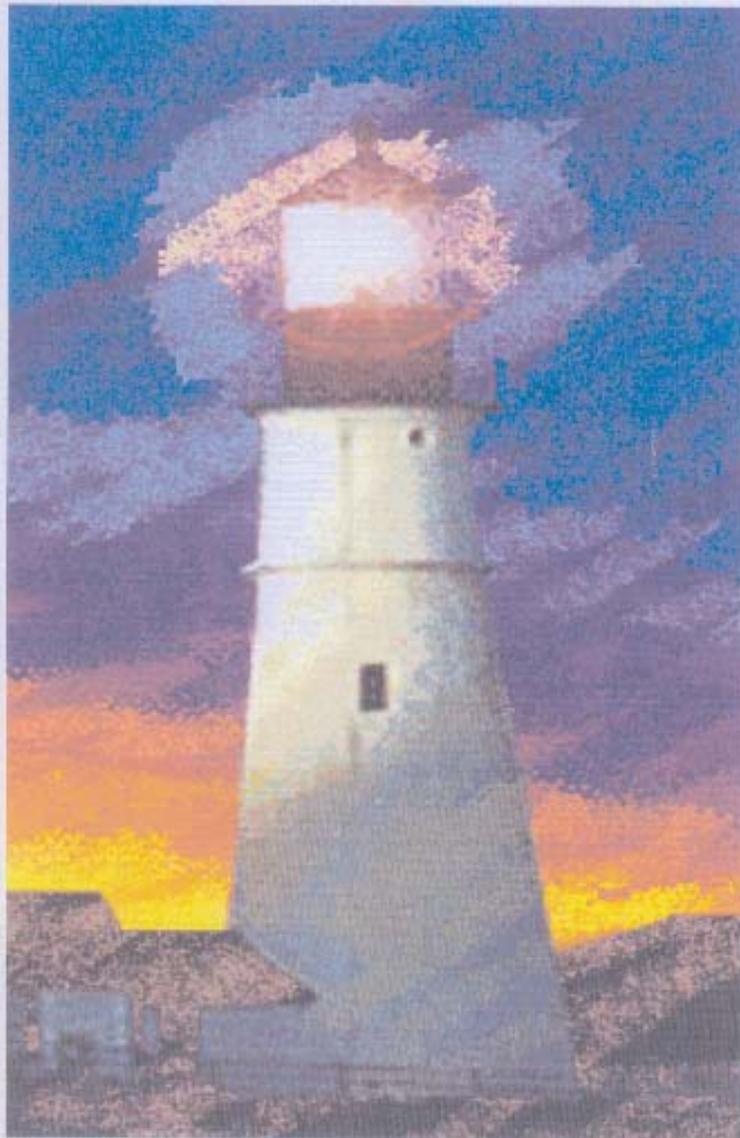


# Palabras

WORDS

November 2002



volume 1 issue 2

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*Palabras* publishes original research, essays, fiction, poetry, and art by Clovis Community College students and residents of New Mexico.

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# Palabras

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### SUBMISSIONS

*Palabras* favors an open submissions policy: anyone who would like to submit, may. Please submit work in hard copy format to the editor in **Faculty Office 509**, in e-mail format to **palabrasje@hotmail.com**, or in hard copy format to the **CCC Bookstore**. Please include a phone number or e-mail address so the editor may contact you.

Submissions should be no longer than 5 double-spaced pages, or approximately 1500 words. If documented, then in MLA, APA, or other acceptable format. If you have an essay, paper, or story longer than the specifications mentioned, please contact the editor at **505-769-4906** or at **palabrasje@hotmail.com**, as excerpts may be publishable.

*If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please write to the editor at [palabrasje@hotmail.com](mailto:palabrasje@hotmail.com).*

...from the Associate

## EINSTEIN'S EFFORT

RAYMOND E ATCHLEY

Dennis Brian, author of *Einstein: a life*, relates how Professor Heinrich Burckhardt of the University of Zurich had commented that Albert

Einstein's thesis on measuring the size of molecules showed "crudeness in style and slips of the pen in the formula..." (63). The year was 1905 and this was the second paper of four submitted by Einstein that year. The third paper, however, had proven the most sensational where-in Einstein had explained his "Theory of Relativity."

I, for one, am thankful that Dr. Einstein submitted his "less than perfect" papers, and hope that all who peruse *Palabras* will consider making a contribution of their own thoughts and ideas. In an article from the August 1999 edition of *National Geographic* entitled "The Power of Writing" by Carl Wolinsky, the author reflects on the "magical power" of writing and how "Words on paper, created by ordinary citizens, have changed the course of history" (116).

I encourage all readers to imbibe in the "magic" of this journal; you too may change history.

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...from the Editor

## A CASE FOR ARGUMENT

GINA L HOCHHALTER

Argument is to make a case for something we believe in. Sometimes, if we're curious enough to look further into a matter, we find that when we conduct enough (or rather, too much) research, we come to realize that anything we believe in can be disproven – and very well – by others.



Although the fact that we can be disproven has lead some into a maddening despair, the crumpling of beliefs doesn't need to lead one into crisis. On the contrary, an openness to alternatives is exactly that which heightens an arguer's credibility and gives to him or her a profound purpose and responsibility. If one ruminates on the possibility that to *have beliefs* and *be learn-ed* at the same time is just plain ridiculous or even preposterous, and if one can accept beliefs as fluid and multiple, then he or she has an intriguing opportunity to poke some holes into the box within which s/he lives, maybe push out its walls – and hence, to knowingly act with respect and care in the face of another's beliefs.

Although an arguer's job is to formulate a solid thesis and convince someone else that what he or she has said about it is at least a viable option, an arguer will want to know as much as is possible because an arguer, in the Aristotelean sense, must act ethically in the interest of the *populas*. Assuming there may eventually be a Truth that applies to *all* people equally, it's important not to offer just one, but a number of ways to see the situation or the issue at hand (no matter if personal or public or intellectual). No matter how certain a few of us are (i.e. how persuaded we've been by our own, uh, argument), our effects on others should be, morally, always checked and double-checked in the interest and attainment of a Higher Good. Because an arguer doesn't know what that One Higher Good might yet be, he or she should always argue with dignity and purpose, and also in respect of those who walk beside us, or those who will be hearing and responding to what we have said.

### Perspectives

Articles or essays of controversy are one of *Palabras*'s favourite pastimes. If you'd like to write a refutation or an alternate perspective to any article herein, the deadline is January 31, 2003 for the February issue.



*Editors' Rabble 1*

# ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM?

*MICHAEL MERRITT*

Recently, the U.S. government released a videotape of Osama bin Laden attending a terrorist dinner party revealing to his friends that he played an important role in the attacks that took place on September 11. Before the government released the video, careful attention was paid that the video was translated correctly from Arabic to English. Experts in the Arabic language were brought in to make sure Osama's words were understood correctly and taken in the right context. In addition to the government's translation, the media subsequently came out with their own translation. Before we worry about understanding bin Laden, maybe we should think about what bin Laden stands for.

When thinking of adjectives to describe Adolph Hitler, one doesn't have to try very hard. Obvious terms like Nazi, fascist, and anti-Semitic come to mind. However, when describing Osama bin Laden, some mental lightweights have been throwing around some very heavy words. Many characters in the media have been describing bin Laden as an "Islamic fundamentalist," while at the same time President Bush speaks of "the peaceful teachings of Islam" and says that on September 11, 2001 the terrorists "hijacked Islam."

*Webster defines fundamentalism as: "n (1922) 1 often cap: religious beliefs based on a literal interpretation of the Bible 2: a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles – fundamentalist n., adj."*

Obviously "Koran" can be substituted for "Bible" when speaking of Islamic fundamentalism instead of Christian fundamentalism. The question is: How can bin Laden have hijacked the "peaceful" and "loving" religion of Islam when he himself is an Islamic fundamentalist? If bin Laden literally interprets the Koran and stresses "strict and literal adherence to" its "basic principles," what can be peaceful about the "basic principles" of the Koran?

The answer is: If Osama bin Laden is a fundamentalist, then Islam can't be a religion of peace. Either the terrorists have hijacked the peaceful religion of Islam, or Islam isn't a religion of peace. Which is it?

President Bush has spoken about how much Muslims have in common with their Christian and Jewish brothers. Like Islam, Christianity and other religions have their fundamentalists, too. Right? Yes, an example of a Christian fundamentalist would be Mother Teresa. Yes, Mother Teresa was a radical and fundamentalist Christian. The Amish could also be described as Christian fundamentalists. Mahatma Gandhi could be described as a fundamentalist Hindu. Tibetan monks could be described as fundamentalist Buddhists. Mother Teresa and Mahatma Gandhi were great teachers of peace. There are no Amish suicide bombers. Tibetan monks don't walk into mosques with dynamite strapped to their backs. Religious fundamentalists like these are peaceful and kind. They practice the fundamental elements of their respective religions.

If bin Laden is a fundamentalist, could one call the 19 hijackers of September 11 missionaries? When Christian missionaries travel to third world nations, they bring with them clean water, food, and medicine. When American-born John Walker traveled to Afghanistan, he took his AK-47. While studying the "peaceful" religion of Islam, Walker possibly murdered some of America's Muslim allies that fight with the United Front.

It's very confusing. If Islam is a religion of peace, like the President has said, then we must stop referring to Osama bin Laden and the Taliban as Islamic fundamentalists. One would think that peace loving Muslims would be offended when they heard someone refer to bin Laden as a fundamentalist. That suggests that killing (Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, other infidels, and nonbelievers) is fundamental to the Islamic religion. If you were a peace-loving Christian, wouldn't you be offended if someone referred to the Ku Klux Klan as a fundamentalist Christian organization? That would suggest that hatred toward blacks and Jews is a fundamental part of the New Testament. Calling bin Laden a fundamentalist suggests that violence and suicide are fundamental elements of the Koran.

If the U.S. government and the media are going to translate bin Laden's words with such painstaking care, maybe they should translate what they mean when they call terrorists "Islamic fundamentalists" and then say in the same breath that fundamentally Islam is a religion of peace.

*Michael's taking classes at CCC in Liberal Arts for "something to do." He [might be] working towards an Associate's, and then may go on to receive a Bachelor's from ENMU.*

# HUMAN NATURE

SELENA WOLFE

What is evil? Most people would agree that evil is inherent in the "seven deadly sins": pride, deceit, murder, scheming, malice, betrayal, and backbiting (*Holy Bible* 559; Prov. 6:16-19). It must be noted, however, that these sins, taken at their most basic stage, all narrow down to one trait: selfishness. Every sin is performed in order to either please oneself, protect oneself, or further oneself (Hume 206). The seeds of selfishness and self-interest are present in humans from birth; therefore the potential to do and be evil lies within the reach of every human being. Human nature itself must be evil in order for it to be capable of performing evil.

The *Bible* uses the term "heart" to describe human nature. In this paper, these words will be interchangeable. According to the Judeo-Christian viewpoint, human nature is base and wicked. The prophet Jeremiah describes the heart as being "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked..." (*Holy Bible* 678; Jer. 17:9). In the gospel of Mark, Jesus states that "from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts,... wickedness,... pride, foolishness" (886; Mark 7:21-22). The biblical stance is that humanity is naturally, lamentably evil.

According to an old platitude, "actions speak louder than words." This is essentially true in determining human nature. Since the "heart" in question is not really the blood-pumping organ but a theoretical, immaterial idea about the psyche of humankind, it is difficult to factually prove anything about it. So the only observable traits of human nature are the actions and attitudes that human beings display.

What actions have humans displayed throughout history that reveal their hearts? While it is arguable that much good has been done on the earth and has, in a sense, pulled humanity back from the brink, much more evil has been committed. Wars and injustice have been a reality on this small planet for thousands of years. People have been hurt, maimed, and killed by others who only think of themselves (Aulson). A closer look at individuals shows that human nature is indeed wicked. The actions of people like Hitler, Stalin, and Nero show that something was fundamentally wrong in their hearts for them to be able to perform such actions.

A person with a good nature literally cannot perform evil deeds. Evil must be present in the

nature of humankind to allow them to commit atrocities. Does this mean that some people are evil and some good and that their natures are arbitrarily set by some jokester in the sky? No, everyone starts on equal footing. It is a long-held belief that "all men are created equal" and all women as well. What a human becomes depends on what he or she does with the materials at hand. It is up to a person to be responsible for his or her own actions and rise above the evil in him/herself.

Some people do, in fact, live responsibly and do not murder or steal or do anything that breaks the law, yet their evil nature is still present and at work in little ways. Real love, kindness, and selflessness do exist in the world and benefit many. However, most relationships are started to benefit the individ-

## PICTOGLYPH



Timothy Frazier

Tim is working on a CIS degree at CCC.

ual and not on the premise of doing good to the other person (Hume 207). These relationships can evolve into something true and meaningful, but in the beginning, humans look out for themselves.

Self-preservation is only a variation on the theme of selfishness and self-interest. Most people would not balk at committing a sin if it meant that it would save themselves, their family, or their possessions from trouble or harm. For example, someone will lie to keep themselves out of trouble. However, sometimes the self-preservation instinct is what drives a person to do good. Humans will obey the law if only to keep out of jail (206). The moral implications are, as it were, left to the philosophers.

The philosophers tend to argue back and forth if evil is ever present or brought on by circumstance (Brociner par. 10). Some people say that human nature is good, yet becomes corrupt because of "extenuating" circumstances. Then why is it that an infant thinks only of itself and its own comfort? Why is it that one of the first words out of a toddler's mouth is "Mine!?" Either a corrupting influence has reached that child insanelly quickly, or it is acting upon its natural instincts. No one has to teach a child to be hateful and mean. Nor do they need to be taught how to lie and manipulate. These things come naturally to them (Aulson). Children do, however, have to be taught how to share and play nice.

Programs have been enacted to bring justice and fairness to society, but they have failed because of human failings. Every Utopian society, every socialist dream has fallen short of perfection because they are all balanced precariously on the idea that humans can live together in peace without any greed or discord erupting. This overly optimistic view of the altruism of human beings has sounded the death knell for many bright ideas for society. Leftists and socialists are starting to doubt if humans can do anything good (Brociner par. 12-15).

Humanity cannot by its own means cure itself of evil (Mitchell). Perhaps a few strong people can live justly and try to do good to all, but they cannot stop their natural instincts and they cannot help unintentional offenses. People try anonymous programs and self-help classes, with little success (Aulson). Twelve-step programs have become a joke in society because people realize that humans cannot change themselves. Humans need to have their very natures changed before they can alter their behavior.

People try to reach the highest Good, or God, by themselves and fail miserably time and time again. "Religion is man's attempt to reach God" (Aulson), but ceremonial, empty religion is the result of their self-righteous, proud efforts. Humanity must realize that it is finite and incapable of reaching God. The evil in humans is what repels them from attaining the highest Good. God cannot allow evil in his presence, so every finite, grasping attempt to somehow earn goodness is a failure. So the prospect of changing human nature looks pretty bleak.

However, God would not really be good if He had not provided a means of redemption for the helpless human creature. Only God can change a person's nature because He is the only infinite being and the only One, ideally, who is totally good. What has God done to reach humanity? He has sent His Son to change human nature, to "take the stony heart out... and give... a heart of flesh" (*Holy Bible* 734; Eze. 11:19). "Jesus is God's attempt to reach man" (Aulson). "The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God" (Lewis 50). God's plan was to have His Son take the place of humans in receiving punishment for their evil so they could join Him as beings with a good heart (Mitchell).

Someone might ask why Jesus is different from others since He was a man and therefore had the same nature as the rest of humanity. In Hebrew belief, the sinful nature of humanity was hereditarily passed down through the man. Jesus was virgin-born. In other words, this belief did not apply because He had no physical father (Mitchell). This does not mean that God "raped" a virgin. In a sense God is present in every conception and wears the "glove" of human history and human nature that is instilled into the new life. In the instance of Jesus's conception, God took off that glove and instilled His divine nature into the human fetus (Lewis 57-8). So Jesus was fully God and fully human and perfectly sinless (Mitchell). Who better then, to teach ever-failing humans how to attain perfection? He is the only human who has been able to get through life with all of its temptations without sinning once. Corrupt humans have already found it impossible to help each other or themselves. Only the incorrupt "God-man" (Mitchell) can replace a human being's nature.

Now, as followers of Christ will agree, this is an ongoing process, and not an instantaneous change

(Aulson). Some things do change automatically, one of them being the viewpoint from which the redeemed person looks at life. Drug addicts have also reported an instant freedom from that bondage. However, the more subtle changes happen from day to day and require the creation to be open and malleable to the Creator. Decisions that the human makes day in and day out shape his or her new nature, whether it is Christ-like or like the old, selfish nature.

Fortunately for humans, God will not rest until His creation is perfect. He requires the whole of a person, not just the bad parts, but the good parts also. He then takes the corrupted human nature and throws it away and starts to meticulously shape a new nature into something like Himself (Lewis 179). However long He takes depends on if the person is open and willing to change, but He is determined to do it. What results is a freedom from relying on self and a change from the evil nature of humanity to the divine nature of God.

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**The Deadline for publication in the February issue is January 31, 2003**

# MIGRAINE HEADACHES AND DEPRESSION DISORDER

*JENNIFER B NELSON*

I originally intended to focus my research on the subject of migraine headaches. Operating under a mistaken belief, I sought to explain a far more simple occurrence, namely why migraines almost always cause nausea as a secondary effect. In the 17th century, Sir Thomas Willias hypothesized that migraines were caused by an increased flow of blood to the brain. This increased blood flow caused the tissues of the brain to swell and expand, resulting in pressure on the nerve endings.



This was thought to be the cause of all migraine pain until as recent as the last decade (Loder 4). Yet new research over the last ten years has led many researchers to believe that there is a far larger picture. Migraine headache is a more complicated issue than previously believed, and is now being tentatively linked to other disorders such as depression, anxiety, sleep pattern disorders, and even an increased tendency towards drug and alcohol addiction.

New technological advances such as MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) and PET (Positron Emission Technology) have now proven that previous assumptions surrounding the migraine headache were incorrect. With such tools, researchers have learned that the brain undergoes many physical changes before, during, and after a migraine attack. As a result, investigators are now gaining a better understanding of brain chemistry and the biochemical process involved in pain. A new theory which is gaining support is centered around a bio-chemical called Serotonin. Serotonin is defined as a neurotransmitter, or a body chemical which relays information from one neuron in the brain to another (Hockenbury 48). Serotonin, in particular, has been associated with sleep, moods, and emotional states which include depression (48).

New research shows that during a migraine attack, Serotonin levels in the human brain drop as well. Researchers believe that this causes the trigeminal nerve to release substances called neuropeptides. These in turn cause blood vessels in the brain to become dilated and inflamed. This results in severe head pain (The Mayo Clinic 3) and states of confusion.

At this point in my research, I forgot my original question and turned instead to further study Serotonin itself. As a person who has been diagnosed with depression, I recognized this particular bio-chemical as being one of the primary suspects which doctors have long felt to cause mood swings and erratic thought patterns. Was there a connection between depression and migraines? It seemed as if there may be, for as I looked again to my migraine research I realized that many of the secondary symptoms listed for head pain were also familiar to me. Indications such as drowsiness and irritability are listed as possible warning signs that a migraine is about to begin; they are also classic signs of clinical depression.

Further research supported this assumption. New studies are now showing that there may be a correlation between migraines and certain mood disorders – particularly depression, anxiety, and possibly panic attacks. These studies show that *migraineurs* (patients who are prone to migraine headaches) are up to four times more likely to suffer a major depression than those who do not suffer from migraines. Conversely, individuals who are depressed or are anxious are more likely to have migraines than those who do not (Matthew 3). Tentatively, some researchers have gone so far as to suggest that depression and migraines are a co-morbid mood disorder, meaning that they may be one and the same physical, neurological condition.

I also learned another fact: antidepressants have been shown to help not only with depression, but they also seem to combat many secondary symptoms as well. Prozac, a popular example, increases the availability of Serotonin in the brain. It works by insuring that messages are able to be relayed properly through the brain, preventing interruptions or mis-relayed information which medical science already knows to be the root cause and effect of depression. Yet at the same time, many patients have reported a decrease in migraine frequency and inten-

sity as a secondary benefit. This has led some researchers, such as James Hudson and Harrison Pope of Harvard Medical School, to suggest that these drugs work by effecting what they call an 'affective spectrum disorder.' Many conditions respond to the same type of drug because similar brain processes are functioning abnormally in all of them. Certain neurotransmitters are just not doing what they are supposed to be doing – in depression, just as in migraine, or bulimia or even panic disorder. The central connection among all these disorders is the chemical Serotonin (Dowling 13). When levels of Serotonin are increased to normal amounts in patients who suffered multiple conditions, the effect seems to be a general relief all the way around the board.

As a result of such new discovery, many disorders which have long been thought to be only in the mind are now being regarded as more biochemical than psychological. They are not necessarily mental disorders; they are not curable by talking or by hours spent upon a couch with a therapist who's diagnosing a patient's innermost thoughts. Many previously assumed mental disorders are now treated on the basis of being an actual physical medical condition. For example, migraine is now listed as a primary disorder, meaning that it is a physical illness and not a secondary effect. To patients who have been told for years that it was 'all in their head' or led to believe that they were somehow mentally 'unbalanced,' this comes as good news. As neurologist Michael Cutrer, who has himself suffered migraines since the age of 14, explains,

**If someone gets kicked in the knee, they feel that stimulus as pain; that's rational... But what we find in people with chronic head-aches is the pain without the physical stimulus; that's irrational... Since doctors didn't know what the problem was, they would sometimes blame the patients for imagining things. Now we know that the brain itself is the new arena for headache research. (Curtis 2)**

Like *migraineurs*, patients with severe depression or anxiety have also faced the same false assumptions that it was all in their mind.

To this date, further research on the effects of Serotonin as a possible connecting factor between migraine and mental disorders has been complicated. Serotonin has been divided into at least five different sub-classifications of receptors, each seeming to target a different aspect of the whole picture. For

example, lack of sub-type 5HT(1b) in laboratory mice has been shown to increase aggressive behavior as well as preferences to alcohol. Sub-type 5HT(2c) has been linked in experiment to migraine, sleep pattern disruption, and increased food intake to the point of obesity (Kennet 3). Medications that are effective in increasing levels of one sub-type might inadvertently lower other sub-types, creating or complicating side-effects. Thus far, a combination which would be beneficial on all levels is yet to be discovered. In the future, the potential for a universal treatment and cure is impossible to ignore.

However, the idea of a 'wonder pill' has made many in the physiology field nervous. That so many complex issues might one day be resolved by a simple daily medication seems almost too good to be true. As the very concept of neurosis itself comes under fire, years of thinking must be changed to adapt to the new possibilities. And yet, to patients such as myself, it is a tremendous relief that cannot easily be placed into words. That there may someday soon be hope at last and finally an end in sight, is too exciting not to want to jump and cheer about it.

I have migraines, severe enough that I have come under fire on my job for missing work. I have been told that a little headache is nothing, and that I am over-reacting or even somehow weak. Yet until a person has had to live with continuing pain for three days, sometimes more, they cannot understand what the word 'migraine' truly means. Until they have felt themselves hitting the floor with sudden and intense pain that is so violent they cannot even remember their own name, or that of their child, they cannot identify or truly understand what these advances mean to those of us who have been there more times than we want to count.

I have been diagnosed with depression; I was accused of seeking attention again, of exaggerating my problems, even making them up to have a reason to complain. Yet though I cannot tell you why I sometimes cry for no reason, or why I will walk the floor at night unable to sleep for days at a time, I can say that this is real. My moods swing every winter; I start to gain weight and lose the energy to even get up and take care of simple tasks. Sometimes I will wake up in the morning feeling 'bouncy' and happy, knowing that nothing in the world can bring me down. Only to find that an hour later I am screaming at anyone and everything that gets in my path, unable to stop myself or say what it

is I am angry about. An hour after this, I will be locked in my own dark room crying again because I know that I am not right, and yet no one will believe me or listen to what I am trying to say.

Yes, a universal wonder pill to solve all my problems does seem too good to be true. Yet so does the idea of being able to live a normal life. No more counseling and rehashing my past over and over to an uncaring psychiatrist who tells me I can 'cure' myself by rethinking my attitudes. No more good intentioned souls telling me that all I have to do is quit smoking, or get married, or find a better job and it will all go away. My problem is not stress; I am not crazy, or a hypochondriac whining so that the world will notice her. It is not my fault; I did nothing to cause this upon myself. My condition is physical; I am no more to blame than a person who discovers they have cancer or a heart condition.

This ends a bit more personally than I intended; however, I feel like Alice in Wonderland, when she suddenly woke up on the grass to know it had all been just a dream. A bad dream, maybe. But I will wake up, and I will finally have help. As researchers learn more about the effects of Serotonin and the real causes of my problem, I will be able to live fully. I will be able to help my child, if it happens that he has inherited this same condition. Already, the relief I have found from even this simple research makes it all seem somehow easier to manage.

I am not crazy. And that is making all the difference in how I look at myself.

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# TECHNOLOGY: LOSS OF HUMAN SYMBIOSIS

(HEED THE WARNING SIGNS!)

DEBORAH L SNIPES

## INTRODUCTION

Those of us who are most sensitive to the rapidity of change are harshly judged archaic. It is the humanistic, rather than the biological aspect of coping that brings a seemingly irrational resistance to change. The ambiguity of the future keeps most aging humans stubbornly rooted in the comforts of established and familiar communication practices. It is not the computer as a tool that worries the older generation, but the computer as a human surrogate.

Is technical communication decomposing the social structure of human value? Is it inevitable that the human experience be replaced by the cyber-relationship; will e-mail become a substitute for a smile and a handshake?

The invention of the automobile brought people together: roaming the countryside in a fraction of the previous time, meeting new people and seeing new places. The implementation of technical communication has separated people; symbiosis cannot be achieved on the Web. In his book *The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality* (1993), Michael Heim implies that our world changes gradually but inevitably. However, there is nothing gradual about the world of computers; just as you're learning one program or machine it becomes obsolete. This assuredly results from a lack of consideration for the future; the cyber-age is not concerned with relevance, only speed. As we prophesy the destinations toward which change carries us, we must include the consequences of pace. There must be a balance between environmental change and the limited pace of human response.

## RESEARCH

Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock* (1970) is an in-depth look at the affects of rapid change on the development of society as a whole. Touching on virtually every aspect of human growth in the advancing age, this piece of work was instrumental in

establishing the [already noticeable] potential costs of the swift, heedlessness of technology. In the year 2002 it is easy to be impressed with the insightful views of [hu]man's advancement into new conceptual environs that were written 30 years ago, including discussions of the many clues and precautions of the impending difficulties that are still applicable today.

As an expert in the field of psychology and continuing education, Claude Levy-Leboyer's (1979, Trans. 1982) research in environmental psychology had a comprehensive take on social development and the use of space. Territoriality has definite age-related levels; the internet has all but abolished age-appropriate territory. The perception and evaluation of one's environment is vital to social harmony; as Levy-Leboyer states, "...territory is a guarantee of safety and therefore of survival... and of affirming the identity of an individual and [her] species membership."

Dorothy Hertzels report on government and industry efforts to preserve children's privacy online is very telling of an ongoing failure to do so. Knowing whether you're talking to a 12 yr. old or a 22 yr. old is on a real "shaky" trust basis while you're surfen' the Net. It is becoming increasingly complicated to protect our children's territory. We must be cautious, realistic, and involved when allowing room for our kids' advancement.

## DISCUSSION

Culture shock is the result of one's sudden immersion into an unfamiliar environment while being expected to adapt immediately. Super-industrial [hu]man traces an electronic path through a world of colliding sub-cultures; this is the social mobility of the future (Toffler, 1970, p. 37). The search for personal style is becoming increasingly intense. Yet, as we are bombarded with a growing mass of choices, we lose the focus if not the purpose of that search. Quantity can actually decrease quality; to "stop and smell the roses" is a useful analogy when trying to extract meaning from material.

According to Toffler (1970), "We expect that certain kinds of relationships will endure longer than others. It is, in fact, possible to classify relationships in terms of their duration" (p. 90). In the pre-technical era, the majority of relationships were stable, long-term, and often intimate. Now, however, the situation is reversed, with the majority of contemporary human relationships being transient. While most people have a core of regular associates, they

also have hundreds, even thousands of people who they may only interact with once or twice ever. People no longer want to define social behavior face-to-face where individuals have to defend their territory in person (Levy-Leboyer, 1979, p. 121). Bravery in one's utterances has become effortless in addition to inconsiderate; to think before you speak is no longer a goal that growing humans are trying to develop. The landscape of interpersonal relationships is being bulldozed at an alarming rate.

**It is the scientific analysis, and not the family recipe,  
that tells us how we should actually eat.  
It is the scientific diagram, and not the painting or sculpture,  
that tells us what the world around us is actually like.  
It is the scientific account, and not the creation myth,  
that tells us how things actually began.**  
(Bruce V. Foltz, *Inhabiting the Earth*, p. 64)

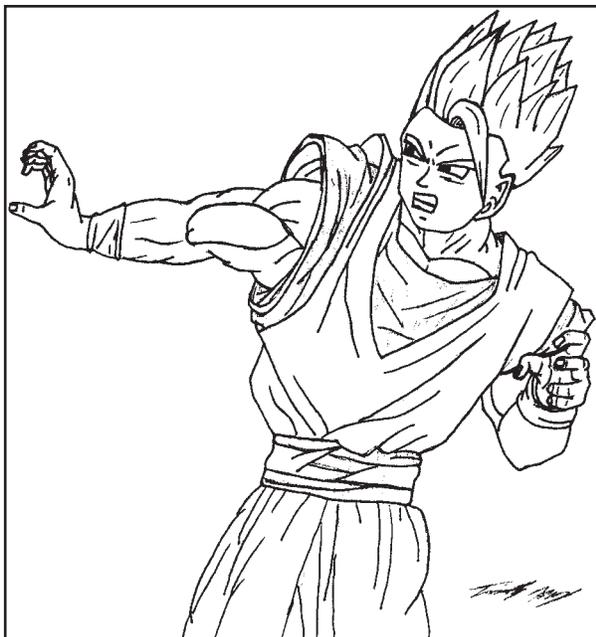
## CONCLUSION

While technical communication is not the only source of change in social relationships, it is undoubtedly the most aggressive. The Internet has created a whole new set of concerns for parents with school children. The strictest of self-regulation must

be implemented with the purchase of a home computer, especially where children reside. Although the computer industry and government legislators attempt to address consumer concerns for matters of online privacy, it is ultimately the responsibility of the parents to monitor this unique social threat. Predators have been handed all new ways to abuse the Constitution. With nearly 66% of our nation's children using the internet, the ability for the "bad guys" to victimize the children is a pressing danger (Hertzal, 2000).

Self-concept and personality development are directly influenced by the mirror of our individual cultures and society as a whole. As technical communication practices to re-shape social reality, individuals race to keep abreast of their conceptual selves. Parents strive to maintain a balance between their children's access to technological advantages, the threat of invasion, and time away from the computer screen. Why go out and find someone to play with when you can hang out with the characters on *The Sims* game and have any kind of life you desire when you can make the unreal characters do anything you want? As we retreat farther and farther into the privacy of our self-contained environments, we are letting go of the essential basics of human development; there is no acceptable substitute for live human contact. Let us not abandon our cyber-environs, but merely proceed with caution, a grain of judgment, and a healthy regard for reality and pace.

## PICTOGLYPH



Timothy Frazier

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*Deborah is soon to be a Nursing student at CCC and is looking forward to the challenge.*

# OVERCOMING NEGATIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE

*GENA HANKINS*

It's just another day at work. You show up with a smile on your face ready to tame the challenges that lie ahead. Your day begins by having to overlook the fact that a co-worker has parked in your parking spot. Not a big deal, since your name is not official-ly on it, but still disturbing. A fresh cup of hot coffee will soon erase your dismay, so you make your way to the break room. You grab a cup and start to pour the coffee, when you notice that someone has taken the last drop and did not bother to make a fresh pot. You wonder, why? To you, it seems like a common courtesy, but to another, it may seem an inconvenience. Who knows the reason why, but it still makes your day start off on a sour note.

You paste a smile back on your face, sit down at your desk, and begin the grueling process of booting up your computer. It always takes a while to do this, but on this particular day the network is exceedingly slow. You log into your phone and it starts ringing immediately. Customers are bellowing out demands that you can't possibly meet because you can't get your screens to change. What would usually take you thirty seconds is now taking you three minutes.

Your mind is racing with things you could and should be getting done, and you feel your blood pressure starting to rise. You are getting frustrated with the computer department because no one, in your mind, is trying to get to the bottom of this. Then a co-worker comes in to ask for help on something that you know you've explained to him or her a thousand times. You are now on edge – what more can happen? You decide to check your e-mail, when you notice a meeting request that has been sent to you on how to overcome negativity in the work-place. It started ten minutes ago. You quietly snicker and think to yourself, "Right." At this particular time, you cannot conceive of any way to battle this raging monster.

Does this sound familiar? Is the human race fine-oiled machines programmed to perform daily functions? Or are we prisoners chained to our desks?

It's all about attitude. Attitude breeds productivity. Why is productivity a viable factor in this equation? A happy and positive person will produce far more results than a negative-Nelly. And since frustration can easily lead to negativity, life's unexpected road-blocks slow us down and even stop us at times.

According to Joe Black, author of *The Attitude Connection*, negative people are like squirters: they tend to go through life squirting other people; they arm themselves with bad attitudes and hose others down along the way with their negative trash.

One thing is for certain, we do have control over how we cope and how we handle negative situations, but I am responsible for me and me only. If I am having a bad day and am not happy, then who will care? My employer may not care as long as I am getting the job done right, and my co-workers may not care as long as I stay out of their business. Frustration has to be properly channeled in order to produce desirable results with your work, and *laughter* is thought to be one of the most potent stress relievers. It is known to help improve team building, communication skills, aid in conflict management, and increase productivity.

The goal to overcoming negativity is to expect the unexpected and to go with the flow as much as possible. In order to remain productive and keep your sanity, you must work on not letting negative people or situations dictate the outcome. By looking at humor as a stress-management tool, negativity can be turned into laughter. People who laugh together work together better, so by learning how to diffuse the frustration before it turns into negativity will not only make us more productive, but will also make us happier people. Don't let society or culture dictate our existence.

## **WANT TO SUBMIT YOUR WRITING OR ART?**

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Gina L Hochhalter in Phase V, Office 509

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# DON'T ASK ALICE

*DANIELLE TURNER*

I was like Alice in Wonderland. Like Alice, I was searching for my white rabbit and like Alice, I got lost. Like Alice falling down her rabbit hole, there was no way out, no way back. I was entranced by the wicked, the absurd. Everything was, what it was not. I chased my rabbit without caution, without fear. It was all that mattered. Then finally I found my rabbit, but not at all where I had been searching for it and not at all when I expected.

I was in high school. I was a normal girl, blonde like Alice herself, and popular. I participated in many typical activities like school dances and football games, and had a lot of friends. I achieved decent grades and was considered to be very smart. However, I felt something was lacking.

I began to grow bored with the typical and longed for adventure. I began to seek out new and stimulating people forever searching for my white rabbit of happiness. In my search I found the Mad Hatter and the March Hare. I saw the tea mouse and we all sang, and danced, but no white rabbit would appear. I became obsessed with my plight. My life had changed with my obsession and my world began to split. I had my normal world with homework and dances and parents; then, I had my Wonderland. Wonderland was where I was sure to find him, my rabbit. Wonderland consisted of friends that were much older than I, some of them models, some of them in college, all of them drug users, smokers, and heavy drinkers.

One morning my two worlds collided. On my way into my high school, some natives of my wonderland parked outside the gymnasium caught my attention and without much enticing, convinced me to skip school and join them for something much more exciting. We went off to find a party, which in a normal place would seem strange, but the second I entered that car, I entered the rabbit hole to Wonderland. In Wonderland it was always somebody's Un-birthday, therefore, there was always a party, even at eight o' clock in the morning.

The rabbit hole I had found so enticing that morning led me to an old house. Within that house was a vast array of people and things that I found quite alien and intimidating. The house was very run down. The windows were boarded up and there was no light except for occasional pockets caused by cracks in the boards. There was no real furniture, only a few mattresses spread on the floors of the three-bedroom

shack. Loud music filled with sexual innuendoes and explicit language blasted through the rooms. The air was filled with green and black smoke and smelled of spoil and incense. People were milling around the whole house but seemed concentrated in a large room at the back, so my curiosity led me back there, traveling further down the rabbit hole and further into Wonderland.

Now in what seemed to be the master bedroom I could see the cast of characters in my Wonderland. These creatures seem to fit their surroundings. With one look, I was perfectly aware of their evil – aware, but strangely intrigued. Suddenly my intimidation disappeared. I found it odd that they didn't frighten me. Funny that in actuality, they annoyed me, the demons in that house.



Amidst this evil was the tea mouse, a small man encircled by the ogres Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dumb. His intelligence was questionable; however, his influence over the group in that house was not. He was obviously the one in charge. I observed from a concealed corner of the room as the mouse coaxed his followers into such demeaning tasks as bringing his drinks and wiping the sweat from his brow. Considering my observations, I let slip a small giggle as the vision of dogs walking humans ran through my mind. It then occurred to me that this was Wonderland, so however odd, anything was acceptable.

As I looked around the room, I began to find myself in an uncomfortable state. I was still not afraid, and now no longer intrigued by my surroundings. I ceased to want to mingle with the group. I had grown bored with my observations, and I realized I was no closer to my white rabbit. Feeling frustrated, I decided to find somewhere to be alone while I sorted out what to do. I waded through passed out bodies, dried vomit, and drug paraphernalia until I found

myself at the door of a closet. Normally very claustrophobic, I took a look at my surroundings, and suddenly the claustrophobia was overshadowed by my need to be away from this scene. I took refuge inside the closet, sitting myself on the hard, cool floor.

Suddenly from the darkness of the small space appeared a Cheshire cat. He was colorful and mystical. He smiled a most innocent smile and asked me the matter. I told him that I was lost. I told him I was looking for the white rabbit but I could not find him.



The Cheshire cat said nothing but again flashed a slight smile. I looked at him and almost pleading said, "Do you know where my rabbit is?" He closed his eyes and seemed to be in thought as his colors shifted from pinks and purples to blues and greens. I thought he should be considered beautiful at that moment, but by the next moment I found myself hating him. I hated him because he was laughing at me. He opened his eyes, saw me imploring him for this knowledge, then began laughing so hard he rolled about in the air like an astronaut in space. He said he knew what I was after and I should never find my rabbit because I was too stupid to know where to look. I was so angry I screamed at the laughing cat, but he laughed on. I reached out with fists of rage to strike him but in an instant, he vanished. I began to cry. I cried out because I was so angry with the Cheshire cat for taunting me and then just vanishing. I sobbed as I felt the torture he inflicted upon me, pretending to be a friend, only to turn on me in ridicule. However, most of all, I cried because I feared that he was right.

Then my tears were stayed. I noticed that one of the fists I had swung at the evil cat had opened into a hand, and that the hand had landed on something. I closed my hand around the strange object and picked it up. Using a bit of light that shone through a hole in the closet door, I saw that it was a bottle. Attached to the bottle was a note written in silver calligraphy; "Drink Me" was what it read. Clear, crystal and pure, the contents of the bottle called to me. I envied its simplicity, its clarity. Where did it come from? Did the Cheshire cat leave it? Did he decide to help me after all? I was intrigued by the prospects of my find.

I found myself convinced that this bottle would lead me to my rabbit. So fearing nothing as I was sure I had seen the worst, I put the bottle to my lips and

began to drink.

I hear it's cold in Russia. I felt the chill of a blizzard on the steppes as a small piece of Russia found its way through my lips into a downward spiral, that would soon spread the cold of Russia throughout my entire body.

The tension around me began to ease. I felt as Alice did as she began to grow larger among the deck of cards that at one time held her captive, then in a moment she was towering over them, able to shuffle them in the palms of her hands.

The bottle made a clinking sound as I placed it back on the floor, now empty.

I exited the closet, confident now that the white rabbit would soon be in my grasp.

With the contents of the bottle now thoroughly absorbed into my body, I began to feel a change. My Wonderland began to spin and all that had seemed threatening, or annoying, or curious, became funny and blurred.

I lost sight of my search. I felt as though I was drowning. Cold and darkness surrounded me. Only periodically could I bring my awareness to the surface and catch a glimpse of the horrifying situation into which I had gotten myself. My overwhelmingly curious Wonderland had become, in an instant, the most terrifying of all hells.

Peeping through a keyhole, too large to get through the door, I could see myself on the outside. I saw the person who I had once been. I saw school dances, football games, and me cheering with the crowd and feeling free. I found myself longing to go back there, but feeling as though I could never return to that place. Now, turning my back to the door, looking at where I was, I watched myself dancing in blackness with the Cheshire cat, Tweedle Dee, Tweedle Dumb, the mouse and the rest of the cast, but no white rabbit. Where was he? Lost forever? The Mad Hatter and the March Hare dance to me with bottles and powders in their hands; I laugh and drink and smoke and sniff without any conscious idea of why. I slid down the door until I was sitting and I realized I was flirting with Death. I had lost all control. I put my head in my hands and closed my eyes.

Surrounded by darkness, and unable to find a way out, I again began to cry. This time I cried because I had given up. I thought I was forever lost in the ever-so-confusing world of Wonderland and I should never escape.

Suddenly a voice came from nowhere. It called to me, but I did not want to answer. I had answered once before and the Cheshire cat trapped me in this hell for it. I was too tired and angry to be scared, but I was

cautious enough by this point that I would not be fooled again. I would rather sit and cry and rot away in Wonderland. I really had given up.

The voice became louder and more demanding. It called my name and beckoned me near. Out of frustration and fear it would never leave me in peace, so I went towards the mysterious voice. Following its call, the voice led me to a strange sight indeed. Amazingly enough, this voice unnerved me; I was set aback, and perhaps saved by the fact that any stimuli could seem peculiar to me now.

My search for the voice ended at the feet of a very large caterpillar who sat upon a mushroom stool, smoking a hookah. Inside myself I thought, "Now



what ridiculous torment is this?" The odd creature told me it had something to show me. I told the caterpillar that I no longer cared about the white rabbit, so his game would be a waste of time. At that I turned and started to go. I was but only a couple of steps away when very

"matter of factly" the caterpillar said, "Okay, but I just wanted to show you how to get home." I stopped where I was. I thought about turning to go back, but I told myself it was a lie, a trick. "He will only hurt you," I told myself. Resolving that I was already hurting and had nothing to lose, I turned and went back to him.

I approached the caterpillar with skepticism and hope, and asked, "How do I get home?" Then the caterpillar began to change. Colored smoke began to swirl around his body, wrapping him like a mummy until all that was left was his head. I watched as his head changed, too, but not in the same way. With the cocoon of smoke still swirling around his body, his head began to morph into that of my mother. I saw her smiling and telling me to come home. I wanted to reach for her and hold on to her, but before I could, the head again changed, this time into my brother. My brother did not look at me; instead he looked around and called to me as if he were searching for me. I screamed to him, "I am here, I am right here!" but he could not hear me, and instead he kept calling. The head continued to change, showing me all of the people of my other world, missing me, wanting me.

I couldn't take it anymore. This was the worst of it all. How could this horrible caterpillar punish me so? Why tease me with these people that I love and miss so much? I wanted to scold him, but before I could

find the words, the smoke cocoon covered him completely and like the Cheshire cat, he was gone.

The caterpillar was gone but his voice remained to say one last thing. "You have the key." I cried out and begged for him to explain, but I knew it was no use. I was so incredibly tired of this place. At the top of my lungs I screamed "I WANT TO GO HOME!" Then the door again appeared in front of me, but it had grown. The door was now large enough to get through. I ran to it and hoping for the best I opened it and went through.

I opened my eyes to find that two years had gone by since I entered the rabbit hole. I was laying in a pool of my own bloody vomit in a parking lot. The bright sun hurt my eyes and my head was pounding. I hurt all over and felt near death. I was home. I gathered myself up and by some miracle managed to get home. Feeling as though I had been gone forever, I looked around trying to find my way. I found the bathroom and decided to get a look at myself. Looking in the mirror, really looking, for the first time in a long time, I saw that Wonderland had taken a toll on me. My once beautiful green eyes were sunken into my face, and surrounded by black circles. My weight had reached very unhealthy lows, and my body was bruised and battered. I felt tired and sick and ashamed. I did not want to live in Wonderland anymore. I wanted out. I wanted to stay in this, the real world, forever.

I went to the people of this world. I sought the help of the faces in the caterpillar. I cried to my mother and my friends. I knew only they could help me stay away from the rabbit hole. They could keep me safe. Slowly I found my way back. I was out of Wonderland forever.

A few months had gone by. I had put on a little weight and began to regain some color in my face. I was feeling safe, and was confident that the Cheshire cat and the others were gone for good.

I woke very early one morning and for some reason was drawn outside. I grabbed a stuffed cat made by my grandmother and walked out into the front yard. I was barefoot and the dew of the grass tickled my feet. It had been so long since I was able to notice such a simple splendor that I cried a little at the joy of it. I looked straight up and after all that time in darkness, at last saw the sun. The beauty of this morning hit me so hard that I fell over. Lying on my back in the wet grass, I rolled my head to the side and studied a single blade of green. I took a moment to reflect on

how lucky I was to see such a marvel and appreciate it. I looked at the top of the blade to see perched ever so gracefully a butterfly. Its wings were perfectly beautiful. It stayed only a moment, then fluttered up toward the sky. I followed its flight until it paused, hovering for a second, then flew off and was gone, leaving only sky. I thought the pause odd at first but then I understood the meaning of the gesture. The butterfly was leading me and I followed. Still on my back, looking straight up at the sky, I saw what it was trying to show me.

I was still for a second, then, an explosion. I began to laugh and cry and scream all at once. I was hysterical, for at last I had found him. After all this time, all this hell. Lying in the grass, looking up at the sky, I saw a formation of puffy white clouds that had long white ears, a fat round body, and a little puffy tail. It was a rabbit. It was my rabbit, my white rabbit. I could not believe it. There he was – the rabbit I had searched for through hell and back, he was right there, I had finally found him.

Not in a bottle, or powder, or pill, but right there in the beautiful morning sky. I continued to laugh, and a part of me continued to cry. I cried for all the pain I had inflicted on myself and those that loved and stood by me. I cried for the bit of anger I felt at myself for the huge chunk of my life that I lost. But I laughed for joy. I laughed because I knew that things would finally be okay.

I finally realized that I am not perfect, and not sinless. But now I know where my rabbit is. He is not in Wonderland, but always with me – here, here in real life.

Here is where I plan to stay from now on.

*Danielle is a Nursing student at CCC.*

Illustrations are borrowed from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. Ed. Donald J. Gray, 2nd edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1992. Jabberwocky (reproduced in *Palabras*, p. 11) illustrated by Sir John Tenniel.

## SITTING DOWN: A DEDICATION

CHARLES LOTT

Seated comfortably at my desk, I have a rather precarious query. How many different places have you taken the opportunity to sit in your lifetime? I find it almost impossible to name all of the possibilities that occurred just in the last week, a conclusion that leads me to believe that seats, in all of their shapes and sizes, may be the most under-appreciated conception I can think of. Chairs, couches, benches, five gallon buckets, or any number of things to sit on always seem to be around whenever someone utters that infamous, and sometimes ominous phrase, "have a seat." Rather than ramble on about possibilities, let me share some stories of friends and myself in which we were grateful to have a place to sit.

### ONE

I was young, a second grader sitting at my desk daydreaming about kickball at recess. My teacher, Mrs. Beasley, was telling us about the unparalleled significance of the events that were about to take place. NASA approved the first civilian ever to be allowed to accompany a shuttle crew in to space. The civilian was a teacher also; I believe her name was Christina. Mrs. Beasley always seemed to be overly excited about events like this. I can remember thinking to my self, a shuttle launch? Big deal, I saw lots of spaceships flying around last night during the *Star Wars* movie I watched. About this time, the shuttle crew, dressed in orange moon suits, had exited the building they were in and started walking towards the lift. Mrs. Beasley hushed the class and turned the volume up on the television.

The announcer began to spit colloquialisms about patriotism, the excitement in his voice increasing with every word spoken. The crew reached the door of the shuttle, waving to the crowd before they entered. Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one. The engines fired, gray and black smoke bellowed from beneath the shuttle. "We have lift off!" the announcer roared. The class was in frenzy; I was on the edge of my seat. We watched as the shuttle climbed higher and higher into the baby blue sky of Cape Canaveral. Seconds later the shuttle erupted into a gaseous inferno.



"The Challenger has exploded, oh my God!" the announcer repeated.

Shock.

Disbelief.

Silence.

I felt my heart sink into my stomach, slumped back into my seat, laid my head down on my desk, and began to weep.

## TWO

Harry, the starting center on the Blackcats football team, is having his seventeenth birthday party tonight. The Blackcats are hosting the undefeated, top rated Scorpions tonight to determine the number one spot in the upcoming playoffs. Willie, the quarterback of the Blackcats, had a monstrous game: throwing for 267 yards and three touchdowns to the Blackcats' victory. The celebration began in the locker room and quickly moved to Harry's house. Best friends on and off of the field, Harry and Willie were pretty much inseparable.

"Man what a great feeling to be number one on my birthday," Harry said triumphantly.

"Yeah, I know; man, there must be a hundred people here," Willie replied. "You know what would really set this party off?" Willie asked. "A little bit of booze."

"Man, you know I don't drink," Harry snapped, then reconsidered, "But I think this definitely qualifies as a special occasion."

Neither could buy alcohol, being underage. Unfortunately, being underage was not a problem for Harry's older brother Phil, who was in town for his birthday. Phil was more than happy to run to the liquor store for his little bro, especially after the way that the Blackcats knocked off the Scorpions.

After Phil returned with the alcohol, Harry and Willie decided to take a little ride in the new truck Harry got for his birthday. They slipped away from the party, bottle in hand, and left for destination unknown. Harry drove miles out of the city limits on a dirt road that led them to a dead end. They laughed, drank, talked, drank, spilled, and drank until there was no more to drink.

"Well, I guess it's time to head back to the party," Willie said.

"Yah, let's go!" Harry screamed as he threw the truck into drive and slammed on the gas pedal. The truck began to speed down the road.

"Faster... faster!" Willie demanded.

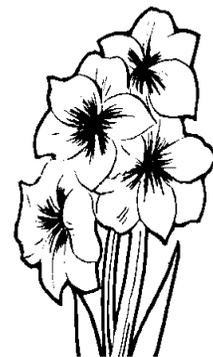
Behind them the truck was leaving a cloud of dust; in front of them the road had a very sharp 45-degree turn, which was almost impossible to see in the dark. Harry missed the turn. The truck was moving 90 miles per hour, struck the bar ditch and flipped five times. Harry and Willie were both killed in the accident. No one ever knew how the boys got the alcohol. No one knew when the boys left the party. The biggest question no one had an answer for was Why?

Phil attended the boys' funeral. He sat on the pew in front of Harry's casket, at the head of the church. He listened as friends and family of the boys said kind words on their behalf and he sank lower and lower into his seat on the pew. In his heart Phil knew the accident was not his fault, but the feeling of guilt was too severe. The next day, while sitting on Harry's bed, Phil put a pistol in his mouth and pulled the trigger.

I have witnessed nearly all of the significant events of my life in the arms of one form of chair or another. It seems that there has always been a seat around when my knees weren't quite there.

Now, in the twilight of my life, I find that I sit quite a bit more than I stand. I often ponder stories such as these while I rest and watch the sun set. I find great joy in watching my grandson play with his toy tractor around my feet as I sit. It is never a problem for me to recall tales of ending up on unexpected seats, while having unexpected feelings to tell my grandson... but that is another story.

*Charles is the head of the Measurement Department at PNM in Clovis. He takes courses at CCC in pursuit of an Associate's in CIS.*



## ENVELOPE

*GEN LAWSON*

The envelope  
the envelope please  
I think I'll fold  
my Self flat,  
fold flat into the envelope  
in your fingers  
in the flutter of your fingers  
you flip me from your fingers  
And I,  
I lie flat  
lie flat in the envelope  
flipping from your fingers  
And I,  
I feel like I am fluttering  
I am fluttering down  
fluttering down to the river.

*Gen is a police officer in Santa Fe.*

## TEACHERS

*CATHERINE ANDERSON*

We real cruel. We  
run school. We  
  
up late. We  
grade straight. We  
  
don't tolerate. We  
lecture long. We  
  
quiz long. We  
never wrong.

*Catherine will receive her Associate's of Liberal Arts in December, 2002.*

This poem is a play on Gwendolyn Brooks's "The Pool Players. Seven at the Golden Shovel" which can be found in *The Blair Handbook*, 4th edition (English 104 course text, p. 139).

## DYING EMBERS

*SHANNON LUJAN*

Like fuel to a fire  
So is my hate to you  
Thrown in  
It explodes with might  
Strong and torturous  
Burning bright  
Long into the night  
The fire dims  
And yet  
The embers burn on  
Always holding a spark of spite  
The flames grow and roar again  
Consuming  
Engulfing all that's insight  
The barren wasteland is left behind  
Charred to a blackness of desolation  
Nothing can grow  
No hope of survival  
No chance at life  
Extinguished but not gone  
The scars left upon the surface  
Are the mirror to a soul  
A life covered with blackness  
Smothered  
Beneath the surface of the whole

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