, or for the same children under other conditions, it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions, most television is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial (Schramm, 1961, p. 1).

Other studies believe in a more complex relationship between media and the public because of the dynamic nature of communication. Marshall McLuhan believed the way media transmit information to the public constantly changes, and to ignore this change effectively disregards a major aspect of modern communication (“Old Messengers,” 2006, ¶2). In a testament to the importance of the methods by which we communicate, McLuhan famously declared “the medium is the message.” Beyond the tangible, obvious significance of what media

report, a far more important level exists. Lippmann never considered the importance of the very medium media use to deliver information. Instead, he committed himself to a simplified model where the minds of people simply fell under the supreme control of media. Years later, McLuhan would alter this statement by replacing “message” with “massage” (McLuhan, 1967). In claiming that “the medium is the massage,” McLuhan emphasized the importance of the medium in human communication. While the reference is clearly tongue-in-cheek, McLuhan’s point is clear: the way people receive information is as significant as the message itself.

Currently, media scholars generally believe that the relationship between people and media is characterized by complexity. Too many variables exist in the opinion-forming equation to determine exactly how people think. Such an idea separates us from animals: we think for ourselves and ultimately form our own opinions. The complex nature of human thought can serve as a microcosm for the human mind at a more general level. Complexity defines humans, and nothing about “us” is simple. Decision-making, social interactions, and personality all involve multiple conditions that do not fall under the ultimate control of others. The qualities that make people unique develop as per our own discretion. This aspect of human development is the basis for individuality in our society. Without the ability to think for ourselves, intellectual thought soon finds itself in a dystopia of Orwellian mindlessness. Unlike the world suggested by Lippmann, the relationship between humans and their environment forms from multiple components, all of which combine to affect our final opinion.

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Instructor: Rodger Legrand; Writing Seminar: "The Business of Image"

Alexander Chahin

Manipulate Me, Please

Public opinion acts as a powerful entity. In its many forms, it has the power to build nations, to drive consumerism, to spark anger, to wage war-the list goes on. While public opinion can go in unlimited directions, human behavior should not. In fact, humanity would find itself in jeopardy if left unorganized and to its own devices. To organize this chaos, as Edward Bernays would say, public relations holds the key. In his 1928 book *Propaganda*, Bernays defines public relations as equivalent to propaganda, and he advocates the importance of manipulating public opinion to calm the natural disorder of society. In light of this, the significance of Bernays's understanding of propaganda shines. Humans need the control that public relations provides.

Acknowledging submission, however, poses no easy task, which is why many people completely disagree with the notion. These people argue that humans do not need manipulation from public relations; rather, they should be given complete liberty from the chains of propaganda. This bondage not only limits human behavior but damages societal well-being. For example, it is easy-and rather trite, really-to cite the terrors induced by Adolf Hitler's application of public relations. His masterful use of rhetoric and symbolism influenced the greater half of Germany to partake in the massacre of millions of Jews, among others. Thus, it is hard to ignore the danger that accompanies the use of public relations for societal control. But a certain fatal danger also accompanies driving a car. A looming peril comes along with flying on

a plane, too. There even follows a hazard, presumably, when someone walks his own dog. However, this does not stop humans from driving cars, flying in planes, or walking their dogs. Why, then, should society completely abandon the benefit gained from public relations in the face of its potential danger, just because it *could* end unfavorably? Fortunately, there exists a simple answer: it should not. There lives some form of risk associated within every fathomable activity; public relations is no different. In fact, it serves as a vital tool used to manage reality. As Walter Lippmann notes in *Public Opinion*, “The real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance” (1922). In other words, humans cannot synthesize and interpret all of the data from reality effectively enough to make decisions; reality is too overwhelming for that. The clear solution, then, involves using something to handle the inundation of information, and that is propaganda. As such, Bernays emphasizes the importance of “organizing the chaos” by implementing public relations in *Propaganda* (1928). The tool cuts through the clutter of information humans face and allows them to process smaller bits by directing their thought to something they can comprehend. Without this guidance of public relations in the world, humans would be rendered dumbfounded and functionless.

Beyond managing information, humans also need the control furnished by public relations for psychological purposes. More specifically, public relations helps humans maintain their mental health and monitor their behavior. This maintenance comes in two forms: individual and collective. First of all, individuals need propaganda because of their latent desires. As Sigmund Freud posits in *The Ego and the Id*, humans have repressed a variety of urges that the public would deem unacceptable into their unconsciousness. According to Freud, these urges direct human behavior (1923). However, since the desires exist in the unconscious mind, they cannot be directly addressed. Public relations, though, provides the perfect solution. This propaganda directs people to behave in a manner that satisfies their repressed urges. Furthermore, humans need public relations on the collective scale. In *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, Gustave Le Bon suggests that crowds’ reasoning is inferior to that of a single person (1903). Such weakened thinking could lead to destructive results, especially because poor reasoning paired with great manpower

creates a dangerous duo. Fortunately, public relations again delivers an effective mode of monitoring human behavior. Because crowds fall into what William H. Whyte coined as groupthink (1952)—“a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members’ strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action,” as Irving Janis puts it (1972)—public relations can guide the entire mass down a certain path and avoid the negative consequences of ill group reasoning. Of course, along with an understanding of this psychology come relevant applications of public relations. One of the most important applications of this psychological aspect is helping divert humans’ attention to maintain the sociopolitical status quo when appropriate. To avoid disastrous outcomes and preserve political stability, it is sometimes expedient to deter humans’ focus on a particular issue, and public relations does the job well. As Noam Chomsky asserts in *Necessary Illusions*, public relations supplies a way to distract the public and to maintain both complacency and complicity (1989). An example of such distraction can be seen in the propaganda that followed the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. To keep citizens from resorting to violence, they were distracted from the tragedy by a surge in patriotism. Soon after the attacks, banners declaring “United We Stand” and “God Bless America” sprung up across the nation. This diversion redirected public emotion toward constructive patriotism instead of destructive violence, allowing citizens to unify behind a common cause and stop chaos from reigning supreme.

It would be foolish, however, to forget caution when applying public relations to society. While humans need the control propaganda provides, public relations must be applied consciously and carefully. In his essay *The Engineering of Consent*, Bernays contends that the public must not become aware of its subjection to manipulation (1947). This is because once a moment of recognition occurs, the effect of the propaganda vanishes, and deleterious results move to the forefront of possibility. A recent example involves Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky’s *Manufacturing Consent*. When it was translated and published abroad, the Turkish government sued the owner of its publishing house on charges of “stirring hatred among the public” and “denigrating the national identity” of Turkey because of its analysis of Turkish reportage

during the Kurdish repression in the 1990s (i.e., revealing Turkey's public relations tactics to its citizens) (2006). Therefore, controllers must remain quite invisible when manipulating the masses. And if you are still not convinced that propaganda provides necessary organization, consider your past few minutes spent reading: you were successfully distracted, your thought guided, your mind controlled. You're welcome.

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Instructor: Rodger Legrand; Writing Seminar: Propaganda

Ken Chang

Dark Red, Not Black

In *The Karma of Brown Folk*, Vijay Prashad examines racial multiplicity and relations in America. Specifically, Prashad argues that black America turned to Asia as a source of inspiration for social protest and justice, referencing the Asiatic influences on John Coltrane's rebellious jazz (Prashad 52). This argument, to say the least, is an understatement. Asia was so much more than simply a source of inspiration for the black civil rights movement. Black freedom fighters have been known to draw extensively from revolutionary icons like Ho Chi Minh, Kwame Nkrumah, H. Rap Brown, Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt, and Jawaharlal Nehru. But the most influential of them all has to be political mastermind and communist leader Mao Tse-Tung. Like a sponge, the black population absorbed Maoist ideology and by the late 1960's "it seemed as though everyone had a copy of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*" (Kelley and Betsy 7). Further examination of the late 1950's to the early 1970's reveals that Maoism was at the core of the black civil rights movement.

The African-American civil rights movement was born in a time when China was transforming from an agrarian society to a major world power. Black America watched from the sidelines as the Chinese, under the leadership of Mao Tse-Tung, broke away from the Soviet and US camps that were blanketing the international political scene. In awe of China's success, black leaders studied the Maoist model in great detail and used communism as a vehicle to advance their own cause. In 1963

they founded the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) in Philadelphia (Kelley and Betsy 14). According to Max Stanford, one of the founders, RAM “attempted to apply Marxism-Leninism Mao Tse-Tung thought” to the black situation (Stanford 197). Stanford went on to claim that the organization “was part of the vanguard of the world socialist revolution” (197). Some leaders even viewed the members of the organization to be an “all-black version of Mao’s Red Army” (Kelley and Betsy 17). Thus, RAM was not a revolution per se, but rather a subsidiary of a much larger liberation movement spearheaded by Maoist China. Similarly, the Black Panthers were born red. Huey P. Newton, the party’s founder, was well read on Marx and Lenin, but was particularly fond of Mao’s works. Newton himself said, “My conversion was complete when I read the four volumes of Mao Tse-Tung to learn more about the Chinese Revolution” (Newton 111). Following Mao, who adapted Marxism-Leninism to the cultural, social, and political realities of the Chinese, Newton adapted Maoism to the cultural, social, and political realities of the black people, eventually creating the revolutionary left-wing organization known as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (“Black Panther Party for Self-Defense”). Thus, both the Revolutionary Action Movement and the Black Panther Party were built around Maoism.

Furthermore, Maoism continued to resonate in the principles and operations of these two organizations. Comparisons between RAM’s “Code of Cadres,” a handbook of sorts, and *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*, the “Chinese Bible,” reveal remarkable similarities. For example, the code states that “A Revolutionary nationalist will unhesitatingly subordinate his personal interest to those of the vanguard” (Stanford 110), reflecting the Maoist virtue of selflessness and absolute commitment. In addition, RAM members were required to conform to ideals of order, discipline and restraint, consistent with the revolutionary ethics and moral transformation aspects of Maoism (“Interview: Robert Williams” 14). Similarly, Maoism was apparent within the daily operations of the Black Panther Party. The most significant effect this had on the party was that it encouraged women to play an active role in black liberation. Mao regarded women as “a vast reserve of labour power” that should “be tapped in the struggle to build a great socialist country” (Mao 298). Mao is also known for his famous quote “women hold up half the sky,” which is now proverbial within Chinese culture.

Mao’s dictums gave women a foothold in the party in a time when the black revolution was becoming increasingly masculine and even sexually repressive. At one point, Elaine Brown, chairperson of the party, stated, “The Black Panther Party acknowledges the progressive leadership of our Chinese comrades in all areas of revolution. Specifically, we embrace China’s correct recognition of the proper status of women as equal to that of men” (Brown 304). The party’s allegiance to such a controversial ideal is demonstrative of the prominence of Maoism within the organization.

In many ways, Maoism fathered the RAM and the Black Panther Party and, in effect, established the black civil rights movement. Maoism reared the revolution from birth and ushered it into the real world, where it shattered the preexisting notions of the black condition. Indirectly, Maoism changed the lives of African-Americans. Indirectly, Maoism changed America. When Mao laid down the foundations of modern China, he created a beacon of revolution, one that anyone can turn to regardless of ethnicity or national identity. For this reason, Mao’s legacy continues to live on, even 33 years after his death.

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Instructor: Jacqueline Sadashige; Writing Seminar: “Race and Popular Cinema”

Kenny Puk

Sugar, Free Market: The British Caribbean Relationship to Great Britain

More than a food or sweetener, sugar was a crucial part of economic systems of the 17th and 18th centuries. From its introduction to European diets as a spice to its ubiquitous presence on working-class tables, sugar has been both a commodity and a social phenomenon. One Sir Darby Thomas hailed sugar as the single greatest contributor to “the pleasure, glory and grandeur of England” (Ellis 82). Renowned anthropologist and author of *Sweetness and Power*, Sidney Mintz was the first to trace the social history of sugar and its impact on the wider world. Indeed, a sugar-free 18th-century economy would have been starkly different, but scholars disagree on how sugar influenced the British economy and capitalism’s development. Some argue that the sugar plantations led Europe towards capitalism by example. However, this simplistic view fails to capture how sugar plantations nourished a capitalist society in Britain without being capitalist themselves.

Those in opposition to a nuanced relationship between sugar plantations and Europe argue that the market identity and exchange between colony and colonizer were clear. From Karl Marx’s definition of capitalism, opponents derive the bourgeoisie and proletariat to be the slave-owners and slaves of the plantation system, respectively. Mintz draws clear connections between slaves and the working masses: “both produced; both consumed little of what they produced. Both were

divested of their tools” (Mintz 57). He argues that slaves are in effect the proletarian “producers divorced from the means of production” (Marx 738). Supporters of a simplistic connection argue that the bourgeoisie are the slave-owners. The historian Eugene Genovese writes in his 1965 *The Political Economy of Slavery* that “the planters were not mere capitalists; they were precapitalist, quasi-aristocratic” (24). Together the slaves and slave-owners form the class structure of Marx’s capitalist society, argues historian Selwyn Carrington, with the slave-owners oppressing the common laborer and leading a life of extravagance (119). As for the market exchange between the plantations and Europe, economist Jairus Banaji connects three economic spheres: “capitalist slave enterprises [sugar plantations] of the West Indies,” the “re-export trade [of sugar] in Europe,” and “the grain-exporting zones of eastern Europe” (Banaji 16). First, he shows the interdependence of the price levels in each region. Then, Banaji concludes that if the plantation systems of the Caribbean operated in a capitalist system, then eastern European estates must have received the idea as well (17)—that a capitalist Caribbean market directly caused the birth of capitalism in Europe.

The evidence that scholars like Mintz, Genovese, and Banaji lay out is valid. Both capitalism and the plantation system had an oppressor and the oppressed; the markets of the West Indies were inextricably rooted in those on the Continent. However, the simplistic analysis of the social classes does not reveal the irreconcilable differences between slaves and the working class. The proletariat is free; the slave is not. This gives rise to another main difference: the proletariat earns a wage, the slave nothing. A similar disjunction can be seen between the slave owner and the bourgeoisie. Many motivations above profit, production, and surplus value spurred on the slaveholder. For example, “the planter typically recoiled at the notions that profit should be the goal of life; that the approach to production and exchange should be internally rational and uncomplicated by social values [...] values antithetical to capitalism” (Genovese *World the Slaveholders Made* 28). At their best, these social values “constituted a rejection of the crass, vulgar, inhumane elements of capitalist society,” social values that slaveholders were prepared to defend at any cost (Genovese *The Political Economy of Slavery* 30). A Marxist class structure simplifies the tensions and contradictions of being a slave or slave owner that complicate the market identity of sugar

plantations.

The intricacies of market characterization proved that sugar plantations were not fully capitalist, but such a status does not exclude the plantations from incubating the financial and social basis of European capitalism. For example, sugar provided the high capital-investments demanded by tech-heavy industrial capitalism. At the end of the 17th century, the plantation trade and re-export of plantation goods accounted for a total of £720,000 in profit (Williams 53). Even slavery, one of the main distinguishing factors between a plantation system and capitalism, can be a driving force for capitalism. Britain demanded colonial commodities for wage laborers to refine, and the slave labor in the colonies met those demands. Thus, slavery, the world market, capitalism, and wage labor not only coexist but also influence each other in turn (Tomich 312).

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Instructor: Jane Kauer; Writing Seminar: "Eating Culture"

Avin Veerakumar

Democracy in the Age of the Attack Ad

Eerie, shifting pictures of a dark forest flood the screen. Shadows slink through the foliage. An urgent female voice breaks the silence: "In an increasingly dangerous world, even after the first terrorist attack on America, John Kerry and the liberals in Congress voted to *slash* America's intelligence operations by 6 billion dollars." A set of eyes leer from the shadows. "Cuts so deep, they would have weakened America's defenses." A hungry wolf pack emerges. "And weakness attracts those that are waiting to do America harm." The wolves fade into a sunlit office with a lone, solemn figure. "I'm George Bush, and I approve this message" (Museum of the Moving Image, 2004). Although this ad aired 6 years ago, it still raises relevant questions. Are political advertisements detrimental to society? Do they work against democracy? After all, democracy is usually understood as government by the people through the *educated* election of public officials. Watching a typical campaign ad, one might come to the conclusion that political advertising does not help anyone to come to an independent, educated decision. However, careful examination of political advertisements and their effect on the public shows otherwise; without these ads, the democratic process would be crippled. Political advertising strengthens democracy.

Those who oppose this view believe that political advertising impairs democracy because it does not encourage educated voting, but rather impulse voting. This impulse voting arises from our natural tendencies, a fact which politicians take advantage of. Psychologists

have demonstrated that humans are cognitive misers; we constantly try to conserve our “cognitive energy” by oversimplifying complex problems (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992). With this in mind, propagandists have long used simplistic persuasion devices to persuade large crowds of people who take comfort in “instinctive belief” instead of careful thought (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992; Le Bon, 1896; Trotter, 1917). For example, a typical political ad may depict a smiling candidate in jeans and a plaid button-down walking through a factory of steel workers. He might talk about the opposing candidate’s plan to raise taxes for working-class families. Through the 30-second attack ad, the politician has effectively provided a “cognitive shortcut” to decision-making for many working-class voters (Franz, Freedman, Goldstein, & Ridout, 2007). Without careful research on the policies of both parties, these voters are persuaded to vote for the smiling candidate in the steel factory. This candidate could be planning to outsource steel manufacturing jobs to cheaper labor in India, but the viewers would not know it. These advertisements do not encourage voting by educated decision-making, but voting by impulse. As a result, one might conclude that these ads work against democracy.

It is true that political advertising causes uneducated voting. However, political advertisements still strengthen democracy because—given the public’s lack of interest in politics—they encourage *reasonable* voting decisions. The public is able to come to these “reasonably rational” decisions because ads serve as “vital information supplements” for those who lack the motivation to learn about politics (Franz et al., 2007; Lippman, 1914). This is because once you strip away all of the dramatic music and finger pointing, these ads are usually focused on the important issues at hand. In a 2007 study led by Martin Gilens of Princeton University, researchers scrutinized 50 years of national voter data. They found that the correlation of voter choice with real policy considerations has increased, and the correlation with superficial considerations has declined (Gilens, Vavreck, & Cohen, 2007). These results were attributed to the “high level of policy content in paid ads” (Gilens et al., 2007). This policy content may not be the most intellectually rich material, but it suffices for a reasonable—albeit uneducated—vote. Without these ads, only those who have the both the time and desire to research campaign platforms on their own would

vote. The vast majority of people have other priorities in their lives. Political advertisements mitigate this dilemma and increase the number of political participants. And the more citizens that participate in the political process, the closer governments are to being truly elected “by the people.”

This discussion raises another question: are nations ruled by citizens through educated voting, or by politicians through propaganda? One might turn to Edward Bernays, considered the father of public relations, for an answer. During the early 20th century, Bernays conducted successful propaganda campaigns for the likes of Procter & Gamble, oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller, and Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Calvin Coolidge. In *Propaganda*, he argues that leaders fail when they follow the desires of the public. He believed leaders should not become “will-less servants” of the masses, because the crowd is unable to think rationally (Bernays, 1928; Le Bon, 1896). Although it would be ideal for every citizen to lead by casting an independent, informed vote, the reality of Western democracy must be recognized. Very few people want to take the time and energy to become the ideal democratic participant. So we submit to rule by the politician, with the illusion of rule by the people. It may not be utopia, but it works.

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Instructor: Rodger Legrand; Writing Seminar: “Propaganda”

Timothy Long

A Spoonful of Dirt Keeps Asthma Away

Imagine a beautiful garden. Let the intoxicating scents fill your nostrils, the humming of bees sooth your weary mind, the soft flap of butterfly wings tease your senses. See the bright flowers dancing in the sunlight. It is beautiful, is it not? Yet in this tender garden a monstrous war is raging. It is a war between plants. Two exotic flowers, bizarre yet exquisite, are having a war for supremacy. These dominant flowers outcompete everything else. This is their entire purpose, to outgrow and strangle weeds, leaving the gardener to tend other responsibilities. To this end they are planted almost everywhere in the garden; not a bed exists in which they cannot be found. Depending on the conditions, one will beat the other and dominate the flower bed. Even then, they do their job of keeping away weeds, but sometimes one will attack other plants or even harmless rocks.

Does it sound impossible, like something too grand for nature to create? Think again. These flowers go by the name T-helper cell 1 (Th1) and T-helper cell 2 (Th2). They are not flowers in a garden but immune cells in the body (Rook 1998). Asthma results when Th2 cells become more numerous than Th1 cells (Hamilton 1998). The current theory holds that exposure to soil-dwelling mycobacteria causes Th1 cells to proliferate and suppress Th2 cells, thus combating asthma. Too little exposure to dirt and the mycobacteria it carries can cause asthma. This theory leads to a conundrum. Are current hygiene practices of excessive cleanliness ill-founded? The cause of asthma may well be too much

hygiene, but that does not mean hygiene is wrong. Instead, a new type of vaccine is needed (Rook 1998). If the immune system is not receiving the mycobacteria it needs, vaccines can be used to restore the balance of T-helper cells.

Th2 cells' role in asthma is well understood. In a normal, healthy adult, Th2 cells spend their time ensuring that no parasites enter the body through the gut. If they find a parasite, they trigger a sequence of events that leads to the release of antibodies, toxic compounds, histamines, and mucus. Any parasite caught in this brutal attack will be killed and washed from the gut. However, this process also describes the body's reaction to allergens. Instead of attacking parasites, the Th2 cells react to harmless substances such as pollen (Hamilton 1998). The mystery is to determine exactly why Th2 cells were reacting to allergens. Solving this mystery would allow the creation of a vaccine for asthma. The first clue came in 1994 when Rook discovered that exposure to mycobacteria promotes Th1 activity in the area surrounding injection (Rook 1994). It was as if the gardener added a fertilizer that only one plant could use. Further studies corroborated this result. Exposure to mycobacteria and some other Th1-stimulating diseases tended to cause long-term promotion of the Th1 cells. Th1 cells suppress Th2 cells, so more Th1 cells mean fewer Th2 cells. This relationship implies that the immune system has evolved "expecting" to be exposed to mycobacteria. When its expectations are not met, the immune system malfunctions (Rook 1998).

Now that the relationship between mycobacteria and asthma is understood, something can be done about it. The Han team's research showed that inhaling live mycobacteria can stop an asthma attack in mice. Certain compounds produced by mycobacteria can achieve the same results. These compounds are isolated from the culture used to grow *Mycobacteria tuberculosis*, the bacterium that causes tuberculosis. The culture-derived compounds contain no bacteria, which reduces the chance of bad reactions (Han 2010). Use of these compounds could lead to therapeutic uses. Hospitals in particular would find these treatments attractive as an alternative to intravenous injections of adrenalin derivatives, which often cause the patient to be exhausted afterwards. If inhaled mycobacteria can retrain the immune system in one area, injected ones should affect the whole immune system. Following this

logic leads to a new series of vaccines. These vaccines would train the immune system to produce the correct amount of Th1 and Th2 cells. The mycobacteria continue to “educate” the immune system all throughout life, so booster shots would be necessary (Rook 1998). Patients at risk for asthma would be able to be vaccinated against the condition the same way people are vaccinated against tetanus.

The mycobacteria theory is far from complete. Exactly why mycobacteria trigger the Th1 system over the Th2 system remains unknown (Rook 1998). Several years of testing and studies are needed to fill this gap in the theory. Pharmaceutical companies will not consider making a mycobacteria vaccine until the base theory is well developed and tested. Even then, the vaccine will still have to undergo FDA approval, which can take years. At least 10 years of work is needed before these vaccines can become reality. Until pharmaceutical companies begin making the vaccines, patients must choose between suffering from asthma or drinking water that has been poured through soil (Hamilton 1998). Without the vaccines, a spoonful of dirt may be the only way to keep asthma away.

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Instructor: Jo Ann Caplin; Writing Seminar: “The Gene Factor”

Kimberly Kuoch

Useless Affection

Within the South African confines of deep ethnic segregation, myriad ethnic groups attempted to define themselves in the confused scramble for political power that occurred through the last half-century. The most notable group was the Inkatha Freedom Party, a political party propelled forward by an ardent Zulu nationalism under the guidance of its zealous leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The burgeoning Inkatha leadership recognized the cultural ties that Zulu citizens of South Africa felt towards the image of the once proud Zulu king Shaka Zulu, and by captivating this nationalistic energy secured the loyalty of thousands of Zulu men and women. But despite the seemingly obvious fervor incited by appeals to a glorious Zulu past, Inkatha leaders failed to move these Zulu people towards its larger goal of political hegemony. While ethnic loyalties can be encouraged by nostalgic attraction towards a historical image or notion, political groups cannot and should not rely on fragile sentiment to enact legitimate change. The cultural affection that Inkatha kindled was too weak to yield political success.

It is certainly true that the use of historical images and characters can incite ethnic loyalty, and Inkatha successfully inspired this. In part, this is because historical representations can imply more than the straightforward history with which it is associated. As explained by Carolyn Hamilton in her book *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention*, metaphorical representations involve not only the narrative with which they are

directly linked, but also the gathered and twisted perceptions of the representation itself. For example, “The potency of the symbol of Shaka in South Africa today is neither the consequence of how great Shaka really was... nor the result simply of clever political manipulations in the present by Zulu nationalists. It is a product of the historical association within it of indigenous conceptions of sovereignty and the practices of colonial domination.”¹ During its bid for power, Inkatha used the imagery drawn from cultural symbols to forecast a vision of past glory into the future. By grounding political dreams in nationalist passion, Inkatha Party leadership created a feeling of loyalty and shared hope with its political aims and Zulu tradition. Followers went so far as to dress in traditional Zulu garb, cheering in leather and feathers the reign of Zulu self-determination. And this seemed successful: Inkatha played a major role in the final years of apartheid, almost preventing its end to maintain their cultural power. Inkatha’s use of the image of Shaka did captivate the Zulu masses, acquiring perceptible political support.

But while these historical images did indeed keep cultural sentiment simmering, the passions that they cultivated were not enough to incite the concrete action for which Inkatha so aspired. The aims of the Inkatha Party rested on politicizing manhood and mobilizing male support-and while Inkatha successfully galvanized Zulu men to take arms, social divisions between these men ultimately fragmented Inkatha’s support group.² As a politics of nationalism, it failed to unify the Zulu people as an ethnic nation. The provincial elections of 1994 confirmed these divisions among ethnic Zulus: in Kwa-Zulu Natal, a province in which 90 percent of the African population speaks the Zulu language, the Inkatha Freedom Party barely secured more than half of the Zulu vote. Local elections two years later confirmed that Inkatha support remained firmly rural.³ Inkatha ultimately lost support to its rival the African National Congress, to which upper classes of Zulu could feel a connection. Despite the ethnic loyalty inspired by Inkatha’s call to the

¹ 14 Carolyn Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 214

² Themba Waetjen, *Workers and Warriors: Masculinity and the Struggle for Nation in South Africa* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 13

³ Ibid. 29

masculine Zulu tradition, the Zulu people did not politically unite in the manner that the Inkatha Party so envisioned.

In his speeches Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi describes the Inkatha Freedom Party as the guardian of the Zulu essence, the group that would bring together the Zulu people as an ethnic and political nation.⁴ But despite its ability to valorize Zulu masculinity, the Zulu population remained fragmented and divided on the basis of socioeconomic concerns. Perhaps Shaka Zulu never could speak to the daily concerns of his cultural descendents, and a call to this antiquated king could not translate into modern-day life. As Violet Sibusisiwe Makanya of the Inhlengano yokuHlanzeka, or Purity League, exclaimed, “It is useless to think that the days of Tshaka will ever return, they have passed forever and those who are still speaking of the good old times are wasting their time.”⁵ But Inkatha’s inability to capture political support doubts the capacity for appeals to historical or cultural origins to justify political effort at all. Ethnic loyalties may justify wearing traditional garb at the yearly Shaka Day ceremony, but they cannot garner concrete political support.

Instructor: Sara Byala: Writing Seminar: “Africa in the Western Imagination”

⁴ Patrick Harries, “Imagery, Symbolism and Tradition in a South African Bantustan: Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Inkath and Zulu History,” *History and Theory* 32, no. 4 (1993): 105

⁵ Paul la Hausse de Lalouvière, *Restless Identities: Signatures of Nationalism, Zulu Ethnicity and History in the Lives of Petros Lamula* (c.1881-1948) and Lymon Maling (1889-c.1936) (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2000), 67

Ezekiel Sexauer

A New Generation for Europe?

In 1985, in Schengen, Luxembourg, aboard the riverboat Princess Marie Astrid, members of the European Union agreed to eliminate all border controls along their shared internal frontiers. Today, thanks to the Schengen Agreement, a person can travel virtually anywhere in Europe without having to worry about passports or visas. In addition, Europeans can in large part live, work, and study in any European Union country. With increased interactions among Europeans across the continent, European leaders hope that Europeans-especially those in the eighteen to forty year-old age range-have begun to scrap their national and regional identities in favor of a common continental identity. To memorialize this hope, they have given this new generation of Europeans a variety of names, from “Generation E” to “Eurogeneration” to “Generation Europe.” No matter the name, it is said that this generation “represents a new breed of European: a person who considers the entire continent-not just one country or city-to be ‘home’” (Reid 199). As the beliefs and ideals of these young citizens of Europe begin to converge, national policymakers will find it more natural to work together with their fellow European nations to create policies on which all of Europe will agree. This common identity will lead to an ever-closer union of states that will secure Europe as the dominant world power once again. Yet, it seems that in reality Europe still has a long way to go until it can truly say that its citizens share a collective identity.

A quick glance at polls of young European adults supports this

assertion and provides a stark dose of reality to those who see the promised land of European identity around the corner. One poll conducted by *TIME Europe* found that 75% of 1,225 people between the ages of 21 and 35 in Britain, France, Germany, and Italy identified themselves with their native countries more than with Europe as a whole (“Way We Are” 40). Meanwhile, data from the European Union’s own polls add Austria, Finland, Greece, and Sweden to the list of countries in which a clear majority of people does not feel any sense of European identity. The truth is that lifestyles and values of young Europeans remain diverse from country to country. These young people tend to feel more like their elders, or to put it more frankly, “a young Dane resembles an adult Dane more than a young Frenchman” (Galland). Indeed, when asked whether they feel more European than their parents do, young Europeans did not respond with any more pro-European feeling than their elders did. In fact, in some places, the eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds are *more* unreceptive to a unified Europe than even their parents were.

In support of their claims for the existence of “Generation E,” proponents of a collective European identity like to point to the Eurovision Song Contest as a “transnational social event” that connects people across the continent (Khazaleh). The Eurovision Song Contest is essentially Miss America and *American Idol* combined. Each European country, together with some non-European countries like Israel, sends a contestant to perform a song in the Eurovision contest. Wildly popular, the contest is broadcast across the continent and at the end of the show, people all around Europe phone in votes for their favorite act. Much like *American Idol*, this contest purports to unify a diverse group of people through entertainment. But many people see something different taking place. As Marijana Mitrovi_ argues, for example, the state-sponsored performances seem to “exoticise difference” and create “something that never existed in the first place” (173). Instead of the Eurovision Song Contest bringing Europe together and celebrating the continent’s “European-ness,” it has done the opposite by highlighting the differences in identities between nations and perhaps even creating more nationalistic identities than there would have been. As *The Baltic Times* points out, the contest “underscores regionalism more than it does a common European identity” (“Eurovision”).

So, can Europe survive without “Generation E”? If a collective common European identity does not exist, is the “European project” doomed to failure? Will national differences once again end the past half-century of peace that Europe has enjoyed? The answer to these questions is a simple no. The European Union is primarily an economic agreement. While this trade union may encounter roadblocks now and then, such as the recent euro crisis around Greek government finances, the truth remains that it is an economic power with which to be reckoned. The other components of the EU, such as the European Parliament among others, have yet to take on the significance that the economic component has. Secondly, identity is complex and to speak of a single identity for any region or state is simply an illusion. Even in the United States, there is no single identity; no one would deny that a Texan and a New Yorker think of themselves differently, nor would one deny that they still identify themselves as Americans. Yet, in Europe there seems to be a belief that adopting a pan-European identity necessitates the renunciation of one’s own national identity. Only when Europeans find a way to be both national citizens and Europeans will a truly pan-European identity finally emerge.

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Instructor: Michael Burri; Writing Seminar: “European and American Identities”

Brent Ginsberg

Old Is New Again

In an age dominated by the iPod, the experience of listening to music has been reduced from a once sacred ritual to an apathetic practice. Enjoying music was a singular event at one point, which commanded attention and respect. However, with the advent of the cassette, compact discs and MP3s, the custom of listening to music was quickly degraded to a hasty experience devoid of any real appreciation. However, by taking a look at recent recording industry statistics, it is clear that the tides are changing and a once near-extinct musical format is again making waves, appearing on the radar of music lovers everywhere. Look at most major record labels, and one will find that these companies are now releasing vinyl editions of all their CD releases. Additionally, in most underground music scenes, the collection of rare and limited vinyl releases is becoming common practice among fans. Vinyl is back.

The revival of the vinyl record can be attributed to its clear advantage in audio quality. Today, the iPod generation is accustomed to digitally-compressed music files in the form of CDs or MP3s. The digital compression allows for greater diversity in volume but compromises sonic quality. The listener is therefore left with a thinner- or tinnier-sounding piece of music. Contrastingly, music on LPs, EPs, and 7-inch records cannot be compressed to this extent and therefore has a superior and fuller sound. That enhanced sound is generally described as warm, nuanced, and precise. Listening to an album on a turntable offers a completely different experience than does hearing a song through the ear

buds of an iPod. I, myself a recent convert to the LP format, can attest to the heightened pleasure of enjoying the tender notes produced by the grazing of needle against vinyl. The soulful crooning of John Coltrane's tenor saxophone is unparalleled when appreciated in its original long-playing format. The reverberations of his buzzing reed can be felt at one's core, a sensation that an MP3 cannot reproduce.

In addition to sound quality, vinyl's recent rise in popularity can also be accredited to the superior aesthetics of record albums that trump those of the CD or MP3 formats. CDs and MP3s offer a homogenous experience with little opportunity to create distinctive art. In contrast, the vinyl format offers great diversity in terms of artwork, color and packaging. One of the best examples of this is the market of hardcore and indie rock vinyl. Musicians in these particular genres are nearly obligated, and always expected by consumers, to provide special and limited edition vinyl versions of their releases. These limited edition versions come in a wide range of colors and designs, accompanied by exclusive artwork. These collectible editions of music releases are unique and cannot be mimicked in the CD or MP3 formats. A double gatefold 12-inch record on orange vinyl, for example, is a piece of art that is incomparable to a hand-held plastic disc or a digital file.

While the vinyl format offers superior sound quality and aesthetics, the digital format has a clear edge in portability and convenience. In an on-the-go world, vinyl simply isn't the practical choice for most consumers. The size and accessibility of iPod technology allows any individual to enjoy music instantly at any time in almost any situation. In a time where cell phones, Blackberrys and e-mail have accelerated human existence, vinyl has been rendered obsolete. Records are artifacts from a period of history that moved at a slower pace. It wasn't uncommon for people to sit down in their homes to listen to an album in its entirety with no other distractions. Today we must constantly multitask and so music devices have evolved to complement such a lifestyle. Perhaps the resurgence of vinyl can be attributed to a widespread case of nostalgia. In the high-stress, frantic world of today, people are looking for any reminder of days past. No matter what the motivation, it is clear that vinyl offers a niche for audiophiles and an eclectic musical audience.

Instructor: Jennifer Noakes; Writing Seminar: "Music in the City"

Vani Sastri

Not So Happily Ever After

She's beautiful, wears dazzling clothes, sports a sparkly tiara and is omnipresent in the world of young girls...She is the Disney Princess, a member of The Walt Disney Company's multi-billion-dollar lifestyle brand. From the movies to the interactive website featuring over 250,000 merchandise products, the Disney Princess affects millions of girls every day. While Disney proudly proclaims, "Each Disney Princess character has a unique story that empowers girls to imagine and live their very own fairy tales," the messages sent through the Princess movies are not as wholesome as Disney would like us to believe (Business Wire). The Disney Princess succumbs to the patriarchy of society.

Admittedly, at first glance, the Disney Princess appears to have come a long way from the two original and rather spineless Princesses, Snow White (1937) and Cinderella (1950). These two characters represent an era when Disney portrayed the female ideal as a helpless damsel in distress waiting for her prince to rescue her from her tangle. In contrast, the modern-day Disney Princess is a go-getter, ambitious and independent. This change in the Disney Princess began a decade ago with Belle (*Beauty and the Beast* [BB] 1999), who is, "for all intents and purposes, a Disney feminist" (Jeffords). She is not afraid to be different, and "want[s] adventure in the great wide somewhere" (BB). She ostracizes herself through her love of reading and her avoidance of her suitor Gaston. Belle's courage especially shines through when she

takes her father's place as the Beast's prisoner. Tiana (*Princess and the Frog* [PF] 2009), Disney's latest princess, is a Black lower-class girl who works tirelessly, sans guidance or support, to achieve her dream of starting her own restaurant. Despite discouragement from men, like Buford the chef, and even her mother, who admonishes her for working too hard and not finding her "prince," Tiana steadfastly believes, "The only way to get what you want in this world is through hard work" (PF). Tiana and Belle both represent today's independent Princesses.

Despite Disney's apparent growth, its patriarchal message constantly undermines whatever feminism exists in its stories. One critic asserts, "The mask [of femininity] is worn to gain authority, or power, or respect, but underneath all that, a set of patriarchal codes remains unmasked" (Sumera). This patriarchy is evident in nearly all of Disney's films and exacerbates the lack of true feminism. For instance, the sole mark of Belle's feminism is her love of books, yet the novels she reads are about romance and princes-hardly anything intellectually stimulating. In all, her tale implies, "If a woman is only pretty and sweet enough, she can transform an abusive man into a prince" (Maio). Her "courageous" actions, though they appear to be manifestations of her independence, ultimately serve patriarchy. Even Tiana, after working tirelessly all her life, is willing to throw it all away for Prince Naveen. The message is that a girl cannot achieve happiness on her own; even if she has a career, it is worth sacrificing for Prince Charming. This theme is repeatedly driven home in every Disney Princess movie. For example, Deborah Ross illustrates Ariel's similar fate, explaining, "Yes, she gets her legs, she makes her stand, she marches-but only down the aisle to marry some guy named Eric" (6). Additionally, every Disney Princess has the perfect body-doe-eyed with a tiny waist, they all represent Barbie dolls in various skin tones. The message being sent through this is that to be happy in life, one must have the perfect looks, the perfect body, and of course, the perfect boy.

Despite the apparent evolution of the Disney Princesses, the protagonists remain painfully tethered to the ties of a patriarchal society. They continue to identify with male authority instead of seeking their own empowerment. These movies seem to uniformly endorse the sentiment that, "in the end, a good-looking boyfriend remains the truest measure of feminine happiness and success" (Maio). Nearly every

single Disney film ends with a wedding. There ought to be more than one storyline for girls because if Disney does not empower its female characters, how can it empower its young female audiences? I wish that these Princesses had stronger voices and would send a more positive message. By breaking from the chains of patriarchy, Disney Princesses will be true role models for generations to come.

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Instructor: Jacqueline Sadashige; Writing Seminar: "Gotta Dance"

Carolyn Vinnicombe

Leonardo and Francois' Dynamic Relationship

In the last years of his life, Leonardo da Vinci sought comfort and stability. It's no surprise, then, that when King François I of France offered him both, he jumped at the proposition. Although Leonardo was obligated to serve François, he began to take enjoyment in doing so. He soon cultivated a strong bond with the young French king and became the monarch's advisor, friend, and mentor. In return, the King gave Leonardo a position that allowed him to leave a lasting social legacy through his influence on him. History proves that "Leonardo and François were a team: they complemented each other" (Wilkinson, 181). Leonardo da Vinci and King François I of France shared a friendship that shaped the intellectual development of France.

For Leonardo, François' friendship not only gave him a comfortable living, but also the chance to leave a lasting legacy outside of the art world. The pair met in Italy in 1516, "just after the battle of Melegnano. The friendship ripened quickly" (Wilkinson, 179-180). François, anxious to bring a taste of the Italian Renaissance to France, sought to woo Leonardo into moving to his castle at Amboise in France's Loire Valley. Once in France, Leonardo enjoyed lavish accommodations at the Clos Lucé manor, located adjacent to the king's castle, and "a very substantial salary of 2000 écus d'or per annum" (Kemp, 345). Leonardo's salary and living situation allowed him the luxury of being able to ponder life's mysteries without the burden of filling commissions. Given the freedom of his new situation, Leonardo was at liberty to discuss science,

art, philosophy, canals and locks, fortifications, and architecture with King François. In fact, François regularly used an underground tunnel from his quarters in the castle to Clos Lucé when he wished to discuss something with Leonardo. It was said that “King Francis... took such pleasure in hearing him talk that he would only on a few days of the year deprive himself of his company” (Kemp, 347). The pair spent hours and hours in deep discussion, the aging Leonardo teaching and the young King learning. While Leonardo enjoyed the vibrant François’s company, he also appreciated the young king’s power and enjoyed the responsibilities that came with being a king’s tutor. Leonardo himself wrote, “Alexander and Aristotle were teachers of one another. Alexander possessed the power that allowed him to conquer the world. Aristotle had great learning which enabled him to embrace all the learning acquired by other philosophers” (Bramly, 401-402). Here, the aging Leonardo compares his relationship with François to that of Alexander and Aristotle. He saw his counsel to the king as a medium through which he could leave a lasting legacy.

For François, Leonardo’s guidance was invaluable. By the time he reached the last years of his life, Leonardo knew a great deal about many diverse subjects, and his counsel helped to enrich François’ work as a monarch. It was noted that “[t]he king enjoyed his conversation, judging him to be the most cultivated man alive and a ‘great philosopher’” (Bramly, 401). One example of Leonardo’s influence on François is the king’s campaign to bring the arts to war-obsessed France. The young king became the first French monarch to greatly expand the royal library and open it up to scholars around the world. This idea for the fluid sharing of knowledge took its root in Leonardo’s belief in the importance of a classical education, something he was denied as a youth. François further demonstrated the value he placed on Leonardo’s opinions when he brought him to the city of Romorantin to draw up plans for his new castle there. The pair had been speaking about Leonardo’s vision of the ideal city, one that used canals to create a central flow of water to increase hygiene. With its vast rivers and location on the riverbank, Romorantin was the perfect site to construct Leonardo’s ideal city. Though the castle was never fully realized, Leonardo’s designs had substantial impact on French architecture. François, a famous builder of castles, constructed the library wing of the Blois castle, whose exterior

staircase features Leonardo’s double helix design, “based on the design of a nautilus shell” (Clark, 158).

Though Leonardo and François were bound together by contract, they grew to become the perfect kind of friends. Each shaped the other’s life in different ways. Leonardo inspired François to reach new heights in his statesmanship and his advocacy of the arts. In turn, François empowered Leonardo with confidence and the promise of leaving a lasting legacy through a powerful pupil. In short, providence brought Leonardo and François together in 1516. The two became so close that members of the French court claimed François cradled the dying Leonardo in arms as he took his final breaths. François helped Leonardo end his life in peace and Leonardo helped him begin his life as a king.

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Instructor: Jo Ann Caplin; Writing Seminar: “Da Vinci: Artist and Scientist”

Justin Charlap

This Essay Brought to You by Nike

You may not have noticed, but product placement is rampant in movies and television shows. The ubiquity of branded items appearing in Hollywood films without audience awareness is due to the ingenuity of producers and marketers. Product placement, which involves the use of brand name products in feature films, has been utilized since the film industry's inception (albeit in a much humbler fashion than the current practice). Placements range from something as simple as a logo snapshot in the background of a scene to something that is a central focus in the script itself. Although further research monitoring the direct effects of product placement on consumer behavior still needs to be conducted, billions of dollars are spent on product placement each year. After the success of Hershey's Reese's Pieces in the blockbuster *E.T.*, when candy sales jumped by 85% after the movie's debut, marketers eagerly embraced the use of product placement to advertise their goods (Wasko). Despite the purported benefits of product placement to companies inserting their branded items into films, there are many downsides for viewers such as deceptive advertising and the use of ethically charged products targeted toward susceptible children. These downsides outweigh the benefits to advertisers and need to be addressed, monitored, or banned. The use of product placement in the media should not be allowed to continue in its current form in America.

Proponents for the use of product placements flaunt its supposed benefits. They claim that it creates a "win-win" situation for the

marketers and producers. The marketers create positive associations between their products and hopefully successful films (such as James Bond's use of an Aston Martin), while the producers receive much-needed money to cover their expensive production costs. This helps the studio (which is often a for-profit enterprise) produce more movies that the American people have come to love. Another purported benefit of the use of branded products in a film is that "such placements provide an element of reality by portraying real products in realistic settings" (Wasko). People expect to see real products used on screen just as they see them everywhere in their own daily lives.

Most of the benefits of product placement are on the production side of the equation, while the negative effects impact the viewers. Some argue that product placement is a form of deceptive advertising involving subliminal-like messaging (Gould). There is legal precedence for the prohibition of subliminal advertising in films if audience members are not consciously aware of it. Viewers do not expect to see advertisements when watching a film, so some critics advocate for the use of warning messages before and after films and even some non-intrusive warnings at the bottom of the screen during the film. Another issue is the placement of ethically charged products such as cigarettes, alcohol, and guns in Hollywood films. While regulations have been established to prohibit the paid placement of such ethically charged products, their use in films still exists. When these products are glamorized, they may influence unsuspecting viewers. Studies have shown that teenagers who are exposed to tobacco products in films are more likely to begin smoking (Weaver). Thus, even though such placements may not be paid for, they should still be banned. A further issue with product placement is that, unlike television advertisements that viewers can either ignore or simply fast forward through using today's DVR technology, movie watchers cannot skip over these placements without directly affecting their viewing experience of the film. Lastly, product placements can affect an audience's viewing pleasure when there is "too much repetition [or] obvious commercial motivations" (Russell). When placements become too obtrusive they distract and annoy the viewer from enjoying the film.

As investment in product placement continues to soar, controls need to be set in place to monitor its effects on audiences and the industry itself. It has reached the point where producers are altering scripts

merely to fit in a specific product and reap the monetary profits, changing the original artistic vision for the sake of compensation. Movies are becoming extended merchandising pitches. The movie industry is no longer focused on merely providing recreational entertainment; it now has a capitalistic agenda, and saturates its films with product placements for additional profits. It is hard for producers to resist the temptation of easy money for their films, but with legal statutes in place or a regulatory board it will be easier for them to resist. Just Do It(r).

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Instructor: Jacqueline Sadashige; Writing Seminar: "Gotta Dance"

Daniel Knowlton

Geometric Transformations: Leonardo's Animation

When studying Leonardo da Vinci's drawings and diagrams, it is easy to recognize his fascination with movement. The fluid lines depicting water and hair found in many of his drawings convey a defined sense of motion. In his book *The Science of Leonardo*, Fritjof Capra begins to analyze how the study of transformations shaped Leonardo's art. In his earliest attempts to study these metamorphoses, Leonardo focused on transforming simple geometric shapes from one shape to another, but as he progressed, he was able to apply his studies to a wide variety of natural processes including turbulent streams of water. Through his development of transformations, Leonardo captured the essence of animation in his drawings.

Leonardo used simple transformations of geometry to convey movement and animation. During the time that he spent with mathematician Luca Pacioli in Milan, he developed a large interest in topology. Leonardo was able to explore how shapes could be transformed to create new shapes (Capra 126). The goal of the transformations was to be able to change the shape of an object while preserving its mass and contiguity. Leonardo, like other topologists, sought to find "a one-to-one correspondence between the points of the original figure and the points of the transformed figure" (Kline 1158). By understanding how shapes could be transformed while maintaining this one-to-one correspondence,

Leonardo could accurately portray the motion of fluid bodies and give the illusion of animation. Unlike Modern Realism, which focuses on a static moment in time, Leonardo's view of realism is stretched to convey the motion of a figure over time. Computer animator E. H. Blake explains that Modern Realism "is dismissively defined to be 'like a photograph.'" However, in depicting movement and motion, "the ultimate act of perception should inform *all* stages of image synthesis" (Blake 401). This idea of portraying many stages of motion and perception in a single image is evident throughout Leonardo's work.

Once he had mastered geometric transformations, Leonardo employed them to depict the motion of natural processes. In his studies of water, he sought to determine how the movement of the water was analogous to his transformations. "Leonardo describes by word and illustration the formation of eddies when water passes swiftly through a narrow opening into a wider space" (Keele 144-45). Water's ability to take the shape of any container it is placed in fascinated Leonardo. Transformations allowed him to depict the motion of the water as it created eddies while at the same time accounting for water's many shapes and forms. Leonardo applied his knowledge of topology to the volume of water so that he could track the water's movement. In topology, an object "can be deformed into and is topologically the same as a circle or a square, but it is not topologically the same as a figure eight" (Kline 1158). As an extension of the idea of topology, Leonardo demonstrated that the human body must also follow topological rules. He understood that only certain motions would be possible since the points of an object cannot change relative locations. As a body moves, the individual pieces may change distances and angles between them, but the same points are always adjacent to one another. Leonardo's notebooks contain many drawings in which the artist depicts the human body going through a series of motions. With a foundation in topology and geometric transformations, the multiple positions that Leonardo depicts give the illusion of movement and demonstrate his ability to animate still images.

Of all the aspects of Leonardo's depiction of motion, perhaps the most interesting aspect is the similarity to modern-day computer animation. When thinking of Leonardo, the age of computer animation appears to be a distant subject, but in reality many of the processes that he used to depict motion are still used today in animation. In modern

animation, "A satisfied shape blending should create the natural and smooth transition between the source and destination shapes and generate the intermediate ones that preserve the appearances and geometric properties of the input shapes" (Yang 414). These are the exact properties that Leonardo sought to preserve with his transformations. Furthermore, both modern animation and Leonardo's use of transformation in his drawings have a rich foundation in simple geometry. Modern animators base their animations on the manipulation of simple polygons. Likewise, Leonardo combined simple geometric shapes to create complex motions. Centuries before animation fully developed as an art form, Leonardo captured the essence of motion in his works by unifying the science of transformations and the art of drawing.

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Instructor: Jo Ann Caplin; Writing Seminar: "Leonardo: Scientist and Artist"

Ali Aziz

Self-Inflicted Barriers

Put yourself in a glass crystal ball. Flanked from all sides by never-ending curvature, you see real images, real experiences, and other people outside of that crystal, but nothing is ever made tangible due to the ubiquitous physical barrier. Desperately trying to find a way out, you frantically bang against the crystal ball, losing all notion of serenity. Just as glass is an amorphous solid with molecules arranged in disorganized, chaotic arrays, your feelings of anger, desire, and ultimate frustration are diffracted in infinite directions, characterized by incoherency and irrationality. Now internalize this radical idea-the physical barrier is just a figment of your own imagination, a major part of a bad nightmare, but you fail to wake up. . . This scenario defines social anxiety disorder, a condition which, according to licensed psychiatrist Dr. David A. Clark of the University of Florida, “is a marked and persistent apprehension and nervousness about social situations due to an exaggerated fear of negative evaluation by others” (2010). Scientists agree that most people with this disorder have a slight difference in the serotonin transporter gene on chromosome 17 of the human genome (Ridley, 1999). But the issue of how to treat these patients is rather complex. For several years, the scientific world has been divided between whether social anxiety disorder should be treated by medications or by cognitive behavioral therapy. The latter method is a sophisticated form of psychotherapy that encourages the patient to think about the mental barriers resulting from social anxiety and to formulate qualitative ways to combat these

factors. Currently, the average human being usually sees medication as the best solution for most medical problems. But cognitive behavioral therapy, which uses logic and persuasion rather than medications with potential side effects, has shown promising results. Though the scientific community has established the validity of both methods, patients should be treated for social anxiety disorder with cognitive behavioral therapy rather than with medicine.

Not everyone, and certainly not every scientist, agrees with this viewpoint. As opposed to cognitive behavioral therapy, medications directly address the biological complexity of social anxiety disorder. The disorder involves hyperactivity of the amygdala, the part of the brain which is associated with the serotonin transporter gene. According to Dr. Michael Platt from the Duke Institute for Brain Sciences, “monkeys and humans with social anxiety disorder have at least one short [serotonin transporter] gene (S/L), and those with extreme cases of social anxiety disorder generally have two short genes (S/S)” (2009). These short genes cause decreased serotonin release into the extracellular environment. Serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SRIs) such as Prozac and duloxetine are the primary clinical therapies for increasing serotonin levels in the blood, and they have been shown to be extremely effective in reducing social anxiety. Harold van Megen, a psychiatrist at the University Hospital Utrecht in Ermelo, Netherlands, reports that “through experimentation of 26 human subjects with social anxiety disorder, 83% responded effectively to SRI treatment” (1997). Cognitive behavioral therapy, on the other hand, does not directly address any biochemical factors that cause social anxiety disorder; therefore, it can be validly hypothesized that cognitive behavioral therapy is just as effective as highly sophisticated witchcraft. One can say that unlike cognitive behavioral therapy, a primarily external way to combat an internal biological problem, medications act within the body and effectively target the source.

Although cognitive behavioral therapy may seem like fragmented voodoo, it can also, like medication, combat social anxiety disorder by increasing serotonin levels. Through a process called “role-play feedback,” the therapy attacks the disorder’s biochemical factors by utilizing videotaped scenarios to challenge social threat cognitions. In a case study supported by Dr. Aaron Beck, emeritus professor at

University of Pennsylvania, a client named Carol rated her anxiety while making a presentation in front of her coworkers at 90/100. Carol's therapist, after video-recording many of these conferences, showed her that "others seemed to understand what she was saying at past meetings as indicated by their comments after she spoke...when she is speaking, no one looks embarrassed or disapproving; they seem to be paying attention." Taking this analysis a step further, the therapist explained to Carol that the consequences of her speaking in front of her coworkers were slight-she felt an escalation in anxiety and discomfort, but there were no life-changing negative consequences because people didn't change the way they treated her. The last part of the process involved the therapist decatastrophizing Carol's thought process by reasoning that the worst-case scenario is Carol having a panic attack and subsequently excusing herself from the meeting. After role-play feedback, Carol "rerated her feelings of anxiety at 40/100, much less severely than the original threat interpretation" (Beck, 2010). Because cognitive behavioral therapy attacks social anxiety by pragmatically and interactively confronting a social situation, it pierces the heart of anxious feelings and ultimately brings more confidence to the socially anxious victim. It is a common fact even among premedical students that confidence increases serotonin levels; therefore, cognitive behavioral therapy can cause the same effect as medicine without having unwanted side effects, such as migraines and mood disorders. In a randomized placebo-controlled trial, 61 patients with social phobia were treated with cognitive therapy and Prozac. Dr. David M. Clark, the leader of this trial at the Center for Anxiety Disorder and Trauma, noted that "at 8 weeks mid-treatment and then 16 weeks post-treatment, cognitive therapy was superior to the fluoxetine [Prozac] and placebo groups. Furthermore, the effects of cognitive therapy were quite specific to social anxiety given that the three groups did not differ at post-treatment on general mood measures" (2003). Thus, it appears that among doctors, cognitive behavioral therapy is considered the most effective approach for treating social anxiety disorder.

Ultimately, cognitive behavioral therapy has not only emerged as an extremely viable method for treating social anxiety disorder, but it has also become the popular approach to solving various psychiatric problems. In many medical fields, however, the scientific hype continues

to surround only biochemical techniques. One such technique is genetic engineering, a process where snips of genes are inserted into the human genome to increase resistance to certain tumors, chronic conditions such as diabetes and hyperinsulinism, and other life-threatening diseases (Silver, 1998). While such biological treatments focus solely on the physical aspects of DNA, methods such as cognitive behavioral therapy take us beyond the human body, forcing us to look at the disorder from a highly macroscopic point of view. The juxtaposition between the outlooks of fields such as psychiatry and other fields of the medical world is incredible, and it raises a crucial question: in what direction will scientists channel their energy in the future? Will we be increasing the magnification of our electron and transmission microscopes? Or will we throw the magnifying glass away and make science more qualitatively based than ever before? Don't be intimidated by the crystal ball of scientific uncertainty that surrounds us all. Look optimistically toward the future, and in due course, the crystal will dissipate on its own.

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Instructor: Jo Ann Caplin; Writing Seminar: "The Gene Factor"

Danielle Swanner

Responses to the Whorfian Hypothesis

Zen, a school of Buddhism, proposes that what is more important than theoretical knowledge is direct, experiential knowledge gained through meditation. The practice of meditation represents an example of thought that is linguistically inexplicable, that is deeper than semantic thought, but at a higher sense of awareness. In this sense, thoughts lack the ability to shape words, but what about the ability of words to shape thought? Linguistic determinism is the theory that individuals' experiences and thoughts are shaped by the grammatical structures and available vocabulary of the language they use. According to Benjamin Lee Whorf, these various linguistic patterns that exist throughout the world alter the modes of thinking of their respective groups to the point that distinct world views have been developed. A staunch opponent to the theory, Steven Pinker believes that thought is in no way altered by the language a person speaks. However, Pinker's argument against linguistic determinism in *The Language Instinct* misrepresents the Whorfian hypothesis.

Pinker argues against the strongest version of linguistic determinism, picking a battle that he can easily win. After making a blanket statement in response to the theory—"It is wrong, all wrong"—Pinker goes on to say that "the idea that thought is the same thing as language is an example of what can be called a conventional absurdity" (Pinker 47). Somehow, Pinker doesn't seem to realize that all of the pro-linguistic determinism sources that he quotes don't actually believe that "thought is the same

thing as language.” Rather, linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity are supported at a wide range of intensities. In fact, the most famous proponent and alleged coiner of the hypothesis, Benjamin Lee Whorf, represented one of the most extreme bands of support. Alfred Bloom, also a proponent, expounds in his book, *The Linguistic Shaping of Thought*, that the linguistic community overreacted to Whorf. Yet instead of rejecting the theory because of the excessiveness of Whorf’s claims, Bloom carries out his own line of research into the grammatical differences between Chinese and English, concluding that there are relatively important divergences in the formation of thought among speakers of two languages (Bloom). Later, this research was deemed invalid because the Chinese translations used in the experiment were incorrect or badly phrased. After they were corrected, the significance of the results decreased substantially (Au 7). However, whether or not this specific set of experiments proves or disproves any level of linguistic relativity is not the issue. The problem is that Pinker, aware that Whorf represents a “radical position,” opposes linguistic determinism based on the severity of Whorf’s beliefs (Pinker 49). As a result, his discussion on the topic devolves into speculation on whether or not Whorf really met any Apaches in his life rather than the actual subject matter of the debate.

Pinker’s fallacy-based arguments don’t end there, though: he also chooses to attack the characters of those in favor of the hypothesis rather than present balanced information on the subject. In his introduction of the topic, Pinker presents the non-professional masses that even slightly espouse support of the theory as “people who remember little else from their college education” that can “rattle off factoids” (Pinker 46). Then he proceeds to only list studies that have since been rejected based on their formatting, such as studies using “color as a non-linguistic domain” (Heider 338). On the other hand, Edward Sapir, dubbed by Pinker as a “brilliant linguist,” alludes to ideas that parallel linguistic relativity and even states that the interpretation of different combinations of words “depends entirely on the genius of the particular language” (Sapir 65). Yet Pinker doesn’t view Sapir as an advocate of the theory, implying that Whorf’s ideas were an unidentifiable mutation somehow slightly linked to Sapir’s teaching, and so doesn’t argue against him. Nor does Pinker delve into the distinction between objective and perceptual concepts,

explored in depth by Derek Bickerton, who analyzed the existence of words such as “burglar,” due to the existence of “abstract concepts, such as ‘ownership’ and ‘property’” (Bickerton 32).

However, amidst the entire debate of linguistic determinism is the fact that language cannot be the only shaper of thought. Whether or not Whorf was correct doesn’t change the detail that it is impossible to isolate language as the only independent variable and thought as the only dependent variable and run an experiment to prove that one’s language does indeed mold our minds. Furthermore, the increasing intertwining of cultures and languages makes it more and more difficult to study individual idioms, leaving researchers to rely on remote communities for their studies, those which aren’t affected by the outside world. In a sense, globalization might make the entire discussion on linguistic determinism obsolete.

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Instructor: Jonathan Gress-Wright; Writing Seminar: “Language and the Mind”

Emily Coco

Stamped: How Food Stamps Exert Control over the Poor in America

Historically, food in anthropological studies has been looked at in contexts of kinship or symbolism, but recently focus has shifted to food as it relates to power. Sidney Mintz, in his book *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past*, writes of how Caribbean slaves controlled their own diets and cuisine to maintain some of the freedoms that they were denied as slaves (Mintz 37). This independent control of food was used to achieve some degree of personal freedom, but control over food can also be used by those in power to take freedom from the less powerful. This phenomenon is present in most unequal power relationships, and can be seen in the U.S. institution of food stamps, a government program that subsidizes food purchases for the poor. Food stamp allowances can be denied or reduced if the recipient doesn't follow the program's many rules, which are decided on by government officials and taxpaying citizens, not those who need the program to eat. In an article on welfare, which includes the food stamp program, Sandra Morgen and Jeff Maskovsky write that welfare reform was a period in which "elite and middle-class constituencies" remodeled the welfare state, which is a case of the upper classes changing the diet of the lower classes based on their own changing ideals (319). The food stamp program allows more powerful people in the United States to exert subtle forms of control over the less powerful.

The most obvious way that food stamp distribution exerts control over recipients is by determining what and how much the poor can eat. The food stamp program was first instituted in the United States as a way to get rid of surplus food after the increased production of WWII, which meant that the poor only got food that no one else wanted to buy (DeVault and Pitts 546). In the decades after the program was established, it was routinely used to manipulate the poor. Food stamps were often denied to entire poor communities to starve them out of towns, and to force them to take underpaid jobs to feed themselves (De Vault and Pitt 551). Today, food stamps are no longer used viciously against the poor, but they do keep recipients out of restaurants, because they can't be used to purchase any hot or prepared foods. The monetary value also pretty much ensures that food stamps can't be used to buy luxury foods without running out by the end of the month.

By allowing the purchase of some foods but not others, food stamps also maintain the power structure more subtly by implying that the poor are not capable of or entitled to make their own food choices like the other economic classes. Carole Counihan, writing on food, control, and hierarchy, remarks that "The claim of middle and upper-class people that it is legitimate for them to determine the diet of poor people, their ability to be choosy about food, and their superior diet, define them as both more powerful and as behaviorally and morally superior to the poor" (Counihan 61). By using food stamps instead of instituting a minimum income for all American families, the upper classes can fulfill their moral obligation to the poor without changing the actual structure of the economy to make the poor independent and self-sufficient (DeVault and Pitt 555). This ensures that the poor will remain poor but not at the obvious fault of the upper classes, and implicitly characterizes the poor as incapable of controlling their own livelihood. Sidney Mintz, in his essay on Caribbean slave cuisine, writes that "An ideology of justification, it commonly involved assumptions about African cultures and the alleged innate incapacity of Africans and their descendants to function autonomously in a society controlled by Europeans" (Mintz 48). A similar assumption about the poor in American society justifies the right of the upper classes to exert control over them, although to a much lesser extent.

The United States, as a leading world superpower, takes the place of the upper class in a global society. As such, America can give or deny

aid as it chooses, and in third world countries that lack even the most basic amenities, aid from richer countries like the U.S. is crucial. Unlike the food stamp program, transnational aid is not monitored by any third party, which gives the U.S. complete control over when and if aid is given. Unfortunately, aid from the U.S. is increasingly doled out by private corporations, which always have a profit-oriented agenda (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck). If a corporation offers assistance to poor farmers who agree to their rules, then that corporation basically has complete control over those farmers, which often leads to a system that maximizes profit without tending to the welfare of the farmers in the long run. In his book *Everything But the Coffee: Learning About America through Starbucks*, Bryant Simon investigates Starbucks's widely advertised claim to help small coffee farms by buying their beans and bettering their quality of life, and he finds that the corporation is unwilling to risk profits to come through on its promises (Simon 211). Similarly, well-off Americans are unwilling to risk losing control of economic resources by putting food choices in the hands of the poor. The current power disparity in access to so basic a necessity as food supports a far-reaching structure of inequality in both America and the rest of the world, which means that changing such laws is a crucial step in dismantling inequitable conditions on a larger scale.

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Instructor: Jane Kauer; Writing Seminar: "Eating Culture"

Yuri Fuchs

The Pitfalls of Ethnic Appeals in Modern South Africa

In 1994, South Africa appeared to free itself from the shackles of apartheid, entering a new era devoid of racial segregation. The transition did not come without its problems, though, as a degree of political violence emerged during this period. This renewed conflict was partly the result of attempts made by the Zulu nationalist party Inkatha (IFP) to mobilize a political base.¹ Shortly before the beginning of multiracial democracy in South Africa, the IFP asserted itself against the African National Congress (ANC), the predominant anti-apartheid party, as a regional and national opponent. In turning to Shakan appeals to bolster its standing, Inkatha was derided by scholars like Daphna Golan for manipulating Zulu identity to achieve its own aims.² Noted author Gerhard Maré argues that such ethno-nationalist appeals are actually the essential manner by which the IFP seeks to gain support, yet the party's reliance on this sort of mobilization has had dubious practical results.³ In

1 Hamilton, Carolyn. *Terrific Majesty*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998.

2 Golan, D. *Inventing Shaka: Using History in the Construction of Zulu Nationalism*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1994.

3 Maré, Gerhard. *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Zed Books, 1993.

fact, Inkatha's basis in Zulu nationalist appeals has limited its political success in South Africa.

Firstly, the IFP's firm roots in stressing Zulu identity for political mobilization severely hinder its viability on a national level in post-apartheid South Africa.⁴ Inkatha's desire to pursue "national ambitions" is evident in its participation in the South African elections of 1999 and 2004.⁵ However, the IFP's ethnic platform limits its political success on a broad scale in South Africa. Inkatha's emphasis on Zulu identity alienates other groups in the country like the Xhosa and the Afrikaners who have histories of conflict with the Zulus.⁶ More importantly, political scientist Jessica Piombo notes that the very use of ethnic mobilization is not "electorally rewarding" in South Africa where a majority of the population does not believe such an identity is salient.⁷ Indeed, the limits of the IFP's inherent ethnic platform are apparent in its decreasing electoral results in South African elections since 1994.⁸

Inkatha's lack of national-level success given its ethnic basis may not be particularly surprising, but an emphasis on Zulu identity has also impeded its political fortunes in South Africa by hurting its prospects within its own KwaZulu Natal region. While some writers like Patrick Harries suppose that the party's ethno-national platform has always given it precedence there, the history of Inkatha indicates that its ideological basis had limited results even before the post-apartheid era. Gerhard Maré notes that appeals to Zulu identity by the IFP during apartheid were simply not enough to create allegiances in its own province.⁹ The organization often had to resort to rewards or threats of force to obtain the political support of other Zulus. Furthermore, as KwaZulu Natal was not

ethnically homogeneous, the party's stress of a singular ethnic identity had negative impacts in prompting the creation of political challengers within the province like the multi-racial, anti-apartheid UDF party.¹⁰ The regional fortunes of Inkatha only worsened during the transition away from apartheid as new freedoms allowed Zulus to move outside KwaZulu Natal and obtain better employment, creating territorial and socioeconomic gaps among them. With this change, appeals strongly rooted in ethnic ideology have become even less politically viable. Jessica Piombo argues that this shift currently prevents Inkatha from winning over key votes of a growing number of progressive elites and urban dwellers who are less concerned with ethnic ties.¹¹ Without these voters, the party has seen its electoral hold over KwaZulu Natal slip in every regional election since 1994.¹²

The IFP's reliance on Zulu nationalist appeals has undoubtedly limited the organization's political fortunes. The situation the party currently finds itself in suggests limits by which traditional Shakan imagery can motivate Inkatha's original constituency. More broadly, the failure of Zulu identity as a means of mobilization demonstrates that ethnicity is not always a particularly salient political tool. The example here shows that a fluid, industrialized, and heterogeneous population is less susceptible to being won over by ethnicity when other layers of identity gain precedence. Yet the primacy of divisive ethnic mobilization for Inkatha does not merely limit its political legitimacy. It also attempts to keep intact the fundamental divide-and-rule mechanisms of the old apartheid regime. Such an adherence to these archaic and fractious means of subjugation can have no positive implications for South Africa. The preservation of apartheid logic deserves no political place in a country still grappling to address the issues of yesteryear, and if South Africa is to ever truly shed the chains of apartheid, the decline and death of groups like Inkatha should come as soon as possible.

Instructor: Sara Byala; Writing Seminar: "Africa in the Western Imagination"

4 Piombo, Jessica. *Institutions, Ethnicity, and Political Mobilization in South Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

5 Ibid, p. 154.

6 Maré, Gerhard. *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Zed Books, 1993.

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11 Piombo, Jessica. *Institutions, Ethnicity, and Political Mobilization in South Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

12 Ibid, p. 150.

Brian Panichella

“For the love of God ...”

For the Love of God is one of the most contentious sculptures in contemporary art today. The piece consists of a platinum-cast skull studded with nearly eight thousand diamonds; the original eighteenth-century enamel teeth are the only non-precious material used in the work. Damien Hirst, a well-known young British artist, created the skull in 2007, and many artists have since critically responded to the work. Some feel that the skull was a marketing ploy to sell the “Hirst” brand, while others believe that the piece was a commentary to question the morality of art and money. Indeed, Hirst most likely had both the former and the latter intentions in mind; however, after analysis of relevant information pertaining to the piece, one might conclude that the money was more important. *For the Love of God* is less a work of art than it is a money-making venture.

Hirst has a unique conception of the artist that engenders a financial agenda. His work philosophy, for example, puts more emphasis on the process of ideation than the act of creation. Often, Hirst simply has his assistants do the “actual” work (i.e., painting), while he takes the credit for the art itself. The skull in *For the Love of God* was not made by Hirst; he had many assistants to help him. Thus, if he did not actually *make* the skull, one might think that at least he conceived the idea. This is not the case, however, as another artist, John Lekay, produced a nearly identical skull fourteen years earlier. Moreover, the zeal with which Hirst advertised the exhibition and sale of the skull implies that he is fulfilling

a new role as the artist: that of a celebrity-publicity maker. Thus, drawing attention to the eventual sale to make a profit is the overarching goal. If Hirst did not come up with the idea, and he did not personally make the piece, then what did he do? He made money.

In addition to the lack of artistic legitimacy, *For the Love of God* focuses more on material than form. Superfluous extravagance in the type and quantity of material suggests a financial motivation for selling the object. Over eight thousand diamonds were used in the creation of the skull, weighing nearly one thousand carats. Expensive platinum, as opposed to any other viable metal for cast-making, was employed, even though the metal is not visible. The diamonds could have been replaced with cubic zirconium, a cheaper diamond look-alike, to shift the emphasis from the luxurious to the symbolic. Moreover, the original form for the art was simply copied from nature itself, instead of being sculpted. After making nearly eighty million dollars from the skull, Hirst unquestionably has played a cruel trick on the art world.

Even if money was the only thing on Hirst’s mind in creating *For the Love of God*, the piece still inadvertently succeeds in questioning the morality of art and money. Public debate and controversy surrounding the work is evidence that this effect was achieved. Hirst may have believed the only way to get the attention of the public was through an exaggerated act. In this sense, the skull had to be made of expensive diamonds to create a commentary about itself; otherwise, it just would not be talked about.

Instructor: Colette Copeland; Writing Seminar: “Contemporary Art in Society”

Jacob Shiff

A Country Divided: Identity Politics in Dyson's *Pride*

To what extent are individuals defined by religion, race, or sexual orientation? The question as to the merit of identity politics—the doctrine that people of a particular ethnic background should form exclusive political alliances—has figured prominently in contemporary political discourse (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). As part of this ongoing debate, Michael Eric Dyson, in *Pride* (2006), argues strongly in favor of identity politics. Maintaining that group identity is necessary to “tap the healing self-love that any group should take for granted as its birthright,” Dyson advocates a resurrection of ethnic pride, in particular African-American pride (62). While Dyson cites numerous sources on the topic, his discussion of identity politics is largely unsatisfactory.

Dyson, professor of sociology at Georgetown University, is presumably well-read on the subject of identity politics,¹ but his writing does not show it. Even though Dyson generously cites from sources that oppose identity politics, nowhere does he defend himself against their attacks. A look at these sources reveals compelling arguments against identity politics. Columnist Michael Tomasky, whose book *Left for Dead: The Life, Death, and Possible Resurrection of Progressive Politics in America* (1996)

¹ Dyson, named by *Ebony* magazine as one of the hundred most influential black Americans, has published sixteen books, many related to race relations, including *Is Bill Cosby Right?* (2005) and *The True Martin Luther King Jr.* (2000) (“About the Author”).

Dyson cites, bemoans the bitter ethnic strife, what he calls “interest-group tribalism.” that has become the norm in the liberal community (15). By focusing on differences between groups, Tomasky explains, the left paradoxically reduces people within those groups to an artificial blandness. Emphasizing intergroup difference leads to highlighting intragroup sameness, Tomasky contends. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, echoes Tomasky’s criticism of identity politics in *The Disuniting of America* (1992), also cited by Dyson. Drawing on the early motto of the United States, *E pluribus unum*, Latin for “Out of many, one,” Schlesinger argues that America was founded on the principal of national unity—not on the notion of minority separatism that Dyson promotes. Whether one espouses this philosophical view or not, Schlesinger writes, an excessive focus on ethnic ties unfailingly “nourishes prejudices, magnifies differences and stirs antagonisms” (17). Other books that Dyson cites, including Todd Gitlin’s *The Twilight of Common Dreams* (1995) and Richard Bernstein’s *The Dictatorship of Virtue* (1994), present similarly cogent criticisms of identity politics. So how does Dyson respond to this barrage of condemnation? Shockingly, Dyson never addresses their arguments. Instead, he seems to unwittingly embody their criticisms. He hastily generalizes, just as Tomasky predicted, the behavior of whites and blacks, while aggressively promoting policies of ethnic pride that seem to invite hostility, as Schlesinger foresaw.² By liberally referring to his opponents’ opinions without rebutting them, Dyson unknowingly condemns himself.

While he does not directly defend his opinions, Dyson takes the aggressive counteroffensive—but once again his arguments are disappointing. For example, he alleges that those who criticize identity politics do so because they “fail to grapple with the history and social advantages of whiteness” (51). This willful ignorance, which Dyson calls “whitewashing,” is “the fulfillment of a fantasy of whiteness as

² For example, addressing white people as a monolithic whole, Dyson boldly declares that “white pride is often the vice that makes black pride necessary” and that white pride “exists only to thwart nonwhites” (45, 46). He also makes aggressive, unfounded assertions, like his generalization of the standard behavior of the Caucasian professor toward the errant student: “It is... doubtful that many white professors would go to the lengths I did just to get to the bottom of their problems instead of simply booting them out of class” (56). See pages 50–51 for his cursory treatment of scholars that oppose identity politics.

neutral and objective” (53). To prevent being swallowed up by this sea of whiteness, individual groups must staunchly represent themselves and their identities. While Dyson’s argument bears some merit, it is largely outdated, as Dyson relies on a portrayal of America more typical of the 1970s, 60s, and earlier. “The past is not the present,” states political scientist Abigail Thernstrom in *Beyond the Color Line* (2002), a compilation of over two dozen essays on race and ethnicity by leading academics (1). While the topic is highly contentious, the authors present an overall narrowing of the ethnic divide, citing credible academic surveys and sociological studies to build their case, in contrast to Dyson’s sparse, primarily anecdotal evidence. Writing from an economic perspective in *Beyond the Color Line*, Finis Welch, professor of economics at Texas A&M University, analyzes critical indicators before optimistically concluding that the previous generation’s “gains have been so impressive that they deserve much greater recognition and appreciation than they have generally received” (181). Similarly, columnist Michael Barone, in an essay entitled “*E Pluribus Unum—Sooner or Later*,” studies the historical trends of the past hundred years and finds reason to look positively on the future. He concludes on a sanguine note that stands in stark contrast to Dyson’s cynicism:

Politically, all these new Americans have the advantage of living in a society where there is a tremendous political penalty for shows of intolerance and ethnic discrimination, and in which both political parties have an incentive to seek their support. (358)

The situation is not all positive—African Americans perform worse academically, experience higher rates of unemployment, and are more likely to experience discrimination than their white counterparts, note the authors of *Beyond the Color Line*. Nonetheless, the circumstances are evidently improving. While this brief essay does not purport to survey the vast amount of literature on changing race relations,³ one thing is clear: Dyson’s depiction of a whitewashing contemporary Establishment

that can only be countered through group politics is simplistic and unsound.

The breadth of Dyson’s citations is impressive, but his *Pride* does not read as thoroughly as does his bibliography. Dyson fails to directly address the challenges of opponents of identity politics and instead hurls specious counterattacks. To Dyson, America is a country of blacks and whites, and his book is as simplistic as his view of country. The situation is in reality more complex, with much of the contemporary populace striving to balance national and ethnic loyalties. Perhaps this balance is exactly what it means to be an American in the twenty-first century.

Afterword

While this essay generally analyzes texts that predate 2006, the author of this essay was excited to stumble on an article entitled “The White Anxiety Crisis” in *Time* magazine’s recent “10 Ideas for the Next 10 Years.” The author of the article, political journalist Gregory Rodriguez, discusses the current state of American race relations. Rodriguez supports the view that “the diversity of younger generations of Americans will inevitably lead to a more integrated, postracial era,” but at the same time tempers his statement with the acknowledgment that “Americans will still invest a lot of meaning in group distinctions” (52). The article cites from Schlesinger’s *The Disuniting of America*, which Dyson refers to as well. Evidently, the topic of identity politics is particularly pertinent.

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Instructor: Stephanie Harzewski; Writing Seminar: "Genius and Pride"

Priyanka Anand

Deepak Chopra, Capitalism, and Social Justice

The home page of the Chopra Center reads like a cross between the website of a high-end spa, offering services such as a \$205 35-minute Abiyanga massage, and a shrine to its founder, Deepak Chopra, whose benevolent, smiling image is prominently displayed at the top of every page. Perhaps the most famous New Age guru of our times, Chopra has generated hordes of followers as well as outspoken critics. Many cynics have trouble taking Chopra's aggressively marketed packets of wisdom seriously. Often, they see his commercial success as evidence of a sense of social elitism. Critical attacks target both the content of Chopra's teachings and the commercial way he chooses to deliver them. Regardless of its philosophical merit, Chopra's ideology has always been one of compassion and justice. Deepak Chopra's teachings support social justice.

Critics of Deepak Chopra often strongly criticize his ideology for its wholehearted embrace of capitalist values. They believe these values are antithetical to social justice in the form of economic equality, the elimination of racism, and environmentalism. Many authors regard Chopra's teachings as typical of the commoditization of religion employed by New Age movements, who dilute and modify the different sets of beliefs they synthesize (Rindfleish 351-352, Phillips and Aarons 327). Rindfleish cites Chopra's work as an archetypal model of how New Age practitioners treat spirituality as a marketable consumer good (351-352). In his book *The Karma of Brown Folk*, Vijay Prashad calls

Chopra a peddler of “escapism” with a “Dale Carnegie ideology” (48). To Prashad, Chopra’s beliefs are a mix of meaningless religious mysticism and an ethos of capitalist self-interest. For example, Chopra often mixes quantum physics and ancient Hindu and Buddhist beliefs out of context to sell his readers solutions to ageing, relationships, and even weight loss (*Ageless Body* 6, Prashad 48-50). Similarly, examining Chopra’s approach to holistic healing, Hans Baer criticizes both Chopra’s uninhibited entrepreneurialism and his emphasis on the individual. He believes that Chopra’s consumerist approach to health “precludes the possibility of forming social movements” (241) to address wider environmental, racial, and poverty-related risk factors. In addition, Baer uses both statistics and anecdotal evidence to show the largely privileged, upper-class makeup of Chopra’s followers (241-242). Many critics view this as evidence of Chopra’s elitism and believe that Chopra teaches a doctrine with little significance to the poor and working classes of the world (Baer 246, Prashad 48). Baer complains that because of his privileged audience, it is common for Chopra to “downplay community service, social reform, and other collective goals” (242) related to social justice as well as to downplay issues of race and social class.

Critics correctly assess Chopra’s active self-marketing and capitalistic mindset. The Chopra Center chain boasts an Ayurveda spa as well as a boutique hotel in New York (Chopra Center FAQs). The website lists business as well as personal development as a core goal in its mission statement (Chopra Center Overview). While Chopra may not hold the same ideal of justice that his critics do, he is a passionate believer in social justice in the form of economic and racial equality. Chopra’s “capitalism” is a far cry from the call to be “self-interested, self-indulgent, and selfish” (Prashad 48) ascribed to Chopra by his detractors; in fact, his teachings treat wealth as a means to a greater common end. In an article about the economic crisis, Chopra advises his readers to heed the words of Christ and “to store up wealth in heaven, not on earth” (“Wealth and Money”), indicating his emphasis on doing good for others rather than simply furthering one’s own wealth. His investment advice includes social rather than individual goals, such as “[i]nvestment in wisdom-based economies, including alternative energies, sustainable agriculture...ways to restore balance in the ecosystem...education... infrastructure...comprehensive health care

coverage for everyone” (“Wealth and Money”). Chopra also clearly aligns himself with the cause of rights for the poor. He is a staunch supporter of universal healthcare, believing it to reflect “core values-rooting for the underdog, taking care of the weak and poor” (“Fix-It President”). He characterizes those opposing healthcare reform as working for the cause of “selfishness, class antagonism, intolerance” (“Fix-It President”). Writing in support of universal health coverage, Chopra criticizes any bill that will only end up benefiting insurance companies and calls for “compassion, because the vast majority who already have health insurance are being asked to help cover the minority who don’t” (“Fix-It President”). Finally, Chopra firmly supports the ideals of racial equality. Addressing an affirmative action case filed by firefighters in New Haven, Chopra writes with emotion,

One sees, with...guilt and sympathy, impatience and resentment, that fifty years of mandated equality has come nowhere near the ideal. Black ghettos are more isolated than ever...drug peddling, street crime, and hatred of the police, to reverse racism...blocks any significant progress. One sees on the White side a lingering racism, desire to hold on to power, social suspicion, and fear. (“Firefighters”)

In this and other articles, Chopra defends downtrodden and wronged groups. Not content with purely symbolic “mandated equality,” he openly recognizes and aggressively attacks sources of injustice and inequality. Far from downplaying issues of race and class, Chopra actively writes against many instances of social injustice.

Deepak Chopra is a symbol of the New Age movement. His work can provide a guide for other holistic health practitioners, and it often defines the image of New Age spirituality in the public eye. Chopra’s recent outspoken involvement in the political discussion on issues ranging from racism and gay rights to healthcare and fiscal policy points towards a new direction for New Age spirituality. Chopra is often used as an example in broader criticisms of New Age spiritualists and holistic health practitioners; however, he can also serve as an example of how New Age philosophy can be applied to the cause of social activism. By claiming social justice as a necessary consequence of his philosophy, Chopra’s work provides a model for a New Age spirituality with concrete and practical bearing on contemporary social issues.

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Instructor: Jacqueline Sadashige; Writing Seminar: "Race in Popular Culture"

Rebecca Hobble

The Role of Shakaland in South Africa

Apartheid has left South Africa in need of healing. After decades of strained racial relations and outright discrimination against so-called inferior racial groups, many South Africans have called for social change. Several scholars believe that one avenue of such change in South Africa is cultural tourism, such as that provided by the Shakaland resort. The resort is built upon the set of the 1980s television miniseries *Shaka Zulu* and doubles as a cultural education center for South Africa's largest ethnic group, the Zulus, who were treated as third-class citizens during apartheid. Scholars such as Carolyn Hamilton, Ciraj Rassool, Leslie Witz, and Gerhard Schutte assert that Shakaland heals ethnic divides by filling in gaps in history and providing visitors with cultural understanding of the long-unknown "other." Though the resort has its strengths as a cultural school, these scholars have exaggerated Shakaland's role as a significant tool for change in South Africa. Shakaland is not as important as scholars believe it to be.

Shakaland does have some significance in South Africa. As Hamilton writes, Shakaland has satisfied people's interest in the history and culture of the "other," such as Zulu people who lived in separate territories during apartheid. Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz agree that Shakaland presents itself as a tourist school, a mode of exploring the Zulu identity.¹

¹ Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz, "South Africa: A World in One Country. Moments in International Tourist Encounters with Wildlife, the Primitive, and the Modern," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 36, no.143 (1996): 335-371.

Visitors to Shakaland can interact with a Zulu healer, witness Zulu song and dance, join the Chief in his hut, and participate in a number of other activities, such as wood-carving, hut-building, and beer-brewing.² Tours are guided by ethnic Zulu “cultural advisors” and also include visits to a real Zulu homestead.³ In this way, visitors assimilate “Zulu-ness” and learn that the “other” is not so threatening.⁴ The history that Shakaland offers is also “corrective,” adds scholar Gerhard Schutte, because it has “installed blacks and other indigenous groups as actors in history,” rather than excluded them, as apartheid did.⁵ By educating visitors in the history and culture of another group, scholars believe, Shakaland provides an avenue of understanding to help heal ethnic divides in South Africa. For these reasons, Hamilton has lauded Shakaland as a “symbolic connection with the past,” a way to connect people at a time of community destabilization.⁶ She also praises the resort’s “role of redemption and healing” and its ability to help South Africans form a “new citizenship.”⁷ Other scholars such as Leslie Witz even call sites like Shakaland a “grand celebration of a South Africa at last freed from bondage.”⁸

Though Shakaland’s efforts at uniting different groups in South Africa are commendable, scholars have exaggerated its importance. Visitors may be enriched while they are there, but it is doubtful that a few days of hut-building and beer-brewing can really bridge certain deep-rooted divides in the South African community. Making that assertion would be equivalent to saying that school children’s field trips to museums are inherently life-changing, when, in fact, these short trips are often little more than a brief cultural expedition. Shakaland’s marketing strategy also takes away from its efficacy as a nation-healer.

² Carolyn Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty* (Harvard University Press, 1998), 197.

³ Hamilton, 196.

⁴ Hamilton, 198.

⁵ Gerhard Schutte, “Tourists and Tribes in the ‘New’ South Africa,” *Ethnohistory* 50, no. 3 (2003): 473-487.

⁶ Hamilton, 193.

⁷ Hamilton, 199.

⁸ Leslie Witz et al, “Repackaging the Past for South African Tourism,” *Daedalus* 130, no. 1 (2001): 277-296.

Protea Hotels advertises Shakaland as a resort getaway, a place to understand the “intriguing customs” of the Zulu nation.⁹ The resort also touts its television inspiration, but this association with entertainment takes away from the resort’s seriousness. Hamilton even admits that Shakaland promotes itself as a “fake,” an attraction built on the *Shaka Zulu* set.¹⁰ These representations render the resort a novel form of entertainment rather than a serious cultural center.

Scholars have pointed out some of Shakaland’s positive qualities as a tourist school, but they fail to emphasize its limitations. The short duration of visitors’ stays, coupled with the resort’s marketing scheme, make the resort a novelty or even a joke. As a form of entertainment, the resort cannot affect people’s lives enough to change a nation from the inside out, nor can it completely reverse the effects of apartheid. Perhaps scholars who laud Shakaland for its healing abilities have ultimately fallen victim to the widespread optimism that swept the nation right after South African liberation from apartheid. In fact, South Africa has not been culturally and racially unified; it has not been transformed by cultural tourism (or anything else, for that matter).¹¹ Ironically, many South Africans are too poor to afford a visit to Shakaland, limiting the resort’s influence to middle-class and affluent South Africans. Furthermore, though Shakaland attracts droves of foreign tourists, they can do little to unify a country they do not inhabit. If South Africans really crave change, they must not place too much importance on cultural tourism sites such as Shakaland and instead look to more realistic sources of unity. Such a turn may help to bring about true social change in South Africa.

Instructor: Sara Byala; Writing Seminar: “Africa in the Western Imagination”

⁹ Protea Hotel Shakaland, *Protea Hotels.com*, <<http://www.proteahotels.com/protea-hotel-shakaland.html>>.

¹⁰ Hamilton, 205.

¹¹ Barry Bearak, “Post-Apartheid South Africa Enter Anxious Era,” *The New York Times*, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/06/world/africa/06safrica.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1

Contributors

Priyanka Anand is a sophomore in the College planning to major in Physics. She loves to travel. She speaks Spanish, French, and Japanese, and is excited to start learning Chinese this year. Priyanka's interest in Deepak Chopra began with her mother, who is completing an Ayurveda certification at the Chopra Center, as well as with concerns Priyanka had about her own experiences with New Age spirituality.

Eileen Anzilotti was born in Chicago and lives in Oakland, California. As a rising sophomore, she plans to study English. She is currently on the staff of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* and enjoys reading and writing in her spare time. Still confused about what exactly she wants to do, she nevertheless hopes her future will include plenty of writing and travel.

Ali Aziz, known by most as Aziz, is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences. Originally from Dallas, Texas, he never fails to utter the all-famous "y'all" with friends, though he sometimes receives confused looks and overwhelming Northeastern laughter in return. His hobbies include working out, swimming, and playing basketball after Friday's classes. Planning to major in either Biology or Chemistry, he is going premed and hopes for the best.

Akeem Bailey is a sophomore from New York City majoring in International Relations with a minor in Economics. His interests range from reading and screenwriting to breakdancing and house music. He is currently developing a screenplay of his own, titled *Imitation*. He hopes to work in the venture capital/film financing space later in his life.

Alexander Chahin is from Buffalo, New York, and is delighted to appear in 3808. A member of the Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business, he heartily tries to balance numbers and formulae with language and art. He is currently interning at Fisher-Price in the International Marketing Department; however, in his free time, Alex likes to work on his first book (there's that balance). Not to mention, a day without music for Alex would be like a day without wit for Mark

Twain (hopefully, that's enough balance).

Ken Chang is from Fresh Meadows, New York, and is a graduate of Hunter College High School. He is currently a sophomore in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and plans to major in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. In his spare time, he enjoys working in labs, reading comic books, bowling, and watching *The Big Bang Theory*.

Justin Charlap is a junior in the Management and Technology program studying computer science and entrepreneurship. After traveling across the world to Hong Kong during the fall semester, Justin realized he could no longer speak English good and decided it was finally time to take his freshman writing seminar. Justin is a former President of the M&T Club and a dancer/choreographer for Penn Masti. He enjoys playing instruments and sports and proving the Riemann Hypothesis in his spare time.

Emily Coco is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences who is majoring in Anthropology. She hails from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and enjoys cooking and taking part in community service. The topic of this essay is the natural confluence of her interests in anthropology, food, and community service.

Yaanik Desai is from Atlanta, Georgia, and is an entering junior in the School of Engineering and Applied Science. As a Bioengineering major, he's interested in investigating quantitative solutions to relevant medical and biological problems. He enjoys writing, and a life-long mission of his is to prove that engineers can write too! In his free time, he enjoys playing harmonica, listening to rock 'n' roll and reading Wikipedia.

Yuri Fuchs is currently a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences majoring in Political Science. Born in Podolsk, Russia, Yuri has been proud to call the Philadelphia area his on-and-off home for the last 10 years. When he's not hugging his books late at night during the school year, Yuri enjoys playing football (stop calling it soccer), running, playing guitar, and volunteering.

Brent Ginsberg hails from Marlton, New Jersey, and is a graduate of Cherokee High School. He is currently pursuing a major in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics with a minor in Sustainability and Environmental Management. Brent is an avid guitar player who enjoys reading the *DP* and exploring West Philadelphia. On campus, he is actively involved in the Eco-Reps program, through which he educates his peers on the economic and environmental benefits of sustainability.

Maia Gottlieb is a sophomore from Baltimore, Maryland. In addition to gaining an unofficial major in iTunes, she is pursuing a major in Health and Societies in the College of Arts and Sciences. Maia is a Benjamin Franklin Scholar and hopes to become increasingly involved with political and environmental student organizations. The “Philadelphia: Past and Present” writing seminar was notable for its field trips, especially those involving food.

Jordan Harrison is a sophomore from Tecumseh, Michigan (go T-Town!). She is a bioengineering major who enjoys running, listening to 89X radio, and reading career blogs. She recommends Penelope Trunk’s *Brazen Careerist*.

Rebecca Hobbie, a freshman from Warren, New Jersey, is in the College, majoring in Health & Societies. She is also part of CSSP, *First Call magazine*, and Christian Students at Penn. In her free time, she enjoys expressing herself through cooking, arts and crafts, and interior design. Her favorite book (besides *Terrific Majesty*, of course) is *Matilda*.

Benjamin Horn is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences. He enjoys reading, writing, and dancing. *Dr. Zhivago* is his favorite novel, as it seems to him that the novel is a beautiful synthesis of prose and poetry. He hopes to major in PPE (Philosophy, Politics and Economics), using his skills in areas such as conflict resolution.

Drew Karabinos, a sophomore in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, is a Dublin, Ohio, native. He loves to play, watch, and talk about sports, and someday hopes to work in the sports industry. Coming from the Midwest, he is a die-hard Ohio State Buckeye fan,

and hopes to become an avid Quaker fan as well (although he hopes the school will consider changing the mascot to a more intimidating object or animal). Drew plays club baseball at Penn, and likes to hoop it up at Pottruck.

Daniel Knowlton is from King George, Virginia, and is a sophomore in the Digital Media Design program in the School of Engineering. Daniel’s many interests include 3D modeling/animation, computer science, and drawing. On campus, Daniel is a website production assistant for the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, and he performs regularly with the University Wind Ensemble and the Penn Band.

Ajay Koti is from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and is a sophomore in the College. He plans to study global health and neuroscience, and he hopes to one day attend medical school for a career in public health medicine. Ajay enjoys watching movies, reading the great classics, and engaging in furious political debates with strangers.

Kimberly Kuoch is a freshman pursuing a dual degree in International Studies and Business via the Huntsman Program. She hails from Berwyn, Pennsylvania, but holds massive pride for her high school Phillips Academy Andover in Massachusetts. She is in Phi Gamma Nu professional business fraternity, and she enjoys playing poker, spades, and board games. Her favorite book is *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera but she enjoys other twentieth-century literature as well.

Michael D. Levenstein is a freshman in the College. A native of Coral Gables, Florida, he is studying Political Science and History. Michael enjoys music, oratory, and philosophy in his (all-too-scarce) spare time. He is Chair of the Sermo Humanita Philosophical Society, and a member of the Undergraduate Assembly, Parliamentary Debate Team, and Squash Club. In addition to these interests, he is a nationally recognized classical pianist, and the published author of six books.

Harrison Lieberfarb is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences, and hails from sunny South Florida. A Political Science and

Economics double major, Harrison also serves as the Secretary of the Student Committee on Undergraduate Education (SCUE). Out of the classroom, Harrison can be found playing his saxophone, or sampling any of Philadelphia's many great restaurants (I eat, therefore I am).

Timothy Long is a rising sophomore in Penn Engineering from Sedro Woolley, Washington. He is majoring in Material Science Engineering with possible minors in Economics and Nanotechnology. Outside of academics, he is interested in music and swimming, having played the violin for eight years and swam on his high school swim team. The topic of asthma is personal to him, as he and two other family members suffer from it.

Rene Newman is a part-time student majoring in English. She works full time as a veterinary technician in the anesthesia department at the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. When not sending Fido and Friskie to dreamland, or writing term papers, she spends as much time as possible in the woods or with family. She is also currently training for her first triathlon.

Brian Panichella is a BBB major interested in chess, neuroscience, and biking. A transfer student from Boston College in the fall of 2008, Brian previously studied linguistics and came to Penn for the strong neuroscience curriculum. During the past three years, he has had the opportunity to live for three months in both Parma, Italy, to study Italian abroad, and in Chennai, India, to work with a mobile eye clinic. Brian hopes to graduate in the spring.

Laura Paragano hails from a small town in New Jersey. As a political junkie, the current junior is majoring in PPE with a minor in Consumer Psychology. She is also the captain of the varsity women's fencing team and layout editor for the *Penn Political Review*. Laura enjoys Mel Brooks comedies, looseleaf tea, and Scrabble.

Kenny Puk is from Marietta, Georgia, and an alumnus of George Walton Comprehensive High School. He is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Wharton School, studying Math and

Finance. Kenny enjoys running, basketball, and especially swimming, so, naturally, he enjoys having fun under the sun in his hometown. He is still unsure about his future but hopes to find a living that allows him to engage his love for languages.

Angela Qian is a rising sophomore in Wharton. Though born in China, she grew up in the quaint, homogeneous borough of Malvern, Pennsylvania. When not obsessing over the thrilling sport of football or maximizing her utility with crime dramas and coffee-flavored ice cream, this self-proclaimed cynic likes to embrace her hopeless romantic side by curling up with a mug of steaming hot chocolate and her favorite Jane Austen novel.

Vani Sastri hails from Chennai, India. She is a junior in Wharton and is pursuing concentrations in Marketing and Social Impact & Responsibility. She is very glad that she waited for three semesters to get into Gotta Dance, and strongly recommends it to everyone. She is a proud member of the Wharton Undergraduate Dean's Advisory Board and Penn Masti. She loves dogs, marketing, beaches, *Glee*, dancing, fruits, reading, traveling, and Thai food.

Zeke Sexauer is a proud member of the College Class of 2013. He grew up in the Greater St. Louis area in a small town called Columbia, Illinois, which confuses anyone who doesn't know where Illinois and Missouri are located on a map. Zeke is pursuing a major in International Relations and is active in both the Class Board and the Undergraduate Assembly. He also has a very interesting last name.

Jacob Shiff is a rising sophomore from Toronto, Canada. During his first year at Penn, Jacob enjoyed a broad range of courses, including History of Ancient Greece, Economics, Biology, and—of course—his writing seminar, "Genius and Pride." Ultimately, Jacob hopes to major in Biology with a minor or double major in Economics. While his studies may not be the most writing-intensive, the Nestorian Order, Two Reasons, Concession, and (Jacob's all-time favorite) Iron Person essay formats will carry with him.

Gregory Singer is a Wharton sophomore from the sunny paradise and center of election controversy, West Palm Beach, Florida. At Penn, Greg is a member and Co-Philanthropy Chair of the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity. He also works as a Management 100 teaching advisor for freshmen. In his spare time, Greg enjoys playing soccer, following politics, and perfecting his egg omelet.

Danielle Swanner is from Scottsdale, Arizona, and will be graduating from the Huntsman Program in a few years, assuming nothing drastic occurs. She spends her time hanging out with kids at Lea Elementary, riding her longboard among the horrifying sidewalks that are Philadelphia, swing dancing, and making delicious foods. One of her favorite songs is “Green Onions” by Booker T. and the MG’s, but alas, seventy-five words cannot dare cover the breadth of her interests.

Avin Veerakumar is a sophomore majoring in Bioengineering and hails from Toronto, Canada. He has traveled to over 20 countries, and his photography was featured on *National Geographic*’s website. Avin has a keen interest in American politics, especially through the lens of “The Glenn Beck Program.” He writes for the *Punch Bowl* humor magazine and enjoys volunteering, SCUBA diving, keeping aquariums, working out, and reading nonfiction (but not all at once).

Carolyn Vinnicombe is a sophomore in Wharton and a true Jane Austen junkie. Though a native of California, she finds the beautiful grounds at Pemberley to be the most agreeable place in the world. She loved the “Da Vinci: Scientist and Artist” seminar for both its wonderful reading and helpful essay styles. She is also the Vice President of Marketing for Wharton Women.

Brette Warshaw is a sophomore in the College and is thinking of majoring in European History and minoring in Jazz Studies and Creative Writing. She is a huge foodie and devotes much of her free time to eating food, talking about food, writing about food, or fantasizing about food. The “Eating Culture” writing seminar was a perfect way for her to use her obsession constructively. She hopes to be a food writer someday.

Student Editorial Board

Krystal Bonner is from West Chester, Pennsylvania, and is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences. She plans on majoring in Urban Studies and minoring in Spanish, and hopes to study abroad in Spain. Krystal is a writing tutor at Penn’s Writing Center and spent her summer interning at Penn Press.

Philip Cawkwell is a senior from Bedford, New York, majoring in the Biological Basis of Behavior with minors in Chemistry and Psychology. In addition to being a writing tutor, he volunteers at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and conducts research at the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience. Philip is a member of the Varsity Men’s Cross Country and Track teams at Penn.

Clare Foran is a rising senior in the College. A student of History, French, and Political Science, Clare is currently writing an honors thesis focusing on the creation of myth and memory in France following the Second World War and the German Occupation. This summer, she completed an internship at the Washington, D.C.-based policy and research organization The Brookings Institution. She has worked as a peer-writing tutor at the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing since her sophomore year. This is her second year serving on the editorial board of *3808: A Journal of Critical Writing*.

Hilary Gerstein is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences majoring in Science, Technology & Society with a concentration in Energy, Environment & Technology. She is also a Hispanic Studies minor. True to her liberal arts-loving self, Hilary has a wide variety of interests, including fine arts, traveling, cooking, tennis, skiing, writing, and environmental science.

Aamir Khan is a junior in the College, majoring in Biological Basis of Behavior, with a minor in South Asian Studies and Chemistry. Aside from tutoring in the Critical Writing Center, he also serves on the boards of Habitat for Humanity, Unite for Sight, the BBB Society, and the

Student Technology Advisory Board. In the future he plans to combine his interests in writing and science by possibly entering the field of medical research.

Kristen Martin is a senior English major concentrating on Creative Writing. She enjoys non-fiction writing, as well as writing about (and cooking and eating) food. She works at the Kelly Writers House and as a writing tutor for CPCW.

Originally from Brentwood, Tennessee, **Aaseesh Polavarapu** is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences studying International Relations. In addition to peer tutoring at the Writing Center, Aaseesh sings in Dischord A Cappella and serves on the boards of Penn for Youth Debate, the Hindu Students Council/Young Jains of America, and Pratit International. His other interests include tennis, web design, and Titans football. He plans to attend law school after completing his undergraduate degree at Penn.

Ashima Sukhdev is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences. As an Economics major and a Sustainability & Environmental Management minor, Ashima is interested in sustainable business. Ashima has been a writing tutor since Spring 2010 and has thoroughly enjoyed the experiences she has had through the Writing Center, both exploring writing and interacting with her peers.

Julia Wolfe is from St. Paul, Minnesota, and is excited to spend her first semester of junior year in Lyon, France. She is a French Studies major and an Anthropology minor. She is a member of Sigma Kappa Sorority and on weekends loves sharing her love of ballet through teaching free classes to young girls in South Philly. In her free time she is content baking, doing yoga, and reading *The New Yorker*.

Katie Wynbrandt is a junior from Highland Park, Illinois. She is pursuing majors in English and Political Science and will be studying in London this fall. Katie is a member of Penn's mock trial team, College Dean's Advisory Board, and Sigma Kappa Sorority. In her spare time, she enjoys playing tennis, going to art museums, and eating Thai food.

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