An America Reading List

An *America* Reading List

INTRODUCTION

When I was small, at our home in Trenton, New Jersey, I would sit on the stairs and listen to my father, the newspaperman, read aloud to my mother, the school teacher, as she knitted. Two books were Charles Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth,* the story of Erasmus before he became the famous medieval theologian, and Sigrid Undset's epic, *Kristin Lavransdatter,* which helped her win the Nobel Prize for Literature.

In 1953 when I was studying in Paris on Fordham's junior year abroad, I spied a copy of *Cloister* in a bookstand along the Seine and bought it, and in 2001 I included *Kristin Lavransdatter* — which turned out to be the favorite of Jesuit seminarians in the late 1950s, perhaps because for many, still in their teens, it was a rare romantic experience. Years later I wrote about it in my 50-essay collection, *Dante to Dead Man Walking, One Reader's Journey through the Christian Classics.* I read recently in Joseph Berger's biography of Woodrow Wilson, that in the early 1900s young people strengthened their friendships by reading to one another. For me to read what my father had read to my mother opened a window into a special intimacy they shared.

Between the 1970s and 1990s, in four of the five Jesuit universities where I taught journalism, I invited the faculty to join me in producing a collection of short essays on books they thought everyone should read. In response to my essay in *America* on "Saving the Humanities" (12/23-30/13),

some readers suggested recreating the book lists from the various schools, and New York Times columnist Jim Dwyer suggested we put it online.

We reproduce them here in the order in which they were published — Fordham University, The College of the Holy Cross, Loyola University New Orleans, and Saint Peter's College, now a university — just as they first appeared. I thank *America* magazine, where I am literary editor, for making its resources and website available. Our production editor, who did the design and copying, and is responsible for its final appearance is Allison Shapiro, a summer intern here. This fall she will be a junior at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications. She has our undying gratitude.

Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.
August 16, 2014

The Fordham Personal Reading List

Some favorite books of Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, SJ • Claire Hahn • Irma B. Jaffe • James R. Kelly • Quentin Lauer, SJ • Richard M. Mills • Mark Naison • Gerard Reedy, SJ • Raymond A. Schroth, SJ • Roger Wines


FORDHAM

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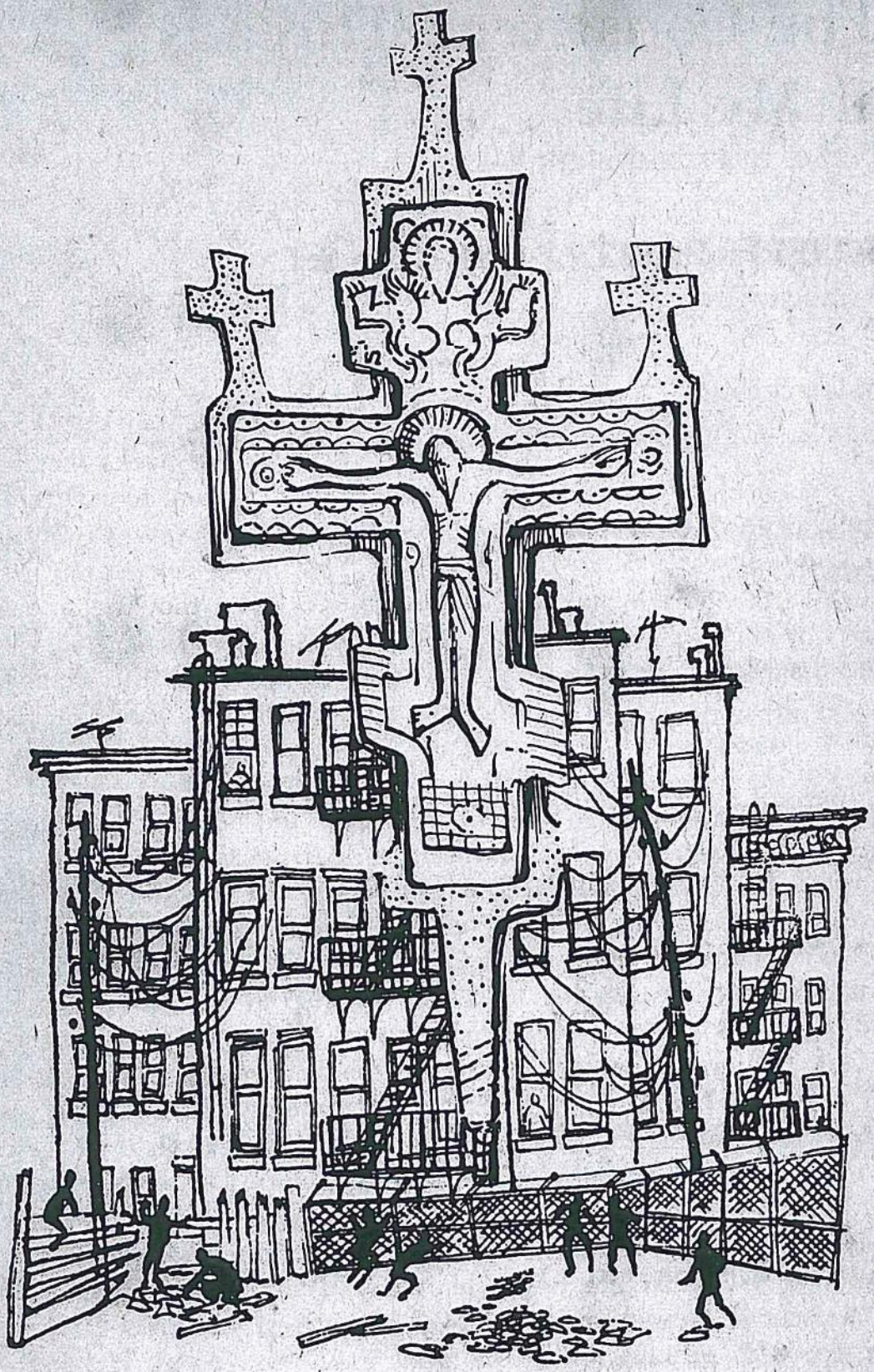


courtesy of *Commonweal*

The Consistent Threads of My Life

JOSEPH P. FITZPATRICK, S.J.

WHEN I THINK of five books that have given new direction to my life. I think of books that introduced me in a special way to persons. (Except for the Scriptures and *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola* which I hardly think of as books; they are so much the substance of my life, they stand apart.) The book that introduced me to Jesus in a way that affected by whole life thereafter was G.K. Chesterton's THE EVERLASTING MAN. I was at college when I discovered it and it gave me a perspective on Jesus in the world (actually the Church in the world) which framed my thinking ever after. I realized, through this book, how deeply the fundamental Christian perspectives had penetrated western culture, the central importance of person, of the sanctity of the individual, of responsibility, of hope, of ultimate accountability. Later on as I became more sophisticated as a sociologist, I realized that Chesterton was saying, in a non-sociological way, that the spirit and teachings of Jesus had become part of the warp and woof of western culture. Whether persons consciously or explicitly acknowledged acceptance of them, their way of thinking and behaving were deeply influenced by the fundamental beliefs, ideals and values which Jesus had given to the world. In a modern vocabulary Chesterton helped me to find my identity in a way in which I had never experienced it before. After reading *The Everlasting Man* I knew in a special and satisfying way who I was, and to what I belonged.

The second person who continued this process was Saint Paul, and the one who introduced me to Saint Paul was Joseph Holzner, in PAUL OF TARSUS. I have no idea what the Pauline scholars think of Holzner as a scholar or authority on Paul. What I do know is that this book brought Paul to life for me as he had never lived before,

even during the many months of formal study of the *Epistles* and *The Acts of the Apostles. Paul* has had an enormous influence on my life both in deeply spiritual ways and in remarkably practical ways.

By the time I had become acquainted with Paul through Holzner, I had become deeply involved in social action policy and social action movements. I was a "man of the modern city," conscious of its problems and promises, and on the way to a professional career as an urban sociologist. I met Saint Paul as the saint of the cities. Holzner took me with him through Antioch, that exciting crossroads of the near east, where people of all nations and cultures met, and where the first great gentile church came into being. Paul was their great pastor, the one who knew the gentile world, who understood the cities and the people of the cities, who never lost heart in the face of massive urban problems and their unfavorable effect on the behavior of people in disorganized societies. Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth and the others—especially Corinth which so resembled the slums of a modern city—these were the scenes of his preaching and evangelizing.

Paul never heard the word "sociology" but his sensitivity to culture and cultural differences was remarkable. He was the one, not Peter, who understood the command of the Lord: the Gentiles were to serve the Lord in their own way, according to their own cultural style; they were not to be compelled to adopt the Hebrew way of life, the Hebrew culture (The Mosaic Law) in order to be followers of Jesus. He fought the fight against any kind of cultural imperialism in the Church and his teaching and example have been the basis of much of my own efforts toward intercultural understanding and intercultural communication. I had seen these qualties in Paul as Holzner unfolded these deeply human features of his life for me. It is a book I can never forget.

I realize now how consistent are the threads of my life. The third book that has a special place in my life is Matteo Ricci's CHINA IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY: THE JOURNALS OF MATTEO RICCI, S.J. 1583-1610. Ricci was the first Catholic priest to penetrate the closed world of Imperial China. He spent ten years mastering the Confucian classics and was certified as a Mandarin. He became recognized as a great teacher of Chinese traditions as well as those of the Christian west. In the spirit of Saint Paul, he adapted Christianity to Chinese culture and created The Chinese Rites, without a doubt the most remarkable adaptation of Christianity to a non-western culture. His mission was

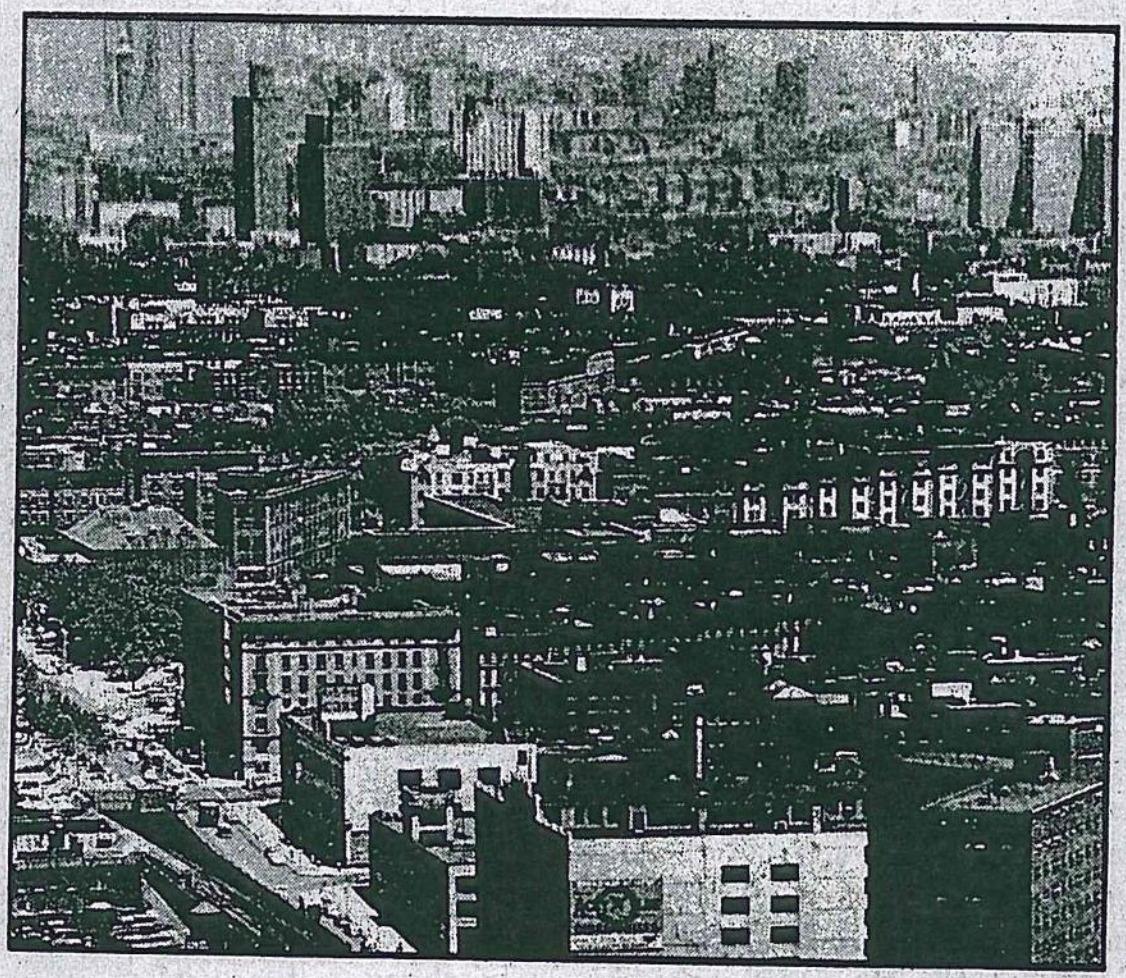
eventually to be destroyed by the decree from Rome forbidding the practice of The Chinese Rites (the prohibition was reversed in the 1930s) but the achievement of Ricci still stands as one of the great moments of the Church's life. He was the Paul of the sixteenth century, the Paul of the orient. He was three centuries ahead of his time.

ALL MY BOOKS seem to focus on religion. But, actually, they are remarkably significant as sociological works. They deal in one way or other with the fundamental issue of the Church in the world, of eternity in time, of the divine expressing itself in the human. The contemporary book that has done this, I think, better than any other is Thomas F. O'Dea's THE CATHOLIC CRISIS. This is a sociological analysis of the relationship of the Church to contemporary culture, or rather to the rapid cultural changes of modern times. The discovery of the world through science, and man's penetrating consciousness of himself are circumstances in which the Church must learn to express the spirit of Jesus. O'Dea's analysis of the dilemmas of the institutionalization of religion, more specifically the Catholic religion, is becoming classic. I have always been convinced that I have been able to face the changes of the Church with peace and tranquility largely because of the insights into religious and social change that O'Dea has taught me.

Finally on the purely sociological side, I must mention Lewis Mumford's TECHNICS AND CIVILIZATION. It appears on almost every reading list I prepare, a classic work to give anyone a sense of the intimate relationship between culture and technology. It is a truly "integrating" work which reveals to the reader the relationship of art, technics, religious belief and literature. One sees that the creation of a tool, the building of a bridge, the development of electric circuits are not isolated technical achievements, but the creative thrust of the whole person, or of many persons, relating new knowledge to long standing needs. Like new visions and new faiths, so also do new technologies give shape to the deepest levels of human experience.

Standing on my desk, waiting anxiously for those free moments when I can get to it is Hans Kung's ON BEING A CHRISTIAN. I am

sure I will not agree with all of Kung's doctrinal positions, but I think he sees very clearly, and in a sophisticated modern way, the mystery of the Church in the contemporary world. To be able to repeat in a modern setting the achievements of Paul and Matteo Ricci needs some of the perspective that Kung can give. Eternity is still seeking to penetrate time; and the divine is still expressing itself in human institutions. The wisdom of the past as well as the knowledge of the present are necessary to help us grasp some of the meaning of that mystery.



The Vision of the Girl Gazing Out to Sea

CLAIRE HAHN

Books have been one of the most important parts of my life since I taught myself to read on a Beatrix Potter in my grandmother's attic. Choosing the most significant few I have read is not so easy. I'll begin with the book which has absorbed my attention most recently. THE DENIAL OF DEATH by Ernest Becker, and move back in time through those works which permanently influenced my thinking.

Ernest Becker's thesis in *The Denial of Death* is that the finite creature man is driven in fear and anxiety by the conflicting threats of life and death. He quotes Medard Boss who says ". . . people who are afraid of living are also especially frightened of death." Becker makes a profound and radical inquiry into the nature of man "an animal who fears death, who seek self-perpetuation and heroic transcendence of his fate." In his brilliant and compassionate exploration, Becker relies on and synthesizes the disciplines of psychology, philosophy, and theology. This book urges man to accept his limitations realistically, not to deny his creatureliness, but to refuse to settle for anything but the boldest creative myths and the highest ideals. At the same time, he says, one must "pay with life and consent daily to die, to give oneself up to the risks and dangers of the world, allow oneself to be engulfed and used up. Otherwise one ends up *as though dead* in trying to avoid life and death." This is one of the most moving and intellectually stimulating books I have read in a decade.

Even though I might like to avoid writing about books relating to my "discipline," it would be merely silly for me not to acknowledge the incredible power exerted on my imaginative and my scholarly life by THE COLLECTED POEMS OF WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS. I don't know why I came so late to Yeats' poetry. What I thought of as "modern" poetry always appealed to me but I had read

only isolated Yeats poems and didn't think of them as particularly modern. Their syntax was so perfect, their form so carefully articulated. They lacked the loosely assembled collage effect, the connection without copula of what I admired. When I finally read through the poems—from the dream-like romantic lyrics to the severely disciplined "Under Ben Bulben"—I knew with awe and delight that I was in the process of discovering the greatest poetry of the age. I remain in that "process" of reading Yeats. My joy in his poetry has not diminished through the writing of articles about his work and constant teaching of the poems.

The most pervasive influence on my attitudes towards this life and the next has been the Bible. Although I turn to the New Testament and the Psalms for reassurance and what I think of as spiritual direction, it is the Book of Job that exerts a constant fascination for me. Job, the blameless and upright man in the land of Uz, the man who feared God and turned away from evil becomes the object of a contest between God and Satan. Job, stripped of all he possesses and then touched in his bone and flesh by terrible sores, acknowledges his absolute contingency. He will not curse God but his despair is darker than any curse. "Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire? I loathe my life." Nowhere in literature is the distance between God and man explored more dramatically or passionately. The cries wrung from Job at the existential limits of being challenge the justice of his Maker. In the extremity of his bitterness and anguish, Job takes on vicariously all innocent human suffering. From his absolute darkness he speaks for each of us in the penumbra of our particular agony.

Perhaps the most solidly useful, dependable book I have ever read is Aristotle's Poetics. The great philosopher's analysis of the nature of poetric truth, art and morality, tragedy as a literary form, the meaning of imitation in art is an essay on esthetics which is as practical today as it was in ancient Greece. Aristotle does not legislate; he describes some of the greatest literature of his time and draws conclusions from this evidence. He was the first theorist to propose, in opposition to Plato, pleasure as the end of art and he was also the first to distinguish between the fine and practical arts. The core of his essay is an analysis of tragedy and the ideal tragic hero. The pressure of Aristotle's unemotional observations yields rich results whether we apply them to *Oedipus Rex*, *Hamlet*, or *Death of a Sales-*

man. His reasoning is lucid, his statements matter-of-fact. Aristotle's *Poetics* is not only a seminal text for literary criticism, it is a calm island of sanity in the present critical turmoil over the value and function of literature.

Surely one of the most beautiful and compelling novels written in English must be Joyce's A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN. This story of a sensitive boy growing to maturity in turn-of-the-century Catholic Ireland is made incredibly believable through Joyce's art. We are told nothing about Stephen Dedalus but we are shown all. As the outside world begins to impinge on the consciousness of the "nicens little boy named baby tuckoo," the reader is drawn into the experience. Joyce's technique is the indirect interior monologue; its effect is hypnotic. Stephen's agony of shyness and boredom at school, his often painful, sometimes ludicrous groping towards understanding himself and his relation to a larger world is not detailed but rather evoked through dramatic symbol. I envy all who begin to read this novel for the first time. Although I think I understand the work more each time I read it, I can never recapture that first moment when I read chapter four and felt that I stood with Stephen near the sea, looking northward towards Howth. "A girl stood before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird." This encounter with the wading girl is an an epiphany for Stephen and the climax of the book. He discovers in the exterior world the esthetic image he has been questing for. The fragments of the book come together for the reader in a kind of emphatic vision.

The book that sits on my shelf unread and tempting is J. Brownowski's THE ASCENT OF MAN. On the dust jacket of the book Bronowski is quoted as saying, "what I present, what has fascinated me for many years, is the way in which man's ideas express what is essentially human in his nature." Bronowski's subject is a contemporary version of what used to be called Natural Philosophy. What he examines is the series of inventions through which man has created a cultural evolution. Someday I shall read the book—in the meantime, the pictures are gorgeous.

Smoke Screen

IRMA B. JAFFE

So, I am to be marooned on a deserted island, and permitted six books to take with me to enjoy, to learn from, to pass the time until smoke on the horizon signals the approach of a ship that will rescue me and take me back to civilization. Which shall they be, these six books on which my sanity will depend?

I know straight away the first must be the Bible. The edition I like best is the JERUSALEM BIBLE, with the volume of JEROME BIBLICAL COMMENTARY to go with it, if I can count them together as only *one* of my choices. I read the Bible text with all kinds of pleasure, delighting in its lovely, sonorous phrases, or its swift narrative; its grand imagery, its dramatic confrontations; and I am puzzled and intrigued by the endlessly reverberating symbols that appear to mean now one thing, now another. Occasionally I feel the sense of thrill at finding myself suddenly understanding a passage that had previously eluded me—or finding new understanding that deepens or sometimes utterly changes my earlier conception.

The *Commentary* is a vast work of scholarship that is, for me, indispensable. It not only provides fascinating historical background and identifies persons and places, but it clarifies meanings and offers innumerable cross-references. Take, for instance, the Song of Songs: The familiarity of so many of its verses is a source of delight—"The cooing of the turtle dove is heard/ in our land." The thrilling passion of human love that is now as it has always been a marvel of sensual and spiritual experience vibrates through the word images and stirs in me some inexpressible sense of what humaness is. And, on another level, the poem's metaphorical resonance has the effect of music. Then, turning to the *Commentary* I learn of the interesting similarities between the Scriptural text and Egyptian love verses, historical scholarship thus enriching my total experience of the Song of Songs. Perhaps on a desert island such reading would make

my loneliness even sadder—but then I could turn to Isaiah and spend my days wondering about the changeless, endless, man-made misery in the world, and maybe be glad I was out of it!

The new edition (1969) of Dante's DIVINE COMEDY would be next in my book bag. It is in three volumes, translated by one of the greatest of modern Dante scholars, Thomas G. Bergin, and has powerful, huge-scale illustrations by Leonard Baskin. For the *Divine Comedy* I also need a commentary (I use the one by Dorothy Sayers, 1954), first of all to guide me through the vast metaphysical system of the poem that heralds the historical metamorphosis of medieval thought into Renaissance: As a student once wrote, "Dante stood with one foot firmly planted in the middle ages while with the other he saluted the rising star of the modern world"! Dante does not always make his meaning clear—sometimes for political reasons—and one may puzzle vainly, but without wanting to give up, over such intriguing exhortations as "O you who healthy intellect possess/ Consider well the doctrine here concealed/ Under the pregnant veiling of my verse" (IX:63-65).

No literary work that I have read opens with lines more intellectually and visually suggestive than those that open the *Divine Comedy*. "Midway along the journey of our life/ I found myself within a gloomy wood/ For the right path had been lost to view./ So hard it is its aspect to define,/ This savage, harsh, and fearsome wilderness,/ That fear rekindles with the memory./ Bitter it is, yea, death is scarcely more,/ Yet to recall the good I found in it/ I'll speak too of the other things I saw" (1:1-9). Spine-tingling, isn't it? And, when in the morning the alarm clock rings and you struggle lovingly with sleep, let Dante come, as Virgil came to him, to remind you, "Now . . . indolence dismiss/ Resting on downy feather-beds/ Or under coverlets, attains not fame/ Without which he who lets his lifetime pass/ Leaves such a trace of himself upon the earth/ As smoke in air or fragile foam at sea" (XXIX: 48-50).

Before being marooned I hope there will be time to run to the bookstore and pick up a one-volume edition of Shakespeare's plays. If not, perhaps our leader will let me count as one book my four-volume Random House publication (1944) with notes and glossary (and not-very-good illustrations) by Fritz Kredel. Marooned with the PLAYS, one might not notice very much being alone. All those people! And of every kind—the kind I know, the kind I'd like to know, and the kind, like Iago, that I hope never to meet. Hamlet, and Romeo and Juliet would remind me of some of my students, struggling with the "givens" in their world, Hamlet for his rightful

place, Romeo and Juliet for the right to love. Who has not known Polonius, wearing one gown or another, whom no disguise can mask? Portia would bring to mind the cultivated intelligence of some of my colleagues; and often in the tragedies and comedies some thought expressed would lead me to recall the complex nature of friends and give me new, fuller insight into motives, hopes, ambitions, hates, that in life I could only glimpse and guess at.

Oh, how I would like to meet Petruchio! I just bet I would come off better than Kate! Why, just let him say to me, "I am he born to tame you, Irma;/ And bring you from a wild Irma to an Irma/ Conformable as other household Irmas." He would soon find out that I, after all, don't depend on *him* for food and shelter—just let me try to starve *me!* And can buy my own clothes—and *will* wear what I please! and, and—But then, come to think of it, woman does not live by bread alone. . .?

I SUPPOSE, like Robinson Crusoe, I'd have to find some way, marooned on the deserted island, to keep busy; one can't read *all* the time. But I would hope there'd be a beach, with palm trees near the shore so I could sit in shade and enjoy the cool sea breezes after tidying up the hut I'd built, or working in my garden. For that, a small book is necessary—bulky, heavy books are not appropriate for outdoors reading. And I think for that reason I'd hold on to my old OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE, edited by Arthur Quiller-Couch (1925). It has a good, long-lasting hard cover, and is printed on the thinnest onion-skin paper, so there's a lot in it for its size. I never learned to enjoy Milton, but for those who do there are thirty-five pages of selections; I would probably spend most of my time with the love poems like Robert Herrick's to Julia: "Whenas in silks my Julia goes/ Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows/ The liquifaction of her clothes!/ Next, when I cast mine eyes and see/ That brave vibration each way free/ O how that glittering taketh me!" Herrick was a contemporary of Peter Paul Rubens, and it is fascinating to see how Herrick's vision of Julia describes so perfectly the plump, dimpled, luscious female nudes painted by the great Flemish master. Of course, one of the disadvantages of the *Oxford* is that it doesn't go much beyond Yeats, and there are a number of modern poets—Auden, for example—that I would regret having

to do without. Still, one could quickly memorize Auden's "In Memory of W.B. Yeats" and take it along that way.

Then there would have to be Frederick Hartt's HISTORY OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART (1969). I would be forced to chose between a number of marvelous works on various periods of art, but since the Renaissance includes the great masters of the western tradition, one finds in the illustrations and in the text of Hartt's book the roots of many pictorial and theoretical themes that have nourished European culture ever since the fifteenth century. Beautiful as nature is—and I'm quite sure that the serene, sunny, zephyr-cooled deserted island will naturally be beautiful—yet, the beauty of nature refined and interpreted by art, serving the purposes of the human imagination, the beauty of man-created form, that is, is a kind that uniquely nourishes the spirit and the mind. Turning the pages of the *Renaissance,* reading with muscle-tightening concentration the *illustrations,* as well as the text, I would be able to find envisioned passages from the Bible, and Dante's hellish images. And although Shakespeare and the English poets that I like to read are later, one finds in the art of the Renaissance such breadth of thought and imagery that there is a constant harmonious resonance between the painting and sculpture of this extraordinary period and much of the poetry that came in the following centuries.

For a sixth choice—something I've never had time to read, according to the Captain's orders—I would grab the biggest, thickest history of philosophy I could carry, let's say THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY published by Macmillan in four volumse. With that, and the others, and taking care of my garden, I probably wouldn't even notice the smoke on the horizon, when finally it appeared.

Introducing Five Friends

JAMES R. KELLY

BESIDES being sophomoric (who was better, Duke Snider or Mickey Mantle?), writing about your five favorite books is a little like introducing five of your friends to a parent. It is unlikely that your friends' charm is as luminous to your mother or father as it is to you, if only because we subconsciously know that charm is partially the result of a creative meshing of idiosyncracies, if not actual neuroses. And it being true that every sane person is crazy in his own way, there is more magic than objectivity in our selection of dear friends and treasured books. With a deeper logic than I possess, my wife from time to time suggests that before I read another sociology manuscript I should read the New York Times Cook Book and a manual on automobile care. She is right, of course. But having passed along her suggestion, let me continue with the task at hand. If at some time in your life you have mastered the art of disguising chicken and you can change your own oil (i.e., the car's), you might find some of the following books half as interesting as I do. Perhaps one more prefatory remark is not out of place. If, like Chesterton, I knew I was to be abandoned on a desert island, and was permitted but one book, I too would bring a book on ship-building.

Paul Piers Read's POLONAISE is a remarkable novel. My college English professor would have called it Tolstoian, and he would be right, as he always was. It's also Augustinian in that with enormous reluctance the main character searches for God. Not a common theme nowadays. But the novel's context is modern indeed. The novel describes three generations of a downwardly mobile aristocratic Polish family. Among other issues, the main character—Stefan Kornowski—is disturbed by the problems of God, evil, love, lust, marxism, art, the Spanish Civil War, the two World Wars and the meaning of life. My God, that is Tolstoian! For me, the charm of the book is

Stefan's thinking through what sociologists clumsily call the parameters of modern existence. But the book is not talky. Every searching college sophomore (and that's just about all of us) would find in Stefan a kindred spirit. The novel's ending is surprising and yet logically and emotionally linked to every preceding detail. Unlike many modern writers, Read follows Aristotle's dictum that art and life have a beginning, middle and end. I think I liked this novel because it was optimistic in a pessimistic way, if you know what I mean.

My second choice is John Rawls' A THEORY OF JUSTICE. I am a sociologist and much of my reading and research is an attempt to find out how "things really are." A sociologist usually asks *How Many?* (births, crimes, welfare cases, etc., etc., etc.,) and *What Is?* the respresentative opinion (about presidential candidates, war, school, etc., etc., etc.) Undoubtedly, counting accurately is a more demanding task than it might appear to the learned, and obtaining survey data through perceptive questions can approach an art form. Still, much (not all) of sociology seems to deal with the surface of society rather than its core. Sometimes, after hearing some statistics, a student or two will ask, but what do *you* think should be done? These are dangerous waters for the sociologist. He is being asked to make a judgment of value. But, since we claim we want to help our students develop *their* powers of judgment, why shouldn't they require the same of their teachers? In this context I have found John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* helpful. Rawls argues that employing the thinnest metaphysical assumptions —relying entirely on rationality—he can demonstrate that on reflection moral persons would organize their society around principles which led to a more egalitarian social order. Rawls uses some clever methodological strategems—such as the "original position" and the "veil of ignorance"—to constrain the sincere reader to see the implications of his ordinary moral judgments about what is fair, but here I do not wish to defend Rawls' methodology or conclusions but only to share a few reflections.

INDEED, many students and many philosophers do not find Rawls' arguments

pean history course in the second half of my sophomore year; Issac

as fairness" rests entirely on rational grounds. I sometimes think that when we say "rational," it is best to add "to me." Still, how could anyone not make room on his book shelf for a work which

begins like this: "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust. Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override." To briefly summarize. *A Theory of Justice* is a sophisticated effort to present a middle ground between Marxism and Capitalism, uniting the redistributionist promise of the former with the political freedoms of the latter. If life grants the leisure to think about social justice, this is a good book to read and struggle with. But in the long run the following book is likely to be a greater force in the realization of Rawls' conclusions.

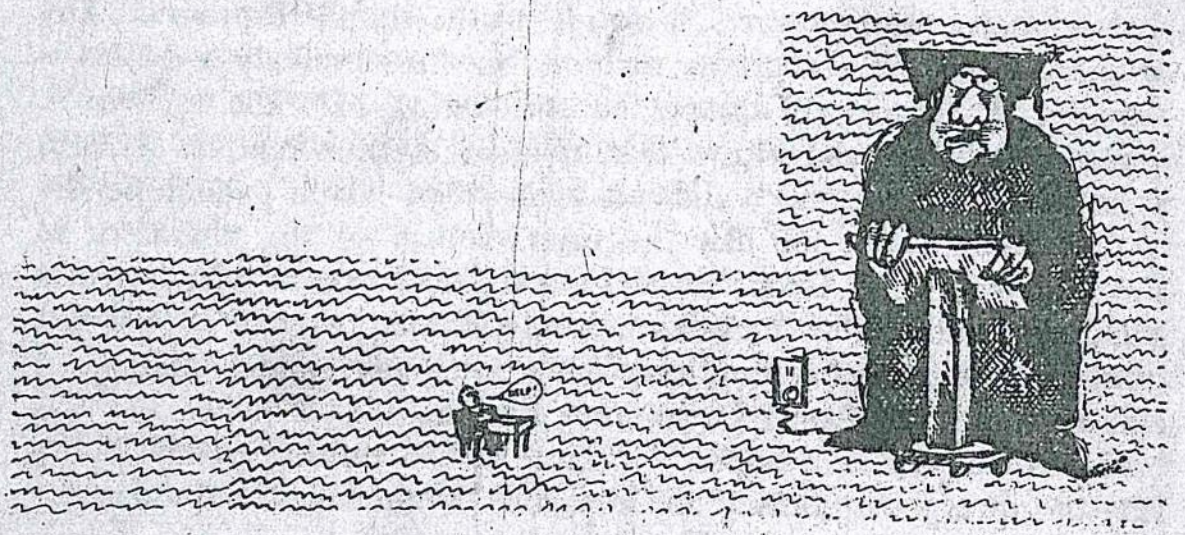
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK was probably written about 60-70 A.D. Commentators observe that Mark's Greek lacks literary finish. The gospel contains a large number of colloquialisms, a limited vocabulary, and an elemetary syntax. But the author has a keen eye for detail, a feeling for the ordinary, and a greater degree of realism than the other gospel narratives. After raising Jarius' daughter the Markan Jesus' first thought is that the girl is hungry and should be fed. Mark's gospel is the shortest. Mark stresses the human traits of Jesus. His fellow townsfolk complain, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses, Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" Commentators observe that Mark exhibits a definite pattern of concealment of the messianic character of Jesus."

Our culture is so fragmentary, self-contradictory, and over-heated that what is most required is simple truths simply expressed. Any ordinary mind can complicate matters, but for simplicity a genius is required. I happen to accept the sociologists (Durkheim, Weber, Parsons, Bellah) who argue that religion is constituative of both personality and society, a difficult proposition which cannot be defended here. I do not like the utilitarianism of the character in Francine du Plessix Gray's novel LOVERS AND TYRANTS who instructs his daughter that she "must be a good Catholic, even if it it is not quite true, because it improves one's intelligent understanding of history" but I do like his irreverent combination of belief and unbelief. All of my best hopes and most of the turning points in my life—the deaths, the births, the important beginnings—have been ex-

pressed through the Church's liturgy. Many of my best sensibilities have been formed by teachers who along with their knowledge communicated a strong but honest sense of belief. With the simplicity of genius and not of naivete, the gospel according to St. Mark transmits these truths. I find it enormously satisfying to think that people have read or listened to these words for almost two thousand years.

I liked E.F. Schumacher's SMALL Is BEAUTIFUL very much. I realize it is a bit of a cult book, but it deserves a wide readership, if only for the basic questions the author asks. "Things are not what they appear to be," is almost the axiomatic basis of all class lectures, and Schumacher applies a humanistic intelligence to many of the conventional economic tenets of our day: that big is usually better; that technology and economic growth will save us from our deepest problems; that work is a disutility and that a mature economic order must first look for "efficiency," however narrowly defined. If we truly believe that each college generation should have the opportunity to look at the world with suspicion as well as docility, *Small Is Beautiful* is a good book to recommend to them.

Finally, and for somewhat different reasons, I'd like to recommend Raymond Schroth's history of the newspaper, *The Brooklyn Eagle*. Though it tells me more than I need or care to know about that defunct newspaper, when insomnious, and even two scotches can not do their magic, this book unfailingly brings me the sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care. I should admit that as of this writing I have only made it to page 12, but a quick paging-through the rest indicates that the high somnific quality of the early pages is skillfully maintained to the very end. Of all the books mentioned above, this one is always by my bedside.



Five Stages

QUENTIN LAUER, S.J.

AFTER FIFTY-FOUR YEARS of voracious reading—it really did start in first grade—it is impossible to pick out five books that have had the greatest impact on me. What I can do is to select five books which influenced me greatly at particular stages in my life. What is a common characteristic, not of the books themselves, but of my reading of them, is that in regard to each of them I was sorry when I came to the end; I wanted them to go on and on. In the chronological order of reading these books were: *The Acts of the Apostles*, Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, Plato's *Gorgias*, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and *The Plague* by Albert Camus.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES I first read when I was eleven years old, and I think I can say with considerable assurance that it greatly influenced my entire subsequent career. From a religious point of view it told me the fascinating story of the first days of the church, when the followers of Jesus were, so to speak, on their own and gradually made his name known throughout the vast expanses of the Roman Empire. The book fired my imagination and gave me a set of heroes who continue to inspire me. Five figures in particular have stayed with me ever since that first reading. As might be expected, three of these were Peter, Paul, and Barnabas. As might not be expected, the other two were the deacons Stephen and Philip. Through it all ran two threads: the rapidly growing community of enthusiastic believers, widely separated geographically but closely united spiritually; and the extraordinarily unselfish labor of Paul in particular, whose life after his conversion had only one goal, to make the name of Jesus Christ as widely known as he could. It might seem irreverent to put it this way, but the book continues to manifest all the qualities of an amazing adventure story.

I read THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV when I was a senior in high school—after having already read Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (which came close to being one of my five selections). By this time I had

read widely in the British, particularly the Victorian, novel, and my enthusiasm was great, but Dostoyevsky was a completely new experience. Never before had I read a novel so thought provoking; never before had I experienced such extraordinary depth of character study. Each of the characters, and there are a great many of them, comes alive in a remarkably vivid and completely individual way. Having read the book four times contributes, of course, to the vividness with which these characters are etched in my mind, but even a single reading reveals the genius of Dostoyevsky's portrayal. Despite the variety and complexity of the characters, one feels that one knows each one intimately: the thoroughly unsavory Fyodor Karamazov, father of the three brothers; Dimitri, Ivan, Alyosho, Father Zossima, Kolya, Iluhha—each stands out as a completely distinct individual. Then, there is that sparkling gem, "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" recounted by Ivan, one of the greatest stories within a story ever told. Comes the end, one wants to begin all over again.

The GORGIAS was not the first of Plato's dialogues I read; it may well not count as his greatest. I read it, however, during my college days, and it left its mark on me in three ways. The story is that of Socrates in his struggle with the Sophists, the professional wise men of Greece in the fifth century B.C., but the story is without date; the issues are as contemporary today as they were in Plato's day. The second impression created was that of passionate ethical inquiry, of questioning the very meaning of what so many men take for granted, the refusal to be put off by words whose significance has not been thoroughly examined, the ability to keep questioning, even questioning oneself, despite the continuing elusiveness of answers. Finally, the dialogue left me with the impression of Plato's sheer literary genius; one can read it today with the same sort of excitement it must have created in those who first heard it recited.

The PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT must be included in this list for a number of reasons. No other book has occupied so much of my time as this extraordinarily difficult philosophical text. I have been working with it for the past twenty-five years. I have written a fairly lengthy book of my own on it. It has profoundly influenced my own philosophical thinking. It has left its mark on most of what I have produced myself. It has colored my interpretation of everything else I read. One cannot in a few words capture the complex riches of this extraordinary work, but it might be described as the odyssey of the human mind at once on the microcosmic scale of individual

growth and development and on the macrocosmic scale of human spiritual history. Its basic premise is that human consciousness is essentially spiritual activity and that this activity constitutes an unbroken continuity from the initial stages of mere sensory awareness to the ultimate in human knowing. In this there is a profound interweaving of psychological insight, metaphysical awareness, sound common sense, and historical erudition. It is a philosophical work, and therefore its procedure is rational; but at the same time it reveals Hegel's unquenchable act of faith in the spirit of man, which cannot rest until it has ascended from the level of the merely sensory to a conscious grasp of the absolute, which is possible only because the human spirit shares in the infinity of the divine spirit. What the book reveals most significantly, perhaps, is that human knowing is authentically knowing and authentically human only when it is integral, and it is truly integral only when it is thoroughly integrated.

THE WHOLE of Albert Camus' brilliant and meteoric literary career (he died tragically at the age of forty-six in an automobile accident) was devoted to a rebellion, prompted by his love of man, against the inevitable senselessness of so much of human existence. This rebellion is summed up in his outstanding literary production, *The Plague*. The plague which he describes as descending on the North African city of Oran is symbolic of absurdity in human life on three levels. The first absurdity is that there should be disease, suffering, and death at all in that beautiful experience which is human living. The second absurdity was concretely the Nazi occupation of France which had just ended when the book was written and which recapitulated for Camus in symbolic from the entire history of man's inhumanity to man. The third absurdity is that of life itself which is, as it were, a plague in which men are condemned to die. There is no question, however, of putting an end to the absurdities by rebelling *against* them; rather there is question of rebelling *for* man by loving what is human. *The Plague* is the story of futile struggle against a disease which strikes at the very roots of human existence, a struggle which continues because the solidarity of human love is worthwhile, even though it does not eradicate the absurdity of the human situation; it simply makes life worth living despite its absurdity.

Dealing with Change

RICHARD M. MILLS

PEOPLE read for every conceivable reason, and, one suspects, even for some inconceivable ones from time to time.

But the reading to be considered in these brief remarks is that special sort done out of individual choice and, indeed, preference.

For me the directing force behind such reading, and the fascination occasioning it, is the problem of change. Put another way, it is the problem of change. Put another way it is the question of relativity.

It is appropriate to start with a phenomenon which is paradoxically strange yet widespread: the relative absoluteness of everything. Frederick C. Crews delivers an aculeate delineation of this affliction's major variations in THE POOH PERPLEX.

This magnificent spoof of literary dirticism of the seemingly innocuous *Winnie the Pooh* applies the insights and methods of a number of critical schools with devastatingly contradictory results. Beyond that, the strong though somewhat misguided personalities of the various pseudonymous critics are sharply and incisively drawn.

In other words, the book alerts one to look at both analytical frameworks and analysts with a jaundiced eye, to beware of those who absolutize the relative. Being human, we are prone to forget these important things, and periodic re-reading of this slim volume invariably obviates the lamentable tendency to lose sight of the forest for the trees.

Another constant concern is the question of power. Both the Declaration of Independence and Adam Smith's WEALTH OF NATIONS were published in 1776.

The general relationship between politics and economics has been so fundamentally important and so tantalizingly elusive that

it must be approached incrementally. Andrew Shonfield's MODERN CAPITALISM: THE CHANGING BALANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE POWER has been valuable in sketching the multifarious transformations of the capitalist economic system in the advanced capitalist nations.

We are all constantly wondering what is happening to us and why it is happening. Unlike other analysts, Shonfied does not have a comprehensive answer, another way of saying that there is no Procrustean bed hidden away in the book.

But he has identified a series of trends, and even some exceptions to the trends, largely having to do with the changing nature of planning. These have led to changing the style of operation of private enterprise and have created ever more active governments—factors which have produced some interesting political implications, which Shonfield discusses.

Technical and partially dated though some of the book's materials are, it remains a great help in navigating the shoals produced by the absolutistic partisans of liberalism, conservatism, socialism and the like as opposed to their more tractable proponents.

The moral dimensions of the technical problems growing out of the interaction of politics and economics are particularly judiciously treated in John XXIII's Encyclical MATER ET MAGISTRA.

Humans are in danger of being overwhelmed by the accelerating complexification of life. And they often search for simple and final solutions to their predicament through maximizing the role, status and function of either the individual, the group, the community or the state.

The Encyclical makes the often forgotten or neglected point that all these must be considered in combination as units and levels of analysis if the community and the individuals and groups comprising it are to develop in a harmonious and balanced way.

THE CONCERN is to take into account at one and the same time the varied divisions and subdivisions into which humans may be and are divided, yet to stress the commanality which people everywhere share in terms of deserving a more humane way of existence than what they have so far achieved after so much conflict.

Mater et Magistra is not so much a blueprint as a challenge to think as comprehensively, as inclusively, as possible about organizing the components of the economic, social and political orders in such

a way that individuals have the broadest possibility for perfecting themselves without shattering the lives of others in the process.

The Encyclical's brevity is one of its great strengths. A multi-volume work on the issues could easily have been produced. But then it would have been another of those which serves to obfuscate further the issues rather than clarify them and make it easier to think about them more productively in rapidly changing circumstances. Pope John's other major contribution is, of course, his application of unchanging basic principles and values to changing circumstances.

A particularly rich evocation of the tribulations and glories, the destruction and creation, the sadness and joy of change is contained in Giuseppe di Lampedusa's elegantly crafted, exquisite novel THE LEOPARD.

The story deals with the destruction of the Sicilian feudal order and the creation of a new, united Italy which nevertheless contained more than a few marks of the old society.

Penetrating insight into the processes of change is rivaled by shrewd descriptions of personalities resisting change yet confronted by the need to accomodate to an enexorably altered way of life.

If on one level the military and political events of the Risorgimento are the catalyst of change, on another level the marriage of a princess to a member of the rising middle class produces changes in attitude and perception on the part of all the major characters.

The clash between religion and secularism, and between tradition and modernization as they affect one family mingle with themes such as the quality of commitment to one's beliefs.

A striking feature of the novel is the attention paid to details of individual behavior, personal interactions and even well chosen elements of various settings. These reveal subtleties of personality or register equally subtle changes in status relationships.

A Marxist in Brooklyn

MARK NAISON

HOW DID A KID from the streets of Brooklyn, borught up on stickball, rock and roll, and the Dodgers, become a radical professor specializing in Afro-American studies? That's a question I've often asked myself, and the story is so strange that I sometimes can't believe it really happened.

But one thing is clear to me. When I look back on important moments in my life, times when I made decisions of lasting significance, I was often inspired by something I read. I have to thank my parents for that. They were both school teachers and, from a very early age, they surrounded me with books on subjects a young boy would find interesting—sports, animals, dinosaurs, rocket ships, travel and adventure. We didn't have much money and the neighborhood we lived in was composed of working people who had little formal education, but I grew up with the habit of living in two worlds—the world of the streets, with its games, its music, its rough sexuality—and the world of books, where my imagination could soar into different times and places.

In high school, while I awkwardly grappled with the problems of adolescence, I romantically identified with the moral dilemmas faced by characters in nineteenth century French, English and Russian novels. At a time when I was too shy and insecure to ask the girl I secretly loved out for a date, I enmeshed myself in the tragic affairs of Anna Karenina, Tolstoi's great heroine, and longed to experience something grand and significant in my life that could consecrate the pain I felt.

In college, I began to slowly bridge the gap between my romantic visions and the patterns of my daily life. My freshman year, by all surface indications, was very ordinary. I tried to get

good grades, played on two teams, joined a fraternity, and dated frequently, though not always happily. But I still longed to dedicate myself to a higher ideal, and in the summer after my freshman year, I read something which seemed to show the way. It was a novel by James Baldwin called ANOTHER COUNTRY. From a literary point of view, it was probably not a great book, but it made me feel the pain of the black experiences as though it were my own and impelled me to dedicate my life to the achievement of racial justice. When I watched the March on Washington on television one month later, that further affirmed my commitment. I joined the campus civil rights group in my sophomore year and began working as a volunteer tutor and community organizer in Harlem. With this came new experiences, new friends, and a greater sense of personal satisfaction than I had ever felt before. Even though I still kept up my athletic and academic activities, my life became enmeshed with the problems and ideals of "the movement."

That year, I also read several books which helped link my intellectual life to my new-found political commitments. In a history course, I read a book by Richard Hofstadter called THE AMERICAN POLITICAL TRADITION, which seemed to cut through all the cliches about American history that I was bombarded with in high school. In an ironic, humorous tone, Hofstader dissected prominent leaders and movements in the American past, mocking their pretensions, exposing their flaws, and showing how their accomplishments came in areas which they ofen failed to anticipate. Hofstadter presented a vision of a society which was successful in spite of itself, which was capable of great brutality as well as great humanity, and which still had a long way to go before it could realize its ideals. His book confirmed the image of American society evoked by my civil rights experiences; but equally important, it showed me the power of historical writing to reveal important truths to people about the society they lived in.

MY INTEREST in history was also confirmed by a book I read in a Euro-history course in the second half of my sophomore year; Isaac Deutscher's STALIN: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY. Deutscher turned the history of the Russian Revolution into great literature, a drama that brought out the best and worst in people, that opened up

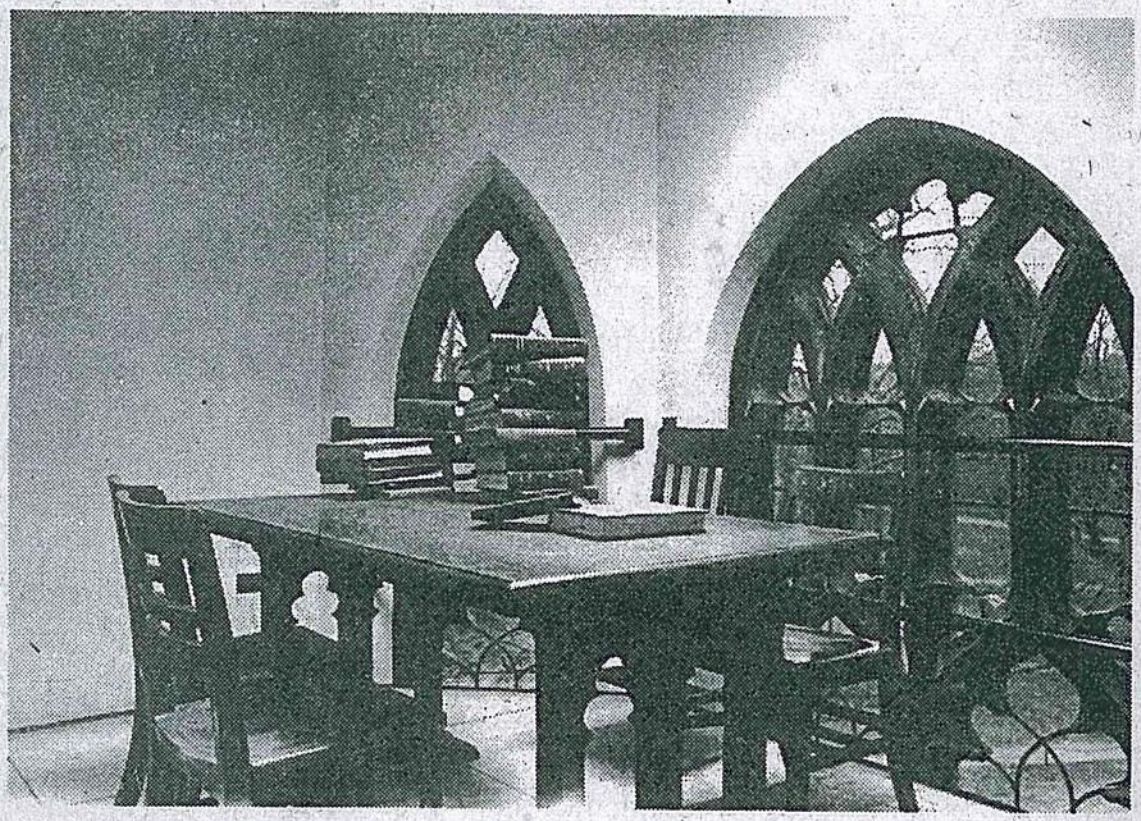
new possibilities for the liberation of the oppressed even as it unleashed terror and repression of unimagined ferocity. To Deutscher, the revolution was high tragedy, and he made his readers personally experience the suffering of the old bolsheviks as they watched soviet society slowly depart from the humanistic ideals they had fought for and turn into a nightmare of purges, labor camps, and political and cultural dogmatism. Yet through all this, Deutscher never relinquished his faith in the socialist dream, or his belief in the necessity of revolution in an unjust world. Reading this book made me feel, once again, the significance of the historian's mission, and showed me how political activism and scholarship could enrich one another.

Throughout the rest of my college career, I tried to follow—in my own terms—the model of the activist intellectual that Deustscher embodied. I was active in civil rights groups on the campus and in the community, and I chose American history as my major and black history as my speciality. When I went to graduate school, I continued to pursue these interests.

But I was also impelled into a radical politics by a profound personal experience. During the summer after my senior year, I fell in love with a black woman I was dating and was ostracized by my family when I told them of my feelings. Her family adopted me as one of their own, and I began living much of my life in an all-black milieu. In the course of this experience, I read a work of history which made the path that I had chosen seem worth all the difficulties. In W.E.B. DuBois' BLACK RECONSTRUCTION, I read an incredibly eloquent analysis of why the denial of full equality to black people was the Achilles heel of American society, a problem that would subvert the democratic ideals that America had helped introduce to the world unless it was faced head on. In passionate, dramatic prose, DuBois showed how Reconstruction presented an opportunity to bring Afro-Americans into the mainstream of American society, but ultimately succumbed to an unholy alliance of southern planters and northern industrialists who minged appeals to race prejudice with coldhearted schemes for the maximization of profit. It was DuBois, more than anyone else, who made me look at ways in which the economic system of this society generates racism and inequality and convinced me that you had to change institutions as well as attitudes in order to bring about racial brotherhood.

It was this insight which led me to the point I am at today—where if I were asked to define myself politically, I would call myself a socialist.

Well, that's my life story. I'm back in Brooklyn now, about a mile and a half from where I grew up, and I'm married and have a child. Sometimes, I sit on my stoop and read DAS KAPITAL as I'm rocking my baby. The Dodgers are gone, and four blocks away, there are abandoned buildings, boarded up stores, and junkies. In ways which I don't have time to explain right now, reading Marx helps me to understand why these things are happening in the place of my birth, and what we have to do to make America a truly just society.



Worldly and Spiritual Encounters

GERARD REEDY, S.J.

HOW DEEPLY DOES civilization, or a sense of form, lie in each one of us? How willing are we to chasten raw emotion with the discipline of form? "Sincerity" and "getting in touch with your feelings" are being purchased too cheaply today; what the self-revealer takes as original and unique may often be trite and Woolworthian, tastelessly and amorphously plastic. My own training and certain reactionary instincts, as a Jeesuit and a teacher of literature, lead me to present a reading list in which form is very important.

From the Bible: my favorite Old Testament story is that of Joseph, who goes from rags to riches in Egypt, and his brothers. The last twelve chapters of GENESIS contain the story. Its substance is great: self-identity, the search for father and family, self-possession in the midst of rapid social change, virtue in the midst of worldly success, and divine providence overcoming human evil. In a classic recognition scene, Joseph refuses to show emotion before his Egyptian fellow executives. He sends them away before he weeps openly to his brothers: "I am Joseph. Is my father really alive? Come closer to me." God himself has plotted this powerful unveiling of true relationships: "Yahweh was with Joseph." Joseph's own humanity has suppressed his just revenge. If we feel that his story is too good to be true, the fault may lie in ourselves. The providential pattern the not unsophisticated narrator presents is, I suspect, the result only of long and skillful contemplation of the discord of history, a discord to which we too easily submit.

Onto the English Renaissance: sometime in the 1640s or 50s, a young Puritan, Andrew Marvell, wrote one of the great love poems of the language. "To His Coy Mistress," on first reading, is a stunning request for a lady's favors, a reminder that all flesh, however

beautiful, will be corrupted, and an insistence that the time to love is now:

> The grave's a fine and private place,
> But none, I think, do there embrace.

Further reflection on such impressive condensation of conflicting emotions suggests Marvell's sense of tradition: some Horace, some Catullus, some scholastic syllogizing and outright dependence on the facetious Renaissance genre of the "seduction poem." This last Marvell deepens in such a way that it is unuseable thereafter; the form seems to have been created only for use in this consummate way. No poet has ever more inevitably counterpointed love and death. "To His Coy Mistress" is simply the greatest short poem in English.

Since the late eighteenth century, poets openly write about the insecurities of poetic creation. Before that gentlemen-poets found the subject harder to broach. In 1682 John Dryden gave brilliant form to his own anxiety about the future of poetry in the very funny satire, "Mac Flecknoe." Instead of ponderously versifying his own high poetic values, Dryden dramatizes the dim-witted coronation of a new prince of poetic dullness, Thomas Shadwell. Announcing the succession to his throne in a London slum, the retiring prince declares:

> Sh— alone of all my sons is he
> Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
> The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
> But Sh— never deviates into sense.
> Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
> Strike through and make a lucid interval;
> But Sh—'s genuine night admits no ray,
> His rising fogs prevail upon the day . . .

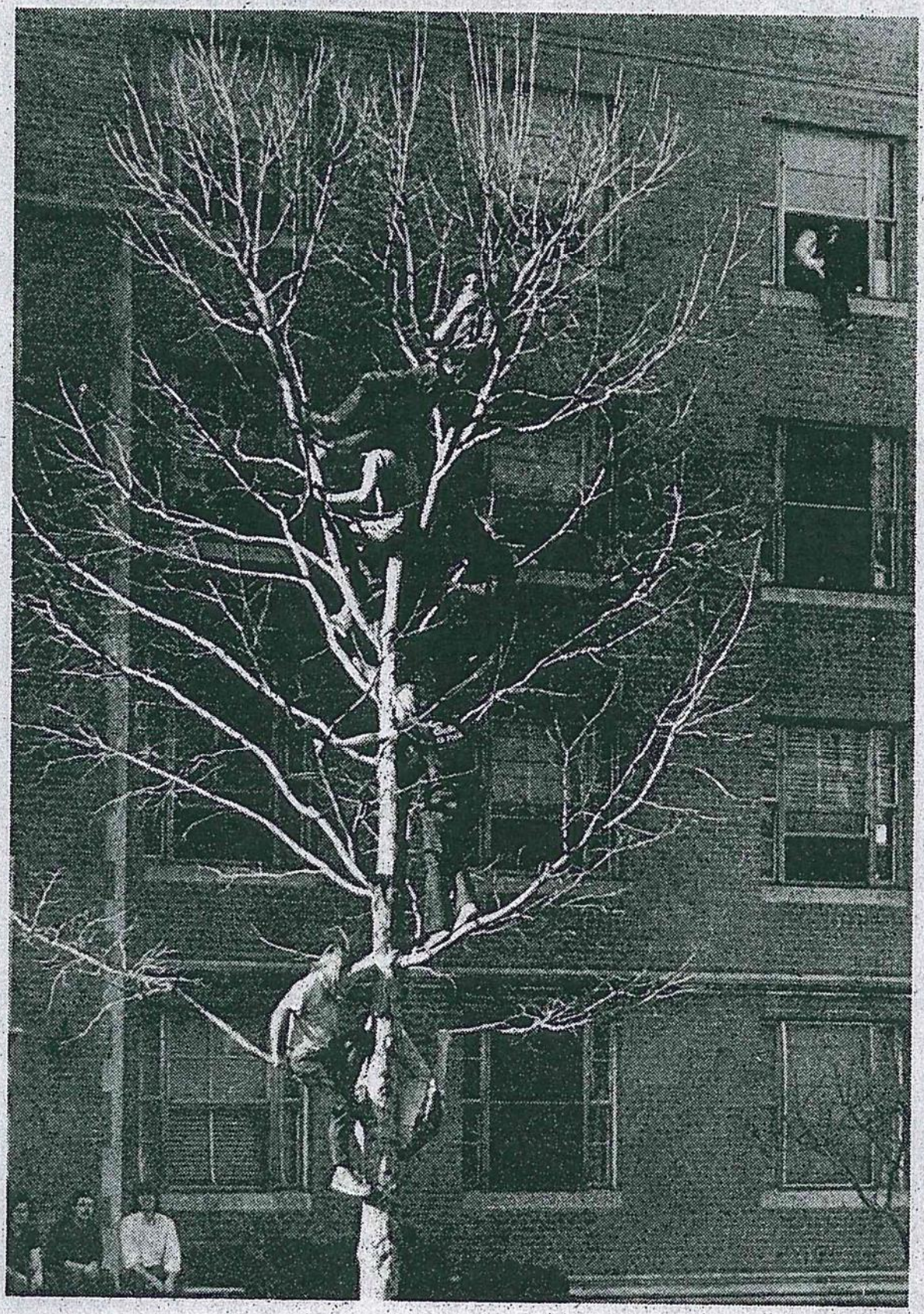
Through such burlesque, Dryden's anti-heroes ridicule their own claims. The skill with which Dryden has them do this shows the self-confident and infinite distance of his wit from theirs—and also from our own toleration of literary and metaphysical dullness.

Kids like the Lilliputians and Brobdingnagians of the first two books of Jonathan Swift's GULLIVER'S TRAVELS (1726). Grown-ups more deeply appreciate the moral issues of large vs. small and also prefer the satire on human pride that is involved in dumb Gulliver's final trip, in book four, to Houyhnhnm-Land. The more I teach *Gulliver's Travels*, the more I wonder whether all I should do is

read it aloud for three or four classes. Its emotion is immediate and yet universal; the words barely contain Swift's anger at man's inhumanity to man. Veterans of the peace marches of a decade ago will recognize, among other splendors in *Gulliver's Travels,* a humanitarian attack on the politics of war that should be required reading for all heads of state.

When Georg Schurhammer, S.J., became seriously ill in 1910, his ordination was put in doubt. He prayed to St. Francis Xavier that he would, if he received the grace of orders, write his life. Surely a pious promise such as this was never better kept. For sixty years Schurhammer researched and published Xavieriana. The final form of his vow is the posthumously published, *Francis Xavier, His Life, His Times.* This is a stupendously researched analysis of the history, geography, and spirituality of Europe and Asia in the sixteenth century. There is nothing like it, especially in the field of hagiography, where "scientific" biography is not overrepresented. Schurhammer also has an eye for personal detail. Francis, fired with missionary zeal, was ready to leave Rome in 1540 with only a shirt and a torn cassock to get him to the Indies. "So, Francis, so?," Schurhammer reports St. Ignatius saying to the great friend of his life. The emotional farewell was tempered by Ignatius' practicality: Francis obediently left with an added satchel of necessities.

FROM SAINTS TO WORLDLINGS: I have read a quarter of Anthony Trollope's fifty-odd novels and will forge on (I am not attempting the fifty his mother wrote before him). Two things are constant in Trollope: his characters, high Victorians all, assume they live in the most advanced civilization ever known. Also, their creator corrects but never condemns them. It is every difficult for Trollope's principals to express their true feelings; their society doesn't give them much opportunity to do so. Still, magnificent scenes of confrontation occur, even through the polite gestures: when the mortal enemies, Lady Lufton and the Duke of Omnium, meet unexpectedly in *Framley Parsonage* (1861), they bow solemnly to one another. Both perfect form and perfect contempt are perfectly communicated. Although Trollope is full of such encounters, I recommend him only to those whose interest in worldly society can be joined by a great deal of patience.



What Journalism is For

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.

AFTER YOU HAVE READ the opening chapters of Genesis where God makes Adam in his own image, then watches as his handiwork—beginning to grasp the full implications of what it means to be free and so to be a human creator—turns against his maker, and after you have at least tasted John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, take up nineteen-year-old Mary Shelley's 1831 Romantic novel, FRANKENSTEIN, OR, THE MODERN PROMETHEUS for an example of a story (rather, a myth) that—like its eight-foot monster hero—can never die. That the core story is inexhaustible is evident in local movie houses and every night on TV as generations of mad doctors, scriptwriters and clowns dig the old boy up and piece him together—usually implanting the "wrong" brain—again and again just so we can watch the lightening crack and see "the dull yellow eye of the creature open" and hear the descendant of Victor Frankenstein gasp: "*It moves*!"

But few films can do justice to the power and complexity of Mary Shelley's marvelous creation, the monster who critic Harold Bloom has described as more human, more lovable and hateful than its creator. For six chapters the monster, who in the films only snarls, speaks eloquently and touchingly about his own education and self-discovery (His own favorite books are *Plutarch's Lives* and *Paradise Lost*) and, above all, his tragic, fruitless search for love—denied to him because he is ugly. Here is a book about the moral ambivalence in every divine and human creative act, the incomparable terror of loneliness, and the destructive moral idiocy of everyman—scientist, artist or parent—who cannot love and accept responsibility for what he has made.

With the possible exceptions of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman, I suspect that there is no more important spokesman for the American consciousness or conscience than Henry David

Thoreau. If his two contemporaries overcelebrated the American spirit, Henry was brave enough to withdraw a bit to make that inner plunge from which many of us instinctively cringe: "I wanted to live deep and suck out the marrow of life . . . to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion."

Thoreau was not a hermit and WALDEN is not an argument that all of us would flee the world and live two "useless" years in the woods by a lake. He was, like Mary Shelley, a Romantic enraptured by the myth of Eden, of the possibility of Natural Man unspoiled by hostile society or the runaway technology that now threatens us all. Thoreau was, in the fullest sense, a writer and a journalist, one who observed minutely with keen eyes and ears for red and black ants at war, the woodchuck stealing across his path, the church bells of Concord and the pond ice cracking at the first stirrings of spring. And he was a philosopher-journalist in that he could sense in these experiences the folly/glory of human and literary battles, his own interior savagery, the harmony of the universe and the very aliveness of the earth.

In A TREASURY OF GREAT REPORTING, editors Louis L. Snyder and Richard B. Morris have collected five centuries worth of what journalists like to call eyewitness "literature under pressure" from a 1587 witchburning to mass murder Gestapo Chief Adolf Eichmann standing before his accusers in Jerusalem in 1961. For some, the more powerful selections may dwell too heavily on battles, trials, executions and crimes, with their severed limbs and bullet-ridden corpses; but, historically, these horrors and human tragedies have often called forth some of the most sublime— as well as the worst —writing from newsmen. Although revised in 1961, this now seems an "old fashioned" book, built largely around the image of the globe-trotting, "I-saw-it-with-my-own-eyes" reporter who was courageous, sometimes foolhardy, perceptive, personally committed to justice, the truth—and the scoop! At the same time, some of the best reporting foreshadows the 1960s and '70s New Journalism where the journalist uses the novelist's techniques of atmosphere, imaginative point-of-view, and realistic attention to detail to make the reader share, not just get information about, the writer's experience. There

are great newsstories by Stephen Crane, Mark Twain, Richard Harding Davis, Ernest Hemingway and Edward R. Murrow. And we have Henry G. Wales tell us, in 1917, how the glamorous dancer-courtesan Eurasian spy, Mata Hari, met her death before a firing squad:

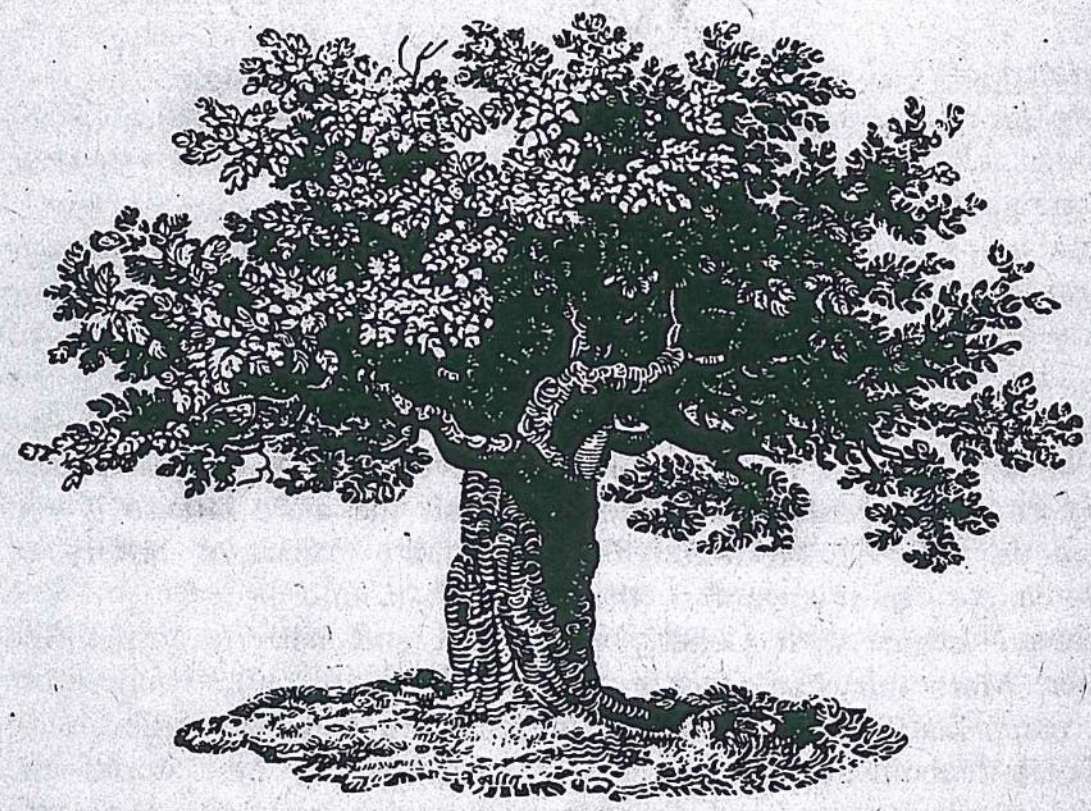
> At the report Mata Hari fell. She did not die as actors and moving picture stars would have us believe that people die when they are shot. She did not throw up her hands nor did she plunge straight forward or straight back. Instead she seemed to collapse. Slowly, inertly, she settled to her knees, her head up always, and without the slightest change of expression on her face. For the fraction of a second it seemed she tottered there, on her knees, gazing directly at those who had taken her life. Then she fell backward, bending at the waist, with her legs doubled up beneath her. She lay prone, motionless, with her face turned toward the sky.

That is one of the jobs of the journalist—to tell us that neither life nor death is really the way it appears on the screen.

WHEN MY FATHER was a young reporter for the Trenton *State Gazette* right after the First World War, one of his regular assignments was to interview eccentric old Washington Roebling, the builder of the Brooklyn Bridge—constructed with "wire rope" from the Trenton Roebling steel mills—on his birthday. My Uncle Frank's family moved to Brooklyn in the 1930s and bought the old *Brooklyn Eagle* newspaper, whose editors had promoted the building of the bridge in the 1860s. Today I love to walk across the bridge—one of America's central symbols of the nineteenth century idea of progress and the wedding of technology and art—and feel it sway in the wind and imagine, like everyone who loves New York, that I own a piece of its spirit. This excitement is all the more intense if you have read David McCullough's THE GREAT BRIDGE, a history of the courage and corruption that brought it into being.

If we began with Genesis we shuold end with a gospel like LUKE. More than the other evangelists, he calls us to compassion, to reconciliation, tenderness, prayer, and to a confrontation with ethical demands we cannot avoid. Luke has the best stories—the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the rich man feasting with the poor man at his gate. And he is the one who turns our eyes away from ourselves to the secular world, to the city—where prophets are killed but where Jesus must meet his destiny. As one commentator says, "Luke has won the battle for the Christian mind and particularly the liberal Christian mind."

Alas! There's always a pile of new books on the floor by my chair, waiting to be read, reviewed and/or taught. But the old paperback that has waited most patiently is Stendhal's SCARLET AND BLACK. It begins: "The little town of Verrieres is one of the prettiest in Franche-Comte. Its white houses, with their red-tiled, pointed roofs, stretch out along the side of the hill where. . ."



History — Large and Small

ROGER WINES

IT MAY SEEM STRANGE for a person who reads books for a living to want to look at them in his spare time. Books are the historian's tools, like the plumber's wrench. Yet I still think, as I did when I was twelve, that books are fun. When people ask me for advice in research, I cheerfully recommend dry tomes and documents: these books I would recommend to anyone for fun.

Garrett Mattlingly, THE ARMADA.

We Americans are at best a simple folk, grown up in an expanded colonial village. Our politics, like our community life, has tended to be straightforward and moralistic, tempered by the human tendency to grab what offers itself. When we have exported our great statesmen to Europe, like Woodrow Wilson, there has always been a popular worry that they would somehow be bamboozled by those sly foreigners. This is a book about sly foreigners.

There are certain great events, which in hindsight, seem to be the turning points in world history. One such occurred in 1588 when King Philip II of Spain sent his great Armada to England, to teach the bothersome Protestant inhabitants of that land a lesson, and to conquer it. Had Elizabeth been less resolute, or her mariners less gallant, North American might be a different world today, a Spanish rather than an English colony. (If you would like to explore this alternative line of history read Keith Robert's excellent novel *Pavane*.)

The author told me once that he was inspired to write the book in 1940, when Hitler stood poised to invade England, and the values of Western civilization seemed to hang in the balance, just as in that earlier struggle with Spain. But the picture is more complicated than that. It took him years to do the necessary research and to write the work. Mattingly was one of those perfectionists who labor ten years over a book, polishing each sentence with a lapidary's skill, but then

bringing it out perfect. *The Armada* reads like a novel, but is the fruit of enormous research, dredged out of the memoirs, state papers and archives of the period. The picture that emerges is one of drama and intrigue: the beheading of Mary Queen of Scots, Drake's daring raids upon the Spanish naval bases, the duel of sailing ships upon the English Channel, the international current of diplomacy, assasination, covert and overt activities maintained by the Papacy, France, Spain and England. It encompasses not a mere battle, but the whole subtle politics of a vanished age which was father to our own.

But Mattingly was more than a perceptive historian. He was a sailor. He could not write about the sea without trying to make his readers experience, too, the flap of wind on sail, and spray on face. He revelled in the details of antique ships. He used to tell the story of Samuel Eliot Morison, the Harvard don who wrote the great biography of Columbus, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea.* Having completed his research in Spain, Morison decided to sail back to America, and was prouder of having navigated his ship to a landfall at nearly the same spot as Columbus, than he was of writing the whole Pulitzer Prize history. Mattingly has that same sense for the sea, and for men.

I shall emulate my mentor by stopping here, lest I overstate. You go right head.

Robin Winks, THE HISTORIAN AS DETECTIVE.

Many historians I know are detective story buffs, ranging from the older classics like Poe, and Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* to the moderns like Ellery Queen and Simenon. One of the best short texts in historical method is a detective story by Josephine Tey, *The Daughter of Time.* Robin Winks, both a mystery fan and a professor of history at Yale has compiled this book which treats some of the great cases of historical investigation. Winks has a real zest for his subject, and has given us a glimpse of the scholar-detectives at work, uncovering frauds like the Donation of Constantine, or discussing the murders of Captain Cook and President Kennedy. The book is not a narrative but an anthology, an analytical romp which makes not only for good detective work, but good courtroom drama. If you would like to meet some strange cases and some interesting scholars, try this one.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV.

Some books are best read fast, a quick-paced thriller or mystery; others need time; you have to live with them, savoring the characters,

getting to know them like long-time next door neighbors. I am not sure I would like to have the Karamazov family next door, but they are a fascinating bunch, quarrelsome, passionate, full of concerns and ideas, larger than life, intensely vital. Of course, all of Dostoyevsky novels are filled with such types: he presents us with a circus of character. *The Brothers* is a great book not only for its dissection of a family but for its description of a country, that Russian world of the nineteenth century which was Tradition beset with Change. The brothers lived in perilous times, when values were no longer safe and social positions threatened, and they chose different paths to the future. Thus the characters not only stand for themselves, but challenge us to make choices about ourselves.

THIS IS THE KIND OF BOOK you start with, lay down for a while, then think over as you continue, watching the complicated strands of the family plot interweave. You puzzle over the patronymics and get lost sometimes in a wealth of characters. In the midst of intrigue and suffering, you come upon that most ironic of all statements about Christianity, the chapter on the Grand Inqusiitor. I loved this book, and went on to read all of his novels in succession, but I still think *The Brothers* is the best of all. It is a book for reading when you feel intense and serious.

William S. Allen, THE NAZI SEIZURE OF POWER: THE EXPERIENCE OF A SINGLE GERMAN TOWN.

History is frequently written large, as the history of great men and nations, when we know from our personal lives that it actually happens small, to people like us. Increasingly, scholars have come to realize that an adequate understanding of history requires that the grass roots be studied as well as the great conferences. And this is nowhere more true than in the case of the Third Reich, if we are to understand how such a monstrous thing could come to be.

Allen's book is an unusual treatment of German history in that it tries to trace the story of one small town during the Nazi takeover of power. It reads sometimes like a Faulkner novel, but is a work of fact. It is full of local characters, the worried burgomeister, the bookseller who becomes the Nazi Party boss, the union leaders and a host of citizens. We share with them a sense of amazement and desperation as the little fringe of Nazis, with the passage of the de-

pression and demonstrations, takes on strength, marches boldly on the streets and finally takes control of the community's destiny.

Lewis Mumford, THE CITY IN HISTORY.

This a great book for all the wrong reasons. Mumford sketches a panorama of the history of man's life in cities, from ancient Mesopotamia to the skyscraper age. It is a very learned book, but some of the scholarship is simply wrong. This was to be expected of any one man trying to comprehend the entire course of human history. What he does achieve is something more personal and more intense: he tries to make sense out of this enormous panorama, he illuminates its dark corners with his flashing insights, he gives chaos meaning. It is not just that the reader comes to understand the glories and limitations of past cities, but that he is brought into contact with the urgent concerns of our own age. What the book loses in historical objectivity is compensated by its striving for a better present, for Mumford is as much a preacher for certain reforms as he is an historian. Whether you finally agree or not, the book is an education and an encounter in one, and what more could you ask?

The editor asked me what book I was going to read next. I cheated, because the one I chose is also one which I have read several times before. I think everyone has a few such books in mind. I chose Mark Twain's HUCKLEBERRY FINN.

In America Mark Twain is pushed mostly as a children's writer, but really his stuff is beyond most kids. The Russians know better, and he has been widely published in the USSR as a critic of capitalist Christian Western society. In fact, he is at his best when reminding us of our foibles, but Twain is far from negative, he loves humanity with its crookedness. When I was a boy I first read *Huckleberry Finn*, and everything else Twain wrote, but I think this novel sums Samuel Clemens up best of all. I am not sure why I like it. Call it nostalgia for country summers past, call it a sense of history for the whole lost natural America which we have industrialized and paved. Twain's book is full of chuckles, and the most serious insights about human nature are often passed off in a joke or an anecdote. His characters are real types, true to the Mississippi frontier, but they are also universal types, revealing something of the common human condi-

tion. Every few years I pick the book up again, assessing how I have changed in relation to these timeless acquaintances.

This summer, I think, is about time. I fantasize: me sitting on the porch of a summer cabin reading, or perhaps, loading the foldboat with Huck Finn and a few cold beers and casting off aimlessly down the lake as I read . . . .

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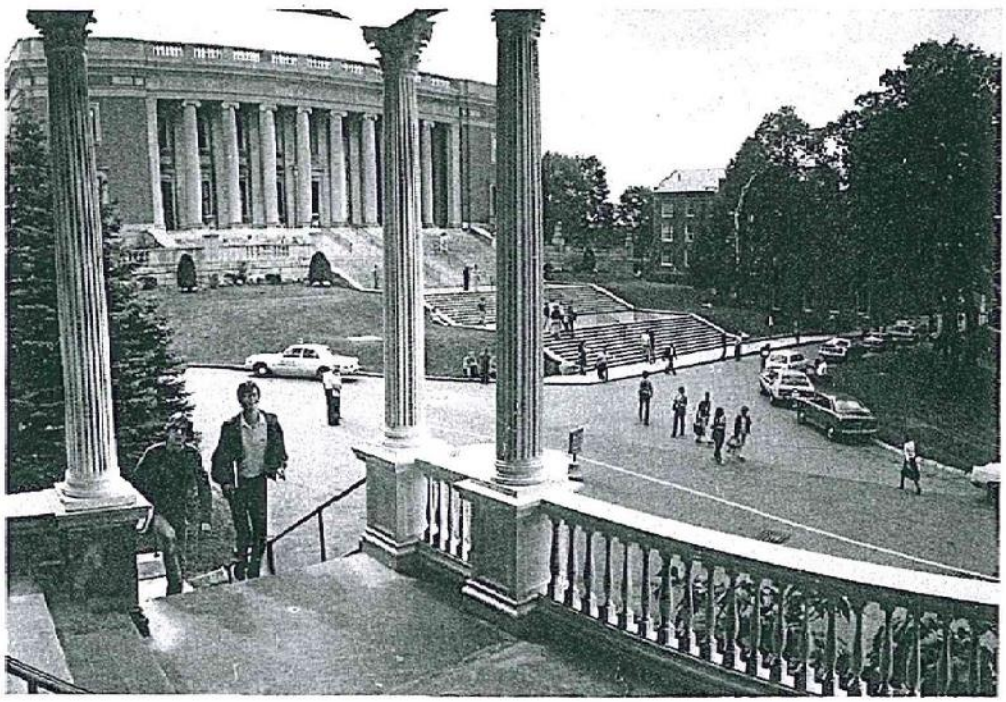
COLLEGE OF THE

HOLY CROSS



100 BOOKS

The Holy Bible

In Umberto Eco's medieval mystery, *The Name of the Rose*, an enlightened, English, Franciscan monk, William of Baskerville, notes that "...the good of a book lies in its being read .... Books are not made to be believed, but to be subjected to inquiry." Of no book are these statements more true than of *The Holy Bible*.

It is basic both to the tenets of Judaism and to Christian belief that God is a personal God who has spoken to men and women, and who has initiated a dialogue with them – a dialogue in which they are called to listen to God's words and to respond. God's words are revelation; the response of men and women is faith. *The Holy Bible* contains God's revelation in the form of a written record, and records human reactions to it, the expressions of human faith or the lack of it. In the *Old Testament* we encounter the rich narration of God's action in human history: What He has done, is doing, and will do in the course of planning the salvation of the human race and preparing for the coming of Christ and the messianic kingdom. The *New Testament* provides us with the principle witness of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, and the permanent and unchanging testimony of the apostolic generation. In *The Holy Bible* we have not merely superb literature and interesting history, but the revelation of God's action on our behalf.

The good of *The Holy Bible*, therefore, lies in it being read and subjected to inquiry – a rich and rewarding experience! For the reader of *The Holy Bible* there await joyful discoveries, learning, inspiration, encouragement, and help in coping with the trials, problems and frustrations of everyday life. No wonder the prophet Isaiah was moved to exclaim:

> "Come, all who are thirsty,
> come to the waters;
> and you who have no money,
> come, buy and eat!
> Come, buy wine and milk
> without money and without cost." (*Isaiah* 55:1)

JOHN E. BROOKS, S.J.

Homer
The Odyssey

The *Odyssey* ought not to be read: ideally, at least, it should be heard.One of the great intellectual discoveries of this century is that the *Odyssey*, as well as the other Homeric epic, the *Iliad*, is part of the oral tradition of Greek literature. We now know that these works were written down – they underwent "recension" – only after a half-millennium of existence as oral poems.

By nature, oral poetry is never static, and the *Odyssey* too kept changing throughout its oral phase. Bards, who spent lifetimes learning and relearning their "songs," imparted something new to the *Odyssey* with each recitation: they gave it finer subtleties, more vigorous language, deeper insights, more deft turns, more haunting scenes, more exotic descriptions. Nothing could compare to poems like the *Odyssey* as forms of entertainment for the ancients. The best "singers of tales" acquired near-celebrity status and would be much sought after at the various religious festivals during which an *Odyssey* or an *Iliad* was recited in an intensely convivial setting. How long the recitation of the *Odyssey* took – it is over 11,000 lines long – is not certain.

These festive occasions, according to the historian Thucydides, constituted an important "release" from the trials of everyday existence. Plenty of time, therefore, was allotted to the festivals, and six-day celebrations were not unusual. The ancient Greeks must have listened with rapt attention to Homer's stories about a heroic age, when men lived in brilliant palaces and even spoke with the gods; they must have marvelled at the stories about one-eyed giants, the sorceress Circe, and the monsters Scylla and Charybdis; they must have rejoiced at the completion of Odysseus' odyssey and at his reunion with the constant Penelope; and they must have shuddered at the stretching of the mighty bow and the ensuing slaughter of the suitors.

Modern readers, of course, have to make do with *reading* the *Odyssey*, either in Greek or in translation. But no matter, the greatness of the *Odyssey* transcends its original medium, the barriers of language, and even time. So read the *Odyssey*, and expect to be awed, excited, and thoroughly beguiled by one of the earliest and surely one of the best works of Western literature.

BLAISE NAGY

Thucydides
History of the Peloponnesian War (Fifth Century, B.C.)

The decisive wars between Athens and Sparta, which closed out the fifth century B.C. and the "Golden Age" of Athens, are the subject of Thucydides's *History*. While even today it is an invaluable historical source, as well as often rousing reading, peppered with incidents of heroism, adventure and intrigue, it ultimately ascends to philosophical reflection and great drama. In Thucydides's hands the Peloponnesian War becomes an occasion for a meditation on the problematic ralations between power, interest and justice, and the story of the tragic fall of perhaps the greatest of the ancient heroes, democratic Athens.

Pericles's Funeral Oration captures, in quasi, mythic terms, the glories of Athens at the pinnacle of its greatness: a *polis* that was powerful but free and just, individualistic but patriotic, democratic but disciplined and led by the greatest of natural aristocrats; a complex, creative, well-rounded people of heroic proportions in both words and deeds. Yet this greatness was inescapably linked to an Empire that was becoming increasingly burdensome to the tributary states – and which ultimately corrupted Athens itself.

Can a democracy rule an empire? This question, in the case of Athens, is ultimately answered in the negative, but not for the reasons imagined by the demagogue Cleon, who raises it. Precisely the ruthless pursuit of power Cleon recommends, the exclusion of restraint, sympathy and morality from foreign policy rots the

foundations of Athenian virtue and democracy and finally, after the ill-judged colonial war in Syracuse, loses Athens not only its Empire, but its freedom. It is hard to read Thucydides today without thinking of Vietnam and wishing that policy makers had heeded not the specious and self-defeating logic of the Athenian envoys at Melos – "the strong do what they wish while the weak suffer what they must" – but Thucydides's powerful warning against entirely divorcing considerations of power and interest from the central political virtue of justice. No romantic or idealist, and not one to renounce either the burdens or benefit of international power, Thucydides nonetheless insists that true greatness – the immortal greatness of fifth century Athens – comes only when politics reconciles the irreconcilable; i.e., when freedom rules over power, and when justice is fused with, but not corrupted by, interest.

JACK DONNELLY

Plato
The Dialogues (Third Century, B.C.)

One may disagree with A. N. Whitehead's apercu that Western philosophy has been but footnotes on Plato, but one cannot deny that Plato's dialogues are works of world literature that have exercised a profound intellectual influence over more than two millennia.

Who would not be moved by Plato's *Apology of Socrates* or by the *Phaedo* which pictures Socrates in his death cell disputing with his friends matters of life and death and afterlife a few hours before his execution? And what student or parent of a student could fail to be challenged and alarmed by the Sophistic puzzle presented in the *Meno*, according to which neither teaching nor learning is possible and where yet the educational search for knowledge is not abolished?

And then *The Republic*, this work containing so many themes of Plato's philosophizing! Here we find Plato's theory of educa-

tion, co-education of course, as well as summaries of his ontological and epistemological views in the famous divided-line simile and the celebrated cave analogy. Here we find his views on justice and social stratification together with his insistence on what strikes us as disturbingly strict forms of censorship and state control of all human affairs ranging from human love life to commerce, travelling, and the fine arts. This work is the blueprint for virtually all utopian writings in Western civilization, and it is much more, as some of the topics mentioned indicate.

What can one in a few lines possibly say on Plato? The space does not even suffice to list all his works. Read them and perhaps engage in the intellectual adventure of studying these texts in a class that provides interpretative help towards understanding them.

HERMANN J. CLOEREN

Vergil
The Aeneid (First Century B.C.)

As he lay dying at Brindisium in September, 19 B.C., Vergil was so dissatisfied with the work on which he had labored for the past ten years that he ordered the manuscript destroyed. An order from Augustus to Vergil's friends Varius and Tucca saved the *Aeneid* from extinction. A failed poem became, by imperial decree, an instant classic. And so it has remained. Not for such titans as Danteand Milton only, but for countless generations Vergil has been, like his legendary hero Aeneas, the Father of the West. T. S. Eliot, in a famous essay, calls the *Aeneid* the unique and universal classic, the consciousness of Rome and the supreme voice of her language. Tennyson's well known tribute

> I salute thee, Mantovano,
> I that loved thee since my day began,
> Wielder of the stateliest measure
> ever moulded by the lips of man

sounds the Victorians' resonance with the theme of imperialism and manifest destiny. And indeed the *Aeneid* is at one level sublime Augustan propaganda. But modern scholarship has learned to detect the private beneath the public voice. The Olympian arrogance of *parcere subjectis et debellare superbos* is softened by the melancholy of *sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.* Was the price too high even for Rome? Gate of ivory or gate or horn? It is the fascination of the *Aeneid* that it is still one of literature's great enigmas.No list is conceivable without it.

WILLIAM H. FITZGERALD, S.J.

Ovid
Metamorphoses (First Century A.D.)

Fortunately for the western world, although banished, banned and burned, the work of Ovid lives on. His masterpiece, *The Metamorphoses* (or Quick Changes), now a 300-page book, continues to enchant and fascinate readers today as it did on papyrus rolls, medieval manuscripts, Gutenberg incunabula or in Renaissance classrooms, and as it will no doubt on those new-fangled word-processors.

He traces the track record of love (or lust) from the mud of Chaos to the mirage of Caesarism. It was and is a new kind of history from a man who seemed to believe that love really did (does) make the world go round and round and round. Ten of the last twenty pages unveil the possibly religious heart of the work. There Ovid lets another exile, the Greek philosopher Pythagoras, preach his "wise but powerless" sermon on transmigration of souls, vegetarianism, the flow or flux of the natural world and the spinning wheel of history. The speech cleverly climaxes and encapsulates the whole shifting and sliding contents of the work and maybe of the world as we know it today.

Not only is the closing chapter a masterstroke, but each preceding page and paragraph leading to it is meticulously constructed as if by some omniscient spider. Nearly 250 favorite folk tales are told, each strung delicately and deliciously together with a sleight of hand word-magicians ever since have envied and which has enchanted all lovers of well-told stories.

Some readers and scholars or, better, pedants find Ovid too clever, too facile, too flip. Perhaps. Some readers may also find Ovid candid and comic, sensual and passionate, irreverent and cynical, vivid and fanciful, surprising and unrestrained. He may very well just have been too undignified and unbuttoned for regal Romans and present day puritans.

No matter what today's students think of Ovid, they can't deny he was the major Latin link to the middle ages and the Renaissance and made a global village of continental Europe and England. His influence flows across time and place from Dante and Boccaccio to Chaucer, Spencer, Shakespeare and Milton, to Montaigne and Cervantes, to Bernini and Cellini and Rubens. Every civilized, humane, literate, liberal artist knew and loved Ovid.

KENNETH HAPPE

Plutarch
Lives of Greeks and Romans (Second Century)

"If I were constrained to throw all the books of the ancients into the sea, Plutarch would be the last drowned." So said Montesquieu about the writings of a Greek biographer who lived circa A.D. 50-120. Although by no means an original thinker, Plutarch was a tireless researcher and a charming writer. He composed more than eighty essays, collectively entitled *Moralia*, but is best known and loved for his *Parallel Lives*, a series of twenty-three "paired" biographies in which an eminent Greek is joined to a Roman of similar endowments – for example, the orators Demosthenes and Cicero, the conquerors Alexander and Caesar. Four "unpaired" *Lives* bring the total collection to fifty biographies.

Plutarch's literary interests clearly lie with public men, statesmen, men of the *polis*. He is moreover passionately interested in the moral dimensions of human behavior. Hence, his *Lives* tend to be "exemplary," virtually constituting case studies of a hero's virtue or lack thereof. From Plutarch's point of view, sin and vice bring punishment in their wake. Beware the pitfalls of avarice, ambition, drunkenness, lust.

Plutarch's readers must be eternally grateful for the ancient author's stated conviction that human beings most often reveal their true characters through the little things they say and do. This belief has produced an abundance of memorable Plutarchan anecdotes and these vignettes are the highlights of Plutarch's *Lives*. He is a master storyteller.

We learn from Merle Miller (*Plain Speaking*, pp. 68-69) that the father of President Harry S. Truman read Plutarch aloud to the future president when he was a boy. Truman believed that Plutarch "knew more about politics than all the other writers I've read put together." No small endorsement here!

Complete English translations of Plutarch's *Lives* (with the original Greek text on facing pages) may be found in the Loeb Classical Library series. Selected *Lives* in modern translations are available in several paperbacks, particularly those from Penguin/Viking. Investigation of the *Lives* might profitably and enjoyably commence with Plutarch's *Alcibiades, Alexander, Antony, Marius* and *Crassus*. There is much to learn – and a huge treat in store.

GERARD B. LAVERY

Saint Augustine of Hippo
The Confessions (Fourth Century)

A classic of religious literature by the most influential of western Christian writers! Writing at the end of the fourth century, a young Augustine relates the intellectual, moral, and religious moments

that make up the story of his self-discovery. *The Confessions* is not so much an autobiography as a creation story, for Augustine was fascinated with questions about the origins of things. Indeed, we are treated with the memorable tale of a great conversion; we listen to Augustine's prayer, we hear about those passions he found so difficult to tame, and we watch him outgrow his adolescent preoccupation with being certain. He needed close friendships, he enjoyed solitude, and he loved the life of the mind.

But it was creation that seized hold of his thinking. What is the nature of time? Where do rational beings come from? Why does a spiritual being fashion a material universe? How to interpret the Book of Genesis? What is meant by "the beginning"? Augustine searched his memory for traces of God, he grasped the wonder and the mystery of human freedom, and he discovered that he could never understand who he was without knowing the God who had been creating him. *The Confessions* moves from the making of Augustine to the making of the universe, from recalling one man's moral weakness and the healing of his mind to acknowledging and confessing the truth and goodness of God.

The Confessions is not a simple book; it does not open itself to the impatient and unreflective reader. Yet there is more to Augustine than his *Confessions*; one should consult the splendid biography of Augustine by Peter Brown. Someone handed me a copy of the *Confessions* shortly before I left for college, and it was on reading this book that I recognized for the first time the real difference between the mind of an adolescent and a mind which had come of age. To read Augustine is to step into the world of late antiquity and to discover a Christian classic. *(Translation: R. S. Pine-Coffin, Penguin)*

WILLIAM REISER, S.J.

Dante
The Divine Comedy (14th Century)

Dante's voyage to God goes through the world first. The circles of Hell, as conceived by the poet, are the scenes of human existence, but as they will be forever. The horrors of the world have to be experienced before one can move beyond them to the nonworldly joys of Purgatory and Paradise. All the forms of incontinence and malice have to be known in their terrestrial settings before the voyager can move to the world beyond them.

Dante's motif is one of the oldest in literature: a voyage through the world beyond the world. Homer narrates one in the *Odyssey*, and Virgil, too, in the *Aeneid*. The unchangeableness of human nature gives to the art of such major poets as Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare their permanent relevance. The great poet is perpetually modern.

Midway between Homer and Shakespeare, Dante wrote his *Divina commedia*. The motives of his characters are analyzed from a special viewpoint: that of the Christian principles of right and wrong. Dante is more rigorously the poet-moralist than Homer or Shakespeare, but he is their equal in his use of strongly rhythmical language and in the creating of images.

Dante is, of course, Italy, and all of Italy, the dream of man's secular life that once was Rome; but he is also the promise of the Christian faith, and especially the belief of that faith and of all religions, that the spirit of each person who has lived is immortal. *(Translation: John D. Sinclair, Oxford)*

WALLACE FOWLIE

Geoffrey Chaucer
The Canterbury Tales (14th Century)

The Canterbury Tales would be on anybody's list of medieval or comic or Christian or English masterpieces. It is an unfinished collection of short narratives bound together by a framing narrative in which a number of "sundry folk" gather at a London inn on the eve of their departure on pilgrimage to Canterbury. The hearty host of the inn invites himself to accompany them on the journey and proposes a story-telling contest to while away the hours. The knight, as the most well-born of the group, presents an elegant and philosophical romance of love and war; the drunken Miller immediately replies with a ribald story of sex and violence, and the game is begun.

Chaucer delights himself and us with building ironic relationships between teller and teller, tale and tale, tale and teller, and these relationships in turn combine to create an overall pattern of meaning which includes a kind of medieval relativism within an ultimate and loving over-view that is one and whole. Always poised between game and earnest, most serious, perhaps, when he is most playful, Chaucer never allows the reader to enjoy the secure possession of a single perspective. We see through the eyes of his various characters, especially when they become narrators, and we see the intellectual and moral limits that shape their tales. We see more than they can see, the more their author also sees and the more that no author in his time could possibly have seen. Time itself, the six hundred years between our day and his, has provided a distance from which Chaucer, we know, would have enjoyed looking back at his world. He has anticipated the experience of such a perspective and perhaps even surpassed it by making present to us the illusion, at least, of a view from eternity.

JOHN H. WILSON

Niccolo Machiavelli
The Prince (1513)

An often misunderstood, if not maligned thinker, Machiavelli and his writings – especially *The Prince* – offer an insightful illustration of the contradictions and societal ills of 16th century Italy. More than any other European country, Italy found itself ill-equipped to deal with the challenges and dictates of political modernity. It was a politically fragmented society, in which the worst forms of degradation and political corruption coexisted with a cultural and artistic climate which was uniquely brilliant and creative. Indifference to the use of immoral means for political purposes and the belief that government depended largely on force and cunning were prevailing characteristics of the period. Caught in a chaotic and decaying society, the individual, "masterless" and alone, seemed to be motivated only by his own egoism and by a pragmatic approach to life. These are the central themes of Machiavelli's writings.

The Prince is much more than what it is usually assumed to be, namely a handbook for aspiring autocrats or a set of guidelines for rulers interested in maintaining and expanding their power. It is both a testimony and a warning – a testimony of the unavoidable realities of political life, of the need to separate political expedience from morality, by subordinating means to ends; and a warning against the dangers of leaving unbridled the profoundly aggressive and acquisitive nature of the individual. (This is why *The Prince* should be read together with Machiavelli's *The Discourses*, in which the author's sincere enthusiasm for popular government and for a system of checks and balances emerges in full.)

Deceptively simple in its thematique and structure, *The Prince* is indeed a most complex work, rich in themes and nuances, which make it indispensable reading for anyone interested in politics. The student of international relations will find in it the first, comprehensive elaboration of the tenets and assumptions of *realpolitik* – a way of look

ing at international politics as the interplay among unified, self-reliant nations, each pursuing its self-interest and bent upon self-aggrandizement. Historically, all other theories of international relations have been forced to cope with the Machiavellian conception of power politics.

For the political philosopher, *The Prince* is, among other things, the work which breaks away from the idealism of ancient philosophy, by looking at political life as *it is* rather than as what *ought to be*. In this respect, Machiavelli can be considered to be the first modern thinker in that he brings politics down to earth. The historically-minded student will regard *The Prince* as being much more than an enticing photograph of 16th century Italy; he will see in it a movie which captures the dilemmas and hesitations of a society in transition, hesitantly feeling its way towards modernity. *(Translation: Leo Paul DeAlvarez, University of Texas Press)*

MAURIZIO VANNICELLI

Erasmus of Rotterdam
The Praise of Folly (1511)

Crossing the Alps in the summer of 1509 after an extended stay in Italy, Erasmus, the greatest of the Northern humanists, conceived of the idea of a mock-praise of folly. He wrote it down in a few days, dedicating it to his friend Thomas More, not without good-naturedly teasing him with a pun on his name (*moriae*encomium).

The basic literary device of Erasmus's ironic-satiric masterpiece is simple enough: from a pulpit Lady Folly delivers a praise of herself and her accomplishments to an audience of faithful followers: flattery, deception, and self-love – all manifestations of folly – are the vital forces that keep the fabric of society intact and sustain man in his search for happiness. To prove her point, Folly parades an endless variety of professions and social classes

before our eyes, ranging from beggars to kings and monks to bishops and cardinals, whose pomp and ostentation she never tires of contrasting with the simplicity of Christ and his apostles.

No one north of the Alps could write a livelier, wittier and more elegant Latin than Erasmus. After almost 500 years, *The Praise of Folly* has lost nothing of its freshness, humor and wit.

And Lady Folly still reigns supreme. *(Translation: Clarence Miller, Yale University Press, 1979)*

ECKHARD BERNSTEIN

Martin Luther
To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation (1520)

Recognized as a great religious thinker by Protestants and Catholics alike, Martin Luther (1483-1546) had an incalculable impact on Christianity, going far beyond the borders of his own country.

A prolific writer until his death – the Weimar edition consists of more than 100 volumes – Luther set down his principal ideas in three pamphlets published as early as 1520, *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and his address *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*. Of these I recommend especially the latter because it articulates most concisely Luther's main aims. Ethics, politics, history, economics, doctrine, all play a role in this work.

Starting with his theological premises (priesthood of all believers, man's justification by faith alone and the centrality of the Gospel), Luther develops a comprehensive reform program that is essentially two-pronged: the emancipation of the state from the authority of the Church and the purification of the Church itself. His numerous detailed recommendations include abolish-

ment of pilgrimages and many church rituals, permission for priests to marry and the end of the "intolerable taxing and fleecing of Germany by Rome."

Luther's treatises, written with eloquence and frank outspokenness, were greeted with hearty applause in Germany. The pope, on the other hand, was less enthusiastic about this bold challenge to his authority. Luther was excommunicated, and a year later, in 1521, summoned to the Diet of Worms. Refusing to recant, he was put under the ban of the Empire. The fateful split into a Protestant and Catholic church had begun. (*Three Treatises, Fortress Press, 1960*)

ECKHARD BERNSTEIN

Francois Rabelais
Gargantua and Pantagruel (1533-35)

Janus-faced, Rabelais was rooted in the Middle Ages by early background but turned with great enthusiasm to the new learning of the Renaissance, to the culture of the Ancients, their scientific knowledge and philosophy. First a Franciscan Friar, he was forced to find refuge in the Benedictine Order when his superiors considered him heretical because of his passion to learn Greek. Rabelais then studied medicine at the famous faculty at Montpellier, was secularized and served as a physician at the main hospital in Lyons. About this time (1530) he began his career as author and would write four novels: *Pantagruel*, *Gargantua*, the *Third Book*, and the *Fourth Book*.

In these works (the first prose novels written in French), Rabelais celebrates the new scholarship, moral concerns, and spirit of the early Northern Renaissance and reveals himself in the process to be, along with More and Erasmus, one of the period's foremost humanists. In his plots Rabelais creates as protagonists a family of princely and "part time" giants whom we follow through a comic prose epic concerning the birth, education, and exploits of Gargantua and his son Pantagruel.

Hidden under these ribald and burlesque situations, however, there is a very serious core of meaning. The giants, in fact, personify their author's ideals in action and word. *Gargantua*, for example, could be subtitled "The Education of a Christian Prince," since it forwards Rabelais' strikingly avant-garde views on education; it also expresses in the Abbey of Theleme episode his fervent belief in the natural goodness of man (provided he be humanistically trained).

Rabelais must be read in order to appreciate the debt we owe Renaissance humanism for so many of our modern attitudes on such matters as war, tolerance, sexual freedom, belief in natural goodness, and aversion to authoritarian systems or dogmas of any kind. He also richly deserves our attention as one of the greatest geniuses of language usage; he has much in common with Joyce in this respect. His prose is peppered with all levels of speech, with *argot*, *patois*, striking neologisms, folk sayings, parodies and delicious (if somewhat obscene) puns. Through his magnificent and unbridled outpouring of language, Rabelais has come to represent, in fact, the very life principle itself and the contrary to all that is sterile or restrictive. Read him as an antidote to the spiritual and intellectual anemia which surrounds us on all sides today.

T. FRASER

Montaigne
The Essays (1550-88)

Since their initial publication over four-hundred years ago, Montaigne's *Essays* remain the most remarkable and successful experiment in the investigation of the self. When, at the ripe old age of thirty-eight, Montaigne retired from his legal duties to the solitude and tranquility of his tower-library near Bordeaux, he would never cease to pursue this aim: "I study myself," he declared in an early essay, "more than any other subject. It is my metaphysics, it is my physics."

As he expanded the scope of his "essays" (by this he meant the "tests" or "trials" that his mind set out to explore), he became convinced that his views did not reflect himself alone but were truly representative of all humanity. He therefore dramatically amplified the earlier assertion, "I am the groundwork of my book," with the claim: "Each man bears the entire form of the human condition." It is by this process of self-analysis through his musings and writings and their subsequent application to all of mankind that Montaigne created the freest and most intimate of literary forms – the essay – and set the mold for all future attempts at self portraiture.

The products of a supremely intelligent and sensitive moralist as well as a human being intensely interested in all aspects of life, *The Essays* encompass an astonishing variety of topics. Nothing in fact was too insignificant or personal not to become grist for Montaigne's mill. As moral probings *The Essays* teach us to respect the amazing complexity and diversity of human nature; at the same time they encourage us to learn to recognize and value what each of us possesses (the "forme maitresse" or individual pattern that distinguishes us essentially from one another). And they are among the most precious and cogent documents ever written in defense of the notion of the individual conscience.

The Essays have been read as a kind of moral breviary by famous and important people through the centuries. Be warned in advance, however, that reading them will not be easy. As with anything that is worthwhile, they do not yield their treasure without effort. They are not to be read at one sitting but should be meditated upon, chewed, digested. Above all do *not* read them if you fear to grow in moral perception and self knowledge. They are infectious and you will never be the same after your first immersion.

T. FRASER

The Life of Teresa of Jesus: The Autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila (16th Century)

Are you aware of the strong and persistent tradition of mystical experiences in the Catholic Church? Do you know that such experiences are not confined to those choosing to live life in total isolation, and that the effect of authentic mystical experiences is not to make one withdraw from an active Christian life? Do you know that first-hand accounts of such experiences need not be remote, abstract, or oblique?

Do you think that humility is a virtue whose time has gone? Is daily prayer something that doesn't quite fit into your life? Do you think that an annual two-week vacation is one of the necessities of life? Does the idea of self-sacrifice seem pointless to you? Do you think any account of a saintly life must be inevitably boring and irrelevant? Do you think that the agitation of an entire town and the reformation of an international organization by a single, strong, intelligent woman could only happen in this century? Would you like to get to know Christ better?

If your response was no to any of the first group of questions or yes to any of the latter two groups of questions then you should begin to read *The Autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila* and let her words work on you. Teresa wrote this autobiography only because of the insistence of her confessors, so the book is not a polemic, is not deliberate propaganda, and is definitely not sentimental nonsense. She describes the halting progress of her spiritual life, her mystical and ecstatic experiences of Jesus, her feelings of inadequacy before the heavenly gifts she receives, and her beleaguered efforts to reform the 16th-century Carmelite order, all in an engaging, direct, and open manner. In addition to her autobiography, Teresa also wrote two other excellent discussions of spiritual growth: *The Way of Perfection* and the *Interior Castle*. In addition to Teresa's works, there are numerous other first-hand accounts of mystical experiences and intense spiritual lives, including those of Catherine of Genoa, Catherine of Siena, and John of the Cross. *(Translation: A. E. Allison Peers, Image)*

R.H. GARVEY

Miguel de Cervantes
Don Quixote *(Part I: 1605; Part II: 1615)*

One uneventful day, a middle-aged gentleman decides to arm himself as a knight errant and leave the comforts of his household in La Mancha for the uncertain world of adventure on the dusty plains of Castille. This decision, strange because the age of knight errantry had long since passed, is made less bewildering by our knowledge of the gentleman's peculiar madness: Don Quixote has lost his wits through an immersion in novels of chivalry and, thus, has come to accept what he has read as true. As a result, he reinterprets the world about him according to his understanding of the fictitious chivalric world.

If this brief description suggests the makings of a parody, it is because *Don Quixote* begins as a loving parody of a literary genre which, for Cervantes, was utterly unrealistic. The parody in *Don Quixote*, however, is but the kernel of a much grander creation. *Don Quixote* is, among many other things, the portrayal of a man's striving to live a meaningful life in a world of illusory perceptions and deceit. It is also, as we learn from Sancho the squire, an acknowledgement that life's meaning may ultimately reside in the very act of striving for a purposeful existence.

Philosophical implications notwithstanding, *Don Quixote*'s universal appeal for almost four centuries stems chiefly from Cervantes's ability to render basic concerns of humankind through an intensely engaging story and compelling characters. Moreover, his ability to sustain the illusion of life, while richly endowing the book with multiple meanings, bespeaks a mastery over novelistic technique unprecedented before his time. Not surprisingly, Cervantes has come to be acknowledged the creator of the modern European novel. *(Translation: Ormsby, Norton)*

JORGE H. VALDES

The Riverside Shakespeare

The Riverside Shakespeare contains everything a reader needs in order to understand and relish the plays. Perhaps most immediately useful are the glossaries; the footnotes is ample aids to word meanings. Each play is introduced by a prominent scholar's discussion of the date and integrity of the text, the sources of the story, and – most important for the reader – a critical analysis of the play which can guide one to deeper understanding. Harvard's Harry Levin has written a generous and engaging general introduction to the book. And, very helpful to those who visualize the plays in the theatre are the copious illustrations, in color and black and white.

But the treasures of the book are the plays – patterns of human action and so mirrors of our lives. Contemplation of them, whether in the theatre or on the page, enlarges our spirit, brings it closer to full humanity, by forming it on the greatest theatrical mind the world has known.

If you are new to Shakespeare, start with a few scenes just to get the hang of it. Approach a scene as if you were acting one of the roles; break down each sentence till you can say it as if it were your own. Here are some scenes to try; they are all about love:

> *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act II, scene ii, lines 35 to 65 (a young couple is about to sleep in the woods);
> *Twelfth Night*, Act III, scene l, lines 95-164 (Viola is disguised as Cesario, a young man; Countess Olivia is in love with him/her);
> *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, scene V (Romeo and Juliet meet)
> *Hamlet*, Act III, scene 1, lines 89-161.

When you've mastered some scenes – or if you didn't need the exercise – start reading the plays.

Begin, perhaps, with *Hamlet*; the language is accessible, the story is exciting, and finding the meaning is a challenge. *Twelfth Night* laughs at love and accepts the ambiguity of our life. *Richard III* is one of the great villains of the theatre. And we understand Romeo and Juliet – and their families – immediately.

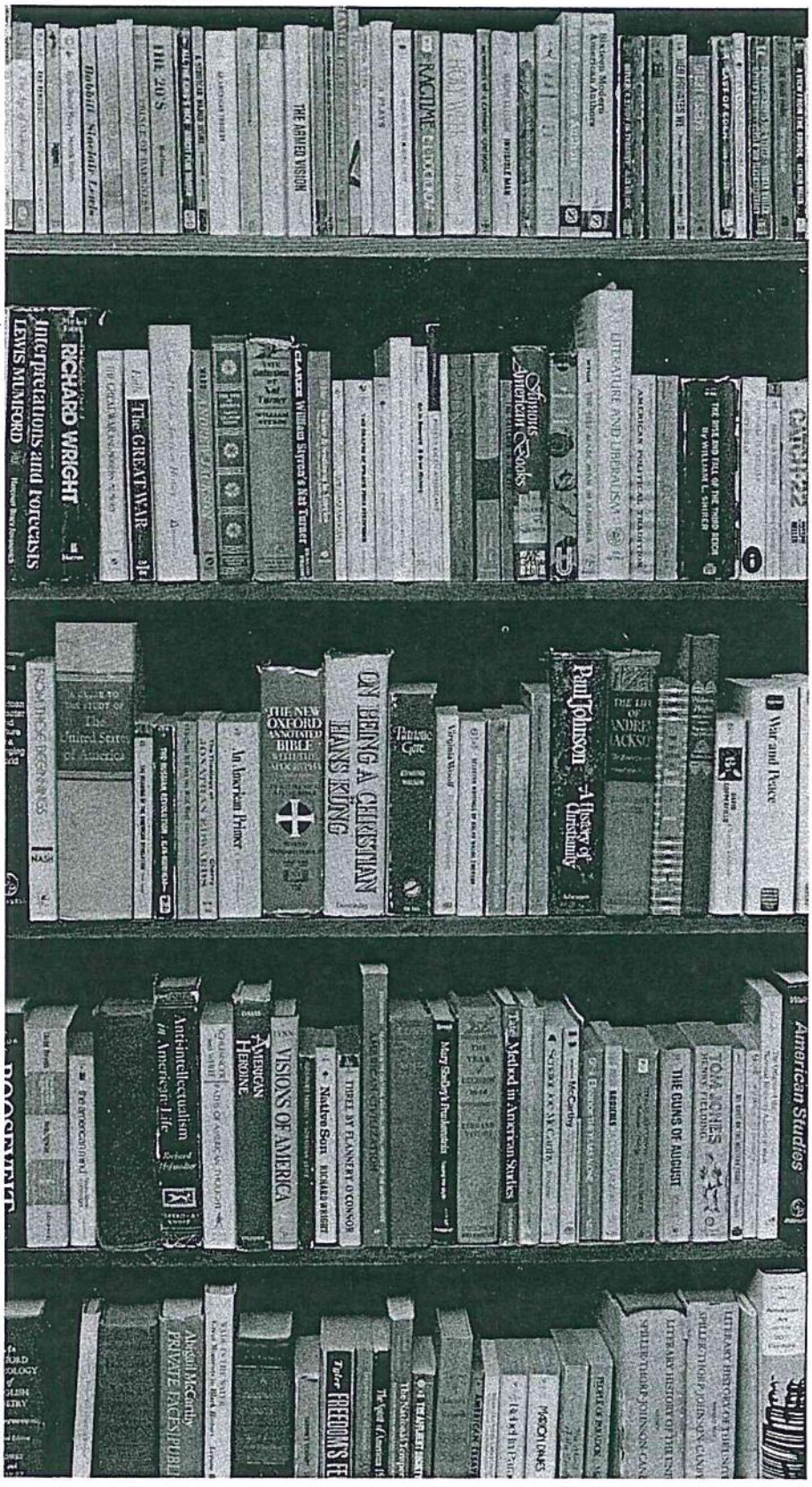
Once you've read that much, you have lifetime access to the stage/world of Shakespeare's imagination.

EDWARD J. HERSON

Daniel Defoe
Robinson Crusoe (1719)

Robinson Crusoe should intrigue any fiction reader since it is the first example ever in the English language of the form that in our time dominates literature: the novel. *Robinson Crusoe*'s self-advertising as a conventional travel book of adventures (chronological, topical, no overall informing idea or theme) sets up its ulterior purposes. Each of Robinson's experiences is presented carefully in relation to several patterns of meaning. First, the book plays against the tradition of Puritan spiritual autobiography, in which it is each person's duty to record his life's events so that he may study their individual meaning in relation to Scripture and gauge God's satisfaction with his progress. However, autobiography is perhaps the least objective literary mode; autobiographers inevitably (often unconsciously) tend to shape the events of their lives to fit whatever meaning now seems most gratifying or significant. It is fascinating to watch Robinson sculpt complex, and partly arbitrary, patterns of meaning from the often shapeless realities of his experience.

Second, Robinson's religious stabilizing procedure is constantly economic as well. Crusoe represents capitalism, with its incessant transformations (Robinson can't stay still, before, during, and after his stay on the island), and with its diminishing of social relationships in favor of self-sufficiency, acquiring material objects and then protecting them. (Alone, on a deserted island, Robinson builds a walled fortress; when, after many years, Crusoe establishes a social relationship with Friday, the relationship is inevitably master and servant.) This particular myth of the economic self has been one of the most powerful in western culture. Though initially he is hamstrung by dilemmas – morality *versus* economics; submission to God *versus* self-assertion for


THE ARMED VISION
RACHMANINOFF
Famous American Books
RICHARD WRIGHT
Interpretations and Forecasts
LEWIS MUMFORD
The GREAT WAR
War and Peace
ON BEING A CHRISTIAN
HANS KÜNG
THE NEW OXFORD ANNOTATED BIBLE
Paul Johnson
A History of Christianity
An American Primer
American Studies
VISIONS OF AMERICA
AMERICAN HEROINE
Antiintellectualism in American Life
Mary Shelley's Frankenstein
Nature's Sons
THE GUNS OF AUGUST
TOM JONES
Three Method in American Studies
Abigail McCarthy
PRIVATE FACE OF A PUBLIC WOMAN

survival and prosperity – ultimately Crusoe develops techniques to concretize a specifically Puritan doctrine: that God wants good men to prosper; that moral behavior is also good economic behavior; that submission to God leads to survival and prosperity. His success in accomplishing this has entered permanently into our cultural subconscious.

RICHARD RODINO

Jonathan Swift
Gulliver's Travels (1726)

Gulliver's Travels, a prose satire in four books, is the most shining gem of the greatest age of European satire: 1660-1740. Its targets are partly specific – belligerent European politics, English oppression of Ireland, foolish scientific experiments – and partly general – the preposterous pride of human beings in their own worth, the dangers of indulging the mind in irrational fancies and imaginings. To these ends, in the first two books Swift powerfully dramatizes the concept of scale: how do men and the world look when much smaller than usual? And what unpleasant new truth may you see when the world appears six times larger than usual? Gulliver's character is the key to these two books, since all our information comes from his sensibility, and even after 250 years of discussion, many questions remain about Gulliver. Do Gulliver's inadequacies represent the (dismal) best that human nature is capable of? (The way he actually prides himself on his meanspiritedness mirrors uncomfortably well our own everyday behavior.) Or is Gulliver himself the unwitting victim of Swift's satire, bumbling about, congratulating himself, airing his own pettiness for us to scorn?

Books III and IV return us to the world of "middle status," but leave most readers highly uncomfortable with that status. Book III takes Gulliver to a grotesque nation of pure empirical science; Book IV insinuates that animals, which are not naturally destructive, cruel, or filthy, are probably preferable to men and women, who are all those things.

One endlessly intriguing aspect is this book's attack upon its own reader. It is unwilling to allow readers a privileged position in the literary experience, sitting back, unthreatened, merely witnessing characters undergoing the story's events. As you read *Gulliver's Travels*, you will find your expectations aroused precisely so that they can be teased or disappointed; your confidence in Gulliver and your willingness to see the world through his eyes will endure a kind of roller-coaster ride. In fact, the best critical discussions of *Gulliver's Travels* in the last ten years have stressed that the satire of its own readers is a crucial part of Swift's attack on our complacency and self-satisfied detachment. The "Good Physician" gives pain, so that he may cure.

RICHARD RODINO

Henry Fielding
Tom Jones (1749)

Fielding's *Tom Jones*, declared Coleridge, is one of three perfect plots in all Western literature (*Oedipus Rex* and Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* are the others), an observation the more remarkable because *Tom Jones* was one of the very first novels ever written in the English language. Fielding, you might say, perfected the form of the novel while inventing it.

Tom Jones's structure has an architectural perfectness: for six books the hero lives at Squire Allworthy's estate; when he is exiled for a minor offense, he spends six books in literal and metaphorical transition on the road, involving sundry adventures; the final six books are devoted to his escapades in London. (This three-part structure has reminded many readers of a Palladian bridge, the eighteenth century's most familiar and significance-loaded architectural feature of transition.) Moreover, this symmetry is rendered conspicuously and emphatically, seeming to advertise the narrator's confident understanding of characters and events along with a festive sense of the predictableness of human affairs.

There's the first rub, for Fielding pointedly disliked the calm orderliness of Palladian design and made sure to give it a swipe in *Tom Jones*. In many other ways, Fielding insinuates the sheer ambiguity of human doings, the artificiality of contrivance, the unrealness of safety and orderliness.

In other words, *Tom Jones* is full of contradictory signals, relentlessly structured and orderly (Tom's return to his birthright and the attendant restoration of social stability seem fairy taleish in their inevitableness), yet also inclined to chip away at its own certainty and apparent cheerfulness. For example, most important characters are tagged with names that seem easy clues to their traits but often these clues are deceptive or at least pointedly inadequate. Squire Allworthy, for instance, though generally a paragon, is peculiarly short-sighted and critically weak-willed in the clutch.

Furthermore, *Tom Jones* places high demands on its readers. Most of its books begin with Fielding's famous disquisitions on the Art of the Novel, which sometimes contradict, other times accord with Fielding's actual practice in the book's action. Moreover, Fielding's narrator makes a point of addressing the reader directly, though often disingenuously, in a way that is sometimes called "outreach" – he refuses to allow his readers the safety of third-person existence; he constantly pulls them into the book, blurring the ordinary distinction between the reading experience and a reality outside the text. This novel requires full participation from its reader in the making of meaning. In the "Man of the Hill's Tale," for example, in a remarkable act of self-consciousness, Fielding makes the Man a surrogate for his own principal narrative voice while Tom and his companion Partridge parody our own roles as the readers of *Tom Jones*; it's a marvellous episode, stunningly evocative of very recent experiments in fiction by Nabokov, Barth, Irving, yet perhaps even more sophisticated than anything these post-modernist writers have yet achieved.

RICHARD RODINO

Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Confessions (1784)

Rousseau's *Confessions* are less the story of his life than the story of his emotions and of his soul; some have called them an indecent exposure of his soul because the author did not disdain demonstrating a certain exhibitionism, spiced with eroticism. Yet his Confessions are a masterpiece of psychological analysis, as well as an eloquent and passionate attack, very frequently unjust, against his enemies. The virtues and the vices he describes about himself were congenial to much in the spirit of the age, and produced a powerful effect on the reader. His lyricism is the element that captivated the later adherents to the Romantic movement; and because of it Rousseau became the master of sentimental literature. Goethe will drink at its font; so will Wordsworth, Chateaubriand, and a thousand others. The Confessions reveal the spiritual wealth of man, as well as all the treasures of his interior

life, pointing to the latent powers that can be found in the human person. Here we have Rousseau the individualist, who preaches the values of the individual. The essayists and the novelists of the Romantic movement were to imitate Rousseau slavishly.

ALFRED R. DESAUTELS, S.J.

Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay
The Federalist (1788)

The Federalist originated as a set of essays published over the pseudonym "Publius" in various New York newspapers in 1787-88 with the expressed intention of persuading voters to favor the ratification of the United States Constitution. Yet its authors also had a further end in view: to provide an authoritative exposition and explanation of the fundamental principles underlying that document, and the reasons for its particular provisions, to which later generations of citizens might refer in order better to understand the nature of the American regime and hence to guide the future development of the republic in a manner consistent with its Founders' intention. *The Federalist* contains classic discussions of such principles as the separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, representation, judicial review, and the advantages of an extended republic in generating a multiplicity of factions whose mutual checking action would serve to protect individual rights against the danger of governmental tyranny. But while elucidating the various safeguards relied on by the Founders to prevent governmental arbitrariness, the authors also stress the necessity of making government adequately strong and energetic to enable it to secure the liberty of the individual against domestic and foreign threats.

Contrary to the claims that are sometimes made today by conservative and neo-Marxist scholars, it is not the case that the American Founders were hostile to

democracy. Rather – as *The Federalist* makes evident – they viewed popular government as a form of rule having its own peculiar weaknesses, for which the architects of such a regime – no less than the founders of a monarchy or aristocracy – must devise remedies in advance. The authors of *The Federalist* claim, and demonstrate, that the remedies the Founders devised for the diseases to which republican government is prone are themselves wholly consistent with republicanism. The historically unparallelled liberty, prosperity, and civic peace that Americans have enjoyed for over two centuries attests to their success in that endeavor. Yet the continued maintenance of that heritage depends on the education of each successive genertion in the principles on which our regime rests, an education for which there is no better single source than *The Federalist. (Mentor)*

DAVID L. SCHAEFER

Jane Austen
Pride and Prejudice (1813)

Pride and Prejudice was written between 1809-12 out of a rejected work entitled *First Impressions* produced in 1796-97. It has become the most read and reread of Jane Austen's six finished novels.

While each of the novels is very different, *P&P* shares with Austen's other "two inches of ivory" (her metaphor) a number of characteristics. "Three or four Families in a Country Village" provide the *dramatis personae* and setting for her comedy in which intimate observations of character, social foibles and vulgarities are self-revealed and delicately satirized. Austen's exploitation of the popular conventions of 18th century romances is evident everywhere: the plot is a variant Cinderella tale; the hero is a tall, dark, princely stranger (but at the ball he won't smile, talk or dance); the heroine (who none but the author and reader know is quite superior) has the allure of lynx eyes and a sharp tongue; the villain is Wickham; the action includes balls, verbal duels,

and rescues; the wicked and silly are foiled; proposals, separations and reunions follow in proper time and order. And everywhere the pressure of conventions transformed generates its realism, its humor, wit, and wisdom.

The history of the gradual union of Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy, one held back by unconquerable pride and the other by prejudice, is propelled by engaging characters in pursuit of pleasure, estate, marriage and love. And while the action has the symmetry and attire of a formal dance and the prose is exuberant and epigrammatic, it is not always "too light, and bright, and sparkling" or innocently romantic; rather, it is a furious and often cruel ritual chase: *et in arcadia ego.*

Despite the pride, prejudice, hypocrisy and sheer "follies and nonsense" which taint and disorder the social fabric, the marriage of hero and heroine demonstrates commitment to ideal social values. The union affirms and renews traditional moral and social structures. As her hero and heroine provide for their requirements for happiness by validating social obligations, Austen discloses her ethical kinship to Fielding.

Austen also anticipates some of the technical and thematic grounds on which George Eliot and Henry James later flourished. In *P&P* she begins to develop (it is fully realized in *Emma*) what James would later call the central intelligence, the narrative strategy which emphasizes the heroine's perspective and which records the growth of her perception: Austen's heroines are endowed with the ability and responsibility to choose. Austen's dramatic dialogue has seldom been equalled (*P&P* has been successfully transcribed to the stage, film and television); its wit bristles with ironies and reverberates with ambiguities; she is able to keep in the air both what is said and what is not said, to represent thoughts without words. *(Vintage)*

MAURICE A. GERACHT

Stendhal (Henri Beyle)
The Red and the Black (1830)

The Red and the Black, taken as a historical novel, is the requiem for an heroic age: the Napoleonic era when the slogan "careers open to talent" was in effect, and when men of energy, courage, and honor, wearing the red uniform of the *Grande Armee*, extended the French Empire across the continent of Europe. For Henri Beyle (Stendhal), France of the Restoration was only a shadow of its former self; terrified by the specter of its revolutionary past, it was once again ruled by a narrowminded, soulless, and grasping aristocracy of wealth.

Into this climate so admirably recreated in the novel, Stendhal places his *enfant terrible,* the projection of all his deepest psychological desires of fulfillment, Julien Sorel, who from the very lowest echelon of society (he too is a carpenter's son), will make war against the hated conspiracy of bureaucrats, parvenus, and aristocratic snobs. Julien is indeed worthy of the task and becomes one of literature's most accomplished rakes. (Or is he a rake *manque?*) With a career in the military (the red) no longer open he gravitates stoically to one as a priest in the church (the black) which he discerns (correctly) as the institution now wielding the power through its undivided support for the restored monarch.

Stendhal has his little Goth at the gate ascend the ladder to success with a dizzying rapidity leading him from the provinces, to the seminary (a kind of French West Point of hypocrisy in this period), to the most aristocratic Parisian salon. The principal key to success is, of course, Julien's handsome eyes and charm with women. He seduces Mme de Renal and Mlle de la Mole, the first a loving maternal sort, the other a steely-eyed feminist before her time. In each instance he emerges unscathed and one more step up the ladder because, like his hero Napoleon, he has iron will and extraordinary power of analysis.

Julien's ascent to the top is disastrously checked in the end and the reader is forced to assume the fascinating task of analyzing the motives which have led the hero to attempted murder, renunciation of driving ambition, and a kind of moral suicide as he offers his head to the very ruling class that he has scorned and contested. If, as I strongly believe, the ultimate test of any great literary characterization is an opacity that prevents the reader from making a facile analysis of motivation of conduct, then Julien Sorel passes with flying colors. I leave to future readers the challenge of forming their own opinions on Julien's motives.

This novel is one of the great psychological masterpieces of all times; and it presents for the first time in literature the modern "alienated" hero in the character of Julien who, refusing to compromise his inner integrity to fit into an ugly, sordid, and immoral society, makes of his death the ultimate protest. Small wonder, then, that *The Red and the Black* is often used as assigned reading in a variety of courses at Holy Cross. *(Penguin)*

T. FRASER

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Faust (1832)

One of the great literary monuments of Western Civilization, *Faust* is like a great cathedral, a hodge-podge of conflicting styles and structures, which somehow miraculously blend into one magnificent artifice because of the great unifying idea behind it. Goethe began work on *Faust* in his early twenties, finishing it a year before his death at 82. Intended more for reading than for performance, the play is the repository of the wisdom of a great mind accumulated over a lifetime.

Faust is the representative modern man, the great individual who through constant striving, attempts to become like God. His adventures lead him from the "little world" where he seduces an innocent girl, to the "great world" of the emperor's court and an encounter with the shade of Helen of Troy. Despite his pact with

encounter with the shade of Helen of Troy. Despite his pact with diabolical powers, however, Goethe's hero is not damned. Instead he is redeemed through the two forces which for Goethe infuse human existence with meaning: love and man's desire to excel.

A massive work, and a treasure trove of romantic art, music and literary imitation, *Faust* is difficult for English readers because it is a German verse play. Manifold classical allusions in Part Two make an annotated edition desirable. No English version is entirely successful; however, the best modern edition, with commentary, is the Norton. *(Translation: Walter Arndt, Norton)*

WILLIAM L. ZWIEBEL

Honore de Balzac
Pere Goriot (1834)

One of the 97 "scenes" or views of French Society that Balzac offered in his grandiose fresco entitled the *Comedie humaine,* the novel *Pere Goriot* is certainly the best introduction to the literary universe of this brilliant novelist and visionary. Written in the early 1830s when Balzac was living in a Paris garret and working around the clock to keep his creditors at bay, the novel portrays modern society and Paris as its center with unmitigated harshness. Society is viewed in biological-ecological terms as various groupings of zoological "types" battling for survival with only the strongest and most wily achieving survival. As the site of this struggle Paris is described as a kind of jungle, a "mud hole," a moral slough peopled by modern Iroquois.

Once this moral climate has been described, Balzac places in this teeming "ocean" of striving his alter-ego, a young, proud, and aristocratic Southerner from a ruined but noble family who, like the author, sets out to make his way in Paris as a law student. At this point in the novel Balzac's supreme talent as a great visionary writer comes to the fore as he charts the course of Rastignac's progress in Parisian society. Using demonic inflation he elevates his major characters to the level of great moral forces. The enigmatic

jack-of-all-trades and ex-convict Vautrin and the pathetic retired pasta merchant, Goriot – both lodgers with Rastignac in the dingy and smelly Pension Vauquer – are gradually made to undergo brilliant apotheoses: Vautrin, literature's first major homosexual character, is unveiled as a modern Mephistopheles, an arch demon who tries to corrupt Rastignac and get him into his net; Goriot, one of Balzac's great monomaniacal "types" (a kind of 19th Century bourgeois King Lear) is revealed to be "the Christ of Paternity" who is ravaged by the incredible greed and cruelty of his two atrocious daughters.

And even a century later, the novel still retains its strange power of evoking in graphic terms many of the moral dilemmas and choices encountered by young men and women out to "make their way" in society. I personally view Balzac's *Comedie humaine* with *Pere Goriot* as the opening chapters of a modern *Inferno.*

T. FRASER

Alexis de Tocqueville
Democracy in America (1835-1840)

Alexis de Tocqueville – French aristocrat, lawyer, political leader, and man of letters – traveled to the United States in 1831 with his friend Gustave de Beaumont. His account of American society based on this trip, published as *Democracy in America* in 1835 and 1840, is a brilliant example of social analysis and, perhaps, the greatest interpretation of American culture ever written.

De Tocqueville's writing arises out of a deep moral and intellectual concern with the profound social, economic, and political revolutions of 19th century Europe. To understand this transformation, de Tocqueville turned to the United States, that society in which social equality and political democracy had reached their most complete development, and remarkably, to de Tocqueville, their most viable forms. How, de Tocqueville asked, had America, unlike France, been able to create political institutions that protected liberty as well as freedom in a society without tradi-

tional restraints on human behavior? His answer – that American values and the pluralism of its institutional life created an alternative basis for social and political order – provides theoretical insight into the social foundations of democracy and the particular structure of American political life.

De Tocqueville's inquiry into the character of American society also explores many other facets of American life. He analyzes the effects of social equality on values, documenting an American emphasis on individualism and change, on practicality and materialism. He situates American manners, education, and literature in the context of the emerging middle-class society. And yet, through all, he remains sensitive to the limits and contradictions of American society: the enslavement of American blacks, the dilemmas of majority rule, and the ominous power of the emerging industrial "aristocracy."

To understand yourself, as an American, and the society in which you live, read *Democracy in America*.

DAVID M. HUMMON

Soren Kierkegaard
Fear and Trembling (1843)

One task only occupies the author of *Fear and Trembling*. That task is to bring thought face-to-face with faith in God. The task is not to place thought next to faith in order to compare the two; nor is it to replace faith by thought. The task is rather to think what the idea of faith in God means and to do so without substitutions, without additions and without deletions.

To concentrate on this thought, Kierkegaard invites the reader to focus his attention upon Abraham who became the father of faith by his willingness, in faith, to kill his son Isaac. Unlike many contemporary thinkers, Abraham did not seek to be beyond faith; what could that have meant to Abraham? Unlike many contemporary thinkers, Abraham did not believe in this world but believ-

ed in God *for* this world; his faith showed itself only after the infinite resignation which enabled him to let go of everything. For Abraham faith was no spontaneous movement of the heart. He travelled *four days* with his son whom he planned to kill when they reached Mount Moriah – four days of fear and trembling during which the mind of Abraham was made to "shudder" by the thought of the horrendous deed he was contemplating.

Kierkegaard asks only one thing of his readers – that they have "the courage to think a thought whole." *Fear and Trembling* is a small book but quite large enough for anyone who is drawn to think wholly the one thought that it raises. *(Translation: Walter Lourie, Doubleday, Anchor, 1954)*

CLYDE PAX

Emily Bronte
Wuthering Heights (1847)

She produced one book of poetry and one novel. The poetry is largely unread. The novel has been a household word ever since its publication a year before her premature death at 30. Generations have read the novel as simply a gothic romance, replete with ghosts, fantastic landscapes, doomed families, swarthy lovers and pale heroines. But for every thousand gothic romances ever written and still being written today, there is no novel competing for the stature of *Wuthering Heights.*

Writing long after the vogue of gothic fiction had died out, Bronte deals with the nature of passion in conflict with human reason. She is a post-Romantic writing a romantic novel to examine and criticize romantic love. Focusing on passion that defies human convention, amoral passion that runs its course, confronting ultimately the dark mystery of the human spirit, the novel is like a Greek tragedy in that the fatal love between Cathy and Heathcliff, the darkly handsome gypsy foundling, cannot spend itself until they and everyone around them are maimed or destroyed.

The masterful narrative structure leads the reader, and the naive narrator, Mr. Lockwood, out of the world of ordinary events into one of darkness and ambiguity. Each part of the story is pieced together from various narrative voices, including a dead women's diary; and, yet, no voice is completely unbiased or trustworthy. Here we see life as a continuous series of violent confrontations – total disorder in the midst of elaborate visible order. At the end we are tempted to think of Hamlet's words: "There are more things in heaven and earth. . . Than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Or, perhaps, like the dazed listener to supernatural events in Coleridge's poem, we turn away "A sadder and a wiser man."

PHILIP C. RULE, S.J.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles
The Communist Manifesto (1848)

The English edition of 1888 contains a most useful Preface by Engels which gives an account of the genesis of the *Manifesto* and something of its subsequent history in the 19th century.

The *Manifesto* is by every criterion a living classic. It presents concisely, yet with precision, in eloquent language easily grasped by even the most rudimentarily educated, the essence of a highly sophisticated *Weltanschauung*. This world-view, more fully elaborated and developed by Marx and Engels in the 35 years following the publication of the *Manifesto*, and for an additional 12 years by Engels after Marx's death, is today truly cosmopolitan. Literally hundreds of millions, from lowly peasants to skilled workers to learned scholars and professionals, have been attracted to it and live by its principles.

As in every classic work, the *Manifesto* contains a timeless message within a dated setting. Yet a special caution must be exercised in the reading of this work. The historical nature of knowledge and truth is central to the thought of Marx. Once the knowledge of the Marxist world-view has been arrived at in the

progression of history, the development of this truth, that is, the theoretical evolution of Marxist doctrine, is to come about for Marx through the concrete historical practice and struggles that have occurred *since* the writing of the *Manifesto*. The timeless message itself develops with the passage of time through the course of history and its ongoing class struggles.

GEORGE H. HAMPSCH

Charles Dickens
David Copperfield (1850)

David Copperfield was Dicken's "favourite child" among his fourteen completed novels. Partly autobiographical, long and leisurely, somewhat loosely plotted, overpoweringly nostalgic and preoccupied with the theme of memory, it brilliantly reveals what this most popular of all great novelists has to offer. *David Copperfield* succeeds wonderfully in simulating the passage of years, seemingly of lived experience. The novel evokes that sense of a mysteriously linked past and present which defines what one is. Thus its great length is no drawback but a virtue, and most are sorry to see the book end. "Parts of it seem like fragments of our forgotten infancy," said novelist-critic G.K. Chesterton. But *David Copperfield* also offers two other distinctive Dickensian qualities: haunting evocation of place, and a gallery of living characters who have escaped their author and passed into the Western literary imagination. Who forgets the sylvan "Rookery" of David's childhood, the charming boat-house of his friends the Peggotys, the sadistic Mr. Creakle's dingy school, the labyrinthine back streets of squalid underworld London, the funereal and villainous Murdstones, the floridly optimistic Mr. Micawber, the loving but aggressive eccentric Betsey Trotwood, the slimy hypocrite Uriah Heep forever declaring how "humble" he is?

Whether you seek the essence of Dickens's imagination, or one of literature's finest evocations of childhood lived and retold, or a family of places and people who will always haunt those of us who have met them – *David Copperfield* is indispensable.

JOHN BOYD

Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Scarlet Letter (1850)

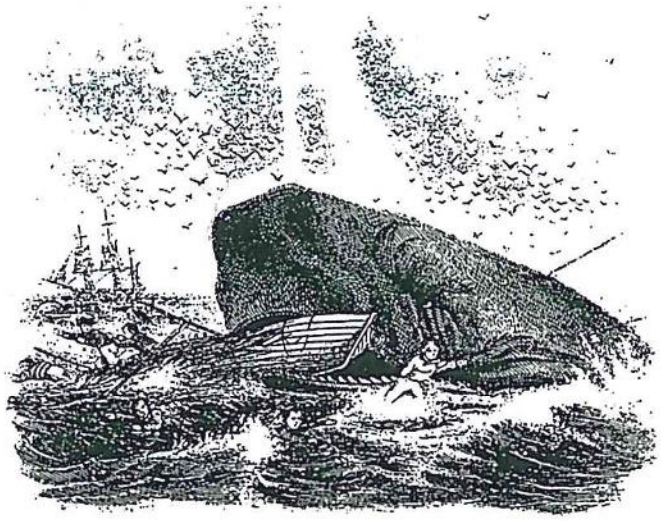
One reason why *The Scarlet Letter* has attracted so many readers over the years is that there are so many ways to read it. It can be read, though admittedly not very fruitfully, as a sort of Puritan New England soap opera replete with its unfaithful wife, her mysterious lover, her vengeful elderly husband, and a meddling and censorious community.

It can be read far more fruitfully as a collage of three unforgettable portraits: the conscience-stricken Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, consumed by the shame and secret guilt from which he lacks the moral stamina to purge himself; the scholarly Roger Chillingworth, a man gradually transformed by his curiosity and by his quest for revenge into a monstrous function of his victim's diseased conscience; and the passionate and proud Hester Prynne, a young woman who is the victim of a rigid and righteous establishment determined to reduce her to a mere emblem of her "sin."

For the modern reader, especially for the reader with an interest in feminist issues, *The Scarlet Letter* can be read as a sensitive and sympathetic consideration of a woman driven to radicalism by a draconian male-dominated society. "Before woman can be allowed to assume what seems a fair and suitable position," Hester finally realizes, sounding for all the world like a 17th century Gloria Steinem, "the whole system of society is to be torn down, and built anew. Then, the very nature of the opposite sex, or its long hereditary habit, which has become like nature, is to be essentially modified."

Finally, and above all, *The Scarlet Letter* can be read as the agony of a creative spirit in the clutches of a fearful and repressive community threatened by nonconformity and bent upon expunging it. But no matter how *The Scarlet Letter* is read, it behooves the reader to be alert to the care with which Hawthorne has constructed his tale and the skill with which he manages his narrative in the creation of this enduring classic. *(Riverside)*

JOHN E. REILLY



Herman Melville
Moby-Dick (1851)

Read principally for its story line, *Moby-Dick* can be a genuine bore. It seems to wander aimlessly or to lie endlessly becalmed while our chummy but garrulous narrator (that man called Ishmael) lectures us in infinite detail not only on whales, the furniture of whaling, the styles of whaling, the peculiarities of whaling vessels and their equally peculiar crews, but on subjects far more abstract and with far less apparent relevance to the novel as story.

The "hero" of *Moby-Dick*, "crazy" Captain Ahab, does not put in his first appearance until Chapter XXVIII, and Melville withholds the "villain" of his piece (if we can assign that role to "the great white whale") until Chaper CXXXIII. Only at that point does the pace of the narrative finally quicken through the closing two chapters to the calm of the brief "Epilogue."

But *Moby-Dick* must be read as far more than just a "tale." It is a thoughtful and articulate consideration of issues which not only troubled Melville and his contemporaries but which trouble each of us today, issues such as the limits and reliability of our knowledge, the responsibilities of power, and our need to recognize that even though our lives may appear to be absurd or mean or meaningless, we must, nonetheless, govern them with

generosity and love. As Ishmael realizes, a realization that is literally the source of his salvation, "There is a wisdom that is woe; but there is woe that is madness," that madness which undoes Captain Ahab. Melville has embodied these things, and a good deal more, in a book that is as intricate as it is patterned, that is peopled with a cast of memorable characters, and that is delivered in prose which stands among the most stunning in the language. *(Bobbs Merrill)*

JOHN E. REILLY

Henry David Thoreau
Walden (1854)

Few books have been more persistently misrepresented than Thoreau's *Walden*. It has been called a text on natural history. It has been called the chronicle, the diary, the journal, the narrative or story of a man who withdrew from human society to live alone in the wilderness and who urges his readers to pattern their lives after the way of life he pursued at Walden Pond. But *Walden* is none of these things.

Above all, it does not advocate that we accept Thoreau's way of life as a model: "I would not have anyone adopt *my* mode of living on any account; for, besides that before he has fairly learned it I may have found out another for myself, I desire that there may be as many different persons in the world as possible but I would have each be very careful to find out and pursue *his own* way, and not his father's or his mother's or his neighbor's instead."

It is the pursuit of one's own way that is the subject of *Walden*: the need for all of us to make a deliberate effort to discover just who we are in terms of the world in which we exist and to fashion our lives, to adjust our values, accordingly. To move us to do these things, to awaken our spirits from their deep and desperate slumbers, Thoreau will crow "as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up." His clarion, his *Walden*, is a rousing call, a wry, graceful, witty, poetic

song that translates his experience at the Pond to a summons to all of us to renew ourselves by "simplifying" our lives, a summons assuring us that in proportion as we do so, "the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness." *(Riverside)*

JOHN E. REILLY

Gustave Flaubert
Madame Bovary (1857)

Requiring almost seven years of unremitting labor and anguished revisions of text, *Madame Bovary* has frequently been described by critics as perhaps the most artfully crafted (one could also say the best engineered) novel ever written. It is also a groundbreaking work containing as it does innovations in theory and technique which have profoundly affected the novel in our own century.

Important as these considerations surely are for the critic, they pale in comparison with the significance of the novel's theme and contents. *Madame Bovary* in fact explores one of the most fundamental problems to assail all human beings at one time or another during life: the struggle between illusion and reality and the stubborn, even perverse tendency we all have upon occasion to allow our judgment to be affected not by fact but by our wishes and dreams. Accordingly, in what he clearly intended to be a 19th Century French *Don Quixote*, he wove the following simple plot: a young woman living in the provinces (Emma Bovary), whose mind has been addled by the insipid convent education then given to women and whose judgment has been severely impaired by the romantic sentimentality that engulfed France and the rest of Europe during the 1830s and 1840s, contracts a disastrous marriage with a plodding and decidedly unexciting Norman country doctor. Unable to divest herself of the illusion that, in the place

of her cloddish husband, the perfect lover must exist for her just around the corner, Emma throws herself into two adulterous affairs with weak men distinctly unworthy of her. When both liaisons fail, she seeks solace in suicide.

Henry James declared that far from being immoral (a charge brought against it in a public trial), *Madame Bovary* could be profitably read as a moral tract against sexual misconduct by a Sunday School class. Even more effective, in my opinion, is its potential as a great work of art to demolish the "Somewhere over the rainbow" mentality so rampant in our own age which foolishly confuses authentic human love with the flimsiest forms of sentimentality – hence the cloying vogue of TV soaps and pulp romances which control the emotional lives of millions of present-day Emma Bovarys of both sexes.

T. FRASER

Charles Darwin
On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection (1859)

Acceptance of evolution as the explanation for organic diversity necessitated a conceptual revolution – one which would overthrow the Platonic concept of eternal, immutable species and view species as dynamic entities, variable over time and space. This seminal work by Charles Darwin started that revolution.

Pre-Darwinian biologists were local naturalists firmly entrenched in a creationist model of species. Viewed from the non-dimensional perspective of the local naturalist, species are clearly distinct with no intermediaries between them. How could such discontinuous units arise if not through an act of special creation? Darwin's five-year voyage around the world on *H.M.S. Beagle* gave him a variation in species that convinced him that species could change. Later, in a rare moment of creative insight, he developed a mechanism to explain species change – natural selection.

On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection is not an outdated, historical landmark, but rather the intriguing account of the genesis of an idea which is, to this very day, a focal point of controversy both within and outside the scientific community. Darwin's logical presentation, masterfully documented with facts, opened the door for the acceptance of evolution, now a cornerstone of modern biology. More importantly, this book is a milestone in intellectual history; it launched biology into the mainstream of science, which since the 18th century had abandoned divine intervention as a necessary explanation for natural events, and freed the process of life from the shackles of mysticism.

WILLIAM R. HEALY

Victor Hugo
Les Miserables (1862)

Very few people read *Les Miserables* any more. It seems, moreover, that those with any familiarity at all with the work are more often than not survivors of required French courses in generations past who were led through a watered-down version of one of its most moving episodes, that of "The Bishop's Candlesticks." Such a trivialization of Hugo's massive novel is most unfortunate. For aside from its historical importance as a moving presentation in fictionalized form of the social criticism and reformist ideals of Proudhon, Fourier, and other French socialist and Utopian thinkers of the last century, the novel compares favorably with *War and Peace* and *Germinal* (both published in roughly the same period) in its vast scope, tragic dimension, and universal theme.

Written by Hugo during his exile (1851-1870) on the Island of Guernsey, where he had been driven because of his opposition to Louis Napoleon's coup d'etat, the novel is nothing less than a huge epic dedicated to the common man. The plot revolves about the fortunes of a representative of this class, Jean Valjean, a man laid low, in fact victimized by the injustices of the social order. When we first meet him, he is a convict returning from a 20-year sentence to the galleys (he has been condemned for stealing a loaf

of bread to feed needy relatives). A vindictive society has reduced him to a subhuman level and hatred is the only emotion that he has been allowed to understand. Yet it is Hugo's contention that this potentially decent and generous human being would have been a good person *except* for the vicious effect of human laws. True Christian charity accorded to him by the saintly priest of the candlesticks (Bishop Myriel) triggers a stunning metamorphosis. The rest of the novel is then woven about the theme of Valjean's moral rehabilitation drawn through a number of intricate identities and experiences and his frantic attempts to evade the hot pursuit of the work's evil nemesis Javert, the very incarnation of the brutal and unfeeling "law and order" policeman.

In this ungenerous age of Reaganomics and American corporatism triumphant (a la Michael Novak, David Stockman, and of course William Buckley), the point that *Les Miserables* makes is so important and convincingly presented that parts of the novel could well be required reading. That is to say, in any social system justice must be more than remuneratory and has the larger obligation of promoting the dignity of the human being.

T. FRASER

Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy
War and Peace (1866)

The history of mankind, as a chain of two different types of alternating links, is made of wars and peace. A pair of such links is the subject of this crowning novel with no superiors in the realm of literature. But the main substance of these links is people: men and women, aristocrats and simple people, generals and soldiers, winners and losers... And people live and die, give birth and kill, love and hate...

On one hand the novel depicts Russia between 1805 and 1820, with a special emphasis on the political and military events in Europe caused by the Napoleonic Wars. The invasion of Russia in 1812, as the most climactic event of the Wars, is given the most time and space.

On the other hand the novel is a family chronicle of three upper-crust families, the Bolkonskys, the Bezukhovs, and the Rostovs. Natasha Rostov, a genuine woman in the process of growth from early childhood to maturity, from hide-and-seek to first torments of love, marriage, and childbirth, is the central character of the work.

There are 559 characters in this novel, and the author portrays with equal intensity Napoleon Bonaparte, the Emperor of France, and Platon Karatev, a simple Russian peasant. Tolstoy gives equal time and attention to the dilemmas of General Kutuzov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian Army, and to the teen-age Natasha's lovesickness.

This outstanding work, an ultimate union of history and fiction, of knowledge and art, is a commanding masterpiece of Russian and world literature. It leaves the reader with the feeling of an intellectual accomplishment and in a state of perfect satisfaction.

GEORGE N. KOSTICH

George Eliot
Middlemarch: A study of Provincial Life (1871-72)

Middlemarch is George Eliot's (pseud. of Mary Ann Evans) major achievement. In this, the sixth of her seven novels, she returns to the Warwickshire locale of her early life, and as in *Adam Bede* (1859), *Mill on the Floss* (1860), and *Silas Marner* (1861), renders remarkable pictures of English provincial life. It is in this intimately known pastoral setting that she shows how ambitious petty jealousies and major conflicts make up the warp and woof, the moral "web" (Eliot's image) of society.

Middlemarch is constructed from the symmetrical interweaving of the lives of her central characters: Dorothea Brooke is a determined young woman who through suffering develops from an idealistic provincial resolved to sacrifice herself for abstract

values to a mature woman who learns that devotion to intellectual and moral truth does not mean the necessary suppression of feelings and personal happiness; Lydgate dreams of heroic contributions to the science of medicine and discovers his aspirations narrowed by self betrayal, an inappropriate mate, restricting social strings and limited ability; Casaubon's late marriage confronts him with the knowledge that his lifelong labyrinthine pursuits, his scholarship, have been denials of life, and his account "Pangs without birth, and fruitless Industry." The structure also juxtaposes histories of several love affairs, marriages, families (aristocratic, merchant, farming), ambitions, careers; the narrative includes political backbiting on small and large scale, questions of reform (medical, economic, political), a murder, an election, the coming of the railroad, the history of England 1828-31. The minor figures in *Middlemarch* are extraordinarily vital and felt; the Garths, Vincys, Farebrothers and Bulstrodes would, in any other novel, be major characters.

Eliot's narrative presence is one of the riches of the novel. Although some readers have found her voice intrusive, its sympathy and understanding give meaning to the most ordinary of human activities, redeem struggling and erring human weakness and suffering, and often ennoble common gestures. Never far from ethical and psychological considerations, the narrator can by turn be witty, ironic, satiric, humorous, solemn, nostalgic, elegiac, passionate, always actively provocative, always seeking to rouse "the nobler emotions" and "enlarge sympathies." There are few novels of equal sweep and scope; few linger in one's imagination as vividly and as long. *(Riverside)*

MAURICE A. GERACHT

Fyodor Dostoevsky
The Brothers Karamazov (1881)

This novel is generally considered the author's masterpiece. Dostoevsky, a re-born Christian, never ceased analysing his religious doubts. In this book we see some facets of his struggle

with disbelief: the attraction of relationalism, of materialism, of determinism. The self-sufficiency of science, and the nihilism of the reigning philosophy during the second half of the 19th century, all this tempted him; but they would have annihilated his Christian principles, and these he found impossible to surrender.

So he argued against his age. Ivan embodies all these temptations, but he found it impossible to harmonize his philosophy with the yearnings of his heart. On the other end of the spectrum stands Christ, who invites man to accept his message, to act freely and to live lovingly. Alyosha accepts this invitation and embodies the Christian answer. But in the midst of all this, there is the Legend of the Grand Inquisitor, the Cardinal who accepts the offers of atheism, but who masks them to his followers; who accepts his freedom of action, but encourages his followers to surrender it to the magistrates of the Church. Dostoevsky was haunted by the principles of the Grand Inquisitor but remained unconquered by them. But in the struggle, his head was bloody though unbowed. This novel is extremely long but highly rewarding. Even the atheist Andre Gide held it to be a masterpiece of dialectics and of superior psychological value.

ALFRED R. DESAUTELS, S.J.

Henry James
The Portrait of a Lady (1881)

James was the most cosmopolitan writer in the history of fiction. It was his "complex fate" (his phrase) to be heir of American, English and continental traditions. The natural noblemen of American literature, from Cooper through Twain, escaped from structured society and sought worlds which would favor their ideal self-conceptions; their English cousins, from Richardson through Eliot, sought to both realize their individual aspirations and to be included in the social structure; on the continent, from Sand and Balzac to Zola, the overriding concerns were how the material and moral environment conditions the individual, how

the "social center" functions in developing awareness of the sensuous surface as well as the self. The conventions and forms of each of these traditions were functions of their visions. James drew from these traditions and synthesized, distilled, and transformed them to create a vision and art uniquely his own.

In his most typical work, James's idealistic, albeit inexperienced, Americans reach for "the requirements of their imagination," seek to "live all they can," and hope "to be better than they are" in a Europe of fairy-tale. There, they encounter a rich structured culture, through experience and suffering acquire knowledge and self-awareness, and risk corruption and destruction. Oversimplified, this is the "international theme" of "Daisy Miller"(1879), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), and *The Golden Bowl* (1904).

James's sixth novel, *The Portrait* helped establish his international reputation and is a keystone of James's house of fiction. It is the consummate achievement of his "early period" and it marks the beginning of his "middle years." In many respects, it typifies Jamesian themes and methods constant throughout his career. In addition to the "international" element, *The Portrait* shares such characteristic Jamesian interests as the impact of European culture on Americans, the moral opportunities and dangers offered by material wealth, the difficulties of personal relationships and marriage, the problem of freedom, the price of experience.

The novel is primarily a portrait of Lady Isabel Archer, the young heiress of the ages and Diana's American votary, created and discovered as we read even to the last period. Settings (Albany, Gardencourt, London, Paris, Florence, Rome), her fairy godcousins (the Touchetts), her suitors (Goodwood, Lord Warburton, Ralph Touchett, Gilbert Osmond), her friends (Henrietta Stackpole, Madame Merle), the incidents (her quest to "confront her destiny," her marriage, her struggles) all function primarily

as the lines, shapes and hues of James's central picture. The vitality (and difficulty) of the work are derived from the techniques James created to objectify and analyze Isabel's limited point of view. The center of everything is Isabel's consciousness. *(Norton)*

MAURICE A. GERACHT

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain)
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884)

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is the quintessential American novel. Since its publication in 1884, more than a million copies have been sold and it has become an integral part of every American's mythical childhood. It is the dream of idyllic youth in a barefoot world of continual Summer. Although Mark Twain intended to merely write a sequel to his popular and highly successful *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, he produced his own greatest work and one of the masterpieces of American literature. In doing so he seriously changed the course of American literature. Subsequent writers as diverse as Hemingway and Faulkner have expressed their debt to his influence.

Like *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn* is a novel that can be read by all ages for pure enjoyment. Unlike *Tom Sawyer*, it carries a much deeper and sometimes darker message. The same Mark Twain who could weave a delightful adolescent tale was equally capable of the most sardonic social criticism. In *Huckleberry Finn* he sets the wonderful raft adrift on the Utopian River as a counterbalance for his often caustic comments on the conventional world. The foibles, the outright depravity and the corruption of society are encountered by Huck and Jim each time they venture ashore. When they return to the raft they regain a mini-society of peace and harmony that transcends age, race and class.

Like other literary classics, *Huckleberry Finn* lends itself to multiple readings, each bringing renewed pleasure and delight from the story, its characters and their expertly captured southern

frontier speech. Though nearly a century old, Twain's narration and dialogue remain fresh and alive. His insights into our humanity with all its failings and pretensions, sadness and happiness never fail to please, enlighten and reward the reader.*(Norton)*

JAMES E. HOGAN

Emile Zola
Germinal (1885)

Born in 1840 and orphaned at an early age, Zola became one of the most successful journalists of his age. Beginning in 1868, he began to construct the history of a fictional family, the Rougon-Macquart, of which *Germinal* forms a chapter. Recognized as the most influential of the "naturalists" with the publication of *L'Assommoir* in 1877, he demonstrated both his anti-clericalism and his sympathy for the lower classes in this story of the laundress Gervaise and, later, in the story of her son Etienne, the hero of *Germinal.*

Germinal powerfully evokes the struggles of a mining community against poverty, and was based upon the important strike of miners in Anzin in 1884. Zola's preoccupations with the socialist ideologies of Fourier, Proudhon, and Marx are evident in the novel, as is his profound belief in the possibility of human progress.

Germinal provoked significant controversy at the time of its publication, yet it enjoyed enormous popular success and continues to be widely read.

THERESA M. McBRIDE

Friedrich Nietzsche
Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future (1886)

It is a commonplace of our time to say that all thought is historically "relative," meaning that man can never achieve "objective" knowledge – and hence that no moral code, in particular, can be said to be objectively valid. Nietzsche is one of the few men ever to have thought through and confronted the radical implications of this assumption.

Presupposing that all thought is historically conditioned or "perspectival," he endeavors to give that assumption an ennobling interpretation, one that can stimulate mankind to new heights of achievement, rather than issuing in a degrading nihilism. His concern for the enhancement of the human species leads him to launch a profound attack against the leading political dogmas of "enlightened" modernity – democracy, humanism, egalitarianism, socialism, libertarianism. He endeavors to generate a new aristocracy that will consciously create "values" demanding the utmost struggle and striving on the part of mankind – in place of the debasing modern morality that honors only freedom, comfort, and mutual accommodation.

The very immoderation of Nietzsche's rhetoric is the source both of the greatest appeal of his thought, and of its greatest danger: one of the most terrible tyrannies in human history claimed to derive its inspiration and justification from Nietzsche. That that claim involved a considerable distortion of Nietzsche's teaching, and that Nietzsche himself would doubtless have despised such a tyranny, cannot entirely absolve him from the responsibility of having indirectly encouraged it. Yet no one who aspires to be liberally educated can afford to ignore Nietzsche's deeply philosophical critique of the cherished assumptions of modern liberalism. Of all his works, *Beyond Good and Evil* – intended by him as an elucidation of his teaching in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* – provides the most accessible summary of his thought in its most comprehensive and mature form. *(Translation: Walter Kaufmann, Vintage)*

DAVID L. SCHAEFER

Joseph Conrad
Heart of Darkness (1902)

One of the most complex and compelling novellas ever written, *Heart of Darkness* is Conrad's probing study of moral degradation and cultural collapse in the depths of the primeval jungle. Based partly on Conrad's experience in piloting a wretched steamer up the Congo into the heart of the dark continent, this journey of awareness is a terrifying exploration as well of the darkness within ourselves, and of our own potential for corruption. It remains one of the masterpieces of modern literature, by a man renowned as one of the most deeply psychological and complex of the experimental novelists of the 20th century.

Few works can be read so rewardingly on so many different levels – as an attack on the hypocrisy and presumption of civilization, an assault on colonialism and capitalist development, a repudiation of the idea of progress, a satanic inversion of the theory of evolution, a terrible revelation of the vulnerability of idealism, an excoriation of economic greed and exploitation. Here the imperialist dream becomes nightmare, then revealing vision through Conrad's systematic reversal of the values associated with our conventional images of light and dark, black and white, civilized and savage, good and evil.

Civilization – superior, white, Western, idealist, exploitative – enters the jungle to enlighten it, subdue it, and loot it. But the jungle strikes back at this fantastic invasion, and corrupt ends twist men and means: machines rot, workers collapse, purpose flags, logic fails, absurdity prevails. In this ironic fable of evolution and progress, we journey through this modern Inferno with the seeker Marlow as our guide and see through his eyes what greed can do to man, what man can do to nature, and what nature can do in vengeance.

As we move physically down the coast, then up the snake-shaped river, we move psychically from outer to inner, and morally from absurdity to perversity. Outer exploitation produces inner decay and collapse: the blacks, natural and robust in their

white civilizers. Kurtz is the blatant exemplar of the jungle's vengeance upon the exploiters, as he is swallowed up in corruption, then reduced to a wraith barely able to pronounce his repulsion at "the horror" of it all. But with all Europe in his background he clearly is all of us – and his fall is our fall. Marlow identifies with Kurtz, crawls with him in degradation, and tells us his story so that we may see and be enlightened. But in this world in which everything turns upside down, the light we see is an immense darkness – about us all. *(Riverside)*

JOHN T. MAYER

Max Weber
The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
(1904-1905)

A quintessential "universal scholar," Max Weber has made an unsurpassed contribution to our understanding of the political, spiritual, and sociological forces at the heart of capitalism, the economic system which has become identified with our Western tradition. While *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* represents only a segment of Weber's monumental scholarly output, and it deals only with some of his inquiries, it is a book which captures the essence of his thinking and it represents, in most respects, his most original work.

To be sure, Weber was neither the first thinker to engage in an in-depth study of capitalism nor did he produce the most compelling insights. The German world, from Marx to Brentano, abounds with thinkers whose scholarly concern was to understand the roots, dynamics, and consequences of capitalism. What makes *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* an indispensable book to the student of modern politics is the original focus of Weber's research, and the conclusions that he draws.

For Weber, capitalism is more than an economic system which has, more or less inevitably, emerged out of the process of industrialization and modernization in the Western world. It is also a system of values, largely of a religious derivation, which has set the stage for, if not facilitated, the birth and expansion of industrialism in Western societies. In order to understand capitalism, therefore, it is necessary not only to place it in a historical context but also to look "inside" it, by singling out those ethical values and sociological patterns of relations among groups and socioeconomic strata which maintain capitalism in life and create the cultural environment conducive to the rigors and dictates of modern, industrial life. In the portrayal of capitalism developed by Weber, economic-historical forces stand in a mutually-reinforcing relationship to sociological-spiritual forces. The vital nerve of capitalism is the synthesis between these two sets of forces, a fusion in which the protestant ethic becomes submerged by the more materialistic "spirit" of capitalism.

Writing as a *fin-de-siecle* German witnessing the convulsive growth of German industrialization, and deeply steeped in the central European philosophical-cultural tradition, Weber left out of his inquiry questions which are increasingly relevant today. For instance, the question concerning the universal applicability of his synthesis, especially with regard to the necessity of a protestant ethic as the prerequisite for a successful development of capitalism. Far from detracting from the importance of his work, the present crisis of capitalism in the West and the spread – tentative at times and unfailingly arduous – of industrialization to the developing countries, make a re-reading of Weber an urgent necessity. *(Translation: Talcott Parsons, Scribners)*

MAURIZIO VANNICELLI

James A. Joyce
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916)

Joyce's 1913-1914 reshaping of an earlier abortive attempt at an autobiographical novel in the 19th century naturalistic tradition, *Stephen Hero* (fragments published in 1944). This later version is a carefully wrought novel of esthetic complexity displaying a strong influence of Italo Svevo and the European novelists, artistic theorists, and psychologists of the early modernist movement. Perhaps of equal importance is the ironic distance Joyce is able to establish between writer and central character, Stephen Dedalus, who, between the ages of six and twenty, finds his vocation to become the high priest of art. Despite the light satire Joyce uses to portray the youthful pretensions, he is in no way unsympathetic with the hero in his battle with the ignorance and bigotry of his conservative, late 19th century Irish-Catholic environment. This could well be the most important *Bildungsroman* of the 20th century. *(Viking, 1964)*

EDWARD CALLAHAN

Henry Adams
The Education of Henry Adams (1906-1918)

The Education of Henry Adams is an American classic, a work about many things. First, it is a story of Henry's life. Despite marked reserve, it reveals much about this grandson and great grandson of presidents. What emerges is a consummate commentator on his nation and the world: brilliant, egotistical, cynical, a rebel against a society which seemed to have bypassed both him and his class. As an Adams, he considered himself entitled to national power. Only a dated and inferior education precluded this.

As an observer of the 19th century, Henry had few peers. A magnificent mind, gifted prose, superb education, and unmatched family tradition and connections assured this. His reflections on the English attitude toward the Civil War made while secretary to his father, minister to Great Britain, 1861-1865, are unequaled.

And this is but a fraction of the intellectual, social, and cultural smorgasbord that one enjoys while ranging over such topics as his comments on world personalities, Harvard College, Darwinism, the dynamo, history and education.

Indeed, the entire "autobiography" concerns education, and one is able to attain much of that elusive commodity by following the author down its tortuous path. Among his many memorable remarks: "A teacher affects eternity." "No man can instruct more than half-a-dozen students at once." Cost is the problem. And, because of the dogmatism engendered by these professions, "no man, however strong, can serve ten years as schoolmaster, priest, or senator, and remain fit for anything else."

The Education of Henry Adams is a brilliantly written work of universal excellence. Students of the American experience cannot afford to miss it. Adams is at home with both the unity of Christianity and modern multiplicity. His appeal is cosmic. Devotees of Aquinas and stained glass windows can embrace him as readily as critics of present society.

JOSEPH J. HOLMES

Sigmund Freud
A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (1920)

The students approaching Freud for the first time can easily be intimidated by the massiveness of the twenty-four volume *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud.* The search for an appropriate introduction can lead to no better starting place than *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis.* This work consists of three series of lectures that Freud delivered to a general audience at the University of Vienna from 1915 to 1917. In an almost conversational style, the founder of psychoanalysis presents his ideas as they stood at the time of the first world war. Developing his arguments with clarity and persuasiveness, Freud gently leads the reader through the most basic aspects of

psychoanalysis and then on to the complexities of neurosis and its treatment. In the process, we learn not only the fundamental propositions of psychoanalysis, but also the essence of the psychoanalytic style of thought.

One of the most fascinating aspects of psychoanalysis is its claim that there is meaning in what initially appear to be meaningless phenomena. Freud explores the implications of this view by examining mental events common to all of us. His analysis of errors and dreams puts us on notice at the outset that psychoanalysis finds hidden meaning not only in the behavior of emotionally disturbed individuals, but also in the daily actions and fantasies of each of us. In the Freudian view, the mind of the "normal" as well as the neurotic "is made up of contradictions and pairs of opposites" (p.80) that are constantly locked in battle. Dreams, errors, and neurotic symptoms alike are the result of these conflicts between opposing intentions and meanings. Although the concepts Freud employed to describe the notion of mental conflict continued to evolve after the appearance of *A General Introduction*, there is no clearer exposition of this central idea anywhere in Freud's writings.

The newcomer to Freud should be forewarned that, although the first two series of lectures presuppose no prior knowledge of psychoanalysis, the third series on the neuroses is more advanced. However, the basic model of the mind that Freud develops earlier in the book is the key to understanding his theory of neurosis, and if you master this you will find your way through the complexities of the final lectures. And it will be worth the effort. (Note: In the *Standard Edition* of Freud's works, the title of this book is given as *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.)

STUART FISHER

Thomas Mann
The Magic Mountain (1924)

This novel, by Germany's greatest writer in the first half of the 20th century, is superficially an historical depiction of upper middle class European society before World War I. On a higher plane it represents a *Bildungsroman*, a typically German form treating an individual's preparation for life. Primarily, it is an allegorical novel of ideas. Hans Castorp, a young German of modest means and intellect, visits an alpine sanitorium where his cousin is recuperating from tuberculosis. His two week stay lengthens to seven years. On the mountain Castorp encounters a microcosm of the forces seeking domination in European civilization at the turn of the century, all engaging in conflict for his soul as well: liberalism, authoritarianism, democracy, communism, mysticism, realism, idealism, literature, music, gallic rationalism and teutonic hothouse romanticism. The pervasive symbol of the latter is the hospital itself, where death is a way of life, exerting a fascinating influence on the hero, who like his creator, must overcome a predilection to reject vitalism for the spiritually refined realm of the intellect and death.

A mammoth book, by turns challenging, stimulating, exasperating and sometimes even boring, for those with *Sitzfleisch*, it offers copious insights into the problems, hopes, intellectual and cultural forces still contending for Western Civilization today. A good warmup is *Buddenbrooks*, treating similar problems in a more lyrical form. *(Translation: H.T. Lowe-Porter, Modern Library)*

WILLIAM L. ZWIEBEL

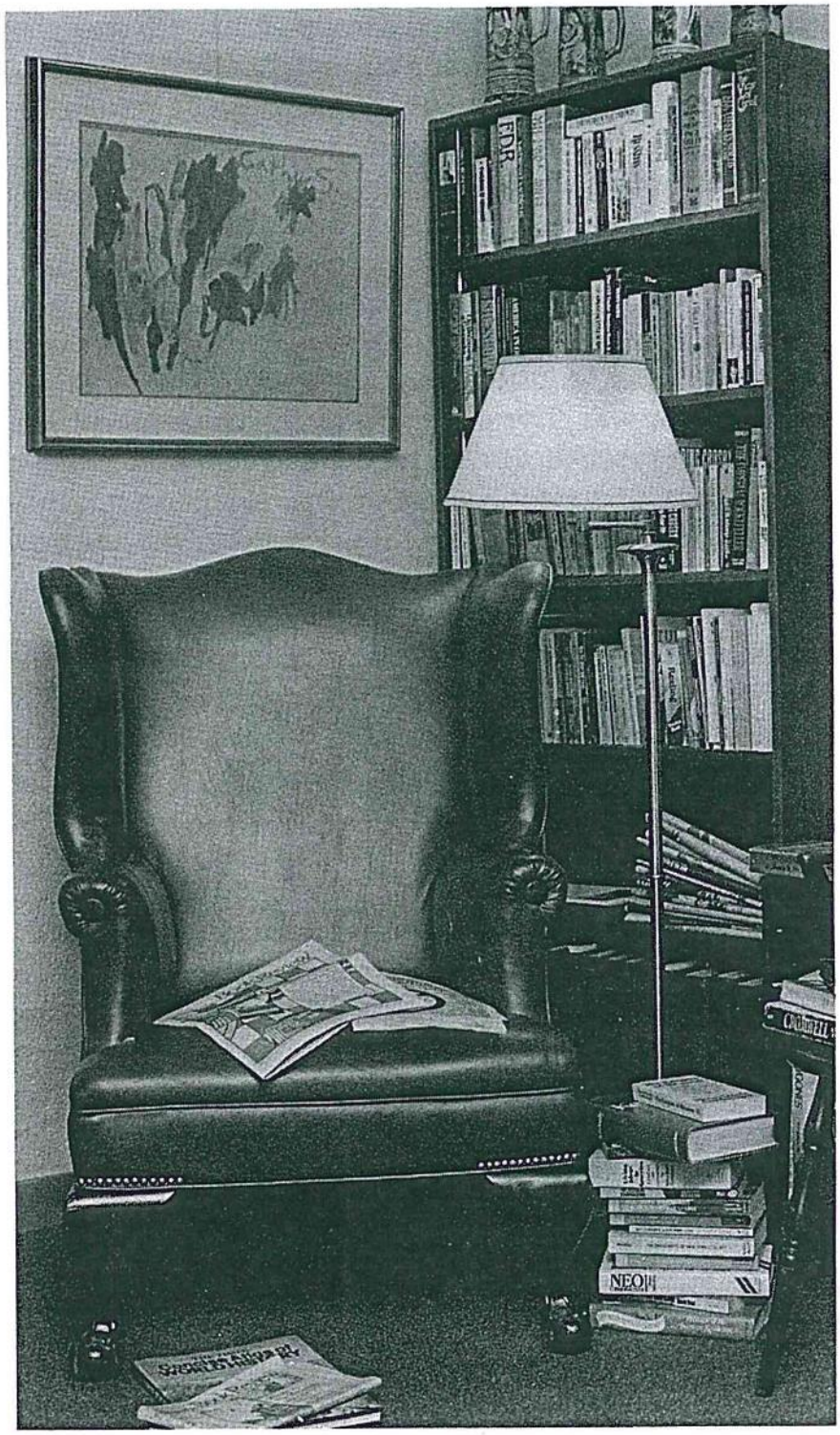
Sigrid Undset
Kristin Lavransdatter (1927)

This Nobel Prize-winning trilogy about the life and death of a medieval Norwegian woman has the timeless quality one expects of a masterwork. It is a richly textured presentation of a deeply-lived life which melds the outlook, theology, and way of life of

14th century Scandinavia with the universal needs and passions of the human experience. The work has an integrity and a wholeness which is especially striking in view of the many levels of thought and intensity present in the writing.

Undset's Kristin is an "average" woman of her time: she is also strong, true to herself, and in fact heroic. That we do not see her as a figure from an alien time is a reflection of the author's skill at leading us to an acceptance of the notions of sin and redemption as understood by the medieval mind. The sense of reality that pervades the novel is accentuated by Undset's remarkable ability to make us *see* faces and landscapes, glowing and luminous as in a painting – one thinks of Rembrandt and Turner. The book, which originally appeared as three separate volumes published between 1923 and 1927, is huge and requires time and patience for the reflective reading it deserves. It is an outstandingly powerful excursion into another place, another time, another life. *(Translation: Charles Archer, Bantam)*

P. SHANAHAN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Erich Maria Remarque
All Quiet on the Western Front (1929)

In World War I the horror and obscenity of modern warfare were new enough to be truly shocking and spiritually deadening to the young men called by their governments to give up their history, heritage and their lives in the "war to end all wars." Written shortly after World War I, Erich Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* conveys that sense of horror, shock, and loss in a manner which is effective even to a post-Vietnam generation of readers.

The novel's narrator is a young German who, at the urging of a school teacher, enlisted along with all his classmates in the army early in the war. There is no character development, no subtly changing perspective, and no innovative use of language in this book. The novel's narrator has already lost his innocence, his past, and his future before he begins telling his story; yet, the book has a power and an impact which are lasting and wrenching. The matter-of-fact descriptions of naked, headless upper halves of bodies lodged in trees where the explosions of artillery shells have left them, the virtuoso description of the frenzied hand-to-hand combat in the trenches, and the chilling encounter in a shell crater between the narrator and a Frenchman he has just mortally wounded are just some of the episodes which stay with one long after the initial reading.

The novel depicts a war where glamour, bravery, and cowardice are practically irrelevant concepts. The only important parameters in the trenches are surviving, avoiding pain, and the simple camaraderie of men who share this bitter, pointless experience. The narrator asks often what will become of his kind after the war, how will they be able to live after living through such savage, godless times. We, the children and grandchildren of such men, must answer these questions.

R.H. GARVEY

Ernest Hemingway
A Farewell to Arms (1929)

In Hemingway, the line between life and art is thin, and most of his novels are the condensed, imaginative tips of the iceberg of his experience. On one level, *A Farewell to Arms* is a love story drawn from the young wounded Ernest's infatuation with his nurse during World War I; and the "farewell" becomes not just a goodbye to lost love but a flight from both the horror of war, to an imagined "separate peace," and, at the same time, from moral responsibility. On another level, the book became, as Robert Penn Warren said, "the great romantic alibi for a generation," an attempt to explain the cynicism and materialism of the age by the "unfairness" of fate.

If we have gone beyond the Hemingway cult of swaggering masculinity and the shallowness of his moral vision, we can still always learn from his style. *A Farewell* begins:

> In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.

William Faulkner
Absalom, Absalom! (1936)

As Faulkner's masterpiece, *Absalom* belongs to world literature, and justifies the compliment paid this Southern Nobel laureate by existentialist Gabriel Marcel, who once, rather matter-of-factly, called him the American Aeschylus. Undeniably dense and complex, the novel's 375 pages should ideally be read at a single sitting; as a novel of immersion, the book is a dramatic tour de force

which in the final pages stuns the reader into a sense of self-recognition – that he shares with the narrator and the story's hero the inclination to deny man's own tragic experience of life. Often described as a perfect meshing of content and form, *Absalom* details the story of Thomas Sutpen, whose tragedy is that he futilely sought to make life ideal rather than real, preferring his vision of life to his own flawed experience of it. On a concrete level, the interracial son Sutpen denies comes to haunt him in a Gothic revenge plot of incest and miscegenation.

The primary narrator, Quentin Compson, recounts the story of Sutpen's denial of experience to his roommate at Harvard as a way of explaining the South's refusal to accept Civil War defeat. In the narration, that denial also becomes a secular metaphor for the human quest for perfection, and a religious metaphor for the renunciation of the biblical fall of man. Because Quentin's narrative sources are so diffuse and contradictory – ambiguous historical documents; biased first- and second-hand witnesses; speculation; even the roommate conjectures part of the plot! – it becomes clear the act of narrating is itself a futile ideal that ever fails to capture the true reality of the past. To wit, the assertion of anything in life as an absolute denies the finite nature of everything man touches. Hence, the narrative method of the novel duplicates the tragic denial of the story's content, trapping Quentin on the final page in a denial much like Thomas Sutpen's. Likewise, the reader, whose ideal goal is to comprehend the problems of Sutpen, Quentin, the South, and salvific and secular history, arrives only at the frustrating knowledge that his own understanding of the universe is indeed flawed. For the patient and discerning reader who itches to know how King Lear might fare on the antebellum plantations of Mississippi, *Absalom* is just the thing. *(Modern Library)*

PATRICK J. IRELAND

Ignazio Silone
Bread and Wine (1936)

Bread and Wine is the fictionalized account of the crisis in belief and subsequent loss of faith in international communism suffered by the Italian political activist Silone (pseud. for Secondo Tranquillo) in the 1920s. Indeed, his is not an isolated incident: a fascinating book still in circulation – *The God that Failed* – provides moving testimonies by Silone, Gide, Koestler, and other European writers and intellectuals to the widespread disillusionment among "believers" in the movement during the period when Stalin was cynically subverting it to his own chauvinist ends.

In the novel, Silone traces the evolution of a fugitive political revolutionary, Pietro Spina, who, worn out in soul and body, returns to a fascist Italy to go into hiding. To better elude the authorities he dons the attire of a secular priest and, in a mystical transference, assumes despite himself the moral responsibility and teaching authority that the priestly garb has conferred on its wearers throughout the centuries.

Newly armed with the philosophy of love, dedication to justice, and concern for the poor taught by Christ, Spina so effectively practices his counterfeit identity that he builds around himself a community of "new Christians" similar to the neophytes of the primitive church.

As the novel ends with Spina's little flock either dispersed or executed by the fascists, Silone's message is simple and disturbing. No solution to the terrible scandal of injustice can be provided, he believes, by modern political systems or institutions, be they religious or secular since, for reasons of expediency or survival, they have placed doctrine and empty formulas above concern for the individual. The true follower of Christ, then, is one who, without institutional ties or at least a dependence on them, directly transforms his principles into action and, if necessary, puts his life on the line.

Christ's magnificent legacy becomes for Silone a pure form of socialism, a terrestrial Communion of Saints concerned with justice here and now which will remake the face of the earth with a new spirit ignited from the still glowing coals of primitive Christian charity. Very few novels which I have taught have so consistently moved students as this one. Please read it!

T. FRASER

Franz Kafka
The Trial (1937)

"Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K., for without his having done anything wrong, he was arrested one fine morning." Thus begins one of the most bizarre yet significant novels of the 20th century. As its title implies, Kafka's novel deals with guilt. Joseph K. has seemingly transgressed against a law whose nature is unfathomable; its regulations and procedures a jumble of self-abrogating contradictions. Everything the accused learns, as he becomes more and more involved in his case, indicates that regardless of his attempts to prevent it, the essence of the court is to proceed, relentlessly carrying out his trial in inaccessible realms, leading inevitably to a guilty verdict and execution. Unwilling to accept such a necessity, Joseph K. dies at the end, "like a dog."

In *The Trial* Kafka seems to have created a modern allegory of the individual faced with the riddles of existence and death in a world devoid of meaning. Whereas traditional Judeo-Christian views justified mortality as part of God's plan, Kafka's work suggests that human life is under an incomprehensible death sentence, implying inexplicable guilt against some remote and inscrutable authority. Yet this is only one interpretive possibility; it lies in the nature and fascination of every one of this writer's works, that they are ultimately enigmatic. *(Translation: Willa and Edwin Muir, Schocken)*

WILLIAM L. ZWIEBEL

Georges Lefebvre
The Coming of the French Revolution (1939)

A brilliant and synthetic analysis of the causes of the French Revolution of 1789, this work by French historian Georges Lefebvre is one of the classics of modern historical writing. This small volume recounts the events of the first year of the Revolution, ending with the Declaration of the Rights of Man in October of 1789. Though it treats only the advent of the Revolution, most of the issues and dynamics of the whole revolution are presented clearly. In particular, the activities and attitudes of each of the social classes is nowhere set forward more clearly and succinctly.

Although Lefebvre was himself a Marxist, his treatment of the Revolution is open-handed, sympathetic to its complexity, and in no way reductionist or narrowly doctrinaire.

Lefebvre's vision of the Revolution demonstrates that it produced a universal philosophy in which all human beings were equal, at least in principle, and a model for future struggles for political freedom elsewhere.

THERESA M. McBRIDE

John Steinbeck
The Grapes of Wrath (1939)

While Steinbeck is perhaps the least stellar of our Nobel laureates, the literary achievement of *Grapes of Wrath* is that it manages to transcend the limitations of quickly dated social criticism in such a way as to address a more permanent and universal audience. The first significant "migrant worker" novel, it created a sensation at the end of the Depression, as did its filming two years later – allegedly the Hearst papers sought to prevent the film's release on the grounds that the work's content was inflammatory.

Steinbeck, like many American writers, is schizophrenically torn between the naturalistic defeatism of experience and the romantic idealism of the human spirit. His resolution of this inevitable mix is often sentimentally disaffecting at the same time it is pragmatically realistic. The novel traces the migration of the Joad family from the Oklahoma Dust Bowl of the 1930s to the great California farm fields. The plight of the dispossessed and their subsequent exploitation by both commerical and government authorities represent Steinbeck's social indictment of American democracy on the grounds that it is primarily a capitalistic economic system with little democratic concern for the rights and welfare of the great unwashed.

As the family Joad disintegrates, their identity is born again as the family of man. Thematically, they learn the gospel of "the whole shebang . . . one big soul ever'body's part of." It is a brotherhood-of-man philosophy that must be learned, not seen, that "you got to find out" from experience. Interestingly, this share-and-share-alike gospel, the novel makes realistically clear, will not necessarily save the masses from physical starvation, but will save them from spiritual narrowness and stinginess. Accordingly, Tom Joad becomes a rebel, not because free enterprise is evil or because its social and economic effects are unethical or immoral, but rather, because the plight of the Okies menaces the general health of the nation, spiritually confining the rich to their monetary self-interest and the desperate poor to an insular clannishness, thus depriving both of a broader, selfless experience in human affairs. As the much-celebrated Rosasharon episode demonstrates, the unity of mankind Tom seeks is effective only when that selfless insight, once perceived, is translated into action, into unspoken, thankless gesture. *[Penguin]*

PATRICK J. IRELAND

Richard Wright
Native Son (1940)

Native Son, published in 1940, is a powerful novel about the hatred, fear and violence bred by racial oppression. Richard Wright's first novel – very likely his greatest and certainly his most memorable work – it was one of the first major artistic and popular successes by a black American writer. The literary lineage of *Native Son* has been traced most often to earlier American naturalism, especially Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, after which Wright may have modeled his use of criminal violence as a dramatic device. For his psychological probing and the main character's search for self-realization an the face of doom, Wright also has been compared to Dostoevsky. But beyond such comparisons, *Native Son* stands as a celebrated point of departure of black protest fiction because of its vivid and uncompromising portrayal of the brutality of racial oppression.

On a literal level, *Native Son* is the story of Bigger Thomas, a resident of Chicago's South Side slum during the Depression. Fear evoked by oppression drives Bigger to violence and carries him to an inevitable fate. Yet the real subject of the book is the meaning of the black experience in America, as revealed by Bigger's violent acts. These acts shock the reader into an awareness of the social circumstances out of which they were created. We see the damaging psychological consequences of Bigger's brutally restricted world and gain a sociological perspective on racism, with its link to economic exploitation. More than this, however, the reader of *Native Son* will find an intensely gripping narrative pace, a dynamic foreshadowing of events, and a rich symbolic texture.

ROYCE SINGLETON, JR.

Hermann Hesse
Magister Ludi, (The Glass Bead Game) (1945)

Imagine a country run by a monastic-like order rejecting all association with the every-day world, devoted solely to scholarly pursuits, whose paramount interest is a wholly intellectual and abstract game. This is *Castalia*, the land created by Hesse in this strange novel of the life of Joseph Knecht.

As his name suggests, Knecht's destiny is to serve. Singled out at an early age, he attends Castalia's elitist schools, advancing slowly through ever-increasing responsibilities. At the same time, he is tested, and must defend the Castalian way of life against the demands of the outer world. Nevertheless, he pursues his vocation with single-minded devotion, finally becoming "Magister Ludi," Master of the Game and head of the order. In the end, however, Knecht leaves Castalia. Warning of the sterility of pure intellectualism, he abandons the *vita contemplativa* for the *vita activa*, choosing to become a young man's mentor. The reader will have to decide the meaning of Knecht's death for himself.

In this difficult, slow-moving, often abstruse novel, Hesse developed several of his most important themes to their highest, but not necessarily clearest point: service to the ideal, the life of the mind, the conflict of intellect and life, fulfillment of the self, and the necessity of coming to terms with reality. Some will find this book insufferably boring; for others it offers a world of meaning. *(Translation: Richard and Clara Winston, Bantam)*

WILLIAM L. ZWIEBEL

Albert Camus
The Plague (1947)

Albert Camus joins Sartre and Kafka as a fitting representative of the Literature of the Absurd. Whether one reads *The Plague* or *The Stranger* by Camus, or whether one prefers instead Kafka's

The Castle or Sartre's *No Exit*, the philosophical presuppositions underlying all this literature deny to life any ultimate meaning. One might even conclude that suicide is the most meaningful of human acts.

I was a sophomore in college when I first read *The Stranger*, and I was both horrified by its content and fascinated by its power: "Mother died today, or maybe it was yesterday..." How could a caring human being not know? And yet, this reflection was strangely symbolic of the whole. Did it matter, really? Did anything really matter?

My first reading of *The Plague* was somewhat similar. How could anyone write three hundred pages of fiction about a plague? Thomas Mann had written *Death in Venice* but there was less emphasis in that story on the plague itself than on the characters, on how the immanent arrival of the plague was denied by one whose sense of reality was blurred by intense loneliness and emotional involvement. But *The Plague* had been written about a Plague, or so it seems, about its setting, its origin, its development, its culmination, its wane, and finally, its termination. Character development seems subservient to descriptions of fear and panic, of pain and death, of burial and cremation. But then one asks, "Is this the story of a plague, or of alienation, or of life itself, as Camus understands it?" Just as hell is other people for Sartre (*No Exit*), is life a plague for Camus?

> Each of us has a plague within him; no one, no one on earth is free from it. And I know, too, that we must keep endless watch on ourselves lest in a careless moment we breathe in somebody's face and fasten the infection on him. What's natural is the microbe. All the rest – health, integrity, purity (if you like) – is a product of the human will, of a vigilance that must never falter... On this earth there are pestilences and there are victims, and it's up to us, so far as possible, not to join forces with the pestilences. (p.229)

Camus demands our hearing and our respect. He doesn't shrink from a struggle with life's deepest questions. There is much in *The Plague* worth pondering. *(Translation: Stuart Gilbert, Modern Library, 1948)*

ALICE L. LAFFEY

Hannah Arendt
The Origins of Totalitarianism (1951)

A work which combines inspiring scholarship and thought-provoking analysis, Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is an attempt, monumental in its scope and structure, to understand the hidden mechanisms of anti-semitism, imperialism, and totalitarianism – three phenomena which, because of their horrifying consequences and resilience, have loomed large in the tapestry of modern political life. This book is both an expression of profound despair about the human condition in the 20th century and a statement of optimism about the individual's potential capacity to overcome his environment and to prevail over the forces of doom and horror which, on the surface at least, appear to be eternal and inevitable.

Arendt's analysis and implicit prescriptions are at times perplexing and unsatisfactory, particularly her appraisal of the evolution of capitalism and her tendency to lump together all forms of totalitarianism. Yet, one cannot avoid being fascinated and enlightened by her scholarly voyage through the horrors of the 20th century, especially her attempt to place the roots of anti-semitism in a comprehensive historical, philosophical, and economic context.

The questions underlying Arendt's work are questions which anyone attempting to understand the development of modern history is forced to confront. Why have the individual and individual life become so seeming-

ly irrelevant and dispensable in modern politics? What happens to the policy when the primacy of the individual is undermined by the rise of the "masses"? What are the consequences of the decline of traditional nationalism and of its degeneration into xenophobia and racialism? And, finally, what are the effects of the disintegration of the stable, self-contained communities of pre-modern Europe?

Above all, Hannah Arendt's book is an act of courage. By attempting to illustrate and dissect the forces of Evil in modern political life, she forces us to confront the realities of our history. Her urging is compelling in its simplicity: we must relive the atrocities of our recent past – its repeated violations of human dignity, its manifestations of sophisticated oppression, and its flirtations with the "banality of evil" – in order to avoid the alluring nostalgia for a lost past or the self-indulgent, passive expectation of a better future. For Arendt, the task, often Sisyphean, of the modern individual is, therefore, to improve his lot in a world in which the forces of Evil and of Good often derive from the same political processes.*(Meridian)*

MAURIZIO VANNICELLI

Dorothy Day
The Long Loneliness (1952)

On May 1, 1983, Holy Cross marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Catholic Worker movement with a major symposium which brought together scholars, long-time Worker activists, and younger people presently performing the works of mercy and justice in Houses of Hospitality in Worcester, Boston, New York and Washington.

Dorothy Day was the heart and soul of the movement from the launching of the *Catholic Worker* paper until her death in December, 1981. By training and temperament she was a writer, her journalism the outstanding feature of the paper, her books an inspiration to people around the world. The best of her books

is the autobiographical *The Long Loneliness*, published originally in 1952. It is a remarkable story of spiritual transformation and growth. Born in Brooklyn and raised in Chicago, she dropped out of the University of Illinois to join the pre-World War I literary and political underground that was reshaping American culture. She joined socialist protests, worked for the radical journal *The Masses*, was jailed for participation in a suffragette demonstration and was part of a Greenwich Village set that included Eugene O'Neill, Malcolm Cowley, and John Reed. Always she was haunted by a life-long spiritual hunger and, in 1927, when she gave birth to a daughter by her common law husband, she joined the Catholic Church.

In the Church Dorothy Day found the union with God she had been seeking since childhood. But there was a price, for she was abandoned by her man and thought she was abandoning her commitment to the poor. Although she regarded Catholicism as the church of the American poor, rich in charity, she though it "did not set its face against a social order which made so much charity necessary." It was not until the winter of 1932 that she learned from Peter Maurin that the Church, too, had a social message, one more radical than the communists', which summoned her members to serve the poor and struggle for a new society.

With Maurin she launched the paper, and Houses of Hospitality sprang up across depression America as young men and women came to practice voluntary poverty, provide food, clothing and shelter for the poor, ("Christ among us"), and study and pray that she might learn how to renew the face of the earth. When war came, Miss Day and her followers refused to support it, and Catholic Worker support diminished; its pacifist stance ran directly counter to the militance of most Catholics during World II and the Cold War. When *The Long Loneliness* appeared, many Catholics preferred Senator Joseph R. McCarthy to Dorothy Day; the thirty years since have raised more than a few questions about who was right.

The radical vision of Christian truth put forth by Dorothy Day provides one of the central strands of contemporary Catholicism. Every Catholic college graduate should be familiar with Miss Day; whether they accept in full her understanding of Christ and the Church is less important than that they are connected through her and her movement to the challenge of the Gospel, a challenge Dorothy believed represents the Christian response to the long loneliness of modern humanity: "We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love." At a time when love seems to have little to do with the real business of life, including study, it may be well to think a bit about that claim.

DAVID O'BRIEN

William Foote Whyte
Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum (1943,1955)

Street Corner Society is a classic sociological study of an Italian neighborhood in Boston called "Cornerville." William Foote Whyte came to Cornerville in 1936 fresh out of Swarthmore with interests in economics and social reform and a flair for writing. Under the auspices of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University, he lived there for three and a half years. He learned Italian, became an accepted member of second-generation informal groups, and generally acquired an intimate knowledge of local life. The result of his research was an astounding work, elegantly written, which traces the structure of a slum community through its pattern of relations among "corner boys," racketeers, politicians, and police. Nearly as important as the original study is a lengthy appendix, published with the enlarged edition in 1955, in which Whyte gives a detailed description of his research procedures and of his own metamorphosis as a sociologist.

Street Corner Society has had a broad and profound impact on sociology. As a study of community and deviance, Whyte's depiction of Cornerville's vital social organization, with its almost bureaucratized extra-legal activities, contrasted with earlier sociological and literary interpretations that tended to portray slum districts as disorganized centers of crime. As a study of small groups and leadership, Whyte broke new ground with his description of the structure and activities of two streetcorner "gangs," showing how group position and prestige affected each group member's behavior. And as an early example of participant observation, *Street Corner Society* is still a major reference in this ethnographic tradition. Whyte's immersion into the community, his participation in its activities, and,ultimately, his ability to convey street corner life from an insider's view make this work lively reading and a masterpiece of sociological research.

ROYCE SINGLETON, JR.

Gunter Grass
The Tin Drum (1959)

"Granted: I am an inmate of a mental hospital." With these words, spoken in 1950, Oskar Matzerath, the dwarf narrator of Grass's masterful novel, begins his account of his life, evoking with his constant companion, a child's red and white tin drum, thirty years of German history.

Born with an adult intelligence and wisdom, Oskar, at age three, refuses to continue growing, rejecting thus the adult world and with it any responsibility. From his knee-high vantage point he henceforth observes the rise and fall of the Third Reich in his native Danzig and the emergence of West German's "economic miracle." Avoiding any ideology and moralizing, he recalls for us the spirit, perverseness, and infantilism of an entire epoch. Though generally more of an observer of his contemporaries rather than a participant, Oskar does, on occasion, get involved, as when he

torments the adults with his glass-shattering scream or when he breaks up a Nazi rally by hiding beneath the speaker's platform and beating out a waltz on his drum as a counter-rhythm to the martial tunes of the Nazis.

Rich in comic invention, full of extraordinary scenes and eccentric characters and written with a Baroque exuberance unmatched by any contemporary German writer, Gunter Grass's *The Tin Drum* remains the best and most highly acclaimed German novel since the war. *(Translation: Ralph Manheim, Random House, 1961)*

ECKHARD BERNSTEIN

Viktor Frankl
Man's Search for Meaning (1946, 1959)

A few years ago millions of Americans watched aghast and unbelieving as thousands of Jews walked heedless to the gas chambers and oblivious to impending death in the mass burial pits of German concentration camps. How could they be so uncaring? Why didn't they resist? The award-winning television series *Holocaust* gives only partial answers to these questions.

A more penetrating answer comes from Viktor Frankl, a Viennese physician who survived one of history's most shameful hours. How did Frankl come through the torture and humiliation he shared with millions of other Jews? He had to decide for himself – will he succumb or survive? Frankl chose survival, and he did so by giving meaning to the degradation he bore. If he had to suffer he would place that suffering in a context and in a perspective. How he did so is the substance of his book.

Published originally in German in 1946, it was translated into English in 1959 under the title *From death camp to Existentialism* (Beacon Press). Subsequent printings – of which there have been many – appear under the title above.

The impact of this book, whose value lies well beyond the story of a man's tenacious grasp on his human dignity, was felt in psychology from its first appearance and added immeasurablyto the then growing emphasis in psychotherapy on man's seeking, searching, being, and becoming. The field of humanistic psychotherapy is richer by a large measure for its depth.

The "meaning" (Frankl's *noesis*) of life and tragedy and suffering is a way of being which we all possess – if only we would reach more deeply into ourselves. His book stands as a monument to the human spirit, just as the wings of our library pay homage to those who did not survive the *Holocaust*.

RUDOLPH L. ZLODY

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
The Divine Milieu (1957, 1960)

The Divine Milieu introduces the reader to one of the great intellectuals certainly of the 20th century and, many would claim, of all time. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest, paleontologist, philosopher, poet, and mystic explains in *The Divine Milieu* his own world view, or more accurately his view of the cosmos, and the central role of Christ in its convergent evolution toward the "Omega Point." He believes intensely that spirit and matter are two aspects of the same cosmic stuff and that God permeates every point of the universal milieu. He sees humanity achieving greater and greater unity as it progresses toward higher levels of consciousness and complexity – Man is becoming one with the All. Although seemingly pantheistic, Teilhard's model allows for, and, in fact, insists on ever increasing individuality in this process of unification; and both phenomena are sustained by a universal Christ.

Critical of the view held by many Christians that life is but a vale of tears to be endured for the sake of individual salvation, Teilhard argues that "it is a truly Christian duty to grow, even in the eyes of men, and to make one's talents bear fruit, even though

they be natural." He wants us to push on to the limits of ourhumanity and to experience the "intoxication of advancing God's kingdom in every domain. I want to dedicate myself body and soul," he says, "to the sacred duty of research. We must test every barrier, try every path, plumb every abyss."

One can understand why Teilhard, who died in exile in 1955, caused deep concern among authorities within his own Church. In fact, much of his professional life was spent under censure from his superiors and in exile in China and the United States. Through all of this and in spite of his criticism of certain trends and positions taken by his Church, he remained steadfast in his obedience to and respect for its authority.

Many themes Teilhard wrestled with abstractly in the first part of the century and touched upon in *The Divine Milieu* appear to be materializing today: a new respect for, if not spiritualization of, the earth; an alliance between science and religion; increased complexity and consciousness of society leading to greater unity in spite of temporary setbacks; a positive contribution by mankind to the evolutionary process.

The Divine Milieu and most of Teilhard's other published works do contain passages that are difficult to comprehend when approached analytically, but these often convey bits and pieces of a spiritual mosaic that can make the heart leap when the reader recognizes a shared image. Furthermore, much of the book is clear and provides concrete advice on living the good life – one which contributes to a more rapid convergence of the cosmos.

Other books by Teilhard particularly appealing to Holy Cross students might be *How I Believe*, *Science and Christ* and *The Future of Man.*

PETER PERKINS

William L. Shirer
The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich (1960)

The passage of time has transformed this book into a period piece whose value lies more in its reflection of postwar American popular attitudes regarding the nature of the German character than as a lasting historical account of Nazi Germany. Its author was a professional journalist who, during the 1930s, covered the Nazi story and whose account, *Berlin Diary* (1941), was a popular best seller. Modeling himself after Thucydides, whose classic history of the Peloponnesian War was based on personal participation, Shirer likewise set out to expand upon his prewar experiences with the aid of captured German documents. The documentation notwithstanding, Shirer remains always the journalist eschewing intellectual analysis and focusing on the "inner story," or human interest, such as devoting five pages to Richard Heydrich's plan for using German soldiers dressed in Polish uniforms to create an incident that would justify the invasion of Poland in 1939.

While Shirer's account is thus entertaining, it is not rewarding intellectually. This is because Shirer lacks a grand sense of history that would permit the classification of events and personalities within a historical philosophy. The result is that we are left with no sense of the larger meaning of the Nazi experience. Nowhere, for example, do we find Shirer seriously attempting to explain why the German people were so willing to follow the fuhrer, except the conventional explanation that the German people are temperamentally suited to it. It is equally wrong to compare Hitler with Alexander, Caeser, or Napoleon. The latter three left a legacy with Western Civilization whose future was shaped by their conquests. Apart from the degradation and destruction (vividly described by Shirer) visited upon civilization by Hitler and his perverted followers, the Third Reich left no lasting monuments. Neither as a biography of Hitler (which this book quickly becomes) does Shirer's book present new intellectual or historical insights, despite the documentation. The

picture of Hitler's end in his Berlin bunker simply follows the account by H.R. Trevor-Roper in his *The Last Days of Hitler*, published in 1947. In sum, those embarking upon a serious study of Nazi Germany should be cautioned that Shirer's account is far from being the definitive work claimed by the publisher.

ROBERT L. BRANDFON

Thomas S. Kuhn
The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962)

According to the author, a physicist turned historian, reports of scholarly work in a mature discipline should not be comprehensible to the layman. If this is the case we can conclude that the study of scientific history has not yet come of age. Kuhn's purpose in this essay is to present an original explanation of how scientific theories are rejected and ultimately replaced. In presenting his arguments he discusses topics which can be understood and appreciated equally by all members of the Holy Cross community. Many of the statements and conclusions will surprise and occasionally elicit a smile from the casual observer of science as well as from the true "addict."

As an introduction, consider just a few of his points which I found to be delightfully controversial.

1. Scientists should not be trained to critically evaluate the foundations of their discipline. This would be both counterproductive and excessively expensive.

2. Scientists should not consider the problems and needs of society when selecting research projects. Excessive social concern might induce the scientist to select a problem which he could not solve.

3. Scientists are almost always guilty of rewriting their history, both in their research reports and their textbooks. Although this may confuse the study of history it is essential for the efficient educating of scientists.

4. Ultimate truth is not an appropriate concern of the scientist. This is better left to philosophers who are better left alone.

I think that the reader will enjoy Kuhn's explanation of these and other gems. Finally, I would probably not have recommended this essay if I did not feel that he made the scientific community look good in spite of numerous characterizations which taken alone could be construed as damaging.

MAURI A. DITZLER

Jorge Luis Borges
Labyrinths (1962)

A fine poet and a wide-ranging essayist, Borges is best known in this country through *Labyrinths*, an English-language collection featuring short stories from his best-known work, *Ficciones*. The trademark of a Borges story is a good tale, encapsulating an intriguing idea, told in remarkably economical, pellucid prose, and with just a hint of an impish grin in a wry twist that brings the philosophical point home. Borges's complete concentration on short forms, the ever present undercurrent of ironic humor, and an unconcealed joy in ideas and the mystery of human experience, make his work a unique delight. While ranging in content from tales of gaucho knife fights to stories that have been anthologized as science fiction, one recurrent theme is the subtle, and fragile, relationship between ideas, art, perception and the "external" world.

"Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" is the story of a scholarly hoax, the encyclopedia of an imaginary world that comes to be believed – resulting in the laws of nature coming to conform to the bizarre rules of the encyclopedia; or so we are told by someone who "knows" that this world isn't (wasn't?) "real." If there is a "objective" material world, for Borges it is hostile, overwhelming chaos, as in "Funes the Memorius," a brilliant sendup of the empiricist dogma of immaculate perception. Into this chaos comes the artist, like the dreamer in "The Circular Ruins," creating order, and even substance, and yet ultimately the pawn of unknowable forces of incredible power. "The trust," if it "is" anything for Borges, is the unique and creative interplay of individual experience and

the so-called external world. What is "the truth" in "Theme of the Traitor and Hero," where the revolutionary leader falls heroically in action – executed as a traitor by his comrades? Even his own life itself is essentialy art for Borges, not just in the "biographical" details he delights in inventing for interviewers, but at a more fundamental level in the profound irony of this most bookish of authors having been blind now for decades, and thus an avatar of the preliterate archetype of the divinely inspired blind poet. Whatever the subject, in Borges's hand the tale, just a "good story," becomes both an impenetrable puzzle and an illumination, an excursion into the infinitely elusive mysteries of time, perception and the mind, the labyrinth of human experience.

JACK DONNELLY

Meriol Trevor

Newman (Two Volumes, 1962)

John Henry Newman's *Idea of a University* still stands as a premier statement of Catholic university education, its ideals alive in colleges like Holy Cross. Even more surprising, Newman himself appears today, a century after his death, as the most significant English-speaking Catholic intellectual of modern times. His ideas, misunderstood and unfairly criticized during his lifetime, have become central to post-Vatican II renewal. The Church is attempting the project Newman made the work of his life, to build a solid middle ground between a conservatism which stands only in negative judgment on contemporary life and a modernism which surrenders crucial areas of faith to achieve a temporary acceptance. For those concerned about the relation between faith and reason, between history and doctrine, between personal authenticity and intellectual integrity, Newman remains a vital model and sure guide.

Born and educated an Anglican, Newman was the inspirational center of the Oxford-movement, which led to significant reform in that church and a major stream of conversions to Rome. He became a priest of the oratory, living most of his Catholic life

in a working class district of Birmingham. His sermons, both Anglican and Catholic, are widely recognized as models for preaching. Newman's journals and letters fill dozens of volumes offering the opportunity to engage an alert mind and a generous, compassionate spirit.

Finally, Newman may well have been a saint. Many who knew him well thought so; even his enemies felt guilty for opposing his ideas. The cause of his canonization is moving slowly forward and recently an organization has been established in this country to work and pray for its success. To know something of Newman there is no better starting place than Meriol Trevor's masterful biography, written with an elegance and grace worthy of its subject. All who should like to be intelligent Christians and faith-filled scholars should know Newman; Meriol Trevor profides a pleasant and rewarding way to meet him.

DAVID J. O'BRIEN

Rachel Carson
Silent Spring (1962)

Silent Spring was the first book to bring ecological concerns before a national audience. The author, Rachel Carson, was trained as a biologist and she had the ability to combine a scientist's precision and a journalist's feel for style and pace with a deeply felt concern for the earth and all its inhabitants.

The book deals primarily with the ravaging effects on animal and human life of the indiscriminate, short-sighted use of chemical insecticides and herbicides. Although the book was written in 1962, the issues raised in it and even the chemicals discussed are unfortunately very much with us today. In readily understandable language, Rachel Carson examines the ways these chemicals act on living organisms and the sometimes subtle and always unforeseen hazards which arise from their widespread use.

Perhaps the most relevant aspect of *Silent Spring* is the author's awareness of and eloquent description of the tragic delusion we have that we can control the environment however we wish and that somehow we can stand apart from the world of nature and be unaffected by the technical havoc we wreak in that world. *Silent Spring* is the ideal book to begin with to learn of how we, in this century, are so arrogantly and foolishly tampering with the environment.

R. H. GARVEY

Richard Hofstadter
Anti-intellectualism in American Life (1963)

Conceived in response to the political and intellectual climate of the 1950s when the attacks of Senator Joe McCarthy smeared so much of the academic world as "soft on communism" and when the Democratic Presidential candidate in 1952 and 1956, Adlai E. Stevenson, was derided as an "egg-head" when he promised to "talk sense to the American people" rather than appeal simplistically to our emotions, this Pulitzer-prize-winning historical analysis of American "resentment and suspicion of the life of the mind" is essential for understanding ourselves as students, teachers and Americans today.

In brief, the enemies of a healthy national intellectual life have been those who have offered simple dogmatic answers to questions that have no simple answers or power-holders threatened by new ideas: religious fundamentalists, revivalists, anti-reform machine bosses, "self-made" big businessmen and educationists who geared the high school system to "lay the foundations of good citizenship" rather than develop the mind.

Hofstadter's most important point for us: his description of the true intellectuals as those dedicated to ideas, to the life of the mind as if to a religious commitment, as those who "serve as the

moral antennae of the race," for whom the meaning of "life lies not in the possession of truth but in the quest for new uncertainities." Thus, the real intellectual is not necessarily the brightest or most educated man or woman, but the one most likely to keep learning from reading and experience.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.

Alexander Isaiyevich Solzhenitsyn
One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich (1963)

This short novel of less than 200 pages is a sober presentation of one man's struggle to survive a day, and wake up the next morning alive. The day in the life of Ivan Denisovich Shukhov is not an extraordinary day in his existence, the way we understand the word "extraordinary" – he wasn't shipwrecked, wasn't chased through the jungle by a band of cannibals, and he wasn't in the vicinity of Mount Saint Helens when it shattered the world with flame, dust and lava. The day in the life of Iv. D. is extraordinary because he has survived an "ordinary" day in the most dehumanizing, and dehumanized, establishment in the history of the modern world – a Soviet prison camp.

Ivan Denisovich was accused of treason. His crime was that he was captured by Germans during WW II, and, after a couple of days, got away and back to the Soviet lines. For the Soviet Army interrogator the fact that Ivan Denisovich made it and came back alive was a clear proof that he fixed up his escape with the Germans and was a traitor. Ivan Denisovich, therefore, as millions of Russians before him and after, had to sign a "confession" of his crime.

> The way Shukhov figured, it was simple. If he didn't sign, he was as good as buried. But if he did, he'd still go on living a while. So he signed.

There were eight years or 3,653 days in his sentence, with three extra ones because of the leap years, all to be spent in Siberia, in polar cold, hard labor, dirt, sickness, perpetual undernourishment, without any contact with his family, and in constant presence of armed guards and their dogs.

The book is a kit for physical and spiritual survival in the environment of tyranny of a totalitarian society. One must read it, one owes it to the millions who didn't survive it, and millions of those who have been struggling to survive it...*(Bantam)*

GEORGE N. KOSTICH

Carl G. Jung
Memories, Dreams, Reflections (1963)

This book is an unusual autobiography in that it does not trace the external or public events of the author's life. Instead, Jung tells a story of personal events; he traces the development of his psyche through an exploration of memories, dreams or reflections. He describes this project in the prologue: "My life is a story of the self-realization of the unconscious. Everything in the unconscious seeks outward manifestation, and the personality too desires to evolve out of its unconscious conditions and to experience itself as a whole. I cannot employ the language of science to trace this process of growth in myself, for I cannot experience myself as a scientific problem...Thus, it is that I have now undertaken, in my eighty-third year, to tell my personal myth. I can only make direct statements, only 'tell stories.' Whether or not the stories are 'true' is not the problem. The only question is whether what I tell is *my* fable, *my* truth." Jung, 1875-1961, a Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist, was Freud's student, colleague, and personal psychiatrist. In 1913 he split from the psychoanalytic movement and began to develop analytic psychology which incorporates both the personal and the collective unconscious as well as personal aspirations into a vision of human behavior. The concepts of ex-

troversion and introversion as applied to personality were posited by Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* overwhelms the reader with honesty of self-inspection, and, to a certain extent, it teaches this honesty. Jung is best described as wise.

ROBERT M. FISHER

The Autobiography of Malcolm X (1964)

Created from a series of interviews with Alex Haley, later author of *Roots*, the story of Malcolm Little, later known as Detroit Red and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz – the name changes symbolizing his transformation from a street hustler to an international leader – is, like other great American autobiographies, like *The Education of Henry Adams* and Jane Addams's *Twenty Years at Hull House*, a conversion story.

On one level it is, like other black classics – Richard Wright's *Native Son* and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* – about a black man's struggle with the illusion of the American Dream. But, more fundamentally, it is a religious story about a man who transcended racism (ours and his own) and discovered the possibility of universal brotherhood because he was constantly open to experience and not afraid to change. *(Ballantine)*

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.

Morton W.Bloomfield and Robert C.Elliott (eds.) *Great Plays (1965)*

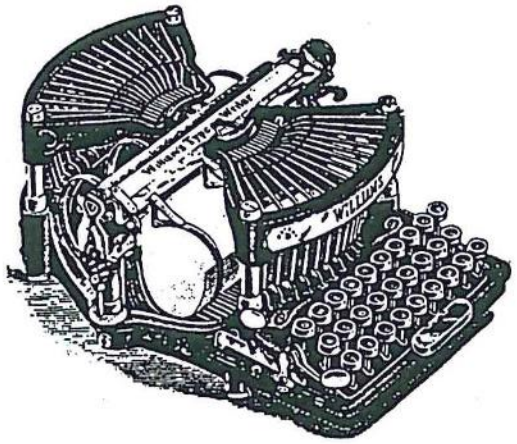
Before you dip into any play anthology or try to fill your gaps in theatre history, you'd do best first to devour *How Not to Write a Play* by Walter Kerr, and Aristotle's *Poetics*.

After reading Kerr, see 20 live theatrical productions of any nature whatsoever: comedy, drama, musical, mystery, high school, collegiate, community, professional – whatever – but *SEE* them because seeing (as the Greek root of the Greek word *theatron* implies) is essentially what theatre has mostly been about.

In *Great Plays*, the collection of 11 plays suggested to lead you into the world of theatre, you will find a multicolored spectrum of dramatic genres, arching over 2000 years from the Greek of Sophocles to the German of Brecht, who, coincidentally, in 1948 wrote his own adaptation of *Antigone*, set in post WW II Berlin.

Like the ribbons of color in a rainbow, each play shares shades of the adjacent plays but still maintains its own true hue.

The austere, almost severe structural simplicity of *Antigone* is mirrored in the virtually classical build of *Othello*: after a first act set in Venice (about 20 percent of the play), the rest of the action takes place on Cyprus over one and a half days, which is practically Spartan playwriting for Shakespeare whose *Antony and Cleopatra* sprawls over three continents and ten years.



Some sixty years after Shakespeare, the theatre came in out of the rain and women began to trod the boards (although all actors were still excommunicated by the Catholic Church in France). Two great satirists were writing just a generation apart across the English Channel: first Moliere flayed the social hypocrisy of Parisian high society, then William Congreve lashed the scandals of a restored if not reformed London. 1660-1700 is a period of such luxury, elegance and refined manners, many relaxed and casual Americans at first have a hard time relating to the theatre of that period.

The language of Congreve, although less metaphor-packed than Shakespeare, is awash with witty word-play. His plots, like any good farce, are even more so. In *The Way of the World* the promiscuous relationships on the page seem unscrambleable; on the stage, distinctive costumes and faces help. The anthology's editors suggest s second reading may be necessary to unravel the knotted plot points, but a second reading of almost any work of art well rewards the expended effort.

Moliere's *Misanthrope* is equally daunting, but for different reasons. It is not typical Moliere. It is bitter, almost bleak, and the exact point of the play has split critics for nearly 300 years. Moliere skewers his high-tone contemporaries as deftly as Congreve, while the later Anglo-Irish writer Bernard Shaw needles his philosophical enemies in the only other comedy in the collection, *Arms and the Man*, a look at romantic notions of war.

Shaw, like the earlier satirists, believed in message plays, a trait he shared with an admired Norwegian, Henrik Ibsen, whose *Hedda Gabler* is another of the four plays selected from the late 19th century, all of which were written in a twelve-year period, from 1888 to 1900.

All four have as their central characters women; in fact, still another way to look at all the collected plays would be to examine the image of the female projected by 11 playwrights – all male.

"Tortured and torturing" might be one glib label to apply as we leap from the frozen wastes of Russia and Scandinavia, looking at Julie, in August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*; Hedda; the three sisters (and one sister-in-law) in Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*; to the hot tenements of St. Louis and meet Amanda and Laura in Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*. At the center of Bertold Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* stands the heroic Grusha, surrounded by music and chorus and amid the disaster of war – not unlike Antigone in her classical orchestra.

After the realism of the late 19th century, the expressionism or impressionism of the three 20th-century plays chosen provide readers with yet another contrast.

All in all, the eleven great plays, chosen from the tens of thousands written, are an excellent starting point at which to begin to explore the many faces of the art and craft of theatre.*(Holt, Rinehart and Winston)*

KENNETH HAPPE

Michael Harrington
The Accidental Century (1965)

Since it is strange for a writer to review one of his/her own books, I might as well begin unconventionally by saying what was wrong with *The Accidental Century* and then go on to explain why, nevertheless, it strikes me as worth reading today.

The book commits a most typical error of radical criticism: it speeds up time. Marx thought in 1848 that socialism would come in two or three years; by 1850, he realized that it might take a half a century more; and we now know that he was utterly optimistic in his revision. I thought that automation would rapidly transform the occupational structure of the United States and necessitate immediate basic changes. In fact, it – and microprocessors and all the rest – has slowly transformed that structure. We are only now approaching the situation which I thought was imminent in the Sixties.

But if events moved more slowly than I thought they would, they have taken more or less the direction I indicated. And that gets to why I still like the book. (I am writing from Paris where twenty years ago I was working on it). The crisis in which we live is not simply economic, political or social; it is culture, the question of a civilization rather than of a "mode of production." All faiths, I am convinced, are in trouble: Judaeo-Christianity, atheism, capitalism, socialism, Communism, etc. And part of their crisis is the absence of common transcendental values which emerge naturally out of the daily experience of our societies. I knew that twenty years ago, vaguely. I have just written a new book about it, entitled *The Politics at God's Funeral*. And I think the worth of *The Accidental Century* is that, in relatively simple and straightforward fashion, it saw our problems in our literature and religion as well as in our Gross National Product and unemployment rate.

I, of course, know much better what is wrong than how to make it right. But, as Hegel understood, the work of the negative comes first and, in any case, the hopes of *The Accidental Century* are, I think still valid.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON, '47

Gabriel Garcia Marquez
One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967)

"*One Hundred Years of Solitude* is not a history of Latin America, it is a metaphor for Latin America," states Garcia Marquez of the book which won him the 1982 Nobel Prize for Literature. The Colombian author's narrative begins with the founding of Macondo, a remote Latin American village, at a time when "the world was so recent that many things lacked names." At the center of this tale we find six generations of the Buendia family as they endure such calamities as the banana fever, the insomnia plague, thirty-two civil wars, revolution, strikes, and a rain that lasts several years.

Narrated in a style in which the fantastic and the mythical are skillfully blended with the everyday, this book exudes joy, sadness, loneliness, and social injustice. The perils of the Buendias not only represent a scathing commentary on centuries of colonialism, civil war, and political chaos, but also these events illustrate the multifaceted nature of myth. The Buendia's saga, with its juxtaposition of imagined and real events, speaks of the inadequacy of documentary history and the need to take into account that which is considered oral history: the superstitions, dreams and imaginations of the Macondians.

Near the end of this magic tale, a character finds a parchment manuscript which contains the "history" of Macondo. This document "had concentrated a century of daily episodes in such a way that they coexisted in one instant." By chronicling its own history, the novel invites the reader to reflect on the elusive boundaries which separate art from life as well as to question the uncertainties of his own reality. Thus Garcia Marquez, with Cervantes and Borges as intellectual forerunners, creates his own "metaphor for Latin America," a mythical portrait which simultaneously partakes in aesthetics, philosophy and social consciousness. *(Translation: Gregory Rabassa, Harper & Row 1980)*

ISABEL ALVAREZ-BORLAND

George Orwell
Collected Essays (1968)

"What I have most wanted to do," states Orwell in "Why I Write," "is to make political writing into an art." He succeeded. Reading Orwell's essays in the four-volume *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell* edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968) helps focus the turbulent social context that engages Orwell's attention in 1920-1950; some of the finest essays are also collected in more compact editions. Orwell's essays rank with the best in English literature, combining moral imagination, political engagement, and stylistic mastery. Orwell unites personal experience and social commen-

tary, notably in the famous "Shooting an Elephant" and in his superb, demythologizing reports on life and death among the poor. Pugnaciously independent, Orwell the democratic socialist probes the weaknesses of English (and Western) society, while turning even more fiercely on the forms of totalitarianism (Left and Right) into which revolutions seem to slide.

Viewing the use and abuse of language as inseparable from moral and political freedom, Orwell fights to purify language into an instrument of truth (classically expressed in "Politics and the English Language"). This concern produces essays examining the implications of how language functions in works ranging from boys' magazines to Kipling to Dickens, as well as in overtly political speech.

Characterizing Dickens, Orwell describes a face that could be his own: "a man who is always fighting against something, but who fights in the open and is not frightened, the face of a man who is *generously angry* -- in other words, of a nineteenth century liberal, a free intelligence, a type hated with equal hatred by all the smelly little orthodoxies which are now contending for our souls." Now as when he lived, Orwell's voice attacks our dishonesty and complacency, encouraging us not to assent to our own servitude.

MARION F. MEILAENDER

James D. Watson
The Double Helix (1968)

In the spring of 1953 at the Cavendish Laboratory of Cambridge University, England, James Watson and Francis Crick were celebrating victory in their attempts to explain the molecular structure of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). This molecule is the genetic substance of all living cells. It contains all the information for the functions and development of life. Discovery of the DNA structure was *the* major scientific breakthrough which led to the understanding, at the molecular level, of the way in which genetic information is duplicated and transmitted in living cells. This

discovery spawned research which has clarified our view of the genetic code and genetic mutations and which, today, is concerned with genetic engineering and recombinant DNA.

In *The Double Helix*, Watson presents an autobiographical account of the events, personalities, conflicts, triumphs and disasters during this period. He provides insight into the efforts in scientific discovery and the inner world of the scientific community in Europe and the United States. Watson gives the layman an intimate view of how science is done. One experiences the enthusiasm, when a new idea emerges, and the despair, when it is shown to conflict with experimental data. Yet, in this tale, told with a brash, opinionated style, the main characters are human beings interested in women, parties, afternoon tennis, English sherry hours and pub lunches.

Watson and Crick know the reward for success is a Nobel Prize and that the brilliant Linus Pauling at Cal Tech is one of their competitors. That the DNA molecule should have a simple structure which easily explains its biological function provides a satisfying conclusion.

MELVIN C. TEWS

Erik H. Erikson
Gandhi's Truth (1969)

Mahatma Gandhi is the father of militant nonviolence. Yet he could be described as: "the man who has stirred three hundred million people to revolt, who has shaken the foundations of the British Empire, and who has introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the last two hundred years." His influence has extended around the world, informing leaders like Martin Luther King and Caesar Chavez. While there are many biographies and books about Gandhi, none is more challenging than *Gandhi's Truth*. A leader in the field of psychoanalysis and human development, Erik Erikson has attempted a psycho-history

of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi is dead, the events which would lead not only many Indians and others around the world to revere him as a holy man and social reformer have passed. Can we recapture his presence and understand the motivations and meanings behind his *satyagraha* (Truth-force) movement? While you may find yourself disagreeing at times with Erikson's psycho-historical method, this volume does reveal the struggles, virtues and vision of Gandhi. It challenges the reader, in an age in which conflict resolution and nuclear arms are all too common parts of our political vocabulary, to consider and understand the force behind militant non-violence. Finally, *Gandhi's Truth* reveals how a very human person was able to reinterpret traditional Hindu beliefs and values in such a way as to father a "non-violent" political and social revolution. This was Mahatma Gandhi, a man who for many came to manifest the divine, to embody "The Truth," and is remembered as *mahatma*, the "great souled one". *(Norton)*

JOHN L. ESPOSITO

James MacGregor Burns
Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox (1956)
Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom (1970)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt dominated the last half century of American life. His domestic programs reshaped American government and American society. His foreign policy created the world we live in. One cannot understand our nation, our society, our world without some understanding of this man.

James MacGregor Burns describes his work as a "political" biography; its central theme is Roosevelt as political leader, first of a nation seeking to throw off the consequences of the Great Depression and later of a nation at the front of a world coalition against the Axis powers. In each case there was an enemy to be fought, a coalition to shape, a goal to reach and, necessarily, some concept of a world to follow.

Roosevelt's great strength lay in his ability to master the process of politics: to capture the spirit of the day, to articulate the people's hopes, to frame the goal, but equally, to strike the deal, to retreat before the impossible, to see what can be done as well as what must be done.

Burns's work serves not only as the chronicle of the public life of an extraordinary American; it is an essay in political leadership, particularly leadership in its American form. Burns's two volumes are a fine introduction to the nature of this nation's politics and society and its role in the contemporary world.

JOHN B. ANDERSON

The Norton Anthology of Poetry (1970)

No one can write, of course, with enthusiasm on behalf of an anthology. But, given the constraints of "100" books, the huge number of poetry books which could be chosen, and the cost of individual volumes of poetry, an anthology becomes a "necessary evil." And the *Norton Anthology of Poetry* is good on a number of counts: the book presents British *and* American poetry from before Chaucer to the present; the poems/poets are presented in the best and simplest manner – chronologically; and the book gives a more ample than usual selection of the poets it contains.

Anthologies are "guilt-free"; no one ever reads them from cover to cover. Self-indulgence is best: either open the book and start reading, or begin from a title which seems to strike a particularly

resonant chord. Anthologies can also be used to disguise ignorance – when someone mentions (superiorly) their intimate knowledge of Yeats's "'Leda and the Swan," you can nod knowingly, then go off and look it up (secretly) in your *Norton*.

A word finally about poems themselves. Don't approach them as mystical incantations known only to initiates (i.e. your teachers). Or as Ideas. Poems need to be read first the way any other writing is read – for the sense of the *sentence* (*not* the line). Read as sentences which follow the same rules as any other sentence, poems will make themselves more available – they demand attention, but no special knowledge. Like all writing, poems arise from the real need to make sense of the world, and as such, anthology becomes the record of our human attempts to understand our lives. *(Eds. Allison, Blake, Carr, Eastman, and English. Revised edition)*

ROBERT CORDING

Ronald W. Clark
Einstein: The Life and Times (1971)

Einstein's achievements in science are as fundamental and revolutionary as those of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler and Newton. Moreover, much of his research in later years was never finished and it too has the profoundest implications for the future development of physics. One thinks of his enduring belief in causality and his rejection of what he called "the dice-playing God" of Born, Bohr and Heisenberg. There was also his surprising belief that the laws of nature cannot be obtained from experience, but must be freely invented. An attitude reminiscent of Plato, to whom he has been compared. Indeed, because of his love of music andgeometry (which he revolutionized), and the schools of thought which he founded, he might even be compared to Pythagoras.

Given Einstein's gigantic intellectual stature, it may be centuries before scholars will be able to fully assess his ideas, scientific theories and their historical influence. Ronald Clark's *Einstein, The Life and Times* bravely attempts to not only give us the man as well as the scientist, but to discuss in common language (albeit with well over a thousand scholarly page notes at the end of the text) Einstein's numerous discoveries including their historical context. Thus he covers Brownian motion, the photoelectric effect, the special theory of relativity (including historical issues), the principle of equivalence, the general theory of relativity (albeit without a clear explanation as to why the apple falls according to Einstein), the pioneering work in relativistic cosmology with its closed universe that has overtones of Aristotle's universe, the quantum theory of radiation (which underlies Planck's law of black body radiation and the theory of the laser), quantum statistics (such as Bose-Einstein gas), and a brief but intelligible discussion of the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen paradox that challenges the completeness of quantum mechanics. Regretably absent, however, is a reference to his collaboration with Grommer (1927) and later with Infeld and Hoffmann at Princeton (1938) to show that the gravitation field equations yield the Newtonian equations of motion to a first approximation. Finally, there are an extensive bibliography of books and publications dealing with Einstein and his theories and a scholarly list of many of Einstein's major publications.

In his treatment of Einstein the person, Clark gives us detailed, provocative and even controversial portraits, such as the youthful patent clerk in Berne and visionary founder of the Olympia Academy, to the majestic, world figure who had become a refugee in Princeton not just to escape Nazi Germany and its persecution of the Jews, but to be in a position to warn and protest against it.

There is still another important side to Einstein and that is his love of children. Thus Clark reports that when Einstein was a member of the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations, "he spent much time discussing how the pro-

spects of peace in the future might be increased by school education in the present." More recently, Gerald Holton in a centennial essay (1979) points out that Einstein's conversations with the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget served to stimulate the remarkable book *The Child's Conception of Time (Le Developpement de la Notion de Temps chez l'Enfant, France,* 1946).

One should therefore look upon Clark's book not as an end in itself, but as a fascinating gateway to continued learning about Einstein and his time. *(Avon)*

FRANK R. TANGHERLINI

Maxime Rodinson
Mohammed (1971)

Political events in the Middle East have made us more aware of the 800 million Muslims that constitute the second largest of the world's religious communities. Understanding the increasing number of attempts from North Africa to Southeast Asia to establish more Islamically oriented states and societies, requires knowledge of that "ideal" which is a source of inspiration and guidance to Islamic activists. For Muslims the Ouran, God's final and perfect revelation, as well as Mohammed, and the early Islamic community/state provide the norm that is to be implemented. Because Mohammed embodied the Islamic ideal, he is the model upon which all believers are to pattern their lives.

In *Mohammed,* Maxime Rodinson combines the best of scholarship with the ability of a storyteller. In this popular biography, we see the interpenetration of the sacred and the profane, of religion and the state that epitomizes the Islamic ideal. Mohammed was an ordinary man: caravan leader, caring husband, loving father. He was also prophet-statesman of the Muslim community/state: religious guide, head of state, military commander, chief judge. If in the West Islam has been "the

misunderstood religion," Mohammed has been the most malign ed of prophets. Rodinson combines objectivity and empathy. He has told the story of Mohammed and the Islamic state in an engag ing introduction to Muslim belief and practice. *(Vintage)*

JOHN L. ESPOSITO

James Thomas Flexner
Washington, The Indispensable Man (1974)

One of the disadvantages of being 20 today is never having had a President of the United States who was a moral inspiration Another is the impoverishing effect of history textbooks, as Frances Fitzgerald spells out in *America Revised*, on history teaching. A fine introductory course would be ten biographies starting with this one, a completely rewritten version of a four volume work, of our founding father, who, 184 years after his death, still has the strength to inspire.

A highpoint is what Flexner calls "probably the most important single gathering ever held in the United States," the meeting Washington called of his rebellious officers at Newburgh, New York, on March 15, 1783. His reasonable arguments were failing to win them over when he took from his pocket a reassuring let ter from a Congressman. But, as the soldiers leaned forward, he stared at the paper in helpless confusion. Then, embarrassed by his weakness, he pulled out his eyeglasses which his followers had never seen him wear. "Gentlemen," he said, "you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown grey but almost blind in the service of my country." The hardened soldiers wept. And today's reader may well weep tears of admiration for the man so guided by a deep respect for human nature, who said at the Constitutional Convention: "Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair." *(Mentor)*

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J

Lewis Thomas
The Lives of a Cell (1974)

Far from being a treatise on cell biology as the title suggests, *The Lives of a Cell* is a collection of 29 short essays that recount the imaginative musings of an eminent physician on the subject of life and scientific research. The topics range widely (music, language, insect societies, the search for extraterrestrial life, medical research and death, to name a few) but seem to focus on the theme that life represents an assemblage of interacting units driven by evolution towards greater interdependence. Crisscrossing the line between reductionism (the whole is nothing but the sum of its parts) and holism (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts), Thomas builds a case for the overwhelming importance of symbiosis in the evolution of diversity and questions the meaning and existence of autonomous individuals.

What makes this book a delightful excursion into biology is Thomas's choice of facts and his intriguing perspective. Are cells the product of cooperative ventures by primitive bacteria? Are ant colonies giant brains whose nerve cells we squash on our kitchen floors? Is disease the panic-stricken and unreasonable reaction of otherwise quiescent cells to a non-threatening stimulus? Is the sky a gigantic membrane which traps energy and turns chaos into order? These are but a few examples of the perspective with which Thomas skillfully weaves a tapestry of wonder out of the threads of fact and hypothesis.

The Lives of a Cell transforms the data of biology, from biochemistry to ecology, into a provocative, albeit speculative, attempt to find direction in evolution; it rewards the reader with fascinating information and the mystique of biology that all too often is choked by the entangled weeds of textbook fact.

WILLIAM R. HEALY

Paul Johnson
A History of Christianity (1976)

It is probably impossible to write a one-volume history of Christianity which would satisfy church historians and address every major facet in the historical development of Christian faith. However, for the average reader looking for a reliable and lively account of the Christian idea and deed over the course of twenty centuries, this book is well worth the investment. Johnson likes to unearth the underside of history, taking note of the people, circumstances, and events which straight-minded histories tend to downplay or ignore. Why men like Cyril of Alexandria or Pius X have been officially numbered among the saints, while people like Origen and Erasmus, who did so much more for the good of Christianity, were so terribly misjudged by the Church, remains an institutional embarrassment.

Johnson occasionally indulges in a public washing of some ecclesiastical laundry, and his book is open to the charge of a certain anti-institutional bias. But he cares for Christian faith and understands its ideals, and this exposes the reader to the disappointment an historian might experience when writing about the failure of the Christian churches to realize their evangelical possibilities. For the book is really the story of a Church caught between the ideal and the practical, between the Gospel and politics, between weak-minded ecclesiastics and the believer's birthright to intellectual freedom and the unfettered pursuit of God. From New Testament times through the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and into John XXIII's *aggiornamento*, it is also the story of a Church gradually outgrowing the intellectual, economic, and cultural strictures of Western civilization.

A History of Christianity is informative, thought-provoking, and frequently irritating, yet it leaves the reader with an odd sort of confidence that the story of Christian faith is largely unfinished, and that this in itself is a welcome sign.

WILLIAM REISER,S.J.

Hans Kung
On being a Christian (1976)

Despite its size (the English edition runs to 720 pages), this book probably had the widest reading public of any religious book in Europe since World War II. The reason for this is not hard to discover.

In a style that is clear and non-technical, Kung provides *for people who are completely part of the present-day world* an intelligent presentation of Christianity. He avoids none of the real questions that Christianity faces today; he makes no superficial claims for Christianity's superiority as a religion or as a wisdom; he recognizes the historical mistakes and weaknesses of Christians and of their Church. At the same time, he is profoundly Christian in his own outlook and witnesses to his own acceptance of Christianity's millenia-old tradition of belief in Jesus as the Christ.

While *On being a Christian* is really a "summa" of Christian beliefs, it is what the title suggests, a book about what it means to be a Christian. It situates the Christian believer in his or her world today, a world of widespread agnosticism and social upheaval and critical knowledge and emphasis on being authentically human, and shows how both the faith and the practice of Christianity can make sense in that world.

This is a book to be read by anyone who wishes an adult and more accurate understanding of Christianity.

BERNARD M. COOKE

Frederick Hartt
Art: A History of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture(2 vols., 1976)

There are a number of surveys of art in convenient paperback form: Jansen has written a *Key Monuments in the History of Art*. Gardner (in edited versions) has produced a popular text called *Art Through the Ages*. My personal preference is for a two-volume work by Frederick Hartt called *Art: A History of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture* (Prentice Hall). Volume I covers pre-history to the Middle Ages (known to the initiates as "from caves to cathedrals"). The second volume deals with art from the Renaissance through our own time. Both works are substantial -- over 500 pages in each volume, each conveniently divided into sections according to historical succession; for example, volume I deals with the prehistoric period in a section called "Art Before Writing," then "Egypt through the Roman World" and finally "The Middle Ages."

A survey book can function as a good reference but it can never take the place of the firsthand experience of an original work of art. All of these surveys should be used as a supplement to one's own looking and critical evaluation. A text such as Hartt's, however, enables one to locate a specific style or image.

In a lucid and admirably well-presented format, the book gives an historic overview of each period, complete with maps and numerous black and white illustrations. The book also contains high-quality color plates. The value of a survey book is in its comprehensiveness and its even-handed treatment of all works under discussion. Hartt presents each period with equal discernment and sympathy, surveying the full gamut of artistic expressions: sculpture, architecture, mural painting, manuscripts, pottery, metal work, panel and easel painting, and prints.

I studied with Hartt in a summer course and was immediately impressed with his attention to the continuity of styles from one period to the next. In no way does he present artistic forms as existing in rigidly fixed time zones. He shows rather that artists (and their patrons) rejected or accepted previous traditions depending on their perceived relevance; for example, Rodin's use of the forms and subject matter of Michelangelo.

Hartt appears particularly at ease when describing Christian context, probably one of the reasons he is to be recommended to this audience. One might cite his treatment of the Ebbo Gospels made in the mid-9th century for the archbishop of Reims. The Evangelists hovering over their work are some of the most compelling images ever to grace a Christian text. Hartt writes:

> Matthew has suddenly been siezed as if by the *furor divinus*. He bends over as he writes, clutching his quill pen, his eyes almost starting from their sockets with excitement, his drapery dashing madly about his form, the very locks of his hair on end and writhing like serpents. Not only the figure, but also the quivering landscape seem to participate in his emotion recalling the words: "The mountains skipped like rams and the little hills like lambs" (Ps. 114:4)

Although Hartt sees the great force of Western art as being indissolubly linked with Christian tradition, he is no superficial apologist. He interprets Christian tradition as eagerly embracing the material world and transforming it with the same impetus with which the Divine brought that world into being. He shows with great sensitivity the continuity in artistic expression from pre-Christian images of anthropomorphic gods to the struggle to picture "God" in the first centuries of our era. He does not separate Medieval from Renaissance traditions and sees common themes progressing even to the present. To Hartt, a work is good, and therefore meaningful, insofar as it reflects a purposeful relationship between artist and society.

Subject matter, material, skill and placement all contribute but are never the "justification" of value: a painting of an escalator by Richard Estes, a prehistoric fertility figure, a stained glass window, all contain meanings for their societies and for us. In a lecture I have heard him state that Vincent Van Gogh expressed more of a religious attitude by painting an apple well than the church painter who, without conviction, copied an image of a saint. It is this breadth of vision and, I think, compassionate understanding of the artist's inspiration that distinguishes this survey text.

Stephen B. Oates
With Malice Toward None: The Life of Abraham Lincoln (1977)

Who needs another Lincoln biography! Understandably this might be the response to any suggestion that Stephen B. Oates's 1977 biography of our Civil War president, *With Malice Toward None*, is worth reading. Even a cursory examination of the book, however, dispels this initial reaction. Although he offers little in the way of new evidence or original interpretations, Oates's monograph is comprehensive. He provides us with a broad, felicitous rehearsal of the principal evidence and standard readings of Lincoln with emphasis on the Civil War years. And, despite the familiar ground, one is rarely bored and is anxious to read on. The prose is compelling.

One of Oates's principal objectives is the portrayal of Lincoln as an ordinary man who is heir to all mankind's weaknesses. He succeeds but not without difficulty. What biographer would fare better in attempting to divest the emancipator of America's slaves and the martyred savior of the Union of the legendary and epic aura which envelops him. If, as Robert Penn Warren suggests, the Civil War was our Homeric period, Lincoln was its foremost hero.

Skillfully, Oates pictures the human Lincoln: the grating Indiana accent, bawdy jokes, polemicism, the ungallant tirade against Mary Owens, blatant politics, moods and depression, rejection of his family, advocacy of the hair-brained colonization scheme and willingness to compromise on slavery to save the Union. But whether considering these frailties in the context of his God-like sentiments at Gettysburg or his superhuman strength in the months preceding Antietam and the election of 1864, one cannot escape the heroic legend.

JOSEPH J. HOLMES

Steven Weinberg
The First Three Minutes (1977)

The first three minutes of what? Why, of the *universe*, of course. One might be inclined to regard the title as merely an astonishing piece of effrontery, but the arguments which physicist Steven Weinberg marshal in his exposition of the early history of the universe are based on solid scientific observations. Reasoning from the present state of the universe backward toward the "big bang," the explosive beginning of space, time and matter which occurred somewhat less than 20 billion years ago, he is able to provide a description of the probable state of affairs from the first one-hundredth of a second onward.

Three distinct elements are encountered in his analysis.

First, there is the vast amount of information obtained during the past three centuries of telescopic observations. Galileo's discovery of the moons of Jupiter, the perception of the milky way as evidence that our sun is part of a disk-shaped group of hundreds of thousands of stars, the understanding that certain fuzzy star-like objects were actually galaxies similar to our own – these were but a few of the many achievements of optical astronomy which led to our present understanding of the place of the earth in the universe.

Second, the discovery made during the early part of the 20th century of the famous "red shift" enables one to deduce that the universe is expanding, and that the further a stellar object is from us, the greater is its velocity away from us.

Finally, there is the quite recent discovery that the universe is filled with an all-pervasive background of radiation – a kind of universal static. The static, which is equivalent to heat radiated from an object whose temperature is a mere three degrees above absolute zero, is thought to represent the dying glow of the original explosion.

Professor Weinberg's book is a fine example of scientific exposition for the educated non-expert. Mathematical arguments are relegated to an appendix, and a determined reader who *expects* to comprehend this intelligent discussion of the beginning moments of our universe will not be disappointed.

P. SHANAHAN

Karl Rahner, S.J.
Foundations of Christian Faith (1978)

This book may well be the most up-to-date scholarly summary of Christian belief now available. Rahner ranks among the top five theologians in the Church, Catholic or Protestant; and this book, written near the close of his amazingly productive career, brings together in relatively simple form his views on the fundamental mysteries of Christian faith.

Much of the book's value comes from the integration of Rahner's own understandings. This book is not a cataloguing of doctrines; it is a synthesis of educated Christian belief.

At the heart of this distinctive synthesis lie Rahner's view of "grace" and his emphasis on the role of the Church as sacrament of God's saving presence in human history. For this reason, Rahner's approach can justifiably be called "anthropological"; at the same time, his focus is clearly on the self-revelation of God in the mystery of Jesus as incarnated Word. Rahner's theology is situated, therefore, at the very center of today's discussion about the religious function of religious language and symbol; and this volume provides an excellent entry into Rahner's thought.

BERNARD M. COOKE

Flannery O'Connor
The Habit of Being (1979)

Flannery O'Connor is, of course, best known as a writer of fiction. This collection shows her also as master of the dying craft of letter writing. These selected letters span the years 1948 to 1964 when she died at age 39 of a long-standing illness.

The letters were written to people as diverse as critics, well known writers, her literary agent, students, English professors, and an anonymous woman known simply as "A."

The collected correspondence of this talented writer, like the sketch books of a great painter, shed much light on O'Connor's artistic development and help explain her natural attitude and point of view. It is clear from the letters that these latter qualities were strongly shaped by her abiding faith and by her strong sense of regionalism. She always remained at heart both a southerner and a person wary of intellectual pretensions. For all of that, she also emits a sense of universality and a close familiarity with the essence of both traditional and contemporary thought. Confined by her long illness, she had more than ample time to satisfy her wide-ranging reading tasts. She confides in us, as twice-removed recipients of her letters, her often harsh opinions of some of her contemporaries and her respect and debt to literary craftsmen of the past. The letters reveal O'Connor as a writer whose stories and characters were sharply influenced by her Catholicism. Yet she is never affected or sentimental. She accepted her faith (which she always felt one had to earn) and her fate in a matter-of-fact manner. Lastly, these letters can also be fun. Somewhat like Mark Twain, O'Connor could turn a terse phrase, illustrate a serious point with a funny story, and poke fun at those critics whom she felt looked too deeply into her work. This is a book that should provide pleasure to O'Connor fans as well as encourage those not overly familiar with her work to read more of this gifted story teller.

JAMES HOGAN

Penny Lernoux
Cry of the People (1980)

In Lent of 1981, an anonymous American priest working in Bolivia published an article in the *National Catholic Reporter* about the plight of the Catholic Church in Latin America. He preferred to remain anonymous in order to prevent reprisals against himself and those with whom he works. He cried out from his heart to his fellow Christians in the United States, begging them to listen and to seek to understand. He wrote:

> What we see is this. The documents of the Latin American bishops's meetings at both Medellin and Puebla...condemn "liberal capitalism" by name along with atheistic communism and ideologies of national security. Neither the U.S. Catholic bishops nor priests, with rare exceptions, teach the implications of this doctrine in the ethical formation of U.S. Catholics. We think this is a grave dereliction of duty which has terrible human consequences.
>
> We see these consequences every day. Assassination, physical and psychological torture and rape are the ordinary judicial means of inquiry in our countries. These intelligence skills have been taught for 35 years to more than 80,000 Latin American military and police forces as counter-insurgent and anti-terrorist tactics to keep the "Communists" from invading our economic sphere of influence. You want proof? Get names and addresses from the bishops of Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, El Salvador, etc., as well as from Amnesty International.
>
> Latin Americans do not want to be satellites of the super-powers, neither of Russia nor the United States. They want to be free of economic and political col-

> onialism. And they are not permitted to be. By force and physical violence, every normal avenue of social and political change is closed to them....
>
> For the first time in their tortured history, Salvadoreans, Guatemalans, Peruvians, Brazilians, etc. want the right to be themselves. They want the right to make their own mistakes in their own path to maturity as a people with identity and responsibility. No one can stop this march of history....("A Cry for Latin America," *National Catholic Reporter*, April 17, 1981).

Where is Latin America? What is Latin America? What is happening in the Catholic Church in Latin America? What is the violence there all about? Does the Church support revolution in Latin America? Why does this anonymous priest speak to us as he does? What is the "theology of liberation"? And what is the meaning of talk about being both Marxist and Christian? How do Latin American Christians think politics and religion go together?

Penny Lernoux's book, *Cry of the People*, is an enthralling answer to these questions, and a disturbing description of the war between the Church and State in Latin America over human rights. One part of the story involves the persecution – even the torture and murder – of bishops, priests, sisters, and lay people who have challenged the right-wing totalitarian governments of the region. Another part of the story is the verified role of the U.S. Defense Department, the C.I.A., and some transnational business corporations in the perpetuation of this totalitarianism. Most of all, it is the story of how the Catholic Church in Latin America, which had previously worked hand in glove with the ruling class, has made a "preferential option for the poor," acting vigorously now in defense of their rights.

It is a story we must read, for by the year 2000, Latin America will have 500 million people, half of them under 21 with explosively creative energy and youthful aspirations. Will North Americans continue to be ignorant of them and indifferent to their aspirations? Ms. Lernoux's book provides an excellent introduction to the people and Church of Latin America, and those who read it will never again be able to pretend not to understand the impulses and reasons behind the revolutionary movements there. *(Penguin)*

ROBERT E. MANNING, S.J.

Dumas Malone
Thomas Jefferson and His Time *(six volumes, 1948-1981)*

> History by apprising them (youth of Virginia) of the past will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other actions; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men...

Thus did Thomas Jefferson describe the value of studying history in the only book which he wrote, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1782). For Jefferson, history meant ancient Greece and Rome, with dates and places coming to life in the pages of Livy, Tacitus and Plutarch. Little did Jefferson realize that his own historian, Dumas Malone, would devote more than a half century of study to Monticello's famed proprietor and eventually write a six-volume opus which discusses, in penetrating detail, the triumphs and failures of 18th and early 19th century America, and describes Jefferson's participation in that exciting era on equal footing with that of the giant, historical figures of Antiquity.

Beginning in 1948 with the publication of volume one, *Jefferson the Virginian*, Malone presents, in thoroughly researched detail and in highly readable prose, a picture of Thomas Jefferson as an American legend whose multiple interests and talents grow to a near overwhelming swell with

the publication of each volume, of which the first five were awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1975. Malone's biographical page unveils Jefferson the humanitarian, the farmer, the dedicated statesman, the political visionary, the educational theorist, the fine arts advocate, the inventor, the moralist and the tender, devoted family man who continually longed for repose at his beloved Monticello. The affection and admiration of an author for his subject are nowhere more apparent than when the eighty-nine year old Malone writes in the introduction to his final volume, *The Sage of Monticello*, of the life of a fellow octogenarian: "It has been my great privilege as a biographer to be intimately associated with this extraordinary man for many years. At the end of my long journey with him I leave him with regret and salute him with profound respect." Thomas Jefferson was indeed an extraordinary man whose interests, personality, and intellectual genius can be more fully appreciated in the 20th century because of Malone's biographical classic.

WILLIAM J. ZIOBRO

Philip J. Davis and Reuben Hersh
The Mathematical Experience (1981)

"Statesmen despise publicists, painters despise art critics, and physiologists, physicists, or mathematicians have usually similar feelings; there is no scorn more profound, or on the whole more justifiable, than that of the men who make for the men who explain. Exposition, criticism, appreciation, is work for second-rate minds." So wrote G.H. Hardy at the beginning of *A Mathematician's Apology*, one of the most beautiful books in or out of mathematics, and a book in which a first-rate mind turned his attention to exposition, criticism, and appreciation of mathematics. Since that time, fortunately, other first-rate minds have been drawn in the same direction, exposing many different views of the nature of mathematics. The latest effort along these lines, by Philip J. Davis and Reuben Hersh, is perhaps the most ambitious and best of all in describing what mathematicians really do. Let me state plainly at the outset that every student of mathematics will find this book valuable, and that Davis and Hersh, who write as one, doubly deserve our gratitude.

What is mathematics, and what manner of spirit animates its study? That, of course is a philosophical question. One of many favors done us by Davis and Hersh is to clear the air a bit by pointing out that the so-called philosophies of logicism, formalism, and intuitionism are not and never have been philosophies of mathematics. Their focus, of course, has always been on the foundations of mathematics, and they became known as "philosophies" only because there was a period in the early part of this century when almost all work in the philosophy of mathematics was work in foundations. Despite its great importance, the study of foundations is only one of a multitude of interesting aspects of mathematics.

In fact, the diversity of interesting aspects is bewildering, as we find ourselves saying that mathematics is like X, like Y, and like Z, when X, Y, and Z themselves are quite dissimilar. Davis and Hersh give us a number of arguments, each well done, from the totality of which we must conclude that mathematics is like an ideology, a religion, or an art form, and is thus a humanistic study, "one of the humanities"; and yet mathematics has a science-like quality in that "its conclusions are compelling, like the conclusions of natural science."

"Mathematics, being a human activity," they say, " . . . profits greatly from individual genius, but thrives only with the tacit approval of the wider community. As a great art form, it is humanistic; it is scientific-technological in its applications." Mathematics is thus caught in the struggle between the individual and society as well as the struggle between the arts and sciences. In the arts-science tension there is nothing which would surprise us. Mathematics draws vitality from being stretched on one side toward beauty, form, and vision; on the other toward utility, function, and rationality.

Davis and Hersh discuss the nature of the creative act of the individual, but they appear to prefer to emphasize the role played by mathematicians collectively. This emphasis is probably justified in view of the relative lack of attention given, until lately, to the collective or social role. *The Mathematical Experience* comes to a close by leaving us in the cultural heights of the conscience collective.

LEONARD SULSKI

Heinz R. Pagels

The Cosmic Code: Quantum Physics as the Language of Nature (1982)

The Cosmic Code is a thorough and surprisingly up-to-date description of what contemporary physics takes reality to be. The first part of the book is a brief discussion of the sometimes bizarre and paradoxical concepts physicists have had to develop in their efforts to objectify the microscopic world of the atom and the cosmic world of space and time. Although the historical perspective of this discussion is rather shallow, this section is well worth reading for the care and intelligence with which the author, a theoretical physicist, has explained these developments in physics. The sections here on randomness and statistical mechanics are particularly worthwhile for the author's discussion of the connections between the physics of the microworld and that of the macroscopic world of our experience. The author emphasizes the important but often neglected point that the world of everyday life *cannot* be derived from the physics of the atom and its constitutents. In the first part of the book the author has some inept comments concerning what God can and cannot do, but even these are of interest as they show the inadequacy of a god who is confined to the role of subject or object.

The second part of *The Cosmic Code* is splendid. Here the author discusses in non-mathematical, but also non-simplistic, terms the recent successes physicists have enjoyed in linking three of the four fundamental forces of physics. Here, gauge field theories, photons, quarks, gluons, and leptons are brought together in a heady brew in exciting, thoughtful, and non-condescending prose. *The Cosmic Code* offers its readers a grand view of physics in the 1980s. *(Bantam)*

R. H. GARVEY

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The Loyola Personal Reading List

A Faculty Guide to 100 Books Which Have Touched Their Lives

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

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Making Choices

KATHERINE H. ADAMS

Literature is an attempt to describe human actions, to tell stories about what people do and who they are. I have been most affected by those works that, at some point in my life, have related to my own doing and thinking, to my own choices.

In Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding* (1946), a 12-year-old girl is trapped by adolescence, by younger friends that she suddenly feels too old to be seen with and by snippy girls who won't let her in their club. The novel tells the story of several decisive days in the life of Frankie Addams, who seizes upon her brother's wedding to will herself into a social community; she decides that her own loneliness, as the only child of a preoccupied father, will end if she can leave with this young couple that is headed off to love and adventure. She wants to change her name to F. Jasmine to match the J's of her brother Jarvis and his fiancée Janice. She scrubs her elbows, tugs at her short hair, and buys a ball gown to be grown up—and a part of them. Her plea is "You are the we of me." I recently saw this novel excellently dramatized at Southern Rep Theatre. My 10-year-old son was there with me to participate in the longing for life to start, in the need for belonging and meaning. This novel stays with me. I once thought of it as simply a tale of adolescence, but I now know that the search and need are ongoing.

A young woman's search for meaning pervades *Madame Bovary*

(1857) by Gustave Flaubert. Emma has been brought up in a convent and longs for a passionate life. She soon realizes that the rapture that she expected upon marriage to the widowed doctor Charles is not to be hers. All the romantic books she read during her early years led her to expect more than his dark rooms, dreary parents, and dull humor. When she sees that his medical journals still have seals on them, she decides that even his vaulted learning is shallow and that being his wife is meaningless. Emma becomes involved with lovers to supply the missing joy: in one scene that takes place in a room above a town square where cattle are being judged and sold, she auctions herself off to gain the fulfillment she desires.

Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1875) also concerns women bound by the fetters of a restrictive social system, living lives without the meaning they crave. The charismatic Count Vronsky leads Anna into an affair that causes her to lose her child and home and be set adrift in a society in which women could not live without moorings. Juxtaposed against Anna's empty marriage and her affair is the solid bond, stemming from mutual respect and hard work together, that grows between her friends Levin and Kitty. In these two books, I looked carefully at the choices of earlier women—at the scarcity of options, at the huge consequences of the unconventional, at the trap of escaping through men. Their struggles stay with me.

In Samuel Johnson's eastern tale *Rasselas* (1759), a young prince lives in the idyllic setting of a Happy Valley in which his every need is met. But because this perfection and ease are unfulfilling for Rasselas, he persuades an older man to help him and his sister, Nekayah, escape. After long effort, they tunnel out into the real world. What they find there is that no course leads to happiness: the meteorologist wants to control the universe's weather; the academician is lost in his words; those who have children early and late encounter problems; "marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

Johnson's strongest message comes from a comparison. When Nekayah's maid, Pekuyah, is kidnapped by Turkish horsemen, Nekayah is inconsolable: life is no longer worth leading without her friend. In fact, as days and weeks pass, she resists the natural urge to feel better and think of other things. But when Pekuyah finally returns,

she reports that she learned about Turkish culture and astronomy and enjoyed traveling with the chieftain and his wives. She is capable of moving with the adventure that is her life; she does not expect for everything to be easy or for a perfect choice to be made. At the end, the prince and his sister return to their native country, but they do not reenter the Happy Valley. This last chapter, a "conclusion in which nothing is concluded," helped me to appreciate life as a process not as a product, as a matter of attitude as well as event.

Like literature about defining actions, research on choices and development holds my attention. I have especially learned about young adults in The *Forms of Ethical and Intellectual Development in College* (1970) by William Perry. Years of teaching have proven to me the rightness of his scheme, based on research with Harvard students. He posits that college-age people go through four stages in their development: a belief in the authority of teachers, parents, or peers; a realization of the multiplicity of opinions; a movement into complete relativism in which they no longer recognize the validity of any code; and then an assumption of their own values and commitments. His elaboration of these theories has helped me to understand why freshmen have difficulty critiquing authorities, why sophomores are so frequently angered by the differing priorities of their teachers, why juniors begin to get sick of college and depressed about the future, and why seniors can move beyond those stages into promising plans for the upcoming year.

Certainly I am simplifying his theories by putting precise years on these four stages: some students never move beyond unexamined authorities, and many older people lose their sense of commitment and return to relativism. But the theory, like the literature, helps me to see where my students are headed—and where I have been and am headed also.

I have recently been affected by David Payne's *Ruin Creek* (1993), Anne Rivers Siddons' *Peachtree Road* (1989), Gail Godwin's *A Mother and Two Daughters* (1982), Anne Tyler's *Saint Maybe* (1991), Clyde Edgerton's *Walking Across Egypt* (1987). A succession of struggling heroines and heroes seems to be a necessary part of "the we of me."

KATHERINE H. ADAMS is an associate professor in the Department of English. Her books include *The Accomplished Writer, Teaching Advanced Composition: Why and How* and *A History of Professional Writing Instruction in American Colleges*. She currently is finishing a grammar handbook and a study of Robert LaFollette's influence on writing instruction.

LITTLE WOMEN
Louisa May Alcott
THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE
Betty Friedan
THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS
Sigmund Freud
CANDIDE
Voltaire
THE WARDEN
Anthony Trollope

Happiness Found

NANCY FIX ANDERSON

Reading has always seemed to me like a magical experience that opens unlimited possibilities of pleasure, adventure, fantasy, and knowledge. My heart still beats faster whenever I enter a library or bookstore. The first book which had a great impact on me, and which I have passionately loved ever since I first read it at age eight, is Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1869). Although the setting is domestic and seemingly conventional, the novel was liberating because it allowed me expand my personality through identification with each of the March sisters.

I, as have most women, most admired the androgynous Jo, who provided a model of female strength and achievement that was rarely shown in my real world of the 1950s. In cutting off her hair to raise money for her family, and unconcernedly going to parties without proper gloves or gowns, Jo rejected the ethic that valued women for their physical appearance. Although the romantic in me was and still is bitterly disappointed that she did not marry her handsome chum Laurie, but later chose instead an older rather stuffy professor, I realized in trying to understand Jo's decision that life to her meant first of all living as a whole, achieving human being, which includes, but is not limited to, love and marriage.

I could also "try on" the personalities of the other March sisters, accepting some and rejecting other characteristics. I admired Meg's maturity and common sense, but thought her narrowly domestic am-

bitions pale in comparison with Jo's dreams. And who could not love Beth, gentle, shy, and always suffering; but she also showed me that suffering is not an effective way to win love, and that it is better to be the writer of a book, like Jo, than the eulogized dearly departed subject of a book, like Beth. Moreover, the seemingly inevitability of the death of the saintly Beth suggested to me the emancipating idea that it was better not to be too good.

And then there was Amy, spoiled and vain, yet self-assertively focused on what she wanted. Eschewing the Victorian female ideal of self-sacrifice, Amy indeed got what she wanted, including both a trip to Europe and the handsome Laurie. I certainly puzzled over the moral in that. Reading *Little Women* was an opportunity to explore the meanings and possibilities in growing up female. The reason I reread and continue to reread it many times over is not, however, because of any higher reason other than the intense pleasure of reading a beautifully written story about people whom I feel I know intimately, and for whom I care deeply.

A natural sequel to *Little Women* as a book instrumental in shaping the way I look at the world and at myself is Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* (1963), published when I was a young woman trying to balance what seemed like conflicting roles and desires in my life. Friedan sets forth what was then seen as the revolutionary and controversial idea (although Jo March had proclaimed it almost 100 years earlier) that women as well as men need challenge, growth, and achievement to be complete human beings. To live only in relational terms, as a daughter, wife, or mother, is, she says, a violation of our own sense of identity. Vicarious living is moreover destructive to family members, in that they become the vessels of women's own desires and ambitions. Self-sacrifice often leads simply to masochism, with powerless people attempting to control others through their suffering.

There is of course much one can fault in Friedan's argument. Placing the burden for change on women, without suggesting changes in our social structures and institutions, created the new exhausting mystique of the superwoman. Nor did Friedan sufficiently credit the valuable economic and emotional work that women do in the home. Nevertheless, it was the *Feminine Mystique* that shattered the traditional way of looking at women's roles and opportunities in life, and helped free women from the burden of guilt for wanting to do more with their lives than just domestic labor. The book sparked the ongoing revolution known simply as the women's movement, and still has relevance today for men as well as women, as a reminder of the importance of living our lives meaningfully and fully.

Nevertheless, as much as we may strive rationally to plan out our lives, we are often sabotaged by our own inner fears and needs. The book that gives a profound insight into the origin and power of these feelings is Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). Although much of his psychological theory, and especially his views on women, have been disputed, his basic premise about the strength of unconscious psychological forces explains much that is seemingly irrational and self-destructive in our behavior. His explanation that these forces were shaped by childhood experiences is too dismissive of the evolving nature of ego development, but it does provide a useful model that sheds light on individual actions and social customs. Freud suggests that the way to free ourselves from being tossed about by these unconscious forces is to make conscious that which is unconscious, and thus put our ego more in control. One way to do that is by analyzing our dreams, which are, Freud says, "the royal road to the unconscious."

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud gives extensive analysis of his own and his patients' dreams, and suggests how to decode anxiety-provoking material that is usually disguised. Even if one discounts his specific culture-bound interpretation of symbols, and his tendency to reduce all meanings to an oedipal struggle, one can marvel at the fertile richness of his ideas. Writing at the end of the nineteenth century, he destroyed the Victorian model of human nature as self-controlled and rational, and revealed in fact how complex and conflicted our psyches are. He also shows how marvelously creative we each are, to fashion in our sleep complex stories full of subtle multi-layered meanings, drawing on diverse often deeply buried aspects of our experiences. Reading this book made me more aware of the significance of my dreams and gave me tools for understanding them, and perhaps more importantly, it gave me an awareness of and confidence in my own creative potentialities.

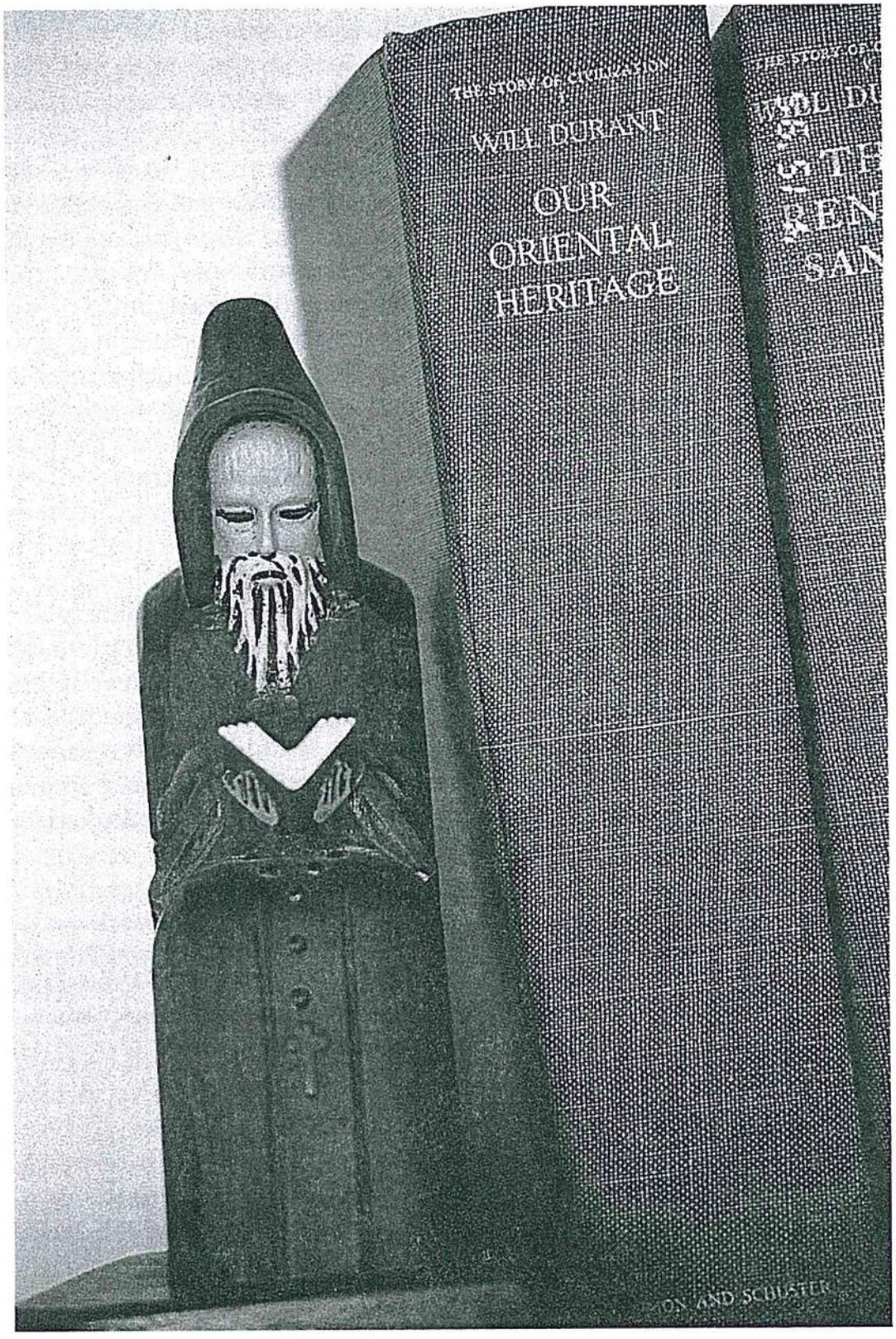
Despite Freud's pessimism about the possibilities of human happiness, I have long held to the Enlightenment utopian dream that as a society, or at least within our own lives, we can create a perfect world. It was therefore a shock to me when I first read Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), a powerful indictment of the Enlightenment faith. The novella seems at the beginning to be a rather superficial, banal satire. The innocent Candide finds out through many horrible experiences that his tutor Pangloss was wrong, that this is not the best of all possible worlds.

Big deal, I thought. We all know that. The novella hardly seemed worthy of a person reputed to be one of the greatest of the eighteenth-century intellects. But then Candide does discover a perfect world,

Eldorado, and this simple story suddenly becomes deeply profound. Even in Eldorado Candide is not happy, because he is restless and bored. Voltaire concludes that "man was born to live in either the convulsions of distress or the lethargy of boredom." I don't agree with this, but with true and lasting happiness seemingly so rare in our world, these words and this novella haunt me.

Torn between utopian dreams and sobering realities, I have found the perfect compromise in the charming novels of Anthony Trollope, and in particular in my favorite, *The Warden* (1855). Trollope has a wonderful grasp of human nature, with all of its foibles and also its goodness. *The Warden*, the first in a five-volumed Barchester series, is a simple story about a gentle honorable Anglican clergyman, who learns that he, as Warden of an almshouse, may have inadvertently taken money that belonged to others. The plot is certainly unremarkable, but Trollope is a master at portraying nineteenth-century English society, and at gently probing Victorian anxieties and impulses towards both good and evil. Trollope is also brilliant in the way he crafts prose. It takes me a long time to read him, because I frequently like to reread his sentences for the aesthetic pleasure his words give me. I love entering his world, which is pleasant and comfortable, in which integrity and honor can win out over ambition and greed. It is not naively rosy, for there are subtle undercurrents of ambiguity and disappointment. But it is a world in which we meet people like the Warden, one of the most endearing characters in literature, reminding us that whatever the philosophers and psychologists say about happiness, we can indeed find it in our books.

Nancy Fix Anderson is an associate professor of history. She has published *Woman against Women: A Life of Eliza Lynn Linton* (Indiana University Press, 1987), and is currently writing about Annie Besant's work for women's rights in England and India, focusing on the dilemmas of cross-cultural feminism.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THE COMPLETE STORIES
Franz Kafka
THE SELECTED POETRY
Rainer Maria Rilke
STORIES
Anton Chekov
POEMS
W. H. Auden
THE ALEPH AND OTHER STORIES
Jorge Luis Borges

Disasters Waiting to Happen

JOHN BIGUENET

At the beginning of this century, a young Jewish law student in Prague, scribbling a letter in German to his school mate Oskar Pollack, offered this fearful advice on literature: "I think we ought to read only the kind of books that wound and stab us. . . A book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us." Franz Kafka, who would go on to become an inconspicuous clerk in an insurance firm and, I would venture, the voice that centuries hence will continue to speak for our age, even as a student understood the task of literature: "If the book we're reading doesn't wake us up with a blow on the head, what are we reading for?" Readers of the following works are advised to wear a helmet.

In his chilling tale of modern justice, *The Trial*, Kafka develops an image of the inexplicably culpable citizen caught in the state's inexorable legal machinery. But it is "In the Penal Colony," included in *The Complete Stories* (1971), that displays the greatest prescience about the twentieth century. The author, whose whole family, within 25 years of the publication of this story, would be exterminated in Nazi concentration camps, allows the assistant to the commandant of a penal colony to elucidate a new theory of justice: "My guiding principle is this: Guilt is never to be doubted." The formalities of prosecution and defense are abandoned in favor of immediate execution. (The gallows, too, yield to a technological marvel that, like the gas chambers of Auschwitz, is

emblematic of this new jurisprudence.) Thus are we introduced to the spirit of our times.

Another modern master of German, also a native of Prague, provokes in us the same uneasiness through exquisite lines of verse. In his profound meditation on the human condition, the *Duino Elegies*, Rainer Maria Rilke proposes that "beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror, which we are just able, for the moment, to endure." And what is the lesson of such awe-inspiring beauty? In another poem, he explains in a single sentence. Though a sonnet is little enough room to develop an argument of these dimensions, the poet waits until the last half of the last line of "Archaic Torso of Apollo," found in *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke* (1982), to challenge his reader with the intimate and troubling declaration: "You must change your life."

Though Rilke assures us that beauty "disdains to annihilate us," neither will it save us. Only fairy tales, after all, end with the formula "And they lived happily ever after." Everything else, we call literature. A Neapolitan proverb, for example, takes a rather literary view of love: "A year of flames, a century of ashes." The embittered Italian spouse who first uttered those disconsolate words would have understood the final, crushing sentence of a love story by a nineteenth century provincial Russian physician and, as it happened, the greatest short story writer of his age. In the conclusion of Anton Chekhov's "The Lady with the Pet Dog," in *The Portable Chekhov* (1968), two lovers, having yielded to their love and reunited, now face the future: "And it seemed as though in a little while the solution would be found, and then a new and glorious life would begin; but it was clear to both of them that the end was still far off, and that what was to be most complicated and difficult for them was only just beginning."

"Complicated and difficult," Chekhov writes, but perhaps not impossible. Some years ago, buffeted on a long night flight through a winter storm, I huddled in the meager light of the reading lamp above my head and paged through a copy of *Time*. In an article on W. H. Auden's recent death, the magazine offered the first stanza of "Lullaby" from the British poet's *Collected Shorter Poems 1927-1957* (1966). As the plane plunged through the tumultuous sky towards a frozen city where someone I loved was waiting, I distracted myself by memorizing the long sentence that composed that stanza:

Lay your sleeping head, my love,
Human on my faithless arm;
Time and fevers burn away
Individual beauty from
Thoughtful children, and the grave
Proves the child ephemeral:
But in my arms till break of day
Let the living creature lie,
Mortal, guilty, but to me
The entirely beautiful.

Taken by the easy grace of its form and, especially, of the delicacy of its rhyme, I looked away from the page and found myself staring into the reflection of my own face in the window, stippled with ice, as my lips mumbled Auden's sentence over and over again, while all around me the other passengers slept or, roused by the storm, clung to one another.

Yet no matter how desperately we cling to one another, our grip must eventually loosen. The heartbroken narrator of Jorge Luis Borges' "The Aleph," from *The Aleph and Other Stories 1933-1969* (1970), laments the death of his beloved Beatriz. The tale seems to coalesce around the eponymous Aleph, a "small iridescent sphere" in which one may glimpse, in a single instant, the whole of the universe in all its infinitesimal detail. Consider the daunting task of the writer who dares to undertake such a description; Borges allows himself only a single sentence to convey the cosmos. But that is not the sentence that makes us tremble. Meditating upon the lesson of the Aleph, his narrator admits the tragic and inexorable truth: "Our minds are porous and forgetfulness seeps in; I myself am distorting and losing, under the wearing away of the years, the face of Beatriz."

Young Kafka, in what was to prove to be the last letter to his boyhood friend, does not merely insist upon his own belief that books should disquiet us but also vehemently objects to Pollack's contention that books should make us happy. "Good Lord, we would be happy precisely if we had no books, and the kind

of books that make us happy are the kind we could write ourselves if we had to. But we need the books that affect us like a disaster. . . ." Be forewarned that Kafka, Rilke, Chekhov, Auden, and Borges are disasters waiting to happen to you.

JOHN BIGUENET, professor of English, directed the 1994-95 institutional self-study program, a task illuminated by his reading of Kafka.

CURE OF MIND, CURE OF SOUL
Josef Goldbrunner
BEING AND TIME
Martin Heidegger
PHENOMENOLOGY OF PERCEPTION
Merleau-Ponty
FALLIBLE MAN
Paul Ricoeur
THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL
Saint John of the Cross

Quests of the Human Heart

PATRICK L. BOURGEOIS

As a rather serious and somewhat young student, I was fortunate to come into contact with a book which had a strong influence on my intellectual development at a time of unbound intellectual curiosity. I came to relish this book as a serious help in coming to understand the underlying elements involved in the dynamic process of psychological and intellectual growth, and to see more clearly the process itself in terms of its ultimate fulfillment.

This book, *Cure of Mind, Cure of Soul* (1962) written by Fr. Josef Goldbrunner, a priest, pastoral theologian, and Jungian clinical psychologist, was my first exposure to continental and existential themes, into which this interpretation of the Jungian individuation process was incorporated, and all within the context of developing a Jungian psychological anthropology. The study of this book led to the perusal of the other books by Goldbrunner, *Individuation: A Study of the Depth Psychology of Carl Gustav Jung* (1964]; and especially, *Realization: Anthropology of Pastoral Care* (1966). I was initially exposed to the works of Goldbrunner from the first graduate course which I took in the Liturgical Theology Program at Notre Dame University, for which he was the professor. And it was this course in 1961 which eventually gave rise to the last book mentioned, which further developed his humanistic anthropology within a Jungian psychological perspective.

Giving such an anthropology, a different and more contemporary philosophical substrate than was provided by my previous studies in philosophy, which were limited to the history of philosophy and to scholastic philosophy, were several works which impressed me profoundly in further graduate studies at Duquesne University, and which have been a mainstay for me since then: Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1964); Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception,* (1962); and especially Paul Ricoeur's *Fallible Man* (1965).

Since the favored author here is Ricoeur, and since I consider him to be ultimately of greater importance than the other two authors, his book will be treated first. Before turning to his work, however, I would like to state why his work is more significant and important than the others, in spite of the common estimation of many scholars. Ricoeur's hermeneutic method (method of interpretation) and consequently his philosophy are far more balanced and viable than those of Heidegger and his followers, whose method distorts the intention of a text so that it only serves his own assumed stance and ultimate question. Ricoeur more than most philosophers today has mastered the pivotal philosophers throughout history, and by a method which fosters an understanding of their works in terms of their own intentions and within their own contexts before appropriating an understanding of them within a contemporary adaptation.

I have found particularly fascinating his interest in the philosophical orientation toward the religious without, for the most part, confusing philosophy and theology; and finally, because as a professional, Ricoeur is the epitome of what a scholar in dialogue with his peers should be—intellectually honest, open to differences in views, and willing to dialogue with respect, humility, and the ability to grow.

Ricoeur's *Fallible Man* is one of the outstanding contemporary philosophical anthropologies. It takes into account the tradition of Western philosophy from the Greeks to the present, with brief but special attention to Plato and Aristotle, and with special emphasis on the philosophical anthropology of Kant and certain elements of Hegel's philosophy. In this work, Ricoeur is attempting to find the place in the structures of human existence for evil, or to find what it is in us that allows us humans to perpetrate or embrace such horrid evils as the

Holocaust. He locates this place in the disproportion between the infinite and the finite, which makes up human existence on the cognitive, on the practical, and especially on the affective levels. While cognitive intentionality throws us outside ourselves, so that the synthesis is projected onto the object, and the practical, the all encompassing level including both the other levels, likewise throws us outward in a somewhat different way, the affective level, as felt, brings home into the heart of the human this disproportion and fragility of the synthesis which it involves.

Although each of these quests of the human heart ends up in a fixation as a deviation or aberration, this in no way for Ricoeur means that the essential nature of the quest is already intrinsically evil; rather, these fixations at the heart of our freedom are the aberration of quests which are essentially undifferentiated, but which as a matter of fact in our concrete historical existence need to be liberated. For my part, I think Ricoeur has given too prominent a place for the actual propensity to evil, making the fault a necessary element of our historical existence. I would prefer simply to see an anthropology which admits the synthesis, the tendency to aberration, but stemming from a freedom rooted in a natural desire for good, yet equally which admittedly can be deceived and misled, rather than a freedom already damned by corruption.

Heidegger, for his part, eschews any such philosophical anthropology as offered by Ricoeur, and even has a tirade against such anthropology in paragraph ten of *Being and Time.*

Heidegger's strong suit is to have posed, in a sophisticated and quite contemporary fashion, the fundamental question of Being, but in such a way, in his own view, as to overcome the traditional myopic focus of metaphysics. Heidegger's book is a work in the direction of the fundamental question about Being and about the meaning of Being, but this book is continuous with the direction already traced above in that Heidegger goes deeper than the other two authors by delving immediately into what he at that time called "fundamental ontology." In *Being and Time,* Heidegger investigates the structure and process of "Dasein," a term he employs to designate human Being, and a term which throws into focus the unique way of Being of humans who are, as human, uniquely related to Being as the one being which poses and pursues the question.

Merleau-Ponty, in the French tradition, and, like Ricoeur, chronologically after Heidegger, continues, in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, on the ontic level, but here attempting to give a phenomenological interpretation of perception, which for him is central to all human experience in all of its facets, practical, cognitive and affective. For Merleau-Ponty, by far one of the most important of the existential phenomenologists, this work represents the full-fledged attempt to undercut the whole modern tradition by a subversion of the modern bent of deriving from scientific understanding its philosophical starting point, in his own return to lived experience in the phenomenological tradition.

Merleau-Ponty's focus on the human body and its central place in Being-in-the-world has become one of his chief legacies to many of his followers. For him, as the heart is in the organism, so the body is in the world, constituting what might be thought of as a quasi-organic relation between the world and our perception. It is the body which mediates the world to us and us to the world. The richness of this emphasis on the ontic dimensions of human existence, and the dialogue which it allows with the human sciences, indicates one of the advantages of his focus on the concrete and ontic, while Heidegger's emphasis has been somewhat oblivious to this aspect of human existence.

The last view of human existence to be considered, which has powerfully influenced me, is that of St. John of the Cross' *Dark Night of the Soul*, (sixteenth century, trans. 1959). Admittedly, in focusing on this work, as with the first work considered above, we transgress the boundary of philosophy in such a way as to leave open the contemporary philosophical substrate adequate for this kind of orientation. This work, understood within certain contextual and philosophical adjustments, is somewhat, but not altogether, alien to the various philosophy considered above. Yet the work itself needs to be reinterpreted in the light of a contemporary philosophy which releases its medieval metaphysical assumptions and explicit framework, reveals both a dimension of the human expression and receptivity as well as a strictly transcendent element which, because of its presupposition of faith and revelation, philosophy cannot encompass.

This work therefore is a work of theology and not of philosophy. This leads to one of the most interesting orientations of philosophy,

not per se, to be sure, but as I personally adhere to it and to the whole enterprise of the intellectual life: its relation to religious living as it is expressed and made concrete in a specific religious commitment of Christian faith.

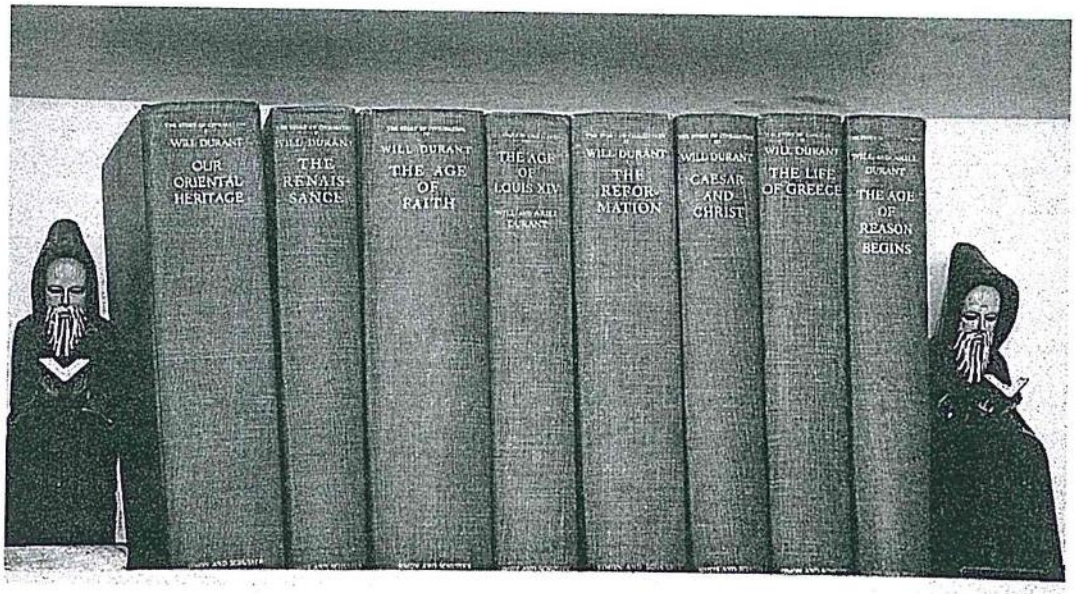
John of the Cross shows us two specific nights of the soul, one of the senses, and the other of the spirit, but both resulting from the infused presence of God in the soul of the contemplative.

In a nutshell, the night or darkness or absence results from the intense personal experience of God in such a way as to draw the desires onto that absolute Good, so that no other good can satisfy the human heart or desires—a condition referred to in the New Testament as "purity of heart." John of the Cross, within his somewhat naive medieval metaphysical interpretation of human being, renders an excellent portrayal of the path to union with God and of the actualization of the prayer life of the Christian toward its most intense and sublime stage. For any serious thinking of human existence which is not only theistic, but Christian, not to take this highest aspiration seriously, is not to take the fullness of the call of the Christian vocation seriously.

And if a philosopher is a Christian of any sort, she/he must find the philosophical place or substrate for this call and its life. A philosophical anthropology or an ontology which does not provide such a philosophical possibility is one which is not true to the philosophical enterprise for the believer or for the Christian. While there are many today who proclaim that only a fool would be a theist and a philosopher, and, on the contrary, while there are many who proclaim that only a fool can be an atheist and a philosopher, it seems clear to me that the foolishness lies in not seeing that philosophy can reasonably be seen to argue in favor of, and to defend rather well, each position.

What still must be done today is to find an adequate philosophical substrate for religious, even Christian, belief, for both Christian faith and philosophy are here to stay, and both theology and philosophy as independent enterprises will profit and grow from such a philosophical place within a contemporary framework.

PATRICK BOURGEOIS is a professor of philosophy. He has recently published *The Religion within Experience and Existence* (Duquesne University Press, 1990) and is working on *Philosophy at the Limit of Reason*. He has published seven books (several co-authored) and over 65 articles.


WILL DURANT
OUR ORIENTAL HERITAGE
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THE RENAISSANCE
WILL DURANT
THE AGE OF FAITH
THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV
WILL DURANT
THE REFORMATION
WILL DURANT
CAESAR AND CHRIST
WILL DURANT
THE LIFE OF GREECE
WILL DURANT
THE AGE OF REASON BEGINS

THE ECOLOGY OF FREEDOM
Murray Bookchin
ALWAYS COMING HOME
Ursula LeGuin
TAO TE CHING
Lao Tzu
THE AGE OF DESIRE
Joel Kovel
THE PRACTICE OF THE WILD
Gary Snyder

Before It's Too Late

JOHN CLARK

Murray Bookchin's *The Ecology of Freedom* (1982) is a contemporary political and philosophical classic. It lays the foundations of social ecology, an ecological philosophy that explores our place in the larger processes of planetary self-realization. For Bookchin, humanity is "nature rendered self-conscious," and in this work he makes an enormous contribution to drawing out the philosophical, ethical and political implications of this momentous quality of our species.

In a sense, *The Ecology of Freedom* is a brilliant retelling of the paradigmatic narrative of paradise, fall, redemption, and reconciliation. Bookchin begins with a depiction of the primal harmony of organic (tribal) society, with its cooperative and egalitarian social order. He then describes the brutal rupture of this primordial unity with the rise of social hierarchies, and the suffering of humanity over a long history of domination under patriarchy, the state, capitalism, and enslaving technologies. But he also recounts the inspiring but little-known "history of freedom"—extending from the ancient Greek *Polis* through modern revolutionary movements—in which there emerges an expansive vision of a liberated humanity and nature.

Bookchin warns us that we are at a crucial point in human history and, indeed, in that of the planet. Never before have we possessed such vast means to achieve liberation, yet never before have the forces

of domination so successfully assaulted not only human social ties, but the integrity of the natural world. Bookchin is a prophetic voice, calling on us to realize the ideal of a free ecological society, not only to deliver ourselves from oppression and domination, but to prevent the destruction of the very preconditions for the flourishing of life on earth.

This work is an eloquent reflection on the authentic meaning of both ecology and freedom, and a magnificent contribution to the task of applying reason and historical understanding to the liberation of humanity and nature.

Ursula LeGuin's *Always Coming Home* (1985) is one of the most magical books I have ever encountered. In an entirely incomparable way it creates a world—a distant world that becomes intimately present to us, as it stirs the deepest longings of our being. With this work, LeGuin creates a new literary genre, which she calls "the archaeology of the future," and in the process gives us the greatest work of utopian fiction ever written.

Always Coming Home tells the story of the gentle, cooperative Kesh, a peaceful valley culture, and the ruthless, aggressive Condor people of the mountains. Only one person, Stone Telling (later called Woman Coming Home), has lived in both worlds, thereby gaining the ability to reveal the true nature of each. The central story of the book is hers, but it constitutes only a small portion of this highly diverse work, which amounts to an anthropological sourcebook of a future society, containing the songs, myths, legends, tales, life stories, poems, and dramatic works of the Kesh. LeGuin collaborated with an artist to create the art, architecture, and symbolism of the Kesh. She invented their language and supplies a glossary to help with the numerous esoteric references. And finally, she worked with a composer to create their music, which is prerecorded on cassette.

But the appeal of this book goes far beyond this extraordinary creative ingenuity. The artistic whole vastly transcends its parts, and conveys a powerful sense of the place, the people, and the ethos. LeGuin gives us a moving and inspired account of a beautiful, loving, creative, and joyful community. As we discover it, our spirit begins the journey.

In our increasingly cynical age, *Always Coming Home* is invaluable for reawakening the utopian imagination, and reminds us of the extraordinary human potential for mutual aid, creative self-expression, spiritual growth, and communion with nature. Ironically, in a frag-

mented and homogenized world that seems more and more like nowhere, we need utopia (literally "no place") to help us find out where we really are.

The *Tao Te Ching* (circa 500 B.C.) was written by the legendary Lao Tzu, the "Old Sage" who tells us not to listen to sages. He is certainly one of the greatest philosophers who may or may not have existed. Literally, it is the classic (Ching) of the way (Tao) and its power (Te). It has taken the world well over two thousand years to begin to catch up with its spiritual and ecological wisdom.

Though this work is sometimes called "mystical," its goal is to bring us more intensely into contact with living nature and our own experience, and it ruthlessly attacks any attempt to escape from reality. In fact, by questioning the validity of our words, concepts and categories, ("The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao") it warns us of how easy it is to create a conceptual or logical dream world to protect us from the real one.

The *Tao Te Ching* is one of the primal sources of the yin/yang philosophy, which teaches unity-in-diversity and the identity of opposites. It is applied to everyday life in the concept of *wu-wei*, or doing without doing. Lao Tzu relates it especially to the nature of the true sage or ruler. This ruler does not dominate or coerce, and, in short, does not rule, but rather influences through quiet example. Such a ruler rejects the "rare treasures" of the wealthy and powerful, which merely drive us insane and set us against one another. Instead, he or she values what Lao Tzu sees as the three authentic treasures: deep love or compassion; simplicity or frugality; humility or non-domination. Lao Tzu's most profound teaching is that if we find these three treasures, then our many paths and the great path of nature can be one.

I have never encountered a work of social theory that is so beautifully written, so absorbing, and so successful in exploring the personal dimension of the political as Joel Kovel's *The Age of Desire* (1981). In this strikingly original book, Kovel achieves a remarkable and unprecedented synthesis of a psychoanalytic view of the psyche, a Marxian class analysis, an anarchist critique of the state and bureaucracy, an existentialist analysis of alienation, and the beginnings of a Blakean mystical critique of civilization.

The work is extraordinary for alternating the most acute and so-

phisticated theoretical analysis with engrossing and beautifully written composite case studies. The latter give us a vivid sense of lived experience in a capitalist, statist, bureaucratic, technological, patriarchal society, conveyed through some truly memorable and revelatory characters. Curtis, in "Love and Money," is the obsessively driven, alienated overachiever, suffering from a "neurosis of production." Sarah, in "Rich Girl," is the narcissistic TV addict, escaping from parental expectations through helplessness and passivity, and suffering from a "neurosis of consumption." Hector, "The Vigilante," a victim of family violence, poverty, and war, is obsessed with paranoid visions of liberating his Puerto Rican people, and condemned to the dreary world of state bureaucratic psychiatry.

The Age of Desire succeeds like no other work in posing economic, political and social problems as problems of both institutions and of selfhood. Kovel offers an acute diagnosis of why our society fails to confront its contradictions and instead sinks more deeply into the abyss of privatism, narcissism and irrationalism. He shows that if we are ever to escape from these dead ends, we will need much deeper self-exploration and much more serious efforts at social transformation.

While the nation-state has its "poets laureate," the laurels, the other living things, and, in fact, our whole continent (Turtle Island) have for decades had their poetic voice in Gary Snyder. Snyder has long been our foremost poet of nature and culture, but in *The Practice of the Wild* (1990) he writes as one of our preeminent theorists of bioregionalism. In this work, Snyder speaks for our land, not as some abstraction or generality to which we owe allegiance, but as the place that we—and all our fellow members of the community of life—inhabit.

One of the most powerful aspects of Snyder's writing is his ability to convey a sense that what is most familiar, simplest, and nearest to us is the most sacred and wondrous. "The truly experienced person, the refined person, *delights in the ordinary*." Snyder urges us to become reacquainted with our home regions and locales, and to experience more deeply the way that we and our culture are an integral self-expression of them.

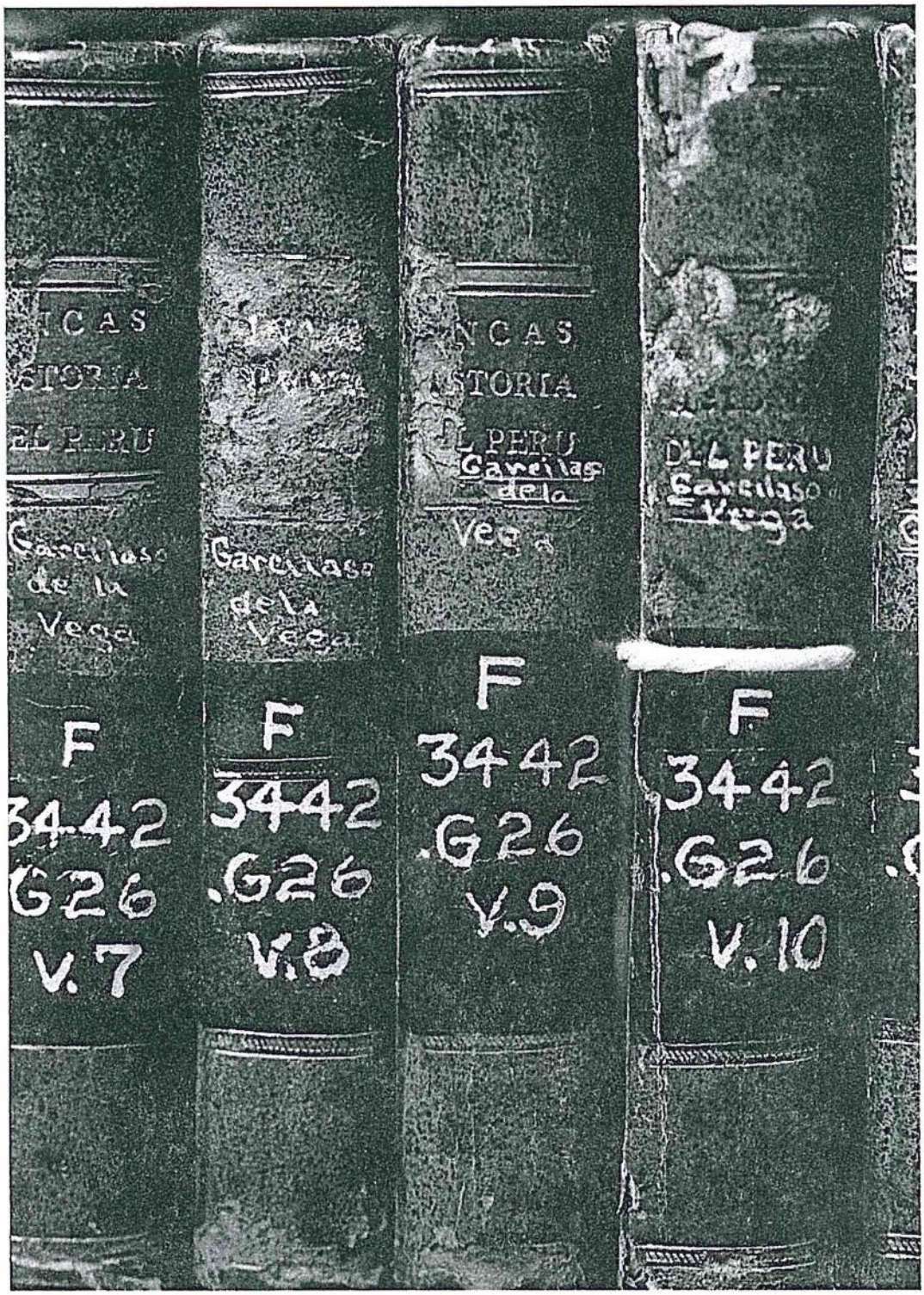
His work has been of great importance to me in the awakening of my own regional consciousness. While I grew up on the banks of the Mississippi and spent many days in the marshes, bayous and lakes of

our region as a child, my awareness of the spiritual significance of the great river, and my consciousness of the magnificence of our swampland bioregion grew slowly. No words have resonated more for me than have those of Gary Snyder.

For Snyder, to be "wild" means to be both spontaneous and orderly. Wildness is a quality of whatever is free, whether it be the wild nature of wilderness, the wild culture of free peoples, or the wild mind of all poets and creators. *The Practice of the Wild* is the most eloquent defense of these realms of freedom, and a powerful expression of wild mind at work.

If we listen to the wisdom of Gary Snyder and keep practicing the wild, maybe we'll get good at it again—before it's too late!

JOHN P. CLARK is professor of philosophy in City College and teaches in the environmental studies program. His most recent book (edited and translated with Camille Martin) is *Liberty, Equality, Geography: The Social Thought of Elisée Reclus*. He is presently at work on several books, including *The Liberation of Nature*, an exploration of ecological philosophy.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JANE EYRE
Charlotte Brontë
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
Jane Austen
THE RED AND THE BLACK
Stendhal
A MAN OF THE PEOPLE
Chinua Achebe
AMBIGUOUS ADVENTURE
Cheik Hamidou Kane

A World of Underdogs

PHANUEL AKUBUEZE EGEJURU

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) was my first novel ever. Jane fit right into the mold of neglected and abused orphans of my village folktales. I equated Lowood Institution with the boarding school where I read my first novel. I admired Jane's rebelliousness, I jubilated over her brief romance with Lord Rochester, and was crushed when their wedding ceremony was interrupted. At the end I was overcome by Jane's nobility of heart in marrying the blind Lord Rochester. That gesture remains with me as the greatest manifestation of true and committed love. Jane's courage and outright refusal to be crushed physically and emotionally by adversity still spring at me any time I sense what I consider a personal adversity. Over and above Jane's exemplary qualities are the largeness of her heart and a near-divine capacity to forgive her oppressors and reach out to them. Jane Eyre remains my ideal heroine because she had the boldness to defy even the threat of death, to rise above her predicaments and lead a satisfying life.

I believe the opening line of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1913) is one of the most memorable lines in English literature. Ignorant of irony, I took seriously the literal meaning of that statement and aligned myself with Elizabeth Bennet to fight Mr. Darcy. Even when the dramatic unfolding of the plot revealed the irony of that first line, I was still angry with Mr. Darcy until Elizabeth, who "is tolerable but not

handsome enough to tempt me," brought to his knees the very Darcy who uttered those words about her and married him! It was Elizabeth's character that endeared *P&P* to me. Elizabeth was the underdog in her confrontations with Mr. Darcy and Lady Catherine De Bourgh. That she had the courage and self assurance to claim equality with Darcy—"He is a gentle man; I am a gentleman's daughter; so far we are equal"—established her as my role model heroine. I was so star-struck with Elizabeth that I adapted her marriage refusals to Mr. Collins and Mr. Darcy for a school play in Nigeria. Just as Elizabeth and her fellow social underdogs won my support in their struggle against class discrimination, so did my heart recoil from Lady Catherine and all other arrogant and ruthless heirs of family fortune.

Stendhal's *The Red and the Black* (1830s) is one of the most conflict-ridden novels in French literature. At fifteen, Julien Sorel, a fragile youth, has only good looks and good luck as weapons against his social superiors. His romantic ideals for the military and the priesthood, and his prodigious memory, serve him as spurious intellectualism. Despised by his peasant father for his inability to do physical labor, Julien's supposed brilliance as a Latin student earns him the job of a tutor in Monsieur de Renal's household. His good looks and good acting as a perfect gentleman earn him the love and heart of Madame de Renal. She initiates him into sex and he awakens in her true passion and sincere love for a man. To avoid scandal for their love affair, Julien is recalled to the seminary. Shortly thereafter, he lands the job of secretary in the truly aristocratic family of Monsieur de la Mole. Mathilde, the spoiled daughter of de la Mole, finds it romantically challenging to become Julien's lover. Her pregnancy from Julien precipitates a background check on him. A letter from Madame de Renal, dictated by her confessor, presents Julien as a phony and a social climber. Julien buys a gun and goes after Madame de Renal. He fires two shots at her, but wounds her only slightly.

Arrested and charged with premeditated murder, Julien learns that his victim did not die. However, he insists on receiving the death penalty. Pleadings from Madame de Renal and Mathilde cannot change his mind. In his address to the jury, Julien strikes at the heart of class struggle and the reason for his death sentence. "I do not have the honor of belonging to your class, you see in me a peasant who has revolted against the lowliness of his position. But even if I were less guilty, I see

men who, regardless of any pity my youth might deserve, would want to punish me and discourage forever that class of young men who, born in inferior rank of society, have the good fortune to secure a good education for themselves, and the boldness to mingle with what the pride of rich men calls good society. That is my crime gentlemen..." It is Julien's understanding and articulation of this universal class prejudice and injustice that touched my heart. Given the rural and classless society in which I grew up, I had never thought of class conflicts, let alone in Marxist terms. I began from then to take an interest in court cases, which most often involved the "wretched of the earth" pitted against the "blessed of the earth."

Chinua Achebe, in his classic simplicity and sardonic sense of the comic in *A Man of the People* (1966), explores the predicaments of the ineffectual African intellectuals who only dream of social justice and enlightened leadership. Chief the Honorable M.A. Nanga is a man of the people because he is able to loot and haul away to his constituency as much of the nation's wealth as he can. The insecure leaders resent any scrutiny or meddling from intellectuals because, "Our true leaders are not those intoxicated with their Oxford, Cambridge or Harvard degrees but those who speak the language of the people." Odili Samalu, an ordinary school teacher, decides, against his better judgment, to run for office in the next election. He wants to replace Nanga and show the people how to be a just and "civilized" leader. On the election day, Odili is publicly humiliated and beaten to an inch of his life by Nanga's thugs. However, the military administers a coup which topples Nanga's corrupt government. Odili, who had earlier seduced Nanga's would-be second wife, marries her, while a handful of his fellow radicals, Max and Eunice, are released from jail. Odili spoke for and acted on behalf of African political underdogs, the ineffectual African intellectuals.

Cheik Hamidou Kane, in his *Ambiguous Adventure* (1952), sums up Africa's initial attempt to fight off European invaders of the continent, and Africa's ultimate defeat, nay, suicide, in a no-win situation. This novel synthesizes all the elements of the conflict within the double consciousness of the westernized African. Forced to go to the white man's school "to learn from them the art of conquering without being in the right," the African runs the risk of losing the values that give meaning to his life. Going to the white man's school ushered in a new

dispensation with no satisfactory alternative. In the end, the African compromises his spiritualism in the onslaught of western materialism. He resigns himself to an endless angst in the face of an incomplete metamorphosis. "It may be that we shall be captured at the end of our itinerary, vanquished by our adventure itself...all along our road we have not ceased to metamorphose ourselves, and we see ourselves as other than what we were. Sometimes the metamorphosis is not even finished."

The western educated African is trapped between two opposing values, his Negritude and his Assimilado. The psychic dilemma of the assimilado is summed up in the hero's evaluation of his situation: "I am like a broken balafong, like a musical instrument that has gone dead... I am not a distinct country of the Diallobe facing a distinct Occident and appreciating with a cool head what I must take from it and what I must leave with it by way of counterbalance. I have become the two. There is not a clear mind deciding between two factors of a choice...." No doubt, Samba Diallo's psychic malaise is typical of countless western educated Africans. And do I identify with Samba Diallo? Not entirely, but completely with the Most Royal Lady who sent him to the white man's school to learn his secrets of winning even when he is in the wrong.

Phanuel Akubueze Egejuru, professor of English, is the author of a novel, *The Seed Yams Have Been Eaten* (1993) and three critical works on African literature—*Black Writers, White Audience: A Critical Approach to African Literature* (1978), *Toward African Literary Independence: A Dialogue with Contemporary Writers* (1980), and *Design and Intent in African Literature* (1982).

POEMS
John Donne
MEMORIES DREAMS REFLECTIONS
Carl Jung
THE AWAKENING
Kate Chopin
WAYS OF SEEING
John Berger
DREAMING THE DARK: MAGIC, SEX AND POLITICS
Starhawk

Friendly Reading

BARBARA C. EWELL

I've been a reader ever since I first managed to decipher the funny pages and the fine print on evaporated milk cans. From Ba*bar* and *The Bobbsey Twins* through the whole rainbow of Lang's fairy tales, I read my way through grammar school, moving past *Little Women*, Lois Lenski and A. J. Cronin en route to high school.

But one of the books that stopped me in my adolescent tracks was a gift. My friend Anna, who was already in college, gave me as a graduation present a slim volume of poetry by John Donne (1572-1631). I was entranced: Donne's startling imagery and intellectual wit (I never imagined serious poetry could be funny) delighted me. I loved the way you had to read each poem several times before you could get the joke—or the point—and how each time the poem looked new, the point more interesting, the joke even slier or sexier than I had first thought—because there was a lot of sex in Donne, too, a frank eroticism that my Catholic girlhood found marvelous, not least because it was contained by that magical language. I was in college myself before I learned, with rather mixed emotions, that Donne was a "major" poet. He had been a secret treasure for me, a private pleasure, and I was a little disappointed to find out that most of the intellectual world already knew about him. But then I made Donne the topic of my junior project as an English major, and the background I acquired gave his poetry even greater depth—and set me on the road to specializing in seventeenth-century poetry.

While graduate school allowed me to study the whole glorious English Renaissance to which Donne had been my introduction, another gift during those years opened some different doors. This time a fellow grad student gave me a copy of C. G. Jung's *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1962) and insisted that I read it. No one has time to read anything in graduate school but about half of the assignments, but Joe was adamant: read this now. I did. It was a revelation. Jung's autobiography is no conventional life story, full of travel and people and events. Instead, as Jung says, "the only events in my life worth telling are those when the imperishable world irrupted into this transitory one." Jung's recounting of his inner growth, his encounters with the "other" reality throughout his long life (he wrote this book when he was eighty-three), are incredibly vivid. I would never have thought that somebody else's soul could be so interesting, but the degree of consciousness that Jung brought to his life amazed me. Here was a life deeply lived. Moreover, his insights into religion and spirit, the nature of creativity, the connections between our beloved dead and the living, and the rich imagery of archetypes ring as true as any poem or novel—which for me always provide the truest measures of human experience. Reading Jung renews one's sense of the importance and the shape of the inner life, how its dream lessons can be learned, how its powers can be embraced—or resisted—and how those powers can connect us to the deepest purposes of the universe.

The next book whose effects still mark my life was also the recommendation of a friend, Dawson Gaillard, who for many years taught at Loyola, and who, in fact, gave me my first job as an English professor. At the time, I was looking for readings for a course I had never taught, "Women in Literature." Dawson said that I had to include on my syllabus a stunning little novel by a woman named Kate Chopin. As most of us know by now, *The Awakening* (1899) is one of those lost fictions whose recovery makes them instant classics. There is something about Edna Pontellier's life that gives most readers—certainly most women readers—a profound shock of recognition. She is just an ordinary woman, not especially bright or gifted, just like us; and like many of us, she finds, at the ripe old age of twenty-eight, that her life really isn't going that well. For Edna, an emergent sexuality is the wake-up call to an awareness that what society (that is, the people around her, including her husband and eventu-

ally her lover) requires of women does not at all match its contradictory injunction to be true to oneself.

Chopin's deft delineation of Edna's dilemma, lacing it with light irony and never pausing to pass judgment, is one of the nineteenth century's most powerful evocations of the double bind that women face. That this novel continues to resonate for contemporary readers is almost as depressing as some find the ending to be. Certainly for me, Kate Chopin seemed to understand something very profound about women, and I went on to read the rest of her work, just one other novel and about a hundred short stories. That she had written so little disappointed me almost as much as discovering that Donne was a canonical poet, but Chopin eventually became a focus both for my research and my teaching, marking a center of my growing interest in women's studies.

John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972) was another gift, this time from an older friend, the writer Ellen Douglas, whose work and life I deeply respect; she thought I'd find it "interesting." Berger's book is really a compilation of seven short essays based on a BBC television series that I never saw. It's a quick read and full of pictures, but its message is radical. Never having studied much art, I found these interpretations of paintings and photography gripping. One essay, for example, explains how what we see depends very much on what we believe or know; another examines how the female nude has historically been created for the male gaze; another, the ways that paintings make things consumable; the last, how the imagery of advertising serves consumer capitalism. Perhaps the impact of these essays derived from my unfamiliarity in reading about art, or perhaps the book simply appeared at the right time in my intellectual life; for, of course, many of the propositions set forth by Berger are now familiar coin of the postmodern realm. But while I have since found these intriguing ideas elaborated with greater detail, I have never found them presented so forcefully or so graphically as in this brief little book.

The final book whose impact on me remains strong is Starhawk's *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics* (1982). Again, it was a friend who led me to it: my colleague, John Clark, suggested that I invite Starhawk to campus. Not knowing who she was, but rarely misled by John's intellectual interests, I agreed. And then I read her book. In short, dear reader, I was

impressed. Like Jung, Starhawk values the inner life, and like him, she explores with great intensity the ways that we can enter and explore its passages. Her analysis of the religious traditions of the West and how they have shaped our treatment of women, of the earth, and of each other, seems to me profoundly true. Starhawk offers a sympathetic and empowering vision of how we need to reevaluate and reimagine our relationship to the world of the spirit if we are going to learn how to act rightly in the more familiar worlds of politics, community, and the physical environment. Her call for exchanging our obsession with "power-over" (the domination of others by violence) for "power-from-within" is especially compelling at this moment of history, where the need for radical change is so obvious and so unsettling. Starhawk describes this process of transformation as magic: the power of the concrete, the tangible, to reveal spirit. In reaffirming the power of images, the power of things embodied in language, of metaphor, Starhawk reiterates what I have always loved about books and these five books in particular: the way they can transform our lives.

Barbara C. Ewell is professor of English in City College. She's published a book on Kate Chopin and co-edited (with Dorothy Brown) a collection of essays on Louisiana women writers. She hopes to live long enough to finish reading all the books she owns.

MYSTERIOUS ISLAND
Jules Verne
SHE WHO RUNS ON WATERS
Alexander Grin
THE DRAGON
Eugene Schwartz
THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO
Alexander Solzhenitsyn
ACQUIRED TRAITS
Raissa Berg

Behind the Iron Curtain

VICTOR FET

I was born and raised in Russia. Lenin and Stalin were long dead by the time I learned to read, but the death-breathing fear they and their Communist henchmen hard-wired into Russian society was omnipresent even in the 1960s-1970s.

One may be amused with George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, a sad and witty parable on Communism; for me, it was my life. Inhabitants of the Animal Farm which took the one-sixth of the world's land, we hardly felt or knew the world outside. We were never allowed to read a foreign newspaper or encyclopedia, nor were any available in our libraries. A number of foreign books were translated, however, mostly European classics; many of those were offered with a clumsy purpose to expose "ulcers of capitalistic society." What I read as a 10-year-old was mainly fiction.

Jules Verne was my favorite. I still have eight volumes of his selected novels, in early 1900s translated into well-worded, educated Russian by some future victims of Stalin's purges (few educated people who could write or talk survived Russian history of this century). Decent and brave Verne's heroes fascinated me as they must any child in any country. One of his best novels, *Mysterious Island* (1875), captures the mind and emotion not by Verne's usual exposure of futuristic technical wonders (in which he was almost always, prophetically right), but by the pioneer spirit of his characters.

A group of Americans in the 1860s is taken from the calamities of the Civil War to an uninhabited island in the Pacific. They start from scratch, without even a matchbox, and the island becomes a flourishing colony; even the old, dying hermit Captain Nemo with his supersubmarine *Nautilus* bows to the colonists' energy. An old Robinson story, it is retold with all the glory and belief in human reason and industry, which was Verne's belief, and one of a late nineteenth-century European civilization that soon, amazingly soon, came to severe trials. By what premonition of a prophet did Jules Verne deny a happy-end triumph (common in his many other novels) to his *Mysterious Island*? A volcano wakes up and swallows the island. At least, the colonists are saved in the last moment, since Verne sends a yacht to get them.

This fact satisfied my need for justice when I was ten. However, the volcano eruption was enormously bothering. There was nothing Verne or I could do to prevent it. Brave, industrious, American pioneers were as helpless, with all their tools and knowledge, in front of this antihuman power as was any Russian intellectual falling into the ruthless tectonics of Stalin's meatgrinder.

Then came two more, allowed but censored, favorite fiction writers, both from Russia. Alexander Grin (Grinevsky by birth, a son of an exiled Polish rebel), born in 1880, wrote fiction stories and novels well before the Communist takeover of 1917; he died in 1932, starved and forgotten. He wrote many romantic, poetic, cosmopolitan stories; with him, in Russian literature, died the spirits of Rudyard Kipling and Jack London. Among Grin's large novels my favorite is *She Who Runs on Waters* (1928), the story of a young man named Thomas Harvey who departs on a sea journey pursuing his dream. A key scene of the novel is a carnival in an overseas "colonial" port city of French and Italian flavor (much like New Orleans, or South Russian ports of Odessa and Sevastopol). A mob of savage people attempts to destroy the city's love and symbol, a statue of a woman who, by legend, on her wedding day jumped a ship and ran over the water toward the horizon to see a wonderful island. Since then, she (or her spirit) is said to have been seen protecting sailors in an hour of trouble, and that was how Harvey met her. Now, Harvey will protect the statue from the mob—but simple retelling does not serve well to convey the fabric of Grin's heroic, beautiful prose; one needs to read it. English

translations are available; look also for his short stories and a marvelous short novel *The Scarlet Sails*.

Grin's characters were among the last heroes, men and women, with real love in their hearts, independence in their minds, and human dignity in their decisions, which I have met in the Western fiction. Since then, European civilization was rapidly moving to documentaries.

My other favorite Russian writer, a playwright, Eugene (Evgeni) Schwartz (a foreign-sounding last name is due to his Jewish father, a doctor in the old Russia) was younger than A. Grin. He lived through all the murderous decades of Russian history (never arrested as many other writers were), and died in the late 1950s. His plays were loved and known in Russia, especially little kid's stories, such as refreshing musicals based on *The Snow Queen*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, Russian folktales, and even a screenplay of *Don Quixote*. In the years of terror, adults also longed for simple feelings, thoughtless lullabies, warm and fuzzy truths. Schwartz, however, is not remembered for these only. Taking off with the *The Snow Queen* in the 1930s, he retold a couple of other stories, and those were stories for adults. One was *The Shadow*, loosely based on Hans Christian Andersen's account of a scientist who lost his shadow who (the shadow!) later becomes an important official. The other was his original and my favorite. *The Dragon* (1943), describes a city where people live under an evil Dragon. The Dragon is confronted by a wandering knight named, aptly, Sir Lancelot. Killing of the Dragon, however, makes just a beginning of the story. "Look into souls of these people," the dying Dragon tells Lancelot, "they are miserable, empty, and burned." The city's population, it appears, did not really want to be liberated, despises wandering knights, and would be content with any new dictator. It is not obvious that their souls can be easily liberated.

It is amazing that Schwartz, who wrote *The Dragon* during the World War II, aimed it as anti-Hitler satire (the city in the play is distinctly German), and himself did not recognize it as an explosive and deadly, heroic charge of anti-Stalinism. In the 1960s, under Khrushchev's "thaw" politics, the play was staged (once or twice, and then banned from the stage); the Dragon spoke with the Georgian accent and featured a Stalinesque pipe.

In my college years, I dreamed about staging it in our self-made student theater. But those were already the 1970s, and it was hardly possible. My generation's youth was spent under the dragon-paw fist

of Brezhnev's superpower, between Russian tanks in Prague (1968) and Russian tanks in Kabul (1979). Reading fiction and poetry was an escape behavior (others preferred yoga, Zen, or drugs). But there were other books, too—non-fiction ones.

The Iron Curtain was becoming rusty, and there were holes in it. Through some, Western-published books written by Russian dissenters made their way even into remote Siberia, the place where I lived. Books were copied via typewriters, since copy machines were understandably banned in Russia, in dozens of hardly legible scripts. Those were real reading treasures of my youth, not available in a library or a bookstore; for me, to read self-copied (or "Samizdat") pages was to drink forbidden, dangerous, thrilling, sweet wine of freedom. It was 1980, and fear was still omnipresent. Criticizing Soviet society was equaled to mental illness, and dissidents wound up in mental hospital cells. Many (I knew some myself) got there for reading and discussing Samizdat books.

I find it sometimes near to impossible to explain to people raised in the West that in the early 1980s in Russia, a person risked at least *five years in prison for reading a book. The* book was Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* (1974) a famous three-volume documentary compilation, made mainly of firsthand reports of the survivors, with an account of a concentration camp into which Lenin and Stalin turned their (formerly prosperous but desperately undercivilized) country starting from 1918. The book is on any list of required readings in Russian history, but for me, and generally for my generation, it had a special importance.

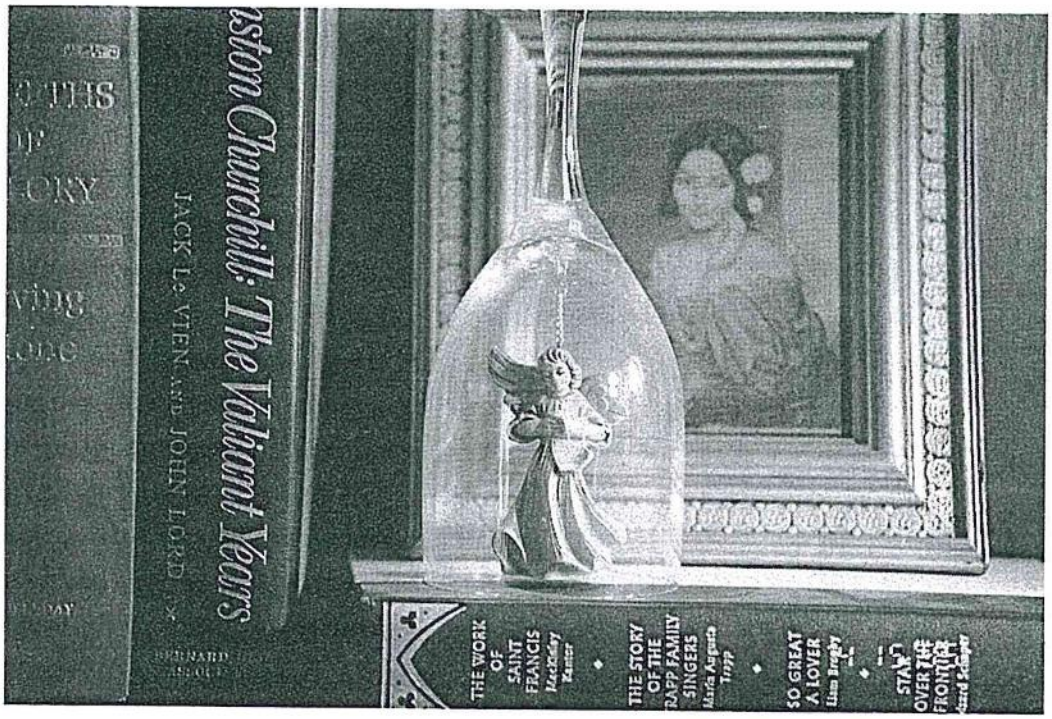
Published in the West, it was a first word of truth that got through and hit many targets. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the crumbling of the Soviet empire started with *The Gulag*. I read it in typewritten Samizdat copies as well as in small precious YMCA-press books, delivered from abroad by some fearless tourist, well-hidden from Russian customs, and endlessly passed from friend to friend. Solzhenitsyn gives a picture of a dozen Russian Holocausts (now estimated at 60 million victims), many with no surviving witnesses.

While the West complied with Stalin's crocodile appetites, hoping not to be eaten next, Russia went to and through hell. What was left was a society where I was born and where my parents and grandparents, scared to death, *never* talked to me about the past. No fiction

could substitute for the real truth, and Solzhenitsyn gave this truth. Only by the age of twenty I realized that, in real history, most of the Russian people who could be my childhood heroes, Lancelots, Harveys—those who did protest against murders or tried to protect their culture—were killed by Communists who, thus, almost reached their Final Solution on the human race: make people slaves and happy to be slaves. (I am not sure they failed completely; there are still many ways to reach that solution).

The last book I want to mention is also a documentary, almost a diary, about Russia; although not of the importance as *The Gulag*, it has a very strong personal meaning for myself. It was written by one of my first teachers in biology, a prominent Russian geneticist, Raissa Berg; born in 1913 at St. Petersburg, she published her memoirs *Acquired Traits* (1983) in the United States. It covers the history of Russian science from the 1920s to the 1970s, and it reads as a horror story. A crooked charlatan Trofim Lysenko, a genuine character of the Stalin era, became a satrap over Russian biology in the 1930s. Lysenko claimed, in essence, that Communist science can change the nature of living things and their hereditary features as it wishes. The practical result of this Swiftian theory was banning of modern genetics and other branches of biology from universities, schools, wholesale firing, exile, and even, in the late 1940s, imprisonment of geneticists who dared to stand up for their scientific truth. Raissa Berg's is only one of many witnesses' accounts on the period, but it is highly precious, as written by an educated insider who was lucky to stay alive. I read it frequently over and over, and it stands on my shelf together with other favorites which document personal quests and heroism of many people, whether fictional or not.

VICTOR FET, formerly an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, is a zoologist with interests in evolution, genetics, and geography of animals. His latest book is *Biogeography and Ecology of Turkmenistan*, a former Soviet republic of Central Asia, where he worked for many years before emigrating to the United States in 1988.


ston Churchill: The Valiant Years
JACK Le VIEN AND JOHN LORD
THE WORK OF SAINT FRANCIS
THE STORY OF THE RAPP FAMILY SINGERS
SO GREAT A LOVER
STAND OVER THE FRONTIER

CANNERY ROW
John Steinbeck
HAMLET
William Shakespeare
RUMPOLE OF THE BAILEY
John Mortimer
DECADENCE AND RENEWAL IN THE HIGHER LEARNING
Russell Kirk

The Soul of the University

HENRY GABRIEL

Twenty years ago, when I was an undergraduate, I stumbled across a copy of John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* (1945) in the bookstalls of a train station. I bought it and read it on the train ride home. I remember laughing out loud as I read it. The characters are vivid and funny, and the situations the characters create for themselves cover about every human frailty and mishap imaginable. I particularly remember empathizing with the central character, "Doc." Doc was a marine biologist who collected marine specimens for biology laboratories. He worked and dwelled among the homeless squatters who lived around the deserted fish canneries of Monterey during the Depression. Doc's love of learning, disdain for having to dress formally, and general desire to live a quiet life among books and music appealed to the young college student in me. The lessons of life and how to live with others are easily digested in this book because it is humorous, and humor is always one of the best conduits for truth.

Last summer, I rummaged through my bookshelves for something to read during a trip. I found my old copy of *Cannery Row.* On rereading it, I relived the original joy I felt when I first read it. I still found myself empathizing with Doc. Doc's love of learning, disdain for having to dress formally, and general desire to live a quiet life among books and music appealed to the middle-aged university professor in me. I now rank *Cannery Row* as a classic by my definition of a classic: a book

that brings great delight to the reader at various periods of life.

I think, though, that the intense enjoyment of a particular book throughout life does not necessarily result in the same perception of the text or the same feeling it evokes. When I was in high school, my father introduced me to Shakespeare. His love of Shakespeare began when he was in high school, and he wanted to transmit this love to me. When he first sat me down and said, "Read this," it was apparent to him that Shakespeare's greatest work was *Hamlet. Hamlet,* of course, is, among other things, about coming to grips with the transition from youth to adulthood, and the possible loss of the ability to live a life governed by principles.

My father is much older now, and his main concerns are with his grandchildren. He recently told me that after a lifetime of enjoyment of Shakespeare, he finds the message of *King Lear* the most powerful in Shakespeare. *King Lear,* as you remember, is about the acquisition of wisdom by the old man. I asked him about *Hamlet.* His reply : "Ah, the rhetoric of youth." I have not quite given up my tenuous grasp on youth. I still prefer *Hamlet.*

The English author John Mortimer wrote nine volumes of short stories in the *Rumpole of the Bailey* series between 1978 and 1992. The protagonist of these stories is Horace Rumpole, a hardworking but never quite successful English barrister. Rumpole is a man of impeccably humane instincts and distinctly eccentric habits. Rumpole's career consists in the defense of the petty criminals who clog up the London criminal courts. Implicit in his motivations is the embodiment of "but for the grace of God, there go I." I have read each of the nine volumes at least three times. I am not sure why I enjoy these stories as much as I do, but the pleasure of reading these stories certainly outweighs any need to know why I want to.

The late Russell Kirk was one of the most incisive analysts of modern university life. After only a few years of teaching, he left academe, yet, he never lost his love for the university and the power of reason. Between 1943 and his death in 1994, Kirk wrote several books and innumerable articles on universities and academic life, but his most perceptive book is *Decadence and Renewal in the Higher Learning* (1978). With the exceptions of Thorsten Veblen's *Higher Learning in America* (1918), and Abraham Flexner's *Universities: American, English, German* (1930), we have not seen in this country in this century a criticism of

university life and academic goals as penetrating as this book.

In recent years, there has been a plethora of books on the decline, greed, bureaucratic inefficiency, and loss of vision of the universities. I count over thirty on my bookshelves as I write this. But they come too late. The damage they speak of is done. And most offer, if any, the most pallid of solutions to the ailments of the academy.

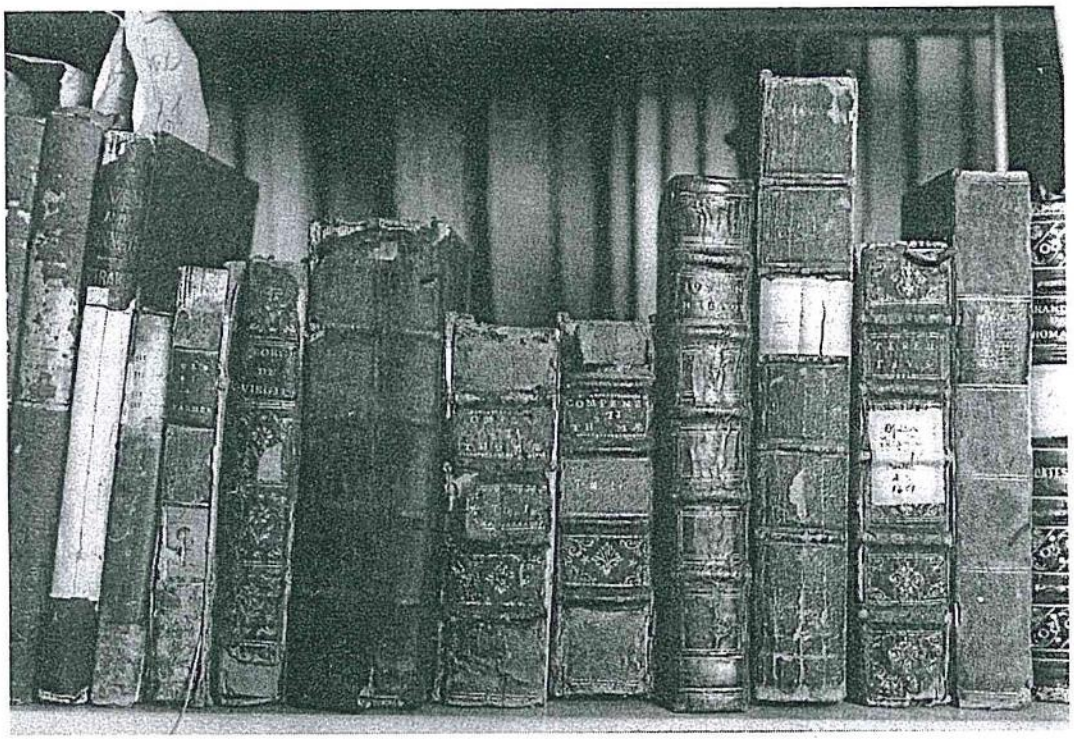
Kirk was timely. His message was simple: "My hope is to assist in the recovery of reason and imagination on our higher learning." This is not a shallow or timid goal, but Kirk understood what was at stake, and therefore would not allow himself anything less. His concern was the very soul of the university.

His examination cuts to the heart of the most perplexing problems of university life. He details the rapid growth of institutions which were ill prepared for the expanse of new faculty members and students. He describes the swift rise in government support of research which drained much of the autonomy and independence out of the universities. He acknowledges with concern the succumbing by the faculty and administration to the external pressures of trustees, students, graduates, and others. He carefully portrays the transformation of university faculty from those who previously defined themselves as teachers into those who now see themselves as historians, chemists, lawyers, and sociologists whose primary task is to their respective professions and their personal research, and not to their universities and the students who attend.

His advice is simple and direct. The members of the academy need to reassert the need to be autonomous of external pressures and to realize that the primary goal of the university is to transmit the knowledge and culture of society to the next generation. This does not, as Kirk tells us, require a large amount of financial resources. It just requires the ability to do hard work and the will to do it.

When I wish to reflect on the problems of the universities, and the work we have in front of us to cure them, I go back to Kirk. He said it first, and he said it the best.

Henry Gabriel, professor of law, teaches commercial law. His most recent book is *Practitioner's Guide to the Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Good and the Uniform Commercial Code* (Oceana Press, 1994).



VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE
Charles Darwin
ORTHODOXY
G. K. Chesterton
COMMEDIA
Dante Alighieri
DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA
Miguel de Cervantes
PENSEES
Blaise Pascal

Keeping the Books

JAMES GAFFNEY

I was taught to read long before elementary school got hold of me, mainly by my grandfather, an Irish immigrant who was himself taught reading and writing by his daughter, my mother. He learned well enough and fast enough to spend the second half of his life as a successful New York newspaper man, and he had a passion for literacy that was contagious. It was to please him that I undertook to read secretly my first "real, whole book" while I was still a preschooler. It was *Tarzan of the Apes* by Edgar Rice Burroughs. The experience of reading it was frankly ecstatic, and became a touchstone for subsequent literary encounters that can still overrule more orthodox and impersonal critical canons. I can remember afterwards actually praying to "go to Africa where the apes live." Was it sheer coincidence that after I married it was to Africa my wife and I did go, and there that our children were born?

My taste for the "Tarzan" genre underwent needed refinement when I got my first regular after-school jobs, at the American Museum of Natural History and the New York Zoological Park. Scientists at both places took an avuncular interest in kids who worked there, and encouraged us to read books they loved and books they wrote. Among the former, Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* (1839) captivated me, and enabled me later to approach *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* with much of the same mental baggage as their author's, borrowed

from his youthful masterpiece. It was Darwin who showed me how prolonged sensitive observation and comparison, combined with audacious imagination, could generate theories that, in turn stimulating and focusing new observations, made intellectual prospects virtually boundless. Because Darwin of the Beagle showed me that careful observation need not be dispassionate or estranged from other values, I was astonished to read in his autobiography that he would later deplore a loss of humanistic sensibility he attributed to a personal culture that had become lopsidedly scientific. How many of his admirers know that he warned students of science never to give up poetry and the fine arts?

Despite the "Tarzan prayer" of my childhood, religion, both in literature and in life, invariably bored me until, in high school, a teacher whom I disliked obliged me to write a book report on a work with the depressing title, *Orthodoxy*, by Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1909). It was that coyly named work, with its playfully powerful argument, that I was converted to the view that Christianity's most valuable perspectives are profoundly similar to those discovered in the great myths and classic fairy-tales that have always captivated me. It was many years before I would hear psychologists talk about archetypes, or theologians about sacramentalism. It was even more years before I realized that it was a point of view that, despite my impatience with papal and episcopal clericalism, would keep me always on the Catholic side of the Reformation divide as long as I found any home in Christianity. Even now, despite erudition, my most trusted thoughts about mythology and ritual are stimulated and nourished by Chesterton's unforgettable evocation of what he called "the ethics of elfland."

Given that kind of approach to Christian religion, it was inevitable that I should eventually fall under the spell of Dante's *Commedia (1310-21)*. That had happened even before I had the good fortune to do part of my doctoral studies in Italy, and afterwards teach in Dante's own city and language. I have found no other book that is, all at once, so many of the things a great book can be as this extraordinary poem, which mocks so many of the stultifying antitheses we seem compelled to create between reason and romance, philosophy and fancy, sacredness and secularity, ethics and passion. Dante's is the only author's name I can imagine applying adjectivally to the entire universe. Could

any sense be made of calling the universe Homeric, or Virgilian, or Rabelaisian, or Shakespearian, or God help us, Miltonic? But the universe I inhabit seems quite definitely Dantesque.

The universe is one thing, but human life in this curious fragment of it is quite another. And for that it is a name derived not from an author but from a book that seems to epitomize my habitual outlook. Here the adjective would be Quixotic. In myself, and in everyone I have known and liked best, both women and men, the components I discern as fundamental are not so much flesh and spirit, or matter and form, or nature and grace, or animus and anima or yin and yang, as—Don Quixote and Sancho Panza! And the saddest (and scariest, and weirdest) human lives have always seemed to me those in which the gaunt, ecstatic "knight" and the plump, prudential "squire" have somehow stopped being friends, or in which one or the other has simply died. Having found in Cervantes' *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (1615) my most congenial treatise on human nature, it was unsurprising that my favorite modern philosopher should have turned out to be Miguel de Unamuno. In contemporary American English the nearest I seem to come to this is in Walker Percy, the novels certainly, but also *Lost in the Cosmos.*

Since I am, after all, a professor of ethics in a university department of religion, one expects to see here more of the literary tools of that trade. Actually, within the sphere of interest appropriate to my professional identity, such a number and diversity of cherished writers and writings come to mind that it is hard to single out any one or few as of really unique personal importance. Theologians, it is true, usually leave me cold—and often drowsy; and it is other kinds of religious and moral writers—philosophers, historians, social scientists—in whom I more often find light and warmth. If I must single out one name in this connection, let it be Pascal, whose *Pensées* (1658) and *Lettres Provinciales* (1656) have been for a very long time my favorite preventatives and remedies for both triviality and absurdity in the study of religion and morality. The salvageable residue of every rational argument for religion always seems very similar to Pascal's "wager." And there is something reassuring about a mathematician who celebrates the heart's reasons "that reason does not know," a mystic with an aptitude for satire and a satirist with an aptitude for mysticism, and not least an Augustinian who could transmit his master's brilliance

while somehow filtering out his fanaticism.

One might have expected some mention of the Bible in the previous paragraph. The trouble is, I cannot read the Bible as in any meaningful sense a "book," and my reactions to the books and booklets it contains range from tedium to awe, and from exasperation to delight. At the same time, I have often noticed that very few of my favorite books outside the Bible could even have been written as they are written if the Bible had not been there first.

I conclude this exercise in bibliographic autobiography with a sense of having allowed a labor of love to lead me into multiple infidelities. As I glance sheepishly about my self-lined walls I hear reproachful mutterings in assorted tongues and accents. "Could you not have said as much of us of that maundering Jansenist?" ask Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky in a rare moment of unanimity. "Wasn't it I," demands Alice in her little blue gown, "who showed you tonic for the soul in life's redundant asininities?" "Was not history merely stale news to you, until my account of Rome's decline and fall taught you how to learn from it?" adds Gibbon. "Without us you would not even have good questions much less answers," jeer Plato and Aristotle. "Did not I make your own country intelligible to you?" reproaches Tocqueville. "Was it not my great dramatic monologue that made you aware there is no one valid view of anything?" reminds Browning. "You know it was my novels that insulated you once and for all against capitalist ideologues whose blather pollutes the atmosphere of modern social philosophy," says Dickens. Enough! I am sorry! You are all right. And so many others are coming. I see Kant. And Goethe. Germans are insufferable at times like this. I am out of here!

James Gaffney is professor of ethics in the Department of Religious Studies. His own latest (tenth) book, soon to be published by Sheed and Ward, is *Newman's Catholic Writings on Development.*

EXODUS
Leon Uris
LA MARIA
Jorge Isaacs
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE
Gabriel Garcia Marquez
THE HUMAN SIDE OF ENTERPRISE
Douglas McGregor
WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE
Harold S. Kushner

From My Family History

JOSEPH GANITSKY

Most of the books which have deeply touched my life relate to the messages that I received during my early childhood. Before I enumerate those books, I am compelled to briefly explain my family's history. More than sixty years ago, my parents immigrated to Colombia, South America, from Russia and Poland, in search of freedom and opportunities. Not a day would pass in which I would not listen to their personal recollections of the unjust world they had endured and left behind and the endless suffering and struggles for survival of the Jewish people.

In fact, both my father's parents and an older sister died during the Holocaust, while most of my mother's family were exterminated by the Nazis. Although the suffering for many Jewish people culminated with the miraculous establishment of the State of Israel, my immediate family was kept against their wishes in Russia, after surviving the Nazi Holocaust in one of Siberia's concentration camps. Nevertheless, my parents maintained their conviction of a better future, in large part shaped by their appreciation for and joy of Colombia, its people, history and geography.

Of the numerous books reflecting Jewish history that I read while growing up, Leon Uris' *Exodus* (1958) and *Mila* (1961) were the two that had the greatest impact upon my attitudes and behavior as a Jewish man in a troubled world. The main characters in both books were

proud, self-confident and ready to defend the Jewish people's rights. Although most of those struggling during the uprising in Warsaw's ghetto died, at least they fought with courage and determination. Their brave example was followed by those who fought for Israel's independence. They overcame the innumerable obstacles, and succeeded against all odds. Never again would the Jewish people have to be subdued by others. From their example, I learned that for the rest of my life I should speak boldly, be very proud of my heritage and contribute to the well-being of society.

Other books that describe the decaying European conditions from which my parents escaped, and those I most thoroughly enjoyed reading, include Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Leon Tolstoy's *War and Peace.*

Another book I particularly enjoyed was written by the grandfather of one of my best friends from school. At that time, critics considered him to be Colombia's greatest writer, Jorge Isaacs (1837-95). His novel about platonic love, *La Maria* (1926, English version), took place in an almost idyllic location in the Cauca Valley, where my father first lived when he came to Colombia. Also, Isaacs was of Jewish descent. As a result, I was encouraged (and, in fact, required) to read it on several occasions by my teachers, parents and best friend. Certainly I enjoyed reading it, but the greatest pleasure came from discussing its content, meanings and style with them at great length.

In 1967, when I was about to complete my undergraduate degree, I read, if not devoured, the best Colombian novel ever —Gabriel Garcia Marquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967). Macondo and the Buendia family would no longer be just an imaginary place and family, but a magical and marvelous point of reference from which to appreciate the contradictions of life and death, war and peace, reality and fantasy, which have prevailed throughout Colombia's history. From then on I would avidly read every new book that Garcia Marquez would publish, e.g., *Cronica de una muerte anunciada* (1984) and *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba* (1989). In retrospect, none however, would replace my deep appreciation for *One Hundred Years of Solitude* which helped Marquez win the Nobel Prize for literature.

I went to college planning to major in either architecture or civil engineering. Very soon I discovered that I lacked the skills for either profession. When I took the "Principles of Management" elective, I

finally discovered my true vocation and changed majors to industrial engineering. Of the numerous theories that we read and discussed, none had a greater impact on me than Douglas McGregor's X and Y theories of management presented in *The Human Side of Enterprise* (1960). In and out of class we debated for endless hours the validity of the participative approach proposed in theory Y and questioned its applicability to the Colombian environment. Having lived in a society where most people gave orders, I was very impressed by the basic approach used by McGregor to gain the cooperation and commitment of others. He would listen and ask questions, rather than give specific instructions, as a way to influence behavior. Well, that was the beginning of my career in management. Since then, I have come to realize the importance of asking questions that generate meaningful learning experiences, just as Socrates had so effectively practiced.

In late 1982, much to my family's regret, we left Colombia due to threats to our personal security, and economic factors. It was a very painful decision for all of us. It meant leaving behind close relatives and friends, and starting all over again. We had to adjust to a new environment and make new friends. In addition, I had to gain the trust and professional credibility from new colleagues who would not appreciate my previous accomplishments because they had not experienced the realities of Colombia's environment. At that time, my wife and I found great comfort in Harold S. Kushner's *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (1981). It certainly helped us to understand the challenges that we faced and to renew our faith in mankind. Since then we have recommended this book to anyone going through difficult times.

Although I have derived great joy from teaching and doing research at Loyola University, my greatest intellectual satisfaction and honor was to assist my father, Natan Ganitsky, in editing his autobiography, *Ochenta anos de contrastes* (1991). Once again, I was able to learn more about my roots. Although his book is of most value to my family and me, I wish everyone would have a similar opportunity. For those for whom this is unlikely, there is, nevertheless, a book that ties generations, friends, cultures, and religion in a magical and intriguing way. I am referring to Chaim Potok's *The Chosen* (1967). I first read this book as a son, more recently I read it again as a father. Both times I found it fascinating, yet obviously for

different reasons. I suspect this can be said of all books that we read. Depending upon the time in our life that we read them, they will each have a different message for our hearts.

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ORTHODOXY
G.K. Chesterton
THE PHENOMENON OF MAN
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
THE GOSPEL OF SAINT LUKE
FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH
Karl Rahner
THE UNIVERSE STORY
Thomas Berry

Meeting the Author Halfway

HENRY A. GARON

One of several landmark experiences I enjoyed during my early twenties was the reading of G.K. Chesterton's *Orthodoxy* (1908). The description of his "journey towards Rome" was presented in a style I had never before encountered. Much of what he said appealed to both my religious sentiments and my love for the things of creation.

I resonated deeply with his chapter entitled, "The Ethics of Elfland" in which he saw creation as marvelously extraordinary, for I myself had similar feelings about the stuff of the world. He referred to Robinson Crusoe's shipwreck and viewed Crusoe's inventory following the catastrophe as his "greatest of poems." That is to say, every kitchen tool had become precious because Crusoe might have dropped it into the sea. Chesterton then goes on to write that everything everywhere has been saved from a gargantuan debacle; namely, the "shipwreck" of nonexistence. Everything everywhere is a great Might-Not-Have-Been rescued from oblivion.

Living in a kind of joyful delirium over the fact that nothing which stood before him had been "overlooked," he wrote of the fairytale philosopher who is glad that the leaf is green precisely because it might have been scarlet. With veiled humor, he wrote even of noticing that rhinoceroses did in fact exist but looked as if they did not.

He noted that Christianity, after being repeatedly put down, con-

sistently resurfaced. In this sense, Christianity resembled "a sunken ship converted into a submarine."

I was captivated by his talent for seeing the new in the old, for regarding repetition in nature as a kind of "ongoing theatrical encore." He insisted that sunrises and moonrises ought not to be taken for granted, for it is possible that God says each morning "Do it again!" to the sun, and "Do it again!" each evening to the moon. For, as he wrote, it might be that God, like an infant, has the eternal appetite for repetition, for we have sinned and grown old and our Father is younger than we.

I believe that some of Chesterton's philosophy rubbed off on me, for I often find myself fascinated by things such as the folds in a window curtain that has been hanging there for years. I myself often try to pass along this kind of thinking to my students, insisting, for example, that they ought to be astonished by the fact that a ball thrown from the earth, consistently turns around and returns to the earth. It's very atypical of things at large to change their motion as if on their own.

During my mid-thirties I was profoundly impressed by Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man* (1959). So expansive was the thinking of this great priest, scientist, mystic, evolutionist, environmentalist and world traveler, that he had to develop his own special vocabularies to be understood.

Highly promoting of intellectual growth, *The Phenomenon* is a work that is not likely to be fully understood on its first reading. Because he recognized God as "eternalizing" the stuff of the world by way of the Incarnation, he saw the Spirit of Christ as alive in material substances whose different kinds, forms, locations, and situations were expressive of "modes of being" of God. Visualizing matter, energy, space, and time with Christ in mind, he understood them as possessing supreme dignity. He saw himself and all humanity as alive and thriving in a "divine milieu" and also wrote a book with that title.

Although a scientist himself, he took exception with some of the ways that scientists thought. He wrote, "In the eyes of physicists, nothing exists legitimately, at least up to now, except the without of things." He insisted that along with their Without there is coextensively a Within to things, and he cited as an example of the "spiritual power" of matter the fact that it supports humans. As he wrote, in order to think, we must eat matter. Also, the stuff of the world gives meaning to our senses.

Without things to see, for example, our eyes would have no meaning.

Teilhard de Chardin's philosophy, I found, has contributed extremely high meanings to my life. Gradually across years, it has become clear that everything in the cosmos is unique and, therefore, precious. The challenge for me now is that of living out that belief.

The *Gospel of St. Luke* is another of my favorite writings, not only because of its supremely transcendent messages but also because of its style. Written mainly for gentiles and addressed, in particular, to someone named Theophilus, it seems to come from an educated and compassionate writer who had done considerable research before "submitting his final draft." His account of the emergence of John the Baptist, beginning with, "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar," is truly magnificent.

Luke frequently portrays Jesus at prayer, thus eradicating a mistaken impression that one might acquire; namely, that because of who Jesus is, he had no real need for prayer. He reveals Jesus as a friend of sinners and outcasts, and focuses attention on women in many of his stories.

When first reading Karl Rahner's *Foundations of Christian Faith* (1978), I became fascinated with his powerful insights and generic understandings of matter and spirit working together as one. What struck me most was this great theologian's willingness to fully include concepts of matter and evolution in his theological musings. Examples:

[For one who believes in evolution], man is the existent in whom the basic tendency of matter to discover itself in spirit through self-transcendence reaches a definitive breakthrough.

Matter means the condition for that "otherness" which estranges man from himself and, precisely in doing so, brings him to himself.

When God wants to be what is not God, man comes to be.

I believe that every person who delights in reading good books is a thinker beforehand, having enjoyed certain highly private and never-before-discussed intuitions. In this sense, one has already met an author halfway. Then, at times when reading a great work such as *Foundations*, one suddenly pauses and exclaims to oneself, "Yes! That's it! That is exactly what I had sensed 'on my own' and would have said had I been talented enough to write in the manner of

this extremely gifted author!" Rahner makes it clear that in sensing truths on one's own, one does so only as outcome of the Spirit at work within.

Written by physicist Brian Swimme and theologian Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story* (1992) is outstanding for the sheer magnitude of its coverage, its extremely broad scope. It begins with the birth of the universe and of time itself. The universe is said to thrive "on the edge of a knife," gravitationally balanced between explosion and collapse.

In a feasible and at least tentatively believable style, it accounts for the appearances of the galaxies, the supernovas, the sun, the earth, photosynthesis, human emergence, culture, civilization, the rise of industrialism, the development of the physical and life sciences, technology, and the discernment of the DNA code. It insists that genetic memory has emerged, enabling things to mutate into forms of higher significance with humans as the recognizers of significance.

This book draws one into thinking really big and, in the process, to see oneself with breathtaking clarity as wondrous outcome of endowed matter and energy interacting throughout the vastness of space and time, progressing as if with a mission.

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THE ODYSSEY
Homer
BLACK LAMB AND GREY FALCON
Rebecca West
COLLECTED POEMS
Constantine Cavafy
MY LAST SIGH
Luis Bunuel

Four Odysseys and a Funeral

ANDREW HORTON

"I've managed to live my life among multiple contradictions without ever trying to rationalize them; they're part of me and part of the fundamental ambiguity of all things."—Luis Bunuel

How to choose four books that have been important to me out of hundreds? A difficult task, indeed. Thus the four titles offered here are not meant as *the* four that have most influenced me, but as a grouping of four, read at different times under vastly differing circumstances but all remaining with me in ways that still surprise and delight me. And all are about journeys, or odysseys as Homer would call them.

Homer's *Odyssey* seemed a wonderful adventure story to me when I read it in a prose translation back in seventh grade. Then when I graduated from college and took a teaching assistantship in Athens, Greece, in the late 1960s, I discovered other joys to Homer's epic. I began to read it again out of a sense of duty, I suppose, while island hopping on an old Greek ferry boat. Then the magic of Greece and Homer hit me at the same time. What Homer was describing was what lay before me on the horizon: sun, sea, rocky islands and clusters of small communities. The more I read the more I realized how well the bard who lived in the ninth century BC captured a landscape and a universe that still existed. Dawn was "rosy-fingered" and the sea was "wine dark." And

every image or metaphor was, as one scholar pointed out, something that the most simple Greek peasant—then and now—could understand.

But there was more. Homer not only told a great story, but his epic spoke of human nature in a way that remains surprisingly fresh, accurate, loving. Odysseus was not a Swartzenegger muscle-bound hulk, but, as the first line of the epic says, "the man of many ways." At the heart of *The Odyssey* lay the workings of the human mind. Not an abstract intellectualism, mind you, but a practical mind able to solve problems, seek answers, survive and thrive. Homer does not, however, emphasize a simple division of mind and body. What I came to enjoy then as now is the delightful blending of the gods, goddesses (especially Athena who guides Odysseus throughout) with human beings of all ages, social conditions, and of both sexes.

The ending too remains poignant. Homer's day and the period of the Trojan War were violent ages without peace. *The Odyssey* ends in a peace worked out by Athena between Odysseus' family and the relatives of the suitors he has murdered upon his homecoming. A year does not go by as we see the horrors of the day around the world on CNN and in our papers that this first great Western poet was urging all people to seek what the world has seldom seen: a true and lasting peace.

Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, published in 1938, is also an odyssey. But this one covers the first half of this troubled century which is soon to end. And it is the odyssey of a talented (and troubled) woman seeking not a home which she once knew, but rather a spiritual/cultural locale that one, through traveling, comes to recognize as "home." In West's case, she made a remarkable journey through what used to be Yugoslavia in the late 1930s, after the Balkan wars associated with World War I, and with a strong sense of foreshadowing that another World War was in the making.

Not only is this a haunting book about a twentieth-century woman, but it is also one of the greatest works of travel literature ever written. I too have traveled throughout Yugoslavia, and, like many travelers, my wife and I ran into in the early 1980s, we were all carrying Rebecca West and rereading *Black Lamb* as we visited monasteries in South Serbia, mosques in Macedonia, castles on the Adriatic coast, forests along the Danube, busy markets in Sarajevo and Zagreb and Ljubliana.

No location seems less inviting today than the Balkans as the

Bosnian war rages on and Macedonia and Albanian Kossovo appear on the brink of war, with Greece, Turkey and others joining in. And yet I love (and I do not use this word lightly) West's absolutely accurate and eloquent prose, because she was able to capture the soul, spirit and humanity of this troubled region in a way that no other European has. Where was her "home" you may ask? She chose Macedonia, where so many roads, religions, races, and dreams have crossed, mingled, and survived all adversity for centuries.

Constantine Cavafy was a modern Greek poet from Alexandria, Egypt who died in the 1940s. It is a tribute to the power of poetry in Greece that most Greeks can quote you lines of Cavafy's poems, especially his "odyssey" poem, "Ithaca." The poem begins this way:

> As you set out for Ithaka
> hope your road is a long one,
> full of adventure, full of discovery.

And it ends, in part, with this stanza:

> Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
> Arriving there is what you're destined for.
> But don't hurry the journey at all.
> Better if it lasts for years,
> so you're old by the time you reach the island
> wealthy with all you've gained on the way,
> not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.
> Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.
> Without her you wouldn't have set out.
> She has nothing left to give you now.

While living in Greece for over six years, I kept this poem with me constantly.

What does it mean for modern Greeks and for me? First there is the simple purity of the language. No special effects, no fireworks, just unadorned directness. And yet the Homeric echoes for a modern age are there. This time, however, we are all Odysseuses, for the voice that speaks, speaks to "you" and thus *us*. I have led six university study groups to Greece (three for Loyola), and it is this poem that so many of the participants remember whenever we meet up, speak on the phone,

write to each other. Yes, it is life itself and the wisdom of living and traveling and interacting that teaches us that "Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey." This poem and the rest of Cavafy's poems are collected in C.P. Cavafy's *Collected Poems*, translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard (Princeton U. Press).

The fourth odyssey is the autobiography of the Spanish surrealist filmmaker, Luis Bunuel, *My Last Sigh* (1983). Bunuel's films such as *Andalusian Dog, Viridiana, Los Olvedados*, and *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, are among my favorite for their irreverent humor, irony and finally, humanity. His autobiography (and we all know what a slippery word that is) is equally engaging. But this slim and unpretentious glimpse into a great artist's life is more: it is an odyssey through Europe's intellectual, cultural, political and spiritual crises during this century, for Bunuel was conveniently born in 1900 and died in the 1980s, thus spanning most of the century. "I am an Atheist, Thank God," begins Bunuel. Born a Catholic in what he describes as a Spanish medieval town, he goes on to cover his life in Paris, Mexico and, finally, in Europe again. Part of the reason I reread this book each year is not only for the fun of hearing someone talk about his youth in Paris with Picasso and his good friend Salvador Dali, or his experiences in Hollywood with Chaplin and others, but because, as I have quoted in my opening, *he embraced life including his own contradictions and lived them to the fullest.*

The funeral? Bunuel's. On the last page of his autobiography, written only several years before his death, he managed to maintain the humanizing irony of surrealism which was his strength. He concludes his autobiography this way:

> I hate to leave while there's so much going on. It's like quitting in the middle of a serial. I doubt there was so much curiosity about the world after death in the past, since in those days the world didn't change quite so rapidly or so much. Frankly, despite my horror of the press, I'd love to rise from the grave every ten years or so and go buy a few newspapers. Ghostly pale, sliding silently along the walls, my papers under my arm, I'd return to the cemetery and read about all the disasters in the world before falling back to sleep, safe and secure in my tomb.

Wouldn't many of us like to think we could face the Great Unknown with such an ironic wink? And as a screenwriter/filmmaker myself, I know for sure that part of the enduring pleasure of this conclusion is that Bunuel would have shot this scene...had he lived longer.

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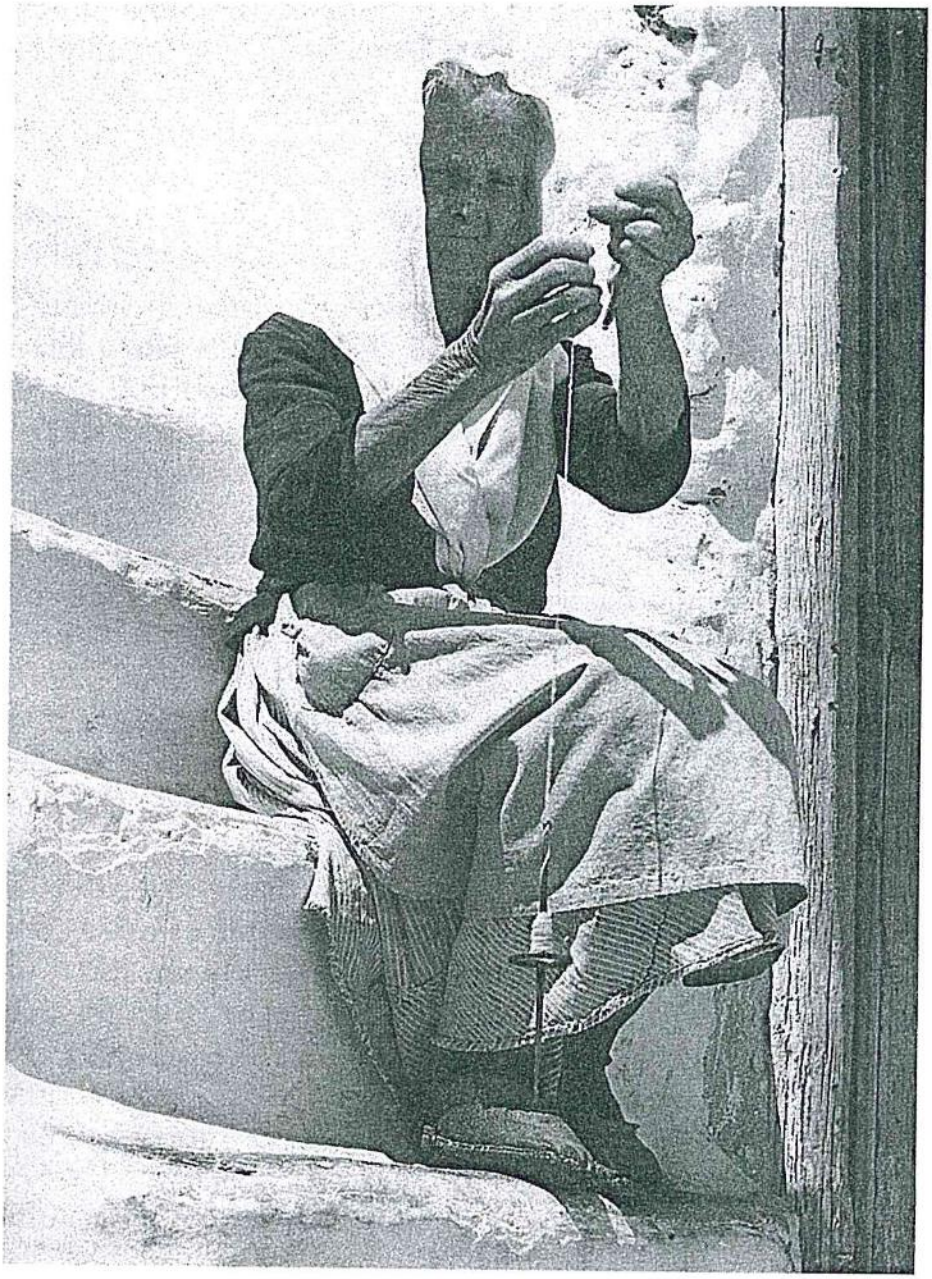

Confessions
Saint Augustine
Summa Theologiae
Thomas Aquinas
The Brothers Karamazov
Fyodor Dostoyevsky
The Nature and Destiny of Man
Reinhold Niebuhr
Systematic Theology
Paul Tillich

Striking Back

Denis R. Janz

In my fifteen years as a professional theologian I have read hundreds of books in my field. That sounds like a lot, until one realizes that theological books published in those years number in the thousands. Basing myself on this sampling, and being perfectly candid, I would have to say that these books run the entire gamut from the sublime to the ridiculous, from the fascinating to the boring, from treasures to trash. The majority, I believe, are worth reading—otherwise I would have abandoned the discipline long ago. But those that can truly be called great are relatively few.

The following five undoubtedly belong in that number. Some of them are certainly the product of genius, and these require special treatment. Too often first-time readers of these works attack them before they understand them. Therefore I suggest the following. Be aware from the outset that true genius is never balanced (think of Augustine, Luther, Nietzche, etc.). Most often it is spectacularly one-sided. Temporarily allow yourself to be caught up in the writer's obsession. Suspend your disbelief, enter into the author's world, and think along with the author. Only then, when you've begun to grasp the magnitude of the author's achievement, should you reengage your critical faculties. You will have earned the right to have your critical opinion taken seriously, and you will have guaranteed for yourself an experience of dramatic intellectual growth.

Augustine, *Confessions* (397-398): Within a century of the author's

death this book was a classic. And for the next fifteen hundred years, until today, countless readers have turned its pages in awe. What they have sensed is that here the depths of the human spirit are probed as almost nowhere else. Augustine saw with dazzling clarity that humans are the product of their past, and that, therefore, no self-understanding, let alone growth, is possible without dredging up the painful memories of what has scarred us. He recognized how the heart turned in on itself stunts human development. And he unmasked with relentless honesty the self-righteousness and pretensions to virtue with which humans fool themselves. Today Augustine has many rivals: dozens of new books on "spirituality" appear every year. They are all mere hot dogs compared to this banquet! Why lunch when you can dine?

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (1266-1273): Hans Kueng and Dietrich Bonhoeffer are fine for bedtime reading, but be wide awake for this one. You may never finish. I have returned to it regularly for twenty-five years. And each time I marvel at its synthetic order, its incisive logic, its panoramic scope, its deep humanism. Don't be fooled by traditionalists who want to find in Thomas answers for today, who try to conscript Thomas into the service of an arch-conservative, ultramontane agenda. It's seven hundred years too late for that. Study him rather in his thirteenth-century context to glimpse a phenomenal intelligence at work on the problems of his age. Read him to discover what theological thinking is. Open his book to encounter what surely is the quintessentially Catholic mind at its very best.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1878-1880): When I first read this novel at the age of twenty, I vaguely sensed that here was something profound. At forty, when I reread it, I knew that my first intuition had been correct. And I was astounded at what I had not understood the first time around. Dostoyevsky subjects the Russian national character to close scrutiny, but far more than this, he puts human nature itself under the microscope. What he sees is grandeur and wretchedness, and his description of both is to my mind unsurpassed. Moreover, Dostoyevsky's theological instincts were absolutely sound in suggesting that in the final analysis, the only real problem with Christianity is the theodicy problem. The novel restates it so powerfully that no solution is possible—unless perhaps a hint is to be found in the mysterious paradox of the epigraph: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die..."

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941): This is arguably the most important, genuinely American theological work of the twentieth century. For champions of secularism at mid-century, it demonstrated how profoundly the whole Western intellectual heritage

is indebted to the Judaeo-Christian tradition. For Protestant liberals at the time, it crushed all that was left of their naive optimism. For those tired of the superficial, it provided the counterpoint to that other most popular book of the fifties, Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*. But for me, its importance lies elsewhere. At the age of twenty-one, after a long period of undergraduate scepticism, this book finally convinced me that there were at least fragments of rationality to be found in the Christian vision of reality. It was thus the first step in my personal "Christianization" process (still, incidentally, far from complete).

Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (1951-1963): Many years ago I spent a week at a magnificent beach on the Greek island of Corfu. Here, to my companion's amazement, I read Tillich. What excited me then (and what still interests me now) was Tillich's clear recognition that the Christian symbols, as traditionally understood, have become increasingly problematic if not impossible in the cultural context of late modernity. But rather than abandoning these symbols, Tillich argues, we must reinterpret them. This does not mean simply modifying them so that they will be acceptable to our culture. Rather, to rescue these symbols we must dig down to recover the very core of their meaning from the tradition and then recast this meaning in the thought-forms of our time. Tillich's attempt to do this was a brilliant achievement of lasting value. Greek islands have their attractions, but they fade relatively quickly in comparison.

I shudder to think of how Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Dostoyevsky, Niebuhr and Tillich would react to these few and inadequate lines. Without a doubt their books are trivialized here. Yet, if some searcher is inspired to look into one or another of them, this will have served its purpose. It's my way of striking back at the many agents in our time that conspire to destroy the culture of the book: television, movies, computers, speed reading courses, etc. Maybe books won't save the world, but they can help us make it better. I'm utterly convinced, especially if the "busiest" people in our world stopped for a few hours, sat down and read a good book, the improvement would be noticeable.

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THE CATCHER IN THE RYE
J.D. Salinger
ALWAYS THE YOUNG STRANGERS
Carl Sandburg
THE UPROOTED
Oscar Handlin
LAMY OF SANTA FE
Paul Horgan
THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY
Thornton Wilder

Of Memory and Love

ALFRED LAWRENCE LORENZ

In his poem "Scroll," Carl Sandburg tells us:
Memory is when you look back
and the answers float in
to who? what? when? where?

When J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* came to our midwestern house as a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in 1951, when I was a high school freshman, I sneaked it away from the bookcase to read it in what I thought was delicious forbidden secrecy. I'm not so sure now that I had to read it surreptitiously, though it was widely characterized as unfit for adolescent consumption. My parents undoubtedly knew I was reading it, and when I came to know them better I realized they would not have disapproved. Nevertheless, I thought I was getting away with something in savoring the weekend sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield spent in New York on his "vacation" from Pencey Prep. What a surprise, then, to find *The Catcher in the Rye* on the reading lists my children—both girls and boys—brought home from their high schools as freshmen. Catholic schools at that. That certainly put the exclamation point to generational change.

The book enthralled me when I first read it, and going back to it was not unlike Holden's experience in the Indian Room of the museum as he passed display cases holding a war canoe, "about as long as three goddam Cadillacs in a row, with about twenty Indians in it," a

squaw weaving a blanket, and an ice-fishing Eskimo. No matter how often he saw one of those exhibits, "everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody'd move. You could go there a hundred thousand times.... Nobody'd be different. The only thing that would be different would be *you*." He was right. Nothing in the book was different: the loneliness, the desire for love, the fear and bravado and confusion, especially over sex, emotions that couldn't be mastered any better than one could control one of those little rubber balls attached to a paddle by a thin elastic string. Even the tone was the same, its outrageous humor set in the morass of Holden's pain. But older eyes take it in differently.

In stark contrast is the lightness of *Always the Young Strangers* (1953) by the poet and Lincoln biographer Carl Sandburg. In it, Sandburg turned memory back to his youth in Galesburg, Illinois, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He confessed that he had his "bitter and lonely hours growing out of boy years into a grown young man." He hated and loved his home town, and he hated and loved himself "about the same as I did the town and the people." But where Holden thrashed out at the people around him for his turmoil, Sandburg "came to see that my trouble was inside of myself more than it was in the town and the people." And it is fair to say, I think, that no more graphic and loving description of that time and its people exists. Nor did Sandburg himself write a better work.

Galesburg and its people come alive at his pen: immigrant parents "taking life in hard ways"; teachers who brought their students to love poetry and to remember that a person could never get enough education; failed businessmen and soiled ministers and drunks and prostitutes and wild young men and beautiful girls; and a Knox College professor from whom Sandburg took Latin because "I thought it would be interesting to study Caesar's *Commentaries* with a professor who could wear overalls and milk a cow." They and the others who rise from Sandburg's pages are not just of Galesburg but of the era, and through them one can tap a deeper memory. Somehow they help to bring alive a maiden great-aunt's penciled genealogy and to animate the sepia photographs in a grandmother's album of stern-faced men seated stock still and uncomfortable in their high collars and heavy woolen suits, tightly-corsetted wives standing alongside.

Still, the poet's questions continue to haunt: "who? what? when? where?" For that reason, I treasure *The Uprooted* (1952) by the historian Oscar Handlin. He set out to write a history of the immigrants in America, Handlin tells us, then "discovered that the immigrants *were*

American history." As I turn the pages of his beautifully written narrative, I can walk in the footprints of my own great-grandfather, an eighteen-year-old tailor who set out from Buhl, Germany, in 1853, to find a new home in Iowa, on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. The stamps on his visa tell me of the political frontiers he crossed on his journey; Handlin has fleshed out the immigrants' story so that I can know how that young tailor and thousands like him lived in villages like Buhl and why they wrenched themselves away from home and family, what they endured on their journey, and what they found when they arrived.

Once here, the immigrants held close to each other. But not for long. For as their children were "taught alien ways in an alien language," and turned from the immigrant press to the sensational newspapers of Pulitzer and Hearst, ever so steadily the immigrants' "distinctive characteristics were rubbed down, the figures became generalized and blurred." Yet, the Americanized son, like Sandburg grown to manhood himself and looking at his father, knew "he must not lose sight of that immigrant journey. We are come to rest and push our roots more deeply by the year. But we cannot push away the heritage of having been once all strangers in the land; we cannot forget the experience of having been all rootless, adrift."

Jean Baptiste Lamy was quite a different sort of immigrant. Twenty-five years old and a newly-ordained priest, Lamy was recruited to go to America as a missionary in 1837. Once here, he made a life that was so remarkable that Willa Cather would recount it in a novel, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927), and it would be told again in even richer detail in Paul Horgan's biography, *Lamy of Santa Fe* (1975). Horgan's is the more fascinating.

During a dozen years of laboring in Ohio, Lamy so impressed his ecclesiastical superiors with "his mild character, zeal for the salvation of souls" and "his piety, honesty, prudence, and other virtues" that they successfully recommended his appointment as first vicar apostolic of New Mexico. In that newly-carved diocese of 200,000 square miles, Lamy found churches in ruins, no schools, and a flock bereft of both ceremony and sacrament. Only nine priests were active, and the conduct of most was scandalous, on the order of Graham Greene's wretched priests in *The Power and the Glory*. Lamy dealt with them, as he did with intrigues and jealousies among the hierarchy, and endured journeys of thousands of miles across the rough country, with faith and fortitude, pastoral devotion and political toughness.

As clearly as he comes to us from Horgan's pen, Lamy remains something of a curiosity for us—as for Horgan himself: "an unques-

tioning perpetuator of the values of almost two thousand years of faith, set forth in every august expression of liturgy, as well as in the daily simplicities of the peasant village life into which he was born like any other local child—except that upon him were visited a form of energy and a need to express it which other children of Lempdes did not receive. The mystery abides."

Thornton Wilder leaves us with another mystery in *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1927) (a novel required by my Jesuit schoolmasters at about the time I went into hiding with Holden Caulfield). It is one that plagues Brother Juniper, a Franciscan missioner in Peru who sees the cables of the bridge snap and "fling five gesticulating ants into the valley below." Why those five, and did their end come at the hand of God? "Either we live by accident and die by accident, or we live by plan and die by plan." For Brother Juniper, the collapse of the bridge "afforded a perfect laboratory" to find out which. For Wilder, it provided a vehicle for exploring the intertwined stories of the five and that of Brother Juniper, who perished in the flames of the Inquisition for daring to pursue the question. Wilder makes us feel their joys and pains, and the joys and pains they brought to others. But never does he quite answer Brother Juniper's question; he leaves that for us.

In the end Wilder turns the bridge into a metaphor for love. To express that, he relies on the abbess of the convent who has in varying ways touched all of the victims: "But soon we shall die and all memory of those five will have left the earth, and we ourselves shall be loved for a while and forgotten. But the love will have been enough; all those impulses of love return to the love that made them. Even memory is not necessary for love. There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning."

That thread runs through each of these books. And each of them helps to burn away at least some of the fog that too often envelops the bridge.

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A DISTANT MIRROR
Barbara Tuchman
ORLANDO
Virginia Woolf
HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS
Isabel Allende
TAR BABY
Toni Morrison
SONNETS
William Shakespeare

They Clamored More Insistently

MARY SUE MORROW

Only Five? Not an easy task for someone who has had her nose buried in a book since forever. Even as I write, the floor of my memory is cluttered with the ghosts of little women, with half-remembered tales of sense and sensibility and still-significant sounds and furies—all from volumes somewhat wrinkled in time but still clamoring noisily for a place on the List of Five. The titles I have chosen simply clamored more insistently than the others, perhaps because I have not only read, but reread them at varying stages in my life, each time entranced by the beauty of their language and enlightened by their view of human nature.

Although I am a confessed novel reader, my list starts with a history, Barbara Tuchman's *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* (1978). Having been bored to stupefaction by a particularly dreadful high school history teacher and numbed by the battles-and-kings type of textbook, I had developed a distaste for history that was proving awkward, given my chosen profession (music historian). Tuchman's book was the first I encountered that put those battles and kings into a context filled with ideas and personalities. Using the life of the French nobleman Enguerrand de Coucy VII as a framework, she weaves a richly embroidered tapestry filled with vivid and colorful characters: roving bands of discontented knights returning from battle; terrified aristocrats fleeing plague-infested cities; plague-stricken peasants dying in untended fields; fashionable men in long pointed shoes and scandalously short tunics; fashionable women in ermine-trimmed robes,

their eyebrows plucked in sinful vanity. I was transported back to the medieval world, caught up in the Otherness of the thought, but also transfixed by the Sameness of the people she describes. Tuchman's book has stayed with me because, for all her facts and figures, she writes a narrative as gripping as any fiction.

If Tuchman's history reads like a novel, Virginia Woolf's novel *Orlando* (1928) reads—well not quite like a history—but at least a historical fantasy. Woolf also centers her tale around a single figure, the androgynous, immortal Orlando, a poet with eyes "like drenched violets" and a fatal love of literature. From his youth at the court of Queen Elizabeth to his young manhood under King Charles to her (yes, her) enlightened adulthood, s/he glides gracefully across genders and centuries. As she stands on a moonlit London balcony at the stroke of midnight in 1799, a single, small cloud suddenly appears behind the dome of St. Paul's, swiftly gathers strength, and, "with the twelfth stroke of midnight, the darkness was complete. A turbulent welter of cloud covered the city. All was dark; all was doubt; all was confusion. The eighteenth century was over; the nineteenth century had begun." After this witty send-up of romanticism, Woolf continues her irreverent romp through the English past up to the year 1928, when Orlando finally finishes the poem she has been writing for three centuries. An ironic comment on the common human thread that runs through history, or just on the reality of writing?

In Isabel Allende's *House of the Spirits* (1982), fantasy and reality intertwine with such matter-of-factness that the reader begins to see nothing out of the ordinary about women with sea-foam green tresses veiling their alabaster faces. Once again I was transported to another culture—this time to Chile in the twentieth century—and swept along by currents of passion and politics that have both comforting distance and disconcerting immediacy. Amid the whimsy of salt cellars that mysteriously drift across the table during dinner and ghosts who resolutely speak only Spanish and Esperanto, Allende paints compelling portraits of the contradictions in human personalities and human affections. There is Eteban Trueba, the self-styled "good *patron*," who builds a school to educate his tenants, all the while raping his way through the fourteen-year old peasant girls on the estate, sowing the seeds of brutal fascism along with his own. There is Clara (the power behind the moving salt cellars), who marries Esteban after the death of his first love, her green-haired sister Rosa. And there is Alba, Clara and Esteban's granddaughter, who survives political persecution and torture by writing in her mind the fantastical

history of her family that is Allende's novel.

Although I can only guess at the vibrancy of Allende's language through the filter of a translation, I can directly savor the voluptuous, rolling prose of Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby* (1981). Morrison has a knack for creating images that envelop you in their seductive and pictorial richness. In one of the novel's pivotal scenes, the young and spoiled Jadine sits at dinner with Valerian and Margaret, her family's employers, in their villa on a Caribbean island: "Fog came to that place in wisps sometimes, like the hair of maiden aunts. Hair so thin and pale it went unnoticed until masses of it gathered around the house and threw back one's own reflection from the windows." But Morrison isn't just setting the scene with some verbal tricks, for the metaphor wafts through the ensuing dialogue, when the maiden aunts return to smile and "toss their maiden aunt hair" at one of Margaret's comments, to "cower in the corner" when voices are raised, then to huddle there sleeping, only to awaken and flee, "pulling their maiden hair behind them" when the intruder with the dreadlocks is discovered. The maiden aunts become a recurring symbol for the vague and unspoken emotions that do indeed blanket the scene like wispy fog.

For all its linguistic splendor, *Tar Baby* may seem like a strange choice to Morrison fans, especially given the critical acclaim for several of her other books, but it hangs in my memory in a way the others do not. It is a profoundly disturbing book, full of unresolved issues and contradictory behavior. All of the characters are flawed, but Morrison writes with a compassion and affection that endows even their worst moments with poignancy and dignity. And although they are invariably Others—separated from me by the great divides of race or gender or class—I also experience at least part of them as the Same, making those divides less intimidating and teaching me things about myself.

The most surprising self-discovery I have made of late, however, has been a totally unsuspected love of poetry. For most of my life, my enthusiasm for verse has been limited to the deathless lines of Ogden Nash, so I was astonished when a chance re-encounter with one of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (1609) revealed a new direction for my Literary Life After Forty. I have even *memorized* several (if only my eleventh-grade English teacher could hear me now), so that I can revel in the sheer beauty of their lines whenever I please. The range of human love that they reveal is breathtaking, from the dark passion that "no quiet finds," to besotted infatuation, to friendship through which "all losses are restored and sorrows end." Across

the span of nearly four centuries they speak with a clear and penetrating voice, as if William himself were standing here, amid the clutter of all my books.

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MASTER HAROLD AND THE BOYS
Arthur Fugard
THE MIRACLE WORKER
William Gibson
THE MEMBER OF THE WEDDING
Carson McCullers
THE ROSE TATTOO
Tennessee Williams
HEDDA GABLER
Henrik Ibsen

Southerner, Teacher, Woman

ROSARY O'NEILL

There is a proverb that says the best teacher is experience, but in my opinion, the best teacher is someone else's experience. A great play hits the audience immediately as if you've lived through the experience. And so a play well told is a life or lives lived.

Throughout the past decade, as the artistic director of Southern Rep, I have tried to mount plays that uplift audiences, presenting experiences that will somehow make us a little kinder. Of the twenty-seven plays that I have chosen, these five stand out in memory: *Master Harold and the Boys* (1982), by Arthur Fugard; *The Miracle Worker* (1956), by William Gibson; *The Member of the Wedding* (1950), by Carson McCullers; *The Rose Tattoo* (1950), by Tennessee Williams; and *Hedda Gabler* (1890), by Henrik Ibsen. Each of these plays presents an experience that has enriched me as a Southerner, as a teacher, and as a woman.

Master Harold and the Boys, by South Africa's greatest literary artist, deals with a young boy, age fifteen, who is coping with an alcoholic father, who has been hospitalized, and an absent mother. Master Harold (Hally) spends most of his time in the St. George's Park Tea Room owned by his parents and run by two South African waiters (Sam and Willie) who have raised him. The play entices the reader into an intimate relationship with the two black men and the young boy in Port Elizabeth. Through the actions of Hally we witnesses the black men's fatherly efforts, a heroism doomed to failure. In act one, the young boy expounds on his experiences, talking about the need for justice even

when justice cannot be found, as he completes his homework.

But at the climax of the play, Hally turns on the two South Africans. Confronted with the return of his father from the hospital, the enraged boy assumes the racist pose that he has been defying. He attacks the black men for refusing to support his hatred for his father. Guilt haunts the mind of the boy turned man as he lashes out at his childhood friends.

The negative lesson of Master Harold is contrasted with the triumphant experience of Annie Sullivan, the "miracle worker," in the play of the same name. In this play, Sullivan, an orphan at twenty, partially blind herself and totally inexperienced, accepts the position of teaching Helen Keller, deaf, dumb, and blind. Annie arrives like a cyclone, in Tuscumbia, Alabama, at the home of Helen's rich Southern parents, who have so spoiled the five-year-old that Helen can be classified as a wild animal.

We experience Annie's tenacious commitment, drive and will power leading her to reach the soul of the phantom girl. At the apex of this play, Annie, having failed dramatically, begs Helen's parents for more time. She describes the life of deprivation at an institution for the blind in Boston fueling her attempts to reach Helen. "Rats-why, my brother Jimmie and I used to play with the rats because we didn't have toys. Maybe you'd like to know what Helen will find there, not on visiting days? One ward was full of the-old women, crippled, blind, most of them dying, but even if what they had was catching there was nowhere else to move them, and that's where they put us. . . ."

The Member of the Wedding recaptures the experience of the terrors of adolescence. The play shows how problems which appear to be small can ravage the soul of an adolescent. In the play, we experience the isolation of a 12-year-old girl, Frankie, trapped inside a small Southern town with a cold, widowed father, who is rarely home, and an only brother who is about to get married. Excluded from the neighborhood girls' club, she decides to soothe her pain by forcing herself on the wedding party. We witness Frankie's futile attempts to join her brother and his wife on their honeymoon, so that she can become a member of the wedding and escape her loneliness.

This play celebrates the dedication of Berenice, the black cook. Through humor and understanding, Berenice helps Frankie find reasons to live. Despite the violent death of her younger brother and the loss of her pet (the 7-year-old John Henry), Berenice insists on finding joy in life. Her obstinate dedication to Frankie saves the child. The

play teaches us that battles of the soul can be won through generosity of spirit.

In *Rose Tattoo,* by Tennessee Williams, we see a woman, Serafina, driven by love, a love that almost destroys her life and that of her only daughter. So all consuming is Serafina's love for her husband that, upon hearing of his death, she goes into a violent mourning, miscarrying and becoming a total recluse. Her frustration turned inward, she torments her teenage daughter, locking her away from her boyfriend. But another love, in the form of an unexpected stranger, reminds us through Serafina that life is for the living. The passion of Serafina that fires *The Rose Tattoo* renews our belief in the thrill of life.

In the complex play, *Hedda Gabler,* we experience the tragedy of a Norwegian woman brought up in luxurious circumstances. In having everything, she has lost her heart. Twenty-nine, Hedda has married a wealthy man, Tesman, whom she despises, because she cannot stand being an old maid. Returning home from a tedious honeymoon, she discovers that her real love, Lovborg, is having an affair with an old schoolmate. Hedda defies her relationship with her effete husband and encourages her lover to kill himself to keep him from enjoying another woman.

The play is a complex study in envy and the seeds of obsession. It traces the actions of a woman pushed to her own suicide by her inability to stop the devious needs that drive her. *Hedda Gabler* is a haunting profile of a women trapped in a materialistic world without outlets for intellectual action, spiritual bonding, and generosity.

These five plays, capture insights that have been valuable to me and have made me richer. By living through the journeys of their tumultuous characters, I hope to learn from their successes and avoid their mistakes.

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TO BE A POLITICIAN
Stimpson Bullitt
HUEY LONG'S LOUISIANA
Allan Sindler
THE MAKING OF THE PRESIDENT IN 1960
Theodore H. White
THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST
David Halberstam
THE ESSENCE OF DECISION
Graham Allison

Surprised, but Never Bored

EDWARD RENWICK

I remember few courses from graduate school and perhaps fewer books. One course which did influence my career significantly was a seminar on American politics taught by a political scientist who had both worked for a United States senator and, of course, taught. Most political scientists do not move back and forth between the various worlds, and his career intrigued me. Indeed, it was one of the primary reasons I became a political scientist.

In this course, one of the assigned readings was a short book by Stimpson Bullitt entitled, *To Be a Politician* (1959). Being assigned a short book is always a joy, and enjoying it is an added pleasure. At the time, Stimpson Bullitt possessed a fairly famous name, was a young lawyer and, as he said, "a former politician blessed with leisure and obscurity." His book is not an autobiography but a series of essays on politics. In it, Bullitt discusses the relationship between personality and politics. In my undergraduate years, one of the few courses that I both thought was valuable at the time and still feel that way about was an introductory course in psychology. During that semester, I became enamored with the impact of personality, and this continued as my interest in survey research developed.

Bullitt does not see a politician as a specialist but rather as a generalist, a person who likes people, and, it is hoped, also likes ideas—but who knows not to put too much emphasis on one to the detriment of the other. A politician, according to Bullitt, "can acquire a better comprehension of the forest, together with its trees, than in any other field."

In this age of computers, it is good to remember Bullitt's axiom, "Politics is an art and it is played by ear." Campaigns now go on for months, if not for years; however, Bullitt's statement today is probably even truer than it was in 1959. "The rationality of a campaign tends to vary conversely with its length." Moderation, Bullitt said, along with caution, tolerance, and discretion, are those qualities most associated with our politicians, while the great problem facing American politicians is intellectual honesty.

Our politics has been changed by our concept of death, he argued. According to Bullitt, "Like sex in the Victorian age, death has become unmentionable except by a euphemism. . . . Perhaps because few people believe that any part of themselves is immortal, most people refuse to remember that the only parts of themselves which they are sure exist are going to rot." This, combined with the lengthening of life's expectancy, has made politicians "more cautious, less reckless with their lives, more inclined to make long-range plans and wait patiently to harvest them, less willing to start a war, less willing to play for high immediate stakes. And in this attitude his constituents back him up." Worrying about the long run and wishing to stay in power, politicians resort to various means of deceit, he said.

Bullitt felt that "People are becoming discontented, not because they are barred from approaching goals which they desire, but because they have no goals for which to feel desire." Perhaps much of contemporary American politics could be summed up in those words.

Following the seminar in American politics, it was time to pick a dissertation topic. I flirted with the idea of studying American political dynasties and narrowed my project to an aspect of the Long political dynasty. I had never been to Louisiana, nor did I know much about the Longs. Personality was supposed to be an extremely important part of their political success and they certainly appeared to be colorful figures. In this state of innocence, I applied and was hired to teach political science at a Louisiana university, and moved here with the intention of doing research on the Longs and leaving Louisiana after one academic year.

I did finish the dissertation; but three decades later, I find myself still in Louisiana. The reason I stayed was my fascination with Louisiana politics. Only three people have dominated the twentieth century in Louisiana: Huey Long, Earl Long and Edwin Edwards. I came to study the first two, and have minutely observed the third. Studying Louisiana politics has not been edifying, but it has been fun.

The first book I read on Louisiana politics, and which I think is

still the best book on the subject, was Allan Sindler's *Huey Long's Louisiana* (1956). Although Sindler's book ends with 1952, Louisiana politics has not changed that much to the present time. How many states have had only three people dominate an entire century? For one hundred and fifty years or more, the big fights in Louisiana have been concerning race, urban versus rural, New Orleans versus the rest of the state, and the haves versus the have-nots. The names change and the dates change, but the issues remain the same.

My first semester in Louisiana in 1963 was the time of a gubernatorial election in which there were many candidates, the primary ones being Chep Morrison, the former Mayor of New Orleans; Congressman Gillis Long, a distant relative of Huey and Earl; and John McKeithen, a public service commissioner who would ultimately win the governorship. Reading about Louisiana politics in Sindler's book and watching it occur day by day was almost too much to bear. This would be the final Long, anti-Long election of the factions which had governed Louisiana since 1928. McKeithen, however, was an Earl Long protege, so even the anti-Long candidate came out of the pro-Long side. Only in Louisiana could the end of an over-thirty-year political fight by two sides have two candidates from the same side be the protagonists.

Reading about the animosity between blacks and whites and Catholics and Protestants in Louisiana, came alive when I was in a church hall filled to overflowing with students there to cheer on Chep Morrison as he defended his religion and the rights of blacks to vote. On other occasions, driving down highways thinking about my project, I observed billboards which read "Help Kill Kennedy - elect *so-and-so* Governor." I also remember reflecting on what I had heard about the dance held in the student union the night he was assassinated. All these things led me to believe that I was indeed in a place that warranted study.

Sindler made much in his book of the clash between north and south Louisiana. Following John McKeithen's victory as governor, I decided I would like to observe for myself what the book described. I applied for a Ford Foundation Fellowship, was successful, and became the first person in the program to work in a Southern governor's office. McKeithen was a rural, North-Louisiana politician. For his time, he had a diversified staff. Most of the high positions were held by North-Louisiana males and a number of the lesser positions held by South-Louisiana females. Obviously, at this time there were no black staff members. Some politicians had served during the time of Huey Long and many had served under Earl. Consequently, this was both a re-

search project about the past and a learning experience about the present. In reality, Louisiana politics is even more unbelievable than described in Sindler's book.

Much that Bullitt had written about had not yet reached Louisiana, and still hasn't. Politics is an all consuming passion in this state and sometimes people forget there is politics in other places, as well. In the Kennedy campaign of 1960, modern politics began in this country; and in 1961, with the publication of Theodore H. White's *The Making of the President 1960* (1961), modern political coverage of politics began. As White called it, "A Narrative History of American Politics in Action" was a new type of journalism. Describing the behind-the-scenes moments, the personalities and actions of the candidates and their supporters and advisers, it revealed new insights into how the political process operates. Of course, to gain inside information, reporters had to have inside access. And to get inside access, journalists had to agree to play by the ground rules set by the politicians. We learn inside politics, but not all that goes on inside. Kennedy was the master politician of the post-World War II era and, as such, an excellent manipulator of the press. Kennedy created a court and selected members of the press were knighted. This changed both politics and the press, and the consequences of this change are with us to this day.

This change in politics and manipulation of the press was not widely recognized, nor did it become an issue for many years afterwards. David Halberstam notes in *The Best and the Brightest* (1972) that Theodore White's 1964 *Making of the President* book makes many references to Lyndon Johnson's assistants who worked diligently in the 1964 presidential campaign, but makes no references, or only a few, to the top assistants charged with making preparations for the Vietnam War. Consequently, even as astute an observer as Theodore White, in his book, missed out on the central theme of the Johnson presidency.

The 1960 book not only changed the way we look at politics, but also recorded how Kennedy won. This campaign became the blueprint for virtually all major presidential campaigns for the next thirty years. This was the first campaign in which public opinion surveys, television commercials, and the candidate's time, campaign resources and money, were allocated largely to the ten largest states. Up until then, candidates tended to campaign all over the country. Indeed, Nixon campaigned in all fifty states in 1960, ending his campaign in Alaska—which, to add insult to injury, he lost to Kennedy.

The soaring rhetoric and optimism of White's book would be

brought back to reality years later by Halberstam in *The Best and the Brightest*, an account of the Kennedy and Johnson years. The Kennedy family was obsessed with becoming part of the establishment. The president desperately sought the members' approval. Kennedy wanted people who had gone to the right schools, belonged to the right groups, and had the right friends. To have gone to Harvard or Yale was as important in national politics as it was to have gone to LSU in Louisiana.

The only thing more important than background was to be a good memo writer, according to Halberstam. The printed word is extremely important on the national scene, but of little importance in Louisiana politics. As Earl Long once said, "Never put anything in writing that you can say, and never say anything that you can wink." Based on some of the things considered by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, they would have been well served by following Earl's advice. Halberstam's book shows how Kennedy's policy in Vietnam "deceived the deceivers." The problems of ego, in-fighting, petty politics, personality conflicts, and naivete, are laid out in gruesome detail in his book.

The absence of rational decision making is almost epidemic at both the state and national levels. Generally speaking, no one is interested in making more than a short-term decision. Elections are always near-term, not long-term. The long-term is somebody else's problem, which, of course, is why it is always somebody else's problem. The process, or lack of process, by which decisions are made is difficult to capture.

Graham Allison's *Essence of Decision* (1971), his book on the Cuban Missile Crisis, is one of the best treatments of decision making I have ever read. Allison examined the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis in detail. Decisions were often made for political reasons by people thinking politically. Actions and decisions that seem completely irrational by viewing something from one model, appear very commonsensical when looked at through the eyes of another model.

Even after studying politics and politicians for several decades, I am often surprised by what they say and do, and mystified as to why they say or do it. But I am never bored.

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A Thousand and One Nights
Anonymous
The Bible

Poesies
Malarme
Poems
Gerard Manley Hopkins
Remembrance of Things Past
Marcel Proust

Resurrected Spirits

Peter S. Rogers, S.J.

My first experience with reading came when I would sit and imagine Chicken Little crying out, "The sky is falling, the sky is falling!" I remember those words as well as I do the drawing on the top of the page. Later I realized that all words were drawings unto themselves. This awareness was especially true with regards to a *Thousand and One Nights* (10th century.) Not only were the drawings the words suggested different from any that my mother had ever read to my brother Robert and myself, but they were the first that let us experience—us; for at times we read aloud to one another, a land so different from the Bayou Teche country where we lived.

We no longer floated through the swamps on pirogues but navigated the skies with our magic carpets in a never-ending journey through the realms of the Orient. In many ways the tales were my first bedtime reading and, though my uncle Roland had given us the book, my parents were skeptical about our being introduced to these foreign characters. While it might have been more appropriate for us to read Mark Twain, my mother finally thought that books which would keep us away from the water had some utility, if not other literary merits. And so I continued to find the magic in words.

Then came the Old and New Testaments, mere Bible stories for some, fable for others. The Bible was still the offering of a distant land, not so much for religious reasons, but for the strong characters it presented in dire straits: Moses told what to do (like my older brothers

being told frequently by my father what to do and not thinking of having the means to do so), David trying to enchant an irate king and befriend the king's son, Mary being totally troubled by the presence of God in her life, St. Paul being so categorically sure of himself. At first the stories were told repeatedly at Mass and commented upon ad nauseam. But when, in successive readings, I gave voice to them myself, I realized that I was no longer in the realm of fiction, but in history, in religion, in the bind and chain of interpretation.

The Bible was also poetry, and it seemed to suit me in all my moods. Though we prayed the Psalms frequently, they touched me in yet other ways. Growing up in a large family, I found myself provided with an arsenal of words with which to combat my older brothers and sisters and even arm myself somehow against God's betrayal of me as I would read out to them, like prophets of yesteryear, some of the stormier passages where Yahweh might strike down my enemies. In yet other moods, blessings poured forth. Since then I have hoped to make a more appropriate use of those holy utterances. But in them I found a God who was less distant, and in their words I found a style and design more to my liking than in the preachy tone of Paul the Apostle. In that sense, the Old Testament is ever new for, chronologically, it was the first religious Story told to me.

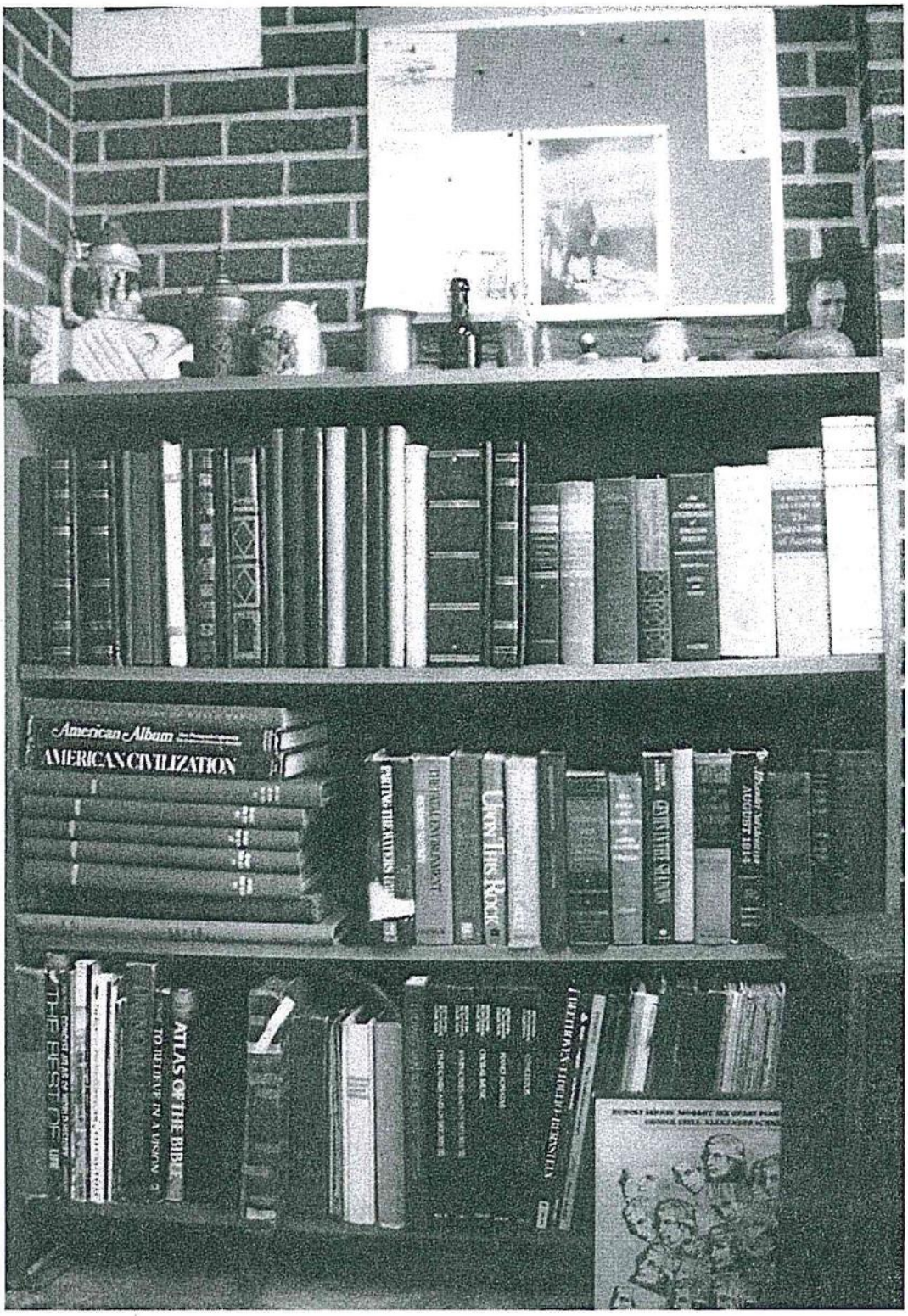
My poetry professor once said that we should make our own anthologies of favorite poems. I have always done that, and, while there may be a prejudice here, Hopkins is the poet I return to most (*The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, 1930*). While I have also been taught in the school of Mallarmé (*Poésies*, 1913), Hopkins is, by contrast, clear, and this even in his most difficult moments. And his words sing. I mention both poets because they opened up for me the struggle that they encountered with words. Hopkins' struggle was certainly with himself (and his God), and the denouement seemed to have come through writing, writing as a kind of daily bread, a necessary resurrection footing every sentence. Though Mallarmé's poetry was and is more of a struggle for me, it opened up other fields with their own questions. Mallarmé was also a teacher of English and I was foolish enough to think that I, a teacher of French, might somehow sense a different strain to his meaning. But always in the reading I found how distant his word could be; and that was, in itself, an ironical variation on the word becoming flesh in a most difficult syntax. Mallarmé and Hopkins impressed upon me the monumental and personal character of poetry that must be embodied in language. They made me feel and understand that language

was not always poetry.

The poetry of Hopkins and Mallarmé served as a transition to Proust. The exact point of transition was Henry James' *Portrait of a Lady.* (1881). Leaving the poets, I could appreciate the dialogue of James. What intrigued me was James' use of space and the naturalness—as it appeared to me—of its creation in language. While I do not return to James as much as I would like, as to some distant friend, he certainly taught me that writing was not just technique but vision. Ironically, he prepared me for the very translation of vision that is Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* (1927). As I look back at these thoughts, they would all seem to culminate in that too well-known cliché of Proust working in his cork-lined room. In his lengthy work Proust gathered elements I appreciated in the other writings, everything from psalms and prophets to strung out metaphors. He taught me the value of solitude. He compared his work of writing to that of the baker, and books to bread that the spirit must have. While Proust considers the book to be a cemetery, he, like Hopkins, resurrects many spirited artists through it with the help of the reader.

Proust taught me the presence of my self, the one engaged with a company of readers, and that of all the books I had previously read and kept with me in the words stored up over time and never lost. As I had always loved the muse that is history, Proust offered me with a great sense of humor. Time fixed in art. He gave me the past now.

Peter S. Rogers, S.J., Department of Modern Foreign Languages & Literatures, has published an essay on Paul Claudel's work (Scribners) and, recently, *Proust: Speculative Scripture with Studies in Twentieth-century Literature*, University of Nebraska.


American Album
AMERICAN CIVILIZATION
ATLAS OF THE BIBLE

Democracy in America
Alexis deTocqueville
Walden
Henry David Thoreau
Polemics and Prophecies
I. F. Stone
Make No Law
Anthony Lewis
Not So Wild A Dream
Eric Sevareid

Books to Make Us Free

Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.

When I was in college at Fordham in the early 1950s I had a journalism professor friend, Ed—we called him "Chief" or "Old Baldy"—Walsh, who stayed in his office all night, smoked Irish whiskey and drank cigarettes, and wouldn't let you out of his office without introducing you to another friend and giving you something to read.

I gave up my pipe when I slowed down running hills in 1980 and now drink a glass of red wine with peanut butter watching "Nightline"; but, by whatever means I have—class assignments, persuasion, or gifts—I want my friends to read. When the young French aristocrat, Alexis deTocqueville, wound up his journey through Jacksonian America and wrote, in *Democracy in America* (1835 and 1840), "I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America," and observed that in a democratic society, the "tyranny of the majority," through public opinion, silences the rebel, "while those who think like him, without having the courage to speak out, abandon him in silence," he was right.

But he hadn't met Henry David Thoreau.

The best books, like the best friends, give us courage to be ourselves. While deTocqueville wanted the individuals among us to stand out, he warned that individualism, that calm feeling which disposes us to withdraw from social interaction into our family hearth—or TVs, CDs, VCRs, headsets and video games—quickly becomes mere selfishness and melts the glue which is supposed to hold our community

together.

On July 4, 1845, the twenty-eight-year-old Harvard graduate, pencil maker, and school teacher, Henry David Thoreau, made his break with the small-town society of Concord, Massachusetts, by building himself a cabin—about as big as a dormitory room—and planted a bean field in a cove at the end of Walden Pond. So far he had failed to fit in in Concord, the bustling little center of the philosophical-literary movement called Transcendentalism. "I went to the woods," he said, "because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

There, for two years, he took his cold, early-morning dips; took notes on epic battles between the black and red ants; measured the depths of the pond; and chronicled the cosmic croakings of frogs, the vibratory hum of churchbells, and the rumbling of the iron horse which made the "hills echo with his snort like thunder."

"I love to be alone," he wrote in the journals he later distilled into the greatest American book, *Walden* (1854), but nearly every day he sauntered into town for banter with local folk or lunch with his aunt and crammed into his hut as many as thirty visitors at a time.

Often students don't like *Walden*. Thoreau represents to them, particularly in late adolescence, most of what they don't want to be: alone, intellectually arrogant, unemployed, short, disappointed in love, ill at ease with young women, celibate, a writer whose books went unsold, and dead of tuberculosis at 45.

But *Walden*, more than any other book except perhaps the *Gospel of Luke*, offers the message Americans most need: incentive to get a grasp of oneself as a free individual. Not the "rugged individualism" of Darwin, where only the strong survive, or of deTocqueville where the upwardly-mobile middle class withdraw, with a few close friends, into the warmth of their jacuzzis, but the individualism of personal integrity, the willingness to march to a different drummer, and, as Thoreau did, spend at least a night in jail to oppose an unjust war.

When I taught in that part of the country, I took my students to swim in Walden Pond—with a romantic half-hope that the waters in which Thoreau had swum still held and might transmit his spirit. Once, in Palestine, I had swum in the Sea of Galilee with the same idea.

Nor had deTocqueville met I. F. Stone. When that peppery little reporter was blacklisted as a radical from the establishment press, he started his own newsletter, *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, in 1953 and built it to a 70,000 circulation by its death in

1971. "All governments lie," he said, but all governments also reveal a great deal more than they intend. So he scrutinized congressional testimony and government documents and spelled out their mendacities to his readers—like the Johnson administration's hollow justification for bombing North Vietnam in the wake of the so-called Tonkin Gulf attack on our ships.

His words were blunt. He called CIA operatives "screwy," President Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles "senescent fumblers," hawkish senators "blood thirsty idiots," and congressional leaders "aged pygmies in aspic." Though Stone was an early Zionist, the Arab refugees and the Jewish attitude of "contemptuous superiority" toward them weighed on his conscience. Originally impressed by JFK's energy and zest, he concluded that JFK was a conventional leader who "died just in time."

He loved freedom and the human race, which constantly seemed about to annihilate itself with nuclear weapons. He lamented, "Someone is always killing someone else for what is called the greater glory of God."

Above all, as anyone who reads his pieces in collections like *Polemics and Prophecies* and *A Time of Torment*, or sees the documentary film, *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, will testify, Izzy had a lot of fun saying exactly what he thought. He also answered his own phone, I found, when I called him twice to help my students. He got a kick out of a Jesuit assigning his stuff.

When *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis gave the Thomas Jefferson Lecture at Loyola in 1993, he spoke to a campus which, like so many others, had gone through its own controversies over free expression. Remarking on "speech codes," for example, Lewis found the idea that a university, which is meant to be the seat of free thought, might codify what one may say—"repellant." I bought several copies of his *Make No Law: The Sullivan Case and the First Amendment* (1991) to give to my friends. Here he traces the history of the First Amendment, from our 1801 rejection of the Sedition Act, which made it a crime to publish false, malicious comments about the president or either house of Congress, to the 1963 *New York Times v. Sullivan* case, in which a Birmingham police chief claimed he had been libeled by minor mistakes in an ad supporting Martin Luther King's civil rights movement. The Supreme Court ruled, in its classic formula, that "debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide open"—and thus must allow for errors made without "reckless disregard" for the truth.

I take from Lewis and Stone that, free speech, like a muscle, shrivels when no one has enough nerve to open his mouth. When the red-bating demagogue Senator Joseph R. McCarthy smeared and bullied newly-appointed Supreme Court Justice William Brennan (who later wrote the Sullivan decision) in a Senate hearing in 1957, Stone, who witnessed the assault, lamented: "How little unalloyed courage there is." Lewis echos Stone, when in the heart of his book, he cites Justice Louis Brandeis in *Whitney v. California*, that the men who fought the revolution "believed liberty to be the secret of happiness and courage to be the secret of liberty."

From 1940 till 1977, one of liberty's best friends was CBS. During those years, I discovered Eric Sevareid four times. As a Fordham student in the early 1950s I listened to his 11 p.m. radio essays when the lights had gone out in our dorm. As a young Fordham professor and *Commonweal* editor, I read and taught *Not So Wild a Dream*, his 1945 autobiography, which summed up for the generation who stopped Nazism in World War II what was special about the America they had saved. In his *CBS-TV Evening News* commentaries in the 1960s and 1970s he spelled out the full damage the Vietnam War was doing not just to Asians but to ourselves, and, in the last days of Watergate, he said of the transcripts of the secret Nixon White House tapes: "From these pages rises the rancid odor of hatred." When Nixon's henchman, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, tried to muzzle his commentaries, Sevareid said: "The central point about the free press is not that it be accurate, though it must try to be, not that it be fair, though it must try to be that, but that it be free."

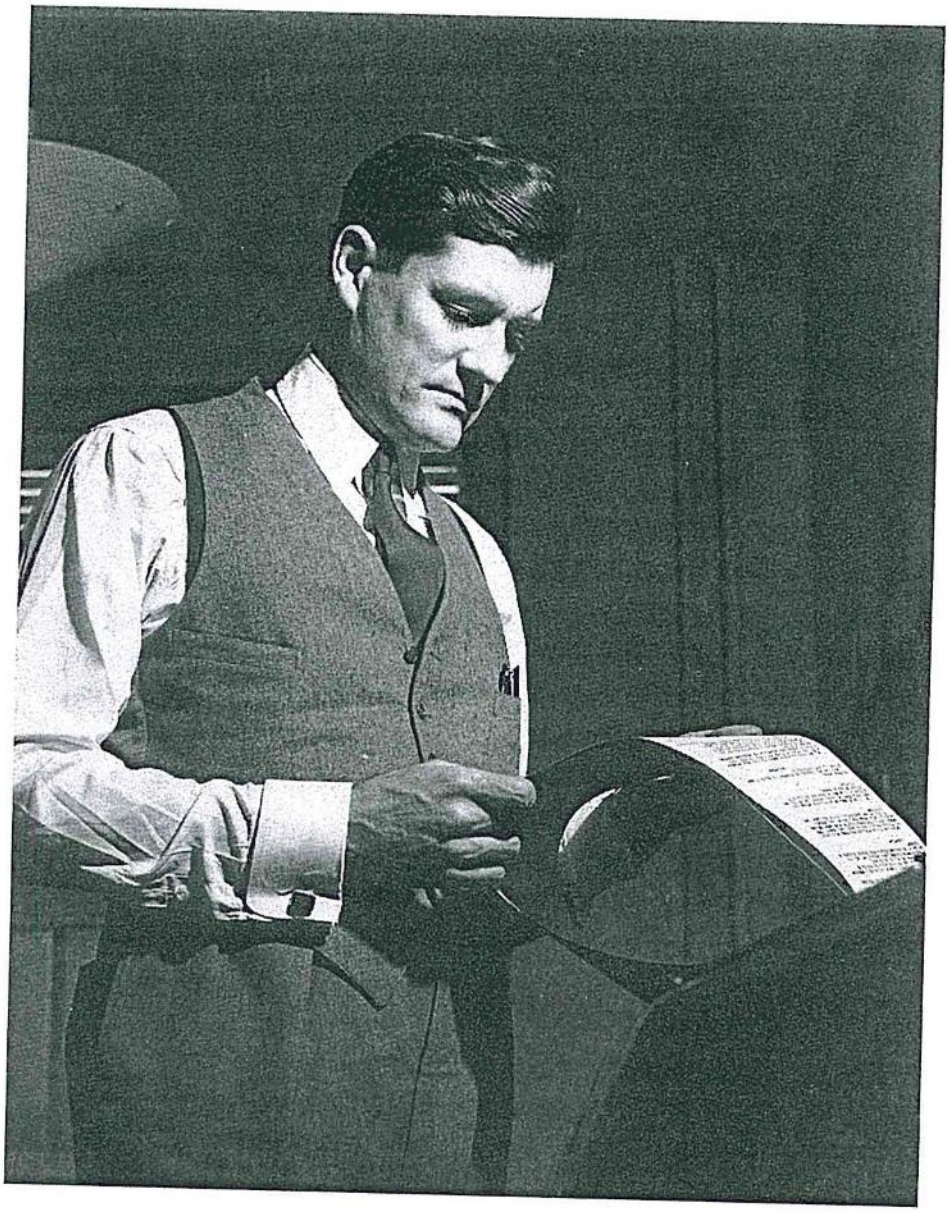
In *Not So Wild a Dream*, Eric learns raw democracy in the wheat fields of Velva, North Dakota (pop. 900), and grows up to envision all America—indeed the world—as unified and as interdependent as his childhood home. With a high school friend, he risks his life to paddle a canoe 2,000 miles from Minneapolis to the Hudson Bay at age seventeen; he spurs a campaign to get rid of manditory ROTC at the University of Minnesota, and is emotionally crushed when spiteful administrators block his appointment as editor of the student newspaper. He marries the track coach's brilliant daughter, and they move to Paris, where CBS's Edward R. Murrow takes him on the star team of "Murrow's Boys." As a war correspondent he reports the fall of France, survives a plane crash among headhunters in the Burma jungle, covers the invasions of Anzio and France and the climactic crossing of the Rhine. He returns from the war, the stench of blood and corpses in his nostrils, in spite of all the horror he has seen, still convinced that the

cause of universal brotherhood is not so wild a dream.

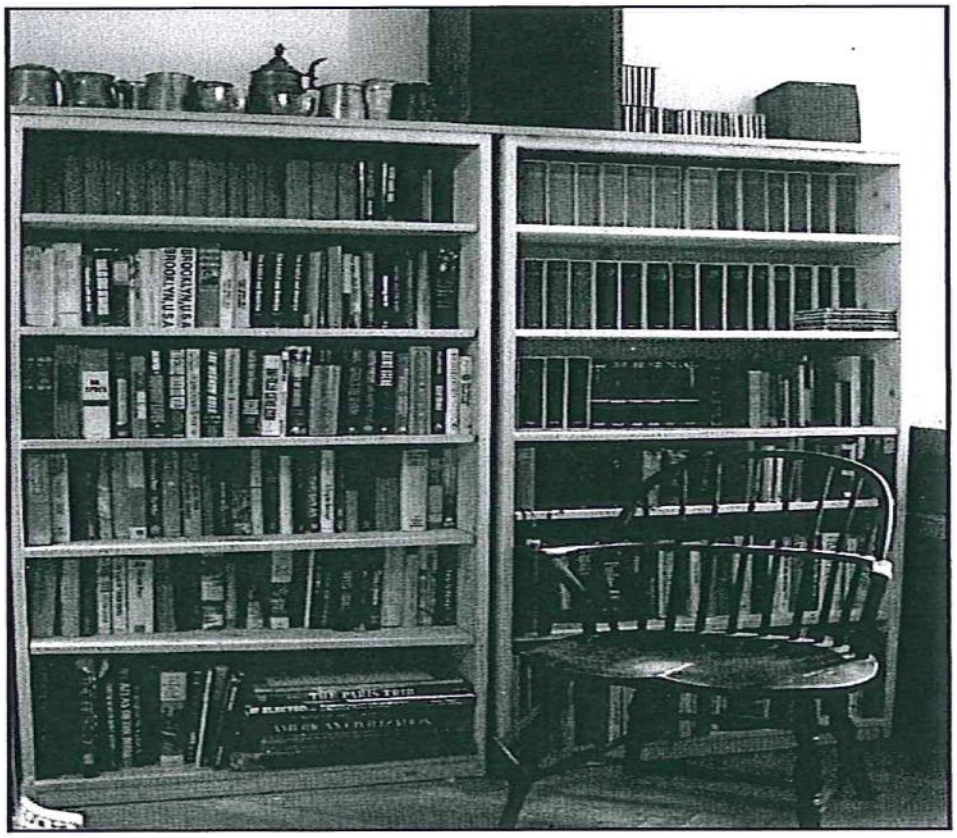
A woman who once loved him told me, when I was writing his biography, that "perhaps being American was Eric's greatest gift, or achievement." His other extraordinary gift was of writing beautifully—to communicate that understanding and love.

We need him now.

Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., author of *The American Journey of Eric Sevareid* (Steerforth Press), and contributor to *Commonweal*, the *National Catholic Reporter*, *America*, and other journals, is a professor in the Department of Communications.



How to Succeed at Saint Peter's College



Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.

VIII Ten Books to Read Before You Graduate

Please invite your teachers to come up with a better list. These are mine. I don't know much about science, economics, Eastern religions, pro sports, and a bunch of other things. But if you have read these, you will have bright ideas to think and talk about for the rest of your life. Ask the faculty too for lists of operas, symphonies, plays, films, paintings, and buildings to see.

The Book of Genesis. The first book of the Bible is, in mythical form, the contemporary story of the human race. The creation account is not so much a record of how the universe came to be as an attempt to explain how we, weak and selfish human beings, are responsible for the world which we have made. But the stories of the patriarchs — Abraham, Isaac, Joseph — recount God's refusal to leave us alone.

The Gospel of Luke. In this most beautifully written and "historical" gospel — in that Luke has a historian's sense of placing his subject in the context of world history — Luke gives us the unforgettable stories: The Prodigal Son, the rich man feasting with the poor man on his doorstep, the Good Samaritan, and Christ's appearance to the disciples at Emmaus. His main points: the leadership role of women, the universality of the church, prayer, and the obligation to share with the poor.

Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1850). David himself tells the story of his own life (a life that resembles Dickens'), from his mother's death, through a series of adventures and travels, including a mistaken and tragic marriage, to a happy ending, in which Dickens meticulously accounts for every character he has introduced. But we must read this book so that its most memorable characters can live with us for the rest of our lives, including: the handsome, charming school friend Steerforth, who seduces Little Emily and is drowned in a stormy sea and the smarmy, sycophantic — "I'm just an 'umble man, Master Copperfield" — Uriah Heep, who reminds many readers of Richard Nixon.

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Henry V*. Hamlet for the mystery, the ambiguity of the character and plot. Is the Ghost real or an agent from Hell? Does Hamlet feign madness or has the encounter with the Ghost deranged him? If he has been chosen to "set things right," how does he cause so many to die?

See *Henry V* as a study of leadership in the medieval, renaissance, and modern world. When a king or president takes a nation into war, is he not responsible for the arms and legs and heads which lie strewn across the battlefield? By all means, see the Laurence Olivier films of both plays.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* and *Civil Disobedience* (1854). On

July 4, 1845, a date deliberately chosen as an assertion of his own independence, the 28-year-old Henry, an unemployed Harvard graduate, moved into a cabin he had more-or-less built himself on the edge of Walden Pond, a short walk from Concord, Massachusetts.

For two years he lived alone, grew beans, and wrote in his journal about the changes in the weather, his visitors, the loons who dove into the depths of the pond, the foxes with hunting dogs on their trails, and the muskrat which he was tempted to seize and eat raw. He interrupted his isolation to travel to Maine and spent a night in jail for refusing to pay a tax as his protest against slavery and the Mexican War. *Walden*, which condenses his two years into a one-year narrative, does not argue that all of us must leave the world behind. But, like Henry, we must discover and face what is really going on in our lives.

He says: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

Feodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamozov* (1881). If *Walden* is the greatest American book, for many of us, *The Brothers Karamozov* is the greatest novel ever written and the one most worth rereading. As a young lawyer said to me recently, "Everything is there." On one level it is a murder mystery. The elder Karamozov, a cruel drunk, is beaten to death in his room, and each of his sons, with the exception of the youngest who is a monk, seems in some way responsible for his death. Dostoevsky suggests — as we sense in Oedipus and Hamlet — that every man secretly desires his father's death. On another level, Dostoevsky teaches the absolute demands of Christian love and forgiveness. "What is hell?" an old monk asks. "The suffering of being unable to love."

Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (1874–1876). If *Karamozov* is not "the greatest," *Anna Karenina* is, with its memorable opening line: "All happy families are alike. All unhappy families are unhappy in their own way." Anna is a beautiful, willful, upper-class Russian woman with a little son she loves and is married to a good, responsible, but dull man. She falls for a handsome young cavalry officer, Count Vronsky, and abandons her family for him, and the two wander Europe as social outcasts. Tolstoy creates a character so real that we imagine we know her, that she lives down the street, that we will drink a glass of wine with her and gaze at her as she tells her story. Whether her tragic end could have been avoided we will never know.

Albert Camus, *The Plague* (1948). Born in Algeria and educated at the Sorbonne, active in the French Resistance against the Nazi occupation during World War II, Camus personified the ideal of the intellectual engagé —

committed not just to his art but to social and political change. In *The Plague*, a pestilence (which may symbolize the Nazi occupation) engulfs the Algerian coastal city of Oran and its citizens are quarantined. Each character's response to the crisis reveals his or her deepest self. Doctor Bernard Rieux, whose wife is away in a sanatorium and whose mother will be stricken, is the moral center of the story.

A nonbeliever, he wrestles with the same theological problem which Ivan Karimozov bitterly states in that novel's Grand Inquisitor episode: How can a just God permit the painful death of a child?

A Jesuit preaches a sermon to a packed church in which he blames the people themselves, their sins, for the agonizing death that knocks on each one's door. Rieux, who cannot believe in God, still struggles to believe "that there are more things to admire in men than to despise."

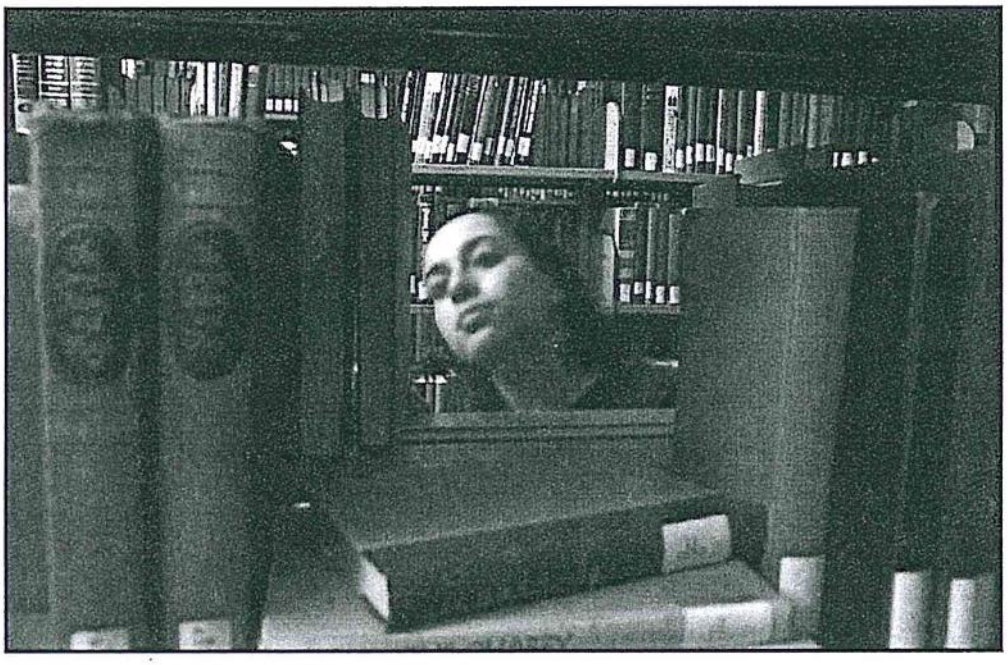
Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory* (1940). During the 1920s the Mexican revolutionary government attempted to impose a thoroughly secular culture on a traditionally Catholic country. Catholic institutions were suppressed and priests were banished or imprisoned and killed. One martyr was Fr. Miguel Pro, S.J., who called out "Viva Cristo Rey!" as the firing squad shot him down. Graham Greene, a British Catholic, traveled in Mexico in 1939 and created his fugitive priest, a plump little man with big eyes and little wit, with an addiction to brandy and the father of a little daughter conceived in one moment of weakness.

In many of Greene's characters near-sanctity and sin coexist in a painful but inevitable tension. Though his priest has every reason to hate his persecutors, he hates only the failures he sees in himself.

George Orwell, *Essays* (1940s). Every student has read or heard of *1984* and *Animal Farm*, but Orwell's most valuable legacy is his performance as the journalist-moralist. In "Why I Write," he gives four reasons: sheer egoism; esthetic enthusiasm, i.e., the desire to share an experience; historical impulse, to record facts for posterity; political purpose — the desire to push the world in a certain direction. Though he was a socialist, reporting on the Spanish Civil War in the 1936-37 taught him that both sides were guilty of war crimes and deception. He concludes: "Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism."

Today both liberals and conservatives claim Orwell as one of their own. In "Shooting the Elephant," based on his experiences as a young man in Burma, the dying elephant becomes an object of pathos and a symbol of the dying British Empire whose agent, Orwell, has pumped bullets into its head. In his essay on Dickens, the author of *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations* is above all a moralist — but one who fails to see the need for social, rather than merely individual, reform.

Orwell's "Politics and the English Language" illustrates the connection between the abuse of language and corrupt leadership. Long before Vietnam he pointed to the word pacification as meaning bombing defenseless villages, machine-gunning cattle and burning huts. His rules for good writing: 1. Never use a metaphor you've seen in print; 2. Never use a long word when a short one will do; 3. If you can cut a word, cut it; 4. Never use the passive voice when you can use the active; 5. Use English rather than foreign or scientific phrases or jargon; 6. Sometimes break these rules



The Theresa & Edward O'Toole Library

10 More Faculty Favorite Books

Plato, *The Republic* (3rd century, B.C.). Plato's masterpiece provides answers to man's compelling philosophical questions. Through a brilliantly written and lively dialogue, Plato invites us to consider the nature and construction of the ideal city, the meaning of "good," "just," and "right," the responsibilities of citizens and leaders, and many other fascinating and uniquely human concerns. He offers us views on the nature of knowledge, reality, and morality; and through these views we learn to draft an answer to one of the most fundamental philosophical questions: "What is the meaning of life?"

Lisa O'Neill, Philosophy, Honors Program.

Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* (430 B.C.). Most plays performed on Broadway last year — certainly ten years ago — have already been forgotten. Why then, is *Oedipus Rex*, written 2500 years ago, still widely read and performed? The question has no single answer, but it underscores the play's resonance for diverse cultures over two and one-half millenia. It has something, something powerful.

Aristotle used it to help define tragedy, a dramatic form that engages our deepest anxieties. We all fear death, the loss of loved ones, disability, disgrace. We wonder how we will behave if the worst happens. Many read tragedy to see how the most gifted and accomplished of people cope with the greatest catastrophes; tragedy encourages us to reflect upon our own place in the order of things. *Oedipus Rex* is a short, brutal play, also sensitive and profound. Oedipus, King of Thebes, learns in a single day that, although he did not know their identities at the time, he killed his father and married his mother. His discoveries of his own patricide and incest plunge him from the most honored to the most disgraced person in Thebes.

His dishonor exists on two levels — that of family and state, or the personal and the political. The man he killed was not only his father but the previous king; his wife is his mother as well as the queen, so his horrifying offenses have multiple significance. However, although his existence collapses irretrievably around him, he assumes a dignity and self-awareness that only those who have gone through hellfire can achieve.

The more you read the play, the more you discover in it. You can't wear it out; no one has in 2500 years.

William Luhr, English

Gregory the Great, *The Life of Saint Benedict* (c 593). The life of Saint Benedict has had an enormous influence in Western Christian Tradition. Although it is not named explicitly as an early influence on

Ignatius of Loyola, the life of Benedict surely was one of the saints' lives the Jesuit founder read at the time of his conversion, so popular was it in the medieval period; Ignatius' own *Autobiography* bears some striking resemblances to it. Saint Benedict, who first lived as a hermit in the early sixth century, is most famous for having developed a form of communal Christian religious life and a monastic rule to govern it. Benedict's monastic tradition endures today in the Benedictines and Trappists, but it was Gregory's *Life* that made Benedict famous — and consequently his Rule — not the other way around.

Pope (Saint) Gregory wrote the *Life* in 593 or 594 C.E., about fifty years after Benedict's death, to show that divine providence in the form of direct interventions on behalf of the faithful did not belong only to the biblical past, but were very much part of spiritual life in the present. The numerous miracles and examples of divinely-inspired knowledge attributed to Benedict in this short *Life* provided cases in point. An amusing and particularly formidable miracle worked against Benedict by his sister Scholastica is included here too.

Gregory intended the *Life of Benedict* to encourage Christians to persevere at a time when they were threatened without and within. The *Life* itself refers to troubles, mostly due to invasions of Italy by the Goths at the time, and its exhortations to faithfulness allude to the then-strong Western Arian heresy that vexed the Church. Against this desolate political and ecclesiastical background, Benedict's miracles, proof of God's care for the Christian faithful, dance through the pages of the *Life* like Apennine streams.

Susan L. Graham, Theology

Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy* (1300 -1321). If anyone has to read only one book from the Middle Ages, this Christian epic by Dante is the obvious choice. In it, medieval theology, philosophy, science, history, and the other branches of knowledge are skillfully blended into the protagonist's journey from the state of purposelessness and disorientation, through successive visions and interactions with inhabitants of hell, purgatory, and paradise, to a vision of the beauty of the divine creator whose love animates the universe itself.

In spite of the medieval context in which the poem is steeped, its theme of the soul's search for salvation and meaning is so universal, and the characters are so lifelike, that the poem is deeply relevant to the contemporary reader. Indeed professors teach this work to prison inmates, and it stirs them.

The work is long and demands a lot of the reader, but it would be a mistake to read only the first part, the Inferno. Dante has so integrated each part into the whole that one cannot fully understand any part before

reading the entire work. If the test of a great book is whether it engages a lively dialogue with other great books, Dante passes that test. We recognize the Bible, Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*, and the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine. And because Dante has inspired so many other artists, we cannot read many of the great Western classics without having read Dante.

Matthew Fung, Economics and Finance

Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain* (1924). When an Italian-born friend recommended that I read *The Magic Mountain*, I did and immediately resolved to read it again. The very opening words captivated me: "Hans Castorp was neither a genius nor a blockhead, and if we avoid calling him mediocre, it is for reasons that are not related to his intelligence or his modest demeanor, but rather for reasons having to do with his fate which in our estimation has a certain super-personal significance."

The international clientele gathered in the Swiss sanatorium of Davos to seek medical treatment for their pulmonary disorders creates a world of its own, a world where a myriad of ideas, personal convictions, and feelings are expressed and debated. While the novel centers on one young man, our average Hans Castorp, we can view it as an attempt to mirror the cultural and social scene of Europe on the verge of World War I.

Polar opposites, such as life vs. spirit, average person vs. artist, sickness vs. health, have interested Thomas Mann from the beginning and have found expression in such works as *Tonio Kroeger* (1903) and *Death in Venice* (1912). In *The Magic Mountain* our hero progresses (or descends) through various stages of illness and disillusionment until alone and lost in the snow he contemplates yielding to the temptation of freezing to death. But this is not his fate. A miraculous mental conversion takes place and our hero rejects the tempting hand of death in favor of life.

Instead of losing his life in the unreal world of the magic mountain, he picks himself up, joins the army and makes common cause with the reality at hand, i.e. fighting on the home front in World War I.

This is in no way a political or historical novel; Mann takes no position for or against the Great War. While one can read different meanings into the ending, I like to see Castorp's decision as a willingness to serve one's fellow man, and for him his fellow man is his country.

Walter Baber, Fine Arts

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (1952). Martin Luther King presented us with a dream for a better future. A decade earlier Ralph Ellison shared his semi-autobiographical nightmare of a terrifying reality. Now we are in the 21st century and both dreams remain with us.

Ralph Ellison's novel begins with his naive, and gifted, character trying to play the role of a Black Man in a White Man's world in the South. Betrayed, he follows the advice of his dying grandfather and flees to New York City. Still naive, he attempts to play a different Black Man's role, this time in the White Man's world in the supposedly more open North. Again he is betrayed. With an awakening consciousness, he immerses himself in the Communist Party, with its promises of an equal role in the struggle for justice. Again he is betrayed. He flees, literally and figuratively, underground. It is from this final vantage point, now with a sophisticated consciousness, that he tells his story.

Ellison's story is a journey that shares rage, horror, racism (southern and northern, internal and external), exploitation, and ultimately and inexplicably, a hesitant hope. His nightmare is also a musical with raw jazz effectively blaring from the pages as in Louis Armstrong's "What Did I Do to Be So Black and Blue?" The lines of reality in the novel are ambiguous but always visible. It is sometimes advantageous to be unseen, although it is most wearing on the nerves. Indeed Ellison's character often doubts that he really exists, because he is living in a world which forces him to wonder whether you aren't simply a phantom of other people's minds.

Yet the journey ends with something which might be construed as optimism. After being rejected by many worlds and betrayed by more, Ellison's character exits his role as an observer forced underground. This time, he reasons, to emerge from his terrible dream, not naively, no less invisible, but because there is a possibility that even an invisible man has a socially responsible role to play. This is not the overt optimism found in Martin Luther King's famous speech, but a measured commitment from a novel, if understood, which might move us closer to King's mountaintop.

David Surrey, Urban Studies

Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (1967). Students at Saint Peter's College have the opportunity to study not only the Judeo-Christian religions of the West, but also to become knowledgeable of and even to penetrate in depth the ancient religious traditions of the East. Gandhi said that all religions are true, and the Catholic Church teaches that truth is present in the sincere searching of those who could have never known Christ.

The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, by the late Philip Yampolsky of Columbia University, is the definitive translation of the Tun-huang manuscript, the earliest extant version of the work, which furnishes the student with a detailed historical introduction and provides the context essential to the understanding of Hui Neng, the Sixth Chinese Patriarch of Zen

Buddhism. Hui Neng, along with Bodhidharma, its founder, set Zen Buddhism on the course it has followed from the Tang Dynasty to the present day.

The Platform of the Sixth Patriarch is only one of the many foundational books on Buddhism (and Hinduism) in the College Library. These books together with the opportunity for Zen practice in the Interfaith Zen Community located at the College offer the student a rare opportunity to enrich her faith. The student can integrate her Christian faith with the themes of this book: suffering, impermanence, emptiness, mind, non-duality, non-abiding, and finally the seeing of one's own nature.

Robert Kennedy, S.J., Theology

Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (1981). Stephen Jay Gould's *The Mismeasure of Man* is a classic illustration of how science can be misused, misinterpreted and abused to further a particular agenda. Gould beautifully describes how, through the course of history, some scientists have corrupted their data to support their preconceived notions of race and ethnic supremacy.

Interestingly, Gould does not speculate as to whether this corruption may be conscious or unconscious, but he leaves it to the reader to decide for oneself. Gould begins with the actual measuring of heads and includes the development of classic IQ tests and discusses how these measures have been used to "scientifically" support social distinctions among ethnic groups. Then he returns to the data to make these distinctions and show how the problems exist with either the samples used or their analyses.

I suggest you read it for three reasons: First, it illustrates how science is an inductive process dependent upon the interpretation of the researchers. Second, it elegantly examines the pitfalls inherent in measuring constructs like intelligence. Finally, the reader is required to think about the moral ramifications of accepting "science" at face value. Thus, Gould's book is a great stepping stone to building critical thinking skills.

Maryellen Hamilton, Psychology

Vikram Seth, *A Suitable Boy* (1993). The curious title testifies to the survival of a social usage that defies the modernization of the 20th century and still necessitates a rubric in any Indian newspaper worth its salt: the arranged marriage advertisements.

Set in India in the early '50s, a few years after independence, the action in this novel, which is longer than Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, takes place in the course of 12 months. And like the Russian novel, it requires inclusion of an appendix of the family trees of the four fictional families

— three Hindu and one Muslim — who make up the main characters of the year's events.

This narrative paints a world between two covers, and though long, it is, compared to the writings of India's premier novelist of the late 20th century, Salman Rushdie, an "easy read."

Besides the personal interactions in the story, Seth depicts the national challenges to post-independence India: for instance, the rural oppression of the lower castes by their landlords and Communal (religious) conflicts even after partition. In one shocking episode two religious processions, one Hindu and one Muslim, by mischance cross paths, and the resulting riot sets a section of the city in flames.

Seth was educated in India, England, China, and the United States as an economist. He devoted six years to research and writing this novel, his first. I read it during a three-and-a half month stay in India shortly after its publication and found Seth's book both a road map and a summary of the world that the great subcontinent is.

John Wrynn, S.J., History

Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible* (1998). When the world is breaking apart, what remains? One answer to this question is found in Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible*, a masterpiece of post-colonial literature. The novel begins in Bethlehem, Georgia, where Nathan Price, an evangelical Christian minister, readies his family for missionary work in the Belgian Congo. Arriving in Africa in 1959, the family enters unknowingly into a milieu that is on the brink of a political, religious and cultural explosion.

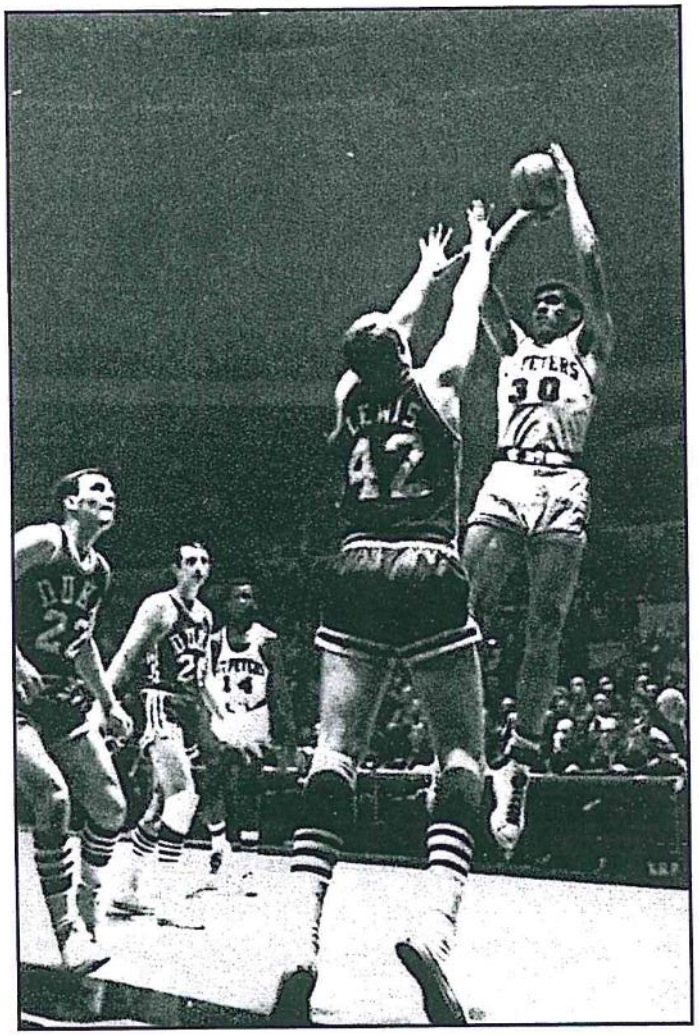
Armed with Betty Crocker instant cake mix and the Bible, the Price family — or its women, at least — are quick to learn that these safeguards will not protect them in environs that are at once bewildering, unmanageable, and indifferent to the saving grace that they have come to offer.

It is Nathan Price, however, who refuses to learn that the world has decentered itself and that he remains no longer at its center. When his Kilanga village congregation decides to vote "Jesus Christ" out of the office of personal God, the end is near for the tragically blind yet self-righteous Price. The end is certainly at hand, however, for his youngest daughter, who succumbs to the poison of a snake's bite.

Solely its female characters narrate Kingsolver's novel. Their stories serve as an interpretive lens through which the political events that are to transform the Congo are seen and through which their personal lives are revealed. It is through these individual stories that Kingsolver puts forth what is central to the novel itself: an awakened consciousness and moral responsibility.

To navigate this shifting terrain is often difficult. Accordingly, none of the characters holds the same point of view. Of course, it is much easier to look the other way. As Adah Price laments: "Where is the easy land of ice-cream cones and new Keds and We Like Ike, the country where I thought I knew the rules? Where is the place I can go home to?"

Anna Brown, Political Science



Saint Peter's Elnardo Webster shoots over Mike Lewis in Peacocks' win over Duke in 1968 NIT at Madison Square Garden.

One Last Word

Is there one word which can sum up the purpose of this little book? Yes. But it's not a popular word. Some associate it with boredom and pain. But there's no escape.

It's work. **Study**.

Study can be thrilling — digging for an answer to an intellectual challenge in history, literature, or science. But every human act that calls for excellence demands sacrifice.

We lift weights to build our bodies. We run 40 miles a week to train for a marathon. To master literature, the arts, and sciences, we study.

Study can also be a hard and lonely business to be endured when it cannot be enjoyed. But it must be done.

To motivate ourselves, look ahead. Where will we be 20 years from now? How much will we want to know to best serve the people who depend on us for expert advice?

How much do we love those who will make us the focus of their hopes?

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*Some of the information in his pamphlet comes from: an article I wrote for Fordham's magazine, *Point* (November 1978); my "Tough Choices on Campus," *Commonweal* (28 March, 1986); William Bangert, S.J., *History of the Society of Jesus*; John O'Malley, S.J., *The First Jesuits*; Robert Ellsberg, *All Saints*; Richard J. Light, *Making the Most of College*; Peter McDonough and Eugene Bianchi, *Passionate Uncertainty*; Richard J. Cronin, S.J., *The Closing and Reopening of Saint Peter's College 1918–1930*; and my own *Dante to Dead Man Walking*, and *Fordham: A History and Memoir.*

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Saving the Humanities

The liberal arts under fire

BY RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

Let us start with a quick quiz: 1. Which literary character falls "down the rabbit hole"? 2. When seven paintings were stolen recently from a Rotterdam museum, taken to Romania and possibly burned, did you care? 3. Not long ago a news story on National Public Radio announced that a long-lost symphony by Beethoven, his 10th, had been discovered. On what day of the year did that news break?

In one sense these questions are "trivia," though the answers might make one a millionaire on a television game show. Yet they come to mind in response to "The Heart of the Matter," not the Graham Greene novel, but a recent report from the Commission on the Humanities & Social Sciences for the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. The report, requested by Congress, suggests that certain qualities of mind that are the fruit of a liberal education and on which a democratic society may rise or fall—inquisitiveness, perceptiveness and the ability to put a new idea to use—are slipping away. Acquiring these qualities demands wide reading and writing and speaking well. Historically, Jesuit education has called these qualities *eloquentia perfecta*, but for how much longer can it make the claim to be fostering this?

In 1941, with the participation of the United States in World War II on the horizon, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent a note to Prime Minister Winston Churchill to boost his spirits. Roosevelt simply said, "I think this verse applies to your people as it does to us." It was from Longfellow's poem, "The Building of the Ship": "Thou, too, sail on, Oh Ship of State!/ Sail on, Oh Union, strong and great!/ Humanity with all its fears,/ With all the hopes of future years,/ Is hanging breathless on thy fate!" Churchill

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J., *literary editor of* ***America****, has been a faculty member and dean at several Jesuit colleges and was editor of the Jesuit higher education magazine Conversations.*

responded by reading the poem on the radio to the British people, and he sent Roosevelt a favorite poem of his own. In a sense this was the humanities in action. Two great orators, world leaders, reached into the common culture of their two countries for words that provided courage for the ongoing crisis.

Negative Report Card

The purpose of the recent report is both pragmatic and spiritual. Nationwide, only 7.6 percent of all bachelor's degrees were granted in the humanities in 2010. At Harvard, considered a leader in the liberal arts, in 2012 only 20 percent of its undergraduates had a major in the humanities, a significant drop from 36 percent in 1954. Universities more and more advertise themselves as institutions that "train" students for the job market, and they water down the liberal arts core to make room for so-called real-world courses—as if ethics, history and poetry deal with an imaginary dreamland. But a democracy can survive only if citizens base their political decisions not just on television attack ads and tabloid headlines but on a background of history, civics and social studies. The report rightly asks, "How do we understand and manage change if we have no notion of the past?" The spiritual gift of the liberal arts—particularly philosophy, theology, biography, history, literature, art and music—is the ability to lift us out of ourselves and introduce us to other lives, places, times and experiences, including the joy, even ecstasy, of Mozart and Michelangelo. In short, the liberal arts help make us human beings.

The spiritual gift of the liberal arts is the ability to lift us out of ourselves and introduce us to other lives, places and experiences.

It helps to see this report—among the commission's 54 members were 10 university presidents, another eight faculty from different departments, four artists, one former Supreme Court justice and one journalist, plus a collection of administrators—in context. Its predecessor was "A Nation at Risk" (1983), a study of secondary education, which it found to be sorely lacking. Some 23 million American adults and 13 percent of 17-year-olds were deemed functionally illiterate. High school graduates had not learned to write effective papers or discuss ideas intelligently. It concluded: "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

The new report is concerned that fewer than 30 percent of public high school students are taught by a history teacher with a degree and certification in history, and a recent study of education schools by the National Council on Teacher Quality characterizes these schools as "an industry of mediocrity." Today forces for education reform include the American Federation of Teachers, which is determined to improve teacher education, and the national drive to implant a common core curriculum, raising the standards of public high schools.

As expected, a debate has boiled over into The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and various websites over whether the humanities are in a full or half crisis. In a bizarre essay in The Wall Street Journal (7/12), Lee Siegel argues that because his own college literature teachers were so bad, literature should not be taught to anyone. "It is too sacred to be taught," he explains. "It needs only to be read." My experience, on the other hand—after teaching literature for over 40 years and, as editor of the Jesuit higher education magazine Conversations, talking with students and faculty in all 28 Jesuit colleges and universities—is that students are starving intellectually, whether they acknowledge it or not. Few can talk easily about a great book they have read. Mark Edmundson writes in The Chronicle (8/2) that literature is "character forming" and "soul making"—a way of life. Catholic and Jesuit universities, it seems to me, have always taught this. How well we have succeeded is another question.

Practical Steps

Jesuit schools, especially when revising the core curriculum, must remember their special responsibility to promote humanities education. Students, particularly the new generation of students who previously would not have aspired to college, are often pressed by parents overwhelmed by the astronomical rise in costs (an average of $40,000 a year tuition, plus room and board, at private colleges) to major in health professions, business management or criminal justice because they foresee quicker job opportunities that will help pay off their student loans. But liberal arts courses will provide the skills most likely to move them up the ladder. Schools should educate parents about the fact that many employers are looking for these human skills.

The new report proposes a number of important steps: a "seamless learning continuum" between high schools and colleges that will raise the competence of secondary school teachers; development of a "culture corps" of qualified adult volunteers to support community reading groups, lectures, trips to theaters, museums and historic sites; global perspective and second language requirements in all curricula; and a significant international experience for every undergraduate, to increase the mere 2 percent who study abroad now. The

report quotes former Senator J. William Fulbright, himself a Rhodes scholar and creator of the fellowship program that bears his name: "The essence of intercultural education is the acquisition of empathy—the ability to see the world as others see it, and to allow for the possibility that others may see something we have failed to see or may see it more accurately."

One partly successful program put in place a few years ago in about 90 percent of colleges with enrollments of 5,000 students or less is the freshman humanities seminar, designed to introduce the new student to a serious study of a humanities topic and to teach study habits, critical reading, thinking and writing and discussion skills. When I taught a seminar like this, an additional goal was to engage students in the Jesuit identity of the school. In an evaluation of the program at the University of Richmond, The Chronicle (8/2) enumerated some problems. Not all faculty members are able and willing to facilitate good discussion, listen well, get the students to talk, assign more than a few books each semester or assign and teach writing related to the readings and return the papers promptly.

Some practical techniques have proven successful: assign a short written essay for each class so the student author will be primed to talk, seat the students in a tightly closed circle and have them warm up by talking with the student in the next seat, and avoid asking questions when the teacher already knows the answer. For a final paper, each student can read and critique the other students' work and discuss each one together for the final exam. Two national norms are well-kept secrets: students should study two hours out of class for every one hour in class (usually 30 hours of study a week), and in writing classes students should write at least 20 pages each semester. Very few teachers, however, approach these goals.

Emphasis on Reading

If one magic word runs through the commentaries on the report, it is *reading*. In 2004 the National Endowment for the Arts published its report "Reading at Risk," which concluded that fewer than half of adults in the United States read literature. The Endowment launched a program called The Big Read—small reading groups across the country to read and discuss American classics. A young writer once asked Ernest Hemingway which writers he should read. Hemingway replied, "He should have read everything so he knows what he has to beat." Pressed, he named about 30 books, including *War and Peace, Anna Karenina, Madame Bovary, The Brothers Karamazov, The Dubliners, Ulysses, The Turn of the Screw, Huckleberry Finn* and everything by Ivan Turgenev. How many graduates of a Jesuit university have read more than one or two of these?

At four of the five Jesuit colleges where I taught, we published pamphlets, essays and annotated book lists of classics we hoped the students would read. The lists, written by 140

faculty members, total 270 suggestions. Here are 10 titles, mentioned repeatedly in the listings, to keep us busy: the Bible, especially Genesis, Luke, Mark and Acts; *The Divine Comedy*, "Hamlet" or sonnets by Shakespeare; *The Brothers Karamazov; Walden; Pride and Prejudice; The Plague;* George Orwell's *Essays;* James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man;* and Karl Rahner's *Foundations of Faith.* Basic stuff. But how many of our students graduate having read more than James Joyce and Albert Camus?

The quiz questions at the start of this essay are not there to play "Gotcha!" They simply remind us that an infinite number of cultural allusions are in the air enriching our speech and goading our understanding. Those who knew that it was Lewis Carroll's Alice who fell down the rabbit hole had a better grasp of Nathaniel Rich's review of Amanda Knox's *Waiting to Be Heard: A Memoir* about the author's trial for murder in Italy. The review begins by applying Carroll's image of Alice to this contemporary woman, an accused murderer facing another trial.

The second question causes us to ask ourselves if we are as devoted to modernist paintings as the observer who described the theft as "a crime against humanity." Is it? The point of the humanities is that all great art is a powerful expression of our common humanity. As for the discovery of Beethoven's lost 10th Symphony? That story was broadcast, appropriately, on April Fools' Day.

Art helps to put our world into context. Today we look to the many nations of the Middle East that are in turmoil, and we struggle for words that will bring sense and order to the debacle. The war correspondent Robert Fisk turned to poetry in The Independent (7/21): "Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!.../ Round the decay/ Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare/ the lone and level sands stretch far away." If we have a good humanities education, we will surely not only know that it was Shelley who wrote these line; we might also know our modern struggles better because of him. A