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# TABLE OF CONTENTS April 2010

# Living in a Material World

"Accomplished But Not Really"5 Joyce Leibowitz
"The Language of Fashion" 6 Gabrielle Smith
"Celebrity Endorsement: When It's Worth the Effort" 10 Walter Bottlick
"Belinda's Weapons of Femininity in Pope's <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> "
"Summertime and Livin' Ain't Easy"

# Ties that Bind

"Smoke"
"Carly's Story"28 Victoria Miller
"Battle with Anorexia"
"Women's Struggle for Independence in <i>The Unknown</i> "41 Emily Greenspan
The Flux of Identity
"Henryton"
"Commerce and Gender in <i>Fantomind</i> "49 Ana Navascues
"Analysis of Perry's Theories of Personal Identity"
"The Crooked Cane"61 Brant Maggard

# Taking Another Look

"Repeat"	·	64
Federica	Pagani	

"The Jean Jacket"
"The Suffering of the Trinity: The Importance of the Cross Event in Christianity"
"Family in War"
"What, Why and Getting Better"
Coda

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#### LIVING IN A MATERIAL WORLD

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The weather that night was perfect. The stars were out, the skies were clear, and the air was warm. One by one, curious neighbors showed up to my housewarming with gift baskets, cheap wine, and even toilet paper. Feeling proud of my contribution to sustainability, I did a couple of tours of my home for my guests, pointing out all the green features. Talking excitedly I said, "Here are the 100% recycled glass tiles and countertop and my lovely bamboo floors; I even installed the greenest lights! There are LED lights, can you believe it?" Most of my neighbors had never heard about LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design), so I explained that it was a voluntary, third-party certification system where different levels of certifications are based on the number of points met (USGBC). "For example," I said, "the most basic certified LEED home needs to meet at least 45 points." I went on to explain that the house had cost a little more than a conventional home, but that it was well worth it: better indoor air quality, lower power and water bill, and reduced construction waste. Booming with pride, I looked around at my guests, and suddenly I recognized the look they were giving me. Typical reaction I get when I start mouthing off about green design. I call this the lectured look because of the glazed eyes, stupefied face, and the constant yawning.

~ Joyce Leibowitz, "Accomplished But Not Really"

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#### THE LANGUAGE OF FASHION by Gabrielle Smith

"The fashion flock's native habitat may be city streets, but this season, designers have gone mad for plaid and discovered a need for tweed." This is how Style.com describes its new fall trend, "Country Life." Doesn't "mad for plaid" and "need for tweed" just make you want to run to the nearest mall and pick up a plaid skirt or a tweed jacket? Fashion writers are constantly coming up with witty phrases that rhyme, are visual, and subtly tell you what you need to buy and spend money on in order to be "in" fashion.

Phrases in fashion writing are a "must have" and without them you have nothing. How else can you correctly pronounce how magnificent a new clothing line is without some catchy clichéd phrase? You cannot even mention the color of a garment without a flattering overly used adjective in front of it. As a matter of fact, do not even say the color! You never write that a piece of clothing is just blue; it's teal, cerulean, azure, cobalt, sky, or deep sea. A garment is never brown; it's camel, beige, rust, tan, or chocolate. Knowing the difference in how to phrase words is a unique skill that must be mastered by every top fashion writer in order to compete in the industry.

Having the ability to twist, throw, tease, tweak, and turn these words into powerful messages that can impact the way people look and think around you is a vital tool for fashion writers. Just think! The power of how people view something is completely in your hands as a fashion writer. Before your "Grinch grin" goes from ear to ear, there are a few more rules you must understand.

One of the most used phrases in fashion is "chic," which has become a timeless word that can be a person, place, thing, or emotion. Yes, fashion lovers; you can actually feel "chic," which is even better than wearing something "chic." On October 7, 1877, *The New York Times* defined chic in an article titled, "What is Chic?" stating, "Chic cannot be common. You cannot put on another person's chic, as you may her boots or her hat. You cannot copy it." Chic is for the individual; it is not for the masses. Only a select few know how to master this classic staple. Chic personifies the person that always looks well-groomed, is never over-dressed, and contains the rare ability to know the difference between what is fashionable and what is chic. What is fashionable is not always chic, but what is chic is always fashionable.

Unfortunately, some of the newer fashion writers have not read the bylaws on how to use "chic." Fashion writers, beware of proclaiming something hideous to be "chic." If you can't find another word to use, do not say the garment is "chic." Say the garment is interesting, unique, or just be bluntly honest. If it doesn't get you points with the designer, the critical fashion world will love your honesty as long as you don't unleash it on them. This is how fashion writer for the Washington Post, Robin Givhans, got known; she tells it how it is.

I have also found in my research of fashion lingo, that any "must have" popular item is considered "it." Not like the person everyone ran away from when you played the game of tag as a kid. To be "it" or to have an "it" item in fashion is the ultimate compliment for any designer or consumer. If a designer has an "it" bag for the season, that bag will sell off the shelf simply because it is "it." Any article of clothing, accessory, or product that is "it" is the epitome of all that is cool, up-to-the-minute, or trendy and is greatly desired by all.

And yet, one has to wonder who chooses who or what is "it"? Fashion writers do! Yes, they usually find an "it" girl who is often seen wearing an "it" designer, and they see what new bags she chooses after fashion week; then close your eyes and pick one and THAT'S "IT!"

Perhaps the most "it" phrase in fashion, which is consistently reapplied in every season, is "(insert any color) is the new black." Any color that is popular during any season is instantly crowned "the new black." The only exception to this concrete rule is that the color black can never be called "the new black"; black is black all in itself. This fashion-writing rule comes without reason or explanation, but remains constant. Perhaps this phrase is not meant to be understood, but to be utilized to place specific emphasis on the color of the moment. Regardless of the deeper meaning of the phrase, any color that is "the new black" will be seen on everyone and in everything for that season. Fashion royalty will embrace this color and it will be present at top fashion shows in fashion capitols all over the world. It is almost like in The Wiz movie where every five minutes the Wiz changes his mind and all of Emerald City changes colors. Top fashion editors and designers are the "Oz" of the industry and the little citizens of the world make up the controllable citizens of Emerald City who happily dance and change at the drop of a new fashion color proclamation.

Like every other career, fashion has its own jargon. While fashion writing is not an easy industry, knowing the unspoken rules of fashion writing would have helped a naïve girl like Anne Hathaway's "Andy Sachs" character in *The Devil Wears Prada*. It takes a lot more that you think to be a "clacker!" Fashion writers have to be able to perfect the rules of the great quote in order to make it to the top. I am committed to making it to the top by

mastering the art of the language of fashion. Having a vibrant, multi-colored vocabulary is the "black" of fashion writing, and it never goes out of style. Thus, as an aspiring fashion writer, I must wrap my articles in the correct jargon, even if the jargon sometimes seems hackneyed and trite and even if it can only be learned on the pages of glossy fashion magazines with tons of pictures and few words.

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# CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT: WHEN IT'S WORTH THE EFFORT by Walter Bottlick

Putting someone famous in an ad and trying to sell something has become a familiar practice to consumers whether they are watching TV, driving by a billboard, or simply walking down the street. Celebrity endorsement is seen by companies as a practice that can really turn a product into a success and bring in high revenues, simply because they assume people want to be associated with a product that a celebrity appears to use. Often celebrities make huge amounts of money from these endorsements, and companies see them as ways of saving a product or even the whole company. Does it really work in the end?

The unfortunate answer for most of these companies is no. A celebrity endorser cannot just sell any product on the market successfully. Through the examination of an endorsement giant, Michael Jordan, one can see when a celebrity can be successful at selling a product and when he or she cannot be. This all depends on the association the consumer makes between the product and the endorser. In the debate over whether celebrity endorsement is effective or not, it really just depends on the product and the celebrity. Two rules can be identified. First, the more successful endorsements often have a good connection between product and celebrity that the consumer can easily identify and be persuaded by. Such a connection exists between Michael Jordan and the Air Jordan shoe line, while it doesn't exist between him and Hanes. The second rule is that in the end celebrity endorsement is also partly a gamble.

Michael Jordan is viewed by many as the quintessential celebrity endorser. Despite his success as a basketball player, which people naturally look up to, he and every other endorser depend on a deeper connection they can make with a product in the eyes of the consumer. Many find that they can relate to the early years of Michael Jordan's story. He was born in Brooklyn, New York, moved to North Carolina, and then played basketball for the North Carolina University Tar Heels. After a very successful career there, he was signed with the Chicago Bulls in 1984 and made a legend of himself through his extraordinary skills as a basketball player (Johnson). He lived the story of a kid coming from a small background to becoming a sports icon through hard work, something that people later can on idolize and respect. His many championship rings, MVP trophies, and scoring titles have immortalized him and made his a very commonly known name, anywhere in the world (Johnson). Jordan embodies what other people would like to aspire to be, especially adolescents who worship his success. This makes him an ideal personality for advertisement. The way companies trying to sell products see it, if their product is associated with Michael Jordan, then the consumers of the world will want to buy them just to have that association (Daye). In Jordan's case, this tends to be somewhat a correct assessment. The products that he endorses which have no

association to him do tend to sell well, something that cannot be said for others in the endorsement game. Despite this, however, the profits of the products with which he does not have an association pale in comparison to those of the products to which he does have a connection.

Many companies have jumped on Jordan's success and have used him to their fullest advantage when trying to sell products. Some of the brands and stores that Jordan has endorsed have been Michael Jordan cologne, Nike, Coca-Cola, Chevrolet, Gatorade, McDonald's, Ball Park Franks, Rayovac, Wheaties, Hanes, MCI, Finnish Line, Sports Authority, Palm, Venator Group, Upper Deck, WorldCom, Oakley, Wilson, and many more. Many of these have seen great success from the use of Michael Jordan, and from the nineties alone he made around 240 million dollars in endorsement money (Johnson and Dukcevich). To delve further into the endorsing world of Michael Jordan and examine his success, one can look into the details of two of his major endorsing brands: Nike and Hanes.

Nike is the one brand that Michael Jordan can immediately be associated with; it is "the brand that he built" (Dukcevich). Jordan's self-titled basketball shoe line: Air Jordan, has become its own separate division of Nike, bringing in revenues of over 300 million dollars per fiscal year (Johnson). Air Jordans have also set a record for becoming the most expensive sneakers ever, selling for over \$200 (Dukcevich). Despite this, there has been no trouble selling these products due to their affiliation with Michael Jordan. Each year they have been continuously flying off the shelves as soon as they come into stock (Dukcevich). Since 1998, Nike's overall revenues have grown from \$8,776.9 million to \$19,176 million in 2009. In that elevenyear period, Nike has doubled its revenue, in large part due to the sales of the Air Jordan basketball shoe line (Annual Reports: Nike). At its highest point during 2009, Nike common stock shares went for \$70.28 (Annual Reports: Nike). This has given Nike the edge over its competitors such as Reebok, who started to make a dent in Nike's financial empire in 2001 until the return of Michael Jordan to the marketing world. In that year, marketers expected his return to the business game to increase revenues by \$170 million in just six months, a goal that his return did meet, putting Reebok back in its place and returning Nike back to the top (Dukcevich). Compared to the shoe brands put out by other basketball stars, such as Allen Iverson, the Nike made Air Jordans are in a league of their own. Unfortunately for Iverson, he was considered to be only the second most popular basketball player in the world right after Michael Jordan (Dukcevich). The difference between being in second and first can be seen in the first day sales when either man releases a new show line. For Iverson, he can see around 15% of his shoes being sold on the first day. Jordan sees between 50-60% of his shoes flying off the shelves as soon as they come out (Dukcevich).

Obviously, Nike has seen huge success due to its partnership with Michael Jordan, but when switching gears to another brand endorsed by Jordan-Hanes-one can see a slightly different story ("Investors"). Hanes is the producer of clothing of all types. A consumer can see Jordan backing Hanes through his men's underwear commercials, which many have come to know and love over the years. These commercials often take on a more comical tone, with Jordan standing alongside actors such as Cuba Gooding Jr. and Charlie Sheen (Johnson). Although in 1998 Hanes was doing well with Jordan and was expecting to surpass \$10 million in revenues annually, today Hanes is not nearly as successful as that, and nowhere near as successful as Nike has been with him ("Investors"). Even though he continues to do Hanes commercials, Hanes has actually seen a slow and steady decline over the past six

years. Since 2004, Hanes has gone from overall revenues of \$4,632,741 thousand to \$4,248,770 thousand at the end of the fiscal year in 2009 ("Investors"). At its highest point in the 2009 fiscal year, Hanes common stock was worth \$25.98 ("Investors"). Jordan still makes a good amount of money off his endorsement efforts with Hanes, but their slow and steady fall in overall revenues, coupled with the greatly varying costs of sales that have ranged from \$2,871,420 thousand to \$3,223,571 thousand, in the past six years have had an effect on their profits ("Investors"). This suggests that there are other factors affecting the sales of Hanes products that override Michael Jordan's endorsement efforts. These could include the tough financial times that the nation has been going through, a factor that Jordan as an endorser has been able to overcome with Nike, but not with Hanes. This says something about the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement, and leads one to look further into such problem.

Generally, Michael Jordan is deemed a successful and effective endorser. Some marketers have used the term "The Jordan Effect" to describe just how much he can change the playing field in sales (Johnson). He is also described as the "10 Billion Dollar Man" due to the overall amount of money that this Jordan Effect has brought in over the years of Michael Jordan's marketing and endorsement campaign (Johnson). But when it comes down to looking at just Nike and Hanes, there is a big difference between the \$4,248,770,000 brought in by Hanes and the \$191,761,000,000 brought in by Nike during the 2009 fiscal year ("Investors," "Annual Reports"). Jordan's effectiveness in these two areas is answered by Derrick Daye and Brad VanAuken, two professional brand managers and marketers. According to these two, the effectiveness of a celebrity endorser has to do with the association between the celebrity and the product (Daye). In other words, Michael Jordan's Air Jordan shoe line sells a lot because in this instance he is a basketball player selling basketball shoes. His fame and success in the basketball world become associated with a product that can be directly linked to that (Daye). People see Michael Jordan jumping higher than they ever could in order to make an amazing dunk, and the height of his jump is accredited to the quality and build of the sneakers he is wearing, which, of course, are Air Jordans. People are presented with the message that his success is aided by his shoes, and so the consumers go out and buy Air Jordans in order to capture some of the essence that has helped Michael Jordan succeed (Daye). That message does not exist with his endorsement campaign for Hanes. Hanes makes no effort to attribute Jordan's success in basketball to the type of underwear he is wearing, and even if they did, it wouldn't be believable.

This is the type of association that Daye and VanAuken explain is so important when using a celebrity endorser. The celebrity needs to have some association between the cause of their fame and the product that they are endorsing if the campaign is to truly be successful (Daye). There are plenty of examples where this has been used properly, and plenty more where is hasn't. The two look at Tiger Woods, another successful and famous sports star, and present a situation similar to the one between Michael Jordan, Nike, and Hanes. When Tiger Woods began to endorse Nike golf balls, their sales shot through the roof, because golfers make that connection between Tiger Woods' success on the green and the type of ball he is using. On the other hand, Tiger Woods also endorses Buick, a partnership that has not worked out too well because there is no connection between the two (Daye). Celebrities can make or break a product according to Daye and VanAuken, and oftentimes using celebrities can be very risky if they mess up in their lives outside of the endorsement. Some examples cited include James Garner, who attempted to sell beef products until he had a heart

attack and triple bypass surgery; Kobe Bryant, who lost his endorsement deals with McDonald's, Sprite, and Nutella when he was charged with sexual assault; and Martina Hingis, a tennis star who ended up suing the Italian tennis shoe company she endorsed because she claimed they were the cause of the injuries she received (Daye). In the end, Daye and VanAuken conclude that, while there are some endorsement stars who can make good connections to products and help the sales, for the most part celebrity endorsement is a waste of money that is more often hurtful to a company than it is helpful (Daye).

In the end, celebrity endorsement is partly a gamble; the celebrity could be like Michael Jordan, who can in fact promote a product that has nothing to do with basketball effectively. Despite the Hanes example, he has been very successful with other products such as Oakley and his cologne. On the other hand, the celebrity could be like Michael Vick, who seems promising until he turns out to be running illegal dog fights, thus helping to soil not only his name, but also the names of the products he endorses.

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## BELINDA'S WEAPONS OF FEMININITY IN POPE'S THE RAPE OF THE LOCK by Sarika Rao

Alexander Pope wrote his five-canto poem *The Rape of the Lock* at the onset of the Enlightenment, a period of time when both empires and minds expanded. Material goods arrived from the New World and the Orient, a term used to describe anywhere east of the Mediterranean. With this growth, more and more people had access to wealth and material goods, and a new consumer culture blossomed. This newfound 'consumer culture' inspires Pope. He compares and satirizes Belinda's femininity as a weapon only when associated with her consumption and consumables, making it seem a performance rather than an actual threat. Pope satirizes the fact that women are not threatening whatever weapon they use; they are weak with or without their consumables. Everything is an imitation and nothing is wholly natural.

Pope compares Belinda's toilette, a decidedly feminine ritual, to the process of going to war and by doing so trivializes its importance. When Belinda gets ready for her day, she is personified as "awful Beauty put[ting] on all its arms" and she "calls forth all the wonders of her face" like a general summoning troops to battle (I.139, 142). The word "wonders" describes her physical beauty but it also refers back to the many consumables at her toilette. Her vanity contains an enigmatic arrangement of "silver vase[s]" where "the various offerings of the world appear" (I.122, 130). Offerings await Belinda like "unnumbered treasures" she can admire and adorn, including "India's glowing gems" along with "all the perfumes of Arabia" (129, 133-134). Belinda cannot enter the battlefield of love without these weapons, and so relies on them to help her appear more beautiful. Although female beauty is a metaphorical weapon, Pope's comparison of female and male ritual satirizes the former.

In the Cave of Spleen, some of Belinda's natural feminine "weapons" are bottled and bagged imagery that refers backs to her toilette or a hero descending to the Underworld (Hernandez 571). Umbriel the Gnome wants Spleen to "touch Belinda with chagrin" after the Baron has cut the lock, so she will become destitute with melancholy (IV.77). Spleen grants his wish, collecting in a "wondrous bag" the "force of female lungs,/ Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues" (81, 83-84). Additionally she fills a vial "with fainting fears,/ Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears" (85-86). All of these items are female weapons of choice, but they are not unadulterated. Belinda relies on consumables even within her own body. She cannot escape her need for artificial powers, rendering her useless on her own.

During the final confrontation, Belinda uses two weapons to battle the Baron, both of which are consumables, signifying her inability as a woman to escape her reliance on them. Initially, she throws snuff at him, causing him to sneeze (V.80-85). Even when using a bit of creativity Belinda must rely on an object symbolizing the material world. Then she draws a "deadly bodkin" wielding it like a sword, but it is a meek imitation of the masculine art of fencing (88). When threatening the Baron with the hairpin, Belinda seems even more feminine and vulnerable. The scene is very comical because Pope deliberately gives a small, phallic object for Belinda to use as a weapon; but her reliance on a female consumable only proves how inadequate it is, and how consumed she is with her own hair.

Although her hair seems to contrast with the material goods, Pope describes Belinda's precious lock as both a consumable for the Baron and as a weapon with the ability to destroy "mankind" (II.19). As her most feminine feature, the lock seems innocent when compared to the "puffs, powders, patches" that make up the "rites of Pride" (I.138, 128). However, she knowingly drapes two locks around her "smooth ivory neck" beckoning men and women alike to admire the "shining ringlets" (II.22). Everything Belinda uses to her advantage, her cosmetics, tears, and locks, she puts on for show; nothing is natural. She wields them as weapons with equal intensity, because she knows the effect they have on the male population. They are all associated with consumption, and therefore Belinda herself "transforms...into a [desired] consumable" (Hernandez 580). Pope undermines the female attempt to enter a masculine world of power.

The remaining weapons in Belinda's arsenal are her eyes. This seems natural enough, but Belinda still relies on cosmetic powers to win back her lock. When she first prepares herself at the toilette, she puts on her face with the assurance that she can use her feminine appeal like a weapon, a force to reckon with. Armed with cosmetic powers, "keener lightnings quicken in her eyes" primed for flirtatious endeavors (I.144). She achieves this heightened appeal with the help of Belladonna drops (Tillotson 157). When she finally leaves her house, she continues using her eyes as weapons of assessment and power, letting them "strike...and shine on all alike" like the sun (II.13-14). Belinda knows her eyes exude a certain masculine authority; she does not falter in the face of conflict when battling men at ombre. However, this authority feels somewhat artificial, another performance like her tears, because her eyes eventually betray her most feminine emotions.

When the Baron cuts her lock, her eyes reveal genuine female vulnerability. Pope still mentions lightning, but instead of being a masculine weapon her eyes convey messages of shock and rage, her true emotions. After the Baron cuts her hair, the lightning flashes from her eyes "and screams of horror rend the affrighted skies" Belinda finally loses something precious (III.155-156). Something she wielded with pomp and strength quite literally becomes her Achilles heel. No longer an armored heroine, the Baron's rape reduces Belinda to a sobbing pile "half drowned in tears," imagery evocative of Spleen's jars and vials (IV.144). Without her weapons of artifice, she loses her ability to fight, and instead becomes the damsel in distress. Her true feminine vulnerability reveals itself and only Umbriel's intercession can inspire her strength of rage to recover the lost lock.

At the epic final confrontation, she meets the Baron "with more than usual lightning in her eyes" a newfound killing rage overtaking her feminine passivity (V.75-78). The Baron does not quietly give up possession of her hair, instead remaining defiant to the end, leaving Belinda with two choices: to leave empty-handed or continue fighting. She continues the fight, embracing her anger with cries of "Restore the Lock!" (103). Unfortunately, for all her effort, Belinda's hair remains elusive to the very end, transforming into a "sudden Star" and "mounted to the Lunar Sphere" (V.127, 113).

Pope effectively satirizes the 18<sup>th</sup> century desire to possess objects of luxury and beauty, and the poem acts as a particular critique of women's obsession and reliance on them. Belinda never breaks free from her dependence on material goods and consumables during her "vain" attempt to retrieve the stolen tresses (V.110). In the end, women remain weak and helpless creatures, their weapons of femininity never natural and always ineffective.

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#### SUMMERTIME AND THE LIVIN' AIN'T EASY by Korey Johnson

Sweat slowly cascaded down the side of his face, collecting at the bottom of his chin until there was just enough to fall to the tiles below. Each drop raced between the terracotta squares until they were devoured by the searing summer sun. The boy licked his lips anxiously as he inconspicuously leaned over a table that held a dozen recently baked treats. His excited eyes impatiently examined each individual treat in comparison with the others. Some were larger, others seemed sweeter, and several were more gorgeous.

"I shouldn't... it's not mine" the boy thought but couldn't stop; he was committed to the treacherous deed the moment he inhaled the alluring warm wind that blew past each attractive cup cake.

Before he knew it, the boy was already briskly walking with a half-eaten cupcake in his tiny hand. Although the cake was tastier than he could have ever imagined, each bite and step was accompanied by a growing feeling of numbress. The sensation grew so strong that he had to stop and examine what remained in his hands to make sure it was still in fact a cupcake. He nervously looked around and slightly hesitated before he stuffed what was left into his mouth. Surprisingly, as he began to walk again, the boy didn't lick his fingers or even his lips; instead, he quickly wiped them off on his already soiled t-shirt.

"I've had enough of this."

He intuitively felt that attempting to enjoy the treat any further was only going to enhance the bizarre, unfamiliar feeling.

After his peculiar day, the boy laid in his bed. The strange and mysterious feelings that he had felt so strongly before slowly faded away until they presently disappeared, leaving only a vague alien memory. With his arms relaxed at his side, the boy took a deep blissful breath and closed his eyes. As he drifted off into his dreams of saving the world from the intergalactic warlords of the universe, he began to feel ill again. The feeling began to invade every thought; trampling everything in its path. Dreams of saving the world turned into nightmares of him deceiving his people and destroying the planet; he felt no longer like a hero.

> Awake again, he inevitably erupted into tears. "I've never felt so awful," the boy sniffled. "I've never..."

As my vision became blurry from the tears that intimately enveloped my eyes, I realized that I felt guilty.

#### TIES THAT BIND

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I hear the door behind me open. Sarah's here. The house has been asleep for hours, recovering from all the action of the busy Thanksgiving Day. With the smell of home-cooked pie still lingering in the air, I rush to hug her. Through her puffy, brown jacket, I feel her collarbones sticking up from her skin, like the carcass of the turkey left on the dining room table. "God, I missed you Sar. I feel like we have so much to catch up on." Sarah simply responds, "Let's go for a walk. I want a cigarette."

I follow her out the door into the uninviting, cold night. We stop at the end of my driveway and huddle around her black Bic lighter. The flash of orange lights up Sarah's face. Her focus is on the tip of the cigarette, as my focus is on her tired expression. It shows something only the flare of the lighter and her best friend can see. "Sar, what's wrong? Are you OK?" Her eyes dart to the ground as we start walking down the street. I glance back to see my porch light fade in the distance. "I didn't know you still smoke," she says, avoiding my questions. As I exhale a puff of smoke that turns the air grey, I answer, "I don't." We both laugh as we turn down streets with no direction in mind, walking to the sound of our heavy boots against the dead cement. "I can't do it anymore, Margaret. School isn't what I expected it to be. I have no idea what I want to do with my life. Look at me! I don't eat! I don't sleep! I'm a wreck! All I want to do is be back home, be back here, how it used to be." I take the final drag of my cigarette and flick it to the ground to free my hands to hug Sarah tight. "I know Sar, I know. We all want it the way it used to be. We all just want to be home."

~ Margaret Sava, "Smoke"



CARLY'S STORY by Victoria Miller

When I was nine years old, my parents, my three siblings and I, moved from Florida to Japan for my father's work. We lived in this huge house that, if you squinted one of your eyes, very much resembled a soda can. It was round and was covered in little mirror tiles that were a bitch to look at when the sun was shining on them. Living in a foreign country is eerie. Everything's different - the landscape, the smells, the sounds. Because I was so far from what I was used to, I inverted into myself. I didn't have many friends and would just sit in front of the television for hours, trying my hardest to understand Japanese soap operas.

The only people who could bring me out of my bubble were my three siblings, especially the oldest, Carly, who was 15. She was struggling a little too. She didn't like Japan and hated leaving all her friends at home. Sometimes after a long day, she would help give me my baths. Once I was in the tub, she would come in, shaking her head and laughing at the mess that I had already made. When she laughed like this, I could see the gap in her teeth that I hadn't seen in awhile. She tossed her frizzy blond hair back in a loose ponytail, rolled her jeans, and pulled up her sleeves. When she reached for the shampoo, I could smell her musky perfume. She took great care while washing my hair and started to ask me about my day. Always making sure to listen carefully to my answers and comment when needed. The cold, sanitary smell that the bathroom usually had was immediately covered with the flowery and fruity smells of my shampoo and conditioner. After a while, the water started to get cold and my hands started to look like prunes, but I didn't want to stop talking yet. She was my friend in this strange place and I was safe from the outside if she was here. There weren't any kids to make fun of me for being the chubby white girl or teachers to get mad at me for not understanding the math problem. I wanted to make her stay there forever, keep her to myself, so I could hear her talk about school and boys, and missing home. I closed my eyes and tried to pretend that she was one of my friends from home and that I wasn't halfway across the world. So I just stayed in the tub, shivering a little bit, but loving it.

The day of my fourth-grade field trip in Japan marked the end of these bath times. The field trip was a chance for me to spend time with Mom. We were getting ready and scurrying around the house because we were running late. We hadn't seen Carly, but that was normal this early because her room was in the basement. When it was time to leave, Mom sent me downstairs to get her. I was so excited to get going that I practically jumped down the two sets of stairs to her room. When I got there, I noticed that the bathroom door was shut and that the room smelled like steam. I called her name a few times but she didn't answer. Then I started to get upset. What if she was still in the shower? She was going to make me late for my first field trip! This was my day, or at least that's what Mom said, so why wasn't she answering me? I called her name for a few more minutes and then stomped across the room to yell at her for not being ready on time.

When I opened the door to the bathroom, steam came rolling out and set a layer of dew on my face. Right in front of me, on the floor, was my big sister half wrapped in a towel, unconscious. She was lying sprawled out on the ground and it looked like she had broken every bone in her body. The harsh lighting of the all-white bathroom made her look paler than a ghost and called attention to her dark blue lips. Being a dumb, scared nine-year-old, I just stood there staring at her. I knew that it wasn't right, that her body shouldn't be in that position, but I was in shock. The steam started to clear but my head didn't. I could hear everyone moving around upstairs and Mom calling for us to hurry up. All of the cars and outside noises seemed louder than normal. My sweaty hand started to slip off the door handle and I readjusted my grip, turning my chubby knuckles chalk-white. The steam from the shower was rolling down the mirror in front of me, clearing the fog so that I could see the scene that had unfolded. Precipitation. That's what it was called. We learned about that this week in class and I made a mental note to tell my teacher that I remembered the big word. Precipitation. I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror and realized that I was just standing there. I'm not sure how much time had passed, but I came to my senses and screamed for Mom. She heard the panic in my voice and immediately came rushing down the stairs. I met her at the bottom. "Something's wrong with Carly. She fell I think, but she's not waking up."

Mom didn't even let me finish what I was saying she rushed past me into the bathroom. Next thing I knew I was being pushed out of the door and onto the bus. I didn't understand what was going on. I thought that Mom was supposed to come with me to school. We were leaving right away, and she was never going to make it on time. Maybe Carly had just fallen and hit her head; she could put an ice pack on it and deal, couldn't she?

The usually short bus ride lasted forever and neither of my other siblings said a word. We all stared out our windows expressionless. The city outside of my window was a blur of buildings and people. Old folks exercising in parks, groups of teenagers waking around in weird clothes, and skyscrapers, all seemed to be staring at me with pity. At least Tokyo knew that this sucked, that it wasn't fair. The city understood.

When I got to school and into the classroom, everyone was excited and ready for our first field trip. I was just angry. As we were getting ready to go, my teacher pulled me aside and said what I had been dreading the whole time. "Your mom's not going to make it, Tory. She had to take your sister to the hospital, but don't worry, everything's going to be fine." I started bawling. How could she do this? Why did Carly have to take the one thing from me that I had been so looking forward to? I thought that we were going to stick together, her and me.

I don't remember the field trip very well. I think we went to some old-fashioned Japanese school. When the day was over, we all went to board our respective buses to go home. I was walking towards the bus area when I saw Danny and Lily, two of my older siblings, and my dad in his car. Dad never came to the school, especially not this early in the day; he wasn't home until 6 or 7 on most nights. I walked over with my head down, still brooding about the day that I had just had, expecting some sympathy. When I got to them, they all kind of looked at me funny. I still can picture it in my head - it was sadness, sympathy, hurt, and anger all meshed into one expression that looked, to the untrained eye, like they were just fine. Dad looked at me and said, "Your mom and Carly have gone back to the states. Carly is really sick and the doctors can't help her here." My breath caught in my chest and all I could say

was, "Is she ever coming back?" I still think that I heard a whisper of "I'm not sure" escape his lips, but I could have imagined it.

I couldn't believe that Carly would just leave me here, with no friends and no mother. Couldn't they have just stopped by the school, given me a quick hug, explained things, and then left? I was alone in this foreign land, with my barely-there father, too-cool-for me 11-year-old sister, and a 13-year-old brother who was too into video cameras and skateboarding to care. I stepped up into the van and we drove away, the same way that we had come but different, more lonely.

Carly had, that morning in her bathroom, while she was stepping out of the shower, trying to hurry up so she wouldn't make me late for my field trip, experienced a grand mal seizure, the first in a series of seizures that would eventually lead doctors to diagnose her with epilepsy. It was bad, the worst she could have actually.

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A few years after we moved back to Florida from Japan, Mom, Carly, my other siblings, and I all went down to Fort Lauderdale for the weekend. I was thirteen years old and not happy about being thrown into the backseat between Danny and Lily. Carly, up front as usual because she "got sick" in the back, let out a loud gasp causing Mom to slam on the breaks. I was mildly amused by the situation because I knew, even from under my headphones, that Mom was overreacting. My other siblings were sitting up looking at Carly but I wasn't about to give her any more attention then she already had.

"I forgot my sunglasses at Melissa's house!" she said, as if the world was ending.

Mom looked like she might have a heart attack, "Jesus Christ Carly, never do that again, I thought you..." "...were having a seizure?" I mumbled under my breath, "Surprise of the freaking century."

"Okay, sorry" she said, "But you know that I'll get a headache if I don't have them."

Mom turned the car around.

I can't handle this, I thought. I knew I wasn't supposed to say anything because Carly was the one that had to live with this horrible sickness. But still, I just wanted to go and now we were all going to be smashed together, in this very small backseat, for longer than anyone ever wanted. I sighed, loudly. Very loudly. I wanted to make my discomfort known. Carly turned around in her seat and stared at me.

"You know I need my sunglasses, Tory. I'm sorry if that inconveniences you."

I didn't say anything; I didn't even look at her. Because if I did we would be yelling and it would ruin everything. But she kept talking.

"I don't know why you're so angry with me. You have never liked me. You always roll your eyes at me and get so frustrated so easily. I don't understand what I did wrong. I don't even remember when it started. But I'm sorry that I'm sick, Tory, and I'm sorry that I have to have certain things. But I can't help it. I can't do anything about that and I wish more than anything in the world that I was better, that I didn't need this much attention. Do you think I like having to be checked on all the time if I'm quiet for more than twenty minutes? People look at me like I'm going to drop any minute. But not you. You won't even look at me and I don't understand why. I can't remember a time when you weren't angry with me or with Mom... I just don't.... I don't know."

I couldn't even look at her. It was still all about her, after all these years. It never even occurred to her that some people had been left by the wayside. The casualties were never even counted. I stared out the window and put my headphones back in, ignoring the burning that was rising in my chest and settling nicely behind my eyes.

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Anger is the hurt that you carry on your face; it is the tension in your shoulders and the harsh slicing of your words. It can be with you for years and you don't even know it's there. Not until someone tells you. Not until you take a look at yourself and realize that you have been holding onto something for so long that now it's not just a part of you, it is you. You have become anger.

Carly never remembered much about Japan; it's all a blur to her. She lives it through our stories and memories of the place. She doesn't remember anything, not how loud the cicadas were outside at night or how it rained almost every other day. She doesn't remember the park down the road where every clover had four leaves or the time that our brother got really sick and we all read him chapters of a book. She doesn't remember that she was my only friend, the only person who actually talked to me over there. The only one who made me feel real. She truly didn't know why I was angry. Heck, until I was thirteen, I didn't even know that I was still angry. I had held onto this anger and this fear for so long that it had become a part of me.

Anger can do a lot to a person. It can turn a little sister into a big angry hurricane of feelings. It can confuse people and hurt people. It can turn an entire family upside down and tear it apart. But anger could also turn a small child into an adult in a matter of hours. It can hold onto a person's heart forever and never let go.

Guilt can do the exact same thing. It can make an adult flinch at the sound of a fight. It can make a nineteenyear-old girl wish that she could go back and change everything. It can make her think that maybe if she was smarter or more mature at nine or thirteen years old, then maybe she would have understood and not held on to her selfishness and anger for so long.

But understanding can heal families and pull them together. It can weather the storms of anger and guilt. It can mend a child's heart. It can make that same nineteenyear-old girl realize that nine-year-old kids aren't equipped to understand trauma. It can help a big sister comprehend what was inside her little sister for all those years wasn't hate, it was hurt, and that she is so sorry for holding on for so long.

When we moved back from Japan, Mom and Carly met us at the airport with a few friends. I walked right past Carly. I walked right past my sick sister sitting in a wheelchair and ran to my mother. I even turned around and glared at her as if to say, "See. I have her now." I wish I could go back to when I got off that fourteen-hour plane ride, with all my anger, and I would take a look at my pale, frail-looking, big sister and I would hug her.

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### BATTLE WITH ANOREXIA by Urvi Patel

As I lay here in this uncomfortable hospital bed, I think to myself, "What the hell am I doing here?" I've woken up to the silence of the hospital floor outside my room and to the sounds of my dad comforting my mom as the tears trickle down her face like the raindrops on the window outside the room. I look to my right and see the time on the clock; it is 11:30 in the morning. I feel lifeless, not moving for the fear of the IV detaching from my left arm. When I finally realize why I am here, I hate myself even more than I did before.

It was my senior year of high school, three days after my eighteenth birthday. I was sitting in my boring math class listening to my teacher go on and on about some calculus formula that I did not comprehend. I began thinking about all the delicious food my mom had prepared for my birthday. She made lasagna with homemade tomato sauce mixed with Indian spices, five-layers of pasta with cheese, and all the yummy vegetables: green peppers, onions, tomatoes, and the small, Indian spicy chilies. My family really wanted to make this birthday special considering it might be the last one I would be spending with them before I headed off to college. My older sister baked a delicious chocolate cake with a pink frosting filling the inside and out, with the words "Happy Birthday Urvi" written on the top of it. It was beautiful. All the food smelled so good and looked amazing. All the hard work my family put into making this day special for me, and I barely touched any of it. I woke up from my daydream about my birthday when the bell rang. As I was walking down the narrow, crowded, dark hallway, I started feeling dizzy. One of teachers asked me if I was OK, but I do not remember answering. The last thing I heard was, "Someone call 911." When I woke up, I was laying in a hospital bed not knowing how I got there or what exactly happened.

\* \* \*

It all started at my sixteenth birthday when I could not fit into my favorite Indian outfit because it was too tight. My parents and I had been fighting so much about why I could not have sleepovers at a friend's house, why I could not date or marry someone who was not Indian, why I had to go into the medical field. There was so much pressure already and I was not even in college yet. I felt like I had no control over anything in my life - they controlled everything. The only thing I could control was how much I ate.

In the beginning, I would skip breakfast and lie to my mom, telling her I would eat it at school. Then at school, I would skip lunch and if anyone asked, I would tell them I ate a big breakfast. By the time I got home, dinner was inevitable and thus my only meal for the day. The first weeks, all I thought about was food, but then I started reading, writing and getting more active in dancing and cheerleading, leaving me no time to focus on food. Finally, after a few months, I just stopped eating dinner altogether. I would chew gum if I started feeling dizzy, or I would eat three raisins every four hours.

The more I fought with my parents and the less attention I got from them, the easier it became for me to not eat; the hunger just died completely. I finally felt good about myself as if nothing could harm me. I was in total control of everything, or at least I felt as if I was. I would slip up sometimes and eat, but then I would go back to not eating again. Finally, the summer before my senior year, I vowed not to eat ever again. I hated my life, I hated my parents for never caring or paying attention to me, I hated my sister for taking every single memorable moment away from me because of her screwed-up marriage. I had to take my anger out on something, so I took it out on the food. I stopped eating.

Luckily, no one else could tell because we had to wear uniforms to school; I just opted for a bigger size to cover up my weight loss. After months of starving myself, the principal noticed and would try to talk to me, but I never listened; I lied to him as well and told him it was nothing. My family doctor kept warning me that I needed to eat more or I would end up in the hospital or worse. I told him I would never let it get that far, but I never told myself that.

When I saw my parents sitting in the dark blue chair talking to the doctor, I realized why I was here. My eating disorder had gone too far. As I lay there, I struggled to call my mom but it was as if I had no voice or tongue to form words. I coughed instead and my mom came over and wiped the tears from my face and she said to me, "Urvi, everything's going to be OK. I am so sorry for not seeing this." I could hear the sadness in her voice, almost like a betrayal. I knew what she was thinking, "How can this happen to my daughter and I not know? How can we do so much for her and yet she does not care about us?" My dad, the man who barely spoke to me unless I asked him something, looked me in the eye and said, "Why, why did you do this? Are we that bad of parents that you had to harm yourself? What did we not do for you? We buy you everything, we provide for you, you don't ever have to worry about anything in your life, and don't you love us?"

I sat there and talked to my parents about everything in my life. I finally confessed to my parents why I was so angry all the time and why I spent so much time doing extra-curricular activities. I wanted them to know that I hated them. I hated it when everything I did would go unnoticed and I had no control over my life. I looked at my mom and told her that they controlled my life and this was the only thing I could control. I blamed them for my disorder.

When the doctor came over to talk to me, his white coat had a little, black ink stain, but his smile assured me that I was going to be OK. He talked about all the things I needed to do and people I should turn to for help. When the nurse brought out my lunch all I could think was, "Eww, I hate eating hospital food!" My dad came over and told me I had no choice but to eat it, and when my dad gets that tone with me, I know he is serious. I tried the red Jello first; I took the plastic spoon and scooped up the jiggly Jello. When the first bite hit my tongue, it felt like heaven. Jello never tasted better! After I finished eating that, I had toast. My mom made some homemade jam, so my dad put a little bit of it on my toast. The jam brought back childhood memories of how, if I got hurt or in trouble, my mom would put this jam on the toast and it would make everything right. While I was eating and looking at my parents, I knew I had to change my ways. How could I have hurt my parents like that; what daughter does that to her parents? I realized that no one was to blame but me. It was as if a thousand knives were stabbing me repeatedly.

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After my first hospital visit, I had to go back two more times. I kept on slipping back into a deep depression, and the only way I knew to deal with it was to stop eating again. I was tired of everyone saying "just eat, it's that simple." I wanted to shout at the top of my lungs: no, it is not that easy to just eat, it is so difficult. My third and final time in the hospital, I could not take it anymore and neither could my parents. I needed to get better. I could not die. I had to walk across the stage at high school graduation in my red cap and white gown, receive my diploma, and turn my tassel. I had to go to college, party like a rock star, meet a boy, have my heart broken, go to class, and eventually graduate.

I was eighteen years old and 76 pounds when I checked out of the hospital. Three years later, I am 21 years old and 115 pounds. It does not sound a lot, but to me it is everything. While I was recovering, I realized I have the strength of David from the Bible when he fought and took down Goliath. I am stronger, wiser, and prettier now because of my eating disorder. Becoming healthy was like climbing Mt. Everest, but I succeeded and put a flag at the top of the mountain.

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# WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE IN THE UNKNOWN by Emily Greenspan

Is it possible for a woman to be truly independent when in a relationship with a man? In the 1920s, a new era of independent women emerged in society. In the 1927 film, *The Unknown*, Nanon—the beautiful, young woman of the carnival—seems to exemplify this new independent woman. However, the film suggests that even these women only had one purpose—to attract men. The film depicts women as objects who ultimately run back into the arms of men.

The Unknown illustrates a new kind of woman in the 1920s through the character of Nanon. Nanon works in her father's traveling circus. At the circus, she grows close with fellow performer, Alonzo the Armless, whose talent consists of using his feet to throw knives and shoot guns at Nanon. Alonzo, who, in fact, does have both his arms, is a felon on the loose, wanted for robbery. A double thumb on his hand incriminates him in the robbery. Day in and day out, Alonzo binds his arms in a painful corset, all to avoid having his hands, and thus his true identity, revealed. Alonzo's faithful sidekick, Cojo, the only one who knows his true identity, would never divulge his secret.

Because of his disability, being armless, Nanon gravitates towards Alonzo. In "The Armless Wonder," a review of the film, Mordaunt Hall explains Nanon's attraction to Alonzo: "She becomes interested in Alonzo because most men in the circus without provocation invariably want to caress her" (Hall). Being a striking young woman working in a male-dominated environment, Nanon is constantly "pawed at" by men. Nanon cannot stand being in the clutches of aggressive men. Malabar the Strongman also vies for Nanon's attention and affection. Whenever in his presence, Nanon draws away from him, trying to avoid his strong, insistent grasp. Nanon's fear of men stems from her father's borderline abusive behavior. He treats all of his performers horribly, especially Alonzo. He even goes as far as beating Alonzo in one scene in the film. One night, Alonzo attacks and strangles Nanon's father. Nanon witnesses a man with a double thumb attack her father. Alonzo realizes this and ultimately decides to have his arm amputated. He also hoped that this would increase his chances with his love, Nanon. Unbeknownst to Alonzo, Malabar and Nanon begin to grow closer. She starts to let go of her fear of men's aggressive hands. After a failed attempt to sabotage Malabar's risky performance, Alonzo ends up sabotaging himself and dies. Nanon and Malabar are happily in love together. She ends up in the arms of her strongman.

The Unknown made its debut in a post-war era and showed newly discovered changes in gender traits. A significant change occurred in women after World War I as women found independence in having her own job, making her own money, and not necessarily needing a man's help. The flapper embodied this independence. In *Flapper*, Joshua Zeitz cites a definition of flapper as a girl "somewhat daring in misconduct, speech and dress" (5-6). Flappers explored their independence and followed no rules but their own. Bruce Bliven, editor of *The New Republic*, believed the success of the flapper "was proof positive that women today are shaking off the shreds and patches of their old-age servitude" (qtd. in Zeitz 7). Liz Conor calls the independent woman, the flapper, the "New Modern Woman" (7).

Films in the 1920s, taking notice of the new style of women emerging, experimented with the idea of the flapper character. Nanon represents a flapper in the broadest sense possible. Even though she may not be an exact replica of a flapper, Nanon still possesses some flapper-like qualities. Dressing provocatively, bobbing her hair, and attracting endless male suitors are the characteristics Nanon possesses and show similarities to those of the flapper. She differs from the flapper because of her lack of rebelliousness. Nanon, out of fear of her overbearing father, does what she is told.

Although Nanon has her independence, it is very limited. Working at the circus and making her own money in order to support herself represents one way Nanon strives to be independent. Unfortunately, Nanon is confined to the lonely world of the circus where she cannot break free from her father's abusive role, therefore repressing her independence. However, Nanon desperately wants independence from men, but by ending up with Malabar the Strongman, Nanon has given up her independence. Sara Ross, in her essay "Good Little Bad Girls': Controversy and the Flapper Comedienne," discusses women's roles in films during the twenties. Ross explains, "The vast majority of flapper films conclude with the flapper explicitly renouncing her experiments with the modern lifestyle and/or settling down in a relationship with a conventional man." The flappers in films, like women in real life, conform and end up in a relationship with a man. Women always retreat into the arms of men hence never

achieving their goal of gaining independence. They surrender their individuality and conform to what society deems as 'the norm.' Throughout the movie, Nanon ran away from men, trying to avoid their control. Hence, Nanon surrenders her independence when she engages in a relationship with Malabar the Strongman in the final scene of the film.

Nanon's fear of men derives from her poor relationships with the men she has in her life. Her sole job in the circus, to be sexy and to attract male customers, often attracts negative attention. Men constantly "paw" and grab her, and her father manhandles her. Her father's abusiveness only adds to her fear of men. A 1920s Hollywood actress, Hedda Hopper, experienced the same feelings toward men as Nanon did. In a Washington Post interview, Hedda states, "I hated men, because I thought them all selfish, grasping and overbearing. They were my natural enemies" (qtd. in Tildesley). Hedda grew up in a male dominated family where the boys could do whatever they wanted and the girls were expected to stay home to cook, clean, and sew (Tildesley). Hedda, too, had an unstable relationship with her father; he would belittle her and tell her she would never amount to anything, crushing her dreams of becoming a performer in the process (Tildesley). Likewise, Nanon's father kept her confined to the circus for his own personal benefit rather than giving her a choice in the matter.

In the twenties, women viewed themselves differently than ever before. The idea of the Modern Woman and feminine visibility surfaced during this decade as Liz Conor describes this in her book, *The Spectacular Modern Woman*. Conor states: "Appearing' describes how the changed conditions of feminine visibility in modernity invited a practice of the self which was centered on one's visual status and effects" (7). The Modern Woman was "spectacularized," increasingly visible "from self apprehension in a mirror to being seen in a public place, to becoming an image through industrialized visual technologies such as the camera" (7). Like the women in the twenties, Nanon is spectacularized in *The Unknown*. As the only female in the entire film, major focus was put on her. Nanon works in the circus among an abundance of men. Her job requires her to attract men and wear scantily clad clothing. She receives sometimes unwanted attention from men because of her position.

Women of the twenties were often objectified, and despite the independence and rebellion of the flapper, the flapper only intensified this. Men viewed women as things, not people. They believed women had one purpose: to be the objects of the men's gaze and to be sexy. As described in The Spectacular Modern Woman, "The Flapper's practices of appearing were seen to be symptomatic of an excessive desire to be objectified by a heterosexual, anonymous, and often transitory gaze" (Conor 13). Flappers knew how to attract and captivate men. Nanon dresses provocatively in order to attract men to the circus. She also risks her life every time she performs with Alonzo. Nanon is spectacle in the film. The focus remains on Nanon because she is the only woman and her job entails her to exude sex in order to attract male customers. And since Nanon presents herself in a sexual way, men tend to objectify her. This leads men to believe that she is an object and that they can own and control her.

The Unknown displays men's objectification of women. Objectifying women gives men the false notion that they have control over women. They view women as property, not human beings. When it comes to Alonzo's feelings for Nanon, a fine line is drawn between love and obsession. He loves her so much and he feels he needs to protect her constantly. Alonzo attempts to sabotage Malabar's chances with Nanon. He tricks Malabar, telling him he is lucky he has strong arms and encourages him to take Nanon into his arms. While talking to Cojo about Nanon, Alonzo says, "No one is going to have her! No one but me!" Crazed with love, Alonzo proclaims, "There is nothing I will not do to own her. Nothing!" He believes if he is with Nanon, she will belong to him. The film portrays Alonzo as the love-struck underdog, relentlessly competing for Nanon's love, while Malabar appears as the hero who wins the girl in the end. But, by expressing his obsessive, domineering feelings over Nanon, Alonzo exposes himself as just another man objectifying her.

Nanon and Malabar being together in the end of *The Unknown* symbolizes their eternal love while also loosely represents a marriage. In "Women Are Afraid Men Will Get Ahead of Them," Hedda Hopper voices her opinions on women's independence and marriage. Hopper believes marriage is not the "sole end and aim of women's existence" (qtd. in Tildesley). She goes on to describe how "A man must be worth marrying before a woman will give up her independence" (qtd. in Tildesley). Men viewed marriage as a way to control women and to rid their fears of women surpassing them (Tildesley).

Though the introduction of the flapper helped arouse a new era of independence in the twenties, women were, however, unable to gain it fully due to their reliance on men. Women's hunger for independence is always overruled by their undeniable appetite for security and comfort.

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### THE FLUX OF IDENTITY



I tilted my head to the sky. Every twinkling star stood proudly forth. The full moon illuminated its surrounding clouds, creating a mesmerizing, bluish haze as the four of us just stood and stared out at our surroundings. I couldn't remember ever feeling such a pure state of serenity until then, here with the run-down, dirty remains of construction, with the stretching vegetation, and the souls of the insane. The moon's allure drew me in, making me feel as if I were the smallest being in existence. Time didn't seem to have relevance. All I'd wanted was to put my life on pause and submerge myself into the most beautiful night sky I'd ever seen.

~ Kristina Romero, "Henryton"

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# COMMERCE AND GENDER IN "FANTOMINA" by Ana Navascues

During the Enlightenment, men and women lived by a "rigid class system" that put renewed emphasis on the public life (Lawall 297). This public sphere of money, politics, and business was reserved primarily for men. In Eliza Haywood's "Fantomina," the title character blurs the traditional gender and society roles that prohibited women from entering the public sphere of money and politics by stepping out of her prescribed private life as a highborn woman. As a woman of the upper class, Fantomina would have been expected to follow "well-defined codes of behavior," which would preserve her reputation and increase her value on the marriage market (Lawall 297). These codes of behavior are applied to the different classes of women Fantomina inhabits. In Fantomina's use of her own money, she enters into the male, and therefore public, world of commerce, while maintaining her guises and their specific roles in society. She not only purchases her many costumes but she rents multiple homes, hires employees, and works when she does not have to. Moreover, each of the different women she pretends to be has in some way

control over their own funds, whether as a prostitute, maid, widower, or wealthy aristocrat. It is because of her plentiful funds she is able to create elaborate alternate personae in order to fool Beauplaisir into believing that it is he who is doing the chasing and not the other way around. It is made clear that almost anything can be bought for a price, except Beauplaisir's affections and in the end Fantomina's freedom. Throughout the story, the discourses of commerce highlight Fantomina's role in this monetary world that is usually reserved for men.

The language of mercantilism is expressed almost immediately as Fantomina becomes consumed with curiosity about the interactions between men and women, specifically the men of her rank and their interest in the prostitutes at the theater. She goes undercover to better understand this forbidden culture. Dressing up like a prostitute and making her way down to the pit; there Fantomina (the name she gives herself when she pretends to be a prostitute) is immediately surrounded by a "crowd of purchasers...each endeavoring to outbid the other in offering her a price for her embraces" (Haywood 632). As a prostitute, Fantomina is a public figure who actively participates in the business of buying and selling goods, namely herself. Released from the restrictions of her class, Fantomina finds a "vast deal of pleasure in conversing with him [Beauplaisir] in this free and unrestrained manner" (Haywood 633). Eager to keep Beauplaisir's attention, despite trying to convince herself otherwise, Fantomina rents "lodgings in a house not very far from it, intending, that if he should insist on passing some part of the night with her, to carry him there, thinking she might with more security to her honor entertain him at a place where she was mistress" (Haywood 634). Even at this early stage, she is taking control of the situation, accounting for the possible consequences of being seen or letting Beauplaisir have the upper hand. Her introduction to the world of commerce

illuminates her naiveté as she reacts with hurt and disgust at Beauplaisir's attempt to pay her as an assurance of his affection. She has either forgotten that she is indeed a prostitute to Beauplaisir or lacks an understanding of the role she is playing. Fantomina is beginning to understand what can and cannot be bought in this public, commercial world as well as the very real dangers to her reputation and her heart.

Noticing that she is losing Beauplaisir's interest, Fantomina dons a new disguise that will enable her to remain close to Beauplaisir as he attempts to distance himself from her. Celia, a maid, is able to earn her own money just as a prostitute does, but now she is entering a more private place in society. As Celia, a maid in the house Beauplaisir is renting on his way to Bath, Fantomina does not just play at being a maid, but actually does her duties as she fully embraces this new role. Understanding what is expected of her, she responds with a "well counterfeited show of surprise and joy," demonstrating her knowledge of what would be socially expected of a woman in her position (Haywood 638). Just as before, Beauplaisir offers Celia money or a salary in return for services. It is not until she acts as the Widow Bloomer does she begin to create business on a microcosmic scale, when she hires a servant along with a coach and horses to travel. This seemingly small occurrence puts Fantomina in a powerful position, as she is now responsible for a servant's livelihood and generating the economy. As the Widow Bloomer, Fantomina has her own money, money that no longer belongs to her husband. She is a fully independent woman masquerading as a helpless widow. Indeed, she must be helpless in order to invoke sympathy and affection from Beauplaisir. By letting him believe that he is comforting her, as he "kisses away her tears," Fantomina is manipulating the situation by appearing to act in accordance to the societal conventions that were expected of a woman of her assumed class (Haywood 640).

Finally as Incognita, Fantomina reaches her goal in securing Beauplaisir's affections. In this process though, she has elevated her position in the economic sense by hiring two "necessitous men" (Haywood 643). As the Widow Bloomer there is no account of how she hired the servant she employed only that he was hired. As Incognita, however, the reader gets a full report on her interaction with these men. This becomes important as she is seen as a competent businesswoman. Incognita goes into the park where many poor men roam, disregarding the potential danger of her situation, in order to find the perfect men for her plan. Incognita begins:

> To communicate the business she had with them in these words: I am sensible, gentlemen (*said she*), that through the blindness of fortune, and partiality of the world, merit frequently goes unrewarded, and that those of the best pretensions meet with the least encouragement. (Haywood 643)

Melissa Mowry points out that it is Fantomina's successful "ability to forge a collation with... commoners" that gives her the upper hand (654). This display of impressive persuasive tactics, in which Incognita is flattering the men and convincing them that she is their ally against the social world that has rejected them, demonstrates her ability to function as a woman in a man's world. Fantomina is able to sell herself (so to speak) and make her enterprise attractive to the men. She is a part of the many facets of commerce, not just as a consumer but as a seller too.

Fantomina's downfall does not happen when she discovers that she is pregnant but when her mother comes into town. A pregnancy out of wedlock would have been catastrophic for a woman of this time, but Fantomina does not even appear to panic at her situation; in fact, she is levelheaded and able to conceal the pregnancy until she begins to go into labor at a ball. The narrator maintains that Fantomina "would easily have found means to have screened even this from the knowledge of the world, had she been at liberty to have acted with the same unquestionable authority over herself as she did before the coming of her mother" (Haywood 647). At last the strict rules of convention and social expectations have finally caught up to Fantomina, not because she made a mistake but by simply being reined in by the voice of tradition and authority, her mother. Like her daughter, though, Fantomina's mother takes on the role of head of the family as she demands that Beauplaisir marry her daughter. It is also significant that it is Fantomina's mother and not Beauplaisir that has exposed Fantomina's secrets and not Beauplaisir himself. Even more interesting is the refusal of Beauplaisir's offer to "discharge it [his daughter] faithfully" by both Fantomina and her mother. Not only does this once again put the women in financial authority, it effectively cuts off any power Beauplaisir might have had. Even while living in the confines of societal expectations Fantomina and her mother remain in control of their lives.

Haywood's story can be seen as moralistic as the heroine is punished for her misdeeds and manipulative behavior, by being sent off to a convent and being removed from the world that she is familiar with. Or it can be looked at as a woman's journey into the male world of commerce and power while have to work within the confines of society. It is Fantomina's ability to adapt to the public world of commerce and exchange that permitted her to get as far as she did before the inevitable crushing influence of social expectations stopped her.

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## ANALYSIS OF PERRY'S THEORIES OF PERSONAL IDENTITY by Neusa Facenda

Perry's A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality gives an example of logical thinking and argumentation. More than theorizing, this text expresses ways of defending ideas and proving them to be true or more-likely-to-be-true than other ideas. The four theories of personal identitybody theory, soul theory, memory theory, brain theoryexpressed in Perry's book are well discussed. In a general sense, it seems that the body theory wins the round of dialogs for having more pros and fewer cons than the soul, memory, and brain theories. It follows then that survival after death would not be possible, because when the body dies the person's identity ceases to exist. Let it be noted that none of the theories was definitely proven flawless. Although a lot of arguments exist against the memory theory, I believe personal identity is directly related to a person's memories, which helps to shape a person's psychological personality. In order to prove my position, I will argue in favor of the memory theory by introducing a new argument, and later by comparing it to the other theories.

Despite arguments against the memory theory, it is still the strongest single characteristic of a person's identity. Memories are not comprised only of "who did I have dinner with yesterday?" or "I remember to have had red wine last week." Memories are the major mechanism for our behavior, mannerisms, feelings, and attitudes regarding particular situations. The formation of one's psychological behavior involves memories. The shy smile of somebody recognizing a neighbor, the warm smile of somebody greeting a good friend, and the sadness of somebody that misses someone special are all reactions that are brought about by memories. One person recognizes another not only by physical characteristics, but also by the combination of accumulated memories, which provides common things to share and talk about.

Now let us consider memory loss. If I lose my memories, do I stop being me? No. There are conscious and subconscious memories. Conscious memories lead us to the type of interaction expressed by statements like, "Let us go to that restaurant where we went last week, because the food was great." This type of memory allows people to identify themselves to one another by common interests and shared experiences. However, if somebody loses (partially or completely) those conscious memories, there are still subconscious fragments that will make one laugh in the same old way, walk in a certain way, or hold the fork and knife in a certain position; these behavioral characteristics are integral parts of one's personal identity. My father laughs very loudly and in a particular way when he is happy, especially after a glass of good wine, which he appreciates. I could recognize his laughter without looking at him; if I just listened I could tell, "This is definitely my dad laughing!" The major evidence for subconscious memory comes from the fact that the great majority of individuals still know how to hold a fork, how to speak, how to write, and so on, after experiencing memory loss.

People perform these tasks without thinking about them. However, speaking, eating, and writing are not inherited traits; they were all learned at some point, and therefore, they are part of memory. I have never heard of somebody who had their penmanship completely modified after memory loss—people tend to draw the letters in a certain way regardless.

Every individual presents a unique combination of what I call "subconscious memory-related qualities" that makes up their personal identity. In the case of certain conditions, such as Alzheimer's, personal identity disappears with the progression of the disease, and therefore, the individual that was there before ceases to exist. The resulting individual is someone with no capability of retaining any memories of any kind, and is therefore a person without identity.

If we compare the memory theory as I have just described it and the body theory, according to which "I am my physical body" (Perry 1978: 36), we can see that now the body theory does not make much sense anymore. The physical body may be one of the means by which we can recognize a person; nevertheless, it is not sufficient to characterize each person's unique identity. A blind person can recognize friends and family. This recognition is not only based on physical factors such as voice, but also on the way a person uses voice to express thoughts, feelings, and so on. A blind person may be able to recognize when a close friend is excited, worried, or lying. This recognition does not come from a particular way the body moves, but by the unique behavior that is expressed and repeated to a point that the memory can identify it. For example, plastic surgery is very advanced nowadays-let us consider that a person can be modified as to be exactly like me, having the same facial characteristics, body type, even the same voice, but not the memories that make up my personality. That person is not me, and ultimately will not even sound like me because she will not use the same accented intonation or word choice that I would. Therefore, body is not sufficient to define one's personal identity.

Regarding the soul theory, in which an immaterial soul defines personal identity, the argument is sufficient to discard this theory as determinant of personal identity. In *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*, Weirob argues that souls cannot be seen, or touched, or smelled (Perry 1978: 8); nevertheless, we cannot know when a soul is present or not. Unless there is a way of confirming the existence of a soul by any sort of technology or study, I do not see how this theory could be proven. Therefore, the memory theory is better to define personal identity than the soul theory.

The brain theory is more difficult to argue because the memories of a person are linked to that person's brain. In other words, the brain harbors the memories that are responsible for the psychological qualities that define one's personal identity. The brain theory is a modified argument that is intended to replace the memory theory; moreover, we can raise some good arguments against the memory theory by using brain theory principles. However, I refuse to believe the identity of a person can be described as "I am my brain, and where my brain goes I go with it" as in the case of the Julia North thought experiment (Perry 1978: 38). Therefore, I'll try to defend the memory theory from it the best I can. For example, let us say that a brain copy is possible, and that my brain is exactly copied with all the memories it contains. One can say that a body from another individual combined with my brain and all my conscious and subconscious memories would be me. It seems logical that if I defend the memory theory I should agree with this statement. Nevertheless, a physical brain may contain one's psychological behaviors and thoughts within it, but the body that this brain will be transferred to may contain different synapses. In other words, the way

the brain communicates with or sends signals to the body is different from person to person. Therefore, all the mannerisms, voice articulations, and other signs of subconscious memory-related qualities would be gone, and the resulting person would not be me. The resulting person may remember having had red wine last week and liking the tagliatelle al ragu, but this person would only seem to be me. The body would not respond to stimuli the way my own would, therefore it would not be me. The resulting person may not like pasta because of differences in taste buds. Also, this person may never be able to talk, walk, laugh, or express emotions the same way as I would. Therefore, the memory theory alone is still better than the brain theory to define personal identity. And after this discussion, we may add that the memory theory has to be related to the same physical connection that translates ones memories into reactions.

Unfortunately, the memory theory is not compatible with the idea of human immortality. The only way the memory theory would work in terms of giving hope for survival after death is if it were combined with the soul theory. We could say that if the memories were linked to an invisible force capable of leaving our body after death and continued to live in a parallel world (or heaven), than survival would be possible. On the other hand, this invisible soul would have to be linked at all times with the same physical connections coming from the same physical body that sustains the memories; but we cannot know if the soul is there because we cannot see it. It does not work. Memory theory does not give hopes for survival after the death of the body.

Overall, none of the theories is flawless. We could argue against the four theories by using all sorts of hypothetical scenarios. However, I believe the memory theory is the best way to define personal identity.

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THE CROOKED CANE by Brant Maggard

My old man was a grizzly fellow with fuzzy, wavy hair and a salt and pepper mountain-man beard. (Now it's mostly salt.) He doesn't have any vocal chords because of a car accident back in the 50's, so when he speaks it's this real raspy whisper that only adds to his mystique. If there is one thing this man loves (other than his family), it's Hap Ki Do, the Korean martial art of harmonious energy. If I really look far back, I can remember the musky, black uniform, the perfectly tied black belt, and the jet-black hair with little snowflakes of white. I also remember his cold, silver, metal cane. The cane is one of the main weapons of Hap Ki Do utilized in offensive strikes and defensive throws. Ironically, for all of the complicated techniques, he used a medical cane like you'd find in a pharmacy because its large handle made throwing easier.

Occasionally, my old man would take me into the basement to teach me Hap Ki Do. It was important to him that he pass along his martial style and a love for the martial arts in general. Though I liked the martial arts, I had pretty bad depression and found that I just didn't have the energy to do much of anything except go through the motions, if that. I learned basic techniques and a few cool cane maneuvers, but I never practiced and so I was sloppy. It would hurt me to know that my old man was trying so hard to get me to learn what he loved, but I just wasn't perfecting it. His transmission was imperfect and I was the reason why. I ought to have been like that cane. I ought to have been strong-willed, perfectly aligned, and positioned just the way my old man wanted.

That cane didn't stay straight, however, and it was by my own fault. In seventh grade, I, like many children, liked to show off, and I loved parlor tricks. I brought the cane with me to demonstrate one of these tricks. I told two people to stand on the shaft while I held the handle. I lifted them with ease (remember the simple machine "lever" we were taught in elementary school?) and told a third person to stand on it. I still easily lifted them, but the cane bent in the middle from all the weight. I brought the cane home and put it back where I got it, never mentioning it again. My father never made reference to the crick that had developed in his perfect cane.

I still see that cane almost every day I'm home, but now it's because my father is recovering from cancer and needs it for support. I watch him as he slowly moves his way across a room with that crooked cane. That crooked cane, that imperfect transmission, helps him walk around the house. That crooked cane, that imperfect technique, gives him the support he needs to keep moving. That crooked cane, which I still use to practice Hap Ki Do, is exactly what my father needs. Sure it isn't the same cane that he had in class, when I presented it back to him it wasn't as shiny and strong as he might have hoped, but it still supports him. Maybe it isn't the cane that my father had hoped it would be, it isn't a symbol of geometric and martial perfection, but it's still his cane. Maybe the cane I saw wasn't really my father's cane at all; my father's cane wasn't the work of perfect craftsmanship; it was a cheap

hunk of metal for people with problems walking. Maybe I wasn't supposed to be the son I thought I had to be; maybe I was just what my father needed. Maybe I shouldn't mind being a crooked cane.

### TAKING ANOTHER LOOK



# Ι

All of a sudden, Giulia grabbed me by my arm. Federica had just stepped out of the big green door that led outside from the lunchroom and covered her eyes from the sun. Giulia pushed me in front of her. Startled, I swallowed my words and slightly mumbled in an unsure tone and trembling lip: "I don't think we should...." I glanced at Giulia, waiting for her to jump into the conversation, but all she did was hide behind me, still holding my arm. I could feel her slowly pressing on my back, using me as some kind of force shield. Feeling the tightness, somehow I got more courageous. With one abruptly breathed out sentence, I said: "I don't think we should be friends anymore."

At that point, I understood what honesty was. I found out that if you tell someone how you feel about them, you survive and possibly feel better for not hiding your feelings.

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The sun is warm, so we lie down and try to catch some rays. Federica finally walks out of the lunch room, and Giulia springs up, grabbing my arm by force. "Who's going to do this first?" I shake my head. We haven't even decided what to tell her yet. But Giulia pushes me in front of Federica, so it's too late to really decide what to do. I just tell her those infamous words: "We don't want to be your friends anymore."

The moment I say those words, I discover this new power I never knew I had. I can make people feel bad just by saying a couple of words. Soon I would be unstoppable.

#### III

Federica stepped out of the big green door that led outside from the lunchroom and covered her eyes from the sun. Giulia grabbed me and together we went tell her how we don't want to be her friends anymore if she is just going to use us when the friends she likes better aren't around.

Federica gave me the look of death, piercing my brain with her angry and arrogant blue eyes that hold a slight expression of surprise. "Fine." She walked away from us toward her popular friends, who were laughing at an unlucky girl on the other side of the playground who had forgotten to zip up her pants.

And then I understood. I turned to Giulia, awkward in her fake designer jeans, and knew I didn't want to be the girl with the unbuttoned pants ever again. A few days after, I told Giulia I didn't want to be her friend anymore; I followed Federica, and now I laugh at the unfortunate.

#### IV

Giulia and I decided to tell Federica that we didn't want to be her friend anymore. I sabotaged yet another friendship. Giulia was in it too, but she wasn't as experienced as I was. Moving so often, I had to protect myself from getting too close to people, calling it quits so the inevitable next move would hurt less. This time it was different though. It was liberating, as I had told Federica straight to her face. Usually my sabotages would consist of me not calling back or ignoring the friend, but now I decided not be sneaky about it. I told her and I watched her walk away. Giulia was holding my arm behind me, scared as hell. Maybe she was scared of the fact that I could do it to her too. She was right to be scared.

~ Federica Pagani, "Repeat"

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THE JEAN JACKET by Elizabeth Carey

I wore her jean jacket. I wore it to school. The old, wornin, battered and bruised Levi's jacket, which I was not allowed to borrow, ever. No big deal though. No one will find out. I will have it back in the closet before she knows it is missing. I always borrow Mom's clothes, and I always put them back before she knows they were borrowed, actually. So it's fine. I will sneak it in my book bag. Hang it in the closet. Perfect. She won't even know I wore it.

Where is my jean jacket? I know I hung it up in here after I wore it last week. It's not in my bedroom closet, so it should be here. You know, Elizabeth left this morning without saying goodbye. She was in an awfully big hurry, and I know it's not because she loves school so much. She took it. She wore my jacket after I specifically told her not to. How many times do I have to tell that girl to stay out of my clothes? She just does whatever she wants with no regard to what I have said. I don't even see why she doesn't let me wear her stuff. All of her clothes are so much better than mine. Even that ratty, old, red flannel shirt that is three sizes too big. It's so baggy, and when I tuck it into my Guess jeans, everybody tells me how great it looks. The beige over-sized shirt that hangs over my black leggings is so cool. Way cooler than any of my stupid stuff.

What is she thinking? I tell her time and time again to respect my things. I make sure she gets her privacy. I make sure the girls stay out of her room. It would be nice if she could extend the same courtesy to me. Elizabeth just never listens. She is so headstrong sometimes. I don't know how to make her listen. This has got to be payback for what I put my mother through.

My friends say I look cool. I am cool. My friends think I have such good fashion sense. See, Mom should be happy I'm fitting in. It's not like she buys me the new things that all my friends have. What am I supposed to do? My friends all have older sisters that let them borrow their clothes. I don't. And you know what? I let my sisters borrow my skirts and other stuff. They run all over the house tripping over my skirts, which stretches them, they get grass stains on everything, and half the time they take my stuff without asking, but I don't complain. I don't get mad and yell at them. So it is perfectly fair that I borrow my mom's clothes. There is no reason I should not be able to wear the jean jacket. It is so cool.

Well the jacket hasn't made its way back into the closet. I wonder how long she plans on keeping this up. All she has to do is fess up. That's it. Then we can just move on. Maybe she'll even stop "borrowing" my clothes. I'm not even sure why she would want the jacket so bad. It's just a beat-up, old Levi's jacket. I've had it so long it's practically falling apart. I should probably just give it to her. It's the principle though. She needs to tell the truth.

The problem is I never put it back. The jacket is still in my stupid locker at school. I forgot it the first few days, but then my mom started asking about it. Well, I lied. What was I supposed to do? I told her that I did not have the jacket. I'm pretty sure she knows that I have it because she keeps asking where it is. But if I bring it home then she will definitely know that I took it, and that I have been lying for weeks. Then she will be really mad. I'll be grounded, I'm sure. So, you see, I can't bring it back. Maybe she'll just stop asking me about it.

Okay, enough is enough. I know Elizabeth took it. I know from that guilty look on her face. She can barely make eye contact with me. I've given her numerous chances to fess up. She is stubborn. I think she would rather hold her breath until she is blue in the face than admit that she has the jacket. I've always said, Elizabeth will cut off her nose to spite her face. I don't care about the jacket; I just want her to tell the truth.

She hasn't stopped asking. *Crap. She knows.* I told her again. I don't have that stupid jacket. I don't even like it. *Yeah, Right.* She went to my Grandma's. She went without me. They went without me. No room in the van. *Sure. I know what she's trying to do.* She is so mad she went to Grandma's for Thanksgiving with my sisters. I have to ride in the stupid white, Sunbird, the most embarrassing car ever, with my dad, even more embarrassing. She is trying to punish me and doesn't even have any proof that I have that dumb jacket! *I'll show her.* I can play this game as long as she can. Two days ago, I took the girls with me out to Mother's house. It's easier to get them out there before Ed and Elizabeth. He needs to pack the car with our Thanksgiving fixings without the girls under his feet. Besides, this gives Ed and Elizabeth a little father-daughter time. They don't seem to talk at all anymore. Well, really, Elizabeth doesn't seem to talk to anyone anymore. I hope that Thanksgiving isn't awkward because of all this jacket business. I would really like us to get past this.

The past two days have been a little easier because I haven't had to lie all the time. But now I have to walk into Grandma's. I feel like a dog who's been scolded. *Maybe she forgot about it.* Grandma greets me and smiles. *She's not mad at me.* Grandma is the nice one. I'll bet she never made my mom feel this bad about anything. Grandma looks the same as always, kind of fat, a big red afro on her head and her glasses at the end of her nose. Her house is so warm. Looks the same too, wood paneled walls, plush white carpet, long teal drapes. Nothing has changed. I can smell ham. Grandma's favorite.

Ed and Elizabeth just got here. I hope they're hungry, because, as usual, we have about eight pounds of ham. I will never understand Mother's passion about ham. Elizabeth and I should talk. We should talk before tomorrow. I know this is a lot for her. I know that she feels guilty. I know she wants to tell me the truth.

I am taking my time getting to the kitchen. Brush my hair. Unpack my bag. Stare at the floor. *Here I go.* In the kitchen, my Mom is waiting. There she is sitting at the table with a crossword puzzle. *This green-walled kitchen. This is where I am going to die. She's really gonna let me have it.* I can't look at her. Instead, I do a room check. Making sure everything is in its place. Green Formica countertops. Check. Ceiling cracks. Check. Dust bunnies. Check. Card table all covered in Thanksgiving stuff. Check. Ham. *Of course.* All there.

All right, time to get this out in the open. I am going to give her another chance to tell me. Here she is. She looks miserable. I never should have let this get so big. She needs a hug. I need a hug.

She knows. Just say something! Stop staring at me and tell me you know! Then I won't have to admit it. Let's just get this over with! Wait, what is she doing? She's getting up. Here it comes. Get ready. She's gonna blow! She doesn't look mad. Is she going to hug me?

*Oh honey it's OK! Poor baby.* I just wanted her to tell me the truth. I just wanted her to learn a lesson. It's not all right to take my things. It's not all right to openly defy me. I didn't want her to cry. She can have that jacket. I've missed her not the jacket.

I don't want to let go. She's crying. I'm crying. She says she's missed me. *Me too*. Finally I say, "Mom, I took the jacket and I'm so sorry." *I really am.* "It's in my locker," I say. "I didn't mean to forget it," I say. "I'm so sorry," I say. *I really, really, really am.* My mom says, "It's okay. I know you have it. You can keep it."

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# THE SUFFERING OF THE TRINITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CROSS EVENT IN CHRISTIANITY by Sara Loperana

Christians have always placed prime importance on Jesus' death on the cross, though theologians are often at odds on how to interpret the seemingly violent event. Questions arise such as; what does it say about the nature of God? Many theologians grappled, and do to this day, with the seeming pain, suffering, and abandonment that Jesus faces on the cross. As humans, those who study Christianity often attempt to define God's nature by explaining away Jesus' final line in Mark and Matthew, "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me," and to focus on Jesus' final lines in Luke or John, in which he seems to have more control of his destiny. However, the Son's claim of forsakenness deserves more analysis. Jesus' plea in Matthew and Mark is one of a person in pain, a man not in control of the moment, and certainly not of a person who is supposed to be a divine Christ. What do we make of this paradox? Jürgen Moltmann, a German contemporary

theologian, attempts to confront this issue by highlighting the "suffering of God"<sup>1</sup> as a way to experience the Holy Trinity in the crucifixion of the Son. Additionally, he puts at the forefront of his theology the need for the trinity to be experienced on earth.

Born in Germany in 1926, Moltmann was raised by secular intellectuals who venerated math and science and had little need for religion. As a peaceful man drafted into WWII, he surrendered to a British officer to escape the fighting and violence. In the POW camps in Great Britain, he read the Bible for the first time. Feeling as though Christ had found him in the camps, he returned to Germany after the war, earned his doctorate in theology, preached at an evangelical church, and settled into a profession in theological academia at Tübingen University. Due to his pacifism and the violence he witnessed in the war, his writings and theology focus on pain and suffering as an essential part of, not only the human condition, but of God's love.

Initially, a view of God and the Trinity, which connects love and suffering, seems like a contradiction and brings about the issue of theodicy: if God is both allpowerful and all good, how could he allow suffering? Even more so, when applied to the crucifixion, people find it hard to grasp that the Father would allow real suffering to befall the Son, and by extension, the Father. Many theologians, including Cyril of Alexandria and Thomas Aquinas, have attempted to explain Jesus' tormented query, and his consequent suffering, as remote from God, and simply as a stand-in; a replacement for the people for which he opens the way to salvation.<sup>2</sup> The Son therefore, is

Jürgen Moltmann, "The Triune God: Rich in Relationships," *The Living Pulpit* (April-June, 1999): 3.
 Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (New York: First

Fortress Press, 1993), 229.

assumed to feel no suffering, and the pain is only an accident of his human form, not true spiritual anguish. In these interpretations, God is remote. The crucifixion, then, is truly a "passion *play*," in which the characters act out this scene for the benefit of humanity.

In the Crucified God, Moltmann proposes a controversial, innovative way to approach Jesus' death, viewed as what he calls, the "suffering of God."<sup>3</sup> The distinction comes in understanding that the Son suffers on the cross, as "does the Father, but not in the same way."<sup>4</sup> In Moltmann's eyes, the idea of suffering is ingrained in the act of love; suffering then, becomes an indispensable aspect, one that is necessary to understand the power and selflessness of God's love. "If God were really incapable of suffering, he would also be as incapable of loving as the God of Aristotle, who was loved by all, but could not love."<sup>5</sup> Love is an imperative condition that allows humanity to connect with God, and without it, the Divine is forever transcendent and unreachable.

To illustrate the suffering faced by Jesus, Moltmann illustrates "the Surrender of the Son"<sup>6</sup> and argues against a divine Christ who feels no pain. Jesus, as God only, cannot really experience the physical anguish associated with a death on the cross. If he is transcendent, then he is unable to experience bodily pain. Moltmann, however, acknowledging that Jesus is not simply God, highlights Jesus' humanity in the time before the cross. Despite his humanity, he is not weak and self-pitying when he prays to God to keep him from following the path laid out for him. Jesus experiences the pain that any human

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Moltmann, "The Triune God," 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Moltmann, *Crucified God*, 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Moltmann, qtd. in McGrath, 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (San

Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1981), 75.

would, in that unanswered prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, which represented the "eclipse of God."<sup>7</sup> It is in this place that Jesus feels the pain of damnation, a distance from God and lack of His presence, and his soul is tormented.<sup>8</sup> For Moltmann, it is essential that Jesus choose to follow his path toward the cross, though he suffers in spirit. He experiences hell, and is resurrected after death, but without the pain and suffering, God's love would not be transcendent.

For Moltmann, the Crucifixion is also representative of God's activity. God exercises his choice to actively participate in the pain of the crucifixion to illustrate his love. The son as well, "undertakes the way to the cross deliberately" in an active passion. God chooses to suffer, in the same way that God chooses to love. Jesus chooses to participate and give his will up to the Father, heading for Jerusalem, where he knows what is waiting, and participating in the "passio active."10 (Moltmann, Trinity and Kingdom, 75). As we have seen in Jesus, it is the choice of participation in pain that shows the sacrifice and love of God, a pain that is also present in the Father's role in the crucifixion. The Father does not sit idly by while the Son suffers the pain and death; no, He is actively participating in the Son's suffering. Using the "Father" metaphor, God's role is even easier to understand. He actively chooses to play a part, yet, must also feel the pain of a father watching his child undergo anguish and death, and with no power to stop it. The Father purposefully disregards the son's pleas, in order to become the "Father

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Martin Buber qtd. in Moltmann, Trinity and the Kingdom, 77.

Moltmann, Trinity and the Kingdom, 75-83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Joy Ann McDougall, "The Return of Trinitarian Praxis? Moltmann on the Trinity and the Christian Life," *The Journal of Religion*, (April 2003): 184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 75.

of those who have been delivered up."<sup>11</sup> Without that pain and separation, there could be no hope for salvation.

The Son's obedience and the Father's suffering would be meaningless without the third person of the trinity, the Spirit. The Spirit, even now, connects us to this moment in history that, for Moltmann, defined God's relationship with us. At the moment of Jesus' crucifixion, the vision of the trinity is most available on earth for "the Son suffers death in our God-forsakenness, the Father suffers the death of his beloved Son and the Spirit binds the other two together through unspoken sighs."<sup>12</sup> The encircling motion, and the divine connection between the three persons, who all feel the anguish of the cross event, binds humanity to the will of God.

When Moltmann's book, The Crucified God, was published in 1964, it met with harsh criticism. Even in the present day, there are two severely contested aspects of his proposal. The first is that by arguing for the importance of the crucifixion of Jesus and the overpowering presence of the Holy Trinity, Moltmann "ties God's being too closely to the progress of human history, and ... compromises the transcendence and sovereignty of the triune God."<sup>13</sup> By making this move, McDougall, Highfield, and others argue that Moltmann dissolves the distinction between the historical understanding of "theology as the doctrine of God and economy as the doctrine of salvation."<sup>14</sup> He fuses the immanent trinity and the economic trinity into one, both hinging upon salvation as the single event that shows this unity. For Moltmann, God in itself does have the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ron Highfield, "Divine Self-limitation in the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann: A Critical Appraisal," *Christian Scholar's Review* (Fall 2002): 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> McDougall, "The Return of Trinitarian Praxis," 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Highfield, "Divine Self-Limitation," 2.

dynamic perichoresis, yet is, at the same time, a part of humanity and linked to history. Secondly, critics argue that Moltmann's language confuses historical terms and ideologies reserved for the immanent trinity and its mystery, to describe his anthropomorphized economic trinity and its human-like relations.<sup>15</sup> By using language such as perichoresis, from the Cappadocian fathers, to describe the economic trinity, Moltmann not only melds the two circles, but also confuses the limits and distinctions between them, beginning a confusing cycle in which he does little to actually "clarify the divine life," but simply allows it to be fully understood in terms of human relationships.<sup>16</sup>

Moltmann argues strongly against the idea that the economic and immanent trinities must be divided. His theology of the cross demands not only the fusion of the trinities in connection with humanity, but also the suffering of all three divine persons. In the history of the trinity, it has been written often "one of the trinity has suffered."<sup>17</sup> This idea is contradictory to all of Moltmann's theology, especially in terms of God's suffering. All three beings of the trinity are active in the crucifixion, and the Father's choice for pain only illustrates the active role played by all three. The connection within the trinity is meant to reflect our experience with God and the church. Humanity's experience with God is a reciprocal appreciation and selfless love, which He experiences in turn, with us.

Critics have a right to argue for God's transcendence, for central to Christianity is the Creator of all life and the love and power of He who created all things.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Karen Kilby, "Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity," *NewBlackfriars*, 81, no. 956 (October 2000): 432-45 in McDougall, Joy Ann, "The Return of Trinitarian Praxis."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Kilby qtd. in McDougall, "The Return of Trinitarian Praxis," 180.

Moltmann, "Triune God," 2.

However, the metaphor of personal connections is more important in helping people unite with, and understand, God's love and selflessness, and emulate that in their own lives. Illustrating how the persons of the trinity are connected to human history adds to theology more than it diminishes. If the role of the crucifixion is not only for our salvation, but also for our example, then the Father, Son, and Spirit do not need to be distant and remote to be appreciated.

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## کہ کی FAMILY IN WAR by Spencer Ball

My father served in Vietnam. Until recently, this was all I knew about the subject of my family's involvement with war. My father was never one to talk specifically about his experiences overseas and my mother did not care to elaborate on how things went back home in the states. Maybe I was too young or maybe the memories were too painful. In the past, I received vague responses when the subject of Vietnam was approached, so I learned not to ask about it. However, since I have been in college, my parents have begun to share more of their experiences from that time, giving me a window into what it was like for them to live through it. It is a delicate topic for them, especially for my father who was forced to witness the events that transpired there.

According to Ron Ball, a Vietnam veteran and my father, when the war first began, there was little knowledge of what was really happening and how fast the war was escalating. In fact, conflicts happening in other regions, such as Central and South America, were receiving more attention. To most, the war in Vietnam was just another conflict overseas that did not warrant too much concern from the citizens of the United States. My mother, Deborah Ball, also shared her account of the first stages of the Vietnam War. She recalls, "I was in high school and did not know very much about the war. The kids were too young to be drafted and the main interests were music and going to The Back Door and Rose City to hear live groups, dance, and be with friends" (D. Ball).

In the beginning of the war, enlisted men were revered and looked upon as heroes. My mother remembers how many people "claimed to be close to those who were in the Army" (D. Ball). She also states another reason society was so comfortable with young people enlisting. "We were too used to winning and assumed everyone would come home in one piece, no injuries physical or mental, and the United States would be victorious" (D. Ball). Some soldiers, including my dad, enlisted with the military in order to avoid the draft. This, in turn, helped them avoid much of the stress caused by the draft. By enlisting, the young men were more likely to end up in their preferred section of the military. My mother's father, being a military man himself, supported the draft and believed that "[it] was everyone's duty to support the country" (D. Ball). But, personally, it was hard for her to be certain that this was true because she kept seeing soldiers return home "injured or dead" (D. Ball).

Dealing with the experience of war was difficult for my dad and his comrades. Many had differing opinions about the war and some of them were greatly changed by the ordeal. He explained to me how "many troops were confused and angry trying to figure out why the war had transpired in the first place and how we could have lost it with our superior weapons and technical knowhow" (R. Ball). When asked what changes he noticed in some of his friends, he slowly and almost reluctantly told me about a specific change in a close friend: After returning home and reuniting, of sorts, with my best friend, I noticed changes in his attitude and personality. Prior to Vietnam, we were both happy-go-lucky partying college students. But upon return, my friend began to drink much more heavily and had a short temper plus a sort of "I don't give a damn" attitude. I look back and realize he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but, as far as I know, he was never treated for it. It cost us our friendship. (R. Ball)

Luckily, my dad did not experience any serious symptoms of PTSD while being back in the states. He did have a little trouble coping with being back home, which he tried to mask with drinking, but he came to the conclusion that it was not helping his cause and was able to snap out of it. In this respect, he was very lucky to avoid this problem while many others were not. Even though he was not too greatly affected by PTSD, my father had been slightly numbed by his experience. Problems that people have in their daily lives do not seem that bad to him and he has a hard time understanding why some people become depressed with their situation in life. On some occasions, when I was having a hard time with various things going on around me, he would seem a little distant mainly because he did not see it as a large concern. In recent years, however, he has become more open to this type of thing, and we have become much closer because we have been able to open up to each other about our lives.

Many of the soldiers not only had PTSD to worry about but physical problems as well. During the Vietnam War, a chemical called Agent Orange was used to defoliate the jungles so that the Vietcong (enemy forces) could not hide and ambush U.S. troops (R. Ball). While effective against the Vietnamese plant life, this chemical had devastating effects on the soldiers in terms of muscle and spinal diseases and many other defects that veterans are still dealing with today.

Many of the soldiers joined in protests both in Vietnam and back home: "Peace signs and other anti-war slogans and symbols appeared on helmets and elsewhere" (R. Ball). In regard to this, I asked my father to elaborate on his stance towards the war since he experienced it firsthand. His response to this was not entirely what I had expected since he had enlisted voluntarily:

> Prior to entering the Army and going to Vietnam, I was against it. This was the position of an 18-year-old who had been watching and reading about the war for several years and was of draft age. Once I was there, I felt it was my duty to do my job and support my country. As time wore on and the war dragged, on my antiwar sentiment was reinforced. (R. Ball)

I then asked if the experience changed his outlook in any way, especially when he returned to the states. His response was simple and straightforward: "It is funny, in a way, that once back in the U.S., I found myself defending the war for the simple fact that the returning vets were mistreated and scorned by the public. I also witnessed firsthand the affect the war had on friends and family. I still wanted it to stop, but I also wanted recognition of the effort put forth by my comrades."

A large problem many of the soldiers faced upon returning home was the treatment they received from society. As a soldier, my dad can recount very vividly much "anger and frustration" from society towards the veterans, as if it was their fault that the U.S. lost the war. He also experienced much prejudice from the public; to that he states, "What bothered me the most was not the name calling, i.e. baby killer, war mongers etc. but the silence and the looks plus the questions like 'how many people did you kill?" (R. Ball). When I inquired as to what my mother observed she stated, "when the soldiers returned the American Legion and VFW refused to admit them as members and they had difficulty finding a job. No one wanted to hire a vet from Vietnam; he must be a druggie or a coward since we lost the war." She also stated that many of the veterans "became invisible that way we never lost the conflict" (D. Ball). She seemed almost as pained as my father was about the treatment of the veterans. Before the war, there was a good deal of support for military intervention in Vietnam. Despite popular belief, there was a larger percentage of support from the younger generation than from the old: "In all 14 Gallup Polls taken between March 1966 and October 1969, a higher percentage of those age 50 and over agreed that 'the U.S. made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam' than of those age 29 and under (Burris 445). One explanation is that the older generations remembered the horrors of WW I and II and did not want to see them repeated, whereas the younger generations were not alive at that time and did not fully understand the implications of combat (Burris 445).

In knowing that my father's experiences had been extremely difficult on him, I always avoided asking for details on what he went through overseas. But the more we talked about it over the years, the more he began to tell me about his tour of duty. During the interview, my dad was still reluctant to tell me some of the more personal stories, but he did discuss some of the technical duties he had while serving. He was an infantry MP (military police) in the army and most of the jobs consisted of armed escort missions for convoys, troops, and prisoners of war (POWs) (R. Ball). He told me one story in which he and a few others were sent out in the gun jeeps to escort a supply truck to a base. Since the roads were "code red" after dark because of the heightened possibility of attacks or land mines, the situation was a little tense. The supply truck drivers had decided it would be a good idea to drink some beers during the drive and consequently crashed into a ditch. While they were waiting for assistance in the middle of an empty stretch of road, the drunken truck driver got jumpy and shot his M-16 at some shadows. Luckily, help finally arrived and they were able to transport everyone back to the base (R. Ball).

I wondered how people's attitudes towards soldiers had changed since Vietnam. To get a better idea I interviewed Logan Herd, a friend of mine from high school who had served a tour of duty in Afghanistan. I asked some questions to get a basic idea of what he experienced and how it had changed him. I asked about his stance on the war before and after going and whether his views were changed by his experience or by society back home (or both). Logan responded, "Same, I agree we are fighting for a cause, and I support that cause. We know what our duties when we enlist, and it's our job to protect America's FREEDOMS" (Herd). In addition, I asked what were some of the things he observed about his comrades. What changes did he notice in them? He responded, "[h]igh hopes about the war, positive attitudes. I did know the people from my unit, and I saw a sense of pride rise in us when we were there and also upon arrival home" (Herd). Logan's experience was significantly different from that of my father's in that he and his comrades received support when they returned home and a significant number of people who agreed with their cause. My father, on the other hand, had a much harder time upon returning to the states. By the time the Vietnam veterans had returned, the public was fully aware of how badly the conflict was going and anti-war sentiment was steadily increasing.

Overall, this was an extremely difficult time for both of my parents at home and overseas. In the case of my father, it was something that affected him greatly and is still a factor in his life. It is interesting to see how soldiers were viewed and treated during the Vietnam conflict in comparison to how the men and women serving in the Middle East today are treated. Even though there is a large amount of disagreement about the current conflict, the soldiers are widely supported whereas the public literally spit on those who fought in Vietnam.

War has been a very important subject in my family. We were not supposed to talk about Vietnam in great detail, but we were always taught to support those individuals in the armed forces in spite of the conflict they were forced into. While I do not personally support the conflict that is being fought, I have always been in full support of the men and women serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. My dad has always supported the people serving overseas because he and his comrades did not receive support while they were in Vietnam or when they returned to the states, and he does not want to see the same thing happen to the men and women today. As I read about all of the horrible ways Vietnam veterans were treated, I try to emulate my parents' mentality towards soldiers currently because I believe they need that support to keep doing their job. Furthermore, if society accepts them with open arms, when they come back it will be much easier for them to get back to a normal life and heal.

I myself have considered enlisting in the military at several points throughout my life. When I consider the possibility, I am always hesitant to bring it up to my father because I am afraid of what he will say in response to the idea. Since I will be receiving a college degree, something he was not able to do before the war began, I would be able to enlist in officer's training. This has made him more open to the possibility of me joining the military because I would be less likely to experience any heavy combat, especially if I went into intelligence officer training. On one occasion I did ask him what his reaction would be if the United States government decided to institute another draft. To this, he simply responded: "I would come pick up your ass from wherever you were and take you to Canada" (R. Ball).

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## WHAT, WHY, AND GETTING BETTER by Margaret Sava

There is a girl that lives down the hall from you. It is late at night and she is sitting in the cold, gray box of the bathroom stall staring at her arm. Colors of bright red, as red as a solo cup, begin to emerge from the pasty white. Her head spins and her hands move practically on their own. The red turns dark as it spills over the sides. She can't look away as she follows a drop to the ugly tile floor, like a tear falling from someone's eye. But not hers. Her stare is fixated on the crimson colors. She looks at her feet, past her arm and under the stall, and sees someone enter the bathroom. She swallows slowly as she speaks. "Hey, um. Could you please go get my friend? She's down the hall. Tell her I need her. Please." The girl on the outside peeks through the crack between the stall door, but she hears the hurt in the girl's voice and asks no questions. "Yeah, sure. I'll go grab her for you."

### If a friend is cutting...

Your support will be important. Ask your friend about it. Listen if he or she wants to talk. **Avoid judging**. Don't dismiss the cutting as a way to get attention.

Let your friend know you care. Understand that he or she is feeling pain.

Help your friend find resources that can help. In an emergency, get help. Call 911 if you need to.<sup>1</sup>

The cool water from the bathroom sink hits her like a slap in the face. The red is so easily washed away, but it leaves something ugly behind. She stares at herself in the mirror, expressionless. A voice snaps her out of it. "Come on, let's go to bed." She walks with her friend out of the dorm bathroom, down the hall and into her room. "Goodnight." But the friend pushes the door open, "No, I'm sleeping here." A pillow and blanket plop on the floor and the two fall asleep, exhausted. The next morning, the girl runs her fingers over her tender arm. The peroxide pools in the gashes as it bubbles and stings the cuts. She finds herself lost in the marks on her arm, angry that her sleep did not wash them away. The door swings open, as her friend walks in with a business card in her hand. "Here. You need to go. I'm not going to make you do anything, but please, consider it. You need help."

### WELCOME TO THE COUNSELING CENTER!

<u>Privacy information</u>- As a student, your use of Counseling Center services does not become part of your academic record. Your use of Counseling Center services is strictly confidential. However, there are limits to confidentiality as required by law. In rare circumstances, such as the following, information may be released: (a) when you sign a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all information taken from the brochure *Cutting* distributed by Marymount University Counseling Center.

written request to have information released; (b) if you disclose intention to harm yourself or others.<sup>2</sup>

She stops reading the homepage of the Counseling Center and begins to get angry. (b) if you disclose intention to harm yourself, or others. She sneers at this line and glances at her patchwork wrist. *How funny. There goes my privacy.* Funny. But it isn't the laugh-till-you-cry kind of funny, more of the pain-so-deep-down-inside-of-you, you're not sure if you could even call it the pit of your stomach, and the only noise that comes from the hurt is a short snort of air that others may classify as a laugh. She is smiling, but doesn't know why. The business card sits on her desk, staring her down, judging her. "Fuck you," she says to the card as she picks it up, gets on the elevator, and finds herself walking directly into the nurse's office.

### What is cutting?

*Cutting is when a person makes cuts on his or her body on purpose.* The cuts might be small or large, shallow or deep. They may cause a little bleeding or a lot.

The person cuts to try to feel better. Cutting isn't a suicide attempt.

Some people who cut, hurt themselves in other ways too. They may burn, scratch, or hit themselves.

While you are in algebra class, she is sitting in a cold room with a big, annoying red couch. Two ladies are sitting across from her with notepads on their laps, waiting. She pulls her sleeve down to cover her wrist and begins to play with a ring on her finger as she looks down at her awkward feet. Their eyes and the silence in the room are suffocating her. The bright red couch is screaming at the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Taken from Marymount University Counseling Center Website <www.marymount.edu/studentlife/counselingcenter>.

girl, and she almost can't stand it. It's known. They are just waiting patiently for her to come out with it. All the girl can think about was the couch. They probe her with questions about her family, friends, life at home. Nothing is wrong. Her family loves her. She gets straight A's. She has best friends. Nope. It's fine. It's all picture perfect. After a half hour dancing around the questions and avoiding eye contact with the two strangers across from her, the lady with the big hair grabs her attention.

"It's hard to talk about, but we know why you're down here. You're friend told us and she's worried about you. We want to help you, but first you must admit it. It's hard to talk about, we know, but we need to start somewhere."

The girl squirms where she sits, awkward in her own body, being sucked into that damn red couch. She takes a deep breath and comes up short, sputtering the word "Okay," and reaches for her sleeve. She scrunches her eyes closed to hide the judgment and hopefully prevent the sobs that she feels coming in her throat. There. It was out. It was a start.

### Therapy can help.

People can learn to:Plan for and understand strong feelings to make them less overwhelming.Stay present in the "here and now."Handle stress, anger, and other strong feelings better.Address past abuse or other painful events.Succeed in friendships and family relationshipsMedicines can sometimes help people manage the urge to cut while they learn new ways to cope.

At 10 a.m. every Tuesday, while you are watching TV after breakfast, the girl down the hall is still in bed, just turning off her alarm. She doesn't have class until later in the afternoon, but it is time to go to the counseling center. She winces at the thought of it, torn against the two voices inside of her. What am I going to tell her today? You need to tell her the truth. The truth is the last thing I want to tell her. Stupid, you decided to do this; you need it to get better. Forget it, I don't want to get better, I'd rather sleep. Try, just try. I really just don't want to. Then why do you hide your wrist? ...Shit. She rolls to her side, and pulls herself out of bed, down the creaky ladder and off the top bunk. She touches her arm and feels the scars, and shakes her head. Each day, she is getting closer to being better, whatever that means. But still, every Tuesday morning is a struggle within itself.

#### Learn new ways to cope.

A person who is cutting may think things can't change. Someone with a friend who cuts may worry that this person is always going to be in danger. Cutting is serious. But people can and do change. People can learn healthier ways to deal with pain, loss, anger and other strong feelings. With the right support, people who are cutting can find other ways to cope.

The girl continues on with her life as normally as possible, not addressing her problem to anyone but the lady in the room with the big red couch. Actually, she thinks of her problem less and less and feels a weight begin to lift off her shoulders, just a little bit. Except when she sits on the toilet in that same stall, as she does now. The gray stall will be forever stained with the memory of that night. She shudders and moves quickly to the sink to wash her hands. As she rubs the soap in and the suds form, her scars taunt her. When she looks at her wrist, it hits her every time, like a low blow to the stomach, knocking the breath clear out of her. She darts her eyes from the marks that tell the world her story, and catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. Her eyes tell more of a story than her ugly wrist. The hazel eyes look tired, but hopeful. She lifts her dripping wet hand into the reflection of the mirror and waves. The purplish scratch marks scream back. The girl clenches her fist at her reflection; her trying eyes. She swallows hard and walks out, away from the judgment of the bathroom.

Perhaps you just passed her in the hall.

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### Coda



Philosophy is a unique subject that deals with finding the answers to questions that are often taken for granted. Most of these questions cannot be solved by a single answer, and philosophers often disagree with one another. The objective of philosophy is not necessarily to come to **the** answer, but to further people's knowledge of the world and of themselves by making rational arguments that support **an** answer.

Philosophy attempts to answer primitive questions that many people assume are known. For example, while a historian may discover an event that happened in the past, the philosopher attempts to find the meaning of time. Since philosophers attempt to answer these basic questions, they have few tools to work with. Thus, the difficulty in philosophy lies in the primitive nature of its questions. Unlike the practical questions of science, philosophy deals with abstract ideas that do not result in an ability to directly change the world. It provides the raw materials for other subjects and enables them to make their discoveries.

Philosophy deals with questions about the world that we find naturally puzzling. Thus, philosophy has not changed much from the past, as the same questions asked today have been subject to inquiries for centuries. Such questions include the meaning of life and survival after death. Philosophical problems arise out of the attempt to arrive at a clear, coherent, and acceptable view of the world. This involves using arguments are that are true and valid. True arguments are those that are based on accurate premises. Valid arguments are those arguments that contain premises that are related in a rational manner such that they are rightly concluded from the given premises. In philosophy, a clear, coherent, and acceptable view of the world is not just desirable, it is essential. That is why many philosophers like Socrates are often dissatisfied, but it is better to be rightly dissatisfied than to be ignorantly blissful.

~ Sara Nourian, "What Is Philosophy?"