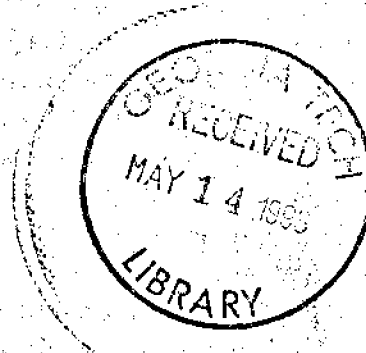


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# North Avenue Review

Issue 19

April 1993



GOVERNMENT IS CRIMINAL

## Structure of The North Avenue Review

The North Avenue Review is produced from a collection of ideas, stories, and art by Georgia Tech students, faculty, staff, and friends who have given freely of their time and dignity for this publication.

The ideas expressed herein are solely the views of the individual authors and artists and are not necessarily representative of the opinions of The North Avenue Review staff. All contents are copyrighted by the Board of Student Publications (A Georgia Tech Student Organization), with all original rights reverting back to the author.

The North Avenue Review is published by the generous people at Chapman Printing.

## Submissions

*All submissions are welcome.* We welcome all truths, alledged truths, lies, rumors, art, fabrications, conspiracy theories, ramblings, and other two-dimensional submissions. We invite all to participate.

Your article will not be edited unless you specify, so submit all pieces as you would like them to be seen. You may request that your name be withheld, but all submissions must be accompanied by the author's or artist's name.

## Procedure

At NAR meetings throughout the quarter, with increasing frequency near deadline, all works are presented to the group for peer review. The editors (you and I) then reads all submissions, offering constructive criticism and advice. If a peer feels that a particular piece is unnecessarily inflammatory or obscene, he or she may bring to the piece to the attention of the group. A submission may be excluded from the NAR with a three-fourths vote against the publication. To date, we have had no need to censor any submission.

Attendance and participation by contributors is extremely important and stongly encouraged to allow feedback and comments. This procedure is used to improve the quality of everyone's work.

*All texts should be submitted on a Macintosh 3.5" disk,* preferably formatted using Microsoft Word. This is to lighten the load of worker drones typically known as layout slaves (Currently, the layout slaves are in a third week hunger strike protesting for better working conditions). Articles should be submitted using a ten-point font. To further help the worker drones (who have begun to eat the bodies of their fallen comrades), please remove all tabs and indentions, leaving a line between paragraphs. Quote your sources appropriately. Be

prepared to rewrite if necessary. We encourage authors to submit graphics and visual aids with their pieces.

## Getting Involved

### *The NAR needs your help!*

Anyone who would like to be involved may, regardless of correct or incorrect political and social ideologies. Meetings are Tuesdays at 6:00pm in the Student Organizations area of the Student Services Building.

*"Going below and around the call of duty."*

**The North Avenue Review  
50271 Georgia Tech Station  
Atlanta, Goergia 30332**

OR

**The North Avenue Review  
Student Organizatins  
Atlanta Georgia 30332-0283  
(404) 894-1707**

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**Don't fight!**

**Resistance is  
useless!**

**Submit  
to  
NAR!**

***In The Streets***

**Deadline May 6**

**at the NAR Office**

**Student Organizations Room**

**Student Services Building**

**(please!)**

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**G**overnment. What is it? Who is it? What can it do for me? Where can I apply for a government grant to study African lungfish and the Dan Quayle Lobster, which by the way are both at the non-government funded National Aquarium in Washington, D.C. (If you care about fish, please give!). This issue of the **N A R** will showcase the ramblings and opinions of Georgia Tech students, faculty, staff, and friends on government. Also, sorry this issue took so long to publish, but you know how government works.

# Suggestions For Political Reform

Cary McKeown

My topic for this essay is political reform, specifically suggestions for possible structural changes to our federal government to make and keep it more responsive and effective, while restoring and maintaining balanced power between the branches and checks on government power. Campaign reform and term limits were big issues in the recent presidential election. Term limits are a bad idea and campaign reform is a good one. I think what politics needs most (excluding a major infusion of qualified candidates) is to be reminded that we have a bill of rights and ought to use it. Here I outline some changes I recommend for consideration as possible means to make our elected officials more responsible to the voters, and re balance the three branches of the federal government.

1) Every federal election at least, should have a "none of the above" box on the ballot for each race and if none of the above is the choice, a new election for that position will have to be called and none of the people who were on that ballot will be eligible to run in the new race.

Also, what about allowing voters to vote directly against individual candidates as well as for them? There would be two

boxes next to every name on the ballot one for and one against, in each race a voter could vote for the candidate s/he prefers or against the one s/he considers the worst. In totaling the votes each would count as plus one or minus one to the candidate's total. In order for a candidate to be elected a) none of the above must be a minority and b) s/he must have a total of votes for minus votes against greater than the other candidates' totals.

These proposals would let people who have been, "voting with their feet" by staying home, go to the ballot box and vote their opinions and not have to vote for somebody they don't like in protest of someone the feel is worse.

2) Have direct popular election of president and vice president or proportional allocation of each state's electoral votes according to the popular vote, perhaps adjusting the electoral votes available from each state according to their voter turn-out. Either way the idea is to make them earn votes from voters not just scheme for the electoral votes of a few states that have most of them. If nobody gets enough of a majority or enough electoral vote to win, just call another election or throw it to the house.

Also I suggest we have President and Vice President elected by separate votes rather than by tickets. Not the original way, making the runner up for President the Vice President, but actually two separate races. And we can make the Vice President a check on the President by having President and Vice President make alternate executive nominations.

The line item veto is also a good idea, that way the President can cut out amendments that were added to kill a bill or tacked onto a bill because the amendment wouldn't have passed on its own, and the proposed compromise that a simple majority will be enough to override a line item veto instead

of the two-thirds majority needed in the case of an outright veto, seems a reasonable check on the potential increase in presidential power from the line-item veto power.

3) Instead of term limits—I've come up with the concept of term spacing.

Senators have 6 yr. terms and each state's two senate seats are staggered 3 years relative to each other. For spacing at the end of a term a senator is not eligible to run for the senate again for 3 years.

House seats have 2 year terms, limit a representative to two consecutive terms with a 2 year break before they can run for the house again. (Thus a representative can either serve 4 years. if he gets reelected then take a 2 year break or serve a 2 year term take a 2 year break and try for another term.)

Presidential terms are 4 years long, limit president to 4 consecutive years in office with a 4 year break before s/he is eligible again and eliminate the two term limit.

This way we largely eliminate long-term incumbency without undo restriction on the voters' right to elect the person they feel is most qualified.

4) In order to isolate the Supreme Court more from politics (such as stacking during an extended term in power) and avoid the spectacle of a justice in failing health hanging on to the last of his strength waiting for there to be a like minded president to nominate his replacement I suggest we arrange

for the random expiration of Supreme Court justices' terms. I think we have the technology and cryptographic techniques to make a 'random' signal generating mechanism that cannot be predicted or influenced undetected and set conditions so that the average term will last say 20 to 40 years before a termination signal is generated.

5) Representatives are elected from districts; this year these districts were redrawn to consolidate various minority voters into specific districts (rather than to break them up among many so that they were a minority in each as often happens in the past), as an alternative to either form of gerrymandering why not regularly redraw representative's districts randomly? Just take a computer, give it a population map of the state plus the minimum population

requirements of a district and have it break the state up at random. Then adjust the district boundaries until all of them meet the minimum population requirement and their populations are approximately equal, and repeat after every few elections.

6) I think we also need more of an institutional mechanism for eliminating junk laws, one way of preventing their accumulation that might be very useful is automatic expiration (sunset laws) so that a law doesn't remain on the books unless specifically renewed. We could at least slow their accumulation by requiring a law to pass renewal a certain number of times before it becomes 'permanent' and no longer requires constant renewal.

*I think what politics needs most is to be reminded that we have a bill of rights and ought to use it.*

I think its about time I explain to the public why Im a conservative Republican. Ive been noticing that although the Georgia.Tech campus has a conservative majority, the liberals keep getting louder and ruder. Ive been called a racist, a Bible-beater, a Nazi, and a herd of other common labels for conservatives. I have decided to focus on the three above labels and the hypocrisy behind them in this column.

First, the idea that Republicans are racist is a desperate attempt by the liberal left to make us look evil. Most conservative Republicans like me know more about business and economics than the average liberal and realize that

telling everyone to come to my church is going to cure it. Neither do most Republicans. A person must take the initiative to accept responsibility for his or her own actions. If you get married, you agree to spend the rest of your life with your spouse. If you think you can just get a divorce if things dont work out, you shouldnt get married in the first place! Over half of all marriages in this country end up in divorce. Divorce is glamorized by the liberally controlled media, but theres nothing I or anybody else can do about that other than simply taking the media with a grain of salt. We need to make our own decisions and accept responsibility for them. The media cannot do this

## Evil Republican Bastard!

John Butler speaks out on the dexter side

racism is simply counterproductive. A racist employer cannot make a good decision about whom to employ because of his or her racist beliefs. Consequently, if a black person and a white person apply for the same job and the black person is more qualified, the white person gets the job anyway. The employer loses the benefits of having the more qualified employee who in this hypothetical case happens to be the black one.

Why are conservatives labeled as racists? One of the main arguments is, how many black people did you see at the Republican convention? The answer is not many. Wed like to have more, because as the Depeche Mode song goes, people are people, and the Republicans know that a vote is a vote and a person is a person regardless of race, sex, religion, national origin, or handicap. Republicans have no reason to exclude any particular group of people from the party, and we do not endeavour to exclude anyone.

Conservatives know that a persons race has absolutely nothing to do with his or her performance, qualifications, or self-worth. As a result, I for one believe that a race of people does not need so-called spokespersons like Jesse Jackson or Al Sharpton to take it upon themselves to speak for the entire race. If I were black I would tell Al Sharpton that I can make my own decisions and do not need to live up to his set of proposed African-American standards. The fact that a particular person is black, white, fuscia or teal has absolutely nothing to do with his or her basic humanity. I am especially sickened by people who believe that people of different races should not marry or have children. This idea of ethnic purity comes from both black and white radicals.

Another annoying myth is that all Republicans are Bible-beating fundamentalists. Wrong. I myself am Roman Catholic. I do agree there has been in this country a definite breakdown of the family unit which contributes significantly to many social ills. However, I dont believe

for us. The government can, unfortunately, do this for us but shouldnt. Our church cant do this for us. Neither can a condom company, a cigarette company, an insurance company nor a lawyer. **We are responsible.**

Finally, I become rather enraged when I hear conservative Republicans labeled as the modern Nazis. This is especially frightening because the Nazi party held many values diametrically opposite to those of the Republican party. If a baby did not have the necessary Aryan characteristics mandated by Hitler, it was aborted or killed, whereas most conservative Republicans believe ALL children have a right to live, grow, and prosper, no matter how little hope anyone else has for them. The pro-abortion liberal left supports government financing of abortion across the board. It is important to note that certain women will have abortions if the fetus is female because in certain cultures the female is considered worthless ( a frightening belief ). This sexual-selection process frighteningly resembles Hitlers eugenics system. Another example was Hitlers government-controlled economy. All businesses were nationalized in Nazi Germany. In fact, Nazi Germany was the first country to nationalize health care. Keep in mind that Bill Clinton has made nationalized health care one of his primary objectives.

The reason I am a Republican is that I believe in capitalism and I believe this is a great country. Always remember that although liberals think that the United States is the most horrible and backward country in the world, the rest of the world looks to the United States as a land where dreams can come true and anybody can succeed through hard work regardless of race. No other country in the world receives as many immigrants as the United States.

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# Meeting the Guy (A True Story)

by J. Franklin Boltz

DATELINE: Columbia, South Carolina; 18 Aug 1992

While walking down Main Street to the Statehouse, the site of the day's activities, one could sense that shortly something big would occur. There were few civilians on Main Street, but instead many of the uniformed legions gathered, as though riot or natural disaster impended with the gray cloudiness to the west. The first raindrops tickled and teased, but the deluge courteously held back.

I could see the throng all the way down the length of the main drag. At the near end, the rear of the crowd stood the Loud People - hawkers, radicals, reactionaries, and others who felt the stood to gain from showing up and behaving vocally to the point of rudeness and chagrin; the kind of people one sees on the news in stories about abortion clinics in Wichita. Abortion Man was present, as expected, fresh from a thirty day stay in the city's lock-up on a disorderly conduct charge. Abortion Man's life's calling seems to be to stand on the corner, pro-life implements in hand, to impede people, and to make a general nuisance of delivering his message. Today he brought all of his playthings: a baby doll on the end of a wooden dowel (fetus-on-a-stick), a placard the size of a tractor trailer with pro-life slogans printed on each side, and, enigmatically, a teddy bear strapped to the staff of the placard. He was dressed somewhere between televangelist and used car salesman, clad in hunter green coat, baby blue high-water trousers, and white buck shoes. On any other day, he stands on important corners in town with no more than one of his toys shouting his ultra-conservative spiel, but today was different. He left jail but a few days ago and achieved martyrdom through his incarceration. Some stood and watched. Some bellowed agreement. Some laughed in dissent. Political junkies like me passed him by for the real show. Abortion Man lives

here. Wild Bill Clinton is just passing through.

Arriving on the lawn, I detected an organization to the apparently willy-nilly crowd of supporters and rabble-rousers. Each group formed a near circle around the podium, like the rings around Saturn. Outermost, as I have explained, were the Loud People, the real wackos with their bullhorns, graphic signs, and wares for sale. The next ring contained the diehard, Bush-Quayle Republicans. A thin ring inside the Republicans was the Ring on the Confused. They donned banners, placards, and t-shirts bearing phrases like "Perot Supporters for Clinton" and "Republicans Against Bush." Between the Confused and the stage stood the several hundred Clinton supporters, confident and wide-eyed like teenage pop fans waiting to catch the first glimpse of their new idol. The final ring, the lucky ones, had seats waiting for them. These were the battle-weary Democrats, the real ones, the ones who voted for Mondale in '84. They occupied the stage with the Secret Service agents and local politicians who were there to rouse up the crowd for the candidate himself.

I stood near the back, weaving in and out among the Republicans and the Confused. These were the true Republicans; their avant-garde - who else would the send to disrupt the opposition's rally? These folks rehearsed well and stood close enough together that they didn't scare, even when the radicals blasted through, breaking signs and stomping on pro-life literature. They chanted, "Bush-Quayle! Bush-Quayle!" as loud and fast as lip, lung, and tongue would allow, but the crafty Democrats proved too much, drowning their cries with, "Mashed potatoes! Mashed potatoes!" which is virtually indistinguishable from the Republican battle cry at the achieved speed and magnitude. I soon realized the reason behind the succession of the rings. The Ring of the Confused formed a sort of UN peacekeeping force buffer zone between the Democrats and Republicans,

kind of like the solution to the riddle of the man who must get goat, fox, and cabbage across the river. This order of the rings existed so that no two belligerent groups bounded one another. Instead, a conservative-to-liberal gradient sloped in a ballet of spontaneous social engineering for the protection of all involved.

I hardly paid attention to the performers and politicians on stage and could nary tell one from the other. While I labored on my rings of Saturn analogy, the whole crowd let out a "whoop", Republican and Democrat, negative and affirmative alike. I looked up and saw the candidate, Billy Boy himself, take the stage, strutting like Chuck Berry, more confident than a Jehovah's Witness canvassing in a virgin neighborhood.

A redneck behind me loudly proclaimed, in a drawl fit for a James Dickey character, "I don't want another Jimmy Carter!"

A redneck Perot Supporter for Clinton turned and accused, in an equally compelling drawl, "Redneck!"

Still, the first held to his original exhortation, "I don't want another Jimmy Carter!" Everyone was clearly annoyed with this Bubba, even the Republicans, so I turned around and lambasted, "Shut up! I'm trying to hear the PRESIDENT!" (remember, it was only August 18th!).

That made the red on his neck creep up his face, eventually singeing his ears as he racked his brain for a retort, but his six-gun was empty so he held his tongue through the rest of the performance.

Once the Guy began to speak, the Republicans tried many an ill-fated gag to disrupt the events on stage. They hired an airplane to fly past bearing the message "NO DRAFT DODGER FOR PRESIDENT" pointing their right-wing index fingers skyward with each pass. They punctuated Democratic chants of "Clinton-Gore!" with a Wayne-and-Garthesque "Not!" In the end their organization broke down and they shouted desperately, individually, and patheti-

cally. They quickly parted when Slick Willy concluded.

As he finished, the Republicans, the Confused, and the short-attention-span Democrats headed for their cars. I, however, smelled opportunity. Perhaps I could elude the Secret Service bouncers and meet the Guy. I pushed, poked, prodded, and kicked my way through the fans. The public address system began playing Elvis.

*"Well, it's a-one for the money..."*

I made it down to a Secret Service agent who told everyone to move back. Some did. I slipped in further.

*"Two for the show..."*

The governor came along the front row, shaking quick handshakes, almost high-fives, and smiling all the way. He stopped two people down from the to hold a toddler up for some nice free publicity shots.

*"Three to get ready, now go, cat, go..."*

The kid started to scream and kick. The nominee put her down.

*"But don't you! Step on my blue suede shoes..."*

Someone stepped on my foot really hard. I looked behind me, into the hurly-burly, but for only a second. I turned around to receive the outstretched hand of Bill Clinton, Democratic nominee for president of the United States. I reached for it, and several other hands fell on top of mine for a giant multi-future-presidential handshake. They all shook his hand, but whose hand was he shaking? Mine.

I looked at him. He looked me dead in the eye. I alone had his attention for a brief moment.

"Good luck, Wild Bill," says I.

"Thanks," says he.

**SUBMIT TO NAR**

# Government At Georgia Tech

by Doug Bodner

With the recent elections, the federal, state and local governments have been in the news quite a bit. Some would even say that they have been in the news too much. Closer to home, though, Georgia Tech has its own form of elected government: Student Government and faculty government. These two forms of government represent the student body and the faculty respectively, and they attempt to provide a democratic process in the decisions made at Tech.

Many students are familiar with Student Government, which operates through the separate organizations of the Graduate Student Government and the Undergraduate Student Government. These two organizations allocate student activity fee money to student organizations, and vote on resolutions expressing the concerns of the student body. Student Government committees provide input to the administration in many areas of student concern.

The faculty governance system is not well-known by most students, and even by some faculty. It consists of two elected legislative bodies, an elected Executive Board and several committees. These groups function separately from the Tech administration and serve a role similar to Student Government for the faculty. Students serve (sic. -ed) are appointed to these faculty committees by Student Government, and the graduate and undergraduate student body presidents serve as non-voting members of the Executive Board and the faculty legislatures.

The academic faculty, which consists of professors and instructors, elects the Academic

Senate, which serves as a legislative body governing academic matters and student activities. The Academic Senate most recently rejected the restrictive student alcohol and drug policy proposed by the administration and referred the issue to a committee which proposed a more acceptable policy. The Academic Senate votes to confer degrees to graduating students, and it also approves new courses and academic policies. Its next controversial vote will be on the proposal requiring undergraduate co-op students to enroll in a class and pay part-time fees during their work quarters.

The other faculty legislature is the General Faculty Assembly, which represents Tech's general faculty. This group consists of the academic faculty, plus research faculty from GTRI and many administrators. The General Faculty Assembly vote on issues of concern to the whole Tech community. For example, it voted on the Georgia Tech smoking policy. An effort is underway by the Faculty Governance.

The Executive Board is often perceived as the most powerful of the faculty governing bodies, since it meets at least monthly and sometimes acts for the Senate and the Assembly. Students have the largest voice here proportionally, since the two student body presidents serve as members, albeit non-voting members. The Executive Board addressed several student matters this year, including the restructuring of the President's Scholar Program and the undergraduate co-op work quarter course/fee proposal. The academic faculty also elect member of the Academic Faculty Committees.

If you haven't figured it out by now, the message here is that you should get involved in what little democratic process there is here at Georgia Tech. If you are a student and have a concern, contact one of your duly elected representatives. They are there to serve you. Also I would encourage you to get involved and run for office or join a committee.

*In case you haven't figured it out by now, the message here is that you should get involved in what little democratic process there is here at Georgia Tech.*

# How to:

## Cover an Event With Dignity

by J. Franklin Boltz

DATELINE:

Atlanta; 13 Oct1992

Vroooooommm!!! I rarely get my car into fifth gear in residential Home Park, nor do I habitually rely on going the wrong direction down the one-way streets. So why am I risking life and Honda at sixty miles per hour in this manner?

It all began the night before at a surprise party for a friend. I had joked with Tom Kemp about covering the debates as reporter and photographer. We decided to attend, one way or another, and perhaps schmooze our way into the press room in the building adjacent to the theatre where the debates were to be held. We would cover whatever we got to see, and maybe get around to writing an article and producing pictures. In order to properly handle the situation we needed one prop: North Avenue Review press credentials. The next day I enlisted Tim King to fabricate an ID tag with my name and NAR on it.

At 5:15 pm I arrived at Tim's place from Taco Bell. I had planned on eating, shaving, slicking my hair back, and donning a suit; I at least had to look important tonight. As I burst through the door Tim announced that he had made my press card, but, he added nonchalantly, "Dave (Miertschin) called and Tom is waiting for you with real ones at the Theatre For the Arts. You have to be there NOW!!"

I didn't even get out a "Thanks" or "See you later." So here I am, flying the wrong way down Snyder Street, up McMillan Street, through campus. In front of the Student Center I parallel park, hurriedly, front end first. Jumping from my car into traffic, it's 5:30 pm. A flash of my wrist locks the car door and I, clad not in a slick suit but in a white t-shirt, cordovan wing tips, purple patterned socks, and Taco Bell-stained plaid trousers, dash like Man-o-War towards the walkway between the Student Center and the debate venue. Within the throng Tom and Dave locate me. Tom throws me a tag declaring "MEDIA" in black-on-chartreuse underneath the debate commission's logo. This gets us past police lines and into the press room but as yet we don't have access to the actual debate. Tom

shows me his ersatz NAR card made and laminated an hour before. I run to my car; I have forgotten notepad and pen.

When I return, Tom has a mission for me. While he tries to get us access to the debate room, I must run to the camera shop and get the film that he didn't have time to acquire earlier. I grab Dave. We run to my car. He bolts back into the Student Center to use Tom's bank card. When he returns I pop the car into gear and pull a U-turn. The time on the bank receipt is 5:37. Tom will hopefully have a pass for me when I return, but I must be in the building by 6:00. I drive down Tenth as quickly as my little Honda can take us. "Automodown" by Devo distorts my stereo speakers. I pass cars left, right, left, right. A red light at the corner of State and Tenth impedes us. The light changes, but we can see that the Democratic motorcade making a left at the next light will block our path to Techwood. My mind goes blank. Dave takes over navigational responsibilities. A left onto State, a right onto Fourteenth, and we pull into the lot at Wolf Camera. I cut to the front of the line, my press pass hanging not like an albatross but more like a license to violate every social norm. I explain that I need fifty dollars of 1000-speed Ektar color film immediately, sort of swinging my media tag on its chain. I apologetically explain to the people in line that I must be back to the debates by six or I don't get in. Surprisingly, they amicably urge me on and wish me Godspeed. Dave goes outside and fires up the car. I gather change and film in an armload, sprint to the vehicle, toss my bundle through the passenger side window, jump in and shout a theatrical "GO!" Dave drives me to campus like The Dukes of Hazard.

He drops me off and I run through the tuba section of the pre-debate marching band. I traverse the Secret Service barricade under the protection of my vividly displayed press card. Two police lines later, I find Tom near the front of the queue to get in, one behind Tom Brokaw. I trade Kemp six rolls of film and five dollars for a ticket and a blue (theatre access) media tag. It's 5:57 pm. Tom somehow phenagled two of the magical blue passes from the Secret Service. No reason to ask how; the answer would probably scare me anyway.

We pass through the metal detectors and enter the theatre itself. As a photographer, Tom doesn't have a seat, but as a reporter I do. It's the last seat in the top row, probably the only one left when we got the ticket. Nonetheless, I've made it. I sit and begin to take furious notes of whatever impresses me. The first thing I write is "Tom, you're a mesheggeneh genius." How did he pull this off? How did I get in here? What have I learned?

What have I learned, indeed! Drive fast. Remain calm. Pretend you belong there. Work with the right people. Above all, be polite and keep your dignity. Being ugly helps nothing. Courtesy, quick thinking, and a mother load of chutzpah (a Yiddish term for what Tom calls "the ability to bullshit believably") will get you past even the Secret Service.

# Daniel Ortega Visits Tech

Ted Metzger

On the morning of April 1, 1993, Daniel Ortega quietly deboarded a plane at Atlanta's Hartsfield Airport, commencing a personal visit to the United States. A few years ago, not only would his visit not have gone unnoticed, he would not even have received a visa to enter the US. Most of America doesn't even remember the name of Daniel Ortega, but from 1979 to 1990 Ortega, nationalist leader of the Sandinistas and President of Nicaragua, was the focus of US foreign policy in the region. The Reagan administration in particular painted him as a despot acting contrary to the principles of freedom and democracy and in power against the will of his people. It was an attempt to fund the ouster of President Ortega that embroiled the Reagan administration in the Iran-Contra scandal, the largest political scandal since Watergate plagued the Nixon administration in the early 1970's. Despite this, despite the fact that trying to oust him cost many Reaganites their careers and scandalized an administration he slipped into Atlanta one Friday in April relatively unnoticed.

Why did he come to the US? Although Sr. Ortega no longer holds official power in Nicaragua, he still works for the betterment of his country. In 1990, Ortega lost a democratically held election to Violetta Chamorro. Shortly afterwards, he became the first Nicaraguan ever to hand over the reins of power to a political opponent and step down peacefully. One of the key factors in the election was the backing of Chamorro by the US under the Bush administration. We promised Nicaragua \$54 million in economic aid if Nicaragua elected Violetta Chamorro president. Now, in 1993, Chamorro

leads her country. Nicaragua remains at peace. The Sandinistas have backed Chamorro's government. Yet, the US has yet to send the aid package promised in 1990 upon the victory of Chamorro's party. As Sr. Ortega explained, \$54 million may not seem like much in American budgetary terms, but Nicaragua definitely can use the aid. He blames the holdup on the political chicanery of North Carolina's Senator Jesse Helms who has used his influence to prevent the aid from leaving the US.

He also spoke of his concerns regarding the United Nations. The UN, he says has become an instrument of US foreign policy. UN resolutions which are contrary to US interests, like several regarding Israel, go unenforced, while those regulating relations with other nations, particularly other Arab states, like Libya (which has fulfilled all the requirements needed to lift the embargo), remain unnecessarily unenforced. He claims that this is part of the larger North-South conflict, which has grown in importance to outweigh the East-West conflict.

*Mr. Metzger is very tired.*

He expressed his ideas about the changing world scene. He believes that the East-West conflict is being replaced by a North-South conflict, with emphasis on ecological issues. The UN, he says, has become little more than an instrument of US foreign policy. For example, many Arab states which participated in the Gulf War did so on the pretense that the goal of the mission was to push Iraq out of Kuwait. To this day, economic sanctions remain in effect. These Arab states now regret having participated in the actions which brought about the current situation in Iraq and have petitioned the UN to remove economic sanctions. In contrast, Israel has repeatedly violated UN mandates, but, since they are an ally of the US, little has been done about it.

He concluded by thanking the students and faculty of Georgia Tech for allowing him time to speak and explain his world views. The students thanked him with "Buenos dias, Senor Ortega!" as they left.

# Debunking the "Pro-Choice Shibboleth"

Jeffery Dimes

Abortion-rights activists often insist that they are "pro-choice" and not "pro-abortion." Thus they cloak their abortion advocacy in a semantic garb connoting tolerance and respect for individual liberty. This is just a complete untruth. First, it is completely untenable for one to claim to respect individual rights and liberties while at the same time repudiating and opposing the most fundamental of those rights. Furthermore, pro-abortionists, or "pro-choicers" as they like to call themselves, have shown little interest at all in broadening the alternatives available to pregnant women.

"Choice" is a broad term connoting freedom, autonomy, and the power to manipulate reality through the medium of the will. The abuse of this perfectly wonderful word by pro-abortionists has been enormously successful because it suggests that to oppose abortion is to oppose free will, and to advocate an authoritarian state which contempts individual liberty. The use of the word "choice" is also much more convenient for abortion advocates than other terms, such as "human rights" or "civil rights." This is because "choice" as a right is distinct from life as a right. Nevertheless, one should easily infer that without the right to life, the right to choose is moot. It takes a life to make a choice.

By manipulating the language, pro-abortionists have succeeded in duping Americans into believing that one cannot be "pro-life" (and thereby against the right to abortion) and still an ardent believer in the right of individuals to make choices for themselves. Pro-abortionists are reluctant to clearly define the

concepts behind the terms they use — terms such as "choice," "rights," and "liberty." Perhaps such honesty would discredit their position and legitimize the position of the pro-life movement.

The right to choose, in a purer sense, involves the power or authority to determine or master one's own life and bodily functions, to possess, use, and develop material property, and to select the type and form of relationships one has between oneself and other people and institutions. A claim to the right to choose may be staked on one of two foundations, either the will to power, or the dignity of personhood. The first one is without limits, and allows the strong to dominate, manipulate, and destroy the weak. Power makes right, and choices may be completely selfish, without any kind of respect for another's rights. The second contains limits. It affirms individual liberties based upon the dignity that each individual human life possesses. It is popularly expressed as "your rights end where my rights begin." Here choice may be made as long as they do not violate another's dignity and choice.

It is a contradiction to be "pro-choice" as in "I respect the dignity of each individual," and for abortion rights at the same time. To witness the murder of fellow human beings, and to defend the legitimacy of that murder is nothing short of being "pro-abortion." Murder is not like speech. One can tolerate and even defend the right of hateful speech without supporting it. The same is not true of killing innocent human life, because, unlike speech, murder violates the dignity of the victim. There is no room for tolerance here, but in its place a categorical imperative to defend the dignity of the victim. To abdicate that responsibility is complicity with the crime being committed.

But let us further examine their claim to be "pro-choice." The "pro-choicer" who promotes free and unrestricted access to abortion should with equal fervor promote a free and unencumbered opportunity to give up the child for adoption. But "pro-choicers" are doing nothing to ease the oppressive government restrictions which make adoption such an expensive and time-consuming alternative. And what about the pregnant girl who is afraid of her parents but does not want to get an abortion? What do the so-called "pro-choicers" and the profiteering abortion industry offer her? Open arms, an open home, and tender loving care? Do they make sacrifices to defend her choice to bear the child? That is not the "pro-choice" move-

ment I know. Comparing the number of maternity homes the "pro-choice" camp has with the number that the pro-life movement supports, (over 3500 in the U.S. and Canada, and with no profit motive), one might surmise that the pro-life movement has a monopoly on compassion in the abortion debate.

Looking at the politics of the "pro-choice" camp, one can find that they are anything but pro-choice. They have consistently supported China's extremely coercive family planning policy, including forced abortions. Currently, there is a law known as the Kamp-Kasten anti-coercion law, which denies U.S. funding to "any organization or program which, as determined by the President of the United States, supports or participates in the management of coer-

"...murder  
violates  
the dignity of  
the victim."

cive abortion or involuntary sterilization."

The U.S. Agency for International Development determined in 1985 that U.S. funding of the United Nations' Population Fund Violated the anti-coercion law because UNPFA is extensively involved in China's compulsory abortion program. This determination was also upheld in federal courts. Nevertheless, 234 of 435 House members from the 102nd Congress voted in 1991 to require U.S. funding of UNPFA in spite of its compulsory abortion agenda. Also, 63 of 100 U.S. Senators last year supported an amendment by Sen. Paul Simon to exempt UNPFA for the Kamp-Kasten anti-coercion law. Almost every member of the House who boasts of being "pro-

choice" voted to force U.S. taxpayers to subsidize an oppressive, anti-choice, compulsory abortion program.

Also in 1991, a House subcommittee held hearings on pro-life crisis pregnancy centers and maternity homes, which provide pregnant women in need with material support and counseling. Though dozens of pro-abortion witnesses were allowed to testify, not a single representative of these centers or of the pro-life movement was allowed to testify. During these hearings, several of the "pro-choice" Democrats on the committee demanded legislation which would ban or severely restrict the activity of these non-profit centers of love, hope, and charity. That is not choice! That is pro-abortion fascism!

This year, "pro-choice" advocates fought the Pennsylvania requirement that all women receiving abortions must be informed of the development of the unborn child and of possible alternatives to abortion. This requirement was upheld in this year's Casey decision. As recently as 1986, however, the Supreme Court decision *Thornburgh vs. American College of Obstetricians* ruled on the same issue in the same state, Pennsylvania. At that time, the court ruled 5-4 that states may not require doctors to inform women of possible complications from abortion and of resources available for prenatal care and childbirth.

Why did the "pro-choice" lobby oppose these requirements? They did not hinder a woman from obtaining an abortion. On the contrary, they helped to insure that her decision was an informed one. If these abortion advocates really want to promote the freedom of choice, they must support education and information. The fact that the majority of the abortion-rights movement is fighting to keep women ignorant to the alternatives to abortion indicates that the abortion rights movement is resolutely pro-abortion, not pro-choice! It is time to dispel the illusion. The abortion rights movement is radical, not mainstream. It promises "choice," while robbing humanity of its dignity and its most fundamental liberties. It is an agenda aimed not at liberty, freedom, and choice, but one which seeks to indoctrinate, to make ignorant, and to coerce.

For a long time, the pro-life movement has made the arguments: "Is this a choice or is this a child?" and some babies die by chance. None should die by choice." Humanity would be better served if we would consider these thoughts the next time the language of "choice" is invoked to promote abortion.



# Afterthoughts

by Gavin Guhxe

Bill Clinton as most of you know has won the Presidency. The results of the election are not the subject of the following discussion. The attitude that has already made many Americans indifferent to the current state of politics is the premise on which the article is based upon.

Many of the readers of this article are probably not too concerned with politics anymore. The stated viewpoint taken at face value seems to have some merit, but I contend that the average American being concerned with politics only in the few months before an election is one problem with the political system in our country. Not being concerned with politics outside of election year causes many other problems with the political process.

How disinterest in politics outside of the months before an election allows the political system to degenerate is not a simple one. The first reason is that everybody in the country has to live with the results of an election until the next election. Now most of you are probably thinking I am insulting your intelligence by pointing out the obvious, but I wonder how many people actually care about how the results affect them? How many readers of this article are as concerned about politics as they were before the election? I suspect that the number of people trying to follow what is current in politics has decreased since the election. I know many readers probably think that they follow politics well, but I wonder how many people actually make the effort to read a newspaper daily? I wonder how many people actually watch the news? I wonder how many people make any kind of an effort to educate themselves about what is current in Washington? To cut to the point, how many people actually pay attention to politics as a whole, and not just the election year rhetoric?

The stated problem expands throughout the whole political design. After election, many people tune out and do not keep an eye on what their elected officials are accomplishing in office. The problem with tuning out is obvious. If you tune out, you can not determine if the elected official actually tried to accomplish what the official stated would be accomplished if he/she was elected. People usually compound their error even more by not stopping to find out what the incumbent had done before the next election. On many occasions the incumbent is re-elected when the incumbent has not performed many of the tasks that the incumbent said he/she would try to accomplish. Unless the incumbent obviously adversely affected his/her constituents, the challenger in many races has very little chance of winning. Many times an incumbent can enter office on platforms that are not truly representative of what they will actually accomplish in office.

Case in point: Ronald Reagan and trickle down economics. Ronald Reagan entered the White House under the platform of government deregulation and tax cuts. Reagan did enact the tax cuts, but did he really deregulate the government? My answer is no. When Reagan first entered political office, he did initially start the process of government de-regulation, as is shown by his initial proposed budget for the 1982 fiscal year of \$695.5 billion[1] versus Carter's initial proposed budget of 739.3 billion[2]. Reagan's budget initial proposed budget for the 1983 fiscal year was \$757.6 billion[3]. At the beginning of 1983, Reagan's initial proposed budget for the fiscal year of 1984 was \$848.5 billion[4]. His final budget proposal before the 1984 election was initially \$925 billion[5] for the fiscal year of 1985. Over four years, Reagan had raised the national budget



by \$229.5 billion. An average yearly increase of \$57.38 billion a year are not the actions of a President who supports government de-regulation and cutting government costs. Yet Reagan successfully ran on the government de-regulation and cut government costs platform in 1984.

Case in point: Ronald Reagan claiming to make a stronger economy. Reagan did make the economy more effective, but not stronger because he built the gains in the economy on credit, without providing a means of repaying the credit. While Reagan was in office, he raised government spending and at the same time he did not raise taxes. The actual yearly deficits that Reagan created through his budget proposals were \$45 billion[6] for 1982, \$91.5 billion[7] for 1983, \$189 billion[8] for 1984, and \$184 billion[9] for 1985, during the 1984 re-election. As can be shown, Reagan raised the yearly deficit over four years by \$139 billion (Jimmy Carter on the other hand had lowered the annual deficit by \$33.1 billion[10] during his four year tenure). Reagan was able to create new jobs and send America into one of the strongest periods of growth in its history. The problem with the Reagan years is he built the whole economy of the country on credit. Sooner or later the economy will collapse when the bill comes due. What Reagan/Bush did is the same thing as your parents going out and buying a new car every year on credit. Sooner or later your parents will run out of money due to the enormous bills enacted by such reckless spending.

Reagan in effect did the same thing with the American government. However, Reagan was able to successfully re-run by portraying the Democrats as tax and spend, thereby insinuating the Democrats would make our economy weaker. Yet what Reagan did in office was more financially senile, by spending on credit continuously. Obviously the majority of Americans never did sit down and seriously look at what Reagan was actually accomplishing in office.

Case in point: Ronald Reagan claiming to have lowered the high inflation rates of the late seventies/early eighties. Actually G. William

Miller, whom Jimmy Carter appointed as head of the federal reserve board, was the person who enacted the policies that lowered inflation. However, who received the credit: Reagan. An appointment by Carter lowered inflation, but Reagan gained the credit due to election year rhetoric.

....allowing the  
current  
political  
system  
to  
remain inept  
and  
dysfunctional.....

Following election year rhetoric is not a healthy way to pay attention to politics, especially when the incumbent has been in office for a long time. When incumbents have been in office a long time, their positions on issues during a re-election campaign often make drastic changes, often to save face on critical decisions which turned sour.

Case in point: Senator Ted Kennedy (D) and his stance on deregulation of industry. Dur-

ing the late seventies when the big push for deregulation of industry was sweeping Congress, Senator Kennedy was a strong supporter of deregulation. Almost fourteen years later it is now realized that deregulation of different industries actually made it harder for businesses to compete fairly and helped to create monopolies in each deregulated industry (airline industry and truck transportation industries are two prime examples). Deregulation caused many of the smaller businesses to fail. Due to businesses going under many jobs were cut from the market. With the amount of criticism raising against deregulation Senator Kennedy made a complete one hundred and eighty degree turn stance on the issue and now supports more regulation. Senator Kennedy completely changed position without an explanation. There was no acknowledgement that his initial stance proved to hurt size of competition in deregulated industries; instead there was a complete blank out of the stance on Senator Kennedyart, and continuing with business as usual.

Voter apathy is a offshoot of not actually paying attention to what is happening in the political spectrum. By not following what politicians do in office, people do not know for a fact where a politician stands on different issues. Instead the voters only listen to election rhetoric which in many cases is nothing but one candidate badmouthing the other and vice versa. Voters hear the slandering and become disillusioned by the slandering. Once the voters are disillusioned they do not vote. Gradually the number of nonvoters grows to the point where the elected officials are voted in by a majority in name only. When the actual vote is counted, elected officials actually only gain the support of about twenty-seven percent of what could have been the total vote (the term total vote consists of everybody of legal age to register to vote). With such a low voter turnout, it is not surprising that special interest groups are slowly shaping the views of our politicians. Special interests pay an active attention to what is happening in politics. By

paying attention and voting, the special interests influence politicians, because politicians need votes to stay in office, and the special interests can supply the votes. Americans should remember what happened in an election and follow the elected career to see if he/she actually did what they said they were going to enact. Other reasons why people should follow politics outside of election year are: Is the politician doing the right thing? Is the politician truly representative of the people? Is the politician the right person for the job? All of these questions should be answered based on what the American people are allowing the current political system to remain inept and dysfunctional because there is no reason for the system to change. Politicians can say anything during election time, a lot people that do vote will vote for the elect that paints the best picture, and it is off to business as usual. politician actually did in office. By not paying attention to politics outside of election year, the final budget proposal (\$27.5 billion for the 1982 budget (New York Times, January 16, 1981, I,1:6)) from the expected deficit of his first approved budget proposal (\$60.6 billion for the 1979 budget (New York Times, January 24, 1978, I,1:6)).

### Endnotes

- [1]. New York Times, February 19, 1981, I,1:6
- [2]. New York Times, January 16, 1991, I,1:6
- [3]. New York Times, February 7, 1982, I,1:6
- [4]. New York Times, January 29, 1983, I,1:6
- [5]. New York Times, February 1, 1984, I,1:6
- [6]. New York Times, February 19, 1981, I,1:6
- [7]. New York Times, February 7, 1982, I,1:6
- [8]. New York Times, January 29, 1983, I,1:6
- [9]. New York Times, February 1, 1984, I,1:6
- [10]. The number \$33.1 billion was obtained by subtracting Carter expected deficit for his final budget proposal (\$27.5 billion for the 1982 budget (New York Times, January 16, 1981, I,1:6)) from the expected deficit of his first approved budget proposal (\$60.6 billion for the 1979 budget (New York Times, January 24, 1978, I,1:6))

# FISHRAP



1



### The Spider

The first day I saw the spider he was majestic, yet terrifying as he lay poised in his web - never moving, yet giving the impression that when the moment came his strike would be swift and deadly. Perhaps I could learn something from this spider - to be bold and fierce in one's daily endeavors - to attack the world and suck from it that which you desire.

The next time I saw the spider it was not his ferocity that struck me so much as his patience - that silent, intense vigil he kept that he knew must soon pay off - never moving, yet poised like a sprinter in a three point stance awaiting the pistol clap. Perhaps I could learn something from my spider - to have patience with the things I desire - to savor the taste of something longed for - knowing that that taste only becomes sweeter with the passage of time.

The next time I saw my spider it was neither his ferocity nor his patience that captured my imagination. No, what captivated me on this visit was the realization that my spider was dead. He maintained the same rigid pose he had on my previous visits and for all I knew he could have been dead all along. As I stood wondering about the fate of the spider in the web I thought - perhaps I could learn something from my spider - that things are rarely what they appear to be and even when they are they are oftentimes tainted. One can be bold and fierce or one can have patience in attaining the things they desire, but what's most important is knowing that the things you pursue will be what's best for you and not leave you dead in your web.



2

Randy Mock



# CIGARETTE MAN

a man walks into a convenience store  
 he is frantic uneasy  
 feeling a distressed emotion  
 as if it were creeping death  
 he hurries down the aisles  
 loses his bearing  
 regains it again  
 views a vending machine  
 produces a sigh of relief  
 selects his personal messiah  
 soon he will caress the thin  
 paper betwixt his fingers  
 indulge in a smoke  
 ashes fall to the floor  
 this feeling can only be temporary  
 and the process will foment again

*Ala Goin*

## Infanticide

Baby Gone  
 Nixon Took It  
 News Is On  
 Makes Me Sick  
 Mow the Lawn  
 Kill the Neighbors  
 Wrap a Preacher  
 Around My Dick  
 Baby Gone  
 Make Another  
 Hardware Store  
 Down the Street  
 Flip a Coin  
 Choose a Martyr  
 Tell Me Which  
 Flesh to Eat  
 Baby Gone  
 Another Victim  
 Regurgitate  
 A Putrid Pile  
 Crackling Rubber  
 Black Smoke Rising  
 Dig a Hole  
 Wait a While  
 Baby Gone  
 Police Found It  
 Never Told Me  
 Fold the Clothes  
 Shoot a Servant  
 Get No Service  
 Doorway Stinks  
 Hold My Nose

::David Klein::

# Perception of

a mind filled with crocodiles  
prepared to snap at fresh meat:  
Refuse on the highway.

Their hunger is never quelled, in fact  
it grows as they gain the taste  
for the criticality of flesh.

"I've noticed you've been especially angry and abrupt with me lately,"  
cried the wild dog. He stared through the wall with vivaciousness, like a blind hunter in a petting zoo. The  
wall did not reply with words, just flashed pictures. The images appeared and vanished with such  
frequency they were almost blurred, yet each left a red outline in the mind. A smoking mask, a torn scalp,  
vegetable matter smashed with a shoeprint, a gutted dog, entrails smeared on the inverted dimension of the  
wall. The angry horrors were realized in greater detail as they passed through the wall, dimethions smeared  
from two to three. The wild dogs eyes glazed over with blood and the entrails were pressed into its  
overfilled soul. The world never knew such a possessive explosion. It claimed all as its own.

::David Klein::

THEY ARE ALL  
A "DRAGON" LADY  
AT SOME POINT IN  
THEIR LIVES WITH  
YOU!

No, please  
please don't  
eat me  
sweetheart...

I'm the BATMAN!

THE ONLY WAY TO  
HAPPINESS IS THRU  
DISCIPLINE!

CRAZY

OR

PATHETIC

That's your choices!  
your free will!



he took her to her treehouse  
on rainy days. Everyone called him jolly  
playful, witty, but the way he played  
was not funny, but horrifying.

## Boys will be Boys

Mommy told me  
it's OK

for girls to see girls' panties  
but not for boys to see girls' panties  
because that's bad.

Boys' use-the-bathroom place  
is bad.

She said boys would try to make me  
show them my use-the-bathroom place  
because boys will be boys  
but I shouldn't let them.

But that's not what Daddy said.  
Daddy said it was OK for him  
to see my use-the-bathroom place  
because he's my daddy.

Then one day

Mommy saw  
and she yelled at Daddy.

She made me go outside.

When she said come back in  
they were praying  
like at suppertime

and bedtime  
but this time

Mom was crying  
and Daddy said

he was sorry

like he'd done something bad  
and Mommy made me promise  
never to show a boy

my use-the-bathroom place  
again

and I won't

because I don't like it  
when people cry.

Not even boys.

a young, needy  
ied of tuberculosis  
Her mother worked  
pport their family,  
with her. She, in a sense,  
was an emotional

stepfather gave her  
desperately craved  
comfort and confusion

Her shame and self  
d grew, however until  
her innocent, trusting  
became a mannequin,  
otions and desires  
ne, **sacrificing** her  
serve others which  
is day, in her  
she feels she must  
s worthy of love,  
**being alive.**

ried my father Unwillingly,  
**user** When she caught  
ie told him to **stop**, told  
pfather, how he had  
when all she had  
**Daddy**  
o hurt me, she did not  
to me

+ eight years my  
**sexually molest me**  
He also molested my sister.





### Motionless Fashions

Your hat has a face  
It stares at me blankly  
Drills through my eyes as I fall out of place  
Give me your hands  
But don't think to smother  
Or ingest my heart as I quicken its pace  
Have some concrete  
Its cracks fit you snugly  
Crawl through the ocean and sip the disease  
The skyscraper ends  
Please baste me in plasma  
I melt on the carpet of bottomless seas  
Erupt out of darkness  
Silk Beatles caress me  
Displace my emotions to a field far away  
Motionless on a cushion  
My life is vibrating  
The practical hammer shall wait one more day

::David Klein::



6

1985-1986

### STEP ONE: THE FIRST STEP

THE DIRECTION OF SINCE-FALLEN CHERUB  
TOWARDS A PROGRESSION OF CONFORMITY:  
COME TO MOMMY.  
WALK TO DADDY.  
COPY WHAT WE DO.  
FALL ON YOUR FACE,  
YOU LITTLE FOOL  
WAIT UNTIL THEY TEACH YOU REASON; IT SEEMS TO  
(OR HAVE YOU FALLEN FAR ENOUGH YET?)  
WHEN "WHY" IS DRILLED INTO THEIR EAR  
LIKE SOME QUIET MOURNING,  
DISTURBED BY THAT ONE-WORD  
DIRGE.  
AND BY STEP ONE, YOU PACE THE PROGRESSION  
TOWARD THIS,  
THOUGHT.  
COPY WHAT WE DO; (DON'T YOU FEEL JEALOUS)  
IT SEEMS TO WORK.  
COME TO MOMMY.  
WALK TO DADDY.  
SO YOU HAVE TRIPPED THIS FAR;  
BY READING THIS, YOU HAVE CONCEDED:  
IT IS TOO LATE.  
YOU SHOULD HAVE REMEMBERED TO THINK  
BEFORE YOU FIRST STEP.

-CHARLES



### Just Another Celebration

Harry kisses Sally as streamers entangle and confetti snows. The boy next door unleashes his pyrotechnical exposition sending the investigative dog fleeing for cover. Dad is asleep on the sofa, Mom watches Dick Clark and 400,000 revelers in Times Square with a hint of longing in her eyes. The guy on the floor wakes up just long enough to become nauseous - then passes out again. And all across the world, or at least in the Eastern time zone, humanity shouts for ...

joy?

Why?

Because that number 92 in the upper right hand of my watch finally changed to 93.

"Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

Hallelujah!

For our Lord God Almighty Reigns.

Let us be glad and give Him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready."

Revelation 19:6-7

Lee Walton

### COCKROACH

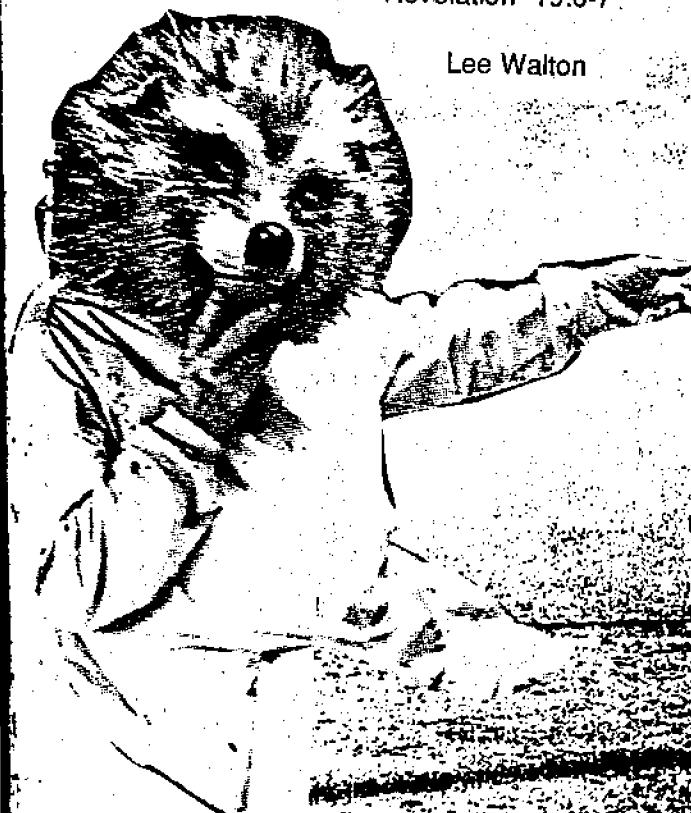
cockroach  
feared by all  
viewed with fright  
it lives for  
a crime of existence  
does not steal  
murder or abuse  
yet it serves a  
sentence of solitude  
shunned from the world  
plagued by a  
superficial horridness  
creating a life  
full of misery and loneliness

*Almighty*



7

7-15-93



in remembrance of green glass

walking up the tracks towards town, the river is cold and you can feel the breeze off the top of it even up on the hill. the ties are warm, though, and make your feet feel good. a little tar never hurt nobody. the tops of the tracks are shiny, but you never hear the trains. maybe they come quietly at night while your asleep. otherwise the rails would be rusty. funny how gravel never seems to age. always looks like it was just spread. the poison ivy spreading through attests its age, though. you hope no trains decide to come today, cause you'd never hear it over the swollen river.

you climb down the scrabbly river bank, through the thick growth of ivy, poison and otherwise, and kudzu, waving goodbye to the ties and rails. forty feet down from the gravel is the rolling edge of the cold water. after four and a half weeks of flooding, the water's clear as green glass. it's not so violent as it was before, but is as if it were going to stay high forever. it's really very cold on the tops of your feet and especially between your toes. you have to kneel down to dip your face in it, though, get a long drink and let your chest be cooled from inside 'cause it's the best feeling that ever existed. the sun shines through the trees enough to warm your back even through the cold wind at the surface.

the water's not so fast as it is cold. you wade out as your legs slowly numb and you conquer the shock to your body. at waist deep the water pushes enough that you have to lean upstream and the longest branches of the dogwood brush the top of your head. at chest deep your feet are slipping on the smooth stones and you can't feel your fingers. the sun filters like rain through the oak limbs overhead.

the big rock twenty feet downstream from where you entered is where you finally get your footing, leaning back upstream so that

the water flows around and over your shoulders, over your ears, stringing your hair out in front of you like slow motion winds. drinking deeply fills your gut with cold and your arms and legs are without sensation. the sun glints spasmodically off



the wave faces and illuminates the bottoms of the leaves in a pale green glow. you can't feel that you're shaking because hypothermia has robbed you of all sensation but sight and sound: the water sounds delicious. the sun looks like all the angels of some god's peoples' heavens and hells flying in angry spirals under the trees. the floods killed all the families of earth four weeks ago. all the friends of the world. all the lice of the planet. the floods washed away all the scars we'd made, all the bruises and stab-wounds on the surface of our world were healed and the disease that was humanity was eradicated. except for you. the last of a breed long in need of extinction. it's only logical that these last moments should be in view of the great healer, the wound eraser, the river that served nature so well. it's not painful to go. you'll soon join the bodies of your friends in the gulf of mexico. after all, four weeks ago the flood killed you for a few minutes, too. after the surface of the water engulfs you, all will be black and silent for eternity, black and silent for the remembrance of the beauty and resolution that was armageddon and apocalypse. what better fate? maybe one day those highest tracks will be washed away, too.

andrew burnes

atlanta, 1992



9

★ THE MAGIC CANVAS ★

★ Sillanna Marie Babb ★  
★ 9-92 ★

# Letters to the editors.

23 October 1992

I'm amazed each time I receive the latest issue of the NAR, usually from one friend or another who knows how much I enjoyed reading and contributing to it while still a student. I'm amazed that the paper is still being published (it hasn't been shut-down or, much worse, died of apathy) and I'm amazed at the consistently high quality of the articles and art in each issue.

As has always been the case, there were a few articles I strongly agreed with, some I didn't like, and at least one I couldn't figure out. But in every case the quality of the thinking and writing was reassuring. When NAR was started several years ago it was an outlet for atypical Tech students who enjoyed the intellectual exercise of creative and/or rhetorical writing and the challenge of collective review. You gals are doing great; keep it up!

When they brought me the latest NAR they also brought a new paper called The Tech Star. My first thought was "Why start another new paper; just write what you want for the NAR." I was afraid that you guys had started excluding work based on political or ideological content and created a new set of outcasts who needed their own medium for expressing their views. Now, having seen their paper (you don't read crap like TTS) I understand; their work would have been vaporized at the collective review. They were wise to create their own paper.

Their Star Trek motif is appropriate, given President Crecine's fantasies about the dramatic progress made during his tenure here (he thinks it compares "extremely favorably" with any

five year period in the institution's history; having experienced his tenure first hand, that paints a dismal picture of Tech's institutional history). Without being too anal, Choya Harden's commentary might be good writing in some other Star Trek universe, but I have some difficulty with her use of indefinite pronouns (she uses "this" and "it" so often and so vaguely that it appears she's writing to herself; not a bad idea if she'd only keep it to herself). Her skills as a writer are cleverly (and completely) hidden, for no apparent reason. Her column consists of ten paragraphs but only 9 sentences (one complete paragraph reads "Sadly mistaken on their part."). Her last paragraph/sentence is my favorite: "Welcome to free press and a little competition, where irresponsible journalism gets exposed before it grows into ugly rumors and important stories are printed without hesitation."

I began by just wanting to tell you how much I enjoy The North Avenue Review. I had forgotten how hard it can be to do something like the NAR while still in school. The garbage printed by The Tech Star provided a point of reference against which to judge your accomplishments. For the record, I'm not against more student publications (my opinions, as an alumnus, on how student funds are spent are as immaterial as a man's opinions on abortion; Unless it's my financial contribution or my fetus in question I don't have or deserve a vote), but I'm embarrassed by the quality of this latest offering.

Y'all continue to read well, write profusely and study occasionally.

Larry Sampler  
Class of 1990

Dear Editors,

Great Disorientation issue. The magazine has definately grown more "professional" looking and put-together over the last few years. I really miss being a co-editor. Perhaps I can make it to a meeting sometime, if someone would please inform me about them. (Give me a call, people! I don't go to Tech no more!)

I have been writing like a demon, as usual, and I would like to submit several poems and some stories, also some artwork. Feel free to keep it and use it as nedded or desired. Perhaps some of it will fit your specific themes. Hopefully I will get up some articles later, also, about gay and lesbian issues,

mental illness, meat compsumtion, and other issues which haunt me.

Perhaps you could send me a newsletter. Is that asking too much? I hope not. I would really like to get more involved. Please get in touch! (Well, most of you seem to be in touch with something, just not with me...)

Thank you for your consideration of my work!

Sincerely and with longing,

Jillanna Marie Babb

# Arthur McCallum's English Essay

10/7/92

To say that I came to this institution of higher education unsure of my beliefs would be an enormous understatement. It was here that I first openly stated and simultaneously admitted to myself that I was unsure of my religious beliefs. It was here that I realized that many of the ideals I've stood for my entire life, I don't truly believe. Also, it was here that it was proven to me that independence is not a virtue, it is a necessity. It has become increasingly clear to me that this college environment will change much of the basis upon which I have built my early, and unfortunately juvenile, character. Yet honestly, I never thought that this place would change the way I felt about race relations in our world. I never thought that any one incident would make me fully awake and remove the shroud of insecurity and lies that has covered my eyes and mind for over eighteen years. But once again, my beliefs were altered.

I have to admit, I've spewed the word "nigger" from my disgusted and ignorant mouth my unfair share of times, and unfortunately I have my own generalized prejudices buried in the crevices of my brain. But never again can I condone any action of another person or group based on subjugation of another race or people. I would like to solemnly thank one skinhead for bringing me to this sobering moral conclusion. If not for this tangible manifestation of hatred in the form of a six foot neo-Nazi, it is improbable that I would have continued my passive view of racists. I would have continued to live not knowing how heavily any one person could have his/her life upon pure, unbridled racism.

It took no longer than thirty minutes for my stomach to twist with disgust from merely listening to one misled young man's triumphant rhetoric detailing his evening of assaulting a street bum simply because he was black. My feelings of loathing and confusion only multiplied as the tattoo-clad skinhead told of how he was approached by a student at a Kappa Alpha fraternity party. The friendly brother introduced himself by saying, "You're a skinhead? Cool man, I hate niggers too!" I don't wish

to single out the Kappa Alpha fraternity for condemnation, as I'm sure that it is neither fully comprised of racists nor is it the only haven for this type of thought on the Georgia Tech campus. It only demonstrates how a mass of our population is continually joined together in the name of hate.

As I sat there in awe listening to completely to every word that came from his mouth, it became more evident that this young man was not against non-whites exclusively. He was an institution in himself. It was not as if he subscribed to a code which fought to promote any group. His sole goal was to

assert himself in a position of power through whatever means were necessary. He had loyalty to no one but himself, and in his mind anyone different than him (i.e. the world) was attempting to hold him down and take over his life and liberty. I sank down into my chair as memories of past feelings, words, and actions mixed in my head and then solidified to form a lump that fell heavily on my conscience. I was both embarrassed and ashamed of myself and my race. It was a point where I

realized just how ignorant it is to hate anyone for something none of us can control.

I slept that night with an extremely uneasy feeling, one which has yet to lose its magnitude. Yet, I don't really know how I feel towards those who wish to promote racism in our society. I can't believe that hatred for these people is any less of an injustice than their own misguided rage. It is difficult for me to have an overwhelming sympathy for those who have been brought up as racists and loyally follow their elders' lead, yet it is obvious that the education of a generation takes precedent over continuing the cycle with a return to hypocritical anger.

If it is at all possible to pass any small bit of what I experienced it would come in the form of a description of hatred. Hatred thrives in a culturally diverse world where individuals strive to establish themselves above others. Hatred is the twisting of every piece of morality into a rationale for oppression. Hatred is becoming uplifted from the downfalls of others you do not wish to understand. Hatred is fear, and ultimately hatred is the destruction of us all.

**If not for this  
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form of a six  
foot neo-nazi...**

# I Found sexism on

## Tech's Campus!

by Elizabeth Ruddock

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Entering my first quarter here, summer '92, I was naive to reality. I thought I knew exactly what to expect from college, and I thought I had a grip on myself. I may not have seen everything yet, but I sure as hell knew how to deal with it. I have always been very forthright, and unafraid to speak my mind, good or bad, I surprised myself. I was ignorant; not only was I clueless as to what was to come, but what's worse is that I did not deal with it (of this I am ashamed). My ignorance of what to expect is forgivable, my passiveness is inexcusable.

I had been directly confronted with several different types of prejudice previous to my arrival here, the least abundant of which was sexism. I'd been ignored because of my age, sex, social status and appearance before, not terribly, but being the self-righteous person I am, I took great offense at each incident. I even went so far as to conduct my own study. I worked in an art store for most of last year and I noticed that when I dressed more "preppy" I tended to sell more than when I dressed "alternative" (I use these descriptions very unwillingly). For almost six months I dressed each fashion on alternating weeks. I found that not only did I sell more dressed "preppy", but that I sold more than twice as much as when I dressed "alternative". This is, in part, due to the area in which the mall was located, and the types of patrons who actually made purchases (our merchandise tended to be fairly high in price); yet I cannot help but speculate that as much of it was due to my attire. But, even this did not prepare me to deal with what I would find here at good old Georgia Institute of Technology. See, the way I dress and how many holes are in my ear are both things that I can control; I can control neither my race, nor gender. I have never had a prejudice, other than attire, directly affect my well being (I received commission in the art store). I have never experienced a prejudice, of any extreme, against something I could not control. I found that I did not know how to deal with it when finally faced with true chauvinism.

The first incident here was in English class. Either my professor was a victim of hearing loss, or selective listening because no matter how many times we repeated ourselves, he rarely heard the females' comments until a male spoke our mind. I am ashamed to say I never confronted this professor and cannot say if he was truly biased, or simply hard of hearing, although he did seem to hear most everybody else clearly, and he was a very soft spoken man. I am not quite sure why I did not say anything to him, I think it may be because I was afraid of what he might have said to me and how it would have made me feel. Maybe I was afraid of being wrong. I don't know. But, the problem was definitely there, and like many other students here I decided to keep my virgin mouth shut. I also had a severe problem with my TA for Chem 1101. My lab partner was a friend of mine who was also female. One particular day my lab partner broke a 25-ml graduated cylinder. Our TA made us stop our lab immediately (do not pass GO and collect \$200) and purchase a replacement. The day this all occurred on happened to be the day with the longest scheduled lab we would have the entire quarter (it was a double lab). Throughout the remainder of the lab six test tubes and one 250-

ml beaker were broken, all by males, none of whom were even requested to pay for the equipment they destroyed, and surely none of which received the production of reprimand which my friend did. In fact, my dear, sweet TA (Do we detect bitterness?) went so far as to pat one of the male perpetrators, who had broken two test tubes and the beaker, on the back and ever so wittily remark, "Slippery fingers today, huh?". I happened to know the guy fairly well so I got the inside scoop on that one. Again I stupidly sat by and passively let it happen, why? Probably those same old fears. I did not even crack when he, my TA, began throwing insults such as "Are you stupid?" at me when I asked him questions. Once I asked for more of a particular compound we were using because I could find none on the tables; his reply was vaguely helpful: "Are you blind? There is more under the counter." Yet once again I played the part of the subservient female better than I ever imagined I would.

Those things made me angry, as did the lovely comments I got just walking about campus which referred to my pants-wearing, my intelligence, my capabilities, my ability to raise children, and my purpose for being here obviously being the MRS. Degree. Anger is unfortunate but hurt is much more aggressive. Those things did not hurt me, they did not hit home. What hurts me is people believing I am inferior, people believing what I am not capable of doing things for myself. I believe I am quite capable of doing anything when given the right tools and enough knowledge. Insult stings me to bone. Every time I asked that Chem TA for help, he would go ahead and finish the experiment, a favor he did not perform for my male

counterparts. My male friends, not all but most, would pull the same shenanigan. It got to the point, last quarter that I no longer asked for help. I do not want to cheat, for that ruins the purpose of putting myself through the ? years here. I want to learn how to do the problems myself, not copy the answer or have someone else solve my dilemma. This quarter I almost keeled when my

group for the required Mathematica projects attempted to leave me out. As a response I went ahead and helped a friend of mine with it, got a copy of that project which I had participated in, and gave it to the three guys in my assigned group before they were even close to finishing. They were dumbfounded.

I am not sure how to go about changing any of this other than speaking out when it happens, and continuing to show that I am capable. I am truly embarrassed that I did not say anything in the events previously related, but I have changed that now. When I first came here I was all for women and their advancement, etc., but I would never have dared to call myself a feminist, probably because of all of the evil connotations which

go along with it. But now I hold my head high when I say the word. I am not for the suppression of the male gender of our species, nor do I believe that women should receive special cuts and breaks, I want to earn everything I've got coming to me. I do believe that the way I was treated was unquestionably wrong, and should not happen. Women should be in equal competition with men in business and school, not below them and not separate from them. There are certain necessary and not so necessary inherent differences between the sexes but intelligence and intellectual ability is not one of them.

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# Domestic Technology and

by S. Danyo

Although technology is understood by many people to be merely a bunch of nuts and bolts with a few chips thrown in, it is generally accepted among others that technologies are not only artefacts. They are also the processes and practices surrounding a technology's application; embedded in this is the know-how to create and maintain the technology, not just in terms of the artefacts themselves, but in maintaining a cadre of engineers, technicians, distributors and users, as well as maintaining an economic infrastructure to support the effort. This know-how, according to Wajcman, a researcher on women and technology issues, "often cannot be captured in words. It is visual, even tactile, rather than simply verbal or mathematical."

What this unfashioned meaning of technology suggests is, in a soundbite, the culture of technology. When looking at

domestic technology, it may be said that it includes not only the Hoover, the Kenmore and the Frigidaire, it refers to what these machines may accomplish, how they are used, what type of labor the domestic worker or housewife does, and finally how housework and the organization of the household are altered (however minutely or significantly) by all this.

It is a commonly held assumption that such domestic technologies have liberated the housewife. But the mechanization of the home has led to little but the mechanization of the home. Some drudgery has been saved, but labor hours have remained constant from the 1920s to the mid 60s. For example, Wajcman notes that when washing machines were introduced, "laundry increased because of higher expectations of cleanliness."

There's a reason the refrigerator is in the kitchen with the women and the VCR is in the family room: technology does not

exist in a cultural vacuum. It is a woman's responsibility to know how to use the vacuum cleaner and the dishwasher. It is the man's responsibility to know how to use the lawnmower, the VCR and the tools. This is because our society values men with technological know-how, while women must be protected from seemingly complex or heavy-handed devices or knowledge. The one exception to this role-playing may be the family car, since the car culture has so consolidated its domineering position in U.S. society (but even here, the family car is usually controlled by the man of the house). Since women are not supposed to possess the knowledge of the tools and workings of their kitchen appliances, they remain in a dependent position to men, who presumably do have the knowledge, as Cynthia Cockburn notes: "it is men on the whole who are in control of women's domestic machinery and domestic environment." (*op. cit.*)

So it is argued that

...technology does  
not exist in a cultural  
vacuum.



# the Housewife's Ideology

domestic technologies have a gendered meaning embedded within: they are designed largely by men, engineered by men, marketed and sold by men (working for profit-driven corporations owned by men), repaired by men, and in male breadwinner households, bought by men. When mentioning the breadwinner ethic, it is important to note domestic technology's confluence with public and private life: Mssr Breadwinner views the home as a place to relax, to get away from the whine of office or factory machinery and the torturous freeway commute back to his castle in the suburban paradise. For the housewife, the home is the workplace, and the whine of the Oster Food Processor is no less harsh, especially when added to a chorus line of whining kids and a husband who Wants His Supper.

If a man's home is his castle, his scepter must be the remote control, a symbol of his crown's domestic domination.

There may be two reasons for the gendering of such artefacts as the remote. First, the housewife may be wary of having to learn yet another piece of machinery since doing so will only increase the amount of domestic chores for which she is responsible. Second, when a new technology is introduced into the home, the husband, who already considers himself knowledgeable about Such Things, quickly learns the operation of the technology, thereby establishing a pattern and history that will justify his continued domination of the particular device (and the power conferred from the use of that device).

As the household underwent its own industrial revolution, being transformed from a locus of production to one of consumption, the postwar economic boon relied heavily on one particular consumer: the housewife, conveniently remodeled and dressed in the newest ideology. Although

structural inequalities between men and women gave rise to gendered technologies, the profit motive is also to blame. The companies that gave uselectric can openers claim to be following market forces of demand, but regardless, those corporations that supply the energy to operate these devices rake it in; it is in the interest of such companies that housewives use the kitchen appliances. Through such practices the sexual division of labor in the home actively influences the continued gendered character of domestic technologies.

1. Interestingly, workers during the Progressive Era referred to themselves as producers. It is telling that people (whether employed or not) are now called consumers, as if this were a positive label — similar to Tech's administration referring to students as customers (*So where's our money back guarantee? I want to talk to the manager!*).

So it is argued that domestic technologies have a gendered meaning embedded within...

# Whispers in the Dark:

## An Interview with Anne Rice

Few writers have captured the attention and imagination of the American public like Anne Rice. Many popular writers have become successful by capitalizing on a theme which is very popular at the time of publication. Anne Rice, however, created a popular theme. By tapping into the collective unconscious of America, she created a new desperately needed mythology for our times. Her first novel, published over fifteen years ago, still impacts youth culture as a bible for the D-rock and Gothic set.

Her use of universal themes of alienation and struggling to find one's place in the world, backed by a dark, moody atmosphere, is quite extraordinary. Just as notably, she has introduced a fascination with vampires that borders on obsession for many.

Hopefully, the following conversation between myself and Anne will shed some light on how this woman from the haunted neighborhoods of New Orleans is able to touch those deeply resonate chords within so many people.

**What was the impetus behind this novel [The Tale of the Body Thief — ed.] (i.e. what were you trying to say about Lestat?)**

I don't think you can really sit down to write a novel and try to say something with it. I wanted to back on an adventure with Lestat. It was a commentary on all the vampire novels I had written up to that point.

**Your working title for the novel was Once Out of Nature, alluding to the line from Yeats. What prompted the change?**

People didn't understand it. It was too cumbersome a

title. So I decided to go with *The Tale of The Body Thief*, which is a straightforward, informative title.

**You have said before that you have a tangible sense of your protagonists as you write about them, such as having the sensation that Lestat was physically in the house with you as you write about him. Does this mean that you don't always know where a story is going when you sit down to write it?**

The story line will always take on a life of its own. I'm never sure where its taking me, or how it's going to get me there.

**Is the gothic moodiness so characteristic of your work crafted consciously or does it simply flow for you?**

It definitely flows. Vines creep up the walls, the sky becomes the color of twilight, the rooms fills with antiques. If anything, I have trouble stopping it.

**It seems to me that in the first two novels, the vampires seemed not to care who they fed upon. In *The Queen of the Damned*, Armand refers to being able to find those who want death. In *The Tale of the Body Thief*, Lestat feeds on serial killers almost to exclusion. The change seems to occur when the vampires are in our contemporary world. Do you consider this important?**

Oh yeah. It represents an evolution in the idea [of the vampires]. The characters grew in different directions. Lestat became a sort of bad boy, while Armand chose to seek out people who desired death.

If you put everything you know into a book, the characters will develop themselves.

There is a definite increased interest in the desire for immortality in the *Body Thief*. Does this reflect concerns that have become stronger in you?

The big thing to me is this I wasn't writing about adolescence and initiation. Everything I had written before was about coming of age in some way. It was refreshing for me to write about maturity and mid-life. It was really a deepening of vision.

There is a sub plot in *The Body Thief* concerning Lestat's attempts to seduce David Talbot which seems to take a deeper poignancy than the primary theme of the book. What are you trying to express with this?

The end is an indictment of everything that has happened. If you go to see the opera *Faust*, Mephistopheles is the most charming character on stage. The earliest novels had romanticized and glamorized being a vampire. Here Lestat is saying, "You want to see me as a bad boy let me show you how bad I can be."

The current grist on the rumor mill is that you are working on a screenplay for a version of *The Bride of Frankenstein* and that you have decided to give another stab at a screenplay for *Interview with the Vampire*. Is there any truth to these rumors?

I submitted my final copy of a screenplay for *The Bride of Frankenstein* to Sean Daniels Productions at Universal Studios in February <1992>, but it seems stalled in pre-production. I also did another draft of a screenplay for *Interview* for David Geffen, but we couldn't find a director who would respect the integrity of the script. The good news is that *The Witching Hour* seems to be moving right along. Warner Brothers and Geffen are in the early stages of casting.

What characters can we expect to see returning in the next few years?

Michael, Rowan, and Lasher will all be back in the sequel to *The Witching Hour*, which I've already finished. It should be out this fall. It will also include

the ghost of Julian Mayfair and a strong emphasis on the Talamasca. I'd also like to get back to the vampires. I definitely want to include Armand. I'm not done with him yet.

What will your next few projects be?

As I've said, I've already finished *Lasher*, the sequel to *The Witching Hour*, and I envision a third volume there. Also, I want to do some more metaphysical stuff with Lestat. I'm interested with exploring David and Lestat's conversation with the vision of God and the Devil in the cafe.

If you had to choose one character from all your novels, vampire or otherwise, which one would you say you most strongly identify with?

Lestat. He's my hero

Do you anticipate writing any further erotica?

I was saying no to that question, but I just had an idea for a story about a man and a woman>

You have said you didn't like the novel *Dracula* for its animalistic portrayal of vampires. Have you seen Copula's *Dracula* yet?

No. I'm dying to see it. I've been hearing about it at the writings and it definitely sounds like its worth seeing, and I think Copula's a genius, so I'm really looking forward to seeing it.

Prevent  
Dead  
Space

# Parking and Pipe Dreams

by Elizabeth Ruddock

Well, I have finally decided to use those so called freedoms the liberal world has given me and speak my mind. For many months I have had these evil thoughts swelling in my head, at times I felt I was going to burst, and only recently did a friend of mine remind me that I do have a voice and there is a place my voice can be heard, thank god for small wonders.

student like myself, whose prime source of income is my parents, that is a major amount cash; think of how many packs of Ramen noodles, or how much food from Taco Hell could be purchased for \$140. The parking lots are already installed and paid for so I would hypothesize that theoretically the cost of storing one's car could be lowered to a more reasonable amount. I understand that

*I expected college to be impersonal, trying and depressing, but I never expected it to be quite so disorganized, uncaring, and frightening*

I do not have a vehicle here at school, I do not have a vehicle of my own. My parents are both firm believers in the, "you will appreciate it more..." theory of ownership. Fortunately, or unfortunately, according to personal viewpoint, I have several friends who do. Being freshman we are naive to the traditions, hardships, and inconveniences connected to tech. Parking at tech is extremely expensive for those students who live on campus who wish to park their means of transportation somewhat near to their place of residence so as to facilitate midnight emergency runs (to Kroger, Waffle House, the hospital, BP, Techwood). One hundred and forty dollars may not be much in the larger scheme of things, but to a measly college

the monetary needs, as well as regulatory needs of the school will not allow for them to offer free parking; I do not suggest that, I merely suggest that the cost be lowered to an amount not quite so near my food allowance for the quarter. What truly enraged me, however was not the cost dilemma, that was simply fuel to the fire, what enraged me was the towing dilemma. You see, a couple of weeks ago, the day of the first home game since this quarter officially began, my friend Liz and I wanted to go get a bite to eat. We got ourselves together and headed out to Peter's parking deck to get her car and leave. We approached the deck and Liz started babbling about her car being gone. Myself, I assumed she'd just forgotten where she parked it, so I tried to calm her down and help her remember. The

conclusion, needless to say, was that her precious toy had been towed. Now the ordeal began. We proceeded to walk to the police station where we were told it would cost \$75 to get her car back (this is in addition to the \$140 she had already paid to park there). Thirty-five dollars of this was an impoundment fee for the campus police to keep the car in the all but empty parking lot behind the station, and \$40 of a ticket was for parking illegally in a parking lot Liz had paid \$140 to have the privilege of parking in. The whole incident took nearly two hours out of my day which was only 24 hours to begin with. Her car was towed to make room for alumnae who had donated a certain amount of money to the school. I was absolutely infuriated. I can remember walking blocks and blocks as a child to see Tulane games with my parents, my mother is an alumnae. Also, along with the alumnae come the tail-gate parties which always seem to leave an immense amount of broken glass and trash.

This is my second quarter here (yes my parents sent me here summer quarter) and every day I become more and more disillusioned with the bureaucratic mess the hierarchy of the school is, and by how absolutely little that mess cares about the people for which they were established. In fact, more and more I get the feeling that they do not even want us here and do not view us as necessary and valuable except in the monetary sense.

I went to the police station to try to speak with somebody about my problem with the parking situation. I was given the run around for 45 minutes then I was finally referred to someone whom I had to wait another 45 minutes to speak with. This person proceeded to tell me that I needed to leave the police station and go find somebody in the administration office to speak with but could not give me a name, or even a floor to begin searching on. Well, I took my little tush across campus to Tech Tower and began asking around. The only answer I came up with was that there is no specific person I can speak with, but there is a board that meets "every once in a while" and that I have to continue checking back until they have a specific date they can give me. Then, maybe, I will be able to talk to somebody on the board, or near to it, who could possibly tell me where to begin. This alone is absurd, and an example of why our country is in the shambles it is. I still have yet

to speak with anyone of use. Several other of my friend's cars have been towed since then and it still continues to outrage me. Incidentally all of my friends' whose cars have been towed are from out of state paying four times as much even be here than in state students.

I do not think that an inconvenience once every two weeks is much to ask in order to help drum support for both the team and the school. What I do think is too much is that they have turned it into a burden and an economic scheme. They should designate a free shuttle, running a maximum of every 10 minutes, to shuttle people to and from their cars on west campus, and this shuttle should be running from the early morning hours of the day before the game until the late evening hours of the evening after the day of the game. Also, if they do tow because someone happens to oversleep, or forget, or leave town, or have major surgery, or whatever may come up, the whole complication should be free, not only the tow, but the "impoundment" (?) also. The ticket given presently is beyond ridiculous and should be obliterated. The parking deck alone houses 500 cars on each deck which comes out to approximately \$140,000 in parking permits alone. I am positive that the mathematical wizards in our accounting department can manage to find a way to spare some of the funds for a shuttle, and make up for the money lost by lack of tows. Then again the faith I have in that department, along with the cashiers office, is minuscule in light of the fact that they have lost my tuition, as well as housing fee, and canceled my schedule (or threatened to) both quarters I have been here, as well as losing almost all of the small fees which I have been required to pay.

I expected college to be impersonal, trying and depressing, but I never expected it to be quite so disorganized, uncaring, and frightening. There is little to nothing that we, as mono-units, can do. The only chance of change would come from the uniting of students against, or for, a specific cause. Unfortunately we have an unbearably apathetic campus which tends to watch the world go on around it. In fact, it makes me rather upset that this whole parking business has not already been changed, as I have been assured that this has been the tradition for years upon years.

# Expendable Customers

by Arthur McCallum

So what's new? The administration of our fine institution in all its glorious wisdom is once again whipping its own cream of the crop. No, we're not going to discuss parking, or housing, or oppression of free speech, or even lack of social activities. We're going to talk about football—not about how Tech players need to start getting some privileges around here—more specifically about the Athletic Association and its treatment of Tech students.

We all know that our football team is nearly as respected as our physics department. And obviously a football game is far more exciting than a discussion on Langrangian Dynamics. Therefore when my roommate and I left our Techwood penthouse and crossed North Ave en route to the epic Georgia Tech vs. Florida State game, we anticipated a well deserved relief from the strain of the week's classes. We dreamed of shaking our little yellow shakers while cheering on our beloved Ramblin' Wreck beside schoolmates clad in white and gold.

We arrived at the student section gate, ID's in hand, ready to enter our stadium, only to be readily balked. An extremely large mass of students stood toe to toe with Athletic Association officers and Fulton County policemen who guarded the chain link fence that stood between us and the game. "Hhhmmmm," I thought to myself, "these authority figures must be protecting us and making sure that we get into the game without problems, because it is their job and I'm sure they do it well." We stood with our fellow outcasts for a time watching the guards let certain people in and turning others away. "Hhhmmmm," I thought again, "I wonder why those people are marching happily towards the stands while these people are getting increasingly upset standing here with us?" My roommate and I were well aware that only a student identification card was required to enter the game. That was the set rule, and it was our Tech-given right. It wasn't possible that student's rights were being oppressed by the Georgia Tech administration. Yet as time passed and we continued to stand listening to the cheers of our brethren, we became aware that only students with block seating tickets were entering the stadium. Apparently normal Tech students were not allowed to see their team play. Like the thousands of East German children who watched democratic prosperity from the wrong side of Checkpoint Charlie, we stood angry in anticipation. The attempts at finding a reason for our exclusion from the officials proved

futile. They replied to our inquiries with a resounding, "We don't know."

Nearly thirty minutes passed, and the once large crowd dispersed on the order of a particular Athletic Association officer who eloquently stated, "There ain't any seats to put you in. We not gonna let you in, and you might as well go on home." After several attempts by my roommate and I to enter the game with only our ID's and several more attempts to find a reason for our exclusion, we left the student gate and began to look for someone with answers. We went around the corner and with some difficulty entered the Athletic Office (we weren't football players or high-ranking alumni). Inside I was told by three different Tech employees, including a secretary and two men in Tech polo shirts, with walkie-talkies, that there was "nothing they could do." In addition a more understanding official told me I would lose my ID or be arrested if I didn't "get the hell away from the stadium." All of this because two of who-knows-how-many Tech students were turned away and wanted some real answers.

The Georgia Tech Athletic Association has one purpose: to promote athletics at Georgia Tech. Presently, they are a money-making organization and they do not mind screwing the students who pay their salaries with tuition and activities fees. It is in their best interest to sell student spots to outside fans and leave students out in the cold. It does not matter to them because, hell, what's the big deal about a few pissed off students. Just take their ID's, they won't do it again. This is the attitude of the administration of Georgia Tech. We students come to Georgia Tech waiting to be put down and hurt because we think that is what it will take to get the coveted Tech Degree. We are brainwashed into believing that it will make us better employees and employers, that we have to pay our dues of humility to graduate. But the truth is that we are the sole asset of the school. Without us, this institution would be nothing. We deserve the respect of the officials in the Athletic Association Building who are employed for and by us. There is no need to believe their mistreatment is acceptable.

There needs to be an entire re-evaluation of the attitude employed by the Athletics Association and their treatment of Georgia Tech students. But this change won't ever happen if students don't start taking a stand. It is our right to have seats at Tech football games, and it is our right to be treated with common courtesy, not threatened by those we employ.

# On Meaning, Morality, Religion

*Religion challenges the human being with epistemological and metaphysical premises impossible for one to remain neutral toward: our culture is defined by the stance we take regarding these premises.*

## I. Affirmation and Skepticism.

The topics I seek to explore are too insurmountable for such a paltry endeavor at objective analysis and reflection. It can be veritably stated, that questions concerning whether or not there lies some Objective, Ultimate Truth in the nature of existence, and whether or not we as human beings are indeed capable of discerning It, (much less *communicating* such discernment), configure us, our history, our culture. How we choose to take our stance in relation to such questions defines our Zeitgeist, the entire epoch generating the encompassing myth<sup>1</sup> empowering our culture in its unique moment in history.

How can I buttress myself against such determining and defining agents? How dare I propose to strike such a diffident approach, cloaking myself in a mantle of perceived objectivity at such immanent and passionate issues; issues that have brought the best—and the worst—out of our mortal souls? On the reader's behalf, then, I must disclose the purpose of my writing: I write out of the urge to be confessional. I am trying to walk a tightrope between affirmation and skepticism without appearing superficial to either position, for such superficiality can only betray a bigotry arising obviously from a true lack of any deep understanding. I ask for the reader's understanding if I appear to ramble or circumvent the very issues I claim to explore, or even if I engender more murk and confusion. I nevertheless choose to blunder in this dark wood, without hopefully losing the nerve that such exploring may require.

I, as well as the reader, can only guess at what may be the fruits of such labor, if indeed my labor should bear any fruit at all.

I phrase my point that seen philosophically, a rough division may be drawn between those who believe in a kind of Ultimate Truth residing in the nature of existence, and those who do not, or even those who choose to remain silent in the face of such a claim. The former I label the Affirmative perspective, whereas the latter I call the Skeptical, (for reasons seen later in this essay). I further subdivide the former Affirmative category into a spectrum, composed on the one end of the *dogmatists*, i.e. those who profess that such Ultimate Truth is capable of discernment by all of our cognitive and rational faculties, and hence believe that such Truth is linguistically communicable. On the other side of the spectrum lie the *mystics*, or those who would affirm the existence of Ultimate Truth, but would argue that it may only be apprehended by some transcendental faculty of our mind/soul, hence such Truth *cannot* be communicated in ordinary language, if language could communicate Truth at all. I have employed such a naming convention

for semantic purposes within the context of this discussion only, hence I choose to omit any pejorative connotations these terms may convey, though difficult this may really prove to be.

As for the latter category; namely, the Skeptical, I do not mean to imply a division between a "religious," and an "a-religious," or "anti-religious" perspective, (relegating the latter to the Skeptic). Indeed, one can remain neutral or even hostile toward all contemporary religious traditions<sup>2</sup>, and still belong even in the dogmatic extreme of the Affirmative. For example, one may conjure up a picture of a Democratean atomist, who would hold that the only forms of Ultimate Truth are the physical laws governing blind collisions between atoms in a void.

By the same token, it is likely, (though perhaps more difficult to imagine), that someone may embrace a traditionally religious perspective while remaining a Skeptic, (which is *not* to be confused with the aforementioned mystic). For example, one

considers Kierkegaard, who would place all metaphysical questions of "the nature and existence of Ultimate Truth" within the dawdling realm of "the Aesthetic," the least mature phase of the individual. For a person in the Aesthetic phase is precisely immature in spirit because he or she seeks to hide his or her actions behind the security blanket of metaphysical doctrines and conceptual frameworks, thereby consciously escaping the terrible burden of responsibility his or her freedom entails. The Religious person thereby dispenses with rationalizations, values the actual over the possible, the concrete over the universal, and, like Job, may be dragged into the pits of hell and be stripped of all conditioned veneer, raging angrily, but never *abandoning* faith. Why? Precisely because faith is absurd: "Credo que absurdum est."<sup>3</sup>

Hence, having stated this, I may be in a better position to avoid falling into a polemic espousing any particular doctrinal framework, without avoiding the religious question altogether. By dividing perspectives into

Affirmative and Skeptical I also do not mean to imply that I have exhausted all the possibilities of stances; doubtless there are infinite and manifold ways of answering the question of Ultimate Truth which lie beyond the writer's personal and cultural horizons. In this respect, I may once again remind the reader of the *confessional* approach I seek to take: I am uttering out of the limited context of my own experience, naturally enclosing my reflections thereon. I am not reviewing extant classification schemes, nor is my primary purpose to offer new ones. Hence, I make the additional disclaimer that doubtless, as human beings we all carry within ourselves a subtly intricate and unique combination of Affirmative and Skeptical elements, which evolve over time. Hence, for ideal purposes only do I invoke the terms "Affirmative" and "Skeptical." It is to ideologies I ascribe these terms, not to people.

In the scholarly world few can argue that in the latter part of this century, with some exceptions, the trend of the prevailing

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intellectual climate definitely favors the Skeptical position.

From the philosophy of Rorty<sup>4</sup>; to the affirmation that "logocentrism breeds tyranny" by the Deconstructionists, there has been a steadfast retreat on the part of such philosophies to even seriously deal with an Affirmative approach. No doubt the latter adherents are perceived as woefully naïve and reactionary on the part of such Skeptical thinkers. If anything, one could argue that the devastatingly extreme conclusions on the part of the Skeptics may have induced a deep polarization and schism: one may no longer remain in "an isthmus of a middle state"<sup>5</sup> between the Affirmative and the Skeptical.

On the other hand, religious scholars with Affirmative leanings are constantly redefining the relationship between theology and philosophy (if there indeed even exists one to boast, in this day and age). Today, religious congregations invite would-be converts into their "community of faith," versus traditionally often intimidating them with ultimate, metaphysical claims. (No doubt, however, the latter is still common practice among many contemporary missionary circles.)

One could argue that this conundrum and divisive polarity in the intellectual climate of our times is merely reflective of the fragmented and pathological hyper-specialization of our culture, (the image of the Tower of Babel comes to mind). Yet, however seriously or not one chooses to take such verbose

haggling and jargon-laden wrangling on the part of today's scholars/specialists, the Skeptical/Affirmative bi-polarity and schism is nevertheless quite serious. Regardless of external influences, how one chooses to side oneself in such quiet and private moments bring about such psychological consequences to the extent that the very definition of the *individual*, e.g. what the individual *values*, remains contingent, by and large, on the commitment forged. It is out of the unbridgeable gap of such antinomies, opposing forces impossible to transcend, that the psychological context of an individual is born, as the individual is shaped and wrought asunder in such contradictions.

Perhaps now it is only fair that I clarify a bit more the Affirmative perspective, in how it relates to a notion of "Ultimate Truth." Simply stated, this position is inextricably interwoven with a sense of *meaning*, as it argues that this objectively discernible Order is significant and valuable enough for us to live happily, should we aspire to pattern our lives according to this Order. This applies equally well to an atheistic atomist as it does to a religious fundamentalist. Ultimately, an Affirmative position holds that the Ultimate Truth, Order, is meaningful and valuable enough, that an ethics self-evidently follows.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, a Skeptic's disavowal of a claim to necessarily base an ethics upon some metaphysical Order need not be taken as nihilist. Previous examples invoked included Kierkegaard. One may also, for example, picture a Skeptic with a complete and highly-evolved ethics based on purely pragmatic and social conventions.<sup>7</sup> One may indeed perceive even a contemporary theoretical physicist, who may doubt that there exists any coherent order *whatsoever*, and still perhaps harbor deeply religious commitments; in a Kierkegaardian sense.

So the demarcation between Affirmation and Skepticism is *not* one of affirmation and denial regarding the question of value of our existence, or in existence *per se*. It is *not* a choice one would make between romanticism and nihilism.<sup>8</sup> But in the final sense, the dilemma between Affirmation and Skepticism is really *metaphysical*.

But this kind of metaphysical conviction *has very much to do* with one's urgent business in living out one's individual existence. It is the very nature of such metaphysical questions that the human self is shaped in its "fearful contradiction."<sup>9</sup> If this comprises the underlying nature of religion and faith<sup>10</sup>, then indeed these metaphysical issues take on religious significance (and vice versa). These questions answer *the self*, not the other way around.

The idea that metaphysics plays such a seminal role in our daily lives and in our psychology is by no means unique, as the philosophies of Nozick<sup>11</sup> and Whitehead<sup>12</sup> provide only a small, articulate example thereon. In this sense, I am not to take on the debate of the validity of metaphysics in its relation to one's inner life. Rather going on the assumption that the metaphysical

commitment to the Affirmative or Skeptical position profoundly shapes one's psychology (and *not* vice versa), I am compelled to explore this theme with examples.

To start with, on the subject of a sense of "coherence," it is certainly more psychologically comforting to assume an Affirmative

position. By nature, one is extending inductively one's perception of order and meaning to universal and ultimate proportions. There is a powerful aspect of ourselves that not only delights in perceiving meaning or making meaning and order out of the world, but also in systematically forming universal classes of subsystems of order, eventually culminating in some Simple Unity.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, arguably the underlying aim of Grand Unification in physics is one such example, in its simultaneous attempts to create theories which are broader, more general, and simple, applying to a broader universe of phenomena.

This faculty of simplifying/universalizing may be inextricably bound in our sense of aesthetics.<sup>14</sup> One can, however, nevertheless remain a Skeptic, and still believe in the "aesthetic experience," "art for art's sake," etc. Choice of an Affirmative stance may then ultimately be subsumed by our sense of aesthetics.

One can conversely associate a sense of turmoil and crisis, when initially choosing a Skeptical position. Lost world-views lead to personal and social debacles, in which at the very least a sense of meaning, value, proportion—*hierarchy*—is temporarily eclipsed.

This "temporary insanity" *must* be endured, should the transition (or at least its appreciation) be made. A reverse transition (from Skeptical to Affirmative) is always tempered when compared with the former, as doubtless testimonials of conversion experiences affirm.<sup>15</sup> By the nature of the Skeptical position, there will always innately reside greater insecurity.

Ironically, though, despite this traumatic lapse of "coherence," a sense of ethics can all the while remain preserved, if for none other than practical reasons. For example, one can recall

There is a powerful aspect of ourselves that not only delights in perceiving meaning or making meaning and order out of the world,



Kant's moral paragon of the "Brooding Philanthropist."<sup>16</sup> But the fact remains that one feels, albeit briefly, that one "continues without knowing why," and could just as well cease to. An ethics that is not rekindled periodically with a sense of meaning and purpose in life is *possible*, albeit extremely difficult, to maintain indefinitely. Perhaps this is just the reason why Kant's antinomies<sup>17</sup> introduced the possibility for faith.

This may lead some to believe that only an Affirmative perspective will lead to personal health and sanity, and consequently drag our society out of its skeptical morass.<sup>18</sup> I refrain from stating whether or not this is so. Skepticism pervades and characterizes our culture. While the loss of world-views typifying the Affirmative perspective may prove to be ultimately healthy and necessary, a loss in the sense of meaning definitely is not: Perhaps beginning with Kant, articulated passionately by Kierkegaard, we see this quest for meaning triumphing over the ravages of Skepticism. Skepticism destroys all of our intellectual fetters and buffers, opening us to the yawning gap of nihilism lying beneath our intellectual gossamer veil.

But our quest for meaning proves equally hardy and fundamental:

Instead of being engulfed in the chasm, we see our sense of meaning remain forever restless. Its degree of restlessness defines its degree of being intact. Kant destroys metaphysics, but affirms faith. Kierkegaard lashes out at petty, bureaucratic "faith," longing to replace it with an authentically human and whole faith.

For the secular-minded Skeptic, aesthetics may perhaps serve just as well an alternative to faith. But both faith and aesthetics have their ground in a *sense of awe*, and are periodically rekindled and replenished by such a sense. The curious truth is that in our age and rage of renewed Skepticism, we are presented with precisely such an opportunity to return to such a state: "When men lack a sense of awe, there will be disaster."<sup>19</sup>

The ravages of Skepticism may mark a "necessary loss:" ethics, a sense of meaning and purpose, all may ultimately become rationally impossible to justify. But twice as weighty becomes our sense of freedom and responsibility, precisely *because* pre-packaged Affirmative answers may never again be resorted to. We are bestirred to finally resort to our creativity, in perceiving the world in its eternal elusiveness and infinite variety. We are helplessly challenged to attune ourselves to the world's relentless course, through our creative faculty in engendering an infinite plurality of modes of perception, though limited and selective these modes fundamentally are. But our spirit of creativity remains tethered to a sense of awe. And at the very least, this sense of awe may indeed become the only safeguard preventing an Affirmative hegemony over a finite set of modes of perceiving the world, which may ultimately prove to become obsolete and self-destructive.

## II. Nihilism and The Sense of Awe

In the previous section, I mentioned that Skepticism confronts us with the possibility to "return" to a sense of awe. At this time, it becomes necessary to clarify what precisely is *meant*

regarding such a sense, and how a "sense of awe" is distinguished from some forms of traditional aesthetic theories, (thus, such a "return" would not necessarily imply a "regression"). Such a discussion is not possible without an in-depth view and analysis of the nature Skepticism's potential darker side, nihilism, and how nihilism and awe may interrelate.

The consequences of Skepticism are such that one does not dispute or abandon the claims of science, religion, literature, art, etc. as veritable universes of discourse, or modes of perceiving and making meaning out of the world. What Skepticism *does* dispute are the "Truth-claims" of the adherents of any one particular universe of discourse, insofar as such claims reference THE Truth, or Ultimate Nature of Things, etc. This of course follows directly out of the Skeptical position in its refusal to affirm the existence of any kind of "Ultimate Truth," or in its refusal to discuss such issues altogether. Hence, under Skepticism, one can dwell within a plurality of truth-systems (such as science, poetry, music, literature), while remaining unfettered from a Truth-system. Exploration and creativity commingle in the constant process of the acquisition of new modes of perceiving the world.

Of course, one of the potentially nasty consequences of such "exploration" is nihilism, the route which, disturbingly, most seem to choose to take in this age of Skepticism:

And so far as the public at large is concerned, there prevails alternately a flaccidity or frenzy of the will; apathy or violence; cynicism or a ranting fanaticism over the momentary

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I believe that nihilism more often than not becomes consequent of Skepticism for two major accompanying reasons, summarized in a "strong" and in a "weak"

position. In addition, the weak position also distinguishes a "sense of awe" from traditionally hedonistic aesthetic theories, as shall be discussed.

The position resulting in nihilism denoted as "weak" derives its name, precisely because an implicitly Affirmative metaphysical commitment is made unwittingly by the subject, who may believe oneself to be a Skeptic. Perhaps the most pervasive of such underlying metaphysical convictions (by and large unconscious for most) remains the strict sense in which we relegate the totality of our experiences into the domains of "subjective" and "objective." In this dualism, the self and its "internal" conscious experience (as subject) remains incommensurate and distinct from the "external" world, (as object). This "subject/object" dualism, which arguably can be traced all the way to the origins of western thought, and finding its modern culmination in Descartes, has seldom been seriously examined or questioned until this century.<sup>21</sup>

With such an implicit metaphysical conviction regarding this duality, we see that one who professes no belief in any Truth may resort to nihilism out of a sense of detached indifference. Nihilism, in this "weak" sense, really becomes the danger of

creating an infinite gap between oneself and the world. The world becomes equally valueless at such solipsistic distances.

Also, a milder alternative to nihilism stemming from this "weak" position resides in hedonistic aesthetics. This is to be distinguished from a sense of awe, precisely because this particularly overarching metaphysical "subject/object" paradigm severely limits the possibility of the person spontaneously generating alternate modes of perception, and hence of *personal transformation*. For example, there are countless aesthetic theories both classical and contemporary equating aesthetics with hedonism.<sup>22</sup> These philosophies are all ascribed with a depiction of the administrative and detached subject, who approaches objects of beauty with a sense resembling one more of manipulative delight, rather than an actual sense of awe. The distance remains: a work of art, a moment in the world, all is to be objectively perceived and enjoyed by the detached and imperial subject.

One must be constantly reminded that the Skeptical position swears no allegiance to *any* metaphysical claim, including those most general which seek to demarcate the human being's experience in the world according to some bold and fixed categories, (such as the aforementioned "subject/object" dualism). In this other sense, a truly Skeptical or "strong" position of nihilism can result, by the simple virtue of a failure of nerve. The world shocks and confronts us continuously in its eternal elusiveness and subtle interplay of familiarity and novelty: As inheritors of The Age of Reason, the realization that *no* rational system could ever fundamentally cogently depict the world's treacherous and bottomless depth is overcoming enough for *any* mind to collapse into the singularity of nihilism.

Unless, of course, we dethrone this hubris. In my opinion, this can only be effectively accomplished by seeking to create alternative modes of perceiving the world within a context of *intimacy*. Precisely *because* the world eludes means we should rush headlong to meet it, versus run away from it to the final outpost of sanity, which is nihilism. What *detachment* was to all former modes of inquiry leading up to Affirmative axiomatic presuppositions, likewise may *intimacy* infuse our inevitably perpetual Skepticism, restoring our awe and openness toward the world, in which we consciously partake of and participate in. "Only he who believes in the world is given power to enter into dealings with it, and if he gives himself to this he cannot remain godless."<sup>23</sup>

Consciously dwelling in mystery, our "primitive" ancestors personified the cosmos. Was this merely a naive act of anthropomorphism? The primal aspect of relationality and intimacy within ourselves finds its most eloquent portrayal in Martin Buber's philosophy of I-Thou:

In the beginning is relation—as category of being, readiness, grasping form, mould for the soul; it is the *a priori* of relation, the *inborn Thou*....In the instinct to make contact (first by touch and then by visual "touch" of another being) the *inborn Thou* is very soon brought to its full powers, so that the instinct ever more clearly turns out to mean mutual relation... (Thou) ...reaches out from the undivided primal world which precedes form...only gradually, by entering into relations, is the (individual) to develop out of this primal world.<sup>24</sup>

Conscious participation in the communion of Thou is silent: "An animal's eyes have the power to speak a great language...the eyes express the mystery in its natural prison, the anxiety of becoming."<sup>25</sup>

Therein lies the sense of awe, inseparable from conscious intimacy, I-Thou, relational participation with the world. However, in a realistic sense, Buber reminds one we also dwell perpetually in the continuum of It: (our sense of manipulation of control of the world), necessary for survival, but not enough for life. But it is precisely in the silent moments when the world becomes a Thou to us, that we arrive at "the mystical," as elucidated by Wittgenstein:

"That the world is, is the mystical." Science tells us *how* the world is; it describes the myriad kinds of phenomena...But before the sheer fact of the world's existence, *that* there is a world at all, that anything at all exists...we can only stand in silent awe. Before this primal mystery of Being...language can only point, and then pass into silence. "Of that whereof we cannot speak we must be silent."

The mystical is also the ethical, the source of what is truly ethical in life...We are driven by a desperate need that our life should have meaning. Yet this 'meaning'

that we seek is inexpressible—at least the strict standards that the *Tractatus* would impose: We cannot state it as simple fact or any of the combinations of facts that logic permits. 'Is this not why men to whom the meaning of life, after long doubting, became clear, could not say therein this meaning consisted?' (6.251)

Wittgenstein's mysticism would embrace...intellect and will...The mystery of the cosmos before which our mind stands in awe becomes one with the mystery within us by which we ethically strive; and both come together in a sense that somehow, in a way inexpressible to us, it is all meaningful.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps we have gone full circle by finally pronouncing the question: Does the world, existence *deserve* such a "sense of awe" bestowed upon it? One is reminded, for example of Schopenhauer's pessimistic world as the manifestation of Will, a devouring hierarchy where "the lion feels the God is on his side more often than does the gazelle." Only recently can we afford the luxury of contemplation of modes of perception of a Nature impelling from ourselves the most shrewd skills of survival: How does one find meaning in the face of spontaneous catastrophe so widespread and capricious? But upon closer examination, we realize that it is only our human actions which banalize the face of nature.

In the end, it is through instinct that we cling to life; left to corrosive reason alone, we would not be able to get through the day. Were some universal disease to afflict...the limbic systems in the brain, which regulate our emotions, mankind as a whole might go the way of suicide—whatever elegantly abstract reasons for living philosophy had concocted. Let us grant biological materialism its clear possession of half the truth...We live from the same instinct that keeps the rat struggling in his trap. But who is to say that the struggle of the rat is not holy?<sup>27</sup>

---William Kallfelz

# APPENDIX A

<sup>1</sup> Paraphrase: Myths act as unifying organizing principles engendering a particular civilization. (Mircea Eliade, *Salvation and the Myth of Eternal Return*, 1959)

<sup>2</sup> I define "religious tradition" in a colloquial sense: any system of beliefs pronouncing absolute ethical and metaphysical doctrines (onto which one can base such ethical claims), with a promise of human salvation and deliverance.

<sup>3</sup> Teurtillian

<sup>4</sup> Rorty claims to destroy the certitude of metaphysics and epistemology and even more fundamentally the legitimacy of pursuing such modes of inquiry.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Pope, *Essay On Man*:

*Know then thyself, presume not God to scan*

*The proper study of mankind is man*

*Placed on an isthmus of a middle state*

*A being darkly wise and rudely great.*

*With too much knowledge on the skeptic's side*

*With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride*

*He hangs between, in doubt to act or rest*

*In doubt to deem himself a god or beast*

*In doubt his body or mind to prefer,*

*Born but to die, reasoning but to err,*

*Alike in ignorance, his reason such*

*Whether he thinks to little, or too much,*

*Chaos of thought and passion, all confused*

*Still by himself abused, or disabused,*

*Created half to rise and half to fall*

*Great lord of all things and a slave to all*

*He stands alone in endless error hurled*

**THE GLORY, JEST & RIDDLE OF THE WORLD!**

<sup>6</sup> In this respect, this differs precious little from the previous definition of "religious tradition," supplied in footnote 2.

<sup>7</sup> Social Contract theories, some forms of Utilitarianism, or for that matter any conventional morality which does not claim any opinion of "objective truth" transcending the boundaries of language, history, culture, all come to mind.

<sup>8</sup> Nihilism in this sense could be argued in either direction: On the one hand, it could be construed as a thin disguise of Affirmation, in that it constructs a "negative value-system," or "negative hierarchy." On the other hand nihilism could be an extreme side of Skepticism, in its denial and disavowal of all hierarchy and value. In general, more often than not, extreme positions are usually vacuous in their ambiguity of classification.

<sup>9</sup> "But every existent nature is partial in its fearful contradiction, excessive desire to attain either good or evil should be avoided, lest one perish in the abyss." (Hildegard of Bingen, *Book of Divine Works*, trns. Matthew Fox, Bear Publishing: 1981)

<sup>10</sup> The existentialist theologian Paul Tillich defines faith as "ultimate concern about matters of Ultimate Concern."

<sup>11</sup> Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*,

<sup>12</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*

<sup>13</sup> No doubt, Classical Platonism and neo-Platonism is a perfect example thereof.

<sup>14</sup> "To a degree surprising among laymen, (theoretical) models have been...selected by...aesthetic criteria. People do 'make their own destinies', but not as they please." (Theodor Shanin, "Models and Reality," *The Rules of the Game*, Tavistock, London, 1971.)

<sup>15</sup> This is of course due to the nature of the Affirmative position: Meaning is preassigned to a certain extent, "more questions are answered, instead of being questioned," by the subject.

<sup>16</sup> Kant's philosophy successfully destroys metaphysical claims concerning "the ultimate nature of things." The claims of science are relegated to the *phenomena*, i.e. the world of perceived experience, whereas the ultimate nature of ethics resides in the *noumena*, i.e. the things as they are in

themselves. Rational knowledge is limited to *phenomena*, whereas the foundations of morals and faith reside in the *noumena*. According to Kant, however, there exists an objective, universal, moral order which unlike physics cannot be explicitly analyzed, but can nevertheless be *practiced*. In this sense, according to this ethical *categorical imperative*, ("Act in such a way that the maxim of your actions can be made into a Universal Law") the "Brooding Philanthropist" is the greatest moral paragon. For he or she remains objectively and universally moral independent of, and despite, subjective whims and desires.

<sup>17</sup> All questions relegated to the *noumenal* lead to antinomies, e.g. paradoxes, when one seeks to rationally answer them, or justify them. The question of faith is one such example: faith transcends reason in the sense that arguing rationally for its justification leads only to paradox. (One could cite phenomenal evidence and argue with equal justification that the world is absolutely meaningful, or meaningless. But because faith lies outside this realm of rational justification is precisely why one is free to whether or not to choose it.

<sup>18</sup> "Only a God can save us now" (Martin Heidegger's interview in *Der Spiegel*.)

<sup>19</sup> Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Xing*

<sup>20</sup> William Barret, *The Illusion of Technique*, (Anchor Press: Garden City, NY, 1979), p. 279.

<sup>21</sup> Some of the critiques of major importance of the subject/object dualism range from: a) Heidegger's "existenzphilosophie," to b) Benjamin Whorf's analysis of Indo-European grammars.

Briefly summarized: a) Heidegger believed that the Cartesian "subject/object" dualism (which as a subcategory includes also the "mind/body" dichotomy) undergirds the modern, technical mind threatening to engulf all of western consciousness. Briefly stated, Renee Descartes was the architect of the "enframing" technical mind, as he laid down his dictum that the only aspects of the "objective" world worthy of the "subject's" attention and use are those aspects which are quantifiable, measurable, predictable. "What, then is the whole strategy of Descartes' thought? *The will in its freedom chooses to go against nature and natural impulse in order to conquer nature and its secrets*. Here is the first step toward the metaphysics of power that will dominate the modern age." (ibid., Barret, p. 128.) According to Heidegger, one avenue of escape from the totality of the "enframing" technical mind resides in a re-kindled awareness of the immanent mystery of Being, intimately connected with a sense of "letting be," or *Gelassenheit*.

"Whatever dominance we come to have over beings, we have in the end to bow before the mystery of Being. There, "actions," "subject" and "object," etc. This grammatical pattern implies a picture of a universe of static, existent objects, (nouns) bound one-to-one with another through "actions," (verbs). But there is nothing "universal" or "objective and self-evident" at all in this picture, otherwise we would observe this uniformly across all other cultures, which we don't.

Hopi grammar, for example, allows for verbs to stand alone without substantives, which among other things implies a dynamical picture of a universe based on "evolving states," "becoming now, and becoming later" (their only two tenses). Actions don't need "actors" in Hopi (for example the verb "ni'pi" translates "flash (occurred)," "flash (becoming now)," versus our having to say, "it flashed," "it is flashing"). Hence "subject" and "object" are inextricably enmeshed in this dynamic totality of their view of existence.

<sup>22</sup> Consider, especially, aesthetic theories stemming from materialistic psychology.

<sup>23</sup> Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, McMillan, NY, 1958, p.94.

<sup>24</sup> ibid., Martin Buber, pp.28-29.

<sup>25</sup> ibid., Martin Buber, p.96.

<sup>26</sup> William Barret, *The Illusion of Technique*, pp. 56-60.

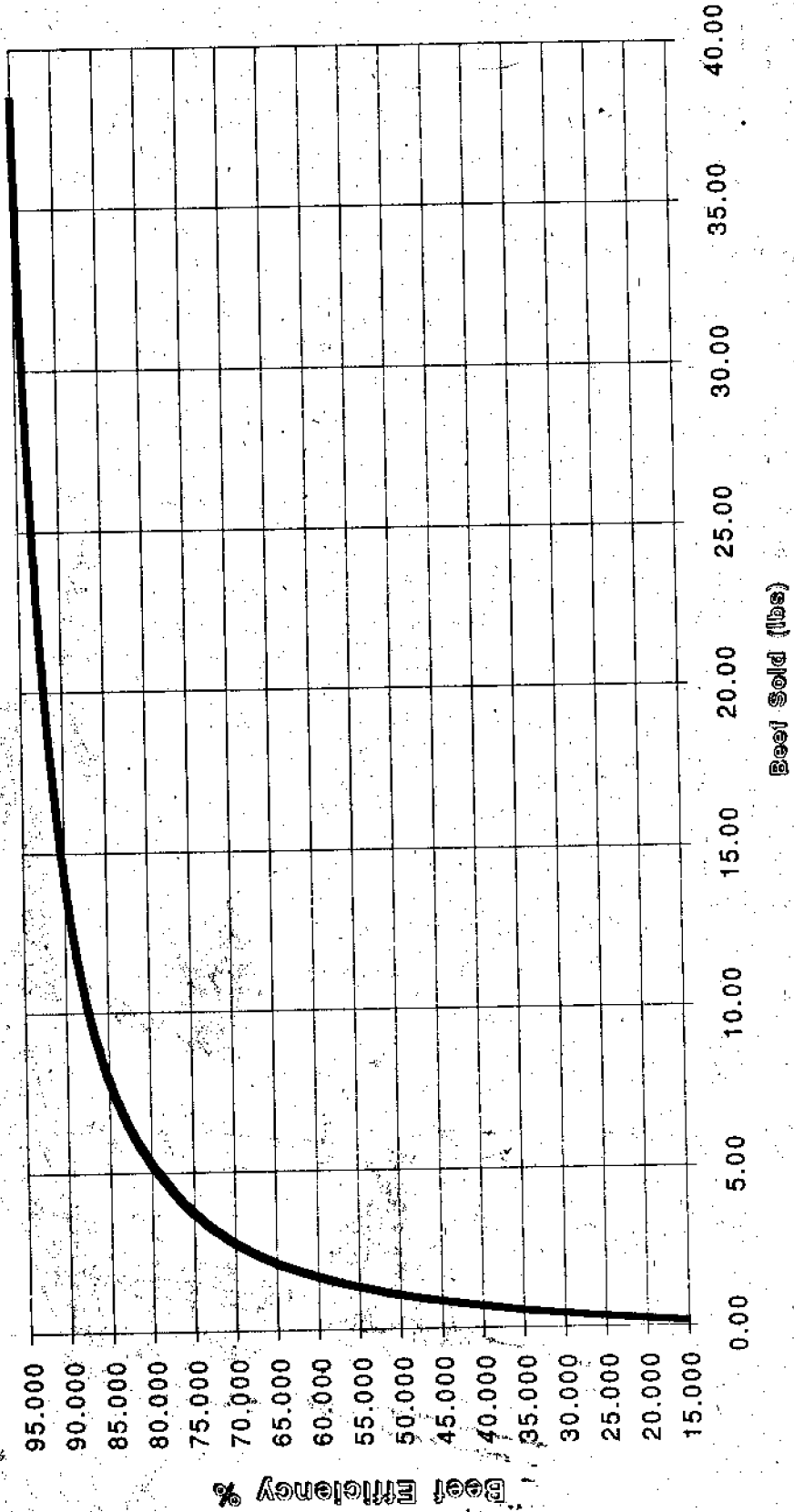
Excerpt from a letter by Wittgenstein to the publisher Ficker, concerning the *Tractatus*:

"The book's point is an ethical one....My work consists of two parts: plus all that I have *not* written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one. My book draws upon the limits of the ethical from the inside, as it were, and I am convinced that this is *only rigorous* way of drawing those limits." (cited from Barret, p.58)

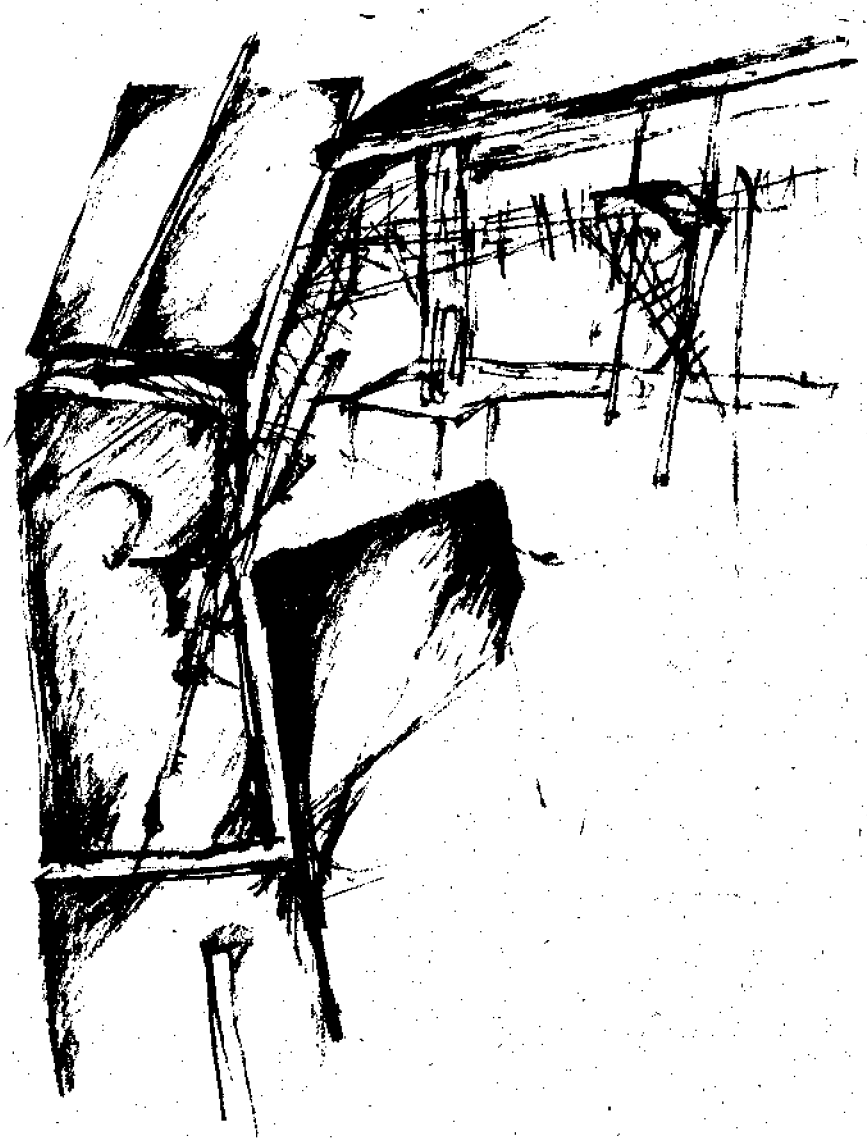
<sup>27</sup> Barret, *Illusion of Technique*, p.320.

Chart1

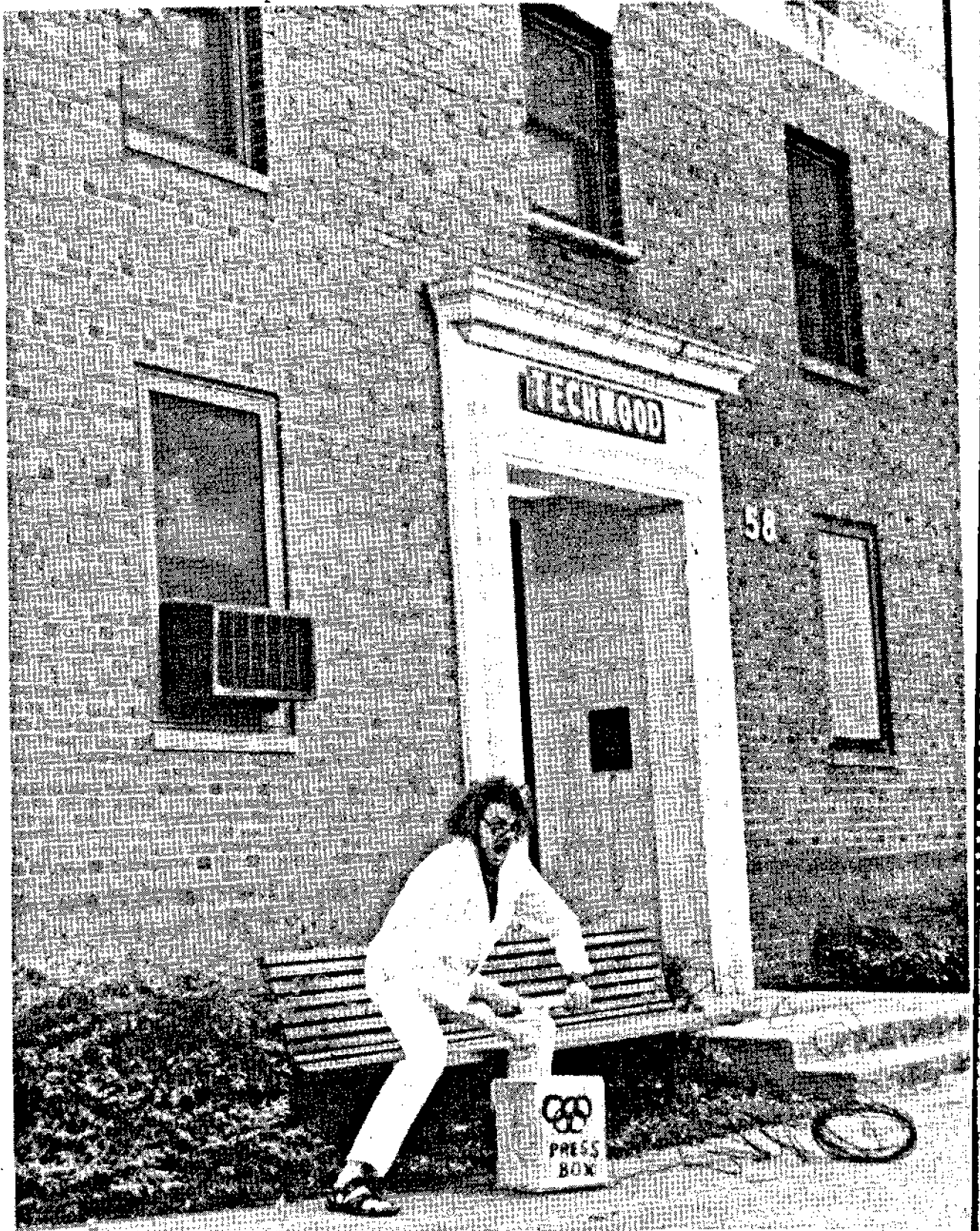
Beef Efficiency as a Function of Beef Sold and Time



\*\*with thermotainer & 1.47% linear slicer operator losses considered



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Ma Mahjouri  
To U To



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