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CONTENTS

Editor's Note	1
KIMBERLY GOMEZ	
PRIZE ESSAY WINNERS	
Protecting Speech or Copyright: A Question of Balance	4
BENJAMIN COHEN	
Dostoevsky and Gogol's Acknowledgments of Writers' Limitations	13
GEORGIANNE MAROON	
Rethinking Humanity: the Chimera Debate	20
JIELIN YU	
WR 100 ESSAYS	
Two Sides to Every Story	32
MICAELA BEDELL	
Darkness Visible: Dante's Clarification of Hell	36
JOSEPH KAMEEN	

Blanche Dubois: An Antihero	42
LAUREN SEIGLE	
Dorian Gray the Escape Artist	49
JESSE R. SHERMAN	
WR 150 ESSAYS	
Fish Farming and the Boundary of Sustainability: How Aquaculture Tests Nature's Resources	56
COURTNEY CARROLL	
Bulgakov's "Moonlight Sonata:"The Thematic Functions of Grand Opera and Lieder in <i>The Master and Margarita</i>	65
JOHN COLLINS	
Tied By Cords Woven of Heart-Strings: A Study of Manhood in Herman Melville's <i>Moby Dick</i>	77
VERONICA FALLER	
Violent Media and the First Amendment	88
STACEY GOODMAN	
The Portrayal of Despair in Poland after 1989: Stasiuk's <i>Nine</i> and Klein's <i>The Shock Doctrine</i>	96
GABRIELLE MIGDALSKI	

EDITOR'S NOTE

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress. — Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*

In this issue of *WR*, we focus on students' efforts to enter into the scholarly conversations experienced at Boston University. Discovering, participating in, and even enhancing, an academic conversation remains a primary goal of university education. This task is not always easy, whether we are teachers, researchers, or students; on the contrary, immersion into any ongoing discussion can be daunting. Not only do we need to find our place in these discussions, we must also establish a common ground and develop the skills and confidence to participate so our ideas are heard and our claims can emerge. Literary theorist Kenneth Burke illustrated this point precisely when he compared the academic conversation to a crowded, intense, and vigorously involved conversation in a parlor. In doing so, he created a metaphor that illustrates not only the milieu of academic

argument, but also its method: the contribution of others' intellectual oppositions and qualifications to the refinement of one's views.

The ability to engage in and contribute to an academic conversation is essential not only for academic success, but also in professional and personal life. Thus, the practice of engaging in creative academic conversation becomes a craft: we listen and discuss issues with our peers, colleagues, and mentors, digging into subtext, hoping our claims are absorbed and considered, and above all, presenting our ideas in written form.

This year the Writing Program continues to explore ways of enabling student writing at Boston University; it is a movement inspired by the metaphor of the academic conversation. Our program assists student writers as they attempt to enter this conversation so they may express their claims, their ideas, and more importantly, develop confidence in making their contributions. By engaging in this process, students gain the ability to craft substantive, motivated, and balanced academic arguments. They engage with texts, reading with comprehension and critical discernment. Just as Burke imagined the stimulating conversation in his metaphorical parlor, our students enter the conversation by responding productively to the writing of others while expressing their own complex ideas. And beyond their writing and research on topics, they also reflect, through the use of portfolios, on their own development as writers.

The essays in this collection epitomize the ongoing development of the Writing Program, as students explore the range of topics, from literature to the social and natural sciences. In selecting the twelve essays for this issue of *WR*, the committee selected essays (from 375 submissions) with varied styles and themes from within different disciplines. What is presented here truly showcases the range of the Writing Program: we present the prize-winning essays first, followed by essays that reflect students' growing engagement with the academic conversation as they follow the assignment sequence from the beginning of WR 100 to the capstone essays of WR 150. Thus, the selected essays illustrate how students' writing grows along with the intellectual challenges of the assignment trajectory.

Indeed, what this issue of *WR* demonstrates is that our students are learning to become communicators, thinkers, planners, and innovators who truly own a place in the academic conversation. The twelve students, whose work represents the undergraduate community of the Arts & Sciences

Writing Program, have entered that room of great thinkers, philosophers, poets, and debaters; they have found their place in the conversation, and in doing so, show us that the stimulating intellectual discussion that is critical to university education and civic life is—as Kenneth Burke reminds us—“still vigorously in progress.”

— Kimberly Gomez,
Assistant Editor

From the Writer

I chose to write this essay about the implications of copyright law on free speech because of its relevance to modern society. The question of how to best enforce copyright restrictions has become a key issue in our increasingly digital world, where highly advanced, easy to use methods of copyright infringement are readily available. While writing this essay, I was constantly confronted with varying ideas of where the copyright line should be drawn. These were interesting to me because I have to deal with issues such as illegally downloading music, decryption of DVDs and CDs, and use of copyrighted materials in an educational setting. Studying these topics, I found myself not only writing a paper, but looking at my own thoughts on the subject and how I treat it in my life. The arguments on both sides of the debate did more than just contribute to my paper. They also gave me new insight into a deep and complex issue, and I can now utilize this knowledge in my everyday life.

When it comes to revisions I would make if I were to write another draft, the first thing I would do is more research. There is a vast amount of further information on the subject available, especially in the realm of music downloading through programs such as Limewire, which I did not have the opportunity to really address. In addition, I feel that I could have gone further in developing the arguments of how the DMCA has worked correctly to protect free speech. There was a lot more about the two cases I mention that could have been said and discussed to further the argument for the value of the DMCA. The last major revision I would make is expanding on the examples of the music industry using the DMCA to obstruct technological advancement. Due to time limitations, I was able to find several examples and briefly summarize them, but further development of these incidents would strengthen my arguments.

— Benjamin Cohen

BENJAMIN COHEN

Prize Essay Winner

PROTECTING SPEECH OR COPYRIGHT: A QUESTION OF BALANCE

Over the last fifteen years, the world has seen vast expansions and improvements in the realm of technology. Computers and the internet have become a prevalent part of society in modern America. Along with the internet, many other technological developments have changed the world we live in, such as DVRs and iPods. As technology and the internet have evolved, however, the law has had to evolve as well, and often this has led to complex issues, such as how to control internet piracy of copyrighted works. In response to this issue, Congress passed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) of 1998, which made it illegal to circumvent digital rights management (DRM) systems or create or sell technology capable of circumventing DRM systems (United States Copyright Office 3–4). Through this law, the courts have ruled that internet distributors of online file transfer programs can be held liable for the copyright infringement performed with their software (*Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer Studios v. Grokster*). However, scholars, researchers, teachers, and programmers have argued against the act, claiming that the restrictions against the creation of DRM-circumventing technology put overbroad restrictions on freedom of speech by constricting the fair use doctrine for digital media, discouraging intellectual and educational progress and discussion, and stifling further technological advances (Schaffner 145). These rights to speech cannot be discarded simply for the benefit of copyright owners and their works.

The debate over whether the DMCA places overbroad restrictions on free speech begins with the question of how copyright protection relates to speech. Historically, American law has contained provisions for copyright protection as a way of promoting artistic and intellectual prog-

ress by protecting authors' rights to their work (Brannan 249). This protection ensures authors the ability to distribute, utilize, and profit from their intellectual works as they see fit. Additionally, as technology advanced and new media were introduced, such as movies or television, copyright law was updated to follow suit (Brannan 247).

The DMCA was designed to supplement previous copyright law by protecting the interests of copyright owners in the internet age. Copyright protection is used to defend the right of those who create intellectual works from having others proliferate and profit from the work without permission from the author (Schaffner 146). The need for the additional protections contained in the DMCA came about as a response to the increasing ease with which individuals could upload copyrighted digital media, such as music or video files, and share them online (Schaffner 147).

The protections offered by the DMCA, however, have come with concerns over the possible detrimental effects it could have on free speech, in particular the right to fair use of copyrighted materials. The fair use doctrine protects the public interest of using minor portions of copyrighted materials for uses such as criticism, reporting, teaching, or research without procuring permission from the copyright owner (Brannan 252). When judging whether or not an instance of copyright infringement qualifies as fair use, four major factors must be taken into account: for what purpose the work is used, the method of its use, the amount of the work as compared to its entirety, and the possible commercial effect the use could have on the original work (*UMG Recordings v. MP3.com* 5). All come together to determine the viability of a fair use defense. For example, making copies of a DVD movie and then selling it would not be fair use, but posting a clip of a war movie in a presentation on World War II would be defensible.

The scholar Derek J. Schaffner believes that the DMCA has given copyright owners of digital media increased power at the expense of the public's right to fair use (151–152). Because the DMCA has made it illegal to circumvent encrypting technology, scholars, professors, students, and other members of the general public cannot legally access many forms of protected digital media for fair use purposes, even if they have legitimately purchased the rights to said media (Schaffner 151). For instance, say a biology teacher wanted to feature a clip from a nature documentary in a presentation to her class. She has the documentary on DVD, and she

uses a program freely available on the internet to upload the DVD to her computer and then inserts the clip into her Power Point for the next day. Technically, under the DMCA, she has committed a crime because “the act of circumventing a technological measure in order to gain access is prohibited” (United States Copyright Office 4). Before the introduction of the DMCA, this kind of use could be defended with the fair use doctrine as an educational tool, but the restriction against the use of copyright-circumventing technology prevents her from uploading the DVD no matter what her intentions.

The fact that the DMCA can make what can legitimately be defended as fair use completely illegal means that it has the power to regulate speech potentially in an overbroad manner (Schaffner 148). This important issue entered the judicial realm in the New York District Court case of *Universal v. Reimerdes*, where several studios sued Eric Corley for providing on his website internet links that allowed users to download a program called DeCSS (303). DeCSS is a program designed to circumvent a DVD encryption known as CSS and was meant to allow users of the Linux operating system to play DVDs on their computers (Brannan 263). Linux is an open-source system developed by users, and does not have the license required for a build in CSS decryption key. In response, DeCSS was made so that users who had legally purchased DVDs could simply play them on their computers, but when the creator released his program on the internet so that other Linux users could also utilize it, people began to use the program to upload DVDs to their computers and share them online (Schaffner 155–156). When Corley linked his site to places to download DeCSS, he was sued under the DMCA for providing access to copyright circumvention technology in direct violation of the prohibition against this (*Universal v. Reimerdes* 305). Corley defended DeCSS, claiming that it would be used for fair use purposes and that the DMCA was unconstitutional because people had the right to circumvent copyright encryptions under certain circumstances (*Universal v. Reimerdes* 304).

While Corley’s actions were found to violate the DMCA’s restriction against the trafficking of copyright-circumventing materials, a great deal of debate was put forth over the constitutionality of the DMCA in regard to the fair use argument. In fact, in the opinion for *Universal v. Reimerdes*, Judge Kaplan acknowledged that “the use of technological means of

controlling access to a copyrighted work may affect the ability to make fair uses of the work” (322). However, despite admitting this potential restriction of fair use, the courts decided that the value of the DMCA in preventing internet piracy balanced out the damage done to free speech (322), and thus maintained the legitimacy of the DMCA.

The reason that this decision is so important in the realm of technology and copyright infringement is because it seems to go against the precedent set by the Supreme Court in the 1984 case of *Sony Corp v. Universal City Studios*. The court in this case determined that the selling of a technology that allegedly could be used for copyright infringement purposes on the basis that its primary functions qualified as fair use (420–421). Sony had recently developed the Betamax, a videotape recording device that allowed users to record a television program and replay it at a later time. Universal sued Sony, claiming that the Betamax would allow for and encourage copyright infringement through users recording and selling television shows. Sony countered that the taping of shows was fair use, as the general user would simply utilize the Betamax to “time-shift” the program, or view the show at a later, more convenient time, and then copy over the recording to tape another show (*Sony Corp v. Universal City Studios* 421). In this view, the Betamax owner may be recording the entire television show, but he or she would in no way infringe upon the copyright owner’s market for their work (425–426). The court, in a close 5–4 decision, decided in favor of Sony, with the understanding that “the sale of copying equipment . . . does not constitute contributory [copyright] infringement if the product is widely used for legitimate, unobjectionable purposes” (442), purposes which they determined the Betamax fulfilled. In writing the majority opinion supporting the Betamax’s positive uses, Justice Stevens cited the results of surveys which showed that 80% of Betamax owners watched the same amount of television as they did before buying the system and that many used the technology to tape programs such as sports games occurring when they were not home (424).

The Betamax ruling poses an interesting problem with DMCA’s take on technology and copyright infringement: if the development of the VCR in the 1980s has protection because it fulfills the legitimate purpose of time-shifting, why does a program such as DeCSS not have the same protection when it too offers legitimate, fair use options? According to the

court in the *Reimerdes* case, the *Sony* case did not have any bearing because “the DMCA fundamentally altered the landscape” of copyright law (323). The reasoning behind the separation of pre- and post-DMCA copyright lies in the potential of the technology to perform copyright infringement that goes beyond fair use (Schaffner 156). In the *Reimerdes* case, the fear was that with the combination of DeCSS and other technology available on the internet, a user could create and share an unlimited amount of copies of a single copyrighted work with extreme ease and optimal quality (313–315). In contrast, when making recordings using the Betamax, each recording lost significant quality, and the making and distribution of copies was far more difficult without the data-transmitting properties of the internet. As such, in writing the DMCA, Congress determined that the dangers associated with copyright circumvention and the internet posed far greater risks than what the Supreme Court confronted in *Sony v. Universal*.

The restrictions on free speech do not end with obstruction of fair use. Another major free speech issue lies in the realm of intellectual and scientific development. In 2001, a presentation by a Russian software company in Las Vegas led to the arrest of one of the company’s employees for violating the DMCA (Schaffner 157). The product under display by the company was a program that could decrypt eBooks sold by Adobe so that users could download purchased eBooks onto multiple devices. Without this program, users could only download an eBook to one machine. The software company, ElcomSoft, claimed that the DMCA was unconstitutional because it placed restrictions on content-based speech in addition to restricting the right to fair use. However, the courts disagreed, believing that the governmental interests in preventing internet piracy and copyright infringement were necessary and outweighed the restrictions placed upon speech by the act (Schaffner 157).

While the legal charges against ElcomSoft were eventually dropped as a result of the arrest and trial, scientists and programmers have refused to come to the United States for programming conferences for fear that their work may incidentally violate the DMCA, and Russia has explicitly warned programmers against travelling to America (Schaffner 158). The information that these individuals could offer towards technological development could prove invaluable, but because of the speech restrictions of

the DMCA, their ideas, research, and discoveries will remain absent from the American marketplace of ideas, which also has the effect of reducing the speech available.

In addition to discouraging the input of foreign researchers, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and other groups have used the DMCA to dissuade native research as well (Schaffner 159). In one particular incident, the Secure Digital Music Initiative challenged programmers to crack DRM technologies. However, when Edward Felten and his team of researchers succeeded and wrote up their work documenting how they did it, the RIAA threatened to sue Felten under the DMCA. Felten refrained from releasing his work for fear of being found liable for the dissemination of programming that could feasibly be used to circumvent DRM-protected media (Schaffner 159).

Despite the variety of ways in which the DMCA potentially violates the first amendment's guarantee of free speech, it has been used in a number of court cases to defend legitimately against internet copyright infringement. In 2000, the case *UMG Recordings v. MP3.com* went to a New York district court to determine whether MP3.com had violated the DMCA (*UMG Recordings v. MP3.com* 2). MP3.com ran an internet service which enabled subscribers to access their music library from any location with internet access. It provided this service by purchasing and uploading thousands of CDs to its servers and granting access to the files to users who could prove ownership of the songs (*UMG Recordings v. MP3.com* 3). They were sued for copyright infringement because they uploaded the CDs without first obtaining permission. The court found that MP3.com had indeed committed copyright infringement and that their fair use defense failed because they were using the songs for commercial gain, using the entire songs, and that their system was a subset of a possible market that the copyright owners had first right to (*UMG Recordings v. MP3.com* 7–10).

A second case in the fight against internet piracy is *A&M Records, Inc. v. Napster*. This 2001 Ninth Circuit case featured Napster, a company that offered a freely downloadable program that allowed users to share music files on their hard drives with other users and download music files from other users via search tools that come with the program (*A&M Records, Inc. v. Napster* 5). Despite evidence that showed a significant

amount of the files downloaded through Napster were copyrighted, Napster defended its program with fair use by claiming its users are simply engaging in space-shifting of already legally owned music files, in addition to the fact that several artists had given permission for their works to be shared on Napster (*A&M Records, Inc. v. Napster* 21). The court found that Napster's defense failed all four aspects of fair use (23–37) and that there was requisite evidence to show that Napster had significant knowledge of the copyright infringement that users had engaged in without making efforts to curb this infringement, which meant they were liable for contributory infringement (57). This kind of contributory infringement by companies offering software capable of circumventing copyright and distributing protected material over the internet is exactly the kind of abuse that the DMCA was designed to fight against (Brannan 254).

While the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 has a commendable purpose and has been effectively used in cases to protect the rights of copyright owners, it has also been the subject of much conflict over its restrictions in the areas of fair use and free speech. As technology advances, it is necessary for copyright law to advance with it in order to defend properly both the rights of the copyright owners and those of the consumer public. In order to ensure the protection of the public's rights to the legal use of copyright works, Congress must revisit the area of copyright law and attempt to correct the deficiencies of the current DMCA. While the arguments against the DMCA may not be enough to overturn it as unconstitutional, this does not imply that its restrictive effects on free speech are right.

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BENJAMIN P. COHEN is a biomedical engineering major in the Boston University College of Engineering. A member of the class of 2013, Ben comes to Boston from the town of Niskayuna, NY, located just north of Albany. Ben is an active member of the BU Hillel and plays on the club Ultimate Frisbee team, the Ozone Pilots. Ben plays guitar, is an avid moviegoer, and closely follows baseball and football. Ben would like to thank his family for helping him get to BU, Professor Queen for his help with the paper in Writing 150, and the rest of his teachers and professors for their contributions to his education. This essay was written for Bradley Queen's course, WR 150: The First Amendment.

From the Writer

As my class was discussing “The Portrait,” a short story by Nikolai Gogol, we touched briefly on the topic of perception and the ways in which the artist in Gogol’s story loses control of the portrait he paints. I had been having trouble determining what to write about in my second paper, and I decided to pursue that subject because the gap between a writer’s intentions and the way his work is interpreted interests me.

After I explored that theme in my second paper, I decided to return to it for my fourth paper and bring Dostoevsky’s *Poor Folk* into the discussion, as well as “The Overcoat,” another short story by Gogol. While it had been relatively easy to see the theme of the artist losing control of his work in “The Portrait,” I had a little more trouble connecting the other two stories to the topic in a meaningful way. Through studying critical essays on *Poor Folk* and analyzing the relevant sections of the text closely, I developed a position on Dostoevsky’s relevance to the subject, noting that he creates one of his characters, Makar Devushkin, as an amateur literary critic who misinterprets Gogol’s work. Once I began to find the connections the three stories shared, my interest in the concept helped me put together a strong argument.

— Georgianne Maroon

GEORGIANNE MAROON

Prize Essay Winner

DOSTOEVSKY AND GOGOL'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF WRITERS' LIMITATIONS

One of the more frustrating realizations most writers make during their careers is that their work, no matter how hard they try to craft it to communicate certain messages to their readers, always has the potential to be misinterpreted and misunderstood. Both Dostoevsky and Gogol have published works that illustrate and discuss this problem, both implicitly and explicitly. In *Poor Folk* Dostoevsky shows, through his protagonist Makar Devushkin's reaction to Gogol's "The Overcoat," the way the public tends to assign their own meanings to literature depending only on what message they want to take from it. (Devushkin, a poor copyist living in St. Petersburg, is sent a copy of the story by his confidant Varvara, and soon afterward writes angrily to her that it has offended him.) Gogol, in "The Overcoat," creates the opportunity for readers like Devushkin to misinterpret his work by making it ambiguous in meaning and message. In "The Portrait," however, he addresses the problem of misreading directly in a number of ways, illustrating the worst-case scenario of an artist losing control over the repercussions of his own artwork for his audience. Dostoevsky shows, through Devushkin's attempts at literary criticism in *Poor Folk*, a common result of the ambiguity Gogol creates in his work: readers who do not understand the purpose of literature and take it only at face value will misinterpret it, leading to confusion about their places in society. In fact, he uses Devushkin to represent the literary critics of his time; Dostoevsky feels that critics often miss the points of the works they analyze but are confident in their interpretations nonetheless. In the end, both Dostoevsky and Gogol essentially resign themselves to the knowledge that some people are bound to deduce meanings the authors never intended to

convey from their work, and each uses his stories to show his awareness of the limitations writers, and all artists, inevitably face.

Gogol first addresses this issue in “The Overcoat” by creating a minor character who misinterprets literature in an exaggerated and comical way. His narrative opens with an anecdote about a policeman who thinks he has been personally ridiculed by a piece of literature and who “states clearly that the government’s decrees are perishing and his own sacred name is decidedly being taken in vain. And as proof he attached to his petition a most enormous tome . . . in which a police chief appears on every tenth page, in some places even in a totally drunken state” (394). The policeman, of course, is meant as a caricature, an outrageous example, but in *Poor Folk*, Devushkin responds much the same way to “The Overcoat” itself, thinking that it has been written about him, and for the sole purpose of offending him. Devushkin interprets “The Overcoat” as a straightforward narrative about a poor, hardworking man being oppressed by society and meeting an unpleasant end as a direct result. He responds with strong emotion to the story because he, like Akaky Akakievich, is an impoverished copyist who seems to have little chance of gaining worldly wealth or status. Indeed, Dostoevsky deliberately creates Devushkin as a similar character to Akaky Akakievich, albeit a more realistic and multi-dimensional one who is able to have a relationship with another person (Varvara), while Akaky Akakievich’s only affection is for his new overcoat.

However, the clear-cut tale Devushkin reads is not truly the one Gogol tells. While Akaky Akakievich is indeed a poor copyist who is constantly mocked by those richer and more powerful than himself, Gogol hints that his obsession with his new overcoat reflects a materialistic tendency, and that this tendency, not his lower-class status, is the cause of his eventual downfall and death. Akaky dies after being robbed of his coat as he is walking home from a party thrown for him in the wealthier part of St. Petersburg, implying that had he not been out enjoying the worldly pleasures that came with his new coat, he would not have had the coat stolen, been forced to walk home in the cold, and fallen ill. Devushkin overlooks that particular bit of subtext and also takes issue with the fact that Akaky Akakievich dies at all, seeing the ending of “The Overcoat” as a final insult to a helpless man with no redeeming qualities. However, Gogol does in fact allow Akaky Akakievich to exact some revenge on those who

have tormented him—as a ghost, he steals the overcoat of the “*important person*” who berated him days before his death, and arguably gains some power in death that he never had in life, as he haunts the town of St. Petersburg (415). Devushkin—like many readers, Dostoevsky implies—ignores or misunderstands this facet of the story completely, and instead reads it as an uncomplicated tale of inescapable misery that is rather different from the ambiguous, layered narrative Gogol has really created.

While Gogol refers briefly to those who willfully misunderstand literature in “The Overcoat,” he discusses the issue at length throughout “The Portrait,” a story that focuses on two different artists and their eventual losses of control over what happens to their art, and those who come in contact with the art. The titular portrait is a painting of a cruel moneylender, done by a painter who is never named. After the moneylender’s death, the painting takes on supernatural qualities and carries the moneylender’s malevolent spirit with it as it passes from the painter to a number of other people, who all experience sudden changes for the worse in their fortunes after acquiring it. Gogol shows that the painter, who had not intended to create a powerful force for evil but merely a realistic, well-painted picture, has no way of stopping the painting’s path of destruction, or of convincing people who have not yet come in contact with it that it will ruin their lives. In the first part of the story, another artist, Chartkov, is forced for financial reasons to paint pictures for a living that take no real effort or feeling but are regarded as masterpieces of great talent, showing again that what an artist puts into his work and what the audience gets out of it can be completely unrelated. While Chartkov feels that his paintings have become “cold and dull . . . monotonous, predetermined, [and] long-worn out” (367), he is referred to in the local papers as an “honored” and “esteemed” painter of great skill (368). The writers who praise him, like Devushkin, fail to understand artists’ intentions, a reference by Gogol to the critics of his own time who he felt were misguided.

Gogol actually rewrote “The Portrait” seven years after its initial publication, giving the fantastic elements of the story an increased role in the second edition and doing everything in his power to influence the message readers would take from his work (Basom 419). Interestingly, as Ann Marie Basom notes in her article “The Fantastic in Gogol’s Two Versions of ‘Portret [sic],’” “the fantastic questions the nature of reality

itself; in other words, it asks if what we perceive to be the nature of reality is really the nature of reality" (Basom 420). The second, and more widely read, version of "The Portrait" emphasizes the supernatural elements of the story, using the focus on phenomena beyond the characters' control to show the inherent possibility of misunderstanding and misinterpretation in the world. Considering the main themes of the story itself, this was not an accidental decision on Gogol's part. The "final" version of the text reflects Gogol's awareness of his inability to determine how people will perceive his own work and—through the plight of the first painter in the story, who spends most of his life trying to erase the impact the money-lender's portrait has had on him—the anxiety resulting from this awareness.

In *Poor Folk*, Dostoevsky both acknowledges Gogol's work and shows his own understanding of the many people who are bound to misread his work through his portrayal of Devushkin. Devushkin's attempts to understand literature are most clearly illustrated in his indignant response to "The Overcoat," and his attempts to rewrite the book in a way he thinks would be more suitable: "It would, however, have been much better not to have left [Akaky Akakievich] to die at all . . . but to make his overcoat be found, to have that general find out more about his virtues, invite him into his office, raise him in rank and give him a good hike in salary, so that then, you see, vice would have been punished and virtue would have triumphed" (68). Interestingly, while Devushkin's impoverished life largely mirrors Akaky Akakievich's, something very similar to his rewritten version of "The Overcoat" does happen near the end of his own story: he is given a raise and some better work to do, thereby gaining a somewhat higher social status. However, Varvara leaves to marry a rich, landowning man named Bykov soon afterwards, meaning that she will no longer be able to write the letters to Devushkin that have been one of the only sources of joy in his life. The despair Varvara's departure brings Devushkin far outweighs the happiness he had felt from his sudden change in fortunes. Dostoevsky leads readers familiar with Gogol's work to think that he may indeed intend to rewrite "The Overcoat" with a kinder, gentler ending, only to leave Devushkin, like Akaky Akakievich, in a bleak place at the end and show that Gogol's story was written the way it was for a

reason and cannot be changed simply because some people may feel it is too harsh.

Through his attempts to reinvent “The Overcoat,” readers learn that Devushkin is not a sophisticated reader of literature and does not understand that not all stories are meant to be parables that teach uncomplicated moral lessons. His oversimplification of the text is meant by Dostoevsky to reflect and satirize the way some critics of his time misinterpreted Gogol; in her essay “Textuality and Intertextuality in Dostoevsky’s *Poor Folk*,” Rebecca Epstein-Matveyev points out,

Through his protagonist’s straight misreading of an already parodic text, Dostoevsky provides an exaggerated version of contemporary critics’ readings of Gogolian texts. At the same time, the author seems to anticipate Belinsky’s [a leading critic’s] sympathetic response to Devushkin . . . thus, the author simultaneously managed both to reinscribe ‘The Overcoat’ and its protagonist, and to mock straight readings in a way undetectable to the period’s leading literary critic. (543)

Epstein-Matveyev’s argument supports the view that Dostoevsky, in deliberately drawing parallels to “The Overcoat” within *Poor Folk*, aims to continue the discussion of literary interpretation he feels Gogol has begun. By portraying Devushkin as a kind of amateur literary critic, among his many other functions, Dostoevsky provides a subtle guide for readers on how not to read his stories and suggests that there is almost always more to be gained from a work of literature than what is obvious upon an initial examination of the text. Whether or not his readers take the hint is out of his control.

Through Devushkin and his interactions with the world of literature, Dostoevsky opens up numerous possibilities for discussion of literary criticism. Devushkin’s unshakeable opinions of his own understanding of writing—he assumes his comprehension of literature is so great that he could easily be an author himself, and at times informs Varvara matter-of-factly that his is the only opinion worth hearing on the matter of what is a good book and what is not—are part of the way Dostoevsky characterizes literary critics, and less observant readers in general. Through his character’s interpretation of Gogol, Dostoevsky manages both to further

the perception of Devushkin as representative of critics who do not understand the complex implications of novels and to bring Gogol and his work, through allusion, into the discussion of literary interpretation. In doing so, he shows key similarities between himself and Gogol: an understanding of the fact that most readers will not comprehend the meanings of their works exactly as they intended and an acknowledgment of that fact in their stories. This acknowledgment shows that they not only understand their limitations as authors, but can occasionally circumvent those limitations, to some degree, by satirizing them in such a way that perceptive readers will gain a better understanding of how their work was intended to be read.

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From the Writer

For our final assignment, we were given a lot of freedom to choose our own topics. We were asked to analyze a debate over a controversial topic in medicine and provide a commentary on the debate and how it reflects our values as a society. In my initial search for topics, I ran into the topic of chimeras, which immediately sparked my interest. From my background research, it became clear that chimera research had tremendous potential, and that the benefits from studying chimeras would be readily applicable to current problems.

Yet, although I see myself as a very open-minded person, I had an inexplicable disdain of this idea despite knowing the benefits chimeras could bring. Part of what drove me to dig deeper into the subject was to find out what made me feel such an admittedly irrational dislike of such a promising field. In a way, that made the research more personal and helped motivate me throughout my research. Eventually, I started looking into philosophical arguments about ethics and morals and a lot of concepts that I can not really grasp, which was challenging. Eventually, I had to stick to a few simple points that I mostly understood, and that ultimately helped focus my paper and make it easier to read.

— Jielin Yu

JIELIN YU

Prize Essay Winner

RETHINKING HUMANITY: THE CHIMERA DEBATE

For most of history, part-human part-animal beings have always resided in the realm of fiction and folklore. Recently, however, advances in genetic engineering and microsurgery have brought these creatures into existence. Scientists now have created human-nonhuman chimeras—organisms that have both human cells and animals cells in their bodies. These chimeric animals hold enormous potential for the field of medicine as well as basic research into human physiology. Their utility in science lies in their unique biological integration of both human and animal cells, which can give rise to human tissues and even organs within the body of an animal. Useful applications of this technology range from the study of disease, to more accurate testing of drugs and medication, to the possibility of transplants using chimeric organs. Despite its potential, however, chimera research faces significant opposition from a wide spectrum of the population. While scientific and public health concerns exist, the majority of the opposition focus on the violation of current ethical and moral codes that arises from creating and using chimeras. At closer examination, however, all of these objections stem from an unwillingness to surrender society's rigid view of human identity and uniqueness. The debate over chimera research represents the changing perception of humanity and our place in the world.

Chimeras differ from the general perception of the genetically modified organism. Technically, a chimera consists of two genomes in a single body, producing two types of cells that work in conjunction to create a viable organism. It develops from two fertilized eggs that come into contact and combine to form a single embryo, instead of staying separate

and developing into fraternal twins. Chimerism within a species occurs naturally in nearly all animals, including humans. Interspecific chimeras, however, rarely exist in nature due to the unlikelihood of specific conditions required. In 1989, scientists at the University of California, Davis breached this barrier and created the first artificial chimera, a sheep-goat hybrid dubbed the “geep.”

Such research into chimeras elicited little public attention and outcry until August 2003, when Hui Zhen Sheng at the Shanghai Second Medical University created the first human-nonhuman chimera. Sheng and his team removed the genetic material from some of the cells in a rabbit embryo and inserted human DNA, creating a human-rabbit chimera.¹

Sheng’s research inspired several subsequent studies that demonstrate the enormous potential of chimeras. By creating animals with human cells, scientists can monitor and track cell differentiation, tissue development, and organ formation without using human infants as subjects. Since chimeras develop from a class of stem cells called nuclear transplant stem cells (ntES), they can be used to study the “molecular mechanisms governing fundamental biological phenomena, such as pluripotency, reprogramming, differentiation, and imprinting.”² A French team led by Nicole le Douarin at the College de France’s Institut d’Embryologie has replaced cells in the vertebrae of a developing cow fetus with human pluripotent stem cells to observe their differentiation and study the development of the spinal cord. This study has already “shed light on the formation of the spinal cord and the integration of the central and peripheral nervous systems in the early stages of development.”³ These results can suggest new procedures in regenerative medicine for patients with spinal cord injuries. Scientists have proposed experiments like le Douarin’s to study the many mysteries of human development. With the current state of technology, research using human-nonhuman chimeras provides the most accurate method of observation aside from directly studying human embryos themselves.

Scientists can also use chimeras to study the progress and mechanisms of diseases in live tissues and organs. Chimeras with human tissues offer a fairly accurate substitute for a real human body. A Stanford team is working closely with human-cow chimeras to study how HIV attacks the human immune system.⁴ A chimeric pig with mostly human T-cells

was used to model a human immune system, and provided insight into the mechanisms of the virus as well as ways to combat it. Scientists at the University of California, San Diego have used chimeric goats with 40% human livers to study the progress of hepatitis B and hepatitis C.⁵ Aileen O'Doherty and a team of scientists in the United Kingdom have used human-mouse chimeras to study the onset of Down syndrome by tracking the differentiation and development of certain human cells. These mice “exhibit behaviors, organ size, and neuronal numbers that mimic the human disease.”⁶ For many diseases exclusive to humans, such as Down syndrome, using a human-animal chimera may be the only legitimate method of investigation.

In addition to helping the study of disease, chimeras also offer a safer and more ethical method of testing for new drugs. FDA regulations require new drugs to undergo extensive pre-clinical studies to examine their absorption, distribution, metabolism, and toxicity before clinical tests on human subjects. Current procedures rely mostly on animal testing, which at best gives scientists an estimation of the drug's effect on a human. Testing on animals such as the common lab mouse provides inaccurate results due to the large differences in physiology and biochemistry. Greater accuracy requires testing on animals similar to humans, such as primates, which raises ethical and financial challenges. Human-animal chimeras provide a loophole through this dilemma by creating a lower animal that has human cells in the organs and system targeted by the drug. This method of testing not only reduces the risk to clinical trial subjects, but also helps make new medications available to patients sooner by speeding up the testing procedure.

Another application of chimeras lies in the field of xenotransplantation, or transplantation using animal organs. The world currently faces a shortage of organs for patients who need transplants. Many die while waiting, while many more venture abroad to seek alternative sources of organs in the less developed countries. The extensive use of chimeras can potentially remedy the situation. Theoretically, cells or pure genetic material can be inserted into an animal embryo or fetus to create a human-animal chimera that has organs made of the patient's cells. These organs can then be transplanted to the patient without risk of rejection or autoimmune complications. Current research focuses heavily on pigs and sheep due

to similarities in the size of organs and has yielded encouraging results. Jeffrey Platt at the Mayo Clinic Transplantation Biology Program has produced pigs that produce human hemoglobin and have lungs that can pump human blood, which is a step towards the possibility of complete lung transplants.⁷ Esmail Zanjani at the University of Nevada has created a fetal sheep with organs that were 15% human, and provoked no immune response from the human immune system.⁸ These have led to further experiments to enhance the feasibility of xenotransplantation through chimeras. If successful, this procedure can provide a safe and cost-effective solution to one of the most debilitating shortcomings of the medical system.

Despite its promises, chimera research poses scientific, religious, and ethical problems. The scientific concerns mostly involve the public health consequences of the spreading of disease between species. Many of the deadliest diseases, such as AIDS, have only recently spread from animals to humans. The recent scares of avian and swine influenzas have demonstrated that diseases usually spread across species through constant, close contact. In this regard, a chimera provides the perfect vessel for diseases to overcome the species barrier, because cells from two different species are integrated in the same body. Cases of porcine virus infecting human cells in human-pig chimeras have already been observed.⁹ The possibility of the interspecific transmission of disease constitutes a legitimate concern. Similar threats, however, exist for nearly all topics of research involving infectious biological agents. The set of safety procedures developed for them can be applied with equal effectiveness to experiments involving chimeras. To further mitigate the threat to public health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has pushed for a rule to require potential human-nonhuman chimeras to be handled in Biosafety Level 4 facilities, the highest security level reserved for biological agents such as the small-pox virus and the 1918 Spanish influenza virus, both diseases with proven deadliness.¹⁰ Thus, from the public health perspective, the possibility of spreading disease across species barriers via chimeras calls for heightened caution and strict regulations, rather than an end to this area of science.

Chimera research also faces staunch opposition from many religious groups. Many Hindus disdain chimeric research involving cows, the sacred animals that are to be treated with the same respect “as one’s

mother.” For the opposite reason, chimeric research involving many lower animals, especially pigs, disagrees with the beliefs of Judaism, Islam, and sects of Christianity like the Seventh-day Adventists. Pigs are deemed unclean, and the eating of pork is forbidden. Creating a part-pig, part-human creature, therefore, is obviously sacrilegious. A common Christian objection arises from the idea that “your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God. You are not your own” (1 Corinthians 6:19).¹¹ In 2005, the Pontifical Council for Health stated the Catholic Church’s stance on the subject, saying that human genes “embody the characteristic uniqueness of the person, which medicine is bound to protect,” an opinion echoed by the council of the bishops of England and Wales in 2007.¹²

Besides the religious opposition, ethical challenges also exist. One argument asserts that the artificial creation of chimeras constitutes an unnatural breach of the species barrier. The act transgresses the laws of nature and produces an organism “against its natural evolutionary will,” according to Dr. Bernard Dixon, a HealthWatch Award recipient.¹³ He argues that creating a human-animal chimera would be akin to creating an evolutionary intermediate between humans and animals that never existed. Many oppose chimeric research based on this idea of backwards evolution and breaching the evolution lineage.

Another argument focuses on the moral confusion caused by the creation of human-nonhuman chimeras. Currently, society’s moral and ethical framework calls for a distinct separation between humans and animals. A part-human, part-animal organism, therefore, creates a significant moral challenge, in that “the moral status of nonhuman animals, unlike that of human beings, invariably depends in part on features other than species membership, such as the intention with which the animal came into being. With human beings the intention with which one is created is irrelevant to one’s moral status.”¹⁴ As a society, our moral obligations towards animals of the same species are contingent on our purpose for breeding them, whether it is for food, labor, research, or companionship. Humans are not, however, created with a purpose in the same sense as animals are, and thus a human being’s purpose does not factor at all in his or her moral standings. Human-nonhuman chimeras sit astride this clear dichotomy in the basis of moral status: they are created for a clear purpose,

and they are also partially human. This “dual-citizenship” presents a crippling problem to a moral code that has no experience in dealing with such a case. While few believe that the possession of human cells alone warrants human species membership and consideration, many believe that certain chimeras share enough in common with humans to deserve human treatment. This approach, however, still involves a separation between humans and nonhumans. With our current understanding of human consciousness and identity, however, society can only draw an arbitrary line that determines the fate of possibly human organisms.

Some bioethicists also argue that even if a chimera receives human treatment and consideration, being a chimera still jeopardizes its personhood. Personhood deals with the concept that our cognitive ability grants us a certain level of self-consciousness and autonomy. The problem arises when chimeric animals may have enough cognitive ability to be granted partial personhood. Experiments conducted by Irwin Weissman at Stanford University have produced mice with nearly all human neurons in their brains.¹⁵ While most scientists agree that the small size of the mouse brain limits mental capabilities, the experiment does raise the issue of whether their cognitive abilities make them somewhat human. Bioethicist Ralph Buchsbaum asserts that the possibility of creating a human-like sapience trapped within an animal’s body constitutes a violation of human rights, and makes research with chimeras unethical.

An argument similar to personhood deals with the idea of human dignity, a term often mentioned in debates against practices such as cloning, torture, and abortion. Despite its common usage, the concept is surprisingly vague. The term suggests an innate right to respect an ethical treatment that is exclusive to humans and different from animal dignity. Indeed, the Second World Conference on Bioethics, held 2002 in Spain, stated that “full dignity is an attribute of humankind, and that its recognition is a fundamental right of each and every individual which must be respected and protected.”¹⁶ The conference, however, left the source of human dignity, whether it is biological, mental, or divine, unclear. A human-animal chimera can potentially have a high enough biological or mental resemblance to humans to have full dignity. There also exists the horrifying prospect that a human can have chimeric parents. An experiment in Brazil, conducted by Irina Kerkis, produced chimeric mice with

human gametes.¹⁷ She had hoped to discover a treatment for infertility in men. Her experiment, however, opens the possibility of a human having mice parents, for if male and female chimeric mice mated, the zygote produced would be entirely human. Possibilities like this cause many to consider any type of chimeric research an affront to human dignity.

These problems all arise from the distinct separation between animals and humans in our current system of ethics. A few fundamental, and outdated, ideas underlie its inability to cope with this promising field of research. The first flaw regarding bioethics comes from an understandable perception that species boundaries are rigidly defined and unchanging, especially with regards to higher primates and human beings. The arguments based on the unnaturalness of breaching species barriers all stem from this idea. In reality, the definition of a species is rather arbitrary in itself. The usual list of criteria includes physiological differences, reproductive incompatibility, and genomic differences. Yet, nature provides several examples that defy these standards. A 2006 study by Dr. David Reich suggests that the earliest *Homo habilis*, our direct ancestors, mated frequently with other apes for over two hundred thousand years before our lineages diverged.¹⁸ Thus, the unnaturalness argument against chimeric research is a manifestation of the desire to maintain the current taxonomy and order of life.

The second flaw lies in our current dichotomy of ethics towards humans and animals, a relic of the “Great Chain of Being” theory. For animals, ethical consideration increases linearly with cognitive abilities and mental functions—apes receive better treatment than pigs, who receive better treatment than lab mice. The trend ends abruptly with humans, where all members of the species receive the same ethical status. Thus, a severely handicapped human being with inferior mental capabilities nonetheless receives better treatment than a smarter chimpanzee. This privileged status leads to our exclusion from the mental capabilities and ethics relationship, which in turn causes conflicts between our personal morals and the ethics system of our society. The conflict is similar to that of a lawyer who is ethically bound to defend his client to the best of his ability, even if it contradicts his moral sense of justice. Morally, we have an obligation to give equal, if not better, treatment to animals with equal capabilities and capacity to suffer as severely mentally handicapped people, yet our

code of ethics orders us to do otherwise. Chimeras, being part-human and part-animal, force society to think critically of current bioethics and finally bring them into alignment with our morality. This restructuring inevitably comes at the cost of losing our coveted position at the top of all life. However, to ban chimera research and delay the progress of medicine merely to defend our pedestal seems utterly unjustifiable.

Yet, despite the benefits, most nations have started legal movements to outlaw the creation of human-nonhuman chimera. In the United States, Senators Brownback and Landrieu have introduced the Human-Animal Hybrid Prohibition Act of 2009, which makes chimera research bureaucratically and financially challenging. Today, the United Kingdom stands as the only nation to have legalized human-animal chimeras for medical research, a decision that has drawn harsh criticisms and cries of alarm from Germany and the rest of the European Union.¹⁹ The unpopularity of chimera research is understandable, as is the general feeling of revulsion and fear towards such creatures. To many, chimeras present a threat to our biological uniqueness in the world. In an age when astronomers and cosmologists continue to discover how small and inconsequential we really are, biology stands as the last bastion in defense of our significance and superiority. And this bastion is on the verge of being overrun by surreal part-human animals.

NOTES

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TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY

Jules David Prown has developed a method of examining and extracting cultural evidence from mute objects such as paintings, photographs, and everyday objects like chairs, clocks, and tables using three steps—and it is with this method that I will be looking at the photograph “VJ-Day Kiss” by Alfred Eisenstaedt. Through observation, we contemplate the general shapes and subjects of the photograph: the flow of lines and shadows that bring us to the focal point. Deduction brings us closer to the feelings, sights, smells, and sounds, as well as the emotions wrought from viewing; is this a scene of celebration or a scene of struggle? Finally, speculation helps us draw some meaning from the photograph as to what importance this scene holds in history and the values and ideals it upholds. Prown’s method helps dig deeper than the superficiality of a first glance. What originally appears to be a celebration full of life and wonder can be deducted through his method as the photographic capture of a sexual assault in progress. With this method we can observe the two-faced passion of “VJ-day Kiss”: both the overwhelming jubilation and the underlying conflict.

First, I look at the shot and make note of what is there: the basic outline and subject matter. The black and white photograph is a vertical shot of a sailor and a nurse kissing amidst a crowd in Times Square. The most notable feature of the photo is the stark contrast in their apparel: the sailor is wearing a dark navy uniform, the nurse a dress, tights, and shoes, all a vibrant white. The shadows of the picture are soft and subtle, and the kissing bodies curve in a way that is appealing to the eye and visual line of the photograph. The two people are the focal point of the shot; the path of

the eye starts at their faces, goes down their bodies, and then comes back around to the man's hand on the woman's waist by way of a shadow on the street. The open space provided by the break in the background's buildings also leads the eye straight to the couple. The depth of field leaves the kissing figures sharp and clear, with the watching crowd blurry in the back and foreground, and seemingly scattering out from behind them. All these lines come together to frame the shot. The fact that the couple's bodies are in full view suggests that the photographer is a few paces away, possibly farther. The breadth he has designated them gives a sense of separation, suggesting that he has no personal connection to either of the two people. It suggests that the photographer, and henceforth the viewer, is perceiving this scene as a passerby, as just another part of the crowd.

Given the objects in the photograph, and this important observation that it is a crowd scene and that every person is connected by only this one overpowering event, it is vital to recognize what the crowd might be feeling and how we might experience things if we were within the picture. Putting myself in this position, I can almost feel the excitement reverberating through the air in Times Square. People amass together, coming from every building, every street, every clearing, shouting and cheering with the news of our victory. The late afternoon sun warms our skin, casting a soft light on all the happenings. It smells like people here: the sharp sweat of hard labor, the light perfume of women, the brisk clean smell of aftershave. People of all ages are kissing, hugging, and shouting. It is mid-August, and the summer air is sweet with celebration.

As we continue our deductions, we find that running through the crowd are sailors, drunk on both booze and joy, grabbing women of all ages and sizes and planting kisses on their lips. Their arrival would add new scents to the air: the sharp tang of alcohol and the faded spice of sea air. Eisenstaedt would be running through through the crowd until he noticed the nurse and paused, bringing the camera to his eye. Mere seconds later, a man would burst through the masses and grab the woman, push her back into an arch and lean down to kiss her. The crowd would cry with amusement as the flash went off again and again. The man's arms, the only thing keeping the woman from the ground, would strain against the pull of her weight. In the photograph we can see that he clutches her to him, his grip like a lightened choke-hold as she grasps at her skirt and purse. We are

but delighted outsiders witnessing the embodiment of what the crowd is feeling—and yet, something is wrong.

The spontaneous, grasping passion of victory, the intense desire the masses feel to celebrate in every possible way, is embodied in this one action. There is an overwhelming sense of joy in this photo, layered thickly upon surprise and disbelief, even distaste. Once the kiss is done, who knows what will happen? The nurse might slap the sailor. She might laugh at him. She might cry at the sheer absurdity of it all. It is the unknown, the spontaneity of the moment, and the unforeseen wonders and consequences of its occurrence that make this kiss so powerful. It is the issues and sheer violence of the passion paired with that wonder that makes this photograph so completely uncomfortable. The viewer can't help but experience the same emotions of the crowd: joy, surprise, disgust. This photograph forces us to think about the events that brought these two together and the aftermath of the kiss that defined a nation.

My initial reactions to this photograph were the same sort of heart-warming happiness the crowd obviously feels. The feelings of passion and celebration are like an aura around it, impossible to ignore. Looking closer, however, and thinking back to how abruptly forceful the kiss must have been, one can observe the confining nature of the man's arms, the silent struggle of the nurse, and the amusement of the surrounding crowd. It pushes you to think, how must it have felt to be grabbed like that? To have someone's lips forced on your own? The mere idea that this woman might have not wanted this kiss, that she was forced into it, leaves a sort of unpleasant aftertaste to the initial joy in viewing this photograph. Despite the sailor's good intentions—to celebrate, to spread the love—this woman can be seen as silently screaming, completely disgusted with what has been forced upon her, horrified at the nearby photographer and subsequent flashes of the camera. If this is in fact the case, this photograph's place as a national symbol of victory might be ridden with undertones of the wrongs done in the name of good, freedom, and happiness. The man's apparent dominance over the woman can even be said to mirror the dominance of the rambunctious, untame, spontaneous nature of war and the complete domination of the US over Japan. The picture shows the power of a nation's support and gratitude through the mere fact of its existence, but it also proves the underlying caution, surprise, and distaste towards war in

spite of all the powerfully good feelings it can bring. Eisenstaedt clearly wants us to recognize the violent, powerful grip of the man, twisting the woman's body to his wants and will. He wants us to recognize the sickening undertone to an otherwise joyful, celebratory picture, and that as a whole, this photograph is of an action that in its occurrence may represent war and the conditions of victory.

Victory, being subjective to whomever is experiencing it and how it is accomplished, holds a variety of emotions for both the winners and losers. The man in this case would be victorious over the woman, who doesn't have the strength or heart to make him stop. All she can do is clutch feebly at herself and wait for release, all the while perhaps thinking, "He fought for this country, for me. He deserves this." The man, blinded by emotions and perhaps even an ideal of male superiority, does what he wants. Following the kiss or later in his life, he might feel a sense of shame in his action. The power of the parade, of the gathering and the joy, is a weak excuse for his complete domination of this anonymous girl. He can't hide behind the fact that he was drunk, excited, overwhelmed with a need for passion, a need to outlet his joy. His victory is her loss; his jubilation is her violent experience. In the end, it's all relative of who experienced what. Eisenstaedt, in making this photograph a cultural icon, seeks to ask all Americans a question: At what cost are we joyful? Victorious? What sense of humanity have we discarded in our quest for victory? Looking back on this event, he calls to us: Remember the kiss that captured it all.

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From the Writer

Strangely enough, I wanted to write this paper not to express a bold new idea, but because I wanted to take a middle-of-the-road approach. All of the writers whom I had studied seemed to take rather extreme stances on the subject of *contrapasso*, whereas I saw an Occam's-razor-style approach as much more suitable. This mindset, however, also ended up complicating the process. Because my thesis was not so radical that my whole paper needed to constantly argue the point, I needed to find another way to make my conclusion seem viable.

In the end, I decided to follow this format: in the first paragraph, I would introduce two extreme interpretations of *contrapasso* in addition to my own. Then, through the course of the essay, I would explain why both of these extreme interpretations were inherently flawed. Finally, I would re-introduce my own point as the logical middle ground. Despite being a somewhat simple plan, my essay went through an unexpected number of major revisions, and the number of paragraphs that were written and struck off were almost as many as those that made it through to the final version.

However, even with all of these revisions, I would still be willing to go back and add a final pass of polish. Nearly eight months after writing it, some phrases now seem forced or over-used. This is especially clear to me in my concluding paragraph, which was written from scratch several times. The one lesson that I did take away from this essay is how helpful the space of even a few weeks is when revising old writing. I had started this paper somewhat early, and the ability to put it off for a week and come back with fresh eyes was essential to getting it to the level that it is now.

— Joseph Kameen

DARKNESS VISIBLE: DANTE'S CLARIFICATION OF HELL

Contrapasso is one of the few rules in Dante's *Inferno*. It is the one "law of nature" that applies to hell, stating that for every sinner's crime there must be an equal and fitting punishment. These punishments, however, are rarely simple or obvious and are usually metaphorically rather than literally related to their respective sins. In fact, Dante scholar Lino Pertile notes, "the ways in which [*contrapasso*] works in the narrative are as many as the sins, if not as many as the sinners, to which it is applied" (70–73). As is to be expected with such a complicated concept, many interpretations of this interplay between sin and punishment have been proposed. Some of the most interesting of these focus on the relationship between Dante's unique form of justice and the traditional, biblical sense of justice. For example, Robert Durling and Ronald Martinez in their notes on *Inferno* argue that Dante's portrayal of divine retribution is clearly derived from "the biblical law of retaliation," better known as "an eye for an eye" (448). These scholars firmly believe that Dante wanted only to properly apply the pre-established standard of justice to his interpretation of hell. Another camp, however, contends that Dante is attempting to redefine completely the popular image of hell. Matthew Pearl, in his article "Dante and the Death Penalty," argues that, "*contrapasso* differs drastically from the biblical principle of 'an eye for an eye,' with which it's sometimes confused. In Dante's poem, punishments must arise from the crime itself, not from the damage it has caused" (paragraph 7). Pearl argues that Dante is breaking away from the popular notion that the severity of a sin is determined by the damage done to society, suggesting instead that a sin is more or less severe because it is more or less offensive to God, not

to man (or rather, that each punishment derives from the offensiveness of the sin itself, rather than the suffering of its victims). There are, of course, problems with both of these approaches. In a work so grounded in biblical history, it seems strange to assume that Dante would completely reject it in favor of his own invention. At the same time, the *contrapasso* is surely much more complex than a simple exchange of blows between man and God, as Durling and Martinez claim. Instead, I propose a middle ground between these two claims: that Dante primarily intended to *explain* biblical justice through his *contrapasso*, but in order to do so more effectively, expanded upon tradition, and thus inevitably added some of his own invention.

At first glance, it *is* Durling and Martinez's summarization that appears correct. Dante, proud as he may be, seems too religious to stray very far from the biblical laws of retaliation. After all, Hell does seem to serve as little more than the "long arm of the law" acting out God's will. All sinners go to be judged before Minos, who, in lieu of God (who will finalize all punishments on the Judgment Day), damns each soul to its respective punishment. From that point on, a veritable army of demons and monsters (that at least appear to be "employed" by God) carry out or add to the punishment due to each person. In correspondence with this idea is the fact that each sin is "rounded up," so to speak, to the nearest biblical sin; for example, Filippus Argenti, though his sins include greed and pride, is lumped in with the rest of the wrathful souls. This is seen again in Canto 28, where schismatics of state, religion, and family all seem to be bound to the same punishment. At least from the Pilgrim's perspective, everything in hell seems to add up to a perfect tit-for-tat system, matching with the classical Christian views of crime and punishment. Indeed, the gates of hell themselves proclaim "Divine power made me;" it is only logical that hell should be portrayed as the perfect execution of God's justice (Dante 3.5).

And yet, complications arise as one reads a little deeper. The gate may proclaim its maker, but it also proclaims its inhabitants, and these souls are not, as might be expected from Durling and Martinez's standpoint, referred to in the traditional biblical sense, as the chaff separated from the wheat or as the goats separated from the sheep. They are referred to as "The Lost People" (Dante 3.3). This immediately brings us back to the image of Dante, wandering off the straight path and slowly veering towards the

valley. Dante is not being pushed into the pits for his past mistakes; in fact, the top of the “delightful mountain” still calls to him (Dante 1.77). In this light, we see that Hell is not simply a repository where God flings the unwanted souls, as a strict theologian of the time may have suggested, but rather it is only the end of all the wrong paths that man can take. It is in small nuances like this that we can see Dante’s true purpose: his main goal is to make hell real to the common man. At the same time, he is artistically bound by the source material, and since he cannot change the Bible, he is forced to add to it.

Matthew Pearl’s statements also seem correct at first glance. We can see that Hell acts as the place where all evil souls naturally go. In this light, Minos ceases to be a judge and becomes more of a directory, an information booth showing souls to their proper resting places. The demons also shift and no longer seem to punish the souls out of anger or bloodlust, but simply because that is the right and natural thing to do given the circumstances. More importantly, this interpretation points out the fact that all sinners in a circle are *not* given the same punishment. Each sinner suffers a different severity based on his or her unique sins: sullen sinners in the fifth circle can be placed deeper in the muck, heretics in the fifth may be roasted in hotter sepulchers, and those in the ninth *bolgia* are lacerated in varying degrees. Dante indicates that some punishments are greater than others based on who committed the sins, as when Virgil calls out, “O Capaneus, since your pride is not extinguished, you are punished more” (Dante 14.62–64). That is, strong or weak or proud souls all have different levels of punishment in Hell because they all led different lives and therefore find themselves at different ends.

Pearl’s points also have their own shortcomings. For example, Pearl bases his argument on the notion that a sin naturally leads to its own punishment on the assumption that hell’s torments are analogous to the soul’s respective sins. This, however, is an oversimplification. Sometimes the *contrapasso* is based on analogy (as with Pearl’s example of the heretics in the sixth *bolgia*), but it is just as often the antithesis of a sin (as with Curio in the ninth *bolgia*). Sometimes, sins of each type are even in the same Canto (compare Mohammed and Curio’s punishments). More often than not, however, the punishment is much more complex than either of these, as can be seen in the punishment for gluttons in the third Circle. This pun-

ishment could be interpreted as a storm meant to overwhelm those who craved stimulus in life, or as a storm obscuring those who hungered for fame, or the storm could be seen as an oppressive force holding the fat to the ground, or even as a fecal metaphor. Pearl's argument's weakness is that he confines the interpretation to one of these, when it is more than likely all at once, depending on the sinner and the reader. In trying to prove that Dante wanted to rewrite religion to his own liking, Pearl is choosing only those parts of *Inferno* that match his hypothesis, ignoring the rest (and, ironically, rewriting the *Inferno* to *his* own liking).

Perhaps the best example of Dante's true purpose can be seen in his treatment of non-biblical mythology. Dante's Hell includes a myriad of classical heroes and beasts, ranging from Ulysses to Geryon, who exist alongside biblical and historical figures. While these mythological figures are taken from many sources and fill many roles, Dante treats them all similarly; in each case, Dante generally sticks to the canonical facts but also expands upon them. For example, the Pilgrim shows respect for Ulysses's heroism in life, but these acts are not the focus of his speech. Rather Dante fills us in on the rest of the story, showing us what happened after Ulysses's fatal last voyage. By showing us Ulysses's final fate, his journey takes on a new light, making the character much clearer to us. Dante makes a point of not contradicting what has already been written about these characters, but he does seem to find their stories incomplete and unclear, so he finishes them for us. Dante does not reinvent or change the classic stories but only augments them as is necessary.

Similarly, Dante is not trying to consciously re-write the biblical definition of justice, as Pearl implies; nor is he simply going along with the status quo for the sake of political correctness. Rather than attempting to redefine hell, Dante is trying to explain hell, to take an abstract concept and make it tactile, and to make it known to the common man. That is why Dante wrote in the vernacular. Although most people of the time probably knew the Bible fairly well, study of the Bible was still a luxury afforded to the few who could afford the time. In addition, the current practices (such as speaking mass entirely in Latin) further distanced the common citizen from a deep understanding of the Bible. Therefore, Dante explains hell in the vernacular, attempting to expound upon the traditional notions, but inevitably adding his own flare to his creation. Toward this

purpose, Dante has crafted a series of *contrapassos* so complex that they will slightly change based on the reader, who will interpret the punishment as it is clearest to him or her. In this sense, Dante does not want to redefine justice, but only to make his religion tangible to the average person, to be to the reader as Virgil is to the Pilgrim: a “sun that heals every clouded sight” (Dante 11.91).

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From the Writer

My paper, “Blanche Dubois: An Antihero,” started with a free write, which I have found for myself to be the best way to begin a paper. The free write concerned Tennessee Williams’s sympathy (or lack thereof) in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and was meant to be a response to three critical articles about the play.

I found what kept me interested throughout the process of writing this paper was how much I disagreed with some of the claims made by the argument sources. I genuinely found some of the statements made by these critics to be quite inaccurate, at least in my opinion, so proving them wrong with the evidence in my paper followed naturally. In any paper one can easily tell if the writer truly believes in his or her argument; admittedly, I have written papers where it is obvious I don’t stand completely on my own side, but this one isn’t one of them.

If I were asked to write another draft of this paper, I would probably boil down the content; I feel I have learned to keep my wordiness much more in check since I wrote this paper. I would also try to interact a bit more with the argument sources instead of using them in mere bits and pieces.

— Lauren Seigle

BLANCHE DUBOIS: AN ANTIHERO

Tennessee Williams's play *A Streetcar Named Desire* presents an ambiguous moral puzzle to readers. Critics and audiences alike harbor vastly torn opinions concerning Blanche's role in the play, which range from praising her as a fallen angel victimized by her surroundings to damning her as a deranged harlot. Critic Kathleen Margaret Lant claims that Williams prohibits Blanche from the realm of tragic protagonist as a result of his own culturally ingrained misogyny, using her victimization as an intentional stab at womanhood. At another end of the spectrum, critic Anca Vlasopolos interprets Blanche's downfall as a demonstration of Williams's sympathy for her circumstances and a condemnation of the society that destroys her. Despite such strong convictions, debate still exists over Williams's intentions in the weaving of Blanche Dubois' tale and the purpose of the play's moral ambiguity. Throughout the play, Williams's sympathies lie with Blanche; this sympathy proves Williams is not misogynistic but rather condemns the environment that has brought about Blanche's tragic circumstances.

Sympathy for Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire* is garnered in large part from the obvious trauma she has experienced due to the loss of her beloved husband, Allan Grey. Ironically, this aspect of the play is also one that critics and readers frequently use to demonize Blanche and disprove her role as a sympathetic character. Arguments arise that attempt to lessen the traces of author and reader sympathy in Blanche's widowhood; critics claim Williams believes Blanche behaved hatefully toward her husband or failed him in some manner, leading to the death she now laments. Kathleen Margaret Lant claims that "Williams does consider Blanche

guilty for not saving her husband from his homosexuality . . . and for not showing more womanly support and compassion for the young man . . .” (233). Lant posits that Blanche had a responsibility as a wife to somehow rescue her husband from his own sexuality, and Williams condemns her lack of calm understanding when confronted with a threat to her own happy marriage. However, this claim contrasts with the trauma that the death has caused Blanche, and the implications that the overpowering love she felt for Allan Grey may have been the last true emotion to which she allowed herself to succumb. She refers to her “empty heart” (146) and sadly mentions, “I loved someone too, and the person I loved I lost” (113). Blanche is visibly heartbroken by her loss, which intentionally evokes pity from the reader.

Evidence also abounds that the traumatic loss of her husband was a driving force for the downward spiral that leads Blanche to Stella’s doorstep. The scandalous events that drive Blanche to her ultimate defeat do not begin until after Allan’s death, and she even admits, “After the death of Allan—intimacies with strangers was all I seemed able to fill my empty heart with . . . I think it was panic, just panic, that drove me from one to another, hunting for some protection” (146). Williams implies that Blanche is not inherently impious; the disintegration of the loving marriage she once clung to dissipates her naïve, youthful innocence and leads her to a sordid path. Blanche’s heartbreak following her first love causes her to descend into the degeneration that becomes her ruin, a fact which lends empathetic justification and a sorrowful light to her actions.

Another situation in which Williams shows sympathy toward Blanche is her most dramatic victimization in the play: her rape. This scene requires careful analysis in order for one to understand that Stanley’s rape of Blanche is indeed an antagonistic victimization and not Williams’s misogynistic idea of poetic justice, as many critics argue. Lant claims in her article that “Williams goes to great lengths to obscure the fact that rape is a political crime . . . making this seem a crime of passion and desire rather than one of violence, cruelty, and revenge . . .” (235). She insists Williams “harbors false notions about rape” and believes Blanche is “a loud-mouthed, flirtatious whore who really asked for what she got” (236). According to Lant, Williams condemns Blanche even as a rape victim and utilizes her as a symbol of justice, a promiscuous woman who essentially

brought her victimization on herself. However, this argument is in complete dissonance with the obvious signs of Blanche's noncompliance in the rape and utterly ignores Williams's vilification of Stanley throughout the play. Critic Anca Vlasopolos states the drive to prove Blanche, or any human victim for that matter, compliant in her victimization is simply the byproduct of "an arsenal of psychoanalysis" and points out that "The 'inhuman voices' and 'lurid reflections' on the walls link the victimization of Blanche in scenes 10 and 11 [in which Blanche is unwillingly seized by the doctors] in a way that dismisses Blanche's complicity in the rape . . ." (165). Indeed, the "inhuman voices" and "lurid reflections" that Vlasopolos mentions are described by Williams during the rape scene as "grotesque" and "menacing" (159), an effect particularly unsettling in conjunction with Blanche's protests of "I warn you, don't, I'm in danger!" (161). The dark, sinister mood of the rape scene disproves the argument that Blanche is in any way compliant with Stanley's violation, discouraging the notion that Williams approves of the rape or intends the audience to view the rape as Blanche's just desserts.

In addition to Blanche's evident noncompliance, Williams's vilification of Stanley throughout the entire play draws a clear distinction between victim and villain in the rape scene. Upon Stanley's first appearance, Williams describes how "[h]e seizes women up at a glance . . . crude images flashing into his mind and determining the way he smiles at them," and in the next line Blanche not coincidentally "*draw[s] involuntarily back from his stare*" (25). This significant exchange sets the mood for the tension between Blanche and Stanley that continues throughout the play. Several times Blanche regards Stanley with a "*look of panic*" (127) or a "*frightened look*" (135), subtle stage directions that further Stanley's dark portrayal and foreshadow his victimization of Blanche. The fact that Stanley is characterized as lecherous and Blanche merely as mentally weak and insecure reflects where Williams's sympathies lie; it does not imply that Blanche brings on Stanley's womanizing cruelty but rather that any woman could become his prey. Williams establishes Blanche's role as Stanley's victim far earlier on in the play than his physical domination of her, and Stanley's menacing characterization implies that Blanche's flawed character does not give her singular potential to fall victim to him.

In *A Streetcar Named Desire*'s final scene, Williams makes his

sympathetic tone toward Blanche tangible by exploiting her vulnerability before the indifference of the people and society that surrounds her. In addition to the iconic comment “I have always depended on the kindness of strangers” (178), Blanche’s vulnerability is also illuminated through stage directions such as “*a look of sorrowful perplexity as though all human experience shows on her face*” (167) and “*She turns her face to [the doctor] and stares at him with desperate pleading*” (177–8). Blanche’s vulnerability leaves her sharply exposed before the cold unresponsiveness of the people who witness her defeat and represent the society in which she has been immersed: the men’s poker game resumes abruptly after her dramatic exit, Blanche’s own sister Stella returns her pleas delivered in a “*frightening whisper*” by staring blankly back at her in a “*moment of silence*” (174), and Eunice simply responds to her claim of rape with, “Don’t ever believe it. Life has got to go on” (166). The other characters in the play, representative of the era’s misogynistic society, choose to disregard Blanche’s plight in accordance with what society expects. Blanche has fallen victim to the brutality of male dominance, yet even the women around her turn a blind eye to her suffering in order to avoid any disruption of their everyday lives.

Lant and Vlasopolos hold different interpretations of this final indifference toward Blanche. Lant claims that *A Streetcar Named Desire*’s ending “dehumanizes Blanche, undercuts her tragic situation, and renders her . . . a maddened hysteric with no place in a well-ordered society” (230). According to Lant, Williams portrays Blanche as a stain on a virtuous, morally correct society. However, Williams’s negative descriptions of the chaotic, domestic abuse-ridden households that the Kowalskis and their neighbors inhabit hardly portray them as examples of a “well-ordered society” (Lant 230). Hence, Williams intends Blanche’s ousting to be a criticism of the surroundings that oust her rather than her as a reject. Vlasopolos mentions, “The fact that audiences feel ambivalent about Blanche is not the problem Williams raises; the problem is rather the audience’s pragmatic shrug at the end of the play” (168). Vlasopolos explains that the permeating air of indifference surrounding Blanche’s final rejection is precisely the issue that Williams wishes to criticize. He utilizes the key characters of the play, who silently watch the doctors force Blanche away to an unknown fate, to represent the cold, misogynistic society in which she has been immersed and from which she is now ultimately rejected. Williams uses the juxtaposition

of Blanche's vulnerability with the indifference of the participants in her destruction to demonstrate further sympathy for her and direct criticism toward her surroundings.

One can easily deduce Williams's sympathy toward Blanche throughout the play and even in the circumstances of her downfall, which gives greater insight into both Williams's perceptions of her role as a character and his own views. Although at first glance Blanche's checkered sexual past and addiction to the attention of men seem to safely secure her a pigeonhole in a womanizing society, in reality her experiences have only broken down her weak spirit and driven her to her downfall. Because of Williams's sympathy, Blanche becomes a tragic protagonist in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and transforms the play into a sort of allegory: Williams uses her plight to criticize the social circumstances that have both shaped her flawed persona and led to her demise. This social commentary leaves Williams's motivations in question: as a homosexual male, why exactly is Williams so sympathetic toward Blanche? One possibility is that Williams's homosexuality in a heavily masculine society rendered him naturally sympathetic toward the plight of women, with whom he probably identified more than with the archetypical male of the era. Another explanation is that, as a homosexual, Williams criticized heterosexuality itself, condemning the sexuality that turns Blanche into a victim, Stanley into a monster, and the rest of the characters into puppets on socio-cultural strings. Although Williams's personal motives are debatable, the story he creates with Blanche Dubois presents a clearly sympathetic portrait of a woman downtrodden by a misogynistic world.

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LAUREN SEIGLE is undeclared for her major but is a proud member of the College of Communication's class of 2013. She hails from the depths of southern Massachusetts and would like to partially dedicate the publication of this paper to her first-semester writing professor Mike D'Alessandro. In fact, he was so helpful that Lauren is transferring to Emerson College in fall of 2010 so she can knock on his door in the South End whenever she needs writing advice. This essay was written for Michael D'Alessandro's course, WR 100: The City in Twentieth-Century American Drama.

From the Writer

“Dorian Gray the Escape Artist” is the culmination of my work in my WR100 seminar, Fantasy at the *Fin-de-Siècle*. The final assignment was to create a research paper based on an interesting problem or paradox I had found in Oscar Wilde’s book, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

For me, one of the book’s most fascinating elements was Dorian’s immature behavior; though he grows older, he never seems to “grow up.” At first, I investigated how my idea related to aestheticism and what Dorian’s immaturity showed about aestheticism; however, I could not find a solid way to prove my thesis. My greatest problem was being unsure of how writing a paper based on a research problem in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* constituted a researchable argument and not just a literary analysis.

Hoping to gain a different perspective on the assignment, I met with fellow classmates to talk out my problem. It turned out that they were having the same issue with their essays, and through discussing my paper with them, I realized that my topic was too narrow to be easily supported by sources; the idea of Dorian growing older without growing up was interesting but could not easily be supported with sources outside the novel itself.

With this in mind, I modified my thesis, claiming that though Dorian Gray demonstrates aesthetic behavior in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, his fascination with artistic things serves less to pursue aestheticism and more to evade his dark past. In this manner, I argued, Dorian could be considered more of an escapist than an aesthete. At last I had an argument that could easily be supported by sources on aestheticism (e.g. Talia Schaffer’s and Walter Houghton’s work); this made writing my first draft much easier than before and allowed me to focus on the essay’s flow and style.

Writing “Dorian Gray the Escape Artist” was no easy task, and I often felt discouraged. What helped me to continue writing was seeking feedback from my professor and classmates; nothing makes one’s “old material” fascinating again like a fresh perspective. The other thing that kept me going was my genuine interest in human behavior. Dorian’s story especially moved me because I could relate to and learn from his feelings about artistic beauty.

— Jesse R. Sherman

DORIAN GRAY THE ESCAPE ARTIST

In the closing years of the austere, morally structured Victorian period, the art-obsessed aesthetic movement began to take root in society. To the aesthetes, the ultimate virtue was artistic beauty, and they strove to instill it in every physical medium of their world, believing aestheticism to be “both a literary philosophy and a guide for everyday life” (Schaffer 7). The main proponent of this movement, Oscar Wilde, applied aestheticism fervently to his writing (Schaffer 7); this is perhaps most prevalent in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The book is crafted with obvious appreciation for the aesthetic lifestyle; however, it is difficult to discern whether the main object of the story is the pursuit of unreal and artistic things or the evasion of reality. Wilde’s title character, Dorian, is a textbook aesthete, surrounding himself with fine jewels, clothing, and other beautiful things (131–38), and one would think that he is pursuing an artistic lifestyle; however, his deplorable private life suggests that his real aim in immersing himself in aestheticism is to distract himself from his past and evade his own depravity. In this way, Dorian may be considered less of an aesthete and more of an escapist.

It is impossible to discuss Oscar Wilde’s work without introducing the subject of aestheticism, as he is considered the figurative father of the aesthetic movement (Schaffer 7), and his *Picture of Dorian Gray* is simply ruled by the philosophy. Aestheticism itself is a deep appreciation for artistic beauty that reaches into all areas of life, including “architecture, dress, food, periodicals, [and] book bindings” (Schaffer 7). The aestheticism at the *fin de siècle* was modeled after the 1850s Pre-Raphaelite movement, which famously “produced allegorical, stylized, richly colored, sensuous

paintings and poems" (Schaffer 7). Wilde implants this artistic emphasis into *Dorian Gray* through his portrayal of Dorian, who collects "heavily-scented oils," obscure instruments (132), jewels like "olive-green chrysoberol" and "flame-red cinnamon-stones" (133), and even luxurious fabrics (135). Wilde's meticulous presentation of his characters also demonstrates his zeal for aestheticism. This is illustrated when he describes Dorian's appearance:

He was bare-headed, and the leaves had tossed his rebellious curls and tangled all their gilded threads. There was a look of fear in his eyes, such as people have when they are suddenly awakened. His finely-chiseled nostrils quivered, and some hidden nerve shook the scarlet of his lips and left them trembling. (24)

This fastidious attention to detail extends to Wilde's descriptions of the novel's physical environment, especially when he depicts a "furry bee" at a flower in Basil's garden as it "scramble[s] all over the oval stellated globe of tiny blossoms" (26). Passages like these evoke an aesthetic motif throughout *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

The Picture of Dorian Gray is, in essence, a book about how aestheticism affected people at the *fin de siècle*, and demonstrates how an aesthete might be lured into evasive patterns of behavior. Dorian exemplifies this by gathering artistic things to himself, mainly for the purpose of distraction; he thinks of his treasures as "modes by which he could escape . . . from the fear that seemed to him at times to be almost too great to be borne" (Wilde 138). Here, Dorian fears to face his role in the suicide of his former lover, Sibyl Vane (Wilde 99), and he clearly uses his aesthetic possessions to divert his attention from the situation. In a sense, he uses artistic things like a drug to "cure the soul by means of the senses, and the senses by means of the soul" (Wilde 182). It is interesting to note that, when pursuing solace from his guilt, he resorts to using actual drugs like opium (Wilde 181). In this part of the story, Dorian seems bent on finding psychological release, and he cares not for *how* his diversions work, just that they *do* work. His dependence on them indicates that he is less interested in making his life aesthetically pleasing and more concerned with distracting himself from personal guilt.

In searching for the source of aesthetic evasion in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, one must consider the novel's environment, turn-of-the-century Victorian culture. Walter Houghton explains how the pre-existing Victorian society was awash in hypocrisy, and how the Victorians were particularly evasive. Houghton says that they "shut their eyes to whatever was ugly or unpleasant and pretended it didn't exist," and presumed "that the happy view of things was the whole truth" (148). Though aestheticism encouraged an artistic lifestyle (Schaffer 7), turning away from Victorian "dogmatism, their appeal to force, [and] their straight-laced morality" (Houghton 146), Wilde shows that his title character's actions were inspired by the hypocrisy in Victorian society and, more specifically, Victorian-style evasion. Wilde employs this kind of evasion when Dorian's friend Basil visits him and tells Dorian of the terrible rumors he has heard about Dorian's private life; Dorian simply replies that "[they] are in the native land of the hypocrite" (Wilde 149). The function of Dorian's quote is threefold: it draws attention to the hypocrisy in Victorian society, shows how Dorian evades his own immoral actions by giving an excuse for his bad publicity, and demonstrates how Dorian distracts himself from reality by making an artistic quip about the situation. As Houghton would say, Dorian is using his "happy view of things" (148) to place the blame on someone else, while embroidering his speech to distract himself from the truth.

Another instance of this Victorian-style evasion is when Dorian murders Basil, and Dorian "felt the secret of the whole thing was to not realize the situation" (Wilde 157). Following this mentality, Dorian goes out to a dinner party the night after he disposes of Basil's body (Wilde 173). In distinct Victorian fashion, Dorian puts the "ugly" and "unpleasant" (Houghton 148) business of Basil's murder out of his mind, carrying on as if the murder never happened. The Victorian-style evasion seen throughout *The Picture of Dorian Gray* demonstrates how aesthetic-era gentlemen like Dorian kept alive their predecessor's hypocritical behavior and offers inspiration for Dorian's escapist attitude.

While Dorian's environment appears to inspire his evasive actions, it does not fully account for his status as more of an escapist than an aesthete. Walter Pater, considered the "leading philosopher of aestheticism" (Elfenbein 272), helps readers to define Dorian's standing by suggesting

ideas about how a true aesthete should live. In his essay “Conclusion’ to the Renaissance,” Pater claims “the service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation” (274). Here, he emphasizes a core concept of aestheticism: its inspiring and thought-provoking nature. Pater highlights this idea in the central argument of his essay as well:

Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. (275)

In other words, failing to recognize and appreciate vital moments in one’s existence leads to a wasted life; Pater’s “short day of frost and sun” refers to the brief, fragile lives of humans, and his “sleep before evening” symbolizes the neglect of precious moments in an already short life. This concept illustrates an ideal of aestheticism: the observation and appreciation of life as it is happening.

Against Pater’s ideal of aestheticism, one can see how Dorian Gray is not a true aesthete. As previously demonstrated, Dorian collects aesthetic things for himself and uses them as “modes by which he could escape” the memory of his grim past (Wilde 138). His fear, more than his appreciation for beauty seems to motivate him to own his treasures, and this applies to the novel Lord Henry gives Dorian immediately after Sibyl Vane’s suicide. Dorian finds the book such an excellent diversion that he does not hesitate to buy nine first-edition copies of it, and he even has the books “bound in different colours, so that they might suit his various moods and the changing fancies of a nature over which he seemed . . . to have almost entirely lost control” (Wilde 126). Dorian’s books may be pleasing to the aesthetic eye, but they mainly cater to his barely controllable “moods” (Wilde 126), which suggests that he is really using them to medicate a psychological problem. In truth, Dorian is under such fear from his past that he cannot fulfill Pater’s ideal and appreciate his artistic possessions “with constant and eager observation” (274). In this sense, Dorian’s collection of aesthetic material is an addiction, giving him temporary escapes from reality; under the stress of fear, Dorian cannot fully appreciate his surroundings, and as Pater would put it, he goes to “sleep before evening” (275).

Based on what is known about *fin de siècle* culture, it seems that Dorian Gray is more of an escapist than an aesthete. Oscar Wilde's character does enjoy owning aesthetic material, but he amasses it to himself less for artistic purposes and more to help him forget about his own depraved activities. Dorian's turn-of-the-century environment offers inspiration for his escapist attitude, as his actions closely adhere to the hypocritical Victorian concept of evasion. When compared to Walter Pater's aesthetic sentiments, Dorian's actions are also proven to not measure up to aestheticism's ideal of observant appreciation. It soon becomes clear that Dorian is not a true aesthete, and that he is actually using aestheticism as a way to dismiss his dark past. Wilde's chosen behavior for Dorian suggests that some people during the aesthetic movement were using art not purely for enjoyment, but to elude their problems. As the figurative father of the aesthetic movement, Wilde presents *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as his manifesto for aestheticism, outlining the movement's philosophy; however, he also constructs the novel as a cautionary tale, demonstrating the consequences of aestheticism's misuse through his title character. Dorian's demise qualifies as Wilde's warning to those who try to make use of art, which, in his eyes, "is quite useless" (4).

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From the Writer

I was inspired to write about aquaculture after I watched a program called *Eco Trip*, a show that investigates the environmental impact of everyday things in our lives. I was surprised to learn that salmon farming had so many negative consequences because I had been under the impression that environmentalists praised aquaculture for taking pressure off of wild populations. In reality, practices like salmon farming often put more pressure on wild stocks. As I did my research, I found that there are ways to make aquaculture more sustainable with operations like closed containment aquaculture. I stayed interested in this topic throughout the writing process because as a student of environmental analysis and policy, such a topic is highly intriguing to me.

The greatest challenge I faced when writing the paper was deciding where I stood on the issue. At first this was very difficult because environmentalists are so split on whether to support or criticize aquaculture. As I did my research, I finally was able to draw my own conclusions. I decided that aquaculture can be a part of society but only if more sustainable practices are adopted, and more thorough investigations of its impacts are completed. If I was asked to write another draft, I would probably develop it a little further where I begin to make conclusions about our relationship to nature. Overall though, I'm highly satisfied with the way my final paper turned out, and I believe it greatly improved my writing skills.

— Courtney Carroll

FISH FARMING AND THE BOUNDARY OF SUSTAINABILITY: HOW AQUACULTURE TESTS NATURE'S RESOURCES

The advent of aquaculture has extended the industry of factory farming to earth's marine and freshwater systems. It has greatly benefited the seafood business and has allowed consumers to have traditionally seasonal fish at any time of the year; however as the aquaculture industry rapidly grows from small scale to large scale, many question its sustainability. While the industry insists that fish farming takes the burden off wild fish stocks, other experts have suggested that the farms actually do more harm than help by increasing the spread of diseases, parasites such as sea lice, and astronomically increasing the level of pollution and waste in the wild ecosystems. In particular, the large scale production of carnivorous fish such as salmon has concerned many environmental groups because it requires much larger amounts of resources than producing other types of fish. Escaped salmon from farms can also adversely affect the genetic variability of wild populations, reducing their ecological resilience. The debate over the sustainability of aquaculture represents the conflict between America's need to conserve and America's need to control nature's resources. Rising evidence suggests that fish farming may end up taxing the environment beyond its capacity if it does not become more ecologically mindful. The ultimate question of the debate remains how far society can push the boundary of sustainability and how far technology can extend the capacity of nature's resources.

Technology optimists believe new innovations can resolve any possible hurdles that may come about with the development of aquaculture. Since 1970, seafood production in the aquaculture industry has increased at an annual rate of 8.8% (Morris et al. 2). As the world population

approaches 8 billion, seafood producers have harnessed aquaculture in an effort to fill the gap between population growth and natural seafood production (Molyneaux 28–29). Farmed salmon production amounted to 817,000 tons in 2006 and increased 171 fold since 1980 (Morris et al. 2). While shrimp and oyster farms mainly grew out of developing countries, salmon farming grew out of countries with access to more sophisticated technology including the U.S., Canada, and Europe (Molyneaux 45). Initial assessments of fish farming concluded that all economies had an interest in developing aquaculture. For example, on June 2, 1976 in Kyoto, Japan, an FAO Technical Conference on Aquaculture examined and discussed types of aquaculture, the possible problems such as the risk of disease, and ultimately recommended the expansion of aquaculture, leading to huge investment in the rising industry (Molyneaux 30–31). To technology optimists, the potential rewards of aquaculture seemed infinite, but few stopped to consider possible repercussions to the ecosystem.

Some environmental concerns about aquaculture did surface as it began to develop, but any initial fears of ecological impacts did little to inhibit growth of the industry. In 1967 the United States Congress established the Commission on Marine Science, and in 1969 the commission released a report that called for more research on aquaculture. Despite the lack of research, the promise of jobs and food security outweighed any concerns about its effects on the environment, and development continued unabated (Molyneaux 45). In addition, the passage of the U.S. Aquaculture Act in 1980 also helped nurture the development of the aquaculture industry (Molyneaux 46). Fish farming has obvious benefits such as food security and jobs, but these obvious benefits obscure many of the potential problems that could arise in the future.

An industry such as aquaculture that does not make efforts to promote sustainability will inevitably run into problems, despite any short term benefits it may give to investors. Salmon farms especially merit concern because to produce predatory fish, companies need to “reduce fish” to produce fish, which essentially turns fish lower on the food chain, such as sardines or anchovies, into feed for farmed salmon (Halweil 5). This process requires a huge amount of resources compared to herbivorous fish, making the salmon industry more vulnerable if supplies become scarce and much more energy intensive. In addition, though the aquaculture business

claims that its farms provide necessary food production for society's growing populations, many estimates show that modern fish farming consumes more fish than it produces (Halweil 18). The question of whether aquaculture provides a sufficient food source for future generations means many companies will lead themselves to failure if they do not manage their resources responsibly.

Does aquaculture pose a risk to wild salmon? Supporters of the industry would argue that aquaculture takes excess burden off the wild stocks that might otherwise become dangerously depleted. Many agree that commercial fishing practices have severely reduced the populations of wild fish in North America's oceans and freshwater habitats. Wild salmon have particularly felt the impact of commercial fishing in the Atlantic and Pacific waters. Aquaculture came about as a possible solution to the problem and would give wild salmon an opportunity to rebound from endangerment due to overfishing. It has been proven successful with other types of seafood such as catfish and tilapia; however, some have contested that serious problems associated with fish farming have put potentially much greater pressures on the wild populations of salmon (Claiborne 1).

According to a report which observed the recurrence of escaped farmed salmon in rivers in eastern North America, "A critical first step to assessing the risk that escaped farmed salmon might pose to wild salmon populations is to quantify the frequency with which farmed salmon enter wild salmon rivers and the frequency with which such escapes recur" (Morris et al. 2). This report provided a preliminary look into the effects of farmed salmon on wild salmon and demonstrated that farmed salmon have a significant prevalence in wild habitats. For example, their observations of rivers in the eastern United States and Canada showed that, "escaped salmon were reported in 54 rivers and bays in the region" (Morris et al. 14). Such escape events call for greater monitoring of farmed salmon production. Some areas have made more efforts to do this than others. For instance, "In Maine growers have implemented a Hazard Critical Control Point process to address the issue for sea cage sites and freshwater hatcheries" (Morris et al. 15). Keeping track of escape events and how many salmon find their way into wild habitats helps identify the risks posed by aquaculture and to what extent they affect the ecosystem.

As production in aquaculture exploded, disease became the defining issue that could impede or even kill its expansion. Infectious salmon anemia (ISA), which began to affect farmed salmon in Maine, became a serious problem and resulted in the destruction of 1.5 million fish (Jenkins 857). The aquaculture industry has not yet come up with a standard method to approach the problem of disease. "The apparent solution is to destroy all infected or potentially infected fish and let the pen sites lie fallow for a season or more, so that the virus, denied its host, will be flushed out by normal tides and dissipate" (Jenkins 857). The epidemic of ISA cost the aquaculture industry as much as \$25 million in lost fish and left the fish growers struggling for control (Molyneaux 102). ISA spread through many pathways such as sea lice, gulls, and sloppy disposal practices (Molyneaux 104). Industry supporters spoke of the ISA outbreak as a natural disaster, but temporary workers hired to dispose of the infected fish placed blame on management practices, as one worker stated, "They knew this was coming but they still overstocked their pens" (Molyneaux 103). The negligence of the aquaculture industry to use more caution in managing its supplies could have led to its abrupt failure and should serve as a warning to fish growers that ignorance of proper resource management has high ecological and economical consequences.

Outbreaks of viruses such as ISA led to the rapid establishment of programs to eradicate them. As one technology optimist stated, "We're looking at improving the immune systems of the fish. And labs are working on vaccines" (Molyneaux 107). Vaccines did help the industry gain control over many diseases that had hindered its development in the 1980s; however, vaccines can create other undesirable consequences (Molyneaux 104, 108). As one expert stated, "One thing people don't talk about is how much protection the vaccine gives the transfer of disease" (Molyneaux 108). In the case of salmon farming, vaccines prevent the fish from showing symptoms but do not protect them from infection, which effectively hides the problem instead of curing it (Molyneaux 108). As stated in Paul Molyneaux's book, "You could have salmon swimming and shedding the virus" (Molyneaux 108). This makes it extremely difficult to monitor how extensively disease impacts the populations of wild salmon and could slow down efforts to make aquaculture more sustainable.

Parasites known as sea lice have risen as another problem, but one that has had a greater impact on the wild salmon than the farmed salmon. Normally, the presence of sea lice does not present much of a threat to wild salmon, but each industrial salmon farm produces large numbers of sea lice which usually end up right in the middle of the migration routes of wild juveniles ("Salmon"). Each female lays hundreds of eggs, meaning billions of lice invade wild salmon habitat and infect the fish, making them vulnerable to disease. In addition, the lice that become attached to the fish can ultimately cause the host to starve to death because they become so large and take up too much nutrition from the host fish ("Salmon"). Aquaculture farms have managed this problem by using a drug known as SLICE, which acts as a nerve poison that kills the sea lice ("Salmon"). This effectively rids the farmed fish of the lice problem, but its benefits to the farmed salmon have not translated to the wild salmon ("Salmon"). Drugs such as SLICE represent the struggle of farmers to control nature's variability and demonstrate the belief that we can use technology to control nature's ecological processes.

Disease not only hurts the salmon but could also develop into a human health issue because many companies will send them to market as long as they do not show excessive symptoms (Molyneaux 108). Some studies have also found that farmed salmon contain ten times the levels of cancer causing PCBs than wild salmon, another major human health issue derived from aquaculture ("Salmon"). Preventing and controlling diseases will continue to cost salmon growers thousands of dollars a year, making disease a controlling factor of how rapidly aquaculture develops or how quickly it crashes. The attempt to control the threat of disease represents an assumption that we can utilize technology to control nature and overcome any obstacle. This stems from the anthropocentric belief that humans dominate nature and gives a license to society to exploit its resources without considering the harmful effects their activities might have. By not taking more careful consideration into their practices, the aquaculture industry also assumes that nature has the capacity to adapt to whatever negative effects they produce, whereas in reality they may fail to see that nature simply displaces those effects, as in the case of sea lice afflicting wild salmon. The industry will not openly acknowledge these implications that their practices have on larger ecosystems because such an admission

would harm the industry economically. Ultimately, the complacency of society towards the environmental costs of its activities presents the biggest challenge facing conservation efforts because it prevents change from occurring.

Some other problems that wild salmon have inherited from farmed salmon include threats to biodiversity, degraded water quality, and habitat conversion. According to the aforementioned report on farmed salmon escapes, aquaculture can have a negative impact on the ecological fitness of wild salmon. "Results suggest that farmed salmon can exhibit lower genetic variability than wild salmon and that the introgression of farmed salmon genes into a wild population can be comparatively rapid" (Morris et al. 16). The escape of farmed salmon can threaten biodiversity because lower genetic variability makes a species less able to adapt to changing environmental circumstances. Furthermore, negative impacts on water could also threaten wild salmon. Industries like aquaculture demand a high amount of resources for a relatively small space, creating a situation in which the environment may degrade because of overexploitation. As one article on aquaculture stated, "Clearly, high densities of cages and high numbers of fish in cages could produce situations in which the assimilative capacity of water is exceeded by the demands of aquaculture" (Diana 6). All of these problems mean that resources have limits, and though the prospects of aquaculture seem boundless, the oceans only have so much to give. American society constantly tests these limits with the use of technological advances, signifying that control of our resources takes priority over conserving them.

Practices such as aquaculture and agriculture create a perceived certainty of food security and control of resources, but unchecked growth in industrial food production can lead to unforeseen consequences in the future that could potentially undermine that certainty. This uncertainty in the stability of nature's resources stresses the need for a line between control and total ambiguity. An approach that aims to preserve the integrity of the ecosystem through more responsible treatment of the environment would justify our use of resources because such a policy would ensure a respectful relationship with nature. In the case of aquaculture, this means adopting more sustainable methods. For example, closed containment aquaculture has a much smaller impact on the environment because waste

and effluents do not go into the ocean, and no escape events can occur, eliminating many problems associated with large scale marine aquaculture ("Salmon"). Also, an organic label has recently risen as a niche market in aquaculture and offers another option for sustainability that would reduce or eliminate the use of vaccines (Taylor 4). Polyculture, otherwise known as Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA), offers yet another example of a more sustainable seafood industry. This method effectively promotes sustainability because "nutrient losses from one species are nutritional inputs for another" (Reid 2). IMTA more closely resembles how a natural ecosystem operates; it makes environmental and economical sense because resources do not get wasted but get recycled in an endless loop.

America's need to invest in an industry that promises to protect our food security sends a message about America's attitude toward nature. It suggests a belief that we have a right to use technology to control nature and the power to control its resources at our discretion. Aquaculture shares many similarities as agriculture in this regard because both represent attempts to control nature's resources for our needs. Agriculture attempts to control nature's resources by taking charge of what type of crops grow in a certain place. The mass production of crops such as corn and wheat in the Midwest take advantage of nature's resources for high profits, because of a high demand for items that include these products. These monocultures have a keen susceptibility to disease and pests because a lack of variety in genetics makes them ecologically vulnerable. Farmers fight for control with chemicals, pesticides, and genetically modified crops. Aquaculture will experience similar dilemmas as fish growers fight for control of the oceans with new vaccines and genetic engineering. Technology will play an important role in maintaining food security; however, if society emphasizes conservation over reliance on technology, this would eliminate a lot of the uncertainty that technology only seems to complicate. Practices such as IMTA stress conservation over technology because they rely on natural processes rather than new inventions or technological advances. The move to more sustainable practices in aquaculture means that our belief of control over nature will shift to a dynamic partnership with nature, a relationship that will ensure the survival and the success of both.

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COURTNEY CARROLL is a student in the College of Arts and Sciences studying environmental analysis and policy. She hopes to build a career in public health or environmental education. This essay was written for Frederic Fitt's course, WR 150: American Environmental History.

From the Writer

Being a music theory student, the numerous musical allusions in Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* immediately struck me as I read the novel for class. But what I learned from the WR program was to pursue these personal connections through scholarly research, filling them out into an informed but original thesis. The varied references throughout the novel to both individual composers and general musical forms became keyword "launch pads" into the history and analysis of the western musical canon: I dug through crisp, never-broken spines and dusty scores trying to find the connection between Schubert, Berlioz, Stravinsky, Strauss, and the raucous Jazz scenes. Through class-given drafting deadlines, including initial brainstorming, detailed outlines, and multiple rough drafts, I was able to carve down the scope of my paper into a strong, unified commentary on Bulgakov's extraordinary novel.

After completing the paper for class, I continued my research into the composers at the center of my analysis. Hector Berlioz, as noted in my paper, was a prominent member of the French musical elite, entrenched through international criticism, instruction, and royally commissioned pieces. But interestingly, though Bulgakov uses him as a metaphor for artistic corruption, I discovered Berlioz personally resembled the "tortured Romantic artist" more prominently associated (in the novel) with Schubert. His musical philosophy was fervently expressionist, and he suffered critical misunderstanding in response to some of his most passionate works. Perhaps this further reflects the mobile roles of Bulgakov's musical allusions or could reveal another layer to his metaphors. I must concede, however, that Berlioz was not as clearly defined a member of the musical establishment Bulgakov spurns as my primary research concluded. I thoroughly enjoyed researching, writing, and editing for this paper. I hope it sparks further conversation about one of my favorite novels.

— John Patrick Collins

BULGAKOV'S "MOONLIGHT SONATA:" THE THEMATIC FUNCTIONS OF GRAND OPERA AND LIEDER IN *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*

Introduction

Several articles have connected Mikhail Bulgakov's many musical allusions to the actual composers and compositions, exploring how these references influence and inform his masterpiece, *The Master and Margarita*. David Lowe traces the narrative transformation of the Faust legend from Goethe through Gounod's opera to Bulgakov's novel. Ksana Blank and Nadine Natov both invoke the similar artistic methods of Bulgakov and Igor Stravinsky and relate the novel to Stravinsky's suite *L'Histoire du Soldat*, albeit with different conclusions. These sources are models for the analysis of musical influences on Bulgakov. However, their contributions illuminate interesting but minor aspects of the novel. I will attempt to analyze Bulgakov's allusions to Romantic European lyric music in their collective thematic functions at the heart of *The Master and Margarita*.

This analysis will have three argumentative threads. First, I will show how Bulgakov's allusions to Romantic lyric music define the politico-cultural environment of Moscow and its central moral conflict in the novel. His juxtaposition in the novel of two different genres and their respective composers is a metaphor for the opposing sides of this conflict: Grand Opera, represented principally by French composer Hector Berlioz, symbolizes the materialism and artistic corruption of Soviet cultural institutions; Lieder, represented by Austrian composer Franz Schubert, symbolizes the emotive individualism and intimacy of true artistic pursuit.

Second, I will show how Bulgakov transcribes this external conflict into the mind of Ivan Bezdomny. In conjunction with Matt F. Oja and

Riitta H. Pittman's compelling if unconventional psychological interpretations of *The Master and Margarita*, I will argue that Ivan's mental breakdown is his attempt to confront the central question of the novel, "what is the moral course of action for an artist" in Soviet Russia (Oja 151)? His "truly schizophrenic" split into "two Ivans," and eventually into Ivan and Master (142), represents the now internal conflict of opposing moral forces symbolized by Grand Opera and Lieder.

Third, through examination of specific pieces of Grand Opera and Lieder, I will show Bulgakov's conflicting allusions also subtly share prominent themes and serve a common function through Ivan's madness. Specifically, Berlioz's opera *La Damnation de Faust* and Schubert's Lied cycle *Winterreise* explore themes of visions, distressed solitude, supernatural occurrences, and dreams and sleep. These themes are also Bulgakov's motifs for developing Ivan's schizophrenic episodes, so that Ivan's madness, ultimately the mechanism for resolving the two moral opposites previously characterized by Grand Opera and Lieder, has a direct relationship with actual pieces of Grand Opera and Lieder. Thus, Bulgakov's allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder function dually as symbolic reflections of the source *and* resolution of the central moral question in *The Master and Margarita*.

Grand Opera and Lieder Thematically Opposed

Before analyzing the complex roles of Bulgakov's allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder, it is necessary to define the musical genres as context for the argument. I adopt definitions from Grove Music Online: Grand Opera is "French opera of the Romantic period, sung throughout, generally in five acts, grandiose in conception and impressively staged" (Bartlet, M., Elizabeth, C.); Romantic Lieder is "the German vernacular song developed into an art form in which musical ideas suggested by words were embodied in the setting of those words for voice and piano" (Bokerheil, Norbert, et al.). These definitions are minimal, but identify basic characteristics. As my paper progresses, the musical and social qualities of Grand Opera and Lieder will be further explored in their applications in *The Master and Margarita*.

Grand Opera's contaminated role in France during the early Roman-

tic era mirrors the descriptions of Soviet artistic institutions in Bulgakov's novel. Jane F. Fulcher details the political relationship between Grand Opera and the French government in her book *The Nation's Image*, revealing that "an official Commission, representative of the state, designed to protect its interests" oversaw all executive decisions at the Paris Opera House, "a fact that was to be decisive for the development of the repertoire" (55). This political contamination of the arts can be seen explicitly in the bureaucratic censorship of Bulgakov's *MASSOLIT*: The novel opens as Berlioz, the chairman of this organization, rejects a poem he commissioned to champion Soviet atheism because he deems that it does not effectively adhere to that political agenda (Bulgakov 4–5). Fulcher mentions a second element of contamination, that Grand Opera "was now a matter of national symbolism as well as of financial interest" (63). The dominant financial motives in France correlate to the material purpose of Bulgakov's Variety Theater: The man truly running the Variety is Rimsky, the financial director, who is first introduced with a safe at his side (Bulgakov 86). Chapter 17 details Vasily Stepanovich's trouble with the very routine delivery of vast sums of money from the Variety to the overseeing Entertainment Commission (154–64). Bulgakov's descriptions of the political corruption and materialism of Soviet artistic institutions overlap with the historical functions of Grand Opera.

Bulgakov's character examples of artistic and political corruption tie these same leaders of Soviet institutions to prominent fixtures of Grand Opera, as described in *The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera*. Mikhail Alexandrovich Berlioz directly alludes to Hector Berlioz, a leading composer and critic of Romantic French music. Hector Berlioz regularly composed pieces commissioned by the state, including several Grand Operas with nationalist overtones. Importantly in connection to Bulgakov's Berlioz, Hector Berlioz was also an editor of a prominent musical journal and an author of an influential theoretical textbook on the grandiose orchestration typical of Grand Opera, *Grand Traité d'Instrumentation*. Grigory Danilovich Rimsky, the financial director of the Variety, also takes his name directly from an operatic composer. Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov was active in a later Romantic period, but still composed nationalist operas in the epic style of Berlioz. These two examples personally symbolize Grand Opera's political and financial overlap of art in the Soviet

institutions. Nikanor Ivanovich Bosoi's name resembles the Bolshoi Opera House in Moscow, which premiered operas by Rimsky and hosted tours of French Grand Opera. Bolshoi itself means "grand" in Russian, certainly an homage to the Parisian center of the operatic world at that time—it is interesting that the house committee chairman alludes to the "house" of Grand Opera in Russia. Through Bosoi, Bulgakov references the state corruption of art in nineteenth-century France to further comment on the state corruption in the housing crisis in the USSR.

In addition to historical and individual characteristics, Bulgakov adopts the musical characteristics of Grand Opera to portray satirically certain Moscow chapters as scenes in an actual Grand Opera. In Grand Opera, marches represent the "chant national" or "a kinetic response to a political predicament" (Charlton 315). This musical style is used in the grotesque march that closes the Variety show, in which Woland skewers Soviet materialism, and George Bengalsky attempts to censor his act. The ballets of Grand Opera make a "close connection [to] prevailing social-dance customs" and are often "masked balls" (Charlton 103, 99). Bulgakov stages his rendition as Satan's Grand Ball: Hellish members "danc[e]" to Strauss's waltz, the scene "pulsating with rhythm" (Bulgakov 230). Berlioz (or at least his head) and a member of the Theatrical Commission are "invited" to this spectacle, equating their artistic and moral corruption to the long list of history's condemned.

Perhaps the most essential musical component, the chorus "puts the 'grand' into Grand Opera" (Charlton 76). A sense of "the chorus" is constantly referenced throughout the novel, as dialogue is never spoken but "sung" in different vocal registers. The chorus was also a main political communicator: After a change in government, "the [French] nation's foremost opera house already had a chorus in place ready to step to the footlights in new roles embodying the power of a people . . . to form an invincible state" (Fulcher 77). Bulgakov uses the strange, involuntary "chorus" of the Entertainment Commission to satirize the political and material corruption of Soviet artistic institutions (Bulgakov 160–63). Bulgakov's allusions to the function, figures, and musical characteristics of Grand Opera highlight the political corruption, materialism, and artistic compromise of Soviet cultural institutions.

In direct contrast, Bulgakov's allusions to Lieder highlight his artistic and moral ideals. During the Romantic era, Lieder is in many ways the opposite genre of Grand Opera. Musically, its succinct length and minimalist accompaniment contrast the indulgent five acts and grandiose orchestration of Grand Opera. The solo voice is juxtaposed against the chorus. Theoretically, Lieder serves a primarily emotional function, as a conversation between poetry and music; while, as I have shown, Grand Opera serves social and political goals. A Lied was performed privately in the home, while Grand Opera was staged in decadent state-funded opera houses with a charged admission. These differences with Grand Opera imply Lieder allusions represent artistic and moral opposition to the Soviet institutions.

The allusion to Schubert introduces Lieder as the representation of artistic and moral ideals. Schubert is the archetypal composer and symbol of Lieder, and his reference brings to mind his principal musical pursuit. Schubert's Lieder are primarily identified by their strong emotional power—his pieces create an “interior stage . . . in the sanctuary of self” (Parsons 21). The goal of his music was not to parlay the current political temperament, but to explore the internal range of emotion in episode dramas of love and sorrow. Musically, Schubert's Lieder have “harmonic audaciousness,” which “may have struck listeners in Schubert's day as wildly revolutionary” (Parsons 21). This shows Schubert was not catering to any audience, but writing his music for purely artistic reasons. It is important within the context of artists in *The Master and Margarita* that, despite being politically “subjected to stringent censorship[,] . . . self-assured resistance to authority is sounded” in multiple Schubert Lieder (Parsons 97). Through his music, Schubert strove for personal and political freedom. Bulgakov's decision to name him as a main symbol of the Master's refuge, awarded in Chapter 32, casts Schubert's musical practices as a higher example than the Grand Opera allusions of Moscow.

The Master is Bulgakov's “living Schubert,” embodying characteristics noted above. Mirroring Schubert's principal practice in music, the Master explores the volatile internal emotions of Pontius Pilate in literature. His rewriting of the Gospels, most drastically in his approach to Jesus, is artistically innovative. While the Master does not fight his censorship and persecution outside of his art, his novel does reproach authority

and its negative effects, both in Yeshua's philosophical hearing with Pilate and in the tragic result of Rome's political policies (Bulgakov 22, 24). His connection to Schubert spreads Bulgakov's isolated reference to the moral and artistic ideals of Lieder throughout the rest of the novel. These Lieder allusions reveal the novel's ideals of personal freedom and expression. Thus, Grand Opera and Lieder allusions represent the opposing sides of Bulgakov's central morality play.

The Conflict of Grand Opera and Lieder on a Personal Plane

But what is the venue for acting out this morality play? Oja and Pittman's psychological argument is essentially an exploration of Ivan Bezdomny's response to the novel's moral and artistic conflict, defined above in terms of Bulgakov's musical allusions. Both critics examine Bulgakov's theme of madness quite literally, leading to interesting interpretations of chapter 11. Each asserts Ivan's "split in two" is the development of schizophrenia. This begins with Woland, who "triggers in Ivan a revelation of the falseness of all the half-baked hypermaterialism" of MASSOLIT and his own writing (Oja 144). After running through Moscow in a dream-like hysteria, he is taken to Stravinsky's clinic. Here Ivan progresses into madness: "At first Ivan talks to himself; then his monologue turns into a dialogue between the 'old' and 'new' Ivans; finally the Master's entry completes the process of Ivan's split" (Pittman 163). Creation of the Master, along with his life and literature, provides a necessary "alternative course for the writer faced by the morally repressive climate of the writer's profession in 1930s Moscow" (Oja 145).

Ivan's development of a "Doppelganger" or "splinter psyche" creates dual personas assuming the external qualities of Grand Opera and Lieder internally (Oja 142, Pittman 163). The "old" and "new" personas represent the same moral and artistic roles symbolized by Grand Opera and Lieder:

The old Ivan, like Berlioz . . . represents the writer as hypocrite, the writer as sycophant, the writer as professional phony; whereas the Master represents the alternative, the writer as hero. This is the moral alternative Bezdomny recognizes, realizes, and adopts for himself. (Oja 145)

When Ivan's mind uses these personas to explore the moral conflict on an imaginary level, allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder continue in much the same way, as signposts marking the proximity to corruption. During Margarita's "flight" in chapter 21, for example, she revels in a release from Moscow, causing destruction *en route* to the deep woods. But the freedom she declares is contingent upon her submission to the authority of Woland in the Grand Ball. Thus, the musical allusions in the woods are a frog's march and a ballet of mermaids and naked witches (Bulgakov 211), two elements of Grand Opera. Within the Grand Ball, her strange immobility alludes to the Parisian operatic ballet "based on codified . . . positions, and sometimes copying Classical statues" (Charlton 98). Her nakedness also reflects sexual corruption of Grand Opera, as "ogling the danseuses at the Opera . . . was a favorite Parisian sport," encouraged to a point of prostitution by the theater (Charlton 99). Ivan creates the Master's life, already noted as an example of Lieder, with full adherence to Romantic ideals of isolation and torment in creation. After Ivan realizes the true nature of Moscow, his resulting psychological breakdown continues the opposition of Grand Opera and Lieder on a personal plane. Grand Opera and Lieder allusions function not only in defining the novel's central moral conflict externally, but also on a deeper, additional level in Ivan's dual-persona attempt to confront the problem internally.

Grand Opera and Lieder: Thematically and Functionally United

In synthesizing through Ivan these strongly opposing symbols on a single individual (and thus shared) plane, Bulgakov hints at their underlying similarities and a second, common function. Violating the seemingly rigid roles of musical allusions in *The Master and Margarita*, Bulgakov's primary fixtures of Grand Opera and Lieder, Berlioz and Schubert respectively, historically overlap in notable ways. Schubert wrote *Fierrabras*, a Grand Opera, and Berlioz composed several *mélodies*, French interpretations of Lieder. Schubert's collections of Lieder consciously approach a unified dramatic narrative, much like an opera, and Berlioz's operas have arias explicitly in the style of Lied. Especially interesting in the context of *The Master and Margarita*, Schubert's first Lied set a section of Goethe's *Faust* to music, and Berlioz wrote an entire Grand Opera, *La Damnation*

de Faust. These similarities, along with Bulgakov's decision to assign Berlioz and Schubert to be the primary symbols of Grand Opera and Lieder, prompt an examination of their actual works.

Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* and Schubert's Lied cycle *Winterreise* share prominent themes. Both Faust and Schubert's protagonists suffer from troubling visions. In scene 7 of Berlioz's Grand Opera, "Faust's Vision," gnomes and sylphs dance ballet for him before Mephistopheles appears. In Schubert's *Winterreise*, in which a young man wanders through the frozen woods after his heart is broken, two songs deal with visions. In "Der Lindenbaum" ("The Linden Tree"), the wanderer's favorite tree calls out for him to commit suicide. Another song, "Die Nebensonnen" ("The Mock Suns"), deals with a vision of three suns haunting the wanderer: two of them, the eyes of his lover, turn away forever. In a typically Romantic ideal, both Faust and the wanderer are tormented by distressed solitude. In scene 16, Faust languishes in the dark woods, invoking nature to abate his piteous cries. For *Winterreise*, the entire cycle of Lieder follows the young man through his existential musings as he travels alone through the winter woods. The supernatural "will-o'-the-wisps" play prophetic roles for Margarita and the wanderer. A quartet of these folk spirits accompanies Mephistopheles' warnings of Margarita's future loss of Faust in scene 12. In "Irrlicht" ("Will-o'-the-Wisp"), the phantom lights have led the wanderer astray, which he interprets as a reflection of his pursuit of love. Dreams provide the setting of scenes for the two composers. In scene 7, Mephistopheles tempts Faust by lulling him to sleep and conjuring dreams of Margarita. The song "Frühlingstraum" ("Spring Dreams") is a yearning dream of love in springtime. These shared elements show Bulgakov's allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder may be in conflict generally, but they are thematically united through his given examples.

Not coincidentally, Bulgakov uses these same thematic elements to develop Ivan's schizophrenia. Bulgakov develops the theme of visions into schizophrenic creation, a product of Ivan's distressed solitude at the clinic. All action within Ivan's imagined narrative is colored by the supernatural and usually heralded by dreams or dream-like states. Bulgakov's allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder are now operating on yet another level; They are functionally united as Bulgakov's thematic mechanisms.

Because of this important thematic and functional correlation with Ivan's schizophrenia, allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder are part of the resolution of Bulgakov's central moral question, "what is the moral course of action for an artist" in Soviet Russia (Oja 151)? The madness argument places Ivan as the central figure of the novel; he becomes Bulgakov's case study of the artist in Soviet Russia. His progression into madness is "a process that is eminently healthy and healing," helping Ivan make sense of his place within the damaging moral and artistic environment of Soviet Russia (Oja 149). The result of this madness is stability between the two opposing moral forces. According to Pittman: "Bulgakov conjures up his protagonists' suppressed or neglected 'shadow' lives and gives expression to a vision of potential unity," a balancing act that "represents a complex 'settling of accounts' . . . between the poet's life of imagination and enforced conformity" (Pittman 162, 166). Thus, through Ivan, Bulgakov presents not an answer, but a synthesis of true and forced functions of the artist in Soviet Russia. As is in all elements of *The Master and Margarita*, there is no simple, definitive answer. An artist must find a variable personal balance between independent and institutional creation. Bulgakov's complex layering of allusions to Grand Opera and Lieder mirrors this synthesis.

Ivan's epilogue also reasonably echoes this conclusion. Every spring moon he seems to relive his dualist madness. "Ivan Nikolayevich openly talks to himself" in Patriarch's Ponds, recreating his horrible realization of moral corruption; he then internally visits Nikolai Ivanovich, remembering a humorous tale from his moral escape in which he "knows what will happen next by heart" (Bulgakov 333). Bulgakov's curious reversal of first and patronymic names reinforces the dual nature of this experience. Continuing this motif, Ivan's full name in the epilogue is different. He is no longer Bezdomny, Russian for "homeless," but Professor Ponyryov. He has found his own psychological "home," mirroring the Master's "eternal home" Ivan visits in his vivid dreams (Bulgakov 325). Bulgakov strengthens this connection by ending both chapter 32 and the epilogue with the same phrase. Bulgakov presents Ivan's synthesis as the goal of the ideal artist, although in the real world.

In conclusion, Bulgakov uses general, historical characteristics of Grand Opera and Lieder to illustrate the two external forces of his central moral question, "what is the moral course of action for an artist" in Soviet

Russia (Oja 151)? Through Ivan Bezdomny's schizophrenic creation of the Master, the moral question is transcribed internally. In typical Bulgakovian irony, prominent examples of Berlioz's Grand Opera and Schubert's Lieder share thematic characteristics that Bulgakov uses to develop Ivan's madness. In this paradox, Bulgakov's chosen elements of Grand Opera and Lieder simultaneously resolve the moral and artistic opposites the two musical genres broadly symbolize.

This progression makes an additional musical allusion. Bulgakov's multi-layered symbolic application of Grand Opera and Lieder in the novel mirrors the harmonic structure of "sonata form," a principle classical music form used by almost every major composer. In sonata form, the piece of music is organized into three sections: the exposition, the development, and the recapitulation. In the exposition, two harmonic "theme groups" are presented in conflict; that is, they are in different keys. However, once the piece reaches the recapitulation, these same "theme groups" are restated, only now in harmony, or in the same key. This accomplishment synthesizes the two paradoxical functions of Grand Opera and Lieder in one final statement of music's relationship with the novel: Taken with his constant invocations of the moon, *The Master and Margarita* is Bulgakov's literary "Moonlight Sonata."

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From the Writer

When I first began thinking of a subject for my paper, I looked first to the aspects of *Moby Dick* that intrigued me most. I found Ishmael and Queequeg's relationship at the beginning of the novel to be of particular interest to me because of a class discussion. I noticed how the relationship seemed to be more friendly than erotic, and I saw how the historical context of the relationship needed to be taken into account, making way for the interpretation that Melville wanted all men, regardless of origin, to be equal. What I did not consider, however, was how the equality argument could be used to talk about the novel as a whole. I realized that my thesis was too narrow and could not facilitate further argumentation in the world of academia.

With a resolve to formulate some of my own ideas before being influenced by any secondary sources, I considered the lack of women in *Moby Dick*. This led me to believe that Melville wanted to use manhood to represent something very specific. I came up with two different needs manhood could symbolize in the novel: the need for acceptance and the need for dominance. I then began to look at secondary sources to see what other scholars had to say on the subject. In fact most of the time I spent working on this paper was spent reading source after source—I wanted to make sure that I left no stone unturned and no room for anyone to say I had not done enough research.

While writing the actual paper, however, I realized that I had incorporated too many passages from secondary sources and not enough of the text of *Moby Dick*. This was a problem because the majority of the paper was written about everyone's ideas except my own. At this point, I knew I needed something more for my essay—an original idea that would give readers something for their time. Ultimately, I used passages that illustrated Ahab's capacity to feel to interpret his obsession with the *Moby Dick* not as a desire for revenge but as a personality trait.

If I had to edit this essay again, I might make the whole first section on the different representations of manhood in the novel a little more coherent. All in all, however, I am proud of the work I have accomplished.

— Veronica Faller

TIED BY CORDS WOVEN OF HEART-STRINGS: A STUDY OF MANHOOD IN HERMAN MELVILLE'S *MOBY DICK*

“All the individualities of the crew, this man’s valor, that man’s fear; guilt and guiltlessness, all varieties were welded into oneness, and were all directed to that fatal goal which Ahab their one lord and keel did point to.” (Melville 415)

Critics have long concerned themselves with the theme of male bonding, or at least manhood, in Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*. Some have called whaling “an avatar for the most base, violent, and stringent version of masculinity available in the mid-nineteenth century” (Dillard 20), while others attribute Melville’s plot and setting to a contradictory response to Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* (Paglia), in which a woman is the main character and the story happens on land. Undeniably, *Moby Dick* is peppered with passages that comprise ambiguous homoeroticism, revenge for emasculation, and male unity, which suggests that fraternal bonds are an integral part of not only the plot of *Moby Dick*, but also the meaning of the novel as a whole. Melville specifically chooses to create an entirely male cast of characters, and two interpretations of what I have found manhood to symbolize in *Moby Dick* are firstly, an innate desire in all humans for dominance over other beings, and secondly, an innate desire in all humans for acceptance from other beings. This study will examine both interpretations in the context of the novel as a whole and will combine the two to explore an interpretation of Ahab’s monomaniacal obsession with the white whale, which previous studies have not addressed.

The need for acceptance in *Moby Dick* stems from the broad range of characters aboard the *Pequod*. From Pip, the black cabin boy, to Starbuck, the god-fearing first mate, the motley crew defies all social prejudices commonly present in nineteenth-century America. The first boundary crossed in the novel is the one between Christian and savage, as evidenced in the beginning of the novel when Ishmael is forced to share a bed with Queequeg. “No man prefers to sleep two in a bed,” Ishmael declares, later modifying this statement to say, “Ignorance is the parent of fear . . . I was . . . as much afraid of [Queequeg] as if it was the devil himself . . .” (Melville 29, 34). Here, Ishmael is afraid of the unknown; cannibals such as Queequeg are not what he is familiar with. And yet, Ishmael brings this strange bed-sharing experience upon himself—it is he who decides to “take to the ship” (Melville 18). At the start of the novel, he confesses,

Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people’s hats off— then I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. (Melville 18)

Here, Ishmael admits to the human need for salvation from the pressures and restrictions of everyday life. What makes him different from the other sailors, however, is his orphan status. Ishmael has no family and therefore feels that if he cannot find love and acceptance on land, he will find it on the ocean. This idea brings him to pack up and spend the night at the same inn as Queequeg.

Indeed, in the beginning stages of the novel, Ishmael does find an accepting family in Queequeg after the initial shock of the harpooneer’s differences has worn away. Ishmael describes their interactions with tender tone and affectionate language, saying they are a “cosy, loving pair” and finding Queequeg’s arm draped over him in the mornings “in the most loving and affectionate manner” (Melville 57, 36). The reader would think Ishmael “had been [Queequeg’s] wife,” as though “naught but death should part [the two] twain” (Melville 36, 38). The two become increasingly more intimate with each other, and Ishmael eventually defies the restrictions of

his Presbyterian upbringing by taking part in Queequeg's idol worship, citing the Golden Rule: "And what is the will of God?—to do to my fellow man what I would have my fellow man do to me . . . What do I wish that this Queequeg would do to me? Why unite with me in my [religion] . . . I must then unite with him in his . . . I must turn idolator" (Melville 57). At this point, Ishmael symbolically erases the line between different religions, making room for the acceptance he craves as an orphan.

Some critics see Ishmael and Queequeg's relationship not as friendly, but as homoerotic. In an argument written in 1994 entitled "Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's Novels," Caleb Crain asserts that Melville chose to use cannibalism as a euphemism for homosexuality (34). This is not a totally random association, because in Melville's day, the savages of the South Pacific islands were infamous for both their cannibalism and their promiscuity between both genders. Crain states that for Melville's nineteenth-century American heroes, "cannibalism and homosexuality violate the distinctions between identity and desire; between self and other; between what we want, what we want to be, and what we are" (34). I give credit to Crain's comparisons of homoerotic love and cannibalism, and I agree that both are similar because each incites a strong desire for the other's body; lovers and cannibals alike become possessive and irrational when stricken with that need. I believe, however, that Ishmael and Queequeg's relationship is more than just sexual—it is a manifestation of the human desire to be loved and accepted as an equal. According to his study entitled "Of Friendship: Revisiting Friendships between Men in American Literature," Josep Armengol-Carrera agrees. He draws a line between homosexuality and homosociality, saying that while one is concerned with desire, the other is associated with friendship. He states that "love and friendship between men might, eventually, contribute to the promotion of more egalitarian societies" (207). The supposed homosexuality in *Moby Dick*, therefore, is actually homosociality, which illustrates the belief held by Melville that all men, orphan and savage alike, not only need each other, but also should be accepted as equal.

Now, some readers may challenge my view that the need for acceptance is a masculine trait at all. After all, many believe that this desire shows somewhat of a weakness and is therefore feminine. In a previous argument written by Mark Lloyd Taylor called "Ishmael's (m)Other:

Gender, Jesus, and God in Melville's *Moby Dick*," Taylor presents a similar theory to mine, separating the masculinity of God the Father as a dominating force and the femininity of God the Son as a loving and accepting higher power. Indeed, my own argument that Melville uses manhood to represent a need for other human beings seems to ignore the fact that Ishmael compares his relationship with Queequeg to one between man and wife. I parry this with textual evidence: Melville very obviously chooses to exclude females from his major cast of characters. Philip Armstrong's "Leviathan is a Skein of Networks': Translations of Nature and Culture in *Moby Dick*" explains the lack of females in the novel as Melville's personal belief that women would not play a huge role in the industrial revolution. He writes that Melville "represses the possibility of female economic and cultural agency altogether by utterly excluding women characters from his novel" (1053). Robyn Wiegman, in her article entitled "Melville's Geography of Gender," offers another explanation: "The male bond provides an illusion of autonomy, of self-creation . . ." (748). In other words, Melville deliberately chooses to exclude femininity in favor of exemplifying man's ability to survive without women. By keeping his characters strictly male, Melville provides no room for ambiguity in his portrayal of manhood.

As *Moby Dick* progresses and the *Pequod* sets sail, Ishmael and Queequeg's relationship fades in significance (with the exception of the chapter "The Monkey Rope"¹), and Ahab emerges as the main character in the novel, along with a new representation of manhood: the need for dominance. The way in which Melville achieves this transition is through the establishment of a chain of command onboard the *Pequod*. Ahab, the captain, gets the most screen time, followed by the three mates, Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask, then the harpooners, Queequeg, Tashtego, and Dago. In the chapter entitled "Knights and Squires," Ishmael notes, "In that grand order of battle in which Captain Ahab would presently marshal his forces to descend on the whales, [the three mates] were as captains of companies . . . each mate . . . always accompanied by his boat-steerer or harpooner" (Melville 106). Ahab, with true manliness, is clearly the dominating force on the ship, and all others act beneath him. The hierarchy is the first superficial manifestation of a need for dominance; it is necessary for the *Pequod* to function successfully.

Other representations of manhood as a dominating force, however, are unveiled with psychoanalytical studies of Ahab's obsession with the Moby Dick. Now, the scope of this essay does not include discussion on the abundant sexual imagery present in *Moby Dick*; I would not go as far as to say what Camille Paglia does in her book *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson*, where she suggests that Ahab's injury is a sexual one, and the harpoon he thrusts at the Moby Dick is a "phallic mental projection, born of frustrated desire" (589). I will, on the other hand, admit that on the surface, psychoanalysts of *Moby Dick* are correct in assuming that Ahab's struggle with the whale is actually a manifestation of erotic frustration. Ahab may have lost more than a limb in his first encounter with the great leviathan, and indeed his injury seems to be a symbolic emasculation. His obsession with the whale would then be due to avenging his shattered manhood.

Thankfully, other psychoanalytic interpretations delve well beyond any sexual problems Ahab may have and into his problems with the repressed nineteenth-century American culture, which I find to be more pertinent to Melville's intentions for the novel. Back in Melville's day, all respectable men had to adhere to a strict doctrine of Christian faith and were expected to denounce non-Christians like Fedallah and Queequeg. Ahab's crew, being composed of men from all over the world, is the ultimate defiance of his own religion. In an essay entitled "In Nomine Diaboli," Henry Murray says this candidly: "[Ahab] has summoned the various religions of the East to combat the one dominant religion of the West" (443). By captaining a crew of infidels and savages, Ahab asserts power over his own stifling religion; by defying it, he has stepped away from tradition and given in to his desire for dominance. Murray goes on to suggest a Freudian interpretation of the novel, noting,

Ahab is captain of the culturally repressed dispositions of human nature, that part of personality which psychoanalysts have termed the "Id." If this is true, his opponent, the White Whale, can be none other than the internal institution which is responsible for these repressions, namely the Freudian Superego . . . Starbuck, the First Mate, stands for the rational realistic Ego which is overpowered by

the fanatical compulsiveness of the Id and dispossessed of its normally regulating functions. (443–444, 446)

If this interpretation is true, then it only goes to show man's innate and internally secret desire to have control over all that opposes him.

David Leverenz, in a book entitled *Manhood and the American Renaissance*, throws out an opposing point of view to my theory of the need for dominance. Instead of a need to dominate, Leverenz argues that Ahab has a need to be dominated. "Ahab *struggles*² for absolute dominance," Leverenz writes, "over his crew, over his malevolent God, and perhaps over his still more malevolent self" (281). And yet, Ishmael and Ahab are "doubles of a self that loathes itself" (Leverenz 280). In other words, Leverenz believes that Ahab and Ishmael each have an intense self-hate, and a desire to be dominated by a higher, unloving power. While Leverenz may speak the truth about Ishmael,³ I disagree that his assertion applies to Ahab. In chapter 37, "The Sunset," in which Ahab is found soliloquizing about the hunt for the Moby Dick, Ahab cries, "I now prophesy that I will dismember my dismemberer . . . Ye've knocked me down, and I am up again . . . Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way!" (Melville 143). As I am sure other readers will perceive this passage, Ahab speaks like a man who wishes to dominate, not be dominated.

As has been shown, the need for dominance and the need for acceptance are prominent in *Moby Dick*. Combining these two interpretations of manhood in *Moby Dick* opens the door to a realm of new understanding on Melville's view of human nature. If man craves both acceptance and dominance, then he not only wants to succeed and rule over his fellow beings, but also feels the need to be loved by the very individuals he has asserted supremacy over. Almost apologetically, man yearns to be put up on a pedestal, worshipped by those who were created by God not to be his inferiors, but his equals. In other words, though all men are supposedly created alike, each secretly longs for the elevation of his own importance in relation to others. The epitome of man in *Moby Dick*, then, is Ahab.

If this idea were shared by Melville, then how does his novel compromise this paradox of equality and desire for greatness? The most obvious answer is in chapter 36, "The Quarter Deck," where Ahab first introduces the gold doubloon. "Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale . . .," Ahab cries, "he shall have this gold ounce, my boys!" (Melville

138). The desire for the doubloon unites the crew, allowing them to accept Ahab's monomaniacal search for the Moby Dick. Ishmael admits, "A wild, mystical, sympathetical feeling was in me; Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine" (Melville 152). Because any crewmember is eligible to receive the coin at voyage end, equality is established between men of different race, religion, age, and background. On the other hand, the doubloon also serves as an agent for Ahab to gain dominance over his crew, considering that without the proper motivation, the crew might not have chosen to abandon their hunt for normal whales.

My discussion on manhood, then, actually opens up the door towards the larger theme of something I will term "egotistical insecurity." I would like to define egotistical insecurity as man's fear that he will fail to achieve his personal destiny. Egotistical insecurity is not the anxiety induced by trying to impress others or an inferiority complex; rather, it is the belief that you are better than others combined with the fear that you will not be able to show it. What I view to be the main conflict in the novel, Ahab versus whale, arises as a result of this egotistical insecurity. Ahab believes he must kill the whale because he sees it not as an animal but as a rival, a challenge to his superiority. Ahab shouts, with a "terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart stricken moose," about how the whale has defiled and violated his body: "It was that accursed white whale that razed me; made a poor pegging lubber of me for ever and a day!" (Melville 139). Being the extreme case of someone with an egotistical insecurity, Ahab's immediate response to a challenge to his superiority over all beings leads him to take his monomaniac obsession to unhealthy heights, ultimately resulting in his demise.

At this point, I would like to address some of the issues raised by the skeptic in me. She feels that I have been ignoring the obvious reasons Ahab would want to slay the Moby Dick. "Back off of the fancy interpretation for a bit," she says to me. "Isn't Ahab's obsession stemming from a simple need for revenge?" After all, in his speech to Starbuck in Chapter 36, Ahab calls his own obsession a need for vengeance.⁴ Additionally, critics such as T. Walter Herbert Jr., author of the article "Calvinism and Cosmic Evil in Moby Dick," claim that Ahab "takes [the attack] as a cosmic affront and determines to be revenged" (Herbert 1614).

While I do acknowledge that the obvious interpretation of Ahab's quest is for revenge, I will remind my skeptic that human beings are not so simple, and that Ahab's need for revenge is only on the surface. Ahab desires to display his preeminence; interpreting his obsession as a need to exact revenge would ignore the positive human qualities Ahab possesses. Sharon Talley, in her book *The Student Companion to Herman Melville*, accurately points out, "through Ahab's interactions with [his crewmembers], Melville reveals the human possibilities that still lurk within the captain's soul" (57). In chapter 125, "The Log and the Line," Ahab reaches out to Pip, a young boy much lower than him on the totem pole, and takes him under his wing, saying, "Oh, ye frozen heavens! Look down here. Ye did beget this luckless child, and have abandoned him . . . Ahab's cabin shall be Pip's home henceforth . . . thou touchest my innermost centre, boy; thou art tied to me by cords woven of my heart-strings" (Melville 392). In chapter 132, "The Symphony," Ahab laments his wife's loneliness, saying, "I widowed that poor girl when I married her . . . what a forty years' fool – fool – old fool, has old Ahab been!" (Melville 405). Additionally, Starbuck witnesses Ahab "[drop] a tear into the sea; nor did all the Pacific contain such wealth as that one wee drop" (Melville 405). These passages illustrate Ahab's capacity to feel, showing that his obsession with the whale is more than an uncomplicated desire for revenge. Revenge is petty; it is too black and white and so much smaller than Ahab's real justification of the "fiery hunt" (Melville 165). I believe that egotistical insecurity is an inherent part of Ahab's personality—he cannot help himself when the Moby Dick, the threat to his supremacy, is alive. Therefore, Ahab is concerned not with the past actions of the whale, as revenge would suggest, but with what the whale represents.

The drama's done. There is no doubt that with *Moby Dick*, Melville meant to convey something important—something that would stretch beyond the minds of nineteenth-century Americans and into those of the readers of the future. By connecting the human needs for acceptance and dominance, Melville achieves a display of truth through Ishmael, who is saved by a coffin on which "a complete theory of the heavens and earth, and a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth" is carved (Melville 366). And yet, Melville chooses to have Ahab, the epitome of manliness, perish along with the rest of the crew. Perhaps Melville is hinting at the

absurdity of his own ideas, deliberately showing his readers that those possessed by their own egotistical insecurity become not perpetrators of greatness, but victims of the desire for it. When all is said and done, man's existence is temporary; nature will not wait for him to achieve his destiny, as Melville asserts at the end of his masterpiece:

Now small fowls flew screaming over the yet yawning gulf; a sullen white surf beat against its steep sides; then all collapsed, and the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago. (427)

NOTES

1. In this chapter, Ishmael and Queequeg are literally tied together by a rope: "For better or for worse, we two, for the time, were wedded" (Melville 255), Ishmael tells the reader of their hempen bond.
2. Emphasis my own.
3. In chapter 1, Ishmael declares, "Who ain't a slave? . . . However the old sea-captains may order me about—however they may thump and punch me about, I have the satisfaction of knowing that it is all right . . . and so the universal thump is passed round . . ." (Melville 21).
4. "... My vengeance will fetch a great premium *here!*" (Melville 139).

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VIOLENT MEDIA AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

On October 26, 1984, nineteen-year-old John McCollum shot himself in the head while listening to an Ozzy Osbourne album. His parents, blaming the suggestive lyrics of Osbourne's *Suicide Solution* instead of John's emotional problems and alcohol abuse, filed suit against CBS records and Osbourne himself. It was their belief that the record company was negligent in the dissemination of Osbourne's music because the lyrics vividly encouraged suicide, thus aiding and abetting John's tragic end. The defense countered that there was not enough evidence to substantiate claims that the music caused John's suicide, nor was it Osbourne's intent to produce such a result. The Court of Appeals of California sided with the defense, ultimately concluding that the plaintiffs failed to allege solid bases for overcoming Osbourne's first amendment rights (*McCollum v. CBS*). This case illustrates some of the major points of debate amongst scholars surrounding violent media and the First Amendment, including the ever-present question of imminent lawless action.

Historically speaking, imminent lawless action, earlier deemed "clear and present danger," is one of few standards that uniformly limits the First Amendment constitutionally. This clause, along with other classes of limited speech, like obscenity, libel and false advertising, are often applied to media as justification for censorship. Critics of violent media believe there is a clear correlation between violence in the media and violence in society, which suggests the imminent lawless action clause is applicable in certain media situations. In the context of the previously introduced case, imminent lawless action was applied by the McCollum family because they believed lyrics like "get the gun and try it, shoot shoot

shoot” were likely to cause any listener to “get the gun and try it” (*McColum v. CBS*). However, when making such claims, judges must be sure beyond doubt that the speech was likely and intended to produce lawless action, and in this case, the judge was not convinced. Other factors, like interpretation of the lyrics and intended mood of the music, are too subjective to serve as the basis for such certain claims. Even though there is an assumed correlation between media violence and violence in reality, it is very difficult to assuredly establish the connection, which makes the successful application of the imminent lawless action clause unlikely.

On the other hand, there is warranted stipulation that claims violent media does not denote imminent lawless action because the vast majority of people who participate in this American pastime do not act lawlessly. Justice Louis Brandeis argued, “to justify suppression of free speech there must be reasonable ground to fear that serious evil will result if free speech is practiced” (*Whitney v. California*). In the case of violent media, it is very difficult to prove that serious evil will result with the continued propagation of violence on television or in music. While there are certainly cases where media is blamed for acts of violence, it seems excessive to project these specific outcomes on the general population. More specifically, watching violence on television or hearing it in music could possibly produce violent behavior in some, but certainly does not in most.

Thus, unusual reactions of a few should not limit the freedoms of all. The Federal Communications Commission endorses this claim, stating, “it is unjust to censor entertainment for a huge majority of Americans because a small fraction of the population reacts inappropriately” (Firstamendmentcenter.org). To illustrate this point, let’s examine the Rhode Island Supreme Court case, *DeFilippo v. NBC*, from 1982. This case arose after thirteen-year-old, Nicky DeFilippo, hung himself while viewing the *Tonight Show*. That night, Jonny Carson interviewed a stuntman who could imitate a realistic hanging suicide and then emerge completely intact and alive. Though the program included a “don’t try this at home” warning, the boy attempted the stunt. Hours later his parents found him hanging, lifeless, with the television still tuned to NBC. They then unsuccessfully sued for ten million dollars, claiming that broadcasting the stunt was negligent of NBC because it disregarded Nicky’s welfare. Stories like this and the Osborne case are shocking and memorable, but pale in number when com-

pared to the thousands of uninteresting accounts of people viewing similar acts without killing themselves or others. These rare instances of supposed media provoked violence are not only unintentional by the media, but are unpredictable by networks and subsequently should not merit the imminent lawless action bar of First Amendment protection.

The courts clearly agree as monetary compensation has yet to be awarded in any of the similar cases. A provable link does not seem to exist between the acts of violence and the media, though lawyers continue to try and make these connections. For instance, fifteen-year-old Ronny Zamora claimed TV shows like *Kojak* led him to shoot his 83 year old neighbor (Hancock). In the case of *Olivia N. v. NBC*, the prosecution tried to hold the network responsible for broadcasting a movie that allegedly led a group of minors to artificially rape Olivia N. with a bottle. In 1978 little Craig Shannon tried to sue Walt Disney Productions Inc., claiming *The Mickey Mouse Club* caused him to pull a stunt that resulted in blindness. These cases and a slew of other unsuccessful suits illustrate that courts are unwilling to hold media monetarily responsible, and rightly so.

There are other, more likely enablers of violence, and the alleged harm caused by media exposure is most likely felt by a vulnerable population that has already been exposed to other enablers. Alfred Blumstein, a dean at Carnegie-Mellon, bluntly states, “the glorification of violence on television has little effect on most folks, but it has a powerful effect on kids who are poorly socialized” (qtd. in Kopel). To assert that the previously mentioned perpetrators acted solely based on their exposures to media is unreasonable, especially when compared to the vast majority of people exposed to the same television shows and songs that did not have violent reactions. Realistically, the media does not exist in a vacuum, and to hold the media responsible for these violent acts is ignoring the bigger picture. Thus, if lower courts cannot even legitimize suits making such allegations, it would not be just to limit First Amendment freedoms of the media based on these faulty claims.

However, few would deny there is at least a slight correlation between violent television and violent reality. Lyndon B. Johnson said, “It is reasonable to conclude that a constant diet of violent behavior on television has an adverse effect on human character and attitudes” (qtd. in firstamendmentcenter.org). On the other hand, the old high school science

adage applies here: just because ice cream sales are higher when more air conditioners are turned on does not mean turning on air conditioners will increase ice cream sales. In these terms, just because violent acts are sometimes related to the media does not mean the media causes violent acts; or simply, correlation is not the same as causation. Much of the research claiming otherwise is subject to serious criticism because of methodological flaws and inconsistencies. For example, a commonly cited Centerwall Study of 1989 claimed that “long-term childhood exposure to television is a causal factor behind approximately one-half of the homicides committed in the United States” (Centerwall). Another study done by George Comstock of Syracuse University’s Center for Research on Aggression surveyed 230 and found a much lower correlation of ten percent (Kopel). Critics of Centerwall argue that his research is skewed because he was searching for a particular outcome. That speculation aside, significant inconsistencies in outcomes testing the same or similar hypotheses suggest innate methodological flaws, and thus courts should not hold these inadequate conclusions as proof that media’s First Amendment rights should be limited. Furthermore, countries with more violence on television, like often cited Japan and Canada, have less violence in society than the United States. Instead, the United States has higher levels of poverty, drug abuse, broken homes, deteriorating public schools, excessive gun ownership, etc. It seems more practical to pin these issues as causal factors of violence in society than to try drawing connections with the fake, acted violence on television.

Yet politicians persistently attempt to pass legislation limiting media freedoms to display violence. Karen Sternheimer, a sociology professor at USC, asserts that regulating television is less difficult than eliminating other potentially causational issues, which is why officials continue to try violating the First Amendment with certain regulations. She rightly points out that “violence is not an equal opportunity problem,” meaning that other factors, like growing up in a rough neighborhood, are more likely to cause violence. It is naïve to deduce that media can create violence in places where none of the aforementioned causational issues exist. For instance, it is true that Ronny Zamora watched a lot of *Kojak*, but does that explain why a fifteen-year-old boy had such easy access to a loaded gun? The attention that politicians give to the media correlation encourages the public to ignore the other causes, which is obviously detrimental.

Disregarding the more likely origins of violence to focus on media regulation is shunning away from the problem and thus avoiding a solution.

Furthermore, it is not the role of the government to regulate public tastes, though that argument for censorship is becoming more common in First Amendment jurisprudence. Many critics of violent media, and video games specifically, claim that these mediums “lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value” (Free Expression) and banning them loses little. And while Harry Kalven Jr. points out, “the desire to elevate public taste and to eliminate the tawdry, the vulgar, and the worthless . . . [is] indeed a seductive one,” the government should be focused on more pressing domestic issues, like the real violence plaguing our streets.

Just as it should not be the government’s responsibility to dictate public tastes, the government should not be responsible for discerning between violent media to determine permissibility. The unclear definition of what constitutes as media violence makes its regulation ambiguous, and vague legislations about censorship are dangerous as they threaten all media freedoms. For instance, few would support the suppression of local news media, which frequently contains actual violence, because free access to that genre of information is highly valued in United States culture. Even less would advocate banning Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, though there is little more violent than the tale’s graphic descriptions of cold-blooded murder.

But then what is the difference between that violence and the significantly lighter and less brutal violence depicted in the cartoon *South Park*, which is often contested? Some claim the interactive nature of television makes violence seem more real and thus regular exposure makes violence seem ordinary (Kopel). And in terms of *South Park* specifically, the light-hearted nature of the program makes violence and its subsequent consequences seem less serious. Conversely, others claim the fantasy aspect of cartoon clearly separates fiction from reality, so the latter is less likely to provoke a violent reaction. Coming to a consensus or even to a significant majority vote about which violent media deserves censorship is unlikely, so it is preferable for the government to protect freedoms by not implementing subjective regulation.

These abstract, conflicting ideas are managed by courts asserting that subjective judgments based on unclear state laws surrounding the media violence issue are unconstitutional. The first case to make such

claims was *Winters v. New York*, which established that laws prohibiting publications of violent materials were unconstitutional because of ambiguous criteria and thus violated the First Amendment. Justice Reed delivered the opinion of the Court saying the law “violates the right of free speech and press because it is vague and indefinite.” Based on this initial case and many others that followed, it is clear that the government recognized the unconstitutional aspect of media regulation of this nature, and though the issue continues to be pressed, the government will rightly stand by these decisions.

There have been laws that successfully bypass the vague criteria claim with unequivocal language. In 1994, Representative Edward Markey successfully passed legislation requiring networks to label violent programs in an obvious and accessible way. This led to the 1995 v-chip law which compelled television manufacturers to implant chips allowing parents to block programs of a certain, explicit rating (“FCC V-Chip”). These television and network features enable parents to do the censoring, taking the responsibility further out of the government’s hands in an appropriate manner. These laws are preferable to other potential forms of government regulations. Additionally, producers would rather play along with the v-chip than offend Congress and risk greater controls, so neither of these laws have been hotly disputed.

The fact that the First Amendment keeps the government from demanding the media to limit violence does not preclude the media from self censorship. This idea is discussed ad nauseam that freedom of speech is not the same thing as freedom to speak, and the same concept applies to violent media. However, the goal of the media is not to be a virtuous source of morals and goodness, but rather to make money and broadcast whatever will up ratings. If violence is selling, the media will sell it. At the same time, if one prefers not to experience media violence, there is the option to select media that does not include it. As it stands, government regulation of violence in the media is neither constitutional nor appropriate, and the media itself is unlikely to cut programs when there is an interested audience. The clear solution is not to ask the government to violate the First Amendment, but rather to address the real violence enablers. Violent media should continue to be included under First Amendment

protection until there is a distinct correlation between programming and imminent lawless action.

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From the Writer

Having my entire family from Poland has no doubt influenced my deep interest in Poland's history and my love of the culture and language. After reading about Naomi Klein's pessimistic views on Poland's economic transition after 1989 in her book *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, I drew a connection to the dreary imagery of Warsaw around this time as portrayed in Andrzej Stasiuk's novel *Nine*. I agreed with Klein's assertions that Poland's transition from a controlled to a market economy was mishandled, thus making the daily lives of Poles more difficult. I set about to support this with Stasiuk's gloomy descriptions of Warsaw's landscape in *Nine*, which I felt illustrated the struggle of many at the time.

What I found most difficult about writing this paper was its organization. I found that making several outlines before writing helped me organize the paper and see what information to include in each paragraph. However, formulating my argument and addressing it properly was time consuming and took several drafts to properly complete.

Comments from students and my professor helped me notice flaws in my argument in addition to giving me helpful suggestions on how to improve my paper. After reading my first draft, students said that I should add more of Klein's statistics to the paper to strengthen my argument, as it is her statistics and facts that I am agreeing with. One student also pointed out that I should expand upon the references to cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol in Stasiuk's *Nine*. The feedback I received from both students and my professor was especially beneficial to my writing process as it helped me strengthen my paper and improve on weak areas in my writing.

Though I am pleased with the final draft of this assignment, I think that it would be stronger if I used more examples from both books. I feel that my thesis would be better supported if I added more of Klein's assertions and statistics about the difficulty of daily life in Poland in the wake of its economic transition. In addition, I would perhaps add more interpretations of the descriptions of Warsaw in Stasiuk's *Nine*.

— Gabrielle Migdalski

THE PORTRAYAL OF DESPAIR IN POLAND AFTER 1989: STASIUK'S *NINE* AND KLEIN'S *THE SHOCK DOCTRINE*

Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* portrays Poland, immediately after its transition to a market economy, as a severely disorganized, poverty-stricken, and betrayed country. This is a country that hoped for a positive change, was promised one by the economists of the IMF and the World Bank, and was ultimately let down by these organizations through the rapid enforcement of strict measures on governing the economy. The depiction of this time period in Andrzej Stasiuk's novel *Nine* is no less optimistic, translating Klein's percentages and information into bleak and depressing images and descriptions of Poland in the wake of its transition. This depression is most visible through Stasiuk's vivid and detailed descriptions of Warsaw's landscapes and surroundings, in addition to his characters' alcohol and drug use. These images evoke the bewilderment, hopelessness, and loss that many Poles felt when their country's transition to a new economy did not reap the fruits that they had hoped for, hitting them quickly and with full force. Stasiuk's *Nine* serves as a visual aid to Klein's assertions in *The Shock Doctrine*, and together these two works demonstrate the damaging effects of Poland's shaky shift from a controlled to a market economy.

Klein offers some telling statistics about Poland's situation after 1989, which are further reinforced by other sources discussing Poland's transition. After Poland's triumph over communism through Solidarity's legalization and victory in the country's election, the state of Poland's economy already seemed dire. Klein states that "When Solidarity took office, debt was \$40 billion, inflation was at 600 percent, and there were severe food shortages and a thriving black market" (220). After Poland

accepted the IMF's financial aid in exchange for the quick imposition of the IMF's economic measures, the standard of living dropped drastically within only a few years. Stanislaw Wellisz, in his 1991 article "Poland Under 'Solidarity' Rule," states that "food now takes up over 55 percent of the average consumer's budget, vs. less than 40 percent in the first half of 1989" (1). This illustrates how basic necessities were becoming more difficult to afford during this time period. Unemployment soared during this time, with 2.8 million people out of work in 1992, "of whom 80 percent had been previously employed," according to Mieczyslaw Wacław Socha and Yaacov Weisberg in their 1999 article "Poland in Transition: Labor Market Data Collection" (1). Klein points out that these high unemployment figures lingered on, even when Poland joined the European Union over a decade later, stating that Poland, according to the World Bank's figures at the time, "[had] an unemployment rate of 20 percent—the highest in the European Union" (241). These depressing statistics propel Klein's fervent tirade against the IMF's and the World Bank's forced and drastic transition in Poland and other countries shifting from a communist to a capitalist economy.

The Poles had seemingly triumphed over the Communists through the Solidarity movement, but had been forced into a radical transition that left them with lower standards of living than in times under communism. They felt lost and uncertain. In reference to poverty, Klein remarks that "15 percent of the population of Poland lived below the poverty line in 1989, in stark contrast to 59 percent in 2003" (241–242). People had lost their savings due to inflation, and with food prices rising, they were barely surviving. These, among Klein's other compelling statistics, successfully support her claim that Poland's and other countries' transitions to capitalist economies were mishandled by the IMF and the World Bank. Though Klein does fail, at least in Poland's case, to offer an alternative to the "shock therapy" program, which would at least give her outburst against the negative aspects of "shock therapy" a bit more credibility, she nonetheless uses key facts and statistics that successfully uphold her argument, which can be reinforced by other sources discussing the same time period in Poland. These descriptions of Poland at this time demonstrate that the standard of living was far from ideal. Such a drastic transition was detrimental to

society, especially if the country, nearly two decades later, is still showing the negative traces of the effects of its mishandled transition.

Poland's instability and the damaging effects of its transition are convincingly illustrated through the imagery and descriptions of Warsaw's surroundings in Stasiuk's novel *Nine*. The story follows a young businessman, Pawel, who is on the run to find the money to pay back loan sharks that ripped him off in the past. Throughout the novel, Stasiuk makes many diversions from the plot to describe the drab and depressing surroundings and landscape to evoke the struggle of the many who are barely scraping by in the aftermath of Poland's transition to a market economy. Homes are dreary and dull, "gray and square-cornered" (Stasiuk 4). In one instance, Stasiuk describes an area where "the buildings came to a sudden end to make room for the tapered bulk of a church," whose "brickwork had the color of congealed blood" (4). The buildings are unattractive and austere, reflecting the poverty of many and also harking back to Klein's depressing statistic on Poland's poor. Gloom and despair are all that exist, as if hope for a better future is lost. Though these buildings were built years before Poland's transition to a market economy, they symbolize the fact that for many, nothing has changed for the better. People were promised a better life under a new system, but their lives remain difficult and stressful, just as the buildings remain shabby and depressing.

A similarly bleak landscape is portrayed at the airport at Okęcie, in which "inky lights behind a chain-link fence summon the planes, and the distant control towers are like the tops of sinking ships. The roar in the sky makes the earth seem twice as large, and uninhabited" (Stasiuk 50). The landscape is bare and desolate, as if death is imminent. The eerie image of "inky lights . . . [summoning] the planes" while the control towers resemble "sinking ships" almost suggests that as the planes land at the airport they simultaneously descend into a kind of hell (Stasiuk 50). This dramatic and ghostly picture seems to serve as a pessimistic symbol for the present and future of Poland in the novel, implying that the end of an era has arrived, and that a new, unfamiliar, and difficult era has begun.

The almost constant presence of cigarettes and cigarette smoke amongst these barren buildings reinforces this feeling of hopelessness. For example, Stasiuk describes, "The crooked wooden structures of Grochow, Kolo and Mlynów with walls in abstract patterns grimy from the smoke

of filterless cigarettes, Mazurs, Sports, Wawels, and filter tips like Silesias and Zeniths,” and later describes Pawel “[lighting] a cigarette to measure time” as the “wind blew from around the corner, making sparks” (43, 54). This emphasis on cigarettes evokes the idea of smoking as a distraction, to escape the fear and struggle of daily life during this time of instability in Poland. Characters throughout the novel are almost always smoking, whether with friends or with enemies, in groups or alone. Smoking is almost a way of life for these characters, as the constant references to cigarette types and brands also demonstrate.

In the novel, specific types of cigarettes, filterless or filter tip cigarettes, and their brand names are associated with a certain social status. Filterless cigarettes seem to suggest an image of strength and wealth, one that perhaps Pawel, coming from a poor background, might aspire to. Pawel’s first prized possession, which he saves up for while working, is an expensive Chinese cigarette lighter “of the kind he dreamed about every time he passed a kiosk,” which was “decorated with pictures of birds of paradise” (Stasiuk 138). Though now many associate Chinese products with cheapness and poor quality, the lighter is a symbol of the exotic and of wealth to the teenage Pawel, who could seemingly escape from his difficult life and low social standing just by owning and using this foreign lighter. At times Stasiuk uses a brand as a key descriptor of a character. For example, a man, unidentified by name, wears “khaki shorts . . . a death’s-head signet ring . . . [and] he [smokes] Wawels” (Stasiuk 147). The fact that the brand of cigarette that the character smokes is juxtaposed alongside conventional descriptions such as physical appearance also emphasizes the importance of cigarettes in the novel and how the type and brand are labels of social status. The novel’s many references to smoking and cigarettes signify the importance of smoking and cigarettes in these characters’ difficult daily lives during this time in Poland.

The constant presence of alcohol and drugs in the novel also reflects the worrying and uncertainty of the time. Bolek’s wealth, due to his success from buying and selling drugs with his colleagues, attests to the demand for drugs and shows that many in the novel desire to escape their hard lives through the mental rush of a drug. Drinking alcohol to feel safe from the harsh reality the characters are faced with is another important aspect of the novel. One of the many examples illustrating this is when

Pawel meets with the man in the purple tracksuit in Beata's apartment. The man orders Luska to pour Pawel a glass, and when Pawel appears hesitant, the man urges, "Come on, just the one. Don't be shy. Tastes good, does you good," implying that the alcohol will help Pawel relax and perhaps improve his state of mind (Stasiuk 104). An example that perhaps encapsulates the idea of drinking as a means of escape from reality is when Pawel is waiting for Jacek at the Filipinka bar. Pawel worries that Jacek might not come back so "he [takes] a long drink to forget all that and [gets] back to his memories, which [are] safe" (Stasiuk 75). This example shows Pawel using alcohol to distract him from his worries by relaxing him and bringing him back to stable and perhaps peaceful and happier memories. He is restless over his situation and how he will obtain the money to pay back the loan sharks, so he drinks when he can for temporary relaxation and for a release from his worries.

The many images of alcohol and drug use in the novel are directly reflected in Klein's statistics on Russia, another country that faced a drastic economic transition. In reference to alcohol use there, Klein states that "Under capitalism . . . Russians drink more than twice as much alcohol as they used to," and in reference to drug use, she states that "Russia's drug czar, Aleksandr Mikhailov, says that the number of users [of painkillers] went up 900 percent from 1994 to 2004, to more than 4 million people, many of them heroin addicts" (300). Life for many was indeed fearful during this time, with many left uncertain about their futures as a result of their country's mismanaged economic transition. Stasiuk clearly illustrates the hopelessness, dreariness, and uncertainty of the times, reinforcing the idea that the IMF's and the World Bank's measures for modernization forced upon Poland and other countries were far too drastic and proved damaging to the lives of millions of Eastern Europeans.

As emphasized by Klein's figures and Stasiuk's imagery and descriptions, it is evident that the strict measures enforced upon Poland's economy by the World Bank and the IMF proved detrimental to the plans for a smooth transition from a controlled to a market economy, causing many to suffer dearly under the drastic changes that took place. Though Poland and other countries were being transitioned into seemingly efficient systems that were intended to improve the lives of citizens who struggled under communism, the daily lives of many did not change

for the better. Klein successfully proves her point that the lives of generations of Poles and other Eastern Europeans have changed for the worse as a result of “shock therapy.” Had Poland’s economy been handled and changed over a longer period of time, perhaps with certain economic regulations and measures being implemented gradually, it is quite possible that the drastic rises in poverty and unemployment wouldn’t have occurred. The country would have had time to adjust and so would its citizens. Regretfully, in Poland’s and many other countries’ cases, such a drastic adjustment from communism and a controlled economy to democracy and a market economy was simply mishandled. We must hope that if a need for such a transition arises in the future, that we will take time to examine and tend to each country’s specific needs and to learn from past mistakes.

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