the quint 3.1

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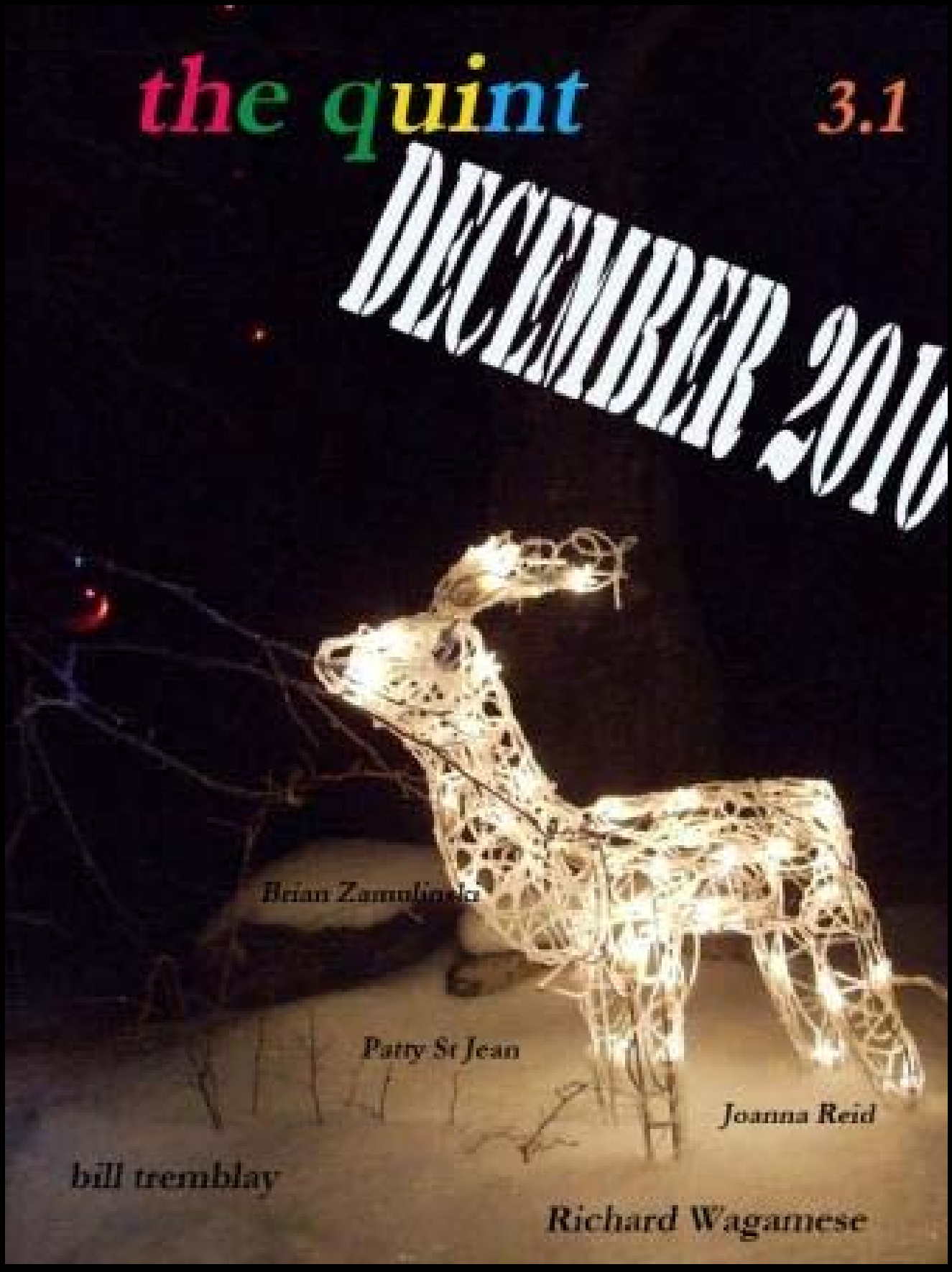

Brian Zamulinski

Patty St Jean

Joanna Reid

bill tremblay

Richard Wagamese

an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north

the quint *volume three issue one*

production: Jillian Karpick and Sue Matheson
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the quint
University College of the North
504 Princeton Drive
Thompson MB
Canada R8N 0A5

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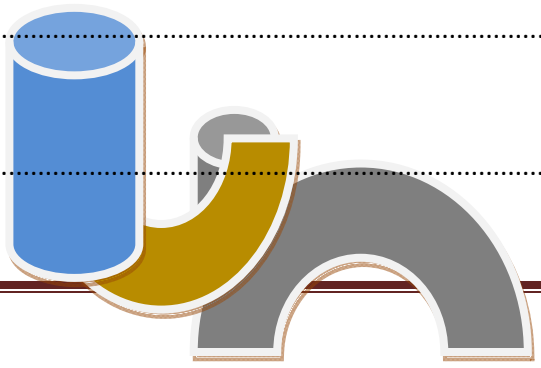
inside



EDITORIAL

This issue celebrates *the quint's* third Christmas at the University College of the North. We are extremely privileged to have received two very generous gifts this Christmas. Poet bill tremblay is letting us premiere "PANIC BREATHING," a stunningly good lyric housed in a long poem, *Fire With Fire*, based on the amazing life and powerful murals of Mexican social realist and revolutionary David Sigueiros. *Fire With Fire* is currently seeking a publisher, so we are the very first readers to see "PANIC BREATHING." *The quint* will be premiering two more poems from *Fire With Fire* in its upcoming issues. Artist and poet norman j. olson has also sent us his two latest works. How *quint* got to be this lucky I have no idea. We must have been awfully "nice" this year to have bill's and norman's works arrive in time for our stockings.

As well, our 2010 December issue packages some of best work in the North for your holiday reading: there are selections from "A Writer's World" by the prolific, award-winning Ojibway writer Richard Wagamese, a short story by Joanna Reid and some incredibly sensitive and sophisticated photography of the Snow Lake area in northern Manitoba from Patty St. Jean. We are also privileged to have two beautiful photo essays of Japan, one by Julyan Cartwright, the other by our own John Butler, to consider while the snow is swirling outside our windows. Under our tree, Jacob Bachinger's thought-provoking paper on Canadian garrison mentality, Brian Zamulinski's stimulating discussion concerning the philosophical paradox contained in the concept of religious freedom, and a paper from yours truly which examining ontological questions of time in James Cameron's *Aliens* (1986) are also waiting to be opened and read. As always, this *quint* is designed to stimulate the mind, satisfy the eye, and provide solace for the soul.

I won't keep you from our holiday cheer other than to say everyone at *the quint* would like me to wish you all the happiness that this season brings and success in all your endeavours in 2011. We'll be in the Thompson area after the New Year and back in March with more from the North for you to discover.

Sue Matheson
Managing Editor

selected from *Fire With Fire*

by bill tremblay

"PREFACE"

In the winter of 1997-98. I was on a bus in Mexico City with Phil Garrison heading southwest on Insurgentes when I saw a big billboard with the word SIQUEIROS in red, featuring a processed portrait of him in photographic black wearing a crown of thorns made of bayonets. It was an ad for his permanent exhibit, *The March of Humanity,* at the Polyforum. Maybe it was Mexico, the mixture of folk art and liberation theology, but it astonished me that at least some people regarded a modern painter as a Christ-figure.

The metaphor set its hook in me, though I had already been to Coyoacán taking notes for what would become a book of poems about Leon Trotsky's death in Mexico. So Siqueiros was set on the back-burner. After *Shooting Script: Door of Fire* was published [2003] and I went through my usual period of gathering strength, I turned my attention to him, wondering if there could be a verbal equivalent to his style, a kind of *concrete expressionism*, as opposed to the Cubism, abstract expressionism and easel painting that were prevalent during his lifetime. The trope of this book has become that the poems are murals, operating on a big canvas, that they are stills which are made to move and come alive, that they are, like Siqueiros' work, illuminations…

PANIC BREATHING

He jerks upright in bed,
eyes twin lakes emptying down his cheeks.
He stares at Angelica's sheer nightgown lit by
lightning mirrored off garden fronds. She sits up,
holding a breath in paranormal vacuum hush.
He tells her it was his father, his eyes half-veiled,
his mouth sealed with tar.

Angelica holds him
as she says that sometimes the dead play charades.
David fumbles a cigarette out of a pack on the night stand
remembering the name over the cathedral door.
—Your mother's name, she says, snapping on a lamp,
startled by a new canvas on a bedroom easel.

She notes the man in the painting has no eyes.
—Why have eyes if we don't want to see
how we have been chewed and eaten by machines
of our own making? Or ears if we don't want to hear it
grind our souls? Or a nose to smell when we know
the air's corruption? Or a mouth when to open it
is to forfeit our lives?

She says he sounds like some Cassandra,
but he's not predicting, he's projecting a current image,
though through the Mexican time-machine it's the same as
Moctezuma not listening to Cuahtémoc tell him
that Cortés is no god but just another pirate who'll steal

everything that makes them human,
but the stamina to outlast exile in their own home
on their pilgrimage back to who they once were.

He looks in the dresser mirror, his eyes
the blood-shot glyphs of nightmare. His brain's
in a baked cocoanut shell, his mind a lightless
closet of ghosts sealed in by dried mud.

What are her chances to post an article on the rally?
— Nobody wants to hear it, she says.
The man. In your painting. What's he begging for?
—He doesn't know he's dead. He thinks there's still
a meeting at Party headquarters to plan a protest.
Angelica hopes he won't argue with Contreras again.
—What I'd like to tell him is, no more meetings!
Let me do my work.

Lightning flashes again on wet garden palmettos

David feels cut open by the dream,
mumbling, mumbling something to Angelica
about adding a new passage to his memoirs,
pulling on paint-speckled pants, turtleneck.

Angelica moans:—I'm not your slave.
I need my sleep if I'm going to get through tomorrow.
—We can sleep when the struggle is over.
—I'm as committed as you are!
She fishes out paper and pen, dresser as desk
as he begins to gather steam about his boyhood.
—People ask how old I was when I first read Marx.
My answer is, I didn't get my politics from a book.

Angelica scribbles, then pauses, placing head on forearm.

David takes pen from hand, notebook from table, writes:

Pancho and I, eleven, sit on the fence watching
Don Antonio's trainer work the young bull
with cape and sword, observing whether he leads
with right or left horn. Pancho says he's sorry
my grandfather died. I'm sorry about his brother
whipped to death by Don Reynaldo Arellano.
He says he'll remember his brother when he ends up
in some skirmish in the wished-for revolution dead
like a bull in the arena, his tail tossed to a senorita
by some elegant killer in a pinche spangled suit and
puto shoes. We hear the chug-chug sputter of a Stanley
Steamer approaching Don Antonio's hacienda. I tell

him the trick to survival is always to be unpredictable.
And to know which side you're on, he adds. I'm on
your side, I say. He asks who's that rich man in the car?
My father, I confess. Come to take you home? I say
my home, no matter where I am, is always with you.

The Paradoxical Impact of Religious Freedom

by Brian Zamulinski, North Battleford, Saskatchewan

One of the things that philosophy does is to clarify concepts. This would appear to be just an academic exercise, a matter of understanding pursued for its own sake. However, the clarification of concepts has a practical purpose when the concepts are used in political discourse. In political discourse, a lack of clarity can make progress difficult and unnecessary conflict probable.

One concept which is widely misunderstood is the concept of a right to religious freedom. For instance, there are many contemporary religious people and organizations who claim the freedom to engage in the political process in the name of religious freedom. Their opponents often concede the point to them. On a true construction of the concept, however, maintaining religious freedom requires the religious to stay out of the political process. In the wheels of their activities, freedom of religion is grit, not grease. It will seem paradoxical to restrict the activities of the religious in order to maintain religious freedom. The aim of this paper is to argue that it is not paradoxical but true, and that we can see that it is true once we are clear on the nature of religious freedom.

The first issue is whether religious freedom is a legal or moral matter. If it is only a legal matter, it can be discussed only relative to different legal jurisdictions, for the laws granting and governing religious freedom vary from country to country. However, the present paper is not a discussion of the actual extent of religious freedom in particular places but its ideal extent. So, it will be treated as a moral issue. This will provide a basis for deciding whether the legally available religious freedom in a particular jurisdiction is insufficient, excessive, or appropriate, although no such judgments will be made in this paper. This approach is hypothetical: if there is a moral right to religious freedom, then this is what it is like. Nothing said here constitutes a commitment to the actual existence of such a right.

First, there will be an abstract delineation of the contours of a moral right to religious freedom. The logic of the notion will be clearer and less controversial if it is first discussed in a way that avoids contact with actual disputes in the political realm. Next, some concrete implications will be explored. There will be discussion of the implications for 1) the relationship between religion and the state in one section, 2) the relationship between religious organizations and their individual members in the next, and 3) the accommodation of religion in the pursuit of legitimate non-religious objectives in the third. Finally, I will consider and reject the objection that the position

here is equivalent to secularism and that secularism (or the position here for that matter) is just another religion.

Some will think that there is a problem with this approach because morality depends on religion. If this were a serious objection, it would really be that there cannot be such a thing as a moral right to religious freedom if morality is based on religion. However, it does not follow that we cannot see what a moral right to religious freedom would be like. It is possible to outline the contours of a theoretical moral right to religious freedom even if morality depends on religion. As already stated, the exploration is hypothetical. More importantly, it is false that morality depends on religion. There will be a brief examination of this falsehood in the discussion of the relationship between religion and the state. It will be enough to justify rejecting it.

This paper does not repeat the points made by Robert Audi. Audi argued that religion should stay out of politics because, if it did not, we could not achieve and maintain a well-functioning democracy.[1] When discussing the relationship between

[1] Robert Audi, "The Separation of Church and State and the Obligations of Citizenship," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 18 (1989), 259-296.

religion and the state, I will argue that religion has no right to work toward organizing the state in accordance with purely religious doctrines, because that amounts to some religious people trying to use the state to compel others to act in accordance with religious doctrines that the latter do not accept, which violates their religious freedom. However, nothing will be said as to whether this improves or impairs the functioning of democracy.

Religious Freedom in the Abstract

The first point is that no individual has a greater moral right to religious freedom than any other individual. This is the default position with any moral right unless there is some reason to extend privileges to some and not to others, and there is no such reason in this case. There is no reason why John should have a right to be religiously free to a greater extent than is Jane, or vice-versa. Furthermore, there is no combination of individuals that has a greater right to religious freedom than any single individual. There is no reason why John and Jane together should have more religious freedom than Joe does on his own.

The only apparent exceptions are cases in which we must minimize the number of violations of religious freedom. In such cases, a group would appear to count more

than a single individual if it were not possible to maintain the religious freedom of both the group and the individual. This is not really a case of the group being more important, however. It is just that each individual counts as one and that the contemplated circumstances are such that the only way to minimize the total number of individual violations is to protect the set of individuals who happen to belong to a group.

Second, moral rights can only belong ultimately to natural persons. In other words, it is only individual human beings and not organizations created by human beings that have a fundamental moral right to religious freedom. Any rights of organizations derive from the rights of its individual members. Thus, since greater numbers do not count, no organization of individuals can gain a greater right to religious freedom than a single individual deserves. Furthermore, the length of time that the organization has endured cannot give the members of the organization, either singly or jointly, a greater right to religious freedom. A new group with only a few members has as much a right to religious freedom as an old group with a billion. That being so, we cannot avoid the conclusion that an individual has as much right to religious freedom as any organization of individuals, no matter how old and no matter how large. If all individuals have an equal right to religious freedom, there is no way

for some individuals to leverage a privileged position for themselves by combining with others even if the combination lasts a long time.

Third, a moral right to religious freedom is a right not merely to lead a religious life or to engage in religious practices but also a right not to. There is no good argument for the proposition that, while no one is obligated to choose a particular item from the religious menu, everyone is obligated to order something from the menu. In other words, there is no good argument for the proposition that no one has an obligation to be Christian in particular, that no one has an obligation to be Muslim in particular, that no one has an obligation to be Buddhist in particular, etc., but that everyone has an obligation to be Christian, Muslim, or Buddhist, or … or whatever. If one person is free not to be a Christian or a Muslim, and another is free not to be a Muslim or a Buddhist, two people could together reject all individual religious requirements, if each rejected the option the other chose, although one of the people would obviously accept some of the requirements that the other rejected. But if all religious requirements can be rejected by a combination of two people, then every individual religious requirement *per se* must be optional. But if every individual religious requirement is optional, there is no reason why all of them could not be rejected by one person. After all, it is not true that being religious always benefits the

religious person or that it is necessary – or even typically sufficient – to ensure that we fulfil our moral obligations to others. Therefore, there is no good argument to the effect that we must choose from the menu of religions.

In contrast, there are good arguments against the proposition. For one, having to choose among extant religions would obviously be a restriction on one's freedom. Someone who must be a Christian or a Muslim or a Buddhist is not as free as someone who can be a Christian or a Muslim or a Buddhist or none of the foregoing. If he had to choose among extant religions, his participation in a particular religion would never be entirely voluntary. Since it would be a restriction on his freedom with respect to religion, it appears to be incompatible with his having a moral right to religious freedom.

For another, there are circumstances in which having to choose a religion would conflict with the fundamental moral equality of persons. Consider the fact that there are many religions that ascribe a subordinate status to women and the possibility that all might do so, as appears to have been the actual case in the not too distant past. If all religions gave women a subordinate status and if all individuals had an obligation to choose one religion or another, women would have an obligation to adopt a subordinate status. But there is no justification for the subordination of women. In a

situation in which all religions ascribed a subordinate status to women and in which all people had to choose a religion, the equality of women would be violated. It should not be violated in any way or to any extent. The only way to avoid violating it in the circumstances described is to maintain that a moral right to religious freedom includes a moral right to reject all extant religions.

It might be countered that what follows is just that women would have to develop an egalitarian religion, but the objection presupposes that the equality of women is conditional. Prior to the development of the egalitarian religion, there would still be a religious obstacle to equality that women would have to overcome and the consequence would still be unjustifiable inequality. A requirement to be religious would make life more difficult for any member of any class that a particular religion disfavoured, not only because developing a new religion is difficult but also because, even if there were a more congenial religion in existence somewhere, religious options are seldom evenly distributed. Since there is no right to deny equality to others for religious reasons, a moral right to religious freedom must include a moral right to eschew religion entirely.

Fourth, a moral right to religious freedom does not give an individual a right to ignore his moral obligations. It does not give him the right to commit murder or any

other wrongful act. If it did, acquiring a religion would give a person a moral privilege that others did not have, and the privileges would vary, depending on the religion acquired. It would be a privilege to act in what would be a morally unacceptable way if the agent were not religious, or had a different religion. There is no justification for such a privilege if all have an equal moral right to religious freedom and if it includes a right to eschew religion entirely, because it would amount to one person being free to use or victimize others in the name of his religion, which would violate the religious freedom of the persons used or victimized. Therefore, a moral right to religious freedom does not give an individual a right to ignore his moral obligations. It is at most a right for an individual to live his religious life in a way that is compatible with his fulfilling all his moral obligations to other members of the moral community.

Similarly, a moral right to religious freedom does not entail a moral right to freedom of opinion with respect to ethical issues. If someone had the latter right, he could believe anything he wanted about them. If he could believe anything he wanted with respect to ethics, he could do anything he wanted, combining the relevant beliefs with a desire to do the right thing. But if ethics does anything, it restricts the range of permissible actions. It does so no matter whether it is relative or not. If ethics is relative, then it restricts the range of permissible actions differently in different ethical

"jurisdictions" but it restricts them nonetheless. So, a moral right to religious freedom does not permit us to believe anything at all that we might want to believe.

Fifth, a moral right to religious freedom would be a liberty right and not a claim right.[2] A liberty right is like the right to marry. If you have the right to marry, no one can stop you but neither is anyone obligated to become your spouse or even to help you meet a potential spouse. In contrast, a claim right is like the right to have debts repaid. If you have a right to have a debt repaid, then the debtor has a correlative obligation to pay it back. If it were a claim right, then one person's moral right to religious freedom could impinge on or restrict another person's moral right to religious freedom, which would result unequal liberties and which, therefore, is impermissible by the reasoning at the outset of this section. In short, only if it is a liberty right can a moral right to religious freedom be a right that all possess. It is important to know the kind of right that a moral right to religious freedom would be because, if a person has only a liberty right, then others have an obligation not to prevent or interfere with his exercise of his right but they do not have an obligation to support, facilitate, or even

[2] See Wesley N. Hohfeld, *Fundamental Legal Conceptions as Applied in Judicial Reasoning, and Other Legal Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923).

accommodate his exercise of the right when pursuing their own legitimate ends. It might be good of them to do so, but they do not have to. If others did have an obligation to do so, then a moral right to religious freedom would be a claim right rather than a liberty right. The same act can be either an interference in or a failure to accommodate the exercise of a right, depending on whether the right is, respectively a claim right or a liberty right. If we mistakenly think that a right is a claim right when it is merely a liberty right, then we will mistakenly categorize permissible failures to accommodate as impermissible acts of interference or prevention.

Finally, preventing the violation of some people's religious freedom by others is not itself a violation of religious freedom – even if the potential violators are religiously motivated. Suppose that we all had both a moral right to religious freedom and a moral right to impose our religious views on others despite their wishes. It would follow that we had both a moral right to religious freedom and a moral right to deny religious freedom to others. If we had a moral right to deny religious freedom to others, however, then they would not have a moral right to religious freedom. If we all had a right to deny religious freedom to others, then literally no one would have a right to religious freedom. In other words, permitting religiously motivated violations of religious freedom is incompatible with the existence of religious freedom. Conversely,

if we all have a moral right to religious freedom, then no one has a right to deny religious freedom to others. If no one has the right to deny religious freedom to others in general, then no one has the right to deny it on religious grounds in particular. We have no obligation to tolerate religious intolerance – indeed, the notion that we do is incoherent – but must combat it in order to maintain the religious freedom of individual human beings.

Keeping Religion Private

We are liable to agree in the abstract that everyone should have a right to religious freedom, that everyone has an equal right, and that it is a liberty right. These concessions become less palatable to many when their actual effects become apparent. For instance, one concrete implication is that religion and politics should never be mixed but that religion must always be a private pursuit. Religious freedom is diminished by both state-imposed religious obligations and state-imposed religious prohibitions. This implies that religion should not have some of the privileges it has or has had, which adherents of religion naturally resist. However, if someone has agreed in the abstract, he should be willing to follow the argument wherever it leads, as Socrates recommended that we do.

As a matter of fact, religious organizations do resist the notion that theirs should be a private preoccupation, for their influence is reduced when their only options are trying to persuade people to convert voluntarily and trying to persuade adherents to follow voluntarily the rules they set out, having no disciplinary devices except expulsion. So, they assert their right to engage in the public sphere and to make their unique contribution. Yet, if they do engage in the public sphere, then what they are doing is trying to use the state as a medium through which they impose religious obligations or religious prohibitions on people who have not accepted them voluntarily. In other words, if they engage in the public sphere, they are trying to limit the religious freedom of non-adherents. If we all have a moral right to religious freedom, they must not do this sort of thing. It follows that religion must always be a private matter.

The justification that religious organizations give for resisting the implication is often that they have both moral insight and moral authority. This is a claim that must be explicitly disputed and rejected. If not disputed and rejected, there will always be the suspicion that keeping religion out of the public sphere amounts to being indifferent to, or even promoting, immorality. Hence, it must be asserted that religion has neither particular moral insight nor particular moral authority, whatever the

religious might think.

In fact, all that religion has are a couple of flawed moral theories that it overrates. The prevailing religious moral theories are natural law and the divine command theory. The Catholic Church advocates natural law while other denominations and religions are proponents of the divine command theory. Both approaches involve elementary logical fallacies. This can be shown very readily.

The Catholic Church favours the natural law theory of Thomas Aquinas.[3] It says that human beings have an essence, a set of properties that all and only human beings possess and that they possess necessarily, and that human beings who do not manifest the full essence of humanity are defective. In line with this theory, the Catholic Church infamously declares gay people to be "intrinsically morally disordered." The reason is that human beings are supposedly essentially procreative and gay people are inclined to engage in sexual acts that are not procreative. The trouble is that if human beings are essentially procreative and if gay people are not, what follows logically is not that gay people are defective human beings but that they are not human beings at all.

[3] See Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas,* translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Bros., 1947).

Since that is obviously false, there must be something wrong with the natural law view. The problem is its reliance on the informal logical fallacy of equivocation: in order to conclude that gay people are defective, Catholics use one definition to categorize them as human beings and a different definition entirely to reach the conclusion that they are defective. The first definition is probably a matter of gay people looking like other human beings or being the offspring of other human beings, while the second is that human beings have essential properties that include the property of being procreative. Indeed, natural law theorists cannot reach any moral conclusions about our obligations without equivocation. The case discussed is merely the most notorious. Hume pointed out that we cannot derive prescriptions from descriptions of what is the case. Natural law theorists purport to derive prescriptions from descriptions of what is necessarily the case. It cannot be done.

As for divine command theorists, they say that morality is constituted by the commands of God and that we can learn what His commands are through revelation. With respect to the latter part of their position, some say that God always speaks the truth and that the Bible contains what He has told us. Let us grant that God always speaks the truth. It follows that a revelation from God would be completely true. If it is a real revelation, then it is completely true. But how do we know that a putative

revelation is a real revelation? The insurmountable problem for people who want to rely on revelation is that we cannot establish that a revelation is a real revelation without demonstrating that it is completely true. If we could demonstrate that it was completely true, however, we would not need to rely on it. As a consequence, the only circumstances in which people rely on "revelation" are those in which they cannot show that the "revelation" is true. In other words, relying on a supposed revelation is always a leap in the dark. This would be true even if there were not a number of competing "revelations." Making leaps in the dark with respect to moral questions on the basis of "revelation" is morally irresponsible. Therefore, adopting the divine command theory is morally irresponsible. Contrary to its proponents, it is shifting sand, not the only rock available.

It has been argued that freedom from religion is limited to freedom from compulsory participation in religious ceremonies that mark events that are important to the participants.[4] Only such compulsion, it is argued, violates their conscience, which seems to amount to upsetting them sufficiently. When religion engages in the

[4] Gidon Sapir and Daniel Statman, "Why Freedom of Religion Does Not Include Freedom from Religion," *Law and Philosophy* 24 (2005), 467-508.

public sphere, however, its aim is typically to compel people to act in accordance with religious moral codes, not to compel them to participate in religious rites. It is wrong to compel people to act according to specifically religious moral codes, for that means compelling people to act in accordance with false moral theories, with the concomitant danger that they will be compelled to act immorally or prevented from acting in ways that are morally available to them. Religious moral codes are seldom completely wrong-headed but it would be an improbable accident that one of them was always right, given the problems with the theories that underlie them. Such compulsion or prevention may not violate anyone's conscience but it surely violates their integrity. Whether the violation of their integrity also upsets them sufficiently to violate their conscience as well is beside the point.

It does not follow that the kind of morality that religious people would like to exist does not exist. As a matter of fact, it is possible to establish the kind of objective morality they prefer.[5] All that has been said here is that their favoured theories do not work. It must be added, of course, that they do not have the right to adhere to their

[5] Or so I believe, having developed an objectivist theory of morality. See my *Evolutionary Intuitionism: A Theory of the Origin and Nature of Moral Facts* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007.)

theories despite their falsity. In the previous section, one point was that religious freedom does not include the right to believe any moral proposition one wants to believe.

It does not follow that religions cannot take morally distinctive stands. It is possible for there to be religious requirements to do what is morally supererogatory. In other words, religious people can be required by their religion to go above and beyond the call of duty. This will make them virtuous, although it will never give them any particular moral authority.

At present, however, with their reliance on false moral theories, however, they often harm rather than help our common moral life. Although their preferred moral theories do not get everything wrong, religious people tend to promote their theoretical errors more than what they get right, because the errors are precisely what society as a whole rejects and what the religious therefore feel compelled to promote. Consequently, their distinctive contribution to our common moral life is often negative, not positive, their subjective sense of righteousness notwithstanding.

Finally, it does not follow that religious people and religious organizations cannot engage in politics at all. All that follows is that they cannot try to promote policies that have nothing but a religious justification, including "justification" on the basis of

distinctively religious moral theories. They are free to promote any policy that is supported by non-religious reasons that are sufficient to justify the policy.[6]

The proponents of religious theories of morality are sincere but mistaken. Whatever their theological expertise, they are not experts on ethics. If we have a moral right to religious freedom, religion *per se* should always be private even if there are some religious people who reject the conclusion. If we have that right, preachers should stay out of politics if their involvement means promoting policies that should only be encouraged from the pulpit. Religions are free to impose a variety of requirements on adherents but they violate religious freedom when they impose the same requirements on outsiders.

Keeping Religion Voluntary

As pointed out in an earlier section, a moral right to religious freedom would be a right properly ascribed to individuals and not organizations. That being so, it obviously becomes possible for non-state organizations to violate the religious freedom of individuals. Moreover, it becomes possible for religious organizations to

[6] Audi argues that they must be motivated by the non-religious justification. I do not go so far.

do so. Notoriously, for example, at least some Muslims believe that any adult male whose parents were Muslim but who adopts a different religion or eschews religion altogether ought to be executed.[7] Obviously, the Muslims who believe that apostates should be killed do not believe that all individuals have a moral right to religious freedom. Hence, if we actually do have a moral right to religious freedom, their attitude and the actions they motivate are morally wrong.

Also as mentioned earlier, there is no obligation to tolerate the intolerant. It does not matter whether the intolerance is directed against individuals whom the intolerant categorize as insiders rather than being directed against outsiders. Hence, the state has an obligation to protect individuals from religious organizations that would sanction them for ignoring or violating religious strictures other than by expelling them. If we believe in religious freedom, we have, for instance, an obligation to protect Muslims and ex-Muslims from Islam at least in our own jurisdictions. Again, we can see the importance of freedom from religion as part of a moral right to religious freedom.

[7] See Abdul Rahman (convert), *Wikipedia,* n.d., accessed 28 October 2010, < http://en. wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdul_Rahman_(convert)>.

Protecting apostates is not a particularly difficult thing to do appropriately. In liberal democracies, it merely requires the enforcement of existing law in most cases. Moreover, some jurisdictions already have the legal apparatus necessary to deal with extraordinary fanaticism. For instance, one way in which it can be done is by allowing for religiously aggravated offences. Consider the English Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which defines religiously aggravated offences as ones in which "the offence is motivated (wholly or partly) by hostility towards members of a ... religious group based on their membership of that group,"[8] where a "religious group" is "a group of persons defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief."[9] While the legislators probably had religious denominations in mind when framing the act, the set of apostates from Islam is certainly "group of persons defined by reference to religious belief" and the relevant offences against them are motivated by hostility. A religiously aggravated offence would naturally attract a more severe punishment, all else being equal. It might be necessary to have a more severe punishment to offset the strength of the religious motivation to violate the religious freedom of apostates.

[8] Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 28(1)(a).

[9] Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 28(5).

Limits to Religious Freedom

The fact that a moral right to religious freedom is at most a liberty right means that we can sometimes justify limiting religious activities. For example, one of the new English "martyrs" is Shirley Chaplin, a nurse who wore a cross on a chain around her neck.[10] Research revealed that neck jewellery poses a risk of infection to patients. New rules were introduced to ban necklaces. Chaplin objected. She contended that her right to religious freedom was being violated. However, the aim of the new policy was not to interfere with her religious life but to eliminate a risk to patients. Since a right to religious freedom is a liberty right and not a claim right, the hospital authorities had no obligation "to support, facilitate, or accommodate" Chaplin's particular expression of her religious commitment.

It must be emphasized that Chaplin's employers simply refused to accommodate her. Their intention was to eliminate a source of potential infection to patients. They had no intention of interfering in her religious life. The effect on Chaplin's religious life was an unforeseen by-product of the policy. It transpired that a policy of

[10] See Minette Marrin, "Religious tolerance has put a fatwa on our nerve," *The Sunday Times*, 11 April 2010, accessed 28 October 2010, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/ comment/columnists/minette_marrin/ article7094227.ece>.

forbidding all neck jewellery would amount to forbidding Chaplin to express her religious commitment in the way in which she had been accustomed to do but that effect was not the aim of the policy.

Chaplin's intransigence can only be explained by her being convinced that a right to religious freedom is a claim right. The hospital authorities suggested that she wear her cross as a broach on her uniform instead of on a chain around her neck, which surely would have been an equally effective expression of her religious commitment. Chaplin rejected the compromise. Her rejection of the compromise is inexplicable unless she believes that a right to religious freedom is a claim right. After all, a mere liberty right could not counterbalance her obligation to minimize risk to her patients while a claim right could. In fact, of course, she had no legitimate grounds at all on which to base her objection to the new policy, while her employers had every right to require her to stop wearing it, an obvious limitation on her religious activities.

In this example, Chaplin would fail in her duty to her patients if she continued to wear the cross. But the authorities would have no duty to accommodate her even if there were no moral justification for the policy. They would have no obligation to alter a dress code whose inspiration was purely aesthetic, for instance. If people understood that a right to religious freedom was a liberty right, they would understand

that they could legitimately complain about prevention or interference but not about others failing to take their religion into account when pursuing their own aims.

The Secularism Objection

The specific points that have been argued for above are that religion *qua* religion should stay out of the political arena, that the state has a duty to protect individuals from hostile religions even when the religions count the individuals as members, and that the right to engage in religious practices should give way in the face of health considerations. It might be objected that the position argued for here is equivalent to secularism and that secularism is itself a religion. The objection would entail that one religion, secularism, was being privileged, which would be incompatible with a moral right to religious freedom as delineated.

The positions are not equivalent. Secularism is a doctrine about the appropriate relationship between the state and religious individuals or organizations. It declares that the state should neither promote nor inhibit religion and that religion should stay out of politics. In contrast, a moral right to freedom of religion is broader. It has to do with the relationship between one individual and another and with the relationship between an individual and religious or other non-state organizations in addition to the

relationship between an individual and the state. Secularism is compatible with religions that punish "insiders" for apostasy. A moral right to religious freedom is not. The latter does more than require the separation of church and state. Of course, the differences are not such that opponents of secularism will have no objection to the right to religious freedom. On the contrary, they will probably find it more objectionable than secularism because it goes further and in the same direction.

Of course, the notion that secularism is a religion is false. It is a meta-view about the proper relationship between religion and the state. The baseless charge that it is a religion is a rhetorical device used by proponents of religion who want to engage in politics and who wish to neutralize a particular argument against such engagement. It is irrelevant that there are organizations that promote secularism and that some secularists are dogmatic in their opinions. Similarly, the notion that we have a moral right to religious freedom is not a religious view. It is a meta-view about the proper relationship among various parties, religious and non-religious.

It is easy to see that the "secularism is a religion" objection is a rhetorical dodge because, if it had any merit, then any statement about religion would automatically be a religious statement, which would make the person who made the statement into a religious person. But a person does not become religious merely because he talks

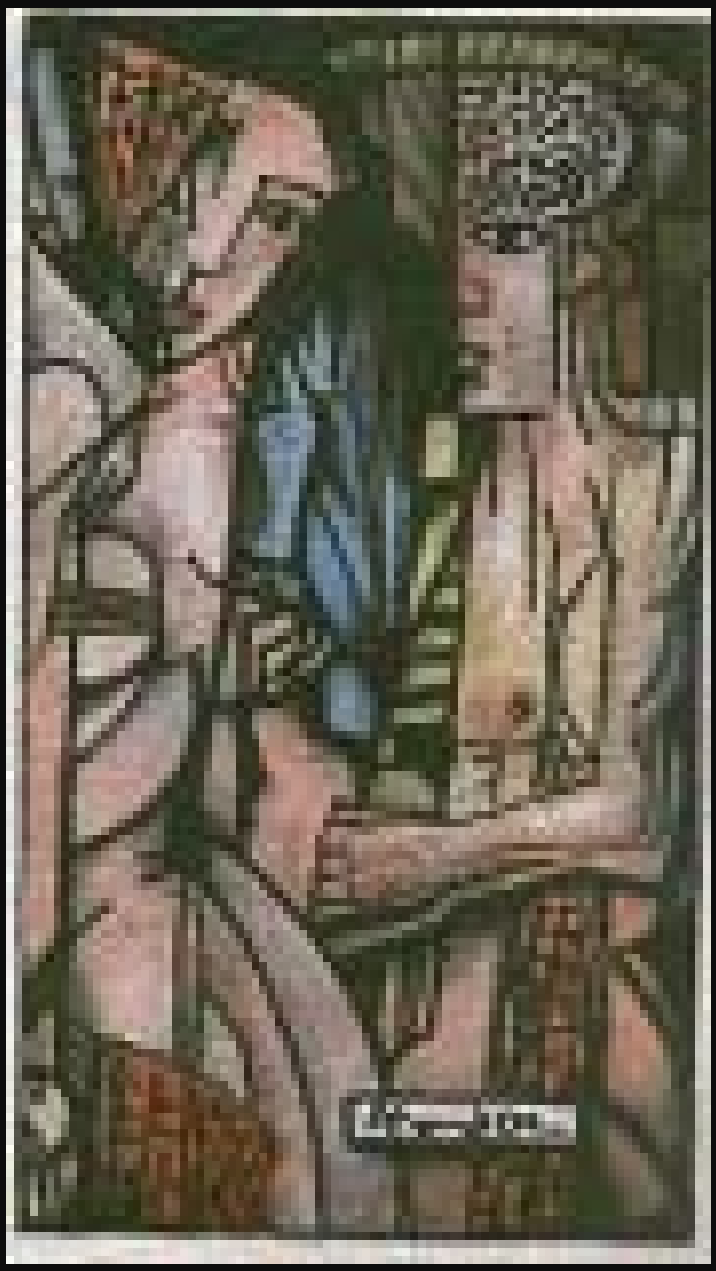
about religion. It is like claiming that it is defamatory to talk about defamation, which is absurd.

Conclusion

Any justifiable moral right to religious freedom is a liberty right rather than a claim right. It is a right of individuals and not institutions. Religious movements themselves can violate the religious freedom of individuals. And, tolerance of religiously motivated violations of religious freedom is not a form of respect for religious freedom. These points have the potential to alter the contemporary political landscape in a positive way that is consistent with liberal democracy. In particular, they help us recognize that the great danger to religious freedom in contemporary liberal democracies is not the state but religions that want to exceed justifiable limits on their influence and their activities if we actually have a moral right to religious freedom. Ironically, maintaining religious freedom often requires opposition to religion, religious people, and religious activities. Thus, as stated at the outset, clarifying concepts is not merely an academic exercise, for confusion about important matters can adversely affect all our lives.

norman j. olson

acrylic, ink and watercolour



Selections from "A Writer's World" by Richard Wagamese

Elder 1

I've been around the ceremonial life and the teaching lodges of my people for over thirty years now. It doesn't seem that long. The very fact of being part of a spiritual community lends time a different quality, one where time passing becomes more like time inhabited, each day, month, year joined in a stream of vital energy. As I get older I look back and recognize significant moments in that journey that I will always hold as special. There are a lot of them actually and I feel blessed.

But for me, the special moments, the unforgettable ones, aren't the big, huge, splashy production numbers you'd expect. My life hasn't been a Technicolor glitz and the things that carry me forward are the simpler, genuine and touching, moments that are memorable for their humanity. In the end, spirituality introduces us to our humanity. That's its biggest gift.

Sure, I remember my first Vision Quest, pipe ceremony, sweat lodge, Sun Dance and healing ceremony or being danced into the powwow circle by elders for the first time but the big moments are always easy to recall. What really moves me though, what keeps me brown, are the quiet enriching moments that happen naturally when people come together in a good way.

When I was thirty I came home to Kenora to live with my mother and try to recover from the failure of my first marriage. I'd been living and working in Regina, Saskatchewan where I'd transitioned from newspapers to radio. But alcohol had me in its grips even then and my marriage was a merry-go-round of craziness and regret. My wife asked me to leave eventually and I arrived at my mother's full of pain and hurt and feeling very guilty and ashamed. I didn't think much of myself and it showed in everything I did.

I worked where and when I could but the only place where I felt better was at ceremonial gatherings. Friends from Manitoba took me to a remote traditional camp on an island on a lake far away from any towns or roads. While we were there we

learned traditional skills, cultural skills, ceremony and got to sit with elders and hear their stories and ask the questions we needed answers to. It was a special place.

There was a man there named Clayton Archie. He must have been about eighty then and had a quiet way about him that was regal almost and we all walked softer around him. He seemed to understand the pain I was in and even though I couldn't talk about it he stayed close to my side all the time I was there. He asked me to be his helper and showed me how to prepare the articles and things he needed for his ceremonies. It was an honor to be asked and I worked deliberately and conscientiously. Every night we'd go and sit on a log beside the water.

He'd sit and smoke an old cob and I would be content to look at up the stars. I recall those nights as being as pacific a time as I have ever encountered and the loneliness and the hurt seemed to lessen in the presence of all that marvelous space. When I looked at him, the glow from his pipe turned his face into angles and shadow like what you'd expect the face of a shaman to look like. I kept waiting for him to say something, to offer a deep meaningful teaching or a story but he never did.

What he did was honor my silence. We sat there night after night and he told me just by his presence that he was there for me and that he always would be. He told me in that wordless way that it's feeling that gives birth to right words and he was content to abide and allow me to find my way to them. In that overwhelming quiet I allowed myself to feel my feelings and he was calm and patient until I could find the words for it all. Eventually I did.

I spoke and he listened and in the end there were no grand secrets transferred to me, no elaborate First Nations rituals of redemption. Instead, my own words, allowed to come at their own time and in their own fashion, framed my healing. It was a ceremony of acknowledgement. Once I owned my feelings and held them, I was free to let them go. I hurt for a while after I got back but it wasn't a crippling ache.

He was a wise man. Ceremony sometimes, is just our hearts in motion. And sometimes when life is tough I still gaze up at the stars and I remember Clayton Archie, waiting for my words to fall.

Elder 2

Elders, they say, are holders of wisdom. What they generally mean by that is that the people we bestow that title on are recognized for the wealth of knowledge they hold about life, the world, and the spiritual life of our people. They are also role models and fit examples of lives lived according to principle. It confuses me a great deal when people grant themselves the title of elder. There's a world of difference between being a senior and being an elder.

Wisdom isn't necessarily gained just by the passing of years. I've met a lot of immature, rigid and unhealed people well over the fifty-five years I've been around. In our way of seeing things wisdom is gained from the experience of humility; the knowledge that what you know and what you don't know are equal and being willing to continue to try to learn no matter the years you've accrued. Elders, those who understand and live by that credo are few and far between. Older people, on the other hand, are plenty.

There's a terrific need for wisdom these days. With the world in the state of flux that it's in and the planet in such turmoil, people everywhere ache and yearn for

sage advice, a direction and rituals to make sense of the topsy-turvy nature of things. I was much the same way for a long time. But I've been fortunate to learn that genuine elders are way-finders and the wisdom they carry is meant to help guide us to a position of balance and harmony with ourselves and everything in Creation. It took a long time for me to learn to appreciate that.

But I had the great good fortune of meeting a man named Jack Kakakaway when I was in my mid-30s. Jack was a Plains Ojibway from Manitoba, a veteran, a recovering alcoholic, a father, powwow dancer and traditional teacher. He was possessed of a marvelous rolling laugh, loved to hear a good story, tell a joke and played a great mandolin. He was quiet, solemn but open and engaging as well. He was an elder in the truest sense.

When I met him I was living in Calgary and had been on the ceremonial road for a few years. I knew something about Native spirituality, something about our traditions, and culture and I'd been around enough and had read enough to consider myself worldly about a lot of things. But Jack showed me how little I actually did know – and he did it gently and kindly.

Back then I believed that the things that mattered, the things that were

important, needed elaborate and complicated answers. I'd grown used to reading huge tomes on philosophy, faith and the job of being fully human. When it came to native spirituality and the way we were directed to live our lives, I believed that there needed to be deep, philosophical content to the answers.

Well, Jack saw things differently. To him simple, unadorned answers were always the best and when he spoke of vital things he always made sure to use language and images that were easily digested and understood. He was a great teacher because of that. His ceremonies were always filled with good humor and gentle teaching and I never met anyone who went away from any of those gatherings without feeling uplifted and empowered.

What Jack liked more than anything was to go walking on the land. We'd drive out of Calgary into Kananaskis Country and we'd park wherever he felt like walking and head up into the foothills. We'd spend entire afternoons and evenings out there.

One time when I was feeling lost and out of sorts with my newspaper job and life in the city, Jack got out of the car without speaking and started walking. I fell in behind him and waited for the wise words to come. Instead, he kept silent and walked and walked. He'd pause now and then to put his hand on a rock, a tree, some moss or

the water in a stream. He never said a word about my problems or the answers in all that time.

When we got back to the car he stood there with his hands raised to the sky and his head bowed, breathing deeply. When he opened them he looked at me and I remember how clear his eyes were and how they glimmered with kindness. He asked me very quietly – "Did you hear all that?" I thought about his question and realized that I did.

Wisdom doesn't live in words. It lives in feeling. That's what he taught me that day. What I needed to hear was within me all the time. I just needed to pay attention to it. Wisdom taught me that.

Dream Woman

I never imagined myself being fifty five. I turned that age recently and frankly, it amazes me. Back a handful of decades I couldn't see myself being thirty or heaven forbid, a crusty old dinosaur of forty. But here I am. I can get a senior's discount in some places now and lawn bowling is starting to look really appealing. There's a touch of arthritis in one of my fingers, I don't run as fast as I used to and the term, old-timer's league, has a romantic resonance and alluring cachet.

I'm at a point in my life now where there's likely more years behind me than in front of me. I'm okay with that because it's been a thrilling journey up to this point and I've managed to learn a few things along the way to being me. I don't know if I would necessarily say that I'm wiser but I do confess to being less susceptible to being fooled – by others or more often by myself.

The trick of getting older is being able and willing to take the time to look back and see the trail. For me it's how I learn to appreciate the gifts that come my way and how the hand of Creator looks taking care of my life. It's valuable. I've made a lot of

plans through my life and I'm more than glad that most of them didn't come to fruition. They say that life is what happens when you're busy making other plans and that's startlingly true in my case.

Like the other day I was thinking about how my mind has changed over the years. I swore up and down that I was a dyed-in-the-wool bachelor. I believed that I couldn't possible find someone who would 'get' me or the things that mattered to me most. But I'm married now and living a darn good life. But there were times that I thought that I would never meet the one person who could make it all worthwhile.

That woman would be spectacular. Not only would she be sensitive to my needs but attuned to my dreams. I called her Dream Woman. She was going to be the one who finally 'got'me, the one who understood implicitly the things that moved me, motivated me, thrilled me and made me the man that I was. She would be the ultimate partner because she cared about everything important to me.

Dream Woman would care, for instance, that the starting infield for the 1965 Boston Red Sox – the year I became a fan – was Lee Thomas, Felix Mantilla, Rico

Petrocelli and Frank Malzone. That would matter to Dream Woman because well, she was Dream Woman. I love baseball and I love the Red Sox and Fenway Park (where I've never been) is the green cathedral of hope. She would know all that and be there with a crying towel when they lost and a hug, s kiss and a cheer when they won. Dream Women do that sort of thing.

She would also care deeply that the bass player for the 60s rock group Moby Grape was a guy named Bob Mosely or that the origin of the banjo was the Gambra River in Africa, made from a hollowed-out gourd and gut strings. Recorded music is one of my passions and Dream Woman would know that the Hanks – Williams, Mobley and Ballard – were part of the ongoing rhythm section of my life. Oh, and she would also know that Hawkshaw Hawkins wasn't a character form the L'il Abner strip.

Dream Woman would care immensely that the thirteen primary poles in a tipi stand for a principle meant to guide the lives of the family that lived there. She'd care that the ribs of a sweat lodge represent the same things to guide our prayers and petitions.

I always thought Dream Woman would be like that. She would be the female

version of me, and the perfect partner because of it. She'd glean the spiritual connection between a knuckle curveball and an honor song and know that Kraft Dinner with a can of tuna thrown in is the bachelor's casserole. That's what the younger version of me thought was vital.

Well, nowadays I look at my wife, busy with the things that drive and motivate her, watch as she becomes, every day, a more fully fleshed vision of who she wants to be and I can't help but be thankful for her. Her full life fills out mine. Her joy over the things she appreciates and adores have become important to me.

I see now that my Dream Woman doesn't necessarily need to care about things like baseball, music, books and the nature of First Nations politics. It only matters that she cares that I do. Ain't aging grand?

My Field of Dreams

You could not dream this place. In the hard glint of early morning everything is over exposure and shadow. From the cabin the land takes itself to the lake lazily, a long ambulation of switch grass, wild rose, fir, pine, aspen and cultured lawns beaten out of the semi-desert heat. The gravel roads looks plunked down, an after thought almost, as if an attachment to the outside world was a hasty addition.

The lake itself sits like a patch of sky against the prickled skin of the mountain. The trees above it are mostly fir, many surrendering to bud worm, so that there's a reddish tint to the mountainside. Some nights when the breeze dies away there are two moons here, the water so calm you feel as though you could fall up or down, away so easily. Like Peter Pan's world beckoning.

In the high heat of the day it descends into a sepulchral quiet. Even the birds cease their flit and flap between trees. Only when the workers return does the sound of the modern world return here. Then it's a small crescendo of motors, kids, dogs, music

and greetings yelled across an acre of space. Afterward, evening pulls everything downward into ease and there is only the breeze, only space reasserting itself.

When I became a novelist in 1993 I wanted to build a place like this in my mind and in my words. There was a grand tale to be told in a setting like this. I believed that if I worked long enough and hard enough at the craft of writing I would one day write that story, set it down in a resonant place, populate it with hardy, eccentric characters and bring a sense of reality to a fictional world.

I came to that naturally enough. The writers I admired had all managed to effect that in their work and I had an unassailable list of influences. I'd read and loved Dickens, of course, followed Dante into hell, sailed with Ahab after the great white whale and gleaned the gentrified manners of the 1920s with Tennessee Williams. In my reading I'd been to Russia, Sweden, Africa, Asia, Latin America, Germany and to the top of the Himalayas.

But nothing ever captured me as much as the swelter and dust of Yoknapawtapha County. When William Faulkner set his characters down in that rural

south I found a world I never wanted to leave. He wrote fifteen books about the place and each one was like a doorway to my sense of self. A Mississippi of the soul. After I read Sartoris I had to go back.

Now, I wasn't a poor white, an under educated black or had any experience at all like the Restoration era immediately after the Civil War. Those years leading right up to the Depression gave Faulkner the material he needed to create a people and a place that was layered with the dust of history, labor and strife. But it was an amalgam of people displaced by the writhing of a country coming to terms with itself – and I could understand that.

Faulkner wasn't always an easy writer to get. His writing sometimes was as dense as a hawthorn thicket. His language was filled with allegory, symbolism, multiple narrators and the particular chips and chinks of regional talk. His sentences sometimes could meander like the broad snake of the Mississippi itself. But he painted a picture nonetheless and my world grew because of it.

It was the late 1970s and I'd just become a writer, a professional, earning a

wage with words. Faulkner awoke the storyteller in me and I wanted to create worlds like Yoknapawtapha County. But I was a journalist then, telling other peoples stories, restrained by facts but growing in appreciation of my new abilities. Fiction was still the joy of a lamp and a chair.

Then came Shoeless Joe. W.P. Kinsella wrote the preeminent book on baseball and when I read it in 1982 I was snared as easily as a lazy fly ball in an oversized fielder's mitt. Kinsella was no Faulkner but he knew how to spin a tale and the mix of magic, spirituality and baseball was irresistible. Here was an Iowa that I'd never visited but could see as clearly as an infield under the lights.

From Kinsella I learned that spirituality, magic and dreams are all a part of our day to day reality. Because of that they could be sewn into a story and cause it to become haunting and unforgettable. Still, I was writing in another form and fiction was a dream in itself.

Then the movie Field of Dreams came out in 1989. It was the film version of Shoeless Joe and the story that came alive on the screen was close to the way I'd seen it

in my mind. I loved that movie as I've loved no other. I have it on my shelf in DVD now and I watch it again every year or so.

It showed me how what's seen with the imagination and felt with the soul can become real. It haunted me. It called to me. I was back in print journalism then after stints in television and radio, even won a national award for my writing, but I was under the charm of storytelling and it wouldn't leave me alone.

Well, I left journalism in 1993, lived in a friend's basement and wrote my first novel, Keeper'n Me. It was published in 1994 and I've been a storyteller ever since. There've been three other novels and a memoir with a lot more stories in various forms yet to arrive. Writing stories is my field of dreams. It's where the tumblers of the universe all click into place. It's where my heart lies, here, looking out over a place I could not dream.

See, Peter Pan's world is never that far away. It's as close as your heart and always just a dream away.

The Art We Become

We meet a varied assortment of people in our time here. Some come and go almost casually and leave little behind but small pools of recollection. Others walk into our lives boldly, trumpeting great things that maybe shake us to our cores and change things so that our lives are never the same again. Still others arrive elegantly, their energy a smooth confluence with our own, like the meeting of streams.

That's the wonderful thing about living. My elders say that 'all we are is the story of our time here'. When we're finished and we carry on in our spirit journey, all we take with us is that story. So, they say, the important thing is to learn to create a beautiful one. That's as true for individuals as it is for communities, municipalities, societies, nations and our species. Our job is to create a wonderful enduring tale of our time here.

As a lifelong loner, it's been hard to learn how to reach out to people. Now that I do my life has become enriched by a plethora of wonderful individuals. But there's a

conceit to being a loner. You get to thinking that you've always been alone, that no one has ever affected you in any meaningful way, or that nothing of the world has influenced you. When you get to the truth of things you realize how many people helped you create the story of your life.

For instance, I met Norval Morriseau in the early fall of 1987. I was freelancing for a native newspaper in Southern Alberta and they wanted a story on the famous Ojibway painter. It took awhile to track him down but when he heard that I was an Ojibway journalist he agreed to do the interview. He was staying in the ritzy Jasper Lodge and I drove up there from Calgary to meet him.

Earlier that spring there had been much made in the media about Morriseau being discovered drunk and wandering Vancouver's downtown East Side. There was television footage of him crawling out of bushes bedraggled, unkempt and far from sober. He was an Order of Canada holder and it was big news.

Morriseau was a painter and a traditional teacher. He was a recluse and an odd sort of character who emanated mystic energy and a magical power that was magnetic.

When we talked it seemed to me that time just disappeared. We spent a whole afternoon and evening together and even now I have trouble understanding how the notion of time absolutely disappeared in his presence.

The strange thing is that we never got around to speaking about the Vancouver episode. Instead, Morriseau invited me into his world of shamanism and the rich Ojibway heritage that he had carried all his life. He talked of being raised by his grandfather and the stories he was given as a boy. He spoke about the way traditional and cultural teachings were presented to him and how he felt the magic within them and how attractive the pull of that magic was.

He seemed to recognize the need I carried for connection to myself and my identity. So he told me stories. He told me the great rambling tale about the Ojibway migration from the eastern sea to the north, about trickster spirits and the root of our traditions. He told me about shamans and the need for principles to guide our actions. He spoke quietly and eloquently and I didn't miss a word. It was an amazing experience.

Then he talked about his art and the visions that spawned it that had made him famous. He told me how it was spirit that made it possible and how the blazing hot colors of his canvases were meant to heal, and the hard black lines meant to serve as contrast in order to teach us to see.

Morriseau was a true original. He wasn't afraid to go beyond convention or to think outside the box. His art resides in a special place – the gallery of magic where visionaries let us see beyond what we think we know of the world.

He's gone now but his art remains to teach us. All he ever wanted us to do was to learn to see and he used color and the stark images of his culture to train our eyes, to let us develop our own vision and in that way create our own lives artfully. I am more for having met him.

He guided me to being a better storyteller. He influenced the way I work and as the loner sits in his writer's space and pecks away at a keyboard, it's the influence of Norval Morrisseau that often drives me. People. Our greatest resource. They come along when we need them most. Always – and we create a better story.

Storytelling Moons

I've come to love the winter. There's something about the long elegant slide from fall into the world of white that lulls me. I become relaxed. I become settled and I relearn the fine art of stillness and reflection. For me it's all firelight and home.

My people say that winter is the storytelling time. The months of snow and frost are called the Storytelling Moons and it's the time of year when legends, teaching tales and traditional stories are shared around the fire. Stories were once my people's university and everyone got to go.

I don't know how much that happens anymore. The native world has undergone as many changes as the mainstream one and things get set aside, forgotten or altered forever. Storytelling around a fire. There's a charm in that old tradition and I yearn for it.

I first heard the Ojibway Creation story around a campfire on a winter's night

long ago. Another time I heard hilarious stories about traditional life in pre-settlement times that made me realize how valuable humor is as a teaching tool. When I light my fires now I hear echoes of those tales.

There's magic in the sound of a human voice augmented by the crackle of a fire. There's something ancient and eternal that stirs things within us and you don't have to be a native person to understand that. Everyone from every culture has a fire and a story in their past.

Maybe it's just the romantic part of me that loves that image. Or maybe the Ojibway heart of me calls to the seed of heritage in that. Either way, the winter has always come to be storytime. I seem to write better when the north wind blows, even.

Or on the other hand, maybe it's just a plain old human thing. Maybe it's something we all share regardless of where we come from. My people say that we are all one soul, one spirit and I choose to believe that too.

Everyone has huddled in the darkness around a common fire. Somewhere in

our collective pasts is a fire in the night and the sound of someone talking. All of us carry in our genes, the sense of community, belonging and security that comes from a band of people, leaning forward and disappearing into the magic of an old tale, well told and empowering.

On the Meaning of Ceremony

There's a ceremony I do for myself every morning. Once I'm awake and had a coffee and sometime to feel my spirit moving, I gather my prayer articles; my smudging bowl, eagle wing fan and cedar, sage, tobacco and sweet grass. I put them in the bowl, light them and go through my home offering blessings to my wife, myself, our things and saying a quiet prayer of gratitude for all of it. It feels wonderful.

These days there are fires in the woodstove now. The ambience of that feels timeless. And moving through the quiet of this small cabin in the mountains is healing and redemptive. This act of ceremony grounds me. I'm fully present in my home and in my life. I'm aware and thankful for all of it. There's no fanfare to it, no big Native production number, just a man moving humbly through a ritual of gratitude and blessing. I can't start my days without it.

I've been to a lot of traditional ceremonies over the years, since I found my way back to the traditional and cultural lives of my people I've been blessed to travel to Sun Dances, Rain Dances, Horse Dances, sweat lodges, pipe ceremonies and Vision Quests

in virtually every part of Indian country. I've met a lot of truly amazing and powerful people; their power directed mostly through the immense aura of humility they carry. It's been a wonderful adventure and I have become more fulfilled because of it.

Ceremony is the center of our traditional lives as First Nations people. When I was first introduced to it as a young man of twenty-four, I embraced it enthusiastically. There was something in the atmosphere surrounding ceremony that enchanted me and allowed me to feel included even when I felt awkward and ashamed of my lack of knowledge. In fact, I became such a staunch ceremonialist that for a long time I went to one virtually every week and I became educated in our ceremonial way.

I learned a great deal of things about prayer and principles and about the virtues of living a life directed by them. I heard great and moving stories and legends. I learned about the cosmology, worldview and philosophy of my people and they shaped the man that I eventually became. I learned that with ceremony in my life, I am able to cope better with events and circumstance and I stay in balance when fate shifts and life becomes difficult or challenging. But that didn't come automatically.

A first when I was going to all of those ceremonies I felt like it was the Indian thing to do. In order to be a good Ojibway I had to be in ceremony, had to be actively pursuing my traditions and living accordingly. I had to be seen as being a ceremonial person and I had to represent that in everything I did or said. I believed that ceremony was a band aid that I could apply to any wounds the world caused.

But once things in the late 1980s things weren't going very well. I was living in a big city and working very hard. I didn't seem to be able to get ahead, to get beyond a hand to mouth existence. I drank too much to deal with the stress and I found myself struggling to maintain a good life. Someone I knew was hosting a sweat lodge and feast. I packed all my ceremonial things together and made the trip.

The ceremony was long and hot and I felt as though I left a lot of pain there and had prayed for strength and a good heart to face my challenges. But at the feast later I didn't feel any better. My stomach still churned with indecision and doubt. I felt shame over choosing drink to deal with my issues. I felt troubled about not representing a brave ceremonialist face in adversity. An elder friend noticed my discomfort and she took me to a quiet corner and asked me what the problem was.

I told her about my troubles and how I'd come to the lodge expecting to me lifted up and out of all of it. I explained how dedicated I was and how much I believed in our healing way. She looked at me and smiled and gave me a big hug.

"Ceremony doesn't change you." she said. "You change you. Ceremony is just the trail you learn to follow until you reach the place where that can happen." I've never been able to forget those words. I quit trying to use ceremony as a band aid after that. Instead, I worked at healing me, worked at changing the way I dealt with things and ceremony became the celebration of success.

Humility

Everything begins with humility. The great circle of energy that comprises our being is driven by it. Without the guiding energy of humility all other spiritual principles are diminished. It's possible to learn them, to practice them, but the vital foundation, their best intent, does not function as highly without humility at the helm. In the Long Ago Time, as the legends say, the Animal People existed with humility at their core. They spoke to each other as equals. They helped each other. When new Creation appeared among them they sought to help, to guide, to teach. There was no hierarchy. There did not need to be because the spiritual byproduct of humility is sharing.

My people say, that for every spiritual principle there is a byproduct. That newly created energy is most always an action, a motion that is energ-ized by the principle. In the case of humility it is sharing. It speaks less of worldly things such as goods or food or money. Rather, its intention is the stuff of the spirit – understanding, empathy, compassion, love, kindness, honor – and when something is shared from that spiritual wellspring, it is offered unconditionally and that is the true nature of

giving. A humble offering in recognition of all that makes us kin; one energy, one drum.

Humility's energy is the binding agent that holds all things together – the glue, if you will. When we look at Mother Earth, we are looking at a truly humble being. She offers life to everything. She grants the skin of her so that we can grow crops. Her hair, the trees and vegetation, are her lungs and they allow us to breathe. Her tears are the rains and the waters that gather as lakes and rivers, and they cleanse everything they touch and rejuvenate the life force that exists in all things. Her heartbeat resonates in all things and when we learn to listen, we are always able to feel it, and we are returned to the innocence we were born in, that place of all beginnings where everything becomes possible. That is the nature of a truly humble being and it why native people have always said that the Earth is our university – we learn all things from her example.

It seems fitting then that the etymology of the word humility comes from the word humus or Earth. Like the Earth. Fittingly too, are the words human and humankind –both of them return us to the essential nature of the word. Like the Earth. When the Teachers o the Ojibwa people were looking for an ongoing example

of humility in action they had to look no further than the world around them. Mother Earth has always been an enduring example of how humankind needed to live to survive; humility in action. The original instructions of walk gently upon the Earth and do each other no harm were given to the human family to direct their vision to the workings of the planet that was the highest expression of that dictum.

And so we are human – of the Earth. Ojibwa teachings say that all of us, the human family as expressed in the word Anishinabeg, come from the Earth. We emerge onto the breast of her as spiritual energy embarked on a journey to find the highest possible expression of ourselves. Our truth. With humility as our guide, the journey is less a trek than a perambulation to recognition of ourselves as Sacred. We are part of everything. We are part of Creation. Creation is a sacred flow of energy and we are part of that. to know yourself as a sacred part of Creation is to carry Humility.

My people say that when Creator blew life into the universe, it was with one breath. Creator took a shell and exhaled through it one time. Everything in Creation came to exist on that one Sacred Breath. Everything. All things became alive, flowing with energy, and that energy drew its force from the Sacred Breath. When we are born

the very first thing we do is breathe. Then we feel. Then we cry for community. It is the energy of that Sacred Breath that makes this so. All of us exist on one breath and my people say that because of that there is no ending, we are eternal. In the breath we draw today are the exhalations of every ancestor that ever lived. In the breath we draw today are the same draughts of air taken when Galileo came to understand that the Earth moved around the sun or when Jesus walked or when the first drum was brought to the Ojibwa. Everything is joined. Everything is connected. Everything is part of that first sacred act and it means that we are all sacred; living and breathing on the one eternal, sacred breath that infuses all things. This is what my people say, and in quiet times when I ponder that, I feel the truth of it and I am humbled and I carry humility.

An Extraordinary Voyage into the Garrison Mentality:

James DeMille's *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder*

by Jacob Bachinger, Memorial University, Newfoundland

James De Mille's novel *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder* remains strange and mysterious to this day. There is still uncertainty as to when De Mille wrote this posthumously-published novel; evidence suggests that it was probably written in the 1860s although it was not published until 1888 (Parks, xix). If it were written in the 1860s, *A Strange MS* (accidentally, coincidentally) prefigured a number of trends in the science fiction of the late 19th century, notably Jules Verne's *Extraordinary Voyages* series, which includes *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.* (At the very least, De Mille and Verne were writing with a kind of uncanny synchronicity.) On top of that, De Mille's novel is, for its time and place, an anomaly: It is so different from all other Canadian works of the period that it is in a class by

itself. In his history of Canadian literature in English, W.J. Keith characterizes both *A Strange MS* and its author as particularly lonely figures; Keith claims that the novel is "an example of the kind of talent that might have developed at this period if a discriminating readership and literary tradition had existed in the country at the time" (Keith 74). And yet despite its anomalous qualities, De Mille's novel did not emerge from a vacuum. My purpose with this paper is to contextualize De Mille's novel as a particularly Canadian work. Despite its science fiction qualities, *A Strange MS* can be read alongside other 19th century Canadian texts (such as Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush*), especially when we consider it in light of Northrop Frye's (in)famous concept of the "garrison mentality."

At the time of its initial publication, reviewers tended to compare De Mille's *A Strange MS* with Rider Haggard's SF/action-adventure stories to the extent that some felt "that the novel was actually a deliberate imitation of Haggards's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She* (1887)" (Parks xxxviii). Reviewers of the time were unaware that the novel probably pre-dated Haggard's stories by roughly two decades, so much of the book originality was lost on its first readers in 1888 (Parks xl-xli). Moreover, reviewers of the time generally failed to notice that De Mille's and Haggard's work were, in terms of tone, quite different. As Malcolm Parks notes, Haggard's work

"lack[ed] the ironic wit of De Mille, for Haggard took his romance seriously" (xxxix-xl). De Mille's novel is clearly satirical, yet this also invites further comparison/contrast with satires such as More's *Utopia*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, and especially with Butler's *Erewhon* of 1872*,* another significant work which *A Strange MS* may also pre-date (Keith 73). However, if *A Strange MS* is read as satire, it is unclear as to what De Mille is satirizing—his targets are broad, ill-defined. The novel's new-found race of people, the Kosekin, live in a new-found semi-tropical country at the South Pole; they are cannibals who love darkness over light, love sickness and death over good health and life, and love poverty and misery over any form of wealth or comfort—except for the prestige and status that absolute, destitute pauperism brings to them. In this, De Mille could be satirizing 19th century Christianity, Victorian social mores, materialism in an industrial age, *etc.* Or, as W.J. Keith mentions, De Mille's target could be vaguely defined as "human fallibility" (73).

However, instead of reading the novel as an indictment of "human fallibility" (something barely worth satirizing), we could instead read the novel as curiously self-reflexive in which one of the novel's satirical targets is itself. This is where "the potential sophistication of its frame device is of considerable interest" (Keith 73). When the novel opens, we are introduced to four well-to-do Englishmen lounging

around on Lord Featherstone's yacht, *Falcon*, which is becalmed near the Canaries and Madeira Islands. They happen to find a copper cylinder floating in the sea and when they break it open they discover the strange papyrus manuscript which is Adam More's eye-witness account of his peculiar adventures and discoveries among the Kosekin. To pass the time while becalmed, the men begin taking turns reading the manuscript aloud to one another; the narrative then flips back and forth at regular intervals between the men on the yacht and Adam More's papyrus testimony. One of the Englishmen, Melick, the literary critic of the group, believes that it's a hoax and complains about the quality of the story they're reading. Of the writer, Melick says: "His plan is one thing and his execution is quite another. His plan is not bad, but he fails utterly in his execution. The style is detestable" (228). Melick also states, "[T]his writer is tawdry; he has the worst vices of the sensational school—he shows everywhere marks of haste, gross carelessness, and universal feebleness. When he gets hold of a good fancy, he lacks the patience that is necessary in order to work it up in an effective way" (228).

With such passages, De Mille seems to be distancing himself from his own text, creating a kind of artistic disclaimer. Aside from such aesthetic concerns, Oxenden and Congreve – a linguist and doctor, respectively – argue over the various zoological, linguistic and anthropological claims that Adam More makes throughout the

manuscript. The novel's frame narrative allows for a unique quality of self-reflexivity, as one narrative playfully comments on the other. Moreover, De Mille seems to be subtly inviting his readers to join in on the debate and to consider the strange manuscript's scientific and literary merit (or lack of merit). The debate on the yacht boils down to a simple question: Does the story seem real? A question which may very well have been at the forefront of De Mille's mind at the time of writing, especially if the book were being written in the 1860s, the very early days of modern SF. Thus De Mille has cleverly written himself, his artistic doubts, and his potentially skeptical/critical readers into the story.

One of the recurring controversies about *A Strange MS* is its conclusion. The controversy stems from the fact that we cannot be sure what De Mille actually intended for the book's ending. The author's brother, Alfred, claimed that James had originally put the novel aside because he wasn't able to "make a satisfactory *denouement* to the plot" (qtd. Parks xix). There is some evidence that De Mille began reworking the novel in 1879, just before his death in 1880, but it's not known whether he managed to create that denouement he felt was lacking earlier. His widow submitted the novel for publication in 1887, but perhaps out of necessity in order to secure some much-needed income (Parks xxi). Even if De Mille had managed to create the ending

that he desired, the novel still concludes radically, abruptly. Adam More fires his gun just as he and his true-love Almah (another non-Kosekin who has also accidentally arrived in the mysterious land) are about to be killed in a ritualized sacrifice. The Kosekin are cowed and awed by this display of power and proclaim him as their new leader. The narrative then quickly cuts back to the yacht *Falcon*, where Lord Featherstone stops reading and yawns, telling his friends: "That's enough for to-day….I'm tired, and can't read any more. It's time for supper" (269). The novel ends right there. For some critics, like W. J. Keith, the book is "clearly unfinished" (73), but others disagree. Gwendolyn Guth, for one, argues that the novel has a deliberate structural trajectory in which Adam More develops from a victim to a hero (52-3). As for myself, the conclusion seems so bathetic – not to mention comic – I can't help but read it as deliberate, though perhaps a little desperate, a little forced.

Perhaps due to its abrupt, unsatisfying – or at least perplexing – conclusion, the novel fell by the wayside shortly after its publication. However, in 1969 it was reissued by McClelland and Stewart for their New Canadian Library series (Parks xxxviii). As a result, *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder* began to enjoy renewed notice, but it was not until the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st that critics began to take some of the novel's peculiarities seriously. As Linda Lamont-

Stewart points out, when critics began re-visiting De Mille's novel, they did so at first with "an essentially modernist approach, seeking to arrive at a single, authoritative reading that unifies the text's disparate elements" (33). Indeed, the text's elements are highly disparate, ranging from clever *Erewhon*-like satire to action-adventure chase sequences on pterodactyls. However, in recent years there has been a shift in the way De Mille's *A Strange MS* has been received. The need to interpret the novel via "a single, authoritative reading" has been eschewed in favour of a "postmodernist impulse to celebrate the self-reflexive, parodic, elusively ironic qualities of his work" (Lamont-Stewart 34). As well, post-colonial critical methods are plumbing new depths in the novel. Maggie Kilgour has examined the novel's fascination with cannibalism in light of its implied concerns about imperialism. Stephen Milnes reads the novel's conclusion as deliberate and ironic, as Featherstone's yawn/boredom is a purposeful silencing and dismissing of what will likely become a critique of colonial power: While the novel ends with Adam More triumphantly taking up leadership of the Kosekin, he is not entirely out of danger and it seems unlikely that he will be able to maintain power indefinitely (Milnes 101).

Although postmodernist and postcolonial approaches to De Mille's novel may reveal new dimensions that would have otherwise gone unnoticed, very little is said

about De Mille's work as *Canadian* fiction, as a Canadian novel that may reflect something about Canada in the 19th century. And there is probably good reason why critics have tended to overlook any possible Canadian contextualization: Although the author was born in St. John, New Brunswick, and at the time of his death was a professor at Dalhousie College in Halifax, Nova Scotia, there seems to be scant connection to Canada in the novel. It could be argued that De Mille distances his novel as far as possible from Canada: e.g., instead of taking place in the north, the novel takes place in the far south, with almost all of its action set at the South Pole. As W. J. Keith notes, there wasn't a Canadian market for the novel, so De Mille was likely aiming at a UK readership because all of its characters, except for the Kosekin, are British (74). That aside, certain Canadian concerns are buried in *A Strange MS* and can be unearthed via Northrop Frye's concept of the "garrison mentality."

In *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination*, published in 1971, Northrop Frye discusses some of the thematic strains recurring throughout Canadian literature. One theme he coins as "a garrison mentality" (225). Frye argues that this mentality emerged as a response to particular features in the pattern of settlement across Canada in the 18th and 19th centuries. Frye writes:

Small and isolated surrounded with a physical or psychological "frontier,"

> separated from one another and from their American and British cultural sources: communities that provide all that their members have in the way of distinctly human values, and that are compelled to feel a great respect for the law and order that holds them together, yet confronted with a huge, unthinking, menacing, and formidable physical setting—such communities are bound to develop what we may provisionally call a garrison mentality. (225)

The two main features of this mentality, according to Frye, are the threatening wilderness which surrounds an isolated community and the need for cohesion within this isolated community. Earlier, Frye argues that the seeds of this mentality are sewn in the experience of travelling *into* Canada. Unlike the U.S.A with its clearly defined Atlantic seaboard, Canada's east coast is more ragged and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which leads into the Great Lakes and into the heart of Canada, functions like a vast mouth. Frye describes the traveler from Europe entering Canada as "like a tiny Jonah entering an inconceivably large whale" and then "being silently swallowed by an alien continent" (217). Once inside the belly of this leviathan, there is the clash of cultures when settlers encounter the aboriginal inhabitants (219) and then the profoundly disturbing fear of the wilderness environment (220). Frye asks: "One wonders if any other national consciousness has had so large an amount of the unknown, the

unrealized, the humanly undigested, so built into it" (220), resulting in a "deep terror in regard to nature" (225). These fears found their way into Canada's literature: for example, Frye calls the 19th century literary pioneer Susanna Moodie a "one-woman garrison" (237). Although something of a cliché now in "Can. Lit.," Frye's garrison theme remains useful (even if it is, to borrow Lamont-Stewart's phrase, "an essentially modernist approach, seeking to arrive at a single, authoritative reading" [33]). And although Frye does not discuss *A Strange MS* in his *Bush Garden* essays, his observations resonate very strongly with De Mille's novel and open up a discussion of the work as a Canadian text.

Adam More's account of his adventures begins with a description of how he came to the land of the Kosekin. In the novel's early gothic chapters, De Mille repeatedly returns to fear, trepidation, suspicion and horror as the dominant emotional tone—all of which are elements of Frye's garrison. More begins by explaining that he was mate of a ship transporting convicts to Van Diemen's land (a wilderness prison, if not exactly a garrison). On the homeward journey, the ship draws near a rocky island; More and his fellow-mate Agnew get permission to use a boat to row ashore and hunt for seals. However, snow and fog close in when they begin rowing back to the ship and they soon lose their way and begin drifting aimlessly. In one of the book's most

memorable episodes, they land at a desolate country that is "iron-bound" (29) and dark, lit by the glare of nearby volcanoes. They meet a small tribe of human beings, but these people are "of such an appalling aspect that they could only be likened to animated mummies. They were small, thin, shriveled, black, with long matted hair and hideous faces" (29). More is suspicious of them, but Agnew is willing to be optimistic. Agnew cheerfully reminds More: "appearances often deceive, and the devil's not so black as he's painted" (31). When they go ashore More fires his gun "to inspire a little wholesome respect" (31), but it doesn't have the desired effect. The natives are unimpressed and unafraid, but More feels better having the weapons on him. The natives provide the men with food, but More and Agnew quickly learn that the natives are cannibals and that they will soon be on the menu themselves. When the natives attack Agnew, More is unable to help and flees to the rowboat and resumes drifting on the current. In the space of a few pages, De Mille manages to express all the myriad fears of encountering an aboriginal "other," in which the explorer/traveler is physically and morally horrified, nearly killed, and in jeopardy of being eaten. (That De Mille likely has his tongue planted firmly in cheek seems to be all that keeps this from performing as a racist horror-story.)

After this episode, we see More "like a tiny Jonah entering an inconceivably large

whale" and then "being silently swallowed by an alien continent" (217). Once back in the rowboat he is caught on a current that draws him into a dark cavern and then into a lightless, subterranean river, which pulls him further into the Antarctic. However, while drifting helplessly onward, he is very nearly swallowed by a sea-monster when an anachronistic Plesiosaur attacks his little boat. Here More's rifle proves to have a greater effect on dinosaurs than on the previous cannibals, and he manages to frighten the creature away. But More is irrevocably swallowed by the geography. Once he emerges from this subterranean passage into the brightness of daylight in the land of the Kosekin, it seems impossible to escape. The subterranean channel cannot be re-negotiated, there seems to be no possible overland escape route, and when he later attempts to fly away on the back of a pterodactyl he is recaptured. This portion of De Mille's novel – the passage into the alien continent – lines up in an uncanny way with Frye's Jonah/Gulf of St. Lawrence observation. In a paper published in 1972, Crawford Kilian seems to make this connection, albeit through an oblique reference to Frye's essay: "The channel down which More and Agnew are carried seems physically similar to the Gulf of St. Lawrence" (65). Kilian also states, "it seems fairly clear that North America, and especially Canada, are singled out as most deserving comparison with the Kosekin" (65). He draws the comparison that the Kosekin live half the year

indoors (because the Antarctic experiences long periods of daylight and the Kosekin can't stand the light), which is "a life-style similar to the Canadian stereotype" (65) in that Canadians will spend the long, dark winter months indoors. That said, he stretches his comparison unnecessarily. Kilian mentions that when More plays his violin – playing old Scotch and Irish songs, like "Tara," "Bonnie Doon," and "Auld Lang Syne" – the Kosekin are moved by the numbers, just as Canadians would be (65-6). (To be fair, Kilian makes the comparison between the Kosekin and characters from Ralph Connor or Edward William Thomson, but the suggestion is clear enough—that the Kosekin are at least like a type of Canadian [65-6].)

A more productive reading of the Kosekin would be to think of them as the aboriginal inhabitants of the land. Like any explorer or settler in an unknown, mysterious land, More needs to come to terms with those around him. The Kosekin are certainly "other," as De Mille has positioned them as culturally the opposite of modern western society. Yet in De Mille's satirical sleight-of-hand, they wind up being more or less like mainstream westerners, in spite of – or perhaps because of – their cannibalism, human sacrifice and hatred of life itself. Unable to see any irony in his position, More must try to find the mental and emotional fortitude to live among them. Luckily, there is another non-Kosekin – Almah, his love-interest – who shares

his feelings about the Kosekin. In turn, they become a two-person garrison. This garrison is in part achieved by More's ability to keep the Kosekin at a mental or emotional arm's length. He manages this by studiously not identifying with them. In Chapter 16, simply titled "The Kosekin," More summarizes all of the observations he has made about the people he has discovered. For example, on sickness More notes, "[a]mong the Kosekin the sick are objects of the highest regard" (136); on death, he writes, "the Kosekin love death as we love life" (137); on labour relations, More explains that labourers do have strikes, "but it is always for harder work, longer hours, or smaller pay" (137); on matters of crime and punishment, More informs us that "the Kosekin capital punishment is imprisonment amid the greatest splendor, where the prisoner is treated like a king, and has many palaces and great retinues" (139). Adam More's quasi-scientific detachment here is, of course, part of De Mille's satirical strategy; but this detachment is also indicative of a kind of intellectual garrison by which More can successfully distance himself from the threatening people and surroundings.

More's most effective weapon in his arsenal is just that—a weapon. His rifle saves both Almah's life and his own just before their imminent sacrifice (which is supposed to be a great honour). The rifle is, arguably, emblematic of the garrison;

moreover, it is emblematic of the success of the garrison once More has managed to stave off all that was once threatening and dangerous. Adam More's narrative, as mentioned earlier, ends here, with More triumphant, taking over as leader of the Kosekin. Yet we sense that this may not last very long. At the beginning of the novel, when the four friends opened the copper cylinder on board the yacht, the manuscript was prefaced by a brief note from More stating that he is trapped in "a land from which escape is as impossible as from the grave" (8). This is clearly despairing, with no sense of triumph at all. It seems to suggest that More's garrison proved to be a feeble construct, something that he was unable to maintain. This is probably, in the end, the true source of terror in the garrison mentality: The "deep terror" is not due to the surrounding wilderness, but due to the fear that the garrison will not hold out against that wilderness.

In the spirit of the novel itself, I feel that my conclusion should also be abrupt. Northrop Frye's concept of the garrison mentality is, I believe, a useful way of tracing the novel's Canadian connections. However, in turn, De Mille's novel is a useful way of reading Frye's garrison mentality: That More's garrison appears to result in failure at the end of *A Strange MS* may be read as a prophetic, early warning, indicating the ultimate failure of the mentality that Frye described. In answer to the earlier question

of what De Mille might have been satirizing, perhaps he was questioning, probing and even satirizing the garrison mentality itself? If Frye is right, it would have been the mentality that De Mille saw all around him in his own time in 19th century Canada.

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Drop Off by Joanna Reid

In the gravel lot where people leave free mattresses, printers, old clothes, comic books, kitchen chairs, dishes, and, today, a yellowed painting of a tall ship on steep seas, I hang clothes on the chain link fence. Every hanger is lifted off right away.

"Perfect for walking along the beach on misty days," the woman says, taking a red K-Way.

"I need big shirts these days," she says, unhooking a huge square Hawaiian one. "I've been painting in oils."

"My dog can wear this during playoffs," she says, folding up my son's old toddler-size Canuck's t-shirt. "Perfect!"

I ball up the empty plastic bag and put it in my pocket. Her arms are full. She smiles and I see gaps between thin teeth, as I might've had without caps. When the sun hits her grey eyes and they have yellow flecks in them, too, I see we are almost identical.

We are both tall with wiry muscles in our forearms. She even has a mole on her left cheek. She is me, only sprung loose and crooked. She says "oops" as the clothes slip and she gathers them. Her hair is brown and curly, too, but coarser and with gray.

"Great stuff," she says, shaking her head. "Just great."

"I'm glad it could be useful," I say.

I put the groceries on the kitchen counter.

My son is watching basketball.

"Today I saw a woman who looked just like me," I say.

"I highly doubt that," he says.

"It was like she was more me than I was," I say.

"Ach, Christ!" he says to the TV. "What the hell was that?"

"I'm very good at first impressions," I say.

The game turns to commercial and he stands up.

"Everyone thinks they're good at first impressions," he says.

I almost follow him into the kitchen.

Instead, I go to the computer and search for old pictures of Joni Mitchell, when she first sang in London, playing her old guitar upside-down, and all you could see under her felt hat was her long white hair and wide mouth. Her voice was a precipitous chime, a secret singing-bell reminder, and you could see the first three rows of the audience with their hands in their laps, their faces dim. Different is good, you could almost hear them thinking. We want some strangeness in our lives. But is this too much or just the right amount? I stare at one photo for a long time, wondering how she learned to be so brave.

norman j. olson

ink

Dreaming, displacement, death, and eternity: time travel in James Cameron's *Aliens* (1986)

by Sue Matheson, University College of the North
The Pas, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dressed in her combat fatigues and cradling her pulse rifle, James Cameron's Ripley was received by general audiences as a gynecentric challenge to masculine notions of power and privilege in 1986. Academics, however, did not embrace *Aliens* as a movie about feminism, female empowerment, motherhood, or even colonialism: dubbed "Fembo," *Aliens* was, and still is, regarded by many feminist film theorists (Constance Penley, Rhona Berentstein, Lynda K. Bundtzen, and Harvey R. Greenberg, among them) as a movie about women who have been duped into serving the patriarchy (Blackmore 211). Linking matriphobia, anti-feminism, and Kristevean notions of the abject, Michael Davis' excellent study, "'What's the story mother?' Abjection and Anti-Feminism in Alien and Aliens," argued in 2000 that *Aliens* should be read as a "symptomatic" text whose psycho-political allegories tell us a great deal about the anxieties engendered within patriarchy by feminism and the defensive

strategies with which these anxieties are met (245). In "The *Alien* Series: A Deleuzian Perspective," however, Teresa Rizzo, in 2004, pointed out that A*liens* continues to call for an approach which recognizes that it is more than a historically, culturally, and politically situated text—perhaps because it, and the other movies in this series, have been the subjects of an intense discussion centering on issues such as the monstrous feminine, the maternal, female identity and desire (330). Negotiating matters that Deleuze and Guattari would recognize as "becoming," Rizzo argues that the *Alien* series challenges the rigid notion of being in which the self as being is complete and has no further potential by engaging their viewers in a series of violations of the categories of the human body which put "any stable notions of subjectivity and identity into question" (334).

As Rizzo notes, the critical discussion concerned with the *Alien* films has generally centered on problems arising from matters of patriarchy in these movies, and little, if any, attention has been paid to the broader ontological concerns about the nature of being that these movies raise. In particular, the nature of time in *Aliens* and its implications have not been examined in any detail—a curious matter when one considers how many references there are to time or the lack thereof during Ripley's adventures on LV-426. The supplementary commentary that accompanies the

theatrical release of this movie also identifies time as a critical factor in this movie: producer Gale Anne Hurd points out the subtle details make the audience aware that a little clock is always ticking as the movie runs. Time is much more than a narrative device used to drive the story forward. There are many types of time at work: time not only runs forward into the future but also simultaneously backward into the past, destabilizing fixed linear notions of history, perception, and identity. In doing so, Cameron's treatments of time challenge our popular assumptions about the individual self as being complete and support the concept that the self is always in a state of flux: "becoming" or transformation.

To begin, Cameron carefully deconstructs the notion of time as a finite sequence of moments that follow one another by using Ripley's 57 years of hypersleep to alter his audience's assumptions about chronological linearity as an absolute and introduce the concept of mythic or cyclical time at the beginning of *Aliens*. First, the *Nostromo's* lifeboat appears, carrying Ripley. In hypersleep, she is experiencing personal dream time and, in the abyss of space, the audience experiences dream time as that period of prehistory during which the world was created. Cameron reinforces the experience of time as the Return, or as cyclical time, via mise-en-scene details while the *Narcissus* is rescued by a deep space salvage ship. Time repeats itself as parallels between details in

the opening sequence on board the Nostromo in *Alien* repeat themselves in *Aliens*. Like the monitors on the Nostromo [sic] in *Alien*, computer screens on the *Narcissus* feature "indecipherable machine language as the ship's message monitors begin to receive information" when contact is made with the other ship (Wood 2). Cameron's evocation of the Ridley Scott prequel clearly indicates that the past is about to repeat itself.

Here it is important to note that a similar disruption of linear time at the outset of *Aliens* is delineated in David Giller, Walter Hill and James Cameron's original treatment of the story. Cameron's first script immediately establishes the nature of Ripley's hypersleep as "a dream state." Not supposed to be able to dream in "the freezer," Ripley has been dreaming. Experiencing the Return over and over again, she has had the same nightmare for sixty years: that is she runs down a corridor in the *Nostromo* to a doorway only to find the alien waiting for her. She screams and uses her flamethrower. Although this scene in the original treatment does not appear in the final draft of the script, dreaming is a conceit which Cameron continued to use. Throughout, the indeterminacy of the dream state destabilizes his audience's narrative expectations in the movie's theatrical release. It is difficult at first to know exactly where Ripley's sleep ends and her waking consciousness of the world begins. Ripley's

incomplete dream of a chest burster in *Aliens'* opening sequences is a scene that is easily mistaken as a waking reality. After the *Narcissus* is salvaged, there is no conventional transition, such as a dissolve, directly into her nightmare, which alerts her viewers that they are seeing a dream state. Instead, Cameron dissolves the contour of Ripley's face, presented like a Sleeping Beauty's in hypersleep, to match the curvature of the Earth in a matte painting before slowly panning to Gateway Station in a wide shot. Cameron cuts from this wide shot of Gateway's exterior to that of Space Station's Sick Bay in which a MedTech is reading a chart before panning to Ripley waking up in a hospital bed. The introduction of a waking state is reinforced when, carrying Jonsey (the only other survivor of the *Nostromo*), Carter Burke arrives for a visit with the news that Ripley has been asleep for 57 years. Shortly thereafter, a chest burster unexpectedly attempts to pop out of Ripley's torso—surprising and horrifying everyone in the room (Ripley most of all) as well as those in the theatre audience. This unpleasant moment, however, is revealed to be but another dream. When Ripley is startled from this dream-within-a-dream to discover her chest intact and the chest burster a figment of her unconscious mind, her waking is not gradual. Cameron cuts sharply to her sitting up in bed. As Cameron means them to be, his unsettling camera transitions in and out of the dream state at the Space Station are but the first of a series

of narrative disruptions in *Aliens that* complicate his viewers' expectations. Cameron's commentary concerning this disruption in *Aliens: Special Edition* (1986) is particularly revealing. He says, "This is, of course, a dream sequence, but you don't know that yet. The incomplete chestburster scene here really got people cranked up and put them on edge…kinda set the tone for the whole movie. You were here to be messed with, which was a good way to start off, I think."

There are numerous other instances of Cameron "messing" with audience expectations in *Aliens*. Wardrobe is one means by which viewers' assumptions about the unfolding of the narrative become confused. For example, one finds male and female gender distinctions blurred by the corporate suits worn by executives of both sexes in The Company's boardroom on Gateway and the uni-sex military fatigues donned by the men and women in the Colonial Marine corps disconcerting after the earlier references to Ripley as a Sleeping Beauty. Even the role which human beings play in the universe becomes shifting and unstable. Taking on the creative function of the gods, Terraformers create a "shake and bake" world via an atmospheric processing plant on LV-426. Comfortably situated at the top of the Chain of Being, Hudson points out that the aliens are "animals" just before Medlab is overrun, but his statement is almost immediately undermined as the aliens prove themselves to be as

rational as their human antagonists by cutting the power before attacking. As Hudson disappears shrieking into the floor, there is no doubt who (or what) alpha-predator occupies the top of the food chain.

Notably, such anomalies appear to blur the distinctions between the conventional categories of man/woman, god/human, and human/animal, yet one finds these categories are not themselves disrupted or destroyed. Throughout *Aliens*, one never loses sight of gender distinctions: women are women no matter how unflattering their combat fatigues may be or how well-muscled they are. Wearing a "wife-beater," Ripley is identified as Newt's "Mommy" at the end of the movie. Hicks gives Ripley a locator with the caveat that it doesn't mean that they are "going out." Clearly inhuman, the exo-skeletal aliens kidnap fleshy colonists, thereby demonstrating that their hapless victims do not really possess godlike powers. The categories themselves remain intact—what are shattered are any expectations which audience members may have that belonging to a category automatically excludes individuals on the screen from simultaneously occupying other categories.

Such shattering is particularly true of Cameron's treatment of expectations about being able to participate in only one of the following categories at any particular moment: the past, the present, and the future. In *Aliens*, individuals' experiences of

these categories of time prove to be fluid and even arbitrary. As Ripley's dream state immediately suggests, time, in this movie, is not as just one-dimensional (it is usually considered the fourth). Time is presented as several dimensions in which an individual or individuals may function simultaneously. Linear time, for example, operates in two modes throughout *Aliens*, pressing the movie's narrative forward into the future *and* drawing it backwards to the past; as these systems of linear time unfold, the workings of cyclical time are also evident as events are re-enacted, and eternal time becomes apparent as well. Even one of Einstein's causal loops appears to be participating in this story, opening up yet another temporal dimension in which individuals find themselves functioning.

It should not be surprising then that the nature of time is a pivotal concern in *Aliens*. In spite of its emphasis on combat and combat culture, Cameron's is a science fiction movie. Time travel, one of the oldest staples of the science fiction genre, is the narrative foundation on which it rests. Since the publication of *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells, science fiction heroes and heroines have travelled ahead in time to foresee the future or journeyed back into the past to correct historical events. *Aliens'* treatment of time twins these travel motifs: paradoxically, as Ripley learns, moving ahead into the future becomes a method by which one may recover the past even as

the past itself returns.

It is the erasure of time which prompts Ripley's recovery of her past. When Ripley's report of the disaster that took place on the *Nostromo* is not accepted by The Company's executives, her history is replaced with a corporate narrative that bears no resemblance to the series of events that occurred on LV-426 and in the *Nostromo*. The Company's revision of Ripley's past and her own version of it co-exist for the viewer but do not overlap: in Ripley's account, creatures that gestate inside living human hosts and have acid for blood exist and necessitate the destruction of the *Nostromo*; in The Company's, such monsters are only the imaginary figments of a mentally disturbed and hysterical female pilot who blew up a Class One Starship. As viewers who witness the first movie of the series know, The Company's findings are not accurate translations of the events on the *Nostromo*, and the "official version" of the destruction that took place is merely a provisional or temporary network of signifiers unconnected to the signified. In short, the Company's report is slippage. This slippage, however, does not produce a constructive and playful set of possibilities in which meaning accrues and proliferates. Professionally displaced by The Company's version of events, Ripley is not freed into a constructive and playful field of future possibilities. Instead, its effects on the individual are disastrous. Having lost her license to work as pilot, Ripley finds her

existence narrowed: she is reduced to working as a machine operator in the docks on Gateway.

Having lost her license to work as pilot, Ripley finds her existence extremely limited: she is reduced to working as a machine operator in the docks on Gateway, the space station. In short, Ripley is displaced. More important, The Company's repression of the truth also has psychologically unpleasant and unwelcome consequences. Ripley finds that the erasure of the *Nostromo's* history has not only displaced and repressed her past, but that also that displaced and repressed past has returned to haunt her present. Ripley's experience of time has become cyclical. She suffers from recurring nightmares. Burke, who has seen her psych-evaluation knows that she wakes up every night drenched in sweat because of these dreams.

Meanwhile on LV-426, an equally disturbing displacement, another Return, is also taking place. While Ripley experiences her nightmares that which has been repressed has reappeared on LV-426. Taking over Hadley's Hope, the aliens attack The Company's colonists and implant embryos in them which in time kill their human hosts. Displacement in the case of these Company employees is expressed literally in physical terms (they are carried off and cocooned for implanting in the processing station under the main cooling towers). Their removal does much more than endanger

their mental and physical health: it questions the very nature of their being.

One's past is not only evidence how one has existed, it is also an important part of the one's ontological foundation, because one's past evidences how one has existed and acts as an expression that one continues to exist. The loss or damage of one's personal history calls into question the integrity of that self in the present. Thus, when one considers the unpleasant ramifications of erasing or revising or displacing history, correcting The Company's historical inaccuracies seems to be necessary and desirable. In psychoanalytic terms, Freud would view Ripley's return to LV-426 to do just this and her expulsion of the Alien Queen from the airlock of the Sulaco at the movie's end as acts of catharsis. For Jung, Ripley's confrontation with and defeat of the Alien Queen could be read as the reintegration of her shadow self back into her psyche. When read in terms of correcting history, however, Ripley's return to LV-426 becomes a fact-finding mission which erases the relative nature of her story (and recovers her professional credibility and personal reputation, so that she may have the chance to lead a fulfilling career and, if you will pardon the term, experience an ontologically significant life). Acting as the Marines' historian, she is able to make sense of what evidence the aliens have left behind. She alone can explain the significance of the melted metal in the hallway just inside the North Lock and the chest bursters in

specimen tanks in Medlab. Her past experiences enable her to identify traces of signifiers and thereby recover them. When reunited, signifier and signified correct The Company's version of the *Nostromo's* history and the breakdown of communication with Hadley's Hope on LV-426 becomes a meaningful part of a cogent causal chain**.**

Throughout the movie, therefore, characters' relationships to Time and the past are extremely significant. The importance of time, which is often recognized by its scarcity, or the lack thereof, is mentioned repeatedly. Ripley informs the Marines that "just one of those things managed to wipe out [her] entire crew in less than twenty four hours." Vasquez is ready to "kick ass anytime." Gorman uses time as a method to punish Hudson: he wants this mission "to smooth and by the numbers": those numbers are units of time. "I want DCS and tactical database assimilation by 0:830," he says, "Ordinance loading, weapons strip, and drop ship prep details will have seven hours." Hudson panics after the drop ship crashes and strands him in Hadley's Hope: time, he says was "growing short." Indicating that he recognizes that his relationship is time is irrevocably ending, he cries, "Four more weeks and out."

As well as repeated references to time, fixed categories of time also proliferate in this movie. These categories demonstrate time's complex and paradoxical nature. Time in *Aliens* is Heraclitean—it is at once linear and eternal, moving and static. When

Ripley awakes from hypersleep on the *Sulaco*, events follow one another in a forward-moving linear fashion: the present becomes the past. Dressing for duty is followed by breakfast which in turn is followed by the morning's work that prepares the marines and the drop ship for combat. Working with the marines, however, Ripley travelling into her future, she is returning to her past. Going to LV-426 with the Colonial Marines, "not to study, not to bring back, but to wipe [the aliens] out," she is about to re-enact the events on the *Sulaco*.

Like Ripley, the Marines also begin to experience this paradox when meeting their own deadlines. No longer only forward-looking, time becomes Janus-faced. Ferro, the drop ship pilot who begins her count down at "ten seconds," while moving forward into the future towards her own death also demonstrates the arbitrariness of the beginning of the release sequencer as the drop ship's Mark is not prescribed. Reversing the linearity of the chronological sequence, she intones **"**Five, Four, Three, Two, One, Mark." The ship drops on *her* Mark. Apone also has to power to determine the sequencing and ordering of moments: he gives the command to his people in the APC to gear up. They have "two minutes…[to] get hot," then ten seconds to disperse from the APC to the North Lock.

Meeting Apone's deadlines, however, does not ensure the success of the Marines'

mission. Although they dutifully gear up during their last two minutes in the APC and use exactly ten seconds of real time to disperse to the North entrance, as Hudson points out, the platoon is on "a one way express elevator to Hell." Notably, linear time cannot function in Hell. An eternal place, Hell, like Heaven, is situated outside the perimeters of History. Only Hicks, the veteran, prepares himself appropriately for this mission by falling asleep during the drop to the colony. Perhaps this nap indicates why Hicks is the only Marine to survive this mission. He alone understands the ontological nature of their mission. While harrowing the Hell created on LV-426, the Marines drop simultaneously forwards into the future and backwards into Ripley's past experience: as in a dream, fixed distinctions between past and present, dream and reality become blurred for the viewer.

Thus, it is not surprising that the first thing the Marines encounter in Hadley's Hope is slippage. Hell is often portrayed in literature, art, and film as a labyrinth in which signifiers do not signify and cause one to lose one's way. In Hadley's Hope on LV-426, the Marines discover that meaningful relationships between signifier and signified have broken down. There is no evidence to show how the aliens breached the colony's barricades. There are no bodies left behind. It is impossible to decipher exactly what happened: there are not enough clues available which would allow the

Marines to reconstruct the colonists' last hours. A half-eaten donut and a cold cup of coffee suggest that someone's coffee break was interrupted when the final attack occurred. Acid holes in the gangway outside Medlab indicate that there were alien casualties. Interrupted Medlogs give an incomplete idea of the work done to extricate facehuggers from their victims. Hudson finally locates the colonists' via their PDCs, but even that information appears incomprehensible: as Hicks comments the grouped PDC read-outs that Hudson locates look "like a goddamn town meeting."

Because of the causal chaos, the only way to reconstruct the past weeks at Hadley's Hope seems to be to talk with those who were there. Further issues of perspective and identity related to time, however, further confuse any chance that the Marines have of decoding the colony's recent history. During the rescue mission that immediately takes place under the main cooling towers, each soldier's camcorder mounted on his or her helmet provides viewers with a severely limited version of the close encounters that follow. The lens limitations of these recorders and the poor quality of the transmissions on the APC's video screens ensure that this information, especially their Mission Times, is often incomplete and at times completely indecipherable. For Gorman, the fleeting impressions of the disembowelled colonists grotesquely cocooned in the Queen's nest and the hapless Marines' last moments in

the field are rhizomatic at best, incoherent at worst. The shots that Cameron offers of the Marines in the field also fail to provide a coherent narrative. During the firefight around the primary heat exchanger's cooling tanks, footage, also incomplete, does not serve to supplement the point-of-view shots on the camcorders. Oddly, the minutes and seconds recorded on the Marines' video read-outs are particularly confusing at this point in the movie. Even though the soldiers began the mission together, their Mission Times do not coincide. The value shown on each screen is different.

As the Marines finally find themselves in retreat, time becomes even more plastic and unstable. First, it shortens, then, it lengthens. After the drop ship crashes, the Marines cannot expect to be rescued from LV-426 for 17 days. As Hudson points out, it would be unlikely for them to "last 17 hours." After the reactor's core begins its emergency venting, they suddenly have only four hours until the entire complex detonates. When retreating through the air vents, Hicks learns that the second drop ship will arrive in 16 minutes. Ripley, Hicks, and Bishop meet this deadline, but Newt's disappearance begins the count again. As Ripley tells Bishop, "There's still time": nineteen minutes remain. During this period references to time increase while its increments decrease. Cameron's treatment of time and space both emphasize the unstable and oxymoronic nature of his chronological conceits: while the plant's

computer reminds the audience that fifteen minutes remain, the elevator levels also count down from fifteen. Ripley's descent is then recorded in sublevels and finally meters on her rangefinder until she finds Newt's locater covered in the slime on the floor: aptly, this instrument looks like a lost wristwatch.

Paradoxically, Ripley's movement backwards also impels her forward, closer to the colony's and (seemingly) her own apocalypse. Her journey to ground zero, however, also brings her to the beginning of everything, the Queen's Nest. In this place, she, Newt and the Queen are transfixed in the moment. In their tableau, one finally finds Cameron's resolution of time's forward motion, associated throughout the action of the movie with the inevitability of death and the masculine worlds of the military and industry. Having finally returned to its source, linear time reaches the point of zero, to reveal not the absence of the abyss (or nothingness) but the presence of the cyclical, expressed in the feminine activity of birth.

Generally considered the beginning of one's individuality and therefore one's history, birth, Davis notes, is presented in the Queen's chamber as the abject: a huge, colonic ovipositor poops out nasty, slime-covered eggs onto the floor of her nest. Typically associated with principle of revitalization, this act is perversely associated with death. It is an act of evacuation—a performance by the abject, one in that which

is born is also that which is abjected since it too is "something, an object, which must be jettisoned, expelled; ab-jected" (Davis 247). As Julia Kristeva points out, filth and waste signify the abject because "filth applies to what relates to a boundary and more particularly represents the object jettisoned out of that boundary, [to] its other side, a margin" (69; quoted in Davis 247). In the case of the aliens, it is easy to accept that which is born in such a manner must be marginalized. Inside-out exoskeletons dripping mucous and other unpleasant body fluids, these creatures produce that psycho-visceral reaction of disgust and loathing which is proof of the abject. It is not so easy, however, to consider the possibility that we, ourselves also the end products of the act of birth, belong in the same category. Nonetheless, Cameron insists that we do. A prime example of human ab-jection, Burke, the slimy Company executive, is marginalized by the Marines. After his chilling perfidy (attempting to infect Ripley and Newt with alien-embryo implants) is revealed, he is, as Hudson points out, "dog meat." Hicks' word choice when deciding to frag Burke could not be more Kristevean. His decision is "[w]e *waste* him" (italics mine).

Earlier encountered in the face huggers in Medlab, grotesque conflations of human body parts, anal and vaginal, prepare the audience for the presence of eternal time, which expresses the oldest of human mysteries: here, Alpha is Omega; that is

one's beginning, if you will pardon the pun, is one's end. As Davis points out, Ripley's expulsion of the Queen from the *Nostromo's* airlock during the movie's finale can be read as a matriphobic act which reconstitutes patriarchal culture by evacuating the abject. Matriphobia, after all, is a reaction to the abject, a fear of the archaic mother and her generative power; and as Kristeva herself states, "the phobic has no other object than the abject (Kristeva 6; quoted in Davis 249). Cameron's treatment of time and history, however, complicates and further problematizes what appears to be a most insidious anti-feminist ideology. The dyad of birth-and-death is presented in the Queen's Nest as the monstrous, but it maintains its integrity as the eternal nevertheless. In this place where while the voice of The Company computer counting down the seconds is unheard, the Queen works repetitively, laying egg after egg.

Nonetheless, one knows that the countdown continues. Eternal time does not supercede, displace, or erase the dimensions of linear time functioning outside the Chamber. In *Aliens*, eternal time is presented as co-equal with the linear categories functioning on LV-426 and one in which the individual may also participate. Meeting the *Alien* Queen, Ripley regains her identity, validates her historical past, and asserts her individuality. Here it should be noted that Newt saying, "Mommy" at the movie's end is much more than an affirmation that Ripley was not a "bad mother" who

abandoned her daughter by working outside the home. As a mother at the movie's end, Ripley retrieves not only her social but also her mythic identity, her ability to participate in eternal time via the physical confirmation of immortality that children promise their parents. As Einstein would note, travelling far enough into the future, she experienced a causal loop, finding her younger self in Newt. Thus, her return to hyperspace at the movie's end involves the twinning of her sleeping image. Mother and daughter, Ripley and Newt represent the temporary and eternal nature of being—like the Heraclitean river, the twinned image of mother and daughter which Cameron presents here expresses the eternal nature of the mutable. Eternity is discoverable when one recognizes that the transitory nature of life is a cyclical state in which individuals are always involved in process of becoming.

In final analysis, what James Cameron's sophisticated treatment of time in *Aliens* exploits and emphasizes is not our fear of the feminine, but our very modern fear of death—that dreadful and final erasure of being as existence *and* individuality. Cameron's treatment of time indicates that there is a second monster at work in this movie—the cannibal, Father Time, another unseen entity, whom we know devours his own children. After the obscenity of birth in the Queen's chamber, it is evident that we are made of that which must be expelled and then devoured, that which we consider to

be waste. As Gale Anne Hurd notes, in *Aliens*, there is a clock that is always ticking. Ultimately, however, Cameron indicates, at ground zero, our ends and beginnings are a-historical issues as well: things of the abyss...matters of sleep. If Sleep is indeed Death's second Self, as Shakespeare suggested so long ago, then it is entirely appropriate, hopeful, and even life-affirming that Ripley's "little" life is rounded by it. In their cryo-tubes, she and Newt are much more than space junk—blood and intestines; mucous and mere appetite—waiting to be salvaged by a group of intergalactic garbage men. Mother and daughter, they are such stuff as their dreams are made of, however bleak and nihilistic their personal dream times may prove to be.

Filmography

Aliens: Special Edition. Dir. James Cameron. Screenplay by James Cameron. Perf. Sigourney Weaver, Carrie Hehn, Michael Biehn, Lance Henriksen, Paul Reiser, and Bill Paxton. Twemtieth Century-Fox, 1986.

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REVIEWS

John Butler

Anthony Everitt, *Hadrian and the Triumph of Rome*. New York: Random House, 2009.

A Real biographer is still required

The enigmatic philhellenic Roman emperor Hadrian has fascinated biographers and students of Roman history for a very long time. However, very little is known about him other than tantalizing details gleaned from unreliable sources such as the *Augustan History* and other such works, although. Hadrian's own monuments such as the Pantheon and Hadrian's Wall all testify to his greatness as a builder and urban beautifier, and a few scattered lines of poetry tell us that he was a cultivated and sensitive man, even if he was not one of Rome's greatest literary lights. We also know something about his military career prior to his succeeding Trajan in 117. All the rest is coins, which figure disproportionately in this book as evidence for various facets of Hadrian's character. Hadrian's love-affair with his deified Greek boy toy

Antinous has intrigued historians, as has his distant and cold relationship with his wife Sabina, whose mother, we read, Hadrian adored. This is interesting stuff, but not enough to write a biography, and it is unlikely that much more evidence will turn up; it would be nice, of course, if we could discover Hadrian's autobiography, which is mentioned several times in Everitt's book, but his is unlikely. The question of Hadrian's lost self-revelations intrigued the French novelist Marguerite Yourcenar enough for her to write *The Memoirs of Hadrian* (1951), which is convincing enough to make people wonder whether she had somehow managed to find the emperor's book and translate it into French whilst concealing its existence from the rest of the world. A similar job was done with Hadrian's predecessor Claudius by Robert Graves, working from minute fragments and producing two volumes of fictional memoirs, *I, Claudius* (1934) and *Claudius the God* (1935). Unfortunately Anthony Everitt, a professor of Visual and Performing Arts, is no Robert Graves or Marguerite Yourcenar, and Hadrian remains, at the end of his book, an interesting enigma. This is unfortunate, as Anthony Everitt has written two well-received books on Roman subjects, biographies of Cicero and Augustus; however, both these men are well-known figures whose lives and personalities are much better-documented than Hadrian's.

The fictional treatment of Hadrian by Yourcenar is mentioned because whilst novelists may freely interpret fragmented history and allow their minds to play with the material, a serious biographer should not. Everitt, however, writes like a novelist or journalist, filling in such details as what buildings Hadrian might have seen as he entered Rome and other details which seem almost designed to distract the reader from the fact that Hadrian himself has somehow managed to get lost along the way because there is really nothing Everitt can say about him. It might well be that Everitt's academic specialty gets in the way a little; he is very good at presenting the outside aspects of the Roman world, the things we can see, but not so good on the inside, which is the stuff of real biography. Too much of this book is speculation, perhaps a product of the "what if…?" school of new historians, who posit events that never happened in order to make things more interesting. What if, for example, Hitler had won the Second World War? It simply doesn't matter, because he didn't. Everitt continually speculates because he has no evidence to go on, and by the end of the book, in spite of the promise of cutting-edge research, he turns up next to nothing that is new about

Emperor Hadrian

Hadrian and a lot more about his background and milieu, topics which can easily be found anywhere else, such as in Michael Grant's book *The Antonines*, which gives a much better picture of the reigns of Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian in a much shorter space than Everitt does with Hadrian. And for scandal, smut, gossip and hearsay, one can always turn to the *Augustan History* itself in Anthony Briley's excellent Penguin translation, which includes Briley's own lives of Nerva and Trajan, who are missing from the original. Indeed, in the end we seem to know as much about Nerva and Trajan from Everitt's book as we do about Hadrian.

Everitt is nothing if not trendy, and spends a lot of time writing about Hadrian's relationship with Antinous. It is here that he lapses into a kind of fey vulgarity, talking about Hadrian "inserting his penis" into whoever he wants, and generally indulging in voyeuristic speculation about just went on between the middle-aged emperor and his twenty-something boyfriend, and in any case this kind of musing makes for trendy reading these days. Homoeroticism was certainly a part of Greek and Roman culture, but in this book it becomes a central part of Hadrian's psyche, only because we don't know enough about what he was doing when he wasn't with Antinous, who appears for a brief year or so and then manages to drown himself and get elevated to heaven by his pining master, who even names a city after him. At the same time, Everitt makes the claim that many Romans were bisexual, which seems to suggest that there was nothing really out of the ordinary in Hadrian's relationship with Antinous, apart from the fact that the Emperor didn't really get along with his wife, had no son of his own and needed a close confidant. Naming a city after his lover was certainly over the top by modern standards, but Alexander the Great named one after his horse (not to mention several after himself), and we

do know that Hadrian was a Philhellene of the highest order. We don't know what Antinous was really like, and we can only speculate, as Everitt certainly does, about his relationship with Hadrian; we have no letters or poems, just a lot of statues to testify to their love. For all we know, it could have been "Platonic," for which take a look at Plato's *Symposium* and the whole notion of "Greek love," which Everitt does, but seems to want to take it all further than the evidence would indicate.

Everitt is good on relating and evaluating what Hadrian accomplished, namely his building-projects and his reformation of Roman administrative practices. There is also no doubt that he consulted Latin sources and tried to go beyond the *Augustan History*. There is a place for a biography of Hadrian, but the evidence is tantalisingly thin on the ground, and historians can only hope, probably in vain, that more will turn up. Hadrian will always remain a bit of an enigma; most of his buildings are in ruins (apart from the Pantheon and Hadrian's Wall), his poetry survives only in fragments, and his autobiography is lost. By the time I finished this book, I was thinking that Everitt should have written on Marcus Aurelius, whose *Meditations* provide a great deal of autobiographical evidence. As a piece of speculative history, Everitt's book serves its purpose, but Hadrian still awaits a real biographer who can bring him to life and make him three-dimensional.

Hadrian's Wall

Gary A. Kozak

Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Turkish Letters.* Translated by E.S. Forster, with an Introduction by Philip Mansel. Harmondsworth: Eland Books, 2009.

Interesting peculiarities handled objectively

Busbecq's *Turkish Letters*, reprinted in an attractive and reasonably-priced edition by Eland Books from E. S. Forster's 1928 translation with a new Introduction by Philip Mansel, is an account of the Ottoman Empire at the height of its power in the sixteenth century. It is a complete and well-rounded description of the Turkish-European relationship under the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, who reigned from 1520 to 1566. It covers the historical, geographical, anthropological, and political aspects of the Ottoman Empire as well. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522-1592), a Flemish nobleman, politician, and part-time herbalist, was the Holy Roman Empire's ambassador to Constantinople at a time when the two empires were clashing over the Balkans. He succeeded the Bolognese Giovanni Maria Malvezzi who was interned following Emperor Ferdinand's annexation of Transylvania.

Busbecq's literary method is semi-autobiographicaland told with attempted unbiased opinion. His descriptions are detailed and diverse. He frequently digresses into background information, further explanation and personal opinions. He makes the transition to and from standard narrative and he does it effortlessly. Although his apparent intention is to make the book a work of travel literature, it evolves into a type of

Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq

historical account with story becoming more predominant as the narratives

progress.

The four letters come across as four distinct themes. The first letter is a description of Busbecq's excursion from the periphery of the Ottoman Empire to its heart in the city of Constantinople and to Cappadocia right up to his first contact with the Sultan himself. The second letter is a grim story of the deteriorating relations between the Ottoman Empire and Busbecq's own country. In the third letter, he is settling down in the city and noticing the unique qualities of life in the Muslim land. The fourth letter is a story of the Ottoman defeat of European power Spain followed by a plague in which Busbecq loses his closest acquaintances.

One of the most interesting aspects of Busbecq's narrative is in the geographical descriptions of the various cultural groups in the empire. He mentions the Serbs and their unique funerary customs and the Bulgars' lively costumes that they seem to wear on a daily basis. Most of his descriptions are left for the Turks, whom he describes as clean and tidy but unpretentious. Their unique funerary customs are discussed in detail as are their choice in colours, their prudent eating habits and the nature of their lodgings.

Busbecq displays a favourable attitude towards his Muslim hosts. He contrasts the Ottoman soldiers with the Europeans, with the former described as being more professional and dedicated but frugal. The latter, by contrast, are mentioned as individualistic and materialistic. He uses the adjectives luxury, gluttony, pride, ambition, avarice, hatred, envy, and jealously. He even mentions that the Turkish Janissaries' role in protecting Christian and Jewish populations in the empire, perhaps suggesting the Christian hosts would be less likely to show the same courtesy. He even believes the polygamous marital traditions as demonstrating a certain sanctity towards women. The Turks' fondness of animals and their more humanitarian treatment of the homeless are mentioned. The less rigid social stratification system in which any Turk can aspire is also supported. The theme is followed up with the Sultan himself being described as austere in his outlook and habits. In regard to this fairer social system, Busbecq says the following:

> They do not consider that good qualities can be conferred or handed down by inheritance, but regard them partly as the gift of heaven and partly as the product of food training and toil and zeal….so they hold that character is not hereditary, and that a son does resemble his father….Thus, among the Turks, dignities, offices, and administrative posts

> are the rewards of ability and merit; those who are dishonest, lazy, and slothful never attain to distinction, but remain in obscurity and contempt. This is why the Turks succeed in all that they attempt and are a dominating race and extend the bounds of their rule (39-40).

Not all of Busbecq's commentary about Ottoman society shows admiration. He feels that they are deficient in keeping historical records. He claims:

> The Turks have no idea of chronology and dates, and make a wonderful mixture and confusion of all the epochs of history; if it occurs to them to do so, they will not scruple to declare that Job was master of the ceremonies to King Solomon, and Alexander the Great was commander-in chief, and they are guilty of even greater absurdities (36).

He goes on to criticize other Turkish peculiarities, such as the Janissaries absurd fire-fighting methods:

> Much of Busbecq's writing is historical. He discusses the Sultan's personal affairs in which illegimate son Mustapha rises then falls. He describes the affairs of advisor Roostem being replaced then working himself back into position before his eventual death. The naval battle between the Ottoman and Spanish combatants is described in detail (36-37).

Oddly, however, Busbecq does not pay much attention to religious matters despite the pronounced differences between Christianity and Islam as well as the prejudices prevalent within them. He is more interested in the differences between the various cultures he encounters, the basic differences between them and the features that bind them together. This is perhaps due to his diplomatic background and the resultant tendency to view all cultures and religions somewhat objectively.

The difference Busbecq notices most of all are physical. He is interested, for example, in the differences in clothing, housing, climate and wildlife. His writing is non-political and purely secular. At times it appears ethnographic. He takes an interest in such differences. In the fourth letter his tone becomes more personal especially during and after the plague devastates the land and appears to alter his view on life. Despite his objectivity, Busbecq does have strong opinions. He agrees with the slavery being practiced in the Ottoman Empire as opposed to the strict punishment issued by European

regimes. His opinions, however, tend to be more favourable to the Ottomans. For instance, he says in regard to slavery:

> I am aware that slavery has various drawbacks, but these are outweighed by its advantages. If just a mild form of slavery still existed….particularly if the state were the owner of the slaves, there would not perhaps be need of so many gallows and gibbets to restrain those who possess nothing but their life and liberty, and whose want drives them to crime of every kind, while their freedom combined with poverty does not always lead them in the path of honesty (70).

Busbecq's writing details all of the above-mentioned features within the context of a diplomat's difficulties and responsibilities to fulfill the sometimes problematic job he has to carry out. He appears to have the most difficult position of all in a conflict such as this. Luckily, he has the objectivity to manage it.

Anne Jevne

Yasutaka Tsutsui. *salmonella men on planet porno*. Translated from the Japanese by Andrew Driver. Pantheon Books, 2006.

Yawn…planet porno

This book was recommended to me a while back by a friend. Having finally found the time and incentive to read it, I will return it to my friend. Written by Yasutaka Tsutsui, one of the

most celebrated Japanese authors working today, *salmonella men on planet porno* belongs on his shelf, not mine. This American debut of Tsutsui's work, a collection of "off-kilter" short stories, which portrays a world in which the lives of ordinary men and women are thrown into disarray, proved at first to be amusing and then slightly disconcerting before it became annoying and ended being a waste of my time. Call me old-fashionned but it has always seemed to me that sex itself really does belong in the bedroom and that one's issues, problems, interests, and concerns associated with such an activity belong there too. That sensible and generally acknowledged maxim regarding one's privacy of keeping the public out of one's personal affairs also extends to the written word, and, after ploughing through 252 pages of the insanities of contemporary life, I'm afraid that Tsutui's sly commentaries on the obscene absurdities in which people may find themselves did not convince me otherwise. They merely confirmed my opinion that what happens in anybody's bedroom ain't nobody's business but his own.

Suffice it to say that I've read this sort of thing before with much the same reaction—a great deal of boredom. After the first story, "The Dabba Dabba Tree," in which Tsutui describes the "hilarious" side effects of a small conical tree that when placed at the foot of one's bed, creates erotic dreams that metamorphose into communal farce, this reader noticed that the collection's subsequent tales followed the the same narrative plan: unhappy and sexually unsatisified middle-aged Japanese married men complained ineffectually about their relationships with their shrewish wives and indulged themselves in equally ineffectual fantasies about their neighbours, co-workers, and wives' friends. In every case, the conflict established at the beginning of their tales of woe remained unresolved.

I found none of this interesting as I'm simply not tempted or titillated by the imaginings of those unfortunate enough to be suffering from male menopause. And after three or four forays into *salmonella men on planet porno* which resulted in listening to Tsutsui's narrators whine about their unfulfilling, unfulfilled lives (not surprisingly the same nasal drone was voiced by each speaker, only the names of the indivudals involved changed), I ran out of sympathy for them and their predicaments. But I did find myself asking questions about their illogical behavior. These questions, elicited by the narrative driveling and drooling, also remained unanswered at the collection's conclusion.

I do wish that someone, anyone, in these stories, would have pointed out

to these speakers, presenting themselves as hapless husbands faithfully fulfilling the requirements of their marriages, that they were making their spouses' lives a living hell.

By the third story, "Don't Laugh," I had stopped being amused by the antics on the page and had also started frowning. What had these men done to make their wives so completely unreasonable, I wondered. After all, women, like men, behave like harridans only when they have been irritated beyond all endurance. By the fifth story, it was clear that (unfortunately and somewhat predictably given the nature of this collection) I would not be able to discover the answer to this question because, in the most irritating fashion imaginable, Tsutsui's speakers kept insisting that they had done nothing to provoke what were spectacular displays of fury from their wives. Ironically, it seems that the reason why the women in these stories expressed such pent-up resentment and rage is precisely because these men did…nothing…with them. And when they may have thought or wanted to do something (with another partner or two or three), for the most part, they accomplished squat. Like these wives, I ended up losing patience with the performances on the page, or to be more precise, the lack thereof, because such passive aggressive behavior, while entertaining for a short period of time, quickly became predicatable, and therefore, very boring. For this reader, the very few egregious extrapolations which Tsutsui's speakers did have were less interesting than their wives' neurotic and displaced tantrums about needing money to shop, because nothing was left to the imagination.

Erotica allows the imagination to engage with its subject. Unfortunately, in *salmonella men on planet porno* the narrators' imaginings were couched in crude and explicit terms, appropriate for inexperienced 14-year old boys, not an adult reader. The result was one highly unsatisfactory narrative that limped along after another. And yes, the pun here is intended.

I had heard and discounted as fantastic a number of rumours about the growing trend of middle-aged, married men in Japan coming home from a hard day at the office only find themselves divorce, the locks on their doors changed, and themselves labeled "smelly garbage" by their disgruntled partners once the children had been raised and left home. Before I had encountered *salmonella men on planet porno*, I had felt sorry for these men. Those poor men, I thought then, how could their wives have been so heartless? Now, however, I understand why this sort of thing is said to happen regularly. What else could a woman trapped in a relationship with such a man be expected to do?

All things considered, I suspect that *salmonella men on porno planet* is a book written for men, not women—and the sooner it goes back to my friend's shelf, the better. In the meantime, Yasutaka Tsutsui may be a prize-winning writer who has been awarded the Tanizaki Prize and the Kawabata Prize and who has been decorated as a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French government, but I am afraid that I cannot recommend buying this collection of his short stories. I am reasonably sure that he did not receive his awards or his decoration for this particular tome. If the public library carries a copy of *salmonella men on planet porno*, it may be worth your while to borrow it. However, I wouldn't recommend paying the interlibrary loan fee needed to bring it in from another city. And if I did borrow this book, I would be careful to not to forget when to return the volume. Paying overdue fines for privilege of witnessing the airing of another's dirty linen in public, not to mention experiencing the irritation and boredom that *salmonella men on planet porno* is sure to produce, is also something that goes very much against the grain.

gallery *quint*

Patty St. Jean

NORTHERN LANDSCAPES

Always interested in photography, Patty has begun to investigate her talents for creating tensions with color and space since she acquired a Canon Rebel a year ago. An intuitive photographer, she is currently investigating the three-dimensional compositions in her landscape studies.

JOHN BUTLER

ON

JAPANESE TEMPLES AND SHRINES

JULYAN
CARTWRIGHT'S

JAPAN

Julyan

CONTRIBUTORS

A doctoral student specializing in Canadian Literature at Memorial University, Jacob Bachinger lives and works in St. John's, Newfoundland.

Formerly a professor of British Studies at Chiba University, Tokyo, John Butler is an associate professor of Humanities at University College of the North. He specializes in seventeenth-century intellectual history and travel literature, especially that of Asia and Asia Minor. John and his wife Sylvia live in The Pas with their 3 cats.

A Senior Investigator with the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cient´ıficas (CSIC), Spain, Julyan Cartwright earned his doctorate in Mathematics at the University of London in 1992. Increasingly his research relates to biological questions and nonlinear relationships of dynamical systems. Currently, Julyan is examining patterns in nature and understandings of the phenomena that spring from it, such as chaos, pattern formation, and complexity.

A single mother of two children, Anne Jevne lives and writes in Northern Manitoba.

Gary A. Kozak, has worked overseas extensively in the fields of educational management, childhood development, linguistic counselling and employment counselling. He has academic education from the University of Manitoba at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in the fields of archaeology, history and geography.

Sue Matheson is a twentieth century generalist who teaches literature and film studies at the University College of the North. Her interest in cultural failure has become the base of her research: currently, Sue specializes in popular American thought and culture, Children's Literature, and North American film.

A 62-year old poet artist and civil service worker, norman j. olson lives and works in Minnesota. U.S.A. Since publishing his first poem in 1984, after many years of continuous submission and rejection, he has published hundreds of poems and drawings in 15 countries and all over the USA . Norman worked in a factory printing telephone books from 1968 to 1988 and since then has worked at civil service clerical jobs.

Originally from Vancouver, Joanna Reid now lives in The Pas, Manitoba, where she is an Assistant Professor at the University College of the North. In 2007, she won the Orange Prize/ Harper's Bazaar short story competition in London. Joanna is currently working on a collection of stories exploring how the histories of landscapes and personal relationships intersect.

Raised in Saskatchewan, Patty St. Jean lived most of her adult life in British Columbia. A self-taught photographer, she lives and works in Snow Lake, Manitoba.

Bill Tremblay is an award-winning poet as well as a novelist, teacher, editor, and reviewer whose work has appeared in seven full-length volumes of poetry, including *Crying in the Cheap Seats* [University of Massachusetts Press] *The Anarchist Heart* [New Rivers Press], *Home Front* [Lynx House Press], *Second Sun: New & Selected Poems* [L'Epervier Press], *Duhamel: Ideas of Order in Little Canada* [BOA Editions Ltd.], *Rainstorm Over the Alphabet* [Lynx House Press], and most recently *Shooting Script: Door of Fire* [Eastern Washington University Press] which won the Colorado Poetry Prize. Hundreds of his poems have been published in literary magazines in the United States and Canada, as well such anthologies as the *Pushcart Prize Anthology, The Jazz Poetry Anthology, Best American Poetry, 2003, The Portable Poetry Workshop,* and *Responding to Literature*. He has received awards and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as The Pushcart Prize Anthology and the Corporation at Yaddo. Bill edited *Colorado Review* for 15 years, served as a member of the Program Directors Council of the Associated Writing Programs [AWP], and is the recipient of the John F. Stern Distinguished Professor award for his thirty plus years teaching in and directing the MFA in Creative Writing Program at Colorado State University. He is currently looking for a publisher for his latest long poem, *With Fire To Fire*.

One of Canada's foremost Native authors and storytellers, Richard Wagamese is committed to the Ojibway oral storytelling principle that "It's all about the story." Working as a professional writer since 1979, Richard is a newspaper columnist and reporter, radio and televison broadcaster and producer, documentary producer and the author of seven titles from major Canadian publishers with two new works waiting in the wings.

Brian Zamulinski holds degrees in linguistics and philosophy and lives in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. He has taught philosophy in Taiwan, Australia, and the University of Saskatchewan. He has also taught English Japan and Borneo.

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call for papers

the quint's tenth issue (March 2010) is holding an open call for papers on any topic that interests writers. We are seeking theoretically informed and historically grounded submissions of scholarly interest which are also accessible to non-academics. As well as papers, *the quint* accepts for consideration creative writing, original art, interviews, and reviews of books to be published throughout the academic year. The deadline for this call is February 15th, 2011—but please note that we accept manu/digi-scripts at any time.

theme issue

The quint's eleventh issue is issuing a call for theoretically informed and historically grounded submissions of scholarly interest on the topic of disability—as well as creative writing, original art, interviews, and reviews of books on this theme. The deadline for this call is April 10th, 2011—but please note that we accept manu/digi-scripts at any time.

quint guidelines

All contributions to *the quint* will be forwarded to a member of the editorial board. Manuscripts must not be previously published or submitted for publication elsewhere while being reviewed by *the quint's* editors or outside readers.

Hard copies of manuscripts should be sent to *the quint*, University College of the North, 504 Princeton Drive, Thompson, Manitoba, Canada, R8N 0A5. We are happy to receive your artwork in digital format, PDF preferred. Email copies of manuscripts, Word or RTF preferred, should be sent to the appropriate editor: poetry/fiction ytrainer@ucn.ca; articles and reviews jbutler@ucn.ca; art smatheson@ucn.ca.

Essays should range between 15 and 25 pages of double-spaced text, including all images and source citations. Longer and shorter submissions also will be considered.

Bibliographic citation should be the standard disciplinary format.