

the  
**Collegian**

Est. in 1888

Volume IV, Issue 1

Thursday, November 5, 1992

*How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world.*

Merchant of Venice, Act V, scene 1

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# Love, Languor, Labor, and Life

Kevin Johnson

These days, it is common for people to speak of Love as a feeling between two people. Similarly, people speak of happiness as a *feeling* akin to that of "being in love." I hope to show that these "feelings" are fine for Youth, but for adults they ought not be considered the *summum bonnum* of Love. Happiness and Love must be modulated across the bridge of adolescence to harmonize with the transposed melody of adulthood. If the harmonic development of the musical ideas of Happiness and Love proceeds at the same tempo of the hormonal changes of the burgeoning adult, it will give the melody of Life a deep and sturdy backbone, not without emotion, but fledged of the breathless abandon of youth.

Is Youth anything but drunkenness? Like drunkenness, it is a passion that inspires us towards exactly whatever presents itself to us. Youth is best epitomized by Cherubino, who mutters words of Love even to rivers and trees. Love as a feeling is expressed as an end in itself by the accidental nature of its objects. Youth changes lovers more often than its underwear. Youth is both drunkenness and a longing to be more drunk. If it had its own way, it would never come "down to earth," but would fly up and up forever, drinking the wine of the Infinite. Icarus, another incarnation of Youth, deserves his death, because at a critical moment he allowed his growth towards manliness to be stunted by refusing to listen to his father's advice about the real world. He tried to abandon the real world for the heavens, but his own earthly nature rebelled against him, and he was dragged back into the primordial soupiness of the ocean from which all Life has come.

I don't mean to imply that Icarus is not a hero. But he is a hero of Youth. You and I intend to be adults; Icarus is not *our* hero, and we must see his heroism as coinciding with his foolishness and lack of self-knowledge. How can we become adults without rejecting what was good about Youth? How can Love be seen as something more than just a *feeling*, without exiling Love from the Heart?

Imagine yourself lying beside your beloved, experiencing gobs and gobs of the good feelings which are said to be the essence of Love. For hours, for weeks on end, you feel nothing but this honeyed

bliss. This is Youth's dream, Youth's utter fulfillment. But are you fulfilled? What is your response to this feast of feeling?

If it is not a deepening and sickening sense of Ennui, you are still too young for this essay. Come back in a year or two. On the other hand, if you find yourself depressed in your joyfulness, if you feel weighed down by its sticky cotton candy languor, then you are feeling the impulse to adulthood. You are ready for hard work.

Your Love and Happiness have been cocooned and dormant in the external moment of languor for long enough. Now you feel the need for freshness, for the flexing of muscles, for the strenuous work of Love's new incarnation. It is not enough for you and your lover to frolic upon the playground of idyllic sentimentality. You must work, as Plato says, to engender something upon Love. This need refashions Love as a work of *emoting* as opposed to the ease of giving over to *feelings*. Emotion makes Love a *vis viva* towards creative pursuits, as opposed to an end in itself. Happiness is now to be found in activity, as opposed to the attainment of feelings, in ecstasy as opposed to stasis. The beloved becomes an *image* of the divine, *seen* as an image, instead of *mistaken* for the real thing. We begin to feel the divine as a river running through us into the world as opposed to an idol which we must woo by any means necessary. Adulthood is a complete rebirth of Youth, and the redirection of all of Youth's aims.

So it must be upon all new stages of Life. Happiness and Love will have many incarnations, will be translated into deeper tongues, but will always take the form necessary to lead us towards the divine. If we do not listen to the lesson of the snake and his skin, if we refuse to allow our Notions to peel off us and be replaced by new ones, then we will become infantile adults. To cling too long to any particular incarnation of the divine is to be idolatrous, and resembles the way that children cling to objects with inane temerity. They are kicking and screaming about Things which must, and *should*, fall to pieces, sooner or later. Linus must give up his security blanket of feelings sometime, and we all must be reborn to adulthood.

## Adventures in Evolution

Andre Barbera

### Part I: Judas Feeds the Dog

Toward the end of last semester, Professor Ray Coppinger, an anthropologist from Hampshire College, gave a Friday Night Lecture. Entitled The Domestication of Evolution, the lecture concerned the end of the Neolithic age and the corresponding domestication of animals. Professor Coppinger focused his attention on a Turkish village that epitomized the final stage of the Neolithic. The domestication of the dog corresponds with the end of this age. Thus Professor Coppinger had much to say about the status and function of dogs in this Turkish village as well as in other, late Neolithic societies such as Eskimo villages. He observed that the brain of the dog is twenty percent smaller than that of the dog's ancestor, the wolf. In this regard, dogs behave like immature and underdeveloped wolves. The mature dog is roughly equivalent to an adolescent wolf, and the qualities that we humans admire in dogs—playfulness, cuteness—are really qualities of immature wolves.

Increasing the cuteness of man's environment certainly was not the original impetus to domesticate the wolf. Food, clothing, and work preceded cute. Professor Coppinger emphasized the value of using dogs for clothing, noting that

their fur is ten times more durable, lasts ten times as long as wolf fur. Of course, we don't eat or wear dogs, and very few members of *Homo Sapiens* in North America make their dogs work. Generally speaking, we keep dogs because they are cute and playful. They are companions. And, as Professor Coppinger revealed, the domestication of the dog has transformed the dog from a source of food for *Homo sapiens* to a competitor for food. This last observation disturbed me. For the remainder of the lecture, I pondered the roles of natural and artificial selection, and of breeding in the evolutionary story.

When I arrived home after the lecture, the enemy met me at the door. She sat as I entered, tilted her head slightly to the side, and wagged her tail. She exhibited every aspect of cute and playful that she was capable of, all of which were met with newfound skepticism on my part. She wanted to play tug-of-war, she wanted pats, she wanted to roll over and lick my hands and face. I turned on the television and did my best to ignore her. My mind remained preoccupied with the role of competition in evolution. Lucy was the same old Lucy, but I had been changed.

Later that night, during a commercial, I started to perform my nightly dog duties. These nightly duties conclude with me playing a trick on Lucy in order to get her to sleep in the basement. I do this by preceding her downstairs into the utility room, conspicuously carrying a dog biscuit. She follows me, and I place the biscuit on her bed. While she is eating the dog biscuit, I close the

door to the utility room and go back upstairs.

Things went according to routine until we both arrived at her bed in the utility room. Lucy stared at me, waiting for the dog biscuit. I stared at Lucy, then at the biscuit in my hand, and then back at Lucy. If Professor Coppinger was correct, then I might be about to commit some horrible crime. I shouldn't give the dog biscuit to Lucy. I should eat it, and Lucy too. And then I should make gloves, slippers, and a hat out of her fur. Which should I eat first, the dog biscuit or the dog? How would I kill Lucy? How would I prepare her?

About twenty years ago, I went fishing often. I learned to clean fish the hard way, hard on the fish, by mutilating fish after fish until I figured out where the edible parts were, how to use the knife, and so forth. Was that going to be Lucy's fate: first in a series of increasingly less mutilated dog carcasses?

Actually, this fishing business never panned out, and after a couple of years I had to give it up. Baiting the hook presented the first stumbling block. I negotiated that obstacle after one outing. The next stumbling block was removing the hook from the fish's mouth, or throat, or stomach. Although more repulsive than impaling worms and minnows, I hurdled that obstacle too without much trouble. Learning to clean (mutilate) fish that I had caught took longer, but eventually I became sufficiently adept with a knife to salvage some edible portions from the fish. Right from the beginning, I enjoyed catching the fish reeling it in, and after learning to clean the catch, I enjoyed cooking and eating the fish.

30/15 Eric Zsebenyi

...this game really sucks  
 The rules bind my feet  
 It all seems rather silly.

I can't think- the lowend pours up through the floor and  
 The buzz of the fridge drowns out my thoughts.

The elevator never goes to the top  
 I'm not surprised (at least not yet)  
 The image that I hold of it in my mind  
 Is damned by my accursed eyes  
 And blasphemed by my obscene desires.

Just sitting there is all I can do  
 The facade crumbles like a lone child's dam  
 And try as she may to maintain its integrity  
 One part collapses as she moves to the next breach  
 In the very same manner does our sanity exist.

**Barbera Cont.**

The part of fishing that I could not stand was waiting around for the fish to bite the hook. Having baited the hook and cast it into the water, I would wait. A couple of minutes would go by, and nothing would happen. I would wait longer: two, three, five minutes. Still nothing. Then I would start talking to the fish, in reality yelling at them.

C'mon, you stupid fish, bite the hook! I especially remember one large bass that was cruising the shore of a pond in Connecticut. I dropped the bait right in front of him, but he displayed absolutely no interest in it. Within seconds I became irate, screaming at the fool for swimming past my hook. People

say that fishing is relaxing, but my experience indicates just the opposite. Fishing is infuriating. After twenty minutes in a boat on a lake, I would be livid. Fishing means dealing with a bunch of insolent apathetic fish.

My head was abuzz with dogs, fish, and competition when it occurred to me that this entire way of thinking might be erroneous. After all, the issue was the evolution of the dog from the wolf and the corresponding domestication of the dog. Even the newest and most radical notions about evolution, with their punctuated equilibria and random selection, would not accommodate the actions of an individual. In other words, I per-

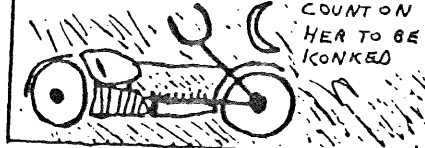
sonally couldn't do my part in the war between the species of dog and man. Killing Lucy, eating her, and wearing her wouldn't aid our side one iota in this evolutionary battle.

I noticed a pool of liquid on the basement floor. Saliva.


My inability to effect evolutionary change in the competition for food provided little comfort. Certainly I could not do anything about our bodies, Lucy's and mine, but what about my soul? What were the moral implications of giving the dog biscuit to the dog? The more I thought about it, the more I saw the act as one of betrayal, species betrayal. How would I be able to face my fellow human beings after having fed the dog biscuit to

**SWIMMING IN CIRCLES** BY DARIEN "NOT DARIEN" LARBE

THE PAPER HAD BEAT MAX HOME AGAIN AND RITA WAS FURIOUS. SHE HAD THOUGHT SHE WAS GOING KROGERING BUT MAX HAD HAD THE BIKE OUT ALL NIGHT. USUALLY MAX COULD COUNT ON HER TO BE KONKED




OUT ON THE COUCH BY THIS TIME WITH THE RADIO STILL BLARING ALL THOSE SAD SONGS THAT MADE HER SAD, SLEEPY AND HORNYY ALL AT THE SAME TIME. SEX AND SORROW HAD ALWAYS BEEN WIRED TOGETHER IN HER ALLITERATIVE ZZ BRAIN ZZ BUT MAX ZZ ZZ ZZ




THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A HANGUP AND DIDNT EVEN SEEM TO NOTICE THE FACT THAT RITA'S SHAME ABOUT HER DESIRE MADE HER EVEN MORE TOUGH AND BEAUTIFUL.

RITA WAS STILL TRYING TO BE PISSED



AND TO IGNORE HOW MUCH SHE WAS GLAD TO SEE MAX AT LAST. SHE LOVED THE FEELING, WHENEVER THEY WERE APART, THAT SHE WISHED THEY WERE TOGETHER. MAX WOUND UP RITA IN HER OWN DESIRE AND PULLED HER DOWN. THEY BOTH SLEPT ON THE COUCH THAT NIGHT.



one of our competitors? I have never been very good at concealing even innocent little secrets. What about treason at the level of the species? Were I to give the dog biscuit to Lucy, my eyes would give it away, and so would the expression on my face and my body language. Humiliated. I could envision the newspaper headlines: MAN FEEDS DOG!

My dilemma seemed to become more complex. Other members of my family regularly feed the dog. Are they betraying the species too? Are the Barberas of Annapolis some sick little cadre of revolutionaries dedicated to covert operations against *Homo sapiens*? If so, then maybe it behooves me to reform the members of my family.

I hadn't always been in cahoots with the animals. We never had animals, or plants for that matter, when I was a kid. Whenever I asked my parents if we could get a dog, they observed that we lived in the city, and that the dog's basic na-

ture to run would be thwarted. It would be cruel to have a dog. When I asked about other animals, hamsters, turtles, gold fish, my parents would always reply: Wouldn't you rather have a dog? It was my wife who had had animals as a child. When I met her, her family even owned a farm in Maine. Talk about animals. Now it is true that one ate or milked most of these animals on the farm, but there were also dogs and cats, the fun animals. She was the one who initially led me astray, subverting the sound moral code that my parents had worked so hard to instill in me.

Thanks to Professor Coppinger, I re-encountered the truth. He gave me my moment out of Plato's cave and an opportunity to see things as they really are. But now I was saddled with a burden of responsibility to lift my family out of that moral quagmire into which they had descended. They considered it normal to feed the dog. As Plato pointed out, the

direct approach with the cave-dwellers is ineffective. Perhaps one should proceed gradually, combining education with action. A small first step that Friday evening might consist of sharing the dog biscuit with Lucy: half for her and half for me. As nights went by, she would receive progressively smaller portions of the dog biscuit. I would also start volunteering to feed supper to the dog. Heh, heh. These portions would start shrinking too.

I had not worked out the transition from simply withholding food from the dog to actually eating her when I was startled by the gurgling of the drain in the basement floor. The pool of saliva had expanded.

The problems of preparing my family to take the offensive against dogs seemed insurmountable. Deprogramming would be a long and difficult task. First, I might enlist the aid of my daughter. Being the youngest and least set in her ways, she might be the easiest to convert. My teenage sons would be more resistant, but maybe I could get them to read Part II, *For Men Only*, in hopes that it would divert their attention from our emaciated dog. My wife, unfortunately, might be beyond salvation. After all, she has never known the truth about domesticated pets. Maybe I could stick Lucy on a high shelf where my wife couldn't reach her.

The gurgling of the drain, having become noticeably louder, distracted me again. Then it dawned on me that there were other culprits, lots of them if one were to believe the advertisements on television. Can TV be trusted? Certainly pet food commercials are not a conspiracy by a few insidious

## Everybody Does It

Suzanne Vito

Frantic one, what can be done  
to stem the flow of words  
unceasing, filling your own ears  
to leave our speech unheard?  
No matter what the point may be  
of this unending tide,  
it's clear you have for your own voice  
a love we can't abide.  
If you should ever trim your speech  
and state but once your view,  
you'd find that we would listen and  
perhaps agree with you.  
But while you steal away the time  
your tangents to explore,  
we'll disregard your intellect  
as you our thoughts ignore.

misanthropes. They must be true, and there must be millions of fellow traitors out there feeding their dogs and cats. Members of *Homo sapiens* across the USA and the world, otherwise deemed normal and healthy, betray their species on a daily basis. TV says it's OK to feed the dog. Perhaps in the future I should heed more closely the advice given in TV commercials and pay less attention to anthropologists.

Lucy agrees.

Next Issue  
Part II:  
For Men Only

### Note Why Sophomores Hate Ptolemy Keith Forrest

All men are by nature unPtolemaic. A sign of this is the Sophomores' wailings as they beat their Ptolemy texts against their noggins. They take part in beating themselves not for the sake of pain but because of a man who wrote an imperfect book on things which were philosophized to be perfect but which in actuality aren't perfect at all.

All animals, except SJC Sophomores, live a life apathetic to Ptolemy; thus they do not directly participate in Ptolemy bashing. If I put my Ptolemy book in the lawn on front campus, do any of the squirrels viciously attack it and tear it apart? Of course not. However, when I put my book in the middle of the floor and let my golden retriever puppy have it, he surely will tear apart and eat the book faster than Socrates could swipe a coat in *The Clouds*. Now one may surmise from this that my dog takes part in the hatred of Ptolemy, but this is absurd because when I take copies of *The Clouds*, *The Odyssey*, *Oedipus Rex*, and the *Meno* the same thing happens four times over. My dog does not like to bash Ptolemy in particular, he just likes to eat books. (And if I ask a first semester freshman, "What do

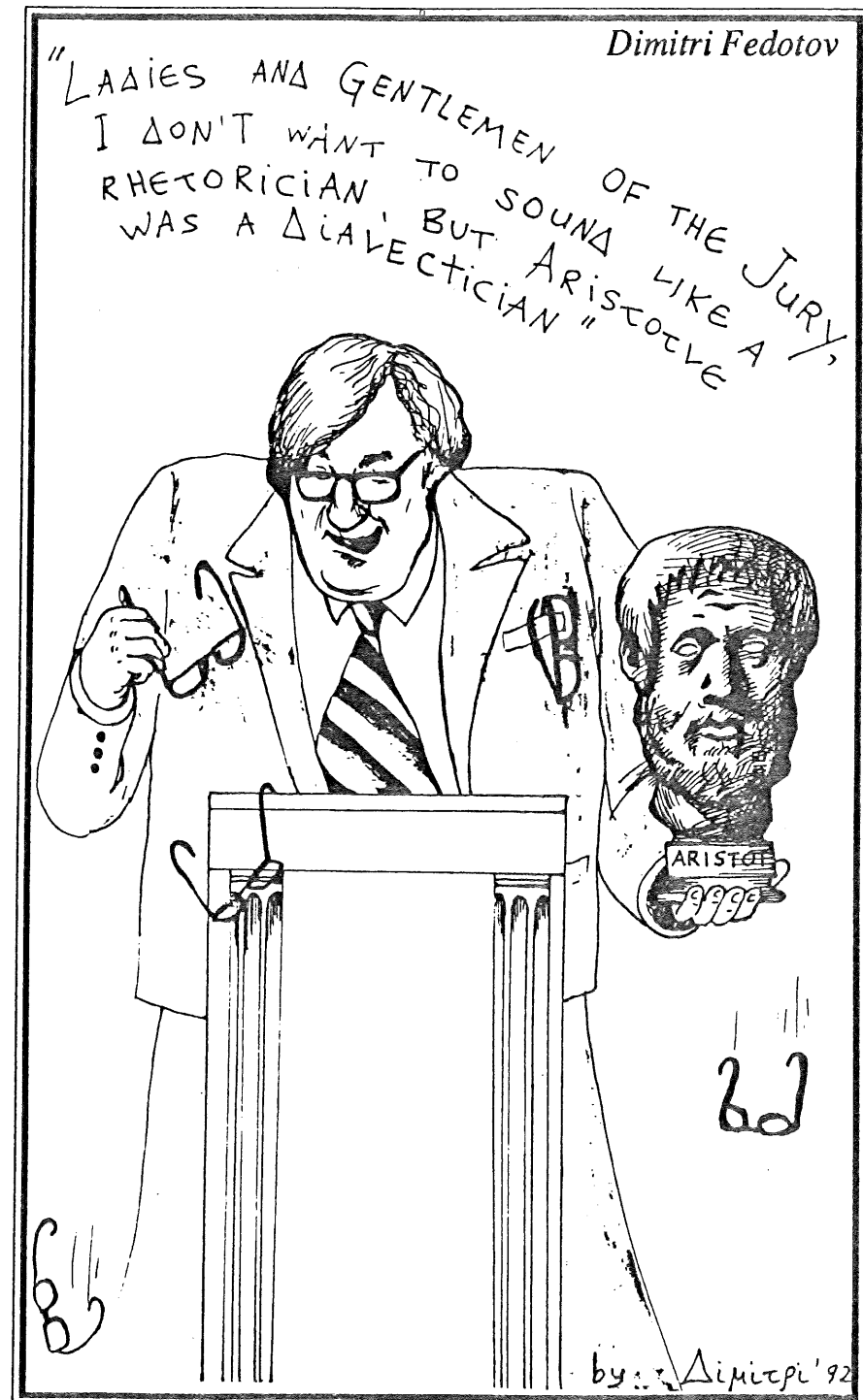
you think of Ptolemy?" I get a look of puzzlement.) Thus, squirrels (and first semester freshmen) do not take part in Ptolemy bashing; and dogs only incidentally take part in Ptolemy bashing. Now if you ask a sophomore "What do you think of Ptolemy" or "what does Ptolemy remind you of?" you will get answers such as "serpent, evil, Satan, Cain, hell, Euclid wanna-be, wrong Aristotelean geometer, in need of an editor, and pushing this Aristotle's wise art (of generalization) a bit too far." And these are only the ones which may be put in print; the many others are best left to be said only.

Why could it be that men are by nature unPtolemaic? Could it be because of all those perfect circles in Ptolemy that do not seem to pop up in our real world (very often) and which are a bitch to draw? Could it be because Ptolemy is so bad at explanation that we need a manual to compensate? Could it be the evil equant point that Ptolemy introduces because he did not have a super computer to use to get an epicycle on an epicycle on an epicycle, etc.? Or could it be that he is a classical mathematician, and, thus by the definition of classical, wrong? If I could answer these questions, I wouldn't be asking them. All I know is that the squirrels did not have a taste for Ptolemy, and my dog did.

Note  
*Uses of Food by  
Homer*  
Linda Rawlings

Food fills the pages of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*--its gathering, preparation, and consumption. Why does Homer emphasize it so? He knew that the good storyteller entertains and persuades best by example and illustration with which an audience can identify, such as food, which is, next to air and water, most basic to survival. Since all people must eat to live, how individuals and groups use food intrigues an audience and creates understanding of the nature of Homer's characters and their relationships through identification.

In Achaian Greece--as Homer presents it to us--at the time of the Trojan War, the citizenry of the kingdoms of Achaia either herded animals from which they gleaned hair, hide, and flesh or they sowed, tended, and reaped crops for fiber, cloth, and produce. If they weren't so occupied, they had charge of those who were. They also raided neighboring kingdoms from time to time to plunder the fruits of someone else's labor. Under these conditions, the Greeks built myth and custom around all facets of food correlating with what they observed to be its fundamental tie with life. They may also have conjectured, since the natures of living creatures appear to differ, and since nature



Dimitri Fedotov



*Note Cont.*

(ψυχη) is somehow embodied in form (σωμα), that by ingesting the substance of another one might also ingest something of its nature, its soul. Then a man who shares his food with others shares both his means of physical life and his essence.

In Homer's epic poems instances abound of the sharing of food. After major battles in the *Iliad* and after Patroklos' death, the survivors feast together. To signify his respect for Priam's suit to bring Hector's body home to Troy, Achilles prepares a feast even though he has apparently just finished eating his evening meal before Priam's arrival. Part of the funeral ceremonies for Hector will be feasting. In most instances the men give the gods a share of the food first and share the remainder among themselves. Thus, after death occurs, they honor immortality first and then mortal life and their being alive together by sharing in common not only the form and spirit of what they eat but their own essence.

In situations where someone gives food to another (rather than an exchange occurring) the giver by his manner of giving reveals something about the kind of person he is, and the receiver by his attitude toward the gift and the giver expresses the quality of his being. The unforgivable behavior of Penelope's suitors in the *Odyssey* is not their continued presence in the home of Odysseus and Penelope, nor is it their constant consumption of food and drink there. It seems accepted that they have come there to court Penelope; and, as hosts of good character do, Penelope and Telemachos tend to the needs and comforts of their guests. The crime of the suitors is that they accept without grace the hospitality and benefits they garner from Odysseus' household. Even as they eat and drink, they absorb the good nature of their hosts. In return they proffer base behavior and bad temperament. This justifies Odysseus and

Telemachos' slaughter of the suitors upon Odysseus' return even as yet another feast is in progress; at least it did for Homer.

In the prior instances, Homer told of food--and thus physical sustenance and essence--shared with other mortals, and of how the Greeks and Trojans honored human life and shared it through communion of food and soul. For contrast, consider Polyphemus, the cyclops, who eats Odysseus' men without a thought, as we would eat chickens. Why should Polyphemus behave ceremoniously or have compunction regarding human life? When the cyclops ate a man he consumed dinner, not a kindred soul.

Another nonhuman, the sorceress and goddess Circe, transforms men into pigs. With a sweet, fermented potion she reduces them to livestock. About doing this she has no qualms. When, with Hermes' help (wit and guile), Odysseus himself avoids the transformation and, indeed, beguiles Circe, Homer illustrates the quality of Odysseus' irreducible manhood, the intelligence, that which separates men by nature from all other animals, which is ever foremost in Odysseus and always controls his passions.

That food of a certain source, kind, quantity, and quality is or is not shared willingly or grudgingly, by coercion or subversion, by two, few or many people acting together or disparately tells us much about them as individuals and in interaction. By illustrating things his characters did and said as their natures bade them do concerning food, he led his audience to deduce for themselves the nature of each character and thus to actively participate in the storytelling process. The audience not only became persuaded into sharing Homer's vision of Ancient Greece but was doubly entertained, not only by Homer but by themselves as well.