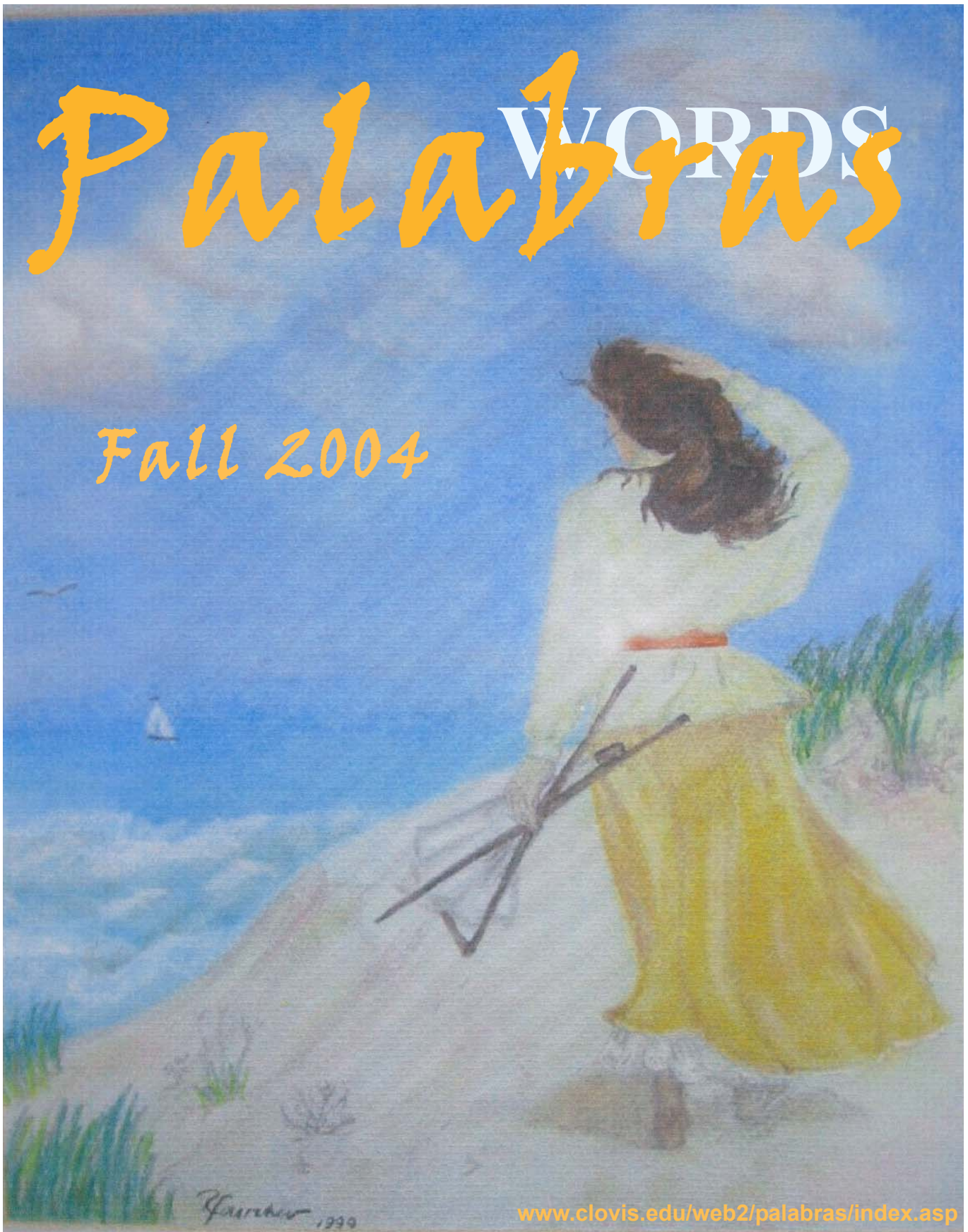


Palabras

WORDS

Fall 2004



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

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Phase V, Office 509
(505) 769-4906

Palabras is also an academic journal and accepts submissions from students across the United States who are currently working on undergraduate degrees.

Palabras

Journal of Exchange

www.clovis.edu/web2/palabras/index.asp

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Fall 2004

Volume 3 Issue 1

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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.

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...from the Editor

SETTLED IN ON THE WINDS: A THANK YOU

GINA L HOCHHALTER

I've come to settle in on the plains – or rather, the plateau – of Clovis. It is, contrary to popular perception, a wonderful place to be: its people I like, its highlights and perks and even its limitations I've come to appreciate, and its climate is especially on the top of my list.

(The smell, of course, I could do without, even though that phenomenon is not always negative: it's safe to take off shoes or to accidentally forget deodorant. ha ha)

And in any case the winds don't bother me because, as a Pastor friend of mine has said, the winds let him know when the spirits are moving through the area. And as we Clovisians (Clovisites?) know, the spirits of the place can be very active.

Aaaahhh to the lure of this place on the border of Eastern New Mexico... ..but not to veer off the point to an extreme degree, *Palabras* has been one of the highlights for me.

This journal, newly on-line – thanks to David Burch and technological brevity – is dedicated to those students and writers and artists who have contributed their work and who have braved publication; to the production crew, for without them the journal would not go to press; and to those who read the journal because without you, there would be no point for it.

Palabras is having a great time – I thank you.



FRANKLY, IT SMELLS OF COW

RAYMOND E. ATCHLEY

“What is in a name?” That is the question second only to the philosophical posing of, “What constitutes a good life?” We all are at least remotely familiar with Shakespeare's contention about roses smelling like roses, even if we called them daffodils. Which leaves us much to consider about Clovis.

As a native, born and bred in this fine metropolis of odorific intensity, I had always assumed that the name Clovis was likely of Spanish origin whose root meaning probably related to “Pardon me señor as I am about to gag.” Even after entering school and being taught that Clovis was in fact the name of a Frankish king from the Middle Ages, something in my synapses never clicked.

A Frankish king? Limited education prevailed and I just assumed he (Clovis) was a big wiener, or maybe ‘frank’ as relating to the word ‘sincere’. . . . or maybe he was sincerely a wiener, a frankfurter. Then again a Frankish king might have inherited the right to mail letters for free. Face it, in New Mexico it is not unheard of for a great many wieners to have free mailing privileges. But, ignorance doesn't last forever and while in these days of strained national relations we are hesitant to admit it, King Clovis was French. Ah, but he was a good, infidel-killing Christian king worthy of having a small railroad junction in the middle of nowhere named in his honor.

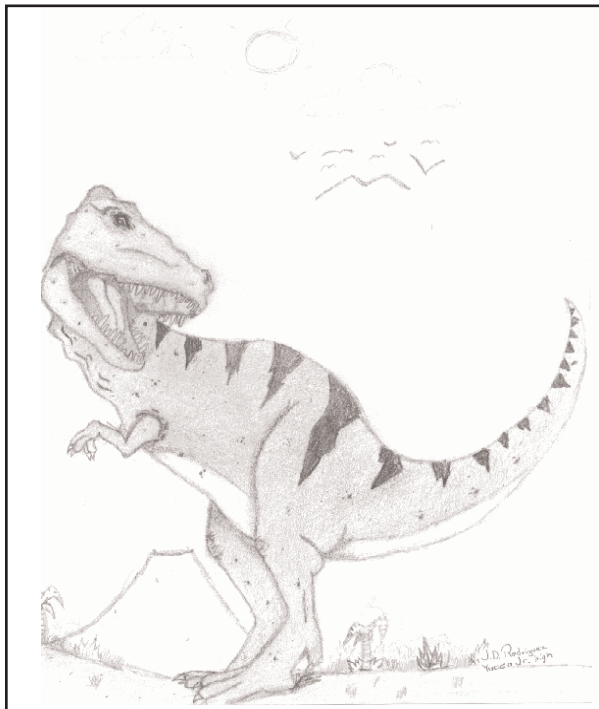
No matter that there is also a place in California that bears the same moniker, but that whole land is nothing more than a suburb of Austria and so becomes irrelevant.

We can thank – and attribute – the great privilege of being named after such a monarch to a railroad executive's daughter who happened to be studying the 5th century history of Clovis (the man). According to Greer and Lewis: “Clovis welded the confederacy into a unified force and then (in 486 A.D.) started campaigns against neighboring Germanic kingdoms and against the Romans in



Gaul" (*A Brief History of the Western World*, p.182). So we can see where the city's name is appropriate: Clovis was a Confederate who changed sides of the Union and didn't get along with anybody. And while we must not forget that he was the first Christian king, he after all was a French Catholic, which is synonymous, from certain perspectives, with being a Protestant or atheist, so he wouldn't feel any discomfort at the number of different churches in his namesake city. That executive's *bourgeois* daughter not only pegged us pretty good but also demonstrated good sense by not getting off the train. The proof is obvious that she never stepped foot in the town she christened. Of course, "Clovis" is easier to write than "What's That Smell?" so maybe she did visit.

PICTOGLYPH



J.D. Rodriguez
Yucca Jr. High

ANTI-DEPRESSANTS: DO WE REALLY NEED THEM?

SANDRA FERGUSON

Anti-depressants are relatively new to the prescription drug market and appear to be the "cure-all" for a variety of complaints. Zoloft, Paxil, Prozac and an assortment of other anti-depressants are used to treat biochemical imbalances. These mood-altering drugs are prescribed for everything from relationship problems, insomnia, migraines, alcoholism, grief, anxiety, weight loss, to sexual problems, depression, and menopause. Not only is the medication prescribed to adults, but children as young as pre-school are now taking them.

The anti-depressant drug family, called SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors), works by increasing the amount of the chemical serotonin in the brain. It is believed that the increase of serotonin promotes well-being. A great deal of care should be taken when prescribing a drug that specifically targets brain activity and has the powerful potential to change one's personality.

Millions of people are being prescribed anti-depressants with nothing more than a cursory exam. Primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, and pediatricians with little or no psychiatric training are recommending these potentially dangerous drugs. The patient who has issues that are deemed serious enough for further action should undergo a complete physical exam and psychiatric analysis. In addition, the patient should be informed about the possible drug side effects and then given a choice of alternative treatments. Therapy, support groups, family, friends, and Christian counseling might help alleviate the "crisis" without the use of medication. General practitioners should not prescribe anti-depressants without the benefit of second or even third opinions.

Why the rush to prescribe mood/mind altering drugs? The answer lies in part with insurance companies and saving money. Insurance companies desiring to save money discourage primary care physicians from referring their patients for therapy. "Insurance companies talk about second

opinion, but they don't really like them," says Dr. Glen Elliott, director of the Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute's children's center (Kluger 56). With little or no actual physical and mental diagnoses, patients are prescribed medication and reassured that the side effects are minimal.

Tell that to the grieving widow who after nine months of taking Paxil could no longer afford the costly drug and had to go through painful withdrawals. She not only suffered a return of overwhelming grief, but she also had to deal with debilitating headaches, weight gain, suicidal thoughts, and a constant ringing in her ears. Consider the young mother who had a near fatal accident after being on Xanax for just a few short weeks. The medication prescribed for migraines appeared to be the cause of a manic episode that almost took her life. A young man battling alcoholism and taking Prozac attempted suicide and later could not recall any specifics of the incident. Each of these patients might have been spared further distress if their doctor had tried other options rather than relying on the current "magical cure."

These events are just "a small sampling of problems with anti-depressants at a local level. Nationally, thousands of lives have been affected and with devastating results." Eric Harris, the Littleton, Co. school shooter, killed thirteen students while on Luvox; Kip Kinkel, the Springfield, Oregon school shooter, killed his parents, two fellow students, and wounded twenty-two others while withdrawing from Prozac and Ritalin; Andrea Yates, the Texas housewife, drowned her five children while on Effexor and Remeron; Chris Pittman, age twelve, is accused of shooting to death his paternal grandparents and burning their house down. His father believes the anti-depressant Zoloft turned his son into a killer (Allshouse). Fox News reported students who were taking anti-depressants carried out seven of twelve recent school shootings. The tragedies are too numerous to mention, but the relationship between these drugs and violence should not be ignored.

Great Britain, Ireland, and Canada have banned the prescription of Paxil and Effexor to anyone under eighteen. Studies have shown these

particular anti-depressants contribute to a greater risk of suicide, psychosis, self-mutilation, and violence in young kids (Allshouse). According to Dr. Joseph Glenmullen, "Prozac and other anti-depressants should be reserved for moderate to severe symptoms that interfere with one's ability to function" (335). It seems obvious that in many cases the risks far outweigh the benefits, so why continue to dispense this harmful medication so freely? In spite of all the possible side effects, facial tics, nervousness, suicidal tendencies, weight gain, hallucinations, sexual dysfunction, mania, anxiety, and much more, SSRIs have been prescribed to an estimated 10% of the American population. Annual sales of Prozac, Zoloft, and Paxil exceed \$4 billion a year (15). In the early 1990's serotonin boosters became managed care's answer to more costly alternatives, and primary care doctors were writing 70% of prescriptions for Zoloft, Paxil, Prozac, and Luvox (14).

This is a powerful, fast growing, billion-dollar industry. Anti-depressants are being marketed to the public via Internet, television, newspapers, radio, and magazines. SSRIs are promoted as the latest, greatest cure for everything that ails us. Forget about self-reliance – just pop one of these feel good pills and your worries are over. Life is full of ups and downs and the greatest rewards often come at a time when we are feeling the greatest despair. At some point in our lives we will grieve deeply, feel overwhelmed by circumstances beyond our control and perhaps want to give up. Facing adversity and triumphing over it is one of life's greatest rewards.

Dr. Peter Breggin says, "The strength and intensity of your suffering indicates the strength and intensity of your spirit. Your discomfort shows how alive you are." He further states, "Imagine if you could learn to turn all that self-destructive energy into creative energy and a love of life" (Breggin and Cohen 3). In today's society of instant results, many do not want to wait to feel better and choose to rely on medication for emotional well-being.

Oftentimes the rowdiest little boys and emotional girls or vice versa grow up to be the most



creative adults. If that energy and creativity is muted with drugs in their youth what might these young people grow up to be? possibly adults with little or no concept of true emotion, or dull, glassy eyed individuals who have never felt true joy or sorrow. It is alarming to read and difficult to comprehend, "When it comes to psychotropic medication, a new study confirms that anti-depressants are tested on only a narrow band of depressed patients but prescribed to a wide range of people" (Baker 20).

Not all patients and certainly not all doctors agree about the dangers of taking the medication. Many report life-changing results from the use of anti-depressants. Panic attacks had one man confined to his home. After a few weeks of taking Prozac he is back teaching and leading a normal life. A woman who suffered from "baby blues" says Prozac saved her life and that of her child. Another woman found renewed hope and reconciliation with her estranged husband. An elderly woman who was having trouble with anxiety and loneliness feels that Paxil has helped her deal with her problems and took the worry away from her family. Many parents of children diagnosed with ADHD have praised the results of the drugs to calm their children. Teachers of these children are grateful for order being restored to their classrooms. Not every person who takes the medications will have adverse effects and undoubtedly many will benefit from their use.

But the question remains: What about all those victims of the indiscriminate prescribing of potentially lethal medications? Surely taking every precaution and closely monitoring a patient's progress is of utmost importance. What if the horrific school murders were a direct result of the shooters being on SSRIs? Can any doctor in good conscience prescribe mood altering medications without first exhausting all other options? So little is known about the long-term use of psychiatric drugs and yet *Time* magazine reported the use of anti-depressants among children and teens increased threefold between 1987 and 1996 and continues to climb (Kluger 51).

We trust our family doctors to act in our best

interests. But we also need to investigate and question any prescription that affects our moods. The decision is ultimately our own. If a doctor does not take the time to explain why a particular drug is absolutely necessary and describe possible side effects, then patients ought to take the initiative and find out for themselves. FDA approval of a drug is not a guarantee of safety. In the past many medications once thought to be safe were later proven to have deadly long-term effects.

It appears that once again individuals' health and happiness are being sacrificed for monetary gain. Drug manufacturers are getting richer and insurance companies are saving big bucks. It just may be the lull before the storm. Numerous lawsuits are already pending or have been settled out of court due to the adverse side effects of SSRIs. Hopefully, in the near future the dispensing of anti-depressants will be strictly controlled and require examination by more than the family doctor. With SSRIs, knowing when not to medicate seems to be the best recourse.

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STAY-AT-HOME MOM? MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION

TONI SHARP

Several years ago it seemed that a woman's main job was to stay home to maintain the house and raise the children. Today so many women are looked down on for leaving their professional careers to stay at home to do the same things that most women were expected to do many years ago. "The idea that time spent with one's child is time wasted is embedded in traditional economic thinking" (Crittenden 4). Women who have made the choice to stay at home after becoming a mother are often greeted with disapproval and a lack of understanding from their co-workers and sometimes even their friends and family (Bullen and Sanders x). Society has, however, changed its opinion and made it harder for women to decide whether to stay at home or to continue working.

The National Mothers at Home support organization reported that the majority of preschool children are cared for by their own parents: "54 percent have a mother at home, 7 percent have 'tag team' parents, and 4 percent accompany their mothers to work or are cared for by mothers who earn income at home." (Bullen and Sanders xiii)

This suggests that mothers are going against what society thinks and many are looking for the decision that is best for their family.

The real question is, Do families benefit more from a stay-at-home mother or a working mother? After conducting extensive research, it seems that there are many different opinions in answering this question.

A 1991 survey of women aged eighteen to forty-nine by *Self* magazine found that nearly three quarters said they were more concerned with balancing work and family than with being "supersuccessful" and 75 percent placed family over work when asked to choose between the two. (Bullen and Sanders xiv)

The question, to stay or not to stay at home, might

be made easier if one considers that "Motherhood is a career that has its own responsibilities, rewards, and challenges" (xi) and families can benefit in many more ways if there is a full-time mother at home, at least until the children start school.

For example, a mother who stays at home will have a better chance to watch her children as they grow up than a mother who is at work most of the day. One survey showed that 50 percent of women said that by staying home their relationship with their child is stronger (222). All mothers want to have the best relationship possible with their kids, but it's more difficult for working mothers to find the time to attend, for example, their child's school functions, and they take a huge risk of missing many of the important moments in their child's life (Murry 24). Many employers will not allow mothers time off from work, no matter what the circumstance (Holcomb 15). Although new laws provide for time off when a child is, for example, hospitalized and many companies offer more flexible work schedules (15), full-time mothers still have a better chance of experiencing all of the once-in-a-lifetime moments, like first smiles, first steps, and even first words, than working mothers.

Another way that families can benefit from a stay-at-home mom is that they don't have to deal with all the worries that come with finding the right day care. Many families don't realize how much they will be saving on the costs of good child care by having a mother at home full-time. "About 3 percent of the mothers we spoke to said they had planned to return to their jobs after their maternity leave, but they either couldn't find child care they were comfortable with or they could not afford it" (Bullen and Sanders 9). By making the choice to stay at home, mothers don't have to feel guilty or worry that their child is being cared for properly. "According to stories that ran in *Newsweek* in February of 1997, poor-quality child care could affect the physical growth of the brain" (Holcomb 22). This shows that mothers who stay at home with their child instead of taking the chance of putting them into a dangerous and unknown environment will benefit because they

don't have to worry about harming their children's growth. Research states that "children can benefit much more from receiving individual attention at home than they will get in school or in a day-care center" (Bullen and Sanders 8). Staying home with your children gives them the attention they need to develop better in all areas of their lives.

Additionally, working mothers have the stress of two full-time jobs – their career and motherhood – yet don't have any time for themselves. A stay-at-home mother benefits more because she can give 100 percent to the one job that is most important to her instead of trying to do her best to juggle life at work and her life at home. One mother stated, "not to mention full-time mothers still have time for personal interests and for sleep" (Bullen and Sanders 9)! Even though a stay-at-home mom may have some feelings of frustration by the many demands of her kids and household chores, she will have time to sit and relax or to do whatever might please her when she feels overwhelmed or trapped.

Another benefit for a stay-at-home mom: a study conducted by *Staying Home From Full-Time Professional to Full-Time Parent* showed that "more than 13 percent of the women plan to increase their education while taking care of their children full-time, while another 14 percent will become involved in volunteer or community organizations" (Bullen and Sanders 11). Any working mother can tell you that taking on school, work, motherhood, and volunteer work would be almost impossible.

A mother who chooses to stay at home may struggle financially for a little while. "When 600 women across the country were asked what the hardest thing about leaving their job was: 24.9 percent of the women said it was the loss of income" (Bullen and Sanders 217). Many women are really concerned about living on one income. A working mother does benefit from knowing she is providing for her family (Murry 13); however, money is not everything when it comes to doing what is best for children. Although realized, "for many mothers, full-time work is a necessity, not a lifestyle choice" ("Working mothers link to school failure" par. 10) and "many argue that it's not so

much the quantity of time a mom spends with her kids but the quality of that time that matters to kids' emotional health" (Holcomb 20). But if at all possible, the rewards a family will receive from a stay-at-home mother are well worth a temporary struggle with finances. Any mother who makes the decision to stay home can always return to some kind of full-time or part-time work (and perhaps she will have received an education or come across a position while volunteering) when she and her family think they are ready. A stay-at-home mother's time at home does not have to be permanent; it may be for only two months or it may even be for five years, but it should be for however long the family feels most comfortable.

There are really many different ways that most families today can benefit from having a full-time mother at home. "Yet many mothers still feel as though they are considered 'less equal' than others who work for pay" (Bullen and Sanders ix). But no mother should feel this way because no matter what society thinks about them, they are raising the next generation to be good and productive citizens (Gardner par. 19).

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THEY WERE SLEEPING . . . METH LABS AND CHILDREN

CYNTHIA RENEE SANDOVAL

They were sleeping when Albuquerque police arrived – nine children ranging in age from 13 years to 14 days, most of them curled on blankets and clothing in the junk-filled living room, some snuggled among the eight adults who called this fetid singlewide trailer home ("Meth and a Family" 1). This is the scene often found by police and other law enforcement officials when arriving at a methamphetamine or clandestine lab: "Dozens of tires and trash bags filled with rotting food and Sudafed blister packs outnumbered the broken toys in the dirt yard. An oozing car battery sat on the rim of the bathtub. Bloodlike smears, possibly from caustic red phosphorus, ringed the bathroom sink" ("Meth and a Family" 1). Subjecting any child to this is *abuse*.

Imagine an industry that depends entirely on the use of hazardous chemicals, in which workers are unlicensed, unregulated, and usually not in their right minds. "Children crawl on the factory floors beneath the assembly lines. Spills and explosions are a way of life" (Hill 8). These are common conditions in which children are found every day in New Mexico and throughout the United States. Children share cribs, bathrooms, toys, and bottles with deadly chemicals found in methamphetamine labs. Children are inhaling toxic fumes and gasses as their parents cook a drug to sell and to get high.

These children never have a chance because by the time they are a few years old, they are addicted to the drug. Seventy percent of children found in meth labs test positive for the drug ("Meth Lab Decontamination Station Created for Kids").

*The Deadline for publication
in the Spring 2005 issue is
December 15, 2004.*

Methamphetamine is being manufactured and sold from houses, cars, apartments, and hotel rooms. A clandestine or meth lab can be set up in a matter of minutes and is often found in kitchens and bathrooms. It does not take intense training or schooling to become a "chemist" in a meth lab. Anyone can "cook" this drug and a recipe for meth can be found easily by searching the internet.

No one can escape the dangers of cooking meth. Even the cookers of methamphetamine can suffer the same cirrhosis in two years that an alcoholic would suffer in 20 (Hill 8). Meth is perhaps the most addictive drug around and it destroys the users more quickly than perhaps any other. Within a year a person in good health can become mentally and physically ill (Conley and Downing B1). The parents of these children are not mentally able to care for their children. Children are left to fend for themselves, they learn to make their own meals, and become caregivers for younger siblings. Microwaves and dishes which children are using are contaminated with chemical residue and byproducts from the meth.

Some of the ingredients used to manufacture meth include potassium iodine, ephedrine, xylene, sulfuric acid, hydroiodic acid, freon, muriatic acid, iodine crystals, and red phosphorus. The mixing, combining, and heating of the ingredients lets off toxic fumes and vapors that can be extremely harmful. This also creates the danger of fire or explosion. Approximately 15 percent of meth labs are discovered as a result of fire or explosion. Careless handling of highly volatile, hazardous chemicals and waste, and unsafe manufacturing methods cause solvents to burst into flames or explode ("Dangers to Children..." 7).

Vapors from ephedrine, lithium metal, anhydrous ammonia, and other chemicals that go into meth can attack and damage mucus membranes, skin, eyes, lungs, and the central nervous system. These vapors and gasses also become a permanent fixture in any area where meth is being manufactured, including kitchen appliances and utensils, carpet, clothes, and drapes. Children are more likely than adults to absorb meth lab chemicals into their bodies because of their size and their

higher rates of metabolism and respiration ("How Do Meth Labs Endanger Children?" 7). Normal cleaning will not remove the chemicals typically used to produce meth.

Five to six pounds of waste are produced with every pound of methamphetamine (Twohey 1B). Agents from the Region V Drug Task Force in New Mexico will not enter a clandestine lab without wearing full-body biohazard suits which include a gas mask and oxygen supply. The fire department and emergency medical services are called to the scene prior to investigation because the risks of explosion and contamination are so great. Yet children are breathing the air and living in these homes with no protection.

Direct health issues are not the only risk of abuse these children are suffering from. They are found malnourished, under-developed, and mentally unstable. They are neglected and physically abused. These homes are unsanitary and unsafe; many are found infested with roaches and other insects. One child was found with hundreds of sores around her mouth and eyes that later were found to be cockroach bites. These children are dirty, un-bathed, and even starved. A University of Arizona study showed that children residing with meth cookers and users were at an increased risk of shaken baby syndrome (Rosario B1).

Not only are there risks of physical injury and abuse, but there are many more risks including being sexually abused and even being shot. Other dangers found in meth labs are: strangers coming and going, loaded firearms, and attack dogs. Meth is inexpensive to produce and expensive to buy, and the owners must protect themselves against thievery from other dealers.

In California, the police found a clandestine lab with two small children that contained numerous semi-automatic assault weapons. It also contained the following: illegal electrical wiring in the home, including wires simply strung down the walls, feces from two adult dogs (a pit bull and another large dog) and numerous puppies all over the home. There were holes in the roof, one with exhaust tubing directly beneath. Charred rafters were simply covered with plywood or plastic sheeting. Steps outside one door were hazardous,

consisting of loose concrete blocks. Some bars on the windows had no safety releases. There was no food in the kitchen cupboards and the kitchen sink was inoperable because the pipes leading from the drain had been eaten away when chemical waste was washed down the sink. There was spoiled food and trash in and around the kitchen (*People vs. Odom III* 1028). Toys, books, and even food are covered in filth and grime let off by this drug.

Clandestine labs are like living in a dumpster, and the children are trying to survive somewhere in the mix of it all. The parents are high; some of them don't even realize that they have children. Children who are removed from meth labs must undergo extreme detoxification and decontamination. They must throw away everything that they own, including clothing, homework, and toys. This is undeniably one of the worst forms of child abuse known today. Not only are the children at a risk to develop a terminal illness, but they are also at risk of explosion, fire, malnutrition, neglect, brain cancer, social dysfunction, and death. This has to be recognized as *child abuse*.

Prior to beginning this paper there was no statute in New Mexico that clearly outlined this behavior as child abuse. Prosecutors were forced to make an argument based on New Mexico Statute Annotated (NMSA) 30-6-1(D) which was merely child abuse by endangerment. Many cases have gone to the New Mexico Supreme Court, including *State v. Graham* and *State v. Trujillo*, and have been overturned on the basis that mere proximity to a dangerous situation without death or bodily harm is not enough to uphold a child abuse conviction.

House Bill 112, which was signed and delivered February 26, 2004 will be enacted on July 1, 2004 and has created a law against the manufacture of a controlled substance in the presence of children. New Mexico Statute Annotated 30-6-1 (F) will read: Evidence that demonstrates that a child has been negligently allowed to enter or remain in a motor vehicle, building or other premises that contains chemicals, materials or equipment used or intended for use in the manufacture of a controlled substance shall be deemed *prima facie* evidence of abuse of the child. Whoever commits abuse of a child that does not result in the child's death or great bodily harm is, for a first

offense, guilty of a third degree felony and for second and subsequent offenses, is guilty of a second degree felony. If the abuse results in great bodily harm or death to the child, he is guilty of a first degree felony. This means that showing the actual manufacturing of methamphetamine in the presence of a child is evidence enough of child abuse.

Finally, our legislation has recognized what California, Minnesota, and many other states have already recognized. Manufacturing methamphetamines in a home or place where your children are is child abuse. State prosecutors are thrilled that they will now have the privilege of putting these offenders behind bars for endangering their children's lives. My hope is that every state will begin to adopt this same law and prosecute child abusers accordingly. Children deserve more of a chance at becoming something in the world. No one, not even a parent, should be able to take that from them.

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THE PATRIOT ACT: IS IT ETHICAL?

DAVE RICHMOND

Several weeks after the infamous attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, Congress passed a piece of legislation known as The Patriot Act. This act gives wide and far-reaching power to federal law enforcement officials in the pursuit of suspected terrorists and their supporters. Many American lives were forever changed that day and the effects will last a lifetime. Every American has been touched by these tragedies in his or her own way. Some have lost loved ones; forever lost to unspeakable horror. It was with this weighing heavily on the hearts of our elected officials that they set out to draft and pass legislation that would protect American lives and prevent this from ever happening again. The Patriot Act is an ethical response to those who would use unethical means to attack this country.

I spent four years in the Navy as a Cryptologic Technician. I was assigned by the Naval Security Group to support special operation missions run out of the National Security Agency. During my time there I traveled to the Pentagon and I walked the very halls that were struck in the attack on September 11th. Even to this day, it turns my stomach every time I think of what those fellow sailors and soldiers were thinking as their world came crashing down on them. I will never forget. I can only imagine the horror and confusion those brave men and women experienced that day.

We all learned a horrible lesson in the weeks that followed the attacks about how these individuals lived, worked, and were trained right here in the United States. Their neighbors never saw any trouble in these seemingly simple, law-abiding citizens and their families. No one would have thought to investigate these people living here right under our collective noses. There were reports of some terrorists being turned down at some of the flight schools they had applied to and that one school passed information on to the FBI

(Federal Bureau of Investigations) which was never acted upon. There was also the report that one of the hijackers was on the FBI's watch list and was still let into the country legally. Also, one of the hijacker's former roommates was under surveillance by the FBI while the hijacker was living in San Diego, California.

Prior to the Patriot Act, law enforcement officials had to secure a warrant signed by a federal judge in order to access personal accounts, such as e-mail accounts held by third parties (eg., Hotmail and Yahoo). All e-mail sent or received in the United States is now scanned for key words, such as "bomb," "President," "nuclear," "biological," and "chemical." Perhaps by lifting some of the FBI's limitations, more terrorists will be apprehended before it's too late.

Another aspect of the Patriot Act is the ability of law enforcement officials to inquire into library usage of a suspect. This can include the books that people check out or the information accessed on the internet, whether at the library or through the use of library computers. The American Library Association has passed a resolution opposing the Patriot Act (Orecklin 1). Many librarians across the country have vowed to destroy these records daily to deny the government access to them. They see this policy as invasive and suppressive of the right of people to freely seek information. It also prevents the staff from notifying an individual whose records have been viewed and who may be under suspicion.

It also loosens the requirements on the ability of these same enforcement officials to put a wire tap on telephones or to intercept cell phone signals; and they have categorized voice mail as stored material (Doyle 1). This is an important policy change. In the past, voicemail was given the same treatment as actual telephonic conversations requiring a signed federal warrant to listen to the material saved. By defining voicemail as a stored material, it is now treated in the same regard as discarded mail. Therefore no specific warrant is needed as long as there is enough suspicious behavior to justify a look into the voicemail account, even without the person's knowledge or consent.

The Patriot Act also authorizes the Attorney

General to collect DNA samples from prisoners without their consent. As science has progressed over the years, DNA evidence has become almost commonplace in all criminal cases. Congress reasoned if criminals can have their fingerprints taken and kept on file, then their DNA was just another form of identification. All members of the Armed Forces have their DNA on file with the Department of Defense, which has in the past provided this information to law enforcement officials when needed.

Another change created by the Patriot Act is that the statute of limitations has been lengthened for crimes of terrorism (*Preserving Life and Liberty*). Often, the statute of limitations has been doubled. It is one of those times when this act is not only ethical but also justifiable. To me, a statute of limitations on anything other than white-collar crime is ridiculous. The parties responsible for the terrorist attacks of 9/11 should be hunted until the end of their days and if it is thirty years from now, the federal government should be allowed to bring charges and punish these people no matter how much time has gone by. Those who lost their lives in the attacks will always be gone from us.

Our society has held the misconception that everyone's rights are equal and therefore subject to equal protection, but this attitude cannot be upheld when considering acts of terrorism. When people choose to commit crimes against American citizens in order to support their own political agendas, those criminals also choose to waive their rights. Terrorists show no regard for the rights of their victims, so why should the United States' government limit its ability to protect its citizens for the sake of these terrorists? The right thing is certainly for Americans to be protected, even when it means a higher level of government involvement.

Terrorists have previously been able to use our own system against us. The terrorists from September 11th lived in this country and knew that nothing could be done to stop them. Their conversations could not have been intercepted, and no law enforcement agency could have gone after them without just cause. The Patriot Act gives our government the power to protect its citizens by using latitude that could have prevented September 11th. It gives our government ample

time to locate and prosecute terrorists.

Terrorists have also been taking advantage of the higher education system in our country. They can receive an education in microbiology and are able to obtain samples of highly toxic material for supposed experimentation (Sachs 30). The summer of 2002 saw many Americans afraid to open their mail for fear that it might contain Anthrax. It was later determined that the Anthrax was produced right here in the United States by the Army at their chemical weapons facility in Maryland. To this day only one suspect has been named and he has neither been arrested nor charged with any crimes. Investigators continue to search for the evidence to prove that this individual is the guilty party. All that they can prove is that he had access to the material and a desire to use it.

Attorney General John Ashcroft is leading the charge for the Patriot Act. He has stated in his presentations to Congress that one of the most pressing threats from the terrorist organizations is their use of 'sleeper agents' that still reside here in the United States (Brill 66). His case for the Patriot Act points to the way law enforcement can now proactively go after suspected terrorists to either stop them and convict them or rule them out as suspects. As I discussed earlier, the hijackers of September 11th resided here in the United States, and attended flight school in Florida and Arizona. Many others could be out there, training for their next target. It was widely known that the government suspected the next attack to involve tractor-trailer trucks. Many of the nation's driving schools that teach the skills needed to operate these vehicles were in a panicked state, reviewing all students' records, in search of potential 'sleeper agents.' It is this type of reaction that the government is trying to avoid by giving more power to its law enforcement agents.

Many people feel that the Patriot Act may go too far and give too much power to the government. I have always felt and continue to feel that the only ones who should fear law enforcement are those who have or will break the law. As a law abiding citizen I have never been hounded or persecuted by the government. I pay my taxes and I work hard. Sometimes I may speed a little and have paid my fair share of speeding tickets, but I have always believed that my government was

never out to get me or my family; that indeed they were looking out for my interests here and abroad.

I believe that debating the morality of the Patriot Act is a disgrace to the men and women who have given their lives to defend our country. So many people have fought so that we as citizens can enjoy our lives today. Unfortunately, there are those worldwide who will try to belittle our beliefs and take our lives. The Patriot Act is a fair, ethical response by our leaders to combat the current world conditions and to ensure the rights of Americans.

The Patriot Act may allow the American government to prevent future tragedies, which is indeed the most intelligent and moral thing that can be done. The Patriot Act is ethical because it is a vital part of the protection of the American public and is necessary in our war on terrorism.

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Dave is a married father of three who attends Wayland Baptist University where he is on staff as the Financial Aid advisor and Veterans representative. His political views come from his family's history of military service (father, grandfather, three uncles, four great uncles and great-grandfather) as well as his own four years in the Navy as a Cryptologic Technician. Dave is an Education major with a goal of becoming a secondary History teacher.

THE EQUALITY DEBATE

JAMES YOUNG

Do you like to pretend? Well, I do, so let's give it a shot... shall we? Let's say that you are a happy 30-something who has just recently entered into a relationship with a wonderful man you met on the sidewalk on your way to the nearest Starbucks (this is obviously not Clovis).

This guy is funny, smart, not to mention cute, and above all he laughs at your jokes. Now, if you are like the rest of the world's population you will instantly begin to analyze the odds of this budding relationship succeeding past the second week. You will recall every flaw you noticed while he was drinking his double mocha cappuccino and you will also think about how cute he looked in those Dockers standing in front of you in the line as he asked for your phone number. That first night lying in bed you will be planning out the foreseeable future of this relationship. You will try and categorize this new man based on the others that have strolled in and out of your life for too many years. Your first date will be meticulously planned in your head right down to the garnishment on the table and the color of the candles you will light. You will try and envision the first time he invites you to his parents' house for Christmas dinner and you will try to understand what kind of people could have brought this wonderful person into the world. The first vacation that you take together, Hawaii naturally, will have you salivating in your sleep that first night.

The next morning the anxiety will continue as you wait for his call that may or may not arrive. You will retrace all the dreams and visions of bliss from the night before. You will make meticulous corrections through your mind's eye so that everything about this unfolding relationship will be perfect. Eventually you will tire of the same thoughts and you will move on to more grand acts of love and affection. You dare to dream about the perfect sunset and the whispering breeze on the inevitable day when he will drop down to one

knee and ask you the grandest question of them all.

Just as the sun drops below its horizon and the sky fills with shades of red and purple that make you appreciate the simple pleasures of life, he will take your hand in his and turn to you. He will bend down and brace himself with his left knee on the perfect sandy beach and lift his head to the failing light of the sky. His eyes will lock on yours and your heart will begin to race. You know what is coming yet your mind seems to wander and your senses heighten. You notice everything about this moment from the light spray of the ocean to the first hint of a chill on the evening air. You will always remember the way the white powdery sand felt on your feet as your toes clenched together in preparation. As he reaches into the pocket of his rolled up khakis and removes the blue velvety box he had so neatly concealed that day, your already racing heart goes into an Indy 500 style overdrive. As the first tears begin to form in your eyes he releases your hand from his and takes this blue velvety box into his own sweaty palm. He opens the box and presents you with more beauty than you were expecting and he begins to speak. Time slows down and everything else simply ceases to exist as he looks into your eyes and says "Will you be my life partner?"

As you wake to find that you had dozed off at your dining room table you recall with disgust those final words that "dream guy" had spoken to you on that fabricated beach. "Life Partner," not husband or wife as the case may be. You realize with disgust that your dream simply cannot become true because you are gay, and simply put, not afforded the right of marriage that is given to every other person on this planet.

I find it hard to believe in an era where we like to brag about our lack of social prejudices and in a television environment that says being gay is "trendy," we still cling to this idea of what marriage is supposed to be. Barring two people from making the ultimate gesture of love because they are of the same sex, seems to me, somewhat barbaric. It also wouldn't hurt us to look into our past and see how we have historically handled situations like this.

We are a culture that at one time didn't believe

that women had the intelligence or constitution to vote responsibly, or to do anything other than cook and raise children. This isn't an opinion, this is fact. It wasn't until 1920 after many long years of protests, marches, lectures, and civil disobedience that the 19th amendment was passed allowing women the right to vote. We as a country also believed at one point that African Americans were lower forms of life that served no better purpose than to act as slaves. This isn't an opinion, this is fact. African Americans did not receive the right to vote until 1869 with the 15th amendment to the Constitution. Even still, it took many more long years before the Black community was able to freely vote without the double standards of poll taxes and literacy tests which were so commonly used to deny them voting rights. Even now there are pockets of this country which harbor hatred to any non-white non-Anglo that may cross their path. Now, at their respective times, these prejudices seemed logical and even just to the powers that be. Yet we all know now how wrong it was to have these notions. How then, can we make the same mistakes of our past and blatantly deny two HUMAN BEINGS the right to wed?

A recent poll (10 March 2004) taken by the *Washington Post-ABC News* suggests that support for same-sex unions is actually rising (51% polled support the idea) which makes one wonder why our elected representatives wanted to make an amendment to the Constitution banning same-sex marriages? Why is it also that the argument seems to be split right down the Party lines? Six out of 10 Democrats support gay marriage while almost the same percentage of Republicans opposes it. Since when did basic human rights and civil liberties become a political issue? When the founding fathers drafted the Constitution one of their biggest fears was of a central government that had too much power. Apparently that idea has been lost on our current government who believe that the States with their "activist judges" (Pres. Bush's State of the Union Address 21 Jan 2004) shouldn't be able to set their own laws about same-sex marriage. It appears that our American way of breaking the mold and respecting the moniker of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" has fallen to the way side.

Our nation is in at the point where openly gay

bishops can preach to the masses, where "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" is an acceptable form of television programming, where don't ask don't tell is the norm, where we question the place of "God" in our Pledge of Allegiance, and where we allow known sexual offenders to father children of their own. How then can we justify that a same sex marriage should not be allowed to take place?

James will be 25 in November; he has 3 dogs, is married, and has no kids. He was in the Air Force for 4 years (intelligence) and now works and attends classes.

THE STONE

SIXTO CASTILLO

I am a stone.
No flesh and no bone.
I stand alone.
In a valley where the free rome.
for this field is my Home.
As the wind Blows over me day after day
If I could talk this is what I would have to say
Oh how I wish I could just walk away
Instead this is where I stay.
Can't even get up to play.
So this is where I lay.
Not on a stool or tray.
But in a valley where the free rome.
If I haven't been kicked or throughn.
This is my home.
because I am a stone.

Sixto wrote this poem in 2000 when he was going to school at CCC and working toward his GED. He's interested in Cosmetology and Auto Mechanics. He's a craftsman who likes to read, and he wants to be happy in life.

POLYGAMY IN COLORADO CITY, ARIZONA

CYNTHIA TARANGO

Today is March 23, 2004.

Like any student who did not go anywhere for spring break I stayed home, slept late, and watched a lot of television. As I was flipping back and forth between Oprah and Dr. Phil, I ended up watching Oprah because a disturbing topic on polygamy in Colorado City, Arizona was about to be discussed. To my amazement I was floored when I learned that polygamy was being practiced by fundamentalist Mormons here in the U.S.

For those who do not know what polygamy is, I will define it: Polygamy is referred to when one man is married to several women or when one woman is married to several men. For those who do not know, polygamy is still being practiced here in the U.S. although it is illegal.

Some may say, "What's the big deal? If it is part of their religion and way of being who cares, as long as they are not hurting anybody?" The problem is that people *are* being hurt! Who? How about the young girls there in Colorado City who are not allowed to listen to the radio, read newspapers or magazines, and are limited to watch certain shows on TV? They are not allowed to get an education beyond the 10th grade and even then they are taught only certain things academically anyway, which usually does not matter because by the time they turn 14 or 15 they are taken out of school in order for them to get married to men twice their age and start breeding. Why? Because these young girls are brought up believing that their sole purpose in life is to worship their husbands and to bear children. If that was not bad enough, the men that they are arranged to be married to and have children with already have around 3 wives and others have as many as 30 wives with numerous other children. To me this is a recipe for child abuse, not only emotionally, verbally, or physically, but sexually.

These girls are being abused emotionally because this way of living is being taught to them according to their community's beliefs. Because

these young girls have grown up in such a sheltered place they do not know any differently. All they know is that once they are married they have to abide by their husband's rules. It is like being in prison. If they want to leave the house, spend money, drink a cup of coffee, or even eat some sugar they have to ask for their husband's permission. These girls are not allowed to wear makeup or cut their hair (it is to be combed high above their forehead and put into braids). They wear long-sleeved, turtle-necked, loose fitting blouses with faded floral patterned full-length skirts, and wear ankle-high, laced, black leather boots. These girls are to have sex with their new husbands whether they want to or not, which brings in the issue of sexual abuse (and statutory rape) because of the fact that they are still considered, in the eyes of myself and a whole lot of others', children. Yet if they do not follow their pre-implanted ways of belief imposed by their community and husband, they are punished verbally and physically.

Even though there are laws in the U.S. banning polygamy, not much is being done to help to save these young girls from having to live such despicable and miserable lives. One man so far has actually been convicted of this crime, but that is not enough. Our government is focusing more on the issues of banning same sex marriages rather than focusing on the issues of sexual abuse and molestation of those children living in polygamy colonies. In my opinion, I would much rather start seeing more and more same sex marriages in which both parties are at least consenting adults and not hurting any one than to see more and more of these young women in these ridiculous colonies being violated and damaged in every possible way imaginable.

For more information on the polygamy colony in Colorado City, Arizona and for personal stories from some people, the website is:
<http://www.rickcross.com/reference/polygamy/polygamy103.html>

Cynthia is a student of pre-nursing at CCC.

DAMN THE DAM!

NORMA RODRIGUEZ

Cheetos..... Cheetos..... Cheetos..... After the near death experience that happened July of 2001, I don't think of them as just a bag of chips anymore. Now the taste of this crunchy, cheesy, odd shaped snack takes me back to sitting on the island of hell fulfilling my hunger by eating this tiny snack sized bag of cheetos. I felt I had to savour every last one of them just in case it was the last thing I ate before dying. While eating them, I couldn't help but notice how the environment around me was getting worse by the minute.

The hot summer day started out with two of my brothers. Sonny and Rodrick, my dad Francisco, and I taking a trip to Ute Lake in Logan. We relaxed by the cool, refreshing water and swam a while as we waited for the exhausting heat to give us slack so we could fish by the dam. That, for us, is the best place to catch catfish without having to sit for hours just to catch two fish. Once the time came, we all headed over to the dam, picking a spot about one hundred yards from it to start fishing. We didn't know it then, but everything slowly started to go wrong.

We chose a spot by this little secluded area with just enough room to fit four people side by side with each person having his own space. Beside each person, on the end of the sandbar were tons of tall weeds. Since Sonny and I were next to each other, both our lines were being taken down stream and getting tangled with my dad's and Rodrick's. So we, being the smart people that we are, decided to cross the river, which was only about ten feet across at the time. Before crossing, I packed two small snack sized bags of cheetos in my jacket. Sonny grabbed our fishing poles and put some hooks and bait in his jacket. Little did we know, our "great idea" was actually something that could have cost us our lives.

After crossing, we began to fish at our new spot. After about ten minutes, I caught the biggest, most enormous catfish I have ever caught in my life! I love to fish, but the part where I have to unhook them gives me the creeps. So to add to that fear of mine, I realized the hook was all the way down in the stomach of the fish and I could-

n't get it out. I figured I would just cut the line and replace the hook. But realizing that Sonny had already used the only two extra hooks that we had, I was going to have to get mine out of the fish. I was horrified and was slightly jumping at every move this ugly, slimy, suffering fish was making. I tugged on the line as hard as I could to try and get the hook out, but no luck. I was going to have to give my fish up since I didn't want to have to cross the river again to get a hook. Sonny told me I was going to have to cut the fish in half, and being my older brother, he thought it would be funny to make me do it knowing I was squeamish. He handed me the only thing he had, a rusty old pair of needlenose pliers. I felt so bad for the fish that it took all I had in me to try and cut him in half with what wasn't even scissors. It was so gruelling and disgusting that it was almost painful for me. Could you imagine the fish?! When I finally got my hook back, the thought of it happening again almost shied me away from trying to catch another fish. But I continued and the rest of the day I was on a roll. The entire time we were fishing, which was about an hour and a half, the only thing we noticed about our surroundings was that the sun was setting and it was getting darker. And in all reality, we should have noticed more of the surroundings.

Trying to find familiar objects in order to backtrack was so difficult because we couldn't find anything that we remembered being there. That's when it finally hit us, we realized the river was now twice the size it was before and was flowing so much faster! Keep in mind that we were the only people out there. So since it was really dark, we whistled our way to where Rodrick and my dad were. Once we heard their whistles and saw their flashlight turning on and off, we knew that that was where we had crossed. Sonny made the first attempt to see how strong the current was by sticking just one foot in the river. Once his foot got far enough in, the river immediately started to knock him over. But he grabbed hold of a tree branch and pulled himself back on the land. He weighed about 100 pounds more than me, and we knew that I wouldn't stand

a chance. We tried finding other areas to cross, but it seemed like everywhere we went we saw nothing but water. What had happened was the dam opened and all the water coming out broke into two rivers, which then connected again downstream. We were stuck on this land that was getting smaller and smaller. Rodrick and my dad left to find someone with rope or something that they could use to pull us across. But realizing that that plan wouldn't work, they left to find a different solution. Sonny and I were left sitting back to back and all that we could do was wait as the water was flowing faster, and rising quicker. It was almost a relief sitting there waiting. I reached into the side of my pockets and pulled out the bags of cheetos and handed one to Sonny and we sat there eating as our last resort.

Finally we saw this bright light go on so high in the air that it looked like it was from a helicopter but it was a fire truck at the top of the dam. It was as though we were on the T.V. show of great rescues caught on tape. There were two ambulances, six cop cars, and two fire trucks. They all got together and created a human chain, pulling us to safety. As I was going across, I could feel the power of the water as it was pulling my entire body. But finally we got to head home at about 2:00 a.m. and with our wonderful luck, we ran out of gas just two miles out of Clovis! We also left both of our fishing poles and all the fish that we had caught on that island, which probably turned into one great big river and swept them away. Damn that dam!



DAVID Z.

They tasted like stale pistachios. I didn't care, though. I hadn't eaten all day, it was getting late in the evening, and I wasn't eating this for the taste. There we sat, in the living room of the dilapidated double wide trailer decorated in modern bohemian styles, three miles outside of town and away from the rest of civilization. A single 60 watt bulb illuminated the room while the flickering television set struggled to retain decent reception.

I sat and watched TV, feeling normal, as though it were any other day. The foul flavor still lingered, stuck between my teeth and hiding beneath my tongue. I sat thusly for about an hour, noticing no drastic changes in myself. My stomach began to feel rumbly and I noticed a slight change in my perspective. Nothing looked different, but my perception was definitely altered. I became more aware of things I had not noticed previously. The chains swung beneath the ceiling fan and the light bulb flickered slightly with every rotation. My friends' faces seemed more vivid, and as I stared at them they began to distort slightly. The television continued to flicker, but I was no longer interested in what was on.

I took in everything around me and noticed all that I could in the living room, and eventually became uncomfortable. I decided to myself that I had to find a new environment, so I got up and moved into the back bedroom and laid down on the bed. I stared at the ceiling, noticing my stomach was still feeling rumbly, but not capable of mulling it over. As I stared upward, my gaze was drawn toward the light fixture in the center of the paneled ceiling, which was full of dead flies and bits of insects and dust. They began to move slowly, I couldn't see the actual insects but only their shadows, I could see them crawling in and over and around each other; every particle visible was alive and moving, skewing in and around the back of the glass, endlessly cycling around and over one another.

I continued staring until my mind began to wander once more, still aware of the activity

Perspectives

Articles or essays of controversy are one of Palabras's favorite pastimes. If you'd like to write a refutation or an alternate perspective to any article herein, please do.



above me, but now distracted by the steady awkward hum of an improperly wired stereo speaker. The noise was unnoticeable at first but now filled the room, my ears, and all of my senses until it was deafening. I stood up quickly, unplugged it, and immediately felt light-headed. I laid back down on the bed and enjoyed the silence for a moment.

Eventually I felt comfortable enough to make my way back into the living room and continue socializing with my peers. Unfortunately the path to my destination was littered with obstacles, and a wrong turn in the hallway left me in the bath-



David Z.

room. Brightly colored electric toothbrushes and a large mirror behind the sink kept me trapped. I caught my own reflection in the mirror and my eyes locked on their reflection. I stared at myself for a while, amazed by my own sim-

plistic complexity. I became aware of every eyelash, every freckle, every scar and every misplaced strand of hair. Each blink seemed to take eons to accomplish. The rest of the universe eventually disappeared and I could see the blood flowing beneath my skin, every heartbeat and every pulsating vein sensed as if I'd never known I was alive.

I finally averted my gaze and the rest of the world flooded back into place. I made the final trek down the hall, trying not to get distracted by pretty colors or shiny things again. I lifted my head and saw my friends again, strewn across the couches and chairs, the TV still flickering. Somebody acknowledged me; I nodded and sat down. Conversations ensued, topics ranging from the significance of twigs to the reasons why heat felt good. We sat, some of us getting lost in curtains or wandering outside in the fields only to return with a confused expression, until the break of dawn. Finally reality had settled itself back in and an overall normality overcame us. Light-headed and stomach aching, we fell asleep, content with our existence.

"If you can't learn to do something well, learn to enjoy doing it poorly."

BASIC TRAINING VS. SCHOOL

JERRY CONNER

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! Flashing lights on and off! Yelling sergeants every morning! Off and on! Off and on! *Off your dead ass and on your dieing feet!* Dear God in Heaven, aren't they human? Don't they ever sleep? *Alright troops up and at em! Formation in 15 minutes!*

Six sinks, six urinals, six toilets and six showers are all there are for eighty young men to get ready for the start of a brand new day. Luckily it didn't take long for the majority of us who were young enough to figure that we could get away with shaving the night before going to bed, or nobody would have made formation.

We quickly dress in fatigues, make our bunks, and make sure they are tight enough to bounce quarters. We've got it down to the point that we finish the quarter test just as the whistle blows for morning formation, everybody outside! By this time we know within an inch just where each belongs as part of India Company, Basic Training Battalion, Ft. Ord California.

Each platoon reports "All present or accounted for" to the 1st Sgt. And then it's *Right Face! Forward March! Double Time March!* and we're off to the Physical Training (PT) area about 1/2 mile distant. Then into mass formation and it's *Double extend to the left March! Ready, front! Left face! Double extend to the left March! Ready front! Right face! From front to rear Count off! Odd numbers two steps to the right March! Remove fatigue jackets and caps and place them on the ground to the right of your right foot Move!* Now we're ready for the Army daily dozen, such as the four count and the eight count pushups, and assorted other exercises to help wake us up.

After PT, back we go to the company area at double time of course. In fact it will be double time every where we go with few exceptions, like right after a meal to help keep the food down and

a short relief from double-time.

Following breakfast, it's shine the barracks which were built as temporary quarters during World War II and here it is 1957. But no excuses allowed and we all pitch in together, as if one area is not good enough we ALL pay the price. You don't want to see the effects of an unsatisfactory barracks. The best way to describe an unsatisfactory inspection is a tornado has struck the inside of the building and knowing that we are to be the ones to clean it up.

Formation again and this time we take our M1 Rifles and our web gear (ammo belt with places to hang such items as canteens, first aid kits, and bayonets). When we first started, our nine pound rifles started to feel like 90 pounds in a very short time. Now we can't figure out why it was ever a problem. So it's *Right face! Right Shoulder Arms! Forward March! Port Arms! Double Time March!* for about a mile.

ALL of our Sgts. in the company and our instructors were veterans from the Korean War so we hung on to every word they had to say and took their training very seriously. They would start each class with "This class could save your life" and they had our attention to the last word.

Our first class this morning was the Bayonet, so they formed us into a U type formation so everybody could see the demonstration. The instructor had three assistants and all of a sudden each of the three was charging at each of the three legs at high port and slammed their bayonets into the ground about 1/2 inch from the foot of three different victims. If anyone was not giving their full attention before, they were certainly giving it now and then these vets proceeded to teach us the bayonet and its proper use.

At the end of the class back into formation and it's *Right Face! Right Shoulder Arms! Forward March! Port Arms! Double Time March!*

Next we get to try hand grenades. The first ones are just practice and they are the old "pineapple" type from WWII and Korea. How in the world those guys were able to throw them for any distance or accuracy I have no idea as they were not comfortable and were heavy and I don't

know about the others but I was a little afraid of them as I worried about getting them far enough away. One thing it proved the movies a lie, where the hero was shown pulling the pin with his teeth as it is certain that he would end up losing his teeth before ever getting the pin out. Then we got to try the new grenades and WOW what a difference. These were smooth and about the size of a baseball, and it could be thrown with about the same distance and accuracy.

Back in formation and back to the company area for our noon meal and a look at our barracks. We tended to hold our breaths until actually inside and How about that! All in one piece! Nothing trashed! I can't recall when we had ever felt better about ourselves.

So there we were for the first time in memory, a full belly from a good meal and time on our hands because our barracks had not been trashed by the platoon sergeants. So I started daydreaming what I had left behind in Idaho.

Jerry, time for breakfast. Ummm oh, ok grandma, thanks, I'll be out in a minute. Hmm... I was up real late reading again last night, maybe I won't bother with school today. Well, we'll see. "Hey grandma, that really picked me up. I was feeling a little puny but I guess I'm ok now so I'll see you after school."

So I jump in my 50 Chevy and off for another boring day at school. Except for music and history, school is really a drag. If I could get a decent job without it I'd quit in a New York minute. Not to mention where am I ever going to use this stuff anyway? I mean it might help if a few of the teachers at least felt that what they had to teach was at least of some importance. After all, if it's not important to them why should it be important to us? All this nonsense just to get a piece of paper so that I can get a job. And look at the subjects we have to take. Just where am I going to use half this stuff that is required?

Two more classes to go, what a long day. Hey, there's Steve! "Hey, Steve, I just got a terrific idea. I can get us in to the Sapphire Lounge because they know me and you look as old as me, so why don't we skip choir today and go for a beer?" Boy that didn't take much talking. Just one beer and then pick up some Sin-Sin for our breath and back to school. That sure helped to perk up

the day.

That evening we drag main to see if we can pick up some girls but no luck and we give up and go home.

I wake up from my daydream and chuckle a little. Talk about a 180 degree lifestyle change. I mean, look at me now, no more DA haircut, and I feel like I can double time forever. In fact, physically, I've never felt so good in my life. I'm learning things that make sense to me and next weekend we get our first weekend pass. Hey, the Army ain't half bad!

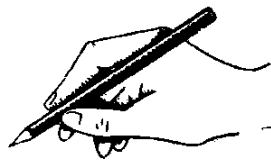
Jerry Conner is a full time student at CCC. He first came here to learn to turn on a computer and was so impressed that he checked into taking more classes and is now looking at the possibility of two degrees. He really had no idea how this ever took place except that he is having a lot of fun.

JOURNAL ENTRY #9: ALBERTO A RIOS'S "THE SECRET LION"

WILLIAM LINCOLN

In Alberto Alvaro Rios's story, "The Secret Lion," there are three primary symbols: the arroyo, the grinding ball, and the golf course. These symbols all involve exploration, finding something new, and losing something. In a way, they reflect life several different ways. For instance, life is a constant exploration, and one is always finding the perfect object, moment, or experience, only to lose it. Humans are always wondering what is over the next hill, but nearly always return to the arroyo.

The arroyo is like the thread that runs through the whole story, just as it is the common thread that ties the speaker and Sergio together to the stream. It is there in the beginning and at the end.



The arroyo also expresses change when the two boys decide not to go swimming there anymore. Other changes that took place were the transition from elementary to junior high school and these two changes represent points of one's life where there is no turning back the hands of time.

The speaker reflects the other changes that occurred (in the second paragraph). The grinding ball is a part of life as well, and simply represents an object, a moment of time, a relationship, or an experience. Like the two boys, we get excited about finding that perfect something. Then, like the boys, there comes a time to determine what to do with the object or experience. Yet, like the two boys, we are afraid that someone will take it away from us, so we hide it. Then, as life goes on, we forget where we hid it, only to talk about what we lost, until just as the speaker says, "We forget."

Children are always curious about what's over there, what's over the next hill. Adults are usually looking over the fence to see if the grass is really greener there, and these expressions identify what the boys were looking for in their exploration of the hills; but, after finding it and beginning to enjoy their paradise, they are interrupted and told to move on because this was not paradise. As the speaker says, "We learned." Each new exploration and discovery lead to a loss for them, as in innocence lost.

After the golf course incident, the two boys return to the arroyo, but it is now entirely different, just as they discovered in junior high school. The 70's group Seals and Croft had a song entitled, "We May Never Pass This Way Again," which is very much like this story. Once one passes a point in time, with all its memories, it will never be the same upon returning to it. A high school friend at a class reunion expressed this to me when he said, "It's not the same, the faces are the same, but we are no longer wrapped up in each other's lives like before."

INEVITABLE SPACE WITHIN

KEVIN NUMERICK

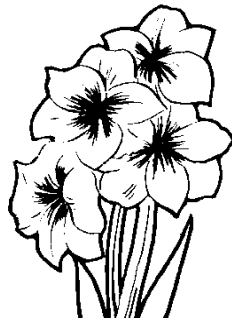
MOONWATCH

CHRISTY MENDOZA

Leaning on the cold glass
window to the lake
water hardly breathing,
the stillness anticipates
the coming of the moon.
My mind weaves
thoughts of you.
Around the shore
lights twinkle
reminding me
I am not alone.
Others have held out
waiting for the moon
to slip across the night sky
and grant a lake dreamer
one special wish.

Perhaps tonight,
it will choose me.

*Christy is an Instructor of Theatre at CCC and is the
Director of the Cultural Arts Series.*



Sparkling shine in your eyes,
Taken so far from a lie,
Truth be told,
Indeed, it had,
Crumbling heart was so sad,
Show the truth,
Let it ring,
Heal yourself and sing.

A simple smile goes so far,
Let it remove those old scars,
Take your love and undying grace,
Learn to hold it and embrace,
Keep the omni-faith,
Hold it deep and keep it safe.

See the tears you once seized,
Watching them go with the breeze,
Lighten your heart,
To love and never part,
Live it day by day,
Always something good to say,
Take your crown,
Hold it upside down,
Watch the level ground,
It creates.

Now take a step,
Go forward bound,
Listen to that sweet, calming sound,
Do not see,
For it can lie,
You never know who's a spy,
Feel the truth in your love,
When in doubt,
Look above,
It's always there,
It's everywhere.
Love.

Kevin Numerick is always striving to better himself and his writing. He works hard to maintain a certain level of mystery in his writing, yet at the same time he attempts to make it subtle enough for everyone to understand. (A Process that never seems to end...)