A Gimlet-Eyed Grunt, Soldiering Balefully Through a War's Horrors

WILLIAM GRIMES
BOOKS OF THE TIMES

A century after the guns of August first boomed, World War I has lost none of its power to boggle the mind. The numbers are simply too big: 65 million men under arms, 37 million casualties, 12,000 miles of trenches on the Western Front, 1.45 billion shells fired. Rather than a human event, it often seems like an immeasurable abstraction, like negative infinity.

Louis Barthas, an enlisted man from southwestern France, managed to reduce the conflict to human scale with a pen and 19 notebooks that he filled with observations and comments from his more than four years of service in the army, most of it spent in combat on the Western Front. With Edward M. Strauss's translation of "Poilu," English-language readers now have access to a classic account of the war, a day-to-day chronicle of life in the trenches and a richly detailed answer to the seemingly unanswerable question: What was it like?

"Poilu" was first published in France in 1978 after attracting the attention of a history teacher at a lycée where one of Barthas's grandsons was employed. The title, whose literal meaning is "hairy one," is the French equivalent of "grunt" or "dogface."

French historians and critics immediately put the book in the top rank of wartime memoirs. They praised it for its richly detailed, unvarnished account of life in the trenches as experienced by an ordinary soldier — a barrel maker from the wine region of Minervois whose service in the trenches took him from Artois to the Argonne, a trail that included horrific stops at Verdun and the Somme.

Barthas was in his 30s when war broke out. As a trade-union activist, socialist and pacifist, he made a reluctant conscript. He entered the war already disillusioned, a state of mind reflected in the bracingly acidic tone of the journals, which challenge the official version of the war on every page.

"If we suffered so stoically, without raising useless complaints, don't let anyone tell you that it was because of patriotism, or to defend the rights of peoples to live their own lives, or to end all wars, or other nonsense," he writes in a characteristic entry. "It was simply by force, because, as victims of an implacable fate we had to undergo our destiny."

That destiny was a nightmare slog through endless miles of mud, with shoulders hunched against an unending rain of steel from German guns. Barthas, who employs an unadorned, straightforward style sprinkled with slang — he refers to the Élysée Palace as the cagna, or "hangout," of President Raymond Poincaré — dryly notes that "combat meant mostly being a target for shells."

The small details make these notebooks come alive. A soldier crouching in a freezing marsh for hours later discovers a fish in his pocket. To ward off the stench of rotting corpses, French soldiers wear a strip of cloth with a small sack of camphor dangling under their noses. While fighting in Flanders in the early months of the war, Barthas throws himself on an embankment and catches a glimpse of a fellow soldier taking a bullet in the back: "I'll never forget the sight of that hole, like it was made with a drill — a little whiff of smoke from burnt cloth, the man's violent somersault, a groan, and then the stillness of death."

As an observer, Barthas puts one foot in front of the other. Anyone looking for a clear picture of troop movements, strategy or tactics will be disappointed. Most of his pages deal with day-to-day problems and vexations: marching from one bombed-out village to the next, trying to find a safe place to bed down for the night, repairing trenches, engaging in field exercises, dodging shells. In his long months on the front lines, the names of the villages

green Louis

Describing exploding shells, lice and power struggles in an acidic matter-of-fact voice.

change, the officers come and go, but the experiences remain the same.

Barthas describes lice and exploding 105-millimeter shells in the same matter-of-fact voice, although the shells do cause him to raise an eyebrow from time to time. During a heavy bombardment, a trench mate disappears under a mountain of earth. Before Barthas can dig him out, a second shell falls, displacing the dirt pile and restoring the status quo, like a film sequence run in reverse. The bewildered soldier suffers nothing worse than a crack in his clay pipe.

Barthas has a keen interest in the power struggles between top officers and the lower echelons, which are more complicated than one might think. It was not unusual to see spirited resistance to orders from on high. Enlisted men connived to thwart impossible commands, and midlevel commanders occasionally refused to send their men into impossible situations. Barthas himself loses a stripe by refusing to obey a captain's orders to have two men dig a trench within machine-gun range of the Germans.

Pushed to the limit, French soldiers sometimes turned on their superiors. At Verdun, Barthas was making his way to the rear after being relieved when a young lieutenant, waving a gun in his face, ordered him to halt. "Outraged by this highly impolite way of stopping people," Barthas writes, "I hoisted my Lebel rifle and replied to him, 'You've got your revolver, I've got my rifle, so what do you want to do now?'" The lieutenant backs off.

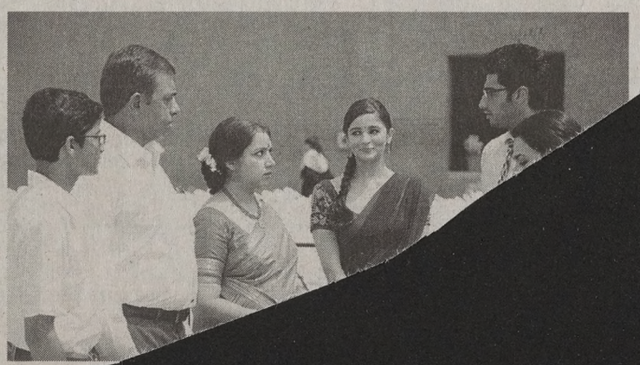
Through tacit collaboration, the men on the front lines subvert the military code. French and Germans work out unspoken truces so that both sides can carry out work details, rescue the wounded or, at forward observation posts, fraternize.

When a corporal in Barthas's company is badly wounded while rummaging through the pockets of the newly dead, a common nighttime activity on the front lines, the company captain pretends that he suffered his wound in the line of duty when a general makes inquiries. Bamboozled, the general says, "He will be commended, and will get the Croix de Guerre and the Médaille Militaire." This tickles Barthas, who writes, "And that's how Corporal Cathala became a hero."

Any kick against authority pleased Barthas, up to and including surrender, an increasingly common dodge in the final stages of the war. "'What cowards!' say the patriots in the rear," he writes. "But if all the soldiers, on both sides, had done the same thing, wouldn't that have been sublime? The generals would have had to fight each other. Poincaré could have gone a couple of rounds in the boxing ring with the Kaiser. That would have been hilarious."

Poilu
The World War I Notebooks of Corporal Louis Barthas, Barrelmaker, 1914-1918

Translated by Edward M. Strauss
Illustrated. 426 pages. Yale University Press/New Haven & London. $35.



Bridge

Phillip Alder

One of the biggest international junior events is the White House tournament held annually in the Netherlands.

This year's ran from March 30 through April 4. Twenty-six teams from 21 countries competed.

The USA-1 under-26 team for the World Youth Teams Championships in August was originally scheduled to play. But the proximity of the Dutch tournament to the Spring Nationals in Dallas and the time spent away from studies was considered excessive. This was a pity because the event in the Netherlands would have been great experience for the players. Europeans have far more exposure to various bidding systems and, in particular, oddball multicolored two-bids.

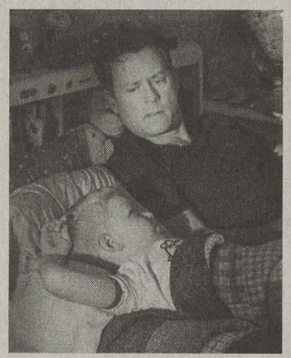
The Dutch tournament started with a one-session team game in which anyone could compete, including nonplaying captains, coaches, officials and bridge journalists. Then the serious business began with a thr[illegible] day, 17-round Swiss Team[illegible] sisting of 10-board ma[illegible]

The top four te[illegible] for 42-board [illegible] 42-board [illegible] four[illegible]

Arts, Briefly

Compiled by Adam W. Kepler

Another Faithful Hit for Hollywood



ALLEN FRASER/TRISTAR PICTURES

"Heaven Is for Real" became Hollywood's fourth overtly faith-based hit of the year over the Easter weekend, taking in an estimated $21.5 million — double the dismal ticket sales that **Johnny Depp** mustered for his latest big-budget effort. But God still could not beat a superhero: The No. 1 movie at North American theaters was again "Captain America: The Winter Soldier" (Disney), which sold about $26.6 million in tickets, for a three-week domestic total of $201.5 million, according to Rentrak, which compiles box-office data. The animated "Rio 2" (20th Century Fox) was second, taking in about $22.5 million, for a two-week total of $75.4 million. Then came "Heaven Is for Real" (Sony Pictures Entertainment), the best-performing new entry, with a total since opening on Wednesday of $28.5 million. It cost $12 million to make and was backed with a grass-roots marketing campaign that focused on churches as well as a broader audience. Religious movies have been hot at the box office this year partly because the current boomlet follows a drought. Studios also aim to lock in sales by church groups, resulting in an opening-weekend pop that can drive positive word of mouth, a crucial element of successful movie releases. "Heaven Is for Real" (starring **Greg Kinnear**, above right, with **nor Corum**) was also based on a best-selling book. The other three far this year have been "Noah," "Son of God" and "God's Not more religious movies are on the way, including **Ridley** : Gods and Kings," which is scheduled for release in weekend, Mr. Depp's "Transcendence" (Warner drama, had $11.2 million in ticket sales — a that extended a string of misfires for him. **Wally Pfister**, a first-time filmmak- rk on Warner's "Dark Knight" and received overwhelmingly -budget comedy horror h took in about $9.1

BROOKS BARNES



HIROYUKI ITO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MATA Festival *From left, Alice Teyssier, Miako Klein and Eliot Gattegno performing in the premiere of Oscar Bianchi's "Matra."*

Meshing Talents for a Dense and Strenuous Sound

CORINNA da FONSECA-WOLLHEIM

MUSIC REVIEW

On Saturday evening the German vocal ensemble Neue Vocalsolisten joined the International Contemporary Ensemble of New York at the Kitchen in the American premiere of Oscar Bianchi's cantata "Matra" as part of the MATA Festival of new music. Before we continue, a brief glossary:

A tubax is a contrabass saxophone. It looks like a metal anaconda folded snugly four times. It can play lower than a double bass. When it does, it sounds like a Harley-Davidson.

A Paetzold recorder is a square bass recorder. It looks like a Cubist sculpture of a piano key. The contrabass version used here is as a person. Its sound is best described as spooky.

Matra, in Sanskrit, denotes a small rhythmic unit in music, or a syllable in speech. According to Mr. Bianchi, it also means "matter."

Mr. Bianchi is fond of extremes. Some of them — the quarter tones produced by the singers, the bottom notes played by Miako Klein on the Paetzold recorder —melt into the gray zone where human hearing gives way to a more visceral perception of air in motion. The division between rhythm and harmony also begins to blur as the sound waves of sustained close harmonies combine into an audible pulse. In "Matra" sound is above all matter, the bubbling, sputtering, trembling coming-into-being of sound as viscous and dense.

"Matra" uses texts from Lucretius's "De Rerum Natura," the Gospel of Mary and the "Vigyan Bhairav Tantra," but they are condensed into fewer than a dozen sparse lines that function like mantras. There were also passages of syllabic nonsense in which the singers became instrumentalists creating complex rhythmic structures. These were mirrored by moments in which instruments were used only to amplify the breath of their players.

Under the assured direction of David Fulmer, the musicians gave a passionate performance of what was often a visibly strenuous work. The cavernous trio made up of Ms. Klein on the contrabass recorder, Alice Teyssier on bass flute and Eliot Gattegno on tubax created a haunting and atmospheric opening. The six singers appeared perfectly at ease with the unusual demands made on their voices; even passages of rhythmic panting were delivered with expressive elegance. When the instruments fell away at the end, leaving the soprano Susanne Leitz-Lorey to sing the final words "let my doubts be cleared!" unaccompanied, her luminous voice emerged from the preceding rumble as if cleansed.

The MATA Festival concludes on Monday with a workshop at BMI, 7 World Trade Center, Lower Manhattan; an afternoon performance on the High Line; and a concert at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, Chelsea; matafestival.org.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: **Clay Clock or the other way around or something**
Date: July 6, 2014 5:00:15 PM PDT
To: david laskin <laskin.david@gmail.com>
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Yo, David-- The "language ever green" poet we were fumbling past last night is John Clare, and here, my man, is more than you want to now about his Clay Clock poem. It was a "Susan Stewart's Poetry Month Pick", whatever that is, in April. My Leavenworth poet buddy, Derek Sheffield (former Linda Bierds student, natch), who originally passed it along to me says Clare has 858 OED entries! Let me know sometime if the poem has anything to do with the novel you're reviling, er, reviewing.

Still digesting from last night,
Ivan

"Clock A Clay"
by John Clare (1793-1864)

1
In the cowslips peeps I lye
Hidden from the buzzing fly
While green grass beneath me lies
Pearled wi' dew like fishes eyes
Here I lye a Clock a clay
Waiting for the time o'day

2
While grassy forests quake surprise
And the wild wind sobs and sighs
My gold home rocks as like to fall
On its pillars green and tall
When the pattering rain drives bye
Clock a Clay keeps warm and dry

3
Day by day and night by night
All the week I hide from sight
In the cowslips peeps I lye
In rain and dew still warm and dry
Day and night and night and day
Red black spotted clock a clay

4
My home it shakes in wind and showers
Pale green pillar top't wi' flowers
Bending at the wild wind's breath
Till I touch the grass beneath
Here still I live lone clock a clay
Watching for the time of day

Susan Stewart Comments:
John Clare (1793-1864), born in the rural village of Helpston, has been called the "greatest English poet ever to come from the

labouring classes." A field worker from childhood, Clare nevertheless received a rudimentary education and became a great reader and writer of poetry and a brilliant nature writer. In this little poem, "Clock a Clay," he speaks in the voice of the insect you may know as a "ladybug" or "ladybird." The name "Clock a Clay" comes from the rural Northhamptonshire belief that you can tell time by counting the number of taps on the ground it takes to make a lady bug fly away.

The poem was written at some point between 1842 and 1864 when Clare lived in the Northampton [Insane] Asylum, suffering from delusions, but continuing to write. John Clare is cited in 858 entries in the Oxford English Dictionary—not because he invented neologisms, but because he provided English poetry with a vast trove of everyday rural words, like "clock a clay," that no writer had before committed to paper.

This poem is printed in John Clare, The Later Poems, edited by Eric Robinson and David Powell, Oxford University Press, 1984, vol. I, p. 611.

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GOLDEN NUMBERS

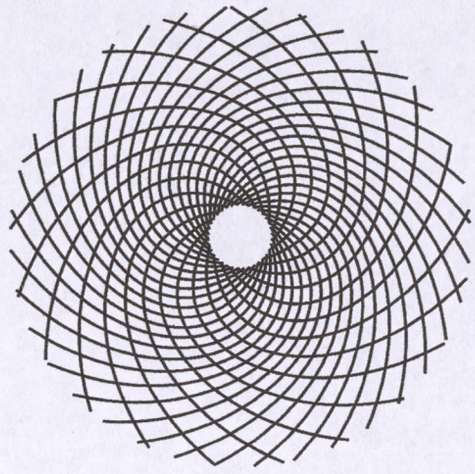
On Nature and Form

If we leaf through a book of verse, we notice immediately that poetry, unlike prose, favors special conformations; it likes to arrange itself in shapes on the page. These shapes in space originally represented shapes in time—shapes to be heard if we were listening to a recitation rather than looking at a book.

In its love for shapeliness and proportion, poetry is like mathematics. Many readers, however, believe that poetry and mathematics are opposed in spirit. Such readers may be repelled by the pages that follow, with their drawings that seem to be straight out of Euclid. But no mathematical background is required—there are no problems to solve. The drawings are only to marvel at. And to be seen as analogies: They are really telling us something about the nature of poetry; and about nature itself.

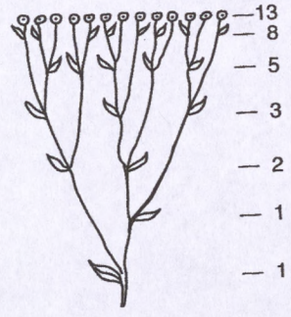
To decide in advance that a poem will have seventeen syllables or fourteen lines or that it will be constructed in stanzaic units of this or that size or shape may seem arbitrary and artificial. When a poem begins to germinate in the poet's mind, could it not grow simply and naturally, the way a flower grows, instead of being forced to follow a pattern? This seems a good question—but it shows little knowledge of how flowers do grow. Nature has been working on its flowers for some millions of years; a close look at them, as at anything in the natural world, will show why Pythagoras said that all things are number, why Plato said that God always geometrizes.

If we take a close look at the head of a sunflower, we see two sets of spirals whirling in opposite directions. The florets that make them up are not of any random number. Typically, there are twenty-one going clockwise and thirty-four going counterclockwise—numbers that a mathematician would come on with a thrill of recognition. They belong to the series of "golden numbers" called the Fibonacci sequence (after a thirteenth-century



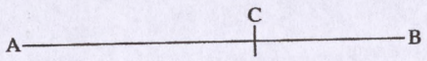
Spiral Pattern in the Sunflower

Italian mathematician), in which each number is the sum of the two preceding ones: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, and so on. Although the sequence may look like an artificial curiosity, it turns up again and again in nature—in the way rabbits breed, in the generation of bees, in the number and pattern of leaves or petals on certain plants, in the spirals of the sunflower. The sequence has been used by modern artists in placing units in their paintings and by modern musicians in planning the durations within their rhythms.



Sneezewort

A further strangeness about the series is that the ratio between consecutive numbers, after the first few, remains about the same, coming closer and closer to a stabilization in which the smaller number is to the larger as .618 is to 1. This .618 ratio—familiar to the ancient Greeks and to most designers, artists, and architects ever since—is that of the Golden Section, a way of proportioning dimensions so that the parts (many believe) have the most aesthetically pleasing relationship to each other and to the whole.

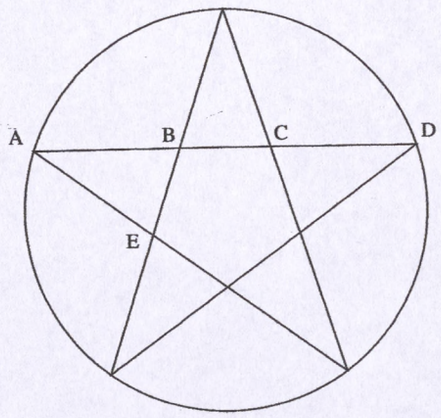


In this division, the lesser part is to the greater as the greater is to the whole: *CB* : *AC* :: *AC* : *AB*. This sectioning or "Section" is what Pound had in mind when in his Canto XC he says of architects he admired: "Builders kept the proportion."

It is also a ratio we have perceived, without being aware of it, in many things in nature. The human body, besides having bilateral symmetry, seems to have proportioned itself in accordance with the Golden Section. The length from the top of the head to the navel and the length from the navel to the toes have the ratio of about .618 to 1. These two divisions are subdivided. The length from navel to knee is to the length from knee to sole as 1 is to .618. In reverse order, navel to throat and throat to top of head are related as 1 is to .618. The architect Le Corbusier, who has planned buildings on the basis of the Golden Section, has even devised a scale for designers based on the proportions of the human body.

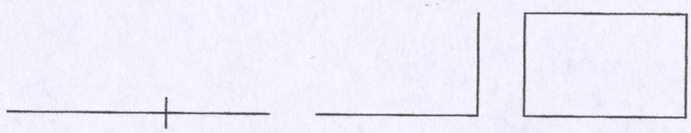
If bodily proportions might have given the Greeks a feeling for the Golden Section, geometry would have suggested it with more precision. The mysterious appeal of the ancient pentagram, or "endless knot," one of the most famous of all magic signs, owes much to its play of proportion. This star-shaped figure fairly glitters with its two hundred .618's. *B* cuts both *AC* and *AD* so as to give Golden Sections. *BE* is .618 of *AB*, and so on. The followers of Pythagoras used the pentagram as their secret sign. It stood not only for health and love but for the human body itself, which was thought to be organized in fives: five senses, four limbs and a head, five fingers (their three bones having the golden proportion).

Since the pentagram also stood for the letters in the name "Jesus," it was thought to be an object of fear to hellish spirits. When Mephistopheles finds the pentagram's *Drudenfuss*, or "wizard's foot," drawn on Faust's threshold,

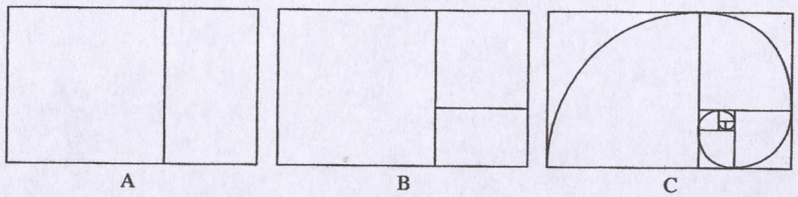


it takes some trickery to get by it. Its shape—as with good poems—is its power. In the pentagram—as in good poems—mathematics and magic come together. We are affected by precise relationships we are not conscious of.

If we take a line divided according to the Golden Section, bend the shorter part upward, and then complete the rectangle, we have the golden rectangle with its "divine proportion," which, with the Section itself, is supposed to have had an important influence on ancient art and architecture, determining, it may be, the structure of the pyramids and of the Parthenon, which fits neatly into it. Certainly it made itself felt in the Renaissance (Da Vinci made use of it) and ever since, right down to the architecture of Le Corbusier and the art of Seurat and Mondrian. In 1912 one group of artists even exhibited in Paris as the "Golden Section" painters. It was with them that Marcel Duchamp first showed his *Nude Descending a Staircase*. We can still find this proportion in modern buildings and in many common objects—envelopes, playing cards, magazines. Numerous psychological tests have shown that we prefer these dimensions in a rectangle, perhaps because the proportions correspond with our oval field of vision.



The golden rectangle has been called "the rectangle of the whirling squares." If we divide it by the Golden Section so that one part is a square, the smaller area will itself be a second golden rectangle within the first (A). If we divide the smaller rectangle in the same way, the same thing will happen—another square, another golden rectangle (B). We can continue in this way, making smaller and smaller squares as we whirl around clockwise. If we then connect, with an evenly curving line, corresponding points of all the squares (C), we will have one of the most beautiful curves in mathematics and one of the most beautiful lines in nature—the logarithmic spiral, whose allure moved one admirer to ask that it be engraved on his tombstone.



This graceful curve, which seems to have been artificially constructed at a drawing board, probably appears most spectacularly in the nautilus seashell, a favorite of collectors. As the creature in the seashell grows, it moves onward, in a spiral, into larger and larger chambers, all of them having the same proportions. Oliver Wendell Holmes found a moral here, which he expressed, by means of a stanza form that itself expands, in "The Chambered Nautilus":

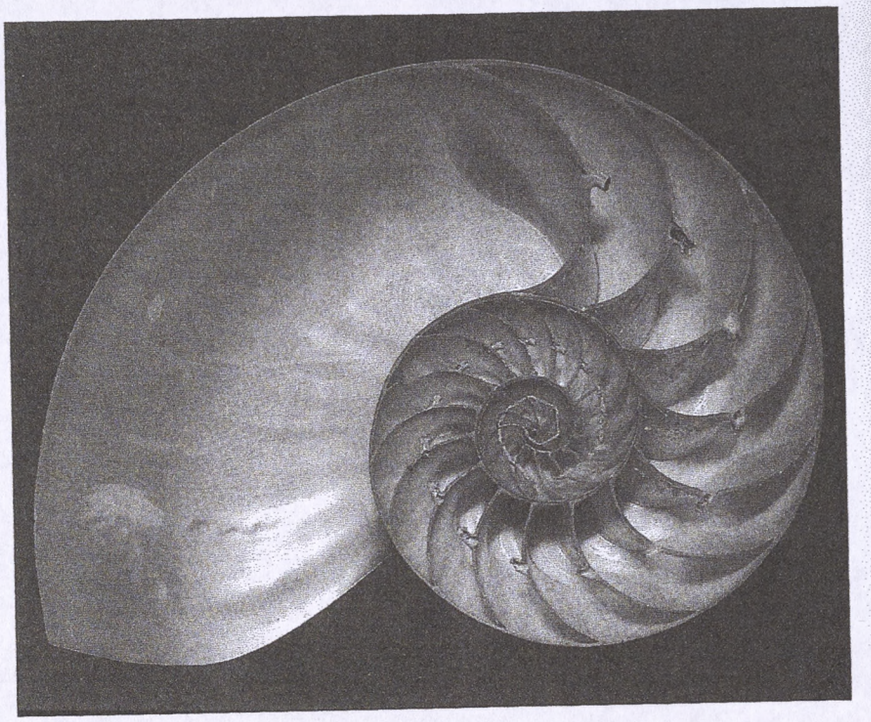
> Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
> As the swift seasons roll!
> Leave thy low-vaulted past!
> Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
> Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast
> Till thou at last art free,
> Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.

We find this same curve in the sunflower head and the daisy, in the pinecone and the pineapple, all of which have their opposing spirals in Fibonacci numbers. We find it where the time element of living growth has left its shape on matter—in the curling horns of mountain goats, in the tusks of elephants, in the claws of a cat, the beak of a parrot. It appears in transitory fashion in the coil of an elephant's trunk or a monkey's tail, in a lock of hair falling naturally.

Part of the pleasure we feel in contemplating this spiral may come from our awareness of its continuous proportion, which, in a world of change, gives us the reassurance of what remains similar to itself. Certain well-managed patterns in poetry may have an analogous effect.

If there is such elaborate patterning everywhere in nature, it would seem not unnatural for poets to wish to incorporate—far more modestly and on a far tinier scale—some such symmetries in their own work. They cannot of course hope to work with the geometrical precision of nature. Most trust their own sense of proportion, developed from study, contemplation, and exercise. However, Dante does give a mathematical framework to his *Divine Comedy.* Its three parts, written in units of three lines, have thirty-three cantos, with a thirty-fourth canto in the first part that brings all to the perfect one hundred.

Contrived as this patterning may seem to be, we can hardly call it artificial. Nature—in the seashell, in the daisy, in a lock of hair—far outdoes our artists in the use of mathematical symmetry. All that matters, in any art, is that the calculation and effort should not show, that we see the ease and elegance of the achievement but not the labor that went into it. It is important to realize that imposing a form is not in any way unnatural—Parthenon and nautilus owe their beauty to the same kind of mathematical harmony.



William Blake once wrote: "Without Minute Neatness of Execution the Sublime cannot Exist! Grandeur of ideas is founded on Precision of Ideas." Yeats saw no contradiction between calculated precision and human passion. He once praised Lady Gregory's house as a place in which "passion and precision have been one." He insisted to a friend that "the very essence of genius, of whatever kind, is precision." In "The Statues" he is concerned with the relationship between passion, beauty, and mathematical precision.

The Statues

Pythagoras planned it. Why did the people stare?
His numbers, though they moved or seemed to move
In marble or in bronze, lacked character.
But boys and girls, pale from the imagined love
Of solitary beds, knew what they were,
That passion could bring character enough,
And pressed at midnight in some public place
Live lips upon a plummet-measured face.

No! Greater than Pythagoras, for the men
That with a mallet or a chisel modelled these
Calculations that look but casual flesh, put down
All Asiatic vague immensities,

And not the banks of oars that swam upon
The many-headed foam at Salamis.
Europe put off that foam when Phidias
Gave women dreams and dreams their looking-glass.

One image crossed the many-headed, sat
Under the tropic shade, grew round and slow,
No Hamlet thin from eating flies, a fat
Dreamer of the Middle Ages. Empty eyeballs knew
That knowledge increases unreality, that
Mirror on mirror mirrored is all the show.
When gong and conch declare the hour to bless
Grimalkin crawls to Buddha's emptiness.

When Pearse summoned Cuchulain to his side,
What stalked through the Post Office? What intellect,
What calculation, number, measurement, replied?
We Irish, born into that ancient sect
But thrown upon this filthy modern tide
And by its formless spawning fury wrecked,
Climb to our proper dark, that we may trace
The lineaments of a plummet-measured face. [1939]

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865–1939)

In the first stanza, Pythagoras is given credit for the emphasis on proportion in Greek sculpture, which might seem cold to a cold observer. But boys and girls saw their dreams of love embodied in these perfect shapes.

In the second stanza, the spirit of the sculptors, even more than the courage of Greek sailors, is seen as defending the precision of Athenian ideals against the abstractions of Eastern thought. (In 480 B.C. at Salamis, the Greeks defeated the much larger Persian fleet. Phidias was the probable designer of the statuary on the Parthenon.)

In the third stanza, an Eastern Buddha figure, fat and dreamy, out of contact with the physical world and the passionate precision of mathematics, is seen taking over as the Greek spirit declines. ("Gong and conch" suggest an Oriental call to prayer; "Grimalkin" is an old cat or an old woman.)

In the fourth stanza, the Easter Rising of 1916 in Dublin is recalled, when, under the command of Patrick Pearse, Irish nationalist forces seized the Post Office. Cuchulain (Coo-hóo-lin) was a legendary Irish hero whose statue was set up in the Post Office when it was rebuilt after the shelling. Here, Cuchulain (and Pearse) represents "intellect . . . calculation, number, measurement," like that of ancient Athens at its best. These qualities, Yeats believed, were desirable in the formlessness of the modern world.

Yeats would have agreed with one of the conclusions of this section: There is nothing unnatural in our desire to find form and pattern in our experience. We can hardly keep from doing so. When we look at the starry skies, all we really see are swarms of bright specks. But we have never been content to see that way. We see hunters and great bears and rocking chairs

Little fly,
Thy summer's play
My thoughtless hand
Has brushed away.

Am not I
A fly like thee. . . .

He probably thought that the long lines of his "Holy Thursday" were appropriate for its processional content. His own drawing shows a long line of children across the page, above and below the verses:

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green. . . .

John Donne seems particularly fond of a stanza form that dramatizes a crescendo, an excitement mounting to a climax. Lines (as heard, but not necessarily as printed) are shorter toward the beginning of a stanza, longer toward the end, though in no regular progression. Rhymes also tend to amass, to intensify, toward the close. This is the pattern in which he thinks and feels.

The Anniversary

All kings and all their favorites,
All glory of honors, beauties, wits,
The sun itself, which makes times as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw:
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;
This, no tomorrow hath nor yesterday;
Running, it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corse;
If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas, as well as other princes, we
(Who prince enough in one another be)
Must leave at last in death these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths and with sweet salt tears;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
(All other thoughts being inmates) then shall prove
This, or a love increased there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their graves remove.

[11]/*corse: corpse*

[18]/*inmates: mere tenants*

And then we shall be thoroughly blest,
But we no more than all the rest;
Here upon earth we're kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be.
Who is so safe as we? where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two.
True and false fears let us refrain;
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write threescore: this is the second of our reign. [1633]

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631)

There is the same kind of gathering intensity, dramatized by the form, in "A Valediction: Of Weeping" (see Anthology, p. 378), which begins with the image of a woman's face, at parting, reflected in the falling tears of her lover. In these poems Donne's stanza form moves from less to more, with a sense of mounting excitement. The line arrangement Christina Rossetti chooses for her "An Easter Carol" is appropriate for the exuberance she feels. It begins:

Spring bursts today,
For Christ has risen and all the world's at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun.
The rain is over and gone, its work is done. . . .

We get just an opposite effect—from more to less—in the sense of deprivation with which a poem ascribed to Francis Bacon opens:

The world's a bubble, and the life of man
Less than a span;
In his conception wretched, from the womb
So to the tomb. . . .

In Robert Herrick's happier poem, "The Thanksgiving," the lineation again follows a psychological motive—that of curtailment, littleness, humility. It begins:

Lord, Thou hast given me a cell
Wherein to dwell;
And little house, whose humble roof
Is weather-proof;
Under the spars of which I lie
Both soft and dry;
Where Thou my chamber for to ward
Hast set a guard
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep
Me, while I sleep. . . .

The adjectives—"little," "humble"—go with the curtailed form, in which Herrick takes a four-beat line and then cuts it in half. Something like the sadness of deprivation is to be felt in the short last line of the stanza that Keats uses in "La Belle Dame sans Merci" (see Anthology, p. 403). In David Wagoner's poem "The Other Side of the Mountain," a short line has a different effect, that of heels digging in to resist the momentum of the long line:

> To walk downhill you must lean partially backwards,
> Heels digging in,
> While your body gets more help than it can use
> In following directions. . . .

Sometimes a poet will deliberately echo a familiar form to exploit its ironic possibilities. In 1650 Andrew Marvell wrote his stately "An Horation Ode Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland" in a stanza of two tetrameters followed by two trimeters, its dignity apparent in such stanzas as those on the ceremonial execution of King Charles:

> He nothing common did or mean
> Upon that memorable scene:
> But with his keener eye
> The axe's edge did try:
> Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
> To vindicate his helpless right,
> But bowed his comely head
> Down as upon a bed . . .

Readers who recall Marvell's well-known poem will feel the ghost of its form haunting Robert B. Shaw's "Shut In" (Anthology, p. 538).

The shape of verse forms may be expressive, as the spiral of the nautilus expresses the life force that shaped it, or as the snowflake expresses the molecular geometry within. At other times the shape seems arbitrary or accidental—though if a verse form continues to live, it must somehow fit the way we feel and think. If the logic of a form eludes us, we might think of it as we think of games. Why *three* strikes in baseball? Why *four* balls? Why the rigidly fixed forms of Olympic events, the 440s and 880s? Without rules, games are impossible. We know what rage a hard-core poker player feels when a slap-happy beginner, given dealer's choice, makes up a fancy variant of his or her own: free-form poker. Too many wild cards, and the game is meaningless.

The next section will consider some of the forms available to writers. Few poets have written in all of them; some have confined themselves to one or two; most have tried their hand at several. Certain poets, like Thomas Hardy, prefer to make up their own shapes. As Kipling said:

> There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,
> *And—every—single—one—of—them—is—right!*

A WORD WITH: HERB ALPERT

The Other Delights In a Trumpeter's Life

By JAMES C. McKINLEY Jr.

Few people can claim to be a Renaissance man in this complex age, but Herb Alpert, the jazz-pop trumpeter and co-founder of A&M Records, might be one of them.

At 77 Mr. Alpert is working on his 34th studio album, a collection called "Steppin' Out" (Almo Sounds) to come out this year. And on Tuesday he and his wife, the singer Lani Hall, are returning for the second year to the Cafe Carlyle for a two-week stand, offering some songs from the new album, a few jazz standards and, of course, hits like "A Taste of Honey" and "The Lonely Bull," which he recorded with his group the Tijuana Brass.

Aside from being one of the most successful pop instrumentalists and label executives of the last 50 years Mr. Alpert also produces paintings

Continued on Page 4

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One of Amar's sons is killed. The other, the bookworm Prince Auda (Tahar Rahim of "A Prophet"), becomes a tribal leader, supported by two women: his wife, Princess Leyla (Freida Pinto), who doffs her burqa for canoodling in a curtained limousine; and a Bedouin's freed slave, Aicha (the charismatic Ethiopian model Liya Kebede). Both women are refreshing and independent presences amid the stiflingly male-dominated milieu.

The film's original title was "Black Gold," which suggested the true villain, obscured amid the battlefield tumult: fossil fuels, the region's perennial apple of discord. *ANDY WEBSTER*

"Day of the Falcon" is rated R (Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian) for violence.

The Many Other Delights in a Trumpeter's Life

From First Arts Page

and sculptures at a professional level. He has an exhibition of abstract paintings and large totem-like sculptures — wavy black obelisks — opening on May 4 at the Robert Berman Gallery in Santa Monica, Calif.

He's a philanthropist too. Since 2010 Mr. Alpert's foundation has donated more than $6 million to the Harlem School of the Arts to save it from closing. (The school plans to rename its building the Herb Alpert Center on March 11.)

In a telephone interview last week from his home in Malibu, Calif., Mr. Alpert talked about the new album, the music industry's woes, his desire to help young musicians in Harlem and how his trademark blend of Latin rhythms and catchy smooth-jazz horn lines, is, for him, "visual music." Here are excerpts from the conversation:



MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Herb Alpert is working on his 34th studio album and has an exhibition of his art opening soon.

Q. Why did you want to play the Cafe Carlyle again this year?

A. Years back I saw Bobby Short there, and I thought it'd be fun to play in this nice, intimate setting. We had a good time last year. The acoustics are really good. We're going to play some new songs, and we have some songs that we played before, but every time we start rehearsing for a new tour we scramble it up and change the arrangements.

Q. What is the new album like? Is it a continuation of 2011's "I Feel You," on which you and Ms. Hall did jazz renditions of songs like "Here Comes the Sun" and "Moondance"?

A. No it's different. It's primarily me. My wife is featured on a couple of songs. They are songs I've always wanted to play, and I used an orchestra.

Q. Why did you decide to save the Harlem School for the Arts?

A. I believe the best chance we have of creating responsible and productive kids is through the arts, and it has to be developed just like literacy. When we were playing in New York I visited the school, and I was really impressed with the faculty, the teachers, the kids — looking in their eyes and seeing the enthusiasm they had. I felt a strong pull to them.

Q. Is it true that in the early 1970s you lost confidence in your playing, and you went to a trumpet coach who told you the trumpet was just a piece of plumbing?

A. I didn't lose confidence in my playing. I just lost my desire, and I was going through a divorce, and it just hit me right in the lip I guess. I found myself getting into terrible habits with the horn. So I met a teacher in New York by the name of Carmine Caruso, who prided himself in being a trouble-shooter. He had these exercises that over a period of time straightened me out.

Q. You were a successful label executive at A&M before you sold it in the late 1980s for a reported $500 million. How does the music industry get out of the mess its in these days?

A. Aw man, it's in serious trouble. The Internet has not been a big help. And looking back on it, I don't think we responded properly to the music-sharing problem that was rampant and that devastated the business.

Q. What is the future of the business?

A. When you look at YouTube and see some of the hits some of the artists have had — millions upon millions upon millions of people can listen in on what you're doing. So if you know how to get around the Internet, you might have a good shot. But the record companies as they used to be? I think that's gone.

Q. "Whipped Cream and Other Delights," the Tijuana Brass album with the woman covered in a wedding dress made of whipped cream, was in hundreds of thousands of American homes in the 1960s. How do you feel about that album nearly 50 years later?

A. I think the album is really good. It was the biggest-selling Tijuana Brass album. At the time, when Peter Whorf, the designer of the cover, was showing it to me, I thought we were pushing it a little too far. Nothing was exposed but something seemed like it was beyond what we needed to do. Obviously it became an iconic cover. Delores Erickson, the model, was three months pregnant at the time.

Q. She was?

A. Yeah, and I hate to break it to everyone but she was covered with shaving cream.

Q. What sort of artwork are you exhibiting in May?

A. Sculptures, totems, black-and-white paintings, and I also paint with coffee.

Q. What is the connection between your artwork and your music?

A. A big connection. I've been painting for over 40 years and sculpting for maybe 25, and I approach it the same way. I'm going for rhythm and things that make me feel good.

Q. Did the Tijuana Brass style for which you became famous limit you as a musician?

A. I never felt limited. This might sound weird. man, but I never tried to make a hit record. I tried to make good records, and I tried to make interesting records. I worked with Sam Cooke and wrote a song, "A Wonderful World," with Sam and my partner at the time, Lou Adler. Sam was a mentor, and he said: "People are just listening to a cool piece of wax. And it either makes it or it doesn't. And it's not important what kind of echo chamber you're using. Or how much time you've spent in the studio practicing."

Even as an owner of A&M Records, when I hear an artist, I'm listening for a feeling, not for the intricacies of it all. I try to play songs that make me feel good. "The Lonely Bull" was my response to the bullfights I had seen in Tijuana. After that became a big hit I remember I got this letter from a person in Germany thanking me for a vicarious trip to Tijuana. And it hit me over the noggin. Man, I'm going to make visual music. That's what I'm going to do.

Q. Visual music?

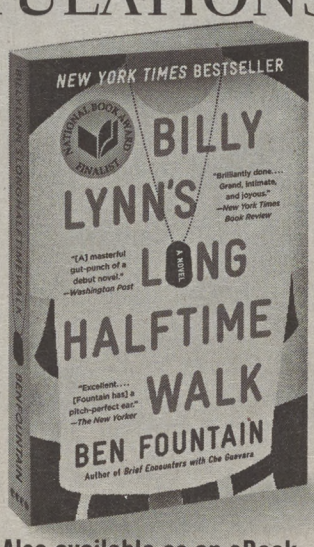
A. Music that conjures up images for me as I'm creating it and playing it.

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Life's Minor Milestones, Served in Lush Detail

JON PARELES
MUSIC REVIEW

Of course, in 2013, a group called Boy is a duo of women: Valeska Steiner, from Zurich, and Sonja Glass, from Hamburg, Germany. But any subterfuge ends there. Boy writes and sings tuneful, friendly, forthright pop-folk songs about life and relationships. The songs detail small milestones: moving into a new apartment, working as a waitress, partying, flirting, fending off unwanted advances, savoring friendship and love. The lyrics are in idiomatic American English, cradled by melodies with a comfortable lilt and by Ms. Steiner's sweet, unfailingly precise lead vocals. Boy's songs make sleek craftsmanship sound guileless.

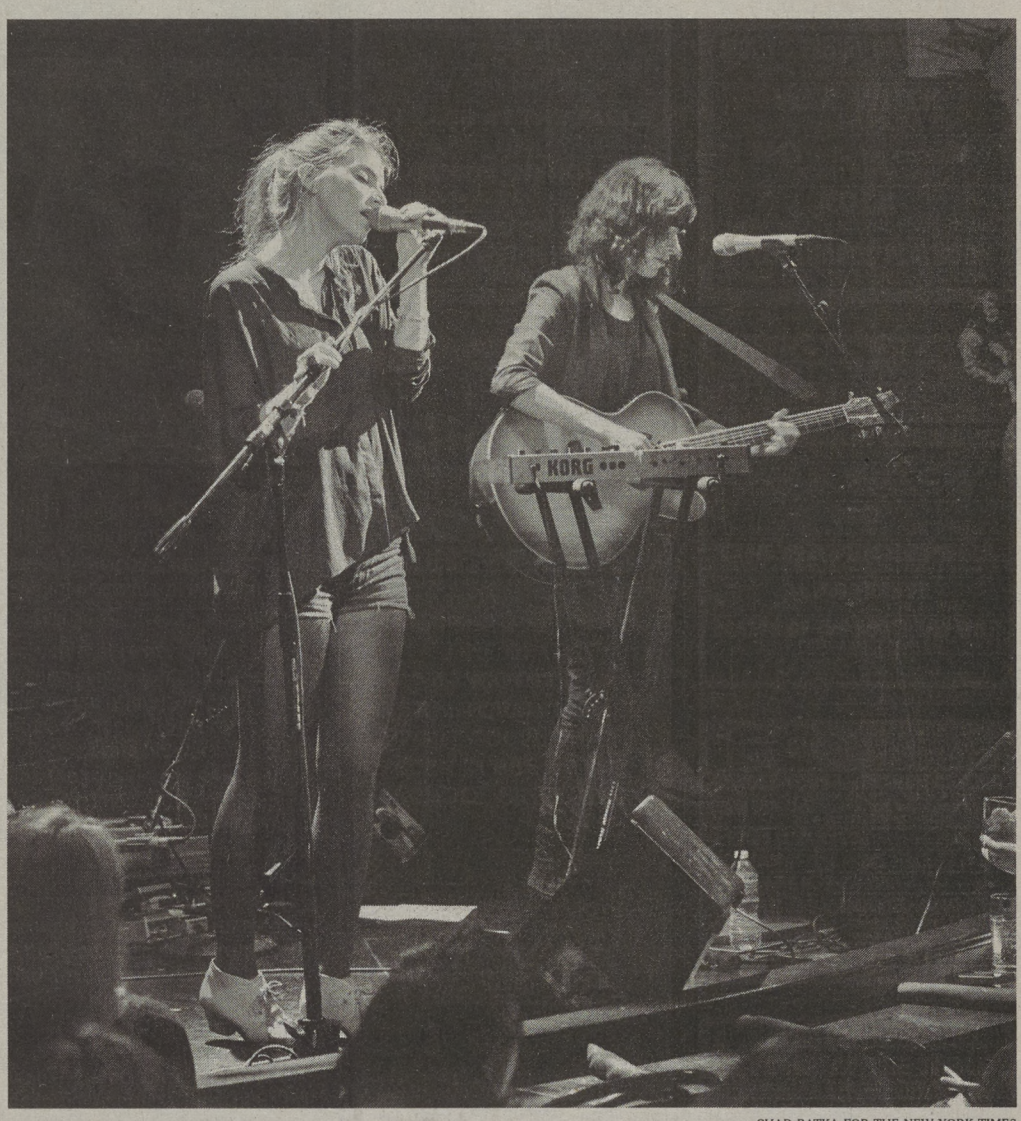
At Joe's Pub on Friday night Boy was making a belated New York City debut; its album, "Mutual Friends," is newly released here but has been available in Europe since 2011. The album's studio production echoes "The Reminder" by Feist, playfully deploying instruments like banjo or clarinet along with a band; there's also a Feist-like flutter in Ms. Steiner's voice, particularly in the album's bouncy first single, "Little Numbers." But Feist has moved on, and Boy makes the most of what she left behind.

At Joe's Pub, Boy performed as a trio, with Deniz Erarslan on electric guitar (and a tambourine on a drum pedal); Ms. Glass played guitar or keyboard and sang harmonies, while a computer sometimes supplied a drumbeat. The folky settings made the songs even more approachable.

"Skin" was a gently strummed depiction of a night spent dancing, "where there's no need to talk because the music is so loud," and the loneliness that follows it: "You can get out of this party dress/But you can't get out of this skin." And "July," with Mr. Erarslan playing hovering lines on a lap steel guitar, was a promise of sanctuary:

All the falls and flights
All the sleepless nights
All the smiles and sighs
They brought you here
They only brought you home.

Boy's songs may be destined for romcom soundtracks; they are determinedly benign. "Boris" — in which a leering man notes "Your boyfriend is out of town" — works up the only bit of rancor, with the singer replying, "You should get out of town too." Yet for all the kindliness in the songs, Boy rarely simpers or resorts to clichés. Boy brings a pastry chef's skill to its music; there's structure behind the sweetness.



CHAD BATKA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Boy *The duo Valeska Steiner, left, and Sonja Glass in their New York City debut, at Joe's Pub on Friday.*

Unresolved Feelings Long After a Murder Trial's End

MIKE HALE
TELEVISION REVIEW

A decade ago the French filmmaker Jean-Xavier de Lestrade spent a reported 650 hours filming his eight-part documentary "The Staircase," an examination of a sensational murder trial in Durham, N.C. It was a highly accomplished true-crime thriller that also functioned as an evisceration of the American legal system and a "what can you do?" evocation of Southern cronyism and small-mindedness for a European audience.

Mr. de Lestrade was careful to leave open the question of guilt or innocence in the case of Michael Peterson, accused of killing his wife, Kathleen. But the film's social and cultural perspective, combined with the filmmakers' access to Mr. Peterson and his lawyers, swung the viewer's emotions to Mr. Peterson's side. When he was convicted and sentenced to life without parole, there was a simultaneous sense of devastation and queasiness: you felt awful about what you'd seen, even though you knew you'd been pushed to feel that way, and even though there seemed to be a decent chance that the verdict was correct.



SUNDANCE CHANNEL

The Staircase 2 *revisits the murder trial of Michael Petersen, above; on Monday night at 10, Eastern and Pacific times; 9, Central time, on the Sundance Channel.*

Those feelings won't be resolved by "The Staircase 2: Last Chance," Mr. de Lestrade's two-hour follow-up documentary on Sundance Channel on Monday night. Spoiler alert: It revisits Mr. Peterson in 2011, when he was granted a new trial because a blood expert who testified against him had since been discredited. (Mr. Peterson is under house arrest while the State of North Carolina appeals the retrial.) The eventual decision in "Staircase 2" has nearly the same visceral wallop as the verdict in "The Staircase," but we don't have any more answers than we did then. What we do know is that Mr. de Lestrade has become an integral part of the Peterson story, which is brought home when Mr. Peterson hugs a cameraman, telling him that without the filmmakers there would have been no retrial.

"The Staircase" was effectively, if self-consciously, structured as a tragedy, with its final scene of Mr. Peterson quoting from "Romeo and Juliet." The prevailing mood in "Staircase 2" is melancholy, as members of the defense team reunite after a decade, noting the signs of age and time, and Mr. Peterson changes from his prison jumpsuit into a sport coat that's now several sizes too large.

If you've watched "The Staircase," then "Staircase 2" is probably necessary viewing, though it has little of the original's mesmerizing effect. It's still artful but more rushed and cursory, inevitably so, given that it recapitulates the entire story within its two hours, reusing material from the first film.

It also serves as a kind of closet critique of the earlier work, since some of the key points brought up in the retrial hearing — features of the state's case that Mr. Peterson's lawyers argue were crucial in his original conviction — are things that were glossed over or not even mentioned in "The Staircase." It makes you wonder how many documentaries Mr. de Lestrade would have to make before we can see the prosecution's entire case.

Love, Cleareyed and Resolute

STEPHEN HOLDEN
MUSIC REVIEW

"No one's gonna wait for you/ so do it now." That statement may sound like a slogan spouted by a motivational speaker, but as sung at the Allen Room on Saturday evening by the gifted indie singer-songwriter Ingrid Michaelson it conveyed the warmth and encouragement of a close friend sitting beside you in the back of a bus when you're feeling discouraged. "Do It Now" was one of 16 originals she performed at the Allen Room as part of Lincoln Center's American Songbook series.

It was not the concert's only song set in the back of a bus. That's where she is sitting in "Soldier" while engaged in an imaginary "battle with the heart." Having given all her love to someone, she waits for proof of reciprocation. That struggle becomes a military skirmish in "This Is War," in which she vows, "I won't surrender/I will fight better."

Even here you couldn't describe Ms. Michaelson's voice as sounding desperate so much as cleareyed and determined. The saddest song was the evening's opening number, "Ghost," in which she is an abandoned lover who describes herself as an "invisible disaster."

Ms. Michaelson, who was joined by Chris Kuffner on bass and Allie Moss and Bess Rogers on guitars and vocals, is in the paradoxical situation of writing smart, accessible songs that achieve considerable success, but not as much as you might expect from music this catchy and well made. Her bright, piercing voice, embedded with a modified Joni Mitchell yodel, peaks in a sob. In timbre her closest vocal forerunner is Jonatha Brooke, whose early solo albums were more somber and literary.



PAULA LOBO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ingrid Michaelson *This singer-songwriter performing in Lincoln Center's American Songbook series in the Allen Room.*

Alternating between the piano and the ukulele, Ms. Michaelson peppered her show with zany asides and playfully self-deprecatory remarks. The group's harmonies were seamless, with Mr. Kuffner's powerful acoustic bass grounding the songs, many of which took circular patterns and had an understated martial pulse.

Her most popular tune, "The Way I Am," is a happy love song whose generic tendencies are redeemed by quirky lines like "I'd buy you Rogaine when you start losing all your hair." That song, used in an ad campaign for Old Navy sweaters, distills the joy of being loved by someone who will "take me the way I am." In a word, it is irresistible.

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NO 11:15AM, 1:50, 4:25, 5:30PM 7:00, 8:00, 9:40, 10:30PM
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BOARD BUSINESS

D&O coverage makes sense for nonprofit organizations

By Brad Robinson
Member Services Director
Montana Nonprofit Association

Nonprofits don't need Directors and Officers Insurance – right? Unfortunately, this is not the case. Protecting your organization from management and employment practices liability through Directors and Officers insurance is important for today's nonprofits.

Many nonprofit organizations continue to labor under the impression that state and/or federal laws protect them from legal actions. Montana's Immunity Law (MCA 27-1-732) does not protect your organization from legal action nor from incurring expenses related to a legal defense. The truth is, so-called immunity laws offer only limited protection, and those laws have not been "court-tested" in Montana, so their efficacy is unknown.

Similarly, the Federal Volunteer Protection Act (FVPA) of 1997 does not preclude claims against a volunteer for allegations of violations of federal civil rights laws (the most common source of claims), "gross negligence," or automobile-related liability.

The bottom line is your organization can be sued for a "wrongful act" that causes injury by anyone with any interest in the organization's activities – employees, members, constituents, donors, board members, vendors, governmental authorities and others. Without nonprofit D&O coverage, you must pay for your own defense, even if in the end you are found not at fault. By not protecting your organization with D&O insurance, you may be exposing your organization to unnecessary risk and unbudgeted expense.

Nonprofit managers who are interested is assessing their organizations risk should visit the Nonprofit Risk Management Center's website (www.nonprofitrisk.org). This site can help managers understand how their organization may be at risk, and what strategies are available to mitigate that risk.

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center offers online trainings, tutorials, and publications – even risk management consulting – to help nonprofits navigate in today's litigious waters.

The Montana Nonprofit Association (MNA) believes that all nonprofits should be covered by D&O insurance. To that end, MNA offers an enhanced Directors and Officer's insurance program to its members.

MNA's program provides $1 million dollars for D&O liability and a further $1 million dollars for Employment Practices liability. Defense costs are paid outside the policy limits, and in the event that the organization is found to be blameless, the deductible is waived.

The policy is produced by Monitor Liability Managers and sold statewide by Payne Financial Group. Monitor provides some of the broadest coverage available on the market.

To learn more about how the laws do not adequately protect your nonprofit organization in the event of a legal challenge, please visit the MNA website at www.mtnonprofit.org and select Directors and Officers Insurance from the Products and Services Menu.

The Montana Nonprofit Association is a membership organization that promotes a stronger nonprofit sector, a supportive public climate and the ability of nonprofits to accomplish their missions. Call 406-449-3717 or visit www.mtnonprofit.org for more information.

MAC is moving

The Montana Arts Council is moving its offices in September … but we're not sure when as of press time.

Please use MAC's Post Office box for all mail: PO Box 202201, Helena, MT, 59620-2201. Contact MAC if you need the correct street address at 406-444-6430 or sflynn@mt.gov.

The 10 immutable laws of storytelling

By Andy Goodman

The question arises at least once during every storytelling workshop I lead, and it drives me crazy. "Can my organization be the protagonist of my story?" a well-meaning nonprofiteer will ask politely. "No!" I want to scream. "No! No! A thousand times no!"

Discretion prevails, however, and I explain just as politely that people relate to people, so stories about your work – any line of work, really – must provide human protagonists to draw the audience in and lead them through the narrative. And that's not just a recommendation, I hasten to add. When it comes to telling stories that an audience will remember and even repeat to others (the ultimate payoff for a well-told tale), consider this a law.

In fact, through the process of leading dozens of storytelling workshops for literally hundreds of nonprofits, I've been able to identify ten such laws. With very few exceptions, the stories that have risen to the top in these workshops tended to follow every one of these laws to the letter.

1. Stories are about people.

Even if your organization (a) is devoted to saving flora and/or fauna, (b) toils in the dense thicket of policy change, or (c) helps other organizations work more effectively, human beings are still driving the action. So your protagonist has to be a person. And since this person also serves as the audience's guide through the story, it's essential to provide some physical description when he or she is introduced. This helps your audience form a mental picture – after all, it's hard to follow what you can't see.

And don't forget to include your characters' names. Audiences will relate more readily to "Marcus" than "the at-risk youth," even if you have to use a pseudonym to protect your subject's identity.

2. The people in your story have to want something.

A story doesn't truly begin until the audience knows precisely what the protagonist's goal is and has a reason to care whether or not it is attained. So within the first paragraph or two, make sure it's clear what your hero wants to do, to get, or to change.

And given that stories are driven by some kind of desire, beware the passive voice! When you write, "a decision was reached," the people in your story magically disappear and suddenly the action is forced by an unseen hand. (For more on problems with using the passive voice, see Gonzales, Alberto.)

3. Stories need to be fixed in time and space.

Audiences don't require every detail of longitude and latitude up front, but the moment you begin telling your tale, they will want to know: Did this happen last week or 10 years ago? Are we on a street corner in Boston, a Wal-Mart in Iowa, or somewhere else? If you help them get their bearings quickly, they will stop wondering about the where and when of your story and more readily follow you into the deeper meaning within.

4. Let your characters speak for themselves.

When characters speak to each other in a story, it lends immediacy and urgency to the piece. Audience members will feel as if they are the proverbial fly-on-the-wall within the scene, hearing in real time what each person has to say. Direct quotes also let characters speak in their idiosyncratic voices, lending authenticity to the dialogue. "The name is Bond, James Bond," is way better than, "The agent introduced himself, characteristically repeating his surname twice."

5. Audiences bore easily.

Human beings are hard-wired to love stories, but in this, The Age of Too Much Information, people don't have time to wait for your story to get interesting. Within the first paragraph or two, you have to make them wonder, "What happens next?" or "How is this going to turn out?" As the people in your story pursue their goal, they must run into obstacles, surprises, or something that makes the audience sit up and take notice. Otherwise they'll stand up and walk away.

6. Stories speak the audience's language.

According to national literacy studies, the average American reads at a sixth-grade level. So if your ads, posters and publications are intended for mass consumption, plain speaking is the order of the day. Good storytellers also have a keen ear for the colloquialisms and local slang that quickly establish common ground between the teller and listener.

7. Stories stir up emotions.

Human beings (which should, hopefully, comprise the majority of your audience) are not inclined to think about things they do not care about. We all have too much on our plate as it is. So even when you have mountains of hard evidence on your side, you have to make your audience feel something before they will even glance at your numbers. Stories stir the emotions not to be manipulative, not simply for melodramatic effect, but to break through the white noise of information that inundates us every day and to deliver the message this is worth your attention.

8. Stories don't tell: they show.

Intellectually, your audience will understand a sentence such as, "When the nurse visited the family at home, she was met with hostility and guardedness." But when you write, "When they all sat down for the first time in the living room, the family members wouldn't look her in the eye," your audience will see a picture, feel the hostility and become more involved with the story.

9. Stories have at least one "moment of truth."

At their essence, the best stories show us something about how we should treat ourselves, how we should treat other people, or how we should treat the world around us. Since the first forms of humankind gathered around the first fires, we have looked to stories to be containers of truth, and your audience will instinctively look within your story for this kind of insight.

10. Stories have clear meaning.

When the final line is spoken, your audience should know exactly why they took this journey with you. In the end, this may be the most important rule of all. If your audience cannot answer the question, "What was that story all about?" it won't matter how diligently you followed rules one through nine.

After founding and running the American Comedy Network, an international radio syndication company, Andy Goodman launched a successful career as a television writer. He spent three seasons writing and co-producing the ABC-TV show "Dinosaurs" (plus co-writing the pilot episode of "The Nanny"). Now, he heads A Goodman, a communications consulting firm that helps public interest groups, foundations and progressive businesses reach more people more effectively. For more information, call 323-464-3956 or visit www.agoodmanonline.com.

Website offers community arts info

The Community Arts Network (CAN) is a portal to the field of community arts, providing news, documentation, theoretical writing, communications, research and educational information.

Headquartered at its website, www.communityarts.net, CAN is a program of Art in the Public Interest (API), a nonprofit organization based in North Carolina. The site offers a living archaeology of information about community-based arts. Go to www.communityarts.net and find:

- The CAN Reading Room, which offers a large database of articles from *High Performance* magazine.
- A monthly newsletter, *API news,* which can be subscribed to free of charge.

Blogs, resources, a bookstore and forums are also available.

ARTIST'S TOOLBOX

Artist inspired by National Encaustic Painting Conference

By Leslie Van Stavern Millar

This summer, I traveled by train from Whitefish to Salem, MA, to attend the First National Encaustic Painting Conference, June 8-10. My journey was funded in part by a Professional Development Grant from the Montana Arts Council.

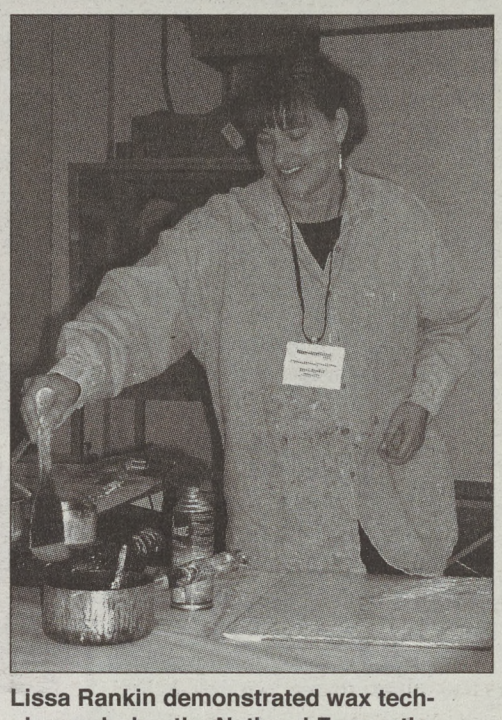
Nearly 150 artists, teachers, critics and vendors from all over the U.S. and Canada participated in this exciting event, hosted by Montserrat College of Art.

Artist Joanne Mattera, noted author of the *Art of Encaustic Painting: Contemporary Expression in the Ancient Medium of Pigmented Wax*, was the founding organizer of the conference and its keynote speaker.

The conference opened on Friday night in the historic First Parish Church in downtown Salem, with a compelling slide lecture by Joanne. She gave an overview of the history of encaustic technique, concluding with images of work by contemporary artists working in wax.

The following day, Joanne hosted "Encaustic: The State of the Art," a lively panel discussion. The panelists included two museum and gallery directors who exhibit encaustics, critic Barbara O'Brien, artist Timothy McDowell and Richard Frumess, the founder of R&F Paints. Issues discussed included whether encaustic is a fine art or a craft medium, the necessity of emphasizing ideas and imagery first and the medium second, technical concerns, and how to approach a gallery or critic in a professional manner.

The next day and a half consisted of a series of demonstrations and lectures on



Lissa Rankin demonstrated wax techniques during the National Encaustic Painting Conference in Salem, MA.
(Photo by Leslie Van Stavern Millar)

such topics as Encaustic Monotypes, Encaustic Sculpture, Heated Cutouts and Textural Explorations. The presenters were accomplished artists working in the medium in a variety of ways. These one-hour sessions were stimulating and instructive.

The 301 Gallery in downtown Salem hosted an exhibition of encaustic paintings. This show provided a great opportunity to see art firsthand by many of the artists' presenting at the conference and to ask them about their work.

The First National Encaustic Conference was packed with technical information, visual treats, networking with new friends, and plans for a second conference hosted by Montserrat College of Art next summer. The conference participants' great enthusiasm for wax is an accurate reflection of the national interest in this emerging and highly versatile medium.

At Sunday's conclusion, Joanne Mattera told me that the conference had realized her original vision and exceeded her expectations.

Encaustic resources

- Joanne Mattera will be artist in residence at Montana State University in Bozeman, Sept. 18-25. The artist and noted author of the *Art of Encaustic Painting: Contemporary Expression in the Ancient Medium of Pigmented Wax* will give a public lecture, "2000 Years of Encaustic Painting," 5-6 p.m. Sept. 23. For information contact MSU art professor Sarah Mast, smast@montana.edu.
- Two new books on encaustic technique are on the market: *Encaustic Art Today: A Practical Guide to Creating Art with Pigmented Wax* by Lissa Rankin (www.lissaranking.com); and *Embracing Encaustic* by Linda Womack (www.lindawomack.com).
- Two encaustic associations represented at the National Encaustic Painting Conference were: **International Encaustic Artists,** www.international-encaustic-artists.org; and **New England Wax,** www.newenglandwax.org.

Leslie Van Stavern Millar is an accomplished Missoula artist, also known for her "Science Woman" persona.

Surface Design Association now has Montana representative

Stevensville artist Carol O'Bagy recently attended the Surface Design Association conference, held in Kansas City, MO, every two years.

The Surface Design Association is a nonprofit educational organization with a primary goal of increasing awareness, understanding and appreciation of textiles in the art and design communities, as well as the general public. It publishes the *Surface Design Journal,* which O'Bagy considers "one of the best, if not the best, publication available having to do with textile and fiber arts" and produces a helpful newsletter.

According to O'Bagy, surface design could include any creative exploration of processes such as dyeing, painting, printing, stitching, embellishing, quilting, weaving, knitting, felting and papermaking. It couid also include other materials beyond textiles that make use of textile techniques. "I personally believe that even a painter is a 'surface designer' of some sort, so the organization is not only for the tried and true textile artist," she says.

O'Bagy has been a member of this organization for several years, but this was her first time attending the conference. "It was extremely well organized for the almost 500 participants and the facilities at the Kansa City Art Institute were easy to get to," she says. "I'd always heard fabulous things about the conference and I must say, it was the best conference I've ever been to. It includes both pre- and post-conference workshops, lectures and demonstrations, a fashion show for the wearable arts and, of course, the member show."

O'Bagy had a textile piece included in the member show, which will tour the U.S. through 2010.

She also returned from the conference as Montana's new state representative for the Surface Design Association. To learn more about the organization, call O'Bagy at 406-777-5288 or email carolmt@cybernet1.com; or visit the website, www.surfacedesign.org.

In Print

China Paint and Overglaze

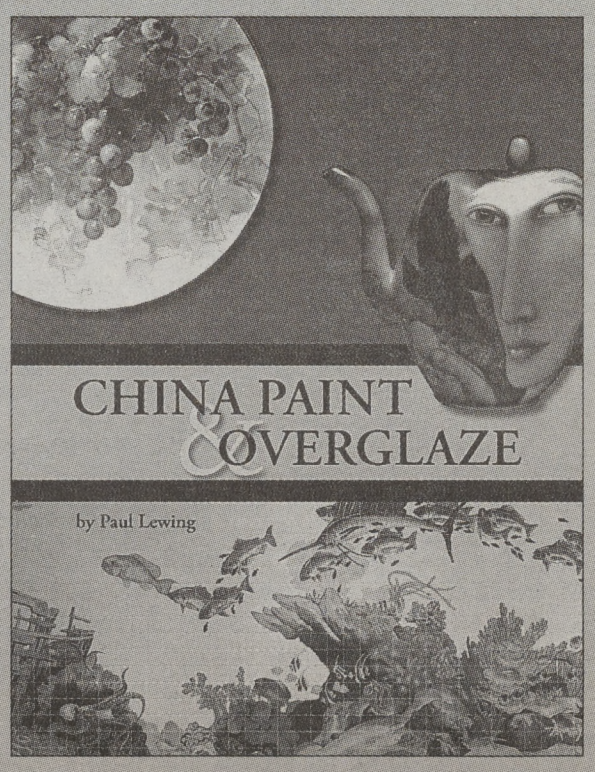
Invented in ninth century China, coveted in 17th century Europe, treasured in 19th century America, and neglected by art schools for over 100 years, china painting is poised for a revival with new materials, new forms and new imagery.

For the ceramic artist interested in exploring this robust medium to the lifelong china painter, Paul Lewing's *China Paint and Overglaze* is considered an essential text.

This groundbreaking book is the first to showcase the work of traditional china painters and contemporary potters and clay sculptors together. Lewing discusses the fascinating 1,000-year history of overglaze painting, while addressing a host of technical issues, including water-soluble painting mediums, china-paint chemistry, safety and durability issues, and unconventional and traditional china-painting techniques.

Lewing, who started painting in oils at the age of eight, earned his bachelor's and master's of fine arts degrees from The University of Montana and studied with Rudy Autio, one of America's best-known clay artists and muralists. He moved to Seattle, where he's been a professional clay artist since 1972.

His book was published in 2007 by the American Ceramic Society in Westerville, OH, and sells for $59.95 hardcover. For details visit www.paullewingtile.com.



Passing Strange

Bliss Broyard explores her father's complicated relationship to questions of race.

BY JOYCE JOHNSON

IN 1855, Henry Broyard, a young white New Orleans carpenter, decided to pass as black in order to be legally entitled to marry Marie Pauline Bonée, the well-educated daughter of colored refugees from Haiti, who was about to have his child; their marriage license describes them both as "free people of color." A century and a half later, their great-great-granddaughter, Bliss Broyard, who had been raised as white, abruptly found herself confronting the implications of her newly discovered black identity.

ONE DROP
My Father's Hidden Life — A Story of Race and Family Secrets.
By Bliss Broyard.
Illustrated. 514 pp.
Little, Brown & Company. $24.99.

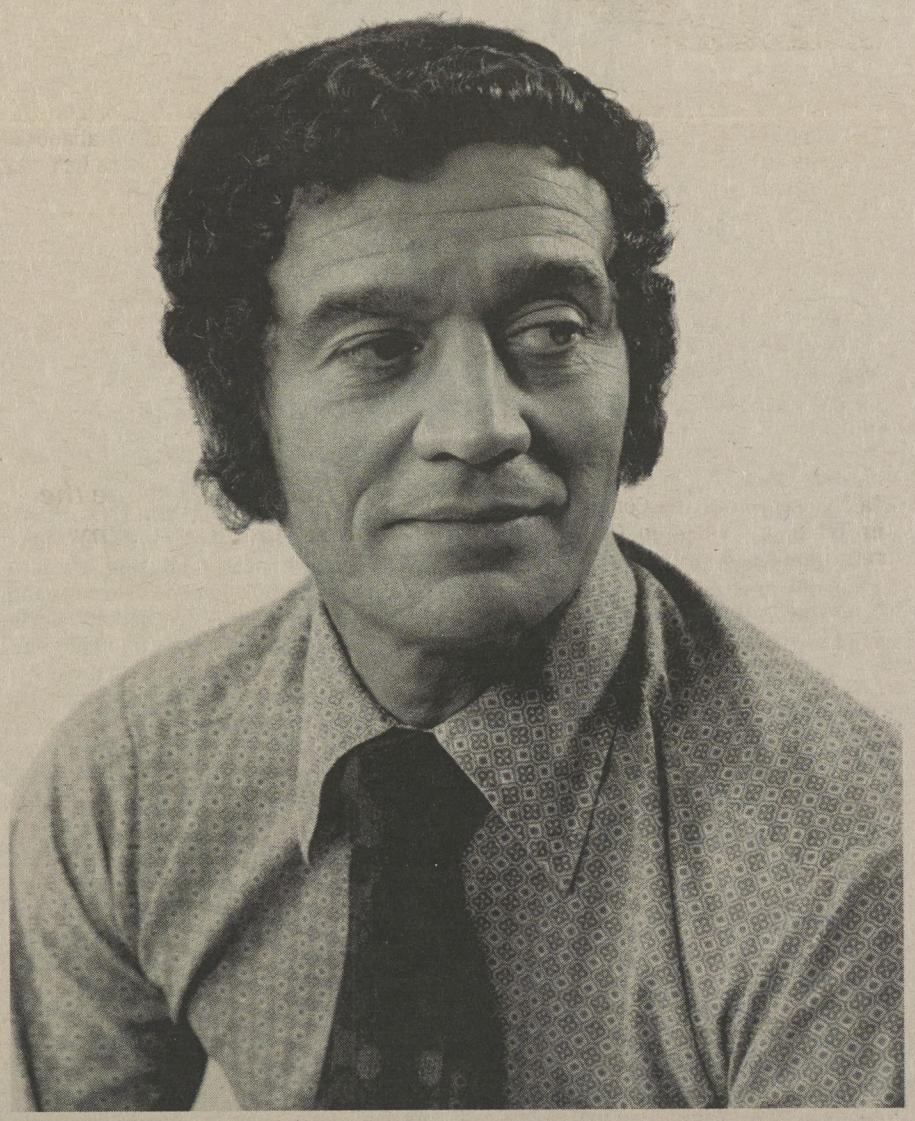
The daughter of the writer and New York Times book critic Anatole Broyard, she had grown up with a feeling "that there was something about my family, or even many things, that I didn't know." What was lacking was any real sense of the history of the father she adored or any contact with his relatives, apart from one dimly remembered day in the past when her paternal grandmother had once visited them in their 18th-century house in the white enclave of Southport, Conn. Even in the last weeks of his life, the secret Anatole Broyard had kept from Bliss and her brother, Todd, was one he could not bear to reveal himself; it was their mother who finally told them, "Your father's part black," not long before Broyard died of prostate cancer.

Their reaction would have stunned their father. "That's all?" Todd said. For 24-year-old Bliss, the news was thrilling, "as though I'd been reading a fascinating history book and then discovered my own name in the index. I felt like I mattered in a way that I hadn't before."

The year was 1990. Profound changes in attitudes about race in America had occurred since 1947, when Anatole Broyard, who during the war had been the white officer in charge of a regiment of black stevedores, left his parents and sisters behind him in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, having made up his mind to continue to pass as white in the bohemian milieu of Greenwich Village. Because of his charm, carefully honed conversational brilliance and success in seducing one impressionable young woman after another, the circles of hipster intellectuals he moved in would have accepted him whatever he called himself — and did whenever he selectively revealed the truth. But Broyard, less hipster and existentialist than an innately conservative young man ambitious to become part of the literary establishment (then exemplified by The Partisan Review), justified the choice he'd made by refusing to have any limits put on his freedom or to be tagged as a black writer like James Baldwin.

In one way, he wasn't wrong at all. "My father truly believed," Bliss Broyard writes in "One Drop: My Father's Hidden Life — a Story of Race and Family Secrets," "that there wasn't any essential difference between blacks and whites and that the only person responsible for determining who he was supposed to be was himself." But for Broyard to construct a white identity required the ruthless and cowardly jettisoning of his black family. He would later lamely tell his children that their grandmother and their two aunts, one of them with tell-tale dark skin, simply didn't interest him. During the 1960s, he expressed no sympathy for the civil rights movement, opposed, his daughter writes, to a movement that required "adherence to a group platform rather than to one's 'essential spirit.' " His posthumously published memoir, "Kafka Was the Rage," revealed only that his people were from New Orleans.

Broyard first made the pages of The Partisan Review with a much-discussed 1948 essay on the black roots of hipsterism. Two short stories, one about a father's death, won him a contract for a much anticipated autobiographical novel he was never able to complete. Paradoxically, his unintended legacy to his daughter would be the huge story he could never have dealt with: the 250-year history of the New Orleans Broyards culminating in the riddle of his own life. In the process of piecing it together, Bliss Broyard would have to cleanse herself of the assumptions about racial inferiority that had been ingrained in her. Without losing her deep love for her father, she would have to scrutinize his life with a historian's objectivity. Contacting lost relatives scattered from New Orleans to Los Angeles, she would gradually fit herself back into the enormous extended family whose very existence had been concealed from her and meet distant cousins who matter-of-factly considered themselves white without losing touch with the Broyards of color.



Anatole Broyard, 1971.

PHOTOGRAPH BY THE NEW YORK TIMES

"WHAT am I?" was the initial question she began asking herself as she started looking up the many definitions of "creole." Until she found that her black ancestors were free people of color, she was convinced that she must be the direct descendant of slaves. Her own black genetic inheritance went only as far back as the birth of Henry Broyard's son Paul in 1856. Black by choice, Henry Broyard joined a militia unit of colored men to defend New Orleans against the Yankee invasion in 1861; the following year, after New Orleans fell to the Union troops, he entered the first black regiment in the history of the United States Army. He endured the humiliating treatment of black soldiers and fought in the Battle of Port Hudson. He died as a white man in 1873, during a brief period when a "reformed Southern society" seemed "tantalizingly within reach," but was buried in a colored section of St. Louis Cemetery. His son Paul, a leading member of the Creole community in New Orleans, would prosper as a carpenter and builder and serve as the Republican president of the Fifth Ward during the 1890s. He played an active role in the fight against the resurgence of white supremacy until he lost heart as Jim Crow legislation stripped away the gains blacks had won during Reconstruction. Bliss Broyard's grandfather, Nat, would give up on his segregated birthplace in 1927 and move his family north to New York, where he at times had to pass as white in order to get work and always felt like an embittered exile. His son, Anatole, the most prominent of the Broyards, was perhaps the one most warped by racism.

Bliss Broyard grew up feeling 'there was something about my family, or even many things, that I didn't know.'

For Henry Broyard, race was nothing measurable in drops of blood — it was composed of a name and the restrictive laws and attitudes of society. "I may never be able to answer the question What am I?" his great-great-granddaughter writes, "yet the fault lies not in me but with the question itself." Her brave, uncompromising and powerful book is an important contribution toward the negation of that question. □

***Joyce Johnson** is the author of the memoirs "Minor Characters" and "Missing Men."*

Show and Tell

William Trevor's short stories do both, in their quest for meaning and catharsis.

BY WILLIAM BOYD



IN 1923, the now-forgotten English novelist William Gerhardie wrote a short study of Chekhov. Gerhardie had been brought up in St. Petersburg and had read Chekhov in Russian, and his little book (long out of print) is as good an introduction to Chekhov's work as Vladimir Nabokov's little book is to Gogol's. Both writers sensed what made their subjects unique and managed to convey their enthusiasm, their privileged understanding, with vivacious brevity. Gerhardie arrived at the peak of his literary renown in the 1920s. His early novels were a dramatic and happily acknowledged influence on his young contemporaries: Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and Anthony Powell. It was Gerhardie, known as the "English Chekhov," who introduced the influence of the great Russian into 20th-century British literature, where it still potently lingers. The Chekhovian worldview and, most particularly, the Chekhovian sense of humor have been silently and hugely assimilated. We British writers are all — or almost all, one way or another — Chekhovian now.

CHEATING AT CANASTA
By William Trevor.
232 pp. Viking. $24.95.

This is by way of a preamble to William Trevor's magisterial new collection of short stories, "Cheating at Canasta." The familiar ingredients are here: ordinary or downtrodden lives, many of them Irish, undergo a sudden transforming crisis, leading to death, betrayal, loss, numb acceptance or stoical suffering. Trevor is frequently cited as a type of Irish Chekhov: the dark, worldly, bleak nature of his stories is believed to be akin to the dark, worldly, bleak nature of Chekhov's short fiction. But this is a caricature both of Trevor and of Chekhov.

Gerhardie, trying to analyze what made Chekhov's stories special, invented a term to describe the short fiction that had been written before the Chekhovian revolution. He called them "event-plot" stories — stories that had a beginning, middle and end and were neatly tied up at their conclusion. Chekhov turned all this upside down, abandoning the tidy plot and making the narratives of his stories like our lives: random, inconclusive, absurdly cruel, meaningless. The essence of the Chekhovian story, and of the Chekhovian worldview, is that, as he himself once wrote to a friend: "It is time writers, especially those who are artists, recognized that there is no making out anything in this world." Chekhov refuses to judge, refuses to explain, refuses to celebrate, refuses to "make out" anything — he simply depicts life as he sees it in all its banality and tragicomedy.

The world of William Trevor's stories would seem initially to replicate a similarly disinterested agenda. In the first story in this collection, "The Dressmaker's Child," a bored mechanic accidentally hits a little girl on a country road and just keeps on driving; in "Old Flame," a 74-year-old woman passively charts the course of her husband's long-term adultery; in "Folie à Deux," a childhood act of fatal cruelty to a dumb animal destroys an adult life — and so on. But Trevor's stories, however dark they may seem, however forlornly uncompromising, are actually significantly shaped. Trevor wants us to see the point of his narratives: he wants us to experience a small but genuine catharsis as we reach the last lines, to understand what the story is trying to say — to make something out. The intention is positively anti-Chekhovian.

There is no 'I' in William Trevor's stories — no intimacy, no direct confession, no unreliable narrator.

A few years ago, in an essay on the short story, I tried to establish a notional taxonomy of the genre, arguing that there were essentially seven types of short story. Gerhardie's idea of the event-plot story was the first, followed by the Chekhovian, the modernist, the cryptic/ludic, the mini-novel, the poetic/mythic and the biographical. Of the 12 stories in Trevor's latest collection, most are told omnisciently: in other words, we have access to the thoughts of at least two of the principal characters and change point of view at the author's whim. This is a device we associate more with the 19th-century novel than with the modern, usually overwhelmingly subjective, short story. Moreover, not one of Trevor's stories is written in the first person singular. There is no "I" — no intimacy, no direct confession, no unreliable narrator.

Trevor is quite at ease with lengthy passages of time. In his stories, months and years can pass in a couple of lines — "The Children" spans two years; "Old Flame" recounts a relationship that lasts decades. Again this is somewhat rare. The timeline of the modern short story is usually short, conforming to V.S. Pritchett's definition: "something glimpsed from the corner of the eye, in passing," seizing a fragment of life, a part standing in for the whole. But not in Trevor's world, where time flies effortlessly by. It's a tribute to his generous imagination and powers of invention that the density of these dozen stories — their potential scope, their scale, their gravitas — is all there in one collection. Another writer might have saved a few of them for a rainy day.

TREVOR'S method and aim are very precise. He outlines the time and place succinctly, with characters often revealed by what they're wearing. ("Their clothes were not new but retained a stylishness: her shades of dark maroon, her bright silk scarf, his greenish tweeds, his careful tie.") Something happens (often an act of violence: five out of the first six stories involve crimes ranging from manslaughter and murder to potential pedophilia) and the consequences are often sad and damaging. There aren't many laughs in Trevor's world. But as the stories draw to a conclusion, the reader is always aware of the authorial hand on the helm.

Trevor doesn't want us to leave his stories without deriving their import. "Time would gather up the ends," one story concludes, "and see to it that his daughter's honoring of a memory was love that mattered also, and even mattered more." In another, Trevor writes, almost apostrophizing like Dickens: "Silent, she had watched an act committed to impress her, to deserve her love, as other acts had been. And watching, there was pleasure. If only for a moment, but still there had been." Trevor both shows and tells, in case we miss the point — something Chekhov never did.

Trevor is not the Irish Chekhov. He is, I think, sui generis, and in his 12 collections (and 13 novels, and two novellas: an exhibition of near-Updikean energy), he has created a version of the short story that almost ignores the form's hundred or so years of intricate evolution. These stories stay in the mind long after they're finished because they're so solid, so deliberately shaped and directed so surely toward their solemn, harsh conclusions. Perhaps there is an eighth type of short story after all: the Trevorian. □

William Boyd's most recent book is "Bamboo," a collection of essays and criticism.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE CIARDIELLO

History by the Ounce

by Barbara W. Tuchman

Harper's July '65

The author of "The Guns of August" gives some clues on the writing of history—an art combining the fascination of a treasure hunt with the hazards of a minefield.

At a party given for its reopening last year, the Museum of Modern Art in New York served champagne to five thousand guests. An alert reporter for the *Times*, Charlotte Curtis, noted that there were eighty cases which, she informed her readers, amounted to 960 bottles or 7,680 three-ounce drinks. Somehow through this detail the Museum's party at once becomes alive; a fashionable New York occasion. One sees the crush, the women eyeing each other's clothes, the exchange of greetings, and feels the gratifying sense of elegance and importance imparted by champagne —even if, at one and a half drinks per person, it was not on an exactly riotous scale. All this is conveyed by Miss Curtis' detail. It is, I think, the way history as well as journalism should be written. It is what Pooh-Bah, in *The Mikado*, meant when, telling how the victim's head stood on its neck and bowed three times to him at the execution of Nanki-poo, he added that this was "corroborative detail intended to give artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative." Not that Miss Curtis' narrative was either bald or unconvincing; on the contrary, it was precise, factual, and a model in every way. But what made it excel, made it vivid and memorable, was her use of corroborative detail.

Pooh-Bah's statement of the case establishes him in my estimate as a major historian or, at least, as the formulator of a major principle of historiography. True, he invented his corroborative detail, which is cheating if you are a historian and fiction if you are not; nevertheless what counts is his recognition of its importance. He knew that it supplies verisimilitude, that without it a narrative is bald and unconvincing. Neither he nor I, of course, discovered the principle; historians have for long made use of it beginning with Thucydides, who insisted on details of topography, "the appearance of cities and localities, the description of rivers and harbors, the peculiar features of seas and countries and their relative distances." I know exactly what he means by that reference to relative distances; it was the need to acquire a feel of them that led me to drive through Belgium and northern France before attempting to write about battles that took place there.

Corroborative detail is the great corrective. Without it historical narrative and interpretation, both, may slip easily into the invalid. It is a disciplinarian. It forces the historian who uses and respects it to cleave to the truth, or as much as he can find out of the truth. It keeps him from soaring off the ground into theories of his own invention. On those Toynbeean heights the air is stimulating and the view is vast but people and houses down below are too small to be seen. However persuaded the historian may be of the validity of the theories he conceives, if they are not supported and illustrated by corroborative detail they are of no more value as history than Pooh-Bah's report of the imagined execution.

It is wiser, I believe, to arrive at theory by way of the evidence rather than the other way around, like Hegel and all the later Hegels; it saves one from being waylaid by that masked highwayman, the categorical imperative. It is more rewarding, in any case, to assemble the facts first and, in the process of arranging them in narrative form, to discover a theory or a historical generalization emerging of its own accord. This to me is the excitement, the built-in treasure hunt, of writing history. In the book I am working on now, which deals with the twenty-year period before 1914 (and the reader must

forgive me if all my examples are drawn from my own work but that, after all, is the thing one knows best), I have been writing about a moment during the Dreyfus Affair in France when on the day of the reopening of Parliament, everyone expected the Army to attempt a coup d'etat. English observers predicted it, troops were brought into the capital, the Royalist pretender was summoned to the frontier, mobs hooted and rioted in the streets, but when the day had passed, nothing had happened; the Republic still stood. By this time I had assembled so much corroborative detail pointing to a coup d'etat that I had to explain why it had not occurred. Suddenly I had to stop and think. After a while I found myself writing, "The Right lacked that necessary chemical of a coup—a leader. It had its small, if loud, fanatics but to upset the established government in a democratic country requires either foreign help or the stuff of a dictator." That is a historical generalization, I believe; a modest one to be sure, but my size. I had arrived at it out of the necessity of the material and felt immensely pleased and proud. These moments do not occur every day; sometimes no more than one a chapter, if that, but when they do they leave one with a lovely sense of achievement.

I am a disciple of the ounce because I mistrust history in gallon jugs whose purveyors are more concerned with establishing the meaning and purpose of history than with what happened. Is it necessary to insist on a purpose? No one asks the novelist why he writes novels or the poet what is his purpose in writing poems. The lilies of the field, as I remember, were not required to have a demonstrable purpose. Why cannot history be studied and written and read for its own sake, as the record of human behavior, the most fascinating subject of all? Insistence on a purpose turns the historian into a prophet—and that is another profession.

To return to my own: corroborative detail will not produce a generalization every time but it will often reveal a historical truth, besides keeping one grounded in historical reality. When I was investigating General Mercier, the Minister of War who was responsible for the original condemnation of Dreyfus and who in the course of the Affair became the hero of the Right, I discovered that at parties of the *haut monde* ladies rose to their feet when General Mercier entered the room. That is the kind of detail which to me is worth a week of research. It illustrates the society, the people, the state of feeling at the time more vividly than anything I could write and in shorter space, too, which is an additional advantage. It epitomizes, it crystallizes, it visualizes. The reader can see it; moreover it sticks in his mind; it is memorable.

The same is true, verbally though not visually, of a statement by President Eliot of Harvard in 1896 in a speech on international arbitration, a great issue of the time. In this chapter I was writing about the founding tradition of the United States as an anti-militarist, anti-imperialist nation, secure within its own shores, having nothing to do with the wicked armaments and standing armies of Europe, setting an example of unarmed strength and righteousness. Looking for material to illustrate the tradition, I found in a newspaper report these words of Eliot, which I have not seen quoted by anyone else: "The building of a navy," he said, "and the presence of a large standing army mean the abandonment of what is characteristically American. . . . The building of a navy and particularly of battleships is English and French policy. It should never be ours."

How superb that is! Its assurance, its conviction, its Olympian authority—what does it not reveal of the man, the time, the idea? In those words I saw clearly for the first time the nature and quality of the American anti-militarist tradition, of what has been called the American dream —it was a case of detail not merely corroborating but revealing an aspect of history.

"Bald and Unconvincing"

The absence of corroborative detail when one is looking for it can be very irritating. Describing William Howard Taft, Governor General of the Philippines at that time, I did not want merely to write that he was a very large, very fat man, a general statement which could apply to any oversize person. I wanted to be able to write specifically that he was six foot so-many inches tall and weighed 280 or 290—or whatever it was—pounds. Stated in figures a weight becomes visible and besides would give more impact to the story about Taft's telegram to Elihu Root after an illness, saying that he had been out

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Barbara W. Tuchman, whose "The Guns of August" won the Pulitzer Prize for 1963, is now at work on another historical study, to be called "The Proud Tower." The mother of three girls, she is a trustee of Radcliffe College. She also wrote "Bible and Sword" and "The Zimmermann Telegram." This article is adapted from the Stimson Lecture, which Mrs. Tuchman delivered at Goucher last fall.

horseback riding and was feeling fine, to which Root wired back, "How is the horse feeling?" Nowhere, however, in Taft's biography, a large two-volume work by Henry Pringle, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his life of Theodore Roosevelt, could I find any statement of Taft's weight. It may appear that I am making a fuss here over nothing but the point is that a weight of over 300 pounds (a figure that I found eventually in a magazine article after a prolonged hunt) is surely a major factor in a man's life, affecting his character, prospects, health, career, and personal relations. It is a fact which, it seems to me, a reader has a right to know.

Failing to know such details, one can be led astray. In 1890 Congress authorized the building of the first three American battleships, and, two years later, a fourth. Shortly thereafter, in 1895, this country plunged into a major quarrel with Great Britain, known as the Venezuelan crisis, in which there was much shaking of fists and chauvinist shrieking for war. Three years later we were at war with Spain. She was no longer a naval power equal to Britain, of course, but still not negligible. One would like to know what exactly was American naval strength at the time of both these crises. How many, if any, of the battleships authorized in 1890 were actually at sea five years later? When the jingoes were howling for war in 1895, what ships did we have to protect our coasts, much less to take the offensive? It seemed to me this was a piece of information worth knowing.

To my astonishment, on looking for the answer in textbooks on the period, I could not find it. The historians of America's rise to world power, of the era of expansion, of American foreign policy, or even of the Navy have not concerned themselves with what evidently seems to them an irrelevant detail. It was hardly irrelevant to policy makers of the time who bore the responsibility for decisions of peace or war. Text after text in American history is published every year, each repeating on this question more or less what his predecessor has said before, with no further enlightenment. To find the facts I finally had to write to the Director of Naval History at the Navy Department in Washington.

My point is not how many battleships we had on hand in 1895 and '98 (which I now know) but why this hard, physical fact was missing from the professional historians' treatment. "Bald and unconvincing," said Pooh-Bah of narrative without fact, a judgment in which I join.

When I come across a generalization or a general statement in history unsupported by illustration I am instantly on guard; my reaction is, "Show me." If a historian writes that it was raining heavily on the day war was declared, that is a detail corroborating a statement, let us say, that the day was gloomy. But if he writes merely that it was a gloomy day without mentioning the rain, I want to know what is his evidence; what made it gloomy. Or if he writes, "The population was in a belligerent mood," or, "It was a period of great anxiety," he is indulging in general statements which carry no conviction to me if they are not illustrated by some evidence. I write for example that fashionable French society in the 1890s imitated the English in manners and habits. Imagining myself to be my own reader—a complicated fugue that goes on all the time at my desk—my reaction is of course, "Show me." The next sentence does. I write *"Le Grand Steeple* was held at Auteuil, *le Derby* at Longchamps, unwanted members were *blackboulé* at the Jockey Club, Charles Swann had 'Mr' engraved on his calling cards."

What the Kaiser Gave His Wife

Even if corroborative detail did not serve a valid historical purpose, its use makes a narrative more graphic and intelligible, more pleasurable to read, in short more readable. It assists communication, and communication is after all the major purpose. History written in abstract terms communicates nothing to me. I cannot comprehend the abstract and, since a writer tends to create the reader in his own image, I assume my reader cannot comprehend it either. No doubt I underestimate him. Certainly many serious thinkers write in the abstract and many people read them with interest and profit and even, I suppose, pleasure. I respect this ability but I am unable to emulate it.

My favorite visible detail in *The Guns of August,* for some inexplicable reason, is the one about the Grand Duke Nicholas who was so tall (six foot six) that when he established headquarters in a railroad car his aide pinned up a fringe of white paper over the doorway to remind him to duck his head. Why this insignificant item, after several years' work and out of all the material crammed into a book of 450 pages, should be the particular one to stick most sharply in my mind I cannot explain, but it is. I was so charmed by the white paper fringe that I constructed a whole paragraph describing Russian headquarters at Baranovici in order to slip it in logically.

In another case the process failed. I had read that the Kaiser's birthday gift to his wife was the same every year: twelve hats selected by himself which she was obliged to wear. There you see the value of corroborative detail in revealing personality; this one is worth a whole book about the Kaiser—or even about Germany. It represents, however, a minor tragedy of *The Guns*, for I never succeeded in working it in at all. I keep my notes on cards and the card about the hats started out with those for the first chapter. Not having been used, it was moved forward to a likely place in Chapter 2, missed again, and continued on down through all the chapters until it emerged to a final resting place in a packet marked "Unused."

A detail about General Haig, equally revealing of personality or at any rate of contemporary customs and conditions in the British officer corps, did find a place. This was the fact that during the campaign in the Sudan in the 'nineties he had "a camel laden with claret" in the personal pack train that followed him across the desert. Besides being a vivid bit of social history the phrase itself, "a camel laden with claret," is a thing of beauty, a marvel of double and inner alliteration. That, however, brings up another whole subject, the subject of language, which needs an article of its own for adequate discussion.

Betrayed by Words

Having inadvertently reached it, I will only mention that the independent power of words to affect the writing of history is a thing to be watched out for. They have an almost frightening autonomous power to produce in the mind of the reader an image or idea that was not in the mind of the writer. Obviously, they operate this way in all forms of writing but history is particularly sensitive because one has a duty to be accurate, and careless use of words can leave a false impression one had not intended. Fifty per cent at least of the critics of *The Guns* commented on what they said was my exposé of the stupidity of the generals. Nothing of the kind was in my mind when I wrote. What I meant to convey was that the generals were in the trap of the circumstances, training, ideas, and national impulses of their time and their individual countries; that there but for the grace of God go we. I was not trying to convey stupidity but tragedy, fatality. Many reviewers understood this, clearly intelligent perceptive persons (those who understand one always are), but too many kept coming up with that word "stupidity" to my increasing dismay.

This power of words to escape from a writer's control is a fascinating problem which, since it was not what I started out to discuss, I can only hint at here. One more hint before I leave it: for me the problem lies in the fact that the art of writing interests me as much as the art of history (and I hope it is not provocative to say that I think of history as an art, not a science). In writing I am seduced by the sound of words and by the interaction of their sound and sense. Recently, at the start of a paragraph I wrote, "Then occurred the intervention which irretrievably bent the twig of events." It was intended as a kind of signal to the reader. (Every now and then, in a historical narrative after one has been explaining a rather complicated background, one feels the need of waving a small red flag that says, "Wake up, Reader; something is going to happen.") Unhappily, after finishing the paragraph, I was forced to admit that the incident in question had *not* irretrievably bent the twig of events. Yet I hated to give up such a well-made phrase. Should I leave it in because it was good writing or take it out because it was not good history? History governed and it was lost to posterity (although, you notice, I have rescued it here). Words are seductive and dangerous material, to be used with caution. Am I writer first or am I historian? The old argument starts inside my head. Yet there need not always be dichotomy or dispute. The two functions need not be, in fact should not be, at war. The goal is fusion. In the long run the best writer is the best historian.

In quest of that goal I come back to the ounce. The most effective ounce of visual detail is that which indicates something of character or circumstance in addition to appearance. Careless clothes finished off by drooping white socks corroborate a description of Jean Jaurès as looking like the expected image of a labor leader. To convey both the choleric looks and temper and the cavalry officer's snobbism of Sir John French, it helps to write that he affected a cavalryman's stock in place of collar and tie, which gave him the appearance of being perpetually on the verge of choking.

The best corroborative detail I ever found concerned Lord Shaftesbury, the eminent Victorian social reformer, author of the Factory Act and child-labor laws, who appeared in my first book, *Bible and Sword*. He was a man, wrote a contemporary, of the purest, palest, stateliest exterior

in Westminster, on whose classic head "every separate dark lock of hair seemed to curl from a sense of duty." For conveying both appearance and character of a man and the aura of his times, all in one, that line is unequaled.

Novelists have the advantage that they can invent corroborative detail. Wishing to portray, let us say, a melancholy introspective character, they make up physical qualities to suit. The historian must make do with what he can find, though he may sometimes point up what he finds by calling on a familiar image in the mental baggage of the reader. To say that General Joffre looked like Santa Claus instantly conveys a picture which struck me as peculiarly apt when I wrote it. I was thinking of Joffre's massive paunch, fleshy face, white moustache, and bland and benevolent appearance, and I forgot that Santa Claus wears a beard, which Joffre, of course, did not. Still, the spirit was right. One must take care to choose a recognizable image for this purpose. In my current book I have a melancholy and introspective character, Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister in 1895, a supreme, if far from typical, product of the British aristocracy, a heavy man with a curly beard and big, bald forehead of whom I wrote that he was called the Hamlet of English politics and looked like Karl Marx. I must say that I was really rather pleased with that phrase but my editor was merely puzzled. It developed that he did not know what Karl Marx looked like, so the comparison conveyed no image. If it failed its first test it would certainly not succeed with the average reader and so, sadly, I cut it out.

Rowboat Under Niagara

Sources of corroborative detail must of course be contemporary with the subject. Besides the usual memoirs, letters, and autobiographies, do not overlook novelists and newspapers. The inspired bit about the ladies rising to their feet for General Mercier comes from Proust as do many other brilliant details; for instance, that during the Affair ladies had *"A bas les juifs"* printed on their parasols. Proust is invaluable not only because there is so much of him but because it is all confined to a narrow segment of society which he knew personally and intimately; it is like a woman describing her own living room. On the other hand, another novel set in the same period, *Jean Barois* by Roger Martin du Gard, considered a major work of fiction on the Affair, gave me nothing I could use, perhaps because visual detail —at least the striking and memorable detail— was missing. It was all talk and ideas, interesting, of course, but for source material I want something I can *see*. When you have read Proust you can see Paris of the 'nineties, horsecabs and lamplight, the clubman making his calls in white gloves stitched in black and a gray top hat lined in green leather.

Perhaps this illustrates the distinction between a major and a less gifted novelist which should hold equally true, I believe, for historians. Ideas alone are not flesh and blood. Too often, scholarly history is written in terms of ideas rather than acts; it tells what people wrote instead of what they performed. To write, say, a history of progressivism in America or of socialism in the era of the Second International by quoting the editorials, books, articles, speeches, and so forth of the leading figures is easy. They were the wordiest people in history. If, however, one checks what they said and wrote against what actually was happening, a rather different picture emerges. At present I am writing a chapter on the Socialists and I feel like someone in a small rowboat under Niagara. To find and hold onto anything hard and factual under their torrent of words is an epic struggle. I suspect the reason is that people out of power always talk more than those who have power. The historian must be careful to guard against this phenomenon—weight it, as the statisticians say—lest his result be unbalanced.

Returning to novels as source material, I should mention *The Edwardians* by V. Sackville-West, which gave me precise and authoritative information on matters on which the writers of memoirs remain discreet. Like Proust, this author was writing of a world she knew. At the great house parties, one learns, the hostess took into consideration established liaisons in assigning the bedrooms and each guest had his name on a card slipped into a small brass frame outside his door. The poets too serve. Referring in this chapter on Edwardian England to the central role of the horse in the life of the British aristocracy, and describing the exhilaration of the hunt, I used a line from a sonnet by Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, "My horse a thing of wings, myself a god." Anatole France supplied, through the mouth of a character in *M. Bergeret,* the words to describe a Frenchman's feeling about the Army at the time of the Affair, that it was "all that is left of our glorious past. It consoles us for the present and gives us hope for the future." Zola expressed the fear of the bourgeoisie for the working class through the manager's wife in *Germinal,* who,

watching the march of the striking miners, saw "the red vision of revolution . . . when on some somber evening at the end of the century the people, unbridled at last, would make the blood of the middle class flow." In *The Guns* there is a description of the retreating French Army after the Battle of the Frontiers with their red trousers faded to the color of the pale brick, coats ragged and torn, cavernous eyes sunk in unshaven faces, gun carriages with once-new gray paint now blistered and caked with mud. This came from Blasco Ibáñez's novel, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. From H. G. Wells's *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* I took the feeling in England at the outbreak of war that it contained an "enormous hope" of something better afterward, a chance to end war, a "tremendous opportunity" to remake the world.

I do not know if the professors would allow the use of such sources in a graduate dissertation but I see no reason why a novelist should not supply as authentic material as a journalist or a general. To determine what may justifiably be used from a novel, one applies the same criterion as for any nonfictional account: if a particular item fits with what one knows of the time, the place, the circumstances, and the people it is acceptable; otherwise not. For myself, I would rather quote Proust or Sackville-West or Zola than a professional colleague as is the academic habit. I could never see any sense whatever in referring to one's neighbor in the next university as a source. To me that is no source at all; I want to know where a given fact came from originally, not who used it last. As for referring to an earlier book of one's own as a source, this seems to me the ultimate absurdity. I am told that graduate students are required to cite the secondary historians in order to show they are familiar with the literature but if I were granting degrees I would demand primary familiarity with primary sources. The secondary histories are necessary when one starts out ignorant of a subject and I am greatly in their debt for guidance, suggestion, bibliography, and outline of events, but once they have put me on the path I like to go the rest of the way myself. If I were a teacher I would disqualify anyone who was content to cite a secondary source as his reference for a fact. To trace it back oneself to its origin means to discover all manner of fresh material from which to make one's own selection instead of being content to re-use something already selected by someone else.

Though it is far from novels I would like to say a special word for *Who's Who*. For one thing, it is likely to be accurate because its entries are written by the subjects themselves. For another, it shows them as they wish to appear and thus often reveals character and even something of the times. H. H. Rogers, a Standard Oil partner and business tycoon of the 1890s, listed himself simply and succinctly as "Capitalist," obviously in his own eyes a proud and desirable thing to be. The social history of a period is contained in that self-description. Who would call himself by that word today?

"Spared Not But Slew"

As to newspapers, I like them for period flavor perhaps more than for factual information. One must be wary in using them for facts, because an event reported one day in a newspaper is usually modified or denied or turns out to be rumor on the next. It is absolutely essential to take nothing from a newspaper without following the story through for several days or until it disappears from the news. For period flavor, however, newspapers are unsurpassed. In the *New York Times* for August 10, 1914, I read an account of the attempt by German officers disguised in British uniforms to kidnap General Leman at Liège. The reporter wrote that the General's staff, "maddened by this dastardly violation of the rules of civilized warfare, spared not but slew."

This sentence had a tremendous effect on me. In it I saw all the difference between the world before 1914 and the world since. No reporter could write like that today, could use the word "dastardly," could take as a matter of course the concept of "civilized warfare," could write unashamedly, "spared not but slew." Today the sentence is embarrassing; in 1914 it reflected how people thought and the values they believed in. It was this sentence that led me back to do a book on the world before the war.

Women are a particularly good source for physical detail. They seem to notice it more than men or at any rate to consider it more worth reporting. The contents of the German soldier's knapsack in 1914, including thread, needles, bandages, matches, chocolate, tobacco, I found in the memoirs of an American woman living in Germany. The Russian moose who wandered over the frontier to be shot by the Kaiser at Rominten came from a book by the English woman who was governess to the Kaiser's daughter. Lady Warwick, mistress for a time of the Prince of Wales until she regrettably espoused

socialism, is indispensable for Edwardian society, less for gossip than for habits and behavior. Princess Daisy of Press prattles endlessly about the endless social rounds of the nobility but every now and then supplies a dazzling nugget of information. One, which I used in *The Zimmermann Telegram,* was her description of how the Kaiser complained to her at dinner of the ill-treatment he had received over the *Daily Telegraph* affair and of how, in the excess of his emotion, "a tear fell on his cigar." In the memoirs of Edith O'Shaughnessy, wife of the First Secretary of the American Embassy in Mexico, is the description of the German Ambassador, Von Hintze, who dressed and behaved in all things like an Englishman except that he wore a large sapphire ring on his little finger which gave him away. No man would have remarked on that.

In the end, of course, the best place to find corroborative detail is on the spot itself, if it can be visited, as Herodotus did in Asia Minor or Parkman on the Oregon Trail. Take the question of German atrocities in 1914. Nothing requires more careful handling because, owing to postwar disillusions, atrocity came to be a word one did not believe in. It was supposed because the Germans had not, after all, cut off the hands of Belgian babies, neither had they shot hostages nor burned Louvain. The results of this disbelief were dangerous because when the Germans became Nazis people were disinclined to believe they were as bad as they seemed and appeasement became the order of the day. (It strikes me that here is a place to put history to use and that a certain wariness might be in order today.) In writing of German terrorism in Belgium in 1914 I was at pains to use only accounts by Germans themselves or in a few cases by Americans, then neutral. The most telling evidence, however, was that which I saw forty-five years later: the rows of gravestones in the churchyard of a little Belgian village on the Meuse, each inscribed with a name and a date and the legend *"fusillé par les Allemands."* Or the stone marker on the road outside Senlis, twenty-five miles from Paris, engraved with the date September 2, 1914, and the names of the Mayor and six other civilian hostages shot by the Germans. Somehow the occupations engraved opposite the names—baker's apprentice, stone mason, *garçon de café*—carried extra conviction. This is the verisimilitude Pooh-Bah and I too have been trying for.

The desire to find the significant detail plus the readiness to open his mind to it and let it report to him are half the historian's equipment. The other half, concerned with idea, point of view, the reason for writing, the "Why" of history, has been left out of this discussion although I am not unconscious that it looms in the background. The art of writing is the third half. If that list does not add up, it is because history is human behavior, not arithmetic.

Shiloh: The Bloody Pond

by Thomas Whitbread

At Shiloh, Tennessee, a finite number
Of days after the first day's bloody fighting,
To be exact, thirty-six thousand, nine hundred
And forty-nine, two, three, or four generations
As parents and children go, I mourned the dead
And the unsown seed of those who left no orphans,
And mystically felt, in a time foreshortened
By the triangular presence in that Park
Of a National Cemetery, of covered trenches
For Southern dead, and of Indian burial mounds
From a million days before our Union shivered,
That if I knelt and drank from the Bloody Pond
I would taste the intermingled corpuscles
Of the thirsting Federal and Confederate dead.

Nehru: A View from the Embassy

by Catherine A. Galbraith



A personal and affectionate report on his unofficial life—including his weaknesses for a good joke, a pretty woman, dashing horsemen, and the British public school tradition.

I first saw Prime Minister Nehru in March 1956, at the residence of the then United States Ambassador to India, John Sherman Cooper. We had been invited to a reception for Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who was in New Delhi on one of his frequent trips. Standing alone in a corner of the garden in the shadow of a giant asoka tree, deep in thought, was a slender man of aristocratic bearing, not much taller than I, in long brown coat, white jodhpurs, and white cap, with an unforgettable face—a face beautifully formed, quiet, strong, a little sad, with dark eyes and a skin remarkably unlined despite the fringe of white hair which showed below his cap. He looked familiar; I realized then that I was looking at someone whose face was familiar to all the world. I could not know that in another five years I would be living in that residence and that we would be friends.

A few days later I saw the Prime Minister again, in quite a different mood. It was in his own garden amidst the throngs who had come to greet him on Holi, the spring festival of colors. He was almost hidden by eager outstretched hands which, in the Hindu custom, were daubing his face, partly bald head and white hair with bright pigments. At the insistence of my Indian friends I too pressed some red powder on his forehead. I remember worrying that he should be so jostled by the crowds, but if he minded he certainly did not show it.

In April 1961, when we returned to India officially, Jawaharlal Nehru was already in his seventies. He was still amidst the crowds. It forever amazed me that one man could do so many things in so many parts of the country and still run the government. He had been doing them ever since he assumed office as independent India's first Prime Minister. He continued, with little respite, until the day he died.

Nehru normally worked fourteen to eighteen hours a day. In addition to being Prime Minister and head of the Congress party and his own Foreign Secretary, he was Chairman of the Planning Commission and also of the Atomic Energy Commission. These latter posts were of great importance to him, for he shared the intellectual and scientific excitement of the twentieth century and was deeply devoted to bringing India with its age-old customs into the modern world. He was concerned with education, health, village life, better methods of agriculture, and the new industries. He wanted escape from Indian poverty and he wanted it promptly; impatient of inefficiency and apathy, he was always pushing to get things done.

The Moral of the Story

Make-believe is more than fun and games, Jonathan Gottschall says; it helps us navigate life's complex social problems.

BY DAVID EAGLEMAN

WE love a good story. Narrative is stitched intrinsically into the fabric of human psychology. But why? Is it all just fun and games, or does storytelling serve a biological function?

These questions animate "The Storytelling Animal," a jaunty, insightful new book by Jonathan Gottschall, who draws from disparate corners of history and science to celebrate our compulsion to storify everything around us.

THE STORYTELLING ANIMAL
How Stories Make Us Human.
By Jonathan Gottschall.
Illustrated. 248 pp.
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. $24.

There are several surprises about stories. The first is that we spend a great deal of time in fictional worlds, whether in daydreams, novels, confabulations or life narratives. When all is tallied up, the decades we spend in the realm of fantasy outstrip the time we spend in the real world. As Gottschall puts it, "Neverland is our evolutionary niche, our special habitat."

A second surprise: The dominant themes of story aren't what we might assume them to be. Consider the plotlines found in children's playtime, daydreams and novels. The narratives can't be explained away as escapism to a more blissful reality. If that were their purpose, they would contain more pleasure. Instead, they're horrorscapes. They bubble with conflict and struggle. The plots are missing all the real-life boring bits, and what remains is an unrealistically dense collection of trouble. Trouble, Gottschall argues, is the universal grammar of stories.

The same applies to our nighttime hallucinations. If you've ever wanted your dreams to come true, let's hope you don't mean your literal nocturnal dreams. These overflow with discord and violence. When researchers pick apart the hours of dream content, it turns out dreamland is all about fight or flight.

What do these observations reveal about the function of story? First, they give credence to the supposition that story's job is to simulate potential situations. Neuroscience has long recognized that emulation of the future is one of the main businesses intelligent brains invest in. By learning the rules of the world and simulating outcomes in the service of decision making, brains can play out events without the risk and expense of attempting them physically. As the philosopher Karl Popper wrote, simulation of the future allows "our hypotheses to die in our stead." Clever animals don't want to engage in the expensive and potentially fatal game of physically testing every action to discover its consequences. That's what story is good for. The production and scrutiny of counterfactuals (colloquially known as "what ifs") is an optimal way to test and refine one's behavior.

But storytelling may run even deeper than that. Remember, in "Star Wars," when Luke Skywalker precisely aims his proton torpedoes into the vent shaft of the Death Star? Of course you do. It's memorable because it's the climax of a grand story about good triumphing over evil. (You'd be less likely to recall a moment in which a protagonist files her nails while discussing her day.) More important, Luke's scene provides a good analogy: It's not easy to infect the brain of another person with an idea; it can be accomplished only by hitting the small exposed hole in the system. For the brain, that hole is story-shaped. As anyone who teaches realizes, most information bounces off with little impression and no recollection. Good professors and statesmen know the indispensable potency of story.

This is not a new observation, but nowadays we have a better understanding of why it's true. Changing the brain requires the correct neurotransmitters, and those are especially in attendance when a person is curious, is predicting what will happen next and is emotionally engaged. Hence successful religious texts are not written as nonfiction arguments or bulleted lists of claims. They are stories. Stories about burning bushes, whales, sons, lovers, betrayals and rivalries.

Story not only sticks, it mesmerizes. This is why WWE wrestling thrives on fake but exciting plotlines, why there are so many hours poured into prefight boxing hype, and why there are stirring back stories included in all the profiles of Olympic athletes. But not all stories are created equal. Gottschall points out that for a story to work, it has to possess a particular morality. To capture and influence, it can't be plagued with moral repugnance — involving, say, a sexual love story between a mother and her son, or a good guy who becomes crippled and a bad guy who profits handsomely. If the narrative doesn't contain the suitable kind of virtue, brains don't absorb it. The story torpedo misses the exposed brain vent. (There are exceptions, Gottschall allows, but they only prove the rule.)

This leads to the suggestion that story's role is "intensely moralistic." Stories serve the biological function of encouraging pro-social behavior. Across cultures, stories instruct a version of the following: If we are honest and play by the social rules, we reap the rewards of the protagonist; if we break the rules, we earn the punishment accorded to the bad guy. The theory is that this urge to produce and consume moralistic stories is hard-wired into us, and this helps bind society together. It's a group-level adaptation. As such, stories are as important as genes. They're not time wasters; they're evolutionary innovations.

Gottschall highlights this social-binding property in the stories nations tell about themselves. Full of inaccuracies, these are "mostly fiction, not history," he writes. They accomplish the same evolutionary function as religion: defining groups, coordinating behavior and suppressing selfishness in favor of cooperation. Our national myths "tell us that not only are we the good guys," Gottschall writes, "but we are the smartest, boldest, best guys that ever were."

When all is tallied up, the time we spend in the realm of fiction far exceeds the time we spend in the real world.

Unlike W. H. Auden, who worried that "poetry makes nothing happen," Gottschall, who teaches English at Washington & Jefferson College in Pennsylvania, feels certain that fiction can change the world. Consider the influence of Wagner's operas on Hitler's self-vision, or the effect of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" on American opinion and culture. "Research shows that story is constantly nibbling and kneading us," Gottschall writes. "If the research is correct, fiction is one of the primary sculpting forces of individuals and societies."

Recent fare like "The Shallows" and "The Dumbest Generation" lament our descent into the end of literature. But not so fast, Gottschall says: storytelling is neither dead nor dying. As for the attention-demanding novel? "Rumors of its demise are exaggerated to the point of absurdity," he writes. "In the United States alone, a new novel is published every hour. Some . . . extend their cultural reach by being turned into films." Beyond books, the strong skeleton of story can be discerned clearly in media including video games and scripted "reality" television. This is why libraries aren't likely to go away, Gottschall suggests. They may change in character; they may even transform into habitats for massively multiplayer online role-playing games. But they won't disappear.

The medium of story is changing, in other words, but not its essence. Our inborn thirst for narrative means that story — its power, purpose and relevance — will endure as long as the human animal does. □



ILLUSTRATION BY MARGARET RIEGEL

David Eagleman, a neuroscientist at the Baylor College of Medicine, writes fiction and nonfiction. His latest books are "Sum" and "Incognito: The Secret Lives of the Brain."

Holy Conglomerate

In Simon Rich's novel, God is C.E.O. of Heaven Inc.

BY PATRICK CASSELS

SIMON RICH'S first novel, the prep-school sendup "Elliot Allagash," drew comparisons to Evelyn Waugh and P.G. Wodehouse. His new novel, "What in God's Name," evokes another titan of English comedy: Douglas Adams. Like Adams in "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," Rich drags heaven down to Earth. His paradise is a mismanaged corporation, Heaven Inc. — full of departments like Prayer Intake and Geyser Regulation — whose chief executive, God, decides on a whim to retire, destroy Earth, kill all the humans (by fire or ice, he's still deciding) and fulfill his lifelong dream of opening an Asian-American fusion restaurant.

WHAT IN GOD'S NAME
By Simon Rich.
227 pp. A Reagan Arthur Book/ Little, Brown & Company. $23.99.

Given the grim prognosis for the planet, it's shocking how optimistic "What in God's Name" is. In satires of religion, wit is typically wielded to criticize anti-intellectual beliefs and the institutions that promote them: think of "The Canterbury Tales"; Christopher Hitchens; or the Flying Spaghetti Monster, the satirical god invented to lampoon creationism. But this gentle, enjoyable parody owes more to "The Simpsons," and to Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman's "Good Omens." Rich isn't interested in condemning religion — he just wants to have fun with it, using the Bible as an outrageous vehicle with which to present, in his own odd way, questions about faith and human nature. Funny and occasionally touching, "What in God's Name" is satire that avoids sanctimony.

The book is far from evangelical — to some it will be downright heretical — but it's not entirely secular, either. Its main characters are Craig and Eliza, two cubicle-dwelling angels from the Department of Miracles, whose main assignment is reuniting Lynyrd Skynyrd. Thanks to a bargain with God, the angels have the chance to save Earth, if they can get the world's two shyest humans to fall in love. Craig and Eliza are as flawed as the mortals they seek to help, subject to the same wild emotions, insecurities and jealousies. Their fallibilities make them comical but also sympathetic and recognizable.

***Patrick Cassels** is a writer and performer at CollegeHumor.com.*

At one point, Craig grapples with the moral ambiguity of miracles after helping students of a school for the blind win their first wrestling match. "The victory dealt a major psychological blow to their sighted opponents, one of whom had lost to a blind child in front of his parents," Craig recalls. "Was it still a miracle if someone had to suffer?"

Rich has created a satirical sandbox in which to play with the Bible's assertions. His imagined situations read like sketches he might have conceived at his old job as a writer for "Saturday Night Live." (In fact, some of the novel's gags first appeared in his debut collection, "Ant Farm.") God, a Nascar fan, orders an angel to send a car into a fiery crash, clearing the way for his favorite driver. In a post-race interview, the winner thanks God ("I couldn't have done it without him"), and so the gruesome logistics behind a sports cliché are laid bare. Later, God checks in with a poorly chosen prophet: a lunatic who passes along his Lord's message by tossing on a tinfoil hat and scrawling (truthfully) "The End Is Near" on a cardboard sign.



Paradise is a corporation whose chief executive decides to retire and open a fusion restaurant.

The novel's secular bite is most evident in scenes like these, but Rich knows how to balance the smart with the funny. When "What in God's Name" bares its teeth, it's because it's laughing. □



New Blood

Carlos Fuentes's Dracula is house hunting in Mexico City.

BY JEFF VANDERMEER

WHEN Carlos Fuentes died in May at age 83, he left behind an impressive legacy and an eclectic body of work. Novels like the sprawling, Joycean "Terra Nostra" placed him at the center of the Latin American Boom of the 1970s, alongside such greats as Cortázar and García Márquez. But later books were often just as ambitious, returning to themes like the corruption of ideals.

The short novel "Vlad" (first published in Spanish as part of Fuentes's 2004 collection "Inquieta Compañía") provides ample evidence of Fuentes's powerful abilities. The book documents the "awful adventure" of Yves Navarro after his wife helps a respected lawyer find a house in Mexico City for a mysterious European refugee, Vladimir Radu, later revealed to be the infamous historical figure turned vampire Vlad the Impaler.

Dark humor dominates the novel's early pages, with Navarro mystified by the client's requests for a house that is "remote . . . easy to defend against intruders . . . with a ravine out back." The client also wants blackened windows and an escape tunnel. During Navarro's initial visit, he notices that "a great number of drains ran along the walls of the ground floor, as though our client was expecting a flood any day now." Radu wears a ridiculous wig and glue-on mustache, and his manservant's demeanor owes no small debt to Marty Feldman's performance in "Young Frankenstein."

From the disconnect between what the narrator knows (nothing) and what the reader understands (everything), Fuentes nurses both comedy and foreboding. "Tell your wife that I am breathing her scent," Radu says to Navarro, and the discombobulated husband replies: "Yes, I will. How very gallant."

Fuentes clearly knew that farce can become repetitious, and he layers in perfectly realized glimpses of the relationship between Navarro and his wife, Asunción. He revels in the details of their boisterous love life and long breakfasts. He also adds emotional impact through an account of the drowning death of the couple's son. "The sea never returned him," Navarro says. "And so his absence was doubled. Asunción and I do not have any memory, as terrible as it would be, of a dead body. . . . I am incapable of hearing the break of a wave without thinking that a trace of my son, turned to salt and foam, is coming back to us."

***Jeff VanderMeer's** most recent novel is "Finch." With his wife, Ann VanderMeer, he edited "The Weird: A Compendium of Strange and Dark Stories."*

VLAD
By Carlos Fuentes.
Translated by E. Shaskan Bumas and Alejandro Branger.
122 pp. Dalkey Archive Press. $17.95.

This sense of sadness becomes infused with creepiness and fear when Radu surreptitiously enters the couple's sanctuary: "From then on, the bedroom was no longer mine. It became a strange room because someone had walked out." Later, when Asunción goes missing, along with their daughter, Navarro chooses to interpret his search for them as "the greatest moment of our love." But all is not as it seems, and the statement so misjudges his relationship with Asunción that those words encapsulate both the earnestness and absurdity of the novel.

"Vlad" inevitably shifts toward the Grand Guignol and the decadent despite such personal moments. A meal of organs, the glimpsed remains of a "huge, indescribable animal" and a cache of subterranean coffins are all vampire clichés, but somehow Fuentes refreshes tired tropes. The novel is genuinely scary.

The final act is ushered in with a sweeping litany of Vlad's evil history, followed by truly unexpected horrors — including the gratuitous use of squirrels in a sequence in which "campy" and "surreal" more or less French kiss. When rodents are being shoved down your pants, you know things aren't going to end well.

Will readers appreciate a novel that pivots between hilarity and fear, insightful characterization and flamboyant fountains of blood? Let's hope so, because "Vlad" displays the strengths of a great writer's late oeuvre to excellent effect. □

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPH NIEMANN
PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON RICH, LEFT, BY MELISSA FULLER; CARLOS FUENTES BY PAULINA LAVISTA

As someone who for the past thirty years has been a full-time writer--one friend always describes me as "self-unemployed"--it's unusual for me to be up here talking about writing instead of planting myself in my chair and making the keyboard say the words.

There's also the matter that an uninvited ghost comes with me these days. I've been thinking toward a book which would take place during the Cuban missile crisis, on ~~a military~~ an Air Force base--where I was, myself, in boot camp training as a young "airman basic." ("Basic" barely said it.) The book seems to want to begin with a scene that is very much in my memory--it's a military base in west Texas; out the window, on what passes for a hill in Texas, a radar dish endlessly pivoted as if slapped back and forth by the wind, and there in the classroom the platoon of us are receiving a first-aid lecture from a dangerous-~~seeming~~ looking sergeant, who every so often interrupts his instructions on what we are to do if a rattlesnake bites us, to yell at us: "Airmen, do you hear my talkin'?"

In the scene in the book in my head, ~~48~~ 46 of the ~~50~~ 48 airmen in the platoon sit up at attention and ~~shout back~~ recite, "Yes, sir!" If I write that book, it will of course have to be about the two who don't, won't it.

Anyway, the haunting memory of that sergeant makes me determined to let the writing do as much talking, up here, as possible. Toward that end, I'm going to start this session by reading the opening scene of a book I've just done--a novel called Mountain Time, which is being published by Scribner the first of August. It's about ten minutes of hearing not "my talkin'" but my writing, in which I would ask you to listen for certain things that I believe a writer has to try to do at the start of a novel:

First --Play God with the characters. Whether it takes you 7 days to create them or 7 years, they've got to be alive and tantalizing in that new world that is the opening of a book.

Second --Justify the book's point of view: its narration strategy. If it's an omniscient narration, for instance, it has to be able to tell us something worth hearing that the characters themselves don't know. ("Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.") If it's a first-person narrator, he has to be more than a motormouth.

Write on board?

Third --Get the plot into gear, even if it's only low gear, at first.

Fourth --Establish the place, the setting.

--And last but not ~~least~~ on the short list here, find the voice. The style. The tone the book is going to have.

So, if you will now bend an ear toward a few questions of this sort in the material I'll read--who is being presented? how is he (the author) making it sound the way it does? what's being promised?--I'll come back to this list for a few minutes when I'm done, and try to show you some of the makings I've used, then we can advance to whatever questions you'd like to ask about the so-called writing life.

go back to blackboard (pause)

Okay, fairly quickly, some of those makings--the ingredients--I use, in trying to come up with:

Characters: (

What do they look like? (I make it a rule not to use my friends. All other faces are fair game; people I see on the street, or even in audiences...) I keep files of faces. Find 'em in old photo albums in archives, old magazines or history books maybe. I brought a couple of examples today as a dab of show-and-tell, and we'll circulate them here so you can have a look. The photograph, of the boy in bib overalls--this is a face I instantly fell for. I grafted it onto my narrator's best friend in my novel English Creek, in this passage: (p. 172, EC)

I will point out that I didn't just accidentally find that face. I was specifically looking through the Depression-era photos done by Dorothea Lange, because I knew she was great with faces. Here, though, is a facial feature I did come across in a history book: notice the long upper lip on this famous Scotchman, Thomas Carlyle, which I gave to Lexa's ancestors and her.

(pause) #

How do they speak, these characters? By the various ventriloquisms the writer hones for them. You heard a bit of back-and-forth between Lexa and Mitch, people who have been into relationships before and now before they start living together they want to know who's going to do the laundry, who's going to do Sunday breakfasts--Baby Boomer generation speak. (By the way, I did swipe from a pair of friends that deal that one of them would do the laundry for a year, then the other one would do it for a year. Their relationship did not flourish.)

And it does matter, I'm utterly convinced, how characters speak on the page, even minor characters. Later in this book Mitch, who is an environmental reporter, fifty years old, has to share his cubicle at the newspaper with a

just-out-of-college young woman of a certain type, who is the new video reviewer--she won't review anything shot in black-and-white, history for her begins with Technicolor. For various reasons Mitch is having an awful time getting his assigned story, WRITTEN and comes the moment--as a reader you can kind of see it coming, I intended it that way--when she's going to ask if he has writer's block. But that can be asked any number of different ways, can't it. I can hear it done by one of the voices I talk to at New York publishing houses--"So what are you, blocked?" Or in a western voice of people I grew up around in the Rockies: "Are you standing there in your tracks telling me you can't so much as write a single word--you're blocked?" But in Shyanne's generational and regional case, she has to say it in the pattern that my research--also known as shameless eavesdropping--indicates she would have, in 1996, in Seattle: "Are you like blocked?" (write it on board instead of saying) Back up to ob...

--The next point I had mentioned, early on, the narrational point of view. I'll be glad to talk more about this during the questions if you'd like, but for now I'll just point out what I see as the essential differences--an omniscient narration can be everywhere and know everything, while a first-person narrator, while more limited in scope, can give more immediacy to the story, with the use of I. (I've written in each.)

(pause)

--Getting the plot going...You heard, tucked away on the second page of the scene I read, the phrase "when she and Mitch Rozier swallowed away what they had done to Travis." That isn't in there by accident. I hope you also were able to pick up a hint of the sisterly situation in the plot--one McCaskill sister, glamorous Mariah, out globe-trotting as a photographer, has it made, one to go.

--Establishing the setting, the place where the story happens. I happen to think this is crucial to what's called the literature of the American West. All of us in this room live in the West--we know that out here you cannot hide from the geography or the weather. To me it's simply a necessary part of the characters' lives that they deal with the land around them when they can, try to endure when they cannot. (Mt. St. Helens)

--Finally, the voice. The style of language used for the book. This has to do with word choice and sentence patterns. You should be able to tell from the voice something about the attitude, the personality, the era in which the book is set--where the writer and the book are coming from. Think of the style, say, of Henry James, those 19th century, ~~elongated~~ endlessly calibrated sentences--it's been said of his prose that it chews more than it can bite off--compared to the whipcrack sentences of Annie Proulx: Just one example from her novel The Shipping News "Here is an account of a few years in the life of Coyle, born in Brooklyn and raised in a shuffle of dreary upstate towns." (wonderful use of shuffle (card-playing & shuffling along)

Let me close, on this note, by pointing out that the voice of a piece is truly worth working at, working over, reworking until you get you want it. When Charles Dickens wrote his first draft of "A Carol," he had Scrooge grumble "Humbug" when he was wished a merry The voice we remember in that story came when Dickens went back in, "Bah."

end here?

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from Reading, Writing, and the Study of Literature

ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE (PP. 27-41)

1. Character.

"Traditionally, character has been regardéd as the most important component of literature." How does the writer go about developing the characters? When are they introduced?

How do they speak?
What do they look like? (I make it a rule not to use my friends. All other faces
How do they act? are fair game; people I see on the street, or even in audiences...)

2. Plot. Plot generally involves both what happens and why. The term causation is often used.

Seldom is the plot the most significant component of a story. However, the art of storytelling involves the creation of an entire world, and significant events are evidence of a world in motion. Events may cause people to change, andmost literature is about change.

3. Point of view.

Who is speaking? (narrating) What can they know? What do they choose to reveal? What do their speech patterns tell about them?

As already noted, a third person, omniscient narrator can be everywhere and know everything.

A first-person narrator is more limited in scope, but gives immediacy to the story, with the use of I,

4. Setting. Where the story happens. The background against which the action of the narrative occurs. Setting is crucial to what we are calling the literature of the American West. People cannot hide from the geography or the weather; they must deal with it when they can, try to endure when they cannot.

5. Style.

Sometimes calledx voice, this has to do with word choice and sentence patterns. You should be able to tell from the voice something about the attitude, the personality, the level of education, xx the era in which it is set.

6. Symbolism. A symbol is a figure of speech that combines a literal, concrete quality with a suggestive abstract dimension. e.g. snow as a symbol of death, spring as a symbol of rebirth.

Some authors self-consciously use symbolism. Other, such as Ivan Doig, will testify to not using symbolism.

7. Theme. What the story ultimately means. This is not simple, and we shouldn't feel forced to find themes, any more than we are obliged to find symbolism. But themes emerge in most high-quality literature, and when we finish each book we may be able to make some broad conclusions.

So let's concentrate on the first five, and if the [illegible]

Craft class:

I've been a full-time writer for most of my life now--one annoying friend keeps describing me as self-unemployed--so it's unusual for me to be up here talking about writing instead of planting myself alone in my desk chair and making the keyboard say some words. But let's divide this session into some thoughts I have about a few of the things that might help out with a piece of writing, and then your questions about anything related to the so-called writing life--could be we'll learn something from the questions, whether or not anybody gets anything out of my answers.

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It seems to me there are a couple of reasonable ways I could try to lay out some aspects of the writing process for you, and I'm probably not going to do either. One would be to go through element-by-element the seven pillars of literature--character, plot, point of view, setting, style, symbolism, and theme--but I'd rather approach any of those through your questions, if you'd like, so that we can try to get to the specifics of those that matter to you rather than to me. The other way to go about it would be to try to poke around in my head, on that question I get asked at almost every bookstore appearance or reading, "Where do you get your ideas?" But that particular question always reminds me of the

answer the great jazzman, Duke Ellington, would give when he was asked something like that: he'd say, "That question has no future." If you have some specific angle of inquiry on something I've done in writing--when you want to know, "Where the hell did you get that?"--sure, I'll try to dig around in myself and tell you as best I know. But I find that a surprising amount of ideas come out the ends of my fingers, from sitting there working at the writing.

So, what I'd like to do instead of either of those more classroomy approaches is to talk a little about the insides of language--some of the properties or linguistic elements available

to the writer. Wordplay, it could be called. If you want to do any writing that counts for anything, you need to be in love with words, crazy about the language, and willing to let it drive you a little crazy. It's a lot like a romance. But I hope a bit more straightforward in its makings.

One of the insides of language that's available to everybody, it's right around you every day, is the slang of the group you hang out with. [Kids: I suspect an example is no farther away than your cell phone.] These private modes of communication, I suppose you could call them, are the language trying to enliven itself, or

excel itself, within a like-minded group. Every group with some kind of common interest or age-level or occupation does this.

--Students: **[on board]** Ace-Bullet-Hook (C)-Death-Flag

--A couple of eternal topics that produce student slang, money and music. Not many years ago my wife's community college students would have said, "You've got to have felony snaps to get the cuts." ["You've got to have a lot of money to buy the music.] And one I get a kick out of: "Buxtehude" **[on board]** was a 17th-century composer, and a couple of generations ago, the music students at Juilliard fastened onto his name as a slang for cash--"You got any Buxtehude?" [Tuesday class: they

even conjured up what kind of car he drove back there in the 1600s--a Buxtehudebaker.]

Computer geeks, cowboys, soldiers, jazz musicians, you name it, they've got their own slang--inside the main written or spoken language, these sayings, these private twists of the tongue . Well, so what? So there's a source of dialogue for you to plug into, as a writer. Whether it's for a piece of fiction, or it could even be poetry, [kids: or a feature article for your school newspaper or Website], or your own journal or diary or Web-log, one of the things you can do to capture the truth of the moment in time is to record, in your writing, exactly how people talk. Besides giving

you a way to push the boundaries of your own vocabulary as a writer, attention to these 'inside lingos' can help you sketch in your characters there on the page. A couple of examples:

--In the book I've just written, one of the characters is a ranch worker in the 1920s who happens to have a terrific singing voice but hasn't had any training at all. When the woman who is trying to give him voice lessons tells him, all right, he's advanced to the point where she can start to play piano accompaniment for him, he tells her: **[on board]** "I haven't ever sang with a piana." Notice, not "I haven't ever sang with a piano"--guys in the bunkhouses of Montana ranches of the 1920's called that

instrument a piana, I know because I was around those old guys when I was growing up on ranches there, my dad was one of that bunkhouse gang. And so throughout the book it's a mark of this character--where he came from, how his language was shaped back there on the ranch--that he always says "piana." He's still saying it when he makes it to Carnegie Hall.

Or, let's take the writing problem I faced with this book. [The Sea Runners] Characters of the 19th century... [plot summary] How do they talk?

--Well, for one thing they would probably be accustomed to proverbs; they'd be country people, in that era of history when

most people were, and their talk would be full of rural flavor, sayings drawn from nature. ["Make hay while the sun shines."]

So I consciously flavored their dialogue a bit with occasional proverbs... "Sick as a dog on grass"... [read March 10 '81 journal entry]

--And you can give a kind of signature to the way each individual character talks. As with all of this, you don't want to overdo, you don't want to pour it all over every character all the time, but you can sometimes do a dab of it to help a character come alive in the reader's mind.

--Wennberg's double contractions [p. 45 & p. 252]

--Ninian's "Ay" and Lucas's "ay?"

So, part of writing is doing something good with the language of your characters. The other part is the writer's language.

The writer's job is to make sounds on paper. Could be the computer screen, rather than paper, these days, but either way, to make sounds that meet the eye. Let me show you a few examples of details on the page that help makes the sounds of the story, as the reader hears it.

--[Blake poem **on board**: kids, think of it as rap. Use poem blue sheet]

Sea Runners, p. 147--Wennberg, "much"...

The tools of poetry, or music, shouldn't be forgotten by a writer, even if you're not writing poems. Here's a little example from this same book:

--p. 70--*Palong! Palong!* (not Bong! Bong!--I went to Sitka, I heard those chimes at midnight...)

Run those last words through your head again:

"who **sneak** a**bout** the **street** at **night**"... Hear it?

"whose **woods** these **are** I **think** I **know**"...

"To **be** or **not** to **be**--that **is** the ques**tion**"

It's iambic, isn't it--an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable-- as in iambic pentameter, a deliberate poetic beat. There's no reason you can't use a little poetry under the prose, sometimes, if it'll give you a sentence that registers better in the reader's mind.

The order of words in a sentence is another thing you can tinker with, carefully. An opening sentence that I think works really well, that starts us right into the situation of the story and the voice in which it's being told, is the start of William Faulkner's novella, **The Bear**:

"There was a man and a dog too this time."

You can see some of the things that saying it just that way do:

--it immediately implies, "What about the other times? Didn't have a dog, the other times he was out after that bear? Wow, what's this dog going to do, how's he going to make the difference in the bear hunt?"

--and it puts a kind of urgency, an immediate sense of determination, a terseness of purpose, into the narrative voice--"By god, a man and dog too, this time--we'll show that bear." You can't quite get the same effect by arranging the words of that sentence any differently:

"This time there was a dog with the man."

"The man had a dog with him this time."

"A dog accompanied the man this time."

None of those have quite the acceleration and the kick there in the tail of the sentence, of "There was a man and a dog too this time."

Besides the words within a sentence, sometimes the way you arrange the length of sentences on the page helps tell the reader--maybe unconsciously but subliminally, something is going on there--the mood of that part of the piece of writing, the effect you want to have there.

--English Creek, p. 199: Jick's mounting exasperation, half a Christmas tree...

-- English Creek, p. 190: spaced-apart words to mimick how the inept rodeo announcer sounds...

[If time allows: The Commitments, mimicking music by how the words are placed on the page...]

Let me just fairly quickly mention a couple of other ways the insides of language can be used to put across the mood or effect you want...

-- English Creek, p. 226: Wisdom Johnson soaking himself sober...

This is alliteration, two or more words having the same initial sound...

For some reason book reviewers hate this. They tend to jump on a writer for it unmercifully--I think because it's an easy target, "Oh, look there, the guy is playing around with alliteration"--but as far as I can tell, readers like it just fine. And real grown-up writers do use it--"Stumbling upon the blood dark track": that's from a poem by Yeats, alliterating tooth and nail. I think alliteration is a natural human tendency, playing around with similar sounds--it's the same impulse as behind puns, I suppose--

and you can sometimes get an interesting set of words to slip into your writing --for, say, emphasis--from it.

And something I work with a lot, the rhythm of sentences. One quick example, how the rhythm of a sentence can echo the action being written about...

--Heart Earth, p, 8

I think you can hear how that long sentence about “pinballing down through the West” moves kind of like a pinball itself, back and forth, pausing a little, and finally rolls to a halt as we ourselves did in that Ford coupe.

This is probably as good a spot as any to turn to what's on your minds--your questions about the so-called writing life.

Put on board:

A piana

B

C

D

F

Buxtehude

Bring me my bow of burning gold!

Bring me my arrows of desire!

Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!

Bring me my chariot of fire!

-Besides them flinging around proverbs, I was pretty sure these guys wouldn't have had clean mouths. Profanity, obscenity, swearing, cussing--call it what you will, but their bunkhouse there at one of the armpits of the world would not have been full of polite language. But it was a hundred and fifty years ago--what did they say, in those days? I'm not going to give you examples I came up with--we don't need the wrath of the school board on our heads here--but I do want to point out part of my job as a writer was to try to find out how Swedes and Russians of 1853 might have cussed--and among other things, there was a scholarly journal I could resort to: Maledicta, the Journal of Verbal Abuse.

A number of years ago I was in Australia, and the terrific Aus'n fiction writer Tim Winton told me, "Ivan, old cobber, I've found the greatest thing to write with." Tim is probably half my age and has already written about as many books as I have, including a tremendous novel with ~~about~~ two big families as main characters and devastating language thru the whole novel. "What's this magical instrument then, Tim" I asked, expecting to hear about some software that would leave me farther in the dust. "A fountain pen. I can write as fast with it as I can move my hand." When you think about it, that's fast, so whatever it takes.

The 'Ulysses' of Mississippi

The greatest Southern novel was written more than 75 years ago — yet it remains the most serious attempt by any writer to deal with the madness of race in America.

By JOHN JEREMIAH SULLIVAN

A poll of well over a hundred writers and critics, taken a few years back by Oxford American magazine, named William Faulkner's "Absalom, Absalom!" the "greatest Southern novel ever written," by a decisive margin — and the poll was conducted while looking back on a century in which a disproportionate number of the best American books were Southern — so to say that this novel requires no introduction is just to speak plainly.

Of course, it's the kind of book a person *would* put first in a poll like that. You can feel reasonably confident, in voting for it, that nobody quite fathoms it enough to question its achievement. Self-consciously ambitious and structurally complex (*unintelligible,* a subset of not unsophisticated readers has always maintained), "Absalom, Absalom!" partakes of what the critic Irving Howe called "a fearful impressiveness," the sort that "comes when a writer has driven his vision to an extreme." It may represent the closest American literature came to producing an analog for "Ulysses," which influenced it deeply — each in its way is a provincial Modernist novel about a young man trying to awaken from history — and like "Ulysses," it lives as a book more praised than read, or more esteemed than enjoyed.

But good writers don't look for *impressedness* in their readers — it's at best another layer of distortion — and "greatness" can leave a book isolated in much the way it can a human being. (Surely a reason so many have turned away from "Ulysses" over the last near-hundred years is that they can't read it without a suffocating sense of each word's cultural importance and their duty to respond, a shame in that case, given how often Joyce was trying to be amusing.) A good writer wants from us — or has no right to ask more than — intelligence, good faith and time. A legitimate question to ask is, What happens with "Absalom, Absalom!" if we set aside its laurels and apply those things instead? What has Faulkner left us?

A prose of exceptional vividness, for one thing. The same few passages, in the very first pages, remind me of this — they're markings on an entryway — sudden bursts of bristly adjective clusters. The September afternoon on which the book opens in a "dim hot airless" room is described as "long still hot weary dead." If you've ever taken a creative-writing workshop, you've been warned never to do this, pile up adjectives, interpose descriptive terms between the reader's imagination and the scene. But here something's different. Faulkner's choices are so precise, and his juxtaposition of the words so careful in conditioning our sense reception, that he doesn't so much solve as overpower the problem. The sparrows flying into the window trellis beat their wings with a sound that's "dry vivid dusty," each syllable a note in a chord he's forming. The Civil War ghosts that haunt the room are "garrulous outraged baffled."

The rules Faulkner doesn't ignore in this novel he tends to obliterate. The plot, for instance. There is none. He tells us on the third page (in italics) pretty much everything that will happen in the book, actionwise. If you ever feel lost, you can refer back to it, a little not-even-paragraph that begins, *"It seems that this demon — his name was Sutpen — "*

A fundamental law of storytelling is: withhold information. As the writer Paul Metcalf put it, "The only real work in creative endeavor is keeping things from falling together too soon." What we discover, though, on advancing into the novel's maze, is that Faulkner has given nothing away, not of the things he most values. He's not concerned with holding us in suspense over the unearthing of events but in keeping us transfixed, as he goes about excavating the soil beneath them, and tracing their post-mortem effects (embodied, perhaps, by the worm that comes to light in a shovelful of dirt, "doubtless alive when the clod was thrown up though by afternoon it was frozen again"). The nightmare of the Southern past exists — an accomplished thing. To delve into the nature of the tragedy is the novel's drama.

For the same reason, we can gloss the book's narrative without fear of spoiling anything. In 1909 a boy from the South named Quentin goes north to Harvard. A brooding, melancholy boy — if we had been following Faulkner's work in 1936, when "Absalom, Absalom!" appeared, we would know that Quentin is preparing to kill himself (the act occurs in "The Sound and the Fury," published several years before), and so he is, in a certain respect, already dead, a ghost narrator. But for now he remains somewhat ambiguously alive. (And who knows, the universe of imaginative fiction functions differently: in this incarnation, he may survive.)

He has a Canadian roommate named Shreve — not an American Yankee, to whom the South might seem offensive (or worse, romantic), but a true foreigner, for whom it is appropriately bizarre. All of America is a South to Shreve. He is like us: he needs to have things explained. "What is it?" he asks Quentin about the South, "something you live and breathe in like air?" In a series of halting exchanges,

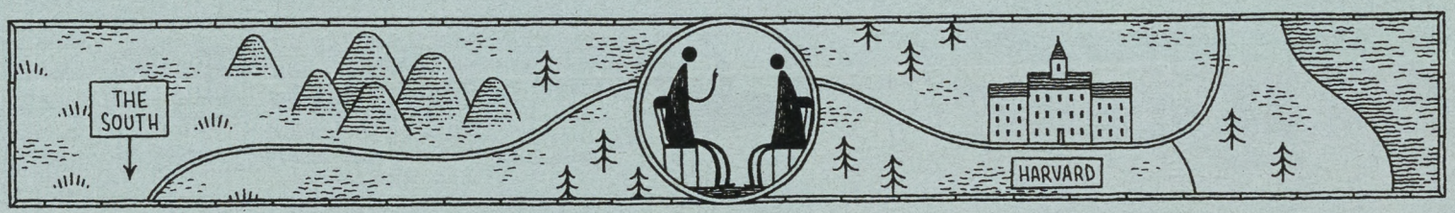


ILLUSTRATION BY TOM GAULD

This essay is adapted from the foreword to the new Modern Library edition of "Absalom, Absalom!" to be published by Random House in July.

Quentin tries to answer, about the South and what it does to people. "I am older at 20 than a lot of people who have died," he deadpans.

Quentin tells Shreve a story from his hometown in Mississippi, about a visit he paid earlier that year to an old woman he knows as Miss Rosa. She in turn had told him — indeed, had summoned him in order to entrust him with — another story, one from long ago, before the Civil War. The shape of the novel, then: a shifting frame (Quentin's disintegrating mind) inside of which plays out a historical novel, with narrators of varying reliabilities, and some chronological jumping around, never violent.

Quentin has gleaned parts of this tale from his father and grandfather, from letters and in-town gossip. This is what Quentin is, we start to see, and what Southerners are or used to be: walking concatenations of stories, drawn or more often inherited from the chaos of the past, and invested here with a special, doom-laden meaning, the nostalgia that borders on nausea — the quality that most truly sets the South apart from other regions, its sheer investment in the meaning of itself. In Quentin this condition has reached the level of pathology.

prisoner-transport ship, and that he grew up in a cabin in the backcountry (in what would become West Virginia), and that he spent time in Haiti. These details point back to the earliest South: the English coastal colonies, as an extension of the West Indian world (many of the first Virginians and Carolinians were born not in the Old World but on the islands). Sutpen arrives with a band of "wild" African slaves, most of whom are unfamiliar with any European tongue: they speak in an island Creole. In buying his land, which he calls "Sutpen's Hundred" — the name itself a straining toward colonial affectation — he treats not with a white man but with a local Indian chief, a Chickasaw.

What Faulkner gains from this bundle of references is a suggestion of cycles, of something ongoing. As the Southern frontier murders its way west over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries — a phase absent to the point of amnesia from our national memory, but which re-emerges here like a wriggling worm — the region keeps generating Sutpens, repeating its themes: Indian removal, class resentment and land hunger, as well as a stubborn race hatred that coexists with intense racial intimacy.

NO BOOK THAT TRIES TO DISSECT THE SOUTH'S PSYCHE CAN OVERLOOK ITS FOUNDING NEUROSIS: MISCEGENATION.

breach. On the basis of pure social abstraction, Sutpen has spurned his own child, his first son.

He remarries in Mississippi, with Miss Rosa's older sister. They have two children, a boy and a girl. Now Sutpen has land, a mansion and progeny. He is almost there, almost a baron. We're not absurd to think of Gatsby here; one of the most perceptive recent statements on "Absalom, Absalom!" was made by the scholar Fred C. Hobson in 2003, a simple-seeming statement and somehow one of the strangest



Miss Rosa's story, which she has gnawed on most of her life — "grim haggard amazed" — concerns a man named Thomas Sutpen, a shack-born Virginian who appeared in their county in 1833, peremptorily bought an enormous tract of land and set about trying to create a plantation dynasty. You can find readings of "Absalom, Absalom!" that identify Sutpen as the novel's main character, but it's not really even correct to call him a character. Quentin is a character: he's conflicted. It's what he can *make* of Sutpen that will come to absorb us. Sutpen himself inhabits the novel like a figure in an Egyptian frieze. His beard possesses greater reality than his mind and heart. He has no motives, or rather, he has only the uncomplicated motive of ambition. The novel speaks of his "innocence," meaning in this case not that he is free from sin but that he knows only the sins of children, of wanting more and to be first. The sort of innocence that wreaks destruction.

Faulkner makes a set of choices, in reconstructing Sutpen's past, that ought to draw our attention. He tells us that Sutpen's Ur-ancestor probably landed in Jamestown on a

Faulkner needed Sutpen's story to be not just authentically but intrinsically Southern this way, less a symbol than an *instance* of the Southern principle. Only then does it make an adequate object for Quentin to fixate upon and go mad contemplating.

No book that tries to dissect the South's psyche like that can overlook its founding obsession: miscegenation. There we reach the novel's deepest concern, the fixed point around which the storm of its language revolves. After Sutpen ran off to Haiti as a young man — it emerges that a humiliating boyhood experience, of hearing a black slave tell him to use the back door of a big house (he wasn't good enough for the front), had produced a shock that propelled him to flee — he married a girl there and fathered a son with her. Soon, however, he discovered that she had black blood, and that his son was therefore mixed, so he renounced them both. He sailed back to the South to become a planter. A plausible thing for a white Southern male to have done in the early 19th century. But what Faulkner doesn't forget, and doesn't want us to, is the radical amorality of the

things a person could say about the book, that it is "a novel about the American dream."

As in any good book of that type, the past hunts Sutpen and finds him: His son, Henry, goes off to the fledgling University of Mississippi, where he befriends another man, Charles Bon. On a holiday visit to Sutpen's Hundred, Bon meets Henry's sister, Judith, and falls in love with her — or makes up his mind to possess her. What Henry and Judith don't know is that Bon is Sutpen's abandoned Haitian son, come to Mississippi via New Orleans, evidently in a sort of half-conscious, all but sleepwalking quest to find his father. Charles Bon is thus both half-black and Judith's half-brother.

Henry inevitably realizes the truth, and that he cannot allow Bon to marry his sister. At the same time, he loves Bon — they have a blood bond in more than one sense. When the war breaks out, they sign up together to fight against the North, suffering alongside each other. But the whole time they're gone to war, Bon is thinking of Judith, and when the two young men at last ride back to Mississippi, Henry knows he must act.

There follows what is arguably the climax of the novel, although by the time we get there, we've rehearsed its import more than once. Quentin recounts it to Shreve in a trance, there at Harvard, almost a half-century later, the two of them becoming through a form of transubstantiation not themselves but Henry and Bon. "Happen is never once," Faulkner says.

" — *You shall not*," Henry tells Bon, meaning, you shall not marry my sister.

— Who will stop me, Henry?

— No, Henry says. — No. No. No.

Now it is Bon who watches Henry; he can see the whites of Henry's eyes again as he sits looking at Henry with that expression which might be called smiling. His hand vanishes beneath the blanket and reappears, holding his pistol by the barrel, the butt extended toward Henry.

— Then do it now, he says.

Henry looks at the pistol; now he is not only panting, he is trembling [. . .]

— You are my brother.

— No I'm not. I'm the nigger that's going to sleep with your sister. Unless you stop me, Henry.

This is a novel that uses the word "nigger" many times. An unfortunate subject, but to talk about it in 2012 and not mention the fact hints at some kind of repression. Especially when you consider that the particular example I've quoted is atypically soft: Bon, the person saying it, is part black, and being mordantly ironic. Most of the time, it's a white character using the word — or, most conspicuously, the novel itself, in its voice — with an uglier edge. The third page features the phrase "wild niggers"; elsewhere it's "monkey nigger."

Faulkner wasn't unique or even uncommon in using the word this way. Hemingway, Dos Passos, Gertrude Stein — all did so unapologetically. They were reflecting their country's speech. They were also, if we are being frank, exploiting the word's particular taboo charge, one only intensified when the writer is a white Southerner. Faulkner says "Negroes" in plenty of places here, also "blacks," but when he wants a stronger effect, he says "niggers." It isn't a case, in short, of *That's just how they talked back then*. The term was understood by the mid-'30s (well before, in fact) to be nasty. A white person wouldn't use it around a black person unless meaning to offend or assert superiority — except perhaps now and then in the context of an especially close humor.

Even if we were to justify Faulkner's overindulgence of the word on the grounds of historical context, I would find it unfortunate purely as a matter of style. It may be crass for a white reader to claim that as significant, but a writer with Faulkner's sensitivity to verbal shading might have been better tuned to the ugliness of the word, and not a truth-revealing ugliness, but something more like gratuitousness, with an attending queasy sense of rhetorical power misused. I count it a weakness, to be placed alongside Faulkner's occasional showiness and his incessant "not" constructions, which come often several to a page: "and not this, nor that, nor even the other thing, but a fourth thing — adjective adjective adjective — made him lift the hoe" (where half the time those things would not have occurred to you in your natural life, but old Pappy takes his time chopping them down anyway).

The defense to be mounted is not of Faulkner's use of the word but of the novel in spite of it, or rather, in the face of it. "Absalom, Absalom!" has been well described as the most serious attempt by any white writer to confront the problem of race in America. There is bravery in Faulkner's decision to dig into this wound. He knew that the effort would involve the exposure of his own mind, dark as it often was. You could make a case that to have written this book and left out that most awful of Southernisms would have constituted an act of falsity.

Certainly we would not want to take the word away from Bon, in that scene in the woods, one of the most extraordinary moments in Southern literature. A white man and a black man look at each other and call each other brother. One does, anyway. Suddenly, thrillingly, the whole social edifice on which the novel is erected starts to teeter. All Henry has to do is repeat himself. Say it again, the reader thinks. Say, "No, you are my brother." And all would be well, or could be well, the gothic farce of Sutpen's dream redeemed with those words, remade into a hopeful or at least not-hope-denying human story. Charles Bon would live, and Judith would be his wife, and Sutpen would have descendants, and together they might begin rebuilding the South along new lines. Granted Bon would still be marrying his half-sister, but that doesn't bother Henry very much (the book tells us so), and life is rarely perfect. There is nothing to keep Henry from saying it, to keep him from reaching out his hand to his black brother, nothing except the weight of the past, the fear of ridicule, his own weakness. Instead of his hand, Henry brings forth the pistol. The scene is one of the last things Quentin and Shreve speak of before the end, that is before Quentin tells us his final story — about the day his own destiny collided with that of the Sutpens. I haven't really told you everything up front, you see — and neither does Faulkner.

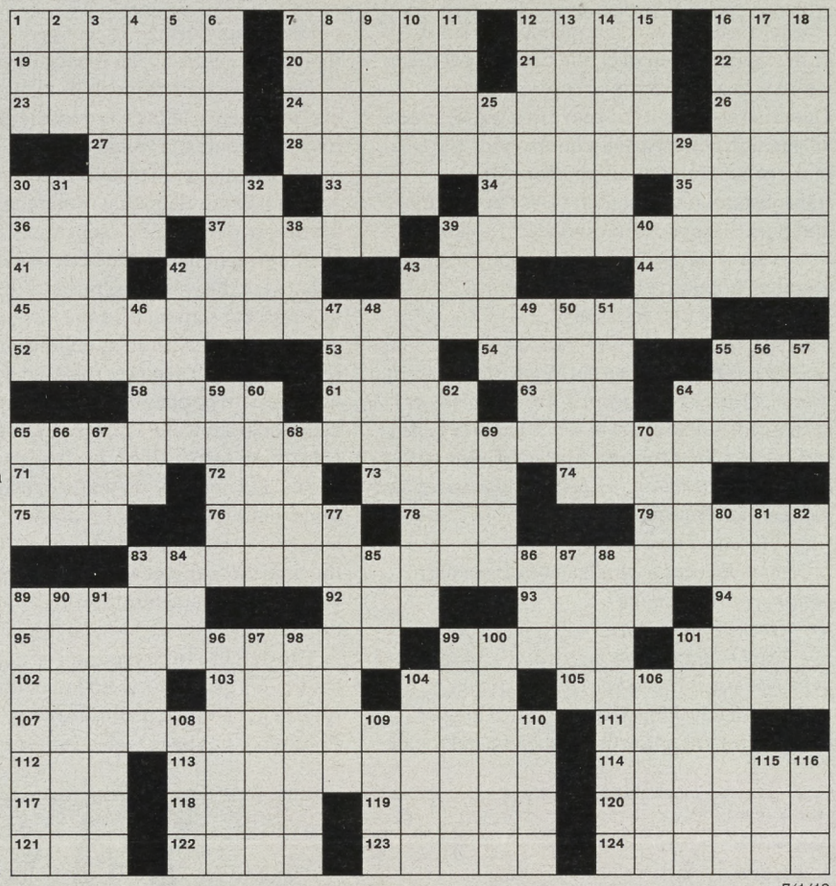
Even when he does tell you everything, you can't entirely trust it. No surer sign exists of the book's greatness than how it seems to reconfigure itself and assume a new dimension, once we feel we know it, and these shifting walls of ambiguity were designed by Faulkner himself. They allow the text a curious liquid quality, so that it can seem alive, as if it might be modified by recent history too. I found it fascinating to read the book with a president sitting in the White House who comes from a mixed-race marriage, and with the statistic having just been announced that for the first time in U.S. history, nonwhite births have surpassed white ones. Some of the myths out of which the novel weaves its upsetting dreams appear quite different, like walking by a familiar painting and finding that someone has altered it. This is a strange time to be alive in America, in that regard. Close one eye, and we can seem to be moving toward a one-race society; close the other and we seem as racially conflicted and stratified as ever. Racism is still our madness. The longer that remains the case, the more vital this book grows, for Faulkner is one of the great explorers of that madness.

The novel is about even more than that in the end. It attempts something that had never been tried before in the art of fiction, and as far as I know has never been since, not in so pure a form — to dramatize historical consciousness itself, not just human lives but the forest of time in which the whole notion of human life must find its only meaning. Not to have failed completely at such a task is indistinguishable from triumph. The South escaped itself in this book and became universal. ◆



YANKEE DOODLE DANDIES

By Dan Schoenholz / Edited by Will Shortz



7/1/12

ACROSS

1 Plays a siren
7 Gold Coast, today
12 Meander
16 It's a plus in a bank acct.
19 Noted landing site
20 Player of the younger Cunningham on "Happy Days"
21 Mach3 predecessor
22 "Yes, I'm a Witch" singer, 1992
23 __ Bay, 1898 battle site
24 Deliver
26 They push things
27 File folder, e.g.
28 President who was 65-Across (1872)
30 Heads up
33 Capital of Denmark?
34 Come to naught
35 Fermented honey drink
36 Where kips are cash
37 Observe, in the Bible
39 Presidential daughter who was 65-Across (1998)
41 First National Leaguer with 500 home runs
42 Act out
43 Staff
44 Some slippers
45 Novelist who was 65-Across (1804)
52 Early computer
53 Yevtushenko's "Babi __"
54 Red Cross supply
55 Word with black or pack
58 "The Haj" author
61 Long way to go?
63 Bill provider
64 __ Valley, 2002 Winter Olympics venue
65 See 28-, 39-, 45-, 83-, 95- and 107-Across
71 Plenty
72 Sri Lankan export
73 Film canine
74 "This is dedicated to the __ love"
75 Wordsworth's "solitary Tree"
76 Interpret
78 Article in Der Spiegel
79 Sweater style
83 Team owner who was 65-Across (1930)
89 Have __ one's words
92 Set-__
93 Sierra Nevada, e.g.
94 Building block, of sorts
95 Columnist who was 65-Across (1918)
99 Powerful blows
101 Attire usually worn with slippers
102 "Unfaithful" co-star, 2002
103 The final Mrs. Chaplin
104 Economic stat.
105 Initially
107 Literary critic who was 65-Across (1905)
111 Michigan college
112 When sung five times, an Abba hit
113 Electrical impulse conductor in the body
114 Riffraff
117 D.C. player
118 Knightwear?
119 Maytag acquisition of 2001
120 And others, in a footnote
121 Most of a figure eight
122 Coolers
123 Water balloon sound
124 Out

DOWN

1 Tufted topper
2 Chapter
3 Some large tubes
4 They might be inflated
5 Part of Tennyson's "crooked hands"
6 Pinch-hits (for)
7 Former financing inits.
8 Wannabe surfers
9 Cove, e.g.
10 Sucker-like
11 Years at the Vatican
12 Wily sort
13 10th-century Holy Roman emperor
14 Iris part
15 Clayey deposit
16 Conclude negotiations successfully
17 Chess closing
18 Impersonated
25 Bundles of joy, so to speak
29 Infuse
30 "Home __"
31 Lord of the Flies
32 Convoy component
38 Wide shoe spec
39 Wide-open mouth
40 Every, in an Rx
42 Lens used for close-ups
43 New World monkeys
46 Frequent
47 Singer Lovett
48 City on the slopes of Mount Carmel
49 What a thermometer measures
50 Garden chemical brand
51 One of the Estevez brothers
55 French game
56 Dish that may be smoked
57 Adjudge
59 Prelim
60 Range rover
62 Certain belly button
64 Magic lamp figure
65 Seabiscuit, for one
66 Crowd shout
67 Ticket datum
68 Den __, Nederland
69 Eastern royal
70 What a thermometer may measure
77 Get off at a station
80 Like adversity, one hopes
81 Mint products
82 Sausage topper
83 Ancient Greek anatomist
84 Seventh chapter
85 "I'll send an __ to the world" (Police lyric)
86 Bird's org.
87 Kind of test
88 Interstate sign
89 "Good night, and good luck," e.g.
90 Six Nations tribe
91 Becomes established
96 Like some mutual funds
97 West of Nashville
98 Registers
99 Air show maneuver
100 Actress Ryder
101 Kettledrum
104 Opposite of break apart
106 High-heels alternatives
108 Anarchist Goldman
109 Meadowlands
110 Punkie
115 "The dog ate my homework," probably
116 Literary inits.

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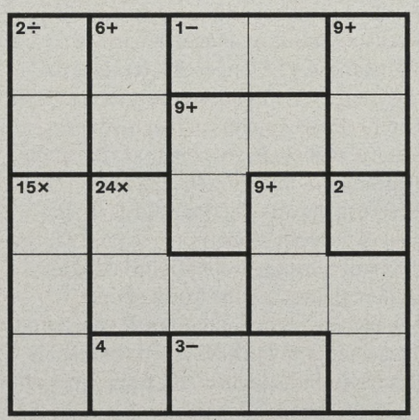
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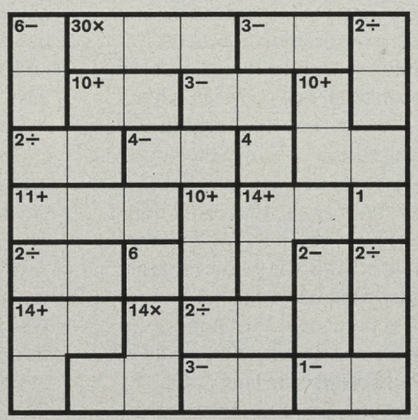
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Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 5×5 grid will use the digits 1–5. A 7×7 grid will use 1–7.





3	4	5	1	2
5	2	4	3	1
2	1	3	4	5
1	3	2	5	4
4	5	1	2	3

3	6	1	5	2	7	4
2	1	3	7	6	4	5
4	2	6	3	7	5	1
5	3	7	2	4	1	6
6	4	2	1	5	3	7
7	5	4	6	1	2	3
1	7	5	4	3	6	2

Answers to Previous Puzzles

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THE VARIETY PUZZLE IS ON PAGE 49; IT CAN ALSO BE FOUND ONLINE EVERY WEEK AT NYTIMES.COM/PUZZLES.

CLINTON

(Continued from Page 23)

state, inevitably, every day into your in-box comes a lot of really nasty problems, many of them intractable. The natural inclination is to run away from them. And I've never seen that in her."

When she gathered Burns and others in her office for a senior staff meeting at the start of this year, Clinton had neatly, compactly written out a to-do list that covered four yellow legal-pad pages. They went through it, nation by nation, conflict by conflict, not just the major ones in the news, but also those that have simmered for decades, like the partition of Cyprus.

It spoke to her focus and discipline, but also the urgency of time running out. Clinton has said many, many times — on the record, off the record — that she will step down at the end of Obama's first term, and yet few can imagine that will be the end of her political career. Such has been her success as secretary that when Obama's popularity ebbed last year, a spate of "what if" stories pondered whether she would have made a better president. Those were followed by more suggesting — fantasizing, really — that Obama would drop Biden and put her on the ticket this year. Clinton herself dismissed it as ridiculous, and senior White House officials told me that the notion misunderstood Obama's temperament and affection for Biden. Now there is speculation that she could mount a presidential bid in 2016, regardless of Obama's fate in November. Some administration officials privately acknowledge that she would instantly be the presumptive frontrunner, only 69 in November 2016 and more iconic than ever.

Meantime, for all the world's crises, Clinton seems to be enjoying herself immensely, more relaxed as America's top diplomat than perhaps at any other time in her public life. At the Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Colombia, in April — infamous now for the behavior of Secret Service agents detailed to protect the president — she joined her staff for a birthday party at a nightclub called Cafe Havana, where she danced and tossed back beer. ("Swillary," The New York Post declared.) Around the same time, two communications specialists in Washington, Adam Smith and Stacy Lambe, created an Internet meme with a black-and-white photo of Clinton in dark glasses, reading her Blackberry on the C-17 that took her to Libya last year. The two juxtaposed photographs of other officials and celebrities and imagined hilarious exchanges. "She's going to love the new Justin Bieber video!" one caption reads under a picture of Obama and Biden. "Back to work, boys," Clinton texts back. Far from taking offense or ignoring it, as she might once have, Clinton submitted her own caption and met Smith and Lambe at the State Department. "ROFL @ ur tumblr! g2g — scrunchie time. ttyl?"

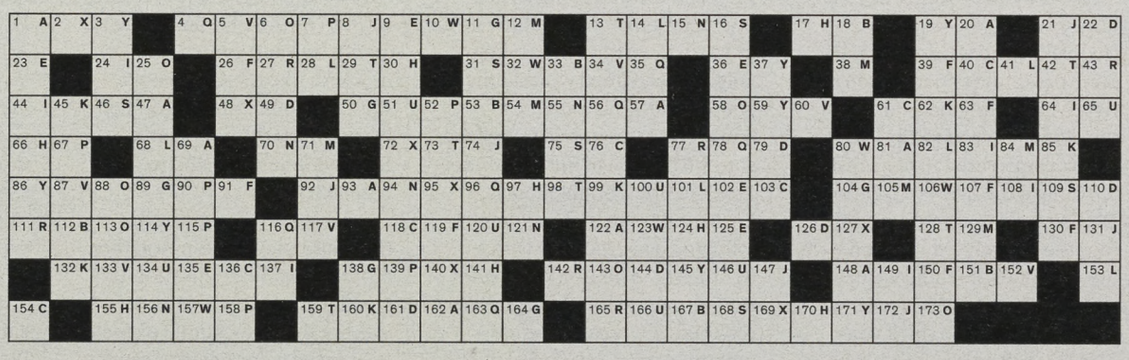
Clinton told me she had not yet made specific plans for her future, but then revealed some, or "pieces of things," as she put it. She intends to write another book and to pursue philanthropy, championing women and girls, as ever. She hinted that people had floated some ideas already, "but there's too much to do. I can't stop and worry about what's next." She sounds sincere when she says she simply wants a rest after four decades of public life. On a lovely spring evening in Rome last year, Clinton joined the traveling press corps for bellinis at Harry's Bar on Via Vittorio Veneto and was asked, again, what she intended to do next. She laughed it off as always, saying she would love to return and linger right there. "What sentient being wouldn't?" she told me later, granting permission to describe what had been an off-the-record happy hour. It doesn't really seem likely, if only because it is difficult for those who know her best to imagine her stopping for long. It would be foolish to assume this is Clinton's last act.

"I have no doubt about the fact that whatever she does, she will be out there working on the causes that she's passionate about," Melanne Verveer, who has known her for four decades, said. "I think the demands on her, the requests to her — if she doesn't engage in politics anymore, if that is truly behind her — will be so great. In many ways she's become a world brand. And you know, how the Hillary brand gets used, I think, remains to be seen." ◆

ACROSTIC

By EMILY COX and HENRY RATHVON

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. Black squares indicate word endings. The filled pattern will contain a quotation reading from left to right. The first letters of the guessed words will form an acrostic giving the author's name and the title of the work.



A. Slashed picture of 2008? (2 wds.)
69 47 20 122 148 57 162 93 1 81

B. Total on a cash register (2 wds.)
151 53 18 33 112 167

C. __ Awards, prizes for crime fiction
103 136 61 118 40 76 154

D. Of or resembling snow
144 110 161 79 49 126 22

E. Hang around offering unwanted advice
23 135 36 9 125 102

F. Seem to defy a natural law
91 150 39 130 26 119 107 63

G. Creature named for its changing shape
50 104 89 164 138 11

H. One with long stories to tell
141 124 97 30 66 17 155 170

I. Minneapolis theater for the performing arts
137 83 44 149 64 24 108

J. Wiped out, erased, expunged
172 74 131 21 8 92 147

K. University in Bethlehem, Pa.
85 45 62 160 99 132

L. Land with a tree on its flag
41 28 153 14 82 68 101

M. One skilled in methodical examination
38 71 84 12 105 129 54

N. Microscopic kind of alga with a cell wall of silica
121 55 70 94 156 15

O. Gaudily cheap; a bit disreputable
173 143 25 58 6 113 88

P. Cyclopean, in a certain respect (hyph.)
90 7 158 67 115 139 52

Q. Successor to Rolls-Royce's Silver Ghost
4 78 96 163 35 56 116

R. Reptile proliferating in the Everglades
165 142 77 27 111 43

S. Darth Vader's dominion, for example
46 31 168 75 109 16

T. Film character who says "I never drink wine"
159 29 128 13 42 73 98

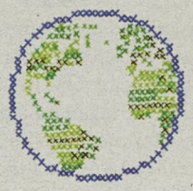
U. Recently created, as a style or art
120 65 166 134 146 100 51

V. Pursuit of a toxophilite
133 5 87 34 152 60 117

W. Unlucky accident
157 32 106 123 80 10

X. Greek Muse of music who's often portrayed with a flute
140 2 48 169 95 127 72

Y. Cowled villain in the "Masters of the Universe" TV series and film
86 145 171 114 37 19 59 3



Geography Lesson

What a village in Africa and a small town in Maine turned out to have in common.

By MONICA WOOD

In fourth grade, my best friend and I made a papier-mâché map of Africa for Sister Ernestine. Our bumpy, still-wet continent was so unwieldy that we had to carry it to school like a plank of Sheetrock, one of us at each end. The map assignment, messy and time-consuming, bolstered our teacher's campaign to turn us into travelers: *Be brave, children! The world is an amazement!*

Sister meant to aim our gaze beyond Mexico, Me., where we lived in the shadow of a hard-breathing paper mill on the riverbank. The shoe factories, too, with their round-the-clock shifts, contributed to our sense of residing at the heart of creation. Denise and I muscled our map into the schoolyard, thrilled with the weight of the thing we made, while above our heads rose clouds of steam so thick you couldn't tell where mill left off and sky began.

Decades later, the two of us — friends now for nearly 50 years — stepped into the evening chaos outside the Cotonou airport in the Republic of Benin, an African country about the size of Maine. Denise had long been following Sister's go-forth advice, but to me this place was blindingly new: brilliant colors in the madding crowd; swoony odors of cooking meats, mysterious flora, human sweat. Brilliant, too, was the assault of sound: loud, urgent French; choked traffic; creatures keening in the darkness.

A childlike resistance overtook me. *Where on Sister Ernestine's globe had I landed?*

Denise's job was to evaluate a malaria-prevention-and-treatment project; I'd come along as her unofficial assistant. Heading north at sunrise, we traveled a bone-jangling road lined with skinny people selling fat tomatoes and big, dusty yams. Through the starburst cracks of our car window I took in brief, bright images: an ancient man in floral green lounging on a truck tire with a hound dog in his arms. A gleeful boy stomping through a puddle of red mud. A woman in yellow emerging from a shelter of sticks, looking like a freshly plucked orchid. I squeezed my eyes shut and opened them again, to reset my flooded systems, trying to fully absorb this strange, heart-wrecking, utterly foreign place.

We arrived at a sunburned village and sat beneath a lean-to and listened to tales of lives lost and saved. The villagers offered what they had, fetching the "good" benches for us to sit on. We perceived hardship in their physical hollows, but their full communion showed, too. A baby clutched the breast of his mother, whose shoulder rested against her husband, who in turn absently tapped the wrist of his friend. Denise and I listened for hours, smitten by their French, which is distinctive and sometimes mocked, like the Québécois French of our childhood. Their frequent laughter freshened the motionless air, and we laughed, too.

As the days disappeared, my impressions began to gather around a baffling sensation I could not name except to say it was not the dislocation I expected. We passed a flock of girls sewing outdoors on treadle machines, moving their vivid cloth in matching paces. Around them goats and toddlers galloped among spindly huts and steaming pots. When I waved, the girls stopped and vigorously waved back. All at once, a second vision: a circle of little girls in Mexico, Me., hand-stitching shoes in round robin, helping our neighbor with piecework brought home from the factory.

Despite the words I wrote every night here — *like nothing I've ever seen, like nowhere I've ever been* — the knot of resistance I felt dissolved in this double vision of girls gracefully stitched to their spot on earth. *Home* is the word I'd been looking for. I felt at home.

Travelers often passed through the town of my youth, handkerchiefs pressed to their noses. They gawked at our malodorous paper mill, our shabby triple-deckers, our filthy river. I once heard a woman cry out from a moving car, "Who could stand to *live* here?"

Us, was the answer. As children, Denise and I knew. And the children here, who have never heard a mill whistle, they know, too. They live where their people live, the people who love them. Which is to say they reside at the heart of creation, just as we did a lifetime ago, two friends rushing into a schoolyard, holding a continent between us. ◆

Monica Wood is the author of "When We Were the Kennedys: A Memoir From Mexico, Maine," due out this month from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

ILLUSTRATION BY HOLLY WALES

E-MAIL submissions for Lives to *lives@nytimes.com*. Because of the volume of e-mail, the magazine cannot respond to every submission. Share comments on this essay at *nytimes.com/magazine*.

DRAFT COLM TOIBIN

What Is Real Is Imagined



Colm Toibin is the author, most recently, of "New Ways to Kill Your Mother: Writers and Their Families."

As night falls, I watch from the window as flashes from Tuskar Rock Lighthouse become visible. It does its two flashes and then stops as though to take a breath. Until I was 12 and my family stopped coming to this remote place on the coast of Ireland in the summer, I watched the lighthouse too, from a different window not far from here. Every day now as I walk down to the strand I pass the house we lived in then. Someone else is there now, but no matter what happens, the room that I can almost peer into from the lane remains my parents' bedroom, with the iron bed and the cement floor. I suppose it must seem smaller now that I am bigger.

And the smell of clover in the field before the cliff is the same smell, although it must be different clover. Maybe the smell is similar and not the same, but because I am trying all day to dream that world of 1967 into existence, it is sometimes closer now than it ever was.

There is a farmers' market in Enniscorthy town, 10 miles away, on Saturday mornings. Some of the pubs in the town have the same names and the same atmosphere they had when I was growing up, but almost everything else has changed. Every shop that I remember has gone. Some of the buildings in the center are empty; some have different uses. It would be easy to exaggerate, to say that the town is more real as I remember it than it is now. Clearly, that is not true. What's real is there now; the rest is memory, history and it hardly matters. This is a poor fact and will remain one whatever I do and whatever I write.

> Like Thomas Mann and Samuel Beckett, I take what I need and discard the rest.

The world that fiction comes from is fragile. It melts into insignificance against the universe of what is clear and visible and known. It persists because it is based on the power of cadence and rhythm in language and these are mysterious and hard to defeat and keep in their place. The difference between fact and fiction is like the difference between land and water.

What occurs as I walk in the town now is nothing much. It is all strange and distant, as well as oddly familiar. What happens, however, when I remember my mother, wearing a red coat, leaving our house in the town on a morning in the winter of 1968, going to work, walking along John Street, Court Street, down Friary Hill, along Friary Place and then across the bottom of Castle Hill toward Slaney Place and across the bridge into Templeshannon, is powerful and compelling. It brings with it a sort of music and a strange need. A need to write down what is happening in her mind and to give that writing a rhythm and a sound that will come from the nervous system rather than the mind, and will, ideally, resonate within the nervous system of anyone who reads it.

I don't know what she thought, of course, so I have to imagine. In doing so, I use certain and uncertain facts, but I add to the person I remember or have invented. Also, I take things away. This is a slow process and it is not simple. I give my mother a singing voice, for example, which she did not have. The shape of the story requires that she have a singing voice; it is the shape of the story rather than the shape of life that dictates what is added and excised.

But the singing voice is a mere detail in a large texture of a self that gradually comes alive — enough to seem wholly invented and fully imagined, although based on what was once real.

All the rooms, however, are really real, as real as they once were. The rooms in our house in the town must be there still, but it is how they were in the late 1960s that matters to me now and that I can reconstruct in the sort of detail which gives me satisfaction and makes me forget myself. Conjuring them requires me to work with the sentences and their shape. The more I remember accurately, the more easily phrases come and the more accurate they seem when I reread them at night and again in the morning.

I have been writing about writers and their families so it is strange that the idea of rights versus responsibilities does not preoccupy me. I feel that I have only rights, and that my sole responsibility is to the reader, and is to make things work for someone I will never meet. I feel just fine about ignoring or bypassing the rights of people I have known and loved to be rendered faithfully, or to be left in peace, and out of novels. It is odd that the right these people have to be left alone, not transformed, seems so ludicrous.

Within a few months of marrying, Thomas Mann wrote a story suggesting that his wife had had an incestuous relationship with her twin brother. Samuel Beckett, in his first book of stories, used a letter from a dead cousin, thus causing offense to her family. Brian Moore's father, who was a doctor, worked tirelessly during the bombing of Belfast in 1941; in his novel "The Emperor of Ice Cream," Moore has the father, who is clearly based on his own father, fleeing Belfast for the safety of Dublin during the air raids.

No one suggests that Mann or Beckett or Moore was an especially bad person. Indeed, all three were known for their courtesy and much loved by those close to them and by readers. But when it came to the moment when they were putting their stories together, working out the details, mixing memory and desire, they had no qualms, no problems about appropriating what they pleased. They used what they needed; they changed what they used. Their soft hearts became stony.

If I tried to write about a lighthouse and used one that I had never seen and did not know, it would show in the sentences. Nothing would work; it would have no resonance for me, or for anyone else. If I made up a mother and put her in another town, a town I had never seen, I wouldn't bother working at all. I would turn to drink, or just sit at home, or run for election. If I had to stick to the facts, the bare truth of things, that would be no use either. It would be thin and strange, as yesterday seems thin and strange, or indeed today.

The story has a shape, and that comes first, and then the story and its shape need substance and nourishment from the haunting past, clear memories or incidents suddenly remembered or invented, erased or enriched. Then the phrases and sentences begin, another day's work. And if I am lucky, what comes into shape will, despite all the fragility and all the unease, seem more real and more true, be more affecting and enduring, than the news today, or the facts of the case, or the beams of Tuskar Rock Lighthouse as night falls and the real darkness comes.

This is an essay from Draft, a series on writing at nytimes.com/opinionator.



BRENDAN MONROE

That's No Phone. That's My Tracker.

NEWS ANALYSIS

BY PETER MAASS AND MEGHA RAJAGOPALAN

Reporters on digital privacy for ProPublica, the nonprofit investigative newsroom.

THE device in your purse or jeans that you think is a cellphone — guess again. It is a tracking device that happens to make calls. Let's stop calling them phones. They are trackers.

Most doubts about the principal function of these devices were erased when it was recently disclosed that cellphone carriers responded 1.3 million times last year to law enforcement requests for call data. That's not even a complete count, because T-Mobile, one of the largest carriers, refused to reveal its numbers. It appears that millions of cellphone users have been swept up in government surveillance of their calls and where they made them from. Many police agencies don't obtain search warrants when requesting location data from carriers.

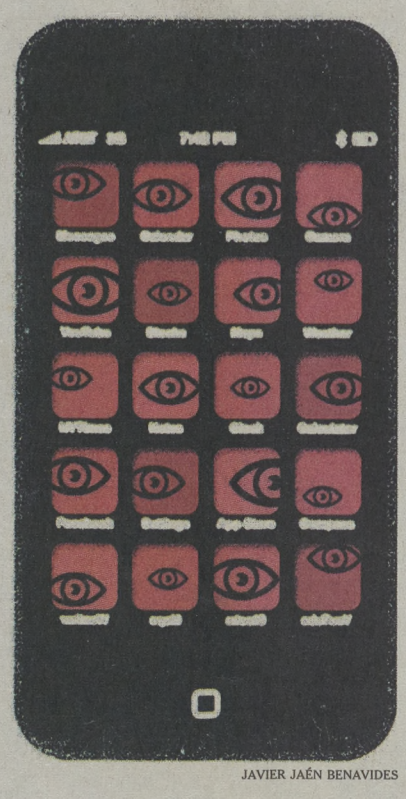
Thanks to the explosion of GPS technology and smartphone apps, these devices are also taking note of what we buy, where and when we buy it, how much money we have in the bank, whom we text and e-mail, what Web sites we visit, how and where we travel, what time we go to sleep and wake up — and more. Much of that data is shared with companies that use it to offer us services they think we want.

We have all heard about the wonders of frictionless sharing, whereby social networks automatically let our friends know what we are reading or listening to, but what we hear less about is frictionless surveillance. Though we invite some tracking — think of our mapping requests as we try to find a restaurant in a strange part of town — much of it is done without our awareness.

"Every year, private companies spend millions of dollars developing new services that track, store and share the words, movements and even the thoughts of their customers," writes Paul Ohm, a law professor at the University of Colorado. "These invasive services have proved irresistible to consumers, and millions now own sophisticated tracking devices (smartphones) studded with sensors and always connected to the Internet."

Mr. Ohm labels them tracking devices. So does Jacob Appelbaum, a developer and spokesman for the Tor project, which allows users to browse the Web anonymously. Scholars have called them minicomputers and robots. Everyone is struggling to find the right tag, because "cellphone" and "smartphone" are inadequate. This is not a semantic game. Names matter, quite a bit. In politics and advertising, framing is regarded as essential because what you call something influences what you think about it. That's why there are battles over the tags "Obamacare" and "death panels."

In just the past few years, cellphone companies have honed their geographic technology, which has become almost pinpoint. The surveillance and privacy implications are quite simple. If someone knows exactly where you are, they probably know what you are doing. Cellular systems constantly check and record the location of all phones on their networks — and this data is particularly treasured by police departments and online advertisers. Cell companies typically retain your geographic information for a year or longer, according to data gathered by the Justice Department.



JAVIER JAÉN BENAVIDES

What's the harm? The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, ruling about the use of tracking devices by the police, noted that GPS data can reveal whether a person "is a weekly church goer, a heavy drinker, a regular at the gym, an unfaithful husband, an outpatient receiving medical treatment, an associate of particular individuals or political groups — and not just one such fact about a person, but all such facts." Even the most gregarious of sharers might not reveal all that on Facebook.

There is an even more fascinating and diabolical element to what can be done with location information. New research suggests that by cross-referencing your geographical data with that of your friends, it's possible to predict your future whereabouts with a much higher degree of accuracy.

This is what's known as predictive modeling, and it requires nothing more than your cellphone data.

If we are naïve to think of them as phones, what should we call them? Eben Moglen, a law professor at Columbia University, argues that they are robots for which we — the proud owners — are merely the hands and feet. "They see everything, they're aware of our position, our relationship to other human beings and other robots, they mediate an information stream around us," he has said. Over time, we've used these devices less for their original purpose. A recent survey by O2, a British cell carrier, showed that making calls is the fifth-most-popular activity for smartphones; more popular uses are Web browsing, checking social networks, playing games and listening to music. Smartphones are taking over the functions that laptops, cameras, credit cards and watches once performed for us.

If you want to avoid some surveillance, the best option is to use cash for prepaid cellphones that do not require

> Names matter, because what you call something influences how you think about it.

identification. The phones transmit location information to the cell carrier and keep track of the numbers you call, but they are not connected to you by name. Destroy the phone or just drop it into a trash bin, and its data cannot be tied to you. These cellphones, known as burners, are the threads that connect privacy activists, Burmese dissidents and coke dealers.

Prepaids are a hassle, though. What can the rest of us do? Leaving your smartphone at home will help, but then what's the point of having it? Turning it off when you're not using it will also help, because it will cease pinging your location to the cell company, but are you really going to do that? Shutting it down does not even guarantee it's off — malware can keep it on without your realizing it. The only way to be sure is to take out the battery. Guess what? If you have an iPhone, you will need a tiny screwdriver to remove the back cover. Doing that will void your warranty.

Matt Blaze, a professor of computer and information science at the University of Pennsylvania, has written extensively about these issues and believes we are confronted with two choices: "Don't have a cellphone or just accept that you're living in the Panopticon."

There is another option. People could call them trackers. It's a neutral term, because it covers positive activities — monitoring appointments, bank balances, friends — and problematic ones, like the government and advertisers watching us.

We can love or hate these devices — or love *and* hate them — but it would make sense to call them what they are so we can fully understand what they do.

Man-Made Epidemics

From Page 1

Agency for International Development. Experts are trying to figure out, based on how people alter the landscape — with a new farm or road, for example — where the next diseases are likely to spill over into humans and how to spot them when they do emerge, before they can spread. They are gathering blood, saliva and other samples from high-risk wildlife species to create a library of viruses so that if one does infect humans, it can be more quickly identified. And they are studying ways of managing forests, wildlife and livestock to prevent diseases from leaving the woods and becoming the next pandemic.

It isn't only a public health issue, but an economic one. The World Bank has estimated that a severe influenza pandemic, for example, could cost the world economy $3 trillion.

The problem is exacerbated by how livestock are kept in poor countries, which can magnify diseases borne by wild animals. A study released earlier

To forecast the next pandemic, experts are studying wildlife.

this month by the International Livestock Research Institute found that more than two million people a year are killed by diseases that spread to humans from wild and domestic animals.

The Nipah virus in South Asia, and the closely related Hendra virus in Australia, both in the genus of henipah viruses, are the most urgent examples of how disrupting an ecosystem can cause disease. The viruses originated with flying foxes, Pteropus vampyrus, also known as fruit bats. They are messy eaters, no small matter in this scenario. They often hang upside down, looking like Dracula wrapped tightly in their membranous wings, and eat fruit by masticating the pulp and then spitting out the juices and seeds.

The bats have evolved with henipah over millions of years, and because of this co-evolution, they experience little more from it than the fruit bat equivalent of a cold. But once the virus breaks out of the bats and into species that haven't evolved with it, a horror show can occur, as one did in 1999 in rural Malaysia. It is likely that a bat dropped a piece of chewed fruit into a piggery in a forest. The pigs became infected with the virus, and amplified it, and it jumped to humans. It was startling in its lethality. Out of 276 people infected in Malaysia, 106 died, and many others suffered permanent and crippling neurological disorders. There is no cure or vaccine. Since then there have been 12 smaller outbreaks in South Asia.

In Australia, where four people and dozens of horses have died of Hendra, the scenario was different: suburbanization lured infected bats that were once forest-dwellers into backyards and pastures. If a henipah virus evolves to be transmitted readily through casual contact, the concern is that it could leave the jungle and spread throughout Asia or the world. "Nipah is spilling over, and we are observing these small clusters of cases — and it's a matter of time that the right strain will come along and efficiently spread among people," says Jonathan Epstein, a veterinarian with EcoHealth Alliance, a New York-based organization that studies the ecological causes of disease.

That's why experts say it's critical to understand underlying causes. "Any emerging disease in the last 30 or 40 years has come about as a result of encroachment into wild lands and changes in demography," says Peter Daszak, a disease ecologist and the president of EcoHealth.

Emerging infectious diseases are either new types of pathogens or old ones that have mutated to become novel, as the flu does every year. AIDS, for example, crossed into humans from chimpanzees in the 1920s when bush-meat hunters in Africa killed and butchered them.

Diseases have always come out of the woods and wildlife and found their way into human populations — the plague and malaria are two examples. But emerging diseases have quadrupled in the last half-century, experts say, largely because of increasing human encroachment into habitat, especially in disease "hot spots" around the globe, mostly in tropical regions. And with modern air travel and a robust market in wildlife trafficking, the potential for a serious outbreak in large population centers is enormous.

The key to forecasting and preventing the next pandemic, experts say, is understanding what they call the "protective effects" of nature intact. In the Amazon, for example, one study showed an increase in deforestation by some 4 percent increased the incidence of malaria by nearly 50 percent, because mosquitoes, which transmit the disease, thrive in the right mix of sunlight and water in recently deforested areas. Developing the forest in the wrong way can be like opening Pandora's box. These are the kinds of connections the new teams are unraveling.

Public health experts have begun to factor ecology into their models. Australia, for example, has just announced a multimillion-dollar effort to understand the ecology of the Hendra virus and bats.

IT'S not just the invasion of intact tropical landscapes that can cause disease. The West Nile virus came to the United States from Africa but spread here because one of its favored hosts is the American robin, which thrives in a world of lawns and agricultural fields. And mosquitoes, which spread the disease, find robins especially appealing. "The virus has had an important impact on human health in the United States because it took advantage of species that do well around people," says Marm Kilpatrick, a biologist at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The pivotal role of the robin in West Nile has earned it the title "super spreader."

And Lyme disease, the East Coast scourge, is very much a product of human changes to the environment: the reduction and fragmentation of large contiguous forests. Development chased off predators — wolves, foxes, owls and hawks. That has resulted in a fivefold increase in white-footed mice, which are great "reservoirs" for the Lyme bacteria, probably because they have poor immune systems. And they are terrible groomers. When possums or gray squirrels groom, they remove 90 percent of the larval ticks that spread the disease, while mice kill just half. "So mice are producing huge numbers of infected nymphs," says the Lyme disease researcher Richard Ostfeld.

"When we do things in an ecosystem that erode biodiversity — we chop forests into bits or replace habitat with agricultural fields — we tend to get rid of species that serve a protective role," Dr. Ostfeld told me. "There are a few species that are reservoirs and a lot of species that are not. The ones we encourage are the ones that play reservoir roles."

Dr. Ostfeld has seen two emerging diseases — babesiosis and anaplasmosis — that affect humans in the ticks he studies, and he has raised the alarm about the possibility of their spread.

The best way to prevent the next outbreak in humans, specialists say, is with what they call the One Health Initiative — a worldwide program, involving more than 600 scientists and other professionals, that advances the idea that human, animal and ecological health are inextricably linked and need to be studied and managed holistically.

"It's not about keeping pristine forest pristine and free of people," says Simon Anthony, a molecular virologist at EcoHealth. "It's learning how to do things sustainably. If you can get a handle on what it is that drives the emergence of a disease, then you can learn to modify environments sustainably."

The scope of the problem is huge and complex. Just an estimated 1 percent of wildlife viruses are known. Another major factor is the immunology of wildlife, a science in its infancy. Raina K. Plowright, a biologist at Pennsylvania State University who studies the ecology of disease, found that outbreaks of the Hendra virus in flying foxes in rural areas were rare but were much higher in urban and suburban animals. She hypothesizes that urbanized bats are sedentary and miss the frequent exposure

Hot Spots for Emerging Diseases

Map shows an analysis of the future likelihood of infectious diseases originating in wildlife that have the potential to infect humans.

KEY: GREATER RISK

Factors in the analysis included population density, proximity to and variety of wildlife, and climate.



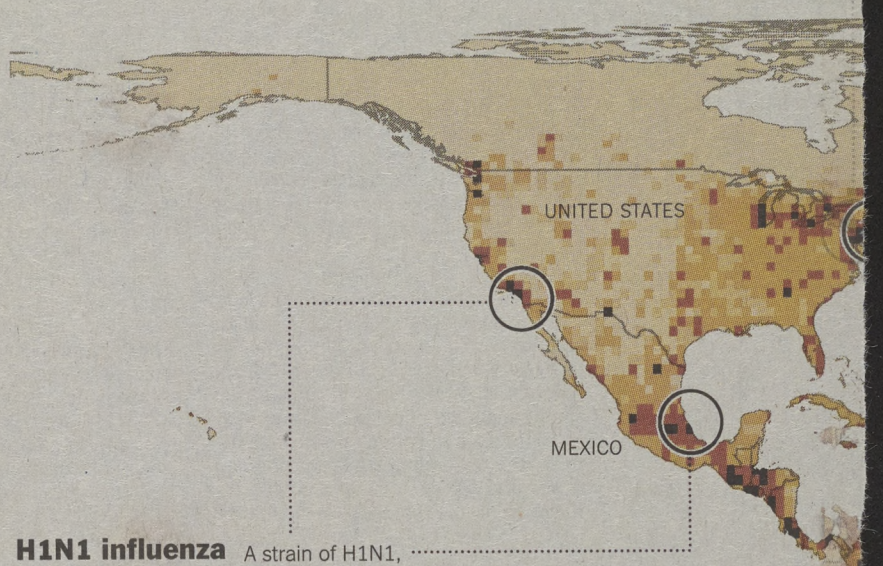
West Nile virus causes symptoms in 150 becomes seve

ANIMAL RESERVOIR

FIRST HUMAN CASE U.S. case was in

WHY IT EMERGED In

SUSCEPTIBLE HOSTS



H1N1 influenza A strain of H1N1, commonly called swine flu, killed thousands and infected millions in 2009. Humans in turn spread the disease to pigs, triggering a pandemic in livestock.

ANIMAL RESERVOIR Waterfowl and pigs.

FIRST HUMAN CASE Veracruz, Mexico, 2009; first U.S. case was in San Diego in 2009.

WHY Livestock production (pigs and poultry); contact with wild waterfowl.

SUSCEPTIBLE Humans, pigs.





Sources: EcoHealth Alliance; Nature; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; World Health Organization

How to Get Our Citizens Actually United

From Page 1

crime on the American people since the events leading up to the Great Depression, a heist that has cost millions of people their homes and their jobs. The same reason no one has been held accountable for pouring 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico during the BP oil spill. (In April, I spent a week with my family on a beautiful stretch of beach we'd visited many times during the kids' spring break, except this time I watched as preschoolers made sand castles with sludge-colored sand and wondered about the unknown health effects on their young bodies.)

Democrats blame Washington's in-

Legally laundered cash in Washington soils everything it touches.

ability to get anything done on Republican obstructionism, and in large part they are right. But there's another part. In March, Senate Democrats couldn't get the votes they needed in their own caucus to pass a bill that would end billions in subsidies to oil companies. They were lucky the Republicans are so corrupt that all but two of them voted to preserve the subsidies.

It didn't — and doesn't — have to be this way. In early 2010 I was approached by a coalition of public interest groups determined to wage a successful campaign to finance clean, fair elections. The policy they advocated was pretty simple. Right now, the first question party officials responsible for recruiting candidates for Congress ask is, "How much money can you raise?" How deeply you share the values of the party is a secondary consideration.

So how can we get away from money-driven candidacies? Let the folks back home decide who gets funding.

The idea behind the Fair Elections bill was that candidates could solicit small donations from people in their state or district — whether up to $100, $250 or $500 — and if they crossed a threshold of support designed to avoid subsidizing fringe candidates, they would receive $4 of public matching funds for every dollar they raised. It wouldn't cost taxpayers a dime. Ending the oil subsidies the Senate rejected, for example, would provide as much as $4 billion every two years — roughly twice what all Congressional candidates combined spent in the 2010 elections. In effect, the savings in corruption would finance campaigns.

The question was how to talk about it. Voters aren't interested in "process" issues. They want to know about outcomes. Voters from right to left will tell you, for example, that they overwhelming reject the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision to allow unlimited, anonymous money to flood our political system. But getting them worked up about election laws isn't easy. You have to connect the dots to something that matters to them — like the fact that once-middle-class workers have seen their incomes drop by nearly 8 percent in three years and their wealth disappear by a staggering 40 percent. And you have to make sure they believe that the problem is not, as the right would have it, the extravagant pensions of teachers like my 82-year-old mother (who taught for over 30 years before retiring from the Atlanta city schools), but the actions of bankers and C.E.O.'s who've engineered a system that is decimating the middle class.

In studying voters' responses to a range of messages, we discovered that Americans understand that our government is bought — and they want it back. You just have to speak with them in ways they can hear.

After reading a paragraph that described the Fair Elections bill, voters listened to messages online, moving their cursors, second by second, up if they liked what they were hearing and down if they didn't. Our best-testing message led the dials steadily upward (producing the findings illustrated in the chart accompanying this article).

The results look like the dial tests viewers often see at the bottom of their television screens during presidential debates, except that they reflect the average of hundreds of people, not just 30 in a studio. What is perhaps most striking and unusual in this kind of message testing is the absence of virtually any differences in the reactions of Republicans, Democrats and independents. "It's time we return to government of, by and for the people, not government of, bought and paid for by special interests," the message began, and proceeded to develop that theme. It pointed out that "the job of a Wall Street banker is to get a good return on their investment, and unfortunately, they've taken those skills to Washington," before landing on the idea that "politicians should work for us, not their corporate sponsors."

That message beat a strong opposition message, 61 percent to 19 percent. And it was only one of several messages that won by extremely large margins.

So why isn't Fair Elections the law of the land? We had consultants from both political parties on our team. We had the chair of the House Democratic Caucus, John B. Larson, sponsoring the legislation, and a high-ranking member of the

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Source: Drew Westen, Emory University

SundayReview

The New York Times

SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2012

OPINION | THOMAS CHATTERTON WILLIAMS
Make the radical choice: Be black.
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OPINION | KATE WENNER
War is brain-damaging.
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OBSERVER | ROBERT B. SEMPLE JR.
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My Life's Sentences

OPINION

BY JHUMPA LAHIRI

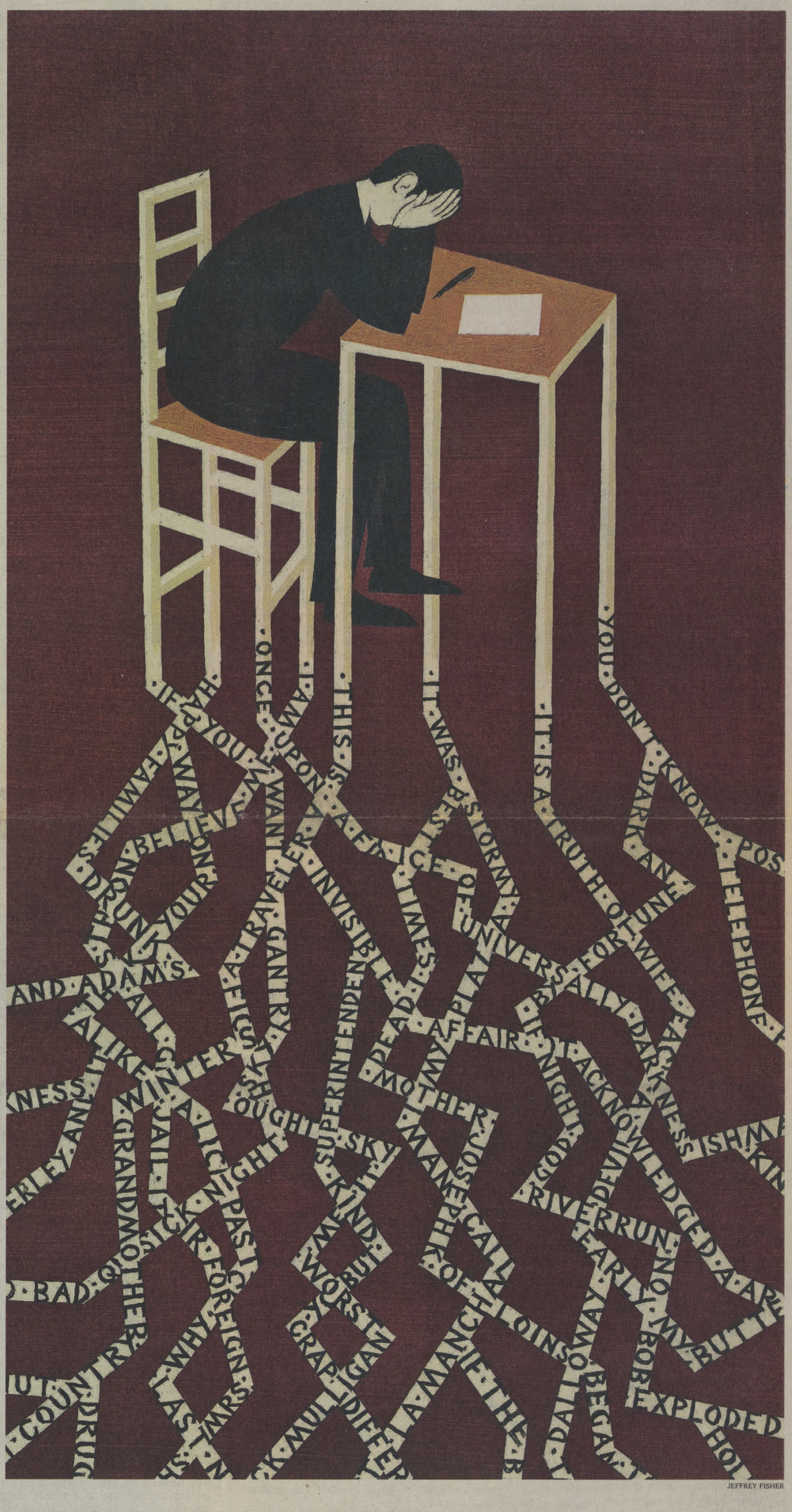
The author of "Unaccustomed Earth," "The Namesake" and "Interpreter of Maladies."

IN college, I used to underline sentences that struck me, that made me look up from the page. They were not necessarily the same sentences the professors pointed out, which would turn up for further explication on an exam. I noted them for their clarity, their rhythm, their beauty and their enchantment. For surely it is a magical thing for a handful of words, artfully arranged, to stop time. To conjure a place, a person, a situation, in all its specificity and dimensions. To affect us and alter us, as profoundly as real people and things do.

I remember reading a sentence by Joyce, in the short story "Araby." It appears toward the beginning. "The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed." I have never forgotten it. This seems to me as perfect as a sentence can be. It is measured, unguarded, direct and transcendent, all at once. It is full of movement, of imagery. It distills a precise mood. It radiates with meaning and yet its sensibility is discreet.

When I am experiencing a complex story or novel, the broader planes, and also details, tend to fall away. Rereading them, certain sentences are what greet me as familiars. You have visited before, they say when I recognize them. We encounter books at different times in life, often appreciating them, apprehending them, in different ways. But their language is con-

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JEFFREY FISHER

More on Reading And Writing:

NEWS ANALYSIS

Choosing the form. **PAGE 6**

BY DWIGHT GARNER

+

OPINION

Stories light up the brain. **PAGE 6**

BY ANNIE MURPHY PAUL

NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

Where Pimps Peddle Their Goods

I WENT on a walk in Manhattan the other day with a young woman who once had to work these streets, hired out by eight pimps while she was just 16 and 17. She pointed out a McDonald's where pimps sit while monitoring the girls outside, and a building where she had repeatedly been ordered online as if she were a pizza.

Alissa, her street name, escaped that life and is now a 24-year-old college senior planning to become a lawyer — but she will always have a scar on her cheek where a pimp gouged her with a potato peeler as a warning not to escape. "Like cattle owners brand their cattle," she said, fingering her cheek, "he wanted to brand me in a way that I would never forget."

After Alissa testified against her pimps, six of them went to prison for up to 25 years. Yet these days, she reserves her greatest anger not at pimps but at companies that enable them. She is particularly scathing about Backpage.com, a classified advertising Web site that is

Backpage.com and similar sites help find buyers for enslaved young girls.

used to sell auto parts, furniture, boats — and girls. Alissa says pimps routinely peddled her on Backpage.

"You can't buy a child at Wal-Mart, can you?" she asked me. "No, but you can go to Backpage and buy me on Backpage."

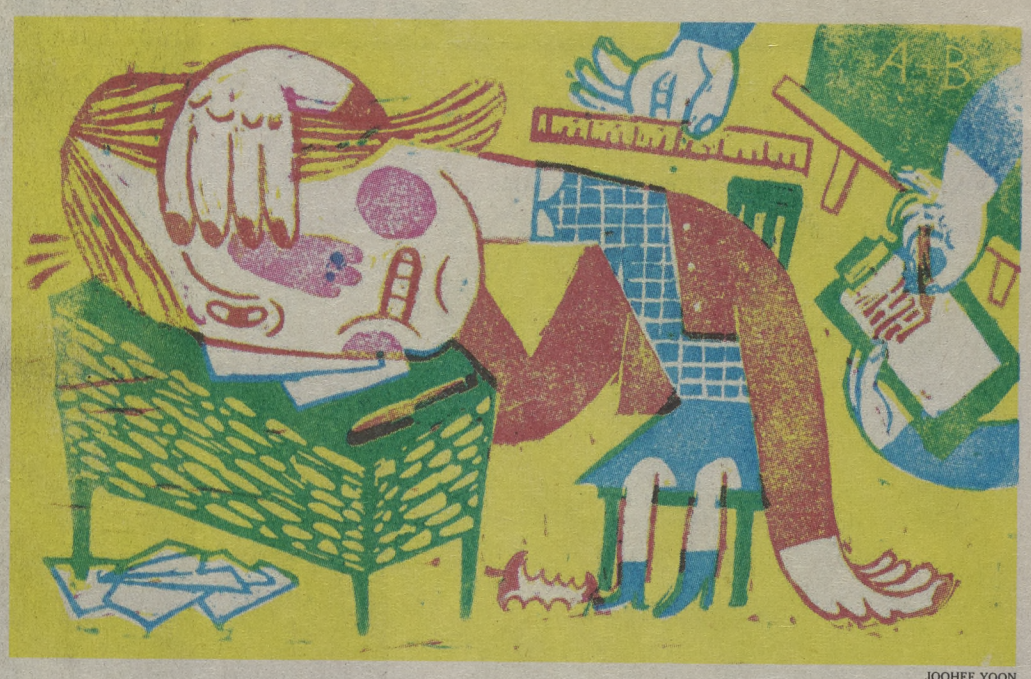
Backpage accounts for about 70 percent of prostitution advertising among five Web sites that carry such ads in the United States, earning more than $22 million annually from prostitution ads, according to AIM Group, a media research and consulting company. It is now the premier Web site for human trafficking in the United States, according to the National Association of Attorneys General. And it's not a fly-by-

Continued on Page 11

LETTERS

Sunday Dialogue: How to Rate Teachers

Readers react to an educator's ideas for fairer evaluations.



JOOHEE YOON

THE LETTER

TO THE EDITOR:

Over the past year states have scrambled to rewrite their teacher evaluation procedures to satisfy federal demands. Because the main thrust of the new procedures is to remove ineffective teachers and, perhaps, reward superior ones, their key element is "value added" test scores — measuring how much students' scores have improved.

But they are also stuffed with multiple observations, often by different observers, long lists of criteria and lengthy written reviews. So freighted, they are not only unfair but also unworkable. There must be a better way.

What schools need are not only simpler and more flexible plans, but also evaluators with enough time and the expertise to do the job. At the elementary level, finding them should be relatively easy: appoint good principals and free them from bus duty and never-ending out-of-school meetings. In high schools, where principals have large numbers of teachers and numerous subject areas under their supervision, the evaluators should be department heads.

As for the evaluation process itself, it needs to be yearlong, with evaluators working alongside teachers and observing many different lessons. Thus, they will see what good teachers do: grading papers at lunchtime, coming in early to tutor a struggling student, staying late to meet with a worried parent, inspiring students to learn more than required.

Primarily, however, states would do well to abandon their obsession with student test scores. As many critics have observed, too many factors beyond a teacher's control influence those numbers. But an even bigger problem is teaching to the test. With so much weight given to the scores in new evaluations, only a few brave teachers will be able to resist concentrating on tests. As a result, real student learning will decline sharply, along with good teaching.

JOANNE YATVIN
Portland, Ore., March 13, 2012
The writer is a retired teacher and elementary school principal and past president of the National Council of Teachers of English.

READERS REACT

I suppose I'm one of the "brave" teachers Ms. Yatvin described, those who aren't swayed to teach to a standardized test. My goal has always been to challenge my students, no matter their level, and I have been rewarded with the best reading scores in my school for the past three years. So it should probably not come as a surprise that I think testing or some other sort of independent measure of the students' abilities should be a component of teacher evaluations, an opinion that puts me in the minority of my profession.

However, should test scores be a majority of the evaluation? Absolutely not. There are too many factors outside of the teacher's skills that contribute to a child's performance on that one test on that one day. There should be multiple observations, as Ms. Yatvin advocated, but I have another idea: What about the opinion of next year's teacher? Were the students adequately prepared for his or her class? Did they come in with the base of knowledge that was expected of them? SCOTT STERLING
St. Petersburg, Fla., March 14, 2012

Evaluation is not a spreadsheet. It is a conversation. The point is not to stamp a teacher with a number. You can never bully a teacher into caring for children.

We need to promote collaboration, not competition. Teachers should be constantly given feedback by their colleagues, students and administrators.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book "Outliers," explains the "10,000-hour rule," claiming that the key to success in any field is a matter of practicing a specific task for a total of around 10,000 hours. Likewise, teachers don't reach their peak until several years on the job.

Parents are putting their greatest treasure in the hands of teachers for 180 days a year. Let's start treating teachers as nation-builders. NIKHIL GOYAL
Woodbury, N.Y., March 14, 2012
The writer is a high school student.

Oh pshaw, here we go again, another educator decrying objective student testing in favor of subjective "evaluations" by school leaders and peers. And then these educators lament the imprecise and subjective nature of the evaluations.

The only way to properly measure teacher success is by student progress. Don't we measure the success of car salesmen by how many cars they sell? Or physicians by the number of correct diagnoses and successful procedures? Why should teachers be any different?

And let's label the criticism of "teaching to the test" as the smokescreen that it is. After all, how better to measure math skills than by doing math problems and having them reviewed by teachers? And how better to measure reading comprehension than by reading and asking students to explain what they have read? DICK LESLIE
New York, March 15, 2012

Like so many other observers of the problem, Ms. Yatvin ignores the best source of information about teacher effectiveness — students. In all my years of teaching English and writing I have never seen better judges of teachers.

My experience with student evaluations — most, admittedly, poorly designed — defies the reflexive charge that teachers can buy good reports by being entertaining or easy graders. Young people can see through such ruses and are, as a group, embarrassingly honest.

In my opinion, hacking into the hallway grapevine would be more effective than "value added" testing plus administrator visits. ROBERT J. MORRIS
Lansing, Mich., March 14, 2012

While there is much discussion about whether and how to evaluate teachers, perhaps we need to broaden the discussion to evaluating parents. I'm sure there are many teachers who would like to comment on whether the parents are fulfilling their responsibility to get the kids to school on time, well rested and ready to learn; to teach their children to be respectful of the teachers and other students; to ensure that their children are doing their homework to the best of their ability; and to take an active interest in their child's performance and behavior at school.

We expect so much from our teachers and too often underreward the good ones who put their heart and soul into their jobs against difficult odds. It's time that the parental role becomes more prominent in our discussions about improving education. THERESA FOSTER
Houston, March 14, 2012

I agree with much of Ms. Yatvin's premise, but would add that the evaluators have to know what they are looking for. I have worked with school systems to help bring a modified corporate approach to teacher performance management and evaluation. This starts with a consistently applied and clearly defined set of standards for a "good" teacher. This will lessen the reliance on test scores, which are acknowledged to be a flawed indicator of a teacher's expertise. It will also reduce the likelihood that evaluators will judge a teacher by "gut feeling" when they can point to an accepted and vetted set of parameters.

Lewis Carroll wrote, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will do." We need to provide evaluators with a roadmap to evaluate teacher performance accurately. Only then can we undertake the important job of improving teacher performance.

RONALD M. KATZ
New Rochelle, N.Y., March 14, 2012
The writer is president of a human resources consulting firm.

THE WRITER RESPONDS

In reading these letters from across the country, I appreciate the differences in the writers' views on teacher evaluation. Yet I suspect that we are all influenced by our own experiences. Perhaps in some cases the writers' students come from strong home backgrounds while in others they are handicapped by poverty.

As a principal I worked first at a school in a wealthy community with highly educated families, and later at one in a rural area where many students lived in rundown houses or a trailer park. Because test scores for the first school had always been high and remained so, the teachers and I were reluctant to take credit. But in the second, where we saw strong gains from lower to higher grades, we felt that our teaching made the difference.

At both schools I evaluated teachers by working closely with them throughout the year and seeing their strengths and weaknesses. Neither they nor I panicked when an occasional lesson fell flat. I hesitate to support the preset standards for evaluation that Mr. Katz advocates. Like Nikhil Goyal, the high school student, I believe, "Evaluation is not a spreadsheet. It is a conversation."

Since retiring, I have been supervising student teachers and doing observational research in a number of schools. Although I still see much excellent teaching and students who are lapping up learning, I also notice deterioration in teacher confidence and student enthusiasm, which I attribute to too much testing and teachers' feeling that they are no longer in charge of their classrooms.

JOANNE YATVIN
Portland, Ore., March 16, 2012

ONLINE: MORE LETTERS

An expanded version of the Sunday Dialogue about evaluating teachers.
nytimes.com/opinion

ADVERTISEMENT

WHAT MATTERS MOST

Education by the Numbers

Randi Weingarten, President
American Federation of Teachers

Since some people think that everything in education can be reduced to a number, let's follow their lead.

- 76: The percentage of teachers who report that their school's budget decreased in the last year (after the recession officially ended).
- 63: The percentage of teachers who say that their class sizes increased in the last year.
- 16.4 million: The number of children in America living in poverty.
- 64: The percentage of teachers who report that in the last year, the number of students and families needing health and social support services increased.
- 28: The percentage of teachers who say that health or social services have been reduced or eliminated in their schools.
- 50: The approximate percent of teachers who leave the profession within the first five years.
- $7.3 billion: The cost to American school systems each year as a result of teacher turnover.

Given these discouraging statistics, it came as no surprise recently when the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher reported that teacher satisfaction is at a 20-year low. Nearly a third of teachers said they are likely to leave the profession. No other industry would stand for this massive brain drain.

Classrooms are full of children facing hardships and challenges that teachers strive, but sometimes struggle, to address. Years of budget cuts have stripped schools of programs and personnel, swelling class sizes and requiring teachers to do more with less. Teachers are compelled to focus more on standardized testing and paperwork, as opposed to teaching and differentiating instruction to the needs of their students. They are required to implement policies made without their input, then blamed when the policies fail.

The ability of educators to address these challenges has been increasingly threatened and curtailed. A rogues' gallery of governors across the country has used the mantra of "education reform" as a ruse to cut budgets and strip teachers of their voice in their profession. Teachers have even been portrayed in the movies as the villains, leading dedicated educators to wonder how they became the bad guys.

Many of the pundits and policymakers who have leveled the most destructive attacks on teachers claim to care about elevating the status and professionalism of teaching. But the data tell the real story: They are shattering teacher morale and making it harder, not easier, to recruit and keep good teachers.

What teachers want are the tools and conditions to meet the needs of their students, especially those with special needs. They want time to collaborate and confer with other teachers, including good training before implementing something new. They want meaningful evaluations that help improve student achievement and teacher practice. They want greater parental involvement.

A third of teachers are likely to leave. No other industry would stand for this brain drain.

Such conditions are commonplace in countries that top international education comparisons. But the United States is going in the wrong direction, as the Survey of the American Teacher and a recent incident in New York City demonstrate. The New York City Department of Education released teacher data reports that were riddled with errors, and numerous news outlets published the ratings along with the teachers' names. The data, which used the "value-added" model to rank teachers, were based on a series of assumptions about how students would perform on tests in math and English, with a margin of error ranging from 35-53 points. Mayor Bloomberg's administration had agreed not to release the data because they were not ready for prime-time, but it reneged on its commitment.

Teachers who received low ratings on these spurious scorecards—which were not intended to serve as evaluations—have been subjected to humiliation and contempt. One media outlet savaged a woman it dubbed "the city's worst teacher"—a teacher regarded by her colleagues and supervisors as an excellent educator who took on a challenging assignment teaching children who do not speak English; her principal said: "I would put my own children in her class."

Officials allowed the complexity of teaching to be presented in a single, unreliable number. This does nothing to improve teaching and learning, it promotes teaching to the test, and it inflicts incalculable harm on teacher morale, all of which hurt our students.

Policymakers who view education as an algorithm would do well to consider the words of a late, great member of the American Federation of Teachers—Albert Einstein. "Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count," he observed. And "everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted."



JERRY NAUNHEIM

Weingarten with teachers at the Innovative Concept Academy in St. Louis.

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DOWNLOAD KATE MURPHY

Kamala Harris

Kamala Harris is California's attorney general and the first woman of African and South Asian descent to serve in that position. She recently wrested $18 billion from financial institutions accused of mortgage misdeeds for her state's beleaguered homeowners.

READING "Confidence Men: Wall Street, Washington, and the Education of a President" by Ron Suskind. It's interesting to read about major events from a behind-the-scenes perspective. It highlights how much circumstances impact decisions. But circumstances can be temporary, although they may feel at the moment as if they are dispositive or permanent.

I'm also reading Isabel Allende's "Island Beneath the Sea." She has a way of getting into the soul of her characters and doing it in the context of real-life events. I can't put it down.

And then I'm always reading cookbooks. I have loved to cook since I was a child in my mother's kitchen. If I don't have time to cook, I'll just read a cookbook. One of my favorites is Alice Waters's "Art of Simple Food."

WATCHING I recently had jury duty. I love being in a courtroom. I feel like a painter looking at a blank canvas. I miss being able to try cases. I got excused with the first bunch, so I didn't get to watch very much.

As far as movies, I loved "Rise of the Planet of the Apes," which was partly filmed in San Francisco. It's a metaphor for the relationships between different species and what those interactions can look like if they are based on primal urges and priorities versus more advanced and evolved behavior. It does a great job of trying to dismantle Darwinian notions of superiority and inferiority in a metaphorical way.

LISTENING Melinda Lee's radio show, Food News, on KNX in Los Angeles. She talks a lot about seasonal and local foods. I actually called her once while I was in the car campaigning to get her recipe for brining — she uses apple juice.

I love music. I think I have every piece of music Bob Marley ever made. And Miriam Makeba, she's fabulous. She's African, and she's got this full, soulful voice. And at the end of a long day, one of my favorite albums is Miles Davis's "Sketches of Spain."



ROBYN TWOMEY

Kate Murphy is a journalist in Houston who writes frequently for The New York Times.

CORRECTIONS

A photo caption with an opinion article about the Americanization of India last Sunday incorrectly identified the mall in the image. It was the Express Avenue mall in Chennai, not Mantri Square mall, which is in Bangalore.

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Mark Bittman's column last Sunday on a vegetarian alternative to chicken misidentified an organization. It is the Vegetarian Resource Group, not the Vegetarian Research Group.

As Black as We Wish to Be

OPINION

BY THOMAS CHATTERTON WILLIAMS
The author of "Losing My Cool: Love, Literature and a Black Man's Escape from the Crowd."

PARIS

MY first encounter with my own blackness occurred in the checkout line at the grocery store. I was horsing around with my older brother, as bored children sometimes do. My blond-haired, blue-eyed mother, exasperated and trying hard to count out her cash and coupons in peace, wheeled around furiously and commanded us both to be still. When she finished scolding us, an older white woman standing nearby leaned over and whispered sympathetically: "It must be so tough adopting those kids from the ghetto."

The thought that two tawny-skinned bundles of stress with Afros could have emerged from my mother's womb never crossed the lady's mind. That was in the early 1980s, when the sight of interracial families like mine was still an oddity, even in a New Jersey suburb within commuting distance from Manhattan. What strikes me most today is that despite how insulting the woman's remark was, we could nonetheless all agree on one thing: my brother and I were black.

Now we inhabit a vastly different landscape in which mixing is increasingly on display. In just three decades, as a new Pew Research Center study shows, the percentage of interracial marriages has more than doubled (from 6.7 percent in 1980 to approximately 15 percent in 2010), and some 35 percent of Americans say that a member of their immediate family or a close relative is currently married to someone of a different race. Thanks to these unions and the offspring they've produced, we take for granted contradictions that would have raised eyebrows in the past.

As a society, we are re-evaluating what such contradictions mean. The idea that a person can be both black and white — and at the same time neither — is novel in America.

Until the year 2000, the census didn't even recognize citizens as belonging to more than one racial group. And yet, so rapid has the change been that just 10 years later, when Barack Obama marked the "Black, African Am., or Negro," box on his 2010 census form, many people wondered why he left it at that.

If today we've become freer to concoct our own identities, to check the "white" box or write in "multiracial" on the form, the question then forces itself upon us: are there better or worse choices to be made?

I believe there are. Mixed-race blacks have an ethical obligation to identify as black — and interracial couples share a similar moral imperative to inculcate certain ideas of black heritage and racial identity in their mixed-race children, regardless of how they look.

The reason is simple. Despite the tremendous societal progress these recent changes in attitude reveal in a country that enslaved its black inhabitants until 1865, and kept them formally segregated and denied them basic civil rights until 1964, we do not yet live in an America that fully embodies its founding ideals of social and political justice.

As the example of President Obama demonstrates par excellence, the black community can and does benefit directly from the contributions and continued allegiance of its mixed-race members, and it benefits in ways that far outweigh the private joys of freer self-expression.

We tend to paint the past only in extremes, as having been either categorically better than the present or irredeemably bad. Maybe that's why we live now in a culture in which many of us would prefer to break clean from what we perceive as the racist logic of previous eras — specifically the idea that the purity and value of whiteness can be tainted by even "one drop" of black blood. And yet, however offensive those one-drop policies may appear today, that offensiveness alone doesn't strip the reasoning behind them of all descriptive truth.

In fleeing from this familiar way of thinking about race, we sidestep the reality that a new multiracial community could flourish and evolve at black America's expense. Indeed, the cost of mixed-race blacks deciding to turn away could be huge.

With the number of Americans identifying as both black and white having more than doubled in the first decade of this century — from 785,000 to 1.8 million — such demographic shifts are bound to shape social policy decisions, playing a role in the setting and reassessing of national priorities at a time when Washington is overwhelmed with debt obligations and forced to weigh special interests and entitlement programs against each other.

Consider the impact that a broad redefinition of blackness might have on the nation's public school system. In the past few years, the federal government has implemented new guidelines for counting race and ethnicity, which for the first time allow students to indicate if they are "two or more races."

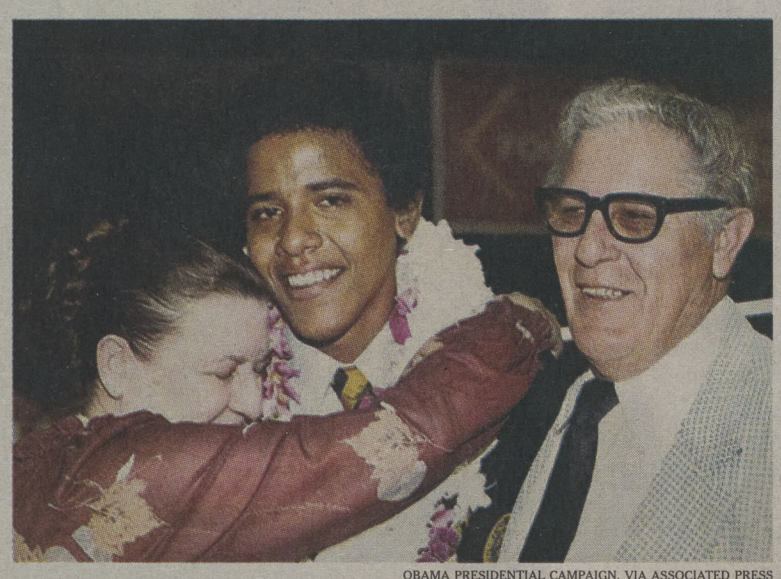
That shift is expected to change the way test scores are categorized, altering racial disparities and affecting funding for education programs. For this reason and others, the N.A.A.C.P. and some black members of Congress have expressed concern that African-Americans are at risk of being undercounted as blacks compete more than ever with other minorities and immigrants for limited resources and influence.

Scholars have long maintained that race is merely a social construct, not something fixed into our nature, yet this insight hasn't made it any less of a factor in our lives. If we no longer participate in a society in which the presence of black blood renders a person black, then racial self-identification becomes a matter of individual will.

And where the will is involved, the question of ethics arises. At a moment when prominent, upwardly mobile African-Americans are experimenting with terms like "post-black," and outwardly mobile ones peel off at the margins and disappear into the multiracial ether, what happens to that core of black people who cannot or do not want to do either?

Could this new racial gerrymandering result in that historically stigmatized group's further stigmatization? Do a million innocuous personal decisions end up having one destructive cumulative effect?

> Mixed-race Americans with African ancestry have an ethical obligation to identify as black.



OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barack Obama with his maternal grandparents, Madelyn and Stanley Dunham, at his high school graduation in Hawaii in 1979.

LAST year, I married a white woman from France; the only thing that shocked people was that she is French. This stands in stark contrast to my parents' fraught experience less than 10 years after the landmark 1967 case Loving v. Virginia overturned anti-miscegenation laws. It is no longer radical for people like my wife and me to come together.

According to the Pew report, while 9 percent of white newlyweds in 2010 took nonwhite spouses, some 17 percent of black newlyweds, and nearly one-quarter of black males in particular, married outside the race. Numbers like these have made multiracial Americans the fastest-growing demographic in the country. Exhortations to stick with one's own, however well intentioned, won't be able to change that.

When I think about what my parents endured — the stares, the comments, the little things that really do take a toll — I am grateful for a society in which I may marry whomever I please and that decision is treated as mundane. Still, as I envision rearing my own kids with my blond-haired, blue-eyed wife, I'm afraid that when my future children — who may very well look white — contemplate themselves in the mirror, this same society, for the first time in its history, will encourage them not to recognize their grandfather's face.

For this fear and many others, science and sociology are powerless to console me — nor can they delineate a clear line in the sand beyond which identifying as black becomes absurd.

Whenever I ask myself what blackness means to me, I am struck by the parallels that exist between my predicament and that of many Western Jews, who struggle with questions of assimilation at a time when marrying outside the faith is common. In an essay on being Jewish, Tony Judt observed that "We acknowledge readily enough our duties to our contemporaries; but what of our obligations to those who came before us?" For Judt, it was his debt to the past alone that established his identity.

Or as Ralph Ellison explained — and I hope my children will read him carefully because they will have to make up their own minds: "Being a Negro American involves a *willed* (who wills to be a Negro? I do!) affirmation of self as against all outside pressures." And even "those white Negroes," as he called them, "are Negroes too — if they wish to be."

And so I will teach my children that they, too, are black — regardless of what anyone else may say — so long as they remember and wish to be.

War Is Brain-Damaging

OPINION

BY KATE WENNER
A novelist and playwright, whose play "Make Sure It's Me" tells the story of Iraq war veterans struggling with traumatic brain injuries.

FIVE years ago I saw a television report about Iraq war veterans in California who were being treated for a new kind of brain injury. I was stunned to watch a female soldier who could no longer recognize her daughter. So I tracked down the therapist treating her and began a nine-month journey in which I interviewed dozens of vets with traumatic brain injuries and their families, eventually turning their heart-wrenching stories into a play.

These vets suffer from a particular kind of brain damage that results from repeated exposure to the concussive force of improvised explosive devices — I.E.D.'s — a regular event for troops traveling the roads in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"It's Russian roulette," one vet told me, "We had one guy in our company who got hit nine times before the 10th one waxed him." An I.E.D. explosion can mean death or at least a lost arm or leg, but you don't have to take a direct hit to feel its effects. A veteran who'd been in 26 blasts explained, "It feels like you're whacked in the head with a shovel. When you come to, you don't know whether you're dead or alive."

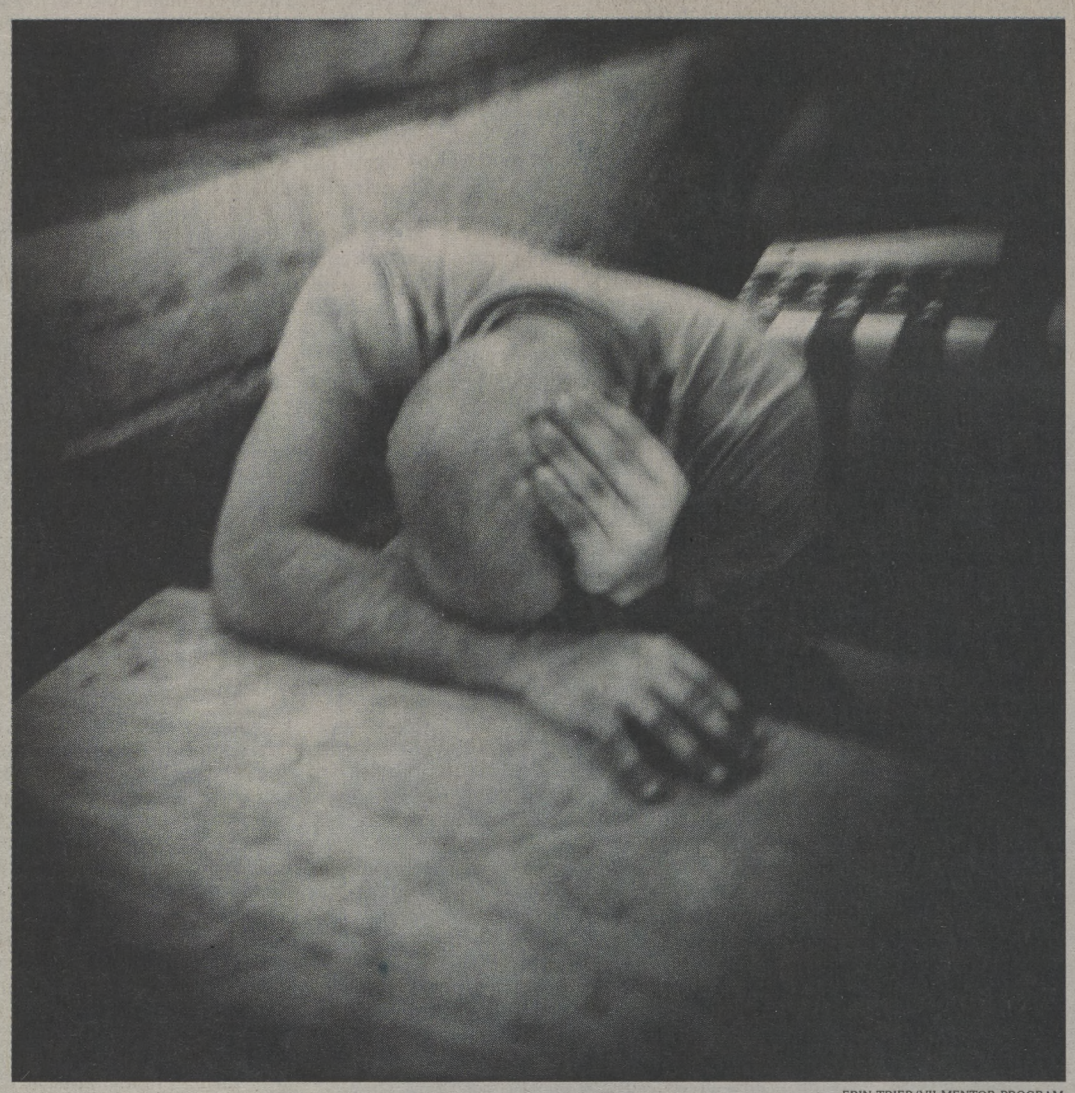
The news that Robert Bales, an Army staff sergeant accused of having killed 16 Afghan civilians last week, had suffered a traumatic brain injury unleashed a flurry of e-mails among those of us who have been trying to beat the drums about this widespread — and often undiagnosed — war injury. New facts about Staff Sgt. Bales are coming out daily. After we heard about the brain injury that resulted when his vehicle rolled over in an I.E.D. blast, we were told that he had lost part of his foot in a separate incident. Then we learned that the day before his rampage, he'd been standing by a buddy when that man's leg was blown off. There are also reports of alcohol use.

People with more appropriate professional skills than mine will have to parse these facts, but from what I have learned in my work as a storyteller, this tragedy may be related to something I heard about in my interviews: a potentially lethal combination of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. When the frontal lobe — which controls emotions — is damaged, it simply can't put on the brakes if a PTSD flashback unleashes powerful feelings. Seeing his buddy's leg blown off may have unleashed a PTSD episode his damaged brain couldn't stop. If alcohol was indeed part of the picture, it could have further undermined his compromised frontal lobe function.

Defense Department officials have said that his brain injury was insignificant. And an individual military base has been singled out for investigation. All of this will be played out in a media frenzy, while the agony of tens of thousands with similar injuries goes unnoticed.

Doing the research for my play educated me to some of the reasons this injury continues to be back-burnered. They fit in three categories: medicine, money and memory.

Medicine: For years traumatic brain injuries — T.B.I.'s — have been scored as "mild," "moderate" or "severe," and this is based, in part, on the amount of time a person was unconscious — from seconds to years. Unfortunately "mild" and "moderate" sound minor and easily fixable. That may be true with a traditional brain injury. But I.E.D. brain damage isn't always the result of a single incident in which a soldier may have blacked out for seconds. Rather, it can be the cumulative impact of several such blackouts over weeks and months of exposure to blasts that put the brain through a sudden and powerful change in atmospheric pressure, expand and contract it, and produce changes at the molecular level.



ERIN TRIEB/VII MENTOR PROGRAM

A soldier in Afghanistan who was repeatedly exposed to blasts from improvised explosive devices.

> Did battle trauma contribute to the brutal killing of Afghan civilians?

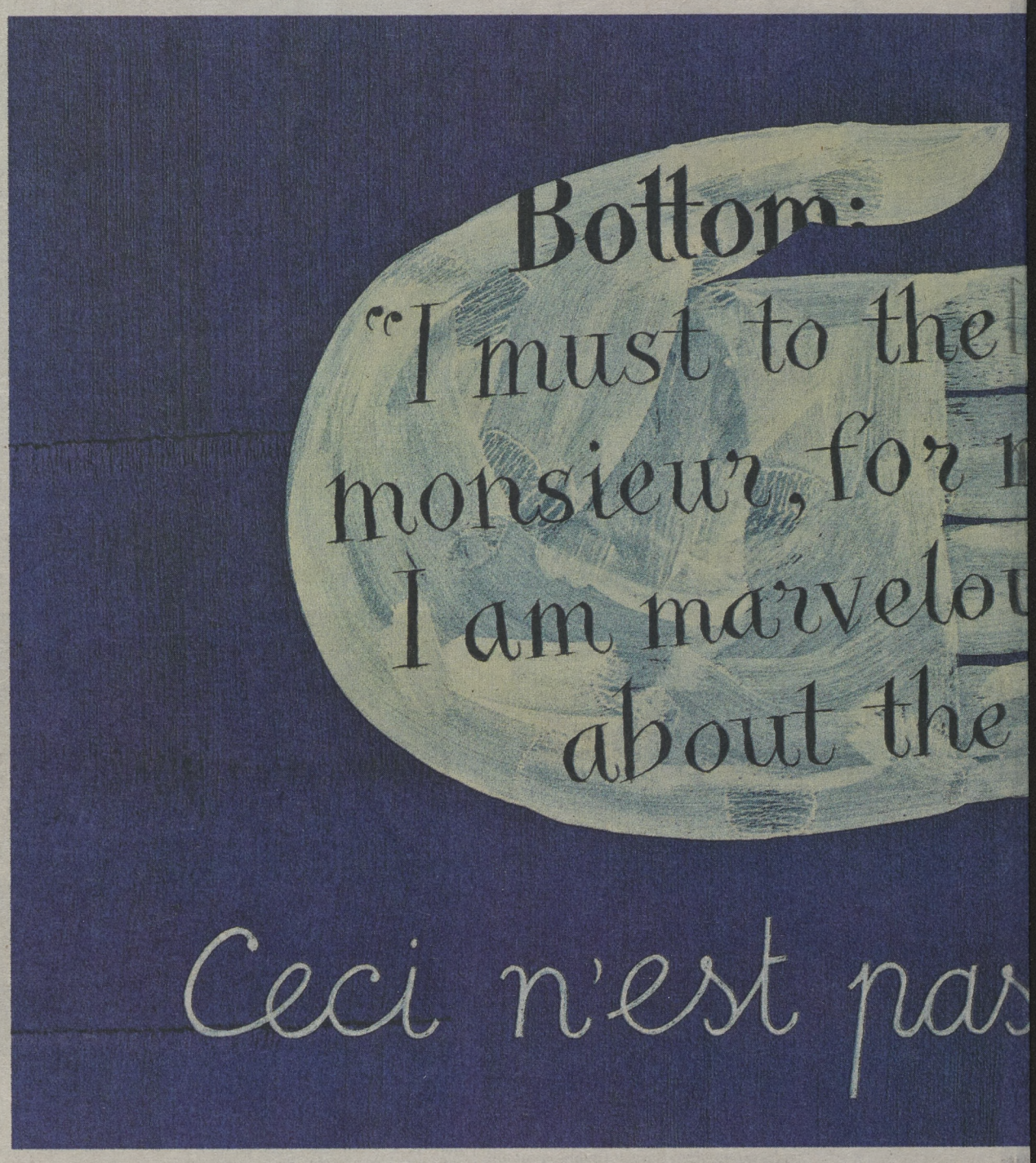
Money: the terminology "mild" and "moderate," while technically correct, helps minimize costs for lifetime medical care and disability. In comparison, post-traumatic stress disorder is cheaper to treat and often easier to manage, and many vets told me they were routinely given that diagnosis and not tested for brain damage. One soldier, who had been given so many medications for PTSD that he carried them around in a fishing tackle box, got the proper diagnosis of traumatic brain injury months later only when his tenacious wife insisted on taking him back to be tested.

This is another danger connected to the failure to properly diagnose brain injury: the cognitive impairment of a T.B.I. can prevent a patient from remembering how many pills he took or when. I interviewed one mother whose son had been found dead from a drug overdose, face-down in the pizza he'd been eating alone in his room. She told me, "They gave my son all these drugs and they murdered him." We don't hear about cases like this; often they are recorded as drug overdoses or suicides.

One last story. I interviewed a gentle bear of a man, a devoted father, beloved by his troops. He told me stories of going into sudden and uncontrollable rages in Iraq. His men had to pull him back. Afterward, he was filled with regret and shame. Luckily he was given a proper diagnosis of PTSD and T.B.I. and was not redeployed. Unluckily, his inability to control his explosive rage made it unsafe for him to continue to live with his wife and child.

Finally, memory's role, which is what drew me to this subject in the first place — the woman who couldn't remember her own child. Don't so many of us lose our memory when it comes to the consequences of wars fought far from home? Aren't we all a little guilty of wanting to turn away from the shameful and painful reminders?

The Way We Read Now



NEWS ANALYSIS

BY DWIGHT GARNER

A book critic for The New York Times.

THE case against electronic books has been made, and elegantly, by many people, including Nicholson Baker in The New Yorker a few years ago. Mr. Baker called Amazon's Kindle, in a memorable put-down, "the Bowflex of bookishness: something expensive that, when you commit to it, forces you to do more of whatever it is you think you should be doing more of."

The best case I've seen *for* electronic books, however, arrived just last month, on the Web site of The New York Review of Books. The novelist Tim Parks proposed that e-books offered "a more austere, direct engagement" with words. What's more, no dictator can burn one. His persuasive bottom line: "This is a medium for grown-ups."

I've been trying to become more of a grown-up, in terms of my commitment to reading across what media geeks call "platforms" (a word that's much sexier when applied to heels), from smartphones to e-readers to tablets to laptops.

It's a battle I may lose. I still prefer to consume sentences the old-fashioned and nongreen way, on the pulped carcasses of trees that have had their throats slit. I can imagine my tweener kids, in a few years, beginning to picket me for my murderous habits: "No (tree) blood for (narrative) oil."

What's best on which device? A critic's guide.

It's time to start thinking, however, about the best literary uses for these devices. Are some reading materials better suited to one platform than another? Does Philip Larkin feel at home on an iPad, and Lorrie Moore on a Kindle? Can I make a Kay Ryan poem my ringtone? Will any gizmo make "The Fountainhead" palatable?

Books used to pile up by my bedside; sometimes it now seems that gadgets do, the standby power of their LED lights staring at me like unfed dogs. Let's talk about these machines, and their literary uses, in order of size, from small to large.

The Smartphone

The smartphone has clearly been recent technology's greatest gift to literacy. Carrying one obliterates one's greatest fear: of being trapped somewhere — a train, the D.M.V., a toilet — with nothing whatsoever to read.

Most of what I devour on my phone is journalism: out-of-town newspapers and links gleaned from Twitter and Facebook. Ben Franklin would have liked this palm-size medium. He's the founding father who said, "Read much, but not too many books."

Franklin's autobiography happens to be an ideal thing to have on your phone. It's in the public domain, and thus free for the Kindle app. Here's another unlikely choice: John Cheever's "Journals," the most underrated nonfiction book of the 20th century. Cheever's entries are bite-size yet profound. They are aching when not outright grim; they'll place the soul-killing events in your own life in context, and may even cheer you up.

I frequently seem to be scanning my iPhone in restaurants, while waiting to order or eating alone at the counter. I like to read about food before a meal; it sharpens the appetite and can lead to drooling. Two favorites are memoirs: "The Raw and the Cooked," by Jim Harrison, my true north of food writers, and "Blood, Bones & Butter," by Gabrielle Hamilton. Scrolling through Ms. Hamilton's memoir, you'll find this shrewd bit of advice: "Be careful what you get good at doin' 'cause you'll be doin' it the rest of your life."

Keep an audio book or two on your iPhone. Periodically I take the largest of my family's dogs on long walks, and I stick my iPhone in my shirt pocket, its tiny speaker facing up. I've listened to Saul Bellow's "Herzog" this way. The shirt pocket method is better than using ear buds, which block out the natural world. My wife tucks her phone into her bra, on long walks, and listens to Dickens novels. I find this unbearably sexy.

E-Readers

More fetching than a girl with a dragon tattoo has always been a girl with a Penguin Classic. With e-books, you have no idea what anyone is reading. This is an incalculable loss, not just to fleeting crushes but to civilization.

That said, e-readers like Amazon's Kindle strike me as the most intimate, and thus sexiest, of these devices. They're the Teddy Pendergrass of platforms. On most, the text isn't backlit, and thus trying too hard, always a turnoff. You are less inclined to cheat on one — that is, to read e-mail or surf the Web. In reading, like love, fidelity matters.

Because e-books don't have covers, teenagers may find it easier to consume the books some parents used to confiscate — "Forever," by Judy Blume, "Flowers in the Attic," by V. C. Andrews. Their parents will think they are playing Angry Birds.

I'm an admirer of Jonathan Franzen, the gifted novelist who has been outspoken about his dislike of electronic books. But if you aren't a fan of Mr. Franzen's, I would guess that reading his novels on a Kindle, a device he loathes, might be considered a literary form of hate sex.

E-readers, excellent for singles — short, novella-length books — are also the platform to turn to when going long, when it's time to finally pick up Roberto Bolaño's "2666" or Thomas Pynchon's "Gravity's Rainbow" or William Gaddis's "The Recognitions." (Shop local, when you can. Ask your local independent bookseller about buying e-books through them.)

The iPad

The iPad, for me, is thus far the place to toss the kind of big nonfiction books I'm probably going to attentively skim rather than read — Walter Isaacson's Steve Jobs biography, for example, or "Reading for My Life: Writings, 1958-2008," by the superb cultural critic John Leonard.

I like, too, that some of these nonfiction books offer electronic footnotes that take you straight to a source. Those sources are sometimes much better than the book you are holding. There are often more unusual things to click. The iPad app for Jack Kerouac's "On the Road," for example, is a sensorium of maps and timelines and other things, in addition to the text. "Whither goes thou, America," he writes, here as in the paper version, "in thy shiny car in the night?"

I'm not sold on these kinds of add-ons, lovely as they are. If I want TV, I have one. But I can imagine a young person being wooed. Art books, too — many of them are available free — are a treat on the iPad. The clarity is breathtaking, like a snort of some visual drug.

I've tried poetry on each of these platforms: Larkin, Dickinson, Philip Levine, Amy Clampitt. It's not happening, at least not for me. There's not enough white space, nor silence. The poems seem shrunken and trapped, like lobsters half-dead in a supermarket glass pen, their claws rubber-banded. Poems should be printed on paper, or carved onto the dried husks of coconuts, so one can hoard them.

The one bit of verse that charmed me, when read on the iPad, was Clive James's brilliant and witty "The Book of My Enemy Has Been Remaindered." This poem forces you to wonder: What will remainders look like in our digital future? Where's the 99-cents bin going to be?

You can't read an e-book in the tub. You can't fling one across the room, aiming, as Mark Twain liked to do, at a cat. And e-books will not furnish a room.

Writing in The Times in 1991, Anna Quindlen declared, "I would be most content if my children grew up to be the kind of people who think decorating consists mostly of building enough bookshelves."

I am so down with that. But it's the mental furniture that matters.

Your Brain on Fiction

OPINION

BY ANNIE MURPHY PAUL

The author, most recently, of "Origins: How the Nine Months Before Birth Shape the Rest of Our Lives."

AMID the squawks and pings of our digital devices, the old-fashioned virtues of reading novels can seem faded, even futile. But new support for the value of fiction is arriving from an unexpected quarter: neuroscience.

Brain scans are revealing what happens in our heads when we read a detailed description, an evocative metaphor or an emotional exchange between characters. Stories, this research is showing, stimulate the brain and even change how we act in life.

Researchers have long known that the "classical" language regions, like Broca's area and Wernicke's area, are involved in how the brain interprets written words. What scientists have come to realize in the last few years is that narratives activate many other parts of our brains as well, suggesting why the experience of reading can feel so alive. Words like "lavender," "cinnamon" and "soap," for example, elicit a response not only from the language-processing areas of our brains, but also those devoted to dealing with smells.

In a 2006 study published in the journal NeuroImage, researchers in Spain asked participants to read words with strong odor associations, along with neutral words, while their brains were being scanned by a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machine. When subjects looked at the Spanish words for "perfume" and "coffee," their primary olfactory cortex lit up; when they saw the words that mean "chair" and "key," this region remained dark. The way the brain handles metaphors has also received extensive study; some scientists have contended that figures of speech like "a rough day" are so familiar that they are treated simply as words and no more. Last month, however, a team of researchers from Emory University reported in Brain & Language that when subjects in their laboratory read a metaphor involving texture, the sensory cortex, responsible for perceiving texture through touch, became active. Metaphors like "The singer had a velvet voice" and "He had leathery hands" roused the sensory cortex, while phrases matched for meaning, like "The singer had a pleasing voice" and "He had strong hands," did not.

Researchers have discovered that words describing motion also stimulate regions of the brain distinct from language-processing areas. In a study led by the cognitive scientist Véronique Boulenger, of the Laboratory of Language Dynamics in France, the brains of participants were scanned as they read sentences like "John grasped the object" and "Pablo kicked the ball." The scans revealed activity in the motor cortex, which coordinates the body's movements. What's more, this activity was concentrated in one part of the motor cortex when the movement described was arm-related and in another part when the movement concerned the leg.

The brain, it seems, does not make much of a distinction between reading about an experience and encountering it in real life; in each case, the same neurological regions are stimulated. Keith Oatley, an emeritus professor of cognitive psychology at the University of Toronto (and a published novelist), has proposed that reading produces a vivid simulation of reality, one that "runs on minds of readers just as computer simulations run on computers." Fiction — with its redolent details, imaginative metaphors and attentive descriptions of people and their actions — offers an especially rich replica. Indeed, in one respect novels go beyond simulating reality to give readers an experience unavailable off the page: the opportunity to enter fully into other people's thoughts and feelings.

Metaphors like "He had leathery hands" rouse the sensory cortex.

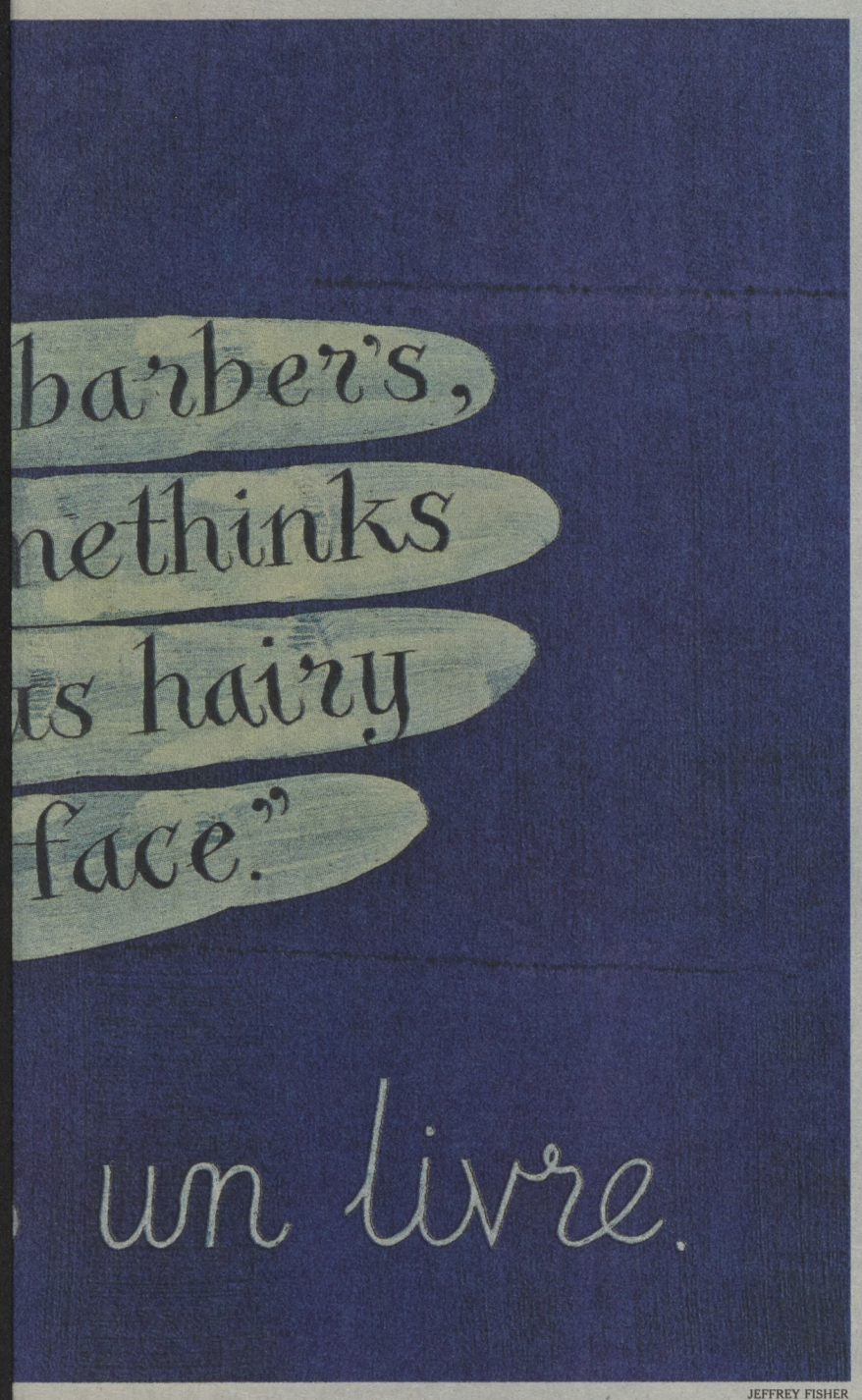
The novel, of course, is an unequaled medium for the exploration of human social and emotional life. And there is evidence that just as the brain responds to depictions of smells and textures and movements as if they were the real thing, so it treats the interactions among fictional characters as something like real-life social encounters.

Raymond Mar, a psychologist at York University in Canada, performed an analysis of 86 fMRI studies, published last year in the Annual Review of Psychology, and concluded that there was substantial overlap in the brain networks used to understand stories and the networks used to navigate interactions with other individuals — in particular, interactions in which we're trying to figure out the thoughts and feelings of others. Scientists call this capacity of the brain to construct a map of other people's intentions "theory of mind." Narratives offer a unique opportunity to engage this capacity, as we identify with characters' longings and frustrations, guess at their hidden motives and track their encounters with friends and enemies, neighbors and lovers.

It is an exercise that hones our real-life social skills, another body of research suggests. Dr. Oatley and Dr. Mar, in collaboration with several other scientists, reported in two studies, published in 2006 and 2009, that individuals who frequently read fiction seem to be better able to understand other people, empathize with them and see the world from their perspective. This relationship persisted even after the researchers accounted for the possibility that more empathetic individuals might prefer reading novels. A 2010 study by Dr. Mar found a similar result in preschool-age children: the more stories they had read to them, the keener their theory of mind — an effect that was also produced by watching movies but, curiously, not by watching television. (Dr. Mar has conjectured that because children often watch TV alone, but go to the movies with their parents, they may experience more "parent-children conversations about mental states" when it comes to films.)

Fiction, Dr. Oatley notes, "is a particularly useful simulation because negotiating the social world effectively is extremely tricky, requiring us to weigh up myriad interacting instances of cause and effect. Just as computer simulations can help us get to grips with complex problems such as flying a plane or forecasting the weather, so novels, stories and dramas can help us understand the complexities of social life."

These findings will affirm the experience of readers who have felt illuminated and instructed by a novel, who have found themselves comparing a plucky young woman to Elizabeth Bennet or a tiresome pedant to Edward Casaubon. Reading great literature, it has long been averred, enlarges and improves us as human beings. Brain science shows this claim is truer than we imagined.



JEFFREY FISHER

DRAFT JHUMPA LAHIRI

My Life's Sentences

From Page 1

stant. The best sentences orient us, like stars in the sky, like landmarks on a trail.

They remain the test, whether or not to read something. The most compelling narrative, expressed in sentences with which I have no chemical reaction, or an adverse one, leaves me cold. In fiction, plenty do the job of conveying information, rousing suspense, painting characters, enabling them to speak. But only certain sentences breathe and shift about, like live matter in soil. The first sentence of a book is a handshake, perhaps an embrace. Style and personality are irrelevant. They can be formal or casual. They can be tall or short or fat or thin. They can obey the rules or break them. But they need to contain a charge. A live current, which shocks and illuminates.

Knowing — and learning to read in — a foreign tongue heightens and complicates my relationship to sentences. For some time now, I have been reading predominantly in Italian. I experience these novels and stories differently. I take no sentence for granted. I am more conscious of them. I work harder to know them. I pause to look something up, I puzzle over syntax I am still assimilating. Each sentence yields a twin, translated version of itself. When the filter of a second language falls away, my connection to these sentences, though more basic, feels purer, at times more intimate, than when I read in English.

The urge to convert experience into a group of words that are in a grammatical relation to one another is the most basic, ongoing impulse of my life. It is a habit of antiphony: of call and response. Most days begin with sentences that are typed into a journal no one has ever seen. There is a freedom to this; freedom to write what I will not proceed to wrestle with. The entries are mostly quotidian, a warming up of the fingers and brain. On days when I am troubled, when I am grieved, when I am at a loss for words, the mechanics of formulating sentences, and of stockpiling them in a vault, is the only thing that centers me again.

Constructing a sentence is the equivalent of taking a Polaroid snapshot: pressing the button, and watching something emerge. To write one is to document and to develop at the same time. Not all sentences end up in novels or stories. But novels and stories consist of nothing but. Sentences are the bricks as well as the mortar, the motor as well as the fuel. They are the cells, the individual stitches. Their nature is at once solitary and social. Sentences establish tone, and set the pace. One in front of the other marks the way.

My work accrues sentence by sentence. After an initial phase of sitting patiently, not so patiently, struggling to locate them, to pin them down, they begin arriving, fully formed in my brain. I tend to hear them as I am drifting off to sleep. They are spoken to me, I'm not sure by whom. By myself, I know, though the source feels independent, recondite, especially at the start. The light will be turned on, a sentence or two will be hastily scribbled on a scrap of paper, carried upstairs to the manuscript in the morning. I hear sentences

> Only certain sentences breathe and shift about, like live matter in soil.

as I'm staring out the window, or chopping vegetables, or waiting on a subway platform alone. They are pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, handed to me in no particular order, with no discernible logic. I only sense that they are part of the thing.

Over time, virtually each sentence I receive and record in this haphazard manner will be sorted, picked over, organized, changed. Most will be dispensed with. All the revision I do — and this process begins immediately, accompanying the gestation — occurs on a sentence level. It is by fussing with sentences that a character becomes clear to me, that a plot unfolds. To work on them so compulsively, perhaps prematurely, is to see the trees before the forest. And yet I am incapable of conceiving the forest any other way.

As a book or story nears completion, I grow acutely, obsessively conscious of each sentence in the text. They enter into the blood. They seem to replace it, for a while. When something is in proofs I sit in solitary confinement with them. Each is confronted, inspected, turned inside out. Each is sentenced, literally, to be part of the text, or not. Such close scrutiny can lead to blindness. At times — and these times terrify — they cease to make sense. When a book is finally out of my hands I feel bereft. It is the absence of all those sentences that had circulated through me for a period of my life. A complex root system, extracted.

Even printed, on pages that are bound, sentences remain unsettled organisms. Years later, I can always reach out to smooth a stray hair. And yet, at a certain point, I must walk away, trusting them to do their work. I am left looking over my shoulder, wondering if I might have structured one more effectively. This is why I avoid reading the books I've written. Why, when I must, I approach the book as a stranger, and pretend the sentences were written by someone else.

ONLINE:

This is the first article in Draft, a new series about the art and craft of writing at **nytimes.com/opinionator**

Age and Its Awful Discontents

OPINION

BY LOUIS BEGLEY

The author of several novels, including "Schmidt Steps Back."

MY mother died in 2004, two days short of her 94th birthday, and 40 years and two months to the day after the death of my father. He died at 65; for the preceding four or five years he had been in poor health.

My mother and I lived through the German occupation in Poland; my physician father, having been evacuated with the staff of the local hospital by the retreating Soviet army, spent the remaining war years in Samarkand. Left to fend for ourselves, my mother and I became unimaginably close; our survival depended on that symbiotic relationship. All three of us — I had no brothers or sisters — arrived in the United States in March 1947, and once here I began to keep her at arm's length. Especially during her long widowhood, I feared that unimpeded she would invade my life, the life she had saved. I remained a dutiful son, watching over her needs, but was at first unwilling and later unable to be tender.

My abhorrence of the ravages and suffering inflicted on the body by age and illness, which predates my mother's decline in her last years, is no doubt linked to there being no examples of a happy old age in my family. The grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins who might have furnished them all met violent deaths in World War II.

> Is there anything good about getting old? No. Its gifts are bitter.

Unsurprisingly, dread of the games time plays with us has been a drumbeat in my novels. Thus, arms akimbo, majestic and naked, standing before a glass, Charlie Swan, the gay demiurge of "As Max Saw It," illustrates for the younger narrator on his body the physiology of aging: misrule of hair, puckered brown bags under the eyes, warts like weeds on his chest, belly, back and legs, dry skin that peels leaving a fine white snow of dandruff. Listening to him, the younger man is reminded of his own father in a hospital, permanently catheterized, other tubes conducting liquids to his body hooked up to machines that surround his bed like unknown relatives. He prefers his mother's "triumphant" exit. A headlong fall down the cellar stairs kills her instantly.

I have followed the progress into old age of Albert Schmidt, like me a retired lawyer, in three novels. Schmidt is 60 when we meet him in 1991; when we part on New Year's Day 2009, he is 78, therefore a couple of years older than I was then. Life has not been kind to him, but so far, Schmidt enjoys excellent health, marching up and down the Atlantic beach in Bridgehampton and New York City's avenues, and doing laps in his pool. Although he worries about performance, his libido is intact. Nevertheless, the reflection of his face in the window of a shop is frightening: he sees a red nose and bloodshot eyes, lips pursed up tight over stained and uneven teeth, an expression so lugubrious and so pained it resists his efforts to smile. My appreciation of my own charms is not very different. Like Schmidt, I see that nothing good awaits me at the end of the road, and that passing years will turn my life into a Via Crucis.

And yet my body, like Schmidt's, continues to be a good sport. Provided my marvelous doctor pumps steroids into my hip or spine when needed, it runs along on the leash like a nondescript mutt and wags its tail. My heart still stirs when I see a pretty girl in the street or in a subway car, but not much else happens. Except that, since by preference I stand leaning against the closed doors, she may offer me her seat. When last heard from, Schmidtie figured he had another 10 years to live. I have a similar estimate of my longevity. Such actions as buying a new suit have become dilemmas. The clothes I have may be fatigued and frayed, but won't they see me through the remaining seasons? Can the expense of money and waste of time required to make the purchase be justified?

My mother did not remarry after my father died. She lived very comfortably, but alone, in an apartment 15 blocks away from my wife's and mine. If we were in the city, we went to see her often, then daily as her condition deteriorated in the last two years of her life. Our children and grandchildren tried to see her often, too — and those visits brought her great joy — but they live far away and the happiness was fleeting. During her last decade she was very lonely. Most of the friends she had had in Poland had been killed. Those who had escaped and settled in New York one by one became homebound or bedridden, lost their minds or died. Or she found they bored her. Hearing poorly, tormented by arthritis in hip and knee joints, too proud to accept a wheelchair, she stopped going to museums, concerts and even the movies. She had loved sitting on a Central Park bench and putting her face in the sun. That humble pleasure was also abandoned; she couldn't get the hang of using a walker.

Having rehearsed the bitter gifts reserved for age, T. S. Eliot wrote in "Little Gidding" that "the end of all our exploring/ Will be to arrive where we started/ And know the place for the first time." The closer that place — the human condition — is to home, the harder it is to take in. I could speak movingly of Schmidt's loneliness after the loss of his daughter, calling his existence an arid plane of granite on which she alone had flowered. But it has taken me until now, at age 78, to feel in full measure the bitterness and anguish of my mother's solitude — and that of other old people who end their lives without a companion.



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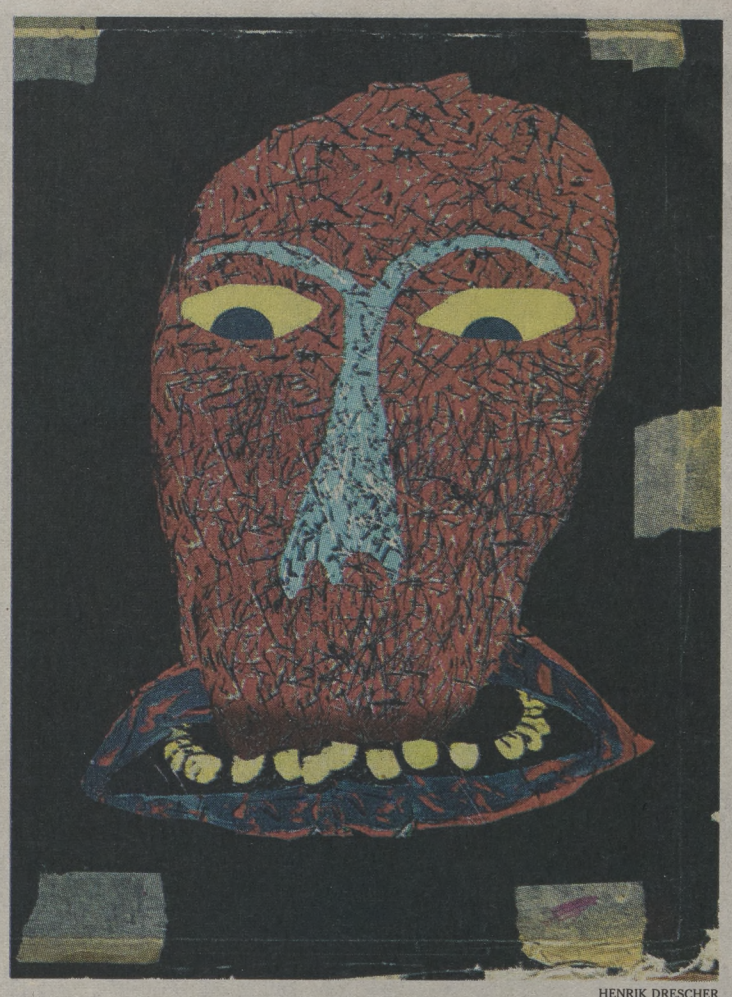
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ANXIETY GORDON MARINO

The Doctor Of Dread

Gordon Marino is a professor of philosophy at St. Olaf College and the editor of the forthcoming "The Quotable Kierkegaard."



HENRIK DRESCHER

Though he was a genius of the intellectual high wire, the 19th-century philosopher Soren Kierkegaard wrote from experience. And that experience included considerable acquaintance with the chronic, disquieting feeling that something not so good was about to happen. "All existence makes me anxious," he wrote in one journal entry, "from the smallest fly to the mysteries of the Incarnation; the whole thing is inexplicable, I most of all; to me all existence is infected, I most of all. My distress is enormous, boundless; no one knows it except God in heaven, and he will not console me."

Is there any doubt that were he alive today he would be supplied with a refillable prescription for Xanax?

On virtually every third page of Kierkegaard's authorship some note about angst is scrawled. But the adytum of Kierkegaard's understanding of anxiety is located in his work "The Concept of Anxiety" — a book at once so profound and byzantine that it seems to aim at evoking the very feeling it dissects.

In some of his most immortal lines from that work, he notes: "Anxiety may be compared with dizziness. He whose eye happens to look down into the yawning abyss becomes dizzy. But what is the reason for this? It is just as much in his own eyes as in the abyss. . . . Hence, anxiety is the dizziness of freedom."

Many philosophers treat emotions as though they were merely an impediment to reason, but for Kierkegaard there is a cognitive component to angst. It is in our anxiety that we come to understand feelingly that we are free, that the possibilities are endless.

In something approaching a Freudian notion of defense mechanisms, Kierkegaard argues that we have ways of trying to deflect and defang our anxieties. I might remind myself that there were many friends at the New Year's Day brunch and that I have the love and support of my family, but assurances or no, I still harbor that deep anxiety about being all alone.

In the age of big pharma, we have, of course, come to medicalize such thoughts — not to mention just about every other whim and pang. When I once confided to a physician friend that one of my children seemed to overheat with anxiety around tests, he smiled kindly and assured me, "No need to worry about that, we have a cure for anxiety today." On current reckoning, anxiety is a symptom, a problem, but Kierkegaard insists, "Only a prosaic stupidity maintains that this [anxiety] is a disorganization." And again, if a "speaker maintains that the great thing about him is that he has never been in anxiety, I will gladly provide him with my explanation: that is because he is very spiritless."

Kierkegaard understood that anxiety can ignite all kinds of transgressions and maladaptive behaviors — drinking, carousing, obsessions with work, you name it. We will do most anything to steady ourselves from the dizzying feeling that can take almost anything as its object. However, he also believed that "whoever has learned to be anxious in the right way has learned the ultimate."

In his "Works of Love," Kierkegaard remarks that all talk about the spirit has to be metaphorical. Sometimes anxiety is cast as a teacher and, at others, a form of surgery. The prescription in "The Concept of Anxiety" and other texts is that if we can, as the Buddhists say, "stay with the feeling" of anxiety, it will spirit away our finite concerns and educate us as to who we really are. According to Kierkegaard, anxiety like nothing else brings home the lesson that I cannot look to others, to the crowd, when I want to measure my progress in becoming a full human being.

But this, of course, is not the counsel you are likely to hear these days at the mental health clinic.

This is an excerpt from Anxiety, a series at nytimes.com/opinoinator.

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Director, Whiting Forensic Division (WFD)
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Experience/Education: A Master's degree or higher in a health related field and at least five (5) years of managerial experience in hospital, health, or mental health administration.

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ONLINE: A VIDEO

In New York City, a young woman tells how pimps brutalized her and sold her on Web sites.



ASHLEY GILBERTSON/VII, FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Once, pimps routinely advertised Alissa on Backpage.com. She escaped, and now she is a college senior.

Where Pimps Peddle Their Goods

From Page 1

night operation. Backpage is owned by Village Voice Media, which also owns the estimable Village Voice newspaper.

Attorneys general from 48 states have written a joint letter to Village Voice Media, pleading with it to get out of the flesh trade. An online petition at Change.org has gathered 94,000 signatures asking Village Voice Media to stop

If sex traffickers go to jail, should their media partners really get a pass?

taking prostitution advertising. Instead, the company has used The Village Voice to mock its critics. Alissa thought about using her real name for this article but decided not to for fear that Village Voice would retaliate.

Court records and public officials back Alissa's account, and there is plenty of evidence that under-age girls are marketed on Backpage. Arrests in such cases have been reported in at least 22 states.

Just this month, prosecutors in New York City filed charges in a case involving a gang that allegedly locked a 15-year-old Long Island girl in an empty house, drugged her, tied her up, raped her, and advertised her on Backpage. After a week of being sold for sex, prosecutors in Queens said, the girl escaped.

Liz McDougall, general counsel of Village Voice Media, told me that it is "shortsighted, ill-informed and counterproductive" to focus on Backpage when many other Web sites are also involved, particularly because Backpage tries to screen out ads for minors and reports possible trafficking cases to the authorities. McDougall denied that Backpage dominates the field and said that the Long Island girl was marketed on 13 other Web sites as well. But if street pimps go to jail for profiteering on under-age girls, should their media partners like Village Voice Media really get a pass?

Paradoxically, Village Voice began as an alternative newspaper to speak truth to power. It publishes some superb journalism. So it's sad to see it accept business from pimps in the greediest and most depraved kind of exploitation.

True, many prostitution ads on Backpage are placed by adult women acting on their own without coercion; they're not my concern. Other ads are placed by pimps: the Brooklyn district attorney's office says that the great majority of the sex trafficking cases it prosecutes involve girls marketed on Backpage.

Alissa, who grew up in a troubled household in Boston, has a story that is fairly typical. She says that one night when she was 16 — and this matches the account she gave federal prosecutors — a young man approached her and told her she was attractive. She thought that he was a rapper, and she was flattered. He told her that he wanted her to be his girlfriend, she recalls wistfully.

Within a few weeks, he was prostituting her — even as she continued to study as a high school sophomore. Alissa didn't run away partly because of a feeling that there was a romantic bond, partly because of Stockholm syndrome, and partly because of raw fear. She says violence was common if she tried connecting to the outside world or if she didn't meet her daily quota for cash.

"He would get aggressive and strangle me and physically assault me and threaten to sell me to someone that was more violent than him, which he eventually did," Alissa recalled. She said she was sold from one pimp to another several times, for roughly $10,000 each time.

She was sold to johns seven days a week, 365 days a year. After a couple of years, she fled, but a pimp tracked her down and — with the women he controlled — beat and stomped Alissa, breaking her jaw and several ribs, she said. That led her to cooperate with the police.

There are no simple solutions to end sex trafficking, but it would help to have public pressure on Village Voice Media to stop carrying prostitution advertising. The Film Forum has already announced that it will stop buying ads in The Village Voice. About 100 advertisers have dropped Rush Limbaugh's radio show because of his demeaning remarks about women. Isn't it infinitely more insulting to provide a forum for the sale of women and girls?

Let's be honest: Backpage's exit from prostitution advertising wouldn't solve the problem, for smaller Web sites would take on some of the ads. But it would be a setback for pimps to lose a major online marketplace. When Craigslist stopped taking such ads in 2010, many did not migrate to new sites: online prostitution advertising plummeted by more than 50 percent, according to AIM Group.

Alissa, who now balances her college study with part-time work at a restaurant and at Fair Girls, an antitrafficking organization, deserves the last word. "For a Web site like Backpage to make $22 million off our backs," she said, "it's like going back to slave times."

ROSS DOUTHAT

Agonies of an Archbishop

IN February of 2008, the archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. Rowan Williams, delivered an address on the fraught subject of "Islam in English Law." The speech, which circled around the question of whether a civil justice system could accommodate Islamic legal codes, was learned, recondite and occasionally impenetrable. The headlines it generated were not: The head of the Church of England, the newspapers blared, had endorsed Shariah law in Britain. Which he had — sort of, kind of, in the most academic and nuanced and trying-not-to-offend-anyone way imaginable.

For Williams, who announced on Friday that he will lay down his mitre at the end of this year, the Shariah controversy was typical of his tenure. Bearded, kindly and theologically subtle, the archbishop has spent the last 10 years trying to bring an academic's finesse to issues where finesse often just looks like evasion — the spread of Islam in a de-Christianizing Europe, the divides within the Anglican Communion over homosexuality and women's ordination, the rise of a combative New Atheism.

The result has been a depressing public ineffectuality for a man charged with leading the world's third-largest Christian body. Whether he was talking vaguely about "interactive pluralism" as a way of avoiding tackling issues like forced marriages and honor killings in Muslim immigrant communities, answering "pass" to a journalist's pointed question about his own views on sexually active gay clergy, or offering unreciprocated olive branches to proselytizing atheists, Williams rarely missed an opportunity to soft-pedal around an important debate.

But then again his office increasingly demands the impossible of its occupant.

Thomas L. Friedman and the public editor are off today.

These impossibilities have been most apparent in Williams's lengthy struggle to prevent Episcopalians in the United States and Anglicans in Africa from dividing over homosexuality. But the debate over gay priests and gay bishops is just one manifestation of the larger challenge facing a religious body that remains theoretically headquartered in Europe even as its center of gravity shifts southward, into the heartland of an emerging global Christianity.

This shift isn't unique to Anglicanism: Roman Catholicism's decline in the West has likewise been accompanied by striking growth in the developing world. (As the number of Catholic seminarians has dropped in the United States and Europe, for instance, it has risen by 86 percent globally since 1978.) In both churches, this geographic and demographic shift is putting a strain on institutional structures that evolved in a more Eurocentric age.

Canterbury has historically allowed for more of a theological big tent than Rome. But Anglicans at least shared a common ethnic heritage and cultural context. As the Communion has gone global, those bonds no longer exist.

To be an Anglican bishop in Britain today, for instance, means shepherding a shrinking native-born flock alongside growing immigrant churches, trying to make religion relevant in a cosmopolitan and often anti-Christian culture, and figuring out whether the continent's growing Muslim communities contain potential allies, potential rivals, or both. But to be a bishop in, say, Nigeria — where Christianity is expanding rapidly, secularism is almost nonexistent, and Islam looks like a mortal foe — means something very different. And asking a Welsh-born theologian to steward a Communion that probably holds more churchgoers in Lagos than Liverpool is a recipe for constant agony.

Here Rowan Williams has borne some of the same burdens as Pope Benedict XVI. The outgoing archbishop of Canterbury and the former Joseph Ratzinger differ theologically and in the scope of their ecclesiastical authority. But both men are European academics trying to speak to Western audiences while leading an increasingly global and post-European church. Both have confronted the

Trying to keep a religion together amid continental shifts.

same issues (Islam, secularism, sexuality) and both have stumbled into public controversies when their soft-spoken styles collided with intractable challenges.

These challenges won't go away, but within a few decades it won't be elderly Bavarians or Welsh academics who are confronting them. This is probably the last era in which the public face of the world's major Christian bodies will look the way it did in 1780, or even 1950.

The next pope could well be Latin American or African; if not in the next election, then it's only a matter of time. And one of the favorites to succeed Rowan Williams as archbishop of Canterbury is John Tucker Mugabi Sentamu, the Ugandan-born archbishop of York, whose biography makes a bridge between the old Christendom and the new.

A hundred years ago, the idea that one of Western Europe's most ancient religious offices could be occupied by a black man born in Africa would have seemed like something out of science fiction. By the end of this century, in a globalized Anglicanism and Catholicism alike, it will probably seem like the most normal and necessary thing in the world.

MAUREEN DOWD

Is Elvis A Mormon?

TRUST Mitt Romney to be on top of the latest trend of the superrich: the trophy basement.

On Friday, The Wall Street Journal reported on the new fashion to look low-key on the outside while digging deep for opulence — carving out subterranean spaces for Turkish baths, Italianate spas, movie theaters, skateboarding ramps, squash courts, discos and golf-simulation centers.

The Journal reported that Romney has filed an application to replace his single-story 3,000-square-foot beach house in La Jolla, Calif., with a 7,400-square-foot home featuring an additional 3,600 square feet of finished underground space.

It's a metaphor alert, reinforcing the two image problems Romney has: that he's an out-of-touch plutocrat and that his true nature is buried where we can't see it.

His two-year missionary stint in France taught Mitt to steel himself against rejection. Still, he must feel awful heading into Illinois (where Joseph Smith, the Mormon Church founder, was running for president when he was killed by a mob), spending so much money to buy so little affection.

There's a certain pathos to Romney. His manner is so inauthentic, you can't find him anywhere. Is he the guy he was on Wednesday or the guy he was on Thursday?

He has the same problem that diminished the equally animatronic Al Gore. Gore kept mum on the one thing that made him come alive, the environment, fearing he'd be cast, as W. liked to say, as "a green, green lima bean."

Romney also feels he must hide an essential part of who he is: a pillar of the Mormon Church. He fears he would turn off voters by talking too much about a faith that many evangelicals dismiss as a cult and not a true Christian religion.

Rick Santorum is drawn to the extreme and ascetic Opus Dei and sometimes sounds more Catholic than the pope — like his promise on his Web site to banish hard-core porn if he's elected president. Yet he has successfully crowded Romney with a fraction of his money by wearing his religion and his immigrant, blue-collar roots on his sleeve.

Mitt works overtime pretending he's a Nascar, cheesy-grits guy and masking his pride in his bank account and faith.

When he talked about his beliefs in his last presidential run, it sometimes provoked confusion, like this explanation to an Iowa radio host about the second coming of Christ: that Jesus would first appear in Jerusalem and then, "over the thousand years that follow, the millennium, he will reign from two places, the law will come from Missouri, and the other will be from Jerusalem."

Just as Romney did not step up immediately after Rush Limbaugh called Sandra Fluke "a slut," he has yet to step up as the cases have mounted of Jews post-

Jews trapped in a 'Spooky Mormon Heaven Dream.'

humously and coercively baptized by Mormons, including hundreds of thousands of Holocaust victims; the parents of the death camp survivor and Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal; and Daniel Pearl, the Jewish Wall Street Journal reporter murdered by Al Qaeda in Pakistan. (His widow, Mariane, told CNN she was "shocked.")

Believing that only Mormons can get into the highest level of heaven, the Celestial Kingdom, and that others will be limited to the Terrestrial and Telestial Kingdoms, they have baptized anyone and everyone, including Anne Frank, Gandhi, Hitler, Marilyn Monroe, Charlie Chaplin and Elvis.

Asked by Newsweek in 2007 if he had done baptisms for the dead, which involve white garb and immersion in water, a startled Romney replied, "I have in my life, but I haven't recently."

Mormon feminists got upset this winter when they found that young women in some temples had not been allowed to do proxy baptisms while they were menstruating.

Church leaders have lately stepped up efforts to stop such baptisms, reminding church members that their "pre-eminent obligation" is not to celebrities and Holocaust victims but to their own ancestors. (Ann Romney's Welsh dad, who disdained organized religion, was baptized.)

Matthew Bowman, who wrote "The Mormon People," says Mormons "have a hard time understanding why people from other religions find this so offensive. Mormons don't think of these people as being made Mormon unless their spirit accepts the Gospel. They just think they've given them an opportunity. Mormonism is wildly optimistic."

Mormons had designated Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Peace Prize winner and Holocaust survivor, as "ready" for a posthumous proxy burial, even though he is very much alive at 83 and still teaching at Boston University and in Florida.

Wiesel calls "the whole process very strange," and faults Romney, a Mormon stake president: "After all, Romney is not simply a Mormon. He's been a bishop of the Mormon Church. He could have called and told me he wanted me to know that he spoke to the elders and told them to stop it. Silence doesn't help truth."

He added: "They have baptized over 600,000 Holocaust victims. There is nothing positive in what they are doing. It's an insult. You cannot ask the dead their opinion.

"Poor Anne Frank. As if she didn't suffer enough."

CAMPAIGN STOPS JONATHAN HAIDT

Forget the Money, Follow the Sacredness



In the film version of "All the President's Men," when Robert Redford, playing the journalist Bob Woodward, is struggling to unravel the Watergate conspiracy, an anonymous source advises him to "follow the money." It's a good rule of thumb for understanding the behavior of politicians. But following the money leads you astray if you're trying to understand voters.

Self-interest, political scientists have found, is a surprisingly weak predictor of people's views on specific issues. Parents of children in public school are not more supportive of government aid to schools than other citizens. People without health insurance are not more likely to favor government-provided health insurance than are people who are fully insured.

Despite what you might have learned in Economics 101, people aren't always selfish. In politics, they're more often groupish. When people feel that a group they value — be it racial, religious, regional or ideological — is under attack, they rally to its defense, even at some cost to themselves. We evolved to be tribal, and politics is a competition among coalitions of tribes.

The key to understanding tribal behavior is not money, it's sacredness. The great trick that humans developed at some point in the last few hundred thousand years is the ability to circle around a tree, rock, ancestor, flag, book or god, and then treat that thing as sacred. People who worship the same idol can trust one another, work as a team and prevail over less cohesive groups. So if you want to understand politics, and especially our divisive culture wars, you must follow the sacredness.

Jonathan Haidt is a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and a visiting professor of business ethics at N.Y.U.'s Stern School of Business. Parts of this essay were excerpted from "The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion," which was just released.

We evolved to be tribal, and politics is a competition among coalitions of tribes.

A good way to follow the sacredness is to listen to the stories that each tribe tells about itself and the larger nation. The Notre Dame sociologist Christian Smith once summarized the moral narrative told by the American left like this: "Once upon a time, the vast majority" of people suffered in societies that were "unjust, unhealthy, repressive and oppressive." These societies were "reprehensible because of their deep-rooted inequality, exploitation and irrational traditionalism — all of which made life very unfair, unpleasant and short. But the noble human aspiration for autonomy, equality and prosperity struggled mightily against the forces of misery and oppression and eventually succeeded in establishing modern, liberal, democratic, capitalist, welfare societies." Despite our progress, "there is much work to be done to dismantle the powerful vestiges of inequality, exploitation and repression." This struggle, as Smith put it, "is the one mission truly worth dedicating one's life to achieving."

This is a heroic liberation narrative. For the American left, African-Americans, women and other victimized groups are the sacred objects at the center of the story. As liberals circle around these groups, they bond together and gain a sense of righteous common purpose.

Contrast that narrative with one that Ronald Reagan developed in the 1970s and '80s for conservatism. The clinical psychologist Drew Westen summarized the Reagan narrative like this: "Once upon a time, America was a shining beacon. Then liberals came along and erected an enormous federal bureaucracy that handcuffed the invisible hand of the free market. They subverted our traditional American values and opposed God and faith at every step of the way." For example, "instead of requiring that people work for a living, they siphoned money from hard-working Americans and gave it to Cadillac-driving drug addicts and welfare queens." Instead of the "traditional American values of family, fidelity and personal responsibility, they preached promiscuity, premarital sex and the gay lifestyle" and instead of "projecting strength to those who would do evil around the world, they cut military budgets, disrespected our soldiers in uniform and burned our flag." In response, "Americans decided to take their country back from those who sought to undermine it."

This, too, is a heroic narrative, but it's a heroism of defense. In this narrative it's God and country that are sacred — hence the importance in conservative iconography of the Bible, the flag, the military and the founding fathers. But the subtext in this narrative is about moral order. For social conservatives, religion and the traditional family are so important in part because they foster self-control, create moral order and fend off chaos. (Think of Rick Santorum's comment that birth control is bad because it's "a license to do things in the sexual realm that is counter to how things are supposed to be.") Liberals are the devil in this narrative because they want to destroy or subvert all sources of moral order.

Actually, there's a second subtext in the Reagan narrative in which liberty is the sacred object. Circling around liberty would seem, on its face, to be more consistent with liberalism and its many liberation movements than with social conservatism. But here's where narrative analysis really helps. Part of Reagan's political genius was that he told a single story about America that rallied libertarians and social conservatives, who are otherwise strange bedfellows. He did this by presenting liberal activist government as the single devil that is eternally bent on destroying two different sets of sacred values — economic liberty and moral order. Only if all nonliberals unite into a coalition of tribes can this devil be defeated.

If you follow the sacredness, you can understand some of the weirdness of the last few months in politics. In January, the Obama administration announced that religiously affiliated hospitals and other institutions must offer health plans that provide free contraception to their members. It's one thing for the government to insist that people have a right to buy a product that their employer abhors. But it's a rather direct act of sacrilege (for many Christians) for the government to force religious institutions to pay for that product. The outraged reaction galvanized the Christian right and gave a lift to Rick Santorum's campaign.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ERIC THAYER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DANIEL BORRIS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES; JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

Groups circle around a flag, an idea, a leader or a cause and treat it as sacred.

AROUND this time, bills were making their way through state legislatures requiring that women undergo a medically unnecessary ultrasound before they can have an abortion. It's one thing for a state government to make abortions harder to get (as with a waiting period). But it's a rather direct act of sacrilege (for nearly all liberals as well as libertarians) for a state to force a doctor to insert a probe into a woman's vagina. The outraged reaction galvanized the secular left and gave a lift to President Obama.

This is why we've seen the sudden reemergence of the older culture war — the one between the religious right and the secular left that raged for so many years before the financial crisis and the rise of the Tea Party. When sacred objects are threatened, we can expect a ferocious tribal response. The right perceives a "war on Christianity" and gears up for a holy war. The left perceives a "war on women" and gears up for, well, a holy war.

The timing could hardly be worse. America faces multiple threats and challenges, many of which will require each side to accept a "grand bargain" that imposes, at the very least, painful compromises on core economic values. But when your opponent is the devil, bargaining and compromise are themselves forms of sacrilege.

GRAY MATTER YUDHIJIT BHATTACHARJEE

Why Bilinguals Are Smarter

Yudhijit Bhattacharjee is a staff writer at Science.

SPEAKING two languages rather than just one has obvious practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. But in recent years, scientists have begun to show that the advantages of bilingualism are even more fundamental than being able to converse with a wider range of people. Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.

This view of bilingualism is remarkably different from the understanding of bilingualism through much of the 20th century. Researchers, educators and policy makers long considered a second language to be an interference, cognitively speaking, that hindered a child's academic and intellectual development.

They were not wrong about the interference: there is ample evidence that in a bilingual's brain both language systems are active even when he is using only one language, thus creating situations in which one system obstructs the other. But this interference, researchers are finding out, isn't so much a handicap as a blessing in disguise. It forces the brain to resolve internal conflict, giving the mind a workout that strengthens its cognitive muscles.

Bilinguals, for instance, seem to be more adept than monolinguals at solving certain kinds of mental puzzles. In a 2004 study by the psychologists Ellen Bialystok and Michelle Martin-Rhee, bilingual and monolingual preschoolers were asked to sort blue circles and red squares presented on a computer screen into two digital bins — one marked with a blue square and the other marked with a red circle.

In the first task, the children had to sort the shapes by color, placing blue circles in the bin marked with the blue square and red squares in the bin marked with the red circle. Both groups did this with comparable ease. Next, the children were asked to sort by shape, which was more challenging because it required placing the images in a bin marked with a conflicting color. The bilinguals were quicker at performing this task.



HARRIET RUSSELL

The collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests that the bilingual experience improves the brain's so-called executive function — a command system that directs the attention processes that we use for planning, solving problems and performing various other mentally demanding tasks. These processes include ignoring distractions to stay focused, switching attention willfully from one thing to another and holding information in mind — like remembering a sequence of directions while driving.

Why does the tussle between two simultaneously active language systems improve these aspects of cognition? Until recently, researchers thought the bilingual advantage stemmed primarily from an ability for *inhibition* that was honed by the exercise of suppressing one language system: this suppression, it was thought, would help train the bilingual mind to ignore distractions in other contexts. But that explanation increasingly appears to be inadequate, since studies have shown that bilinguals perform better than monolinguals even at tasks that do not require inhibition, like threading a line through an ascending series of numbers scattered randomly on a page.

The key difference between bilinguals and monolinguals may be more basic: a heightened ability to monitor the environment. "Bilinguals have to switch languages quite often — you may talk to your father in one language and to your mother in another language," says Albert Costa, a researcher at the University of Pompea Fabra in Spain. "It requires keeping track of changes around you in the same way that we monitor our surroundings when driving." In a study comparing German-Italian bilinguals with Italian monolinguals on monitoring tasks, Mr. Costa and his colleagues found that the bilingual subjects not only performed better, but they also did so with less activity in parts of the brain involved in monitoring, indicating that they were more efficient at it.

The bilingual experience appears to influence the brain from infancy to old age (and there is reason to believe that it may also apply to those who learn a second language later in life).

In a 2009 study led by Agnes Kovacs of the International School for Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy,

Knowing two languages has dramatic effects on cognitive development.

7-month-old babies exposed to two languages from birth were compared with peers raised with one language. In an initial set of trials, the infants were presented with an audio cue and then shown a puppet on one side of a screen. Both infant groups learned to look at that side of the screen in anticipation of the puppet. But in a later set of trials, when the puppet began appearing on the opposite side of the screen, the babies exposed to a bilingual environment quickly learned to switch their anticipatory gaze in the new direction while the other babies did not.

Bilingualism's effects also extend into the twilight years. In a recent study of 44 elderly Spanish-English bilinguals, scientists led by the neuropsychologist Tamar Gollan of the University of California, San Diego, found that individuals with a higher degree of bilingualism — measured through a comparative evaluation of proficiency in each language — were more resistant than others to the onset of dementia and other symptoms of Alzheimer's disease: the higher the degree of bilingualism, the later the age of onset.

Nobody ever doubted the power of language. But who would have imagined that the words we hear and the sentences we speak might be leaving such a deep imprint?

The New York Times

'Magic Mike' Is Big Draw For Gay Men

By ERIK PIEPENBURG

Men flirted and showed off their muscles through tight-fitting tank tops. Women with no shoes gyrated next to men with no shirts. A D.J. played deep beats. Shachar Keizman, 24, climbed atop an armrest and peeled off his shirt to reveal a chiseled torso. People screamed and stuck dollar bills in his shorts.

Then the lights went down, and Channing Tatum got naked.

Clearview Chelsea Cinemas, a cineplex in Manhattan, had become a makeshift gay bar. It was Friday night, and four theaters were showing "Magic Mike," the Oscar-winning director Steven Soderbergh's new movie about a troupe of male strippers. The pouty-lipped Mr. Tatum, who has been open about his past as a stripper, plays the title character.

"It's a fun night out with a bunch of gay friends to go see a movie about hot boys," said Aaron Rhyne, 32, a theatrical projection designer who saw the film with about 10 friends. "We've been throwing the trailer around, laughing about it."

Mr. Rhyne wasn't alone in organizing a group. While the scene at Chelsea Cinemas may have been more raucous than most, interviews around the country indicated that gay men have been flocking to "Magic Mike" in numbers not seen since the release of "Brokeback Mountain" in 2005. But unlike that film, about two

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To Use and Use Not

New Edition of 'A Farewell to Arms' Includes Alternate Endings



PHOTOGRAPHS FROM JOHN F. KENNEDY PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

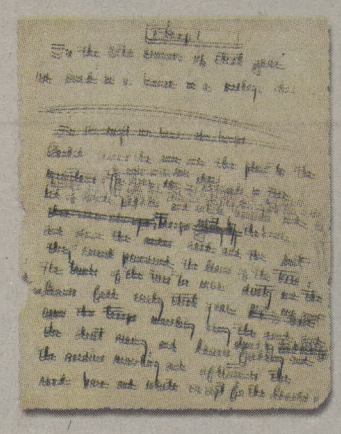
By JULIE BOSMAN

In an interview in The Paris Review in 1958 Ernest Hemingway made an admission that has inspired frustrated novelists ever since: The final words of "A Farewell to Arms," his wartime masterpiece, were rewritten "39 times before I was satisfied."

Those endings have become part of literary lore, but they have never been published together in their entirety, according to his longtime publisher, Scribner.

A new edition of "A Farewell to Arms," which was originally published in 1929, will be released next week, including all the alternate endings, along with early drafts of other passages in the book.

The new edition is the result of an agreement between Hemingway's estate



Left, Ernest Hemingway in 1947. Above, his first-page draft for "A Farewell to Arms."

and Scribner, now an imprint of Simon & Schuster.

It is also an attempt to redirect some of the attention paid in recent years to Hemingway's swashbuckling, hard-drinking image — through fictional depictions in the best-selling novel "The Paris Wife" and the Woody Allen film "Midnight in Paris," for instance — back to his sizable body of work.

"I think people who are interested in writing and trying to write themselves will find it interesting to look at a great work and have some insight to how it was done," Seán Hemingway, a grandson of Ernest Hemingway who is also a curator of Greek and Roman art at the Met-

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A Pop Sweetie With Edge

A.O. SCOTT

FILM REVIEW

According to a young fan interviewed in "Katy Perry: Part of Me," attending a Katy Perry concert is like being shot with an arrow of Katy Perryness. To watch the movie, a 3-D concert documentary directed by Dan Cutforth and Jane Lipsitz, is to be subjected to an artillery barrage of Katy Perryness. Not only from on screen but also from the screaming, cheering, weeping, singing-along members of the audience, some of whom will be wearing Katy Perry costumes, not all of whom will be teenage girls. You would not believe how much Katy Perryness there is in the world.



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Katy Perry: Part of Me, *which follows the pop star on tour, opens nationwide on Thursday.*

And why not? Ms. Perry's approach to pop stardom, evident in "Part of Me" and on the yearlong tour it chronicles, is friendly and inclusive as well as cannily professional. Video clips of young admirers testifying to the positive effect she has had on their lives are sweet but perhaps redundant, given the sugar rush of positive attitude her concerts deliver. It is hardly an accident that lollipops, chocolate Kisses and other kinds of candy figure prominent-

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Shakespeare in Slang and Serbian

By PATRICK HEALY

LONDON — The names of the three couples were familiarly foreboding — Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Ophelia, Othello and Desdemona — but almost everything else about them felt fresh and disorienting.

To the beat of electronica and pulsing lights, they gyrated lustily on a dance floor in a circular brick chamber ringed by a subterranean labyrinth of narrow passageways. As an audience stood and watched like voyeurs at a rave, they would shout above the music, mixing Shakespeare ("never doubt I love") with more modern cries about "caring too much." Hamlet and Othello, holding their ladies, were sweeter than usual, and Ophelia seemed happily sane — for a time, at least, until their revels ended, and fate took its usual toll.

Turning doomed classical lovers into heartsick club kids, and weaving lines from the original plays with improvised slang from its 15 teenage actors, this production, called "The Dark Side of Love," is one of the more experimental outings of the about 70 shows in the World Shakespeare Festival, a major cultural component of the London Olympic year. Yet this work, a collaboration of Brazilian and British artists running through Sunday at the Roundhouse Theater here, is also squarely representative of the aim of the festival: "to treat Shakespeare as the world's playwright," according to its director, Deborah Shaw.

"Rather than simply stage Shakespeare's 37 plays we wanted to look at how artists shine light on their countries and societies through the prism of Shakespeare," Ms. Shaw said. Noting that only 5 percent of the dialogue in "Dark Side" is Shakespeare's, she added, "If not all the words are his, or the plots veer off in new directions, that's all the better."

Perhaps the most logistically am-

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TIM MITCHELL

A video projection in "The Dark Side of Love," part of the World Shakespeare Festival in London.

Music Festivals Make a Move Into New York

By JAMES McKINLEY Jr.

If you think there's a new pop music festival every couple of weeks in New York this summer, you're not imagining things.

For years the conventional wisdom among concert promoters was that music festivals face impossible hurdles in the city, where the cultural calendar is crowded, large public spaces are hard to reserve, and costs are high.

But this summer entrepreneurs have started three new for-profit festivals in New York, including the CBGB Festival that begins on Thursday and features the bands Guided by Voices and Cloud Nothings. Over the last four years three other large-scale festivals have taken root and prospered.

With album sales in decline, festivals of all sorts have become big business, and promoters in New York look with envy on the success of large urban festivals like Lollapalooza in Chicago and South by Southwest in Austin, Texas. Several said they see a huge potential market in the nation's most densely populated major city for a big festival, if the right formula can be found.

"Lots of people are running at New York, both local promoters and, for that matter, out-of-town promoters," said Mark Campana, a co-president for North American concerts at Live Nation, the

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Alighiero Boetti. *Mappa (Map)* (detail). 1989–94. Embroidery on fabric. Collection Giordano Boetti, Rome. © 2012 Estate of Alighiero Boetti/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SIAE, Rome; *Senza titolo (Untitled)* (detail). 1969. Ink and stickers on paper. Private collection. © 2012 Estate of Alighiero Boetti/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SIAE, Rome

A WORD WITH: GLEN DUNCAN

Writing a Werewolf Myth, and Making It His Own

By JOHN WILLIAMS

Glen Duncan's novel "The Last Werewolf" was narrated by a 200-year-old man-wolf named Jake Marlowe. Jake's condition forced him to eat a human being every month or perish, but otherwise he was a charming fellow. In The New York Times Book Review, Justin Cronin said the book "plays out in splendid good fun, bouncing from one James Bondian locale to another."

Mr. Duncan's new book, "Talulla Rising," is a sequel about a female werewolf desperate to rescue her newborn son from vampires. In a recent interview via e-mail, Mr. Duncan discussed his relationship to the paranormal, the appeal of unsympathetic characters and why psychotherapy isn't for him. Below are excerpts from the conversation.

Q. Were you always interested in writing about werewolves and vampires? Did commercial considerations play a prominent role in these books?

A. Yes. I wasn't making enough money. My original plan was to write a Victorian serial killer novel, "Oliver Twist" meets "The Silence of the Lambs" (which someone reading this will now write and clean up with). But the research was a drag. Nineteenth-century English literature I know; 19th-century sewage systems not so much.

Then, on New Year's Eve 2009, a friend asked me what I was "hoping to achieve" in the next 12 months. Resisting the urge to break a bottle over his head, I said — for no reason I can now remember — that I was going to write a novel about the last surviving werewolf. Agreement that this was a good idea was slurred but unanimous. Moreover, it still seemed a good idea when I woke up the next morning.

Q. What's your history as a reader of gothic or paranormal subjects?

A. As a reader, virtually nil. "Dracula," "Frankenstein," "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." What I've absorbed of the gothic or paranormal has come mainly from films. I grew up watching the Hammer classics of the '60s and '70s. Also, I had a Roman Catholic childhood. It doesn't get more paranormal than that.

Q. What kind of research did you do for these novels? How did you balance loyalty to the vampire and werewolf myths with making them your own?

A. No research at all. The balance was determined partly according to taste (death by silver is cool; I was definitely keeping that) and partly according to thematic utility. Some versions of the myth allow for voluntary metamorphosis, but that doesn't present the same dilemma of conscience. The lunar enslavement forces a choice between murder and death — a much richer moral quandary.

Q. It seemed as if there were a more steady flow of action set pieces in "Talulla Rising" than in "The Last Werewolf." A bit less ruminating than Jake did. Was that a conscious decision?

A. To my eye, Talulla is no less reflective. The difference is tonal rather than quantitative, and determined by their predicaments: Jake wants to die; Talulla wants to live. As far as the action set pieces go, I just wrote what seemed necessary to keep the pace up. Plus, if they ever make the movie, they'll look great.



MICHAEL LIONSTAR

Glen Duncan, author of "Talulla Rising" and "The Last Werewolf."

Q. The new novel features the legend of a vampire named Remshi, whose promised return has a surface parallel to Christianity. How much, if at all, did religious stories influence these novels?

A. Well, again, I grew up Roman Catholic. "Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my body." "Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the cup of my blood." Is there really anything I need to add to that?

Q. Talulla has a conflicted view of motherhood, and fears inflicting violence on her own children. Is this just a function of her hybrid nature, or is it a commentary on your own views of parenthood?

A. Talulla's fear in relation to maternity is a very specific one: Will she be capable of eating her own child? Which is a grotesquely enlarged version of what I suspect is a common fear among mothers-to-be: Will they feel the way they "should" about their children? In a world where the "appropriate" response to virtually everything is commercially co-opted and aggressively peddled, it's hardly surprising half of us are on drugs or in therapy because we don't think our feelings are quite what they should be.

Q. In "The Last Werewolf," you wrote: "One knows one's madnesses, by and large. By and large the knowledge is vacuous. The notion of naming the beast to conquer it is the idiot optimism of psychotherapy." Is this your own belief about the limits of self-knowledge? Have you ever tried therapy?

A. I'm too conceited for therapy. I prefer drinking, and it's much cheaper. There's no doubt good therapists help some people out of their suffering, and hats off to them for it. But yes, I'm with Jake on this. It's less that there's a limit to self-knowledge than that the self is infinitely elusive; everything you discover about it alters it, slightly, forces it to sprout curious new aspects, which in turn need to be mapped. It's always a little shadow-distance ahead of us. Which is a good thing, since that's where imagination functions.

Q. An earlier novel of yours, "I, Lucifer," was narrated by the Devil. What do you find appealing about deeply unsympathetic protagonists?

A. I'm with Milton and the Rolling Stones: I don't find the Devil an unsympathetic character. But in any case, my fiction is populated as much by people who do good as it is by those who do bad. I'm interested in imaginatively accommodating as much of the human as possible, for which you need both moral extremes and everything in between. Anything less simply shortchanges the species. No one has summed up this doomed but necessary mission better than W. H. Auden in his poem "The Novelist."

Q. What books have influenced you most as a novelist, in terms of style and subject matter?

A. Leaving the pre-20th century aside and confining myself to novels: "L'Étranger" by Camus, "The Catcher in the Rye" by Salinger, "The Rainbow" by D. H. Lawrence, "Money" by Martin Amis, "Earthly Powers" by Anthony Burgess, "1984" by Orwell and John Updike's Rabbit novels.

Q. You've said in the past that this was going to be a trilogy. Is that still the plan? And if so, can you say who might star in the third book?

A. I'm writing Book 3, "By Blood We Live," at the moment. Difficult to describe without spoilers, but I can say there are multiple narrators — including a vampire and a couple of humans — and we do get (it's about time, some readers might feel) a werewolf origin myth. Other than that, lots of sex and violence and philosophy and jokes and love and death. Just the thing for the beach.

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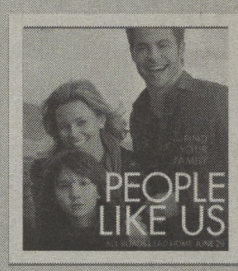
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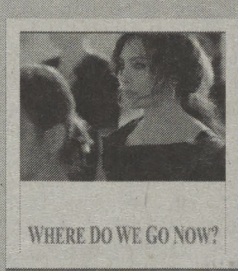
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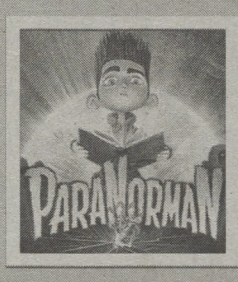


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PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUBY WASHINGTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jason Samuels Smith and Company *Mr. Smith led a program of tap at the Joyce Theater on Tuesday that showed his command of balance and included dances choreographed to bebop.*

Tapping to Tunes When Charlie Parker Is Calling Them

BRIAN SEIBERT

DANCE REVIEW

For most recent summers, tap dance at the Joyce Theater has meant Savion Glover, the era's dominant and increasingly insular figure. This week, however, there are world-class tap dancers at the Joyce, and Mr. Glover is not among them. It is Jason Samuels Smith's turn to present his idea of tap, a great art currently in need of direction.

Mr. Smith and the majority of his cast members are former associates of Mr. Glover, and like him they are in the jazz tradition. They have appeared at the Joyce before, as members of the Jazz Tap Ensemble and in shared programs, but Tuesday's program was the first full evening under Mr. Smith's direction. In contrast to Mr. Glover's usual sprawl this show is disciplined to a fault, a brisk hour based around a dominant figure of an earlier era, the game-changing saxophonist Charlie Parker.

It starts with a bang: Mr. Smith in a white jacket, baby-blue shirt and pink tie going at "Bebop," one of Parker's steeplechase compositions, with a fine five-piece jazz band. Mr. Smith attacks it in chunks, improvising sympathetically as the musicians take solos. Ten years ago he was an innovator in perverse virtuosity: inverting steps, transferring them to odd edges of the foot. Now those innovations look natural, blending in as he pushes the envelope elsewhere.

And the pushing now looks less like showboating and more like artistic expression, especially as Mr. Smith eases into Horace Silver's ballad "Lonely Woman." A foot escapes like a skittering crab or stitches steadily as the other one embroiders around it prettily, but what impresses most is how slowly Mr. Smith can do steps that normally require speed in their fight against gravity. His off-balance moments sing the blues.

He is a charmer too. Like a flamenco dancer he milks drama out of removing his jacket and rolling up his sleeves. He teases the finish, hesitating with a smile before caressing the floor one last time. For his third number he dances without accompaniment, hopping among three squares of light. The visual conceit is hardly original, but it helps a viewer distinguish between the grooves and meters Mr. Smith samples, while the rhythmic lines he sustains and implies conjure the rarer, aural illusion of two or three dancers.

Promoting motion's place in the jazz tradition.

The three dancers to whom he cedes the middle of the show are no illusion. They are Chloé Arnold, Michelle Dorrance and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, performing excerpts from "Charlie's Angels," which Mr. Smith presented in full at the Kitchen in 2009. The idea — to tap the intricate solos in Parker recordings as those recordings play — is close to tap karaoke, an exercise better suited to the practice room than the stage. But it's a pleasure to see these women rise to the challenge differently.

Ms. Arnold, a hard worker, is the least distinguished, but she captures some of the friskiness in the clipped bebop cadences. Ms. Dorrance, more technically assured, can add character, using her gangly frame to make out of the music's zigzags a comedy of splayed knees and deadpan pauses. She's a delight.

If Ms. Sumbry-Edwards is not the greatest tap dancer of our time — as I have long believed her to be and as Mr. Smith has attested — then she is surely the most finished. Look at the subtle sass of her shoulders, the elegance of her hinging elbow. Tracing a circle on the floor, this foot-drummer can seem to bend notes like a saxophonist. And the sonic clarity: it's as if someone has filtered out all the noise.

Ms. Sumbry-Edwards is the music, but replicating Charlie Parker is too easy for her. The assignment fences her in, and the Joyce program's final selection doesn't give her much more room. This is "Chasing the Bird," an experiment in "dance opera." Craig Grant's incoherent text, much of it mercifully drowned out by the tapping, refers to Parker but flails at more general allegory, a lame morality tale against selling out.

It's like watching a high-school assembly skit performed by dancers of jaw-dropping ability. The three women lock together in briefly thrilling counterpoint, and some of Mr. Smith's choreography manages to be both sexy and uncompromising. But the distance between the caliber of the dancers and the quality of the dramaturgy gapes.

"Chasing the Bird" isn't the direction tap needs. A program note indicates "the evolution of an idea," which is fair enough as long as the evolution doesn't stop here. These tap dancers, and more where they came from, keep evolving. Whether Mr. Smith will be the person to discover how to display that growth onstage is a question this program leaves open.

Jason Samuels Smith and Company continues through Saturday at the Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Avenue, at 19th Street, Chelsea; (212) 242-0800, joyce.org.



TIM MITCHELL

Triana Victoria in "The Dark Side of Love," a production with a young British-Brazilian cast playing at the Roundhouse Theater as part of the World Shakespeare Festival.

Shakespeare in Slang and Many Other Tongues at a London Festival

From First Arts Page

bitious part of the festival was Globe to Globe, in which leaders of Shakespeare's Globe Theater spent nearly two years lining up 37 international theater companies to mount one of the plays in their native languages at the Globe over six weeks this spring. The shows included a new "Balkan trilogy" with theaters from Serbia, Albania and Macedonia each performing one of the three parts of "Henry VI" — not coincidentally a play about civil war — as well as productions of "The Comedy of Errors" from the Afghan troupe Roy-e-Sabs and "The Merchant of Venice" from the Habima theater company of Israel (which drew protesters waving Palestinian flags).

The Globe projected English supertitles that described the action of scenes but did not translate the dialogue — an effort to push the English-speaking audiences to try to understand, on their own, the emotions and intents of the characters.

Dominic Drumgoole, artistic director of the Globe, said that "making marriages of plays and cultures" included extensive diplomacy (many theaters lobbied to bring productions of the ever-popular "Macbeth"; a gangland version from Poland won out) and struggles to find companies for lesser-known plays like "King John" (an Armenian theater, it turned out, had a long devotion to that drama). Globe to Globe went off with few hitches, rain and last-minute visa headaches aside, and now some of the companies are preparing to mount the productions back home.

More traditional productions are also in the festival this summer, including a "Timon of Athens" starring the Shakespearean actor Simon Russell Beale here at the National Theater that starts next week and runs into October. Despite the Athens connection to the Olympics, the National did not time the production to coincide with the Games, and the production itself is hardly intended to be a crowd pleaser, Mr. Beale said in an interview.

While Mr. Beale said England's focus on Shakespeare was natural, he added that he felt relieved that the festival organizers had not sought to showcase the playwright "as a sentimental figure representing green and pleasant lands."

"The danger of a Shakespeare festival is that it can be too cheerfully celebratory, but I think we've helped avoid that by reaching out to other countries," he said.

"The Dark Side of Love," for instance, is largely the creation of Renato Rocha, a director from Rio de Janeiro who helped train the child actors in the acclaimed 2003 Brazilian film "City of God," and who has worked in recent years at the Royal Shakespeare Company. Ms. Shaw, who is also an associate director at the Royal Shakespeare, asked Mr. Rocha to team up on a festival project with the Roundhouse Theater, which specializes in works featuring new young actors. Mr. Rocha decided to explore young love by using Shakespeare's tragedies, and was inspired to experiment with the text and the characters by the Roundhouse's unusual Dorfman Hub theater space.

An endurance event alongside the Games.

"It's like an underground lair in there," Mr. Rocha said of the Hub after a recent performance, "with its dim corridors and corners and alcoves. It gave me ideas about breaking out the most unsettling, crazy moments of young romance from the tragedies."

Working with a co-director in London, Keziah Serreau, Mr. Rocha assembled a cast of 15 actors from Britain and Brazil, including some who had never performed before. (Mr. Rocha said he hopes to take the production to Brazil next.) At the first rehearsal with the British cast members last fall he described his desire to collaborate with them on an original script that mixed Shakespeare with the actors' own experiences and then asked them to open up about their love lives.

"They were totally silent," Mr. Rocha recalled with a laugh, "and then Keziah explained that here it's different from Brazil, that they are more reserved. So we put Shakespeare aside and just started improvising scenes about a breakup, obsessing over a boyfriend, sharing secrets with friends, confessions about cheating. And that led to a script."

The show unfolds in so-called promenade style, with audience members walking through the Hub space and coming upon actors in the throes of torment — some speaking in verse (like a mad-looking young woman reciting part of "to be or not to be") and others in their own voices (a young man in a gas mask asking, "What is love when you're 14 or 16?"). Eventually the actors gather in the central, circular space, and the slimmest of plot outlines is revealed as a group of young men talk about meeting up to dance with girls named Juliet. ("For all its strengths and visual swagger," a critic for The Guardian wrote, "this frustratingly disjointed piece never quite delivers.")

One of the most visually arresting sequences unfolds soon after between Romeo and Juliet, as they emerge from opposite passageways and walk toward each other only to be held back by cloth fabric around their bodies that the other actors (standing in for the Montague and Capulet families) pull and stretch like taffy.

George Young, a 14-year-old newcomer to theater who plays Romeo, said he knew little about romantic love before performing in the show and had only skimmed the original play. But that scene in which he struggled to reach Juliet had opened his eyes, he said, "to interpreting theater work for myself."

"I'd thought theater was all about memorizing lines and then putting on the play," he said. "But now I ask myself: What are the plays really saying? Do you always have to do Shakespeare the same old ways?"

To Use And Use Not In 'Farewell'

From First Arts Page

ropolitan Museum of Art, said in an interview. "But he is a writer who has captured the imagination of the American public, and these editions are interesting because they really focus on his work. Ultimately that's his lasting contribution."

The new edition concludes that the 39 endings that Hemingway referred to are really more like 47. They have been preserved in the Ernest Hemingway Collection at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston since 1979, where Seán Hemingway studied them carefully. (Bernard S. Oldsey, a Hemingway scholar, listed 41 endings in his book "Hemingway's Hidden Craft," but Seán Hemingway found 47 variations in manuscripts preserved at the Kennedy Library.)

The alternate endings are labeled and gathered in an appendix in the new edition, a 330-page book whose cover bears the novel's original artwork, an illustration of a reclining man and woman, both topless.

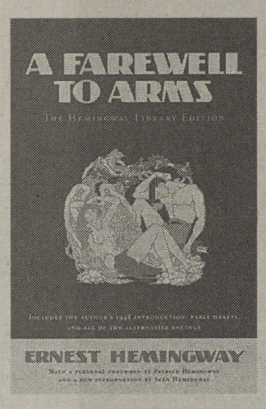
For close readers of Hemingway the endings are a fascinating glimpse into how the novel could have concluded on a different note, sometimes more blunt and sometimes more optimistic. And since modern authors tend to produce their work on computers, the new edition also serves as an artifact of a bygone craft, with handwritten notes and long passages crossed out, giving readers a sense of an author's process. (When asked in the 1958 Paris Review interview with George Plimpton what had stumped him, Hemingway said, "Getting the words right.")

The endings range from a short sentence or two to several paragraphs.

In No. 1, "The Nada Ending," Hemingway wrote, "That is all there is to the story. Catherine died and you will die and I will die and that is all I can promise you."

The "Live-Baby Ending," listed as No. 7, concludes, "There is no end except death and birth is the only beginning."

And in No. 34, the "Fitzgerald ending," suggested by Hemingway's friend F. Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway wrote that the world "breaks everyone," and those "it does not break it kills."



The new edition, with the original cover art.

"It kills the very good and very gentle and the very brave impartially," he wrote. "If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry."

Hemingway also left behind a list of alternate titles, which are reprinted in the new edition. They include "Love in War," "World Enough and Time," "Every Night and All" and "Of Wounds and Other Causes." One title, "The Enchantment," was crossed out by Hemingway.

Patrick Hemingway, Ernest Hemingway's only surviving son, said in an interview from his home in Montana that when Scribner suggested the raw material be published, he agreed.

"They do give insight to how Hemingway was thinking," said Patrick Hemingway, who is 84. "But it is absolutely true that no matter how much you analyze a classic bit of writing, you can never really figure out what makes talent work."

Susan Moldow, the publisher of Scribner, said that while Hemingway is a perennial strong seller, especially for schools and libraries, "the estate is constantly wanting to present the work afresh."

"This is one of the most important authors in American history," she said. "And fortunately or unfortunately you need to keep refreshing or people lose interest."

After reading the various endings, Ms. Moldow added, she didn't question the author's decision; the actual ending — cool and passionless after an epic tale of war and love, with the protagonist leaving a hospital in the rain — has stood the test of time.

"Ultimately," she said, "I think we have to be glad that he went with the ending that he went with."



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

"Katy Perry: Part of Me" chronicles the star's 2011 concert tour. She personifies the paradoxes that contemporary commercial music encompasses.

A Pop Sweetie With Edge: Following Katy Perry on Tour

From First Arts Page

ly in her costumes and stage designs.

But Ms. Perry is more than just another pop sweetie. She is an energetic, industrious personification of the marvelous paradoxes that contemporary commercial music encompasses. The child of traveling Pentecostal preachers — who appear in the film in old video and in present-day interviews, and who seem both proud of their daughter and mildly disapproving about some of her creative choices — she migrated, while still a teenager, from Christian music into wilder secular styles. (She also moved from respectable Santa Barbara to club-kid Los Angeles.) Her first major influence was Alanis Morissette, whose crafty, large-voiced emotionalism is reflected in some of Ms. Perry's more introspective, less bouncy songs.

Her first big hit, though (after she emerged from a spell in record-label limbo briefly revisited in "Part of Me"), was "I Kissed a Girl," a teasing, infectious, decidedly nonangsty confession of adolescent bi-curiosity and tipsy indiscretion. The slowed-down, torched-up version performed onstage in the film taps into melodramatic undercurrents unexplored in the original, which was one of the unavoidable sounds of 2008.

Mildly scandalous and more than mildly sexy, "I Kissed a Girl" set the template for the aspect of Katy Perryness that might test the limits of the PG rating this film has earned. Ms. Perry combines, with an ease and insouciance that is quite remarkable when you think about it, a childlike, kittens-and-rainbows innocence with frank declarations of and incitements to lust.

Some of her lyrics seem intended to make the parents of 12-year-old girls feel uncomfortable on karaoke night, but once they are in your head, they will never go away. Her sexual imagination runs the gamut from the suggestive ("sun-kissed skin so hot/ we'll melt your Popsicle") to the baldly literal ("we went streaking in the park/skinny-dipping in the dark/then had a ménage à trois").

Katy Perry
Part of Me

Opens on Thursday nationwide. Directed by Dan Cutforth and Jane Lipsitz; edited by Scott Richter; costumes by Johnny Wujek; produced by Brian Grazer, Katy Perry, Martin Kirkup, Bradford Cobb and Steven Jensen; released by Paramount Insurge Pictures. Running time: 1 hour 37 minutes.

And yet in the end it all seems like good clean fun, thanks to Ms. Perry's gift for the radio-friendly hook and her all-around niceness. "I guess she's a good role model," a mother was heard to say after a recent screening of "Part of Me," and after seeing the movie — which emphasizes Ms. Perry's generosity to fans, loyalty to friends and family, avowed feminism and unpretentious work ethic — you may find it hard to disagree. But at the same time role model may not be precisely the right term. Really, Ms. Perry is an alluring but ultimately safe fantasy figure, an expression of dreams and desires that are not as contradictory as they might seem.

Nor, however, are all of them equally accessible. One of the curious features of modern musical celebrity is the idea that it is transferable, that a pop idol's success is shared with and somehow available to her fans. And so, as we sample her wildly glamorous life and revel in her amazing achievements — during her 2011 tour she became the first female artist to have five No. 1 songs from a single album — we are also reminded that she is, deep down, a regular person.

There are several reasons that "Katy Perry: Part of Me" is more interesting than similar movies about Justin Bieber, Miley Cyrus and the Jonas Brothers. Most simply, she just has more talent than any of them, and her songs have a wider emotional range. But the film also catches glimpses of the unraveling of her marriage to the British actor and comedian Russell Brand, which gives it an undercurrent of classic backstage melodrama.

"Part of Me" will never be mistaken for "The Red Shoes" (though Ms. Perry has some of those, as well as every other color), but her negotiation of the painfully competing demands of stardom and marriage is undeniably poignant. Mr. Brand is barely on screen, and we don't really know what happened between them, but the intrusion of grown-up problems into a fairy-tale world turns the movie into something deeper than it might otherwise have been. By the time the sequel arrives, Katy Perryness may have a whole new meaning.

"Katy Perry: Part of Me" is rated PG (Parental guidance suggested). Your kids already know the songs.

Music Festivals Seek Success as They Move Into New York City

From First Arts Page

largest concert promoter in the country. "They are all looking to try to find a way, but it's expensive. This is not something for the faint of heart."

The sudden abundance of music festivals in the city echoes a national trend. More than 20 major festivals were started this year across the country. Live Nation alone has plans to stage eight this year — more than doubling its festival business, and starting outdoor events in cities like Philadelphia and St. Paul, Mr. Campana said.

In New York promoters have adopted two main strategies. Several are following the music-conference model: staging a series of multiband concerts in local clubs and then complementing them with panel discussions, film festivals and free outdoor events. Others are producing more conventional festivals on Randalls Island and in other city parks, trying to avoid the pitfalls that doomed All Points West and outdoor festivals elsewhere in the region.

This week the first CBGB festival, organized by a group that bought the rights to the famous punk-rock club that closed in 2006, kicks off with concerts in Times Square, Central Park and at 40 clubs around the city. Last month two music-industry veterans resurrected a concert series at clubs to accompany the New Music Seminar. Later this month the Black Keys and Snoop Dogg will anchor the first Catalpa Festival on Randalls Island, booked by Dave Foran, a young Irish impresario.

Now in its second year, Governors Ball drew 40,000 people over two days in June to Randalls Island Park with a mix of electronic music and indie rock bands. Electric Zoo, a festival devoted to electronic dance music, returns to the same park over the Labor Day weekend for the fourth year and is expected to draw 100,000 people over three days, promoters said. And the Northside Festival in Brooklyn, started four years ago by the publishers of L Magazine, went off in June without a hitch in Williamsburg, drawing some 80,000 people over four days.



CHAD BATKA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Governors Ball music festival brought fans to Randalls Island for two days in June.

The promoters behind the CBGB, New Music Seminar and Northside festivals have all adopted as a model the CMJ Music Marathon, a long-running music industry conference and concert series held each fall in New York. These promoters are making deals with existing clubs to present lineups that put obscure and emerging bands on bills with better-known headliners.

As album sales decline, live shows are more important.

It's a flexible design, promoters and club owners say. People can buy a pass for the entire festival or just pay a cover charge at a club for a particular night. Generally the clubs make money from the sale of drinks and, in some cases, take a percentage of door charges, while the promoter books the acts and pays the major artists out of the sales of festival passes. Some of the lesser groups play for a small stipend or a percentage of the door receipts.

Such a blueprint works well in New York with its plethora of clubs and lack of open space, said Tim Hayes, the lead promoter behind the CBGB festival. It also allows promoters to take a chance on more new bands rather than sticking to established acts.

Mr. Hayes said his aim is to build a festival that can rival South by Southwest in introducing new bands. In recent years, he said, that festival has become dominated by major labels and their stars.

"It has started to feel like spring break for music executives," he said. "New York is the media capital of the world. New York should be the home to the biggest music conference, and we are going to try."

A similar ambition is driving Dave Lory and Tom Silverman, who organized the New Music Seminar last month. Both were involved with the seminar in the 1980s, when its concert series drew more than 6,000 people and featured hundreds of bands.

This year Mr. Lory booked about 150 emerging acts at 15 clubs over three days. Many of the acts were unsigned bands handpicked by the promoters as prime candidates for a record deal. Next year, he said, he expects the series not only to grow slightly but to include free outdoor concerts on the Lower East Side. "I think festivals can survive if you focus on the integrity of the music," he said. "If you keep your credibility, money comes."

By contrast the festivals on Randalls Island are smaller versions of the Lollapolooza model: multiple stages in a park with a lineup of bands and D.J.'s with proven drawing power. The business model is simple but risky. The promoters sell one- or two-day tickets that must cover the costs of paying the bands their guaranteed fees and of producing an outdoor show.

Promoters wading into the business have studied the failure of All Points West, a large three-day festival that was held in Liberty State Park in Jersey City in 2008 and 2009. That event, produced by the promoters behind Coachella, featured big-name artists like Jay-Z and Coldplay but did not make a profit and was canceled in 2010.

Tom Russell, one of promoters behind Governors Ball, said a lesson he and his partners took from All Points West was to stage a smaller event and to book acts with proven track records. This year the festival made a profit by presenting 27 groups over two days with no overlapping sets, and relying on headliners like Fiona Apple, Beck and Kid Cudi to pull in crowds.

"You have to find that balance where your event can do well," he said. "Is there really a need for 5 stages and 70 bands a day? It's expensive to do that, and the crowd doesn't respond well to it."

Mr. Foran, a 28-year-old former rugby player and day trader, has a more ambitious plan for the Catalpa Festival, which will be held on July 28 and 29 on Randalls Island. He booked 45 bands and plans four stages, interactive art installations, a disco tent and a 60-foot inflatable mock church where concertgoers can pretend to get married. The cost of the festival will total more than $3 million, he said.

But Mr. Foran said he is betting that New Yorkers will pay for a European-style festival, which tend to highlight the atmosphere and food as well as the music. "If its something that's eclectic enough and can cater to the demand of people in New York for something a bit more quirky, a bit more organic — something that isn't just the music — the call I'm making is that that will work," he said. "I hope I don't eat my words."

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Spotlight on Ivan Doig

As you may know from my previous posts, I am currently adapting Ivan Doig's novel Prairie Nocturne for Book-It Repertory Theatre's production, opening Feb 7 and running through March 4th.

In addition to getting to work with the exquisite language of Ivan Doig, I've also had the privilege of meeting Ivan and his wife Carol. And two finer people I can't imagine. Luckily for us, Ivan agreed to an interview to coincide with the production. You'll find below Part I of the interview. Part II will be posted Feb 15th.

Renowned author of numerous novels such as The Whistling Season and Dancing at the Rascal Fair, Ivan has also published works of non-fiction. Born in Montana, and raised in the rarefied air of the Rocky Mountain Front, Doig brings his gift for language to his stories. Like a modern-day Shakespeare, Doig's literary fiction blends poetry with action and puts words together, that once heard, you realize could be said no other way.

Many of his characters, though universal in their trials and travails, are also uniquely western in their speech and indomitable spirits. Descriptions of the wide open spaces and sparseness of man and forestry, brings into the imagination of any reader, the vast inimitable beauty of the far western reaches of the United States.

Doig also locates novels in his current home, that of the Pacific Northwest, and those of us here are pleased to claim him as our own.

He is the self described "red-headed only child, son of ranch hand Charlie Doig and ranch cook Berneta Ringer Doig ... who in his junior year of high school ... made up his mind to be a writer of some kind."*

*See his website at www.ivandoig.com

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Past Words/Prompts
Special Features
Elena Recommends

Next Month's Spotlight On...

Check back for the March Spotlight...

Prompt for the Week: January 29

After my death, I'd like to be remembered for ...

Word(s) for the Week: January 29

Catafalque: A decorated platform which a coffin rests on during a funeral.

In the Roman Catholic Church, a coffin shaped structure, draped with a **pall**, used to represent the corpse at a requiem Mass after the burial.

Pall: A drape for a coffin, usually in black, purple or white velvet.



Indie Theater Now

A Strange Disappearance of Bees



Indie Theater Now

Prairie Nocturne

by Ivan Doig
Adapted by Elena Hartwell
Book-It Repertory Theatre
Feb 10, 2012 - March 4, 2010

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Ivan Doig Part I

Describe your writing process.

When I'm asked, at booksignings and readings, what my working habits are, I tend to say something like "pathological diligence," the patience of one of the odd patron saints of our trade, the late Flannery O'Connor, has always guided me in the long devotion of the writer's backside to the seat of the chair where he or she sits and works. Flannery O'Connor was ill, most of her short writing life, but her collection of letters show her to have been a dedicated sardonic professional, as when she gave this unbeatable version of the experience of looking over one's own writing: "I have just corrected the page proofs and I spent a lot of time getting 'seems' and 'as if' constructions out of it. It was like getting ticks off a dog."

This is what she had to say about a writer's necessary state of patience: "I'm a full-time believer in writing habits, pedestrian as it all may sound. You may be able to do without them if you have genius but most of us only have talent and this is simply something that has to be assisted all the time by physical and mental habits or it dries up and blows away… of course you have to make your habits in this conform to what you can do. I write only about two hours every day because that's all the energy I have, but I don't let anything interfere with those two hours, at the same time and the same place. This doesn't mean I produce much out of the two hours. Sometimes I work for months and have to throw everything away, but I don't think any of that was time wasted…."

And then her conclusion, which I believe is at the heart of being a professional writer: "The fact is that if you don't sit there every day, the day it would come well, you won't be sitting there."

Ultimately, Flannery O'Connor's advice does add up, I believe. In my case, I began as a journalist, and so from the start did not believe in that malady called "writer's block" -- I never did meet a newspaper or magazine editor who would say, "Oh, that's all right, we'll just run a blank space there where you can't think of anything to say." The point always is to get something down on paper: describe the character, make up dialogue, dig something out of your pocket notebook or laptop.

Thus I get up early -- still on the lifelong ranch clock where the chores start at daybreak -- and by 6:30 or so am beginning the morning's work. With time out for a two-mile walk around our neighborhood with my wife Carol, I keep at the words until lunch, and if I don't have my quota in that maximumly productive four or so hours which seems to be the creative limit in most of us, I go back to the first drafting in the afternoon; if I already have the words I'll do research or edit myself in that half of the day.

A Picture is Worth 1000 Words...



Use pictures as a prompt

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Elena Hartwell

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Ivan Doig Part I
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In any case, I write a given number of words a day on a manuscript, a given number of days a week, a given number of weeks a year. This varies from book to book, so that the job isn't a permanent assembly line -- on novels such as The Whistling Season, The Eleventh Man, Work Song and the forthcoming The Bartender's Tale it's been four hundred words a day. That's two triple-spaced typed pages --it may not sound like much, but trust me, it's a days work.

What's it like having your work re-imagined by (playwright/production)
It's intriguing to have my cast of characters become an actual theatrical one. Over the years I've been asked countless times who should play so-and-so in my books, something I've only whimsically indulged in once myself. When the movie rights to my first novel, The Sea Runners, were bought (although we're still waiting for the movie after a couple of decades), I was asked who should play the four men who escape by canoe from Russian servitude in Alaska in 1853, and I chose Robert Duvall, for all four roles.

More recently, the associated Press reviewer of Work Song wrote that he could absolutely see Johnny Depp as Morrie and Nicole Kidman as Grace. Don't I wish.

But now I am in the fortunate position of leaning back in a Book-It seat and watching the population of my imagination in Prairie Nocturne come to life onstage, and I couldn't be more pleased to make their acquaintance.

Your work is informed by the landscape of Montana/West, what about that region captures your artistic eye?
Throughout my teenage years in Montana, the Rocky Mountain Front was practically a neighbor, although an upscale one, to the buffalo-grass benchlands where my family worked on sheep ranches. Just over the craggy horizon lay "The Bob," the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area that is the million-acre heart of the northern Rockies. But out of reach to the likes of us, fading remnants of the lariat proletariat; hired hands do not go on hikes nor pricey pack trips.

Yet that monumental geography seemed to me a natural setting for the trilogy I set out to write in the 1980's. -- English Creek, Dancing at the Rascal Fair, and Ride With Me, Mariah Montana -- my fictional Two Medicine country, as I have made of it, has become the home country of my characters in several other books, as I suppose it is for my imagination.

Put simply, those unforgettable mountains and plains give me rich metaphoric possibilities -- and it should be noted that the very different Northwest Coast has done the same in two other of my books, The Sea Runners and Winter Brothers. I am always mindful of trying to write not regionally, but about that larger country -- life -- by putting my imagination to work as poetically and stylistically as I can on the face of

the earth as well as the features of my characters.

Check in February 15 for Part II...

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*See his website at www.ivandoig.com

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Ivan Doig Part II

For Part I - see post below

How has your approach to your material/process changed over the years and novels?

The wordmaking process really hasn't changed much over the years and the soon-to-be fourteen books. I still rely on file cards that preserve turns of phrase, dossier details of my characters, and touches for imagined scenes, as well as a pocket notebook to always, always get down an idea or good phrase as soon as I think of it—memory and good intentions are not our friends in that instance, folks—but of course the computer has come into it. For me it's still a mixed blessing—an aid in revising, you bet, but also a soul-draining screen to stare at and that invention of the devil, the mouse, to torment my hand and wrist, unlike the honest both-handed ten-fingered workmanship of the typewriter, which I still do use for much of my rough drafting.

What do you feel most impacted your writing process or career?

The acceptance of This House of Sky, way back in 1978, and its subsequent success--reviews that were a writer's dream, acclaim which carried it into the finals for the National Book Award where it lost by a single vote--set me up to write the books after that. If there's any one lesson in Sky's record, maybe it's to be found in the diary I kept during the writing of it, where I set down that I was determined to make the language dance, to try to make each sentence of the book have "a trap of poetry" within it. I estimate that I rewrote the opening page, starting with its much-cited first sentences --"Soon before daybreak on my sixth birthday, my mother's breathing wheezed more raggedly than ever, then quieted. And then stopped."--some seventy-five times to get it right.

What are you working on now?

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First, published this fall, will be The Bartender's Tale, the novel about a father and son left on their own in a shifting world--a tale in itself as old as kinship, but ever new in the way "the bachelor saloonkeeper with a streak of frost in his black pompadour and the inquisitive 12-year-old boy who had been an accident between the sheets" go about life in a small western town in 1960.

Meanwhile, I'm writing a sequel to the well-received Work Song--more Morrie! More Butte! Yes. Morris Morgan, the "Walking encyclopedia"

He scripted *Abe Sapien: Drums of the Dead*, the first Hellboy spin-off comic book, as well as *Lost in Space* and *Predator – Strange Roux* for Dark Horse Comics. He has also directed spots for Visa and a segment for MTV's *$5 Cover* and has written for A&E's *Hoarders*.

McDonald is also a teacher of story construction for various institutions and the author of several books on the subject: *Invisible Ink*, *The Golden Theme*, *Freeman* and the forthcoming book and *Ink Spots*. His book *Invisible Ink* is quickly becoming required reading for film students.

Prompt for the Week: February 26

When I was a child, my hair was...

Word(s) for the Week: February 26

Hirsute: Covered with coarse hair. Hairy. Excessive growth of hair.

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Elena Hartwell

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2012 (7)

February (3)

Spotlight on Ivan Doig

Ivan Doig Part II

Ivan Doig Part I

from the one-room school in The Whistling Season and the subsequent Butte novel now restursn--arm in arm with his bride, Grace--at the start of the Twenties to open another front in the perpetual war against the oligopolistic Anaconda Copper Mining Company, also know as "the snakes." This one will likely reach print late next year or early '13, the writer says with crossed fingers.

Final Words of wisdom

Keep a journal or diary to strengthen the habit of writing regularly. And write in it on bad days as well as good ones; the words don't know the difference.

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OBITUARIES

Russell Hoban, 'Frances' Author, Dies at 86

By BRUCE WEBER

Russell Hoban, a prolific author who created Frances, a girl who appeared in the guise of a badger in seven books for children, and Riddley Walker, the eponymous narrator of a widely praised postapocalyptic novel for adults, died on Tuesday in London. He was 86.

His death was confirmed by his daughter Phoebe, who said that she was unsure of the exact cause but that her father had recently received a diagnosis of congestive heart failure.

Mr. Hoban had several distinct careers. Trained as an illustrator, he wrote copy for advertising agencies and produced paintings for books and magazines, including several for Sports Illustrated and for Time magazine. His illustrations included a portrait of Holden Caulfield, the fictional protagonist of J. D. Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye," and cover portraits of Joan Baez and Jackie Gleason that the subjects, Mr. Hoban said, did not like.

He began writing children's books in the late 1950s. His first, "What Does It Do and How Does It Work?," featured Mr. Hoban's own drawings of dump trucks, steam shovels and other heavy machinery. But he didn't care for illustrating his own books, and his second title, "Bedtime for Frances," a gentle tale about the delaying tactics of a child being sent off to bed, was illustrated by Garth Williams, with Frances as a furry little badger.

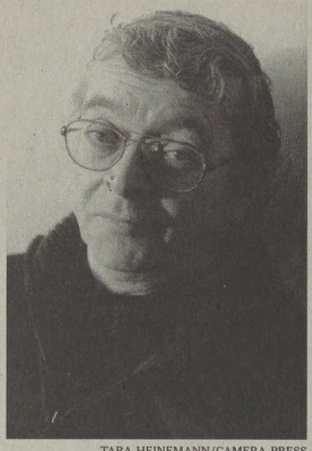
In the six Frances books that followed, including "A Baby Sister for Frances," "A Birthday for Frances" and a poetry collection, "Egg Thoughts and Other Frances Songs," the illustrator was Mr. Hoban's wife, Lillian.

All told Mr. Hoban wrote more than 50 books for children of various ages, from tots to adolescents — including "The Story of Hester Mouse Who Became a Writer," "What Happened When Jack and Daisy Tried to Fool the Tooth Fairies" and "The Mouse and His Child" — most of them before he turned his attention to writing adult fiction in the 1970s.

He proved to be a novelist with an expansive, eccentric imagination for language, for settings and for plot, a free melder of realism, psychological astuteness, historical research and science fiction. The Independent in London once referred to him as "the strangest writer in Britain."

His "Turtle Diary" (1975) was about two lonely middle-aged people obsessed with freeing sea turtles from the zoo and returning them to the ocean. It was made into a 1985 movie with a screenplay by Harold Pinter, starring Glenda Jackson and Ben Kingsley.

In "Pilgermann" (1983), set during the during the 11th century, he gave a vividly violent account of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem by a castrated German Jew. In "The Medusa Frequency" (1987), set in contemporary London, he wrote of a blocked novelist who becomes obsessed with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice by way of his encounter with a severed head that keeps resurfacing as various familiar objects — a cabbage, a football, a grapefruit.



TARA HEINEMANN/CAMERA PRESS



LILLIAN HOBAN/"BREAD AND JAM FOR FRANCES"

Russell Hoban, left, and Frances, above, from his series of children's books.

By most critical accounts, Mr. Hoban's greatest triumph was "Riddley Walker" (1980), which he set some 2,000 years in the future, in Canterbury, England. A nuclear holocaust has long ago decimated human civilization, and a mostly slave population labors in the thrall of an unseen band of rulers who are determined to unearth the long-buried detritus of their ancestors, hoping to find clues to the great secrets of the past — airplanes, for instance, or "boats in the ayr," as they are called.

Praised for 'Riddley Walker' for adults as well as more than 50 children's books.

The narrator, Riddley, is a young renegade in flight from his enslavement. What many reviewers cited as the novel's signal achievement, or at least its most apparent, was the invention of a language — "a worn-down, broken-apart kind of English," Mr. Hoban called it — that reflected both the withered remains of a tongue no longer in use and the liveliness and creativity of the human need to name things. The government, for instance, might be referred to as "the Pry Mincer"; "plomercy" is diplomacy; "Ardship of Cambry" is the Archbishop of Canterbury; and, more vividly, atomic energy becomes "Littl Shynin Man the Addom."

"Where we wer stanning you cud hear the sea beyont us in the dark," Riddley says in a passage in which he describes ruins of a power plant. "Breaving and sying breaving and sying it wer like them machines wer breaving and sying in ther sleap."

Most reviewers were dazzled by Mr. Hoban's facility with sounds and spellings, his narrative command, his visual clarity and his sophisticated, eclectic sensibility.

"Set in a remote future and composed in an English nobody ever spoke or wrote, this short, swiftly paced tale juxtaposes preliterate fable and Beckettian wit, Boschian monstrosities and a hero with Huck Finn's heart and charm, lighting by El Greco and jokes by Punch and Judy," Benjamin DeMott wrote on the front page of The New York Times Book Review. "It is a wrenchingly vivid report on the texture of life after Doomsday."

Russell Conwell Hoban was born in Lansdale, Pa., west of Trenton, N.J., and north of Philadelphia, on Feb. 4, 1925. His parents were Ukrainian immigrants who opened a newsstand in Philadelphia. His father, who died when Russell was 12, also worked as an advertising manager for The Jewish Daily Forward.

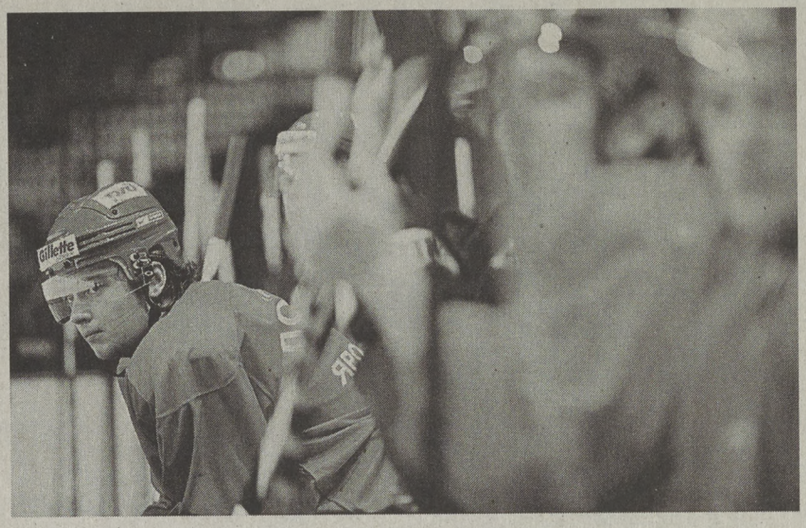
After high school he attended art school in Philadelphia and served in the Army Europe during World War II, earning a Bronze Star. At his death he was awaiting publication of a new book, "Soonchild," due early next year.

"Writing was my father's life," Phoebe Hoban said Wednesday, "and when he died he had done what he needed to do."

Mr. Hoban had lived in London since 1969. His first marriage ended in divorce. He is survived by his wife, the former Gundula Ahl; their three sons, Jake, Ben and Wieland; four children from his first marriage to Lillian Aberman: three daughters, Phoebe, Esmé and Julia, and a son, Brom; and 13 grandchildren.

In "The Moment Under the Moment," a 1992 collection of his writings, Mr. Hoban discussed his literary motivation.

"The most that a writer can do — and this is only rarely achieved — is to write in such a way that the reader finds himself in a place where the unwordable happens off the page," he wrote. "Most of the time it doesn't happen but trying for it is part of being the hunting-and-finding animal one is. This process is what I care about."



Russian City Embraces the Soul o

From First Sports Page

"We can sign players from other teams from all over Russia, but they are not ours, and will not soon become so," said Dmitri Lysikov, another lifelong fan, who plays in an amateur league with Fedotov. "Much was done in the last 20 years. An average team was made into one of the best. This is now destroyed and it will take a lot of time to rebuild."

In the emotional crush that followed the plane crash in September, the team's executives were faced with a difficult choice. Some, including top K.H.L. officials, wanted Lokomotiv to push ahead with the current season, using borrowed players from other K.H.L. clubs. There was no shortage of volunteers, but Lokomotiv officials said they thought such an option would be unacceptable to their fans and a blow to the memory of the lost team.

The club pulled out of this year's K.H.L. season and made what many saw as a risky but necessary decision. The new team, it decided, would be built around the players of the Lokomotiv junior squad, a team of 18- to 22-year-olds who were short on experience but much loved in Yaroslavl, where the junior team is affectionately known as Loko.

The job of molding them into a professional team was handed to Pyotr Vorobyov, a veteran coach known for his ability to develop young talent. Vorobyov coached the Yaroslavl professional team to its first Russian league championship in 1997, when the club was still known by its Soviet-era name, Torpedo.

"The president and other leaders of our club approached this intelligently and perhaps nobly and honestly, and ultimately made the correct decision in my opinion," Vorobyov said. "They considered the issue and decided not to build the team on the graves of people who were just killed. They decided not to rush, to allow for the bodies to cool in their graves and rebuild the team gradually on the basis of the youth team."

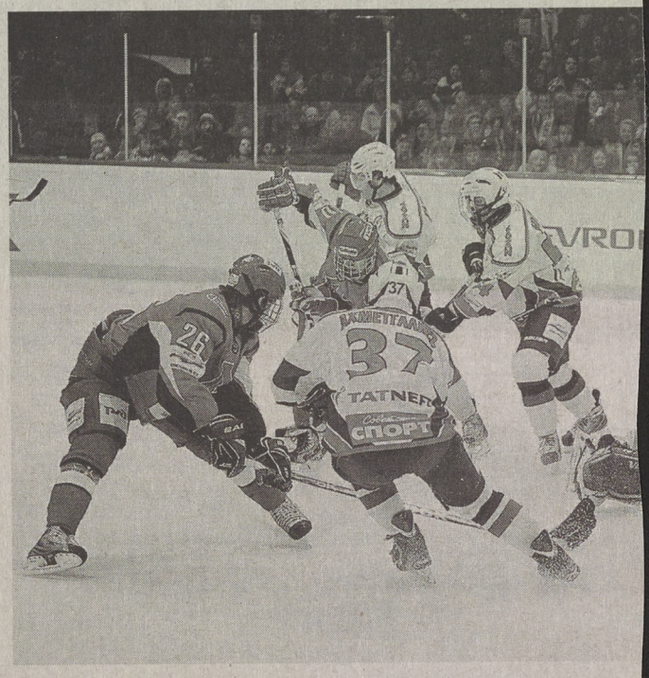
The club will have less than a year to do so. Loko played its first home game of the season on Oct. 26, but the emotions were still strained. The team lost to the Chelyabinsk Polar Bears, 3-2.

Since then, the team's fortunes have improved. It rose to the top of the Volga Conference in the Youth Hockey League, or M.H.L.. And this week it moved up to the Higher Hockey League, or V.H.L., a professional league that is a Russian equivalent to the American Hockey League. The team was clearly ready: it won [illegible] on Almetyevsk, 5-1.

Loko, though, has been forced to consider recruiting players from other teams to fill out its ranks. Vorobyov, the coach, said he was looking to bolster the team with second-tier players from other clubs, who he says can be more easily molded to fit Loko's needs. Ultimately, as the team heads into the K.H.L. next season, it will begin to do what the other highly competitive teams in the league do: draft foreigners, a process that fans are watching with some trepidation. Vorobyov said such choices were unavoidable, and not a betrayal of the plan to keep the team as closely linked to Yaroslavl as possible.

But most satisfying to Vorobyov is the hope that the best of current team — as many as 10 players — could eventually form the core of a reconstituted Lokomotiv roster.

Among them is the team's captain, Maksim Zyuzyakin, a 20-year-old forward [illegible]



Yaroslavl Lokomotiv, in dark jerseys, in a recent game. Some fan

A Roster's Rebirth

This is the first article in a series that will examine the effort to rebuild Yaroslavl Lokomotiv, the elite Russian hockey team whose players, coaches and support staff were killed in a plane crash in September.

ONLINE: *More coverage and photographs:*

nytimes.com/lokomotiv

Elena—

music - Teresa director:
plays many instruments
Mrs. Gus

#1- Desc. writing process

#2 - What like to have work re-imagined
by playwrt/actors etc.?

#3 - What art region captures my imgn
& artistic heart?

#4- How has approach & process possibly
changed over yrs?

#5 - What + impacted career? (last pub'n)

#6 - What working on now

#7 - Final words of wisdom
- sentence or 2 to aspiring writers

Answers for Elena's blog:

1. When I'm asked, at booksignings and readings, what my working habits are, I tend to say something like "pathological diligence." The patience of one of the odd patron saints of our trade, the late Flannery O'Connor, has always guided me in the long devotion of the writer's backside to the seat of the chair where he or she sits and works. Flannery O'Connor was ill, most of her short writing life, but her collection of letters show her to have been a dedicated sardonic professional, as when she gave this unbeatable version of the experience of looking over one's own writing: "I have just corrected the page proofs and I spent a lot of time getting 'seems' and 'as if' constructions out of it. It was like getting ticks off a dog."

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First, published this fall, will be **The Bartender's Tale**, the novel about a father and son left on their own in a shifting world--a tale in itself as old as kinship, but ever new in the way "the bachelor saloonkeeper with a streak of frost

in his black pompadour and the inquisitive l2-year-old boy who had been an accident between the sheets" go about life in a small western town in 1960.

Meanwhile I'm writing a sequel to the well-received **Work Song**--more Morrie! more Butte! Yes, Morris Morgan, the "walking encyclopedia" from the one-room school in **The Whistling Season** and the subsequent Butte novel now returns--arm in arm with his bride, Grace--at the start of the Twenties to open another front in the perpetual war against against the oligopolistic Anaconda Copper Mining Company, also known as "the snakes." This one will likely reach print late next year or early '13, the writer says with crossed fingers.

7. Keep a journal or diary to strengthen the habit of writing regularly. And write in it on bad days as well as good ones; the words don't know the difference.

###

Put on board, Wednesday:

A piana

B spats

C

D

F

Bring me my bow of burning gold!

Bring me my arrows of desire!

Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!

Bring me my chariot of fire!

C's class, 17 Nov. '95:

In the beginning is the language. That's what stories are ultimately about, whether they're in the form of a book, or tv, or film, or computer. We live by stories--our own memories are the stories we tell ourselves--and what's magical about stories is the way they're told, about the language always trying to excel itself, say something in a new way, say "hey, listen to this!"

Every group has its own lingo. Student slang...

Ace
Bullet
C--hook
Death
Flag

OK, in the Sea Runners...characters of the 19th century: how do they talk?

--Proverbs: (read 10 March '81 jnl entry)
--cussing: rough guys (Journal of Verbal Abuse)(Maledicta)
--signatures of each character's talk: Wennberg's double contractions
p. 45--shouldn't've
p. 252--I'd've

So, part of writing is the character's language; the other part is the writer's language.

The writer's job is to make sounds on paper. You maybe hear them with your eye rather than your ear, but let me show you a few examples of details on the page that help make the sounds of the story, as the reader hears it.

p. 70--Palong! Palong! (not Bong! Bong!--I went to Sitka, I heard those chimes at midnight...)

p. 147--Wenberg: Here in the first 80 yds..., much.

The look of the pages can tell some of the story, make a subliminal sound, in the same way. If you page slowly thru the 1st 34 pp. of Sea Runners, you won't find any page with more than 1 break--white space--between scenes; that's the portion of the book where these guys are confined. The look of the pages is slow, old-fangled; it's all print, no jump-cuts, no MTV, right? On p. 35, the pages begin to look different as there are these blurts of activity getting ready for the escape: 3 white spaces between scenes...quicker scenes, quicker paragraphs. The look of the pages themselves change the pace of the book. By pp. 171 & 173, paragraphs are shorter and more numerous, to match the many days of the escape downcoast, the rhythm of these sixty-some days coming, going.

(if time: Proxy-Tom Harry dialogue--

"Shannon, what the bejasus is going on over there, Latin lessons? You're supposed to be out on the floor--"
"He's a little riled up, Tom. I'll--"
"--dancing, not gassing the sonofabitching--
"--make up the difference on the dance take and--"
"--night away with some yayhoo crying in his--"
"Tom, I have to!" (small caps)

Two last things on this kind of craft of language, both having to do with Karlsson. Notice that as the situation of the last 2 Sea Runners gets more desperate, Karlsson's interior thoughts get more ragged. Again, it's right there on the page because I put it on the page that way. P. 267 examples--just phrases.

My final point is from maybe the most obvious of the sounds on the page in the book, on p. 64 where Karlsson sings in a pretend-drunk way and the capitals and doubling up of letters render how he sings it. That kind of technique--any of these uses of craft, once you learn them--can be carried over into any other kind of writing. An example here in a book that could scarcely be more different from the Sea Runners (The Commitments, pp. 50-51--about a gang of Irish down-and-outer would-be musicians who decide to play soul rock-and-roll, James Brown, Otis Redding, Stevie Wonder type of music. Joey the Lips is an old trumpet player who supposedly has been a backup man to all these singers, and here he starts to take the Commitments thru What Becomes of the Broken Hearted, by Jimmy Ruffin.)

Roddy Doyle dealing my stuff

Put on board, Tuesday:

A piana

B spots

C

D

F

Buxtehude

Bring me my bow of burning gold!

Bring me my arrows of desire!

Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!

Bring me my chariot of fire!

Call me Ishmael. Wonderful in itself, but even better if you know the Bible verse...

Faulkner, The Bear: "There was a man and a dog too this time." What makes it work is "this time"--saying implicitly, what about the other times?

Book of Genesis, 16:12--"his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of his brethren.

how old?
save questions until I'm done

Young Writers:

1. If you're going to be a writer, you have to write. Regularly. It doesn't count if you make up the best story in the world but you don't get it down on paper or into the computer and it just whiffles off and is lost forever. A couple of ways you can form the habit of writing regularly:

--A diary. If you can write and think, you're never too young to have a diary, to put down anything interesting that happened to you that day. (Susie? "stinkbug") Read: Julia diary.

--a notebook, to write down something you've thought of. (Donny, my 11-year-old:Why can we snap our fingers and not our toes?)

2. You have to be interested in other people--your stories can't be just all about yourself. So, you have to pay attention to what other people look like, how they talk, who they are. names, noises, and noses.

Whistling Season: a one-room school a hundred years ago. Pass around schoolhouse pic; show my folks' pics.

--Names change. (Paul? Damon? Tobias?) Say you're going to write a story about someone who is going to invent the car, a hundred years ago, but it's going to fly as well as go along the road. That person can't be named (girl's name) or (boy's name), those simply were not used back then. (Mildred, Dewey)

--How does a person sound--what noises does she or he make, in talking, or laughing, or whatever? (Oliver)

--Noses--I mean by that the facial description of a character. The nose is often the most prominent feature, so does the person you're writing about have a big nose, a ski-jump nose, a nose like an anteater... You have to let your reader see the person--Ray Heaney pic. (have Isaac hold while I read description)

3: The third and last thing I'd say about being a writer, you have to exercise your imagination. "What if"...Dog Bus plot.

show off Columns?

for Sitka reading

With Space / Trav

A writer has to be fickle--indeed, be a literary bigamist. ~~His books of~~ Whatever book he is working on at the moment has to be the love of his life.

Ace
Bullet
~~Ato~~ C (hook)
Death
Flag

PAGANINI (violinist who came on stage
DATE NINE "wrapped in blue flame)

BRKLYR
CARP
MESSR
REPR

EIN FANATIKER DES DETAILS (DAS HAUS DES HIMMELS)

You've got to have Felony snaps to get the cuts.

CAPT. MacWhim

homework

Dowagiac students: everybody raise hand

--WBros, Doig boys; horse-race, girls.

--11th Man covers: Photo shop

--Ace-Bullet (ABCDF wd have been 1-room grades)

--diary: my high school one (not the way to do it)/Ellen Creek

--intersperse: period of their qns, then I talk

--Despite ourselves, we do have something in common: I'm a former teenager, and hard as it is to believe at the moment, you're future gray geezers like me.

- show script markings

10:35 @ C's office, or go to 11:10

Wn Spea/ Trav

BHUMAHVE CRYWAV

--"Slushai" example (also possible: the Jane--historical laws of gravity)

--show and tell: Peter Doig papers (my letter; his nat'zn papers; map of h'stead)

--sheep shears (demonstrate; read section)

Systems: file cds; pocket notebook; desk calendar

--writing 800 wds/day; hashmarks; write nonconsecutively, make it pile up. Linda Burds

Don't be hesitant abt your own skills; see it as process of improvement.
It doesn't come out right the 1st time: don't be afraid of drafts: retyping, getting in in
Easier to write a portion every day than whole thing at once; the fingers
also furthers the organic process of writing, your cont'd thinking abt it.

How begin: get s'thing down on paper("I had a farm in Africa"; Sky lead?)
-find device, question or quotation or incident; maybe cut it later
Resume by beginning in middle of sentence. Or: I try think ahead to next day, make notes.

Timelines: you can't get everything done; put aside what doesn't really count; use
spare time etc. as reward to yourself, bribe yourself.

"The art of taxation consists in so plucking the goose as to obtain the
largest amount of feathers with the least ammount of hissing."
(Colbert, fin'ce min'r to Louis 14)

w h Space / Trav

That's pretty much what a writer does, nag at his language to sit up straight and stop sharing its corn flakes with the dog...

Craft:

--difference, journalism to fiction: you must invest emotion in characters (heart on sleeve in my P-I piece), across years, where you don't--and probably don't dare--short-span, in news stories.

--free to make things up in fiction (not in non-fiction; I detest the phrase "creative nonfiction"). Sins: composite characters, approximations of conversations, interior thoughts of characters.

--resources: journals, diaries--habit of regular serious writing.
--notebooks, filecards (lingo); dossier on my main characters, maybe pics
- Sday Jensen 3rd entry
--insides of language: slang, barroom toasts
--Maledicta, the Journal of Verbal Abuse

--rhythms:
Bougainvillea
--word order: Faulkner, "There was a man and a dog too this time."
- work routine: must be able to stand yourself, alone, for long periods
- make words add up, day by day
- & don't write consecutively (heresy in n'paper offices)
- regular: Flannery O'Connor

1943

1

Never much of a town for showing off, Gros Ventre waited around one last bend in the road, suppertime lights coming on here and there beneath its roof of trees. As the bus headed up the quiet main street toward the hotel, where the lobby served as bus depot, Ben Reinking saw the single lighted storefront on the block with the bank and the beauty shop. Of course. Thursday night. His father putting the newspaper to bed after this week's press run.

"Here will do," he called to the driver.

The bus driver jammed on the brakes and heaved himself around to take a better look at this final passenger. Using all the breath he could summon, the man let out slowly: "I'll be goddamned. You're him. Awful sorry, Lieutenant, I didn't--"

"I'll live." Most civilians could not read the obscure shoulder patch on his flight jacket, and any camouflage he could get anytime suited Ben.

Right there in the middle of the street, the driver laboriously dragged out the duffel bag from the luggage bay and presented it to him. The man looked tempted to salute. Ben murmured his thanks and turned away toward the premises of the *Gros Ventre Weekly Gleaner.* Well, he told himself as he swung along under the burden of his duffel, now to see whether his father had picked up any news about the repeal of the law of averages, as it apparently had been.

Career:

ranch hands: lariat proletariat

journalism school at Northwestern (broadcast

--jobs not taken or that did not take me:

--Montana draft board: Reston letter; Dave Botter dying, I neeed job...

--Decatur, Lindsay-Schaub: Nov. 22 '63, 7 editorial writers having lunch

--Wall St. Journal picked up one of my editorials--invited to apply

--Magazine, slower pace: The Rotarian, circulation 900,000; budget,

Kilpatrick, Sydney Harris, sainted Murray Morgan, Dolly C?

The move west, to UW grad school, notion of becoming j'lism prof

--Dick Hainey, Sunday mag byline, Hearst's Chicago American

UW history seminars: but freelancing, and began writing poetry

--turned down job halfway up the tenure track at Indiana U.; C's job

--U. of New Mexico, Hillerman letter (pattern: self-unemployable)

Ten years of freelancing: eventually too financially preposterous

--Meanwhile at work on Sky; if there's any arc to career, it's toward longer rhythms of writing and thinking to work in. I left freelancing when Sky came out in '78, and since then have done ten books, each of which took 2-3 years to write. (John Marshall has a key on his computer..."prolific"--Stephen King! Joyce Carol Oates!--but I simply see it as steady.)

Ben kept a reporter's habitual count, day by day, as he inhabited the wire room during this. His own taste of shipboard war clung in him as the reports of sunk ships rattled in on the teletypes. The carrier *Princeton*, gone down; someone he knew back in the distant days of pilot school was a liaison air officer aboard there. One Japanese battleship sunk, another put out of action. The destroyers *Johnston* , *Roberts*, and *Hoel* perished. Two more Japanese battleships and a cruiser destroyed. The escort carrier *Gambier Bay*, gone down; Ben himself had been on that one less than six months ago, a hop in the journey to Australia. Old visions of the gray mass of ships around him and Animal when they talked and joked at Eniwetok gripped him while he endlessly bummed coffee from the communications section clerks and sifted the constant combat reports. The five bells of a wire machine would go off again, and there were two fewer Japanese cruisers on the ocean surface. More clatter of the teletype keys and another chapter of smoke-veiled military engagement came in.

Throughout, he felt the ~~hot breathing~~ presence of history's proposition for a reporter, any true chronicler. The question is brought by Mnemosyne, goddess of memory, high priestess of knowledge, as she steps from the tall grove on Olympus with her closed hands held forth to you. In one is the grant of a long uninflected life, peace without pause to be looked back on. In the other lies the chance, issued only once per lifetime, to witness Waterloo from a spot within range of the guns. And in your most honest self, which would you choose? The oncoming shadow of the sea battle, not to mention the less than divine hand of Tepee Weepy, had done the choosing for him this time, in the shutdown of air traffic to the Philippines. Which hand of fate he would have chosen for himself, he was not perfectly sure. He prowled among the chatter of the teletypes vitally aware of having been spared one more time and conscientiously restless with not being out there when history pivoted on an obscure archipelago. In his reporter's vigil there was not even

Missoula SEMINAR:

① - turning time into printed words. Slow process - 1997's book - but the time will turn into something anyway. . . (read opening scene)
- desc. book a bit: Red uncle, etc. (no outline, but synopsis)
- how to get there - an ambitious novel in stores by Labor Day of '97 - from here:

Work habits: regular as hell at it, but . . . (daily hrs & wd totals) (Flannery O'Connor)
- I don't write consecutively (read motor-sickle #)
file cards, files, photos
- dossiers o characters (Mrs. Tidyman)
- but use what presents itself: Telenkov maps, Wenberg's neuroticness
Voice, language: how words sound on paper
② - shimmer of language behind story (toads in trilogy: hayhnd greetings; DARE warmup)
- prose "meant to be heard"; Shakespeare
③ - not much of a minimalist; Cheever pp.

Sustaining work by whetting yourself against problem of bk:
- making form & content match; challenge of each bk -
- Sky, giving memory itself a voice in italic sections
- WBros, diary about a diarist
- SRunners, mtng day-by-day tension, w/ comic voice
- Trilogy, deliberate 10-yr gamble to me. West's own poetry of vernaculars.
- Heart Earth, a technique I call "deliberate dream"

20-25 after Crocodile factor: hand out Whippet pic(s)
- explain Darius & Jaraala
(collision of faith - religion, communism & engineering.)

(5A)

~~placement~~

sentence structure sometimes helps the meaning of the words:
Faulkner's "The Bear": "There was a man and a dog too this time."

"bougamvillea"
blurts of rodeo announcer
road rhythm, Mariah p. 215

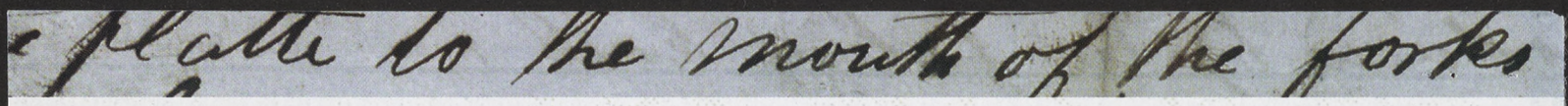
(immediately implied:
what abt other times?

↓ "All that summer long she was out in the bougainvillea, kissing college boys."

kinetic prose: RG Vliet in Scorpio Rising, p. 45:

"Over near the curb, perched on a candy wrapper, a monarch butterfly rocked back and forth, its orange-and-black wings, veined like a church window, slowly opening and closing, opening and closing like breathing. In the fall those things migrate clear to Mexico."

--"opening and closing" is like the breathing, also is like the butterfly's wings, larger words on either side of the small "and" body. Sentence would be even better by nicking out "slowly". Next sentence, "In the fall...", takes off from the precision of the previous describing one, is as general and slightly loose as the butterfly's flight, as migration, is.



No longer resentful, I felt sad, pained that I had worked for so many years willfully pursuing what must now be cast aside. My sorrow welled up. I thought of those who had died, whom I had disappointed. Think of the sorrow I had caused Craig Wylie. My God, had I hastened his death?

As I thought of John's strong recommendation that the last chapter be shortened (maybe by half), I recalled the countless months I had searched for diaries and letters that described the previously unpublished story of thousands leaving San Francisco, sailing in scores of ships to Panama City, struggling through the fevered jungle to Chagres, sailing back to East Coast ports, and finally returning to their families. What a dénouement.

Now I must cut, ruthlessly, that major achievement? I felt a sense of despair. But I knew he was right, that the last chapter dragged on too long, causing the reader to feel impatient. I had suspected as much, as that chapter developed as a testament to my scholarly skills, as evidence of my admirable perseverance.

To accept John's advice would require months of work. How many? What could I say this time to Houghton Mifflin? What if, at long last (and in the face of what would surely seem like disloyalty), Houghton Mifflin told me they had had enough of my "fiddling," enough of my broken promises?

Through August I avoided trying to answer those questions. I worked as never before, not telling Ruth Hapgood anything about my new thinking, my new sense of purpose. I rented a small room in a third-rate building in downtown San Francisco. A single window opened into an air well, embellished with a dead pigeon. I labored in that room, slept there many a night, ate there (usually baby food because it came in small servings and required no preparation), pushed ahead, made wonderful progress, knowing my book truly benefited from John Dodds's relentless admonitions.

John offered no sympathy, no praise, no encouragement. Just new demands for simplification and for a new focus on William Swain as the center of the story. Through my years of research, Swain's diary had become burdened with all I wanted my reader to learn from what I had discovered about the California gold rush. In contrast, John constantly reminded me: "Let the reader identify with William Swain, he's the reader's alter ego." That advice required eliminating years of work. A painful process, like amputation. I wondered if Houghton Mifflin would ever make such a diagnosis.

September passed, and I could not forecast a completion date. At night I worried and felt more fearful. And then more fearful when I decided to be deceitful. I would not tell Houghton Mifflin the truth, that I was working under the guidance of a new editor. But I would tell them the other truth, that I did not know when, if ever, I would finish—which led me to the hope that they would allow me to escape not only my 1950 contract and its 1970 renewal-revision but even more. I wanted release from my moral commitment to Houghton Mifflin. Could I make such a request knowing I had no right to expect their agreement?

My nights of worry finally brought me to the morning of October 3, 1979, when I wrote to Ruth Hapgood. That fateful letter is scattered with misspellings, words crossed out—reflections of my anguish.

AUGUST 1979

I rented a small room in a third-rate building in downtown San Francisco. A single window opened into an air well, embellished with a dead pigeon. I labored in that room, slept there many a night, ate there . . . [and] made wonderful progress.

Ruth, I must face reality. I no longer want to nor will accept the feeling of guilt and my ever deepening sense of failure to meet yet another promised deadline. I cannot go on like this. Therefore, I write to you to tell you that I must be free to reassess this ancient project which has been central to my life yet has failed for endless years to give me the confidence and satisfaction that comes with completion. Now I find it is essential for me to look at *A Pocketful of Rocks* and decide for myself—not for HMC—what I want to do with it.

And so I have concluded that I must withdraw from my involvement with HMC. I suspect that your reaction will be a sense of the inevitable coming true.

I am enclosing my check for $3,000 to repay HMC for the money advanced to me so many years ago. I request cancellation of my contract.

I regret, deeply, that after all these years we have only this disappointment to share. Thank you Ruth and Dick McAdoo and others before you, for your encouragement and for so many years of patience.

Respectfully and regretfully . . .

With the patrician dignity so characteristic of Houghton Mifflin (of Craig Wylie!), Ruth responded on October 12, 1979:

I can't tell you how disappointed we all are to have this beautiful manuscript 99 44/100ths percent finished and then have you withdraw it. And after all these years, it's making a terrible break with tradition. However, you know your own problems best, and so we regretfully accept the $3,000 which repays your advances, and cancel the contract for *Pocketful of Rocks* originally signed by you in November 1950. . . .

I can certainly see how you wish to get this book off your neck. . . . If you ever take it up again with a view to commercial publication, I do hope you agree with us that our twenty-nine years of enthusiastic support of this project have earned us a new chance at publishing it. . . . All good luck to you in your next career and do keep in touch with your friends at HMCo.

More ashamed and guilt-ridden than relieved, I was now free to continue with my revisions and surgery, for months, for years if need be. But would I be able to satisfy John Dodds's requirements? Did I have the confidence to carry on? Or would I, finally, give up, escape? The habit of the book had become so deeply centered in my life that I knew the answer. Some day, some final moment, my work would be finished.

In late November, John Dodds telephoned from New York. To my amazement he reported that he had taken the revised chapters for the purpose of proposing that Simon & Schuster publish my book. Would I come, immediately, to meet him? Why? He would say no more.

We met at Bemelman's Bar. Before I could order a drink. John told me—with dramatic details—that he had presented his proposal that very morning to the editorial board. The vote was unanimous—to publish my book. In response, I began to cry. I retreated to the men's

(4)

So, part of writing is the character's language; the other part is the writer's language. The writer's job is to make sounds on paper. You maybe hear them with your eye rather than your ear, but let me show you a few examples of details on the page that help make the sounds of the story, as the reader hears it.

p. 70--Palong! Palong! (not Bong! Bong!--I went to Sitka, I heard those chimes at midnight...)

p. 147--Wenberg: Here in the first 80 yds..., much.

my writing was going, my stiff reciprocal questions about his latest fishing luck, his hunting plans for that autumn. Old bandits gone civil. When dumptrucks and graders at last paused, he would declare, "Okay, she's a go" and flag me on through to the fresh-fixed patch of blacktop. And I can only believe this was how the dying Wally saw his mending action of willing the letters to me, a betterment.

But before any of this, before the gnarl in our family history that brought me back and back to that wintry cemetery, he was a sailor on the *Ault*.

I am feeling pretty good, much better than anytime so far since I've been down here. Charlie is the one that isn't well.

A few of the letters in the packet duffeled home from the Pacific are blurry from water stains, but this first one by my mother to her sailor brother makes all too clear that we have traded predicament in Montana for predicament in Arizona.

My parents and my father's sister Anna and her husband Joe and the five-year-old dirtmover that was me had thrown what we had into a Ford coupe and pinballed our way down through the West a thousand and fifty miles, ration books straining from gas station to gas station along U.S. 89, me most of the time intrepidly shelved crosswise in the coupe's rear window, until we rolled to a halt in Phoenix the night before Thanksgiving of 1944. The next Monday my father and Joe latched on as Aluminum Company of America factory hands and our great sunward swerve settled into Alzona Park orbit.

Unit 119B, where the five of us crammed in, consisted

of a few cubicles of brown composition board, bare floors and windows howlingly curtainless until my mother could stand it no longer and hung some dimestore chintz; along with fifty-five hundred other Alzonans, we were war-loyally putting up with packing crate living conditions. But pulling in money hand over fist: my father and Joe drawing fat hourly wages at the aluminum plant—*hourly*, for guys who counted themselves lucky to make any money by the month in Montana ranchwork. Surely this, the state of Arizona humming and buzzing with defense plants and military bases installed for the war, this must be the craved new world, the shores of Social Security and the sugar trees of overtime. True, the product of defense work wasn't as indubitable as a sheep or cow. Aluminum screeched through the cutting area where Dad and Joe worked and a half-mile of factory later was shunted out as bomber wings, but all in between was secret. For the 119B batch of us to try to figure out the alchemy, my father smuggled out down his pant leg a whatzit from the wing plant. I remember the thing as about the size of the business end of a branding iron, the approximate shape of a flying V, pale as ice and almost weightless, so light to hold it was a little spooky. "I'll bet ye can't tell me what this is," Dad challenged as he plunked down the contraband piece of metal to wow my mother and Anna and me and for that matter his brother-in-law Joe. Actually he had no more idea than any of the rest of us what the mystifying gizmo was, but it must have done something supportive in the wing of a bombing plane.

Like light, time is both particle and wave. Even as that far winter of our lives traced itself as a single Arizona

Writing is like a life-long hunch. I can never entirely explain it, tell how it happens or just where I want it to go...

What I want to get at, for the next several minutes before we reach the main part of this--your questions--is the craft that goes into the words on the page. "The poetry under the prose," as I once heard Norman Maclean phrase it. Every prose writer who is at all interested in style will try for this in her or his own way, but I know that, in my own case, when I was working on my first book, This House of Sky, I wrote a reminder to myself in one of my notebooks: "Each sentence should have a trap of poetry."

I since have backed off a little from "each sentence" needing that, but I still write as if plenty of them need those "traps of poetry". The book I'm going to yank examples out of is my novel "The Sea Runners." (3 incarnations since published in '82; read first line of back cover as description of plot.)

I wanted the book to have a 19th Centuryish hint of style, to match the time of the story, 1853. So, I deliberately did it in an old-fangled narrative way, as if the story always had existed and just was waiting to be told by some mid-air voice. (p. 202, graf "Out of their winter rust..."

But I also wanted the characters--who are the heart of any book--to be people of their time. In all 8 of my books, soon to be nine, I've worked on what I call "a poetry of the vernacular" in my characters, in how they talk. These four indentured Swedes in Russian America (Alaska) in the mid-19th century--what did I know about how they would talk?

--They would swear fluently. They would cuss their lot, and their employers, as working people always have. They were rough guys, and not to dwell on the splendors of their cussing, but I will point out that you can do research, even of the scholarly sort, on something like this. (The Journal of Verbal Abuse)