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R. Newcombe
Ursinus College

Harry L. Serio
Ursinus College

Linda Leeds
Ursinus College

Peter Vennema
Ursinus College

James H. Ryan
Ursinus College

See next page for additional authors

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For the sake of future contributions, perhaps a little should be said about editorial policies of the Lantern. Past issues have been accused of being esoteric. Editors, like parents, are very sensitive to criticism of their issue; we have attempted to broaden the scope of the Lantern while maintaining the quality of the art. If we've failed, tell us.

Our faculty takes a quite liberal attitude toward subject matter of the magazine. But please remember that we want literature, not protest alone. Questionable subjects must be bathed in art.

"The greatest literature has yet to be written. Write it!"
A New Bedlam

R. Newcombe

By nature, I am not given to complaining. I have often been assured by both friend and enemy that I am too reasonable and too willing to accept trouble and tribulation merely to avoid the worries entailed in opposing those conditions which I suspect should be altered. I mean to have you, the reader, understand that I would not have undertaken to write this complaint except at the severest urgings of my friends and my physician, and my own embittered conscience. Diffident as I am, my heart has become calloused and my hand steadied by overlong exposure to the utterly foul and completely impossible living conditions in South Hall.

For purposes of illustration, let me compare South Hall to a lunatic asylum of several centuries ago. South Hall is bedlam indeed!

At any given time the inmates of South Hall are in a senseless and tumultuous uproar. In the daytime the screams of the tortured and the maniacal laughter of their torturers are audible within half a mile of the dormitory. At night, half-animal forms brush greyly past in the dark and the air is tainted with the odor of blood spilled during the day. Behind every door and around every corner water balloons and shaving cream await the unwary who step too slowly or too fast. If and when you attain the relative comfort of your room, you are likely to find even this inadequate haven spoiled by the depredations of your fellow inmates. Your furniture, such as it was, will not be there, or if it is there, this is a signal to the wise that the room has been boobytrapped. You must avoid sudden motion, step carefully over half-hidden tripwires, and open drawers with extreme caution.

The only significant difference between South Hall and an eighteenth century madhouse is this: it was the delight of the rich and sane to tour asylums in bygone days. Apparently, young ladies of quality were able to derive considerable amusement from the plight of the inmates. Any
young lady who might have the temerity to enter South Hall, even on a
dull day, would be fortunate to escape with her life and her honor.

I do not know how visitors to Bedlam were greeted, but their reception
was probably more cordial, and certainly more decent than that offered
to those who dare to make a phone call to "Old South". The mothers,
fiancees, employers and friends who have attempted to make contact with
an occupant of South Hall have invariably had their most urgent attempts
ruined by the volume of noise produced by the inmates at a phone ring's
notice. In addition, these poor people have been exposed to as much profanity
of the most degraded and unnecessary nature as has the average
boot-camp army private.

In fairness to the inmates, let me say that I believe their madness
is not of their own production. I assume that the admissions office is not
so inefficient as to admit thirty lunatics in the short span of four years.
Rather, I believe that their condition was brought about by their environ-
ment: South Hall.

It would seem that no effort has been spared by the authorities to
make South Hall as conducive to study and rational living as possible.
The plumbing is perhaps adequate for six people. While it is true that an
effort to ameliorate this condition was made recently by the installation
of a new shower (bringing the total number available to three), it is also
true that this shower seldom functions correctly. Again, if one of the in-
mates were to attempt to get next to godliness by using one of these
showers, he would divert all traffic into the remaining bathrooms. Every
time that anyone turned on the cold water, the occupant of the shower
would be scalded in live steam. Or if the hot water were used, the occup-
ant of the shower would be deluged in ice. The cumulative effect of such
shock treatments does much to explain the mental condition of South's
inmates.

Not content with water shock treatments, the designers of South Hall
achieved the height of sadism in their efforts to endow the building
with central heating. The temperature on the first floor is invariably 110
degrees Fahrenheit, on the second floor, 72 degrees Fahrenheit, and on
the third floor, 13 degrees Fahrenheit. The end result of these tremendous
extremes of climate is that the occupants of the third and first floors are
continually at each others' throats. The second floor occupants infuriate
everyone else by their total inability to understand the nature of the
problem.

Recently, a measure of compromise was achieved. Occupants of the
third floor store ice cream, milk, cheese, and other perishables on their
radiators for the first floor people, and these unfortunates in turn allow
us of the third floor to fry eggs and heat coffee on their radiators.
One condition remains which has served to destroy the morale of all the inmates alike. The power supply of South Hall is entirely inadequate. It is a rare night that at least four fuses don't burn out. The wiring is cleverly arranged so that each fuse controls about half the rooms on one floor. Therefore, if a fuse burns out on the first floor, ten lusty voices cry out for light, and twenty stumbling feet pound over to the proctor’s room, where the voices again raise the cry for light. The proctor, who is no longer willing to risk life and limb by importing two hundred pounds of fuses into the dorm every day, briefly outlines the ancestry of the supplicants and slams the door in their faces. Again, twenty feet stumble up to the third floor where the fuse boxes are situated and replace their burned out fuse with one that controls, say, half the third floor lights. This is a signal for all out war. Soon all lights are doused or broken, and the air is filled with firecrackers, water balloons, and curses. Somewhere, one poor fool is trying to study. He is soon ferreted out and forced to become the target for the rest of the evening’s merriment. This riot continues until the last participant drops from battle fatigue, or until the dawn of a new day announces the advent of classes, quizzes, labs, and hourlies.

Thus South Hall is obviously worse than the worst of madhouses. The conditions of the institution serve merely to aggravate the conditions of the inmates. I suggest that the only solution to the problem is to dismiss all the inmates of South Hall from the college, then to raze the building and plow the charred fields around the ruin with enough salt to discourage any future attempt at human habitation.
A PRIORI

1
Temptation of thought no longer provides
The drive, the means, and the trust.
All that I saw has so easily died;
Earth has taken its dust.
More patent, less real, logian's crust
Denies me reason to pursue
All the goals that once I wast,
Fore queen came into view,
Exalting feeling's ether that I might pass through.

2
My reason to go on with life
Seemed purposeless and leaving fast,
For Knowledge only taught me strife
Through all the tragedy of its past,
In never answering questions asked
Of truth and beauty, on love and God.
Alone I sought life's furtive cast,
Until at length all paths were trod—
Still was I a being of no love, no God.

3
All seemed lost; hope turned to vapor,
Till from the mist stepped my sublime,
Beautifully shining sincerity's color.
Her heart knew warmth; no other clime
Was hers through passage of endless time.
"Intuition affords us reality's shade,"
She said, and found in poesy's rhyme
A stir surpassing study's virgin maid
And the chill of all sciences before us laid.
4

Contagion of truth has brought within
Through the being of this pure flower,
A good which surely always has been
Beyond all breadth of cosmos' power.
Since the crumble of reason's tower
Sirius' glint seeps e'er more bright,
And never more shall temperance cower
In the dark to augment night.
Mind, not soul, restrained by its own might.

5

Paragon's eyes, one short, one far, see
Vogue as reality's jester fool;
But oft' I pause that I may be
A soldier in the thinker's school.
Logic, love says is an artless tool,
Which serves to thicken the shroud
And composes a spirit, already now cool.
Greying the hue of hope's cloud
So that life's strange religion remains to her unbowed.

6

Now belief has taken doubt's leave,
Departed disorder of thought.
Only love for life conceives
The truth that all men sought;
Never found in theory's drought
A peace so rare explained,
When only after contests we've fought,
Meeting on the ground of our bane,
May we in ourselves all the universe contain.

Townsend
Summer sessions are abominations, especially if you pick the blasted southern clime of Talladega College in Alabama, as I did in the summer of 1960. I remember one particularly blistering day . . . . Half of the water in that sovereign state was poised on the edge of the air, and the other half was gluing me to the seat of my wooden desk. I had been doing some rather distressing experiments having to do with gastric ulcers in field mice, and after such a day, I was hardly in a receptive mood when I faced the several miles of rippling asphalt and tar that separated me from home.

At a little past 9:30, my tires finally found the little dirt road which ran through a cornfield to my dwelling. I was midway through the field when I was stunned by a blinding green light moving toward me from above. "Aurora borealis," was my first thought, but this was quite improbable at latitude 33° 25'. The light touched the field, careened and skipped to a place no more than a 100 yards to my left. I ran toward it while an inner urge told me to run in the opposite direction. Realization that I was looking at a space ship caused an oath of some indecency to escape my lips.

The vessel approximated the shape of a gigantic hypodermic needle and gave off an eerie glow by which I could see some details: strange markings on its side that were remindful of graduations, no ports or win-
dows. As I watched from my hiding place, I was soon able to notice something moving within the craft. The ship itself was not luminescent, but translucent, and it was the light from within that caused its glow. I crept closer, cursing myself for scientific curiosity, to examine a strange apparatus at the tail end of the ship—a depressor? A cold, gelatinous substance plopped onto the back of my neck. I spun around and was confronted by an incredibly large, seven foot germ. A second pseudopodia lashed out and enveloped my arm. I was dragged to, and through, an opening that had appeared in the bow of the projectile, to find myself in a narrow corridor that was somewhat reminiscent of an artery, though I had never been in one.

We entered a large chamber through a membranous fold, and I found before me a beehive of activity. A great number of giant germs were scurrying about, busying themselves at complicated instruments that lined the walls of the chamber. In the center of the chamber, one germ was giving orders to the others, and it was to this germ that I was precipitated. He took time to grow a mouth, respiratory system, and vocal cords, and then asked me questions about my personal life, exactly where the ship had landed, and some apparently unrelated things. Then the leader, assuming an air of confidential camaraderie, which seemed ludicrous to me, imparted knowledge of the conquest of the universe.

The germs had, eons ago, come from a planet so large that it could have engulfed our entire solar system. This planet Armatrox, supported a race of giant, humanoid creatures. The germs, however, were the intelligent species and took up residence in the herds of the dumb animals. Some of the more adventurous germs had become addicts of nationalism, and developed space flight to spread the germanic civilization throughout the universe. Since our planet was only imperfect in its insufficient size, the germs settled here. Being intelligent and practical creatures, they abandoned the giant race, called Titans, and built new homes. Some wanted cozier homes and new styles in exterior architecture, others preferred larger homes. They installed mechanisms of reproduction to prevent housing shortages as the germ population increased, and created automatic remodeling, or evolution.

When all this had been accomplished, they chose the hosts in which they would live, and by multiple division, they reduced themselves to their microcosmic state and entered their homes to live happily for centuries. But trouble occurred—man grew his head much too large, and became civilized. War broke out among the germs. One faction decided to destroy the human race before man progressed further, and create other homes which they could inhabit by further multiple division. But the conservative man-dwellers were content to remain in their present state. When the Black Battle was over, the conservatives emerged victorious. The anti-man germs were exiled to rats, flies, and pond scum, from which only
sallies could be made.

It was roughly one hundred and fifty years ago that man began to take the offensive against the germs. But man used his weapons indiscriminately on both friendly and disease germs. The conservatives panicked and called for help by means of transmitters, utilizing the appendix. These giants, who were holding me captive, had begun their odyssey a century ago to answer the s-o-s of their brothers. Their next task was to contact the Chairman of the World Council of Germs, Macro Coccus, who lived in the right ventricle of one Marjorie Arden.

I told the leader that I knew the girl and that she would be delighted to know that her heart was serving as the capital of the Germ Empire. I was dispatched at once to bring Marge to the leader of the Armatroy germs. Marge didn't believe my story, but she decided to come anyway when I told her that the ship was in the middle of O'Grady's cornfield. When she saw the hypodermic needle, she wanted to turn back, but I had made a promise and I was going to keep it. I dragged Marge the rest of the way.

Once inside the chamber, a germ grabbed Marge's arm and jabbed a hypo into it. The germs that were taken from her were told to return and bring their leader. In a matter of seconds the hypo was again injected and the contents placed on a glass slide. By some odd-looking device, the germs were enlarged. Before us appeared Macro Coccus, a white corpuscle, Leader of the Earth Germs, Commander-in-Chief of the Conservative German Army, and Defender of the Right Ventricle of Marjorie Arden.

The leader from Armatroy and the leader from earth then went into conference. Marge and I waited two hours.

When the two leaders came out of their conference, they related to us the plan of compromise that they had worked out. They had considered destroying the human race, but since man was only interested in destroying the bad germs and not the conservative germs, they had decided to waive this proposal. The compromise was this: Marge and I would not take any anti-biotics, germicides, injections, vaccinations, or hexachlorophene. We had to leave to Macro Coccus and his army the destruction of the anti-man factions. We were also required to serve as their spies and report to them any new development in anti-biotics and the like, so that the conservatives would have time to build up a resistance. This would be beneficial both to the humans and to the conservatives. Lastly, we were both asked to join the Christian Scientists and help in converting others to the doctrine the germs had given us.

When we had signed our names to the agreement, Macro Coccus was returned to his microcosmic state and reinjected into Marge's arm. We left the craft carrying the transmitters they had given us. As we stood on a small rise two hundred feet from the great hypo, it took off. They would
go to a nearby planet and establish a base of operations should there be a need to destroy the human race.

Since that day in August, 1960, Marge and I have kept our promise. We have not been vaccinated; we have not taken any medicinals; we have not consulted a physician. As a result we consider ourselves two of the healthiest individuals alive. I’ve taken a position in a medical research center along with Marge, and every night we communicate with our little friends, telling them of any new developments. Our movement is growing. Everyday more and more people are joining our ranks. Soon we will have a healthy world and all disease will be wiped out, through mutual agreement between humans and germs.

Man doesn’t know how close he comes to the truth when he claims that he descended from one-celled animals, for everytime he looks into a microscope, he is able to see his creator.

VERSE FOR A SYMPATHY CARD

We half hoped, half expected, to see some outward sign of the inner change that must have taken hold by now.

There was no sign. Unless the moment’s pause at the window was a shutting inward and guarding outward of the inner pain.

Linda Leeds
ON LAMARTINE'S CRUCIFIX

(In the summer of 1816 Lamartine, vacationing in the Swiss Alps, met and fell deeply in love with Mrs. Charles. They were to meet the following summer, but she was too ill, and died of tuberculosis before seeing him. The cross which she held as she died was sent to Lamartine, who also drew consolation from it at his death. His immortal poem, "Le Crucifix", asked that the cross might pass from hand to hand as a symbol of salvation. —Editor)

A wooden coffer 'lone can ever yield
This final monument and treasured shield.
A simple thing it is, the Fisher's cross,
Yet gathers value through the wearer's loss.

A chain upon its end does self connect
To make a circle, linked to clasp elect,
That forms an opposite of unity
With meaning of the pendule's angled tree.

As just an ounce of pressure may confound
A compass point from its eternal round,
So could this symbol of the Nazarene death
Stain by an unbeliever's careless breath.

Yet when I reach to touch, my hands object...
And find concentric rings of awe protect
By bringing thoughts of rattling sounds, without
A Christ to close the palaver of doubt.

Peter Vennema
On Art

M. B.

As the Creation, so creation. "Let there be light!" and the imperceptible in the command of the artist mediary lights a cold and barren emptiness, ". . . and the light was good . . . ." Art is the quintessential consummation of the incomprehensible spirit of creation. It is coterminous with life itself. Art, like life, although apparently ardently straining toward purposeful goals, is ultimately meaningless. It is, and does, but cannot be grasped. It has aspects of a preserving Vishnu of many arms. Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Literature are all limbs of the same body.

Creative literature is the inadequate translation of a complete internal emotional life into accepted symbols. Symbols themselves are abstracted from another world of life, where what is commonly experienced must be identified. How poor, then, are such designations to describe what is uncommonly felt. The artist carves a dream in marble or in words, and his work is marble, or words. Art, as creation, is life, but the artist's creation lives only through implication. To analyze a book is to analyze words. To comprehend a creation is to feel it vitally. To understand a work of art is to undergo the emotional experience of its creator.

A magnet draws art ever forward in endless grasping. It is the philosophers' stone called Truth; being, yet not; a word without meaning. Truth is the perfect unattainable ideal. Distilled and refined, art approaches the asymptote it may never touch. Why waste life in the hopeless, fruitless cause? Proximity is relative, and the greater the heat, the more highly refined the product. Each hopes to better the precededent for his own glory or the maintenance or attainment of his own contentment, and with various degrees of ardor penetrates deep into his soul to drain the essence onto a canvas or a leaf, dissolved in its inadequate vehicle.

Ideals are inherently beyond the automation of the accepted limited truths which govern the surface life. The man willing to live on the surface has no need of the ultimate truth, for whose disquieting quest he
must leave insensitive security to interminable probing and permanent discontent. His conscious life may be physically real, but its values are spurious, its satisfactions worthless, for they are based on ignorance rather than knowledge; on nothing rather than something. The creation of art, being the art of creation, sets the only true values. No criticism is valid, save one of method.

HOPE

Pandora should have closed that box
Before the very end
And saved a race of dying men
The torment of such a friend

A friend that glorifies the gloom
Of life's eternal race
Bed fellow of a thousand dreams
Forever seeking no place

A friend to mollify the sting
To ever tranquilize
Panacea for life's long attack
To cure and hypnotize

Eternal preacher of life as a means
Denyer of an end
Always telling men to await
Paradise and the Friend

Without Pandora's final gift
Man could see the slope,
Could see life going down then out
Save for your cloud, false Hope.

J. H. Ryan
HYMN TO THE MORNING

A soft refraction, dulled by mist, arrives
To tint the lightest of my almost things –
They doze, when darkness comes, and purge their lives
Of that reality which waking brings.

A ringing silence hangs in shrouds, and then
Is sundered by the sound of warmth that moves.
Her garments float through trails of dreams and wend
Through currents, furling; whispering that soothes.

Her lips, too red to form a smile, are lost
From view as fevered moistness numbs the nape.
Resistance merged with an eternity,
Inertia floundering in a maelstrom’s rage is tossed.
I fear it’s hard enough to find escape
From dreams, but then if they’re reality?

Peter Vennema
It is with pleasure that I note the growing conviction among contemporary educators that the encouragement in our schools of non-intellectual forms of competition is not only conducive to the welfare of all students from kindergarten to college, but essential to it. Those intimately acquainted with the nature of our educational system and the problems which it now faces cannot fail to appreciate the benefits to be derived from such competition; teachers and principals throughout the nation are enthusiastically supporting what I shall henceforth refer to as N.I.C.

I have, however, observed an alarming coldness toward N.I.C. among the general public — fostered in some cases (no doubt) by genuine concern for our children's and our own welfare, but more often by the petty carplings of selfish politicians, soft-headed intellectuals, and the other self-appointed critics of the American educational system. I am happy to say that the American public, although it may listen with some sympathy to their persuasions, has not yet actually been duped by these foes of education. It is to that public that I address myself. I have confidence in the ability of American citizens to choose what is best for their children; it remains only to lay the facts before them.

The chief argument advanced against N.I.C. is that it is the school's place to foster intellectual development and that, to this end, intellectual forms of competition should be encouraged to the greatest possible extent. To those acquainted with our educational system, this argument sounds like something out of the Dark Ages. If it were followed to its logical conclusion, the students with high intellectual ability would obviously do better in school than those lacking such ability — a situation which, in addition to its intrinsic injustice, would tend to give students a distorted picture of American society. For thousands of years, a mistaken emphasis upon intellectual achievement has prevailed in the educational systems of Western civilizations. It is only within the last half-century that enlightened educators have succeeded in lessening it; we must not undo the work of those fifty years.
It would certainly be unwise, however, to do away with all forms of competition, or to let outstanding ability go entirely unrewarded. The absence of intellectual competition creates a vacuum which must be filled by more rewarding activities—and the last half-century has witnessed an unprecedented blossoming of such activities. Only in our own time has N.I.C. come into its own. Such mainstays of education as basketball, baseball, and, above all, football have restored to education a balance which it has not had since the day of the caveman.

Unfortunately, such activities have aroused vociferous opposition from those who do not possess physiques suitable for strenuous sports. It must be admitted that this opposition is not entirely unjustified. Surely it would be as arbitrary to make physical prowess requisite for success in school as to cling to the outmoded, intellect-centered view of education. Football and basketball have served their purpose in removing undue emphasis from intellectual achievement and focusing attention on N.I.C.; it is time now to find a form of competition which, while still generally recognizable as non-intellectual, makes no strenuous demand on either intellect or physique.

I have been puzzling over this problem for some years, attempting to find a sport which meets these requirements and is suitable for students of all age groups. The answer dawned on me recently while I was leafing through a pile of old sports magazines and came upon an article about automobile racing; before I had read a dozen lines, I knew that I had the solution. Automobile racing demands neither exceptional intelligence (although it requires enough to please incorrigible intellectuals) nor extraordinary physical endowment (although it requires enough to please athletes). It provides physical thrills in abundance, is imbued with strong elements of luck, and, if widely enough adopted, will greatly reduce overcrowding in schools by eliminating a large percentage of the total enrollment. It will be necessary, of course, to devise special rules for school races, in order to tone down the demands on intelligence which have not yet been eliminated from championship racing, but the changes should not be difficult to make. Perhaps in a few years it will be possible to eliminate entirely the antediluvian intellectual tendencies which linger in our educational system and to devote our schools wholly to auto racing.
COME OUT

With open mouth and hungry mind
Taste the savor of the wind;
Drink deep, with brimming brew delight
Thy sense-dulled countenance repined
That dungeon narrow encloses tight
In galling manacles to blight.

With buoyant limbs and heedful ear
The soft refined vibrations hear
Of Zephyr, playing on the reeds
His rondo’s soft sound surging clear;
And thrushes singing in the meads
Sweet poems and heroic deeds.

With tilted head and dilate nare
Breathe the perfume of the air
That wafts as lilacs softly sway
In gentle breeze, with scents as rare
As new mown grass or ocean spray
To pass the East’s most sweet sachet.

With beating heart and tingling palm
Feel the spicy, fresh’ning balm
Of sparkling water, icy cold
From deep in earth’s unfathomed realm;
And in impressed fingers hold
A memory of soft leafy fold.

With labored breath and dazzled eye
Behold the glory of the sky –
The countless wide Elysian Fields
Of radiant beauty open lie
To eager outstretched hand, and yields
A wealth no misanthrope conceals.

M. B.
The sleek, needle-nosed ship *Pioneer* drifted aimlessly in the dark reaches of space. Inside, its captain and only occupant, Martin Halleck, experienced a mixture of emotions. He felt the pride of accomplishment, having built the *Pioneer* secretly and unaided. It had taken several years and much hard labor, but he had no regrets. He was forever free from Earth’s hold over him. He could use his revolutionary space drive to carry him to the frontiers of the galaxy.

Earth was a very old planet. The human race had become decadent. War, famine, and disease were things of the past. But for all his achievement, man, somewhere along the line, had lost his desire to invent and discover. There were no scientists, no quests for knowledge. The race was content to live out its existence in ease and luxury.

In this respect Halleck was a throwback. He had always wondered what lies beyond the moon and the planets. In his youth he was constantly ridiculed for his foolish scientific experiments. But now was his chance—his chance to do something, to have a purpose. An unexplainable fervor of excitement raced through his veins. His heart pounded a little harder. He gazed at the gleaming control panel. For an instant Halleck felt a familiar gnawing ache in his stomach. He was a brave man, and every brave man knows fear. His finger hovered over the button that would hurl the *Pioneer* forward at many times the speed of light. With a grim resoluteness he stabbed down. Instantly he lost consciousness.

The ship’s compartment swam in circles before Halleck’s half-opened eyes. He rested in the heavily-padded chair for several minutes until the terrible dizziness passed. Finally, when his strength began to return and his brain cleared, he sat up and looked through the observation porthole. He was aware of two bright objects in a white-streaked, black background. This must be a binary solar system, he thought, the kind he
had seen many times through his telescope on Earth. One sun was rather small and yellow; the other was nearly twice as large, radiating brilliant white light. Instinctively Halleck sensed something was wrong. His velocity gauge indicated that the ship was not moving. Yet the heavens seemed to be whizzing past him in blurred streaks. Then the monstrous truth dawned on him. He reasoned that somehow his ship had broken the time barrier and was now traveling through the future at a fantastic rate in some distant galaxy. What other explanation might there be?

His deliberations were suddenly interrupted by a violent explosion. The huge white sun erupted from its very core, leaving only a vast gaseous cloud that rotated around the remaining sun in a flat circular disk. As eons of time passed before Halleck's eyes in seconds, the vapors condensed to form a system of planets. He was completely awed by the realization that he was actually witnessing the birth of a solar system. At once Halleck knew what must be done. In only a few minutes of his time life would surely evolve and advance on at least one of the planets. He would wait for the proper moment, cut off the ship's drive, and make contact with the aliens. The infinite opportunities available were overwhelming. But in his excitement Halleck prematurely pushed the "off" button. He realized his blunder immediately, but it was too late. Fate seemed to punish him for his error, as he was unfortunate enough to break through the time warp only a few miles above the surface of one of the planets. Out of control, the Pioneer dove straight down. In those last seconds its helpless captain could only regret the futility of his end.

The planet was barren and lifeless. Its long cooling process was nearly over. The land was covered by great rocky stretches and newly formed mountain ranges. The warm, sterile seas beat savagely against the shorelines. On one of the beaches the remains of Martin Halleck were washed by the virgin waters. But they were virgin no longer, for the submicroscopic forms from his body infected the oceans with life. His job was done.

Night descended on the planet's first day of life. The sky above would have been familiar to Halleck, especially the bright crescent-shaped object... men would someday call the moon...
A DAY'S HOPE

Run, ripples, run.
Strange that this timid breeze and tender sun
Has called me here
To think what's to be won.
This silly April brook
Has carved its way
In winter’s ice and August Sun.
So run, ripples, run.
Your purpose shames the lack of mine,
But you, the silver spirit of the spring,
Are deathless and you sing
Where death shall never force decline.
Yet here we two are just begun.
Run, ripples, run,
Carve me a way
Through night and day
Down to the waiting sea.

R. Newcombe
Laura

Susan M. Wilding

I first saw Laura in a small cabaret up in Germantown. The place was typical of that area—small, burnt-grainy paneling—and a smokily comfortable atmosphere. The clientele relaxed over their Löwenbrau and wienschnitzel, and sometimes sang along with the zither-player, who started at eight o’clock. The waitresses were ruddy-complexioned Germans, pinafored, well-rounded, with ready smiles. I was lost in contemplation, peering into my glass of moselle, as a fortune-teller into a crystal ball. Looking through the pale clearness of the wine, seeing figures distorted across the room, I was recalling the words of a Frenchman I’d once known, and, holding the glass by the stem, properly, as he had instructed.

“Why?” I had asked.

“First,” he had replied, “it is important to see the wine, then to sniff the aroma of it; that is half the pleasure of a good wine, and the very essence of it. Then, finally, to taste it. Ah!” he exclaimed, lifting the glass, and his eyes, “so you hold it by the stem, and the delightful color can be seen, and most important, you do not lose the chill.”

I lifted my glass in a silent toast to him, and downed it with sudden inspiration, repressing a magnificent urge to throw it with all my might against the wall, as I had seen done in last week’s movie. This had always struck me as a very noble gesture and I liked occasionally to identify myself with these heroes of my dreams. I did not hurl the glass.

As I set the glass down with a sigh, I heard a low smiling chuckle from behind me. The laugh was barely audible above the zither and the clinking of glasses, yet distinct and somehow different. I turned around and saw a shadow of black hair and laughing mouth.

“Why didn’t you throw it?” she asked, still smiling.

“Was it that obvious?” I returned, taken aback by her perception. Another low laugh escaped her lips. “I was waiting for the crash,
seeing a mental image of you in spotless uniform and glossy boots, hurling that glass at the wall.”

I quickly looked down at my once-new-now-ivory shirt and sleep-wrinkled trousers. Suddenly I became aware that I hadn’t shaved or changed clothes since the night before, so caught up was I in the inspiration.

That was the beginning—a new breath into a stark, bare and aimless existence... wish it had never been... no... might have been easier... both of us... would have been...

I next saw her in the park, the Carl Schurz Park, overlooking the East River on 86th Street. I was wandering through, vainly attempting to catch candid shots of children playing, when this small creature with high cheekbones again struck me. She walked slowly, in old flat shoes, run down at the heels, her face staring straight into the sky, as if looking for something hidden. The wind blew Laura’s black, black hair, and I could see her more clearly than the first time. The most striking aspect of her face was the large and delightfully expressive mouth, her beautiful, living, moving, laughing mouth...

"Hello again," she said, "You must live around here too. Isn’t it the best place ever, to be in the city, yet so free, with the air and sky and river?" She pointed to a tugboat dutifully pulling a barge loaded with rusted flatcars. "You know, whenever I think of water, I think of drowning—oh, not a horrible drowning—it’s very peaceful and quiet. Even rain makes me feel this way—it’s almost a pleasantly delicious feeling." As I looked at her, surprised, she hurriedly glanced at her wristwatch, a large, silver, nurse’s watch, and turned to go before I could reply.

Later I thought about Laura, safely welded back into my life of cameras, typewriters, and cigarettes. I looked out at the water and thought of her—the water, which always reminds me of her now....

What a strange creature she seemed. Light and gay, expressing youth and a kind of beauty, but some other strangeness as well. What was Laura? And why did I ask this question of myself?

I lit a cigarette, propped my feet on the huge footmarked desk, and tried to think about the work in front of me. The inspiration, last week’s inspiration, remained in the past, having flown with the week. What had happened? How had I become caught up in a state of laxity and lazy carelessness? The manuscript lay, like a black and white demon, on my desk, staring, daring me to pick it up. I lost the dare, and turned to the evening newspaper. It did not help, so I went to bed, seeing again the tugboat and water, and the image of that small hurrying girl.

After that I saw Laura often. She came and went, but I never really...
knew what or who she was. We both remained on the surface of the relationship, above the current, unwilling to dive into what could be perhaps a painful or revealing unknown.

She was well-read, I knew. We had often discussed best-sellers, and she’d read Camus and Gibran; she completely outstripped me on Aristotle’s forms in our occasional battles of wit and knowledge. But I could not discover what she did or what underlying unknowns made up the total Laura. Again I asked myself, what was there in Laura so strange?

We walked in the block of a park, she, skipping, running, jumping at branches she couldn’t possibly reach, kicking stones, like a child. We stood for hours, entranced, looking at the blue-green and white froth of the river, at the boats coming and going in rhythm; and the old people who wandered by arm in arm, aimlessly; the bums sleeping on the benches, oblivious; the stylish matrons walking their trimmed and bowed poodles; the grimy children playing ball or simply chasing one another through the path-ridden hedges. We too could be like children, laughing, her exquisite mouth widening and her lovely low laughter winging forth, to be caught up by the wind and sky. How beautiful those days . . . beautiful summer days . . .

She heartily despised small talk. We were happy and light-hearted but never frivolous. Laura froze into silence rather than engage in trite clichés and useless banter with strangers. I was surprised to learn that she was twenty-six—I’d thought her younger; these few things I knew about her. The real Laura remained an opaque piece of glass, possibly fragile if handled carelessly.

But the answer to the question of Laura seemed to be at a beginning—a beginning of an unasked, unintended answer. We finally came to understand one another, though perhaps not too deeply at first. Was I beginning to see in Laura a bit of myself—of my own thoughts and questions—or were these just weird and hopeful imaginings?

It was difficult to be objective at this point. We sought each other out, always in the park, to discuss some of the deepest thoughts of our minds. This mental probing was like purging, a direct and clean emptying of ideas and thoughts, not as refuse, but to understanding and welcoming ears. Thus was our relationship becoming cemented, almost a necessity between us. It was as if neither of us had any outside life at all, as if all the rest were a shell, so breathless we awaited and clung to those meetings in the park. I had no idea exactly where Laura lived; I was almost afraid to ask—afraid that any probing of this sort would take the delicious flavor and particular intimacy from our relationship. We never discussed the past; the future only occasionally; it was the present, the here and now, that was important. Our minds seemed to be beginning to work in fusion; she was deep and questioning; within her was a free and
searching mind. But there was a great difference between Laura and me. Her searching was often a wistful and troubled questioning, as if she wished to beat her head against the wall to try to understand herself and the part she was to play in life; mine was also searching, but I had come to see the futility of it, or perhaps I had just given up. I saw a part of myself in Laura, and often wished to be again like her, but my years had seemed to mellow me so much I could hardly remember a time when I was like her....

Autumn came after summer, and golds and brown, misted by a rising dust; and a chill wind rushing out of the greying sky; and the river losing its mellow summer look and taking on an angry and defiant expression. The children who had played in the park, wearing brown patches in the green, disappeared, and the old folks were more than willing to stay indoors. Laura and I met again on such a day, she wearing a huge fuzzy green windbreaker, and looking like a kitten rolled up in a ball of yarn. She had a masked expression on her face, as if knowing what was to come, but disguising her feelings.

We walked along, kicking up the crinkled, crackling leaves, not speaking. Finally she broke the screen of unspoken words.

"I guess we won't be able to meet here anymore, it's getting so very cold."
"No, I guess not."

Suddenly she turned, filled with some strange emotion. Then she put out her hand, her strong small hand. "You can't know how much this has meant to me," she said, looking past me at the angry flow of water and the darkening sky. . . . the sky reflected in her face. "Perhaps I'll see you in the Spring?"
"Perhaps," I replied.
"Goodbye," she said, and turned to hurry away in her usual manner.

I couldn't just let her go. I should have, but I couldn't. Finally, after first refusing, she said she would drop up for a drink sometime. I gave her my address. She did not volunteer hers, but said she would come, and left me quickly.

Winter came, and I looked at the river out of my one small grimy window. I seemed to see Laura in every ripple, in every dark and freezing wave, in every murky ebb and flow of tide . . . .

Again I had found myself at an impasse in my work. My tiny room with its pock-marked desk remained the same; so did I. The words would not come, and when they did they were either so bitterly ironic or so very personal that I was ashamed to put them on paper.
Occasionally I still walked in the park, but it was bare—no leaves, or golden wind, no children at their games, laughing waves on river, or laughing mouth of Laura. I found I had come to depend on Laura for understanding my deepest feelings and thoughts. I knew she could and would understand, and could help me out of the dead end into which I had blindly run.

The doorbell rang as I was straightening up my desk; the messiness of it depressed me, so I'd decided to make a new start. I pressed the buzzer to open the door, wondering who it could be at so early an hour . . . Laura stood there, black hair flying, her beautiful mouth and eyes smiling up at me.

"I came for that drink you offered," she said, stepping in and taking off her coat.

We spoke no more. I mixed two drinks, handing one to her. Her eyes proposed a toast, we drank quickly, and then, as one, threw the glasses violently against the brick wall. Our laughter joined in with the tinkle of the broken glass.

Laura, Laura . . . how did it happen . . . beautiful, wondrous Laura . . . I can still remember you lying there, afterwards . . . sun slitting through the blinds onto your face . . . your mouth, made pale by mine, . . . eyes closed . . . beautifully smiling . . . epitome . . . perfect meeting . . . mind and body . . . Laura, Laura . . . I should have known it to be inevitable—but it didn't matter . . . Laura . . . you were too perfect, too desirable . . . was I wrong? . . . could I help it? . . . and could you, my darling Laura?

Laura came to my apartment with increasing regularity, both of us caught up in the new and exciting facet of our relationship. She would come to the door and fall into my waiting arms. It seemed the need for words had passed; the physical urgency took first place and seemed to suffice for us completely . . . at first . . .

Lying next to her, touching her, hearing her speak beautiful, tender, endearing words, all barriers had been broken down. This was the ideal, the perfect, a never-never land, new and wondrous. Her brilliant, searching mind seemed of necessity to require such a perfect, fiery body for the completion of the whole Laura. This Laura, as I knew her then, was the whole and complete Laura.

Cold, icy, blissful months we spent together, loving, laughing, only occasionally speaking as we had before; it seemed not to matter at the time.

I could think of nothing but her. My work, now even untried, lay
stagnant on my desk; she was my one and only thought and desire— I could not, had no wish to escape her, or what she stood for.

But Laura, my sweet, laughing, searching Laura, the enigma of womanly perfection, whom I knew so intimately, became unhappy. Lying in my arms, she seemed at times to withdraw from me, and I could feel her disappearing out of my arms, though bodily she remained. I was unable to understand, for the first time, and Laura even seemed to find it difficult to pinpoint; she could not control it, but she was increasingly distant.

One afternoon on a chill, sleet-covered day, she dragged me out to walk in the park. We wandered through, quiet, not laughing, the depth of understanding between us seemingly washed into the black-and-blue waves of the river. Laura walked in long strides, violently, as if demanding that we find something, I knew not what. I was still so completely consumed and held by her, I could not comprehend what had risen between us. What was she trying to re-create? To me it needed no re-creation—it had not changed but had only become better. My puzzlement and her insistence collided head on, bringing us to an impasse.

Laura... why did I not understand?... I do now... why did I let my desire overcome us both?... but you did too, my darling... though you realized... and I... blind... too late... why, why, my Laura?...

WALKING TOGETHER

We walked apart together
in the mist that fell between us,
you were sad when I was not.
And the trees you saw were lonely
while the ones I saw were brave.
And ahead, the path seemed different,
though we knew it was the same.

Linda Leeds
20 SEPTEMBER 1960

Scarcely-born wings of water,
Mottled with new foam whip,
Are washed away by newer breakers
Born in an old, old sea.

The pass-word is "ever-changing",
And the law is "ever-changed".
Even the great winds are troubled
In a place where time is mocked,

Where foolish hope struggles
For vain glory — for the current of an
Eternity — which, in the sea, is never.
Only the sea goes on.

The course of the sea is not commanded —
Always it commands. Rearing, raging,
Slashing, sounding — always in command
Of everything and nothing at all,

Because in her bosom there is
Everything and nothing; life, death;
Heavens, hells; victory, defeat — all vain.
Only the sea goes on.

No beginning and no end!
That is the call of the breakers
To the destitute dreamer of dreams,
Born in an old, old sea.

Bob McClellan
Green forests in a red Autumn,
With many an ageless, mossed shrine,
Illumined by a grey sun gathering glow
on a grey morning
Of this very finite life of mine:

The cricket's song is a damp haze
With falling leaves and branches for
counterpoint.
And only the mind of man can remember
the occasional voice of feathered
bodies and other men's footsteps —
The hope of eternity is nothing like
the glory of living now, content
to be a part of something great.

The soundless nights of sound,
Passed over by the great god, Change,
Bringing peace in ebony folds trimmed
with brilliant beacons
Of another time, beyond our range:

No different than the mornings
With their ordered noise and coolness.
No different they in meaning, whether
light to dark or dark to light,
as far as life is seen —
No one grasps reality with his hands
full of little conquered summits —
life folds in like a tin roof.

Bob McClellan
he shadows in the corners of his cell meant night again. Why did it always have to come just when a few feeble rays of sunlight began to penetrate the city grime that caked the glass outside the bars? He had been in the cell for what he figured to be two weeks, and time lengthened with every hour, removing him farther and farther from the outside world. He didn’t care whether or not he had done it any more; they hadn’t believed him when they caught him; the priest hadn’t believed him when he swore on the Virgin. Even his wife doubted him as she begged God to forgive him. He didn’t want God or forgiveness or trust or belief. All that was theory and complication and school; what he wanted was freedom!

From somewhere a fly had gotten into the little room, and it buzzed up and down the filthy window in search of its own escape. He felt very sorry for the fly. “I wonder if that ol’ fly would help me out if he was a man.” But since this was like school, he found it better to act without reasoning. He reached up and tried to herd it over to the open space between the bars on the door. The fly only became more frantic and buzzed the louder. “What the hell’s all this justice anyway?” He lit a cigarette and let the match burn down until the heat made him drop it.

When the cigarette was finished, he lit another, and another after that, until he had smoked the rest of the pack. He heard the two o’clock train wail out beyond the freight yard at the end of Southard Street, and he could smell the diesel oil and the dirt and the freedom of it. He tried to finish the Sunday comics, but just then nothing seemed very funny.

He lay back on the cot and clasped his hands behind his head. It was another hour before he slept, but it started to rain, and the rhythm of the dripping on the ledge outside helped. He dreamed that he was sitting on his back porch at noontime on a summer day. The sky was very black, and little puffs of wind sent candy wrappers and newspapers walking down the alley. One particular piece of paper rose up and took the shape of a
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as his
white man with a dog on a leash. The dog growled and bit a department store advertisement from its master’s leg. There was a headline across the man’s face which read, “MURDERER.” And the man’s face became his own face, somehow twisted and almost unrecognizable. All the while the singing of the choir drifted in and out of the open chicken-wire window in the rear of the Baptist Church across the alley. Now a newspaper man raised his hands and conducted the hymn in mockery. The more inspiring the music grew, the more perverted and ugly became the paper conductor. He stopped his gesticulations and produced a cigar from his coat pocket. He lit it and carefully put the match back in his coat. He caught fire, and began to swirl around with the wind until nothing was left but a neat little cone of flakey grey ashes in the middle of the cobblestones. The dog went over to the ashes and with great dignity began to sniff at them. He didn’t want to see the dog do it. When he looked back, the dog was gone and the ashes had turned to dark grey mud.

And now he wasn’t sitting on the porch anymore. He was in a fancy restaurant up town with a beautiful girl who looked a little like his wife, except that she was much younger. Then the waiter came and said, “What’ll it be, Nigger?” And the girl said, “Newspapers for the gentleman.” Then the dog was there again sniffing at his leg. He ran with the dog and the girl and the waiter carrying a skyscraper bundle of newspapers behind him.

The street was lined with endless rows of newstands. In front of every stand a boy cried, “Read all about the Nigger that killed the Governor’s dog!” And the waiter and the girl stopped to buy more papers at every stand, but still they gained on him. The dog was sprinting ahead of him, only to turn and chase him back toward the waiter and the girl. He was sweating, and he knew that they could smell his fear all the way to the tobacco plant at the edge of town. Then he did a thing which he couldn’t understand. He just stopped in his tracks and folded his arms. As the dog was about to raise his leg again, he woke up.

The first light of dawn was sneaking into the cell. He lay there in sweat and confinement. Already he had forgotten his dream, but he still trembled from it. Down the corridor someone coughed an early morning cigarette cough. The cell was exactly the same as it had been the night before, oppressively the same. He tried to fall back into a sleep, but something held him fast to the cot and acute consciousness.

On one of the watch towers two guards were talking over coffee. “What do you think they should do with that Nigger?”
“Hang the sonofabitch. That’s what I’d do if it was my dog he shot.”
“I guess you’re right, but it wasn’t like it was a man or anything.”
“Wasn’t a man did the killin’ either; it was a Nigger!”

Out in the street a dog barked as it chased a lumbering tomato truck around the corner and out of sight.
emotionally and physically immature, Leslie Felix tried to assert himself by seeking as much social approval as possible. Every day he would dream up new theories to achieve a popularity which never came. Because of this degrading dependence on his high school associates, Leslie was afraid of them and would continuously give excuses for real or imagined criticisms. Before a neighborhood softball game last summer, he tried to decide which excuse he would use; either he had eaten too big a dinner, or he was out of shape, or the bat was too light, or the ball was too heavy.

It was a muddy field that night, so the players didn’t run very quickly nor did the ball bounce along the ground too lively. These handicaps contributed to six scoreless innings. When the sky became darker, both teams agreed to play one more inning with Leslie’s team batting first.

The first batter was Larry Poznowski, who just didn’t realize the seriousness of the situation. He was forever smiling—a big ugly, buck-toothed smile that annoyed Leslie, especially after Larry struck out.

“If you’d wipe that stupid smile off your face, you might hit the ball sometime,” Leslie coiled. Leslie had also struck out before in the game, but at least he had been upset.

The next batter, Art Klemner, used profanity quite extensively. He made a remark about the pitcher’s sister which further irritated Leslie.

“You’ve a dirty mind,” Leslie said. “Can’t you ever say nice things about people?”

“Ah shaddap, ya fairy,” said Art. “Yeah, shaddap,” said half a dozen other guys, including the pitcher.

Aiming poorly, Art threw a hard piece of mud at Leslie, and then stepped up to the plate (half a newspaper page weighted down by stones). On the first pitch Art fouled one down the right field line, but on the next
pitch he got a good piece of the ball and whacked it into left field. By the
time the fielder caught up with the ball, Art was halfway to second, and,
on the outfielder’s throwing error, Art scooted to third.

An air of confidence swept Leslie’s team, for up to the plate stepped
their best player, Hank Osborne. Hank was everything Leslie wanted to
be—handsome, popular, athletic, intelligent. Leslie frequently confided
in Hank during homeroom period about all his frustrations. It disturbed
Leslie that Hank didn’t confide in him also.

“If he doesn’t get a hit, nobody will,” Leslie thought. Hank upper-
cut the ball, though, and sent an easy popfly back of third base. Art tried
to trip the third baseman, but the out was made.

Well, here was the situation: first half of the last inning, tie score,
a runner on third, two out, and a hit would probably win the ball game. The
team at bat was shouting it up. And up to the plate stepped our boy Leslie
Felix. As he slowly picked up the bat and made his way toward the plate,
all his theories popped into his mind. “When the ball leaves the pitcher’s
hand, my weight will be on my right foot,” he thought. “As the ball is
coming toward the plate, my wrists will move back slowly while my eyes
are glued to the ball. If the ball isn’t right over, I’ll let it go. If it is over,
I’ll swing late. My wrists will move toward the ball while the bat follows
in a whip-like motion. As I swing, the weight of my body will be shifted
from my right foot to my left. When I complete my swing, I will follow
through and look toward left field.”

The pitch came in. Leslie closed his eyes and swung the bat fero-
ciously in a swing which sliced the air about waist high. The ball was
high and outside. In other words, he missed it by about two feet. “I’m out
of shape,” Leslie said.

His team quieted a bit. In this game one more miss was a strikeout.
“C’mon Leslie! You can do it,” Hank suddenly shouted. As if it were a
signal, the rest of his team took up the clamor. “Come on, Leslie! Come
on Leslie!” they shouted.

It only made matters worse though. Leslie was really shaking by
now. Something deep down inside told him he would have to swing on the
next pitch or run away. As the ball left the pitcher’s hand, Leslie closed
his eyes again and started to swing. Inexplicably, for a tenth of a second,
his eyes opened, and he saw the ball coming in—outside and almost a
half foot over his head. Frantically, in the same motion with his swing,
Leslie swung the bat over his head as he would have swung an axe. To
the amazement of himself and everybody else, the bat connected solidly,
and the ball rocketed out to right field. The outfielder charged in about
five feet, looked up at the ball determinedly, and watched it sail ten feet
over his head.
Leslie’s team was wild! Already the leading run had scored. By the time the ball was retrieved, Leslie was running like a madman to third. Without even looking at the throw, Leslie rounded third and streaked for home. It would have been a close play if the throw had been good, but it wasn’t. So, Leslie Felix made his first and last homerun of the summer. “Way to go, Leslie!!” “Way to fight, Leslie!!” “What a guy!!” He was punched, shoved, and his hair was mussed up; but he loved every second of it.

Well, the third out was made and Leslie’s team took the field. The first batter grounded out to Hank, but the next guy hit a liner right to Leslie in center field. Leslie grabbed the ball with both hands, disregarding the pain in his ungloved hand. “Nice catch!” said Hank. “Yeah, nice catch!” said Art. “Yeah, nice catch!” said half a dozen other boys.

Leslie’s luck changed, however, on the next pitch. The batter hit the ball hard to left centerfield. Leslie ran over to the ball, calmly for a change; but he just couldn’t hang onto it. By the time he could throw it back to the infield, the batter had reached second. “Tough chance,” said Hank. “Yeah, tough chance,” said half a dozen other boys.

The next batter ended the game, though, when he popped out to Hank in foul territory. As Leslie left the lot, everybody made it a point to say goodbye to him—something most of them hadn’t done for the whole summer. They departed in groups of two’s and three’s while Leslie went home alone.

“Gee,” Leslie thought, “they really like me.”

POEM

Silvered sliver of moonlight on the floor
in the clock-ticking silence.
Waiting.
Your clarinet
dropping notes through the silence
one by one
like the slow distillation of nostalgia.

Linda Leeds
The Philadelphia Free Library, Logan Square Branch, reminds me of Mrs. Kipfer’s place. Though unintended by its directors, this building resembles that house of much repute seen in “From Here to Eternity”. But Mrs. Kipfer doesn’t remain at the library; she only sets up the contacts... of a different kind of commercial activity.

Let me draw out the analogy. There are three characteristics that I believe are common to both commercialized sex and commercialized education. First I shall consider them as they concern the ostensibly more immoral activity. 1) Love is for sale so profit can be made. 2) The money goes to the madams, the pimps, and the creditors; little is left for those who sell themselves. 3) And the sellers are truly slaves; they rarely can break away from the business. Polly Adler’s book, with but limited sordidness contained in its view of people, is an exception: check the authorities, the records; go even ask those involved. And those who patronize the houses are often pitiful, too.

The comparison I wish to make is not a nice one; the analogy I present is with American secondary education. The Main Library is from the outside a decent enough building, but some nasty business goes on inside. There are some scholars to be seen in a few rooms, as well as graduate and college students, but on any week-end or holiday (the busy days for Mrs. Kipfer) the main reading rooms are filled, often overflowing with high school students from the public, parochial, and private schools in and around Philadelphia. There they submit to and work on the illusion of being educated. Few are ever disillusioned and become like the often cynical—but realistic—prostitutes. They will work there, sometimes: generally they waste a good deal of time meeting, giggling, and fooling around with friends. For as much as four or five hours a day they may work on a term paper, just copying, transferring letters, from one or two books. They are doing research. “Detailed stuff, main library only!” they proclaim to their friends, either proudly or in misery. They think, often only because their teachers have told them so, that they are being educated.
somehow, but they don’t really understand what the process means. And nine times out of ten one of the better neighborhood branches of the library is quite adequate for their needs.

Just as the “ladies of the night” never achieve much for their troubles, these students get but little out of the practice of writing. I imagine a few facts remain while passing from the eyes through the brain to the fingers. But they are not even “learning how to use the library;” college teachers know that the freshman student who knows his way around even a small library is virtually nonexistent. This part of the process of education is a hoax. Further, high school graduates commonly realize that their “education” consisted merely of a general collection of facts, some of which have pecuniary significance; they were in the “business” for the financial advantages it might bring them. Though they realize not all of their “learning” is “practical”, here they are less fortunate than those who are slaves to commercialized sex: they never find out that “doing reports” or “creative research” is a bunch of hogwash. If particular facts or ideas are not tested for their financial value, they generally are blindly accepted, or occasionally scoffed at, just as blindly. The resultant blind living (“George Washington was honest”) is antithetical to freedom. That most high school graduates live unreal lives, as real beings in the mythical world that they are taught, is obvious; they can’t break away from the taught world to a sensible one. They are trapped in confusion; the “system” seems to control them. And the flow of defecated intellectualism that is produced in the high schools is only (if anything) refined in language and changed in scope as the majority of students who go on to “advanced” education—college—continue to produce. Jacques Barzun, the Angry Young Man of Columbia U., laments in the October ’60 Harper’s the increase of the “cults of creativity and research”. And his pointing finger is pretty much all-accusing. I believe these creative fetishes are engendered primarily in high school.

The uncritical tolerance of commercialized education is not the greatest inherent danger to the individual, the society, or the state. Education, in the organized fashion that exists, is a handmaiden to the “system”. I should call it instead the woman-servant or slave, inasmuch as it has lost most of its virtue. Read Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World Revisited for a critical essay of the part of education in controlling the mass mind. It happens: the enslavement of all who participate, to the “system” of things—a control, just as functionally real as by a “white-slave trader”—with a result of crowding out of individual initiative, original explorations, and the discoveries inherent in the standard line of society, whether it is democratic, communistic or what-have-you. Blind living is slavery; as in Brave New World, the bosses are the ones who possess insight. If not the state, then it is the community which determines which line is to be taught and what is not to be talked about, what is nice or good and what reeks of the bogey-man, and who is or who isn’t a proper influence on the minds of the young. And here is also the source of the public hy-
pocrisy; it is the "community" which in reality places "value" on education and on readily available women.

It isn't hard to see what I'm against—the enslavement of minds, the repetitious reports and memorizations, and the phony status of "creativity" and "research" applied to people still wet behind the ears. If you agree with nothing else, future teachers from Ursinus, see the worthlessness of "writing reports".

Saint Augustine showed how "it is a happier thing to be the slave of man than of a lust . . . ." I would extend that to mean that for real freedom it may be a better situation to be a slave of a madam than to stumble through life blindly, the slave of a "system," and not yet understand the source of one's confusion and anxiety. Certainly the latter slavery is at best the equivalent of the former.

TO CONSERVATIVE CHILD

Sing songs of jubilation
When summer melts away
And ice cube's maturation
Reminds of opening day.
The reverence of ration
Here finds its rightful home,
Moreover campus fashion
Ordains a mental loam.
Rejoice, for culture's here en masse,
Enjoining us to raise our aspirations.

Peter Vennema
Seventeen American Skating Careers at the Zenith.

How silent is this sport.  
With closed eyes, it would be music only,  
Unless you hear the sound of the whispering satin,  
Which is the blades speeding across the ice.

How silent the fans.  
Quiet as a love-fire in cold, dead winter,  
Unless you hear the appreciative heart full beating,  
Which is the dance-step skates knitting poetry on the ice.

How silent the arena, now.  
Quiet and still as a heart not beating,  
Unless you can hear a memory.

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