

The Harper Anthology of Academic Writing

ISSUE V
1993

William Rainey Harper College

Jeffrey R. Baran
Nimfy Kolodziej Barry
Jennifer Beaumont
Jeff Buczkiewicz
Diane Caron
Sandy Cox
Mary Ann Crosby-Anderson
Joanne Curran
Irene Daly
Cari-Lynn Grossart
Joseph L. Hazelton
William C. Hillman
Sheryl Huff
Ann T. Jaslikowski
Thom Karmik
Mark Klinn
Courtney LaBeau
Kathie Lange
Marti Lansu
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Scott Lumbard
John Mak
Kathy McDougald
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Nasreen Tahir
Robert J. Wilshe
Bruce Whitmore
Georgina Winslow
David Y. Wu
Patricia Zaradic

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Foreword

The writing on the following pages is as broad in its subject matter as it is distinctive in style. It is vividly, intensely personal, as in a Spanish love poem or a narrative of a mother's death. It is environmentally aware, as in the report explaining how deserts are formed or in the investigation of animal communication. It is socially conscious, as expressed in an interview with an aging ball player from the old segregated Negro Leagues or in a news story on the future of downtown Palatine. It is philosophical, as in a reflection on the nature of "the good life" or in an essay contrasting modern Walden Pond with the pond by which Henry David Thoreau built his tiny cabin. It is whimsically informative, as in an essay on lace making or in a report on the periodic table. You'll find all kinds of writing here—from funny to serious, personal to public, formal to informal. You'll read writing done in class and out of class, journal entries, essays, reports, even a final exam. As in all the preceding issues of *The Harper Anthology*, the writing in this fifth issue is a powerful tribute to the intellectual life of Harper college and the record of educations given and received.

Included in the pages that follow is writing done in the courses of twelve departments, the largest number ever featured in *The Harper Anthology*: Chemistry, Computer Information Systems, Early Childhood Development, English as a Second Language, English, Journalism, Linguistics, Parks Management/Horticulture, Philosophy, Political Science, Reading, and Spanish. As always, the Anthology Selection Committee has tried to choose writing that expresses learning—but also writing that, through observation, exploration, or reflection, actually stimulates learning. Writing to stimulate thinking

Foreword

is as important and worthy of inclusion here as writing to demonstrate learning or communicate.

We believe you'll find much to admire in the writing that follows. If you're a student, you'll find models for your own writing. Join with us in congratulating these writers. And look forward to the sixth issue of the anthology in 1994.

Preceding each selection is the instructor's description of the assignment. Following is the instructor's evaluation. At the end of the anthology, the judges for this issue describe their standards for good writing, selected students reflect on their writing, and an instructor, Professor Jayne Wilcox, shares her thoughts on good writing.

Thanks to the faculty members of the Anthology Selection Committee for all their efforts in producing this issue: Dennis Brennen, Annie Davidovicz, Barbara Hickey, Judy Kaplow, Barbara Njus, Peter Sherer, Wally Sloat, and Molly Waite. Special thanks to Mike Knudsen and Deanna Torres from the Harper Graphics Department, to Joan Young and Anne Frost from Harper Publications, and to Peter Gart and the entire Print Shop for all their production assistance. And greatest thanks to all the Harper faculty and their students who have contributed their writing.

Jack Dodds

Anthology Selection Committee

Apart

by Jeffrey R. Baran
Course: English 101
Instructor: Nancy Davis

Assignment: *The assignment was to write a narrative/descriptive essay depicting a memorable moment or incident that had a lasting effect on the writer's life.*

I think I am dying.

Sometimes, when I'm lying here all alone at night, with the kids asleep and Ron snoring in the room next door (in our bed), sometimes I wish I would. I feel so helpless, so lonely. Most of the day it's only me and Stephen and Agatha. This is beginning to be unbearable, and I'm starting to wonder if the chemotherapy is really going to work.

I'm tired all the time, because the pain in my back is constant and unrelenting. I feel I'm lucky if I can manage an hour of light sleep. I can't imagine what it is down there that hurts so terribly (cramps?), and my drugs don't seem to be helping very much. I've got Percodan (which I've named my new stuffed bunny after), Valium, Darvon, Advil (which is a joke, really) and some kind of cramp medicine which I can't even pronounce. They sit on the nightstand, reminding me of toy soldiers all lined up in a row, maybe guarding the bottle (the jar, actually) of mineral ice, which doesn't help either.

George Carlin was on last night. I love his bit about the comments directed at the deceased at wakes- "He looks so good," he mimics in a granny voice, then wails, "What do you mean he looks good? He's dead."

I hope I can be better for Christmas.

Tonight my father is drunk. I pass him on the stairs leading to the basement and I can smell the alcohol on his breath when he mumbles, "Hello, Jeffrey." I sit down on the stairs, and staring at the ethereal glow of the fire, I hear him start to rant about "Terry not getting enough exercise," that her back is hurting because all she does all day is lie in bed reading. "We've got a damn indoor pool that nobody ever uses," I can hear him say, his

Apart

speech slightly slurred, "and you are going to start *exercising* in it," he orders.

"Ron, that water's too *cold* to swim in," my Grandma informs him, a little condescendingly, because she can tell he's had too many.

"Cut the shit," he whines, as if he's talking to a child.

I'm fairly sure the water *is* too cold, but I don't say anything.

"Ron..."

"Cut the shit," he repeats, and then after a sip of his drink and a pause he continues. "She needs to start moving *around*, and she's going to start right *now*." He gets up, steadies himself on the loveseat, brushes past Grandma, who is already up, and helps Mom up from the couch. He holds her arm as he directs her in slow lazy circles around the living room as I watch, doubting this will do any good.

Tonight dad decides to take my mother to the hospital, which surprises me because she seemed to be a little better at Thanksgiving. I'm sitting in the kitchen watching the Smurfs when my parents come down; she's in her winter coat with the nightgown poking out from under it, and he's in his big black fuzzy overcoat, carrying suitcases. She stands by the door as the Christmas lights blink on and off stupidly, her eyes sunken, and she sways slightly, waiting for him to warm up the car. After a minute she has to take hold of the doorframe.

A morbid part of me thinks, *This is the last time she'll be in this house.*

I don't visit her much. Most of the time she

just doesn't seem to be there. She seems somewhat talkative tonight, however, possibly because the grandmothers aren't hanging all over her, like elderly Polish bumblebees hovering over a wilting flower. Some of the time she's incoherent, she hallucinates occasionally (she had Grandma Baran wiping mustard off the walls earlier, I heard), but most of the time she just lies there quietly.

Dad gets up to get her some water, and I watch him go, then my eyes shift to mom. Her limbs look like toothpicks in relation to the size of her standard-issue hospital gown; they resemble the stick figures she taught me to draw when I was little. Intravenous needles stand at attention on her small bony hands, piercing her pale, waxy flesh, surrounded by tiny red and purple marks. Her hair, unwashed and thinned out by chemotherapy, tendrils out in all directions.

We're all watching T.V. It's a program called "Kissyfur," the pilot episode, in fact (if there really is such a thing for a cartoon, I'm not sure). The mother circus bear has died, leaving daddy and young Kissyfur all alone, and they are hugging each other. There is a part in the show when, as it's raining, the momma bear's coffin falls out of the truck that carries it. This scares me, though I'm not sure why.

Today is Christmas, and I'm bored and impatient because this gift exchanging deal here at the hospital isn't working out, and my sister seems irked as well. Mom stares vacantly at the walls, won't even smile, doesn't do anything but mechanically open her presents, one after another, followed by a "thank you" in monotone after each. Grandma Metz is doing her best to act cheerful. But we all think it is a lost cause, but nobody says anything. We are itching to get out of here, except for my grandma, who can't seem to under-

stand why Mom is so absent, so uncommunicative. I'm looking forward to opening my presents.

Later I learn some quack doctor has been in before us to tell my mother she is terminal.

New Year's Eve, and we're all sitting around the kitchen table when Dad breaks the news.

"Mom's not going to make it..." he tells us, and shakes and buckles as he begins to cry. This freaks me out, because I've never seen him cry. I'm too shocked to notice this right away, because my heart is sinking and my chest is tightening.

He pushes clumsily away from the table, making the legs scrape against the floor, and I'm wondering what's going to happen next, and as he holds out his arms we realize we all have to hug each other now, not because we want to or it will make us feel better, but it seems like the right thing to do. Then we all leave the kitchen. I go to the basement, which I've converted into my bedroom, and throw a mug against the wall, not knowing why. Then I just sit there in the cool damp basement, hugging my knees to my chest, listening to the Christmas carols that play constantly upstairs. I have never felt such frustration, or lack of self control.

I'm a little nervous about visiting Mom now, because I am at a loss for words. What do I say to her? When I walk in, I notice the plethora of machinery that surrounds her bed.

Mom does not look good.

When I see her surrounded by all this I think to myself she looks like the bionic woman, half machine, with tubing all over the place and the silent electronic hum of the life support systems.

The thing that stands out the most is one large tube, about half an inch in diameter, that is inserted *directly into her chest*, probably straight into an artery.

This woman does not look like my mother at all.

She is breathing heavily, with obvious difficulty, and beads of sweat break out of her pores and trail down her face as her jaw clenches tightly and her eyes squeeze shut. The entire abdominal area is swollen, pregnant with the cancer that is eating her life away. I notice her rings have been cut off of her hands.

I'm sitting in the back seat of my grandparents' car, and as we leave the hospital, my face to the window, breath fogging it up in regular intervals, I try to let my feelings out. I try to cry but I just *can't*. I haven't been able to at all since I learned that mom is terminal. As we get home, my sister and I go straight to our rooms.

January 11, 1986. I've just woken up because the phone rang again, and people are rustling about downstairs. I sense what is coming.

"Mom passed away just a little while ago," my dad informs me. Mandatory hug, then he leaves.

As I walk downstairs I can hear Grandma Metz calling up all the relatives, her voice alternately cracking with emotion and changing into tear-filled mumbling. She sees me enter the kitchen, and after she hangs up the phone, gives me a hug, which actually makes me feel a little bit better.

When she finishes the call (at least the ones to the closest relatives and friends), she goes upstairs to pick out the clothes that Mom will be buried in. As she starts browsing through the closets she starts to cry again and has to pull out a handkerchief, and while she does this, I wonder to myself,

Why is she the only one crying?

My sister and I are in my aunt's guest room. I think it is a good idea to get away from our house, because of all of the commotion there. I've just turned the lights out. She's in the bed across the room, and in this silence I'm feeling as though I have to be a stand-up big brother and *talk* to Maria, but in all reality I have no idea what to say.

I ask her how she feels about Mom.

"I don't know," she answers hesitantly and some time passes before I reluctantly decide to prod further.

"Sad?" I ask.

"Yeah," she sighs. I want to talk about it, but at the same time I am relieved in a way that she is so unresponsive, so I just try to fall asleep, slightly relieved.

Today is the day of the funeral, and I don't want to go. I want this all to be over. I want to forget about it all.

When I see her in the casket, Mom looks familiar again. Although I know there is cotton in her mouth, which is pinned shut, and I can see that her hands are clamped together, I decide that the mortician has done a good job. She looks peaceful, at rest, and none of the battle with cancer shows on her face. As I stand there I hear an old person marvel that Mom "looks so good," reminding me of her pet peeve, which makes me smile a little, but not really.

At the final viewing, when they close her casket for the last time, I can't hold back my tears the way I did when this all started. The three of us are standing in front of the casket as I get the last

glimpse I will ever have the Therese M. Baran, and as I realize this, I break down, leaving our awkward embrace to cower over to a grandma, where I try to hide, feeling ashamed that I am showing my emotions in front of everybody.

Instead of bringing us closer together, Mom's dying has driven the three of us apart. I'm crying now because I lost her, but mostly I'm crying because I feel so goddamn alone.

Evaluation: Jeff masterfully weaves description, dialogue and flashback to create a powerful and lasting narrative that is devoid of sentimentality and melodrama.

Downtown Palatine 2002

by Nimfy Kolodziej Barry
Course: Journalism 130
Fundamentals of Journalism
Instructor: Rhea Dawson

Assignment: Develop a news story with attribution to a public official, examine both sides of an issue, and use inverted pyramid style with facts introduced in descending order of importance.

Consultants have been solicited to review a comprehensive plan for Palatine's downtown redevelopment program. The village board will vote November 23 to award the bid.

"One favored bidder to date is the Boston-based firm of Sasaki Associates, Inc., and Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen and Payne, Inc. Sasaki was the main consultant for the Highland Park redevelopment program," said Martha A. Bell, chairperson of the Downtown Palatine Redevelopment Commission.

All recommendations said further study was needed on a finer scale. "Not one firm said they could do it all. Each recommended additional sub-consultants," said Bell. Bids for the proposals have ranged from \$18,000 to \$175,000. Bids were prepared in various ways. Some had drawings while some submitted proposals in phases. The commission does not have to accept the traditional low bidder, since village funds are not involved.

As a group, consultants who have presented their proposals to the board have all said that Palatine is not a "brick and mortar" community. Bell explained this to mean that brick and cement is not going to be thrown together to get a new look. "Palatine does not have a blighted residential area and is stable," said Bell.

Consultant responsibilities would be to help with finding "an identifiable center of downtown" as well as suggesting sources for funding, landscape architects, architects, urban planners, real estate and marketing specialists, traffic engineers, civil engineers, and downtown management (someone who coordinates advertising promotions, business hours, maintenance and bringing in business).

At this time, the commission is not close to asking the village for financial resources. "The idea

is to use small amounts of public money, taxes, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Special Service Area, Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), bond issues, or other general programs which are available," said Bell. "Most communities use a combination of programs," she added. When the redevelopment commission finalizes its thoughts and ideas, they will then approach the village.

Bell said that the consultants say the project will not be fully funded, as in urban development of the '60's. "Leverage public funding to bring in private developers," said Bell. Who are these developers? They can be the store owners themselves. Banks can offer low interest loans to make building façade improvements on existing structures and provide design assistance.

"The goal is for architecture of the area to be individualistic. It will not look like a strip-mall. There will be a coordinated effort," said Bell. "We do not want to create a theme town. It's not Walt Disney," she added. "The stores should be continuous and never interrupted by anything boring," she continued. "Infill should be sympathetic to what is there," said Bell. "The square footage of business space is larger than any other shopping center in Palatine," she continued.

Bell referenced the National Main Street program which is an umbrella for National Historic Preservation. The group stresses design, promotion, economic restructuring, and organization. Libertyville used National Main Street.

During the first six months of meetings, the commission "aired its gripes and concerns about downtown," said Bell. They also developed a "wish list" of businesses they would like to see in the area.

At the top of this list is a bakery. "Palatine

doesn't have an old-fashioned bakery. Palatine once had an excellent bakery. The closest one now is in Arlington Heights," said Bell.

A Japanese, Italian or other ethnic restaurant is also high on the list along with an up-scale restaurant/bar eatery. Other wishes include a clothing store for men, women and children. A gourmet shop, a shoe store, an antique shop, as well as a toy and book store also are desired. "The question of viability for such businesses must be answered," Bell said.

The commission needs to resolve questions about parking as well. If the parking areas are restructured, the question "'Will people walk this far?' needs to be looked into," said Bell.

"...People are willing to walk to Woodfield, but won't walk two blocks. They expect to pull up to a shop," said Bell.

"Some residents don't have cars within the downtown Palatine area," said Bell. "A postal sub-station, cab/limousine or bus service to the airport is being considered," continued Bell.

"The commission began in August 1991 by Rita Mullins, Palatine's village president," said Bell. A letter to Mullins expressed Bell's concern about the present downtown area. This encouraged Mullins to form a committee comprised of business owners and residents.

Brainstorming sessions have included members of the commission as well as village management such as Dick Kozdras, director of community development, and Mike Cassady, assistant village manager. In Bell's March memo to Palatine's trustees, the commission requested the board to formally accept the comprehensive plan presented to them in their finalized "vision statement entitled 'Downtown Palatine 2002'" summarizing their 10-year goal for downtown improvement.

Bell, a Palatine resident since 1978, owns Martha Bell & Associates. Her company is an architecture, planning and interior design firm. She said they would not bid, citing a conflict of interest. Bell primarily deals in interior renovations. Her specialty "is not shopping centers," she said. Commission members are volunteers.

Sidebar:

FUNDING*

1. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)—In the redevelopment program, only property owners within the boundary area would be taxed. Example: If you pay \$500 and taxes go to \$700, the \$200 increment goes toward TIF. Then the \$200 would go to whomever TIF has approved for spending the money. TIF does not take a tax increase. The village board decides if it wants TIF. If the board want TIF, an agreement is drawn between the school districts and the village. This form of financing doesn't affect the entire community. TIF funding cannot extend beyond 23 years. Qualifications for TIF are: the area must be (a) blighted; (b) have historical value; (c) or have an economic tool (Sears in Hoffman Estates is the only group which received this funding in the State of Illinois as an economic tool).
- 2.h Special Service Area—Incorporates additional property used specifically for downtown. This must be approved by the village board only. "If 51 percent of the downtown area objects, then it is dead," believes Bell.h
- 3.h Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) adopted in 1992—
"a source of money through the Illinois

Department of Transportation (IDOT) where various forms of transit come together," said Bell.

4.h Straight bond issues.h

5.h Other general programs available.h

*Funding information provided by Scott Buening from Palatine's Planning, Zoning and Development and Martha Bell.

METRA

Metra is privately owned. Village President Rita Mullins and Chairperson Martha Bell met with Metra officials to determine goals and objectives. Metra has begun a program for train stations located close to the downtown areas. Safety and pathways are the main concern. Beautification guidelines are also provided. Metra is also considering services for their riders, such as day care, newsstands, restaurants/coffeeshops; photo-finishing; video rental; flower shops; dry-cleaning stores; barber shops/hair salons; convenience-retail stores; banking/ATM facilities; and automotive services. Both Arlington Heights and Highland Park are examples of this new program.

Evaluation: *Nimfy applied all the rules of journalistic writing style in the inverted pyramid so the reader can tune out at any point without missing major facts.*

The Political Tree

by Jeff Buczkiewicz
Course: Political Science 210
Presidential Elections
Instructor: Molly Waite

*Assignment: One option on the final exam
involved explaining the structure and function of a
presidential campaign organization to a child.*

The structure of a presidential campaign is relatively simple. At the top of the campaign tree is the candidate. He is the one who shakes the hands, kisses the babies and puts on the best show in public that he knows how. He gives the campaign its definition and meaning. If we compared him to a tree, he would be the name of the tree such as, an Oak or a Redwood.

Next is the campaign manager. He is the person who is in charge of everything in a campaign. The trunk is the part of the tree he would be. His assistants are the branches of the tree. They handle the media. The type you pay for known as the controlled media, and the type you do not pay for known as the uncontrolled media. They also are the people who are his speech writers. They advise the candidate of what to say and how to say it. Research is another area his assistants handle. The researchers find out important information about the campaign. All of these people have a lot of other people working directly for them. These people are the local campaigns and are made up of people from within a state, county, city, or town. These people would be the leaves of the tree.

Last, but by far not least, are the people of the campaign known as the grass roots. The campaign is centered around and depends on them for its existence. The grass roots are people such as your mother and father; they are the people who vote. A tree could not exist without roots, and a campaign could not exist without the voters. A tree would not grow if it had no roots, and a campaign would not grow if it did not have any voters. The roots of the tree not only supply life to the tree, but also supply an anchor for the tree. The same is true in a campaign organization. The voters supply the life of the campaign, and they give the campaign the support and anchor it needs.

Evaluation: *Jeff paints a memorable picture of a presidential campaign in his discussion of the parts of a tree.*

A Collection of Spanish Poems

— by Diane Caron, Mark Klinn —
Patricia O'Connell, Lisa M. Shea,
Jennifer Beaumont
Course: Spanish 102
Instructor: Ana Lucía Hernández

Assignment: *As part of a take-home test on the Preterite and Imperfect Tenses, students were to write a poem of at least five lines. The "rules" would finally fall into place in their writing.*

Soñaba mi amante

Yo soñaba con mi amante.
Probaba sus besos.
Decía cosas sabrosas
con sus ojos,
escribía palabras de amor
en mis manos.

Nos secamos las lágrimas.
Hablamos hasta tarde esa noche,
estaba sentado en su coche...

Le amaba entonces,
le amo hoy.
Pero se fue con los ángeles.
Se montó en sus alas.
El siempre amó a las estrellas.h

Un día me uniré a mi amante y
Subiremos hacia el cielo.

I dreamt of my lover

I dreamt of my lover.
I tasted his kisses.
Exquisite ideas were expressed
with his eyes,
and wrote words of love
on my hands.

We dried our tears,
spoke until late.
He was seated in his car...

I loved him then,
I love him still.
He went with the angels.
Mounted their wings.
He always loved stars.

One day we will come together
and ascend into the clouds.

Diane Caron

Evaluation: *Love lost tragically scars our souls. In a tone of sadness and pain the last moments are expressed. Hope lingers, sweetening despair.*

Mi poema

El hombre vivía
en una tierra muy lejos de aquí.
Cuando allí estaba,
curaba,
era el salvador del pueblo.
Los dones los recibió el pueblo.
Hoy está olvidado.
¿Por qué alguien que dió tanto
recibe nada a cambio?
Los que no creen en Dios,
pagarán la vida eterna.

My poem

The man lived
in a far away land.
There, he cured
and was their savior.
These gifts were receivedh
by the people.h
Today he lies forgotten.
Why does one who gave
it all come empty handed
in exchange?
Those who do not believe
in God will pay
eternally.

Mark Klinn

Evaluation: Mark questions faith, then and now. This is a description of a young man struggling with society's changes. He plays with both tenses perfectly.

AGUAS

El agua tranquila
era una manta
de verdes y azules.
Su color me rodeaba.
Su calor me daba seguridad.

En el acantilado,
las ruinas me hablaban.
Me decían muchos cuentos
de personas antiguas.

Las aves me cantaban.
Personas nadaban
en las mismas aguas.
Miraban el mismo sol.

Yo estaba segura que podía oír
las voces de los niños
en el viento...

AQUAS

The tranquil water was
a cloak of greens and blues.
Its color surrounded me.
Its warmth comforted me.

On the cliffs,
the ruins were speaking.
They told tales
of ancient ones.

The birds sang to me.
People were swimming
the same waters,
watching the same sun.

I was certain that I heard
the voices of children
in the wind...

Patricia O'Connell

Evaluation: Patty has captured the preterite and imperfect perfectly. Her words evoke "days of yore" and describe her as a true romantic.

La bailarina

De pequeña,
bailar le encantaba.
Todos los días
practicaba y practicaba.
Sobre el escenario,
giraba,
se deslizaba.
Parecía un angelito
con quien yo conversaba.

¡Qué feliz!
¡Qué alegre yo estaba!
Al escuchar la música
me enamoraba.
¿Puede quedarse conmigo
por muchas mañanas?
Eso era imposible.
En la mañana
mi sueño terminaba.
Pero en mi memoria,
siempre va a quedar
un angelito
que no puede hablar.

The ballerina

As a small child,
dancing was her love.
Every day,
she practiced, practiced.
whirling and gliding
on the stage.
She was an angel
with whom I spoke.

How happy,
how excited I was!
As the music played,
watching her,
I fell in love.
Will you remain
with me many mornings?
My ballerina could not.
In the morning,
my dream would end.
In my memory remained
a small angel
who cannot speak.

Lisa M. Shea

Evaluation: *Poetry brings out the inner-self. This poem speaks of lost childhood and dreams. With simple words, Lisa has described maturity and our desire for innocence.*

El grito

Todas las personas
oían las palabras;
Pero nadie estaba hablando.
Estábamos extrañados,
escojimos el silencio
y lo queríamos ignorar.
Cuando lo oímos otra vez,
alguién pedía ayuda,
y no hicimos nada.
Un grito explotó
en mi cabeza.
¿Por qué?
¿Por qué tu no ayudaste?
Mis pies no se movían.
Afortunadamente
los gritos se terminaron.
Fue más fácil pensar
que nunca había ocurrido.

The scream

Everyone heard the words.
But no one was speaking.
Puzzled, we chose silence.
We wanted to ignore it.
Again we heard it,
a plea for help.
We did nothing.
A silent scream
echoed in my mind.
Why?
Why didn't you help?
My feet would not budge.
Finally,
the screams ceased.
It was easier to imagine
that nothing had happened.

Jennifer Beaumont

Evaluation: In a few lines, in simple words, human nature's selfishness is described. This poem questions our preference for comfort and subsequent refusal to aid the needy.

"Gimpel the Fool"

from Elka's Point of View

by Sandy Cox
Course: English 102
Instructor: June Way

Assignment: In order to help you sense what a difference a point of view makes, briefly rewrite one of the stories we have read from the point of view of one of the other characters in the story.

Well, the day is dawning cloudy and rainy just like my thoughts. How could it be that I have sunken so low as to marry the town fool? Such a state of despair am I in, that I must marry such as he to be provided for. Let me start from the beginning. My name is Elka, and I have lived in the town of Frambol all of my life. I have one son who is a bastard child from my first love, and his name is Yeichel. Yeichel is about eight years old now, and he needs a father to give him some stability.

I had married twice before, once a long time ago. My husband was a handsome, strapping young man, but when he caught me with another man in my bed, he divorced me and sent Yeichel and me out into the streets. Not long after that, I met up with an older man who took us into his home and fed us for the pleasure of my company. We were married shortly after that, and things went along nicely for a short while. He didn't care or mind if I had another man sharing my bed, and often I would catch him watching me from the door. We had a compromise of sorts, and he took good care of the boy and me. One day, I went in to wake him for breakfast but he wouldn't wake up. He had died in his sleep.

Now, it seems that I can no longer support myself and Yeichel on the measly trinkets and few loaves of bread that I can afford. It seems that once more I need to marry. The townspeople took it upon themselves to find me a suitable husband, one who would not mind the absence of my virtue or the presence of my child. It seems that the only man in town who fits this description is Reb Gimpel, the town fool. Now it may seem cruel to call a man a fool, but Gimpel is truly a fool to believe what the townspeople have told him! For him to believe that I am a maiden with a younger brother, he deserves to be deceived. I don't care; I

will continue my life as I have, and with a few simple lies here and there, Gimpel the fool shall be none the wiser.

As I was scrubbing up the last of my wash for the day, I heard the laughter and carousing of the townfolk leading towards the house. I limped over to the window to see Gimpel, and I could easily pick him out up in front of the crowd. Some of the younger children were throwing pebbles at him as he walked. Served him right, the idiot.

Barefoot, I hobbled back over to the wash tub and mused over my plight. I could taste the bitterness over my misfortune and I vowed that the townsfolk would pay for this, of that I swear. Either John the butcher or Joseph the candlemaker has gotten me with child, and I refuse to raise another little bastard alone. John won't leave his wife and Joseph is betrothed, so Reb Gimpel was the best they could find for me on such short notice. At least Gimpel works hard and can support me and the youngsters.

Gimpel entered my little clay house and tracked sand in as he went, the clod. He looked me over and I felt a bit uncomfortable in my worn plush dress and my plain hair tucked up into braids. Stubbornly, I said, "Look who's here! He's here, the drip. Grab a seat." I asked him about himself, making sure that he had enough money and means to take care of the three of us. With a sigh of relief I realized he would be more than a good provider. I almost laughed outright when Gimpel asked me if I was a virgin of all things! He actually believed me when I said "Yes," and that little Yeichel was my brother. Oh, this is rich!

I told Gimpel I was an orphan like him, and that I wanted a dowry of fifty guilders and a collection from the townspeople. I didn't mince words with him, and told him it was fifty guilders

or nothing.

Gimpel and the town agreed, as I knew they would; and due to the plague of dysentery, the wedding took place at the cemetery gates. Fine place for this farce of a marriage to begin if you ask me! I watched Gimpel's face when he found out I was both a widow and divorced, and I realized then and there that he had gone too far with the proceedings and would say nothing to blacken my name or call off the wedding.

What fun I had receiving all of the gifts from the town, and when the crib came around, I heard Gimpel ask the reason for such a gift. I thought for sure even he wouldn't believe such a reply that, "it may come in handy," but believe he did. After that, I danced with all the town's men except my husband, tie on that word, and ate and drank merrily to my heart's content. When Gimpel came to me that night to claim his rights, I lied and told him I was having my monthly. Of course being the fool that he was, he believed me!

The next day, I told Gimpel that he would have to spend the week nights at the bakery since it was too far for him to be coming from at night by himself, and that I would worry. Gimpel complied without a murmur, and I spent night after night with my male lovers until it became too close to the babe's birthing time.

When I gave birth to my son, I thought I was going to die, and I screamed out for Gimpel's forgiveness. He seemed not to know of what forgiveness I asked, and went to go pray for my miserable life. The babe was born without incident, and took to Gimpel right away.

I really couldn't believe it, but Gimpel fell for the excuse that the babe was four months premature. What a fool he was! Gimpel circumcised the boy and named him after his father. Afterwards, he

gave a grand party while I lay miserable in bed, suffering.

The months went quickly by with Gimpel staying at the bakery most nights. But, one night, unexpectedly, Gimpel came home in the dead of night and caught me with one of my lovers.

The next day, Gimpel rightly accused me of being unfaithful and visited the Rabbi for advice. When the beadle came for me, I took the youngest child with me and I simply stated, "He's out of his head, I know nothing of dreams or divinations." They screamed at me, they yelled loudly across the room, and they angrily hammered with their fists on the table. I kept my chin up high and stuck by what I had said. The child wet himself, and they allowed me to go.

I know that the Rabbi told Gimpel to divorce me, but he must have decided against it, for the Rabbi forbade him to see me while they made a final decision on my guilt. I wasn't sure how I felt on the matter, for no matter how much a fool he was, Gimpel was a good man and he deserved better than myself.

While Gimpel was awaiting the Rabbi's verdict, he would send his apprentice to the house everyday with some bread. The apprentice was handsome indeed, and before long he had made a nice addition to my bed. How could Gimpel be so blind? He was tempting me to be unfaithful at every turn! I didn't even feel bad, for Gimpel was the fool for sending the apprentice. I just couldn't help myself when it came to appetites of the flesh. One night, as fate would have it, Gimpel even walked in on the apprentice and me in bed, and he dropped the bread he was carrying and started to shake and tremble terribly.

I asked, "Who is that, ah?"

Gimpel muttered, "It's me."

"Gimpel?", I said, "How come you're here? I though it was forbidden?"

"The Rabbi said," he answered, while still shaking like a leaf in a fall breeze.

"Listen to me, Gimpel," I said, "go out to the shed and see if the goat's all right. It seems she's been sick." We have this goat that I know Gimpel adores, and sure enough, he left the room.

Quickly, I sent the apprentice away. When Gimpel returned, I pretended ignorance of my foul act, and screamed threats and vile insults upon his head. From behind the oven my oldest son, Yeichel, clobbered Gimpel over the head with my frying pan.

Gimpel, still standing, pleaded with me not to cause a scandal and tried to calm me. That was the end of that.

Gimpel and I lived for twenty years together like that, and I bore him four daughters and two sons, all of which he adored.

Then suddenly, I was having great pains from a lump in my breast. I became increasingly sicker and sicker. Gimpel did his best to nurse me back to health, but nothing seemed to help. He called doctors and healers from far and wide to try to heal me, but I just became worse and more frail.

When I realized that my time had come, I called Gimpel to my side. "Forgive me, Gimpel," I said.

He said, "What is there to forgive? You have been a good and faithful wife."

"Woe, Gimpel!" I said. "It was ugly how I deceived you all these years. I want to go clean to my Maker, and so I have to tell you that the children are not yours."

"Whose are they?" he asked.

"I don't know," I said, "there were a lot... But they're not yours."

"Gimpel the Fool" from Elka's Point of View

With those words, I weakly tossed my head to the side and I felt happy that at last I had stopped fooling Gimpel. I saw the light close in around his head as if it were an angel's halo, and I realized with utter and complete horror that Reb Gimpel was going to be the closest I ever came to heaven. In my last living breath I heard the shrill screeches of dybbuks shuddering through my darkening being and I knew I was lost ...

Evaluation: Sandy wrote much more than was asked. She has created situations which are only hinted at in the story, but all her additions are in keeping with the information provided, and she fulfills the assignment well. Her fluent style delights the reader.

I Was A "Twenty-Something" Yuppie

— by Mary Ann Crosby-Anderson —

Course: English 102

Instructor: Barbara Hickey

Assignment: *Write a definition of a stereotype.
Develop the body of the essay with examples.*

I was seated by the window of the silvery, bullet-shaped box they call a Chicago Northwestern train car, occasionally glancing through the glass at the approaching Loop high-rises. When I wasn't staring idly out the window, my eyes scanned the headlines of the morning's *Tribune*. Squeezed between the major events of the day, the economic news, the weather, the editorials, and the "INC" column was a small article that caught my eye. It described a new societal term, the "yuppie," which stood for "young, urban professional." The author went on to state that if you were to compare a person's age with his gross annual income, you would be able to determine if this same person was a yuppie. According to the article, a yuppie was someone whose gross annual income was equal to or greater than \$1,000.00 for each year of his current age. For example, a thirty year old person was a yuppie if he was young, lived in a non-rural area, worked at a white-collar profession, and earned at least \$30,000.00 per year.

My jaw dropped, and I broke into a sweat, which was both unprofessional and unladylike. After all my heard-fought years of being a hippie, after thousands of pounds of tofu and bean sprouts, after countless Grateful Dead albums spinning on my stereo turntable, could it possibly be true that I had become upper middle-class? Part of the "Establishment"? God forbid! Never would I become a miserly, stuffy, narrow-minded, boring Republican suburbanite like my parents! And yet, there I sat, my leather briefcase at my side, dressed in a dark wool suit, expensive leather shoes, and simple yet elegant jewelry, obediently travelling to my high-paying job with a multinational corporation. Oh my God, could it be true? Was I a twenty-six-year-old yuppie?

Filing off the train and trekking east toward

the lake on Washington Street, I observed the herd of corporate executives, lawyers, doctors, and financial whiz kids who rushed along side me to their appointed rounds. We all looked the same, so homogenized and clean cut. Everyone was dressed in shades of grey, black, or navy. Everyone carried black or brown briefcases. No one had a single hair out of place, and no one's hair was longer than just below the ears, even the women's. I had always thought of myself as a rebel, a radical, but I began to wonder if perhaps I had slipped into this new state of "yuppie-ism." But exactly what was a "yuppie," beyond the dollar-per-year definition I had read in the paper?

Over the weeks and months that followed that fateful morning when I discovered I might no longer be a hippie, the term "yuppie" began to take on more depth and meaning. Magazines and news programs began to recognize and describe this societal phenomenon; television programs and movies were produced that introduced yuppie characters and detailed their lives. Initially it seemed a yuppie was a person who was completely materialistic and obsessed with upward mobility in all areas of his life. There was a direct correlation between the emergence of yuppies and the entry of massive numbers of baby boomers to the white collar workforce. Many of these baby-boomers (those born between the end of World War II and 1960) were well-educated and eager to surpass the economic status of their parents. Consequently, brilliant, aggressive whiz kids were taking over the older generation's jobs like piranhas devouring other fish in a stream.

To the yuppie, work came before all else. Fifty- and sixty-hour work weeks were commonplace. They carried beepers and installed car phones; they drove BMW's (called "beamers" in casual conver-

sation) or Mercedes. They wore Rolex watches and the finest of wool suits in muted dark colors. Recreational clothes weren't very visible in a yuppie wardrobe because most yuppies had little free time. The recreational clothes they did own came from L.L. Bean or Eddie Bauer. IMAGE was everything. They were slim, had straight teeth, sported clean and conservative hair styles, and wore only a moderate amount of make-up or nail polish. Female yuppies didn't want to look too much like floozies. Due to their lack of non-work time, the fledgling yuppies were quite unlikely to have families or to be in any type of relationship with depth to it. Those yuppies with spouses were married to other yuppies; those yuppies with children shipped them off to daycare for the day. They were also quite non-spiritual—it wasn't viewed as aggressive enough for a yuppie to display reliance on any kind of Higher Power. They developed very pure tastes in food and drink—Perrier replaced martinis at business lunches, and nouvelle cuisine took the place of meals heavily laden with fat and sugar. With his monogrammed briefcase in hand and his American Express card safely in his wallet, the yuppie confidently gobbled up the world. He was lean and mean!

As time continued to roll by, yuppies seemed to begin to outgrow the definition and the boundaries that had been set for their social group. Perhaps the hardness and heartlessness of full-blown yuppie existence was too much for these super-humans to bear after all. Perhaps the yuppies were bitten by the humanity bug. In any case, present day yuppies are softer around the edges than the yuppies of the late 1970's and early 1980's. They are certainly as interested in wealth as their sociological predecessors, but it's no longer acceptable to flaunt your wealth. Many yuppies

now find it advantageous to seek personal, social, spiritual, and aesthetic goals. They purchase run-down, turn-of-the-century hulks of houses and completely restore them. They fill their houses with expensive antiques and collectibles. As the baby-boomers age, they seem to have developed a social conscience. It is now very appropriate, practically mandatory, for yuppies to show concern for the environment. They are quite family-oriented, and in some cases female yuppies actually leave their jobs to stay home with their children when it's financially possible. They continue to be well-educated. They continue to be "in charge" but in new ways, from the local PTA to state and national politics.

Present-day yuppies have mellowed and matured, but IMAGE is still everything—all must look perfect. Most clothing is direct from Marshall Field's, Lord and Taylor, L.L. Bean, or Eddie Bauer. "Outdoorsy" clothes are very "in," but they should never actually be dirty or worn. Haircuts are still short and neat. Many yuppies have "outdoorsy" dogs of a hunting line, like honey-colored Golden Retrievers or lustrous Black Labs, although most yuppies loathe hunting. They drive rugged, natural-looking vehicles like the Jeep Cherokee or the Chevy Blazer. It's important to look wealthy in a casual kind of way. Pure tastes in food and drink are still very evident in yuppies' lives—they are ever vigilant in trying to eliminate sodium, fat, sugar, alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes from their lifestyle. Yuppies these days are more likely to be married with children, but their children must be perfect. The kids must look perfect, be smart, play the violin according to the Suzuki method by age six, and be involved in a myriad of other clean-cut activities such as soccer, gymnastics, swimming, ballet, softball, etc., etc.

These children are clearly burdened by their yuppie parents' yearning to have them be overachievers. And overachievers they become, whether they develop stomach ulcers by age ten or not.

When I analyze my life today, and the lives of my friends, I wonder—had I become a yuppie on that day way back when as I traveled to the Loop? Probably. Am I a yuppie today? Maybe, but the older I get, the less concerned I am as to whether or not I fit into any particular social category. I can't say for a fact that when the television program *Thirty Something* hit the air waves, I could have sworn I knew those people. They seemed so familiar. I recently attended a reunion of old friends, being reunited with some of my radical hippie friends from twenty years ago. An amazing transformation had taken place—we all looked so mainstream! But in talking to them, I still saw a hint of "the edge," that sharpness in opinions and actions that put us slightly to the left of center. And for that, my heart was glad.

Evaluation: Mary Ann gives life to her definition with vivid examples. How fortunate it is that she has been transformed from a "twenty-something" yuppie to a "thirty-something" student and writer.

Buster

by Joanne Curran
Course: Journalism 133
Feature Writing
Instructor: Rhea Dawson

Assignment: Write a profile feature article of a person, place or thing. Incorporate background information, observations and direct quotations from sources you've interviewed.

Police officer Michael Whetstone and his partner had just been dispatched to a burglary-in-progress call. It was late at night and very dark. Whetstone turned off the lights as they approached the driveway. He quickly opened the car door, and they slid out and began to approach the house. As they got close to the front door, Buster stepped in front of his partner as a warning to stop.

Without making a sound, Buster began crawling on his belly toward a clump of bushes to his right. As he got closer, his muscles began to twitch, his nostrils flared, and every hair on his back stood straight up.

"This is the police. Give yourself up and come out of there or I'm sending the dog in," shouted Whetstone, canine officer of the Palatka, Florida, police department.

There was a rustling in the bushes, and Buster's low guttural growl became just a little louder.

"Ok I'm coming out. Just don't let the dog get me! Okay?" A man stepped out of the bushes with his hands up in the air and his eyes glued to Buster.

"Stay where you are," said Whetstone, "and don't move."

"Hey man, I'm not going anywhere," said the burglar. "Just don't let the dog get me!"

Whetstone advised the man of his rights as he handcuffed him behind the back.

Meanwhile, Buster turned his attention back to the bushes and started to whine. "Hey, partner, what's wrong?"

Buster ran into the bushes and dragged a dark canvas bag by the strap handle. He stopped in front of Whetstone and began to whine and claw at the bag.

"Okay, partner," said Whetstone. "Watch him." Buster sat upright in front of the man, less than two feet away. The man was shaking, sweat

rolling down his face.

Buster remembered the words "watch him, and stay." He knew that if he walked away from the man, or took his eyes off of him for a second, that Whetstone would get very upset with him and yell "NO!" He wouldn't love him up and tell him he was a good boy. Buster wanted Whetstone to love him and tell him he was a good boy. So Buster would sit there and watch the man until Whetstone told him "out." Then they would play for a few minutes and go back to work.

Whetstone bent to examine the contents of the bag. As the burglar took a step toward the back of the squad car, Buster bared his teeth. Whetstone hadn't called "out." The burglar froze. Whetstone bent down and pulled a small caliber hand gun out of the bag of goodies.

Would you believe Buster is a dog donated to a local police department because his original owner abused him?

This miraculous transformation took place due to one man. Canine officer Michael Whetstone. Whetstone used to be partners with a German shepherd named Jason in the United States Air Force, and knew the value of working with a trusted dog.

Whetstone and Jason knew they could rely on one another in any situation. Whetstone trusted Jason with his life, much the way Whetstone's wife and three daughters trusted Whetstone.

Being an animal lover herself, Cathy Whetstone was drawn to her husband because of his attitude toward animals and children. He reminded Cathy of her own father. When Whetstone left the service, he took Jason with him for two reasons. First, Jason was too old to stay in active service. Second, Cathy was more than willing to accept Jason into their home as a member of

the family.

One of the few times in her life Cathy saw her husband cry was when they had to put Jason to sleep. She didn't think he'd ever want another dog.

"Jason was more than just a dog," said Whetstone. "He was my partner, and he was my best friend. He saved my butt more than once."

And then about a year later, Whetstone met Buster.

His owner had boarded Buster at a pet motel because her husband had been abusing him. She called local police stations to find a home for him.

Whetstone went to look at him, if for no other reason than because he had never seen an all black pure bred German shepherd before. And Buster was all black except for a small white star on his chest and a few white hairs in between the toes on his front paws.

It wasn't exactly love at first sight. But Whetstone saw something in Buster, something worth saving. And so began a relationship that's been worth every bit of pain, patience, understanding, and hard work.

Whetstone's concern was how Buster would relate to his three daughters, Michelle, Jackie, and Jessica. Buster and the girls bonded instantly, and he stayed pretty close to Cathy those first few weeks.

Slowly, Whetstone began to win Buster's confidence and trust. Bonding started.

Whetstone knew it was time to get back into the canine end of police work. Now he had a partner he believed could do the job.

Whetstone was employed at the time by the Gulfport, Florida, police department. So he enrolled in the Tampa, Florida, police department canine academy. For more than 640 hours, eight hours a day, five days a week for 16 weeks, the

team trained together. And that was just basic canine training.

Class started at three in the morning and went until about 11 am. It was late spring so the dogs and their partners were scheduled to avoid the intense training in this seasonal heat in Florida.

Up until the last three weeks of training, Whetstone worked his regular shift at the Gulfport, Florida, police department. He traveled straight to Tampa with Buster for school.

After the first three weeks of training, Whetstone admitted he hoped that Buster would wash out.

"There would be days I'd be so tired, I'd almost fall asleep driving to Tampa. Then I'd look at Buster in the back seat and see how excited he got the closer we'd get to school. He was trying so hard, I couldn't let him down," said Whetstone.

It's just that I was so tired all the time and wasn't spending much time with my family," said Whetstone. He was also worried about officer safety being compromised at work.

But Buster had other ideas.

By this time, Buster had come to love and trust Whetstone and would do anything to please him. On days Whetstone felt too tired to do anymore, Buster seemed to pull him through the day.

Buster tried harder, and worked harder, than any other dog in the class. In fact, Buster was graduated as top dog in the class.

At the graduation ceremony, Buster was picked to demonstrate the recall. No matter how good a dog is, if he fails the recall, he doesn't graduate and isn't certified as a working canine.

When a dog is chasing a bad guy off lead, and his partner calls him off, he must immediately return to his partner in a heel position, which is to his partner's left side. Also, if the bad guy stops

running and gives up, so must the dog. That is recall.

This takes hours of training which begins with the dog taking off after a "bad guy" while on the end of a long lead. When he reaches the end of the lead, his partner yells "OUT," as the dog is jerked up off the ground because he runs out of lead. If the "bad guy" gives up, the dog's partner yells "OUT" as he yanks on the lead, bring the dog to an abrupt stop. At this point, the handler runs up to the dog, telling him what a good boy he is and pats him on the head or rubs his back.

"The biggest advantage to this," says Whetstone, "is that you can recall the dog. You can't recall a bullet."

Whetstone knew that Buster could do more.

Being a peninsular state, Florida's drug traffic is particularly heavy. So Whetstone decided to get Buster certified in drug detection. This meant another five weeks of school.

And again, Buster proved to Whetstone that he was bred for police work. "He has a nose for drugs," said Whetstone.

"Buster has torn out the entire back seat of a car in less than 10 minutes to get the dope," boasts Whetstone.

Within a month of being on the streets for the Palatka, Florida, police department, Buster's drug arrests became so numerous that drug dealers in Putnam County, Florida, put out a contract on him.

The deputies of Putnam County and the officers of the Palatka police department, didn't take this threat against a "fellow officer" lightly!

The deputies and officers pounded the streets interviewing known drug offenders, until the men were arrested who were responsible for the threat against Buster.

Most bad guys don't know it, but if you cause bodily harm or death to a police dog, it's a felony. A police dog is a police officer.

Today, Whetstone and Buster are the leading canine team in the state of Florida.

Buster lives with the Whetstone's extended family, Cathy, Michelle, Jessica, Jackie, four horses, several cats, six other German shepherds, a blood hound, a mini-hound, chickens, and four exotic birds.

At home, Buster is the family pet as well as protector.

"When we get home from work at two or three in the morning, Buster checks the girls bedrooms first thing," says Whetstone. "Then he'll let me take off his collar and badge and feed him."

Cathy has not had an easy time through all the training, long hours away from home, and threats against her husband and his partner. But she knows and feels in her heart, the qualities Buster utilizes at home and at work.

Cathy knows Whetstone has a better chance of coming home at the end of his shift, safe and sound, because of Buster. She knows Buster wouldn't hesitate to protect Whetstone, even if it cost his own life.

"It's kind of scary," says Cathy, "Those dogs don't know what death is. They have no fear of what can happen to them protecting their partner. But I'm glad it's that way."

Knowing this makes it a lot easier for Cathy and her daughters to sleep well at night.

Evaluation: Joanne's diligence in rewriting as often as necessary to bring her article to journalistic standards is exemplary. She took a difficult subject to profile and made it work.

Note: Since this article was nominated and subsequently accepted, Joanne's article in rewritten form has been purchased by Police Journal magazine and is slated for publication in Spring '93.

To Annex, or Not to Annex— That is the Question

by Irene Daly
Course: English 101
Instructor: Joseph Sternberg

Assignment: Persuade us that your position on a subject you know well is reasonable. The writer wishes not to identify the name of her subdivision or village.

"I don't want to be incorporated into the village—my taxes will go sky-high!" "Things are fine as they are—don't rock the boat." These comments are typical remarks from homeowners as I trudge through my subdivision seeking signatures for a petition to incorporate into the Village of _____. Along with many of my fellow residents, I believe strongly that annexation should occur; however, a surprising number are either firmly against it or simply are indifferent. Simply stated, I believe the advantages of annexation far outweigh the disadvantages.

Perhaps the most vocal opponent to annexation is the homeowner who fears his property taxes will increase dramatically. Granted, there will be an increase. However, according to the Cook County assessor's office, the average home income in our subdivision will realize an approximate increase of \$535 per year. This, in itself, is a modest increase; but it will be offset by savings which will be realized by annexation.

Water and sewer rates would plummet. Currently, homeowners in unincorporated _____ are charged \$4.00 per 1000 gallons of water used, or for the average family of four, approximately \$685 per year. On the other hand, village residents pay only \$1.35 per 1000 gallons, or approximately \$240 per year for a family of four. This is quite a substantial savings. The savings alone nearly cancels out the increase in property taxes, and, besides, property taxes are tax deductible.

Other areas of savings and benefits of annexation include the elimination of the Rural Fire District tax and lower garbage collection rates, in addition to a free full service curbside recycling program. The village also provides many municipal services unavailable to unincorporated areas—for example, free wood chips, free furnace inspec-

tion, lighting of street intersections, and 50/50 sidewalk replacement. There is also fall curbside leaf collection—free of charge. No more clumsy bags to fill—just rake your leaves to the curb and let the village do the rest. This service would be both a time saver and a money saver in these days of paying for yard waste disposal.

Another major advantage to annexation would be the professionally staffed, full-service government available to respond to residents' needs and problems. There would be local representation on the Village Board by an elected District Trustee—something we currently lack and desperately need. I have been trying for three years, through numerous phone calls and letters to my county representative, to get a much needed stop sign installed on my corner—with no results. On the other hand, I believe that a _____ District Trustee, who is both a village resident and makes his home phone number available to the residents he represents, would have been much more responsive.

Perhaps the most important reason for annexation to the Village is the excellent services provided by the _____ Police Department. Our subdivision is now policed by the Cook County Sheriff's Department. Although some opponents to annexation feel that the services are adequate, the Sheriff's police do not provide a guaranteed response time, whereas _____ police, according to Dispatcher Sharon Voss, respond in five minutes or less to all calls. The police department also offers a neighborhood watch program in addition to the popular "neighborhood beat" program where one or two individual police officers exclusively patrol one small area, personally getting to know the residents.

The implementation of 911 service is a critical aspect to this whole issue and a valid reason to

support annexation. It is not available to our unincorporated subdivision, only to village residents. Whether you are an invalid, senior citizen with health problems, or simply a parent with small children, having the option of quickly dialing those three numbers could be a matter of life or death.

Clearly, annexation to the Village of _____ is very attractive — given the abundance of municipal services, the decrease in water bills, and the improved governmental and police services. Now is the time for our subdivision residents to think of the future and join the Village of _____.

Evaluation: Clear sentences and words combine with mounting evidence to persuade us that annexing the writer's subdivision to a village is advantageous.

The Amazing Periodic Table

by *Cari-Lynn Grossart*
Course: Chemistry 110
Fundamentals of Chemistry
Instructor: Jayne Wilcox

Assignment: *Chemistry 110 is a general chemistry course designed for students who have never had a formal chemistry course before. With that in mind, I asked them to write a short essay on the theme "I Never Knew That..." (something pertaining to chemistry).*

The periodic table. Looks like just another scientific table, huh? Just a bunch of hieroglyphics. You probably already know that the periodic table can tell you the chemical symbols of the different elements and their atomic masses, but are you aware of all the other information contained within those rows and columns? Well, let me tell you what amazing information is available just from looking at how the elements are arranged.

First, there are the rows, or periods, as they are called. The rows tell you about the size of the atoms. The rows at the bottom of the table contain the largest atoms, for instance. As you go down the table, each row's atoms have larger volumes of space for their electrons to move around in, so they are bigger.

Next, there are the columns, or groups, as they are called. Just by looking at what column an atom is in, you know how reactive it is. The elements are put into columns according to similarities in the arrangements of their reactive electrons. As a result, elements in the same column have very similar chemical properties.

There are trends within the rows and columns, too. You can get an idea about an element's density, melting point, and tendency to form ions just by where it's located.

The periodic table is so amazing and wonderful. It looks just like any other table, but it isn't. It can tell you so much. It holds a wealth of knowledge.

Evaluation: *Cari-Lynn gets the reader's attention quickly, and then conveys her appreciation of the periodic table. Her insight into the potential of this chart is impressive for someone so new to chemistry.*

Untitled

by Joseph L. Hazelton
Course: English 101
Instructor: Patricia Fuhs

Assignment: For this independent study project, students were to investigate one aspect of language, using print or nonprint sources or a combination. They were then to explain their findings in a thesis-support paper.

As an Air Force recruit approaching the end of basic training camp, I encountered what I later came to know as military doublespeak. On the day that I and my fellow recruits received written orders informing us of the jobs that we had been assigned, I first learned of that peculiar language. I remember one of the other recruits received assignment as a "pavement specialist," the job title that appeared on his orders. He was dismayed. He had not been expecting to be given such a poor job. He understood what the title meant and informed a number of less knowledgeable recruits, myself included. I learned that he would be working on roads, either paving new roads or repairing old roads. For a young airman hoping for a glamorous and exciting job, assignment as a "pavement specialist" was mortifying.

What made the incident so memorable was the laughable attempt by the Air Force to make that job seem more attractive. After all, the recruit would be a "specialist" in the pavement field, much as a cardiologist and a neurologist are specialists in the medical field, right? Wrong. However, the incident had little impact on me; I received assignment as a "communications/computer systems operator," a computer operator. It was not until just recently that I learned the true, insidious nature of military doublespeak.

William Lutz, an English professor at Rutgers University, who could easily be touted as the United States' leading expert on doublespeak, defines that language as "language that avoids or shifts responsibility...that is at variance with its real or purported meaning...that conceals or prevents thought" (*Doublespeak* 1). Consequently, military doublespeak refers to language which possesses one or more of the aforementioned characteristics, as used by and in association with the

armed forces. As evidenced from my recollection of "pavement specialist,"^h such language can be amusing. However, I now recognize how double-speak can be used to subvert the true meaning of the ideas being conveyed. Also, I have come to understand that military doublespeak, as used by both military and government leaders, misrepresents various aspects of the Department of Defense, from the very name of that national agency to bombing ("No Ordinary Nut" 34).

First the name of that institution, the Department of Defense, serves as an example of military doublespeak because of the denial of an aspect of war. Professor Lutz contends that, with the signing of the National Security Act of 1947 by President Truman, "the military pulled off the doublespeak coup of the century."^h Specifically, he was referring to that part of the act which created the Department of Defense and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, replacing the Department of War and the Secretary of War. Mr. Lutz makes this comment about the change: "Thus war became 'defense'" ("No Ordinary Nut" 34).

Although the significance of this change may not be immediately evident because the purpose of the Department of War was to protect, to defend, the civilian populace of the United States from its attacking enemies, the change constitutes an example of doublespeak in that it implicitly denies the existence of a major part of war, as stated earlier. With that act, passed by the United States Congress and signed by the United States President, the national government lamely attempted to portray "war" and "defense" as interchangeable, possessing the same meaning. Yet the term "defense" lacks an aspect which the term "war" possesses: offense. By deleting this feature of warfare from the title of the department, the

United States government implicitly offered the notion that protecting the civilian people of the United States no longer required American troops to take the offensive after repelling the enemy's attack; only fending off the attack would be necessary. In war, allowing the enemy to escape, to possibly attack again on another day, is ludicrous. However, the title "Department of Defense" implies as much. Perhaps, at the time the change took place, a person could have believed that a real shift had occurred in the purpose of the department. Later use of American troops would shatter this fiction.

A second example of how military double-speak allows for misrepresentation of matters related to the armed forces involves the expenditures of money by the Pentagon. Through that peculiar language, the Department of Defense has managed to hide its outrageous spending habits concerning certain items. In an article entitled "'No Ordinary Nut': How Pentagon doublespeak obscures what's really going on," the author states that the Department of Defense makes use of double-speak when it "wants expensive items to sound very complicated and worth their high price." He presents this term as an example: "hexiform rotatable surface compression unit." Although the term seems to indicate a sophisticated device, this "unit" is, in fact, nothing but a steel nut. However, by using this doublespeak alias for steel nut, the Pentagon can justify the price it pays for such a "unit": \$2,043.00 ("'No Ordinary Nut'"^h 34). I cannot help wondering how much of the hundreds of billions of dollars allocated to the Department of Defense is also spent so outrageously and subsequently disguised through military doublespeak.

Another aspect of the Department of Defense hidden by doublespeak is the nature of weapons.

In a booklet entitled *American Military Power: Future Needs, Future Choices—A Background Paper*, a reference is made to "high performance weapons" (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment 3). Make no mistake, the term does not mean that the weapon can accelerate from 0 to 60 miles per hour in 4.5 seconds. The term can be better understood using meaningful language. In this case, "high performance weapons" translates as weapons capable of killing large number of people and causing great damage to structures and land in little or no time. For that is the true nature of "high performance weapons." Yet the national government prefers couching such weapons in language more commonly associated with automobile commercials. In this manner, the nature of the weapon may be obscured, presenting the public with a Department of Defense no longer associated with killing.

Although a number of people may laugh at the idea of the armed forces not being associated with killing, there appears to be a movement in the national government to separate the Department of Defense from killing, from death. As a matter of fact, an article mentions how the United States Army no longer kills the enemy. Instead, it "services the target" ("No Ordinary Nut" 34). Other examples include the terms "KIAs" and "collateral damage" (Fotheringham 56). Since "KIA" can be easily guessed as meaning "killed-in-action," the Pentagon largely failed to separate itself from death in this case. However, it achieved a stunning success with "collateral damage." From an article by Allan Fotheringham, the meaning of the term can be obtained. "Collateral damage" refers to civilians killed as a result of warfare (Fotheringham 56). Obviously, the Department of Defense should be congratulated for this incredible

feat of military doublespeak, managing to portray death as simply "damage."

Not only has the Department of Defense attempted to obscure the relationship between itself and death through military doublespeak, the Pentagon has also avoided admitting a particularly harsh reality to the country's civilian population by means of the language. In 1977, in response to questions raised about the intended use of the neutron bomb, a nuclear weapon which kills people by attacking their central nervous systems, the Department of Defense indicated that this weapon could kill "an enemy with a minimum of damage to friendly territory"; it was meant for use against an enemy-occupying army, for use "over our own territory, if necessary." In both instances, the Pentagon avoided mentioning that use of the bomb in destroying an enemy army occupying United States soil would result in the deaths of any American civilians within range of the explosion (*Doublespeak* 189-90). Since the Defense Department exists to protect the United States' civilian populace, the idea that it is prepared to sacrifice many American civilians in such circumstances could be viewed as a betrayal of its duty. However, there is an underlying principle in this idea, a principle that American people may be able to understand. The citizenry of the country would likely be able to cope with the principle of "cutting off a limb to save a life" if given the opportunity by a forthright Department of Defense. Alas, the Pentagon has chosen instead to emphasize the destruction of enemy troops and the virtue of a bomb that would cause minimal damage to American land, avoiding the other aspect through doublespeak.

Consistent with avoiding the reality of the neutron bomb, military doublespeak also allows

the Pentagon to continue to portray itself as being used for only defensive purposes, not offensive. If that agency of the national government were truly the "Department of Defense," then the armed forces would be used strictly for defense, never offense. Yet, in 1983, United States armed forces undertook an offensive campaign, the invasion of Grenada, a country which could not be viewed as attacking the United States in any way. In keeping with the idea that the Defense Department is for defense only, President Regan attempted to characterize the invasion as a "rescue mission" in which troops were deployed to protect American citizens there, among other objectives ("Doublespeak, the Invasion...Discourse" 57).

A similar event occurred six years later, with the invasion of Panama by American troops. On that occasion, President Bush attempted to avoid the appearance of the armed forces of the Department of Defense being engaged in an offensive campaign by conspicuously avoiding the use of the word "invasion." As a matter of fact, even the opening statement of his announcement, made on nationwide television, lacked the word "invasion." Instead, that opening remark read as follows: "Fellow citizens, last night I ordered U.S. military forces to Panama" (Doublespeak, the Invasion...Discourse" 56).

As for the name given to that invasion, "Operation Just Cause," it, too, exists as an example of military doublespeak for two reasons. First, the use of the word "operation" fails to convey the nature of the event, an invasion. Instead, it strikes me as a word better used in association with a surgeon, an occasion in which people's lives may very well be saved, not in relation to an event in which people will be killed. Second, the other part of the name, "Just Cause," misrepresents the invasion as

being justified, lawful. Although the desire to remove General Manuel Noriega from his position as dictator may be justified, the invasion cannot be viewed as lawful. Not only was this invasion conducted without a declaration of war in accordance with provisions of the United States Constitution, but the charters for the Organizations of American States and the United Nations, organizations to which the United States belongs, both forbid the invasion of a member-country by another member-country ("Doublespeak, the Invasion... Discourse" 56).

Other aspects of war have been misrepresented through military doublespeak, to include battlefields, bayonets, and bombing. During the Persian Gulf War, the people of the United States were introduced to "the Kuwait theatre," as though the events occurring there, viewed by many people on television, were some form of entertainment (Fotheringham 56). In the case of the newly designed bayonet, the parlance of military double-speak allows it to be categorized as a "weapons system" ("No Ordinary Nut" 35). Through such inaccuracy the Pentagon could allocate exorbitant amounts of money to a program which may only involve redesigning the handle of a bayonet so that it attaches properly to the latest model of machine gun. Finally, bombing appears to have become a casualty of military doublespeak some eighteen years ago when Colonel David Opfer, a United States Air Force press officer in Cambodia, made this statement to the media: "You always write it's bombing, bombing, bombing. It's not bombing. It's air support!" (Model 81).

In all of these ways, military doublespeak has served to confuse so many aspects of the Department of Defense. Consequently, when I think of that memorable encounter with military

doublespeak as a young recruit, I am still amused, but I am also fearful. For military doublespeak, the language that makes death "damage," strikes me as a language capable of replacing reality with dangerous illusion. With this thought in mind, I would call for a return to an honest form of language and would respond to statements like that of Colonel David Opfer in this manner: "It is not air support; itis bombing."

Evaluation: *Blending past experience with material presented in class, Joseph has given a skillful—and occasionally humorous—comment on the use of Doublespeak in the military.*

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Attitude

by William C. Hillmanne

Course: English 101

Composition

Instructor: Jacqueline U. Heckman

Assignment: *After reading James Thurber's "University Days," tell us about a course you did not like and the reasons why. Discuss whether your reasons and Thurber's are the same.*

In one passage of his 1933 memoir "University Days" (Dodds, Jack. *Roles for Writers and Readers* New York: MacMillan, 1986.) James Thurber speaks of a botany class that required extensive microscopic study. He had a degenerative eye condition that made it impossible for him to see clearly through a microscope. When speaking of his instructor, Thurber says that "he would always end up in a fury; claiming that I could too see through a microscope but just pretended that I couldn't." His instructor would also say that "anybody can see through a microscope." When I read the memoir, it was this attitude that brought to mind a class with which I currently have to struggle.

The class is Chemistry 101, an introduction to chemistry and the living organism. My instructor is a bald, heavyset man who walks with a wobble and has a very pronounced, Geraldo Rivera-type moustache. His disposition is that of a European monarch. He can be found in front of various vending machines—early in the morning—feverishly pumping in quarters, dimes, and nickels in a futile attempt to attain sustenance. Every time that he makes a reference to his tenure in chemistry—"foaty yea-uhs"—his voice takes on a sudden British quality and his lips tighten as his head tilts slightly backward, sending his nose skyward. Any time that he is required to speak directly to a student he will often sigh. It's not a regular sigh, mind you. It consists of two very distinct parts: the first ("hee") is a very abrupt inhale that sounds like a woman practicing Lamaze breathing techniques for the future pains of labor; the second ("huhh") is a long drawn out exhale or cleansing breath that seems to prepare him for impending conflict. The first few times that we experienced this sigh, my classmates and I became startled—only to realize

that he was not experiencing cardiopulmonary distress. His own education (which he made perfectly clear) includes a Ph.D. and several stints of independent laboratory research; I don't know that any of his work is actually published. Since Chemistry 101 is an introductory course, it involves extensive memorization and many chapters on formulas and equipment that may as well be taught in Greek (most of it is). This instructor rifles through the pages of text and descriptions of materials like an Olympic competitor in the luge: lightning fast and seemingly out of control.

During one lecture on cell structure he was trying to teach us the intricacies of one of the most complex elements of science—all in fifteen minutes. At the beginning of the lecture I became distracted by a small white spot in the corner of his mouth, just below his moustache. He began to tell us about electrons and how they orbit the nucleus just as the Moon orbits the Earth. The white spot was growing now. He continued with explanations of electrons' orbits and how they can be either spherical or like a figure 8 in shape. As he made his dogmatic presentation the spot grew and grew until it was quite obvious that this spot was, in fact, foam. Like a rabid canine he stalked the students in the classroom—fixing his loathsome stare on anyone who dared to fix her eyes upon his, and he barked out instructions which, apparently, fell on deaf ears; everyone had become fixated on the foam. He surprised us all by stopping abruptly and asking if anyone had any questions. There were about twenty people in the class who didn't understand a word of what he had said in the last ten minutes. Nobody raised a hand. I took it upon myself to lead the group with a question: "If the electron travels in a figure 8, wouldn't it collide with the nucleus?" A simple question—fair and

based completely on common sense. Straining to look above his spectacles, he suddenly fixed his eyes on me, burning a hole to the back of my skull. The foam began to breathe and beat in a regular rhythm; his scalp turned an uncomfortable shade of red. I think about four minutes had passed when ("hee-huhh") he finally blurted out eight or nine incoherent, partial sentences and told me not to complicate things by asking for further explanation.

He always told us that we must be prepared when we enter his classroom; we should always pre-read the text and especially the lab manual. During one of our lab sessions he began to give us equipment that didn't pertain to the experiments that we were about to begin. Looking around the class, I found that everyone was looking back at me; I then felt obligated to bring his error to his attention. When I did so he scurried over to my desk and snatched my lab manual out of my hands. His eyes quickly scanned the manual and he said, "Well, if you had read your manual closely enough you would know that these can be substituted!" He took them all back, quietly, and passed out the correct instruments. At this point my classmates were all chuckling under their breath. I couldn't decide what it was they were chuckling at: the futility of trying to attain a passing grade, the feeling of anguish and despair they were now experiencing, the instructor, or maybe the anticipation of our first three-hour exam (that would be the following week) and how he would be out to prove how incompetent we all were.

Thurber's instructor (and mine) had begun to overlook the "basics" of the courses that they were teaching. Through the routine of doing the same thing for "thutty or foaty yea-uhs" some people begin to lose sight of exactly what is important to

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those just starting out in their field. These instructors have adopted an "attitude" of superiority and they patronize their pupils; other possess a rare gift for instruction and, regardless of their tenure, stay tuned in to other people's needs. I can only hope that I too can steer clear of this "attitude" and continue to help people throughout my life.

The exam was last week—I finished it in forty-five minutes—it was easy.

Evaluation: This essay was well received by the writer's peers and by his instructor. We all enjoyed his humor, appreciated his observations, and applauded his selection of detail.

Chasing the Wind

by Sheryl Huff

Course: English 101

Instructor: Peter Sherer

Assignment: *Write a personal experience essay which focuses on an incident which helped you mature. Combine the elements of narration and description.*

This particular day was warm enough for bathing suits but the wind was far from breezy. It was strong, almost blustering. The sky was pale blue, not the kind of blue a person would wish for when he is depending on the weather to be agreeable. There were clouds, thin and pale, quickly scattering across the sky and occasionally casting a shadow on the shoreline while passing the sun for a moment.

I ran out onto the powdery sand that had been freshly raked that morning. I was thirteen, old enough to send flirting glances to boys I liked but still too young to truly know the "curse" of womanhood. I wore an orange one-piece swimsuit and carried a bright yellow beach towel with a picture of an umbrella stitched into it. In my other arm I held a plastic, doughnut-shaped blow-up raft. The top half of this raft was a darker color orange than my swimsuit, and the bottom half was black. I also wore a smile. I had just won an argument with my little sister, not an easy feat considering the cunning way she always seemed to get the last word. We had been fighting over the raft, and who was going to be taking it out on the water. Despite my sister's excellent debating skills, I had the advantage of being born first, and therefore I was larger than she. I pushed her down, grabbed the raft and ran, ignoring her cries of protest and then of frustration.

I tossed the towel down in the sand next to my mother, lying in a large lounge chair and striving for the deepest, darkest tan she could get. She glanced over at me as I ran from her towards the water, carrying the raft at my side as I went. I heard her warning as I was running, and I stopped where the tide rushed past my ankles, making my feet sink down deep into the sand. I looked out onto the water as I wiggled my toes to feel the

gritty sand between them.

I silently disagreed with my mother. The water looked a little rough, but it didn't look like anything I couldn't handle. I had been swimming since I was a toddler. I had been on swim teams for endless summers. For gosh sakes, I could swim! I looked back at Mom and gave her a reassuring wave.

As I slowly pulled my right foot out of the sand, the air pocket I had created collapsed and I heard a sound that can only be described like this—"Shhlop!" I took a few giant jump-steps while holding the raft over my head. The water, cold and refreshing, splashed up around me and gave me tingling sensation where the droplets landed on my face and neck.

When the water reached my chest I stopped and held my breath. I bent my knees and ducked my head under the water for a few seconds. Only my hands, grasping the raft tightly, were above. The rest of me was submerged in the cool saltiness of the gulf. I felt the force of the water, while I was under it, pushing me from the side. I got my feet set solidly in the sand below and pushed at my knees with all of my own force. I shot out of the water like a rocket while pulling the raft underneath me. The plastic pinched me and squeaked against my skin.

My drenched body began to shiver against the wind. The water churned behind and to the side of me as I kicked with my legs and used my arms as oars. Even with the waves as choppy as they were I felt I moved rather quickly away from the shore and would soon be where I wanted to be.

After a minute or two I checked behind me to see how far away I was from the shoreline. I saw my sister, kneeling next to my mother on the sand, watching me. I waved again and saw Mom wave

back. It felt like the right distance so I swung my leg over the side of the raft and dropped it knee-deep into the water. Nothing. I swung my other leg over and went waist-deep before feeling the grainy mass beneath my feet. I took a few steps, pushing the raft ahead of me, till I was calf-deep. The tidal change may have varied the depth of the sandbar, but it was still there. I remember thinking that the sandbar was something dependable, something that was always going to be there to help me to stand in the ocean as if I were performing a miracle of some sort.

As I stood and watched the shore, for what seems now like it could have been hours but for what I'm sure was only a minute or two, the wind grew stronger. Suddenly the raft was ripped from my hands; it landed in the water only a few feet away. I immediately leaped after it, making a shallow head-first dive and barely scraping my belly against the sand. When my head broke through the surface I opened my eyes, expecting to see the raft within reach. Much to my surprise, it was a few feet farther away. I wondered how it could have moved so fast. Then I saw it flip. The wind was at the right angle and had started flipping the raft over and over, farther and farther away from me, already moving it over deeper water.

I took a running start and then made a deeper dive towards the raft. I was confident that I would catch it as I looked out of the water. It had stopped flipping and was almost close enough for me to grab. Just as I outstretched my arm to grasp the small cord attached to the raft's side, orange flipped over to black and my buoyant tease was a few more feet away again. I swam freestyle while the waves lifted and dropped my body. I was trying to catch what the wind had already caught.

Five feet away turned to nine, then seven feet

turned to twelve, and still I swam on, sure that the wind would die down just long enough for me to catch up. I was the cat and the wind was the cruel child, pulling the string attached to the bell I was chasing, letting me get oh...so close and then sharply yanking it out of reach again and again. I didn't notice the wind growing ever stronger. I didn't notice that those clouds that had seemed so thin and pale before were gaining density and deep, rich color, changing the sky to a grey that only mean a storm in the making. I didn't notice what direction the wind was blowing or how much farther away from the shoreline I was getting with every stroke of the arm. I did, however, notice that my arms were starting to feel heavier and that my breathing was more difficult each time I turned my head to the side. I thought about the consequence of losing the raft, but anger and determination burned in the center of my chest and I really didn't care what anyone in my family would say. I was chasing the wind and fighting the water. I wanted that raft.

As I grew more tired, I started losing the breathing rhythm I needed and before too long I gulped down a mouthful of gulf water. I stopped swimming and treaded water for a moment, coughing and spitting up some of the salty liquid from my throat. I watched the raft relentlessly flipping over and over, getting farther away with every second and felt a familiar heat rise up around my eyes. Although my mouth was full of salt, I could taste the difference between my tears and the water I had just swallowed. The tears seemed to burn on my tongue even worse. I swam on.

I don't know how long I chased it. I do know that I was several hundred yards from where I had first lost my grip on the raft before I heard a high-pitched voice, almost drowned out by the wind,

screaming from the shore. I turned my head and saw my mother waving her arms wildly and signaling for me to get back to the beach. I stopped swimming again and treaded water exhaustedly, turning my head back in the direction of the raft. It had been flipping continuously for a while now, quickly becoming smaller in my view.

Suddenly it stopped. I kept watching it, waiting for it to start flipping again but it didn't. It was almost as if something was holding it down, waiting to see if I would choose to continue to chase the wind like a determined fool, which was exactly what I had been until that moment.

It was during the exhausted swim back to shore that I realized how insignificant I was, how tiny and powerless against the great temperamental beast of nature. Was this experience a punishment for thinking of that sandbar as dependable? For childish reasons I had believed that, being human, I had some kind of control. I discovered that control over anything so vast could only be completely imagined. The only dependable thing about nature is change. The sea and the wind are free to do as they wish; it is Man who must follow the rules they give.

This particular day I had dropped my towel and rushed into the ocean as a giant. As I took my first quiet steps onto dry sand and my mother wrapped the towel (and her arms) around me I looked out for the last time at the raft which, by now, was only a speck of orange changing to black. I was as small as that speck on the ocean. I was dust, and dust can only follow the wind, never chase it.

Evaluation: *Here is a mature treatment of an incident. The speaker spends, but doesn't waste, words as she tells of a moment of discovery, learning. The ending is especially forceful.*

Desertification: Its Causes and Some Possible Solutions

by Ann T. Jaslikowskie
Course: Horticulture 110-001
Soil Science
Instructor: Dr. Ed Metcalf

Assignment: As one of their soils course requirements, students were asked to select a soils-related topic, approved by the instructor, and write a short paper delineating the importance of this topic. Proper interpretation of soils-related factors and the possible influence on the quality of life were also to be considered. Students presented their papers in class.

Desertification is the degradation of land from arid or semi-arid conditions to useless desert. The spread of deserts is a global problem, affecting not only developing countries, but also the United States, Canada and Mexico. The United Nations Environmental Program estimates that as much as six million hectares (14.8 million acres) are turning into desert each year worldwide.

The causes of desertification include deforestation, overgrazing, overcultivation and poorly managed irrigation. The three factors influencing these practices are human population growth, economics and politics.

In many areas of the world where people inhabit semi-arid and arid lands, especially Africa and Asia, human population is increasing at a rapid rate. More people need more food, meaning that more land must be cultivated or existing land must be more intensively cultivated. Traditional farming methods, such as croplands being left fallow for substantial periods of time and crop rotation, are being abandoned in an attempt to grow more food. In addition, lands that are drier and more suited to grazing are coming under cultivation. Consequently, these soils are losing their fertility, producing not more but less food, and will eventually be abandoned. This will leave these areas susceptible to extensive erosion.

Because of economic and political changes that have occurred over the last several decades, especially loans of large sums of money to developing countries by wealthier nations, much of these poorer nations' resources must be put into producing goods for export. The best land is often used for cash crop plantations. Small farmers may be forced to work for the plantation owners or else move on to poorer land. The cash crops themselves are often unsuited to the conditions, requir-

ing constant treatment from expensive fertilizers and pesticides. Eventually the land suffers from overuse and the buildup of chemicals. Meanwhile, the poorer land, having to support too many people, rapidly turns into desert.

Traditionally, people keeping herds in arid lands have been nomadic, moving with their herds wherever conditions created good feeding for their livestock. They moved frequently, spreading their herds widely over the sparse vegetation. In this way the rangelands were maintained. Until the past few decades, these people had been traders, bartering for the goods they could not provide for themselves. With the advent of travel and communications, people began using cash for their transactions. The rapid increase in human populations dependent upon herding for survival, coupled with the introduction of these "cash" economies, has caused herders to increase the size of their herds. With much of the traditional grazing land now under cultivation, these animals are concentrated into smaller and smaller areas, resulting in overgrazing. With nothing left to hold it in place, the topsoil simply blows away.

Deforestation of open woodlands in arid regions is a major cause of desertification. About 90 percent of the people in developing countries depend on wood for building materials and as their main source of fuel for cooking and heating. As populations grow and land is cleared for agriculture or cash plantations, trees are cut down. Hence, through overcultivation of the cleared areas or direct exposure of these soils to erosion, the desert spreads.

Irrigation is one way of growing more food in arid regions. It can lead to a six-fold increase in the yield of grain and other crops and reduce the threat of crop failure during droughts. It can also

help to stop desertification by slowing down the movement of farmers onto poor lands. However, if not properly designed and managed, irrigation can turn land into desert. Worldwide, more than 80 million acres of land have been rendered agriculturally sterile by irrigation. That number is likely to grow much higher soon because of vast increases in the number of acres recently put under irrigation. The main culprit in degradation of the land through irrigation is salt, which of course is toxic to plants. Soils in arid lands, which receive little rainfall, contain salts that have been accumulating over very long periods of time. When land is irrigated and the soil is flooded with large amounts of water, the water leaches the salt from the soil, carrying it down into the groundwater supply. Over a period of time, as the water table starts to rise, this water is drawn back up into the soil as evaporation occurs, leaving the salt behind where it can kill crop plants. The land is abandoned, the vegetation dies, and more desert is created. Irrigation projects can also attract mobile herders in search of water supplies, creating a new problem in that area—overgrazing.

Halting the spread of the deserts will be no easy task. Populations are growing fastest in areas of the world most threatened by desertification. It has been suggested that one way to control population growth in developing countries is to provide education, especially to women. A recent study in Asia by the World Bank indicated that when the number of women receiving a secondary school education doubled, the birthrate dropped by 30%. The study's findings suggest that a woman who learns to read will get a better understanding of the problems and possibilities she faces, such as birth control options, and will often choose not to have as many children.

One way to stop more and more land being used for crop production is to improve that already in use. Effective use of fertilizers, use of improved, drought-resistant crops, such as grain amaranth, lima beans and winter squash, better cultivation methods such as crop rotation and fallow periods, establishment of storage facilities to hold reserves of grain when crops fail, and improved irrigation practices are ways to stop or control overcultivation of the land.

The obvious way of halting overgrazing is to reduce the number of animals using the land. Also, forced settlement of nomadic herders in many lands has caused high concentrations of animals in small areas. Helping these peoples return to their traditional methods of herding could reduce damage to grazing lands.

Trees are vital in preventing desertification. One technique for using trees to halt the spread of deserts is called Agroforestry. Trees are planted in such a way that crop and livestock production can continue. This technique uses multi-purpose trees that can be grown on poor soil and yield food, fodder, firewood, and building timber and enrich the soil at the same time. One such tree is acacia; it fertilizes the soil by adding nitrogen and phosphorus, its pods are high in protein and carbohydrates, and crops such as wheat and millet can be grown underneath it. Another use for trees in preventing the spread of deserts is planting belts of trees as windbreaks along desert edges. These trees protect planted fields from blowing sands, provide shade for crops from direct desert sun, and help the soil hold moisture.

One method for reducing irrigation damage to land is to build drainage systems that allow water to drain away from fields rather than add to the groundwater. This method, however, is expensive

and not a practical solution in poorer countries. The best solution to the problems caused by irrigation is to use less water. Most standard irrigation systems are terribly inefficient, and on the average deliver only half the water originally collected. The rest is lost through seepage and evaporation. The best irrigation method is called drip irrigation. Water is delivered by plastic hoses that have holes near the plants; a relatively small amount of water is delivered directly to the plant and only when it needs it. Drip systems dramatically reduce water consumption and also improve plant growth because they prevent overwatering. No irrigation system can completely eliminate environmental problems, but through sensible, responsible management, the adverse effects of irrigation can be minimized.

Eliminating land degradation, including desertification, will be no easy task. What is needed is for governments to recognize the urgency of the situation, to produce national plans to solve these problems, and then to carry them out. Equally important is the need for international cooperation. Only then can the destruction of land through desertification be halted.

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Evaluation: *This well-done paper shows a good understanding of various soil and soil-water concepts as studied previously in class. The ability to correctly interpret information regarding the relative importance and inter-relationships of several soil factors and life concepts is clearly shown in this work.*

Some Old Ball Player

by Thom Karmik
Course: English 101
Instructor: Karen Keres

Assignment: Write a narrative, using as models the essays in the text (Orwell, Woolf, Diller, etc.)

I left the Loop on Lake Shore Drive heading into Chicago's South Side, going from the opulence of the Gold Coast to the oppressive rows of Chicago Housing Authority projects. I turned south on Cottage Grove Avenue and parked in front of the third of five identical buildings on the east side of the street.

I was here to visit a legend, only most people had never heard of him. As I got out of the car, I was met with the suspicious stares of several youths congregated on the corner. Old women pulling their carts home from a dilapidated grocery store interrupted their progress long enough to observe this stranger. More stares as I rode the elevator up to the fifth floor. I thought how, but for the color of his skin, I might be visiting this man in a large house in the suburbs. But William DeMoss was born black, and came of age at a time when he was not allowed to ply his trade with whites. He was blessed with the skills to play baseball, but, when he began, Jackie Robinson was not yet born and Major League Baseball was white.

Knowing he was well into his eighties, I was not sure what to expect, although he had sounded quite lucid on the phone. I entered a small, well-kept apartment, and was greeted by a slightly stooped elderly man. He was dressed immaculately in Sunday suit and tie, but wearing house slippers on his feet. While age had taken its toll, it could not hide the fact that this man had once been a great athlete. Broad shouldered, with no more than five extra pounds on his frame, this was a man who had kept himself in shape. We shook hands and exchanged pleasantries; I then began to explain the purpose of my visit. I told him how I planned to write an article about how injustice had kept him and his peers from their rightful place in history. He laughed softly as he sat to put on a pair of

shoes, and said, "Let's you an' me take a walk, young man."

We left the apartment building and walked south on Cottage Grove, past the constant reminders of urban renewal and social reform; buildings which once housed proud families striving for the American Dream now stood vacant, boarded, and rodent infested. As we walked, I looked into the faces of those we passed, old men who had worked the Stockyards along Halsted, and the steel mills of Gary and the far South Side. These men who now spent their lives talking about the old days, and trying to get by on meager pensions, were momentarily brightened by the novelty of a young white man strolling through the neighborhood with the local hero. For when these men were young, they went to Comiskey Park, not to watch the White Sox, but to cheer for the Chicago American Giants. They filled the park to watch the great black stars of their day.

He spoke slowly, reflectively, as he recalled traveling from town to town in "rick'ty ol' buses 'round through the South", playing games against local white teams. Several times each session they would play exhibition games against Big League all-star teams. I pulled a yellowed copy of an old Chicago Defender article out of my pocket, which told how he had gotten three hits off the greath Dizzy Dean in one of these exhibition games. "Didn't it bother you that you were as good as these guys but never got a chance?" I said. "Son," he said, stopping to look at me, "my daddy was born a slave. When I was a kid we picked cotton down 'n Mississippi, one dollar ev'ry hundred pounds. The whole family, my daddy, momma, and all us seven kids, I bein' the youngest." He began to walk again and continued, "When I got ah little older I found I could make a buck playin'

ball, but I didn't dream big 'nough to think I could play with the white boys." He stopped again. You know 'bout Jim Crow?" I nodded yes. "Well, when you spend your whole life being' sep'rate you just 'cept it. You don't like it, but it's the way things is. The only way to do what I loved was to do it the way it was. We had some boys fight it, maybe I should have, but I think that now, after Dr. King, after Malcolm, I didn't dream big 'nough back then."

"For a spell," he said, "I played with a white team out of Mobile, all white 'cept me an' one other boy. Every town we played in, we had to stay in the colored hotel, eat in the colored diner, colored we was then." He laughed, "I been nigger, I been colored, I been Negro, now I'm black.¶" "See now, we just never dreamed. I can't recall sittin' 'round sayin', 'We belong in the Big Leagues with them white boys.' Now 'course by the time it happened I was too old, but I was never sad for myself, just happy for the boys who got the chance."

He stopped again, and looked right at me. "You know I knew Josh Gibson real well, best player I ever saw. He was 'bout thirty-six years old, and this is right before Jackie got in, in '47. 'Course I was done playin'. Now 'bout '43, '44 some owners tried to get Josh in the white leagues, but it never worked out. So now the winter before Jackie gets in, Josh dies, thirty-six years old. They used to say he died of a broken heart."

We walked some more, mostly talking about the technical aspects of the game and some of the great players he saw and played with. We arrived back at his building, and rode the elevator up to his apartment. Seeing the time, he said he had to get over to his daughter's house for dinner. I asked if I could come back to see him another day. He

laughed and said, "I was blessed with two lovely daughters, each of them had two girls, who I adore. I think it would be nice to have a young man come 'round who is interested in what an old man's got to say. All them old timers out on the street been askin' the same questions for thirty years, and the young ones just don't care."

I called two weeks later and spoke to his granddaughter; she said he was not feeling well, but wanted me to come by the following week. Three days later I saw a small item tucked in between the box scores and the previous days game summaries in the *Sun Times*. William DeMoss had died at age eighty-five.

Two days later I attended his wake at a large, modern funeral home on Martin Luther King Boulevard. After spending some time meeting his family and friends, I approached the casket. While paying my respects to a man I had known for only a couple of hours, I reflected on how grateful I was for having known him. As I got ready to leave I spoke again with his granddaughter; we promised to keep in touch (we didn't), and I headed outside. As I reached the street I was approached by a Chicago police officer, "I heard some old ballplayer died," he said, "Yeah, some old ballplayer," I replied as I headed for my car.

Evaluation: Thom's writing is always direct and well structured, and he certainly has something to say.

A.M. Practice

by Courtney LaBeau
Course: English 101
Instructor: Annie Davidovicz

Assignment: Write an essay that defines. Use personal experience enhanced by sensory detail and "showing" facts to develop the essay. Include a personal memo that discusses your process of writing the essay.

"Aaaannntttzzzzzzzz," screeches the little rectangular box atop my dusty dresser. With disgust, I slowly extend my numb, right arm across my limp body and up to the unforgiving machine. In anger, I slam my weak fist down on the clock in hopes of teaching it a lesson for disturbing my sleep. Silence. "Aaaaah!" My swollen eyes pop open like a jack-in-the-box. I've got to get up for morning swim practice!

Half awake, half asleep, I roll out of bed like a lump of clay. My room seems as dark as the sea after a storm. The impenetrable blackness engulfs my small cubicle as I glance over my shoulder toward the puny alarm clock to see what time it is. Hmm, interesting. A red blur now illuminates a tiny portion of my bedroom. I lean closer, squinting my eyes. It appears to be ... yucka ... 4:43. Slowly, I come to the realization that I've only got 15 minutes before I have to get into the cold car and head to the pool. Instantaneously, my sleepy limbs become filled with adrenalin and I am energized.

I peer down at the carpeted floor, and grab at the clothes and swimsuits I carelessly laid out the night before. I strip off my warm and fuzzy p.j.'s in exchange for the tight, cold, nylon suits... all seven of them. I follow the pattern of thought that wearing more suits will create a greater amount of drag on my body, which will, in turn, strengthen me, but this idea is hardly reasonable early in the morning. I stretch my goosepimpled arms and legs into the orange sweatsuit that belongs to my school. I am positive my feet were refrigerated overnight. I trample down the staircase leading to the tiled foyer. The icy tile sends a chill throughout my corpse-like frame. Yucka. Without delay, I plunge into the kitchen.

Once in the kitchen, I go on a hunt...a hunt for

food. I do not want cold cereal. Winter and its blankets of snow have arrived and the milk I would use for my Wheaties would form icicles in my mouth and stomach. (Trust me, the thought process your mind goes through at 4:45 am is not very intelligent.) I decide on hot, sticky oatmeal and a cup of warm, smooth cocoa. I retrieve a bowl, a cup, and a spoon and attempt to prepare my breakfast. Fatigue overcomes me, and I have no desire to measure the proportions, so I estimate. "A little water, a few oats, some sugar ...looks okay... nuke it," rambled the cook in me. I toss the bowl into the microwave, press a few numbers, and hit start. Now for the cocoa. I pry open the lid to the container of Quick. I shove my oatmeal covered spoon into the brown powder and transfer the clumpy material into my "ComputerLand" cup. "Oh, I need milk," I realize, feeling my intense stupidity. Quickly, I lunge for the 'fridge, yank it open, pull the gallon of milk out, and slam the door. Suddenly, my arm drops to the floor. Following that, a resounding thump shakes my house as the gallon slams to the ground. Milk weighs ten times more than usual in the morning. This time, with two arms, I lift the milk up to the counter, flip off the lid, and pour the cool, white liquid into my cup. In a daze, I stir, and wait for my gooey oatmeal to finish cooking so I can nuke my cocoa mixture. Sounds yummy, doesn't it? Anything tastes yummy this early in the morning.

My intelligence tells me that the bowl of oats had been heated for a long time...too long. I prance to the microwave and see that I had set the cooking time for over thirteen minutes. Although my creation had only been in for about five minutes, I knew that I had to eat...yucka...fried oatmeal. With an intensity characteristic of most

heavyweight boxing champions, I punch the stop button. Apprehensively, I eye the inner sanction of the nuking machine. Strewn with bits and pieces of oats that had been blown out of the little bowl, the microwave now looks more like a battlefield. Without thought, I reach for the container. "Yeeooooowww!" My senses seem to have taken on a life of their own as the heated bowl singes my delicate hand. I heat my cocoa next, careful to select the proper time, and sit at the brown, circular table to consume what I had created. Oh, yum.

After breakfast, I pack my school bag, because I have to go straight to school after practice. "Physics book? Check. Calculus? Check. English? Check. Spanish? Spanish? Spanish? Where's my Spanish book?" Desperately, I search for the small, orange book filled with words and phrases I really don't understand. With only a few minutes to go before departure time, I peer under couches, beds, chairs, and rugs...all to no avail. Oh well. Spain's not going to go anywhere. "Zzzziip!" I seal the filled, green backpack, sling it over my shoulder and trek towards the garage. "Oh, look, my swim bag. It might be a good idea to bring this, Courtney," I ridicule myself. I pull the lightweight bag up onto my left shoulder, slip on my Keds, whisk a jacket off the dirty floor and open the creaky door to the garage.

Once in the car, I insert the small round key into the ignition. It did not fit. Okay ...try the square key. "Broooooom!" revs the engine. Stepping on the brake pedal, hidden in the darkness below, I grasp the cold gear shift and move it into reverse. Shivering, I fiddle with the small silver buttons, eventually finding one that heats the automobile. Next, I tune into a radio station that still broadcasts its night-time elevator music. I turn to see what is behind me and decide that it might

be wise to open the garage door. The boxing champion in me presses the button that is supposed to open this door. The heavy door remains silent, so I press the button again. But this time, as I hit the button, I kind of lean in towards the master garage door opener and... voila!... "Reeooww-iinnnnggghhtttt," cries the garage door, as each of its wooden frames passes overhead. I slowly back out of the garbage, and drive, with eyes half open, to the dreaded pool.

The city of Arlington Heights looks no different at five in the morning than it does at five at night, except for the fact that less light shows me the way, and fewer cars take up the road. Olympic Pool, however, looks quite different. A bluish haze illuminates the pool instead of its customary white lights. Unbearably, I tread through the heat that I have never noticed before, due to the fact that I have never walked into the building at five in the morning after being outside in the freezing cold. Yucka.

I lurch into the locker room, rip off my sweats, pull on my cap and goggles, stomp out to the pool area, and stare, cold-heartedly, at the motionless water. "I know it's cold. I know it is. It's ice cold. I don't want to get in. Yucka. Ooooh." Carefully, I sit on the edge of the pool, stand up, stretch my tired muscles, yawn, and then splash into the silent water.

Whoa-ho, was I wrong! I emerge, jumping and splashing, trying to bring myself to the wall, so I could hurl my frigid body onto the warm, dry deck. Being in pool water at five in the morning really bites. Let me go off on a tangent here and describe what it is like.

You get up in the morning, perhaps at the same time as usual, but still somewhat early, so, of course, you are tired. With eyes shut, you drag

your warm body into the bathroom, turn the shower nozzle to 'H', and begin to remove your comfortable pajamas. Instantly, you are covered with them. You know... the dreaded goosebumps. Now, shaking uncontrollably, you decide that the water has had enough time to heat up. "Click". You open the hazy door and jump in. You realize, too late, that the shower is still cold. Instinctively, your blue arms wrap around your torso. Bouncing up and down, you make a slight whimpering noise that you would never had made in public. Soon, the water is scalding hot and you find yourself turning it cooler until it is suitable to wash yourself in. Ahhh, that's nice, now isn't it? Tilting your head back, a grin comes across your face ...the same grin the people have in those Zest commercials. Your prunish hand traces the wall in search of the little shampoo holder. No shampoo, eh? Suddenly your face contorts from the "Zest commercial" look to the "bad guy in movie who realizes that he has run out of ammo and is staring down the barrel of a shotgun" look. You tremble and exit the shower. Without looking, you rip open the cabinet and snatch a bottle. Now, look ...you are jumping around your bathroom, soaking wet, holding a bottle of ...Listerine, and you're in the nude. Briskly, you exchange the Listerine for some Head and Shoulders and retreat into the shower. A.M. practice feels like this, except there is no Listerine or Head and Shoulders, only rising heartbeats, breathlessness, and muscle pain.

After kicking and pulling my way through about four laps, the water temperature begins to match that of my still limp body and, finally, I feel at ease. Morning practice has begun. The devotion I have surpasses all. While everyone else in the world has their heads buried under their pillows, sleeping and dreaming, I have my buried underwa-

ter, fighting to make the next time interval. If, for some reason, I had forgotten to go to the bathroom in the morning...too bad, I had to hold it until practice was over. Well...hold it or pee in the pool, and I wasn't about to do that. Practice goes on for the next hour and a half. By the end of practice, my bladder is full, my heart and muscles are pumping, I cannot breathe, and I have pushed my body to the limit of almost throwing up my fried oatmeal and cocoa. Yum.

Memo on Writing This Essay

Frustration. That's basically what I am going to tell you about in this memo. I was so incredibly frustrated with writing this essay. I sat at this computer two weeks ago wondering what to write about. I had done a definition essay in high school on happiness. My teacher helped me out. We had to write on what our topic smelled like, tasted like, looked like, felt like, sounded like, etc. We used all of the senses. I thought that was tough. I mean happiness is so abstract, how can you put it into a concrete definition? Nonetheless, I got through it. Happiness smells like a home baked apple pie, it tastes like freshly fallen snow, it looks like the contorted face of a newborn child, it feels like a soft, well-worn pillow, it sounds like shrieks of laughter at an amusement park. That was difficult, but not impossible. I got through it, and I actually enjoyed writing that essay ... it made me happy.

I guess I could have easily copied my old essay, made some adjustments and handed it in, but I decided that I was going to challenge myself. I was going to put experience into all of my essays in this class. So, I sat and thought. You made us make up topics, but none seemed to fit for me. They just

didn't work; they didn't inspire me. I have to be inspired to do good writing. I started writing a couple of essays, but I quit when I saw that I couldn't transform them into a suitable composition.

I actually had planned on turning in a different essay than this one. As I sat at this computer, staring wide-eyed at the blank screen, I heard Jason say, "I'm stuck." Something clicked. I thought, "Hey, Courtney, that's something you can relate to, and it will be a different topic to write on, considering that it will be taking place as you are writing the essay." So, I began my paper. I got an entire 3 1/2 pages out of the definition of being stuck. "Yes, I'm done. It was such a relief for me, because I had gotten through something that I never thought I'd even start. I was prepared to tell you that I just couldn't write the essay because I was unable to relate directly to anything that I cared to write about.

Well, I reread the essay and realized that it was stupid. It had no flow, no basic idea structure, no nothing. It really sucked. Kathryn read it and thought that it was really funny because everyone in this class could relate to it. No, I couldn't have even gotten a 'C' on it.

So, I pondered, but could not find a topic. I don't even remember how I came up with swimming. I haven't swum since high school, but for some reason, it hit me. This is the longest essay I have ever written. Although I am not entirely pleased with it, I feel that it truly expresses the grief that I went through at 5 am. I wanted to make everyone go through it with me. However, I drone on and on and on and on ...and when I read through it, it was too long and boring. The people who read it seemed to enjoy it, but their faces, upon seeing my paper's length, showed me that

they really didn't want to read that much. Oh well. It took me 7 pages to explain about 2 hours. So, I am a detailed person...sue me. Well, it did turn out to be a fun essay for me, personally, and members of my former swim team, who read "A.M. Practice". And for all the people who don't like it, and who haven't gone through it...!@#%\$@\$@! No offense to you, Ms. D, because I have a feeling that you may have enjoyed it.

Evaluation: Courtney has the ability to capture an action and reveal it by using "slow motion" detail. Her pen seems to relish the very act of writing. In "A.M. Practice," the audience goes through the morning routine with the narrator. I loved her memo (and now use it as an example in other classes) because of its honest, down-to-earth expression of the highs and lows of writing.

Unique Vision

by Kathie Lange
Course: English 101
Instructor: Peter Sherer

Assignment: Write a contrast in which you present two views of a person. Discuss the change in view. Evaluate the change. Illustrate the change with specific details on both sides of the contrast.

I have learned that eyesight and vision are not synonymous. This discovery occurred quite gradually as I grew up near my sightless grandmother.

When I was very young it was difficult for me to fully understand what being blind meant. It seemed to me that because of grandma's blindness, she and I did not have much in common. She could not draw pictures, play Old Maid, read books, or help me print my name. These are all very important things to a five year old, so I'd drift off to another part of the house looking for more enjoyable company.

But as I got a little older and thought about what it's like to be blind, I learned to be more patient with my grandmother. For example, when I was about ten years old my younger sister brought grandma a handful of wilted dandelions. As Grandma told my sister how beautiful those "flowers" were, I just rolled my eyes and shook my head. I told my grandmother that they were dead dandelions and that we should throw them away. She asked for a vase and smiled as she pulled my sister up onto her lap. She told me that because she was blind, she could see things that other people might never see. She then asked me again to bring a vase for the flowers. I didn't yet understand what she was talking about, and I think I might have rolled my eyes again, but I went to look for a vase.

As I grew older, I learned what blindness can do to a person's life. My grandmother couldn't dial the phone, read her mail, or write her own letters. She rarely left the house, and if she did it was usually only to go to the doctor. She never went shopping, wore make-up, played softball, or learned to drive a car. I thought about how empty life must have been for her, and I often thanked God for my eyesight.

Easy things were hard for my grandmother, even getting dressed. I could usually tell if she had help in choosing her clothes for the day because some of the outfits she would put together were enough to scare me. I'd politely point out that her sweater was inside out or that the stripes in her blouse clashed with the plaid in her skirt. Like most teenagers, I thought I needed to dress in style. I believe my priorities began to rearrange as I thought about how Grandma could care less about color-coordination.

Grandma had trouble just walking from room to room. It seemed to take her forever to get from one place to another, especially when I was behind her and needed to go in the same direction. She did not pick her feet up when she walked; instead, she shuffled them along the floor so that she would not trip. I learned to be patient and wait as I thought about the danger presented by one wrong step.

Grandma evidently thought she was entering the kitchen the day she plunged down the basement stairs. We heard a series of thuds and then a deafening silence. I stood frozen while listening to the commotion as the paramedics were called. I felt as if my heart would leap out of my chest, and I prayed she would not die.

The staff at Belmont Hospital said her injuries were severe and that other than the blood transfusions and seventy stitches, nothing else could be done. They were amazed at Grandma's attitude. She told all who would listen of God's goodness and how "fortunate" she was. Fortunate? The doctor told her she would never walk again. She was bruised, swollen, and her head was shaved. Black threads traversed back and forth across her scalp creating a pattern similar to that in a railroad switching station, but she was fortunate. We all

were.

She changed me. Had my grandmother been able to see how she looked, she still would have felt fortunate, and she still would have praised God for his goodness, something I'd neglected to do. My throat tightened up, and I began to cry, not for my grandmother, but for myself.

Who Grandma was became even clearer to me when she was released from the hospital. We fed her, so now there were no messes to clean up. Because we dressed her each morning, her clothes always matched. If we were in a hurry, we would push her wheelchair a little faster. I began to miss Grandma shuffling slowly down the hall in the clothes that she'd chosen herself. I really missed my grandmother.

Today I revere Grandma as one of life's best examples. Ah! Those dandelions! Finally I know what my grandmother was talking about when she said that because of her blindness she could see things other people might never see. Grandma could only "see" the giving, not the gift. Eyesight had robbed me of the beauty that I hope I'll now always see in even the humblest of gifts.

She died last October at the age of eighty-nine. Some called her handicapped. I'd call her a woman of vision.

Evaluation: As the narrator here contrasts two views of a special person in her life, she tells of the particular maturing process that helped her become the adult she is. This older, reliable narrator speaks compellingly, honestly.

Walden Redux

by Marti Lansu

Course: Philosophy 115
Ethics

Instructor: Jerome A. Stone

Assignment: *Visit a site of environmental importance. Write about your thoughts and the significance of the site.*

This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt-sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing special to attract me, all the elements are usually congenial to me. The bullfrogs trump to usher in the night, and the note of the whip-poor-will is borne on the rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy with the fluttering alder and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled. These small waves raised by the evening wind are as remote from storm as the smooth reflecting surface. Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and roars in the wood, the waves still dash, and some creatures lull the rest with their notes. The repose is never complete. The wildest animals do no repose, but seek their prey now; the fox, and skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and woods without fear. They are Nature's watchmen—links which connect the days of animated life ("Solitude").

My story must begin with a confession. My first visit to Walden Pond, if you can call it that, was in 1974. That October, my husband and I endeavored to show my in-laws as much of New England as possible in a week (including the drive back to Chicago). We reached Concord midweek and

traipsed over the historical sites from the Revolutionary War. Before we headed toward Boston, my husband wanted to stop at this pond he'd been reading about. I couldn't figure what the big deal was. We were supposed to read *Civil Disobedience* in one of my high school classes a few years earlier but I preferred to rely on my gift of blarney to get me through the discussion. After all, what could some dead guy have to say to us with-it people in the 60's? By that time of the trip my aging in-laws were already pretty footsore so I opted to keep them company in the car while my husband went for a closer look at his blessed pond. He parked on the shoulder and walked down the embankment while we sat in the car trying to understand his interest.

So now I stand castigated, thoroughly abashed and abased for having missed opportunities to meet Thoreau both in word and milieu. Did I delay my adult education?

When I saw the list of required reading for this class, I sensed the opportunity to redeem myself for my youthful ignorance. On the flight to Boston, I attempted to read *Walden* despite turbulence, inconsolable babies, and overly attentive flight attendants. At my first taste of Thoreau I found him rather crabby—perhaps remedied by "the love of a good woman." But my anticipation and curiosity grew the closer we came to Concord. Was this pond really a mysterious place? Would I leave there a changed person? Would I have a moment of epiphany?

I was surprised how quickly urban melted into rural just outside the city limits. The highway was dotted with small holdings, bordered by a riot of green. The light was red where 2 met 126. Walden Street was lined with full mature trees offering a moist cozy welcome. But on the left, that colon-

nade was arrested by the sight of a garbage dump. A GARBAGE DUMP AT WALDEN! That's like a McDonald's at Mount Moriah! Worse yet, the garbage dump was immediately followed by a trailer park! (My mother lives in a mobile home—temporary permanence—so I can be facetious for a moment.) [NOTE—When the dump is filled and the last resident of the trailer park moves out, possession of the properties will be assumed by the Walden Pond State Reservation, or so the Lyceum docent told me.] The third sight was even more revolting to me—a sign that said "Parking \$5"! What would Thoreau have said about that? Paying for the sublime! Now I had to make a choice between my Scotch frugality and my desire for further investigation of this mysterious occurrence at Walden Pond. We decided to ask the Park Ranger if the fee applied to those visiting the pond or merely those using the trails. To our delight we found the ranger clocks out at 4. End of dilemma, except I wondered if I should pay for parking in absentia. (I'm still working on that one.)

We parked the car in a lot paved with a special porous material that maintained the integrity of the water table and slowed erosion (The Sign assured of this). We crossed the highway and made our descent by way of the rather steep Ridge Path. I felt dwarfed by towering pines. The forest floor was littered only by their needles—perhaps this place is too sacred to defile. I looked for other evidence of man's intrusion and saw what I call snowfences here and there along the path—the Sign explained this was another attempt to curb erosion. Unbarbed wire kept visitors on the path and wooden planks prevented us from making a lasting impression on this hallowed ground.

A man was fishing in Thoreau's cove. I told the children to stop talking so we wouldn't scare his

supper. He waded away from the shore and I was amazed at how clear the water was. Its pebbled bottom was as visible a good dozen feet out as it was at shoreline! (In class, you said clear water at a dam denoted dying water—is that also true of ponds? The docent at the Lyceum said the pond is so clear because nothing empties into it to pollute it—except possibly the swimmers.)

I looked out over the bard's bay, trying to imagine his vantage point. If there weren't trees in the distance, it would have been hard to delineate sky from sea: The cirrus clouds, mirrored in the pond, melted into a thick gray mural foreboding rain. The water was as warm as the air, 65° the Sign said. A light breeze tossed the branches overhead. I squinted into the distant underbrush looking for animal life but managed only to see a pair of squirrels playing tag.

It was a short walk up to the cabin site ("half a dozen rods" Thoreau said but in actuality 200' from the shore). So wide a path had been impressed upon the location that I saw little recognizable vegetation nearby. I guess the only growing thing (except the trees) is the cairn. My husband explained to me that visitors tossed a stone onto the pile. I wondered if they brought them from home because I scavenged for one to add myself and only found a tiny pebble. It tinkled down the pile and fell down between some larger stones. I wondered if I should say a prayer or make a vow of environmental chastity or something. The kids wanted to climb the pile but we weren't sure if that would be a type of desecration so we told them to get down and I resolved to think more of this later.

About a dozen stone slabs, like tombstones, marked the cabin site. It was much smaller than I had pictured on the plane. We passed a replica near

the parking lot (and saw the actual furniture in the Concord museum). It was spartan but not stoic. The door had been carefully made. (The docent told how Thoreau went to purchase a lock when he heard the militia would be practicing nearby. When he heard the governor would be joining them, he said, "Then give me two locks.") The furniture was simple but comfortable. Henry's flute lay across his bed and his hat stood ready on the table. I was surprised to see portraits on the wall—he had a landscape at his doorstep but wanted to keep these people before his eyes, fresh in his memory. I envied this minimalist life and wondered how well I would have managed. A Sign marked the site of the woodshed but there was no evidence of a latrine. (Maybe that business was conducted elsewhere along with his laundry.)

We decided we didn't want to miss the experience of walking the perimeter of the pond so we started out despite the rain. The path was a narrow strip of damp sand and pebbles. We pressed ourselves against a section of snowfence as a jogger passed on the left. I looked toward the beach house (175 rods according to the book or about 2500' long by 1500' at its widest) and wondered how long a conversation Thoreau could maintain with his neighbor across the pond. To our right, we heard the train whistle. It was around 5—do the neighbors still keep time by it? I was surprised to find the train tracks formed the southwestern boarder of the reservation. I looked down the tracks toward Boston and considered the vast differences between that metropolis and this ecopolis.

As I walked, I was two selves. Part of me wanted to drink in every sensation—record every bird call, study every streaking ground squirrel, detect every plant by smell, feel the moist breeze on the

only skin I chose to expose—my hands and face—and try to roll them all into a type of tasting Walden Pond. I knew I had to know these things for myself—not just for this prospective class but for my own experience. But my other self wanted to insure that my children were also tasting. My son longed only to skim rocks over the glassy pond and climb the stay-on-the-trail ledges. Instead, he scuffed on ahead with my husband trying to learn only by seeing and not touching (Thoreau the teacher would have been chagrined). My daughter and I brought up the rear and I tried to muster up the Thoreauisms I had tried to commit to memory. I tried to talk about living and being and writing. I was afraid she thought I was pontificating but then I noticed a change coming over her. Was she understanding what I was getting at or was she responding to the magic of this place? She became dreamy and lagged behind. As we rounded Emerson's Cliff, I dropped back and broke her reverie. She said, "I got it, Mom. I know what I'll write for my next Young Author's (a statewide contest)." I knew it! I thought. I could see it now—she'll write a *Child's Visit to Walden*. But the muse had taken her a different direction. She said, "I'll write Anne Boleyn's story." (She's become quite an anglophile lately—now, what did this Henry think of that Henry? In Economy, he said, "We are amused at beholding the costume of Henry VIII, or Queen Elizabeth, as much as if it was that of the King and Queen of the Cannibal Islands. All costume off a man is pitiful or grotesque. It is only the serious eye peering from the sincere life passed within it, which restrain laughter and consecrate the costume of any people.")

As we entered Deep Cove, the lifeguards

jumped into a small motor boat and sped across the 500' that separated the bathhouse from the boat launch. Perhaps it was a type of warhoop that the workday was done. The cordoned off swimming area was empty of all but a single dead fish bobbing against the shore. I took a closer look to make sure it was dead—I don't know what I could have done if it wasn't. I saw a thin line of red coming from its mouth—had he been a fisherman's reject, too small to eat but not to die? I noticed a streak forming a green horizon on his scales and made a mental note to look him up when we visited the Concord museum the next day.

I scanned the pond one last time before we began mounting the planked path to the parking lot. Swimmers, Joggers and Sportsmen had vanished and for a moment, there was only my family and me. We would quickly be replaced by a middle-aged couple coming down from the highway. I wondered how they would worship in this place.

I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pondside; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear, that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best

*see the moonlight amid the mountains. I
do not wish to go below now
("Conclusion").*

Works Cited

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden, Or Life in the
Woods*. New York. Signet Clossus 1942, 1960.

*Evaluation: The student showed her awareness of
the significance of Thoreau and Walden Pond and
expressed vividly the subtleties of her feelings on a
quick visit to an important place.*

Final Exam

by Jan Lueker

Course: Introduction to Philosophy
Instructor: Herbert I. Hartman

Assignment: *Final Essay Examination. The final question was composed, as well as answered, by the student.*

A general philosophical theory includes an analysis of the logic, ethics, epistemology, religion and other areas incorporated in its beliefs. Important areas of my own general philosophy include 1) the rationalist's belief that knowledge comes from active learning; and 2) the question of what makes the human life good. In this essay, I will not only explain my philosophies in these two areas, but will also present thoughts to counter possible objections to my theories.

The Rationalist's Belief That Knowledge Comes From Active Learning

Knowledge is derived from active learning, a theory which dates back to Socrates. Socrates was a great teacher and philosopher who asked questions of his pupils. When they responded, he would take their responses, twist them around and throw them back to the pupils with further questions. His pupils were always active and learned to think and to consider alternative, rather than listening passively to their teacher and simply taking notes.

This Socratic method of teaching lost its appeal when Socrates was later accused of corrupting the youth by making them critical of authority. John Locke's theory that the mind was a blank slate at birth, to be filled by sensory experience, gained approval and the idea of knowledge and education by drill resulted from his assumption.

A young child will become engaged with ideas that interest her and will learn as a result of this process of engagement. Yet when she enters grade school, drills become the norm and the child is expected to memorize the basics of reading, writing and mathematics. The majority of school sys-

tems in our country do not allow independent thinking or questioning by youth. The type of rigorous, critical thinking required with the Socratic method is very extensive and can be subjective. A teacher may not be knowledgeable enough to respond appropriately to a student's probing questions. Yet when this approach is used, students are able to work in groups, think out loud as they grapple with problems, and spend time trying different approaches to problems rather than just seeking the right answer. They are asked to explain their reasoning to their classmates. The role of the teacher is to steer the students in the right direction by asking questions that focus attention on mistakes or unnoticed ways of problem solving. This type of active learning will provide true knowledge which can be developed and applied toward more complex situations as the student enters the real world and encounters life problems.

Critics of this theory of knowledge and teaching might question whether students of disciplines such as math and science are able to obtain all the basics they need without the use of lectures and drills. To disprove their arguments, one can use the analogy of how we learn to use a complex machine such as a computer. We don't just memorize the instruction manual, then turn on the computer and go to work. We actually learn through a process of trial and error, where something we need compels us to find out how to do it. Students who simply memorize are really only able to throw back what they have memorized to a teacher who already knows the material. In real life, this would be considered a senseless waste of time. What is really needed is the ability to solve problems and make decisions based on previously acquired knowledge and thought processes.

What Makes the Human Life Good?

A good life has been the aim of most rational, stable people throughout history.

A person of any age is capable of having a good life. A child's concept of a good life includes happiness, stability, and health. While a child possesses only a limited amount of knowledge and experience, he is capable of recognizing happiness vs. sadness, stability vs. instability, and health vs. illness. The quantity of these factors need not be as great for a child in that they are able to process and manipulate a limited amount of basic life concerns. The presence of a family will also affect a child's view of a good life.

As the child matures and enters adulthood, his concept of a good life builds on the earlier foundation. Items such as virtue, morality, and to a lesser degree, financial security, become necessary for a good life. Each item is sought for its own sake and contributes to a complete and good life.

As long as man has aimed for a good, complete life, critics have debated over the qualities that actually constitute the good life. John Stuart Mill described a good life as consisting of happiness and pleasure and felt that these two objectives were the only things desirable as ends. His theory of the greatest happiness for the greatest number means that happiness and pleasure should be sought not only by the person acting, but should include the greatest number of people possible. In reality, proponents of Mill's theory seem to be shallow and somewhat egotistical in believing that goodness need not include the finer inner qualities of a good man, such as virtue and goodness.

Aristotle's theory of a good life was similar to Mill's in that it included happiness, yet for Aristotle, happiness was the single, most important

factor. He felt happiness to be the quality of a whole human life, and that only when a life was over could it be considered to have been a happy life. While he acknowledged certain qualities such as health, wealth, knowledge, friendship and virtue make for happiness, happiness alone is the ultimate and supreme goal of a good life. Those who agree with Aristotle's theory deny that happiness can exist during a man's life. Yet I believe that happiness can certainly be experienced by a person of any age as it is seen in many small children, and young and older adults. And happiness alone, without the other qualities, is a surface factor only, and limits the definition of a good life to a temporary situation which could change with a single event or occurrence.

Question:

Explain Descartes' theory that we do not know about physical objects through our five senses.

Answer:

Descartes maintained that it is the mind which understands physical objects rather than our sense impressions. He proves his theory by describing and distinguishing between two forms of wax - fresh and melted.

Fresh wax taken directly from a hive provides sensory information to us. We can taste it, smell the aroma, determine its shape, color and size, and hear what it sounds like when brought into contact with another object. Now, if you take this piece of fresh wax and melt it down, what you know about it through your sensory information will change.

The taste evaporates, the odor vanishes, the shape, color and size change, and the sound is different.

If one person actually obtains the fresh wax from the hive and personally melts it down, he will see the characteristics of the wax change. If he relied only on his senses, he would view the melted wax as a separate object. Yet his understanding of the of wax would lead him to believe it was the same piece of wax.

Applying this principle of the wax example to all external things, Descartes was able to prove that it is not through our senses or imagination that we know something, but rather that our understanding or reason (our minds) is the source of general knowledge.

Evaluation: This essay offers a clear, creative, concise and precise presentation of the student's ideas concerning learning and the good life. She conveys the ideas of some philosophers studied in the course in an understandable manner; thus lending authority to her participation in the philosophic practice.

The Makings of a Martyr

by Scott Lumbard
Course: English 102
Instructor: Annie Davidovicz

Assignment: Write a literary analysis based on one or two short stories read over the semester. Bypass research in favor of your own critical thinking and conclusions.

To some human beings, guilt is an emotion that requires action. Whether or not this action helps to soothe one's conscience, or to inflame it, depends upon the individual. I once knew a man, who, while on his way to buy a brand new pair of shoes, became a philanthropist. He gave his old pair, right off his feet, to a homeless man who was piled up in a raggy, wine-stained heap below the shoe-store window. He walked into the store in socked feet and with a complacent grin wrapped around his head. In a sense, he was fortunate. Although he would never have invited this poor man to dinner, his conscience had been soothed. His action had pleased himself, immensely. However, as in the case of Toshiko—the main character in Yukio Mishima's "Swaddling Clothes"—some individuals' guilts can never be alleviated. Because Toshiko is oblivious to the true origin of her guilt, she is consumed by it. Eventually, Toshiko's guilt leaves her helpless.

Why does Toshiko feel so guilty? In order to answer this question, a few words must first be said about the values of Toshiko and her peer group. In Japan (or at least to the higher class, westernized Japan as portrayed in this story) a child who is born a bastard is deemed dishonorable. And because this child is marked at birth, he/she is thought of as having no right of social advancement in later years. This oppressive thought is seemingly innate and heartily accepted by Toshiko's husband and friends. Toshiko's husband refers to the single mother as a "cow" (Mishima 59) and a "stuck pig" (60). His friends "burst into laughter" (60) at his narration of the horrid birth scene.

Yet, Toshiko is somewhat different. Although she is among this higher class, she is at one point "oppressed by the knowledge that their life

together was in some way too easy, too painless" (60). Toshiko is sensitive. And because she has contemplated the sadness of the less-fortunate, she has been deemed "oversensitive" (59)—that "her delicacy of spirit was evident to her most casual acquaintance" (59). Thus, Toshiko views the doctor's treatment of the child as spiteful, and "callous" (60). She shows kindness by wrapping the child in a new piece of flannel as if, symbolically, the swaddling will grant the child his honor. But later, as she hides her merciful act from her apathetic husband, Toshiko feels no better: "How strange that I should have this feeling of guilt," she thinks, "After all, it was I who took him up from the floor, swathed him properly..." (60). This brings us back to the original question: why is Toshiko feeling this guilt? The answer: Toshiko's motives for swaddling the child are ambiguous—stemming not so much from a pure sensitivity, but from an inner conflict. Yes, Toshiko is sympathetic towards the child. However, her sympathy clashes with her own innate feelings of shame for the child. Along with her peers, Toshiko herself, believes that, "Even if the child grows up in ignorance of the secret of his own birth, he can never become a respectable citizen" (61). Subconsciously, Toshiko knows that any kindness she has shown towards the child is at best, token. She knows, again only subconsciously, that she, too, sees the child as an illegitimate new being who should be rightfully and divinely shunned.

Now that Toshiko's origin of guilt has been established, we must examine why, during that evening "all sorts of unsettling fancies had burst open in her mind" (61). Where does Toshiko's itching inner-self take her and why?

First of all, guilt is probably the most subversive emotion a human being can experience.

Ironically, it is usually lodged deepest when it's at its strongest level. Sunk there, festering and unfathomable, guilt can become a powerful motivator for all sorts of strange thoughts and behaviors. Secondly, and more important, Toshiko is carrying not only the weight of her own guilt. She is also carrying a crushing guilt that she has assumed on behalf of her society—a guilt she believes to be missing among her peers: "I alone shall have to preserve that terrible scene in my memory" (60). With this great burden weighing in her subconscious, Toshiko becomes paranoid: she comes to see her own son as a symbol of oppression that the bastard child will one day seek retribution against—by murdering him. Following this bizarre thought process, Toshiko resolves to intercept: "When the time comes I shall take my son's place" (61). Toshiko's paranoia reflects how her guilt is affecting her state of mind. Not only is she encountering some horrid, clairvoyant thoughts, she is reacting to them. Thus, her behavior, also, begins to be influenced by her guilt. Uncharacteristically without her husband, Toshiko enters a dark public park, late at night. But why? Where is her subconscious leading her?

Since Toshiko has assumed the guilt of a whole subculture, she, subconsciously and accordingly, has an urgent need to be punished. Indeed, she is deriving a "certain satisfaction from her somber thoughts: she tortured herself with them without cease" (61). Toshiko believes that the bastard child "has been sinned against" (61) by the attitudes of herself and her peers. And now, since Toshiko believes she cannot help the child: "He will be living a desolate, hopeless, poverty-stricken existence—a lonely rat. What else could happen to a baby who has had such a birth?" (61), Toshiko comes to see herself as a martyr—as someone who

will absorb a justifiable punishment for the sins of her peers. With this subconscious belief driving her, Toshiko forms the delusion that the impoverished young man lying on the park bench is the adult bastard child. When the man seizes her: "She did not feel in the least afraid and made no effort to free herself" (62). In the end, Toshiko's guilt has left her vulnerable to a very dark and hostile force—a force she believes her society, and herself, has made by oppression.

It was unfortunate for Toshiko that she could not overcome her innate idealism of the bastard child. In contrast to those who can soothe their consciences by minimal means, Toshiko's guilt drove her to self-destruction. But in either case, it doesn't matter. What is more important is the realization that, even if the human subconscious never surfaces, it is always influencing our thoughts and behaviors. Although a clear conscience should not be the goal behind benevolence, humans should always examine the motives behind their merciful acts.

Evaluation: Scott's lively, intelligent writing stands above most 102 students. His thesis is well-supported with textual quotation and with general knowledge about human nature. His analysis offers fresh insight into Mishima's protagonist.

"I Never Knew That..."

by John Mak
Course: Chemistry 110
Fundamentals of Chemistry
Instructor: Jayne Wilcox

Assignment: Chemistry 110 is a general chemistry course designed for students who have never had a formal chemistry course before. With that in mind, I asked my students to write a short essay on the theme "I Never Knew That..." (something pertaining to chemistry).

I never knew that chemistry plays such a major role in life. Chemicals are everywhere! What would happen if all the gases that were colorless, odorless, and tasteless suddenly had color, smell, and taste? If we could see the carbon monoxide emissions from cars, would we stop making cars? What if the exhaust from trucks and buses remained as a thick, black smoke? Would everybody walk around with gas masks on? If we actually saw the ozone layer thinning out, would we change things? What if radon gas were a putrid, pink cloud? What if cigarette smoke didn't disappear into thin air?

If the law of conservation of matter really exists, then we are slowly killing ourselves. Carbon monoxide and other poisonous substances are increasing because cars are bought and used every year as the human population grows. Yet few people seem alarmed by the toxic chemicals which combustion produces and fewer people seem to care because we cannot see, taste, or smell them.

Evaluation: John's writing reveals a newly-discovered appreciation for and understanding of environmental chemistry. He sounds an alarm to the reader with a powerful impact.

CompuCard Study Phase Report

— by *Kathy McDougald, Jim Nygaard,*
Chris Sutter, and Bruce Whitmore —

Course: Advanced Systems

Analysis and Design

Instructor: Virginia B. Bender

Assignment: The assignment for the team was to find a company with a problem and to decide on a solution. After studying various solutions, the students wrote the Study Phase Report, which presented the chosen solution. [To fit the space requirements of The Harper Anthology, the authors have omitted a number of their report's illustrative figures. They have retained the references to them so that the readers will know that such figures were necessary.]





CompuCard™ Study Phase Report

September 15, 1992

I. System Scope

A. System Title

The Computerized Card System (CompuCard™)

B. Problem Statement and Purpose

Meadows Currency Exchange, Inc. has a purely manual customer database system at present. The system has 1,200 customers on file. The management would like to have the system computerized, thus having on-line access to its present customer base. The present manual system is inadequate when reports are necessary. Serious problems have already occurred when attempting to compile customer data for specific reports. Specific problems that have been identified are:

1. Complete inability to compile customer data in any reasonable time frame.
2. Lack of ability to print customer data within a reasonable time.
3. Complete inability to classify customers within desired parameters.

Therefore, the purpose of the CompuCard™ project is to supplement the existing card file system with a computerized database application to eliminate the stated problems and allow Meadows Currency Exchange, Inc. to plug into the twentieth century.

C. Constraints

The CompuCard™ constraints are:

1. Development of the on-line customer file system is to be completed within four months.
2. CompuCard™ is to have a growth potential to handle 5,000 customers.
3. CompuCard™ is to be designed as an on-line system in a single user DOS environment.
4. CompuCard™ must be free. Completely, totally, without cost to Meadows Currency Exchange, Inc..

D. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of CompuCard™ are:

1. To speed up access to the customer cardfile.
2. To create a previously missing capability to provide accurate reports in a timely manner.
3. To create reports in a form acceptable to the Illinois Department of Financial Institutions.

E. Methods of Evaluation

After CompuCard™ has been operational from ten to twenty days:

1. Random samples of customer files will be audited to ensure their accuracy when compared to the paper card file.
2. A simulated Illinois Department of Financial Institutions license hearing will be conducted, to check the accuracy of the customer reporting features.

II. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Conclusions

The feasibility analysis of the CompuCard™ system was extremely simple. As the system must be completely without cost to Meadows Currency Exchange, Inc., all commercially available systems were deemed unsuitable (see constraint #4). Due to this salient fact, CompuCard™ will be written by a group of personable, highly talented, advanced systems analysis students using dBase IV Ver. 1.5. For free. Sigh. Paradox was rejected as the system must operate on a single IBM Mod 25 with 640k ram with a 40 megabyte fixed disk. Paradox was installed and found to be relatively slow in such a system. Approach for Windows was not even installed as the environment (Windows 3.1) will not run on a 8086-based system. dBase IV was found to operate splendidly, while still providing a measure of upgradeability. Outputs will be available as visual displays with printed reports available as required.

The monthly operational cost of CompuCard™ is projected to be less than one dollar. This is due to the fact that the computer system has been fully depreciated for several years, the copy of dBase IV is already on site, and the paper and ribbons are provided through a Western Union support agreement. The only expense to Meadows Currency Exchange, Inc. is the actual cost of power to the computer.

The projected development cost for CompuCard™ is to be, well, *zero*. We are hoping for a case of beer out of the deal, however.

B. Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that CompuCard™ be approved for the design phase.

III. Performance Specification

A. External Performance Description

1. *Data Flow Diagram* - Figure 3.2 is the logically equivalent information-oriented system flowchart for CompuCard™. The accompanying narrative appears as figure 3.3.
2. *System Output Descriptions* - The four CompuCard™ outputs are:
 - i. Flagged company report
 - ii. Customer proximity report
 - iii. Company proximity report
 - iv. Customer information display

Figures 3.4a through 3.7b are the specifications for output and the data element lists.

3. *System Input Descriptions* - The four CompuCard™ inputs are:

- i. Check cashing request form
- ii. Customer entry screen
- iii. Customer update screen
- iv. Customer search screen

Examples of the system inputs are included as figures 3.8 through 3.11.

4. *System Interface Identification* - CompuCard™ will operate in a single user DOS environment as a stand-alone application. It will supplement the existing physical card file.

5. *System Resource Identification* - CompuCard™ will operate as a stand-alone application on an IBM PS2 Model 25 microcomputer with the following characteristics:

- i. Intel 8086 CPU with 640k random access memory
- ii. One IBM Proprinter II 9-pin dot matrix printer
- iii. One 40 megabyte fixed disk drive

B. Internal Performance Specification

1. *Data Flow Diagram* - The logically equivalent process-oriented system flowchart with narrative is shown in figure 3.12. This is in lieu of data flow diagram.

2. *Data Storage Description* - Each master record contains 27 data elements with a total of 309 characters. This will use a maximum of 1.5 megabytes, given 5000 customers. This allows ample room for additional application expansion.

IV. Project Plans and Schedules

A. Detail Milestones - Study Phase

The study phase was scheduled for a three week period, beginning 9/1/1992 and ending 9/19/1992. The funding authorized for the study was again, well, *zero*. Our budget will relate to man hours only. As shown in figures 4.1a & b, the project is on schedule and within budget. The design phase remains to be completed.

B. Major Milestones - All Phases

Figure 4.2a is the schedule for the entire project. The design phase is scheduled for 5 weeks, and the development phase is scheduled for 7 weeks. If there is a God, and we proceed as projected, the design phase will be completed by 10/21/1992. The development phase will be completed by 12/9/1992. Really. No kidding.

The estimated cumulative cost (in hours, not money) for the entire project is graphed in figure 4.2b. The total monetary cost will be the big Z.

C. Detail Milestones - Design Phase

Upon approval by higher authority, the design phase is the next phase to be completed. Figures 4.3a and 4.3b show the detailed projections for the design phase.

Figure 4.3b projects the hours for the design phase.

V. Appendices

Figures

<i>SuGenCom's</i> suggested location for the school's new high altitude computer research lab	3.1
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Narrative for above	3.3
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Data element list	3.4b
Customer proximity report	
Output specifications	3.5a
Data element list	3.5b
Company proximity report	
Output specifications	3.6a
Data element list	3.6b
Customer information display / report	
Output specifications	3.7a
Data element list	3.7b
System input description	
Check cashing request form	3.8
Customer entry screen	3.9
Customer update screen	3.10
Customer search screen	3.11
Process-oriented system flowchart with narrative	3.12
Project plan and status report (study phase)	4.1a
Project cost report - study phase - (hours - estimated vs actual)	4.1b
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Candidate system evaluation	4.5
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Candidate weighted evaluation matrix graph	4.8

CompuCard Information-Oriented Flowchart

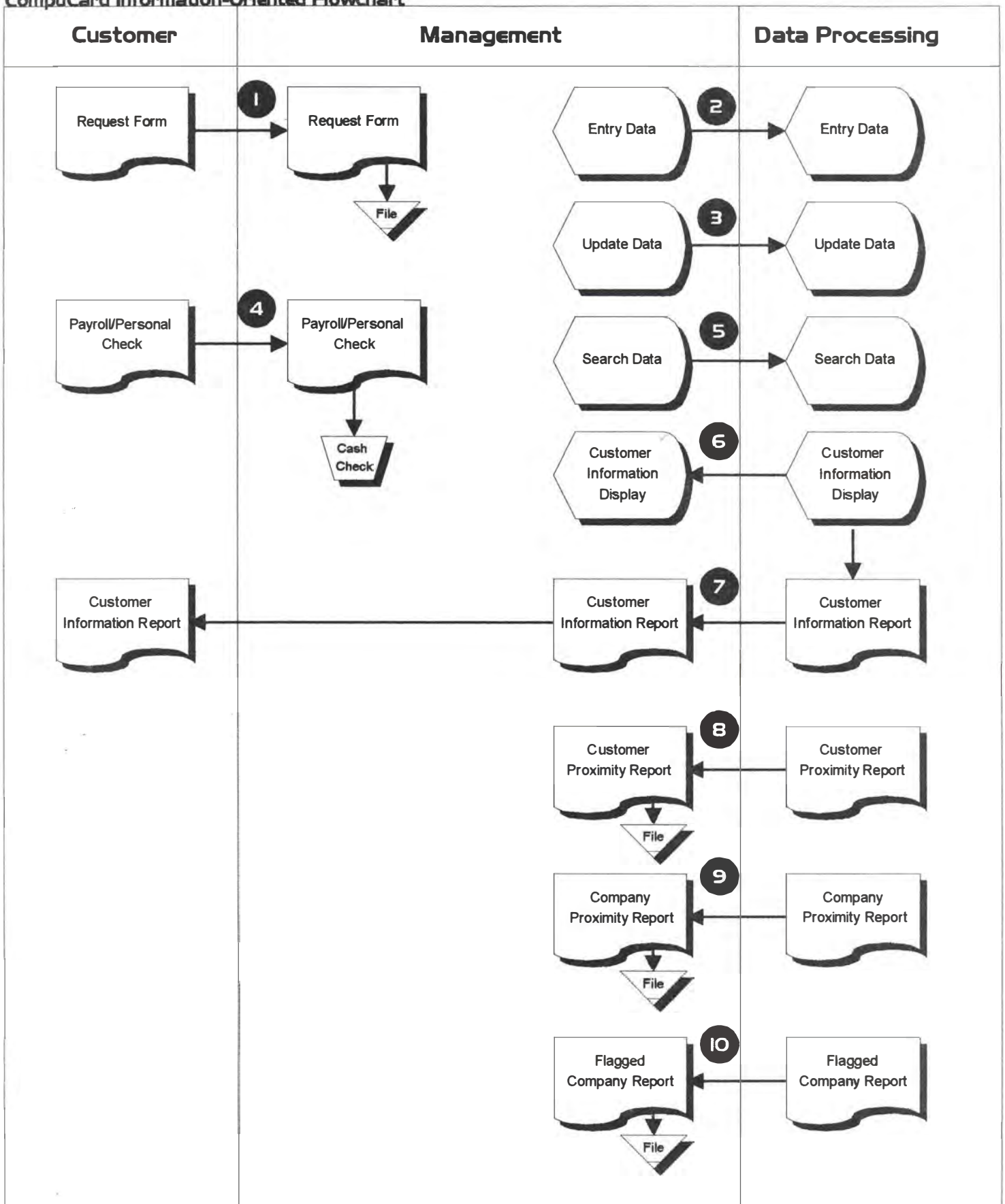


Figure 3.2

Output Specification

Title : Customer Information Report

➤ **Proposed Layout**

Date xx/xx/xx

Customer Information Report

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone Number _____
Driver's License Number _____
Social Security Number _____
Date of Birth _____
Height, Weight _____
Hair Color, Eye Color _____
Occupation _____
Company Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Company Phone _____
Company Bank _____

Additional Information:

Lives Within 2 Miles? _____
Works Within 2 Miles? _____
Company Good? _____
Cleared For Personals? _____

Page No. xx

Figure 3.7a

DATA ELEMENT LIST

Customer Information Display / Report

Description	Format	Size
Date	xx/xx/xx	8 characters
Page Number	xx	2 characters
Last Name		25 characters
First Name		20 characters
Middle initial		1 character
Phone number	xxx-xxx-xxxx	12 characters
Address		30 characters
City		15 characters
State		2 characters
Zip		5 characters
Driver's License number	xxxx-xxxx-xxxx	15 characters
Social Security number	xxx-xx-xxxx	11 characters
Date of birth	xx/xx/xx	8 characters
Lives within 2 miles?	y/n	1 character
Occupation		25 characters
Height	x'xx"	5 characters
Weight		3 characters
Eye color		5 characters
Hair color		5 characters
Cleared for personal checks?	y/n	1 character
Company name		30 characters
Company within 2 miles?	y/n	1 character
Company address		30 characters
Company city		15 characters
Company state		2 characters
Company zip code		5 characters
Company phone number	xxx-xxx-xxxx	12 characters
Bank name		25 characters
Company good?	y/n	1 character

Figure 3.7b

Customer Update Screen

UPDATE EXISTING CUSTOMER

Last		First			M	Phone #	
Address		City			St	Zip	2 Miles?
D/L Number	SS Number	D.O.B.	Hgt	Wgt	Eyes	Hair	
Occupation							
Company Name				Company Address			
City	St	Zip	Phone #	2 Miles?			
Company Bank Name							

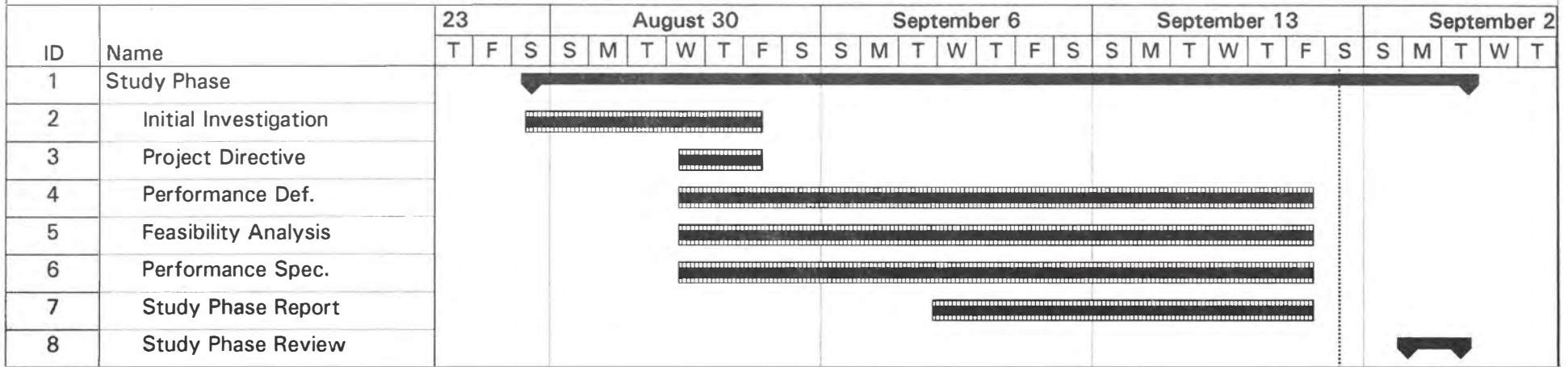
Company OK?

Personals?

Edit || D:\dbase\CUSTOMER || Rec 1/? || File || Num

Figure 3.10

Project Plan and Status Report - Study Phase



Project: CompuCard Date: 9/23/92	Critical	Progress	Summary
	Noncritical	Milestone	Rolled Up

Figure 4.1a

PROJECT COST REPORT

CompuCard - Study Phase

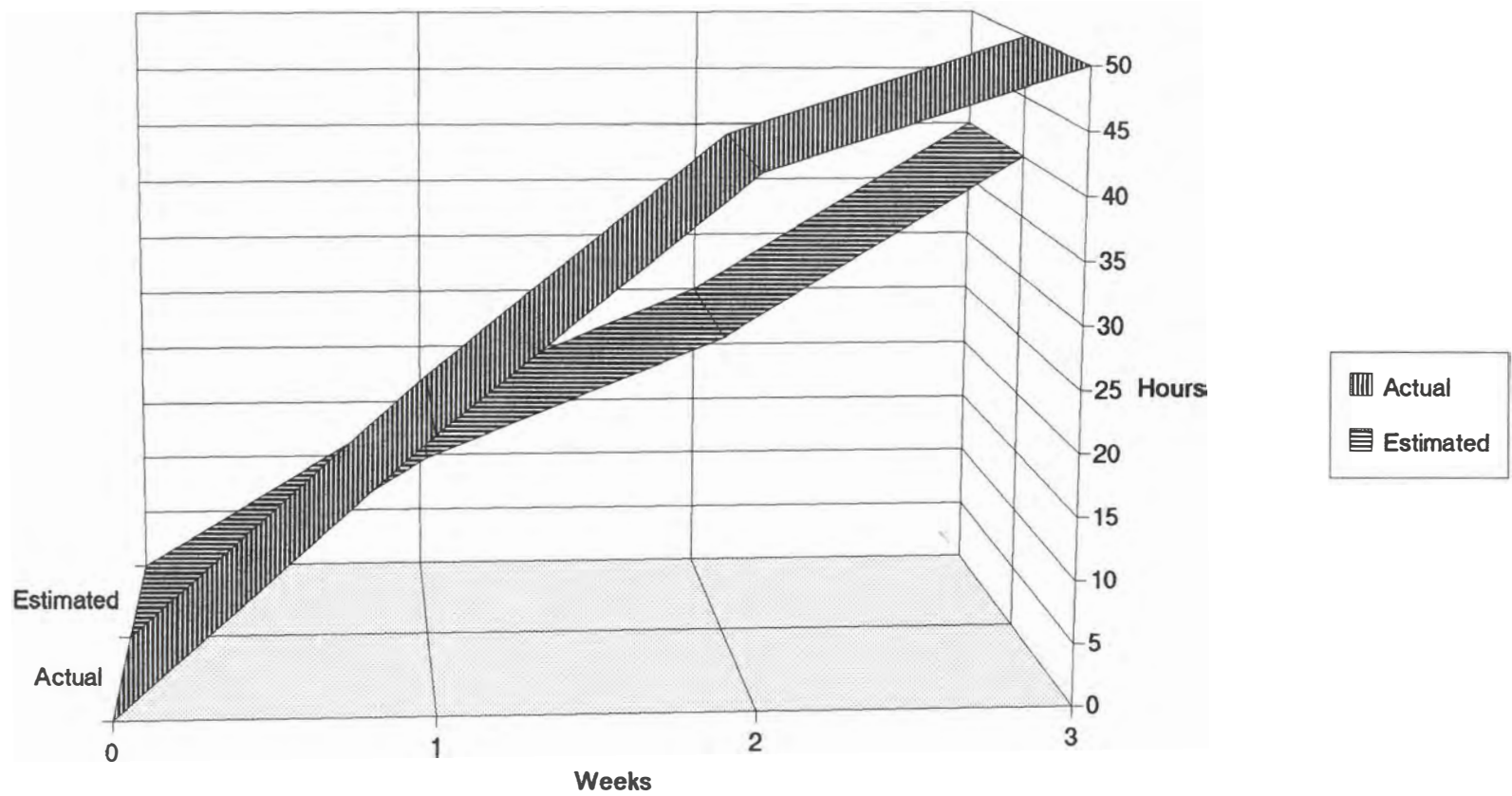


Figure 4.1b

INFORMATION SERVICE REQUEST

Page 1 of 2

JOB TITLE: Study phase for on-line customer master application (COMPUCARD).	NEW X	REQUESTED DATE: 09-02-92	REQUIRED DATE: 12-12-92
	REV	AUTHORIZATION	
OBJECTIVE: Improve the efficiency of customer identification, tracking, and reporting.	LABOR		OTHER
	HOURS 350	AMOUNT 0	HOURS AMOUNT
ANTICIPATED BENEFITS: 1) Instant recall/reporting of customer information, providing identification and tracking of customer/employer. 2) Improved controls. 3) Reduce loss of information 4) Growth.			
OUTPUT DESCRIPTION		INPUT DESCRIPTION	
TITLE: Customer Info. Display		TITLE: Check Cashing Request Form	
DESTINATION: In-House		SOURCE: Customer	
COMMENTS: general information display w/hard copy capability.		COMMENTS: card to be filled out by requesting customer.	
TITLE: Flagged Company report		TITLE: Customer Entry	
DESTINATION: In-House		SOURCE: Owner/Operator	
COMMENTS: Reports companies not approved for cashing their checks.		COMMENTS: Data entered from customer card into the system.	
TO BE FILLED OUT BY REQUESTOR			
REQUESTED BY:	DEPARTMENT:	TITLE:	TELEPHONE:
APPROVED BY:	DEPARTMENT:	TITLE:	TELEPHONE:
TO BE FILLED OUT BY INFORMATION SERVICES			
FILE NO: 1	ACCEPTED X	NOT ACCEPTED	
SIGNATURE:	DEPARTMENT: CIS204	TITLE: Project Leader	TELEPHONE: 397-4081
REMARKS: This is the Project Directive prepared for requestor's approval. Bruce Whitmore is designated as Project Leader.			
FORM NO: 92245	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: USE EXTRA PAGES		

Figure 4.4

CANDIDATE WEIGHTED EVALUATION MATRIX (WT)	CANDIDATE I RATING/SCORE	CANDIDATE II RATING/SCORE	CANDIDATE III RATING/SCORE
RESPONSE TIME (7)	5 / 35	4 / 28	0 / 0
ACCURACY/NEATNESS (5)	6 / 30	6 / 30	0 / 0
USABILITY (6)	5 / 30	5 / 30	0 / 0
GROWTH POTENTIAL (4)	6 / 28	6 / 28	0 / 0
STORAGE REQUIREMENTS (2)	5 / 10	4 / 8	0 / 0
SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT *HOURS (2)	5 / 10	5 / 10	0 / 0
SYSTEM OPERATION *HOURS (2)	5 / 10	5 / 10	0 / 0
TOTALS	153	144	0

* Since this is a school project, development cost was N/A.
Operational costs and payback were too infinitesimal to evaluate.

Figure 4.7

Evaluation: The students very carefully followed the guidelines and made sure the report was written correctly and succinctly. They made sure they followed through on such details as matching the figure numbers in the text to the actual figure numbers on the drawings. The students also added a little humor.

White Picket Fences

by Dan McReynolds
 Course: Reading 099
 Instructor: Denise Davis

Assignment: *Students were asked to write an essay on the "American Dream," which was to integrate their own ideas with some reference to ideas expressed in the course readings. Students in this class read parts of four texts, all in some way related to the "American Dream."*

It isn't what I thought it was! When I was nineteen and a freshman at Harper College, I had a clear vision of my *American Dream*. It was a way of life and it was primarily materialistic. Like many of my friends, I wanted my own home with a white picket fence; two nice cars in the oversized garage - one station wagon with fake wood sides and one two-seater sports car; two blond headed kids - preferably boys who started on the little league team (with me as the head coach, of course); vacations to Disney World; a cocker spaniel, a wife who could cook like my grandmother but looked like a movie star; and a high-paying job with a grand title. Basically, that covered the dream, as I saw it.

Now that I'm older, it has dawned on me that, while I haven't quite achieved all of my goals or captured "the dream" entirely, at least the young Dan's dream anyway, it's possible that I have lived the *American Dream* for a long time now. No, the house isn't that great, but it's home. It has a big brown fence around it, not the white one that I would have preferred. The inside is cozy. The wife and I fixed it up as best we could. Yes, we have two cars, but I never got a chance to get that sporty two-seater that I wanted. Maybe sometime in the future I will be able to achieve that goal. My four daughters aren't athletes, but it feels neat being the man of the house and messing with the boys that come over to the house to take them out. Our vacation to the Wisconsin Dells wasn't quite like Disney World, but we went as a family and I realized that's the most important thing. It's not where you go, it's who goes with you. I love my family very much. My wife isn't Cher, but I realize that it's not on the outside; it's what's inside of a person that counts. Mary is a sweet, caring, thoughtful and very smart woman and I love her

dearly. Although my job at the hospital is very hard and can be stressful at times, I always know that I have a home to go to where I have a family that loves me and that I love them very much too. They are the most important thing in my life.

I recently discussed the *American Dream* with my neighbor on the west side of the house. Robert grew up next to a packing plant in the city. His mom supported the three kids on about \$200,000 a week plus food stamps. Robert rode his full athletic scholarship to the U of I where he played football and majored in accounting. In his last season he broke his hip. The doctors said that if he played football again, he would risk being paralyzed. That didn't matter because Robert graduated with honors, got his CPA, and went to work for Sony, where he had interned for two summers. He says he got the job to enhance ethnic balance. Robert is black. Funny, I only think of him as the guy next door who helps me with my tax return and is an unfortunate fan of the Green Bay Packers. Robert says he achieved his "dream" the day he started college. All he ever wanted was the chance—everything that came after was a bonus. Robert and his wife, Linda, who teaches at a local school for the handicapped, make very good money. They're saving for later on in life so they can enjoy themselves and maybe see things that they never got a chance to see when they were kids. Interesting that Robert experienced his "dream" at age eighteen and hasn't revised the dream since. He says, "The *American Dream* for me is just getting the chance. I guess if I grew up in that city pit he called home, I'd probably feel the same way. A guy like Robert would have made young Dan feel pretty guilty about his selfish material desires.

On the east side of the house, we have Ray and Rhonda. Ray owns his own small quick-printing

shop. It's in the strip mall three blocks from here. He walks to the shop, even in deep snow. That's probably because he's an ex-Marine, tough as nails, you know! Ray's a great guy. The whole neighborhood looks to him for help on the stuff most of us can't fix or can't do. For Ray, fixing a lawn mower or building a storage shed in the back yard is no big deal. He is always happy to help. It's his thing in life, being the guy you can always depend on. He never sleeps! One weekend he and I stayed up all night and put together a model remote control car that he got for his son for Christmas. I owed him one for the shed he built for me in the back yard. Rhonda's the one who helps the kids with their homework. When the algebra book comes out, Ray disappears to the basement where an important project has to be finished. Rhonda and the kids understand, no problem. Ray smiles a lot. He's one of those happy guys, happy all the time. Life is great. "Don't Worry, Be Happy" is Ray's favorite song.

Ray and I have become close friends. When he and I are alone is the only time I see his serious side. Ray has a very serious side. As a boy he didn't smile very much. His father drank a bit, quite a bit, in fact. Even though he won't go into much detail, I think there was some violence attached to the drinking. Either he or his mother suffered beatings during the drinking times. Whatever the case, Ray doesn't touch a drop, ever! He cares for Rhonda and his kids, works hard and smiles all the time. In spite of his size, something like a linebacker, he's a very gentle giant. Did his unhappy childhood create his helpful, gentle and happy style? During one of our serious conversations, Ray said, "Dan, people just don't understand how to be happy and content. The important thing is to love and enjoy life to the fullest." I guess that's

Ray's *American Dream*. Here's a simple guy from an unhappy past who only wants people to love and respect each other.

The neighbors on the other side of my back fence are a young couple. It seems that money is the main priority in their *American Dream*. I see Ted every morning reading the Wall Street Journal on his back porch with an installed hot tub and pool. Once in a while he will call me over to have a cup of coffee with him and his wife, Pat. The whole time I'm over there it feels like I'm the bad guy who doesn't work on Saturday. That's what Ted says. They talk about why they bought the house. For investment of course! Ted and Pat both hold two jobs and they have no social life. The neighborhood gossip lady, Betty, says that you can see them on a Saturday night doing paperwork at the kitchen table for hours on end. Ted also came from a not-so-fortunate family. His dad was a waiter. His mom cleaned hotel rooms. Ted always dreamed of having his own home with a built-in pool in the back. Living in a one bedroom apartment with his parents and his two brothers gave him the determination to get what he wanted. I have to give him credit. He got what he wanted: nice house, a car, and lots of money.

When I was young, I always wanted the big things: a boat, a sports car, and a nice house with a three car garage. Now that I have grown older and talked to more people and learned how they looked at the *American Dream*, my views have changed a bit. When I had my family and raised them, my values and priorities changed totally. I found that the boat and the sports car weren't in my mind anymore. My family was. My main priority is my family. It seems when you grow older those material things don't matter any more.

While I was in college, I read about immigrants

who came to this country to find their *American Dream*. The Nassery family did. A man named Mohammed Daud Nassery wanted to bring his family to America. When he was a little boy, he came to America as an exchange student from Afghanistan. He lived with an American family. He kept in touch with them after he left to go back to his country. There was a lot of trouble in Afghanistan and he wanted to leave for the sake of his family. He planned to get a job once they got to America, and put his children in an American school where they would get a proper education. He did it. He achieved his dream. Daud is now living comfortably in his home in Massachusetts with his family. His kids are happy and they are getting the proper education they need to be successful.

It's only now that I realize the *American Dream* cannot be getting material things. White picket fences need to be painted and cars have to be repaired. Opportunity and hope for a good life have lived for two hundred years in America.

Oh, if I were only young again! I could have

Evaluation: *This student chose a particularly creative way to share with his colleagues and me his own "American Dream" and has, as required, integrated his own ideas with those expressed in the required course readings. This was the most whimsical, non-academic paper that I received, and one that I probably enjoyed reading the most!*

How to Reduce U.S.-Japanese Trade Friction

by *Terumi Miyabe*
Course: English 102
Instructor: Gilbert Tierney

Assignment: Write a 1,500-2,500 word research paper citing seven or more sources and using the MLA format.

Outline

Thesis: In order to reduce U.S.-Japanese trade friction, it is most important for both nations to solve some fundamental problems of the trade friction, beyond many divergent views and regardless of the trade deficit between the two nations. In a word, both nations need to deal with the underlying racism; Japan needs to make its market really open without any insularity; the United States needs to recover its economic strength.

- I. Background of U.S.-Japanese trade friction
 - A. History of U.S.-Japanese trade friction
 - B. Divergent views between the two nations
- II.h Dealing with the underlying racism
 - A. The United States
 - B. Japan
- III.h Japan's responsibility in U.S.-Japanese trade friction
 - A. Reform of *keiretsu*
 - B. Abolition of an anti-import bias
- IV.h The U.S. responsibility in U.S.-Japanese trade friction
 - A. Improvement of the business environment
 - B. Positive acceptance of foreign investments
 - C. Partnership between the government and industries
- V. Summary of U.S.-Japanese trade friction
 - A. Present U.S.-Japanese trade friction
 - B. Prospect for the future U.S.-Japanese partnership

The end of the Cold War brings the United States and Japan the beginning of a new partnership which emphasizes close economic ties rather than military alliance. However, U.S.-Japanese economic relations today are much more complex and important than ever, and trade friction continuously occurs between the two nations. The history of U.S.-Japanese trade friction is long; the problem first emerged in 1969 when the United States asked Japan to limit textile exports, and then the trade friction expanded item by item to steel, color TVs, automobiles, semiconductors, and computers (Nacht 150). U.S.-Japanese trade friction is not a problem that can be solved in a short time, but groping for the solutions is indispensable to the new partnership.

Before discussing the solutions, both nations should recognize the fact that the people of the United States and Japan have many divergent views, some of which are obstacles to reducing the friction between the two nations. Although the discrepancies are too many to be enumerated, some examples can help one to understand more clearly U.S.-Japanese trade problems. Michael Nacht, Dean of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland, gives an example of divergent views: "Americans tend to believe that the Japanese are simply not fair traders - that they push exports and are rigidly protectionist in imports"; on the other hand, "Japanese see the trade imbalance as a reflection of what they consider the superior quality of their products" (Nacht 150). This argument gets both nations nowhere.

Furthermore, Glen Fukushima, a Harvard-educated specialist on Japan who is with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representatives, gives another example. Fukushima indicates that the United

States and Japan each seem to have different definitions of Japan's market openness. The United States insists that Japan's market is still closed because Japan's ratio of imports of manufactured goods to GNP is only 3 percent, which is the lowest in the world, while those of European nations are, on the average, 10 to 15 percent. On the other hand, Japan insists that its own market is open because the government has already drastically lowered every tariff and largely removed quota restrictions except for some agriculture imports. The United States judges Japan's openness only by its importing ratio irrespective of the abolition of imports barriers, while Japan takes no account of the importing ratio but emphasizes the abolition of imports barriers (Fukushima 12).

The U.S.-Japanese historical background also sometimes produces divergent views between the two nations. Holbrooke, former Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, gives an example:

Most Americans feel they have a right to make special demands of Japan because of history.h...For their part, Japanese acknowledge the generosity of America's postwar policies, but they generally feel that the United States no longer has the right to make seemingly endless demands based on obligations from the past. (42)

These discrepancies make U.S.-Japanese trade friction more serious and never bring about any solution. However, an awareness of the divergent views is necessary in order to reduce U.S.-Japanese trade friction because both nations should impartially consider the solutions.

No one has immunity from mistakes, and one of the common human mistakes is racism. Nobody likes to admit racism as one of the fundamental

factors in U.S.-Japanese trade friction; however, many well-informed people in the United States and Japan indicate that underlying racism has helped to cause the conflict. Shintaro Ishihara, a leading figure in Japan's Liberal Democratic Party, says that racism underlies the trade friction in his book, *The Japan That Can Say No*. Ishihara says that the identical trade friction that exists between the United States and Japan would not occur if West Germany, Britain or Australia had achieved Japan's present economic power and standing (29). Holbrooke also states an opinion similar to Ishihara's; he points out that if a Dutch or Italian company had purchased Rockefeller Center or Columbia Pictures, Americans would not have had the complicated emotions "triggered by Japanese purchase of these two American trophies" (43).h

On the other hand, the Japanese are also not immune from underlying racism of which they are not always conscious. For instance, some Japanese politicians have a stereotyped idea that American workers are lazy, selfish, and incapable of producing first-rate products, and some statements reflecting this stereotype have aroused criticism in the United States. According to Holbrooke, the theory of Japanese racism is widely accepted in history. In other words, many historical experts conclude that the Japanese have great difficulty dealing with other people or nations as equals; the Japanese have either accepted inferior status or sought superiority in all relationships (56). Although the United States and Japan can not blame each other for the racism, both nations need to recognize and abolish their own racism. The abolition of racism can be the first step toward the solution of U.S.-Japanese trade friction.

Another factor in U.S.-Japanese trade friction seems to come from Japanese historical and geo-

graphic background. Japanese history has the experience of the isolation policy; through this policy, the government forbade the Japanese from interchanging with foreign civilization and foreign culture from 1639 to 1853, during the Tokugawa period. In addition to this historical background, Japan has been an island, a homogeneous country for more than 2000 years. This historical and geographic background has brought the Japanese some insularity, which helps to cause U.S.-Japanese trade friction. As Japanese relations with the United States become close, the United States urges Japan to remove the typical insularity, *keiretsu*, and an anti-import bias.

The United States often criticizes the unique economic structure of Japan, which is called *keiretsu*. *Keiretsu* is an industrial-banking economic group, and Mitsubishi, Mitsui, and Sumitomo are some typical examples of *keiretsu*. Clyde V. Prestowitz, the author of *Trading Places*, expresses very critical views against *keiretsu*. According to *Trading Places*, in a *keiretsu*, a major Japanese bank and a trading company form a huge network of all sorts of Japanese companies, and foreign companies cannot easily enter the network. These alliances are linked by cross-shareholdings, common banking affiliation, and the use of the same trading company to import raw materials and to export products. *Keiretsu* is said to give preference to group members, perhaps particularly when the competing product or firm is foreign. Although this accusation is not easily substantiated, it is certain that the unique economic structure, *keiretsu*, gives an extraordinary uphill battle to foreign companies in Japan's market (Prestowitz 157). *Keiretsu* gives the United States the idea that the Japanese are unfair traders.

In addition to *keiretsu*, Japan needs to abolish

an anti-import bias if U.S.-Japanese trade friction is to be reduced. Philip H. Trezise, a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution, says in his article, "Japan, the Enemy?":

Why Japan's manufactured imports are comparatively low has been the subject of debate among economists, Japanese and American, with no fully conclusive answers. But anomalies in Japan's trade structure [which indicates that Japan is a modest importer of manufactured goods in relation to GNP] give credibility to the existence of an anti-import bias, whether enforced by custom or by rules and regulations. (7)

In fact, most of Japan's imports are foodstuffs, raw materials and fuel, and its imports of manufactured goods are exceptionally low; furthermore, no other industrial country exhibits this pattern of trade (Trezise 7). Although Japan is usually proud of the extremely low level of official barriers in importing manufactured goods, invisible barriers still exist in Japan's market.

In addition, Stephen D. Cohen, the former chief economist at the United States-Japan Trade Council, indicates that in international economic relations, Japan's major flaw is its inhospitable attitude toward importing manufactured goods. According to him, although there is no crucial evidence, Japan seems to prefer to keep its market share of imports of manufactured goods to a "moderate" level because manufactured goods are Japan's targeted industries of the future (Cohen 184). Japan owes its economic success today to many foreign markets, and these insular ideas are no longer admitted by other countries. Japan needs to accept the fact that *keiretsu* and an anti-import bias make some invisible barriers and that most

foreign countries have extraordinary difficulties in selling their manufactured goods to Japan's market. In reducing U.S.-Japanese trade friction, Japan's responsibility is to make its market really open and not affected by any insularity.

However, the United States can not blame all of the causes of U.S.-Japanese trade friction on Japan. Carla Rapoport of *Fortune* gives evidence of U.S. economic problems. According to the evidence, Japan has taken actions to open its market, but there is the problem that the United States has not significantly benefited from Japan's openness. In other words, most of the benefit flows into Europe and Asia instead of the United States. For instance, while Japan's imports from the United States climbed 76% between 1986 and 1990, its imports from France went up nearly 300%, from Germany 144%, and from South Korea 106%. The growth of exports from Europe and Asia to Japan handily surpassed U.S. growth (42). Although it is dangerous to judge U.S. economic problems only by these statistics, they can be an indication that the United States is losing economic competitiveness in foreign trade. Recovering U.S. economic strength is necessary in order to reduce U.S.-Japanese trade friction.

First, the United States clearly needs to improve its own business environment by two means: education and long-term profit practices (Cohen 184). Cohen explains these two means in his article, "United States-Japanese Trade Relations." If the United States wants to improve the quality of products in order to compete with other countries in foreign trade, education, which includes school education and job training for employees, should be emphasized more than ever. Moreover, American business executives should alter their short-term profit practices; they should

not only chase some immediate profits by wheeling and dealing in mergers, acquisitions and leveraged buy-outs, but also prospect the future profits by capital investment and study of new technology (184).

Second, Americans need to recognize the merits of foreign investments in their country. Generally, some visible foreign investments often bring unpleasant reactions to almost every country, and in the United States, Japanese investors make some Americans nervous. However, many American economists suggest that foreign investments should be welcomed in the United States. In the article "Japan, the Enemy?" Trezise also explains Japanese investments and their merits. He says that the United States is never being "colonized" by Japan or anyone else. Americans should recognize that foreign firms establishing themselves in the United States become American firms, which are liable for American taxes and required to observe American laws and regulations. Furthermore, their interests are profitable for Americans and their community life, and the opportunities of employment also increase (6).

In addition to the merit, Trezise explains the relationship between the depreciation of the dollar and Japanese investments:

In 1985 a Japanese investor needed, on average, 238 yen to buy a dollar's worth of U.S. assets. In 1988 he needed only 128 yen. This depreciation of the dollar has led to complaints that Japan is buying into America on the cheap. But...it has equally lowered the yen income to be earned in the U.S. Japanese investors can not have failed to observe this relationship. (6)

Finally, the United States needs to reconsider

the partnership between the government and industries. According to *Fortune* the Japanese government keeps an eye on every important industry and fosters it by administrative guidance and subsidies in order to meet foreign competition (Rapoport 48). This Japanese economic policy is usually criticized as unfair business by the United States, but Dominick Salvatore, Director of the Graduate Program and Professor of Economics at Fordham University, advises the United States to reconsider this economic policy in his article, "How to Solve the U.S.-Japan Trade Problem." He says, "This kind of policy is common in Japan and Europe and is credited with giving foreign companies an edge over U.S. competitors." Salvatore says that American big companies usually have an adversarial relationship with the government, and it is not easy for the U.S. government to cooperate immediately with U.S. domestic industries. However, he ventures to advance this suggestion that the U.S. government needs to support and foster some important domestic industries not only to recover its economic strength but also to win the international trade race (46).

Akio Morita, Sony Chairman, explains the reason that the Japanese government takes care of its industries in his book *The Japan That Can Say No* [Japanese version]. The Japanese government has the right to collect over half of the benefits from every domestic industry as taxes every year although it never owns any company's stock. In other words, the government is much the same as a large shareholder of its domestic industries; therefore, the government is willing to support the domestic industries in order to increase the national income profit. Japanese companies also consider the government as a good partner (70). In the United States such an economic policy, the part-

nership between the government and industries, may be controversial. However, if the United States builds the government-industry partnership, it may be on an equal business footing with Japan, thus recovering economic competitiveness in foreign trade. In addition, if the United States improves its business environment and positively accepts foreign investments, it will become much stronger economically. Recovering U.S. economic strength is its responsibility and can help to reduce U.S.-Japan trade friction.

It is true that the United States and Japan have made a lot of efforts to reduce the trade friction. As a result, the U.S. deficit with Japan has shrunk dramatically; from the peak of \$57 billion in 1987, the gap has narrowed to \$41 billion in 1990 (Rapoport 41). Although U.S.-Japanese relations today are excessively influenced by the trade deficit, it is most important for both nations to solve the fundamental problems of the trade friction regardless of the import-export ratio. In a word, the United States and Japan need to deal with the underlying racism; Japan needs to make its market really open without any insularity; the United States needs to recover its economic strength.

If the United States and Japan succeed in solving these fundamental problems, U.S.-Japanese trade friction should be reduced. U.S.-Japanese relations are said to be like a marriage; although the two nations sometimes fight, they can not easily divorce because the United States remains one of the most important nations in the world to Japan, while Japan remains one of the most important nations in the world to the United States (Shimomura 30). In addition, if the United States and Japan learn to appreciate each other's different good points, the new partnership will not only

contribute to the two nations but also help to create a peaceful world in the future.

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Evaluation: Ms. Miyabe's paper deals with a difficult, complex subject and does so thoroughly, even-handedly, and insightfully.

The Modern Ending of Dickens's *Great Expectations*

by Tom Olcese
Course: Literature 232
Instructor: Barbara Hickey

Assignment: Write a scholarly, critical analysis of a literary work. Substantiate your interpretation with citations of the primary source, and supplement your insight with references to secondary sources.

I took her hand in mine, and we went out of the ruined place; and as the morning mists had risen long ago when I first left the forge, so the evening mists were rising now, and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw no shadow of another parting from her. (Dickens 451)

So ends Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*. The novel was extremely popular from its very first installment in Dickens's weekly magazine *All The Year Round*, and it immediately revived the magazine, which had lost a large portion of its circulation in the time since his previous serialization, *A Tale of Two Cities*. "A more far-reaching effect was its role in reversing the decline in Dickens's popularity that had taken place during the half-dozen years since *Hard Times*" (Page 214).

Critics of the time generally hailed *Great Expectations* as a return of Dickens the humorist, and his vast following of readers greeted it in kind. After its rather somber predecessors, the novel was greeted as a "refreshing return to his earlier manner of robust comedy" (Page 215). This is especially true in Dickens's handling of the minor characters and episodes in the novel; for example, Pip's visits to Wemmick's Walworth castle and his Aged Parent, Wemmick's wedding, the unrestrained chaos at the Pockets' home, and Mr. Wopsle's rather unsuccessful try at *Hamlet*. There are scenes in *Great Expectations* as hilarious as anything the author created in his earlier "lighter" novels. However, modern critics generally perceive the over-riding themes in *Great Expectations* to be disillusion and guilt and as such it is now considered one of the author's "dark" novels along with *Bleak*

House and Hard Times.

In 1874, Dickens's friend and biographer, John Forster, opened a seemingly bottomless can of worms when he published the ending that Dickens had originally written for the novel in which Pip and Estella are forever parted. Since that time the critics have debated the question of which ending is more appropriate, which is truer to the book's characters and its themes.

In the original ending, Pip and Estella meet but briefly. They shake hands, exchange a few words, and part. Narrator Pip concludes: "I was very glad afterwards to have had the interview, for in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's teaching, and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be" (Dickens 454).

Though Pip *says* that this change in Estella's character has occurred, there is no empirical reason to believe that it has. Her manner is as imperious as ever. All we are given for evidence of her transformation, from Miss Havisham's student and Pip's tormentor to a woman of some warmth and understanding, are some rumors of her "leading a most unhappy life" and Pip's brief impression of her face and voice and touch (Dickens 453).

This is consistent with Dickens's handling of the character of Estella throughout the novel. Almost all we know of Estella is filtered through Pip's poor, love-struck eyes. We know far less about her than we know about many lesser characters, and she speaks far fewer lines. Estella is the embodiment of Pip's "Great Expectations," the symbol of what he wants and cannot have, of what he is and can never be. There is nothing in either ending to suggest she has become anything else. It remains, then, for the reader to discover if the

change that has occurred in Pip has made him now able to recognize goodness and change in Estella. Or, perhaps, poor Pip is still seeing in Estella what he wishes to see.

Dickens altered his original conclusion to the novel at the suggestion of friend and fellow novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who objected "to a close that should leave Pip a solitary man" (Forster 480).

Bulwer-Lytton was a great friend of Dickens's and one of the most "popular and critically esteemed novelists" of his time (Christensen 75). His novel *A Strange Story* followed *Great Expectations* as a serial in *All The Year Round*. Bulwer-Lytton is generally not highly regarded by modern critics and is, perhaps unfortunately, best known in our time as a writer of the most trite and overblown kind of prose. (Snoopy sits on his doghouse and begins his truly awful Gothic novels again and again by typing, "It was a dark and stormy night..." the now infamous opening line of Bulwer-Lytton's *Paul Clifford*.)

The problem most critics find with the revised ending to *Great Expectations* is that it is too sentimental and less than the novel deserves, that it seems "tacked-on" to please Dickens's mass audience. They argue that the original conclusion is bleaker, more true to the nature of the characters, and more *modern*. "Advocates of the original conclusion believe that the alteration conflicts with what they view as the pessimistic tone of *Great Expectations* and the novel's logical outcome: although Pip learns from his experience and expiates his guilt, he was meant to be sadder at the end" (NCLC 155).

It is clear that Dickens himself did not feel this way. In a letter to Forster dated July 1, 1861, he writes,

You will be surprised to hear that I have changed the end of *Great Expectations* ... Bulwer (who has been, as I think I told you, extraordinarily taken by the book), so strongly urged it upon me, after reading the proofs, and supported his views with such good reasons, that I resolved to make the change... I have put in a very pretty piece of writing, and I have no doubt the story will be more acceptable through the alteration. (Dickens 167)

So which ending *is* truly the more realistic way to finish the story of Pip and his *Great Expectations*? I would argue that the revised ending, in which Pip and Estella meet and the possibility of a renewed relationship and marriage is raised, is not only the fitting end to the novel but also the one which, despite its popular reception, is also the more pessimistic, the more modern.

Pip and Estella *should* end up together, not because they have changed and now will live happily ever after in the old-fashioned sense. Dickens recognized that his two characters, despite what they have gone through, haven't changed. And they won't change. Because they can't change.

Charles Dickens, Jr., who inherited *All The Year Round* from his father, wrote of the novel's ending, "More acceptable (the new ending) was, probably, to those readers who are never satisfied without 'a happy ending,' but it is certain that the only really natural as well as artistic conclusion to the story was that which was originally intended by Charles Dickens, and which kept Pip and Estella apart" (NCLC 165).

Dickens's biographer Edgar Johnson goes even

further, when he says,

Great Expectations is the most perfectly constructed and perfectly written of all Dickens's works. It should close with that misty moonlight scene in Miss Havisham's ruined garden, but, as (George Bernard) Shaw suggests, with Pip and Estella then bidding each other a chastened farewell and Pip saying 'Since that parting I have been able to think of her without the old unhappiness; but I have never tried to see her again, and I know I never shall' (Johnson 993)

David Lodge argues that it has taken Pip all of his life to recognize and reject the values he foolishly adopted in pursuit of his expectations and that Estella is the most powerful symbol of those values. Having Pip and Estella together at the end "compromises the novel's sober recognition that not all the damage we do to ourselves and to others is reparable" (Lodge 43).

There are many critics, however, who argue that the revised ending is the more effective and more appropriate one. A.L. French deduces from chronological clues throughout the novel that the action being described by Narrator Pip is twenty years in the past, and that Dickens's choice of words, that Pip saw "no shadow of another parting from her," indicates that Pip didn't believe "the parting would happen, but he was wrong and it has. He didn't see the shadow, but it was really there, and he has been living in it for two decades" (French 359).

French, like many critics, seems intent on discovering whether Pip and Estella marry, as a sentimental reading of the ending would have it, and he goes to some length to prove that they do not:

If we read the ending with the book's chronology in mind, we see that Dickens hasn't betrayed

his artistic conscience because he has carefully implied, for the attentive reader, a psychologically right ending for the hero. The Pip who is writing Great Expectations is, at fifty-four [French's conclusion], well into a futile and celibate middle age. (French 360)

At the time *Great Expectations* was published it was widely assumed that Pip's final words, "I saw no shadow of another parting from her," and the scene of Pip and Estella leaving the ruins of Satis House (and the ruins of their former lives?) together, meant what such endings in Victorian novels always meant: a marriage. Some critics insist that there can be no other interpretation and readers at the time were pleased. These critics find the revised ending to be one of redemption and self-forgiveness. They posit that Dickens meant to have us believe the Pip and Estella have changed; that they have become, through their separate trials, different, and better, people; that, fallible and imperfect though they may be, now they are finally truly capable of giving and receiving love (Miller 346).

But, as Stanley Friedman points out, the novel is narrated by Pip in the past tense, from the point of view of a man looking back over his life. We must assume, then, that Pip can confirm in no uncertain terms whether a marriage to Estella took place. Why then does narrator Pip not say the words? Why not, "We lived happily ever after," if indeed Dickens changed his ending to provide his legions of readers with the warm conclusion that they supposedly needed? (Friedman 418)

Finally, there are those who claim that the novelist left the ending ambiguous on purpose. Martin Meisel argues that because of the author's artistry, either ending works well. He does castigate Dickens for tinkering so casually with something

so important, yet he sees both endings as post-scripts to the true conclusion of the novel which has Pip back at the forge with Bidley, Joe, and young Pip, whom Pip takes to the churchyard to see the graves of his parents, a scene that comes full-circle from the beginning of the book (Meisel 330).

Novelist, and unabashed Dickens fan, John Irving writes:

It is that hopeful ending that sings with all the rich contradiction we should love Dickens for; it both underlines and undermines everything before it. Pip is basically good, basically gullible; he starts out being human, he learns by error, he keeps on being human. That touching illogic seems not only generous but true. (Irving 96)

I would argue that the revised ending of the novel satisfies on two levels. For the sentimental reader, Victorian or modern, the coincidental meeting in the garden gives the two battered lovers a chance to start again, a chance to undo the hurt and the torment their hearts have endured, and a chance to do it over again and get it right. Who, in looking back over a life of love and lovers, choices made and not made, wouldn't leap at such a chance?

Surely Pip has changed, has grown as a person, hasn't he? Yet, during the crucial scenes near the end of the book (when he discovers the truth about his benefactor, when Magwitch dies, when Miss Havisham dies, when he falls ill and is nursed back to health by Joe), he never acts from a purely altruistic point of view, from the point of view of a man who has seen the error of his ways. Even after all his difficulty, even after supposedly discovering the shallowness in himself, Pip's choices are made from necessity and from selfishness. His resolve to

return to the forge to repay the debt (both financial and spiritual) that he owes Joe, "this gentle Christian man," springs not from a determination to give back what he owes or to find a way to enrich the lives of his friends, but from a desire to "relieve *my* mind and heart" (my italics) (439).h

When he returns to the village to marry Bidly and finds that she has just that day married Joe, Pip collapses in the kitchen of the old house. As Bidly and Joe fuss over him Pip says: "They were both so overjoyed to see me, so proud to see me, so touched by my coming to them, so delighted that I should have come by accident to make their day complete!" (445). Talk about "a gallon of condescension"! Even after coming to beg Joe's and Bidly's forgiveness, he can't help thinking of them as people who are below his station. He *does* beg for forgiveness, but with all the genuine feeling of the obsequious Pumblechook.

"My first thought was one of great thankfulness," says Pip, "that I had never breathed this last baffled hope [of marrying Bidly] to Joe," the presumption being that good, kind Joe would have acquiesced to Pip's desire and that good, kind Bidly would actually want him (445). These are not the feelings and behaviors of a man who has learned a lesson.

Finally, then, Pip takes the role of martyr for himself. He joins Herbert in the East, lives a frugal and, it seems, monastic life, pays his debts, and does not return to England for eleven years. Upon his return, in the revised ending, Bidly asks if he has "quite forgotten Estella. Pip replies with some conviction that his "poor dream...has all gone by" (449).

Yet even as he says the words he knows they are not true. He secretly intends to revisit Satis House that very evening. Why secrecy? Because he

remains obsessed, with Estella and with his expectations. Pip remains unmarried after years of being a reasonably successful man because he is still incapable of loving. His obsession with Estella, for that is what he feels for her, not love, still blinds him. Even after all he should have learned about himself and about her, obsession still governs his life. For Pip to remain under Estella's spell after all he has endured, all the heartache he has brought on himself and others, is completely in keeping with his nature, and should come as no surprise to us.

Whether Estella has changed enough to be deserving of Pip's love, whether they actually marry and build a life together, these questions are of less importance than the question of whether Pip has really learned about himself, and about love. Clearly, he has not. In the end Dickens has Pip and Estella fulfilling the only destiny they can fulfill. They are joined forever, whether they marry or not.

Modern critics see the substituted ending as the sappy, sentimental one. But only in the original ending has Pip truly changed. He has been badly scarred but he is capable of loving Joe, Bidly, and their children in a favorite-uncle sort of way. He has regained his emotional stability, if not health. After his chance meeting with Estella in her carriage he notes, in a gracious and forgiving tone, that "in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's teaching, and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be" (Dickens 454). There is a sense of closure. Perhaps he will be able to get on with his life after all.

In the revised ending, though, he goes back again to the place where so much of the hurt in his life has occurred, and, it seems, back to the woman

who has done much of the damage. Yet, if he has truly changed, if he has truly learned how damaging his great expectations were, he would not be able to make a choice to marry Estella. For those who believe in ending number one, this is the great failing and weakness of the revision. "Pip has changed!" they cry. "He could never go back to what he was."

But he hasn't changed. And that is what makes Dickens's revision so right. By going to Estella, Pip reaffirms the power she has over him. The power *he* has given her. For she has not manipulated him. His notions of "Great Expectations," notions in his character long before he received his fateful letter from Jaggers, are what have been Pip's undoing. No, he has not changed at all. And this is what makes Dickens's final draft the subtle and powerful thing it is. When Pip takes Estella's hand and sees "no shadow of another parting from her," he is like an alcoholic sipping from a glass of wine after years of abstinence—smiling sadly, acknowledging the bittersweet joy in the tasting and acknowledging his powerlessness in the face of his obsession.

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Evaluation: Tom argues cogently and convincingly, surpassing the "Great Expectations" of even the most demanding teacher.

Sentiment towards Autumn

by Kyoung Shin Park

Course: English as a Second Language
Advanced Writing Skills II
Instructor: Jerilyn Gadberry

Assignment: This was one entry of an on-going journal. Students were to express their thoughts and feelings about any topic of their choice.

It has come profound autumn before I am aware.h
The scenery in the street has been impressed on my mind—all tree leaves turned red, yellow, or crimson. Now, those leaves fade away in their splendid colors, fall under the trees in heaps, and are scattered by a blowing breeze. Fallen leaves are blowing towards the sides of the street when a car passes... It looks as if leaves are following the car. How beautiful it is!

There will be a Halloween day, at the end of October, a few days later. In front of houses in the roadside, there are lots of shapes of ghosts and pumpkins with smiling faces for Halloween. I don't know yet what Halloween is. To tell the truth, I am disturbed to see those ghosts, and it looks as if here is the kingdom of ghosts. Do Americans really like ghosts? How come they like ghosts? Pumpkins, however, are cute, and they give me a sense of autumn. I think pumpkins are the happiest vegetables because they smile a lot!

It was drizzling unremittingly for three days last week. The grayness of the street when I looked out of the car window was impressed on my mind. There was nothing but gloom hanging over the street. I fell into a melancholy in a few moments. I missed my friends who could spend time together and have a mug of coffee on such a melancholy day. I felt a haunting loneliness more strongly, since I had no friends.

"Out of sight, out of mind." Many friends sent a letter to me in the first few months after I came here, and these letters gave me strength. However, there are no more letters from my friends. We became estranged from each other because we couldn't see each other. I felt their diminished affection as much as the hue of faded leaves. The hue of faded leaves in the rain made me so sad.

I stood for a few moments thinking of my por-

trait—what I did, what I realized, what I'm going to do. I remembered all dreams faded from my mind—my plan of the future and my way of life. I was busy just adjusting to this new country so that I couldn't do as much as I expected. The sky is much higher in this pathetically beautiful season, but my dreams are getting lessened. However, what the sky told me is I had had too many dreams and I stuck at the dreams too much. I have, at least, school work and a relative's affection. Ah! Autumn has awakened me to a sense of having the confidence of life.

After Mr. Rain passed, it is more chilly, and scenery in which fallen leaves pile up in the street can be found. It is cold here, even in October. At the enchanted twilight, I feel sometimes sentimental and tears flow down my cheeks because of the beautiful scene. However, I appreciate this season, the Autumn, and I feel cozy.

It is the season to remind me of the music "Adagio in G Minor" by Tomaso Albinoni; a bunch of wild camomile, a mug of coffee, the pretty look and sweet fragrance, and the cordial feeling harmonize with Autumn. Unlike the summertime, which seems like a strong sunlight or a rainstorm, the autumn looks like a mild and pleasant breeze. Thus, it's time to miss the simple and pleasant thing, like the lyric melody and the wild camomile rather than Symphony No. 5 by Beethoven and the trimmed rose.

Now, I have a mug of coffee. I am listening to the "Adagio in G Minor" and I am writing this note. I am pleased with this present moment, for the reason that I have at least music and coffee. In a fleeting moment, the idea has just crossed my mind, which is "From time to time the usual moment seems terribly beautiful."

Evaluation: *Kyoung Shin Park stirs the reader with her sensitive description of ambivalent moods stimulated by autumn. These are paralleled with her own fluctuating feelings about adjustment and dreams in a new country.*

Lesson

by Sidonie Rische
Course: English 101
Instructor: Peter Sherer

Assignment: Write a personal experience essay in which you focus in on an incident that helped you grow in some way.

Another trickle of sweat slithered down the back of my neck as I led the last horse into the welcoming shade of the barn doorway. Slipping the halter from the tired old gelding's head, I followed him down the aisle to his stall and swung the door shut behind him. Pulling the hose down from its hook between two stalls, I proceeded to fill the water buckets in all twelve stalls as twelve thirsty polo ponies enjoyed a long, cool, well earned drink.

After rehangng the hose, I went in search of the trainer, Jimmy, to ask what I should do next. Stepping from the cool shade of the barn into the ninety degree heat, I asked myself if I could last much longer at this job. I wondered if it was worth the twelve hour days, the heat, the crushed toes, the cranky horses, and aching legs and back.

I found Jimmy loading hay into a large wheelbarrow. Before I could say anything, he asked, "Did you water the horses yet?" When I told him I had, he said, "Good, then you can give them their hay before you sweep the barn." He should have been a drill sergeant, I thought to myself as I wobbled unsteadily away behind the weight of the wheelbarrow.

When I had finished "haying" the horses, I stowed the wheelbarrow in the feed room and helped Jimmy finish feeding the horses their ration of oats. As we moved from stall to stall, I looked at his sweaty shirt and sunburnt face with a feeling of smug satisfaction. At least I wasn't the only one feeling the heat that day.

Hot and tired from a long day at the polo fields, I tried a new tact in hopes of going home a little early. "I'm going home," I announced to my taskmaster as he appeared from the tackroom carrying a rake and a push broom. "No you're not," he said flatly. "You're going to sweep the floor of the barn first." He pushed the broom toward me

and I took it without protest, feeling like a wilted balloon. Turning on my heel, I walked to the far end of the aisle and started pushing dirt toward the barnyard. I was about three quarters of the way down the aisle when I spotted Jimmy standing in the open doorway, watching me sweep.

"You sweep like a little kid. You skip the corners. Do it over," he said.

I shot my most sincere scowl at his back as he turned to rake the barnyard. I realized that he took pride in the neatness of the barn and yard, but really! I looked back at where I had already swept and saw with great disappointment that he was right, for I had missed several spots. I retraced the length of the aisle and started over, this time catching the corners. I swept the pile of collected debris out the barn door just as Jimmy raked a similar pile over to meet mine. He paused to inspect the floor.

"Do it again," came the judgement.

"What?" I shouted. "There is nothing left on that floor."

"Yes there is, and I'll prove it," he replied. He took the broom from my hand and walked the length of the aisle, turned and started sweeping. Sensing discordant voices, a couple of curious horses peeked over their stall doors. Jimmy swept the distance of about two stalls while I, refusing to watch, stood with crossed arms and tight lips. He called me over to show me the pile of loose shavings and dirt he had gathered.

I was too angry to admit defeat. No one had ever treated me the way this man did. I thought of myself as a good person and a hard worker. To him I was just a lazy shirker. Jimmy must have read my mind, but he didn't relent. "You know, I could make a good worker out of you if you spent as much time trying to be efficient as you do feeling

sorry for yourself."

Now I was seeing red. Instead of spending the day at the pool with all my eighth grade friends, I'd spent the day following orders without question or complaint, getting hot, sticky and tired in the process, and he was treating me like some sort of spoiled brat! I reached into the brush bin at my shoulder and pulled out a brush. I raised it above my head to throw it at him.

"Hold it! You'll spook the horses," he shouted at me. "Besides," he added, smiling, "you'll just miss me anyway."

I stood there glaring at him for several seconds and then it hit me. He was right! Before taking this job I had never experienced a hard days work in my life. This man was simply trying to teach me to do my job efficiently and correctly.

He was not making fun of me. I slowly lowered the brush and put it away. I took the broom from his hand without comment and started to sweep again. Finally finished, I tossed the debris into the manure pile and turned to find Jimmy leaning against the frame of the barn door with a big grin on his face and two sodas. "Thirsty?"

Evaluation: This older, wiser narrator looks back to a time when she first learned about work. Her conflicts with her mentor and with herself are presented forcefully, amusingly. It's a well-paced, enjoyable read.

The Most Precious Things

by Angel Sanden
Course: English 101
Instructor: Joseph Sternberg

Assignment: Play the participant's role and write about a particular experience that enabled you to discover your strength or weakness.

Friday, September 20, 1991e.. The day burst into life around me as the alarm rang out. It startled me, but I was already awake. I had been lying on the living room floor stroking my ever growing belly and wishing my back would stop hurting. This was the way I always spent my early mornings—thinking of how beautiful my twins would be and wishing I had gotten a better night's rest. This morning was different from the others though. This time I wasn't content. I was apprehensive and concerned, and I didn't really care that I'd barely slept the night before. I rolled half way onto my right side and rose to a sitting position. Time to shower.

As the hot water caressed my tense body, I prayed. I was going to the hospital for my second Level 2 ultrasound. I had been told three days earlier that there was a 75% chance both of my babies would die. This ultrasound would decide our next course of action. I was praying over and over that God would get me through whatever lay ahead. I was fighting tears. I loved my sons so much, healthy young men. I did, however, know that God's will and my will were very often two very different things. So although I did ask for everything to be all right, the basis of my prayer was that He would do what was best for all involved and get me through it.

Bob, my fiance, arrived at 8:55 am. He had just gotten off work that morning and was very tired. He hadn't even showered. (He is an E.M.T. and works 24 hour shifts.) My father drove us to the hospital and stayed with us.

At 9:35 am I slid my navy blue sweatshirt up and lowered my black maternity pants to my hips so my pregnant belly was accessible. My hands were shaking as the perinatologist spread the goop over my belly. My back ached as I lay there, look-

ing nine months pregnant at five months and a week. Bobby held my hand as the perinatologist prodded my abdomen, causing pain at times. The doctor didn't say a word, but I knew something was wrong. I could feel it in my heart. I kept staring at the screen, trying to convince myself the babies were moving, but they weren't. I knew what was wrong before the perinatologist said a word. My blood felt hot and cold at the same time. It drained from my face, and I felt like I couldn't breathe. I was shaky and wanted to throw up. There were numbing prickles charging through my heart, and my lips tingled. My hands were cold and I needed to urinate. The doctor sat down behind his desk, shuffled a few loose papers, and looked at me. He said it anyway, "I don't know how to tell you this, but the babies are both dead." My lungs collapsed and I was dizzy. My whole body screamed out in agony, every sense acutely aware that nothing was right; my whole being had been stripped away. There was nothing left except my broken heart and Bobby.

Bob, my dad, and I all walked silently across the sidewalk to the Doctors' Building to see Marina, my midwife. She and the nurse both had tears in their eyes when we entered. She took me in her compassionate arms and hugged me tightly. She had the nurse call the delivery floor to make an appointment for my labor induction. She briefly explained that a suppository would be inserted to induce cramping and dilation and that I would need to spend at least one night in the hospital. "You can have anyone you want with you," she cried. I was told to call Labor and Delivery at 4:00 pm to make sure the room was ready and then just follow their instructions. Marina recommended I eat a light lunch, enough to keep my strength up, but little enough that I wouldn't get sick.

As my father drove us home, Bob solemnly held my hand, squeezing strength into me. We both cried. I wanted to curl up all alone, no one touching me or speaking to me, but he needed to touch me, to reassure himself that I was still there, that I was still alive.

When we arrived at my house, Bob went home to take a shower and tell his parents. I took a moment to eat a small chocolate bar, figuring it would give me energy without being enough to make me sick. I had to be alone. I walked to a nearby park. I wanted to walk farther, but my back and ribs ached so much from the pressure that I just couldn't do it. I sat on the swing set holding my belly, tears welling up in my eyes, but only one escaping. I was in shock, numb. I remembered how my friend Tony Adorno and I used to play on the swing set at our elementary school when we were nine. How much simpler life was then. How much less pain there was! A young blonde child ran over to his grandmother who was perched on the bench on the other side of the park. He was so happy. He was alive. He was a symbol to me. A symbol that life goes on. I cried. I prayed, "God, You know what is best; do what You will. But know that I know You can make everything better if You want to. I believe that. However, if You choose to take these babies, help me deal with it, God. I won't be able to do it alone. I love them! More than anyone could ever know. *Your* will be done, but get me through it." It was 12:30 pm. I had to get back home before Bob did.

Bobby didn't arrive until 2:00 pm. When he sat on the sofa and encircled me with his strong loving arms, we both fell into a fitful sleep. I awoke at 3:00 pm, one hour before I was to call the hospital. I didn't want to wake Bobby, I was so worried about him. He looked so drained as he slept there.

I called Teresa, our family friend of many years. I asked her to talk to me until 4:00 to help me get through the endless waiting. She assured me she'd do the best she could to get up to see me that night. We talked about how worried I was about Bob and I kept telling her that I was going to be fine. I had God; what more did I need? I was in such shock; that was my response.

When I called the hospital at 4:00pm they told me to go ahead and start heading over. I grabbed a pair of clean underwear, my hairbrush, my toothbrush, my journal, and a book. I knew labor could take a long time and in all my naivete I thought reading would help pass the time. We left at 4:30 pm, Daddy fighting the rush hour traffic all the way back out to Hoffman Estates. Bobby tried to hold my hand; I tried to read. I started the same sentence over and over the whole way there. Not once did I comprehend what I was reading.

We arrived a little after five and wandered around trying to find Admitting. The hospital was under construction and no one seemed to know where we were supposed to be. There was a sign in Admitting instructing us to go to Outpatient Registration. We went there and the women sent us back to Admitting. There was still no one there, so we returned to Outpatient Registration. The woman tried to send us back again, so we asked the people at the information desk. They told us to go back to Outpatient Registration. We walked up to a different desk this time. "Are you in labor?" the woman asked me. "No. I need to have it induced." My voice was barely a whisper. She asked what the problem was and I choked out, "Fetal demise." She called Labor and Delivery after I explained they were expecting me. She asked about my Social Security number. Did I have my dad's insurance card? Did I want a

phone? Did I want a TV? I didn't care. All I wanted was for my babies to be okay. Finally a young woman arrived with a wheelchair to take me up.

I was put in the first labor room at 5:30. I went into the little bathroom to change into a gown. I looked at my enlarged belly in the mirror. I touched my soft skin and cried. My face was so pale and drained. I begged God in hushed tones not to leave me. I was so scared! I collected the urine specimen the nurse asked for and washed my hands, the whole time feeling detached, like it was a dream.

I went out and sat on the bed. A nurse came in and asked me a lot of questions about how many pregnancies I'd had, if I drank or smoked, when I last ate, etc. I had to sign papers to have the labor induced, to give permission for a D & C if necessary, to have a Cesarean Section done if necessary, and to have blood work done. A technician came in and took my blood; she was followed by another nurse starting an I.V. They both had trouble finding veins; the I.V. person had to stick me twice.

Daddy, Bob, and I had about fifteen minutes to ourselves. I made a nervous joke about the DW5 in my I.V. being WD40 for white people. I thought everything I said was making sense—at least it did in my head. But because of my shock, the words coming out of my mouth were a lot more bizarre than I thought they were. I was very spacy. All my senses were heightened. The room was so bright my eyes hurt. Everything seemed so loud that I couldn't hear anything clearly except Bobby telling me it was okay. I smelled my fear as I perspired. My mouth tasted awful, a combination of fear and disgust. The room seemed so cold and all my perception was altered.

Marina came in about 6:00 pm. She helped me lie back and raised my knees. Bob and my father

stepped to the other side of the curtain. She inserted the suppository and it hurt. I felt like I was being ripped apart. Little did I know that this pain was nothing compared to what was to come. Marina told me it could take up to three suppositories six hours apart. I had to stay on my back for half an hour after it was inserted. I was already dilated to two, and I was in extreme pain immediately. Labor had begun. Because I was carrying two babies and excess water, I was experiencing "back labor." The nurse told me to tell them when I started experiencing abdominal cramping. I never did—all my pain was in my back so I thought the delivery was never going to happen.

Teresa showed up sometime while I was stuck on my back. She walked over to me and squeezed my hand to let me know she was there. Then she went to hold my father. Bobby sat by my side as I moaned. I wanted to turn to my side to relieve the horrible pressure on my back. The persevering pain I'd had in my ribs for several weeks went unnoticed as I experienced this new level of pain. I squirmed and tried to turn but I had to stay on my back. I crossed my arms and squeezed my shoulders, trying to release the tension. Nothing eased the pain. "I don't want to do this. I just want to go home. Can I go home now? Bobby, can I go home? Please?!" I cried.

I was finally able to turn to my side, but half way through turning I had to stop. I gasped as the pain intensified and shot up and down my spine. Teresa asked me if I wanted something for the pain. I nodded tearfully. The nurse shot something through the I.V. My arm burned and I became extremely light headed and nauseous. The medication helped tremendously. I could still feel the pain, but it wasn't the same. I don't know how long that was. I was kind of semi-conscious. I was

pretty delirious. Everything I did and thought seemed fine to me but when I tried to speak, the things I said made no sense. I slept for a little while, maybe half an hour. Teresa went to see her husband in the waiting room to let him know how I was doing.

A little while later, the intense waves of pain returned. The nurse injected new pain killers through the I.V. which speeded everything up. The next thing I knew Marina was checking me and it was pretty much time. Teresa returned and stood to my left holding my daddy. Bobby sat right beside me, love and concern radiating out of his loving blue eyes. He tried to hold my hand but I refused. I was gripping the sides of the bed so tightly I thought I'd break his hand if I held it, and I didn't want to cause him any more pain.

Marina reached in and broke the first water bag. Her hand stretched my skin and it hurt. There were about two drops of water. No one needed to tell me when to push; I just knew. Mother's instinct? At 8:45 pm my first born son, Joey, entered this world without a sound from his tiny perfect lips. He was placed in a soft, fresh baby blanket and taken from the room.

Marina broke the second water bag and I had more pain as her hand repeated the process. This time a tidal wave roared out of my body. My whole abdomen flattened as wave after wave of uterine fluid escaped my body. The look of nine months pregnant to not pregnant in ten seconds flat. The nurse's feet were soaked, Marina's feet were soaked, and the whole floor up to where Bob was sitting was soaked. I was lying in a puddle. The nurse used two blankets to mop up the floor. I was embarrassed and I apologized for making such a mess and being such a bother. Marina just looked at me with compassion. She squeezed my knee and

said everything was okay.

I could feel the other one coming but Marina was trying to get some dry sheets under my leg. The second baby got to the opening and kind of got stuck. It seemed like forever before Marina was able to help me ease him out. At 8:56 pm, my second son, Tommy, was born. He was slightly larger than Joey, but just as silent. He, too, was taken from the room in a fresh baby blanket.

More problems were to plague me, however. We couldn't get the placenta out. I tried pushing, they tried pulling. Nothing! Marina was about to prep me for a D & C when a resident who specializes in cases like that was found. It took him a long time and it really hurt. The placenta had not separated from my uterine wall and he had to get it out in as few pieces as possible. This time I did hold Bob's hand. Later he would tease me about having hurt his hand, I squeezed so hard.

Finally around 10:00 pm, everything came out and all the afterbirth was taken away in a stainless steel bowl. The nurse changed the sheets around me and I was told I had to stay in the room for one hour. I was brought cards with the delivery times, weights, and footprints of each baby. Joey weighed nine ounces and Tommy weighed thirteen. Marina asked if I wanted to see the babies, and I did. Bob went out to see our friends, Jim and Wendy. He wasn't ready to see the twins.

The babies were brought to me in tiny wicker baskets lined in white flannel with little yellow rosebuds. They were so perfect. Beautiful, soft little boys. Perfect. Daddy saw. Teresa saw. "They are beautiful," Marina whispered. Their tiny bodies snuggled in yellow, knitted blankets. I touched their soft, pink skin. It was so smooth. Their fingernails and toenails were so tiny and perfect. I saw the ink on the bottoms of their feet from the

footprints. It was so precious. Both of them lay with their heads turned and their hands curled like any slumbering newborn. It was so hard to believe they weren't just sleeping.

I was still in shock when Bob came back and asked if I wanted to see Wendy. I told him it was okay, but neither Wendy nor I knew what to say. She didn't stay long, and I was relieved. Bob stayed right by my side, leaving only to tell his work he would not be in on Sunday; he had to take care of me.

I went to the bathroom at 11:00 pm. There was a lot of blood and I was shaking all over. My blood pressure had been extremely high this whole time, reaching 133 at one point (its normally 90 something). I was taken up to room 414. I had no roommate and got to pick my bed. I chose the one next to the window. I didn't move much at all; I was still incredibly shaky. I stayed up until about 1:00 am talking to Daddy and Teresa, but I don't have any idea what we talked about. I know I was falling asleep when they left. I also remember my vitals being checked very often. I asked what they were and what time it was, but I never remembered.

At one point in the night I got up to go to the bathroom and I was shaking really badly again. My blood pressure was back up to 130. I kept shaking even when I crawled back into bed. Bobby tucked me in and held me. It was awful.

Another time a little later I got up to go to the bathroom and I had to change my sanitary pad. I didn't know how because it was the belt kind and all the nurses had just changed it for me without showing me what to do. This night nurse wouldn't explain it to me and acted like I was a bother when I asked her how to do it. She finally just gave me a special pair of panties to be used with the pads.

I slept some more on and off—the first hour had seemed like four, but the rest each seemed like five minutes. At 5:30am some guy named Dennis came in to get my blood. I still got my vitals checked at 6:30 am by that night nurse. The day nurse, Eileen, came in around 8:00 am. She was very patient and understanding. My bed was a mess of blood. She provided me with fresh pads, a clean gown, and a new panty thing. I went to the bathroom while she changed the bed.

While I was changing my gown, my breasts leaked colostrum. This upset me very much. It was another painful reminder of what was going on. My heart was broken. I was empty. I climbed slowly back into bed, tears silently streaming down my cheeks. Bobby held me and stroked my hair. "It's okay. I love you," he tried to reassure me. Little did he know this was to be our main conversation for the next several months.

Breakfast came around 9:15 am. Burned wheat toast, 2% milk, slimy eggs, and black bacon. I didn't touch it.

Marina came in a little while later. She nearly cried as she assured me again that it was a fluke thing, happening only to a small number of people. I could see how much she cared for me. She told me I could go home as soon as the nurse took my I.V. out and my daddy arrived to drive us home.

When she left, I cried. Bob called my dad and I called my friend Cindy. I figured I paid for the phone; I might as well use it. Cindy said if I needed anything she'd be there for me. Bobby watched a little TV and I read a pamphlet about grieving and stillbirth. My book remained unopened.

After the nurse finally removed my I.V., Daddy and Teresa arrived. Bobby helped them bustle about gathering my things while I changed (my maternity pants were so loose I cried again). I

got to keep the baskets in which the twins were brought to me and the blankets the nurse wrapped them in when she took them from the room.

I was taken down to our van in a wheelchair, about to start a new life. I was a different person. This Angel was much older—much more knowing of life's hardships. Never would I be the carefree teenager I once was. Now people would see my young face and be fooled—never expecting someone of such a tender age to know such pain. And I do know pain. I never thought one day could make such a difference! But it did. The most precious things in my life were taken from me. Never will I get them back. Never will I be the same.

Evaluation: *Here is a powerful true story told with good, sharp words. Ms. Sanden draws her audience close with intimate details.*

Pick-Off

by George Simikowski
Course: English 101
Instructor: Peter Sherer

Assignment: Write an extended definition in which you teach a general audience about a term which refers to a movement or behavior. Develop your essay by way of a variety of definition patterns.

The phrase "picked-off" has been penned by many Hollywood script writers over the years. Old Western movies are full of incidents in which a group of homesteaders or cavalry regiments are picked off by the Indians as they travel the plains. But when it's used in baseball jargon, the term means to be caught off base, which is usually the result of a quick, perfectly-timed throw from the pitcher.

Perfecting a pick-off motion is advantageous to a pitcher because it can get him out of trouble just as fast as he got himself into it. There are many regulations a pitcher must remember to adhere to when attempting a pick-off play. The right-handed pitcher must have his pivot or right foot in contact with and parallel to the pitching rubber. The left foot, while also parallel with the right, must remain in front of it. After receiving the signal from the catcher, he closes his stance by bringing his non-pivot foot in closer to the right. He brings both hands together, coming to a complete stop. This is called the set position. It is from this stance that he can deliver the baseball to home plate, or try to pick-off an opposing baserunner.

The most difficult pick-off move for a right-handed pitcher is to first base. After he comes to a complete stop, he has to rely on his peripheral vision because he cannot move his head to physically look at the size of lead the baserunner has. If he decides to attempt to pick-off the runner, he must be sure to first take his pivot foot off the rubber and jump turn to step with the non-pivot foot to the base. The footwork must be completed before the pitcher can separate his hands to throw to the first baseman. And if that's not enough, the throw should be to the inside of the base so that there is no wasted motion by the first baseman. He simply catches the ball and applies the tag. If the

pitcher practices this move enough, he should be able to hit a spot the size of a tea cup. If he practices with vigor, he should resemble a snake uncoiling at its target.

A pick-off move to second base relies on deception. Here the pitcher has one advantage. He can move his head freely back and forth. Looking at the baserunner allows the pitcher to set him up for a specific timing play. If the batter at the plate is a left-handed hitter, the shortstop is used in the pick-off attempt. Once he is in the set position, he looks at the baserunner's lead off second. The shortstop begins to jockey around behind the base, feigning a throw from the pitcher. Once the pitcher and shortstop have direct eye contact, the pitcher turns and looks back to home plate, and the shortstop, moving slowly back to his original position, pretends to ignore the baserunner. From the moment the pitcher looks towards home, both he and the shortstop are counting. The shortstop counts to three and breaks for second base. The pitcher, to the count of four, continuing the deception, allows the shortstop ample time to position himself for the throw. The pitcher, once again, pivots his foot off the pitching rubber and jump turns with his left foot aiming towards second base. The throw should be delivered to the third base side of second base and only a few inches off the base. This allows the shortstop to catch the ball and apply the tag in one quick motion.

A pick-off move to third base for a right-handed pitcher is virtually non-existent because he is always directly facing the runner. If he does attempt to pick-off the runner, the pitcher has to be in the set position, and stride with his left foot to an imaginary line in between home and third base. The ball should be delivered to the outside of the base to allow the third baseman an easy tag.

Although the pick-off move is not a glamorous part of baseball lore, it still brings the crowd to their feet when performed correctly. Perfecting the pick-off attempt helps the average major league baseball team win an extra two games per year. It could mean getting into the playoffs for an above average team.

Evaluation: George plays the teacher's role well. His speaker defines a baseball term that many of us likely know far less about than we think we do. The essay is interesting, compelling. The reader is privy to a real pitcher's thinking.

My Philosophy of Early Childhood Education

by *Nasreen Tahir*
Course: Introduction to
Child Development
Instructor: Meenakshi Mohan

Assignment: In this course, the students received a kaleidoscopic view of different philosophies of education from those of Socrates and Plato to more modern ones like those of Piaget and Dewey. They learned how some of those ideas shape the modern trend of Early Childhood Education. As a part of their final assignment, the students were asked to write their own philosophy of education. This involved extracting the essence of different philosophies and forming their own ideas and views.

My philosophy of Early Childhood Education is based on the philosophy of Maria Montessori, who is considered one of the world's outstanding educators and psychologists. The essence of Montessori philosophy is that every child has an innate potential to construct his or her personality in the physical, social and intellectual realms. She believed that in order to develop this potential, the child has to have freedom. Thus, my philosophy would incorporate this freedom in a prepared environment that does not hinder or force but rather supports an individual child's unique development at his or her own speed and capacity. My philosophy is a personalized approach in which each child is respected as an individual. The child is not treated as a miniature adult. Another important feature of Montessori philosophy that is appealing is that it is child-centered rather than teacher-centered. The child educates himself in the prepared environment that provides the appropriate material and activities. Montessori's philosophy is based on the concept that the most important years of learning, or the sensitive period, is from birth through age six. An important aspect of my philosophy is this period of intellectual growth.

Evaluation: Nasreen's view of the "sensitive period" is also in keeping with Plato's idea that in every task the most important thing is the beginning. She has very well extracted Montessori's views of child-centered education and weaved them through her own philosophy of education.

Ginsberg 101: An Informal Introduction

by Robert J. Wilshe
Course: Literature 105
Instructor: Annie Davidovicz

Assignment: Write a literary analysis that explores the elements of poetry. Avoid trying to sound like a stodgy old graduate student. Write with a natural voice that allows for a more personal or creative introduction.

As I'm sure many college poetry students will admit, reading and understanding modern poetry can often be a terrifying experience. If we look at poets like Sylvia Plath, we are distanced, but mystified by her somber, depressing tone. Sharon Olds' language can sometimes offend even the most callous-tongued reader. When confronting astounding imagery, Robert Bly may leave our poetic imagination lost in the "dragon smoke." Yet among these great writers, there is Allen Ginsberg, who for decades has appalled readers with his blatant sexual content, heedless use of abstract images and poetic vehicles, and has still captured and inspired many anxious readers. Why? Because there is something about him that, I feel, sets him above others; loyal readers carry him on their shoulders like a cherished teammate. There are still those, however, who do not see his work clearly, reading him with preconceived notions and misunderstanding. It should be made clear that Allen Ginsberg has made a significant contribution to American poetry, and with a little patience, desire, and a liberal, open mind, anyone from the novice to the fervent poetry disciple can read, understand, and learn from who Bob Dylan said was the "single greatest influence on American poetical voice since Whitman."

Much of the power that is contained in Ginsberg's work was created using his powerful insight into human nature. His poems can illustrate the most mundane, dull, episodes of life in vibrant, breathing color. Consider the poem, "Surprise Mind:"

How lucky we are to have windows!

Glass is transparent!

I saw that boy in red bathingsuit

walk down the street.

In four lines the poet has captured the sheer power vested in vision. The event described might have been witnessed by the reader in his/her own life, and the reader would probably pay it no attention. But Ginsberg forces us to recognize our eyes, our "windows," and we are then captured by awe. Although the scene has homosexual connotations, anyone can learn that we do take our senses for granted, allowing the simple pleasure of daily life to blow past us, vanishing perhaps forever. This urgency to use our senses is present in many of his poems, serving as a base from which the spirit and verve in his poetry emanates.

The poem, "America," was written in 1956 while Ginsberg was writing and living in Berkeley, California and stands as one of his best political poems. The persona, presumably Ginsberg, is heard denouncing all of the world's ills of the day. The opening lines picture the speaker saying what could be his last words to society:

America I've given you all and now I'm nothing.
 America two dollars and twentyseven cents January 17, 1956.
 I can't stand my own mind.
 America when will we end the human war?

Besides portraying the speaker in dire straits and loneliness, those opening lines establish a tone of denunciation and honest confusion.

Your machinery is too much for me.
 You made me want to be a saint.
 There must be some other way to settle this argument.

These three lines, still early in the poem, show the persona complaining about the ever-present

System. The "argument" is also classic: the old versus the new; liberalism versus conservatism; free expression versus censorship... The list is exhaustive, and the poem's beginning tone complements the roll of problems that follow.

The other powerful element besides tone in this poem is Ginsberg's use of concrete imagery in abstract applications. Particularly, the speaker often identifies with actual objects or persons:

America free Tom Mooney
 America save the Spanish Loyalists
 America Sacco & Vanzetti must not die
 America I am the Scottsboro boys.

The four separate groups or persons above were all persecuted for either doing something they felt was right or for supposedly breaking the law. Particular attention should be paid to the Scottsboro boys since the speaker directly associates himself with them. The issue involved whether or not a group of nine black youths raped two white girls. Luckily, the case resulted in reversed death sentences. What is important here is that Ginsberg identifies with the victimized groups or persons and uses their image to demonstrate the whirlwind of uncontrollable events that affect the speaker, indirectly or directly. Therefore, the reader senses all the moral/intellectual confusion that develops inside the speaker. As a result, the poem conveys how innocent people, who may be radical in a healthy way, are consumed by the System and are unfortunately repressed.

Another poem that exhibits Ginsberg's mastery of imagery is the short poem "Those Two":

That tree said

I don't like that white car under me,

it smells gasoline

That other tree next to is said

O you're always complaining

you're a neurotic

you can see by the way you're bent over.

The title, "Those Two," may very well make reference to two ways of interpreting this poem. For the first way, let's assume the first tree is the voice of Ginsberg's persona, and the second is society at large (notice that Ginsberg often places himself or his speaker in a position contrary to society or the norm). The first tree is sensitive to something it sees as an eye sore (or nose sore for that matter) and expresses its disapproval of it. In a larger context, Ginsberg is noticing what he feels is wrong with society, namely industry and pollution, evidenced by the car and gasoline smell. The other tree symbolizes the public at large. Ginsberg writes words like "always complaining" and "neurotic" to indicate how society labels people with different ideas or visions. The first tree is seen "bent over." The reader could infer that bent over suggests a line of thought or a path of life that is unlike the most commonly accepted conventions of living. This ignores, however, the first tree's right to voice its opinion and to express its individuality, both which are concerns of Ginsberg's. If we reverse the roles, we see the first tree as society and the second as Ginsberg's persona and ideology. Society, in this role, may not be rejecting ugliness, but rather is resisting Ginsberg's thoughts. Ginsberg's persona responds this time by stating

how the world is "neurotic" and possibly "bent" out of shape. Either way, Ginsberg crafts his lines to support his ideas and to denounce traditional society. This denouncement of the commonplace is a standard theme in Ginsberg, especially when discussing homosexuality.

"Old Love Story" is a lengthy poem which can be considered Ginsberg's manifesto of gay rights. The poem earns its own special place among his others primarily for two reasons. First, the poem follows a distinct rhyme and metrical scheme, which is fairly uncommon in his work. Second, Ginsberg uses numerous concrete events from history to bolster his claims. These two characteristics afford "Old Love Story" a status comparable to a classic, time-worn poem.

After the first lines establish a setting of general societal discontent of homosexuality, Ginsberg asks us to "think back to the time our epic world was new," proposing a world free of judgements and biases. The lines that follow remind the reader of historical times when the world accepted homosexuality and revered the nude male figure. Examples date as early as the Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh, he being paired with Enkidu; David and Jonathan are mentioned; Greek mythology is supplied to enlist Zeus and Ganymede; the classical intellectuals like Socrates and Plato are used to elevate homosexuality to a scholarly plane; and even Michelangelo's David, whom the Western world regards as the embodiment of artistic and human perfection, is referred to. All these help to banish the idea that being gay is new or wrong. Ginsberg's argument is clear: something like homosexuality did not discredit the highly regarded icons of Western civilization, so why should it be seen as a moral or actual threat to society? The last two lines summarize the poet's concern: "I

want people to understand! They can! They can! They can!/So open your ears and hear the voice of the classical Band.

In the poem, "Many Loves," Ginsberg boldly forwards and actualizes his feeling on homosexuality stated above, but on a personal level. The two central figures in the poem are Ginsberg himself and Neal Cassady. We know Ginsberg isn't substituting a persona here because he was an integral part of the literary period, the Beat Movement. Among him were Cassidy, Jack Kerouac, and William Burroughs, all of whom he collaborated with. Cassady is significant here, though. Here's why: "Neal Cassady was my animal: he brought me to my knees/and taught me the love of his cock and the secrets of his mind..." With respect to the poem's plot, the two were brought together on a cot one night "after a long evening.¶ The first quarter of the poem that follows tells us of how he idolized Neal, and Ginsberg is seen remembering many homoerotic images of him. The narrative continues in this fashion and then begins to focus on the sexual act itself. What is read here really amounts to heavy foreplay; the actual sex act is extremely condensed, placed within the last seventeen lines of the poem. We are left to read that Ginsberg is lying "...naked in the dark, dreaming[.]"

There are several facets here that point to Ginsberg's love being unsatisfied and that suggest a sense of hopeless longing for more. First, the majority of the narrative only focuses on what he remembers long ago and on the innocent fondling and love play that transpired. Second, we read that this act was an error on Ginsberg's part, which still taunts and teases him: "But I made my first mistake, and made him then and there my master..." Once is never enough, he suggests, and he reminds

us of the consequences of a one night fling. Third, readers may also infer that the longing is eternal due to a grammatical technique: Ginsberg leaves off the closing period in the last line to show a trailing stream of consciousness. Lastly, just the word "dreaming" conjures up meanings of its own to reinforce this. Still if the poem's theme and presentation are not enough to be convincing, Neal Cassady eventually married, and thus it is clear that Ginsberg is still wishing for the old days.

Ginsberg was interested in more than just politics and homosexuality. His poems also bridge over to topics like aging and inter-generational differences. The brief poem, "Maturity," is one of these:

Young I drank beer & vomited green bile

Older drank wine vomited blood red

Now I vomit air

There is a definite chronological order here corresponding to three phases of the speaker's life. Also, there is an engaging use of color symbolism. In the first line, we see the young speaker in his prime. Most college students are painfully familiar with having too much to drink and later being sorry; that sentiment is picked up in the first line. The vomit suggests throwing off our mistakes and attempting to go onward. The green color signifies a green light, a forward motion. His life is still viable, and he may still make the best of himself without too much worry about the future. In the second line, he drinks wine, a symbol of taste, intelligence and sophistication. Here the vomit is "blood red." The red symbolizes a slowing, perhaps stopping, motion. However, the event has more impact this time because he is losing blood,

his life force. Along with that, his concern about aging is escalated. He is in the middle of his life (middle of the poem), so life decisions are magnified and more important. In the third line, he and the poem virtually capitulate. His days of partying are over, and there is no reference to color in this line. The colorless air portrays an emptiness in his life, a bland existence. He takes nothing in anymore and can only release what is left of him: empty breath. Although quite bleak, this last line suggests a fear of death and of the unknown, both being genuine human emotions not only reserved to Ginsberg.

The last poem, "Prophecy", has a pleasing sense of closure to it, so it will be the last considered:

As I'm no longer young in life
and there seem to me not
so many pleasures to look forward to
How fortunate to be free
to write of cars and wars, truths of eras,
throw away old useless
ties and pants that don't fit.

This autobiographical poem was written on January 9, 1985; Ginsberg has been writing since the spring of 1947. As the first line indicates, yes, he is up there in his years! But this isn't detrimental by any means. He may be repressing himself by holding a narrow outlook on his future (lines two and three), but at least he has his memory. Ginsberg seems to desire a sort of "retirement" at this time, a phase in his life where he could devote time to writing down his experiences and

thoughts. Though by 1985, he is established as a poetical figure internationally and has a lifetime of experience to draw upon. Now he is free, as the poem implies, to write without the demands of having to establish himself, working only to produce another revolution of poetic thought.

We readers and students of poetry can learn from this. Allen Ginsberg has taught us through his poems how to see, how to experience things, and to question institutions which seem limiting or wrong to us. Consistent with what the poem suggests, we should never be idle. We should constantly be in tune with our past, future, and with what surrounds us, writing about it, reacting to it, and changing it if we feel it's necessary. Our minds and senses are our inspiration to better our lives, and we should strive to do that, or, at the very least, learn vicariously by reading Ginsberg.

Class dismissed!

Evaluation: Bob's analysis is both inviting and intelligent. Though his essay spits out some tough academic thinking, his style and wit have not been sacrificed. This guy makes analyzing poetry sound like fun!

Profile: Bobbin Lace Making

by Georgina Winslow

Course: English 101

Instructor: Mary Kay Hobbs

Assignment: *Write an essay about an intriguing person, place, activity, or hobby, using the basic features of profile writing to guide your essay.*

The smuggling of contraband and the exploitation of small children are not activities we associate today with the gentle and patient art of lace-making.

I was given the opportunity to learn more about this craft from my niece who visited us recently. Heather has been making lace for three years, since she was 11 years old; but what she might lack in years, she makes up for in enthusiasm and love for her craft.

Bobbin lace is the most common lace found today. The skill dates back to 16th Century Europe although authorities dispute whether it first sprang up in Italy or in Flanders. Whatever its place of origin, the skill spread rapidly throughout Europe. Men who were unable to labor physically, as well as women and children, worked as lace makers and their product would be sold to the rich to be worn as collars, cuffs and headpieces.

Heather's first task was to make some more bobbins to add to the collection she already had. She stood at the workbench, slowly turning the slender, four-inch-long wooden dowel on a hobby lathe, routing out a shallow indent near the head of the dowel, around which the thread would be wound. The bobbins themselves are as much an art form as the tiny, delicate webs which they produce. Made usually of wood, but also of bone, many are collector's items, painted with brightly colored designs and intricate carvings. No two are identical. Some even sport candid messages such as "Marry Me...Quick," which lead us to wonder what history's demure and diligent lace makers did in their spare time. At the bottom of the dowel, a tiny hole is drilled and a 3-inch strand of very thin wire threaded through, and any combination of colorful "spangles", beads, colored glass, or small marbles threaded onto the wire and secured in a

loop. Their purpose is to lend equal weight to all the bobbins and the result is a collection of individual and gaily decorated instruments.

The bobbins will be worked in pairs. By hand, Heather swiftly winds some of the thread onto one bobbin, reels out yards more, snips it and then winds the other end onto a second bobbin, leaving a connecting strand of about 10 inches for the weaving.

The next step is to decide on a pattern. Seated together at the kitchen table, we pore over some beautifully illustrated books on lace and finally agree on the piece she will work on: a scalloped edge for a four-inch linen doily. Beside a photograph of the finished piece, a pattern consisting of masses of tiny dots is provided. Using tracing paper, carefully taped to the page to prevent slipping, Heather painstakingly traces the intricate pattern of dots. Ten minutes later she places the tracing paper on top of a six-inch square piece of specially waxed cardboard paper and, taking a "pricker" instrument dipped in beeswax for a cleaner hole, punctures the traced holes onto the cardboard.

As she is working, she tells me more about the history of bobbin lace making, pausing now and again to examine her work. It seems that during the 18th Century lace imported from Europe threatened English lace makers, whose own product was inferior to that found on the Continent. In an attempt to stop the country from being swamped by foreign competitors, the import of European lace was prohibited. It seems, however, that lace continued to find its way into the country but in unusual ways: baked into loaves of bread or tucked into infants' swaddling clothes. Apparently it was worth the risk: documents exist to show that on one day a certain gentleman paid £7 for a new

horse, £6 for half a year's wages for one of his servants, and £8 for some lace for his wife.

The bobbins and the pattern now prepared, Heather is ready to start on her lace. She sits upright in a wing armchair, the morning light from a nearby window streaming in. Her "mushroom," the lace maker's pillow, rests firmly on her lap, with the pattern pinned to the centre. The "mushroom" is so called because it resembles the domed part of a mushroom. Very hard to the touch, the pillow is tightly stuffed with sawdust and must be covered in a plain, dark material so that the white lace may more easily be seen. Even the type of material is important: no fabric that attracts fluff or dust which might become woven into the lace can be used.

Any number of bobbins from 14 to 1,000 can be used to create a piece of lace. Twenty-four are to be used today. The "anchor" is the first of many brass pins to be inserted into the pattern, the 10-inch thread draped around the pin with the two attached bobbins lying vertically together on the mushroom. Another pin is inserted into the waxed cardboard and another pair of bobbins draped, and then three more times this is repeated. Pins in her mouth, eyes intent on the pattern, Heather deftly takes a pair of decorative bobbins in her fingers and, hesitatingly at first, she begins to weave and twist and braid them deliberately and slowly. She removes a pin from her mouth, leans further forward to check its placement, pauses for a moment, and then continues, more confidently now, to cross and plait the delicate threads. It is a restful pastime, the faint click of beads and wood the only sound. Her eyes never leave the ever-increasing bristle of pins. By now all twenty-four bobbins are employed, some flying in her fingers, other resting on the mushroom awaiting their turn. She is deep

in concentration and unhesitating in her task. The bristle of pins is becoming a forest, with the twenty-four threads radiating out and down the side of the mushroom; now and again she removes one pin and re-inserts it to continue the pattern. I peer over and examine the result thus far: after 20 minutes a tiny and exquisite fan-shaped filigree is taking shape between the throng of pins. It is still only the size of a thumbnail.

But now Heather is more familiar with the pattern and can talk without having to pay exclusive attention to her tiny web of work. In France, Aleçon was the center of that country's lace-making industry, and schools devoted to teaching the art sprang up to which little girls as young as five years old would be sent. Conditions would not have been pleasant. Since the fine thread used reacted badly to dry air, the children worked in damp, often dark areas, such as above a cowshed. The heat from the cows would keep them warm, and the moisture would provide optimum conditions for the lace. Sometimes candles would be fitted with special glass globes that would cast the light directly onto the lace. None of the food in the establishment could be fried for fear of the grease finding its way onto the lace, so it was all boiled.

Happily we are able to offer Heather better conditions for the pursuit of her task. By now she is so familiar with her pattern that her darting hands move swiftly, swapping, exchanging, turning and twisting the bobbins with no system that I am able to discern. Now and again she pauses, moves a handful of bobbins to the side of the mushroom and anchors them away from the work, with dividing pins which are just like decorative hat pins. Ten minutes later there are two fan-shaped scallops evident on the mushroom, the delicate fili-

gree curving and unfolding as slowly as a tender shoot of spring.

Heather works diligently and patiently on her beautiful and intricate lace. This piece requires six hours of work to complete, and the finished product is an exquisite, curved border of lace.

In a world which is taken up with "big" and "fast," bobbin lace-making is a dying art. Today there are approximately 1,000 lacemakers left in the U.S. What they lack in numbers, however, they make up for in enthusiasm and devotion to their highly specialized craft. Lace-making pamphlets, magazines, clubs and specialty stores testify to the small numbers of people who are still prepared to devote many hours to keeping alive this lovely tradition by their tiny, beautiful and lasting creations.

Evaluation: Georgina has a marvelous sense of the worth of steady detailed description using specific, concrete language. She is able, in this essay, to integrate historical narration, a technological process and sense of art through the recounting of an unusual present-day "hobby."

My First Pair of Shoes

by David Y. Wue

Course: English as a Second Language
Instructor: Brenda S. Belanger

Assignment: *After reading "The Surprise" by Russell Baker to my class, I asked the students to also write about an item that they had always wanted as children. Did they receive the item; if so, how did it affect their lives, and what significance does it have now?*

My first pair of shoes was nothing but a generic rubber product without shoelaces. By today's living standard, it would be a very plain, inexpensive, unattractive, and unwanted pair of shoes. However, there was a special story about it fifty years ago, and sometimes the story still vividly floats in my memory.

It was a time of war and economic depression. Dressing grade school children in ragged clothes with bare feet in the classroom was acceptable as a standard dress-code for all seasons. I had to walk more than a mile to school with neighborhood children every school day. The roads were long, gravel-paved, and muddy. Sometimes the road surface was full of earth worms creeping over it. In winter, the road was cold and, occasionally, covered with frost. I prayed while walking, "How wonderful it would be if I had a pair of shoes to wear!"

Among us there were two children from rich families who had nice clothes to keep their bodies warm and shoes to protect their feet from dirt. Yet they were not as easily accepted among the poor children. Because they were constantly embarrassed and harassed by those who were from poor families, most of the time the rich children felt lonely. I did not wish to be an isolated rich child in my class, but I still dreamt that one day I would have a pair of shoes to wear.

On a Friday morning in September, the teacher brought in a dozen pairs of shoes to the classroom. They were made of rubber and provided free for the poor pupils by the county government. She announced, "I have to use a lottery pool to award the shoes." Excluding two rich children who did not care to have a pair, there were sixty pupils in the classroom. I was one of the lucky ones. I shouted after I learned of my winning ticket,

"Wow! I won, I won."

That was an exciting day in my childhood. When I got home, I raised my two hands, each holding a shoe, and cried to my mother and father, "Look! I have a pair of shoes." The shoes appeared a little loose, but my mother confidently asserted her economical point of view, "You're a smart boy to choose the larger shoes. You're still growing and they will be usable for many years." The next day, I put them on my feet and visited everyone I knew, just to show off my first pair of new shoes.

That following Sunday, I wore them to the park where there was a little pond in which I always played with my friends. Although the shoes were waterproof, I still wanted to take off the shoes before walking into the pond. So I laid them carefully against a huge tree and spent my luxurious afternoon in the water.

After that exciting afternoon, I completely forgot my valuable property lying nearby, and I walked home as usual without shoes. Moments after waking up from my daze, I instinctively rushed back to where they were left, just to find that the shoes were gone forever. While staring at the empty spot, I kept telling myself that this was only a bad dream.

The next day, I returned to school with a mixture of joy and sorrow. I had lost my first shoes, yet I had enjoyed two days of having them. I envied those poor children who had shoes and sympathized with those who did not have some. When I played with my old poor friends who did not have shoes to wear, I felt more habitually comfortable and normal since I no longer was wearing a pair of shoes.

The gain of my first pair of shoes dramatically changed my life style as if I were a prince, being carried by them, wandering and dancing through a

fantasy land for two days; and the loss of them miraculously returned me to my old practical world as if I were awakened from a sweet dream. As I look back to my childhood life, many gifts from all sources have been quickly forgotten; but the story about this first pair of shoes always tickles my memory every time I long for a pair of new shoes.

Evaluation: Mr. Wu, a graphic artist by profession, skillfully paints a vivid picture of a bittersweet childhood memory. His essay is imbued with warmth, rich imagery, and descriptive detail. This is Mr. Wu's first writing class; he is writing in his second language.

"Do Animals Have Language?"

by Patricia Zaradic
Course: Linguistics 105
Instructor: Carrie Dobbs

Assignment: In Linguistics 105 students are required to write reaction papers in response to various presentations. This one was written after the student viewed tapes concerning efforts to teach animals a human language.

"Wadsworth, do animals have language?"

"Mrreow."

What may seem like an enigmatic response to you speaks volumes to me. But then you may have missed the tail flick, the leap up to my writing desk, and the final curl up into a comfy ball directly atop my homework.

Wadsworth, my cat, is trying to tell me that he's missed me, that I spend altogether too much time doing homework, and that I should spend more quality time scratching his chin. Not too subtle, but did he answer my question?

I don't know if any other species will ever be able to converse with humankind on our terms, using our words and concepts. Certainly not if we narrow our definition of language such that the only acceptable response is a college thesis. I believe Koko and the other primates we saw in the videos have already demonstrated the most basic of language abilities with their use of sign language and, given the opportunity, would be able to answer that question for you themselves. However, beyond that, I think we are going to have to take a close look at our definition of language.

Like Wadsworth, I often communicate as much through my tone and body language as I do with the words I speak. The language of gorillas, dolphins, or cats for that matter may be just as expressive and expansive as our own, but in each case the mode of expression is unique, based on the species' own frame of reference. If we truly want to find a way to "talk with the animals," we are going to have to look beyond our human prejudices and to that particular creature's point of view. Only then, having a greater understanding of the forces and concepts that shape their world view, will we have a framework in which to explore more abstract

thoughts and ideas. Louis Herman's work with dolphins at the University of Hawaii and the focus of more recent avian and primate research seems to be making great strides in that direction.

For all we know, "Do animals have a language?" may have its own controversial counterpart in the aquatic world of dolphins... "Can human beings swim?"

Evaluation: *Patti has succinctly and articulately summed up the problem of deciding whether or not animals have language.*

What Is Good Writing? The Anthology Judges Give Their Standards

Dennis Brennen

Good writing makes me want to read on, to find out what the writer will say next. Sometimes the ideas draw me on, sometimes the style. When I'm really lucky, the writer ropes me with both.

Annie Davidovicz

In my opinion, good writing is tight writing. Every word chosen by the author enhances the work in some way. I like to get the feeling that the writer cares about his/her writing—that there is an intimate relationship between the composer and the composed. A writing voice humming with confidence and genuineness always catches my eye. I like a voice that tempts me to read further. Depending on the type of the assignment, vivid, fresh detail and/or accurate reasoning are two more of my preferences. Ultimately, good writing accomplishes the writer's goal.

Jack Dodds

Whenever I read I look for details, details, details appropriate to the writer's purpose or the occasion: descriptive details, fresh facts or figures, supporting instances, insightful observation or explanation. Good writing is dense with information. Good writing is also alive with voices: the writer's voice (persona), dialogue, quotation, and allusion. Good writing always talks to me.

Barbara Hickey

In Mark Twain's words,
"Eschew surplusage."

Judy S. Kaplow

For me, good writing is composed of four interwoven threads: the writer's voice, the writer's sense of the reader, the language, and the idea. The "voice" gives the sense that there is a human being behind the words; the words—otherwise disembodied verbal protoplasm—acquire life, weight, and identity. The writer should recognize the presence of a listener and partner who can imagine, question, wonder, and think. The language should be clear and graceful, exploiting our language's capacity for precision, its sounds and rhythms, and its emotional and image-making power. But it's the idea that must be at the center, and that idea must be alive and important. It should crack open our old ways of looking at things, both whisper and shout. Surprise me.

Barbara Njus

In an authentic VOICE, using effective and figurative language, to an established purpose and audience, from a clearly organized THESIS, GOOD WRITERS DEVELOP IDEAS in a coherent, concise, unified essay using SPECIFIC evidence from readings and from personal experience to analyze opposing positions about topics having STRONG SIGNIFICANCE for that writer, that may involve the writer in taking RISKS and that the writer will resolve and evaluate from a CONSISTENT point of view.

Peter Sherer

Writing that focuses and boldly goes where it promises to go alerts and engages me. I like writing that is intelligent, consistent in its logic, and concrete in its detail. I like examples and I want to hear an honest voice which speaks to me in sentences which are fresh, crafted, varied, economical, and musical.

Wally Sloat

"Go Greyhound, and leave the driving to us." These words from the old tv commercial came to mind as I thought about the qualities of good writing. Like Greyhound drivers, good writers are always in charge. Their ideas and language are so clear and logical that I can relax and enjoy myself without getting lost in confusing sentence structure or disjointed thoughts. Good writing takes me on a well-planned trip with efficiency and great attention to interesting details along the way.

Molly Waite

What works for one piece of writing is not always obvious. It could be the tone, topic, style, or sentiment. A great deal has to deal with my mood or mindset at the time, in terms of how I personally react on a given day to the written work in question.

Harper Students on Writing

Nimfy Kolodziej Barry

... I see...
...I visualize...
...I write...e

It's my way to:
>Capture floating words
>Release emotion
>Be creative

Writing makes me feel good!

Jennifer Beaumont

I have to be direct. I believe my writing must be the same. If we don't get to the point then our task is fruitless.

Jeff Buczkiewicz

Writing is a reflection of ideas. It is an avenue of communication which is unique. Most forms of communication are straight forward and easy for one to interpret. Writing requires the reader to imagine or interpret what the author is attempting to communicate. An effective writer will stimulate the imagination of his readers.

Diane Caron

Writing lifts my spirits. It allows me to put emotions into words and gives a sweetness to my life.

Mary Ann Crosby-Anderson

My writing experiences have been similar to my experiences with pregnancy and childbirth—enriching and exhilarating, but slow to develop and take shape. After some pushing, pain, and worry, my ideas are "born" and take on a life of their own. I still follow them around for awhile, picking at them and preening them. Finally, I turn them loose.

Joanne Curran

When I get a strong feeling about someone or something, I need to write about it in the hopes of getting that feeling to people so they will know the truth.

For example, the bad publicity working police dogs get. I feel very strongly that people should know the dog is only as good as his human partner, that a dog is a useful tool to a trained police officer and nicer than a dog will give his life to save his partner.

Cari-Lynn Grossart

I enjoyed writing for the Anthology. It was fun to write about a topic that was different.

Joseph L. Hazelton

I still cannot believe that my essay was included in this anthology. Without the encouragement of Mrs. Fuhs, my English professor, I would never have thought to submit my paper; I viewed the piece as pedestrian at best. Consequently, I owe her my thanks for this honor. I also wish to thank the members of the Harper Anthology Selection Committee who deemed my essay worthy of inclusion. For a person whose high school writings suffered from tortured syntax and abused punctuation, the choosing of my essay marks a surprising transformation. For that transformation, I have two people to thank: Abraham Lincoln and William Manchester. From the text of Mr. Lincoln's best addresses, I discovered the power and poetry of the written word. From Mr. Manchester's work, I learned the logic and mechanics of writing that may someday allow me to achieve that power and poetry.

William C. Hillmann

From picking up my pen through the final draft, I know what I want on paper. The process of forming my thoughts into a presentable piece of writing is frustrating, time consuming, and thoroughly rewarding. I don't become discouraged because I know that in the final draft my thoughts and writing will be fluent. The written word is one of the most enduring imaginative exercises known to man and I hope to make a few contributions of my own.

Sheryl Huff

The importance of the writer disappears after the last letter has been written. Each person perceives what he reads in a unique way. When someone reads my work, I don't want him to simply see my perspective; I want him to view my perspective through his own. That's the way new ideas are formed. Those new ideas are what make writing important, and that's why the importance of writing is left to the reader.

Thom Karmik

I know I don't write right. I've read about it *ad nauseam*, I've attempted to justify it to those more learned than myself, the opinion is unanimous: I don't write right. The concept, as explained to me, is that people should have an idea about what they want to say before they start. Sounds logical, makes sense, but it doesn't work for me; if I waited until I knew what to say, pen would never touch paper. I prefer to improvise; to let junk spew forth until a cogent thought arises. I can write page after page, come out at the end in an entirely different place and with an entirely different idea; this is the point where one sentence or one word might be worth saving. While this is time-consuming and, perhaps, impractical, I find I learn a lot about what I feel and think. Also, it's a lot cheaper than a shrink.

Ann T. Jaslikowski

It was satisfying to be able to write a general overview of this very interesting subject, and I hope that people will be motivated to do further reading on this important environmental concern.

Mark Klinn

My aim is to write clearly. Writing in another language is a true challenge. When I write, I want to express my emotions, feelings.

Courtney LaBeau

F.L. Lucas once said, "Every author's fairy godmother should provide him not only with a pen, but also with a blue pencil." It's a great analogy, but, rarely do I change or edit the thoughts, feelings and emotions that have fueled out of my head and onto paper (except grammatically). I go with my primary instincts and "bulldoze" into the writing in order to express myself. "You don't write because you want to say something, you write because you've got something to say." — F. h Scott Fitzgerald.

Kathie Lange

Exploring my memory provided me with the sparks necessary to begin each of my essays. Completing them enabled me to reveal some feelings and impressions that had previously been expressed only in the hidden corners of my mind and heart. I have found writing to be a remarkably therapeutic means of expression.

Jan L. Lueker

My goal is to keep the audience interested and tempted to read further. I believe if the reader loses focus, the purpose and ideas contained in the paper are lost. Writing can be one of our best forms of self-expression, and it is extremely satisfying when the reader has learned or benefited from the expression of my ideas.

Scott Lumbard

Why write? Perhaps because it's better than trying to build a noose for a toad, and not quite so useless. Or maybe it's the illusion of self-government during the doing of it. Mostly, it's to keep from being mere in comparison to the Work. To become part of the Work? Although critics are small, they definitely have something to do with something about it.

John Mak

I like writing because I like the thrill of what my mind might create. I like to detail the intricacies of each thought. The possibilities are endless...

Dan McReynolds

I had a grammar school teacher in Georgia who said, "Y'all can't tell a story, a good story, on paper unless you write like y'all talk." So I tried it and found that it was easier to get my real thoughts in writing. Actually, it's feelings that are hard to get on paper and this method seems to help. I like the challenge of telling good stories on paper. Y'all understand?

Patricia D. O'Connell

Writing allows me to express my feelings and share my experiences with others.

Sidonie Rische

Opportunities for self expression are rare for me. I have found writing to be a wonderful and overdue outlet, not just emotionally, but creatively as well. I intend to make writing a lifelong habit.

Lisa M. Shea

I am an extrovert. Writing opens our souls to all. Power is carried in the written word. I believe that every piece of writing that I produce must be the very best. That is how we must live: always striving for perfection.

Nasreen Tahir

Upon reading books about Maria Montessori, I was intrigued and impressed by her outstanding contribution to early childhood education. All pre-schools have incorporated her method of education. As a result, children graduating from pre-schools are easily adaptable intellectually, socially and physically to the norms of formal primary education.

Bruce Whitmore
for the CompuCard™
design team

Good writing is similar to obscenity - hard to define, but you know what it is when you see it. Our team decided early on to do the best job we could while remembering one salient fact. This isn't real life, it's school! Given this imaginary, artificial environment, we were able to attempt the impossible. We tried to make advanced systems analysis *fun*.

Robert J. Wilshe

Writing's about honesty, about truth; it demands personal involvement. Whether writing a creative work or an essay, the writer appears on the page. So, what is good writing? Quite simple: be yourself! What's dishonest or wrong about that?

Georgina Winslow

Writing, like so many skills, needs to have basic principles applied if it is to be successful. When writing specific assignments I have found these rules to be useful checkpoints against which I am constantly asking myself, "Have I fulfilled the goal?" and "How can I further improve the piece?"

David Y. Wu

Writing, the utmost level of language, mirrors the proficiency of reading and speech. Fascinated by unique writing and speech through which authors deliver a powerful and passionate message to their readers, I hope to one day communicate as well.

Lightning and Lightning Bugs

by C. Jayne Wilcox

My students often ask me why their chemistry grades are determined partly by how well they write. In asking such a question, they reveal an unfortunate failure to distinguish between information and communication.

Many students have an abundance of facts swimming around in their brains. This is fine, but until that information is organized and communicated coherently, it seldom serves any useful purpose. My students tell me that when they try to answer an essay question concerning a concept they've just studied, they are sometimes disappointed by how little they are able to write. This usually reflects how little they've actually learned.

But what's even worse is a situation in which a student *does* understand something and cannot communicate it. I am dismayed at the number of students who cannot express themselves gracefully in speech or writing. One reason for this is that the structure of the English language is not really understood by most of them.

Improper use of the language is a national disgrace that permeates almost every arena of everyday life. I've seen resumes sprinkled with spelling and punctuation mistakes written by people who should know better. When I visit a museum and read the plates describing the exhibits, too often I see simple grammatical errors. Highway signs contain misspelled words. Even so-called "educational" publishers cater to the soft corruption of our language by allowing sloppy editing, their excuse being that they must reflect the customs of the day.

Why do we have rules of grammar? As a chemist, I would answer that it is for the same reason that we have and rely upon the periodic table for the elements—to provide order and clarity. One of the basic laws of science is the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which says that all matter

and energy tend toward a state of disorder. It is ironic that man's fate is to make order out of almost everything he encounters—but it is also essential that he do so, if he is to make sense out of his world and the civilization that he has created. (Personally, I look forward to the possibility of someday finding myself in a parallel universe where the Second Law is reversed.) As a result of our human nature, though, we have two kinds of English: good and bad.

It's possible to write accurately and explicitly without being blessed with the artistic talent of great novelists and poets. But it takes hard work! In these days of lotto, unfortunately, our society seeks the "quick fix"—the easy way out. Student writing reflects our declining national pride and deteriorating work ethic. An English teacher of mine once told me that the original notes for a three-sentence dedication in one of Ernest Hemingway's novels contained fifteen re-workings of his simple message. How many of us don't even bother to proofread what we write? How much effort do we expend to ensure that our readers know exactly what we mean? In science, especially, communicating one's thought unambiguously is vital. As Mark Twain said, "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug."

We learn best by doing; more emphasis must be placed on oral and written communication at all levels of education. In this country, entrepreneurs are making good livings presenting seminars and workshops on the proper use of the English language to corporate America. Companies use these services because so many of their employees enter the workplace unable to write well. America is full

of people who cannot transmit their knowledge, even to their own colleagues.

So, when my students ask me why they have to spell words correctly and write well in chemistry class, I respond that if we cannot communicate our ideas effectively, we cannot achieve a mastery of any subject. As a result, we handicap ourselves in *all* subjects, and we settle for that handicap, both in school and in life beyond.

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