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The St. John's Review

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November 18, 1974

The St. John's Review

Editors.....Derek Cross
Bill Kelley
Managing Editor.....Gene Heller
Administration and
College Offices.....Mary Rogers
Affairs Concerning
The Deans.....Leslie Graves
Program Discussions...Joan Silver
Program Papers.....Chris Hoving
Student Polity.....Helen Aikman
Literary.....Richard Davenport
Stephanie Slowinski
Reviews.....Kate Owen
Alumni.....Susan Tischler

Production: Gretchen Berg, Laura
Bridgeman, Matthew DeBacker, Susan
DeBacker, Matthew Ellis, Charles
Hoffacker, Tom Horvath, Peter
Kniaz, Joyce Mendlin, Arlene Roe-
mer, Cheryl Rubino, Annette Tul-
lier

Special Thanks to Rick Plaut,
Scott Arcand, and Bob Godfrey

A Laboratory Fantasy

I am skeptical of scholarly criticism of the Lab program. The primary difficulty with the Laboratory is self-evident and its solution is non-academic. For nearly two years, tri-and bi-weekly, I have sat spellbound by fantasies of this solution.

I envision an electronic "buzzer" system inobtrusively installed under every Laboratory table. By each seating position I imagine a button, similar in size to a doorbell, skillfully concealed. When a student wishes to ask a humiliating question, in my fantasy he or she may inconspicuously sound the buzzer by pressing this button. This subtle interruption signifies to the class the need for immediate clarification of the discussion matter. I imagine myself with a placid, self satisfied expression venting vehement frustration thru that concealed doorbell. My neighbors have no reason to think me anything but knowledgeable, well prepared and even slightly bored. And, indeed, when I know of a question which adequately expresses my unspoken superiority, I imagine myself asking it aloud, signifying contempt for users of the "buzzer." I am convinced that in this way Lab would not only pass very pleasantly but that my enhanced understanding of the Laboratory manual would soon enable me to become one of its many critics.

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2 I realize that there are many possible objections to the proposal of my fantasy. I have carefully examined these, however, and conclude that none need be taken seriously.

First, it shall be stipulated that students keep one hand beneath the table at all times. This will guarantee the anonymity of the questioner and preserve the pretense that we all have disgraceful questions to ask--or that at least our neighbors do. Secondly, it may be indignantly objected that this system will impede the proper pace of the class; that, indeed, the buzzers will constantly interrupt and refuse to be silenced until answered. I cannot deny this possibility, but urge those objectors to consider the benefits of this rather chaotic situation. Great distinction shall be won by those who most rapidly, with precision and ingenuity, phrase the torrent of buzzers' questions and provide adequate, silencing answers. The class will soon realize with awe that these students keep one hand under the table only for courtesy's sake. Furthermore, as I might point out to those objectors, this system offers excellent preparation for participation on "Jeopardy." Finally, the objection may arise that a buzzer inadequately expresses a questioner's specific difficulty--that no one shall have the slightest idea as to why the buzzer is sounded. I hardly think this a justifiable objection. I need only point out that the articulation of my spoken questions is undoubtedly surpassed

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by a buzzer's and that the latter's 3
ambiguity precisely represents
the confusion of my own position.

I suffer no delusion as to the
persuasiveness of these replies.
There are always those who argue
against reason. I hope only that
unlike the proposal for a swimming
pool on back campus, I may enjoy
the fulfilment of my fantasy before
graduation.

Mary Rogers

Personality and Class

If you went to your local com-
munity college, your courses might
all be lectures. Most probably,
you and the professor would never
communicate. Indeed, without any
conversation between the two of
you, his grade would inform you
of your progress. At St. John's,
talking is the medium for learn-
ing; tutor and students talk with
one another, and it is natural
that the student's work should be
discussed in the Don Rag.

What is said in a Don Rag?
Well, what can be said in a Don
Rag? The hard work of a quiet
student, or the clear thinking of
an argumentative one, is unknown
to the tutor, who must judge the
student by what he says in the
classroom, and how he responds to
others. Because a student's man-
ner is all the tutor sees, he must
consider it as revealing his think-
ing. However, manner is deter-
mined by personality. Therefore,
personality is what is discussed

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most often in the Don Rag. Mr. Argumentative is told to tone it down; Miss Quiet is told to speak up. This attention results in some Don Rags looking like test cases of the lowgrade psychology question; "What makes Jack a dull boy?"

About Jack's dullness, there can be no doubt. Listen to excerpts from his last Don Rag:

Junior seminar leader: "He seems to lose interest and drift off into a world of his own. One time he fell asleep in seminar and no one noticed until a language class came in the next morning. The language tutor asked everyone who had not finished his paper to raise his hand. All hands went up except Mr. Jack's. Of course, after waking Mr. Jack up, the tutor realized that he was not a member of the class. That was the only time Mr. Jack stood out all year."

Senior seminar leader: "Well, I can't add anything to that. Mr. Jack seems to have too little motivation and too much common sense. Always glassy-eyed."

Laboratory tutor: "One time a look of real passion crossed his face, and I hoped he would say something interesting. He just made his usual commonplace remark, however. Later I learned that he was leaning back in his chair and momentarily had felt himself going over. If he had fallen over well--that would have been something!"

Math tutor (of 8:30 a.m. class):
"Mr. Jack is an adequate student."

Now that I think of it, he has seemed bored most of the time; I always thought he was sleepy. He has brought little playthings to class, too. On one occasion, I noticed his lips moving, and, trying to encourage him, I asked him to repeat it in full voice for everyone's benefit. He proceeded to read off the ingredients of the cereal box he had in his lap."

How did Jack come to be this way? That is the question. The last tutor's comments may help.

Language tutor: "I don't want to think that Mr. Jack has to be entirely to blame. In my class there are several students who just want to severely criticize the grammar of everyone that talks. This hindered Mr. Jack from making very involved statements. His favorite contributions became: 'Not true!', 'Question! What's that mean?', 'Maybe different.', and 'Fine.' As a tutor, I had trouble getting much out of them."

Perhaps Jack's class should be looked at now. Besides Miss Quiet and Mr. Argumentative, there are Miss Serious, Mr. Flippant, Mr. Dogmatic, and Miss Lost in Space; I am confident you can think of others. There are also a few people Jack feels comfortable with, probably--though not necessarily--friends of his. The tutor fits in somewhere, also. His personality will determine the extent of Jack's dullness more than anyone else's, but everyone present has his effect. When Mr. Dogmatic has quoted the same passage four times, Miss Serious has ac-

cused Mr. Flippant of wasting time, and Mr. Argumentative has lost his temper because he cannot refute Miss Lost in Space without knowing what (subject) she's on, then, even if the tutor gets along with him, Jack will feel his mind dissolving. Now, I do not mean to deny that a peculiar person may best communicate with others equally peculiar or unique in some other way, but different personalities often clash. When Jack has had classes where there was some rapport, communication followed, and the results were often wonderful, but it is inevitable that personality clashes will come about. Different students are hurt in different ways (those in the Quiet family are not likely to begin talking with Argumentatives around), but the worst result occurs when a student feels forced to conform to the tutor's personality--as, in effect, he was told to do in the Don Rag--and gives up all hope of really communicating his thoughts. Adapting to various personalities may be a useful art in the business world, but the student comes to the College to learn something else.

Can Jack find happiness? He cannot have classes where everyone has the same personality as he. Anyway, that might be really dull. Though antagonistic people are not helpful, the resultant excitement sometimes is, for those who do communicate. Jack always will have some tutors with whom he does not have rapport. Perhaps

the human spirit is not strong enough to take on simultaneously strange ideas and strange personalities teaching them. A few tutors overcome this problem, but all are affected by it. It may be that the problem is inherent in the St. John's teaching method. An alternative which I have heard suggested is to withdraw into yourself, treating alike those who clash and those who do not clash, and to care only for your private understanding. However, dialectic depends on emotion. Without the passionate excitement of mutual understanding, students learn very little in our classes. So, I see no easy solution, but, suspecting that most people to some extent are aware of the effect personality has in classes, I have attempted merely to raise the issue for community concern by indicating its scope.

Chris Hoving

What is an Opening Question?

It has been my experience, and the experience of every other St. John's student as well, that there are good seminar discussions, and there are not so good --nay, mediocre--seminar discussions. The quality (if so damning a word may be used) of a given discussion is governed by such diverse influences as the length of the assigned reading, the

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thoroughness with which an assignment may have been read, the number of participants (that is, both the number of occupied chairs and the number of speakers), the proximity of this particular seminar night to a vacation, and so on, with such absurd factors as the amount of cigarette smoke in the air during the meeting even contributing a little. But, for whatever reason we do so, students often relegate to the tutors the responsibility of making a seminar good. The ways a tutor might do this are, for the most part, far too sophisticated and arcane for me to dissect under the harsh (blinding?) light of reason, with the scalpel of taste as my tool. All tutors do have, however, at least one thing in common: they begin seminar with The Opening Question. A seminar discussion, in time if not in logic, follows the opening question. The opening question initially states what aspect of the reading is to be discussed, and by making this selection, ignores, at least temporarily, other aspects. It therefore has as much or more influence on the discussion than all of the other factors listed above.

A good opening question is one which causes, as much as it can, a good discussion. That's very nice; all that remains to be explained is what a good discussion is, how it is the result of a good question, and why that particular question is good, that is, causes this good discussion.

A good discussion is a combination of two species of discussion. The first is that kind of discussion which is concerned with only the implications of the thought presented in the reading. In this discussion, which probably takes place in the College of Dreams, all participants have read and understood the reading. There is no need for the opening question to be directed at teaching the student about the reading, and so the tutor asks a question whose father is the reading, and whose mother is his own mind. The question might be very general: "Does the truth of tonight's reading imply anything?" It might be specific: "What does the truth of tonight's reading imply?" In either case, it is not an attempt to point out anything about the reading itself--any fallacies, truths, ironies, poetry are all known to the students already. They understand the reading. Again, the opening question is concerned with the implications of the reading, as seen by the tutor. The question might have a mother other than the mind of the tutor (the students, we know, have minds: that they have understand the reading demonstrates this). Is there then a need for tutors at this college? Absolutely, precisely because the class depends upon the tutor's mind being better able to suggest implications than the student's. Whether he has read this particular reading before or not, the tutor

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simply knows more than the student, but not about this reading, only about the rest of the world, and what this reading might have to do with it.

The other species of discussion is concerned with teaching the students about the reading. This occurs among students who have read but not understood the reading. They look to the seminar, and the tutor, to help them achieve a complete understanding of the reading (I do not know in what college this kind of discussion takes place). The aim of the opening question then is to teach. How can a question teach? It is more direct, if the students are not aware of a fallacy or a truth in the reading, for the tutor to simply state all those he knows of. The seminar could then truly succeed in its goal of teaching the student, and could either be ended, or continued much in the manner of seminars at that other college. One unhappy situation at this "teaching" college is that, by my account, the existence of the students's minds is not demonstrated --they do not come to seminar in a state of understanding. This is nothing but a deception, however. The students do in fact have minds, and the tutor can reassure himself of this in the following way. Let us assume a minimal degree of comprehension on the part of the student--that he does understand some, but not all, of what he has read. (Well then, you might say, he already

must have a mind to do even that. True, but wait a bit.) If the opening question is such that it both directs the answer to the more difficult part of the reading, yet indicates that the part of the reading already comprehended will yield the answer, then the student has a task that can only be thoughtful. A good discussion in one of this college's seminars, then, is one which brings about the student's comprehension of the assigned reading, by treating the more difficult part of each reading as an implication of the understood part. A good opening question in a seminar of this type can again, as in the first college, be asked only by someone who knows more than the students, albeit this time about the reading itself.

Since at Real College the degree to which students understand a reading is something less than fixed, so must the type of opening question be variable, as the reading is more or less accessible, by the tutor's estimate. A good discussion will be concerned with both the reading itself and its implications, its relationship to the rest of the world. A good opening question will seek to examine the consistency of thought presented by the reading--both as a system itself, and as a part of all human thought.

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The Potential of Man: Aristotle in De Anima

BEST SOPHOMORE ESSAY, 1974

The time I have spent studying Aristotle is precious, because it was time spent with a man convinced that knowledge was accessible to him and to us. In De Anima, he makes a wonderful attempt to knit the universe to the soul and the soul of man has there a very real heroism (if potency is heroism). The knitting of the soul to the universe to demonstrate how man knows is a formidable task that for completion requires not only the premise of knowledge but also, knowledge. Aristotle needs his Prime and Immovable Mover, matter, attributes, all the categories, in fact, in order to build a definition of a soul that is able to sense and know these things. The soul is treated as a substance that apprehends all substances, in a dialectical inquiry -- the common conceptions are that the soul is the cause of life, the attributes of life, and the faculties of movement and judgment. My first goal in this essay has been to discuss Aristotle's accounts of certain faculties of the soul, those leading to an understanding of what it is to "judge the essence of flesh." This involves an understanding of the process (the motion) from sensation to thought. The second goal is an attempt to understand Aristotle's view of how the soul apprehends the universe, particularly looking at the active mind (the nous in Part III,) in relation to first, the First Mover, and secondly, man in motion.

Aristotle says that "error seems to be more natural to living creatures, and

the soul spends more time in it." To understand the nature and cause of error is in a large part to understand the process of thinking, since error falls between the two errorless extremes of the direct perception of a proper sense object by its sense organ and the function of the active mind, thinking about an undivided essence -- a metaphysical axiom. The activities of the mind which are capable of error depend on the errorless faculties, making it important to decide how error is indeed possible. Looking at what Aristotle says about error, both perceptive and intellectual, places the blame for error on the judging faculty of the soul. However, in order to understand error or judgement requires an understanding of what Aristotle means by the process of an actualization of a potential in sensation and in thought. Faulty judgement may be a result of a potential not being correctly actualized.

The faculty of a sense organ to become the form of a sense object does not involve the same kind of potential to actual relationship that Aristotle uses in describing the soul as the actualization of a body. Concerning the latter he says "The soul is a kind of actuality or notion of that which has the capacity of having a soul" (414a26), which is quite different from the description of the sensitive and cognitive faculties. "The sensitive and cognitive faculties of the soul are potentially these objects, viz., the sensible and the knowable." (431b25). In the case of the soul and body, the actualization is that of a form to its material, its material being an essential part of the formulation. The way in which the sensitive and cognitive faculties are actualized is through their re-

ception of a form, and they are always in a state either of potentiality or actuality (whereas, man is always actual). The actuality of the sense organs constitutes what Aristotle calls second actuality, exemplified by the man who possesses and is exercising knowledge. More specifically, that these faculties may be spoken of as becoming is reason enough to say that their potentiality is different from that of the body, since the body is not body or potential without the soul, whereas the faculties are faculties and potential without the presence of the actualizing agent.

"One need no more ask whether body and soul are one than whether the wax and the impression it receives are one, or in general whether the matter of each thing is the same as that of which it is the matter; for admitting that the terms unity and being are used in many senses, the paramount sense is that of actuality." (412b5)

But in the case of the sensitive and cognitive faculties it is most important to maintain the distinction between the form, supplied by the actualizing and actual exterior objects, and the matter, the faculties. The form of the sense object properly belongs to the sense objects matter and the matter of the faculties is properly 'formed' by their essence, which is their ability to receive. The whole which is a cognition or a perception is not the same as a whole which is a functioning body or an eye which can see. (Nevertheless, other parts of De Anima seem to indicate that for Aristotle knowledge depends on the potential to actual relationship being the same in both cases. This will be discussed later. At any rate, the above statements

are true and to regard the potential to actual relationship as the same seems to require a different perspective.)

Since both the cognitive and perceptive faculties are understood in terms of something potential becoming actual, it is good to examine the relations and distinctions between the two. Some differences may necessitate or cause the judging faculties of each to be different, as similarities may imply analogies or identities in judgement.

The mind does not have a part of the body to which it corresponds. Hence, its actuality is described as that which can think by that which is thinkable.

"Both knowledge and sensations are divided to correspond to their objects, the potential to the potential, and the actual to the actual. The sensitive and cognitive faculties of the soul are potentially these objects, viz., the sensible and the knowable." (431b24)

That which is thinkable are the essences of things -- it is appropriate that that which has not matter, the mind, relates to essences that qua essence also have no matter. There does not seem to be an efficient cause for the occurrence of thought, as in the case of the sensitive faculty the sense objects are the effective causes of sensation. Sense objects are that which makes sense organs be like themselves, which it can do since they are capable of being all things sensible. But as for the efficient cause of thought, Aristotle hotly refutes the statements of his predecessors, who declared that thought was equatable with perception. Nonetheless, it is possible and correct to regard the active mind as the efficient cause of thinking. As Aristotle says, active mind is "some-

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thing else which is their cause or agent in that it makes them all" (III,5). So even though the mind properly does not have a part of the body to which it corresponds, it still has an efficient cause, whose matter is in the passive mind. Sense objects and active mind are analagous in being efficient causes for sensation and thought, and since sense objects are actual and always thus, so is the active mind. This provides an explanation of what Aristotle says about it -- "When isolated it is its true self and nothing more, and this alone is immortal and everlasting and without this nothing thinks" (III,5). Since active mind is pure actuality, it cannot have material, in the sense of matter. It does, though, have material by holding the form of thought in it.

The distinction between thinking and sensing which holds because the one has something bodily and the other doesn't is irrelevant, since their potentialities become actualities through the same process, the only difference corresponding to the difference in their objects, sensibles and thinkables. It should be remembered that it is only when a thing may only be called actual that it is always true. With this in mind, and the distinctions between sensation and thought, what Aristotle says concerning the judging faculties of the soul and the erring capacity begins to make united sense.

"But, since we also distinguish white and sweet and compare all objects perceived with each other, by what sense do we perceive that they differ? It must evidently be by some sense that we perceive the difference; for they are objects of sense ... nor is it again pos-

sible to judge that sweet and white are different by separate senses, but both must be clearly presented to a single sense ... That which asserts the difference must be one; for sweet differs from white. It is the same faculty then, that asserts this; hence as it asserts, so it thinks and perceives." (426b12-23).

That is speaking of the judging faculty in perception and this of the judging faculty in thought, and the relation it has to the judging faculty in perception.

"Now it is by the sensitive faculty that we judge hot and cold, and all qualities whose due proportion constitutes flesh; but it is by a different sense, either quite distinct, or related to it in the same way as a bent line to itself when pulled out straight, that we judge the essence of flesh. Again, among abstract objects, 'straight' is like 'snub-nosed,' for it is always combined with extension, but its essence, if 'straight' and 'straightness' are not the same, is something different; let us call it duality. Therefore, we judge it by another faculty, or by the same faculty in a different relation. And speaking generally, as objects are separable from their matter so also are the corresponding faculties of the mind." (429b15-22)

The last reference to judgement is:

"The soul in living creatures is distinguished by two functions, the judging capacity which is a function of the intellect and of sensation combined..." (432a15-17)

The implication of the last two quotes

is that the judging faculty concerned with thought may be the same as the judging faculty concerned with perception -- "we judge it... by the same faculty (as the sensitive faculty) in a different relation" or "differently disposed". As perception is prior to thought, presumably the act of perceptive judgement is prior to cognitive judgement. This makes our ability to judge intellectually dependent upon our ability to make distinctions between objects of sense not concerned with the same sense organ, such as sweet and hot. This dependence is analogous to the dependence that the thinking part of the soul has on images provided by the sensitive part -- which is the manner in which perception is prior. The intellectual judging faculty (the sensitive faculty "in a different relation") is comprehensible, therefore, in terms of the sensitive faculty, being the same thing, but concerned with different aspects of cognition, one with sensibles and one with thinkables. That which asserts the difference between different objects of thought is one faculty, then, and the same in all cases of this assertion. This is what "judges the essence of flesh". However, a satisfactory discussion of exactly what that means entails a discussion of imagination and error.

Aristotle says of error in perception that

"The perception of proper objects is true, or is only capable of error to the least possible degree. Next comes perception that they are attributes, and here a possibility of error at once arises; for perception does not err in perceiving that an object is white but only as to whether the white object is one thing or another

(e.g. the son of Cleon). Thirdly comes perception of the common attributes which accompany the concomitants to which the proper sensibles belong (I mean, e.g., motion and magnitude). It is about these that error is most likely to occur." (428b18)

and, of error in thinking:

"The thinking of indivisible (undivided) objects of thought occurs among things concerning which there can be no falsehood; where truth and falsehood are possible there is implied a compounding of thought into a fresh unity,... for falsehood always lies in the process of combination, for if a man calls white not-white, he has combined the notion not-white."

In the case of errors of perception, the blame is said to lie with judging, since making the statement in one's mind that a white thing is a certain something is a judgement. It is not, however, the perceptive judgement Aristotle speaks of, which is a discrimination. This judgement, attribution of qualities, is akin to imagination.

"If imagination (apart from any metaphorical sense of the word) is the process by which we say that an image is presented to us, it is one of those faculties or states of mind by which we judge and are either right or wrong... Again all sensations are true, but most imaginations are false."

After demonstrating that imagination (*φαντασία*) is neither opinion or sensation, or any possible combination of opinion and sensation, Aristotle states what is imagination:

"Imagination is the blend of the

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perception of white with the opinion that it is white...to imagine, then, is to form an opinion exactly corresponding to a direct perception."

Aristotle is using opinion -- $\delta\omicron\gamma\alpha$ -- equivocally. At any rate, that seems to be the case, since immediately after denying that imagination is opinion alone, or opinion in conjunction with anything else, he says that imagination is to form an opinion. The explanation of the equivocation lies in examining what is meant by opinion in the first sense. "But opinion implies belief (for one cannot hold opinions in which one does not believe); and no animal has belief, but many have imagination. Again, even opinion is accompanied by belief, belief by conviction, and conviction by rational discourse." This $\delta\omicron\gamma\alpha$ is involved with the mind, a form of thought. It is the assertion that a thought one has is true, corresponds to reality. The $\delta\omicron\gamma\alpha$ that is imagination is an assertion of a similar nature, but involved with perception and not thinking. It is assertion of the existence of what is perceived. The equivocal usage of the word is another instance of the analogy between perception and thought, one use applying to sensibles, the other to thinkables. The assertion of existence is the common ground.

Therefore, imagination is the judgment that something exists, on the sensory level. Imagination is particularly meaningful and particularly prone to error when it opines that a perceived attribute belongs to something. Imagination, the faculty of attribution, is the agent of error in perception. It is possible that one of the "metaphorical senses of the

word" is the sense in which $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ is involved with thinking.

Discriminative judgement, as was mentioned earlier, differs from assertive judgement. To reach the end of understanding what it means to "judge the essence of flesh" requires a connexion between the two. This will be found in the cognitive analogs of discrimination and assertion, examined with regard to error.

In the case of intellectual error, as opposed to perceptive, error is possible prior to the judgements made. "Imagination always implies perception, and is itself implied by judgement." (427b16) Since imagination is capable of error, judgement ($\epsilon\pi\epsilon\lambda\eta\psi\iota\varsigma$), based on imagination, is also capable of error. Discriminative judgement ($\kappa\rho\epsilon\iota\nu\alpha$) and any of the judgements depending on assertion ($\epsilon\pi\epsilon\lambda\eta\psi\iota\varsigma$) are intimately connected in thought. Incidentally, error is possible in the mind not only because judgement implies imagination but also because opinion implying judgement is there and capable of error.

Discriminative judgement, $\kappa\rho\epsilon\iota\nu\alpha$, is a single, undivided faculty with the primary responsibility of differentiating between the objects of different senses and the different objects of thought. The type of judgement, $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\lambda\eta\psi\iota\varsigma$, to which error is directly ascribed is the process in which existence, in the case of perceptibles, and truth in the case of thinkables is asserted. For example, that white is, that white which I perceive is John's shirt, or a square has four equal sides. These are assertions about things beyond their simplest sensibility which does not require conviction of existence and beyond (or below) contemplation of the essence of a thing, an undivided thought which does not involve truth or falsity.

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The relation of the judgements in the cognitive faculty is existential and springs from their functions in the perceptive faculty. The assertive judgement which is capable of error depends on the differentiating judgement since, without differentiating between different sense objects and without being able to do so simultaneously, thinking about the essence of a thing or holding the form of a thing in the mind would be virtually impossible. Thinking of a thing necessitates the conviction that it exists; holding it, that it is true. Thinking depends on the presence of an image or sensation and no sensible object exists having only one sensible. In addition, thinking about the essence of a thing or holding it as a separate form is impossible unless it is differentiated from all other existents in reality. In so making that differentiation--and the cognitive discrimination depends upon the perceptive--information is gathered for determining the things' essence. Error is manifest when the essences of two existents are combined. To be more specific, it is not possible (as Aristotle says) to have error about a simple concept, but differentiation automatically implies a comparison between the essence or the sensation of one thing with the essence or attributes of another, and is therefore complex. Nevertheless, when a concept is recognized and held in the passive mind, it is then possible for the active mind to think of it simply.

The judging faculties of assertion and differentiation do not involve the actualization of a potential in the same sense as that of sensation and thought, where a sensible or thinkable actualizes the sensitive or cognitive faculty. They are actualized in action as a soul actualizes

the body. Judging is instigated by the man. Judgement uses, however, the errorless information gathered by two errorless activities--knowing and direct non-attributed perception. Error is made when the soul asserts attributes and differentiates, and this is why it is in error most of the time. It would be a meaningless, if errorless, existence for the soul to only recognize sweet, hot, white, bitter, and wet; it would be impossible for the soul to be in the very meaningful errorless state of knowing without ascending through the erring faculties of sensation, imagination, opinion, and thought.

Aristotle says that error and knowledge are the same with regard to opposites. Knowledge is obtained the same way that error is, and the "judge the essence of flesh" is to hold an idea of the essence which may be right or wrong but is held in the same way, and in the passive mind. To draw an analogy between this and sense perception, so as to understand the role of active mind in this, is useful. "Nor do we say 'I imagine that it is a man' when our sense is functioning accurately with regard to its object, but only when we do not perceive distinctly." (428a15). Since active mind is the agent of knowledge and can only be right and when functioning is identical with its object, holding a thinkable through its agency is like "when our sense is functioning accurately with regard to its object." Imagination in the quote is opposed to the accurate sense function, and as opinion is the imagination of the thought faculty, we must oppose opinion to the function of the active mind. Thus, active mind is responsible for the conviction that the erroneous thought is true and thus, held.

Now we may spend some time in speculation concerning Aristotle's view of the

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and *verbo*. Certain ideas drawn from the considerations about Aristotle's use of the potentialization of an actuality, error, imagination, and judgement, particularly the extensive parallelism between sensation and thought. The questions of particular interest are first, what conditions are necessary for man to know, second, what are the implications about the relationship between active mind and the First Mover in view of the relationship of sensibles and sensations, and third, how does the active mind relate to man--really, an attempt to describe active mind.

The conditions necessary for knowledge are made evident by consideration of the faculties of the soul as Aristotle describes them because he assumes knowledge to be the end of the other activities of the soul. The sensibles are apprehended by the cognitive faculty, using images, becoming identical in thought. It was mentioned earlier that possibly Aristotle wants to regard the whole that is a sensation in the same way as a whole that is a living body, i.e. to regard the potential sense faculty as actualized by the sense object in the same way that the potential body is actualized by the soul. (Although, it is manifestly not the same actually). The indications that they might be regarded in the same way are first, that in sensation the sense object and the faculty become one, a sensation, and are indistinguishable and secondly, the odd manner in which the notion (the actualization) must be spoken about.

"And clearly the sensible object makes the sense-faculty actually operative from being only potential; it is not acted upon, nor does it undergo change of state; and so, if it is motion, it is motion of a distinct kind;

for motion, as we saw, is an activity of the imperfect, but activity in the absolute sense, that is activity of the perfected, is different." (431a10).

The motion in sensation is of perfected objects, or an object and a faculty. It is this that Aristotle chooses as the description of how the soul can gather errorless information. The sense faculty needs, for knowledge, to not be altered in any way by the processes of sensation, and its more or less pure potentiality is the basic condition necessary for knowledge, or for the sensation necessary for knowledge.

The substance that is a soul apprehends the substances and all other categories of the universe by initially becoming identical with their sense form if they have one, and then with their essence. The process of thought has already been described. However, the faculty which enables thought, the active mind, is still very unclear. To determine what it is is facilitated by using one of Aristotle's suggested methods of inquiry, to examine the object that corresponds to the part of the soul.

Active mind is like the First Mover, relating to the rest of the soul and body as the First Mover relates to the universe. It makes all the thoughts be in the soul, and the First Mover is the cause of all substance and motion, though it of course is unmoved.

"But if there is anything which has no contrary, it is self-cognizant, actual and separately existent." (an alternate translation)
"But if there is anything some one of the causes, which has no opposite, then this will know itself and is activity and distinct." (430b25)

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Because the First Mover has no contrary, its corresponding faculty also has no contrary. This means that active mind will not err. Yet, despite the similarities, it is difficult to imagine in what manner active mind relates to the First Mover. I think that the answer lies in regarding active mind as the First Mover of the soul. It will thus be that which causes motion. This presents obvious dilemmas, as Aristotle says that appetite is the cause of motion.

"It is clear, then, that movement is caused by such a faculty of the soul as we have described, viz., that which is called appetite."

But appetite needs, or implies, imagination and here is the solution of the problem. To the extent that knowledge is the final end of all the processes of the soul, it is the final cause of imagination. Causing imagination, it will also be the cause of appetite, which in turn is the cause of motion.

If active mind is the so-called First Mover of the soul, to it may be imputed all the qualities of the First Mover but with regard to the parts of the soul rather than the parts of the universe. What does it mean to say that a man is 'using' his active intellect? In terms of results, it may mean that he is doing anything at all since the active mind is responsible for everything done by the soul. However, in another sense, a man may be using or having active mind when he is thinking and thinking truthfully. He approaches active mind as the stars approach the First Mover. Knowledge is identical with its object as the essences of things are in a sense identical with the First Mover, but thinking and embodied essences always imply motion. Active mind is also the source of

the metaphysical axioms which man uses to think -- logic. Logic is the order in thought and springs from active mind as order in the universe originates in the First Mover. This is how the active mind resides in man.

Supposedly, regarding active mind as the First Mover of the soul was to help in discerning the manner in which active mind relates to the First Mover. Once again, a return to the extensive parallelism between sense and thought, matter and essence, is necessary. That is, what Aristotle says concerning the relation of sense objects to the sense faculty should have a bearing on the relation of active mind to the First Mover given the parallelism.

"... the activity of the sensible and of the sensitive is the same, though their essence is different. Hearing in the active sense must cease or continue simultaneously with the sound, and so with flavour and taste with the object; but this does not apply to their potentialities. The earlier natural philosophers were at fault in this, supposing that white and black have no existence without vision, nor flavour without taste. In one sense they were right, but in another wrong; for the terms sensation and sensible being used in two senses, that is potentially and actually, their statements apply to the latter class, but not to the former." (426a15-30).

So, actually, sensibles do not exist without sensation. That means that something is sensible only in so far as it is sensed. A thing isn't called sensible without sensation, the two concepts do not exist without each other, except potentially.

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If sensibles and the sensitive faculty don't exist without each other, do active mind and the First Mover? In the same sense, no. The eminently knowable First Mover is known only in so far as something exists to know it. That is why active mind is eternal. At any rate, the possibility of the non-existence of either one is impossible for man since the act of conception requires that which moves it, the active mind. This, the interdependence of the two, is actually not dependent on the parallelism between the processes of sensation and thought for understanding. Indeed, it is not proper to draw the analogy, since the active mind and the First Mover are, for the purposes of man and the universe, causes.

Leslie Graves

Because of loves and frenzied times gone by,
I sit all cloistered, cold, as in a cell;
I sit and watch, a stark medieval lie,
Denying signs of warm that breathe and swell.

Soon life, created like a soft conch flesh,
Presents itself; a shell so blest and full
Of dithyrambic twitch and Bacchic thresh,
That stars are sown, begot of moon-tide's pull.

A tonsured monk not I, not now when all
I see is green and full of double grace;
Constellar faces shine and spark to small
Way far in night to break the bleak of space.

So now to act, do which I know some-wise
Will open doors, my eyes, to Paradise.

Richard Davenport

UNE PETITE CHANSON

by Gerry Ekman

very slowly

8va

pp

8va

pour MONSIEUR CHARLIE

etc.

etc.

The musical score is handwritten on four systems of staves. The first system consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. It contains two measures: the first has a quarter note on G4 and a half note on A4; the second has a quarter note on B4 and a half note on C5. Above the first measure is the word 'etc.' with a dashed line. The bottom staff also begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. It contains two measures: the first has a quarter note on G4, an eighth note on A4, and a half note on B4; the second has a quarter note on C5, an eighth note on B4, and a half note on A4. Above the first measure is the word 'etc.' with a dashed line. The second system consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 3/4 time signature. It contains two measures of eighth notes: G4-A4-B4, C5-B4-A4, and G4-F#4. The bottom staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 3/4 time signature. It contains two measures of eighth notes: G4-A4-B4, C5-B4-A4, and G4-F#4. The third system consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 3/4 time signature. It contains two measures of eighth notes: G4-A4-B4, C5-B4-A4, and G4-F#4. The bottom staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 3/4 time signature. It contains two measures of eighth notes: G4-A4-B4, C5-B4-A4, and G4-F#4.

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Handwritten musical score for a piano piece, dated November 18, 1974. The score consists of five systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system includes the instruction "end 8va rit." with a dashed line indicating a change in octave and tempo. The notation includes various note values, slurs, and dynamic markings like "p".

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Handwritten musical score for "The St. John's Review". The score is written on six systems of two staves each. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* (forte) and *8va* (octave). A handwritten instruction "end 8va" is present at the beginning of the first system. The score is divided into two main sections by a vertical line on each system. The notation is handwritten and appears to be a draft or a personal score.



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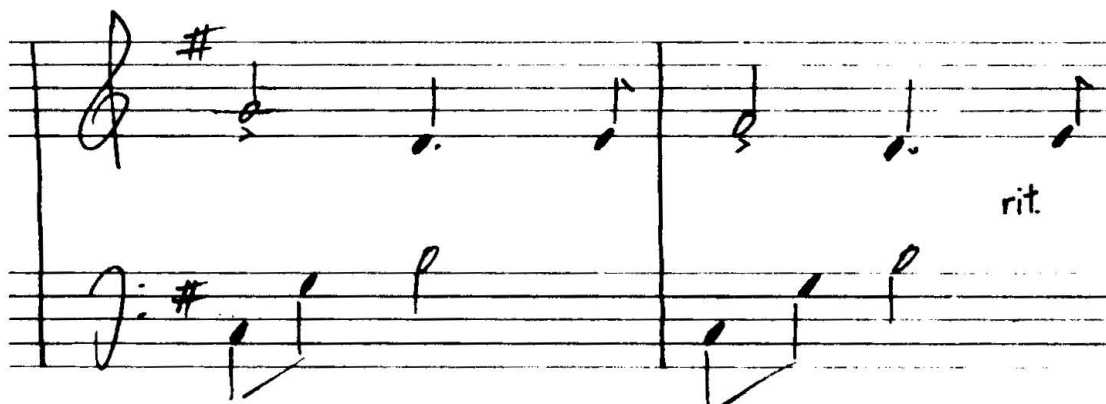
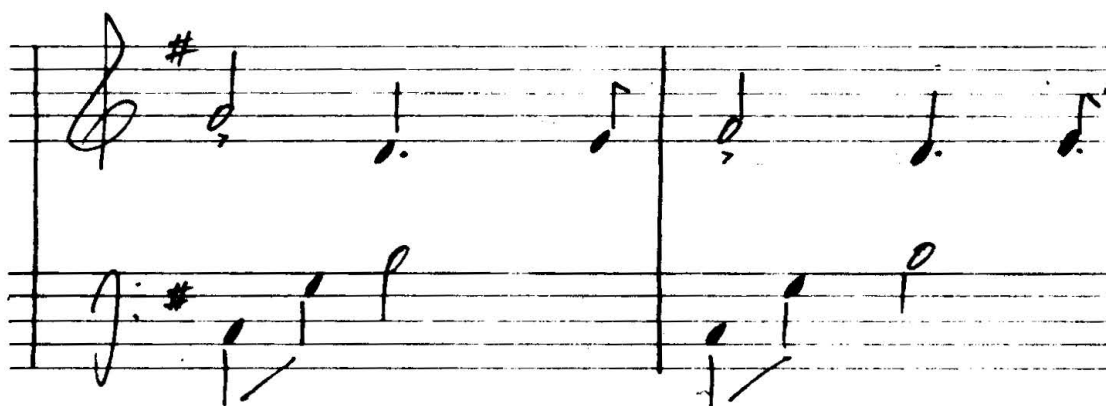
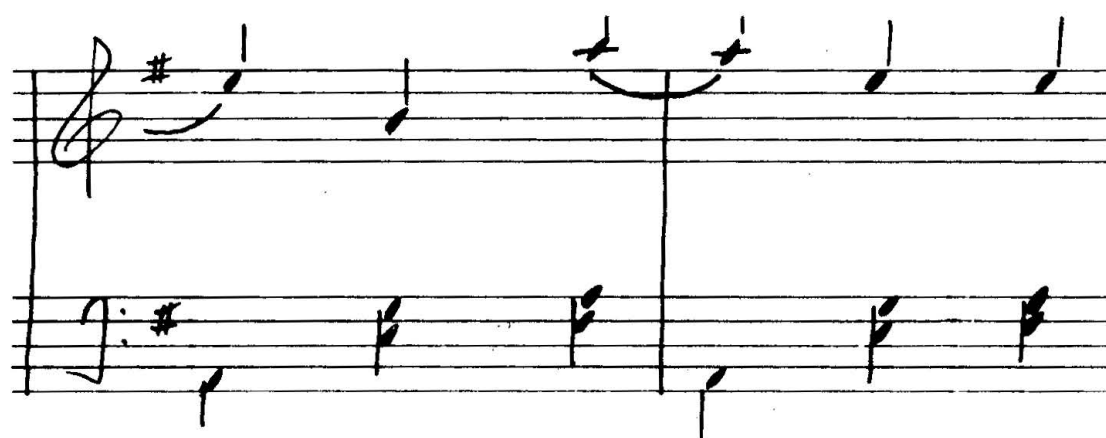


Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff has the annotation "8va" above it, followed by a dashed line and "etc to end". Below this, the word "faster" is written. The bottom staff has the annotation "8va" above it, followed by a dashed line and "etc to end". Between the staves, the word "rit." is written. The notation includes various notes and rests.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff features a series of notes with a slur underneath. The bottom staff contains notes with stems, some of which are beamed together.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff shows a series of notes with a slur underneath. The bottom staff contains notes with stems, some of which are beamed together.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff features a series of notes with a slur underneath. The bottom staff contains notes with stems, some of which are beamed together.



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The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a half note. The lower staff contains a bass line with chords and single notes. The tempo marking *rallentando* is written above the lower staff.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The lower staff contains a bass line with chords and single notes, including a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The tempo marking *a tempo* is written above the upper staff.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The lower staff contains a bass line with chords and single notes, including a *p* (piano) dynamic marking.

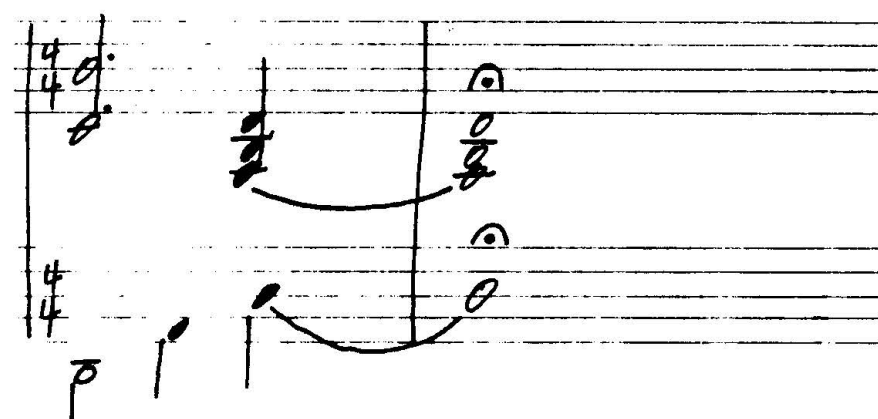
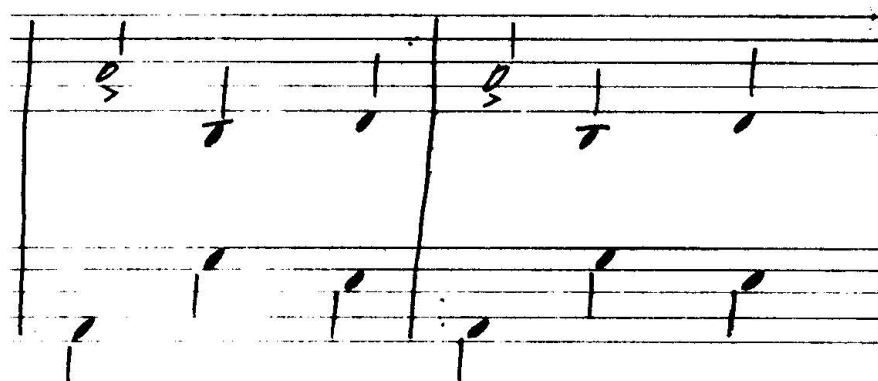
The fourth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The lower staff contains a bass line with chords and single notes. The tempo marking *accel.* (accelerando) is written above the upper staff.

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Handwritten musical score for piano, page 38, dated November 18, 1974. The score consists of six systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system shows a melody in the treble and a bass line in the bass. The second system includes a "rit." (ritardando) marking. The third system includes a "pp" (pianissimo) marking and a 3/4 time signature. The fourth system continues the melody and bass line. The fifth system shows a melodic phrase in the treble. The sixth system continues the bass line. The notation is handwritten and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

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Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two half notes, G4 and A4, connected by a slur. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two half notes, G3 and A3, also connected by a slur. The word "rallentando" is written between the staves. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The top staff continues the melody with two half notes, B4 and C5, connected by a slur. The bottom staff continues the accompaniment with two half notes, B2 and C3, also connected by a slur. Above the final note of the top staff (C5) and the final note of the bottom staff (C3), there are dashed lines with a small 'v' mark, indicating a breath mark or a specific articulation. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Lecture Review

"Grace and Redemption in Michaelangelo's Last Judgment" by Prof. Philipp Fehl, Professor of the History of Art, University of Illinois at Urbana. Lecture and Question Period, October 25, 1974.

In his lecture and question period, Prof. Fehl provided us with some good insights into "The Last Judgment" and into the function of art and the relation of art and religion. However, much of what he said did not have its full impact, since those slides of "The Last Judgment" that were shown were shown too late in the course of the lecture and conveyed very little of the detail and power of the painting. A brief explanation of "The Last Judgment" as a whole and in its several parts would have vastly aided the appreciation of those people who were not especially familiar with it. Also, some of the lecture was inaudible, even to people in the front rows.

After many introductory remarks about St. John's, past and present members of the college community, and the swarms of tourists that now infest the Sistine Chapel, Prof. Fehl discussed several works of Michaelangelo other than "The Last Judgment." He then examined early criticism of the painting, the nudity issue, how the painting violated various

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artistic conventions of the time, and the themes of mercy and vengeance in the painting. The discussion in the question period centered around the resemblance of the Christ in "The Last Judgment" to Apollo, the massive figures, and the limits of art, particularly religious art.

Among the many topics discussed in this lecture and question period, at least three call for further consideration: (1) nudity, proportion, and style; (2) adherence to tradition and convention in art; and (3) the resemblance of the Christ in the painting to Apollo.

(1) Even among treatments of the same subject, Michaelangelo's "Last Judgment" is an engrossing and peculiar work. It is a great, swirling sea of human figures, a mass of writhing, heroic bodies. The naked figures, their heroic proportions, and the "operatic" style of the painting are all common targets of criticism, but, in the end, the painting triumphs. To use naked figures as Michaelangelo does is appropriate since the Last Judgment follows the Resurrection of the Dead. Showing man as he was before the Fall is a good way of hinting at the glorious nature of the bodies of the resurrected dead, which as yet remains largely unknown to us. As St. Paul says, the dead will be raised and changed in "the twinkling of an eye" and will possess glorified bodies, like that of the resurrected Christ, of which our bodies now are only

kernels.¹ To see baseness in Michaelangelo's presentation is to be blind to his full intent; it is almost to deny the Christian truth that, since it is created by God, the body is good.

The proportions of the figures are, of course, incredibly heroic. But this is most apparent when a figure is considered by itself and without regard for the painting's theme. It is necessary to remember that men are being judged and that mankind is being judged. Each figure contributes to the overwhelming power of the presentation. The figures are none too massive for a scene representing so awesome a reality. Much the same reply can be made to criticisms of the painting's "operatic" style. Such a style may, perhaps, be considered absurd when used in depicting mundane events. That is another question. But the most powerful and vivid means are needed to depict eschatological events. Scripture uses such means: in particular, the books of Daniel and Revelation are full of apocalyptic imagery. These means appear as theatrics only when we are blind to their role as indicative of realities that deny complete representation.

(2) "The Last Judgment" violates a number of Christian iconographic conventions that were prominent during the time of Michaelangelo. How one regards Christian iconographic conventions depends on one's attitude toward Christianity. If one denies Christianity, and thus denies the roots it has in

certain cosmic realities, such as sin and redemption, and in related historical events, such as the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection, then nothing but innate human conservatism keeps one from using Christian symbols rather freely and drawing from them ideas that are notably different from, and perhaps at variance with, certain Christian ideas. If one accepts Christianity, and thus the roots it has in cosmic realities and historical events, then the very nature of Christianity as a historical religion imposes boundaries on its artistic expression. Such boundaries are, however, broad and allow a considerable degree of artistic freedom. If something admits of variable representation in Christian art, it should be because that thing is a matter of indifference or because variability in its representation allows us to see some truth that lies beyond the representation. Similarly, if something admits of invariable representation in Christian art, it should be because invariability in its representation allows us to see some truth that lies beyond the representation. As Prof. Fehl pointed out, we should not expect too much from art; art is not the real thing, but leads us to the real thing. This is especially true of Christian art. I think that a careful study of the iconographic tradition of Eastern Orthodox Christianity could shed much light on this matter of Christian iconographic conventions.

(3) The portrait of Christ in "The Last Judgment" is startling. Here He does not appear as the humble Man of Sorrows foreshadowed in the Servant Songs in Isaiah, nor as the serene All-Ruler depicted in Byzantine mosaics, nor even as the sugary pseudo-Christ found in much American church school art of a couple of decades ago. He resembles Apollo, the avenging god of light. This resemblance is not original with Michaelangelo. Christian art before Constantine often adapted pagan subjects to Christian uses. Thus Christ is sometimes represented as resembling Apollo. It is quite natural that early Christians did such things since, being surrounded by classical art, they had no other artistic tradition. Michaelangelo's use of an Apollo-like Christ is somewhat similar since his culture had been strongly influenced by classical culture, but it is not as easy to defend as the similar early Christian use, since Michaelangelo was heir to a long Christian iconographic tradition.

In using Apollo as he does, he is borrowing a subject from not only pagan art, but also from pagan religion. This use can be seen as exemplifying a truth of which Michaelangelo was probably unaware: that Christianity is not only the fulfillment of Judaism, but of all religions. Since Judaism is the divinely revealed religion of the Old Covenant, it has a unique place in the economy of salvation. How-

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ever, Christianity also fulfills all the God-directed yearnings which are in pagan religions mingled with much that is false and obscurant. Thus in imagining the mythical Apollo, the avenging god of light, the pagans were actually anticipating the Son of God, who is light, and who at the end will judge the world.²

The resemblance between the Christ of "The Last Judgment" and Apollo is evident, but the differences between the two are much more evident. Apollo is a god who resembles a man; Christ is God incarnate. Apollo is a mythical god; Christ is God who has entered history for the salvation of man. Apollo does not love selflessly or show humility; Christ does. In "The Last Judgment," hosts of angels bear the cross, the column on which Christ was scourged, and other instruments of His passion. The wounds on His hands and feet and sides are small but clearly visible. Christ is the God who became man for the salvation of the world and who, as both God and man, is the only rightful judge of mankind.

In the course of his lecture, Prof. Fehl referred to the Dies Irae and Dante's Divine Comedy. These works, one a hymn, the other an epic, are, like "The Last Judgment," superb expressions of eschatological themes. Hymn 468 in The Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 1940 is an English translation of the Dies Irae.

1 Cor. 15:52. See vv. 20-55 for discussion of the resurrection of the dead.

²For an excellent discussion of this whole question, see A.G. Hebert, S.S.M., Liturgy and Society: The Function of the Church in the Modern World (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1953), pp. 51-58.

Charles Hoffacker

wanted:

typists,

assistants,

contributors

meeting--friday at 7:30

mc dowell 21

or contact us by mail

A Letter

To the editor of the ST. JOHN'S REVIEW:

I understand that your theme for the first issue is, "learning, conversation and rhetoric." It would be strange if one of us did not have something to say on such an inviting group of topics. What I have on my mind particularly is, I think, a rhetorical issue, occasioned by my Greek class.

For the first time in nearly a decade I again have the great pleasure of teaching a freshman language tutorial. I am myself no believer in the "spirit" of a tutorial, because I am convinced that what happens in class for well or ill is nothing beyond the accumulated effect of the goodness or deficiency of each person in the room. And yet I cannot escape a feeling that a happy genius is presiding over this class, and this glow has inspired me with an immense ambition: I want to cause my students to say what they think, in writing. That they think is already very clear from the papers I have so far received. It is clear even if I discount my natural interest in expressions that I have elicited from people for whose learning I am, in part, responsible. In almost all the papers questions are initiated, formulations are attempted, solutions are thrust forward which I know will be echoed in the books of the next four years. And yet there is

a difficulty with these so incipiently interesting papers--an almost universal difficulty.

Almost all of them show the effects of stage fright. The necessity of writing down thought has petrified and diminished it. In conference, when confronted with a stilted, drained sentence out of their papers, students will gladly supply what they really meant but discarded. Why? Because it was too lively, too immediate. Somewhere someone has persuaded my freshmen that a proper intellectual product, signed, sealed and certified, ought to be formulaic and that one should be a little beside oneself with nervous apprehension in order to write acceptably.

Unfortunately our present language, as it is spoken by mildly clever people abounds with terms (I cannot bring myself to call them words) which assist this state of affairs. They are safely current, and their function is, I am convinced, not to raise thought but to lay it neatly to rest. They can be used to produce a moon-scape of the mind where one may hover and glide over enormous fixed shapes strewn randomly about:

art	verbal communication
reality	motivation
symbol	meaningful
creative	Western Civilization
concept	The Greeks
values	individual
general	gut-level = intuitive
abstract	world-view
culture	

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This is an honest list, well and truly collected from real tutorial life, or it would contain many additional terms. I know I do not have to ask the forgiveness of their original sponsors, who, I have discovered to my comfort, are quite willing to give them up for exposure.

There is a horrible activity called consciousness raising in vogue these days. Much as I despise it as a method, I have an uncomfortable feeling that I am attempting something slightly similar here: To beg the community, certainly not to proscribe these terms, but to think of them as very like rattlesnakes who can kill them unwary with a flick of tongue and fang. Four years seem to me just the right time to grow wary, to discover what these terms were meant to mean, who used them first, who picked them up, who is now propagating them and with what purpose in mind. And, of course, the answer to these questions is largely to be found in the seminar books.

Eva Brann

P.S. I am looking for some exemplarily terrible passages of jargon prose to analyze in my tutorial and would much appreciate any such small nuggets of fools' gold anyone might hand me.

THE REVIEW: An Apology

THE ST. JOHN'S REVIEW seeks to provide a forum for reflection on the College and its concerns which is appropriate to the written mode, of established periodical issuance, publicly recognized, and a topical stimulant to further discussion. We suppose that this venture will be a failure if it does not provoke discussion--both the lively arguments of incidental time and place, and notes and essays responding to previous numbers of the magazine.

By "discussion," we commonly understand something oral--living argument. At St. John's we have heard that this notion may not be without critical foundation, that truly to argue something one must demonstrate understanding by response to a living objector, clarifying the subject for a person who does not see. Put most radically, we sometimes say, "Speech is better than writing." Only analogically, then, will we be entitled to speak of the "discussions" in a magazine.

We may not be satisfied with this equivocation, however, and, led by the hope of discovering more nearly what discussion is, we may look a bit closer at the content and mode of discussion -- what is discussed and the nature of discussion itself.

Concerning the latter, we observe part of discussion's "nature" manifest in the activity of

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"waiting for the end of seminar/lab/tutorial." At times a discussion here can seem painfully endless. But the game of stultimately resolving to outlive a discussion because of its sheer unpleasantness--a game that assumes an offensive character if the wish to insure one's possibilities of winning takes shape in the positive action of killing the discussion personally --this game arises from frustration, and is a sign that one is not engaged in the discussion. Any protestations about life being too short and precious to speculate away in laboratory spring from a merely external observation which lacks the essential sympathy required by knowledgeable criticism. More intimately, the character of discussion I'm considering appears in long talks which run late at night. Here clocks are forgotten, the niceties of "public performance" are ignored, and the participants strain after the beings of thought embodied in their speech, carefully sifting each other's words for significance. Such a discussion is limited only by exhaustion--of the speaker's not of the subject, for again it becomes evident that discussion is endless, capable of indefinite extension were some god to stay the course of night. The "weakness of the flesh" inevitably prevails; stifled yawns call a halt to further talk, and an end must be made, as artificial as any three hour limit, if less desired. How can this be

done? It lies, of course, under the directive province of prudence, which discerns with wisdom the proper disposition of circumstances surrounding individuals. I have had discussions in which the other person ended with a summary of the points we had made, collecting the argument luxuriantly sprawled over the course of several hours into a chain of chaste propositions. It is a great satisfaction to formulate what one has learned if the course of inquiry must be abandoned. The whole which is shaped from the characteristically endless argument serves as an aid to the memory, a springboard for the continuation of the argument if we should meet again, refreshed by sleep.

Now we must consider what gives rise to such discussions. If it is true that men are moved to action by desire, and desire is always desire of something, our discussions must always be brought forth by attempts to speak about some thing, i.e., something which appears as a whole. How does such a discussion begin? We can take a clue from the end of the "satisfying" discussion above. The whole which was constructed in summation was attractive partly because it promised to give rise to further discussions. But do not all discussions begin in this way with the proposition of a whole? To apprehend a thing requires a preliminary approach, an initial standpoint; I suppose

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that a discussion will flow more easily if aided by a seminar text we have in common or initiated by a (mentally composed) speech given by one of the participants. Now we can say that the analogical character of the discussion in a written article stems from its being a "composition," a selection from the realm of possible speech, and its disposition in the form of a whole. Just as writing is an equivocal discussion which must ever be re-immersed in the living speech which gave birth to it, so living discussions seem naturally to arise from and return to composition. (At least this is the case with human discussions, for I suppose we have no empirical evidence of the dialectic of the angels.) Having uncovered a difference between speaking and writing, between essentially endless discussion and the composition of wholes, and noting the mutual dependence of discussion and composition, we can say that though it may be second-best, writing need not be despised.

We must remember, however, that the "satisfying" wholes we make are precisely made and not to be confused with The Whole, which is not made, by any of our accounts. To think otherwise would be to risk succumbing to the stultifying consequences of illusion. As David sang, "The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak

not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

There is a familiar case which we can examine. Most students come to St. John's worshipping a ready-made image of the school, their idea of St. John's College, but living here awhile gives them the uncomfortable suspicion that the image and the thing do not fit. They have been engaged in idolatry. There are several ways from here. The idol may be smashed. That is certainly spectacular, even a fitting subject for a large-screen movie, but not nearly as effective in this case as Moses' way with his brother's calf. Idols of the mind are more subtle and consequently more pernicious than any golden calf or miraculous Madonna, for mental acts are indistinguishable on their own grounds, and, since a confusion of ideas initially led one into idolatry, it is unlikely that it will even yet be a simple thing to distinguish the good from the bad. The act of the iconoclast results in flight--either corporal or, for those who remain, the mental act of placing one's self in resentment. Fear of pollution, too hasty separation, causes one unwittingly to carry the pollution with him, as does the Levite who refused to touch the wounded man for fear of contracting ritual impurity.

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Wholes which harden into idols require the outlaw assistance of Samaritan discussion, an infusion of the boundless--"whatsoever thou spendest more. . . I will repay thee"--that health may come again to a subject. In the case we have been considering, it is appropriate that assistance come from the community. It is the question, and it provides fellow-questioners to help us see what we are about. It is possible to discover ourselves, for there are others who will help.

The joys and strengths of learning in community should make us jealous to guard against its hazards. The betrayal of the common good is effected by submission to cynicism, mediocrity, and hyperbolical skepticism, manifested in an attitude devoted to nothing, willing to let all simply pass. The College never ceases in its prescribed course of study, to show that our world is a world that supports learning and love (variously interpreted), at least for a time. In such a world our actions render us worthy of praise or blame, contribute to nobility of soul or strip us to baseness. The student who has come to St. John's--he cannot know whether providentially or accidentally--learns that to stop the course of inquiry, for almost any convenient cause that presents itself, is to succumb to final darkness. Our attempts at questions and the answers these imply lead along new and perhaps frightening ways. We wish to

to speak to others beside us, to request guidance or point to beauty, or in perplexity, the dialogue of self with self, curiously blended of understanding, calculation, and will, to seek support of another's encouragement. Strength, the mastery of the arts of freedom, exhibits its self in action in conformity with man's nature--only thus not overwhelmed by passions, the often violent movements from without, rightly called irrational, whose darkness permits no light to pierce or shape it.

The common questions, articulated in rational speech, then, rightly deserve our consideration. As a forum of St. John's College, THE ST. JOHN'S REVIEW intends to foster our public learning. New members of the community, still unsure of what the College expects, will enjoy the fruits of the finest accomplishments of the students and tutors. The printing of prize essays which are now shrouded in semi-private obscurity, alumni work in areas of interest to the community; reviews of lectures, translations, books, and art exhibits; as well as independent papers and analysis of events touching our life as a community, will spring from and contribute to the vitality of our common enterprise. Just as discussions are more likely when something is provided to discuss, so people will be more likely to write with the establishment of a regular periodical which is a goal and an

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assured place for finished work, as well as a proponent of models for the undertaking of such work.

THE ST. JOHN'S REVIEW is for asking and answering questions and exhibiting products crafted in speech. It is not a seminar in which anything may be said in view of the opportunity for swift disagreement, the immediate call for necessary clarification, the possibility for silencing those who would damage themselves, tactfully practised not only by Anna Scherer. If the composition of wholes allows them to be stored in the memory for the contemplation of understanding, written composition--crystallized speech--needs such a repository as well. Our hope is that from this necessarily selective publication outlaw discussions may grow. When one has read Mr. Kelley's article, he may deny that learning is musical; he may say the analogy is ill-considered and unhelpful, but then it is incumbent upon him to ground that denial in reason. One may say that this article is the product of a blind man, but then it will be necessary to make the proper distinctions and sharpen what I have blurred. One may even deny the claims of reason itself, but this must be done in articulate speech to constitute an adequate denial.

Each issue of THE ST. JOHN'S REVIEW, insofar as it is possible, will center around a topic of concern, exhibiting a variety

in approach and opinions. As Miss Brann's letter indicates, the theme of the present issue is "Discussion, Learning, and Rhetoric." It is something we have all tried to touch--Miss Brann, by citing a practical rhetorical difficulty encountered in her Greek tutorial, the solution of which requires and justifies the entire course set for our learning; the editorials, by setting forth the role of THE ST. JOHN'S REVIEW in the community, indicating the stake we must all have in such a magazine as this, despite our conflicting opinions; Mr. Heller, by reflection on the rhetorical instrument of classroom learning; Mr. Hoving and Miss Rogers, by indicating in different ways a common consideration which sometimes impedes discussions--our humanity; Miss Graves, whose prize-winning essay elucidates Aristotle's thoughts on our essentially psychological theme of learning.

The editorial staff sees its responsibility as encouraging writing from all sides of the community and selecting and arranging appropriately this work for the community's best consideration. None of these editors will expound week upon week; all will solicit your effort.

Derek Cross

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Meditation before a New Publication

There is no reason why students at St. John's cannot discuss the problems of the school as a community, generally (we must eat and we must sleep) and specifically (we wish to grow in the arts of thinking and speaking well), in a way that is not inconsistent with the aims of the College. The demands of the College on a student are great, but it is not reasonable to say that they prohibit good talk. Indeed, it is to learn the arts of thinking and speaking well that students come to the College; and anyone's presence at the College is at least in part a tacit acceptance of this aim.

Now anyone who would acquire the arts of thinking and speaking well must for a time undergo some confusion, which is noisy, but also periods of silence and reflection. To be silent in a productive way does not mean to forego speech and to plug up one's ears. Rather, internal silence depends upon careful and thoughtful consideration of what **is heard and a cautious proceeding in speaking--speaking** in a way that what is said by the speaker is heard by him, understood by him, and accounted for by him. Learning seems to be combined of the noise of confusion and the silence of deliberation; learning is a dialogue in

which the two join together in a musical way. This union seems musical because music is made of certain sounds limited by silence. This dialogue, whether the internal work of one person or the conversation of many, like music, seems to be essentially a motion, but in such a way that it reflects on all it has accomplished, and also in a way that the end of each motion is limited by the preceding motion.

Now it is not sound to argue that good reflection on the workings of the College and its program must be perfect. For we want to approach perfection, and if we so argue, we will not be able to think of a way to go, because no one will maintain that his ideas are perfect. But this is not to say that bad talk should ever be tolerated, for this impedes us and even causes a degeneration in the quality of both our regular, daily work and weakens the force of our commitments. That is why we must proceed slowly in our endeavor to speak or to think about ourselves, so that we may account for both the strengths and the weaknesses of what we say and what we believe.

THE ST. JOHN'S REVIEW seeks to publish material showing careful consideration of issues, and certainly of the books and ideas studied here, and is devoted to presenting any well-articulated argument fairly.

We can as a community think of ourselves in a public way. But

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62 not if we place no limits upon ourselves. For then our talk exceeds our thoughts, which are limited of necessity; it becomes loud, and it tears down what we have attempted to build up.

Bill Kelley

An Editor's Plea

As editor for the "formal" aspect of the program, I would like to talk a little about the paper as a forum for criticism of the program. I hope to elicit thoughts on some of the questions that we share as members of this learning community, but seldom discuss publicly or genuinely. We talk as often among ourselves about what is "wrong" with our classes, the program, and the College as we share the excitement of common learning. It would make sense to discover the roots of our frustrations as well as our joys. We might discover their roots in ourselves as the program stretches us to our limits, or in the program itself as it orders our lives and our learning. As a community we need to talk openly and learn to talk well about how the program governs our lives. I suspect that this opening of conversation may sometimes be led by wrong starts, and lead to strong disagreements. But discovering the origin of these wrong starts and seeking

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resolution, or at least understanding, of the disagreements are necessary to the strength and growth of the college. 63

Please send submissions to the general editors who will forward them to me.

Joan Silver

Future REVIEWS

The next issue of the St. John's Review will expose to public scrutiny, for the first time, some of the books which are not assigned reading, yet are read by the community at large. The content and merit of these non-program books will be brought to light. Contributions from readers who have some experience with this kind of writing will be gratefully accepted, in the form of review, criticism, or sheer revelling. Publication will be in three weeks.

The next few issues following will be concerned with both program and non-program matters. There will be an issue devoted to the lab program, with both commentary on some of the current lab readings, and criticism of the program, together with suggestions for improvement. Another of the issues now being planned centers on politics, and as of this writing will contain an article questioning the relationship between the state and

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the arts, together with one about the desirability of "gentle politics." Also "in the works" is an issue about revolution--a student's guide to Descartes.

We would truly welcome writing --"Articles"? "Essays"? "Compositions"?--about any of these topics. Writing about other things is equally welcome--the above-mentioned themes are only those for which some, and by no means all, material has been received.

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AN APPEAL

TO THE COMMUNITY

The staff of the newspaper had a long and somewhat harried discussion about how to raise money for production. We have estimated costs at about \$100 for each issue if it is to be distributed to all members of the community. Aside from searching out benefactors, our only alternative seemed to be to ask for subscriptions, and send the paper only to those who would subscribe. We did not like this alternative; we want the paper to be a community newspaper, not the interest of a few. In light of this we are asking for contributions.

Clip out this coupon and mail it to the ST. JOHN'S REVIEW:

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