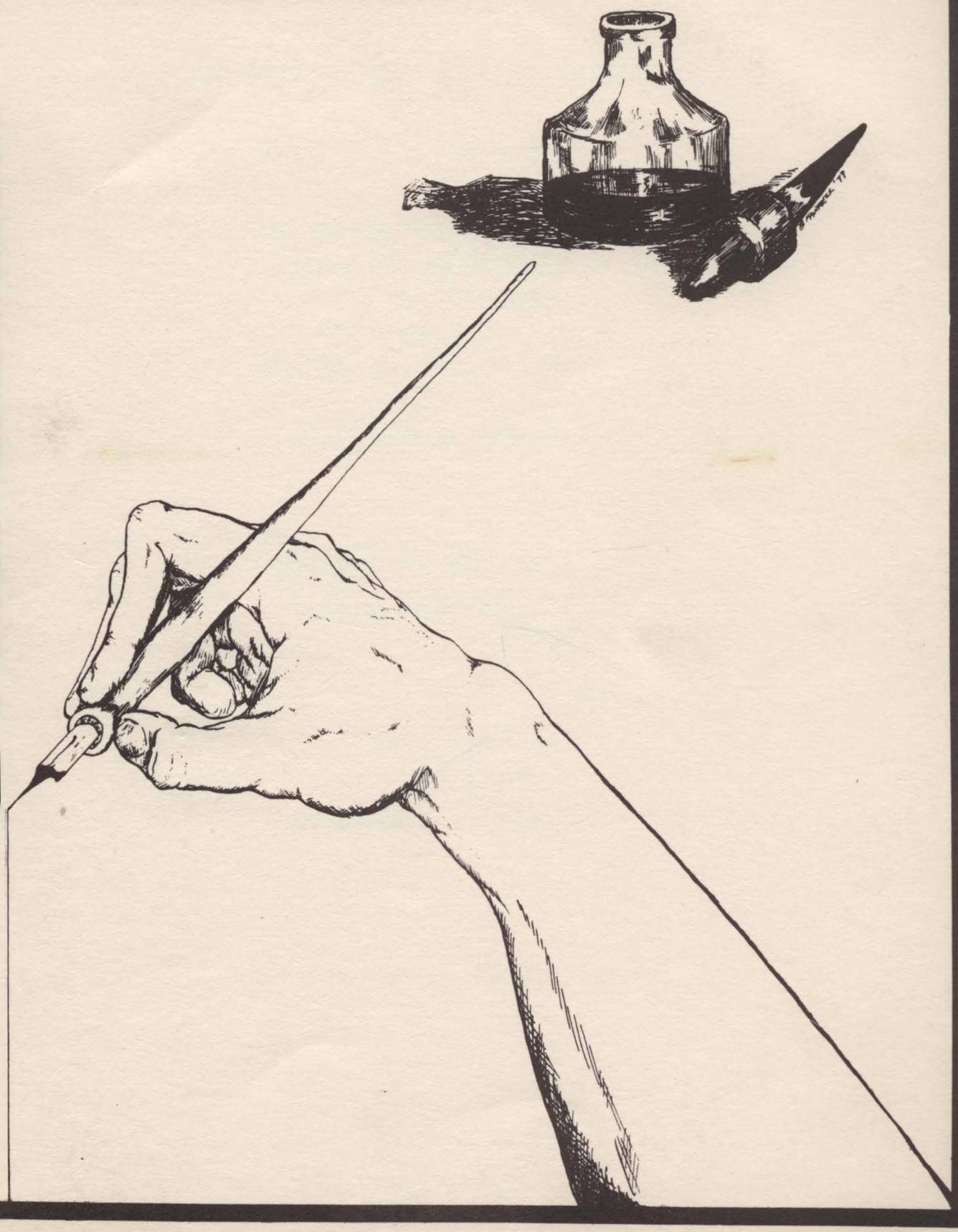
RYCENGA

SYMPOSIUM



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In Memory of
Professor John Rycenga
Sacred Heart University

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First Generation:

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In their fear your forefathers gathered you too near together.
And that fear shall endure a little longer.

Kahlil Gibran
The Prophet

Shafica Thoomey, my paternal grandmother, was born in the small mountain village of Biskinta in Lebanon in the 1880's. She was an only child, but she had many close cousins and other relatives. She grew up knowing the Church as the main social gathering place in the town. While roughly half of Lebanon's people are Moslems, Shafica's family were among the other half of proud Christians.

Biskinta was a summer resort town in which everyone knew each other. It was a very secure environment where one could not do anything out of the ordinary without everyone else quickly hearing about it. Most of the people had their own small farms from which their families grew enough food to live on comfortably. However, because Lebanon is a small country, many of the people were only part-time farmers and tried to earn a living elsewhere as merchants of some kind or as silk manufacturers.

Many of the middle class had indentured servants, as did Shafica's family. When Shafica reached the age of 15, her father was planning to betroth her to a wealthy Lebanese man from the United States who was much her senior, a man she did not love or like. Shafica had other ideas. She had met a boy at school named Fram Kittaney who managed his father's farm in the same town.

In order to save Shafica from her terrible fate, he came to her rescue. They ran away to his aunt's home and were married. In the meantime, Shafica and Fram's family realized that they were missing. A search party was formed by Shafica's male relatives, but by the time they discovered

where they were, it was too late to stop the marriage. After a few days, the two families accepted each other but not without much controversy, for in Lebanese culture, a girl rarely opposed her father, especially in those days.

Four of Fram's older brothers had left Biskinta to go to the United States and make their so-called fortunes. Fram was receiving letters from his brothers who were in New York City. They had established the Lebanese-American Bank. Things were going along well, and they wanted Fram to come help them and make some money too. Fram was anxious to leave. Shafica, of course, would go with him. However, since she knew it would hurt her mother to tell her she was going to the United States permanently, she only visited her mother one last time, but she did not tell her the news. Instead, she just left.

It was in the early 1900's that, leaving from the port of Beirut, they arrived in the United States and settled in Brooklyn, New York. Fram had an older brother whose first name was Saad. When his brother had arrived at Ellis Island a few years before, the customs officer confused his first name for his last name and Fram went by his brother's new last name. So Saad is not our real last name - Kittaney is.

Fram had some sort of eye infection when they landed on Ellis Island and he was not allowed to enter the country through New York. However, being the persistent type and with more than a little help from his friends and relatives, he and Shafica took a ship down to Mexico, entered the country through Texas and managed to get back up to New York. And they did not even know how to speak English!

My grandfather wasted no time getting involved with his brothers and with business. Their bank financed a small lingerie company which Fram and one of his brothers operated. Fram did most of the selling. Much of it was done in Cuba, the Madiera Islands, and as far west as the Mississippi. They also imported and exported linens.

They were prosperous until there was a United States moratorium on Cuban debts and both the bank and the lingerie company failed because so much of their money was tied up in Cuba. This happened in the 20's, so it just preceded the Depression. Fram sold their summer residence in the Adir-

ondacks and divided his interests with his brothers in Brooklyn. They moved to Bridgeport to start from scratch.

Shafica, however, had managed to save some money unbeknownst to her husband and saved the day until Fram, after some illnesses, found a good job as a pattern cutter at Mitchell Brothers lingerie factory in Bridgeport. Shafica even sold linens and lingerie in well-to-do neighborhoods to make ends meet for a while. Because Fram had a craft - pattern cutting, his family did not suffer financially as much as others did during the Depression.

After about 15 years of childlessness, Fram and Shafica had had four children - a daughter and three sons - in quick succession. My father, Thomas, was their oldest son - quite an honor and responsibility in the traditional Lebanese culture.

Mary Bechalaney, my maternal grandmother, was also born in the late 1800's in a mountain town called Salima in Lebanon. There are many good natured arguments as to which town, Salima or Biskinta, is the larger one, or the better one, or has more population, or is more cultured, etc., etc. My father enjoys teasing my mother's side of the family about it, although he has never actually seen either town. Mary's grand-uncle was the first recorded Lebanese immigrant to the United States.

Mary had almost the same middle class upbringing as Fram and Shafica. She had a charming, good looking boyfriend; however he had a reputation for being a gambler and for having a roving eye, so her parents did not allow her to marry him. Her marriage at the age of 22 to Joseph Hareēz (later Harris) was planned, although they did go through a period of courtship.

Joseph was the youngest of three brothers, who was left in charge of their languishing silk mill after his brothers emigrated to the United States, also to make their fortunes.

Mary and Joseph had two children, both daughters, while Joseph was still living in Lebanon. Joseph decided to join his brothers in the United States and send for his family after he made enough money to do so. Mary, meanwhile, lived with and took care of her ailing and appreciative mother-in-law, who was a widow.

Apparently, Mary and the girls (Sadie and Adele) could have emigrated sooner than they did but some conditions interfered - World War I, troubles with Turkey, and Mary's lack of motivation. However, after her mother-in-law died and the war was over and she had the money to travel, Mary's mother almost ordered her to go and make a proper home for her husband. For it was expected that wives always follow their husbands, no matter what the conditions.

According to a letter I received recently from my Aunt Sadie, there was much starvation and sickness in Lebanon during World War I. She said that due to her mother's maneuvering, they were among the fortunate ones who did not starve or get sick. Her mother worked hard, my aunt said, and always had work when there was none.

They took an old crowded Army ship to France and then, from France to Ellis Island, they took another very crowded ship with male and female dormitories. Aunt Sadie said that her mother bribed someone in authority on the ship to give them a room. They shared it with another woman and her small son. The other woman could not speak because her tongue was cut out by Turkish soldiers, her little son told them. The Turks also had buried her alive, but she was found after three days because her hand was sticking out above the ground and someone saw it and saved her - a true horror story which my aunt will undoubtedly never forget.

At Ellis Island, they had to wait for three days because her father had not received the telegram they had sent him from New York. They slept in what she described as a room that looked like a cage with bunks in it. In the daytime they stayed in a large hall and had meals all together. Finally, Joseph claimed them and they arrived in Olean, New York.

Joseph had made his living doing many different things. He was a farmer, a strikebreaker on a railroad, an itinerant merchant, a carpenter, and a mason contractor. He later purchased a store with an apartment above it. He established a men's work clothing store which was located between a ladies' dry goods store owned by one of his brothers and a grocery store, owned by another of his brothers. I am fascinated by this! He opened the store during the Depression because although he could get plenty of work as a carpenter or mason, it was hard to collect what was due him from his customers.

A few years after Mary emigrated, she and Joseph had two more children, Regina, my mother, and Esther. When Joseph died at an early age, Mary was left with Joseph's property and she never had to work. She lived on the rents of the property for a long time and managed her money well.

Second Generation:

My Parents - Thomas Fram Saad and Regina Harris Saad

To you the earth yields her fruit,
and you shall not want if you but know how to fill your hands.

It is in exchanging the gifts of the earth
that you shall find abundance and be satisfied.

Kahlil Gibran
The Prophet

None of my grandparents became citizens or really learned to write English. They were literate in their own language and were educated in Lebanon into their teenage years. They could read a little English.

I believe there was a mild undercurrent of embarrassment which existed while my parents were children because their parents could not speak English or because they spoke it with an accent, and because the culture they were used to was different from American culture. While my parents were young, there was no "ethnic movement." It was not *avant garde* to be ethnic then. It was ironic though, since both sets of their parents did well economically during the Depression, in fact, probably as well or better than many of their American schoolmates' parents. Both the Saad and Harris families ended up owning income-producing property, which is an accomplishment.

Olean, where my mother Regina was brought up, had a relatively large population of Lebanese people. Joseph Harris was among the founders of the local Maronite Church. Even in the second generation, the Church tended to keep the culture strong, for it was the social as well as the religious meeting place of the Lebanese people. There is no Maronite Church in Bridgeport, so my father lacked that steady influence in his childhood. Olean, in my opinion, had some of the same environment as

the village towns of Lebanon. Neighbor watched out for neighbor. It was safe.

My mother has shared many memories with my brothers and me. She worked after school in her uncle's dry goods store, attended public schools, and graduated from Olean High School; but she did not go on to college, although she could have had a scholarship. The college was out of town and she could not afford the room and board. Instead, she opted for a local business school, much to her teachers' disappointment.

My father and his brothers and sister all attended and graduated from Sacred Heart Parochial School on Park Avenue in Bridgeport, and later all went on to Central High School. While in school, my father and one of his brothers bought a paper route in the South End of Bridgeport which grew and grew to a size that would make today's paper routes look like postage stamps. Every so often, my father entertains us with memories of delivering papers in the snow, sleet and rain, and with other anecdotes which reveal the early maturation of their competitive mercantile spirit. Yes, they needed the money; yes, they helped their parents, but I have a suspicion that inbred was a strong business drive. I think that even if they were well-to-do, they would have taken on some kind of business challenge.

By the time the boys reached their late teen years, with their savings and encouraged by their father, they purchased a small grocery store on the corner of Garfield and Capitol Avenues in the North End. Saad's Market did well for a while, but unfortunately, World War II interrupted the venture. My father and his brother went into the Army.

My father became a lieutenant in the Army and graduated from Officers Candidate School. While he was stationed in Maryland, near Washington, his sister, Gen, wrote to him of a nice Lebanese girl named Regina Harris who worked at the Pentagon as a secretary. Regina's sister, Sadie, was a neighbor of the Saads'.

Meanwhile, Sadie was also writing to Regina about a nice Lebanese boy named Tom Saad who was a lieutenant in the Army stationed in Maryland. It was inevitable that, in order to satisfy both their sisters after receiving

many letters praising Regina to Tom and Tom to Regina, they would finally make a date and get to know each other. Their relationship blossomed.

They found each other to be a haven or refuge in the midst of war confusion and American social life away from their families. To me it seems that their marriage was predestined. Their story is as romantic as any movie on the Late Late Show.

My parents, Tom and Regina, married in 1944 in Olean, New York. Both families were highly pleased at the match, especially Sadie and Gen, the letter writers. By this time, Regina was used to living away from her family, so she thought nothing of living in Bridgeport with her husband.

At the end of World War II, housing was hard to find in Bridgeport. Therefore, the whole Saad family ended up living in the three family house on Capitol Avenue, which, indeed, the elder Saads had bought especially to house them all.

My father could have gone to college on the GI Bill, but he was anxious to make up for the three years he had lost in the service, and could not bring himself to go to school at night. He had always wanted to be a salesman like those who called on him when he owned the store, so he sent resumés to several companies and received an offer from General Mills. He always did well in his chosen profession. Every job change he made was offered to him. He never had to look for a job again.

Before I was born, my mother worked as a secretary to the general sales manager at Manning, Maxwell and Moore in Bridgeport. After all of her children were in school, she resumed working, and now she is assistant to the pastor of a large church in Bridgport. She enjoys her job, and finds it rewarding.

After three years of marriage, my parents had me, Joan Marie. I was named after my maternal grandparents. My brother Fram (named after my grandfather) came along 19 months after I did. My brother, David (named after my mother's uncle) was born one month after we moved into our house. Later, my youngest brothers, Tom and Joe, were born.

Third Generation:

Myself and my husband - Joan Marie Saad Garthwaite
and James Garthwaite

The Lebanese woman distinguishes herself from the woman of other nations by her simplicity. The manner in which she is trained restricts her progress educationally, and stands as a hindrance to her future. Yet for this reason, she finds herself inquiring of herself as to the inclination and mystery of her heart.

Kahlil Gibran
Spirits Rebellious

My brother Fram and I, having been the first two grandchildren in the family, were absolutely idolized by our uncles, aunts, and grandparents. We were surrounded by a happy warm glow of love and attention at all times. It was not only because we all lived in the same house, for later we moved to our own home, and the family was just as close. However, in our own home, my mother did not cringe anymore everytime we pounded on the floor, since my grandparents no longer lived underneath us.

My parents' social life became wider. Business friends and new social acquaintances were entertained often. However, much of our and my grandparents' social life involved visiting other Lebanese families or relatives or their visiting us.

Each year, there was a Maharajan, which is a huge gathering of Lebanese people with plenty of Lebanese music, food, and culture. My grandparents used to put up many people who came to Bridgeport to the Maharajan from other cities.

As a child, I learned the fine art of hospitality, for we forever had company and it was usually Lebanese company. A certain style of entertaining was the custom. It became second-nature to me. I learned that the oldest of the male company was served first and on down the line, according to age. (I often wondered how one could tell who was the oldest in the room - was I supposed to ask him??) An ash tray was immediately produced for the smoker, practically before his match had been blown out. One never brought a glass of water to a guest without a little dish under it and a napkin. (Even the Plaza Hotel never saw service like this!)

The boys learned to stand when new company arrived in the room, and we were never allowed to ask for food or a drink in another person's home.

However, we could accept it if it was offered to us. The boys were taught to offer their seats to the older and female members of the group in the room. There was a great respect for the elders of the families, unlike in American society, where youth is almost worshipped. It seems that in modern culture, the adults adjust themselves to the child, whereas in old Lebanese culture, the child has to adjust himself to the adults.

We never speak of "Lebanese standards" as such, but they are there. For instance, when I was approaching working age, my father told me, on no uncertain terms, that I could not be a waitress and that doing housework in someone else's home was definitely out. I could work in a department store, which I did through my high school and early college years, or I could work in a secretarial capacity, which I did later. If I chose to go to college, it was expected that I would probably become a teacher, since I was such a good student and loved school so much. Nursing was out, since nurses have to do menial work, and their hours are sometimes bad, even though they get paid well. Girls did not work evening shifts in our culture - at least according to the influence I received from my parents.

My brothers and I all attended parochial grammar schools. Later, I graduated from Notre Dame High School, having had a very classical (Latin and French, etc.) and rigorous four years of education there.

My college education has been divided into two parts, with marriage, two children and ten years in between. I think of my education as a challenge as well as a ticket to more interesting jobs.

My husband and I met in high school, and went to the same college together. He is English, Irish and Dutch, on his father's side, and his mother is English and a convert from Protestanism to Roman Catholicism. Jim's mother was brought up in the South. Southern hospitality and manners are important to her. In many ways, our Southern and Lebanese social customs are similar. Both families enjoy entertaining and socializing. The Saad and Garthwaite families look forward to getting together and there has never been an awkward moment between them.

One way in which Jim's family and my family differ, though, is in occupational choice. While he had humble beginnings, Jim's father is now a chemical researcher employed by a worldwide conglomerate. He has had to

uproot his family at least four times as his children were growing up. In my estimation, it was a struggle sometimes for the family in many ways.

Jim and I are both the oldest of five children in our families. Out religions are the same. We both attended parochial schools. The only apparent difference between us was our nationality. He adopted our kitchen culture and many of our customs, and my family has adopted him in turn.

My parents had a true dual culture. They had to fit into an American lifestyle, although they still had a tremendous loyalty to their heritage. It is still very much a part of their lifestyle today.

I have come to the conclusion that my own personal culture is more American than Lebanese, although I feel strongly influenced by the Lebanese ways of thinking about things, and ways of doing things. And, in my opinion, my two children, Susan and Jim, have a happy, unpressured blend of Lebanese and American cultures.

Reflections

And when the shadow fades and is no more,
the light that lingers
becomes a shadow to another light.

And thus your freedom
when it loses its fetters
becomes itself the fetter of a greater freedom.

Kahlil Gibran
The Prophet

Much to everyone's dismay, none of us in the third generation know the Arabic language fluently enough to carry on a conversation. We all know a few idioms or some slang, but that is the extent of it.

Our dress is purely American. The older generations naturally are more conservative. My grandmothers usually wore long dark dresses and they each had long hair, but it was never flowing - rather it was tied in a loose bun in the back of their heads. I have six delicate real gold bracelets from Lebanon that I usually wear when I go somewhere special. Many of the Lebanese women have real gold bracelets or other jewelry

brought over by someone from Lebanon. It is sort of a trademark.

Some of the traditional socializing is slowly dying out, even as old-fashioned American socializing is. I believe the root of it is that women, who were largely responsible for entertaining, are more involved with careers and fulfilling themselves. It is good that women are finding themselves, but I think some of the finer things in life can be lost unless care is taken to prevent it.

I still recognize some typically Lebanese traits in the family, particularly in my parents' generation, which seem to continue on. One is the penchant my father and my uncles have for philosophizing about everything from economic woes to the beauties and burdens of childbearing. I like to philosophize too, but a Kahlil Gibran I will never be.

My grandparents, and hence my parents (though more subtly) took a dim view of people who moved constantly, for those people had no roots. They looked down upon "American ways." Dating was frowned upon, not so much by the second generation. Children were expected to be unquestioningly obedient. My grandparents had to make an adjustment to the automobile, especially to their daughters driving cars. Also, buying on credit was looked down upon, although inevitably, it became a part of our lives, just as it did in most Americans' lives.

I realize now, that the tight, sometimes stifling hold on the children was a disadvantage in our culture, especially for the girls. The boys were encouraged at an early age to go out and mingle with others so that they could prepare for future business relationships. But as I look at American life, expecially the typical stereotypes portrayed on television, or in books, or in ads, I am faced with the huge differences between American culture (or non-culture) and old Lebanese culture. In our culture, there is the idea that "we will take care of our own," a result of pride or arrogance in some cases. Hence, in our family, my grandfather bought a three family house precisely so that the whole family could live under one roof and he saw to it that his boys started their own business so they would not have to look "outside" for a job. In American culture, we hear, "I will take care of myself" or "I will do my own thing."

When I was in my pre-teen years, both my grandmothers died in their late 70's. Just before I had my first child, my grandfather died in his 80's. They were all well taken care of in their old age, and even in sickness by their families.

I, as the oldest of 13 cousins, have been the most traditional one. Some of my cousins and even my younger brothers do not remember my grandparents or the ethnic atmosphere their presence created. My education is broadening my view of life, but is is sad that after my generation, much of our family's culture will be gone.

Most of the Lebanese immigrants never intended to stay in the United States. They only intended to make money and go back home to Lebanon. Or if they did stay in the States, they almost always sent home money to relatives. According to one author, almost all of the red tile roofed houses in all the villages and in Lebanon were built by money from America.[1]

My relatives were unable to send money home, except for my maternal grandfather who sent money for my grandmother's travelling expenses. From what I can gather, most of my ancestors did not follow the usual pattern that most Lebanese immigrants followed, for they stayed here and made their lives here. They brought their religion and their skills and their customs and music and cuisine with them. Their closeness made for a secure, strong and proud unity among them. The advantages of the culture far outweight the disadvantages, in my estimation, and I think that many small but strong reminders of our culture will live on in our family's generations to come.

NOTES

[1]Philip Hitti, *Lebanon in History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967), p. 474-5.

Judy Turziano

English Commoners 1590-1640

Linda Lind

Relatively little has been written about the common Englishman of early seventeenth-century England. In the overall picture of those turbulent times of dramatic change and impending Civil War, the conditions surrounding the poor man's life may seem unimportant and inconsequential, but the commoner constituted the majority of England's population, and these men and women witnessed the transformation of their country from an old order to a new one. The purpose of this paper is to deal with some of the conditions under which the common people lived - their work, their local laws, their religion, and their education. Hopefully, this will provide the reader with some insight into what life was like for those ordinary Englishmen.[1] Coverage will be restricted to between 1590 and 1640.

By the turn of the century a great many people in rural areas had demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the Anglican Church; antipathy stemmed, primarily, from the lack of spiritual and moral leadership.[2] Dissent; however, created serious problems for both ruler and ruled. King James I, jointly with Archbishop William Laud, consistently tried to enforce Anglican conformity, believing that the Bishop's monarchial power in the religious realm was essential for the security of the King's monarchial prerogatives in government.

Upon examining the precepts of the Protestant doctrines, it is not surprising that official objection was strong and bitter.[3] The influences of Protestant philosophy was, undoubtedly, threatening. For one thing, they taught that the state of a person's conscience was of greater importance than external ceremonies - a conviction in direct opposition to State Church practices. They preached equality among men - a concept diametrically opposite the prevalent Chain of Being theory, a belief that was widely held until after the turn of the century.[4] Simply stated, they wanted to purify the Church and to be free to exercise the dictates of their consciences.

Puritans came from all levels of English society (except the extremely high, and those unfortunates who occupied subcommoner status, like vagrants and vagabonds). The finesse and skill with which they, ". . .dispersed its books, sermons, and tracts throughout the land. . . should excite admiration in the most knowing modern propagandist."[5] The dissemination of Protestant literature was so great that Laud forbade master printers to print anything unless first licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London. Nonetheless, Protestantism grew. Part of its success could be attributed to the lecturers who traveled around the countryside visiting different parishes (villages) delivering sermons. "The highest tribute to the effectiveness of sermons. . .came from Laud, who considered them the direst threat to his program for the Church of England."[6] All attempts to silence these lecturers were futile. Protestant families worshipped together in their homes, regularly attended church services, and responded enthusiastically to lectures.[7] One of their fundamental domestic concerns was, easily, religion, and they were not to be suppressed.

The living conditions of the majority of people during the pre-war years were pretty miserable. It is not surprising that life expectancy was thirty to thirty-five years of age: Diseases from unsanitary surroundings, malnutrition from inadequate and unbalanced diets, deaths of mothers and/or their babies during childbirth all contributed significantly to the death tolls. Diseases in the cities were an even greater problem than in rural areas. Close living quarters of the poor made communicable diseases spread faster and involved a greater number of people. Few streets were paved, and dogs, cats, pigs, et al, roamed about them freely. As if this were not enough, people habitually threw their garbage into the streets. Personal hygiene was unheard of, body sores were prevalent, and the lack of bathing facilities, and the practice of wearing dirty clothes were the rules rather than the exceptions. "Agues and intermittent fevers were much. . .rife. . .which is not to be wondered at, as there was great preference for low and sheltered situations for houses, and drainage was but lightly regarded."[8] The few doctors there were were seldom called upon for assistance because of their ex-

orbitant charges. Often there wasn't much they could do anyway. Most wives acted as nurse when a family member was sick. It was she who prepared and administered medication which she made from recipes handed down to her from generations past. She also set broken bones.

During the first few decades of the seventeenth century, poor people did not eat regular meals; they ate when they had the time and when food was available. Their diets usually consisted of dark bread, cheese, and eggs. For those who lived in coastal areas there was, of course, fish, but meat was scarce and expensive. The greatest dietary deficiency resulted from a lack of fruits and vegetables.

Rural homes were, predominantly, constructed of the cheapest materials, like straw, sand, and twigs. Windows were typically glassless, lighting was poor, and roofs were thatched. These dwellings offered little protection against England's nine months of cold, damp weather. The average home consisted of only one room where the entire family slept and ate.[9] In the cities where the poor, literally, lived right next to each other, the custom was to bring their housework outside during the daylight hours. There, right outside their front doors, they could enjoy adequate lighting and the sociability of conversation with their neighbors and passers-by.

Farmers and laborers worked from sun-up to dusk. These men were often assisted in their work by their sons. Daughters worked with their mothers or were hired out as domestics. This, sometimes, proved to be a tremendous advantage for poor girls if they were hired by yeomen (a yeoman being financially better off, but of the same social rank). It gave them exposure to men of their own class and broadened their acquaintances with possible suitors. "Usually the experience moulded a young woman. . .into a thrifty housekeeper, and not infrequently it enabled her, through marriage, to move upward in society."[10] As for her male counterpart, some were treated affectionately and were well cared for, and others were brutalized.[11] Women servants were often crowded together in cramped quarters; and servant boys considered themselves lucky if they got a loft with some clean straw to sleep on.

Increased trade with continental Europe, imported goods and gold

from the New World, and peace at home stimulated the English economy during the early part of the seventeenth century. The trend had moved toward market distribution. Commodities like produce, wool, and dairy products were taken to cities and given to retailers for assemblage and distribution. Many men from rural villages migrated to the cities and prospered through the healthy economy. Those who remained at home engaged in whatever economic assets their region enjoyed. It was during this period that ". . .the countryman became a citizen - a profound psychological transformation experienced every year by larger and larger numbers of Englishmen."[12]

Periods of economic prosperity fluctuated, however. The imposition of monopolies by King James proved to be a detriment to the economy as they inhibited further industrial growth. This, in turn, limited job prospects for the unemployed. Unemployment, frequent food shortages from crop failures, and displaced citizens from enclosures, combined to create a multitude of impoverished people. The Poor Law was an attempt to improve social conditions. It placed responsibility for the poor on the parishes, some of which levied taxes and dispensed the revenue to the needy. Others did nearly nothing to alleviate the suffering of their desperate citizens. Almshouses were erected in towns which could afford to build them to house those who were homeless. Some of the homeless people sought shelter in barns and outhouses.

In a very real sense education began at home where parents taught their children the rudiments of religion and morality via daily worship. Much of the vocational instruction of children was provided by their families, too. Initially, the emphasis on education was for its utility. Mastering the English language, for instance, was essential to the commoner in order for him to read charts and manuals pertaining to his work, and fundamental math was necessary for transacting business in the marketplace.

During the early part of the century, elementary schools were established in many rural areas. Classes were conducted in churches and were funded by endowments, taxes from the town, and, occasionally, by benefactors. A few parishes were fortunate enough to have their own school buil-

dings. Although these were called free schools, a small fee was charged to cover the cost of supplies (fuel, candles, paper, etc.), which placed additional strain on parents' already lean pocketbooks. Those parishes which could afford to, paid the charges for indigent children, but in order to qualify, the children had to come from families whose morals met with community standards. For those who were unable to complete the parish school, there was the possibility of serving an apprenticeship.[13] During these years the attitude was growing strong among the lower ranks that an education was essential if one wanted to succeed in life. In fact by 1641 the idea of state financed schools had grown popular.

Music played an important part in the lives of nearly every Englishman, regardless of his social rank. It was played at wakes, weddings, churches, homes, for private entertainment and pleasure, and in the streets of London. So pervasive was it that:

> . . .part of the furniture of the barber shop of the period was a stringed instrument of some kind, and while the young gallant was waiting his turn to be trimmed and shaved a lute would be handed to him just as a newspaper would be handed anyone to-day. [14]

The government of English parishes during this time was surprisingly sophisticated. The traditional judicial bodies on the manors expanded in the course of these years. Normally each manor had a court-leet and a court-baron. The court-leet had police type responsibilities and investigated crimes such as rape, fights, thefts, etc., and meted out punishment to the offenders. The court-baron was responsible for overseeing the Lord's rights as well as the tenants' and for the settlement of their mutual differences. To the local people manorial legalities were more important than national laws because they directly influenced his everyday life.

It was during this period, too, that town meetings came into existence. Each parish had open meetings in which local citizens participated in the business of the community. They determined tax rates, administered common waste lands, and, "basing its decisions upon the will of the majority of its members, made and enforced by-laws that bound the entire parish."[15] All of the officers of town government had to be able to read and had to

own property. This, of course, narrowed the list of candidates.

Justices of the Peace were the connection between local and national government. They met four times a year (hence, the name Quarter Sessions) to determine civil and criminal cases. In addition they licensed alehouses, established wages, investigated absences from church, fined poachers, and judged felonies and moral cases. It seems amazing to a modern reader what constituted a felony. Besides murder and arson there were such things as "hunting by night with masked or painted faces, or stealing goods of a few shillings in value."[16]

The law of the land by which these men and women lived was heavy, ruthless, and swift. Severe punishments were not confined to murderers and traitors but included petty offenders as well, and conviction of a crime required little evidence. Hanging was the customary punishment for felons. If a man could read, however, he had the option of pleading "benefit of clergy." He was then granted the opportunity to read the neck verse, and if successful, qualified for branding on the hand in lieu of hanging. (This was a privilege offered to men only.) The capital crime was treason, and conviction carried with it extraordinary punishment.

The status of women rose somewhat during this period. This was partially due to assuming additional work loads when their husbands were impressed, and partially to a change in attitudes toward women during Puritan development. As time passed women became less their husband's property and more their helpmates. Nonetheless, the function of women was *semper et ubique* in conjunction with marriage. All indoor management came under the wife's supervision. In addition to preparing meals, baking, cleaning, washing, malting, having babies and rearing them, she was responsible for the management of the dairy, the livestock, making the family's clothes, spinning wool and flax, mowing corn, and shearing sheep. It was not unusual for wives of yeomen to help their husbands by overseeing their apprentices; this wives managed around their household chores.

The commoner had little time to concern himself with luxuries and fashion. Farm women made do with, maybe, one new dress a year. The ordinary countryman wore crude clothing made of homespun wool to church. For work he wore clothes made of coarse canvas, worsted stockings, strong shoes,

and hats made of felt.

In spite of the hard work that occupied most of their time, commoners did enjoy periodic relief through activities in which the entire parish participated. Once in a while a social event took place on the church lawn. There was a considerable amount of drinking, music, dancing, and game playing, and all-round, cheerful camaraderie.[17] There was also such entertainment as a visit to the parish by a traveling acting company, as well as ale houses, holiday festivities, and as was the custom in London, a stroll to Paul's Walk where one could mingle with his friends as well as with his betters and catch up on the latest gossip and news.[18]

The fluctuating economic conditions, the plight of the destitute, and religious unrest caused many commoners to question the status quo. It was occurring to more than a few that they had as much right to the riches of the Commonwealth as their elite counterpart. During these critical years (1590-1640), England was undergoing a transformation. Civil War was about to ensue; thereafter, the economy would thrive with increased industrialization offering greater opportunities for the commoner.

But first a lion would roar.

NOTES

[1]Within the context of this paper "ordinary" and "commoner" refer to the lowest class of people on the social stratum; those below the gentry and nobility.

[2]The Anglican Church was (and still is) the official religion of England. It was Catholic but independent of Rome since the reign of Henry VIII.

[3]Limited space prohibits the numeration of the different doctrines among the many sects, but those cited were common to all sects.

[4]Chain of Being was a generally held belief in a universal structure of being based on a concept of hierarchies, i.e., all things on earth were

arranged in classes. For example, if a man were born poor, he assumed that God made him that way; that was his proper station in life. It never occurred to Englishmen, until shortly before this time, to question their status or to try to rise above it.

[5]Carl Bridenbaugh, *Vexed and Troubled Englishmen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 334.

[6]Bridenbaugh, p. 309.

[7]Attendance at church services and the payment of tithes were required by law of all citizens, but note that this was not sufficient for the Puritan.

[8]Elizabeth Godfrey, *Social Life Under the Stuarts* (London: Grant Richards, 1904), p. 99.

[9]An interesting trend developed about this time commensurate with the growing sense of personal privacy (a result of the new emphasis on the individual). Those who could afford to divided the interiors of their homes into different rooms, and added second and sometimes third floors. It was then, too, that rooms acquired names to designate their function, e.g., bedroom, kitchen, etc.

[10]Bridenbaugh, p. 90.

[11]Badly treated domestics and apprentices did have recourse. They could register complaints with the Quarter Sessions, and if the judges ruled in their favor, masters were obligated to make recompense.

[12]Bridenbaugh, p. 143.

[13]Now and then masters would instruct their charges themselves, and on rare occasion provide private tutorage. In any event, agreements of this kind were included in contracts between master and apprentice and were legally binding.

[14]Mary I. Curtis, *England of Song and Story* (Boston: Alan and Bacon, 1949), p. 257.

[15]Bridenbaugh, p. 245.

[16]Curtis, p. 38.

[17]These sorts of indulgences were popular until after the War when Puritan influence stifled them.

[18]This section of St. Paul's Cathedral was given over to public use; businessmen gathered there to conduct business. It was as popular with gentry and nobility as it was for the ordinary people.

UP YOUR NOSE

Michael Spizzirri

Paranoia

Elizabeth McCauley

"My mouth is sewed closed!"

"A man in the upstairs room is nailing everyone's toes to the mattresses!"

"An opium smoker doped me by sticking a needle in my heel!"

"The Communists in South America are trying to poison the sugar beet crop!"

"I am wearing a rubber suit to protect me from dangerous invisible rays!"

"I am the Creator of the universe!"

The above statements are all true remarks made by victims of the disorder known as paranoia.

The term paranoia, which is as old as Hippocrates himself, was once used by the early Greeks to mean a little more than insanity. Today, it is specifically defined as a mental disease capable of producing chronic delusions and hallucinations. The symptoms involve a loss of touch with reality, thus making life, with all of its activities, experiences, and relationships, a very arduous task to cope with.

There are four main categories into which paranoia can be logically placed and explained. The first area is the paranoid state as a form of a functional psychoses, which occurs when the stress in the environment becomes intolerable and acts upon internal emotional tensions. The real world becomes a painful place to live in, and the person who chooses to retreat to his own created world, made up of fantasies, fictions, and fragments of dreams, can appropriately be referred to as paranoid. As noted by Hendrik Hertzberg, "Paranoia provides the comfort of a universe ordered about oneself, a comfort that many people are willing to pay for in the currency of anguish."[1] This shows that paranoids aren't necessarily happy people, even though they may appear so.

In this state, there exist logical, coherent, systematic, and plau-

sible elaborations of some misinterpreted actual event which are delusional in content. The person may hear voices, see aparitions, imagine himself in contact with God, and actually act upon what his "voices" tell him to do. These elements are categorized under delusions and hallucinations.

A delusion is a false belief that "People over there are talking about you," or that you rule the universe, or are being slowly eaten up by invisible insects. The most common ones are delusions of power or grandeur, where one claims to possess a great, famous, or royal title, and delusions of persecution which involve an irrational fear of enemies, be it a neighbor, a local situation, a whole community, or even an international organization. Others include delusions of reference where everything is taken personally; somatic delusions where a person asserts illness from unnatural causes such as electricity; and nihilistic delusions where a person may claim that "the sun is dead."

The victim is usually unaware that a disorder exists as in a case described in *The Disorganized Personality*,[2] where a person claimed to be an emperor, yet consented to sweep the hall. Untrue ideas are clung to in spite of rational arguments. One man insisted his arms and legs were cut off although he was standing up and was using his hands to explain. Examples from history would be Philip V of Spain who refused to eat or drink because of his delusion of death, and Christopher Columbus, the victim of a serious brain disorder, who believed he was the ambassador of God. A whole book has been devoted to the story of three men, commonly called "The Three Christs of Ypsilanti."[3] These unfortunate men were victims of a powerful delusion of grandeur which had taken the form of a messianic fantasy.

Some delusions are really quite believable because of their consistency and persuasiveness. The paranoid person has an inflated faith and sincerity in himself, and usually keeps in touch with the real world in all respects, except with reference to what bears upon the theme of his delusions. They influence the daily life routine and form the central focus in mental life.

A companion of delusions are hallucinations, which are perceptions

that occur without external stimuli, such as hearing voices in the mind, or tasting poison in food. Examples include the classic dagger seen by Macbeth and perhaps an old man listening to his ancestors speak.

Delusions and hallucinations can be quite natural such as fantasies, or misunderstandings, but the link of normal to abnormal behavior lies in their degree and consequences. Unless a person's behavior, social interaction, or goal attainment is affected, the problem can be regarded as trivial.

A second major area in which symptoms of paranoia appear is in paranoid schizophrenia. This disorder takes on many of the paranoid psychosis qualities, but the personality deteriorates with time and aggressive, hostile tendencies are replaced by quietness, apathy, and a moderate withdrawal from life.

Behavior and life are dominated by bizarre delusions, hallucinations, and unusual behavior. The delusions are the key elements in distinguishing the schizophrenic from the psychotic. Delusions of persecution and grandeur still exist, but they are very disorganized, illogical, and ridiculous, in that they lack coherence and plausibility.

Paranoids live in a state of perpetual crisis. They are always ready for a catastrophe. In Hendrik Hertzberg's article, an interesting case is noted. A gas main had broken in a large mental hospital and it was vital to evacuate the patients from the poisonous fumes. The staff was undermanned, but the expected chaos and panic did not occur. A group of paranoic schizophrenics immediately took charge, by organizing and carrying out the evacuation efficiently. They saw nothing unusual in the fact that the hospital was about to be engulfed by a deadly, invisible force. According to David Klein:

> A paranoid patient behaves like an intelligent spy in a foreign country. He is constantly on the alert for evidence of the next move to be made by the "enemy." Nor does he remain passive when he thinks such evidence has come his way, for the paranoid personality is a fighting personality. He is even ready to defend himself by violent means if necessary. This is what makes paranoia a dangerous disorder. [4]

The victims are usually intelligent, but a little odd and unpredictable because of the absence of reality.

The average person has many worries but he does not generally worry that somewhere, without his knowledge, a secret tribunal is about to order him seized, drugged, and imprisoned without the right of appeal. An eloquent phrase, applicable to paranoid schizophrenia, is stated by Scrope Davies: "Babylon in all its destruction is a sight not so awful as that of the human mind in ruins."[5]

On many occasions, paranoia has been referred to as an extreme form of the defense mechanism, projection. The real world is so emotionally painful that fears and suspicions are projected into the world and distortion follows. A person who is distressed by having an abnormal urge or idea, tries to protect himself from stress by projecting the awful problem onto the world, but in the meantime, a delusional system is unknowingly built up.

The projective type of person is always on guard, apt to misinterpret, and probably warns and complains to newspapers. He is usually grim, humorless, and irritatingly suspicious with annoying ideas of reference. The paranoid view of reality can make everyday life terrifying and social relationships problematical. The person is so wrapped up in himself and in trying to construct fallacies, that he becomes mentally exhausted and unable to function properly.

There have been claims that paranoia is a recent cultural disorder in that it substitutes a rigorous (though false) order for chaos, and at the same time enables the paranoid to feel significant by making him the focus of all he sees going on around him - a natural response to the confusion of modern life. It is terrible to be persecuted, but pleasant to believe that the universe is a conspiracy for personal benefit, which points to a slightly optimistic overtone. Other good qualities are reasoning, organization, and persuasion techniques which develop from believing in delusions.

The last category is that of the paranoid personality disorder and is dominated by systematized delusional reactions. They develop from stress, guilt, or a personality defect, but rarely develop the elaborate systematized organization of classical paranoia.

There are scores of characteristics that may point to a paranoid

disorder. A few are the personality that is suspicious, jealous, mistrustful, introverted, sensitive, ethnocentric, stubborn, sarcastic, evasive, verbal, or authoritarian. The person may find it hard to form close relationships, may adhere to extreme political and social views, or have strong unconscious feelings of inferiority. Many of these elements are part of a normal person except for the fact that these paranoid trends are not the dominant factors. Every human being may seem slightly paranoid but most are willing to change views and opinions. The paranoid person is incapable of realizing that an error may exist in his thinking.

Nobody can say if the cause of the disease is hereditary or environmental. Most of the evidence favors the environment or situational experiences, and statistics have shown that the victims usually come from restrictive authoritarian families. The individual probably never developed the capacity or security to freely choose decisions, which later hinders mental development.

The prognosis is generally fatal from a psychic standpoint, especially if the delusions are progressive and expanding. Drugs, psychotherapies and lobotomies have been attempted as cures, but if the person does not try to shift his perspectives and remains in the same environment, it is futile. The key is really care on an individual basis administered in the early stages.

It is appropriate to conclude with a quote from Shakespeare's *Othello* which describes the overall paranoia attitude:

> Trifles light as air
> are to the jealous
> confirmations strong
> as proofs of holy writ. [6]

Paranoia is the very opposite of meaninglessness in that it drenches every detail of the world in meaning.

NOTES

[1]Hendrik Hertzberg and David C. K. McClelland, "Paranoia," *Harper's Magazine* 248(June 1974), 53.

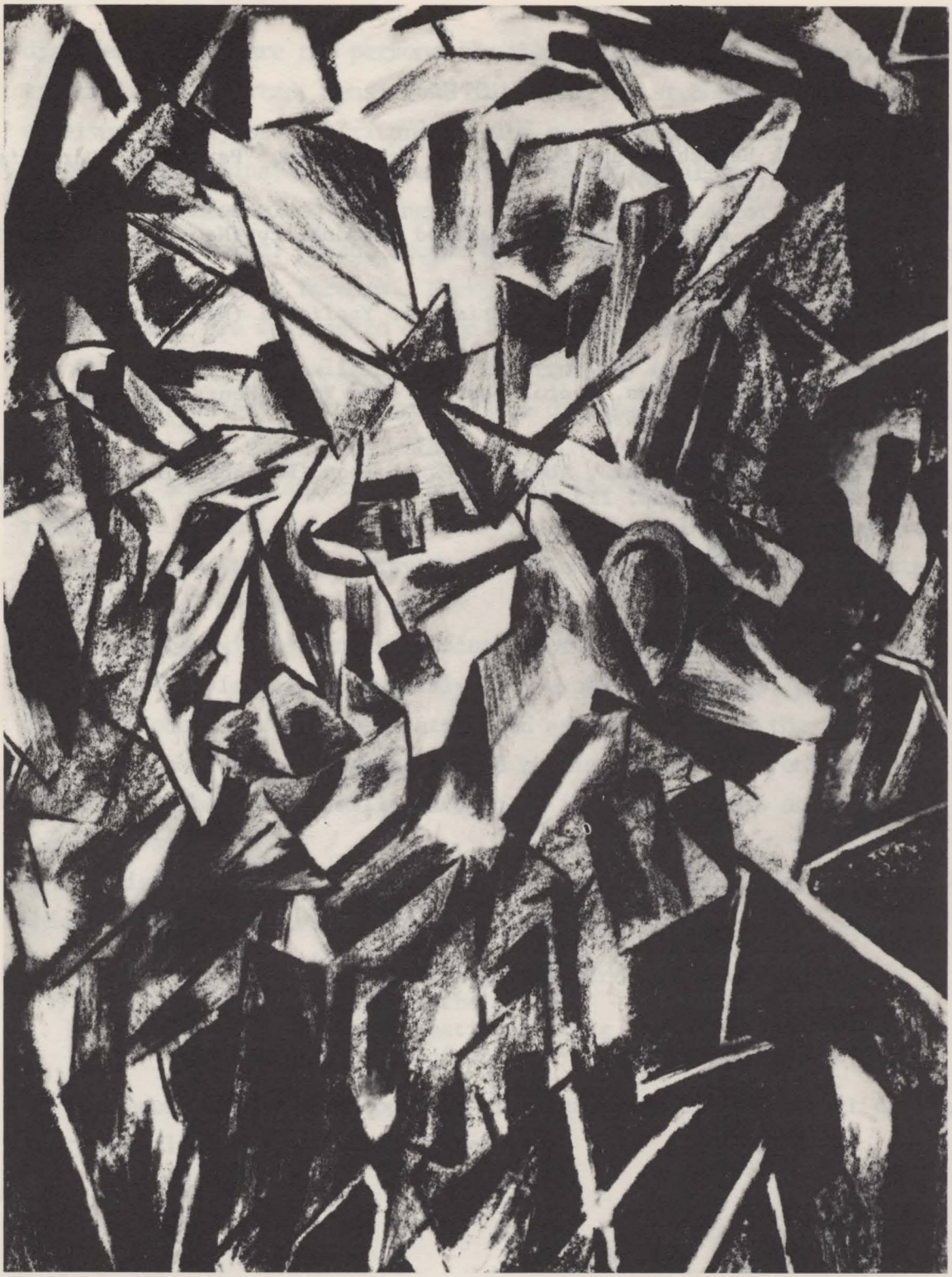
[2]George W. Kisker, *The Disorganized Personality* (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1972).

[3]Milton Rokeach, *The Three Christs of Ypsilanti* (New York: Random House Inc., 1964).

[4]David Ballin Klein, *Mental Hygiene* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1944), p. 69.

[5]Ephraim Rosen et al., *Abnormal Psychology* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1972), p. 213.

[6]Rosen p. 245.



MAN IN TOP HAT — Mary Mieszczanski

Ahab: A Character analysis

Francine Molinelli

It is difficult to discuss the novel *Moby Dick* without first discussing the character of Captain Ahab. He is the central character in the story without whom there would be no story at all. For years, critics have analyzed and picked apart Ahab and termed him a symbol of mankind fighting the hostile powers of the universe. But, Ahab is too finely drawn by Melville to be categorized so simply. Raymond Weaver stated that, "On the white hump of the ancient and vindictive monster, Captain Ahab piles the sum of all the rage and hate of mankind from the days of Eden down."[1] It seems that any character who is capable of such an intense passion deserves to be considered as more than a symbol.

Ahab is a character who seems to be the embodiment of all that is human while also seeming to be the personification of evil. He is also a hero, tragic in the Aristotelian sense, yet archetypically cast in the same mold as Emily Bronte's Heathcliff, whose ultimate goal in life was also revenge.

The reader of *Moby Dick* does not meet Ahab immediately. However, something of his personality is set forth by Peleg who describes the Captain to Ishmael:

> "He's a queer man, Captain Ahab - so some think - but a good one. . . .He's a grand, ungodly, god-like man, Captain Ahab; doesn't speak much; but when he does speak, then you may well listen. Mark ye, be forwarned; Ahab's above the common; Ahab's been in colleges, as well as 'mong the cannibals; been used to deeper wonders than the waves; fixed his fiery lance in mightier, stranger foes than whales." [2]

Now, if one believes that characterization is established through a character's speech, thoughts, and that which is spoken about him, then Peleg's description seems an honest one. He depicts a well-educated, intelligent man familiar with the world. However, the reader is not allowed to feel that he "knows" Ahab for very long. Peleg's continued com-

ments are disturbing. He calls Ahab "moody - desperate moody, and savage sometimes," and concludes his analysis by saying, "and wrong not Captain Ahab because he happens to have a wicked name. . .Ahab has his humanities!" (77)

The reader's introduction to Ahab is filled with ambiguities. He can only be certain that Ahab possesses the first trait attributed to a tragic hero - an air of nobility or high standing.

Ahab, however, is more than a tragic protagonist. The entire structure of the novel forbids him that. He stands apart from other characters. Alan Lebowitz in analyzing Melville's heroes said, "Ahab as Melville's prototypical hero embodies a cohesive syndrome of characteristics that are clearly recognizable in fragmentary form throughout the other novels, albeit difficult to label precisely save Ahab."[3]

Ahab is a man in search. He is the quintessential American. He, at the end of the story, is finished with the search and finished by it. He makes up his mind, after penetrating and mulling the mysteries of the universe, to challenge them. He is not what Raymond Weaver calls the "atheistical captain of a tormented soul."[4] Rather, he is a religious captain acknowledging the existence of something outside of his own power and challenging it - whether it be God or some other controlling force. Ahab wants to attack that which has attacked him. He is not a "safe" man as the lawyer of "Bartleby" is safe. He is a driven man who has rejected the monotony of everyday life in favor of battle with that which has crippled him. Ahab would rather die in his battle than live with defeat.

Even though Ahab has escaped the external, mundane life, he remains tortured by his internal self-destructive obsession - killing Moby Dick.

Ahab's extreme monomania becomes evident with his first appearance on deck when he speaks to his crew of his purpose for their present voyage. The dark mystery which surrounds him is curiously mixed with Christ-like allusions and the reader's awareness of the struggle of good vs. evil is intensified. Ahab is described as a man who had been "cut away from the stake, when the fire has overrunningly wasted all the limbs without consuming them." (110) The mysterious scar that Ahab bears makes him seem even more demonic, yet "Ahab stood before them with a crucifixion

on his face; in all the nameless regal overbearing dignity of some mighty woe." (111) While he seems satanic, he is also capable of seeming divine. From Peleg's first description and throughout the book, Ahab eludes categorization. He can be called an enigma during instances such as his first appearance on deck because he is difficult to define or explain. It can be stated, however, that he is a character with a dramatic presence which is repeatedly underlined, and a personality dynamic enough to convince his crew to rally behind him.

Many critics have chosen to call Ahab "mad." If he is mad, however, it is his inability to accept his own humanity that has made him so. In Chapter 132, "The Symphony," the reader is able to see this most clearly. The title itself seems to depict the culmination and subsequent outpouring of Ahab's soul. We gain insight about him through the words he speaks about himself. In a reflective mood, Ahab speaks of his past forty years at sea. He is only able to see the meaninglessness of it all. The sadness of the passage lies in Ahab's regret of his past and his seeming inability to accept any human offering of love; ". . .away, whole oceans away, from the young girlwife I wedded past fifty, and sailed for Cape Horn the next day leaving but one dent in my marriage pillow." (443)

In "The Symphony," Ahab reaches his tragic peak. He seems almost pathetic, yet when Starbuck, recognizing Ahab's vulnerability, offers an alternative, he refuses it and "like a blighted fruit tree," hate repossesses him, and he is revitalized by evil. (444) At that point, Ahab does arouse both pity and fear apropos an Aristotelian tragic hero. He gives up his soul, and at that point loses all chance for redemption.

Ahab is aware of existing love. His awareness of it and his complete inability to partake of it make him even more pitied. He is cut off from all that is human and he know this: ". . .fool - old fool, has old Ahab been!" (444) Even when Ahab commands Starbuck to stand close to him so that he can look into his eyes, he remains alienated, isolated from fulfilling human contact.

Ahab's quest for the white whale may seem illogical at first, but as the reader continues it becomes apparent that the Captain believes he is fated for the task. He says of himself: "Fool! I am fate's lieutenant;

I act under orders." (459) Because Ahab believes that he is destined, he is. Yet, his pursuit is somewhat of a contradiction in itself. While Ahab's vengence is aimed at a universe which has exercised control over him, he also is controlling the men under him. In seeking to destroy Moby Dick, he disregards the safety of the crew members and they are killed. Ahab is a man afraid to face his own insignificance and his hunt for the whale is a final act of defiance which ultimately demonstrates his, and mankind's, inadequacy against nature.

Captain Ahab and Moby Dick share equal space in the mind of the reader. Ahab exists as Van Wych Brooks describes him as "the soul, the brain, the will of the ship, and in the end, the embodiment of all bedevilled humanity."[5] Ahab is excessively proud and this is his tragic flaw. His will is admirable but the object of that will is warped vengence. He wishes to defy the established law of nature and replace it with man. In doing this, he places himself in a position that can only result in his own destruction due to his inability to yield. Ahab's pride "springs not out of conceit or vanity but out of suffering."[6]

Ahab feels certain about his quest yet he deceives himself. He refuses to draw a line between his capabilities and impossibilities. He refuses to accept his human limitations. He relies only on himself and in doing so isolates himself from others. Ironically, the leg that he is missing is replaced by part of a whale's jaw and it is made evident that he cannot escape existing as part of the universe he abhors.

In order to understand the character of Ahab, one must also examine the characters surrounding him and their relationships to him. The characters to consider in particular are the carpenter, the blacksmith, and Pip.

The carpenter is a simple non-questioning man who knows his business and that is all. Ahab (because of his excessive pride) resents the fact that he must depend on the carpenter - whom he considers his inferior - for construction of a new leg. This is made clear when Ahab exclaims, "Oh life! Here I am, proud as a Greek God, and yet standing debtor this blockhead for a bone to stand on! Cursed be that mortal inter-indebtedness which will not do away with ledgers." (391-2)

The blacksmith, on the other hand, is a man who has suffered a great

deal, but who has not been overcome completely by the blows life had dealt him. He, in opposition to Ahab, has accepted his lot and become reconciled to his life. Perhaps the best description of him comes when the author says: "No murmur, no impatience, no petulance did come from him. Silent, slow, and solemn; bowing over still further his chronically broken back, he toiled away, as if toil were life itself and the heavy beating of his hammer the heavy beating of his heart. And so it was most miserable!" (400)

Finally, there is Pip. Pip's madness comes from being crushed under the weight of life. However, like the lowly fool in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, he touches Ahab and sparks humanity in him. Ahab says of him, "I do suck most wonderous philosophies from thee!" (433)

Pip seems to have a therapeutic effect on Ahab. When he swears faithfulness to the tormented captain, Ahab proclaims, "Oh! Spite of million villians, this makes me a bigot in the fadeless fidelity of man!" (436) However, while we may see the capability of compassion in Ahab, we also see it snuffed by his hateful and all-possessing pride.

Ahab's final alienation comes during the last three day chase. Ahab, throughout the entire novel, has been caught in the eternal struggle between good and evil - Starbuck vs. Fedellah. Now, during the chase, he is tense and grim and he must cease to be suspended and choose between the two forces. Starbuck in a last desperate attempt cries out to Ahab, "Oh! Ahab, not too late is it, even now, the third day, to desist. See! Moby Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou that madly seekest him!" (465) Ahab, nevertheless, refuses salvation. He has been so blinded with his solitary purpose that after a wave had crashed over his boat he cried, "I grow blind; hands! stretch out before me that I may grope my way. Is't night?" (467) He is most human at this point - groping in the darkness of the universe - seeking light or meaning for his existence.

At the end of the story, Ahab is stripped of his epic qualities, left simply a man at the time of his destruction. He is mortal - crippled and powerless. He goes to his death however, still accepting damnation, rejecting God: "I turn my body from the sun" (468) He laments only that his ship will perish without him since this act will cut him off complete-

ly from the only form of human contact he has known:". . .death - glorious ship! must ye then perish, and without me? Am I cut from the last fond pride of meanest shipwrecked captains? Oh lonely death on lonely life! Oh, now I feel my topmost greatness lies in my topmost grief." Dying, Ahab damns the whale once again and gives up: "Thus, I give up the spear!" (468)

Ahab fits into the mold set forth by Aristotle. Yet, the tragedy of Ahab lies in Ahab the man. He was not larger than life, but rather the epitome of humanness, totally unable to accept the restrictions placed upon him by his humanness. Melville's genius lies in his portrait of Ahab as a human being.

NOTES

[1]Raymond M. Weaver, *Herman Melville, Mariner and Mystic* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1948), p. 25.

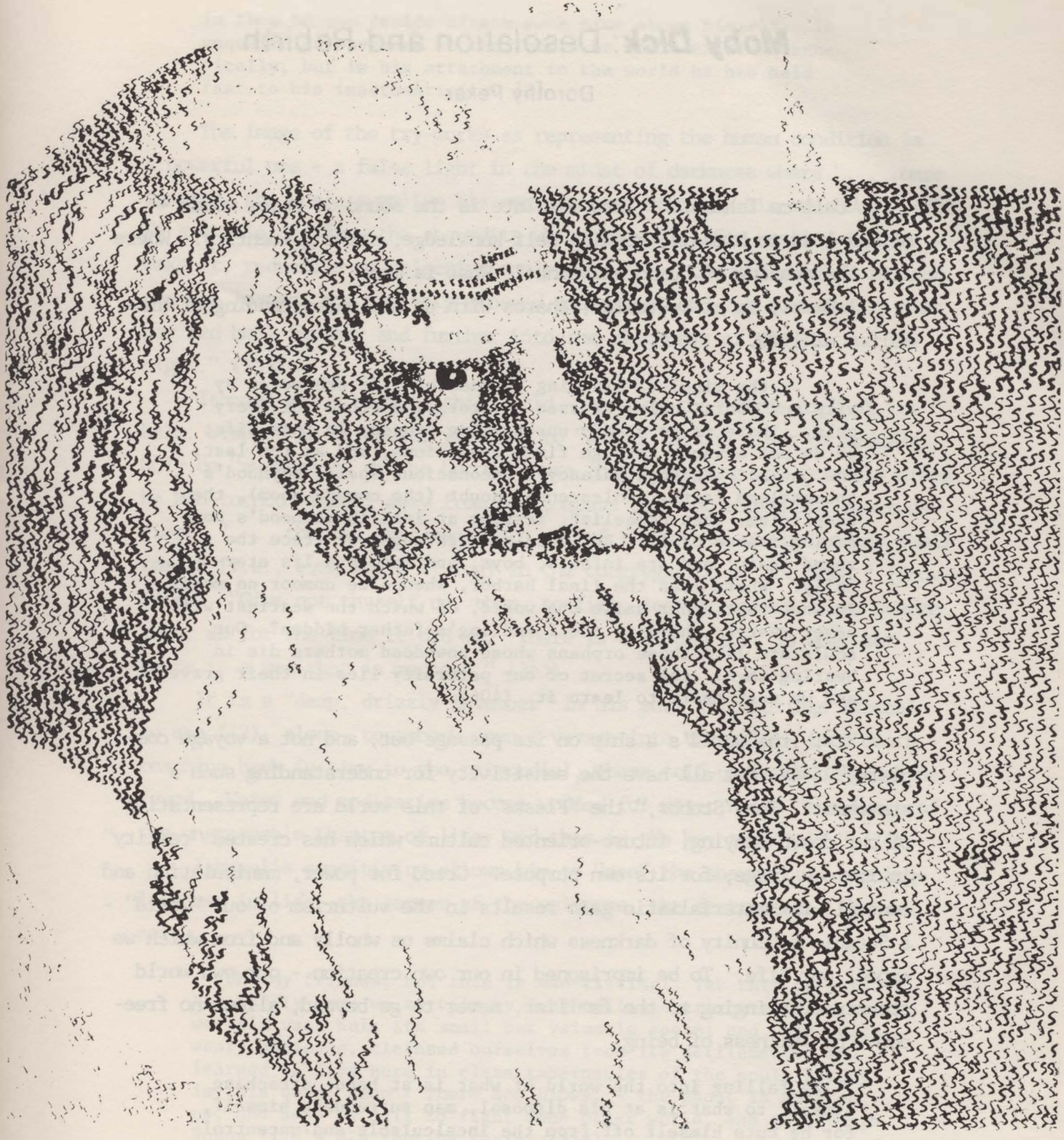
[2]Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 76. All subsequent quotations from *Moby Dick* are from this source.

[3]Alan Lebowitz, *Progress Into Silence, A Study of Melville's Heroes* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1970), p. 45.

[4]Weaver, p. 332.

[5]Van Wyck Brooks, "A Third Look at Melville," in *Moby Dick as Doubloon,* edited by Hershel Parker and Harrison Hayford (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 157.

[6]Stanley Geist, "Melville's Tragically Great Hero," in *Moby Dick,* edited by Hershel Parker and Harrison Hayford (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 639.



Phyllis Liuzzo

Moby Dick: Desolation and Rebirth

Dorothy Pekar

"Call me Ishmael."[1] How desolate is the sound of these words - of one lost to himself, seeking self-knowledge, seeking identity. Where lies the meaning of human existence? What is man?

Ishmael, as story-teller, shares with us his understanding of himself - of life.

> . . .the mingled, mingling threads of life are woven by warp and woof: calms crossed by storms, a storm for every calm. There is no steady unretracing process in this life; we do not advance through fixed gradations, and at the last, one pause: - through infancy's unconscious spell, boyhood's thoughtless faith, adolescence' doubt (the common doom), then scepticism, then disbelief, resting at last in manhood's pondering repose of If. But once gone through, we trace the round again; and are infants, boys, and men, and Ifs eternally. Where lies the final harbor, whence we unmoor no more? In what rapt ether sails the world, of which the weariest will never weary? Where is the foundling's father hidden? Our souls are like those orphans whose unwedded mothers die in bearing them: the secret of our paternity lies in their grave, and we must there to learn it. (406)

". . .the world's a ship on its passage out, and not a voyage complete." (44) Not all have the sensitivity for understanding such a statement. The "Stubbs," the "Flasks" of this world are representative of our death-denying, future-oriented culture which has created "reality" in its own image, for its own purpose. Greed for power, manipulation and control, for materialistic gain results in the vulturism of our "world" - a Satanic community of darkness which claims us wholly and from which we expect our life. To be imprisoned in our own creation - our own world structure, clinging to the familiar, never to go beyond, allows no freedom - no fullness of being.

> By falling into the world of what is at hand, attaching himself to what is at his disposal, man surrenders himself, for he cuts himself off from the incalculable and uncontrollable encounter of the future in which he is himself, because

> in them he can decide afresh each time about himself. In unqualified openness to the future he would exist authentically, but in his attachment to the world he has held fast to his inauthenticity. [2]

The image of the try-works as representing the human condition is a powerful one - a false light in the midst of darkness where ". . .once ignited, the whale supplies his own fuel and burns by his own body." (353) We are shielded from the absurdity which prevails, for reality is what we make it, reducible to objective analysis: ". . .the wind howled in, and the sea leaped, and the ship groaned and dived, and yet steadfastly shot her red hell further and further into the blackness of the sea and the night." (353)

Ishmael was a part of this world - guiding the "fire-ship" at its helm, wrapped in darkness, yielding to "sleep" in the midst of madness. Only on "awakening" did he become aware that something was terribly wrong. He had turned himself away from his compass and was headed for destruction: ". . .the man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain [i.e., even while living] in the congregation of the dead." (Prov. 21:16) "Give not thyself up, then, to fire, lest it invert thee, deaden thee; as for the time it did me. There is a wisdom that is woe; but there is a woe that is madness." (355)

It is a "damp, drizzly November" in his soul which brings Ishmael to sea (12); alone, to embark upon a voyage into the self - into death - reaching back in time to the primordial; where self-understanding can be found. Water and meditation become wedded for water holds "the image of the ungraspable phantom of life; and this is the key to it all." (14)

Ishmael's sensitivity allows him to "see" the absurd, the meaninglessness in life, the terror of the universe, the destruction, the deceit.

> Oh! my friends, but this is man-killing! Yet this is life. For hardly have we mortals by long toilings extracted from this world's vast bulk its small but valuable sperm; and then, with weary patience, cleansed ourselves from its defilements, and learned to live here in clean tabernacles of the soul; hardly is this done, when - *There she blows!* - the ghost is spouted up, and away we sail to fight some other world, and go through young life's old routine again. (358)

> . . .the palsied universe lies before us a leper; and like wilful travellers in Lapland, who refuse to wear colored and coloring glasses upon their eyes, so the wretched infidel gazes himself blind at the monumental white shroud that wraps all the prospect around him. And of all these things the Albino whale was the symbol. (170)

Ishmael is drawn into the vortex; he descends into "hell"; he touches death. To dive at death is to die to one's self-orientation, to see the inadequacy in one's own creation of reality and be willing to go beyond this structure, to throw one's self into the unknown, "into the region of the strange Untried." (402)

"All men live enveloped in whale-lines. All are born with halters round their necks, but it is only when caught in the swift, sudden turn of death, that mortals realize the silent, subtle, ever-present perils of life." (241)

Only in the awareness of his own nothingness, his finiteness in the face of death, can man die to himself and realize a dimension of reality which is "wholly other," which is beyond the knowable, the graspable; beyond his world structure; a reality which calls him out into freedom, whose foundation is freedom itself.

The relationship of Ishmael and Queequeg is very important, for I feel that it is in the symbolism of Queequeg that Ishmael finds the means for rebirth. It is through the love they come to share that Ishamel begins to open himself to others, to viewpoints other than his own; his own world structure begins to break.

The image of the monkey-rope not only involves the understanding that men are brothers, tied together, and should be willing to die for one another, but also that each of us has the management of only *one* end of the rope. We must not seek to control - manipulate one another, but must give each the freedom to be himself.

> I began to be sensible of strange feelings. I felt a melting in me. No more my splintered heart and maddened hand were turned against the wolfish world. This soothing savage had redeemed it. There he sat, his very indifference speaking a nature in which there lurked no civilized hypocrisies and bland deceits. Wild he was; a very sight of sights to see; yet I began to feel myself mysteriously drawn towards him. And those same things that would have repelled

most others, they were the very magnets that thus drew me. (53)

True love - true friendship is not open to objectivity; it cannot be placed under one's control. Human relationships escape definition for they stem from a dimension beyond our world structures and can only be realized through existential encounter.

> Oh! my dear fellow beings, why should we longer cherish any social acerbities, or know the slightest ill-humor or envy! Come; let us squeeze hands all round' nay, let us all squeeze ourselves into each other; let us squeeze ourselves universally into the very milk and sperm of kindness. (348-9)

On Queequeg's body had been tattooed "a complete theory of the heavens and the earth, and a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth." (399) These were the unsolvable mysteries which Queequeg carved onto his coffin - a symbol of himself, the mysteries of life, the symbol of rebirth for Ishmael.

Ishmael is reborn, having destroyed the vision of what he had believed to be reality. He no longer has the need to strip everything until it is undone but rather has a reverance, an openness, an acceptance to that which he encounters. He is brought back to the relationship of others by the Rachel who had been searching for her lost child but "only found another orphan " (470) he who was stripped of his old parentage, his old language, his old reality. Truth must be shared if it is to be meaningful and so Ishmael in his new reality is brought into being linguistically - metaphorically, through the creation of his story.

To be an "Ishmael" in a "Flaskian" world is difficult. Perhaps only a few will find the way.

> Do not believe
> the world is a closed box
> under which, with lid secure,
> we wind our sheet, wrap our life
> in time's cocoon
> and go to sleep.
>
> Have you noticed
> how the magic of love
> touches dark fields
> with clouds of flowers?
> How the acres - yesterday
> a tangle of thorns,

a pulp of old leaves -
run now with silver streams?

We shed our winter cloaks,
our hoods of snow;
change pace;
our featherlight selves
rise through the air
upward; the only channel
open to us, the way to sunlight,
to freedom. [3]

NOTES

[1]Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, edited by Harrison Hayford and Hershel Parker (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 12. All subsequent references to this book will be to this edition.

[2]W. Schmithals, *An Introduction to the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1968), p. 89.

[3]C. de Vinck, *A Time to Gather* (New Jersey: Alleluia Press, 1967), p. 42.

RUSH HOUR

Bryan Farrell

Mouth Spewing and the Puritan Adolescent: A Look at Fire, Brimstone, and Sermons in Puritan New England

S. Michael Furo

> If you cry to God to pity you, He will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case or showing you the least regard or favor, that instead of that He'll only tread you under foot; and though He will know that you can't bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet He won't regard that, but He will crush you under his feet without mercy; He'll crush out your blood, and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on His garments, so as to stain all His raiment. He will not only hate you, but He will have you in the utmost contempt; no place shall be thought fit for you but under His feet, but be trodden down as the mire of the streets. [1]

Far from the words of consolation which we normally associate with Christianity, this dissertation, and a great deal of others like it, spewed forth from the mouths of ministers in colonial New England, making the pulpit the single most horrifying symbol in the daily lives of the Puritan child and adolescent. The effect, as can be imagined, was to hurl the child into "a process of deliberate introspection, whose mark [was] left in the constitution of melancholy and frequent insanity."[2]

This particular type of rhetoric was, of course, not the only manner of discourse to be heard in the Puritan Meetinghouse. However, its occurrence was often enough, and to a great enough extent, to warrant a deep concern on the part of anyone wishing to understand Puritanism as a cultural influence. The main reason for its extensive influence is that "the principal popular literary form of the early New Englanders was the sermon."[3] Furthermore, their encounter with sermons was not limited to Sunday. "Not only did many of the inhabitants during the first generation by law attend two sermons on Sunday, but the first colonists also could read and study as home an enormous variety of published sermons."[4]

The sermons themselves were amplified by the rhetorical techniques which they employed. "Puritan literature, particularly the sermon, received its fundamental vitality and meaning from the deepest feeling of the individuals who listened to, purchased, read, and re-read those writ-

ings."[5] In essence, the sermon reached into the hearts of the congregation and ripped from their consciences every feeling of guilt and the knowledge of every personal transgression. No one was spared of this for "All men have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

None suffered more from such intense personal introspection than the children, particularly the adolescents, whose lives at this stage of their growth were occupied with the attempt to arrive at some sort of self-definition. This is normally accomplished, to a certain extent, by pushing against the environment and testing its resistence. Hence, we have the disobedience which is so characteristic of adolescence.

In contrast to the needs of the adolescent, child rearing in the seventeenth century in New England may best be described as "an epoch of systematic brutality toward the young."[6] Obedience to the parents was the most vehement demand. "Although the Massachusetts law prescribing death for disobedience to the parents was never enforced, ministers never let the children forget God's punishment: 'So when children shall rebel against their Parents, wickedness is excessively great. And such children do usually die before their time.'"[7] The demand for obedience can be traced directly to Calvin himself, who stated, "Those who violate the parental authority by contempt or rebellion are not men but monsters. Therefore, the Lord commands all those who are disobedient to be put to death."[8]

Physical death, of course, was not the only fear which children had to associate with disobedience. Michael Wigglesworth in "The Day of Doom" warns of far greater horrors. This poem, which became America's first best-seller, graphically portrays the second coming of Christ and the judgement of all Mankind. The fear of the judged may be best described by the verse in the book of Revelation, which the poem paraphrases at the end: "They cried out to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us! Hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! The great day of their vengeance has come. Who can withstand it?'" (rev. 6:16-7)

The inability of the sinner to escape punishment is further emphasized by Jonathan Edwards in his sermon, "The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable": "What will it signify for a worm, which is about to be pressed under the weight of some great rock, to be let fall with its whole weight upon it, to collect its strength, to set

itself to bear up the weight of the rock, and to preserve itself from being crushed by it? - Much more vain will it be for a poor damned soul, to endeavor to support itself under the weight of the wrath of Almighty God. What is the strength of man, who is but a worm, to support himself against the power of Jehovah, and against the fierceness of his wrath?"[9]

It is important to note that the Puritans considered this preaching of hell-fire and damnation to be more than mere pastoral rhetoric. "Puritans believed that the Biblical text selected for preaching actually contained all of the sermon. A Minister did not find a passage to strengthen his message; rather, a test seized him and made clear its meaning, dictating and controlling the ensuing doctrines and applications."[10] Hence, the words were believed to be, not those of the minister, but those of the Holy Spirit.

The need of the adolescent to question, and the forbiddence of any questioning of authority, must have caused a great deal of internal conflict. "The fact that the town records reveal little open rebellion of adolescents suggests that the young people struggled privately and often silently during their periods of crisis."[11] Furthermore, "Because the society repressed the young, it thereby prolonged and heightened the agony of adolescence."[12]

Also, we cannot ignore the problem of the anxieties produced by the sexual discoveries of adolescence, especially for boys who are just entering puberty. It is this anxiety which we encounter in Wigglesworth's journal, when he relates, "The last night a filthy dream and so pollution escaped me in my sleep for which I desire to hang my head with shame and beseech the Lord not to make me possess the sin of my youth and give me into the hands of my abomination."[13]

Two of the basic needs of the adolescent were not met by the Puritan culture. The first need, the need for a development of self-trust, was considered heresy. "For anyone to forget that he was totally dependent upon God's grace was a sin of presumption."[14]

The second basic need of the adolescent was some kind of continuity between the life of a child and the life of an adult. However, the Puritans taught their children to be conformists in the New World (even though

they had been nonconformists in Europe), and to leave leadership to their elders. Thus, there was a great contrast and contradiction between the two periods of their lives.

By far, one of the greatest damages done to the mental health of the children and adolescents of this period may be found in the types of punishment which their parents inflicted upon them. "There was an insistent emphasis upon the shaming of children as an effective technique of child rearing."[15] This supported the child's feeling of guilt, which the sermons constantly spoke to.

Also, the Puritan parents would often remove love as a punishment for misbehavior. This reality would evoke sheer terror when the children would hear such sermons as the one by Increase Mather, when he says, "What a dismal thing will it be when a child shall see his Father at the right hand of Christ in the day of judgement, but himself at his left hand; And when his Father shall join with Christ in passing sentence of Eternal Death upon him; And when after the judgement children shall see their Father going with Christ to Heaven, but themselves going away into Everlasting Punishment."[16]

This fear of being separated from their parents was also very strongly reinforced during the time of their apprenticeship, when they were forced to leave their families. "Indeed, for a people who used parental rejection as a form of punishment of the child in his early years, the practice of seeming to expel the child from his home in puberty must have had serious psychological repercussions. Children who were sent out of their homes at the very time in their lives when they were experiencing renewed doubts about the state of their souls would have been inclined to make an unconscious connection, at least, between their sinfulness and the actions of their parents."[17]

What were the effects of all this on the Puritan adolescent? "Although most children responded to these tactics of fear and shaming by developing the expected obedience and dutifulness, others experienced severe psychological distress that took the form of early religious experiences and demonstrations of early piety."[18] Out of fear they responded to the call to personal salvation, but there was no consolation to be found in their faith; Puritanism offered them nothing more than increased anxiety. "Children suf-

fered cruelly from the fear of sin's consequences."[19]

James Janeway published a book in 1700 entitled *A Token for Children.* The book was a collection of narratives about early conversion experiences. Each story followed the same format: the child experiences a conversion in his early life, then, in puberty, he experiences serious physical and psychological difficulties which result in his being convinced of his own sinfulness; he then falls ill, is finally reassured of his salvation, and he dies.[20] "Janeway's stories, and others like them in sermons, present striking evidence of the effects of the extreme emotional pressure that children of that period endure."[21]

Ultimately, the fear and the guilt and the anxiety, which the sermon literature of this period instilled in the adolescent, evoked a feeling of sinfulness, of vile wretchedness, and of such a lack of personal worth, that they were driven to tragic consequences. "In his work, *Children and Puritanism*, Sanford Fleming found in the children of the second and third generations, 'a condition of melancholia leading to insanity and suicide;' and he observes that when children did manifest a conversion experience, 'it was the result of pressure brought to bear upon them, and was wholly abnormal and there fore deplorable.'"[22] Such were the tragic consequences of the sermons of early New England. Hell-fire and damnation took its toll, and, if we consider Jung's theory of "collective unconscious," the anxieties are in social behavior today.

NOTES

[1]Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," in Milton R. Stern, editor, *American Literature Survey* (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 200.

[2]Barrett Wendell, *Cotton Mather, The Puritan Priest* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1891), p. 29, as quoted in Emory Elliott, *Power and the Pulpit in Puritan New England* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 65.

[3]Phyllis Jones, "Biblical Rhetoric and the Pulpit Literature of Early New England," *Early American Literature* XI(1976/1977), 245.

[4]Jones, 245.

[5]Emory Elliott, *Power and the Pulpit in Puritan New England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 63.

[6]Katherine Anne Porter, *The Collected Essays and Occasional Writings of Katherine Anne Porter* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1970), p. 314, as quoted in Elliott, p. 64.

[7]Elliott, pp. 66-7.

[8]John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by Ford L. Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 344 (See also pp. 360, 364-7), as quoted in Elliott, p. 68.

[9]Jonathan Edwards, "The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable," in Eugene E. White, *Puritan Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), p. 74.

[10]Jones, p. 245.

[11]Elliott, p. 72.

[12]Elliott, p. 72.

[13]Elliott, p. 73.

[14]Elliott, p. 78.

[15]Elliott, p. 69.

[16]Increase Mather, *An Earnest Exhortation to the Children of New England* (Boston: 1700), pp. 35-6. See a similar statement in *A Call from Heaven*, p. 28, as quoted in Elliott, p. 68.

[17]Elliott, p. 75.

[18]Elliott, pp. 69-70.

[19]Elliott, p. 65.

[20]Elliott, p. 70.

[21]Elliott, p. 70.

[22]Elliott, p. 65.

WOO MAN

Michael Spizzirri

A Comparison of Huck Finn and Nick Carraway

Sally Richmond

In terms of time, place, structure, and authors intentions, *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Great Gatsby* do not have much in common. Their narrators, Huck Finn and Nick Carraway, also differ in age and circumstances. Yet I found after reading the two novels that I had much the same mixed feelings of hope and disillusionment for each narrator. Beyond the many differences, Huck Finn and Nick Carraway share a spiritual bond, which begins in the way each views society.

I.

Although the societies through which Huck Finn and Nick Carraway travel are dissimilar on the surface, the basic natures of these societies are alike. The predominant underlying characteristics of each are violence and moral shallowness. When Huck Finn is sheltered by the aristocratic Grangerford clan, his matter-of-fact descriptions of their house point up the superficiality of their way of life.

> On the table in the middle of the room was a kind of lovely crockery basket that had apples and oranges and peaches and grapes piled up in it, which was much redder and yellower and prettier than real ones is, but they warn't real because you could see where pieces had got chipped off and showed the white chalk, or whatever it was, underneath. [1]

In the next chapter, Huck learns that superficialness of appearance extends also to the persons of the Grangerfords. After seeing the family through admiring eyes, he finds its ideal appearance is seriously flawed; the family is involved in a senseless feud. When the Grangerfords went to church, "the men took their guns along. . .and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall." (141) The following is Huck's description of the parties the Grangerfords give, further showing the flaw in appearance.

> Sometimes a stack of people would come there, horseback, from ten or fifteen mile around, and stay five or six days,

> and have such junketings round about and on the river, and dances and picnics in the woods daytimes, and balls at the house nights. These people was mostly kinfolks of the family. The men brought their guns with them. It was a handsome lot of quality, I tell you. (137)

The society which Nick Carraway views also contains the same discrepancy between illusion and reality, or in other words, the violent evidences of a shallow morality. Nick describes parties at Gatsby's house:

> In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. . . .On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight. . . .And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before. [2]

The two preceding passages quoted are interesting not only for the comments on society, but also for the styles of the narrators. Though Nick's voice is more sophisticated than Huck's, his "style, with all its wit and vitality from understatement to extravagance,"[3] is the same as Huck's style. In both descriptions of the parties, the sense of glamour and excitement is overstated. The reality behind the appearances is given a subordinate position and is understated. The effect is ironic. I think it is this constant play between overstatement and understatement in the two novels that creates much of the tension in the reader. Especially as neither narrator directly comments on the discrepancies. One other example is where Huck Finn, floating down the river on the raft, watches the scenery on shore changing from natural beauty to despoiling civilization. (151) I was reminded of Nick's description, in the fertile terms of a farm, of the "valley of ashes." (14) There are many passages in both novels which show a seemingly factual, ironic view of society. However, because the reader receives the descriptions second-hand from the narrators, it is the characters of Huck Finn and Nick Carroway that are important.

II.

Nick Carraway may be "thirty years old in the summer of 1922, the time of the novel, [but] he is still an adolescent when he settles on

Long Island, with an adolescent's memory of the war."[4] Morally, Nick is not a great deal older than Huck Finn. He has a "habit of reserving judgement,"[5] while Huck uses "the ethics of tolerance and appeasement."[6] Both narrators are conscious of their attitudes. Nick ascribes his to what his "father snobbishly suggested. . .[that] a sense of fundamental decencies is parcelled out unequally at birth." (5) Huck also traces his creed to his father: "If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way." (160)

Despite, or more likely, because of these narrators' reservations on passing judgement, their accounts come off as essentially honest. Huck Finn "does not set [his experience] up in an artificial order or give it the pastel colouring of romantic diction. He leaves it as it came to him, a bewildering muddle of keenly-felt sensations."[7] And, while Nick's descriptions are admittedly romanticized at times, he possesses "a serious kind of candour. Nick considers not only his friends, but himself as well."[8]

Huck Finn's and Nick Carraway's attitudes may give their accounts credibility, but the effects are more far-reaching in character. First, these two narrators have little sense of purpose. Huck Finn originally lights out because it is the easiest thing for him to do. Nick "comes to New York to enter the bondselling business chiefly because other restless young men are doing the same thing."[9] The narrators are also trying to escape the responsibilities of personal relationships. Not too far into *The Great Gatsby*, Nick completes his reasons for coming East.

> The fact that gossip had published the banns was one of the reasons I had come East. You can't stop going with an old friend on account of rumors, and on the other hand I had no intention of being rumored into marriage. (13)

And Huck wants "to get so far away that the old man [pap] nor widow couldn't ever find me anymore," (35) so he won't have to "go to bed and get up regular." (32)

The second effect of a creed of tolerance or indiscriminate reservation of judgement, is that it often leads to a species of immorality.

Neither narrator realizes at the outset of his adventure the implications inherent in his creed. Huck Finn and Nick Carraway are often called innocent, naive, or provincial. I feel it is necessary to qualify these epithets. Huck Finn and Nick Carraway are innocent, but innocent in the sense of lack; they lack a personal sense of moral standards. It is when the narrators are forced into personal contact with their respective societies, where "the dominant type of social relationship is founded, not on knowledge, love and trust of the other person, but on superficial gestures and appearances of passing strangers,"[10] that they are "forced into moral activity."[11]

The Grangerfords, with whom Huck stays for a spell, have a son about the same age as Huck. The two naturally become friendly, but Buck, the son, is killed as a result of the feud. Huck finds his body. The meaningless death of a boy much like himself (even down to name), "teaches Huck the callous inhumanity underlying the Southern aristocratic code."[12] Huck's reaction to the death is uncharacteristic; he edits the episode.

> I ain't a-going to tell *all* that happened - it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them - lots of times I dream about them. (148)

The episode is much like one in *The Great Gatsby* which affects Nick deeply, the senseless death of Myrtle. Nick writes that the night of her death, "I couldn't sleep all night; a fog-horn was groaning incessantly on the sound, and I tossed half-sick between grotesque reality and savage, frightening dreams." (65)

But although Huck Finn and Nick Carraway can see the nightmarish quality of meaningless death, it is not enough. Morality is societal; it exists in positive action. The high point in each novel comes when its narrator puts an internal sense of morality into action. Despite their creeds, Huck Finn and Nick Carraway each become involved in a friendship with an outcast of society, deeply enough so each must make a moral choice between the friend and society.

The choice Huck Finn must make is one he has been unconsciously arguing within himself. He feels the right thing to do is turn in his friend Jim, a runaway slave. The first time an opportunity arises, Huck is deter-

mined to betray Jim, "but the words wouldn't come.....So I just give up trying" (116). Huck has decided for Jim, but he does not question why. The second time Huck has an opportunity, again, "the words wouldn't come," but immediately Huck questions himself, "Why wouldn't they?" (271) This time the words that come were a prayer to harden his heart against Jim. Huck is surprised by his own answer. He finds that his feelings for Jim, based on mutual trust and need, are greater than his desire for society's version of morality. He chooses Jim, and instead hardens his heart against what he thinks are the consequences of his decision. "'All right, then I'll *go* to hell.'. . .It was awful thoughts and awful words, but they was said. And I let them stay said; and never thought no more about reforming" (273).

Nick Carraway has the same kind of decision to make in his friendship with Gatsby. Like Huck, he chooses at first unconsciously. Gatsby offers Nick a chance to "pick up a nice bit of money," (38) in return for a favor. In telling of his rejection of the offer, Nick says, "I realize now that under different circumstances that conversation might have been one of the crises of my life. But, because the offer was obviously and tactlessly for service to be rendered, I had no choice except to cut him off there." (39) I think what Nick realizes as he tells of the incident is that he had made a moral choice for Gatsby. It was not one of the crises of his life because Nick, by refusing Gatsby's external, monetary value, had accepted him on the internal basis of friendship. Later in *The Great Gatsby* comes the moment when Nick puts this acceptance into action. He and Gatsby have shared the dawning of a day, and Nick must leave for work. Nick writes, "I didn't want to leave Gatsby," (68) but he does. As he was leaving, Nick relates, "I remembered something and turned around. 'They're a rotten crowd,' I shouted across the lawn. 'You're worth the whole damn bunch put together.'" (69)

III.

The marvelous scenes in which Huck Finn and Nick Carraway affirm the ties of friendship give me the feeling of hope mentioned in the beginning of this paper. Comparatively, the feeling of disillusionment is small. The ending of *Huckleberry Finn* seems almost calculated to disappoint

the reader. Yet, I agree with the statement that, "it is right that the mood of the end of the book should bring us back to that of the beginning."[13] When Huck writes at the end of the novel that he has "got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to. . .sivilize me," (374) there is a world of difference from the beginning. Huck has learned about society and himself. There is meaning in his writing, "I can't stand it. I been there before." (374) With Nick, one is left with nagging doubts about his relationship with Jordan. "Nick was dishonest because he acted as though he brought no other standards of conduct to judge their liason with than those which Jordan's hedonism impose."[14] But Nick ends the relationship with full recognition of his part. (79) He has "learn[ed] to stop reserving judgement."[15]

The choice Huck Finn and Nick Carraway both made was hard-won, and as in life, entailed a loss for each. When Huck Finn first ran away to Jackson Island, he felt not only a sense of freedom, but also a sense of place, of belonging. "I went exploring around down through the island. I was boss of it; it all belonged to me, so to say, and I wanted to know all about it." (51) When Nick first starts living on Long Island, his feeling is the same. A stranger asks Nick for directions, and Nick writes, "I was a guide, a pathfinder, an original settler. He had casually conferred on me the freedom of the neighborhood." (6) This concurrent sense of freedom and belonging derived from a limited geographical place is the essence of the American Dream. Gatsby "forever wed his unutterable visions to [Daisy's] perishable breath." (51) Jim tied his visions to being a freeman with a farm of his own. All these characters are like the man, who first seeing the New World, "must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an aesthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired." (*Gatsby,* 80) A critic of *The Great Gatsby* wrote that "Fitzgerald represents the past both as a loss and as a source of strength."[16] The loss Huck Finn and Nick Carraway suffered from their choice of human ties over society was the loss of their own versions of the American Dream. The gain was a new kind of freedom, not limited by geography, but as expansive as the human spirit.

NOTES

[1]Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (New York: Pocket-books, 1977), pp. 129-30. All future page references to this book will be to this edition.

[2]F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby,* in Henry Dan Piper, *Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby: The Novel, The Critics, The Background* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), pp. 20-1. All future page references to this book will be to this edition.

[3]Gale H. Carrithers, Jr., "Fitzgerald's Triumph," in Frederick J. Hoffman, *The Great Gatsby: A Study* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), p. 307.

[4]Thomas Hanxo, "The Theme and The Narrator of *The Great Gatsby*," *Modern Fiction Studies II* (Winter 1956-7), in Hoffman, p. 287.

[5]Carrithers, Jr., p. 318.

[6]Albert E. Stone, Jr., *The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination* (Archon Books, 1970), p. 157.

[7]Jonathan Raban, *Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn* (New York: Barron's Educational Series, 1968), p. 16.

[8]Hanzo, p. 289.

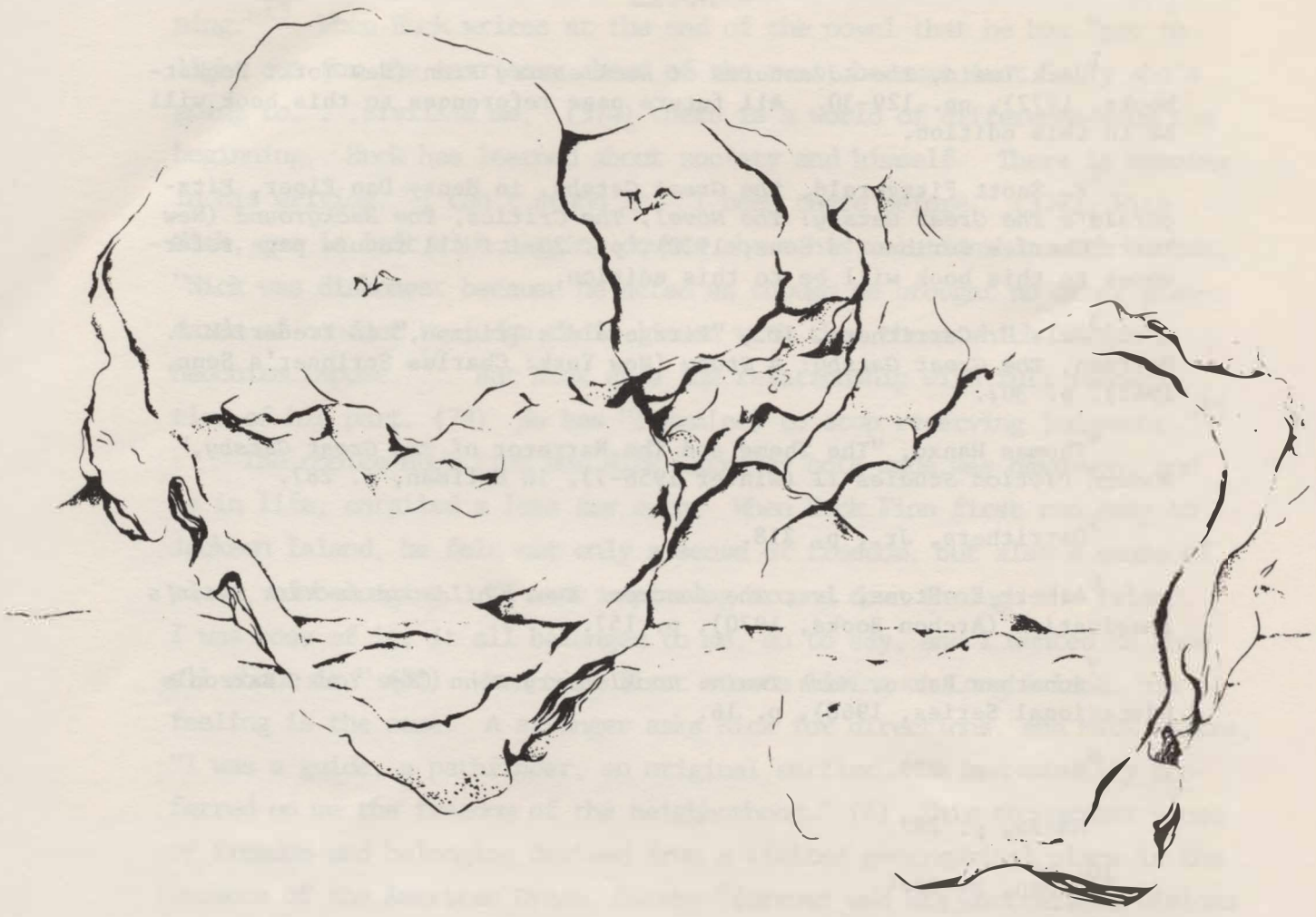
[9]Hanzo, p. 287.

[10]Raban, p. 33-4.

[11]Raban, p. 18.

[12]Stone, Jr., p. 149.

[13]T. S. Eliot, "Introduction to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (Chanticleer Press, 1950), in Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (New York: Pocket-Books, 1977), p. 39.



ESSENCE

Virginia Hoffman

WHERE IS IT?

Michael Spizzirri