

# THE COLLEGIAN

OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>

NO. 274

## AN INTRODUCTION

My parents never read children's poems to me when I was young. I was warned that poets were often bare-footed vegetarians who didn't bathe much. So I avoided poetry, and, like everyone else, decided to become a football player.

It was not until the first yelps of puppy love that I embraced poetry. In fact, I even wrote some poems, all of which were dedicated to my beloved:

O Sally!  
I want to meet you so badly  
on the way  
to Algebra class.

As I grew older, my attitude changed very little. Poets seemed less vile to me, but all of them were dead. Anyway, my English teachers were constantly reminding me that I didn't understand poetry. So I pursued safer literature, like TIME magazine.

When I arrived at St. John's I read a very long story about people getting killed. This, I was told, was poetry, perhaps the greatest poetry ever written. I soon realized that I would have to change my attitude about poetry if I was to survive here.

And so I did. But I think I still harbored the fear that somehow poetry was an illegitimate enterprise.

The people have submitted their works for this literary issue have proven me wrong. No one would claim that St. John's is a thriving artist's colony; on the other hand, one could claim that there is serious creative writing going on here. I hope the COLLEGIAN can continue to support this writing by offering a chance to authors to publish their works.

As for poetry and me,

Words slip off the pen;  
there is no event.

Words gather;  
there is no story.

Words take on strange meanings;  
there is no reason.

Words run away;  
there is no author.

I am left holding the pen.

*Sean Ball*

Editor	Sean Ball (and cover art this week)
Associate Editor	Mark Wielga
	Business Manager John Lippman
Copy	Alison Athey, Chris Butler, Jeff Hume, Lynn Gumert, Ken Ross, and Mark Fuller
Printing	Patti Nogales, Jo Plitt, Wendy Tribulski, Ann Schwartz, Jeff Harter, Terry Polk, and the Mad Printer
Assembly	Amy Coughlin, Steve Edwards, and Roberta Carnevale
Graphics	Danielle George

## SPIDERY

In the spidery hedge, everybody minds her own business.  
Each lies fat, centered in its own thin sheet of dangerous space,  
Waiting for thirst-quenching accidents.

This one has a morsel of bug to suck on.  
She rocks it around between her front legs,  
Aiming for every dissolved, juicy drop.

Her neighbors are undisturbed by her lucky catch;  
Their sticky designs do not intertwine.  
She wants no false-hope tingles of satisfied hunger  
Caused by a fellow citizen she can't consume.  
Every flicker of her silky nerves must mean success!--  
More vitality to bloat her hideous abdomen.

They do not chat with one another.  
No need. They all know what to do:  
When danger twitches, they shrink deep in their web-caves,  
Prepared instinctively in advance.  
They despise ants, with their communes to run home to.

Condescendingly they mate--a ghastly ritual!--  
Performing completely in private.

They die in winter, shrivelling,  
but they're crunchy by spring.  
Their children don't know where they come from,  
but they know what to do.  
Their silk hooks the wind and they're off!

James Silver Jr.



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He had learned that even tedium was preferable to boredom. That's why he was surprised when the sign began to follow him around the city. He first saw it in the window of an unused and forgotten delicatessen, possibly on 14th street. The sign was hand-lettered with broad strokes on cardboard; the message was obscured behind the glass filmed by white grime. The letters seemed to shift and flow but by concentrating very hard he seemed to read: The fourth world war will be fought with knives and rocks. What did it mean? There had been, so far as he knew, only two world wars already so that it seemed a bit premature, even gloomy, to be talking about a fourth.

The man didn't know that he was being observed. He didn't know that he was one of the dregs of humanity. The young woman watching him was a college student, her face thin, puffy and pallid. Her eyes watched the street like restless cats peering out of alleys. This area which was, as I may have mentioned, 14th street, was frequented by whores, pimps, pushers, thieves - dregs in anybody's lexicon. The past was the graveyard of their expectations; their future a tag neatly wired to their toes. They lived, like Zen philosophers, only in the present. The young woman was an English major minoring in Poli Sci and working for a semester in the D.A.'s office as a P.O. (probation officer). She was observing the dregs in their relentless misery. Later she would write a paper. In this way she earned extra credit.

Meanwhile on the top floor of the World Capital Bank, the president was shifting papers on his desk and reading numbers. Here are some of the numbers that he read:

17%  
58.2%  
1,807,923,567.02  
16.7% of 30.2%  
0.82 0.96 1.24 1.53 2.07  
523,001 metric tonnes

The president of the World Capitol Bank was a top-flight man with a hair-trigger ulcer. The yen was gaining as the dollar sank. This pleased him very much, because the economy of Japan was strong. The dollar sank as the yen rose. This frightened him very much, because the economy of the U.S. was very weak. Thus wracked betwixt pillar and post he was very worried. He was a man with his finger on the pulse of the times who had no idea what was going on. He realized that a great deal depended upon his decisions. He was in a most delicate position, watched incessantly by ambiguous enemies who were trying to make him feel paranoid. The president opened an envelope. Out fell a sheet of thick creamy note-paper. In pristine typing were the words: The fourth world war will be fought with knives and rocks. He looked up the figures for the steel mills he owned in Alabama and Essen. The production was very strong. He had also, as it happened, inherited from his grandfather a granite quarry in New Hampshire. He realized that in the event of a fourth world war he would be in excellent position to supply the world's war material needs. Thus fortified and encouraged he pressed the buzzer on his desk and ordered a sumptuous repast.

Meanwhile, in the city, seventeen percent of more everybody was extremely concerned and distressed by the rising rate of rising rates. It seemed to seventeen percent of more everybody that things had been different in his childhood. Now every time he turned around he encountered another rate: crime rate, inflation rate, overseas deficit rate, rate of falling production, birth rate, cancer rate, automobile accident rate, . . . on and on, until there was even a rate rate and that too was rising. They seemed to shriek and gibber like the sheeted dead in the Roman streets. They proliferated like guppies, which, he understood, were born pregnant. He wanted to whisper but didn't because he was afraid that someone might be looking. He didn't realize that Time, Inc., had reported an astonishing jump of sixtyseven percent (67%) in the rate of people who wanted to whimper.

The learned psychiatrist made of teepee of his fingers and leaned back in his expensive chair. "Whimpering is a perfectly natural activity," he intoned. "It's nothing to be ashamed of, really. We live in a world of things that whine and clang and clatter and thump and sometimes explode (as James Thurber said, or, if he didn't, he should have). The point is to become well-adjusted." Seventeen percent of more everybody lay back more deeply on the couch. The doctor's calm self-assurance was very soothing. Then it occurred to him that perhaps the rate of people who were maladjusted was rising and this gave him just one more rate to worry about.

"Tell me about your childhood," the doctor said.

"I was thrust into the world at a tender age, doctor. The other kids picked on me because I was small for my size." He then poured forth a nearly incoherent tale of endless longing, countless disappointments and traumas, an account of his lonely dogged march from nonexistence to obscurity. "Of course," said seventeen percent of more everybody, "I realize that all this is of no real interest to anybody but myself." The doctor, who could afford to be kind, refrained from telling him that he was perfectly right.

Meanwhile at the Covenant Gardens Hotel there was to be a convention of poets. The poets had been constantly honing and polishing all year for this event. There was going to be a literary salon and poetry readings and for the best poem a five-hundred dollar prize. Each contestant believed his chances were excellent to garner the honors, since last year's winner had committed suicide. The Covenant Gardens Hotel offered its guests the use of the Rainbow Room lounge. The poets gathered here to drink, harangue, invoke, gossip, declaim, take drugs, ogle, whisper, cry and raise hell generally, except one who nursed his drink and sneered. For variety he would nurse his drink and smirk. He was very much admired; everyone acknowledged that he had the finest collection of Sung dynasty pornography in the Greater New York area. "The collection," he liked to purse his lips and say, "is exquisitely corrupt." Everyone who heard envied him and wished that they too had the subtle aesthetic sensibility to appreciate whatever it was that he was talking about.

The man in front of the grimy ex-delicatessen window (whose name by the way was Walter) was not thinking of subtle aesthetic sensibility. He was thinking of his ex-wife and trying to remember if she had run away with her lover or died in childbirth. He tried to grasp at strands of memory but every one seemed to melt into fog in his hand. He wandered disconsolately along 14th street past the college girl and around the corner. On a sidewalk someone, apparently with an unsteady hand, had spray-painted messages. Walter read them. Here are some of the messages which he read:

Sharon and Bobby Forever

Fuck You.

Hell's Angels, Oakland Calif.

Fuck you

Carol loves Stanley

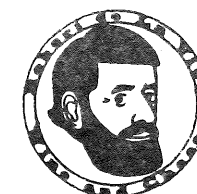
The Fourth World War will be fought with knives and rocks

Did it really say that? Walter looked closer and the letters seemed to flow and shift. It was like trying to look out of a bus window at night in the rain. What was the message? Who was trying to communicate with him? Why him? Walter felt confused and wanted to go into some bar, crawl into a corner booth all alone with a beer and just sit, quiet and warm.

by Jeremy Freeman

Robert de La Viez  
Wine and Cheese  
Fifty-one West Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

~ Come in and see  
our new soup sign.





# VIEWPOINT

We have not left it  
as we found it  
but it seems to  
me that way,  
though twelve years  
of living  
have softened  
the harsh lines  
the naked floor  
throws back coldly,  
an echo of  
my despair.  
I would like to  
to say farewell  
to my room  
but I look to find  
four walls,  
a bed, a floor.  
my door  
where is my room?  
Did it leave  
with the desk  
hailed out the door,  
my chair, my pictures  
or the bookshelves  
eased into the back of  
an old green truck?  
At what moment  
did it disappear  
with the loss of  
which part did the  
whole  
lose itself  
in the bustle  
of the last days.  
It is lost like  
the fleeting sigh of warmth  
in a cold winter.  
So when we  
softly  
close the door  
for the last time  
and look back  
we will see  
a house.  
not as we found it  
but knowing  
that whatever  
made our home is gone  
as we stare  
at a  
strangely familiar  
house at the  
top  
of a hill.

Patti Nogales

## BIRTHDAY SONG

They must have lied about  
my age when I was born.  
they must have seen my  
crumbled face, my  
crooked body,  
and have known.

And have known it  
would be too cruel

To have lived so long,  
and not to tell.

They must have lied about  
my age when I was born  
so I would not know  
I was mute.

Lynn Gumert

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## A Starry Night

Through some lost sieve was borne this vast expanse,  
Yet trembling headlong past the waxing moon's  
Gay madness, trolling heaven's nightly song,  
They cease to linger on your eyes, the stars,  
Enmeshed, transfigured in ephemeral light.

Your eyes are tidal seas suspended by  
An awful power, disrobing prophecies  
That promise passage through the stormy night,  
Dreaming of silhouetted old empires  
Consumed in grand encomia of time.

The oceanic fog rolling past the sky  
Scales the chilled night as on the narrow cliffs  
You climb for miles and miles around the lake,  
Through windy gulfs, to witness silver streaks  
Of thunder breach and cleave the water's edge.

And raging comets plunge like fishing lines  
Breaking the water's surface in the sun  
Down to the promontory, canopied,  
Star-fired, where praying for light you long to see  
One last great helios dance its frenzied play.

Estuaries of deep grass at our feet  
Sway skyward, casting shadows on your eyes  
As stars reflect the pallid light before  
Dawn breaks the sky, when mere appearing moods  
Slowly eclipse the aperture of night.

We lie against an earth, our clothes dispersed  
To gentle winds which sift the distant night  
And blow as calmly as the dialogue  
Of that tomorrow when perhaps I'll know  
Your softly-spoken presence on my mind.

Douglas Barton

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In the Land of Left-Handed People (where people laugh the day)

One day, as the left-handed people were laughing their troubles and cares away, they were getting ready for the big Science Fair.

Thousands of Scientists from all the lands other than the land of the left-handed people were coming to display their advances for the benefit and edification of the left-handed people.

The left-handed people felt happy and fortunate. They were grateful to Science for providing them with an occasion to celebrate.

The left-handed ladies cooked brownies and cakes and pies and delicacies of many shapes.

The left-handed men talked about the metaphysical implications of the Fair and laughed.

The disillusioned youths of the left-handed origin played music and laughed more than they wanted to.

Again, I say they felt happy and fortunate.

Then, the scientists arrived and explained how the largest and most spectacular display they had formed was one which needed laughing individuals to people it. They wanted volunteers.

So, many left-handed people jumped up laughingly to volunteer. The scientists led them to a large and spectacular display which they peopled according to the scientists' wishes.

The scientists then filmed their large and spectacular display.

They ran the film back and the scientists laughed.

- Alice Mikal Craven

# THE COLLEGIAN

## NEWS SUPPLEMENT

OCTOBER 15, 1978

NO. 274

### ALL COLLEGE SEMINAR NEWS

The Student Committee on Instruction will be selling copies of the All College Seminar reading, Civil Disobedience, in the Dining Hall at various times and in the Senior Conversation Room in the Coffee Shop after seminars.

Submitted for the SCI by Jim Melcher

### WE NEED YOUR JUNK

The K.W.P. is having a fund raising rummage sale on October 22 from 10:00 to 4:00 in the FSK Lobby. We need any and everything you can donate to this worthy cause. We will be collecting from dorm to dorm the week of the 16 through the 21. If you have any questions, contact Holly Johnson or Patti Pratt.

### NOTICE TO COMMUNITY

There will be a meeting Wednesday, October 18, 1978 at 4:00 PM in room 23 McDowell Hall for all those interested in setting up a recycling program (aluminum cans, paper, ect.) at St. John's.

### Art Work Wanted

I would very much like the loan of student paintings, drawings, photographs, etc. to display on the walls of my office. Some hooks are up, but pictures would have to be ready to hang. Mr. Blistein, artist-in-residence, tells me that the art studio has matting equipment and supplies.

Please come by to see me if you have work you are willing to loan.

Judy Maistrellis  
Assistant Deans' Office

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### THIS WEEK

#### Sunday

2:00 pm Pick-up soccer  
8:15 pm Film: Orpheus

#### Tuesday

7-9:00 pm Folk Dancing (FSK Lobby)

Please try to come if you are at all interested — for the past two weeks only 2 to 4 people have shown up. If this continues we will be forced to give up the effort. Thank you.

Stephanie Moore ('81)  
Harry Fisher

Anthony Burgess (author of A Clockwork Orange) will be giving a talk in Washington tonight. If someone could drive, I will pay for gas, or make some such arrangement. The talk is being given at no cost. Contact: Sean Ball, Box 87.

#### Friday

3:30 pm Board meeting with Faculty and Seniors

8:30 pm Lecture: "Things As They Are" Mr. Robert Bart, Dean of St. John's West (Santa Fe, N.M.)

#### Saturday

##### BUS TRIP TO WASHINGTON

There will be a bus leaving from Cambell parking lot at 10:00 am to Washington museums, galleries, monuments, and whatever else is there, and will return to St. John's at 4:00 pm. All interested should give their names to Mrs. Maistrellis in the Asst. Deans office. The cost is \$ 1.00, paid when you sign up.

Student Life Committee

8:15 pm Film: Between Time and Timbuctu

### Reminder: Student Parties

Only the Assistant Deans can grant extensions for parties. If you are planning a party and wish a special extension, you must make your case to one of them at least a day before the party.



## D.C. Minutes of Oct. 10

Present: Balkcom, Coss, Stoneseifer, Schuler, Stuck, Shapar, Ross, Newlin, Kolman, White

Visiting: A. Cox, F. Cox, Bolle, Edwards, Hunter, Jackson, Jago, Mahlze, Moore, Oggins, Sparrow, Neitz

The meeting began with an announcement by Mr. Sparrow. He said that although he could have waited until Thursday's meeting with the administration, rumors had already begun to spread about Mr. Dunham and his relationship with the college. The Dean proceeded to announce that Mr. Dunham "will not be a college employee" in three weeks, because he felt that his new duties, which included "increasing revenues," were "burdens bigger than he could handle." Mr. Dunham's vice-presidential duties will be divided between Mr. Sparrow, Mr. Elsey, Mr. Peters, and Mr. Parran.

Since Mr. Sparrow was sitting across the table from him, Mr. Kolman decided to ask about the gynecologist. Mr. Sparrow replied that he didn't know very much about it, except that Mr. Berkowitz was donating his time. Mr. Kolman thought that Mr. Berkowitz' actions were "above and beyond the call of duty."

The D.C. proceeded to fill up the spaces on the myriad committees which keep the wheels of polity government turning.

### The Student Life Committee:

Anthony Cox, Stephanie Moore, Robin Jackson, and Julie Neitz were elected. There are still two more openings, including one for a freshman.

### The Health Committee.

Fred Cox is as of now, the health committee. Fred is a witty, vivacious person, and he wants help in looking after your health care. There are only two positions left, at least one of which would be best filled by a woman.

### The Development Committee:

Steve Edwards, Linda Mahler, Melanie Jago.

Mr. Bolle presented a charter for the club. The charter was unanimously approved, \$25 dollars was given to them, their membership fee was set at

\$2, and Mr. Bolle was named archon. In

like manner, Miss Oggins presented a charter for the small chorus, which was approved unanimously, \$15 was given them, and Miss Wachsmith and Miss Oggins were named archai.

Mr. Newlin proposed that a student-faculty art committee be established. He felt that students seemed unaware of both what the college has to offer and the responsibilities which go along with the use of the art equipment. His proposal will be considered at a future meeting, but students are asked to approach their delegates and tell them how they feel about the art program.

## D.C. Meeting w/ Administration of Oct. 12

present: Stoneseifer, Andeson, Leonard, Jackins, Stuck, Braun, Williamson, Kolman, Tonjes, Balkcom, Sparrow

Miss Leonard informed us of the parking lot re-assignments. Resident students will have priority in all lots except Mellon, and a certain number of these lots will be assigned. The new policy will be spelled out in detail soon.

Mr. Sparrow reported that members of the faculty are concerned about noise on campus, and that students had spoken to tutors about it. Students are reminded that they should complain to their delegates first. Mr. Williamson said that there seems to be less noise on campus this year and that he hears less noise about noise from students.

A contract concerning the occupancy of rooms is being drawn up. As the College no longer stands "in loco parentis", there appears to be a need to clarify the rights and obligations of the College and those students occupying rooms on campus. More on that at a later date.

No decision on the calendar for next year has been made yet. There exists the possibility of a referendum.

Finally, nobody seems to know why there is still a 12:30 bell. It will probably be done away with. Mr. Kolman, obviously not an early riser, wondered why there has to be an 8:10 bell. However, that bell will continue to ring.

Karen Anderson

## WOMEN'S SPORTS by Stephanie Reineke

A fullback, a fullback, my knee-pads for a fullback. Ah, but there are fullbacks...galore. Out on the field the fullbacks doggedly play their positions, hoping to boot the ball down the field, away from any unsuspecting or careless forward who is willing to fight it out for a goal. Although very important, a fullback's job is fairly unrewarding. When it comes to actual recognition, generally the goalie is there to receive the glory for a deflected play (deservedly enough), but one must remember the fullbacks harassment of the offensive line. A fullback is definitely defensive, protective, and most assuredly offensive, trying desperately to be all places at once, fighting tooth and nail for possession of that ever elusive ball.

They are too numerous to name EN TOTA...but a few of the more constant fullbacks are: for the Amazons, Miss Hawkinson and Mrs. Eller, the D.C.'s have Misses Shapar, George and McKennis. Misses McMahon, Oggins, Athey and Scioscia rotate and gyrate for the Maenads and the Nymphs are blessed with Miss Dorn, Miss Cooper (who really prefers playing halfback) and sometimes Misses Collingwood and Tosheff (when they aren't playing halfback).

Admittedly there is lots of switching of halfbacks and fullbacks on the field-the halfbacks have the most running to do when they are really "playing their positions"-and so sometimes the positions overlap, but I'll talk about halfbacks later (Miss Sisson!).

It was exciting last week to see the D.C.'s win their first game of the season. For once the D.C.'s had lots and lots of players while the Nymphs were lacking many, having only 7 players. With lots of steam, the D.C.'s put in 2 and won the game leaving the Nymphs scoreless. Many thanks for the D.C.'s go to Misses Oreskes and Nogales, (not to mention Miss \_\_\_\_\_.) (I didn't mention her.)

It's also very exciting to see the Maenads play up to their potential. They won once again, defeating the D.C.'s with a score of 6-1. Miss Groff and Miss O'Keefe really strutted their stuff scoring 2 points apiece.

And the Maenads kept their winning streak going by defeating the Nymphs 3-0

in their game last Thursday. Despite Miss Jago's foul in the first 35 seconds of the game, all went well for the rising Maenads.

"And that's the way it is, today October 15th Nineteen seventy-eight; This is Walter Cronkite for Women's Athletics... good-day."

### NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE:

4:15 Tues. Oct. 17 Amazons vs. Nymphs  
2:45 Thur. Oct. 19 Maenads vs. D.C.'s  
4:15 Fri. Oct. 20 Nymphs vs. D.C.'s

## SPORTS

by Bryce Jacobsen

### UNIVERSAL (COSMIC?) GYM DEPARTMENT:

We have been informed that our Iconoclastic Machine will be shipped from the factory on Oct. 16. What factory? We forgot to ask! Iran? Hong Kong?

GYM HOURS: Starting this week, the gym will be open from 7:00 A.M., from Tuesday through Friday...thanks to Miss Murphey.

RACQUETS: Our supply of Badminton and Racquetball racquets is "tending to zero". Remember, you have to supply your own now. It is later than you think. Within two weeks, for instance, women's team competition in badminton will start.

FOOTBALL: Druids-23, Greenwaves-14. Without Mr. Barton, the Waves had trouble with their offense. Too often, the Druids came up with interceptions, and capitalized on them. This was the Druids best offensive game so far, helped along by a field goal from Mr. Brandon.

Druids -18, Spartans-13. The Spartans are still experimenting with their offense. In this game, they tried quick lateral pitch-outs from the quarterback, to open things up. The trouble was, two of these were picked off by the Druids, who then scored unmolested. Mr. Brandon and Mr. Twigg perpetrated these felonies.

With these two wins, the Druids are back in the football picture, and will have to be reckoned with. Only the winless Spartans are saying, "Wait 'Til next year!".

Greenwaves-29, Guardians-6. Its been

tough lately for the Guardians...a loss to the Hustlers last week, and now this embarrassment! The Waves made sure that Vr. Barton showed up for this game, and he responded well to the challenge.

**Soccer:** Spartans-1, Hustlers-0.

Once again the Hustlers were victimized by a penalty kick (from Mr. Berger) late in the game. Somebody ought to be telling their fullbacks, with utmost clarity and vigor, "In general, don't foul people... and in particular, don't foul people late in a close game in the penalty area."

Guardians-3, Druids-2. Mr. Edozien scored first, on a beautiful long shot that was unstoppable by any goalie. Then Mr. Putnam found the range. Then Mr. Harris, arriving regally in time for the second half, got into the act. And Mr. Kuzmak converted a very accurate center from Mr. Griffin.

So the game went into overtime, which was bad luck for the Druids. There was the ball, rolling slowly in front of their goal...and with only gold shirts around it! Mr. Adams easily punched it in.

# THIS WEEK'S MENU

Sun. L-Scram. Eggs w/ Scrapple, Spinach Souflee  
Veg.-Spinach Souflee  
D-Chicken, Fried Mackerel  
Veg.-Eggplant Parmigiana  
Mon. L-Burgers, Quiche Supreme  
Veg.-Quiche Supreme  
D-Veal Steak, Asst. Pizza  
Veg.-Carrot Loaf  
Tue. L-Teen Twist, Chix Chow Mein  
Veg.-Meatless Teen Twist  
D-Meat Loaf, Knocks 'n Kraut  
Veg.-Cheese Fondue  
Wed. L-Fish Sand., Chili and Corn Bread  
Veg.-Veggie Chili and Corn Bread  
D-Roast Beef, Sausage and Esc. Apple  
Veg.-Stuffed Pepper  
Thu. L-Sloppy Joe, Fruit Fritters & Bacon  
Veg.-Fruit Fritters  
D-Turkey, Baked Trout  
Veg.-Ratatouille  
Fri. L-Steak Sand., Egg Salad  
Veg.-Egg Salad  
D-Chick. Pot Pie, Burger Steak  
Veg.-Cheese Ravioli  
Sat. L-Scram. Eggs, Chicken  
Veg.-Mushroom Omelete  
D-Pot Roast, Pork Polynesian

## From the Placement Office:

**Seniors** - If you are taking the October GRE and are interested in coordinating transportation to the test centers, please meet in Room 21 at 7:30 on Monday evening, October 16.

**All students** - You are invited to attend a Graduate/Professional Schools Day on Friday, Oct. 27 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. at Morgan State University in Baltimore. Seventy-five graduate and professional schools will be represented. They will each have a booth where you can visit and talk with the representatives. Information on academic offerings and financial aid will be available.

**Recruiting Visits** - At 1:00 on Wed., October 18, 1978 a representative of the Vanderbilt - Owen Graduate School of Management in Nashville, TN will visit in the Placement Office to talk with students.

On Thursday, Oct. 19, 1978 we will have a representative of the Drew University Theological School and Graduate School to talk with interested students.

There are packets of information on both of these schools in the Placement Office.

The Placement Office has received information and applications for summer jobs at the YMCA of the Rockies. This requires early application.

I have been asked to talk about dark times, about the darkness of the times in which we live. I shall try to do that, but it seems to me that, being who I am, for better and for worse, I can only indirectly carry out what has been asked. A sign of that indirectness, which I have to say in the form of reflections on brief passages from four books, the most recent of which was written about seven centuries ago. But I shall try very hard to make myself understood and I hope that some good may come from our being together.

From the Iliad of Homer, composed more than 2500 years ago, I wish to talk about what it means for one human being to offer another as much time as he needs; from the Confessions of St. Augustine about what it means to be faithful to that original care for one's own well-being which seems to be a part of each of us; from Dante's Purgatory about the sort of weeping that might be redemptive and about how one can keep intact one's capacity for that sort of weeping; and finally from the Gospel of St. John about why it might be that if all the deeds done by Christ were to be written down, the world itself could not contain the books that would be required.

I would like to begin with a moment in the Iliad because that book seems to me to be very much about time. In pondering the assignment to speak of living in dark times, I had to ask myself what it would be like to live in bright times. And it occurred to me that the difference between dark times and bright times might not be the most important difference, just as Achilles, the beautiful young warrior who is the hero of Homer's poem, comes to his proper wisdom when the choice which had always seemed so important to him - a long life versus a short life, much time versus little time - comes to be replaced by the difference between enough time and not enough time, a difference which depends not upon choice, but rather upon a sort of grace. I shall try to explain what I mean. Because of a certain prophecy, Achilles believes he has a choice between a brief life of unforgettable glory or a long, undistinguished - though not unhappy - life. He broods much over this choice and is greatly confused. Then his dearest friend is slain in war and he is impelled into action of a despairing and merciless sort. He slays scores of men and even does battle against a mighty river. He finally slays Hector, the slayer of his friend. In his rage he drags the body of Hector on the ground behind his chariot, around and around the camp, every day for twelve days. But the gods Apollo and Aphrodite protect Hector's body, and the natural outcome does not ensue - Hector's body is preserved rather than being mutilated beyond recognition. Finally on the twelfth day Priam, who is very old, the father of Hector, comes to Achilles to ask for his son's body so that a proper funeral might be celebrated, with ritual lamentation and the feasting of a great feast. Achilles and Priam weep together, Achilles now for his own father, now for his dear friend, Priam for his dead son. Their tears somehow form one stream and are indistinguishable. Achilles, moved by the beauty of Priam, grants his request - he is willing to restore the body of Hector. And - this is the one act of divine grace which takes place within the Iliad - there is a body to restore, not a formless mutilated obscenity which would break Priam's heart to see, but the body of Hector, young and handsome. Reconciliation takes place within the Iliad because Achilles has been given enough time, as much time as he needs. At no earlier moment would he have been capable of transcending his rage and despair. Had Priam come earlier his petition would have been futile. But if the gods had not, contrary to all rational expectation, preserved the body of Hector while Achilles was enduring and laboring through his rage, if divine grace had not secured harmony between the requirements of Achilles's inner time and the requirements of the world-time which men share, Achilles would have had nothing to offer Priam except regret, and the most beautiful moment within the Iliad, from which light streams upon all of the darknesses and bitternesses of the poem, would never have occurred. Homer writes: "But when they had put aside their desire for eating and drinking, Priam, son of Dardanos, gazed upon Achilles, wondering at his



size and beauty, for he seemed like an outright vision of gods. Achilles in turn gazed on Dardanian Priam and wondered, as he saw his brave looks and listened to him talking."

Achilles has been given-graciously, independently of any claims he might have-enough time, and he knows it. Anyone who has experienced being given enough time-and part of that experience seems to be a powerful sense of how easily things might have gone otherwise, how likely it is for one to be given not quite enough time-the question of much time versus little time, of a long life versus a short life, cannot seem very important.

Thus Achilles asks Priam how long he will need to mourn and bury his son. Priam says twelve days and explains why. Achilles grants him twelve days-he will hold back the war for that long. Achilles, having himself been given enough time, gives Priam enough time. This is Achilles' imitation of the gods, his truly god-like act within the Iliad. And it seems to me that for us too it is utterly important to give people as much time as they need, to let them tell us just how much time that is, and to understand that clear reasons cannot always be given for needing just that amount of time. But I do not think that many of us-I leave out of account a few great souls among us-are capable of giving another time unless we ourselves have, in one form or another, had the experience of being given, beyond any fair claims we can make, and contrary to all rational expectation, enough time. However dark our times may be, I do not think that such experiences are altogether impossible for us. And when they do befall us, surely gratitude requires that we make available to another, as graciously as may be, what has been made available to us.

Let me now turn to the Confessions of St. Augustine, a book written about 1500 years ago. The title Confessions means something different from what we might suppose. For Augustine, the proper subject of confession is the goodness of God. But God's goodness is shown not only in the deep-down, always-present goodness of His creation, but also in the mercy He shows to sinful man. Hence to acknowledge and praise God's goodness includes acknowledging and praising His mercy, and that requires that the occasions of that mercy, the sins and sinfulness of our lives, be set forth. That in turn requires a travelling through memory. This is what Augustine does in his Confessions: he presents himself in his neediness in order to present God in His graciousness and to give Him praise for His graciousness. According to Augustine, this praise is not so much our duty as it is our deepest delight, the delight for which we were made.

I would like to consider with you something Augustine says about himself as a young child. He finds something wonderful in that child, something altogether worthy of praise. That something is no achievement of the child, nor any potential for achievement, but rather something wholly God-given: it is Augustine says "a care for my own well-being" which shows itself, among other ways, by the fact that "I shunned sadness and dejection."

This may seem strange to us. We are accustomed to saying and perhaps thinking that it is a matter of course for each of us to care for himself-"to take care of number one," as we sometimes say-the only surprising thing-perhaps even a miracle-being that occasionally we also care for other people. But for Augustine the most difficult thing in the world is to care for our own well-being, or more precisely, to be faithful to that original care for that well-being with which God endowed us in the beginning, to go on shunning sadness and dejection. The reason is that we grow weary, feel worn-out, are bewildered and embarrassed as we attempt to sustain the care for our own well-being. We long for rest. He says to God: "Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee." But until that most proper rest comes to be, the human task is to be faithful to the original restlessness and to the original care for our own well-being from which it springs.

Augustine does not praise himself in the confessions, one reason being that he knows the great power of what he calls "the passion for self-vindication", that is, not merely pride in the sense of having too high an opinion of ourselves,

but rather the awesome passion to vindicate ourselves when accused, whether by others or by ourselves. Augustine does not suppose that this passion within him needs any help from him. But if he were to praise himself, to find something praiseworthy in his life,-achieved with the help of God of course but still achieved by Augustine-it would be for being faithful through many years to his own restlessness, for sustaining, in the face of so many temptations to come to some false settlement, to some false peace, that restlessness which so wearied him.

From the point of view of the Confessions, written when he was about 45, he writes of himself in his 31st year, fully the 13th year of his most earnest searchings for a truth in which his heart and mind could find genuine rest - that is, the 13th year of what we so easily refer to as an "adolescent religious crisis,". He writes of how weary he was, and how embarrassed - how embarrassed, since he had been making such a fuss about his own well-being for so long a time, instead of getting on with the practical business of life (he was, after all, a Roman). But he held out in his weariness and his embarrassment until, as he recounts it, he received a true invitation from the true God. And then he said yes.

Now let me turn to a passage in the Purgatory of Dante. This book is the central part of a work called the Divine Comedy. The first part is in some way about the lives of human beings in Hell, the second in Purgatory, the third in Heaven. Dante's work is full of stories of human lives, each presented in amazingly few words but each somehow effectively bringing the human face before us. The stories are told to Dante as he journeys through the three worlds. There is a certain story told to Dante by a soul in Purgatory which I would like to tell you. But first I must say a few words about how Dante thinks of Purgatory - every one of them - will one day be in Heaven with God and each will be filled - in the measure possible for each without his ceasing to be himself - with light and joy. But first - and this is what Purgatory is for, according to Dante - a kind of patience is necessary, and a coming to understand the ways in which our lives have been perverse, and an attempt - for once, happily, an attempt which is bound to succeed - to straighten out what has been crooked in them, not because otherwise God could not stand the sight of us, but because otherwise we would be simply ashamed and bewildered and miserable in the presence of God. The straightening out of what has been crooked in our lives - in us - is painful, but it is a pain which the souls in Purgatory do not wish to avoid.

Now let me recount to you the story which one of the souls in Purgatory tells Dante. His whole life, he says, or almost his whole life, had been full of violence and hatred, of hating and being hated. He met his death hunted down by his enemies, who wounded him and drove him into a swamp, where as he lay dying he saw pools of his blood form alongside him in the stinking water. He was alone and there was no one, even far away, who loved him. The moment before his death he shed a tear. The devils came to take him away to Hell. But angels came who would not permit them. The devils were furious at the unfairness of it: "On account of one little tear (una lacrimetta in Dante's Italian) we are deprived of what is rightfully ours," they shriek, "What is one little tear against a whole lifetime of violence and hatred?" But the angels are firm, and the soul goes to Purgatory, to prepare itself for the presence of God.

I want to reflect with you upon that one little tear, so strangely powerful. First, I think it must be not merely a tear of self-pity, of feeling sorry for oneself - I think some wider sorrow must be in it, some sorrow for having offended God or having offended against the beauty of His creation or some sadness at having betrayed things one shouldn't have betrayed. But I am not so sure that there may be nothing of self-pity in it. It would be strange, after all, and perhaps perversely prideful, to see and sorrow over the deep sadness of the world - the "tears of things", as Vergil says - and to exempt oneself, to stand above that sorrowful world and look down upon it. No, I do not think that self-pity - of which we so often speak harshly - must be excluded from that tear, although of course much more must also be included.



Second, we must be aware that to shed such a tear, to shed the right kind of tear, is not an act of will. We cannot heroically, at that final moment, make ourselves do it through strenuous exertion. Such a tear comes forth or it does not. It comes forth from a heart in which there is still some goodness. Here, I think, is where the will comes in, where trying hard and struggling come in. Not indeed the kind of struggle that seems possible for some among us - the struggle to be as good as good can be, the struggle to be very good. Rather I am thinking of human beings in whose lives it is much too late in the day to make of their lives a beautiful thing which might gladden those who behold them, but for whom the question is: after so many betrayals of the things I ought least to have betrayed, after so many acts of violence against what I ought most to have cherished, what difference could one more betrayal, one more act of violence, possibly make? What difference could there possibly be between a thousand betrayals and a thousand and one? Perhaps I could resist this present temptation to betrayal - it would be painful, but perhaps I could do it - but what's the use? What difference could it possibly make? And surely tomorrow I shall be guilty of some new betrayal.

What Dante means to say, I think, is that it does make a difference that one moment of fidelity in the midst of a thousand betrayals does not indeed make a life into a beautiful thing in which men and angels may rejoice, but it may be enough to keep somehow intact a heart capable of shedding the right kind of tear when that matters most.

Let me conclude by saying a few words about the final sentence of the Gospel of St. John. That sentence says: "But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." This makes sense, I think, only if we suppose that John does not have in mind only the deeds of Jesus during his 33 years in Palestine, where of course he encountered only a not very great number of souls. Rather, John must mean that every soul that has ever been in the world or ever will be encounters Jesus in one guise or another, knows him by one name or another, responds, however obscurely, to his invitation. And I think of it is not blasphemous to speak of the deeds of Jesus as being not only for our rescue - although surely it is right for us to think of them in this way most of the time - but also for his own fulness and therewith for the fulness of the creation. For we must take seriously his being a person. And of myself as a person I know that there are some things in me which are brought out - and in some mysterious way even called into being - only by a certain friend, other things brought out only by another friend. The loss of a friend is the loss of a part of me. As Jesus issues his invitation in as many ways as there are souls in the world, the creation comes fully into its own.

These words may sound to you outrageously serene coming from one who was asked to speak about the darkness of our dark times. Surely an urgent and bewildered sense of our need for rescue, and painful doubts about the very possibility of rescue, its availability in any comprehensible way, are among the deepest parts of our experience here and now. But I wonder whether there are not moments in the experience of each of us in which we can somehow sense the truth of these words spoken by wisdom, that is, somehow, by Christ; "I am from eternity, and before the earth was made I was with Him forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing at His feet at all times; playing in the world. And my delights were to be with the children of men."

How such moments - moments in which the world seems a deeply innocent place - are to be put together with the dark moments is very hard to say - it is surely beyond my power to say - but not give voice to them all seems to be a lie.

William O'Grady



### chromed noise

The drug state  
finally

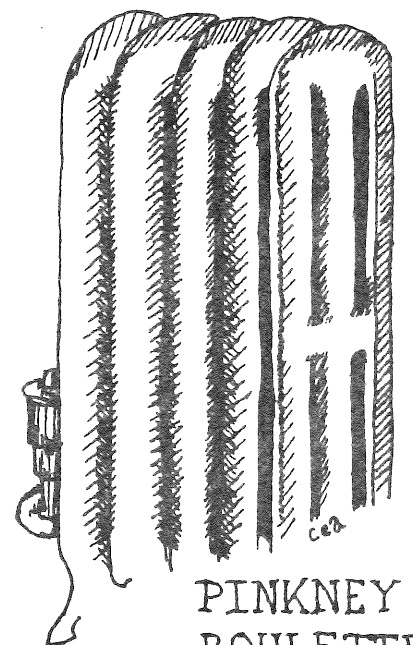
stutter wild lightning like  
electric roots of some sky plant

all these things happening and  
all these things happening and

time distends  
lies in the darkslabs about the room  
veins/arteries subtly pulsing

close to the window  
lips pretend to weld themselves from the glass  
but it is my own voice that speaks  
red and green in thin lines  
grids that hope for meaning  
fly on sweet unconscious  
turn indifferent matter to my soul.  
speak to me heavens  
clouds whisper of lost loves  
but i am twisted in the limbs of thick oaks  
lost between the wood and myself  
lost so helplessly  
the line/ i am no part of these bricks save  
thru deception.  
SAVE THRU DECEPTION

by Geoff Bain



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ROULETTE

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## A POEM

By all the boots I've ever worn  
 By all the tendons ever torn  
 By all the tennis shoes I've had  
 By all the baseballs good and bad  
 By the dirty gym socks in my locker  
 Never again will I play soccer.

by Laura Trent  
 with the able  
 assistance of  
 B.J. Sisson and  
 Joe Roach

All I have done is costume to me;  
 All I have known is gall -  
 Thou, Christ, who sees the sparrow,  
 When wilt stop my fall?

Buffy Bowser

The flower closed up  
 for some reason  
 and  
 for some reason  
 I opened it up.

Josh Rappaport

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## AT THIS MOMENT

At this moment,  
 A breeze has feigned to sigh,  
 Unvirulent,  
 As sad winds seem to cry.

At this moment,  
 A rose has lost its bloom,  
 Evanescent,  
 With lore of life's near doom.

At this moment,  
 A lone leaf floats to sea,  
 Irresponsible,  
 To where its end will be.

At this moment,  
 A mind is tinged with dreams,  
 Luminescent,  
 With glow of love's vain schemes.

At this moment,  
 A tear streams down a face,  
 Acquiescent,  
 To love which bears no trace.

At this moment,  
 A heart is bound to bleed,  
 So despondent,  
 With thoughts of woe to feed.

At this moment,  
 A love has died in vain,  
 Nonexistent,  
 To a mind veiled in pain.

At this moment,  
 A shriek has stabbed the gloom,  
 Sanguinolent,  
 With pain of some self doom.

At this moment,  
 Someone will read these lines,  
 Quite ignorant,  
 That for this my soul pines.

Peter Griggs

## SAGACIOUS SHIT

or

## INCREMENTS &amp; EXCREMENT

(An Hopus) by Joshua Kates

What does it taste like?  
 What expectations flourish with it?  
 What presumptions lie behind it?

It, that's you  
 New York, the modern city.  
 But is this transformation possible?

Many in maniness.  
 But any in oneness?  
 None, except maniness.

The sound tomorrow, can be heard this night.  
 Musicians, instruments akimbo

Sucking air, straight from the streets  
 Huge breaths, sweet smoke and piss smell  
 Stale smoke and gasoline stench, dust  
 Iron and moldy newsprint, swirlin  
 Burst out through Bass Clarinets  
 and Pocket Trumpets, comes too  
 All the years spent  
 On subways hearing

Them, planes, cars and  
 Accidents, Three A.M. screams  
 And the dark howlings of dogs.  
 But there is Central Park  
 Sunrises as well to be heard from  
 In amongst the effervescing Sound.

As elsewhere it contains  
 Those who retain their past  
 Yet feel the present.

Most react perversely, some act nobly, almost.  
 There are no more pure ones  
 First Generation immigrants, 1900 style,  
 All are post two world wars  
 And believe a lot less  
 Without ever realizing it.

Long dark rows, of 2 family houses.  
 Red brick, and wrought iron railings.  
 Names, mostly Italian, in big letters  
 Over big numbers, which is their address.

Their kids congregate  
 Under old black iron streetlamps  
 With large radios and heavy chains  
 Around their necks, with crosses  
 Or stars, or some saints medal.  
 Drink wine, blow joints, drive cars  
 And talk about them too.

Machines that shine at night  
 And make as much noise as anything around.  
 Some, those who drink most,  
 With the tightest pants, will stay  
 Out the latest, to go and beat people  
 Till they are beaten. The rest

Will go in about one.  
 All can be seen during the day,  
 But never together.  
 In the dry afternoons  
 They look pale and seem anxious.  
 The ones with tans look hot and scrawny.  
 It would seem appropriate  
 If all tilted their heads  
 Forty-five degrees off their necks.  
 Someday they will.

Already their eyes hang  
 In their heads like animal skins  
 Left out to dry.  
 NOT ALL, but many.

Those are just  
 A couple antipodes  
 Out of countless  
 Many charted across  
 This distorted graph  
 These city streets.

Each one that has been  
 Picked out and resonates  
 Somewhere inside  
 The harmonics are called forth

Many times over, individual instances  
 Sediment added by books  
 Thoughts and remembrances  
 Begins to fashion  
 A marvelous network  
 From caves to tunnels  
 Down in this deepest soil  
 Paintings adorn it many  
 Taken from the city  
 And the whole design, too  
 Has kept this mined.

This city: it,  
 Has come through me,  
 To be this city: you  
 My created friend  
 Where the most is to be  
 Recalled and learned.

Please grant me the right  
 not to presume?  
 I grant you the right  
 not to presume.

Through all of this you were smiling?  
 Then I had to, sometimes, even now I do.  
 How can you help it?  
 Then let's leave it  
 That Way!!!

Author's note: this is not a "confessional" poem.

#### WHERE I AM NOW

Where I am now is a fruit so full and old  
the skin has split: between structured hysteria  
and monomaniacal sleep. I find myself—that is,  
as being awakened by terror, one resumes a survey—  
with limp and cursing lovers on a train  
or in a room with deadline geography  
or dancing beside myself in the street;  
and one poet's dolor is another one's grief

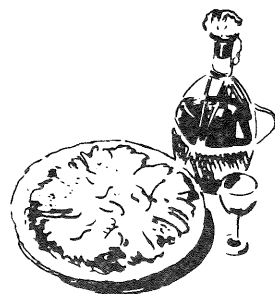
where I am is a blind and blank  
hot place where love coerces me  
I like about it the ornamental release  
unraveling once knotted of various  
fevers of context. now however  
a slice of image overtakes  
my previous foot marks; I have to infer them.

what I do is watch and think time geodesics  
concerning the crystal my eye has generated  
true conversation is love or dialectic  
so this is gossip  
less real, more articulate

where I am is abandoned on  
a bench between trains and sleeping corpses  
where I am is my center of power  
my strength to annihilate you.

Caroline Allen

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