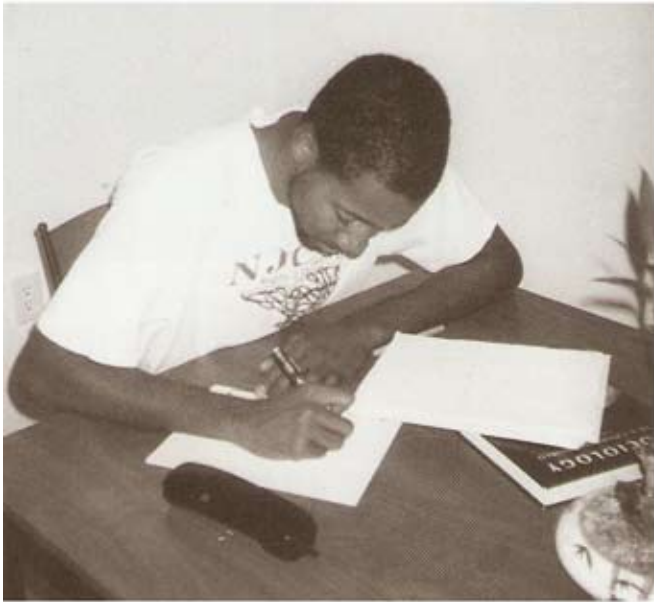


ReVisions

Best Student Essays of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

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Best Student Essays

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Capitalism vs. Bartleby

By Laura Bowers



Laura Bowers is a junior majoring in Molecular Biology. Originally from Westport, MA, she currently lives with her husband in Raeford, NC. She was on active duty for eight years in the USAF before recently transferring into the reserves. Laura is a member of Alpha Chi and Alpha Sigma Lambda honor societies.

As Industrialism swept through America, it left a path of prosperity for some and, yet, devastated the lives of others. Herman Melville wanted to show us the darker side of this changing world through his story, “Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Tale of Wall Street.” He wanted to show his readers how industrialization can strip away humanity and breed a mechanized society. Melville’s main character, Bartleby, struggled to resist the powers of industrialization that surrounded him, but he still became the product of its force in the end. Bartleby would passively refuse to conform to the standards set by society by responding, “I would prefer not to,” when others asked or demanded things from him. Melville creates a vivid scenario whereby the capitalist system is blamed for its inability to connect the gap between the worker and employer.

The historical background of the scenario unfolds during the rise of market capitalism on New York’s Wall Street in the mid-nineteenth century. Bartleby is in the midst of the working-class rebellions taking place during this period. Urban workers were demanding land reform (an end to land monopoly) and an end to wage slavery from the controlling, wealthy, upper-class society. George Evans, former editor of the

Working Man’s Advocate, stated in 1841 that “if any man has a right to live, he has a right to land enough for his subsistence. Deprive anyone of these rights, and you place him at the mercy of those who possess them” (qtd. in Foley 94). Bartleby is a lone, young man struggling to survive in this environment. Melville meticulously placed the background of this tale in New York during the working-class rebellions and the demand for land reform because this mid-nineteenth century, historical event adds much dramatic realism to his story. Melville then begins to describe the setting to the reader, so they may further see the world through Bartleby’s eyes.

The setting of this tale depicts the poor working conditions surrounding the expanding industrialized society of New York’s Wall Street. The lawyer, Bartleby’s employer, describes to the reader Bartleby’s working corner that he labors in day and night. He tells us that the small window “commanded at present no view at all ... the light came down from far above, between two lofty buildings, as from a very small opening in the dome” (Melville 860). Bartleby works for this lawyer as a scrivener copying wills, deeds, and other documents over and over. In 1853, George Curtis wrote an article in Putnam’s magazine portraying the anguish of the industrialized worker: “I knew that men had been hard at work since sunrise—since daybreak—toiling heavily at labor that should not end until their lives ended; confined in close noisome places, in which the day was never bright, and their hopes grew daily darker” (qtd. in Post-Lauria 197). This quote provides the reader with the grim setting of Bartleby’s struggling existence and foretells his fate that lies ahead. These surroundings create much despair, depression, and hopelessness for Bartleby who is trapped within its walls.

The lawyer’s office that Bartleby works in (located in the middle of Wall Street) is

also rather dungeon-like. His desk is placed “close up to a small side window.... that afforded a lateral view of certain grimy black-yards and bricks” (Melville 860). The callus, demanding atmosphere surrounding Bartleby slowly and painfully begins to decay his soul. He reacts to this oppression by challenging property rights and refusing to work. He challenges property rights by refusing to leave the lawyer’s office even after the lawyer moves to another office. His actions do not help him overcome the capitalistic tyranny represented by the numerous barriers Bartleby encounters in this tale.

Symbolism explodes across the pages of this tale, and Melville begins to provide literary meaning to Bartleby’s empty shell of a human being. The largest symbol throughout this story is the walls that surround Bartleby. The walls depict dreadfully powerful obstacles too overbearing to tackle. The first wall Bartleby encounters is Wall Street, which is the symbol for the very heart of capitalism. Capitalistic principals are the bricks that build these walls. The next walls Bartleby encounters are within the lawyer’s office, which he would stand looking out “upon the dead brick wall” (Melville 867). The dead brick wall represents Bartleby’s ominous encounter and realization of the fate society forces on him. Dan Vogel explains this to us by writing, “Bartleby staring at the wall becomes a symbol of humanity’s encounter with boundaries and limitations” (151). The lawyer puts up another wall when he places a high screen that separates him and Bartleby. This screen reinforces the idea of how the lawyer tries to distance himself (authority) from his subordinates. These walls give the power to separate humanity and enforce authority. Melville shows that the industrial working environment becomes depersonalized when walls separate everyone. The prison wall (that Bartleby is found dead against) at the end of the story symbolizes the last obstacle he had to face. When Bartleby finally realized

that he was powerless against these mighty walls, he resorted to death as the resolve of his defeat.

The rigid legal structure this society operates within was another obstacle Bartleby was faced with. The symbolic nature of the legal documents mentioned in Melville’s story represents this legal structure of law and order. Laws (ideals created by man) regulate what a person can and cannot do. The language used in these codes tries to create a surface illusion to stand for meaning. The lawyer “maintains the structure of the entire legal framework by repetitiously writing the documents that encode the laws of ownership or origin” (Weiner 70). By reinforcing these standards, the lawyer defines his position of authority over his employees. When the scribes (copiers of these legal documents) repetitiously copy these laws, it reinforces their belief in these abstract ideals.

The rapidly growing industrialized society that surrounds Bartleby has no patience for those who question the authority of legal codes. Laborers were viewed as the working parts in the machine (society’s industry). When these parts break (wage earners questioning authority or refusing to conform to society’s laws), they are easily replaced with another (workers that do not question authority and will conform to the standards set by society). The laws enforced in an industrialized society breed a stratified social structure based on principals of capitalism that wedge a gap between the laborers (Bartleby, Turkey, and Nippers) and management (the lawyer). Susan Weiner explains that “rather than finding a basis in ethics or morality, the abstract truth is now tied to the workings of Wall Street and the goal of the system is the perpetuation of the status quo” (71). Laws enforce the standards of conformity within a market industry, but are these ideals that the law represent necessarily based on any truth? The documents written by the lawyer and copied by the scribes represent

Laura worked hard to articulate the complex message contained within Melville’s “Bartleby.” The story made her wonder whether or not capitalism and industrial/ technological advancement are worth the loss of individuality, autonomy, and humanity. This essay is a result of an active reader, a deep thinker, and a diligent reviser, and it was certainly a pleasure to read.
—Jesse Peters

ideals, not necessarily truths.

Bartleby questions the ethics and morality of the industrialized society. He realizes that the documents he copies contain dehumanizing untruths that threaten one's self-identity. He begins to see how laws that structure an industrialized society can transform wage earners into robotic humans that are programmed not to question authority and mechanically work to benefit the industrial system. As he begins to slowly understand this, he rebels against this system by passively refusing to review, copy, or send off these documents by saying, "I prefer not to". He refuses to maintain the illusion that an abstract truth is within the legal code.

Melville portrays how his characters react to enforced abstract truths differently by describing how an industrialized environment breeds certain traits found in the characters of this story. Bartleby, Turkey, Nippers, and the lawyer react to their environment differently, but they represent the cogs that enable the machine (capitalistic society) to decrease, sustain or increase productivity. The lawyer's other employees, Turkey and Nippers, display the loss of autonomy and the monotony in this unfulfilling occupation. One form of their resistance to this monotony is the way they lower their productivity in the workplace. The narrator tells us that Turkey and Nippers offset one another. Turkey is most productive in the morning, but is slacker in the afternoon. When he becomes frustrated, he breaks his pencils, drops things on the floor and leaves blots on the documents, etc. Nippers is the same way, except he is slacker in the morning and very efficient in the afternoon. During his fits of anxiety, he becomes frustrated, grabs his desk and shakes it violently, cusses, and is mean and irritable towards others. The narrator (the lawyer) says "their fits relieved each other like guards" (Melville 859). While one is having a fit, the calmness of the other provides a safeguard to keep them balanced. This stressful working environment

also affects them physically. The pressure that they endure lead to ailments such as Nipper's ulcers (that the narrator mentioned as fits of "indigestion"), Turkey's high blood pressure (the lawyer describes that his "face was of a fine florid hue" which represents a sign of high blood pressure), and their addiction to alcohol (the lawyer tells us that both men enjoyed their alcohol during the day "for Nippers, brandy-and-water were altogether superfluous" and Turkey's clothes smelled "of eating-houses") (Melville 857-859).

The lawyer (narrator) plays the part of the capitalist employer who prefers not to open his eyes to the harshness of the realities that affect his employees because "instead of acknowledging the way in which he is victimizing Bartleby, he traces the victim to an incurable disorder of the soul" (Hans par. 21). He does not want to deal with Bartleby's reality because he is too frightened to face the fact that this could happen to him. His status in this industrialized society enables him to enjoy many comforts in life, unlike his employees. The lawyer prefers to be "in the cool tranquility of a smug retreat doing a snug business among rich men's bonds, mortgages, and title deeds," and he owned his own carriage that he drove around town in (Melville 856). His job requires him to manipulate other people's money, but he also blindly manipulates his employee's lives. He realizes that his employees struggle financially, but instead of raising their wages he tries to dole out charity. He tries to give Turkey a "highly respectable-looking coat of [his] own," he offers to hand over extra money to Bartleby (to get rid of him), and he asks Bartleby if he would like to go home with him "till we can conclude upon some convenient arrangement" (Melville 859, 876). He offers these charities because he is trying to fulfill the emptiness that he feels which is caused by his guilty conscience. Although the lawyer has the cure for Bartleby's illness (treating Bartleby humanely), it would force

the lawyer to give up too much (it would take away from his high social status), so he tries to provide Bartleby a quick fix (charity). The employer realizes that “to look on Bartleby is to be overwhelmed by the isolation and alienation of life and so the only alternative to these horrible truths is to turn Bartleby into something less than human” (Hans par. 19). Although the lawyer believes that he is doing all he can to help the poor scrivener, he unconsciously withdraws from his insight regarding disgraceful working conditions and their detrimental effects upon workers. He assumes instead the orthodox sentimental stance: “Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!” (Melville 879). In other words, the lawyer exclaims poor Bartleby! What is this world coming to? By stating this, he denies his role in the death of Bartleby. The lawyer was fearful of what would become of him if he dared to overstep the boundaries that held his position in the industrialized society. As a result, he failed to aid Bartleby and helped strengthen the capitalist principles that destroy the lives of those who are less fortunate than he is.

Bartleby’s character is described differently than that of his cohorts. He lacks the fiery nature that Turkey and Nippers possess during their unproductive times. Bartleby is depicted as an emotionally empty individual. In the opening of the story, the narrator describes Bartleby as “motionless, sedate, and incurably forlorn” and he adds that he was “famishing for something to copy, he seemed to gorge himself on my documents ... there was no pause for digestion ... he wrote on silently, palely, mechanically” (Melville 860-861). Notice that the narrator used the word forlorn, which means neglected, without hope, or desperate. The lawyer used this word to describe Bartleby’s character, but he leaves out that Bartleby’s hopelessness was a result of the debilitating affects caused by the constant neglect of an industrialized society. Bartleby began to realize that he was losing his self-identity because his whole life

revolved around working long, highly productive hours with the same low wages. He did not have enough to afford a place of his own, and he did not eat much so he could save more money. When he comes to this realization, he refuses to do any work and lingers around the office day and night doing nothing. Melville tries to shed light on Bartleby’s seemingly irrational character when Bartleby asks the lawyer, “Do you not see the reason for yourself?” (Melville 869). Bartleby is trying to tell the lawyer to open his eyes to the reality of the world surrounding them and to see that this society (that the lawyer is also a part of) is devoid of humanity. The lawyer’s rose-colored glasses do not allow him to see Bartleby’s depraved circumstances. He begins to rationalize Bartleby’s work stoppage by saying that because Bartleby’s “eyes looked dull and glazed,” his vision must be temporarily impaired from the abundance of work he has accomplished lately (Melville 869).

As the story progresses, not only does Bartleby prefer not to work, but also he prefers not to leave the building and he is also unwilling to vacate the public street. Weiner states “the harsh workings of Wall Street deal with Bartleby by automatically consigning him to prison for failing to assume his assigned place within the machine” (72). Society’s laws justify the right to imprison Bartleby by labeling him a vagrant. This impatient industrious society has no place for those that do not conform to their standards or laws. Bartleby refuses food or money from his boss. While in the Tombs (prison), he once again refuses to eat because the food is coming from the same degenerate society that led to his imprisonment. As a result, he dies and becomes the product of industry’s workings.

Melville probes the question of whether or not the loss of autonomy, humanity, and the gains of monotony are worth productivity and industry. This overwhelming industrialized society leaves its victims with the depress-

ing choice of which way they would prefer to lose. Either make the choice to let society devour your soul and spit out a useless empty shell (of what was once human), or resist and die knowing that society will no longer be able to benefit from your existence. In the fight against capitalism, Bartleby nobly chose death because he realized that one couldn't escape becoming the product of industrialization's destructive power. ❖

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The Men Who Built America

By Crystal Craven

The Second World War was a watershed event in the history of the world in the twentieth century. The war impacted, directly or indirectly, six of the continents of the world. Europe was left in shambles. During the war, and the years immediately following, a major demographic shift occurred. Colonial powers were forced to relinquish their empires. Two powers emerged from the war in the position to rebuild the old world. One of them, the United States, stepped up and committed itself to rebuild war-ravaged Europe and Japan. The men who fought this war also committed themselves to building.

The men who fought in the Second World War gave their youth and innocence to the war effort. In *Band of Brothers*, Stephen E. Ambrose says, “They had a character like a rock, these members of the generation born between 1910 and 1928” (301). They were born into a false prosperity of the 1920’s, were hardened during the Great Depression, and became men “in the greatest war in history” (Ambrose, *Band* 301). The men and boys of this generation saved the world from fascism and returned home not considering themselves heroes. To them, they were simply fulfilling their duty. When asked by his grandson if he was a hero during the war, a paratrooper from the 101st Airborne division answered, “No, but I served in a company of heroes” (Ambrose, *Band* 301).

The combat experiences of the soldiers forever changed those who returned home after the war. These men had seen enough destruction. In 1945, the entire European continent was smoking ruins. As Ambrose says, “The ex-GIs had seen enough war; they wanted peace. But they had also seen the evil of dictatorship; they wanted freedom” (*The Victors* 350). Once home, the members of this generation were determined to build. Among veterans the most common post-war careers were in construction and education.



Ambrose noted in an interview with Pvt. Ed Tipper this phenomenon. Tipper said, “Is it accidental that so many ex-paratroopers from E Company became teachers? Perhaps for some men a period of violence and destruction at one time attracts them to look for something creative as a balance in another part of life. We also seem to have a disproportionate number of builders of houses and other things in the group we see at reunions” (qtd. in *The Victors* 349). President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the top soldier in the European Theater, built the interstate system. This same generation is responsible for the creation of IBM, the space program, and most of the institutions commonly associated with modern America. Recently, writers have focused on this generation of men who fought in World War II and then came home and contributed to building America. Tom Brokaw’s book *The Greatest Generation* focuses on the sacrifices of this generation. He argues that “the challenges the World War II generation faced — a depression, a world war and the birth of modern America — transformed even ordinary people into extraordinary achievers and heroes” (“Due Respect” 91). Brokaw’s respect for this generation goes beyond their wartime sacrifices. He not only discusses their impact

Crystal Craven is a senior majoring in English. For the past two years, she has had the opportunity to work as a reporter for the *Richmond County Daily Journal*. Crystal says that writing this essay gave her the chance to help tell the stories of the men in Richmond County who fought in the Second World War.

in the war effort but what they did when they came home. Ambrose, although he focuses mainly on the war experience, also discusses the impact of this generation on America and the world. The experience of rebuilding was common throughout the United States, from the largest cities to the smallest communities including a rural county in southern North Carolina — Richmond County. The soldiers of Richmond County returned home with a vision of building a part of America that reflected their experiences in the greatest war in history.

Like most of the American soldiers in the Second World War, the veterans from Richmond County were young - many not old enough to cast votes for the men who sent them to fight. In the 21st century we would not trust boys their age with the keys to the family car. In the 1940's, these youths were charged with the duty of saving the world from totalitarian dictatorship. James McFayden was only eighteen in 1942 when he left the small town of Ellerbe to hitchhike to Spartanburg, South Carolina, to join the Army Air Force. Edward Garrison was but twenty years old when he enlisted in the United States Army after hearing news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. At twenty-two, Heath Carriker, also of Ellerbe, in northern Richmond County, joined the Army Air Corps, fulfilling a life long dream to fly. Doug Cook, of Hamlet, had the "good fortune" of serving in the peacetime navy during the Depression. He was a twenty-three year old seaman stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. These men were instrumental in defending freedom during the Second World War and building a new society when they returned home.

Carriker, a plow-boy, thought work on his family's corn, cotton, and peach farm was difficult. The twelfth of thirteen children, Carriker worked on the farm with his other siblings. The farm demanded long hours of

physical labor. It was what had to be done during tough times, though. Little did Carriker know that the work he had known on the farm would be nothing compared to what he was to find in the U.S. Army. He had a dream to fly, and when the Army Air Corps announced it would accept applicants without a college degree if they passed an equivalency test, Carriker studied hard. After passing the test, he was off to pilot training school. It wasn't long after his first solo flight that he began to feel overconfident, he said. On a routine trip, he landed too hard and too fast, ballooned up an estimated 74 to 100 feet, spun and crashed. Left with one broken shoulder bone and one ruined airplane, he said his pride and ego crashed with that plane. Afraid of being "washed out," he was sent to confront a review board that could have given him his papers to go home. As Carriker spoke with the board, answering questions as well as listening to criticisms, the colonel asked him if he had anything to say. "I put all my eggs in one statement which I remember word-for-word to this day," he recalled. "I realize that crashing an airplane usually washes out a cadet, but I believe that if I am washed out, the Army will lose a good pilot. I know I can do the job." It worked. Carriker returned to flying status determined not to make any more mistakes. This same determination can be witnessed in McFayden. Also determined to fly, he served in the 44th Bomb Group, 677th Squadron, as a tail gunner on B-29s. McFayden remembers leaving for bomb runs on Tinian Island in the Pacific Theater of war. On one bomb run over Osaka at 19,000 feet, every plane in his formation was hit. His own plane was fired upon and hit with flak in many places. The plywood and metal floor was literally shot out from under his feet so that he could see the ground below him. His unopened parachute was filled with wood and metal splinters. During the raid, McFayden couldn't

This essay demonstrates Crystal's many strengths as a writer, most notably her skills in researching primary sources and her ability to write lucid, engaging prose.

—Mark Canada

think of what might happen to him; he was determined to complete the mission and help protect his friends. His crew was awarded a Presidential Citation for this raid.

The soldiers gained medals for their bravery, but they also lost something while fighting—their youth and innocence. McFayden saw many of his friends die during that bomb raid over Osaka. One of the incidents in the war that still haunts Carriker involves the plane, the *Liberty Belle*. His crew was ordered to pick up the airplane and fly it to England via Newfoundland and Nutts Corner, Ireland. The plane was difficult to fly; the left wing tended to be heavy, he said, but the engineers weren't able to find any problems with it. A week later, a lead crew of eleven men took the *Liberty Belle* up, got 100 feet or more in the air, went into the ground and crashed, killing all eleven on board. Upon hearing the news, Carriker said, "I turned so sick after the crash that I just doubled over and vomited and vomited and cried." Today, more than fifty years later, he says he still feels guilty that his complaints to the engineers were not specific enough or not clear enough to cause a major testing program to find the difficulty.

Cook, now eighty-four years old, still remembers vividly December 7, 1941, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, leaving more than 18 ships sunk or damaged, 165 aircraft destroyed, and more than 2,400 Americans dead (Anderson 92). President Roosevelt proclaimed the day as a "date which will live in infamy" (63). Stationed at Pearl Harbor, Cook was drinking coffee in the mess hall that morning when the raids began on the base. The only thing he can't remember about the day is where he set his coffee cup down. At first, he wasn't sure what was happening. During the attacks he grabbed his pistol and just shot at the planes. "I was scared at first. Afterwards, I was mad," Cook said. To this day he has trouble talking about Pearl Harbor.

"This world has not been right at all since Pearl Harbor," he said. After the attack, Cook was sent to fight on Guadalcanal in the jungles. The worst thing he has ever had to do in life was to cut the head off of a Japanese soldier. "War is hell on earth," he said.

After the attack at Pearl Harbor, Garrison was determined to join the war effort. He joined the Army after the Navy refused him because of a problem with one of his eyes. Involved in North Africa and Italy throughout his service, Garrison says he spent up to eighteen days at once in a foxhole on the beach in Italy. At other times, though, he hardly had the time to change his socks because he was constantly moving. Garrison now says that the war "robbed" him of his teenage years. Like many other veterans, he finds it difficult to talk about the war. Something that still bothers him involves a young friend whom he fought with in Italy. His friend had received a letter telling him that he now had a baby boy. "He was so excited to be a father," Garrison recalled. That same day Garrison's friend was killed. He still wonders whether or not that boy would ever know how proud his father was. Garrison was camped out in Italy when the foxhole he was in was blown up. He says he remembers waking up six months later and being in North Carolina.

Just two days before Christmas in 1944, Carriker wondered if he would live to see December 25. He and his crew were scheduled to take the bomber, the Ghost II, over the Ardennes in Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge. His aircraft sustained some damage over Germany. He and his co-pilot lost control at 23,500 feet. They finally were able to straighten the plane out at 6,000 feet. After the war, Carriker lost contact with his crew. Nearly 40 years after this close call, on December 23, 1988, he received a call from his co-pilot. His friend just said, "Let's go fly over the Ardennes." Since the call, his crew

has kept in touch with reunions at least once a year, and Carriker has someone to talk to who shares the same experiences.

After the war was over, many of the veterans didn't know what to do with themselves. They just knew that they had to do something. McFayden said he was ready to pick up the pieces of his life. Upon returning to Ellerbe, though, he felt there was somewhere else he needed to be. Garrison shared the same sentiments. He traveled throughout the country, trying to find his way in the world as a man. Fortunately, the G.I. Bill, which helped veterans with college tuition, was enacted and allowed these young men to get an education. Many of the men from Richmond County say this was one of the best things to come from the war because otherwise they may not have had the opportunity to go to school. The World War II G.I. Bill proved to be a watershed in American history. Reginald Wilson argues in "The G.I. Bill and Transformation of America": "It was significant not for what it did in providing education for a broad spectrum of Americans, though that is important, but for what it did in changing the social and economic relations of Americans and moving them closer to a true democracy" (20). Before World War II only ten percent of Americans attended college (mainly those who were members of the upper middle classes were fortunate enough to attend school); by 1947, veterans accounted for forty-nine percent of college enrollments (Wilson 20). Carriker went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, graduating with degrees in political science, history and education. When Carriker was young, he found refuge in the school library. It was there that he first began to love learning. It was in the library that he found respite from the long hours of backbreaking labor. There he could explore people and places — places far removed from his world that centered on the family farm. McFayden

was also able to finish college, graduating with a degree in business.

Garrison, after recovering from his wounds, wasn't sure what to do with himself either. He went to work for DuPont, where he retired. His travels in the United States after the war gave him a sense of self and accomplishment. He saw what he was fighting for. He now has a textbook for youth on geography in the United States. In that text, he talks about being an American and what that means to him. After Cook's service in the war, he worked for CSX Railroad and, after more than 30 years, he retired. During his employment, he missed only twelve days of work due to bad weather. After Carriker graduated from college, he taught school in Florida. While there, he helped organize the Big Brothers of Greater Miami. He then moved back to Ellerbe, where he has been a member of the Kiwanis, Civitan and Lions clubs. He also has been a volunteer in Richmond County since returning. He was awarded this past summer the Volunteer of the Year award for Ellerbe. After the September 11, 2001, attack on the United States, Carriker has also been called on to speak to young students in junior high on what it means to be an American. But he doesn't want to be called a hero. He says he was doing "his duty." McFayden maintains that he left the war with a deeper faith in God and a "profound love of our country." He has since started up over twenty businesses in Richmond County and surrounding areas. He now owns a consulting company in Charlotte, and, during his free time, he gives advice to young people who wish to start up their own companies. Another Richmond County veteran of the war, J.C. Lamm, was the dean of Richmond Community College for many years. During his tenure at the college, he implemented the Veterans Education Program in 1968.

The men who fought in World War

II committed themselves to building the country. After seeing so much destruction during the war, these men wanted to come home and reconstruct. As Ambrose argues, “That generation has done more to spread freedom—and prosperity—than any previous generation” (“I Learn” 71). These men had “successful careers, they were good citizens and family men, and many of them made great contributions to their society, their country and the world” (71). Marjorie Haselton of Athol, Massachusetts, summed up her sentiments best, when she wrote a letter to her husband, Richard, who spent the last months of the war behind Japanese lines engaged in espionage duties: “...I know I am proud of the men of my generation. Brought up like you and I, in false prosperity and degrading depression, they have overcome these handicaps. And shown the world that America has something the world can never take away from us—a determination to keep our way of life. None of you fellows wanted the deal life handed you—but just about every one of you gritted your teeth and hung on” (qtd. in Litoff and Smith 28). This is the generation of men who helped to build America and proof of this can be seen in Richmond County. In the words of Lamm, “We must honor the memory of their lives so that they are not forgotten. We try to honor them not just for their sakes but also for our own. Words cannot repay the debt we owe them” (qtd. in Craven 1).❖

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Dealing with Controversy in Theatre

By Amanda Fousek



Amanda Paige Fousek is a senior majoring in Theatre Arts. A native of Stella, NC, Amanda plans to continue in the theatre arts through acting, directing, and eventually owning her own theatre company.

Theatres are an important part of our society. While we entertain, we hold up a mirror for the world to see itself through the stage. Because of this mirror, we are faced with the threat of controversy and criticism. It is a threat that can destroy a theatre if it is not prepared for the storm. We are at a time in our history where sociological views and roles are changing. Gender roles, sexual orientation and awareness, religious beliefs, socioeconomic levels, and the family unit, along with many other elements in our society, are moving away from the status quo. We as a society are being faced with the fact that we do not all share the same standard values and beliefs. For so long, our society has tuned out, ignored, or ostracized those that did not fit the sociological ideal. Today, however, more and more people realize they do not fit this ideal, and they are refusing to be sequestered by it. As our society begins to recognize more of its own unique and colorful traits, we are finding ways to express, and there by accept, the lifestyles and values of more and more of its citizens. The arts are a breeding ground of ideas. Artists can use their forum as a projection to the world, exposing audiences to new ideas and issues. Theatres today can be used as a tool not only of entertainment but as a tool of learning and tolerance. Many

of today's playwrights deal with controversial issues such as religion, abuse, sexuality, illness, and death. As an artistic community, the theatre has a responsibility to portray these issues on the stage. As expected, addressing such issues through theatre can lead to unrest and controversy for the theatre from the surrounding community.

One instance where such controversy is more than evident is the case of the Charlotte Repertory Theatre and its 1994 production of Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Angels in America*. Kushner's work looks at many of the issues that the City of Charlotte's vocal majority would prefer to have swept under the rug; the show looks at political corruption, betrayal, religion, AIDS, and alternative lifestyles (Pfister 9). The fanfare of the opponents, while always an undercurrent to the production, truly erupted the morning of opening night. Using the indecent exposure statute, the managers of the performing arts center, which houses the Charlotte Repertory Theatre, issued a cease-and-desist order against the production (Nunns 24). The Charlotte Repertory Theatre was forced to fight in court to preserve their right to perform the work. While the theatre was able to win the legal battles needed to insure the production of the piece, they still had to concern themselves with protestors, threats against those involved with the work, a media blitz, and the possible loss of funding (Pfister 10-11). Keith Martin, producer and managing director of the Charlotte Repertory Theatre, was not going to give up this production without a fight. When the theatre opened under Steve Umberger in 1976, its goal was to "offer contemporary drama other than that already available locally" (10). The theatre has tried to stay close to that goal set so many years ago. Martin also believes that "canceling the production would have forfeited both the freedom and the responsibility of artistic

expression” (10). In the end, the Charlotte Repertory Theatre survived the storm and became stronger because of it. After the *Angels in America* controversy, the theatre and its audience became more unified, the theatre’s recognition increased, their subscription rate grew by twenty percent, and it has been able to overcome the funding barriers it faced in the wake of the issue. By looking at the *Angels in America* controversy in Charlotte, what they did right and what they did wrong during the issue, strategies can be formulated that can be used by other theatres that may be dealing with a controversial issue.

When a theatre considers producing a controversial work they must realize what they will face from all sides:

The decision to produce a controversial work can be a difficult choice for any theatre. You may risk conflict with those who find the work itself upsetting or offensive. You may jeopardize audience support and fundraising efforts. You even may risk tearing apart your theatre company itself, pitting supporters and opponents of the controversial work against one another. (Martin 17)

With so much at stake, a theatre must be concrete in their absolution on the issue of the production. Steve Umberger believes that the only reason the Charlotte Repertory Theatre survived the controversy was because the theatre “stuck to its convictions” (20).

If the theatre feels they are up to the challenge ahead of them, they can prepare for it. The theatre should prepare for the storm to come from the very beginning. Begin with the board that must approve your project. Keith Martin agrees that the board must be the cornerstone of your position: “A board divided against itself cannot give you the support you need, and there is the possibility of permanent divisiveness that could last long into the future” (17).

How can you get the board behind you?

First make them feel involved in the selection process of the play (17). This allows them to “feel vested in it” (17). Be upfront with the board about the script, why it is controversial, what the repercussions of the productions may be (18). Plan how you are going to fund the production and how it will fit into the rest of the season (17). Give the board as much information ahead of time as you can. If they can see the work in the full scheme of things rather than as a separate piece of the puzzle, they are more apt to see it as a work rather than as a controversy.

After you have the support and consent of your board, you must begin gathering support in the community. Not only must you go to the community for support, you must go to them in an effort to prepare them for what you will be presenting (18). Not everyone in the community is going to agree with the content of the work you plan to present. If this were the case, there would be no need to prepare for it. When presenting an in-your-face work, you must be sensitive to and acknowledge the feelings of those that will find it offensive. If possible, use community outreach strategies such as seminars and forums on the subjects (18). Give the community information on the issues that are faced in the work prior to the production. If appropriate, make sure that all advertising states that the show is for mature audiences, have signs in the theatre, at the box office, and in all mailings associated with the work (18). The worst thing to do is to have an unprepared audience. Meeting with elected officials and the media explaining the situation ahead of time may also work well to avoid controversy. This is one area where Keith Martin says that the Charlotte Repertory Theatre fell short (20). In addition, look for support from other art and legal agencies (18-19). The more people that you have supporting you, the stronger your defense.

Almost all theatres rely on money other than box office revenue to support their pro-

Controversial theatre productions often generate unfavorable publicity that frequently threatens the economic stability of a theatre. Amanda, a graduating theatre major, provided a service to community, educational, and regional theatres with her essay that suggests means to minimize such negative publicity.
—Chet Jordan

gram. Because of this, theatres dealing with controversial works should look to protect their revenue from the controversy. One way that the Charlotte Repertory Theatre did this was by “inflating” the grant requests it made to the local and state organizations (19). They knew that they would not get the full amount asked for; in fact, they were counting on it. When they received less than the asked amount, they were allowed to ask the organizations to not list *Angels in America* as supported through their funds (19). This separation keeps the responsibility and the heat of the controversy away from public funding, which makes it easier to be approved for money in the following years. With corporate sponsors, theatres can ask for heavy funding for other projects in the year to compensate for the money that will need to be diverted for the controversial piece.

Negative media is one thing that can cripple a theatre in the midst of a controversy. Having a crisis plan to handle the media is key. Such a plan can be used to handle any possible bad publicity, including arguments over a controversial presentation. According to the June/July 1997 issue of *Stage Directions* there are twenty-three points that should be considered when beginning a plan. First “take it seriously” (“Media’s” 14). If the media is knocking on your door about something, then apparently someone takes it seriously, so you have to as well. Also, “create a crisis team” (14). These people should be in charge of gathering information about the situation as soon as it is introduced. In that same vein, “designate one person to be crisis manager” (14). This person should be in charge of all the information. Also, “designate a spokesperson,” someone that can calmly and confidently handle the media (14). The theatre must also be sure that it “identifies confidential information” (14). Know what you legally can and cannot release. Next, “define your position” (15). Have this as a clear precise statement that can be used

as the cornerstone of your interviews. Your life with the media will be so much easier if you prepare for it, so “rehearse” and “communicate only after you are prepared” (15). When people believe incorrect or exaggerated information to be true, you get the leading cause of bad media coverage. To avoid and correct this “get the facts straight,” “write down the facts,” and “develop a media fact sheet” (15). The theatre taking the first step can achieve even more prevention of this. The theatre can “consider releasing information first” and “get all the controversial or damaging facts out all at once” (15). You must also be sure to “communicate internally”; be sure everyone in your organization knows what is happening (16). The perception that the community has about a person usually comes from how they handle themselves in front of the camera. Therefore, “project confidence,” “accentuate the positives,” “stay available,” and “don’t get hostile” (16). The public will judge us through the media, so do not give the opponents any more fuel for their fires. When in front of the media, “don’t repeat negatives,” “do note inaccuracies,” “avoid no comment,” and most importantly “never lie” (16). Lastly, be aware that issues may arise so you must “anticipate problems” (16).

Theatres must also realize the impact such a controversy is going to have on the production’s cast. The actors are going to be faced with personal fire from opponents of the issue. The actors have enough on their plates with the production itself; they do not need to be worried about the legalities of the show, threats against it and themselves, or public bickering. Let the actors know who is supporting them. The *Angels in America*’s cast knew that they were well supported, which helped them to stay focused on their task. There needs to be a separation for the performers so that they can “remember that the controversy is not the play” (Peithman 12). Actress Mary Lucy Bivins says that knowing the Charlotte Repertory Theatre Board and

Keith Martin were standing strong behind her really made a difference (13). The actors of *Angels in America* were very fortunate to have the play's author, Tony Kushner, behind them in their efforts. Kushner sent the cast a letter prior to their first preview, which read in part:

We know the secret of making art, while they know only the minor secret of making mischief. We proceed from joy; they have only their misery. And while we have to resist them vigorously, we can also pity them, and let compassion as well as anger fuel our work. (7)

With these words of support ringing in their ears, the cast was able to go out to enthusiastic crowds and have wonderful performances. While all theatres may not be able to bring the playwright in for a pep talk before each show, never underestimate the importance of supporting the cast. If a cast cannot focus on their work, there will not be a successful production.

The theatre industry today is ripe for controversy. It is an unavoidable issue. Every theatre deals with controversy. By even deciding not to produce controversial works, you deal with controversy. For the theatres that take the plunge into a controversial production, there are some things you can do to prepare for, and ride out, the storm. Make sure you have the support you need. By gaining support both inside and outside of your organization, you will have a stronger stance to work from. Also make sure that you protect your revenue. Controversy can hinder sponsors and ticket sells. Have a financial plan of action prior to the controversy. If your theatre cannot survive the loss of funding, you should rethink the step you are about to take. Theatres should also consider having an extensive media plan. In the end, it is the media that controls the controversy; learn how to use them to your advantage. Finally, do not let the controversy

hinder the production. Let the actors know who is behind them. Let them know what is being done to protect them and their artistic investment. Theatre can be a unifier in our society. There are times when not everyone wants to accept all of society's diversities. This is when the need for theatre is great, and theatres should not be afraid to push open the doors of society for all to see. ❖

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Women Legislators:

A Product of Party Recruitment

By Rennie C. Harrington



Originally from Lewiston-Woodville, NC, Rennie Harrington is a junior majoring in Political Science with a concentration in Pre-Law. After she graduates in May 2003, Rennie hopes to receive her Master of Arts and doctorate degrees in Political Science. She then plans to work as a political consultant and university professor before running for the U.S. Senate. Rennie's political heroes are Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

In attempting to provide a new insight into the causal factors influencing the representation of southern women in legislative politics, the purpose of this examination is to “break” from the traditional norms of the political science elite. In doing so, this examination will provide new insight into why women remain a minority in legislative politics. The thesis of this paper is that party recruitment, as opposed to widows succession, has been the causal factor influencing the low representation of southern women in legislative office. Additionally, party recruitment will be used to discredit the commonly discussed theme of “widows succession” in explaining the low representation of southern female legislators.

INTRODUCTION

Indeed, one of the most fascinating phenomena in congressional history is the fact that women are disproportionately represented in legislative politics (Lee, 1976; Bledsoe, 1990). While voters are electing more women to legislative office, many feminist scholars have been less than enthusiastic with the increase of female legislators. Congressional scholars alike have conducted abundant research on gender politics, but they have

not adequately examined the representation of females in legislative politics. In this lack of scholarly efficiency, many researchers have easily inserted their personal and political beliefs into their work. By disregarding factors influencing legislative representation, we have failed to find a solution to the gender gap in legislative politics. In researching the gender gap in American politics, most political scientists have controlled for two separate variables—south and non-south—when analyzing the representation of women in legislative politics (Nuwer, 2000). However, most congressional scholars have assumed southern women have been hindered by widows succession and other matrimonial connections. By limiting their research to widows succession, scholars have failed to account for influences such as the widow's successful bid for the “seat” after her husband's term has expired or the effect of party structure and dominance on legislative politics. While many scholars support the theory of widows succession, party recruitment, not widows succession, is the dominant causal factor influencing the representation of southern women in current legislative politics.

HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF SOUTHERN WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

“Widows succession,” which refers to a female who is appointed to her husband's elected office upon his death, has fascinated many congressional scholars since the first documented case of widows succession in 1923 (Gertzog, 1923). According to political scientist Sue Thomas (1994), existing research provides limited insight into the impact women have in congressional politics. With a limited number of women serving in the U.S. Congress and state legislatures, Thomas suggests researchers have tended to focus on women's participation in politics, rather

than the reasons why they have entered the “political arena.” Political scientist Deanne Nuwer (2000) points out that as the data have become available to academia, congressional scholars have been eager to analyze these factors as they influence who attains legislative office. In researching the various ways women have entered the United States Congress, political scientists have documented two main entries into the United States Congress, election and appointment to office. Appointment to office can further be divided into two subcategories, appointment to fill a legislative vacancy and widows succession. In the event a legislator dies while in office, his widow is the most likely replacement until a “special election” can be called, which can take a month to several months to be called.

While widows succession is a fascinating topic for congressional scholars, widows succession has never been a mandate in the political world. As political scientist Irwin Gertzog (1980) argues, from 1916-1976, three hundred and sixty-four representatives died while in office. However, of those three hundred and sixty-four representatives, only one out of seven spouses succeeded their husbands in office. With the few times women have succeeded their husbands in office, it is right to assume that widows succession has never been a mandate or a hindrance for southern women in legislative politics. As Sue Thomas (1994) argues, however, congressional scholars have often had to deal with existing data, which gave them little, if any, insight into how women entered congressional politics. Therefore, scholars were forced to draw conclusions from the research they were able to obtain, and, in most cases, widows succession was the most frequently distributed data among the academia. While the political science academia have been unable to obtain sufficient data on the causal factors influencing the representation of southern female legislators, scholars currently have more resources to draw theories from.

Therefore, it is right to assume new theories will be devised as more data becomes available to congressional scholars.

Even though widows have been appointed to succeed their husbands in office, other factors influence who will be appointed to fill legislative vacancies (Gertzog, 1980). Other factors influencing appointment to a vacant seat include party dominance, the electoral make-up of the district, the electoral strength of the deceased legislator, and the likely challengers to the legislative seat. As congressional researcher Anna Holli argues, various factors not only influence the success of female legislators, but the probability widows have of appointment to their husbands’ legislative seats. For instance, the party dominance and electoral make-up of the district play an integral role in the appointment of a widow to her husband’s elected position. When assessing the chances of winning the legislative seat in the next election, a political party will evaluate their influence within the district (1). There is some controversy in the field regarding whether a political party will appoint a widow to a “safe” or “unsafe” seat. As Roger Cooperman and Bruce Oppenheimer (2001) suggest, some scholars believe that political parties will appoint widows if the seat is “safe” for the party. On the other hand, Deanne Nuwer (2000) points out that other scholars believe that political parties will appoint widows if the district is considered to be an unsafe seat. Regardless of the political parties’ intentions, by appointing a widow to succeed her husband in office, many political scientists believe political parties will avoid inter-party squabbles over who will fill the vacant seat. Moreover, the political party may be seen by the electorate in a favorable light by appointing the widow to her husband’s legislative seat. By appointing a widow to her husband’s legislative seat upon his death, political parties may be seen by the electorate as willing to allow more women into congressional politics.

Rennie not only located a number of relevant, credible sources, but also drew on these sources to craft an insightful analysis of an important, complex phenomenon.
—Mark Canada

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF EXISTING RESEARCH

As many feminist scholars have concluded, matrimonial connections have had a detrimental effect on the representation of southern women in legislative politics. Often having no prior political experience from which to draw financial and electoral support, southern widows have been regarded as a hindrance to the feminist movement and to the increased representation of southern women in legislative politics. As Deanne Nuwer (2000) and other feminist scholars have argued, southern widows tend to be viewed by the electorate as being ineffective legislators. Widows succession, according to many scholars, gives the electorate reason to doubt the viability of widows in the legislative arena. Because women usually have weak or virtually no bases of political support, political scientists believe widows succession further defines what a southern woman is and how she is to be defined by society. This, in turn, has caused a constant turnover in the representation of women in legislative office. By 1976, half of the congresswomen to ever serve in the U.S. House of Representatives were widows. Moreover, 73% of all female U.S. Senators in 1976 came to the Senate through widows succession. However, as Hope Chamberlin (1973) notes, the first woman to serve in the U.S. Congress was Representative Jeanette Rankin (R-MO), who was elected twice to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1916, and then again in 1926. While there have been a number of women who have either been appointed to a legislative seat, or have come to Congress through widows succession, history will recall the first woman to ever serve in the U.S. House of Representatives as being the first woman to also be elected to serve in the U.S. Congress. To her credit, Representative Rankin's tenure in the U.S. Congress can be hailed as a leading precedent in the women's

movement.

While men outnumber women in election to legislative office, widows succession seems to be less relevant in today's southern politics. If widows succession were of any relevance in today's southern politics, we would see a noticeable increase, or at a minimum, continuation in the number of widows appointed to office. However, the data suggest women are being elected on their own merit, rather than being appointed to fill the vacant seats left by their deceased husbands. For instance, of the current thirteen female U.S. Senators, eleven were elected to their current legislative positions. Only two female senators serving in the 107th Congress have been appointed to their legislative seats. In the 107th Congress, the first female senator to be appointed to fill a legislative seat was Senator Kay Bailey Huchinson (R-TX), who was appointed to fill the vacant seat of a resigning Senator in 1993. However, Senator Huchinson was not appointed through widows succession, but was appointed by Governor Ann Richardson (D-TX) to fill a vacant seat in the state's national delegation. Since her appointment to the U.S. Senate, Senator Huchinson has won election to the U.S. Senate twice, in 1994 and then again in 2000. Conversely, Senator Jean Carnahan (D-MO) is the only current female U.S. Senator who has been appointed through widows succession. Appointed in 2001, Senator Jean Carnahan was appointed to fill the vacancy left by the death of her husband, Mel Carnahan, who passed away shortly before the 2000 elections ("Senate," 1; "Women," 2).

ANALYSIS OF THE RECRUITMENT OF SOUTHERN WOMEN

While various factors influence who will be appointed to fill the vacancy of a deceased legislator, party recruitment has been the leading causal factor influencing who will be appointed to a vacant legislative seat.

Though party recruitment has been a leading factor in the political gender gap, researchers have been unwilling to examine this issue in great detail. Perhaps, this lack of enthusiasm can be accredited to insufficient data, or to a deeper, more personal bias in favor of feminist culture. Regardless of the reasons, party recruitment has not received sufficient care by the political science elite. However, the effect party recruitment has on the gender gap in American politics is undeniable.

Scholars have often lacked scholarly efficiency when examining the reasons for the gender gap in American politics. As Irwin Gertzog (1980) suggests, current political parties use a different set of criteria in assessing potential successors to vacant seats. With an increase in emphasis on professional training for campaigns and the political experience of candidates, political parties will continue to use restrictive sets of criteria for nominating candidates for legislative office. While political parties may avoid potential problems in the party and district by nominating a widow to fill a legislative vacancy, there is no guarantee that the widow would be an asset to a political party. Essentially, political parties will assess their advantages and disadvantages when appointing candidates. Therefore, if a political party sees no incentive to appoint the widow to the seat, parties will be less inclined to do so. As political scientist Thomas Murphy (1974) argues, widows have been viewed as convenient, or noncontroversial, for political parties because there will be less tension among party elites to nominate someone to fill the vacant seat as well as draw support from the constituency in the next election. However, there is no conclusive evidence to support political parties' nomination of widows for an indefinite period of time. Essentially, many scholars have concluded political parties will appoint a widow to the vacant seat until a replacement can be found and a "special election" called. For instance, the first woman to serve in the

U.S. Senate was Rebecca Latimer Felton, who was appointed to replace a deceased Senator. However, Felton only served one day when a special election was held and the successor to office was elected. Therefore, political parties seem to not have much faith in the ability of widows to successfully govern as their husbands did.

While political parties are less than enthusiastic about nominating widows to vacant seats, political parties seem unwilling to nominate any group of women to legislative office. This lack of enthusiasm stems from various factors, including: the reproductive responsibilities of women, the perception of the woman's role in society, but, most importantly, the views of the electorate. Foremost, the reproductive responsibilities of women restrict the potential list of candidates to legislative office. Since women are the primary caretakers of children, it is noteworthy to examine the age women are nominated to run for legislative office. As political scientist Marcia Manning Lee (1976) stated, women who have one or more children at home are significantly less likely (53 percent) to seek nomination to run for legislative office. Since a female assumes caretaking responsibilities of her children, political parties are skeptical of her priorities, whether those priorities are with her family or in pursuit of office. Secondly, the perception of the woman's role in society also hinders the ability of political parties to nominate women for legislative office. The perception of the woman's role in society has decreased dramatically in recent years. However, men and women still view the woman's place as being in the home, or she is at least primarily responsible for the rearing of the children (Darcy, 1977). If the electorate does not approve of a woman in politics, political parties may rightfully assume there is not incentive in nominating women to run for legislative office.

More importantly, political parties are sensitive to the views of the electorate. If the

electorate does not have faith in the leadership of female representatives, political parties will be less willing to recruit women candidates for legislative office. Since women candidates have an easier time gaining recognition (Stokes, 1962; Tolchin, 1973), Philip Converse (1962) believes women candidates have an advantage over their male counterparts in gaining public recognition. However, the ease of which women gain public recognition does not equate with electoral success. As Leo Snowiss (1966) suggests, women do not face direct discrimination by the political parties, but by the electorate. For various reasons, women are not fully accepted by the electorate as legitimate lawmakers. As Congresswoman Martha Keys asserted, “Women are perceived as not being part of the power structure” (Darcy, 1977, p.3). For instance, women usually occupy traditional female jobs, including: nurse, secretary, and educator. As a result, many voters believe women do not have the skills necessary to be effective legislators, which could, in part, explain why so few women have been elected to legislative office (Darcy, 1977).

CONCLUSION

While congressional scholars begin to examine the ways southern women enter congressional politics, female legislators will continue to be of interest to the political science elite. Since the “birth” of widows succession in 1923, political scientists have documented two main entries women have used to enter congressional politics, which are appointment or election to office. Due to the plethora of implications they have on congressional politics, the subgroups of appointment to legislative office—appointment and widows succession—have been of particular interest to congressional scholars. Appointment to legislative office, especially widows succession, has been regarded as the primary influence of the gender gap

in southern legislative politics (Gertzog, 1980). While political scientists have often been forced to deal with little existing data on the paths women take to the U.S. Congress, innovative data resources have opened a “flood-gate” of opportunities for scholars to examine this issue in greater detail. Even though there are more resources available to academia, many researchers continue to assert their personal and political beliefs into their work, which serves to only perpetuate the existing gender gap in American politics. Southern women are hindered by the presence of widows succession in congressional politics. By having relatively few bases of political support, widows are viewed as ineffective legislators by the electorate (Nuwer, 2000). While many scholars have assumed that widows succession has a significant role in southern politics, the leading causal factor influencing the representation of southern women in legislative politics, the leading causal factor influencing the representation of southern women in legislative politics is party recruitment. Party recruitment, not widows succession, influences who will run or be appointed to legislative office. ❖

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Obsessive Compulsive Disorder:

A Personal Struggle

By Rebecca Johnson



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I had this struggle going on in my head. I wanted to shower, but I wasn't sure that I should. If I did, my towel might hit the floor ... then I'd get that disease ... how many times would I have to wash my hands? Open the bathroom door, wash my hands. Open the dresser drawer, wash my hands. Wash them wrong, wash my hands (Colas, 1998, p.72).

Does this sound bizarre, maybe even a little crazy? Definitely out of the ordinary, right? Not for an individual who suffers from obsessive compulsive disorder. For such an individual this scenario is far too commonplace. Obsessive compulsive disorder, OCD, is a "strange and fascinating sickness of ritual and doubts run wild" (Rapoport, 1989, p.1), in which habits such as hand washing can become gross caricatures and distortions of useful, everyday behaviors (Rapoport, 1989, p.6). According to Dr. Judith Rapoport, a physician, child psychiatrist, and research scientist at the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Maryland, more than four million people suffer silently from OCD in the United States (Rapoport, 1989, p.1). Despite the alarming number of individuals in this nation alone that suffer from OCD, only recently has the disorder been a topic of

intensive scientific study and research.

The earlier example that OCD sufferer Emily Colas uses to illustrate her intense, difficult battle with the disease is frighteningly familiar to me. I have suffered from obsessive compulsive disorder since the age of twelve, although formal diagnosis of the disorder came only a year ago. Although I have undergone treatment, the battle against OCD and its control over my life is still one that I fight every day and probably will for the rest of my life. It is for this reason that OCD is a topic in which I am not only interested, but one about which I am passionate.

As a result of the misunderstanding and stigma associated with OCD and similar psychological disorders, many people have very little factual knowledge concerning these disorders. Therefore, I strive to aid in the public's understanding of OCD and the effects it has on the lives of those who suffer from it, while also making clear the fact that complete understanding of the disorder is reserved for its sufferers.

In order to offer an understanding of OCD, I must first define it. OCD is based on certain obsessions and compulsions that an individual develops. An obsession is a "recurrent, persistent thought or image that is intrusive and causes marked distress, "one that generally does not consist of worries about real life problems" (Foa and Kozak, 1997, p.), and, although patients often attempt to suppress the thoughts, their efforts are generally to no avail. Therefore, many individuals will engage in compulsions to decrease the intensity of their anxiety. Compulsions are "repeated behaviors on mental acts an individual is driven to perform, although most compulsions are not realistically related to the obsession or anxiety being avoided" (Foa and Kozak, 1997, p.). Perhaps one of the most distressing aspects of this disorder is the insight that most patients have about the

“absurdity and the wastefulness of the crazy thoughts that consume their lives” (Rapoport, 1989, p.6).

Individuals who do have some knowledge concerning obsessive compulsive disorder often believe the disease to be based upon compulsive cleaning rituals such as hand washing. While this is not a misconception, it is only one facet of an extremely complicated condition. OCD can manifest itself in a number of different forms. One surprising ritual that compulsives engage in is hoarding. This as much the opposite to cleaning as black is to white. When an individual hoards, he or she often refuses to dispose of anything, the result being a life filled with clutter, filth, and utter mess. Examples include Amy Wilensky, who, while moving out of her college dorm room, swept the trash and dust off of the floor and saved it in a plastic bag (Wilensky, 1999), or the man who had such a mess in his apartment that he had to sleep in a chair because he couldn't locate his bed.

Other common rituals that compulsives engage in include counting, either silently or by doing a certain task or action a specific number of times. Because patients with this disorder often worry about the safety of themselves and others, often they will compulsively “check.” These rituals often include checking the door to make sure it is locked or making sure the oven is turned off time and time again. Mark Summers, television personality and former host of Nickelodeon's *Double Dare*, is compelled to keep things in order. In several television interviews, Summers describes numerous nights that he would spend aligning the tassel strings on the rugs in his home.

An aspect that few are aware of with respect to OCD is that this disorder is quite commonly found in addition to one or more different psychological disorders. For example, almost every individual that suffers from OCD also suffers some type of depression. Because OCD is so distressing, the disorder

itself can trigger depression in lives of its sufferers. Tourette's syndrome is also found commonly in OCD individuals. Other disorders include hypochondriasis, which is a intense worry about being contaminated or getting ill, certain eating disorders such as bulimia, trichotillomania, which is a form of OCD in which individuals pull out their hair, or body dysmorphic disorder, which is a form of OCD in which the patient has an compulsive preoccupation with his or her body.

Another overlooked, but important aspect of this illness is the fact that those who suffer from OCD often suffer in silence. OCD and the anxiety and doubt that it can cause an individual are extremely heavy burdens to bear alone. Often, however, patients are frightened of telling someone about their problem, even a professional, for fear that he or she may find them insane. Therefore, compulsive individuals will often inflict pain on themselves, such as cutting wrists, in order to show the world how much they are hurting.

I remember how I felt in the midst of my greatest battle with OCD. I was in such intense pain, so miserable, and yet no one around me, family or my friends, new that there was anything wrong. Therefore, I decided to starve myself. I thought, well, if I lose enough weight then they will have to recognize that something is wrong with me. My family and friends did notice, and OCD is the reason I had to leave college during my freshman year. OCD is difficult to deal with, but I believe suffering silently was nearly as painful.

There is yet no determined cause of OCD, although researchers at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland believe the disorder to be a genetic one (LoBuono, 2000). In their study of the disease, the researchers concluded that relatives of patients with OCD have an approximately five time greater risk of developing the disorder (LoBuono, 2000). It has been within recent years that some geneticists

Becca Johnson used her English 106 research paper to explore her own psychological disorder. Writing clearly, honestly, and thoughtfully about this complex condition, Becca sheds light on a mysterious disorder that especially plagues gifted children.

—Monika Brown

have claimed to have discovered genes for OCD, although these discoveries have since received quite a bit of speculation (Malik, 2000, p.2). Another theory which is receiving some merit is called PANDAS, pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections (Jenike, 2000). This theory suggests that a dysfunction in the basal ganglia of the brain may be involved in OCD, based on studies completed that show that children who have suffered streptococcal infections are at a greater risk of developing OCD than a healthy child who has not suffered such an infection (Jenike, 2000). This theory is quite interesting to me in my battle against OCD because I suffered from strep throat numerous times as a child. Although research is still in progress to find a cure for OCD, certain treatment methods have been determined to be helpful in decreasing the symptoms of the disorder and the anxiety it causes in the lives of its victims. As increasing amounts of research are done on OCD, doctors of psychology and psychiatry are finding more and more merit to cognitive, or behavioral therapy for patients with OCD. Behavior therapy, often referred to as exposure therapy, exposes the patient to the fears and anxiety from which his or her compulsions are based and forces that patient to confront those fears. Although reasonably effective, the therapy is not a quick fix. Rather, this method of treatment places the patient into a time of increased anxiety before relief is measurable. It is for this reason that professionals guiding an obsessive compulsive patient through this difficult process will often introduce the patient to various relaxation techniques to help control his or her intense anxiety.

Another successful method of treatment that is often used in patients with OCD is pharmaceutical therapy, or medication. Although a medication has not yet been discovered exclusively for the treatment of OCD, researchers have determined that certain antidepressants are useful in controlling

the effects of the disorder. The first of these medications introduced was Anafranil, but, despite its reasonable success in Europe, it was never marketed in the United States. Quite recently however, research has shown that a new family of antidepressants known as SS-RIs, or selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, including the highly controversial Prozac, as well as Paxil, Zoloft, Luvox, and the newly marketed Celexa are encouragingly successful in decreasing the symptoms of OCD (Health Source Plus, 2000, p.1). Because research shows that individuals who suffer from OCD have a serotonin deficiency in the brain, these medications, which boost the brain's level of serotonin, are proving quite helpful. The medications are not without side effects, often including dizziness, constipation, and tremors, although many patients find these side effects tolerable considering the relief they receive from their obsessive compulsive symptoms. Studies have shown, however, that the combination of both behavioral therapy and medication have proved to be the most successful form of treatment for OCD.

Another alternative, although rare, is psychosurgery. Although surgery is not an affective cure in treating all psychological disorders, it does prove to be a productive measure in decreasing the symptoms experienced by patients suffering from advanced OCD. The surgery, known as cingulotomy, however, is only used as a last resort for individuals whose OCD has not been improved by means of medication, behavioral therapy or both (Murray, 1999).

Judith Rapoport once said of OCD that, "The disease affects some of the most able, sensitive, and talented people I have ever met. Their otherwise normal ability to function, to become a good husband, wife, or friend makes working with obsessive compulsive patients particularly rewarding and, when they are severely ill, very painful" (Rapoport, 1989). I include this quote to make others aware of the fact that people

who suffer from OCD are not just homeless and on the street. People with OCD can be and are quite often successful individuals. Samuel Johnson, a poet, playwright, biographer, scholar, and very influential man during his lifetime likely suffered from OCD, based upon descriptions of his behavior by friends (Rapoport, 1989, p.4).

Respected author John Cowper Powys, who would bang his head against his mailbox to ensure the safe delivery of a letter or walk around in the snow without shoes, also suffered from the disorder (Millman, 2000). A more recent, well known public figure to suffer from OCD was Howard Hughes, whose “fanatic preoccupation with germs led to a bizarre life of filth and neglect” (Rapoport, 1989, p.5).

Until recently a majority of individuals displaying symptoms of OCD suffered this nightmare in silence because of the lack of information about the disorder and due to the stigma associated with psychological disorders. Although the public’s awareness about OCD and related disorders is still limited, more and more is being done to improve the public’s knowledge and compassion about these disorders and those who suffer from them. One major breakthrough in increasing awareness of the disorder was a book written eleven years ago by Judith Rapoport, a child psychiatrist who has concentrated her career on the study and treatment of OCD (Rapoport, 1989). It has been within the last two years that a number of books have been written by obsessive compulsive sufferers, detailing their individual fight and struggle with this invisible monster. Such books, one by Amy Wilensky (Wilensky, 1999) and another by a young author by the name of Emily Colas (Colas, 1998), have been very therapeutic to me, making me more aware of the fact that I do not suffer this battle alone. Julia Kelly, an actress whose life and career was disrupted by OCD is now using her personal struggle to inform others. Kelly has

opened a one-woman show entitled “Don’t Mind Me,” hoping to “destigmatize mental illness by showing its ordinary face” (Hershenson, 2000). Also encouraging is a new series from Fox Television called *Knitter*, the plot revolving around a young N.Y.U. student who suffers from obsessive compulsive disorder (King, 2000).

Other forms of media have done a commendable job in educating their audiences about OCD, including popular magazines (King, 2000), as well television programs. Programs such as *Dateline NBC* and *The Oprah Winfrey Show* have dedicated air time to the disorder, its causes, its effects, and most importantly, its victims. Hollywood has also tried to tackle the issue of OCD. In the recent Academy Award winning movie *As Good As It Gets*, Jack Nicholson plays a character suffering from the disorder.

Because obsessive compulsive disorder is difficult to understand, and because of its overwhelming presence in the lives of its victims, coping with it is not easy. The keys to staying as OCD-free as possible are simply everyday tasks. A healthy lifestyle is key for someone who suffers from OCD, including regular exercise, a nutritional diet, and low levels of stress. Another important coping strategy is having support, simply family and friends or support groups. Web sites on the Internet, such as www.ocfoundation.com, are also good places to find encouragement, often from others with OCD. A third factor to winning the OCD battle is knowledge. Someone once said, “knowledge is power.” Learning more about the disorder makes dealing with it much more manageable.

Despite the pain and suffering that I have experienced because of my battle with obsessive compulsive disorder, I am thankful that I have had to deal with it. I know what it is like to suffer in silence, to feel absolutely alone. Therefore, I am much more aware of the needs of those around me, more sympathetic and understanding to the fact that I

may never know what battle someone else is having to fight.

This research paper has been an enjoyable project for me for several reasons. First, I have been able to learn more about OCD, which has offered me new insights on the disorder and how to deal with it. I have also been able to inform others about this disease that has made such an impact on my life, to share some of my experiences in hopes that others will be more understanding of the disease and how damaging it can be to those who suffer from it. Finally, I have developed a new passion about informing others of OCD, which has led me to seriously consider a career in psychology, concentrating on counseling individuals with the disorder. ❖

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The Lumbee Rout of January 18, 1958

By David Jones

Have you ever felt that you were unwanted and hated by others? Well, that is exactly how my fellow Lumbee people felt on the events that occurred on and around the night of January 18, 1958. Since the Lumbee people are such a united and proud Native American tribe, the Ku Klux Klan had no chance of rioting in Robeson County. The 1958 Klan rout by the Lumbees was magnificent and a very important part of Lumbee and Robeson County history. Even today many witnesses still reminisce on the events that took place on that cold winter night, while others may read stories written by the legendary History Professor Adolph Dial and others. No matter where you may hear the story that took place on January 18, 1958, you are certainly assured to be intrigued by the Lumbee's presence and pride to stand up for their beliefs. So, exactly who are the Lumbees?

According to information given on the Lumbee tribe website, Lumbees are the largest tribe east of the Mississippi and ninth largest in the U.S., whose population rises above 42,000. Most live in Robeson County and account for more than half of the 80,000 Native Americans that reside in North Carolina. Records show that the Lumbees have lived in Robeson County for over 200 years and account for more than 38% of the county's population. The Lumbees did not have a "real" tribal name until the name "Lumbee" was adopted in 1952. The name "Lumbee" comes from the Lumbee River (more commonly called the Lumber River) that runs through the whole county and other parts as the state as well. In 1887, the state created the Croatan Indian Normal School in Pembroke, N.C., which was a school for Lumbee Indians and today is known as the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. Even though the Lumbees are not federally recognized, progress continues and many



leaders of the community are still fighting for more Lumbee rights. Recently, in 2001, the Lumbee tribal government was established to help Lumbees gain federal recognition and argue to receive more aid from state and federal governments. They also manage and support many programs and organizations that help the Lumbee people. (Lumbeetribe.com; History, Quick Facts) This is just a brief overview of the Lumbees, but what events were taking place around the time of the 1958 rout?

The 1950's and early 1960's were great years in Lumbee history. Many historical events took place along with the Klan rout on January 18, 1958. To take a closer look at some actual dates, I refer to *The Lumbee Indians-An Annotated Bibliography, with Chronology and Index* by Glenn Ellen Starr. In chronological order she lists:

-April 20, 1953: Passage of a North Carolina law changing the tribal name to "Lumbee Indians of North Carolina."

-December 5, 1954: Early Bulard was sworn into office as judge of Maxton Recorder's Court. He was the county's first Indian to hold a county-level elected office.

-June 7, 1956: Passage of the

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federal Lumbee Act (PL 84-570), designating the Indians living in Robeson County “Lumbee Indians of North Carolina.”

-May 31, 1958: Tracy Sampson was elected as Robeson County’s first Indian county commissioner.

-April 1, 1963: Harry West Locklear began his term as the first Indian member of the Robeson County Board of Education.

-June 1963: English E. Jones became the first Lumbee president of Pembroke State College (UNCP). He had served as interim president since September 1962. (182)

The last date is very sentimental to me because English E. Jones was my grandfather, and for him to play such a big role in Lumbee history really makes me feel that much prouder of who I am. Unfortunately, there are groups that dedicate their duties to prevent minority success, such as those listed above. So, who and what disturbances would interfere with the success of the developing Lumbee tribe?

You probably guessed the white supremacy organization, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Dial gives a very brief history and purpose for this obscene organization in his book, *The Lumbee*. The description states, “Since its founding in the immediate aftermath of the South’s defeat in the Civil War, the KKK, in its various manifestations, has worked to terrorize minorities, particularly blacks” (Dial 96). Dial also illustrates that before the Brown decision and the civil rights movement, KKK members hope to use fear as a tactic to hinder minorities from obtaining the rights that they were so deservedly entitled to. Unluckily, the KKK’s cowardly actions led to many problems, and it just so happened to backfire when they entered Robeson County on the night of January 18, 1958 due to the tensions caused by previous disruptions.

These events and disruptions that led up

to the night the Klan fled Robeson County were led by the Grand Wizard, James W. “Catfish” Cole from Marion, S.C. One previous act Catfish Cole enacted was when he came into Pembroke and tried to setup a revival ministry. Adolph Dial and David Eliades briefly mention the revival in their book, *The Only Land I Know*. They state, “Cole had once came to Pembroke with a small tent for a revival but had to leave because there was no interest in his message” (Dial and Eliades 162). One witness named Sim Oxendine, who played a major role in the Klan rout, claimed that Cole did not like being ignored by the town not attending his services. After the revival was over, Cole seemed to never forgive the Lumbees of their lack of interest in his attempt to preach his messages. Another ignorant action perpetrated by Cole happened five days before the night of the rout on January 13, 1958. Cole, followed by his knights dressed in white robes and hoods, led his members into Robeson County to the homes of two Lumbee families. They burned crosses in both of their front yards attempting to frighten the Indian families. According to Dial and Eliades, one of the families had just moved into a white neighborhood and the other was the home of a young girl who was supposedly having relations with a white male. The KKK gained confidence by their actions and planned to have a larger impact on the area by preparing for some sort of rally. (159)

According to Dial, “Cole announced that the KKK would hold a rally in Robeson County in order ‘to put the Indians in their place, to end race mixing’ (96). The Klan’s first attempt to have the rally in Pembroke came to an abrupt halt because nobody would allow them to rent any land. So, finally the Klan led by Catfish Cole, leased a field at Hayes Pond near the town of Maxton, which was about ten miles west of Pembroke. It was then the Klan scheduled the rally for January 18. The Klan posted flyers and spread of the

David researched an event of historical importance to the Lumbees. He explored resources on Lumbee history, created a well-written historical narrative, and made selective use of quotations to reveal the significance of the Maxton field event for individual Lumbees.
—Monika Brown

rally grew quickly as the night neared. As tensions grew stronger as the rally got closer, who was yet to know what was in store for the unprepared, overconfident Ku Klux Klan?

At midnight on January 18, 1958, the Klan began to enter the field wearing white robes and white hoods, posting their flags and lighting up the field with one large light. Dial and Eliades included an excerpt in *The Only Land I Know* written by a reporter named Charles Craven from the *Raleigh News and Observer*. He portrayed the scene as:

Darkness had descended. It was freezing cold. The cars kept coming. The Klansmen had set up headquarters in the center of the field. They had stretched a huge banner emblazoned with KKK and had erected a long pole with a naked light bulb on it. Religious music blared forth on the cold air from a public address system. The Indians were arriving in fours and sixes and were getting from their cars and lining the road. The armed Klansmen were at the little circle of cars in the center of the field and some patrolled at the edges of the darkness. Some of the young Indians along the road had begun laughing and shouting, giving war whoops. Now and again somebody would yell, "God Damn the Ku Klux Klan." (qtd. in Dial and Eliades)

Confrontation erupted as a few of the Lumbees tried to take down the huge light that filled the whole field with light. Then, a single shot blasted out and shattered the light into pieces. This caused a domino effect and shots began to fire all over the field. In less than several minutes, law enforcement officers began to arrive on the scene to calm things down. Luckily, no one was injured or harmed. The Klan welcomed the policemen after fearing their lives and were shortly escorted out of harm's way. They left with an array of cheers and whoops and hollers from the crowd of Lumbees. It was a sure victory

in Lumbee history.

As I mentioned earlier, Simeon Oxendine, a Lumbee and decorated World War II veteran, played a major role in the rout, gaining national attention with a photograph taken of him wrapped in the KKK banner. Dial recorded his comment on the matter: "I helped to pull the Klan's flag down and this seemed to make them mad" (qtd. in Dial 97). The photo was published in different magazines and newspapers worldwide. Oxendine received many letters and telegrams that pronounced him as a hero in the Klan rout event.

The bad luck continued for Cole and the KKK as they were called to trial. Cole and another member, James Martin, were indicted for inciting a riot. To add to that, Martin's judge was Lumbee native, Judge Lacy Maynor, who sentenced Martin to six to twelve months in prison. Dial recorded Judge Maynor's final statement: "You came into a community with guns, where there was a very happy and contended group of people. We don't go along with violence. . . . We can't understand why you want to come here and bring discord" (qtd. in Dial 97). Cole was also tried, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment for 18 to 24 months. He was also extradited from South Carolina, but Cole was still not sorrowful for his actions.

As for the Lumbee people, they rejoiced, and tales of this special night were talked about heavily for a long period and are still today mentioned in some form or fashion. Lumbees learned from this incident, and more Lumbee leaders have begun to seek political positions by gaining local, state, and some federal offices to help prevent another Klan uprising in the community.

Being a Lumbee Indian and native of Pembroke, this historic event makes me feel proud of who I am and proud of who my fellow natives are. If you were unaware of the event, you would have never thought that this united Indian tribe would have stood up to

the verbal abuse and the so-called intimidating Ku Klux Klan. But, unfortunately for the Klan, the Lumbee people are far from being pushovers, and this obviously was evident on the night of the rout. On the night of January 18, 1958, the Klan came into Robeson County with their heads high and left with hiding faces. As unity and pride continues to strive throughout the community, success is sure to follow. I am glad to report that ever since January 18, there has been no other Klans to enter Robeson County. If they are smart, they will recognize and not ignore the presence of the Lumbee as in the past and avoid another confrontation in “The Land of the Lumbee.” ❖

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Processing Sign Language in the Brain

By Lindsay Melton

Babies babble, children shout, people talk, and birds chirp, all representing differing forms of communication. But one may ponder, why? What is this innate need to communicate and where does it surface? Throughout centuries, language has manifested itself as a human's primary vehicle for transporting information, ideas, and emotions. Ancient languages as well as languages of today all over the world consist of a rich and complex network of rule-governed grammar systems that all native speakers master as young children. This is not limited to those languages actually spoken, for the multitude of sign languages in varying countries also operate on these same principles.

When it comes to procuring language, experts agree that there are certain windows of learning in childhood years. Once these windows are closed, the capacity for acquiring certain cognitive functions, although not impossible, is severely impaired. This holds true not only for language, but also for grasping the grammar of native speakers. Helen Neville of the Salk Institute has conducted research which proves that "...children must learn a language—any language—during their first five years or so, before the brain's neural connections are locked in place, or risk permanent linguistic impairment," including the ability to learn the grammar systems of a language (qtd. in Wolkomir and Johnson 4). In the acquisition of sign language, as a native tongue, grammar systems are integrated into signing along the same lines of spoken language. Spoken languages consist of combining "...bits of sound—each meaningless by itself—into meaningful words, ...[while] signers, following similar rules, combine individually meaningless hand and body movements into words" (2).

The components of verbal languages are labeled as morphemes, which represent the smallest unit of linguistic meaning. In turn,



morphemes are broken down into phonemes, the distinctive sounds of a language. Oral language combines these units of sound to form words with meanings discernible to its speakers. In sign language, the certain hand-shapes, where they are placed on the body, as well as the manner in which they are handled, all parallel a spoken language's phonemes (Radley and Aguliera-Hellweg 2).

Babies who fall within normal hearing ranges begin anywhere from age seven months onward to lock onto certain phonemes, practicing them in what is classified as baby babble, with the repetitions of such sounds as "mamama" or "dadada." Deaf children born to deaf parents are no exception. In fact, they may actually begin obtaining and utilizing language at an earlier age than their hearing peers, considering not only the fact that motoric centers in the brain, which among other functions also control hand movement, mature at a faster rate than speech centers, but that the part of the brain which controls vision, the visual cortex, reaches maturation before the section of the brain which controls a person's hearing, the auditory cortex (Daniels 5). Deaf babies babble by "...moving their hands and fingers in systematic ways that hearing children not exposed to sign never do" (Wolkomir and

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Johnson 8). These movements are not mere gestures but linguistic grammatical units. In addition to the actual signs made primarily by the hands, the use of body movement and facial expressions contribute to the signer's grammar: "the face is a fund of grammatical information, [for] very particular facial movements (a certain way of raising and lowering the eyebrows, or pursing and clenching the lips) fill in information about relative clauses, questions, and adverbial nuances, ...go[ing] well beyond the scope of facial expressions universally used to show emotion" (Radly and Aguliera-Hellweg 3). This seems to imply that not only do deaf children learn to communicate earlier, but they are more expressive in their language.

The knowledge of the complexities of sign language, and the simple fact that sign language exists at all, have been long in the making. The earliest references to the deaf are found in Babylonian laws, which restrict the rights of deaf individuals, followed later by the sixth century Mosaic Code of Holiness, which warns the faithful against cursing the deaf, a custom which was undoubtedly taking place (Groce 99). Constraints were placed four hundred years later by Talmudic monks who "...imposed laws that restricted congenitally deaf individuals from assuming many of the legal rights and responsibilities of other citizens, thus placing them in the same category as children and the mentally retarded" (99). Aristotle, considered by many to be the father of Western thought, believed speech to be the primary vehicle of thought and education; [therefore,] if one could not hear, one could not learn, and instruction of any sort was useless" (99).

During the Middle Ages, the rights of the deaf continued to be limited, as evidenced by secular writings of the time, and "Saint Augustine argued 'that deafness from birth makes faith impossible, since he who is born deaf neither hear[s] the word nor learn[s] it' (99). It was not until the seventeenth century

that attitudes toward the hard of hearing began to undergo a significant change with those in the fields of science and medicine exploring the issue of the possibility of educating the deaf. The first school for the deaf was founded in Paris, France, by Abbe de l'Epee in 1755. Such measures did not take place in America until 1865 when a group of men from Hartford, Conn., interested in establishing a school for the deaf, sent Dr. Thomas Galludet abroad to study the methods of instruction being utilized for deaf students (Riekehof 7). After several months of study in France, Dr. Galludet returned to the states along with an instructor for the deaf, Laurent Clerc (7). These two men established the first school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817, eventually instituting schools all across the United States.

While strides for the deaf were taking place, an ironic parallel runs along the same time line as the study of how spoken language takes place in the brain was occurring, beginning with Franz Joseph Gall in the early part of the nineteenth century. Gall identified specific parts of the brain controlling different human abilities and behaviors, known as localization, and argued "...in favor of modularity with the brain divided into distinct anatomical faculties that [are] directly responsible for specific cognitive functions, including language" (Fromkin and Rodman 36). Paul Broca in 1861 cited language as being lateralized to the left hemisphere of the brain based on his research through autopsies performed on patients who suffered from loss of speech following some type of brain injury. Damage to the area, the left frontal hemisphere, became known as Broca's Aphasia. Thirteen years later, Carl Wernicke, in 1874, presented his findings of research conducted also during autopsies for patients stricken with damage to the left back portion of the left hemisphere, a condition entitled Wernicke's Aphasia. The findings of these two men provide solid support of the left

Lindsay chose a topic with which she has personal experience and in which she is extremely interested; therefore, she was able to synthesize her empirical knowledge with her research materials. She showed a passion for linguistics and for her work in the course that was both unusual and delightful.
—Kay McClanahan

hemisphere's responsibility for computation of spoken language.

Considering where spoken language takes place in the brain leads us to the issue of where sign language is processed. Teams of scientists have now begun research into this topic. In Japan, at Osaka University Medical School in Suita City, Hiroshi Nishimura led his team "...to measure brain activity in a person who had been deaf since birth" by using positron emission tomography, or PET, which allows a view into a living brain and how it reacts during stimuli (N. S. 1). The research team presented to the individual a still picture of someone signing a word. This viewing of a still frame elicited no response from the auditory cortex. However, once an active video of someone "...signing many words [was shown], a part of the auditory cortex was activated in the deaf person watching the video" (1). For this research, the patient then received a cochlear implant to allow for a limited perception of sounds. Once a sound was played, the auditory cortex was activated, yet, not in the secondary region as was activated by the moving, silent videotape of someone signing meaningful words. In addition to this, the subject was shown a video of someone randomly moving and making handshapes with no forms of signs. During this viewing, no part of the auditory cortex was stimulated with the only activation occurring in the visual cortex. The results of this study indicate the secondary region of the auditory cortex used by hearing individuals to hear words is also being utilized by the unaided hearing impaired to "hear" sign language.

Another example of this type of research that "brain regions previously thought to be dedicated to making sense of sound may in fact be involved in the processing of sign language" comes out of McGill University in Montreal, Quebec (Larkin 1). Laura Petitto, lead author, states,

It seems that this neural tissue possesses

a unique sensitivity for aspects of language patterning [regardless of whether or not the input is oral or visual]. Deaf children learn sign language on the same timetable as hearing children learn speech—when a hearing child begins to babble manually. If the brain were so dependent on speech, then why would deaf children achieve language normally? (1)

The tests conducted by Petitto and her co-workers were also conducted using PET "...to compare blood flow patterns in the brains of 11 deaf and 10 hearing people in response to five tasks involving signed and spoken languages" (1).

The 11 deaf participants had been so since birth, with five knowing American Sign Language while the others used different types of sign language found in Quebec and other parts of French Canada (Bower 2). The following five tasks were given to the deaf individuals: "...starting at a point on the computer screen, watching a string of meaningless hand signs, observing meaningful signed words, and generating appropriate signed verbs for a series of signed nouns" (2). The hearing group also participated in the first four of the tasks with half watching and imitating signs from the languages (2). For the fifth task, as opposed to signing verbs along with their noun counterparts, the hearing group produced verbal responses to written nouns.

The results of these tests showed an increase in activity in the frontal of the brain when each group produced the verbs. As the deaf adults viewed those gestures which represented actual signs, both sides of the back sections of the brain were activated, thus prompting the researchers to theorize this area "...long linked to speech perception and the formation of associations between sounds and meanings ... [as also processing] abstract properties of language that get expressed through both speech and signing" (2). As

for the frontal area being activated, Petitto's group theorized this area as being responsible for the searching and gathering of the meaning of words whether the linguistic meaning is given through sight or sound (2).

For further evidence of the connections between spoken and signed languages, in addition to the studies of Nishimura and Petitto of the location of the processing of sign language, attention can be turned to the comparisons of hearing individuals and the hearing impaired who suffer a form of the two aphasias discussed earlier found by Broca and Wernicke. Aphasia refers to language impairments or loss of the ability to articulate ideas in any form due solely to brain damage. These detriments are not directly related to any intellectual deficiencies or "...loss of motor or sensory controls of the nerves and muscles of the speech organs or hearing apparatus" (Fromkin and Rodman 45).

Voiced speakers of a language who suffer from Broca's aphasia are considered to be agrammatic due to their inability to construct correct syntax. Their sentences are characterized by ungrammatical utterances, often omitting function words such as "a" and "the" in addition to leaving off different parts of a word including tense markers. Patients also have difficulty comprehending sentences when comprehension is dependent upon syntactic structure. Those struck by Wernicke's aphasia retain an ability to produce fluent speech; however, it is speech that is unintelligible. Serious comprehension problems arise for these patients as well as trouble in lexical selections evidenced by their inability to name selected objects. Though there are times when a Wernicke's aphasic will substitute one word for another that bears no semantic relationship between the two, some aphasics insert words that may share the same lexical category, such as boy for girl. Another form of aphasia that Wernicke suffers often display is that of jargon aphasia, interchanging one sound for another, such

as *sable* for *table*.

Comparable to brain damaged individuals with normal hearing capabilities where speech production continues, although an impaired version of it, hearing impaired individuals with damage to the left hemisphere of the brain have been shown to continue to make meaningless gestures in the world of categorized sign language such as nodding of the head or shrugging of the shoulders. Additionally, while hearing patients lose command of their performance of grammar skills, hearing impaired individuals also lose the competence to perform grammatically correct sentences contingent upon where exactly the damage occurs in the left hemisphere (Wolkowicz and Johnson 7). This reinforces the loss of abilities from aphasia; whether the affected may be a hearing or deaf individual "...has to do only with the production or some comprehension of language (or specific parts of the grammar). [A] fact ... dramatically shown by ... deaf signers with [brain] damage" (45).

Deaf signers who experience damage to Broca's aphasia are, like their hearing counterparts, considered agrammatical. An example profile is that of a woman with damage to the left frontal hemisphere who "...had extreme difficulty producing signs" (Hickok, et. al. 2). Before this patient could produce signs, she initially had to orient her hands to the sign, having profound difficulty placing her hands into the correct shapes in order to obtain the correct grammatical category for the word—not a motor control issue, for once asked to copy certain drawings, she did so with complete accuracy (2). Just as deaf sufferers of Broca's aphasia mirror the same problems as hearing patients, the same holds true in the cases of Wernicke's aphasia. One example of this is that of a deaf patient who, with damage to the back portion of the left hemisphere, signed fluently with all the proper grammatical markers. Yet, just as hearing patients produce unintel-

ligible vocalized speech, this deaf individual produced essentially unintelligible messages (2). This incoherent signing exemplifies the deaf patient's inability to choose the correct selections from his mental lexical categories. When asked a question, the signer could not produce a meaningful response, suggesting his difficulty in comprehension.

The hearing impaired have progressed through time from being stigmatized to being accepted as functional and productive to a society as any other individual. The main mode of communication for the deaf, sign language, has also come into its own with the recognition of the complexity of the language with its own set of rule-governed grammar systems. Now that evidence suggests that the same areas responsible for the comprehension of spoken language may also be accountable for that of signed languages, researchers are given new avenues in which to explore the different aspects of exactly how language is processed in the brain—whether spoken or signed. ❖

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Opaque Containers and Ancient Tales

By Annelle Waldron



Annelle Waldron is a Philosophy and Religion major who will graduate Summa Cum Laude in May 2002. Her home is in Whiteville, NC, where she is a wife, mother, and grandmother as well as a full-time student. Among her many activities and accomplishments, Annelle is a published poet and a member and vice president of UNCP's chapter of Alpha Chi. She was also one of 118 students in North Carolina to receive an Academic Excellence Award in the year 2000.

It all started out as a normal day in class. The students sat waiting for Professor V to enter the room. When he came in, he put down a plastic container with some type of vegetable or fruit in it. The plastic was opaque, so one could not see inside. Curiosity filled the room, but no one dared ask what they were, or better yet, why he had brought them to class.

Little did the class know that they were being set up by their professor when he offered them cherry tomatoes, sweet, succulent and ripe. He talked about how unusually sweet they were. He told a little story about the fact that tomatoes were once thought of as being poisonous, and how a man had stood on the steps of the courthouse in Millville, New Jersey, and dared to eat one to prove they were not poisonous.

Each student took a tomato and passed them on to the next student. Some students reluctantly tried one, while others popped them into their mouths as if they were candies. Professor V had told them only that they were from his garden, but he failed to tell them that he had traveled all the way to New Jersey to get these special fruits.

But wait a minute, are they fruit? Yes, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, they are in fact fruit. Professor implied such

when he advised the class not to go all the way back to the Garden of Eden with its analogy. Could it be that he did not want the class to associate his assignment with God's warning not to eat of the fruit that would produce knowledge of good and evil? But isn't that exactly what the class would need to write a thriller of interest to the world? All thrillers, legal or otherwise, involve some element of good, as well as some element of evil. Right?

Professor V knew that if the class even imagined that these succulent fruits held within them some powers, some magical and mysterious powers, that they would fear eating them. The class would fear what they might come to know. So he just offered them to the class as simple fruit from his garden. He said that he had an abundance of them and that his wife had grown tired of them, so he was sharing them with the class.

Professor V never told the class that the seeds for these golden ripe tomatoes were carefully transported from New Jersey to North Carolina in his special truck, disguised as a broken-down heap so no one would be tempted to rob him, just weeks prior to the onset of the semester. You see, he and only he knew the power of knowledge these little tomatoes would deliver to that unsuspecting classroom of students.

Creative juices would flow just as assuredly as the luscious nectar had filled the corners of each student's mouth and trickled down each throat that day. One student, overcome with the power, almost choked. But even he would not escape the knowledge of good and evil. For most of the class, the tomatoes tempted the palate like no tomato they had ever tasted, and they wished for more. When it was all over with, there would be no one to blame but self; the whole class had willingly partaken, eager to please the

professor.

In the days and weeks to follow, fingers would feverishly fly over the keys of their word processors as they tried to keep up with the information that filled their brains. Coffee and late nights would be commonplace as they endeavored to release the creative juices that surged through their whole being and spilled out in words. This would be the se-

mester of all semesters and the legal thriller of all legal thrillers. The professor would publish the book and become independently wealthy while the students would get a mere grade.

And it all began with a smile and a “try this” from Professor V. ❖

One day I came to class with a container of Sun Gold tomatoes, offered them to students, and then told the true tale that once tomatoes were considered poisonous and that one brave person ate a tomato and lived. I invited students to use this tale and what they experienced during class that day and write their own “tomato tale.”

—David Vanderhoof

Call For Papers

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Manuscripts requirements: no more than 3500 words in length, double-spaced, and conform to the MLA style manual. Do not include any names or identifying information on the essay itself; use the nomination form as a cover sheet. All essays will be read and judged on their own merits in a blind selection process. If a submission is chosen for publication, the author will be notified and asked to submit an electronic version, a photograph, and a brief biography.

Submissions to be considered for publication in the Spring 2003 issue will be accepted until February 1, 2003.

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