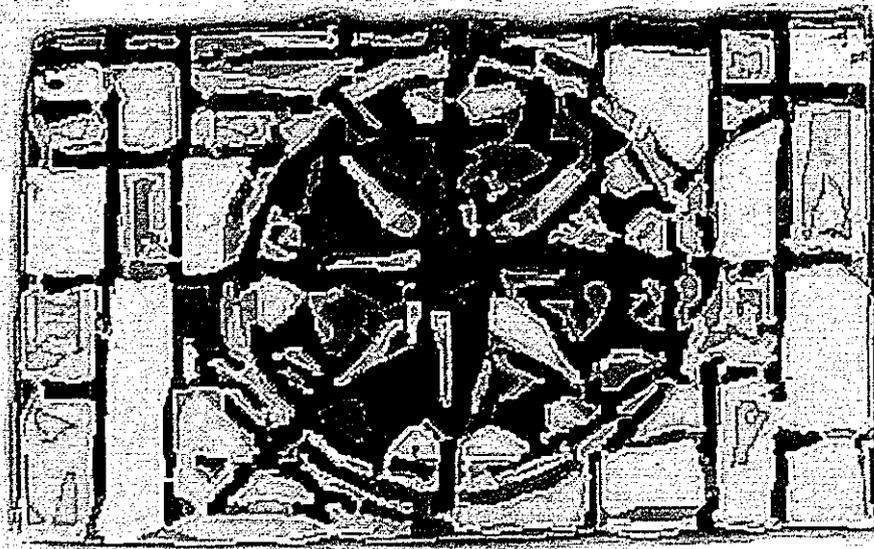
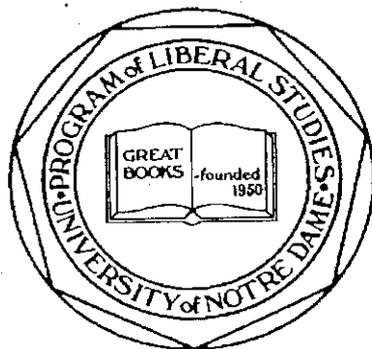


# Programma



The Program of Liberal Studies  
University of Notre Dame



# PROGRAMMA

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A Newsletter for Graduates of the Program of Liberal Studies  
The University of Notre Dame  
Volume XVI, No. 1      March 1998

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## A VIEW FROM 215

The view from 215 in the middle of February is not a snowy one this year. "El Niño" seems to have brought the mild South Bend winter that had been forecasted. I hope that you like *Programma's* "new look," thanks to Professor Julia Marvin, our new editor, and Ave Maria Press, our new publisher. I want to thank Professor Henry Weinfield for editing and Ms. Debbie Kabzinski for publishing and mailing past issues of *Programma*. Debbie will work with Ave Marie Press preparing the layout for *Programma*.

Part of the "new look" is getting *Programma* to you earlier in the school year. We believe that this will be a better way of getting you information about the alumni reunion and summer school program. Thanks to some very valuable input from alumni/ae, we are planning a one-week "summer experience" for interested alumni/ae and their families. The experience will include Great Book Seminars, which will revisit some texts perennially read in the Program and a couple of the more recent additions to our list. The experience will also include a choice of one-week courses in a variety of top-

ics from ancient to modern. Faculty have expressed interest in teaching a variety of courses (e.g., courses on Augustine, Dante, Bonaventure, the operas of Mozart, Joyce, eighteenth-century German philosophy, Milton and Wordsworth, Cardinal Newman, Teilhard de Chardin, Karl Rahner, and moral education). We would be very happy to hear from you if any or all of these sound inviting; please feel free to suggest other authors and texts you might be interested in studying for a week in the summer. We hope to include inexpensive housing in the residence halls and family activities, such as white water rafting, a Silverhawks baseball game, and a workshop on Great Book Seminars for children as part of the package seminars, along with opportunities for discussions with all of the faculty in residence during the summer. Unfortunately we were not able to make the necessary arrangements in time for this year's summer session, but everything should be in place for 1999. Please drop us a line if you are interested. You can send comments and suggestions to Steve Fallon (either by mail to the department or by e-mail to

Fallon.1@nd.edu).

Last June we had an impressive turnout of alumni for our reception in the foyer of O'Shaughnessy. I can't tell you how much all of us on the faculty enjoy seeing you and catching up on your family and work lives. In our alumni seminar, which as usual filled Room 214 to capacity, we had a lively discussion of Flannery O'Connor's "Everything that Rises Must Converge." We have had a number of spirited faculty seminars on Flannery O'Connor's short stories, and I recommend them to you. Some of our alumni may remember when Flannery O'Connor lectured at Notre Dame not that long ago.

This summer we also learned that Professor Michael Waldstein decided to resign his position in the Program. Professor Waldstein heads a newly established theology institute in Gaming, Austria. We are sorry to see him leave and we wish him and his family the very best.

The class of 1997 took its place among the ranks of our distinguished alumni. Jeff Speaks was chosen by the seniors and faculty for the Willis Nutting Award, given to the senior who has contributed the most to the education of his or her peers and professors in the program. He also received the Bird Award for his Senior Essay, "Wittgenstein and the Art of Philosophy," written under the direction of Professor Cornelius O'Boyle. The graduates of the class of 1997, like their predecessors, have gone into a variety of graduate programs, businesses, volunteer organizations, and professional activities. I am particularly proud of the fact that over 30% of this class chose to do a year of volunteer service in the United States, Africa, or

South America. The Program continues to lead the university in the percentage of students and graduates involved in service programs.

As I informed you last spring, Professor Fred Crosson, who holds the Cavanaugh Chair and is a former Dean of the College of Arts and Letters, will retire this year. He will, however, continue to teach for the Program as an Emeritus Professor. We will inform you soon about our plans for thanking him. He was honored this fall with the College of Arts and Letters Sheedy Award for excellent teaching. He has not only been an outstanding teacher in the Program but has for many years served as a teaching mentor to me and to many faculty and graduate students. I urge all of you to read his thoughtful and inspiring Sheedy Award speech as well as his "Opening Charge."

I would like to thank all of you for your faithful support. We continue to receive many generous gifts and words of encouragement. We are blessed with excellent students, faculty, and alumni. Please visit us in person or through our Web site.

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 each year by the  
 Program of Liberal Studies for its graduates.

Faculty Editor  
 Julia Marvin

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## FOCUS ON NEW FACULTY

We are delighted to report that **Edmund Goehring** and **Julia Marvin** have joined the ranks of the Program's faculty. Ed, who will be teaching the Fine Arts tutorial, was awarded a doctorate in musicology from Columbia University in 1993; Julia, who will be teaching the Literature tutorials, received her Ph.D. in English from Princeton in 1997. Before coming to Notre Dame, Ed had taught at the University of Georgia and the Oberlin Conservatory, and Julia at Princeton and Southern Illinois University; so while both are young, vibrant, and full of energy, they are also experienced educators.

Ed Goehring's dissertation at Columbia was entitled "The Comic Vision of *Così fan tutte*," and he is now writing a book on Mozart that goes beyond the dissertation. Ed is a man of many parts. His double undergraduate degree at Oberlin was in religion and piano performance; he is a pianist as well as a musicologist; and in addition, he is an avid tennis and basketball player. (I can testify to his tennis prowess because he has been walloping me on the courts lately; but since my basketball days are over, at least I don't have to watch out for his flying elbows.)

Julia Marvin doesn't play tennis or basketball, at least to my knowledge; but in addition to being a specialist in medieval literature, with a particular interest in the historiography of the period, she is an accomplished choral singer who, in the few months she has been at Notre

Dame, has already become a member of the South Bend Chamber Singers. Her dissertation at Princeton was entitled "The Prose *Brut* Chronicle and the Lessons of Vernacular History" (a title, she wants it noted, that has the virtue of doing without the usual academic colon and subtitle—as does the title of Ed's, for that matter). Julia's dissertation, which she has now begun to turn into a book, involves a reconsideration of late-medieval understandings of King Arthur.

In my separate interviews with them, Ed and Julia both expressed delight with the Program, with its integrated curriculum, and with the sense of community it fosters. Julia mentioned that her first impressions—of a community of students who care about learning for learning's sake and of a faculty who are dedicated to teaching—have been richly confirmed. Ed remarked that he was impressed with the calibre of the students and their range of intellectual curiosity.

One word more. Julia is an experienced editor (she worked for a time at Princeton University Press); and so it is without trepidation that I pass along the torch, or the mantle (I'm looking for the right metaphor), of the editorship of *Programma* to her. (It's been fun, guys, but now it's time to move on.)

—Henry Weinfield

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

by

Julia Marvin

Since Henry Weinfield has already introduced me (in the third person) in this issue, I'll proceed straight to the matters at hand: this issue of *Programma*, and a proposition for you.

I hope this issue will give you the feeling of an afternoon's visit to O'Shaughnessy. You'll have the opportunity to consider such typically modest PLS questions as the value of death to life, the nature of education and community, and why we understand the universe as we do, and you'll get a chance to catch up on the comings and goings of faculty and friends. You'll also find information about upcoming PLS activities for which you can return to campus in body as well as spirit. I'm particularly pleased to be able to include several contributions from Frederick Crosson in this, the year of his retirement (although his emeritus status will not stop me from asking him for more in the future).

My editorial yoke is easy because of the hard work of our student clerical workers Colleen Wamser Hutt and Jaime Saul and especially that of Debbie Kabzinski, who is the desktop publisher of *Programma*. She designs it from start to finish, keeps track of the material and its progress, and generally fights chaos here as elsewhere in the Program, and she deserves all our thanks.

Now for the proposition, for the alumni readers of *Programma*.

This is my first year in the Program. In the fall I taught sophomores who were trying to figure out *how* they were going to do their PLS major. Now I'm teaching seniors who are trying to figure out *what* they are going to do with their PLS major.

You are out in the world, doing any number of varied, fulfilling, and even remunerative things that it would do the Program's students a world of good to know about as they make their choices. What I propose is the creation of a PLS alumni career bank, a file of letters from any of you who would be willing to be contacted by a PLS student to talk about your profession or service activities.

If you are interested, please write a one-page letter to the Program explaining what you do, how to reach you, and what kind of contact you would like to have with current PLSers. Please be sure to include your e-mail address, which can be made confidential if you prefer. For example, you might be willing to

- respond to a letter or e-mail
- talk on the phone
- have a hometown student visit your job for a day during a break
- participate in an on-campus career discussion sponsored by PLS (no plans yet exist, but I'd like to know if there's enough interest to make it happen)

I plan to assemble these letters and make them available to PLS students *with the strict* understanding that their contents are private and that what they can hope from you is discussion of jobs, not jobs themselves! If you have any ideas or suggestions about this project, please contact me. This year it's an experiment, and in the next issue of *Programma* I'll let you know what has transpired.

If all goes well, the career bank may be not

only a way for you to help out the bewildered student you may have been three, or thirteen, or thirty-three years ago, but also an opportunity for you to take a more active role in the community of which you are forever a vital part. It's yet another way of returning to O'Shaughnessy and helping the Program—and the students who are the Program—to thrive.

Once again, I hope that you'll enjoy this issue of *Programma*, and I wish you all the best until I'm in touch again.

Please address your letters to

*Programma* Career Bank  
Program of Liberal Studies  
215 O'Shaughnessy Hall  
University of Notre Dame  
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556

e-mail [al.pls.1@nd.edu](mailto:al.pls.1@nd.edu)

## FACULTY NEWS

**Michael Crowe**, in August of 1997, mailed off the final manuscript for a volume entitled *Calendar of the Correspondence of Sir John Herschel, 1792-1871*, which will be published by Cambridge University Press. Crowe is editor of this 828-page volume; David R. Dick of the University of Winnipeg and James J. Kevin of Eastern Tennessee State University are the associate editors. Among the fourteen other contributors listed opposite the title page of this book are the following PLS graduates: Gina M. Bacigalupi, Diana H. Barnes, Anne-Marie Clavelli, Ryan D. Dye, Rebecca L. Lubas, Susan P. Petti, and Jameson M. Wetmore. The volume contains, along with other materials, summaries of 14,815 letters to and from John Herschel.

**Walter Nicgorski** extends his greetings to all friends and former students; he is enjoying immensely a return to directing senior seminars after more than ten years at other points in the PLS curriculum. He continues his work as editor of *The Review of Politics*. Recently, at the American Political Science Convention, he presented a paper on St. Augustine's reading of Cicero; during July he lectured on "The Classical-Modern Encounter in Political Philosophy" in the Phoenix Institute at Notre Dame. He is

at present completing an essay on the relationship of Leo Strauss and Allan Bloom and will be at Yale the last days of February for a conference on Ethical Foundations.

**Katherine Tillman** says she has been plenty busy with "the three C's": classroom, computer and committees. From March through August, she led "Tocqueville Seminars" in town for a local group of Women in Philanthropy, sponsored by the education division of the Lilly Endowment and the St. Joseph County Community Foundation. She gave papers—on Newman, of course—in California and Indiana, wrote review essays on four recently published books on Newman, and is looking forward to the reprinting by Notre Dame Press, in the next month or two, of Newman's *Fifteen Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford, 1826-1843*, on the relation of faith and reason, with a fifty-page introduction by "hers truly." It will be published as part of the continuing "Notre Dame Series in the Great Books" established by GP/PLS alumni/ae in the early 1980s. What also contributes to her happiness these days is the recent inauguration of her close friend of forty years, Dr. Marilou Denbo Eldred, as the first lay woman president of St. Mary's College.

## OPENING CHARGE 1997-98

### A Journey to the Underworld

by

Frederick Crosson

September 2, 1997

We're going on a long journey, this year, visiting and talking with people who lived long ago and far away, to find out how they looked at life and what they thought was important and worth doing, and to become aware of perspectives different from our conventional wisdom in modern America. Visiting people who lived long ago and far away can enlarge the horizons within which we think and live, can give us broader vistas, can induce us to reflect—can help make us thoughtful citizens and thoughtful human beings.

We are going to visit the underworld to talk to people who are dead and reflect on what some of them said about life—and about death. I know that's taking you all the way to the end of the horizon, to the end of your life—but hey, that's a journey you're already embarked on, so you might as well think a little bit about where it's going.

\* \* \* \*

About death, I've got some bad news and some good news. . . . The bad news is, you're all living under a death sentence. The question is, what can be good news after that? As Woody Allen said, "It's not that I'm afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens."

Heavy stuff; yet it concerns the closest and most personal dimension of our lives. It's not something we are attracted to think much about; generally we do it (if we think about it at all) only in the context of religious ritual, at the wakes and funerals of friends and loved ones. Note that the Bible doesn't present death as integral to life, but as an unexpected penalty for disobedience.

But I want to bracket the religious context for the most part, and think about the

meaning of the fact that death seems to be the natural, destined end for each of us. I want to ask about what that means for human life, about what we today seem to think about it. Perhaps it has no meaning for life; perhaps it is simply meaningless, perhaps it simply makes nonsense of all our striving, all our goals, all our love—outside a religious context. Many people today would say that, many more fear it is so.

So in one sense, I'm going to take you far away from our everyday preoccupations, yours and mine too—far away not only because it's not exactly an everyday topic of conversation when we have friends over, but because thinking about death, my death, may seem not only unattractive but a little morbid. Here's a quote from the author's preface to a recent book titled *Confronting Death*:

When I called the American Cancer Society to request permission to include some of their materials in this book, their representative responded: "Absolutely not. In no way do we want to be associated with a book on death. We want to emphasize the positive aspects of cancer only."

The death of friends and relatives cuts across our paths, so to speak, but our own death, insofar as it is brought to mind by such events, isn't something we can do anything at all about evading. It lies down the road somewhere, and though I may try to reduce its proximity by doing all sorts of things for my health, there is nothing I can do to ensure that I will not encounter it tomorrow. We are born old enough to die.

## I

My aim is to think about death in relation to life, but it is not the aspect of its uncertainty which I want to focus on. It is not the uncertainty of the time of its coming but rather the fact of mortality as such that I want to reflect on. Why? Because while it is a fact that none of us doubts, the oddity is that we have found it hard to accept, indeed have sought in many and diverse ways to overcome it. Death has from the earliest ages of humankind been regularly envisaged as a limitation on life, something alien to life, which we should try to defer as long as possible, or even hope to escape.

Indeed human beings have generally avoided thinking of death as simply the end. The Neanderthals, who flourished in Europe 50,000 years ago, carefully buried their dead and placed stone tools in the graves. The pharaohs of Egypt even sought to preserve their physical individuality through embalming, while equipping their tombs with the food and supplies needed for the journey to another world. Eastern religions—Hinduism and Buddhism notably—have sought immortality through release from the cycle of reincarnation by the achievement of unity with the Absolute, the union of our innermost soul with abiding divinity.

Such religious pursuit of a life beyond life has not been the only quest to live beyond death. The oldest epic narrative in the world, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* (which dates back some 1500 years before Homer's poems) is the story of the king of a city in Mesopotamia. At first, like a thoughtless child, he rejoices in his youthful strength and power and gives no thought to death. Then from his palace wall he sees (remarkably like the experience of the Buddha) dead bodies floating down the Euphrates river, and he embarks on a series of adventures with his friend and companion Enkidu to win everlasting fame. But Enkidu is killed, and the quest for fame loses its sufficiency for him. He goes on a long journey to seek the immortality which is reserved to the gods. (Note already the conceiving of the possibility of unending life.) He learns of an old man, Utnapishtim, who has survived a flood which covered the earth, and who has been given immortality as a gift from the gods. But the old man has no secret to share with Gilgamesh: his receiving immortality was a gratuitous gift, not something he won, and

Gilgamesh returns home to die, accepting or at least resigned to the human lot.

Greek philosophers reflected long and deeply about the transience of human life in an eternal universe, and Aristotle in his treatise on the animating principle of organisms (*De Anima*) says that immortal longings are built into living things (415b), and he suggests perspectives under which human life can be seen as seeking to fulfill those longings.

First, there is a *kind* of immortality that we can have, adumbrated in the story of the Garden of Eden, and which is a prominent element of the early Jewish Scriptures, namely living on in our children and our children's children. To grow old without any children was the great sorrow of Abraham and Sarah, a sorrow alleviated by the promise of Isaac and of descendants numerous as the sands of the sea and the stars of the sky. Even if we consider it simply on the biological level, individual life points beyond itself. The so-called instinct for self-preservation often takes second place, even among animals, to the goal of procreation, to the preservation of the species. Among human beings, this attachment to one's progeny acquires a special quality and a poignancy because of the love that binds us into a common, a shared life.

A second kind of immortality became available with the emergence of the city-state in ancient Greece and the creation of history. The possibility of a tradition—a remembered and treasured past—and its preservation, first orally and then in writing, made possible living beyond one's death in the collective memory of one's fellow citizens. Herodotus says he wrote his history of the Persian Wars to preserve the noble deeds of the Greeks and Persians from oblivion. And, it is striking to realize, he succeeded: we today still read that history and come to know the names of Xerxes and Themistocles, the courage and self-discipline of the Spartans, the strength of the free and democratic Greeks against the despotic Persian rulers. So too, we know of and remember Socrates and Caesar, Saint Francis and George Washington. We remember them because their lives made them stand out in the eyes of their contemporaries, and they became enduring exemplars of human action and character. They live on, in our memory, and they will live in our children's children's memories.

Most of us have to settle for a lot less than

being remembered across the centuries—but we still have the longings. So part of our satisfaction in life, and part of the satisfaction of our desire for living beyond, is realized through our identification with something larger and more enduring than our own life. Being a part of and contributing in however small a way to something which survives us, even if not eternally, is a way of lending value and meaning to one's life. We "identify," as we say, with a social, political, historical community broader than our family: Notre Dame, or our country, or our ethnic group. To say we "identify" with it is to say we treat its advancement as our own, its obstacles as our obstacles, its good as ours. We are a part of a community which survives our death, and in some way we feel that we are carried on in that longer common life.

All of these are ways to respond to the question that Fr. John Dunne puts this way: "If I know that I must someday die, what can I do to satisfy my desire to live?" But these surrogates of immortality, real and effective though they are in our lives, can only assuage, not satisfy adequately our desire to live on. How many years would it be reasonable to wish for? And if we did arrive at some figure, would we still think, having lived to that point, that it was the right one? Would we be willing to surrender a life still healthy and vigorous?

Even if, as my tone suggests and as I think to be the case, we do spontaneously desire to live indefinitely, that does not mean that the spontaneous desire is wise. We all have desires that are not wise, are not reasonable. Any overweight person who tries to diet knows that the desire for food continues to assert its independence of our good reasons. And perhaps that desire to live on is also not always reasonable, however innate in us it appears to be. Let's think about that. Let's listen thoughtfully to two classical figures from the Underworld.

## II

Socrates in the *Apology* says that death is not the greatest of evils, that we do more harm to ourselves by maliciously hurting or cheating innocent people than we do by dying. Self-preservation, wanting to save this biological life, may not be wise because there is more to the good life than its biological dimension. In fact, Socrates even

asserts in the *Phaedo*, his pre-execution discussion, that the thoughtful life, the philosophical life, is a life of learning how to die (68b-c). (Cicero picks up this in the *Tusculan Disputations*, and Montaigne writes one of his *Essays* with the title "That to Philosophize Is to Learn How to Die.") That may sound a little peculiar, but what Socrates means is that death is the gauge, the measure, of the kind of life we have led. If I have led the right kind of life, then when death approaches I won't need to regret the way I have lived. Confronting my death, even in thought, in anticipation, can disclose to me the value of the life I am leading.

Odysseus, that wise and well-travelled hero of the Greeks, spent ten years wandering in the known world of the time, having more adventures than the Starship *Enterprise*, and he returned home, Homer says, "having seen the cities and learned the minds of many distant men." One of the remarkable adventures he has, in the *Odyssey*, that Bible of the Greek civilization, is spending a year with a demi-goddess, the nymph Calypso. Calypso has fallen in love with him and offers him immortality if he will stay with her. Despite the fact that he has *already* visited the Underworld and there has been told by Achilles that death is terrible, and that it is better to be a slave in the land of the living than a king in the shadowy land of death—despite that, Odysseus chooses to return home, to live with his wife and child . . . and to die. Like Socrates, he apparently thought that death was not the greatest of evils: worse is living as an alien, far from the home that allows you to be who you are, the husband of Penelope, the father of Telemachus, the child of Laertes.

It is really remarkable to reflect on the contrast between this story and that of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh seeks immortality and resigns himself to death when he learns it is the human lot and cannot be overcome by anything we can do. Odysseus, on the other hand, declines the offer of immortality and chooses the human lot. What were the Greeks saying to themselves, in singing this story over the centuries? Is there a wisdom in choosing the human lot, even when it includes death? Is there a wisdom in choosing the human lot *just because* it includes death? That sounds almost ridiculously paradoxical. Can anything be said in its favor?

One thing to remark as a preliminary is

the difference between the anthropomorphic gods (or "the immortals" as they are synonymously called) and the human persons in Homer's story. The gods bicker endlessly, drink ambrosia and eat their fill, watch the spectacle of men's wars and fates the way we watch television series—except that they interfere now and again to make things turn out the way they want. (They're not couch potatoes but cloud potatoes.) They even join in the battle at Troy (though rarely), but of course they cannot be killed, because they are . . . the immortals.

Think about that for a moment. Can the gods show courage on the battlefield? Well, surely not in the same sense that humans can, because *they cannot risk all they have and are*: they cannot risk their lives. Make it stronger: *they cannot sacrifice their lives* for any cause more noble than themselves. . . . Greater love than this no man has, that he lay down his life for his friends. That capacity, to give one's life for another—and it need not be a single event, it can be a long period of giving one's life—that capacity is of course simply inseparable from mortality. We would not admire as we do, as even non-religious people do, the lifetime of dedication of a Mother Teresa if that life were not finite, one-time. Only because Jesus became truly a human being could he make that sacrifice and speak those words honestly.

So it begins to appear that death *can* give meaning and value to our lives, because it can be the ground of a universally acknowledged and deeply human action. What Odysseus did, what Jesus did, could not have that value unless the life were bounded by death. It is because our days are numbered that they have value for us, that they can be sacrificed; it is because our days are numbered that we treasure the passing moments, not only because they will never return again but because we will one day run out of them.

Again, think of the contrast with Homer's anthropomorphic "immortals," i.e., with an image of what human life would be like if it had no span, no end. What could it mean for such a person to sacrifice a year, a decade, a century, out of an unending span of life? Even if it might seem to have some non-negligible significance, it would be (literally) incommensurable with the significance of a mortal's action. Immortal life, endless life, would inevitably lack weight,

seriousness, nobility.

And this brings into view another aspect of the implication of our spontaneous desire to live indefinitely—again one suggested in Homer's poems. The life of the gods is trivialized by its endlessness and therefore its inevitable repetitiousness. How many people desire to live longer and longer lives who do not know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon? How many times would the coming of spring continue to lift up our hearts, if it had already come five hundred times and we knew it would go on returning indefinitely to our vision? Jonathan Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* has satirized mercilessly the naive presumption of Gulliver that such a life would be most happy.

When Gulliver is on the island of Luggnagg, he learns that there occurs—by chance and not often, but regularly—the birth of a child with a birthmark that means the one born will never die. Gulliver exclaims, "Oh happy nation where every child has at least a chance of being immortal," and he rhapsodizes about how wonderful it would be to enjoy that gift. But it turns out the struldbrugs (so they are called) are the least envied and most unhappy of Luggnaggians. We could put it paradoxically by saying that the indefinite prolongation of life as we know it would not be the prolongation of life as we know it.

Pause now and look back: We have tried to put our spontaneous desire for indefinite life to the test, to test its limits; and have found some ground to think—supported by Homer and Socrates—that mortality is not merely a surd, an irrational absurdity in relation to life, but that it has positive aspects, has the capacity to give value to my life which it would otherwise lack. The inference may be drawn that we ought not to oppose life and death, ought not to think of death as a misfortune which awaits each of us "down the road." We ought rather to bring death into relation to life, *just because* our concern is with life and living a truly human life. Only if we do this will we understand human life adequately.

*Learning to live well and learning to die well are one and the same.* Why? Because the life we choose to live should be one which retains its value even in the face of death. It should be one of which, when we stand at the moment of dying, we do not have to say, "If only I had it to do all over again. . . ."

Death, I want to say, is the touchstone by which we can truly judge whether the life we are living is meaningful and valuable. A way of life that hides from itself the fact of death, which seeks its happiness while ignoring death by not thinking about it, is inevitably illusory. How odd—but, I think, how true—that what seems at first the destructive opposite of life should come to be an integral measure of its value. "Brother Death," St. Francis of Assisi called it—our twin, our shadow side.

Such an appropriation of my death into my life can be both liberating and individuating. Liberating, because it helps me to face my life as a whole and not just be carried along on the escalators of society, along the well-marked paths which define the "good life" as our time conceives of it. Thinking about my death in relation to my whole life pulls me back from that preoccupation with everydayness, with the whirlpool into which each day pulls us, day after day. (One of the basic themes in Tolstoy's great novel *War and Peace*—perhaps the most basic—is how to come to terms with death, and Andrew's final transformation is effected by his coming to welcome death. Indeed, the most vivid presentation of this realization of having been a prisoner of everydayness is the short story by Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.) Thinking about my death is also individuating—I mean that it brings into sharp relief the unique and one-time character of my life. There is *no* job or function which I perform or fulfill that someone else cannot take over for me—and indeed will, after my death. They may do it well or poorly, but someone will do it. But no one can die for me, can die my death, whether well or poorly. My death is the most singular and unique of my possibilities.

### III

But . . . I still feel that desire for life without death strong in me, even though I acknowledge the truth and the force of these reflections. Even if the spontaneous, unreflective desire for life is not always wise, even if it ignores the positive qualities—indeed, the essentially human qualities—of our life which derive from the fact that we must die, is it only lack of wisdom that has led so many cultures and religions to long for and to seek immortal life? This is the final enigma which we have to address.

Why do we want to live without limit? Why has the wall of death seemed something blocking us from . . . what? From happiness? If what we have argued earlier is at all correct, it is far from clear that the mere prolongation of life as we know it would make us happy. It might well make us miserable. Why, then, have we been haunted from the time of Neanderthal man with intimations of immortal life?

Let me change the question. Why are books to help us change our lives so as to make them more satisfying, more fulfilling, more harmonious, more successful, more self-confident . . . why are these regularly on the best-seller list? (Why aren't there books on not changing?) Isn't it because we all feel a lack of completeness, a lack of something that would make us *whole*, the learning of or the possession of which would leave us *centered* in our lives instead of longing endlessly to fill something wanting? Of course, there may be pathological immaturities in us as well, which some of these books or programs or ways of living seek to address. But I want to argue that deeper than all of these and present in every human being is a longing which has universally characterized human existence, and which is in principle incapable of being assuaged or filled by any temporal remedy. *The longing for immortality, for life without end, is only a substitute and symbol for this deeper yearning.* We are, essentially and ineradicably, incomplete beings. It is not death which steals our happiness, and it is not indefinitely prolonged life which would provide it. We yearn for some final goal toward which the wisest of our teachers point us, and for which the spontaneous desire for endless life is only a token.

As a matter of fact, when we think about it from this perspective, no major religion has ever hoped for merely more of the same, for mere prolongation of biological life. (I am not appealing to theology or to revelation here, but simply to a human observation about the religions of mankind.) What religions in both East and West have aspired to is the *transformation* of life, the union of our human person with a divine life. What Jesus promised his disciples was a more abundant life, a fulfilled life, not merely an indefinitely prolonged life. Not even the resurrection of the body means that.

To sum up: We have tried to face, head-on, I hope, the enigma that death poses for

us who love life. Reflecting on death, we have come to see that it appears as opposed to life, appears as a curse to be dreaded, only if we begin from a shallow conception of life as merely biological. Biological death is not the greatest of all evils. If we think more deeply, we see that human life is treasured just because it is finite and passing; it has nobility and seriousness just because it can be risked and sacrificed. Death is integral to the meaning and value of human life as we know it. It is not an absurd disaster which lies at some arbitrary moment in my future. On the contrary, whatever authenticity and achievable happiness of which we are capable derive from bringing death into our lives as a measure of their true value, as the standard against which to assess their deepest natural meaning.

Indeed there seem to be good grounds

for thinking that we are not, by nature, capable of complete fulfillment through the indefinite prolongation of our biological life. What the unquenchable desire to live bears witness to is the desire for a life beyond longing, for fullness of life, for completeness, and no mere continuance of biological life can satisfy that deepest yearning.

So far philosophical reflection can take us, and it is not, I think, a negligible distance. Dag Hammarskjöld in his thoughtful journal, *Markings*, put it in a manner with which both the mere philosopher and the religious believer can agree:

In the last analysis, it is our conception of death which decides the answers to all the questions that life puts to us.

# SHEEDY AWARD ADDRESS

by

Frederick Crosson

November 14, 1997

I want to reflect on some things I have come to think about teaching, especially in a college of liberal education, as a result of my own education over the years as a teacher. Liberal education I will characterize for the moment as being for the sake of the student himself, the person herself. So it's not like professional education, it's not designed to prepare the person for a *particular* job or function in society, but rather to broaden and deepen the mind and heart of every learner, to help make them more informed, more reflective, more thoughtful persons. Every society, and especially every democratic society, needs as many as it can beget of such persons to be thoughtful citizens, voters, jurors, neighbors.

To teach is a relational verb: you can't teach unless someone is learning from your teaching. If no learning is going on, no teaching is going on, no matter what kind of activity the aspiring teacher may engage in. (A chastening thought!) And if that's so, we can also say that *appropriate* teaching corresponds to appropriate learning. So what kind of learning is appropriate to a student in the liberal arts and sciences, or, since I'm reflecting on my experience as a teacher, what kind of learning is appropriate to a student in the College of Arts and Letters who is enrolled in the humanities?

When you first begin teaching, you're just out of three, four, five years of study in a particular discipline, having immersed yourself, generally, in a small sub-field of that discipline for the last several years. And your first attention is focussed on teaching Philosophy 101 or History 203, or Sociology 302. Your contribution to the liberal education of your students is to do the best job you can in that course, in that discipline. Only gradually do you begin to think about the wider horizons of learning, about the fact that you and your department are engaged in a com-

mon enterprise with all of the other departments in the College—and so begin to think about that common end. Of course almost all students “major” in some discipline or field, but majors in Arts and Letters are intended to deepen and broaden the understanding of a field, not ordinarily to prepare one for a position in it. Moreover, only about a fourth of their undergraduate courses are allotted to satisfying the requirements of a major, which, in Arts and Letters, is itself not a professional or vocational preparation for a role in society. The other thirty or so courses make up the educational *complement* of the major speciality. So what kind of education is appropriate to the goals of that common enterprise?

Well, generally, education that widens and deepens the range of our knowing and of our thoughtful understanding, that broadens the horizons within which we think and live. (My favorite Gary Larson cartoon is of a group of cows munching in a meadow, and one of them raises its head and says, “Hey! This is *grass* we're eating!” Liberal education ought to get us to raise our heads and look afar.)

To be better informed, but also to reflect on and to understand that information, is to expand not only our memory banks, but the scope, the articulation, of the everyday world we live in, to enrich the meaningfulness of our daily experience. Learning can help us to see more, to see otherwise, to discern what we never noticed. *The more you know the more you can actually see and hear and feel.* Marcel Proust, the French novelist, referring to travel as showing us new things, said that

The only true journey . . . lies not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes, in seeing the world with the eyes of another, of a hundred others.

One of the reasons that a journey to distant places has long been an image of education (from Homer's *Odyssey* to Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*) is that such travel can present us with customs and beliefs and values that are different from those we are used to, different from those into which each of us has been acculturated by the society into which we are born. It can make us think about that acculturation *as* acculturation, can bring it into view, so to speak. But of course liberal education can also take us on a journey, a journey of the mind, across the seas and back into time, through accessing and reflecting on the worldwide web of the ages that have gone before us: the artists and storytellers, the scientists and philosophers, the historical actors and the contemplators. "The past," someone has said, "is a foreign country; they do things differently there."

For liberal education to be liberating, of course, it's not enough merely to encounter, to come to know, new data, new information about the natural world and the human world, about what other ages and cultures and peoples thought was true and worth doing and being. That's the first responsibility of the teacher: to bring the student to know the organization of the solar system, what happened in the rise of Islam, what Plato wrote in the *Republic*. What is necessary to add in order to profit from those encounters is reflecting, thinking about the information and making connections. And that's the second—and major—responsibility of the teacher: to show the connections, the meaning, the implications of what we have come to know. A good choice of texts or data can facilitate this second goal, can provide launching pads for reflection. (One of the beneficial consequences of research on teaching is to expand our knowledge of and insight about such texts.)

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You'll indulge me if I say that all education, from kindergarten up, is based on "show and tell."

"Telling" predominates in earlier schooling, but goes on as long as we are learning. *Not* telling you what *I* think, but telling you what "*we* know" (St. Augustine says the last thing parents should send their children to school for is to learn the opinions of the teacher). All of us learn, by reading and by

being told, many things that we don't verify or see for ourselves. It's the way we come to share in the accumulated knowledge of many inquirers over many centuries. So for example, all of you "know" that the earth rotates on its axis and orbits around the sun—even though you don't feel any movement, and even though it certainly looks as if the sun rises and sets. And if you do know that, we can connect it up with a little geometry that you also know, and I can "show" you—let you see for yourself—that when I'm standing up, my head is going faster than my feet.

That's part of what I mean by "showing": connecting, bringing together, elements of what we know—the facts—so that they show us things we hadn't realized, so that they lead us toward understanding something about the *meaning* of the facts. Here's a contemporary example of that kind of bringing together: the Constitution says that any citizen over twenty-five years of age (thirty for the Senate) is eligible to be a member of Congress. You might not be surprised to learn that more than 95% of the members of Congress are college graduates. But do you know what percentage of adults in the United States have bachelor's degrees? About fifteen percent. So, as a matter of fact, our legislators are chosen not from the citizenry at large but from a very small subset of the population. . . . Is that good or bad? There we are with matter for thinking and discussing and understanding.

A large part of liberal education, particularly in the humanities, is concerned with bringing the present into relation with, connecting it to, the past—as my reference to the image of a journey into the past has indicated. The great American novelist William Faulkner once said, "The past is never dead. It isn't even past." We human beings are this astonishing animal that bears its past with it wherever it goes—not just the individual's past, but the past of the species, of the culture, embedded in our language and our way of living. Every year I read with my students Thomas Aquinas on natural law, and John Locke on natural rights, and then later Martin Luther King's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*. It's really interesting to see that King, in defending his organizing of demonstrations in Birmingham, appeals not to a right to disobey the law, not to the law violating his rights, but rather to the teaching of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas (whom he explicitly names) that an unjust law is no law at

all, that a civil law in conflict with a higher law does not morally oblige us to obey it. Why doesn't he appeal to the Declaration of Independence, to his "unalienable rights"?

Sometimes facts can show us the presence of the distant past where we hadn't noticed it. Here's an example: December, November, October, September. . . . What do those Latin prefixes mean? . . . Okay, and if you count back that way to number one, what's the first month of the year? And why is it the first? And why does a big rabbit hide eggs at the time of the equinox?

None of those examples of showing, of exhibiting implications and connections, are intended to end with a period. They're intended to open up a field of further inquiry, of further thinking. That's why my examples end with questions. In fact, I think that the most effective kind of teaching is teaching by asking questions, by opening up a conversation about issues that arise from reading a text together. Not recitation questions, but questions about the sub-text, so to speak. Good teaching questions are questions that the student doesn't know the answer to—indeed there may not be a neat answer—but that lead to thinking again about the text or the information and about the issues it raises. The students can then have the experience of discovering connections, discovering important implications, for themselves. My questions only suggest a way to look at the issues, to bring them into view, to show them. Of course, to bring that about the students have to learn to read more carefully and thoughtfully that they did at first, have to learn how to formulate and support an interpretation, how to listen mindfully to other students' questions and objections. And those are among the skills essential to liberal education. I add to those only writing carefully—a paper assignment is asking students to try their hand at making connections on their own—and calculating properly.

For myself, I love that kind of teaching by questions—though it's not the only kind of teaching I do and love—because it's the most human (face-to-face conversations about important things), it's the most effective pedagogy (when it goes well the students discover things for themselves), and it's the most fun. Moreover, I learn along with the students. Sometimes I learn from things that a student remarks on, that I had never thought about before; sometimes the discussion presses me to articulate an issue in a way

I had never thought about before. I often go back to my office when class is over and make notes in the back of my book about such things. And so in a way, I am the carrier of insights from generation to generation of students, the carrier of gifts, so to speak, to the students who come after this generation.

Raising your head and looking around you is, for a teacher, coming to think about what we are doing, or trying to do—both individually and together. So it means thinking about the ends and the means and the modes of teaching and learning. It means thinking about the knowledge and the understanding, the skills and the abilities to see, that we want our students to acquire. And it means thinking about how our collective efforts are, or should be, greater than the sum of the parts, how the result is more than the assembling of forty courses. It is a responsibility of all of us as thoughtful teachers to keep the communal character of that enterprise on our radar screens.

But I want to say something now about a possible dimension of teaching that can't be planned for in quite the same way. I want to think about not just the mind of our student but about the heart. Can we speak to the heart of the learner? Well, not in the same sense that we can speak to the mind. If I borrow Saint Teresa's metaphor of the "Interior Castle" of the soul, I could say that our teaching activity can evoke the attention of the lookouts on the towers, but that the keep of the castle, the heart's keep, has to be opened from inside.

By "the heart" here I don't mean the emotions or feelings of the student, but rather the sense of personal implication, the realization that this insight has a special meaning for me. There is an old Latin adage, "Where the heart is, there too are the eyes." The heart—in the sense I am using it here—the heart responds by appropriating what comes into view, by making that understanding my own, by thinking about its relation to my life. This may sound fuzzy and mushy, so let me tell a story to make it more concrete.

While I was in the Dean's office, a legendary teacher of English at Notre Dame died; the funeral was planned for two days hence. I received a call the next day from the governor of a large state, who wanted to come to the funeral. He cancelled all of his appointments and meetings for the day of the funeral and flew here. It turned out he had

been a student of that teacher many years before.

He told me that his life had been changed, reoriented, by his experiences in the classes of that teacher. The teacher not only lectured on and introduced him to works of literature that he found deeply significant, but more important, seemed himself to reflect the goodness that was discovered to the young student in those classes. Indeed, to my astonishment during the drive in from the airport, he likened his teacher to the teacher of Dante, Brunetto Latini, to whom Dante speaks moving words in the *Divine Comedy*.

While this particular example may be unusual in the depth and duration of the effect on the student, it is not unusual for a teacher to function as a catalyst in the encounter of a student with a text or a topic, awakening the student to look more closely. It is not uncommon that teachers have such love and enthusiasm for their subject-matter and at the same time such concern for their students' learning that their love communicates itself and opens the eyes of the learner to the beauty and insight of what is loved.

I still remember the enthusiasm of my freshman biology teacher. She motivated me, though I was only satisfying a science distribution requirement, to learn more about that subject than any of my others, so that even two years later when I took the Graduate Record Examination, my scores in the biological sciences section were higher than in any other area.

When the subject-matter is such as to offer insights that address the human condition, that can move us toward self-knowledge, the potential of this affinity between teacher and topic is heightened. It is perhaps not standard, but it is also not rare that a teacher lives what he teaches, and without preaching conveys a moving vision to some of his students which opens their heart and their eyes to the truth or goodness or beauty of what he bears witness to. We teach some things indirectly, which is why I said earlier that you can't *plan* on speaking to the heart. If the heart hearkens, it is by a kind of grace that may or may not transpire. All you can do is speak so that the heart may hear. A college that took speaking to the heart as its aim would be foolish. But a college that forgot

that possibility would lose something of its own heart.

Of course it's generally true that not everything that the student can learn—or even needs to learn—can be taught in the usual modes. All teachers propose values to their students, whether they intend to or not. Just as parents convey their values to their children more by what they do than by what they say, so every teacher by what she does tells her students what at least some of her values are. By what is demanded of them, by the quality of work required, by how she uses her and their time, the teacher conveys some sense of what is important and what is not, what is valued in their behavior and what is not. (I once had a professor, an erudite man, who began a course by saying there would be no discussion in the class because he had nothing to learn from us.)

A true teacher is one who seeks the good of another. Indeed, St. Augustine wrote that teaching is the greatest act of charity. I sometimes think about Christ as a teacher, about how he taught. He made texts from the past relevant to the understanding and the lives of those he taught. He had hearers who weren't very quick to understand sometimes, but he didn't lose patience. He didn't generally give "the answer" that seemed to be asked for. For example, when he was asked "Who is my neighbor?" he didn't give a definition, which is what the question seemed to invite, but told a story to be thought about. And sometimes instead of answering a question, he asked a question back. Much of what he taught had to be thought about before it disclosed its deeper meaning. He surely spoke in such a way as to be heard by the heart as well as by the understanding.

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When I finished my college work and went on to graduate school, I really wasn't thinking about a job—I just was drawn by love of the understanding I had begun to experience in my studies. In fact, if I had thought much about the likelihood of getting a well-paid teaching position, I probably would have hesitated. It is a grace for me to be able to say truthfully that if I had my life to live over again, I would choose the same path. I wish all of you such a gift.

# ACADEMIC SOLIPSISM

by

Frederick Crosson

*The Review of Politics* 59 (Winter 1997)

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David Damrosch, *We Scholars: Changing the Culture of the University*.  
Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1995. Pp. 225. \$15.95, paper.

The discovery of the top quark was announced in two papers in *Physical Review Letters* in 1995, by 831 authors. To be sure this is a somewhat unusual authorship, but it represents the antipodes of the situation that Damrosch laments as the reigning paradigm-situation in the humanities and some of the social sciences: a state of affairs in which fields and disciplines are increasingly subdivided into sub-specializations, in which scholars increasingly work apart; in which the curriculum both reflects and fosters such separation. Of course the natural sciences are similarly subdivided into specializations, but research is normally by groups.

Robert Hutchins once jocosely remarked that a university was a group of departments connected by steam tunnels. But even the departments are now less unified, less of a community than they were in the recent past. There are deep structural tensions in the universities (or "pluriversities" as Clark Kerr termed them) and in the colleges, which increasingly model themselves on the research universities. The author's purpose is to examine the ways in which academic work is presently structured, to look at its sociological, historical and psychological aspects and to sketch some fundamental reforms in both undergraduate general education and, especially, in the way in which graduate training and scholarship are organized.

These divisions in the academy accompany the constant partitioning of disciplines and fields of specialization, and they also reflect the divisions in society: for example, identity politics is not only a social parallel to academic specializations, but group identities in political societies have given rise to new scholarly specialties and even departments. No one can master the methods and literature of more than a handful of sub-fields of the discipline one is identified as belonging to, and so we talk to each other

about our work less and less.

One exemplar-model of the present situation is the image of the humanities professor sitting alone in his or her office researching (reading, thinking) or typing on the computer. Why is that the standard model? Why does the structure of academic culture make it so hard to work collaboratively? Why has undergraduate education become a kind of assembly line, with infusions of credit-hours from various departments (degree and distribution requirements), but with the individual departments or professors having little sense of being consciously involved in a common enterprise? Why does graduate education, especially in the humanities and social sciences, reflect this model, so that each student after fulfilling course requirements goes off, so to speak, to work alone in the library or carrel or dorm room, with periodic checks by the "advisor" or director?

Damrosch likens the partitioning of fields to the way in which one language of learning—Latin—was replaced centuries ago by the vernaculars. For a while, academics kept up with cognate research in at least a small group of vernaculars, but unless works are translated, it is more and more rare for the literature in more than one or two other languages (or even none) to be known. Damrosch thinks that patterned isolation of disciplines, and of fields within them, began about a century ago, and has been accelerating as time went on. One of the catalysts in the disintegration of undergraduate general education—though the partitioning of disciplines proceeded independently—was sheer numbers. From 1960 to 1980, college enrollments went from three to twelve million, paralleling an analogous spurt a century before. One of the consequences then, as well as now, was the "industrialization" of enrollment, the amassing of bureaucracies, the certification for

graduation by transcripts instead of persons interviewed.

His proposals do not quixotically aim at vanquishing specialization, but at fostering new modes of interaction among academics, and allowing (at least) two kinds of scholars and research to flourish. To that end he suggests a number of things that might be tried in a restructuring of graduate education, with the aim of fostering collaborative learning at the graduate level. To mention only one: how about allowing at least some dissertations to consist of a series of concordant articles, written with a number of different sponsors?

The argument of the book is effective in drawing the reader's attention to what goes on around us and in stimulating thoughts about what might be done about it. It is gracefully written, informative and concerned in the best sense. It is also making a case, and some things could be said to mitigate the darkness of the picture that is painted of "we scholars" (the phrase is Nietzsche's.)

But there is a genuine problem to be concerned about. That the proper historical perspective is a century seems dubious: at the bottom of all the fragmentation Damrosch deplors is a doubt about whether all truth is related, whether what is known in one discipline can in principle illuminate or be related to another. *Universitas* came from *universus*, the oneness of knowings reflecting the unity of the whole—and that was rooted in the notion of creation by one God. That was still the ground of Newman's confidence in the interrelatedness of all knowledge, in the *Idea of a University*. In the forties and fifties of this century, there was a flood of research and writing by Catholic scholars on the "integration" of the curriculum, an effort to counteract or think against the trends Damrosch is mapping. (If you type "integration" into your on-line catalogue you can find some of these books, but since the 1960's, "integration" has come to refer to the racial integration of our social institutions, so most of the recent literature refers to that meaning.) Damrosch has only one passing, and inaccurate, reference to Newman's work, which might have

helped him. (He says that the relation of the church to the university was a "leitmotif" of the *Idea*, but in fact Newman insisted that he was not talking about a Catholic university but rather about the nature of a university as such.)

Moreover long before the medieval university espoused such a vision, the Greeks had discovered a world of "nature" and law, and of a common human nature, that subtended the project of analyzing, for example, the nature of the human political community. It is an ironic reflection of our present situation that Damrosch can refer scornfully to Plato's conviction of a common human nature as "a religious vision of a mystical unity above history" (p.119).

And there are reasons other than the author's historical and sociological ones for the "individualism" in the academic enterprise of the humanities. In the first sentence of this review, I could have put the word "authors" in quotes, since in the natural sciences, authorship refers more to the work done than to its written report (as is evident to any reader!). In the humanities, thinking one's thoughts out into words in a way that both articulates what one has come to see and brings that into view for others, that makes it persuasive and evident for someone else, is not at all like writing a summary of an experiment. There are, as Damrosch says, some fine examples of collaborative work in the humanities (and a fortiori in the social sciences), but they will remain the exception. Which does not mean that more interactive scholarly work is not desirable, and that even computers—for some the very model of a one-on-one relation—through things like list-serves and discussion groups of those sharing common interests might not in time make a major contribution.

Despite some shortcomings, this work is nonetheless strongly recommended to academics—teachers and scholars—who, more than most engaged in work that can make a difference for our common future, need to think what they are doing.

# ALL SOULS MASS HOMILY

by

Fr. Nicholas Ayo, CSC

November 3, 1997

Welcome this evening to gather our community in prayer and in remembrance of those in the Great Books program who have gone before us into the life of God. We know they have passed along the same ways that we have. Where they have been, we now are. Where they now are we will be. It is a moment of reflection for us each year. We ask questions about the meaning of our life together and the meaning of death for each of us and for all of us together.

We live in a time that especially values control. We would control genetic processes and environmental outcomes. We would control nations and control emotions. We would control our lives, and if we could we would control our death. But death is the moment without control. Death is maximal out of control. We are then altogether in the hands of God and not in our own hands. We have no control. And whenever we have no control we are in fear. One could argue that human history is the attempt to overcome the fear inherent in the human condition with its limitless limitations. We find always the need for control at the heart of our fears.

As I am writing this homily we are reading in seminar the *Histories* of Herodotus. Xerxes is building an empire, and the Greeks are building a confederacy. Everyone has suspicions about almost everyone else. And Xerxes says in the council session called to determine whether Persian empire should invade Grecian confederation, "If we do not wound them first, they will surely come and wound us." Fear leading to control has haunted human history. It is at the bottom of all systems of domination and oppression, whether it be wealth over poverty, one race over another race, or one class over another. The feminist literature argues that fear and control are the engines of patriarchy, and that men are not only afraid of the implications of equality with women but most of all men are afraid of the control of other men. Our uneasy

systems of social adjustment allow for some sort of balance of power and the cessation of at least most lethal hostilities. But the principle that I must seize control and insist upon power and domination before and lest the other party do unto me remains such a trap and such a burden, causing untold misery all around to both the oppressed and the oppressors, whoever they may be. And yet we must all die, and in that moment we shall surely relinquish control. Our efforts to ward off fear of death will seem futile and unnecessary at that moment. Would that we would learn sooner that fear and control presuppose a world without appreciation for the presence of God and the true security that can be found in embracing the human condition with faith, hope, and love.

One could easily conclude that fear and control are at the root of all systems of oppression and injustice. That wide a net may well coincide with what religion has understood as original sin, which is the condition of sinful injustice that we are all born into. Original sin is not personal guilt, but rather it is the way of the world, the way of fear and control, that inevitably leads to inequality at every level.

Consider the story of Adam and Eve in the garden. Sin appears in this account as fear and need for control. One could even argue that already the blame is being projected onto woman. Adam and Eve eat of the forbidden fruit because they are afraid that it is not good enough to be human. To be human is not to have control over everything and everyone. Hence the temptation: you human beings must become like Gods, knowing good and evil.

Trust in God and in human life should define the human condition, and not fear and control. Trust in each other as children of God is what human beings have for their security. The truth comes about by dialogue. Safety resides in the community. A better world depends on our equal and mutual collaboration. Going it

alone or in privileged and exclusive groups comes from panic, a fear of being out of control and of not knowing how to diminish our fear by entrusting our humanity to others we do not control. The only genuine control remains our mutual caring and our just assistance of each other under God's providence. Any form of liberation that is just and human echoes the promises of the Communion of Saints.

Baptism was meant to be the introduction of a child into a new community, brothers and sisters of one God, a family that was to be free of patriarchy in favor of the freedom and equality of the children of God. In the community that would fully live the gospels, there would be no fear. God's love is given to everyone. And there would be no need for control or domination, since serving the needs of others was to be the lifeblood of this community and the only role of its leaders. "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great

among you must be your servant, and who wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and give his life a ransom for many" (Mt 20:25-28). Chesterton argued that in the pursuit of a better world, "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried." Indeed, the same might be said for every devout religious tradition and for every just movement of liberation. They are not found wanting so much as they are left untried and found all too difficult. We pray this evening that we might find the courage to trust in the creator of the human condition and to proclaim that perpetual fear and exaggerated control are not humanly good solutions to our predicament. The hope that will be asked of each of us when we must let go of control in the moment of our death can be achieved even now in the living of our lives together. And for this we can indeed pray all together.

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# THE EDWARD J. CRONIN AWARD WINNING ESSAY Messengers of Revolution

by

Shawn Gould

Class of 1998

Imagine yourself walking with a friend down a country road on a clear summer's night, miles away from any cities and their accompanying light pollution. Having some knowledge and interest in astronomy, you both decide to take advantage of this rare opportunity away from "civilization" to look up at the stars and "see what you can see." Much to your delight, you notice an unusually bright object in a spot where there should be nothing discernible. That it might be a cause for consternation never enters your mind, for you remember having heard that a comet would be coming into the range of naked-eye observation on this very night. Why is the arrival of this comet not a cause for great alarm for both of you? From our twentieth-century perspective this question may seem somewhat odd. Of course, the comet does not alarm an observer; why should it? Aside from the extremely low probability of the comet impacting the Earth, there is not much reason to fear it. A speeding ball of ice through the vast expanse of space, although interesting to see, hardly seems to concern the average person. Oh, some scientists might still concern themselves with the content of a comet's core and some might even think that comets carry germs or the primordial building-blocks of terrestrial life.<sup>1</sup> Most astronomers, though, do not bother with these lesser members of our solar system, choosing instead to investigate such topics as the physics of the universe immediately following the "big bang." How did the passing comet come to be such a commonplace occurrence?

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<sup>1</sup> Two scientists, Hoyle and Wickramisinghe, put forth the hypothesis in 1978 that comets carry germs throughout the universe. For a summary of ideas concerning the danger of comets see John C. Brandt and Robert D. Chapman's *Introduction to Comets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 211-216.

Though one might answer this question with a straightforward recounting of the history of cometary theory, another, and possibly more revealing, method of inquiry is to examine the point in astronomy at which comets become common. In that the point under discussion concerns change in or the birth of a scientific theory, the method employed to discover the reason for the twentieth-century comet's conventionality must deal with such a change in science. One such work is Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.<sup>2</sup> To apply his theory of scientific progression to the change in the conception of comets, we shall focus on the theory of Newton and Halley.

In his essay, Kuhn deals with the problem of the common perception of the progress of scientific theory. Most science textbooks published before his essay portrayed the development of science as a constant betterment of previous theory. In this manner they would have shown Einstein's theory as a modification of Newton's prior paradigm. So would Copernicus also have perfected the Ptolemaic system to a greater degree of accuracy. In reality, as Kuhn shows, this is not the way in which science progresses. The true process of scientific development of new theory is one of revolution, such that the new theory supplants the old completely. Indeed, the new theory so thoroughly destroys its predecessor that scientists adhering to the new paradigm and the research that they perform have no meaning under the old system. Likewise, the results of the science performed under the old theory are not meaningful under the

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<sup>2</sup> This paper utilized the second edition, enlarged, found in *Foundations of the Unity of Science*, edited by Otto Neurath, Rudolph Carnap, and Charles Morris (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

new. This revolution occurs when normal science ceases to produce results that concur with the existing paradigm. These results Kuhn calls anomalies. The production of the anomalous results eventually leads to a crisis within the research operating under the paradigm. At this point the scientists working under the paradigm in question will put forth a manifold of new theories, attempting to explain their results. The theory that best accounts for the results will then supplant the old theory and all of the other competing "new" theories. Normal science will then continue under the newly established paradigm.

This rather brief summary of Kuhn's thesis requires greater explication. Kuhn states that "normal science means research firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice."<sup>3</sup> Scientists working under the Aristotelian paradigm, for example, were concerned with the essence of the subject in question. Comets, for Aristotle, were composed of air and water, and were formed in the "outer part of the terrestrial world, that is, of all that lies beneath the celestial revolutions . . . composed of dry exhalation."<sup>4</sup> As such the Aristotelian scientist concerns himself with the investigation of this nature. Indeed, this research has an outcome at odds with the normal science of today. Comets under the Aristotelian paradigm of science become messengers of terrestrial events: "The fact that comets when frequent foreshadow wind and drought must be taken as an indication of their fiery constitution. For their origin is plainly due to the plentiful supply of that secretion."<sup>5</sup> Modern scientists concerned with comets do not consider any inherent predictive quality in comets, because they operate under a fundamentally different paradigm than that of the Aristotelian. Hence, the Aristotelian will devise experiments in hopes of elucidating the message of any particular comet, whereas the experiments of the modern scientist will further the modern theory under which they operate.

Particularly noteworthy when considering normal science is that its results are not intended to be surprising. The scientist establishes the

experiment believing that the outcome will fall within the existing theory. As such, scientists do not search for discoveries, but rather happen upon them in the course of trying to achieve the predictable. A scientist "discovers" something when the results of his or her experiment are anomalous. If the scientist cannot ultimately resolve the anomalies with the existent theory, then he or she must attempt to create a new theory that will include the new results. When Tycho Brahe observed the comet of 1577 he came to the conclusion that it could not be a terrestrial phenomenon, which was the prevailing theory of the time. Noticing that the comet did not display evidence of parallax, a necessary attribute if it truly existed beneath the sphere of the moon, he concluded that the comet was, in fact, celestial.<sup>6</sup>

A fundamental aspect of a change in paradigm is that there must be an alternative possibility. If no such possibility exists then there will be no change in paradigm. If Tycho had thought unequivocally that comets must be sub-lunar, then he would not have formulated his new theory. The supernova of 1572 provided him with the possibility of the new theory. When that star appeared in the sky the Aristotelian conception of the heavens as unchanging became obsolete. Armed with this idea, Tycho was then able to propose that comets, then considered transient objects, belonged in the super-lunar sphere of activity.<sup>7</sup>

If a crisis develops in the research of the normal science and a new theory emerges that succeeds in accounting for the resulting anomalies, then the newer theory supplants the older. Within the purview of the theory in question the replacement is complete. As Kuhn points out, Einstein uses the same terms as Newton, such as space, time, and mass, but that does not mean that Einstein's theory incorporates Newton's: "Newtonian mass is conserved; Einsteinian is convertible with energy. Only at low relative velocities may the two be measured in the same way, and even then they must not be conceived to be the same."<sup>8</sup> Tycho's theory of comets categorically superseded that of Aristotle's, and, as we shall see, Newton's and Halley's concept of comets replaced that of Kepler and Descartes in the same manner.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, *Meteorology*, trans. H. D. P. Lee, in *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), I, 1; quoted in Jane L. Jervis, *Cometary Theory in Fifteenth-Century Europe* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1985), 12.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>6</sup> Donald K. Yeomans, *Comets: A Chronological History of Observations, Science, Myth, and Folklore* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991), 37-41.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 164.

Though the new theory completely replaces the old, what do the scientists who practice the newer theory perceive through this theory? Another way of formulating the question is to ask whether the scientist who experiences a change in theory is able to perceive his or her results in the perspective of both paradigms. This is much like the situation of the Gestalt psychologists, who showed subjects a picture that could represent either a rabbit or a duck. Once familiar with the picture, the subjects could see one or the other, but not both at the same time. Scientists perceive their data in a somewhat similar way. A comet for an Aristotelian is an exhalation of dry air that combusts in the sub-lunar realm. For the modern observer, a comet's existence has nothing to do with material from the Earth; such a thought does not even enter one's mind as a possibility. What is important is that the view of the scientist is in complete accord with one theory or the other. To illustrate this concept, Kuhn postulates the existence of a recent convert to Copernicanism from the Ptolemaic paradigm who is questioned concerning the nature of the moon: "The convert . . . does not say, 'I used to see a planet, but now I see a satellite.' That locution would imply a sense in which the Ptolemaic system had once been correct. Instead [he] says, 'I once took the moon to be a planet, but I was mistaken.'"<sup>9</sup> As with the pictures, the scientist may switch back from one view to another, but at any one point in time he or she will adhere to only one paradigm.

Armed with these concepts, we can then ask the questions that will lead us to the reason for the modern perception of comets as routine celestial phenomena. What was the normal science of comets before Newton's theory? In the period of crisis following the normal science research, what theories emerged to explain the new anomalies? How did Newton react to these theories, and how did he dispense with them and form his own? Finally, when did Newton's theory become the accepted paradigm of the scientific community?

From the fourth century BC until the fifth century AD, Aristotle's account of comets remained the standard paradigm of scientific theory.<sup>10</sup> Then in 1456 Georg von Peurbach attempted to determine by using parallax the distance of a comet seen at that time (it happened to be Halley's Comet). Following upon

Peurbach's calculation, one of his students, Regiomontanus, also attempted to determine the parallax of comets, publishing his work in 1531.<sup>11</sup> Both of these scientists adhered to the Aristotelian conception of comets, a view that their parallax calculations did not hinder. Tycho Brahe used the same method, but because of his greater belief in the validity of his instruments and his prior experience with the supernova of 1572, he concluded that Aristotle's conception of comets was erroneous. Theory then placed them in the realm of the planets; that is the extent of the normal science. Two beliefs of pre-Newtonian astronomers stand in stark contrast to the conceptions of comets by Newton, Halley, and their followers. One is the old Aristotelian belief that comets are omens. The other centered on observations of the non-periodicity of cometary orbits.

Kepler, who integrated his Copernican system with a breed of mysticism, denied to comets the possibility of elliptical orbits. He reasoned that only eternal figures, such as planets, could have such movements. Because comets were ephemeral, they must have *straight-line* trajectories.<sup>12</sup> The problem with Kepler's theory was that comets were not observed to follow rectilinear paths. He circumvented this objection by stating that the tracks of comets do not look straight, because the Earth is moving, thus offering a proof of the Copernican system. Calder points out that "by this argument Kepler put Halley [and Newton] and other successors in a bind; they might seem to be siding with anti-Copernican fuddy-duddies if they questioned the straight-line motion of comets."<sup>13</sup>

Descartes, however, explained the path of comets with his vortex theory. In this conceptualization, both comets and planets were formed from dead stars, with comets being the more dense of the two. The less dense planets acquired momentum equal to that of the vortex they were in, but comets, because of their greater density, achieved a greater velocity and escaped the vortex in which they were formed. They then wandered from vortex to vortex, with each path being slightly curved.<sup>14</sup> Descartes, in contrast to Kepler, did not base his theory on any mystical conceptions of order or purpose, but rather maintained a mechanical explanation of cometary movement.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>10</sup> Jervis, *Cometary Theory in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Yeomans, *Comets*, 28.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>13</sup> Nigel Calder, *The Comet Is Coming: The Feverish Legacy of Mr. Halley* (New York: Viking Press, 1980), 38.

<sup>14</sup> Yeomans, *Comets*, 64-65.

Following the publication of Descartes' and Kepler's ideas, however, the cometary theory becomes more muddled rather than clearer. Jean Dominique Cassini places the comet of 1664 in an epicycle around the star Sirius.<sup>15</sup> Hooke introduced the idea of some kind of gravitation accounting for the path of comets: "By internal agitation and external dissolution, a comet's gravitational principle was disturbed over time. Then the comet no longer circled the central body but tended toward a straight line as it lost its attractive, magnetic virtue."<sup>16</sup> There are other examples, but these are sufficient to show the mood of the times.

Each of the theories proposed relies upon its own set of inherent "problems." Kepler needs to have a theory that fits in with his conceptions of the ordered universe. Descartes needs a purely mechanical explanation based on his corpuscular theory. Hooke acts in the same manner for his "gravity" and Cassini needs to reconcile his theory with his more precise observations.<sup>17</sup> One should notice that each of these theories has elements within that persist in the theory of Newton and Halley. Kepler's order, Descartes' mechanistic approach, Cassini's closed cometary orbit, all find their way into the new theory. This period conforms to Kuhn's theory of the rise of crisis after the proliferation of anomalous results in normal science. Many astronomers observed comets before Copernicus and Tycho Brahe did away with the Aristotelian conception of the heavens. After the fall of that system, however, such observations made by Copernican astronomers could be reconciled with Copernican theory without difficulty and disagreement. The result is the cometary crisis of the seventeenth century, described in brief above. Leaving aside the superstition attached to comet appearances for the moment, we can now see how Newton reacted to these various theories concerning the paths of comets.

Newton's first thoughts concerning the path of a comet were that it was rectilinear in nature. He did not believe, as John Flamsteed did, that the comet of 1680 was one object but rather believed that it was two. Flamsteed's cometary theory combined both the effects of the Cartesian vortex and the concept of solar magnetic attraction and repulsion. Somewhat strikingly, a comet under this theory initially heads in the general direction of the sun, is

pulled towards the sun by its magnetic attraction and then repelled by magnetic repulsion without ever having gone around the sun.<sup>18</sup> Newton, still harboring doubts as to the idea of it being one comet, responded to Flamsteed's theory critically. The source of the sun's attraction cannot be magnetic, because all objects possessing magnetic traits on the Earth lose this attribute when heated, and the sun is, of course, extremely hot. Therefore, the attraction of the sun cannot be due to magnetism. The comet also should not have turned ahead of the sun, as Flamsteed's theory proposed, because that would have required the sun to both effect an attractive and a repulsive force on the comet, which would have required the comet to recede faster than it approached. This was contrary to the observed motion.<sup>19</sup> Newton, who assumed elliptical orbits, worked out the path of the comets as he had done for the planets. The orbit he described for comets was necessarily periodic, allowing for the theory's justification later by Halley. If someone could successfully predict the return of a comet using orbital calculations worked out by Newton, the return of the comet would in effect give support to the Newtonian system. Of course, this is what actually occurred with the return of Comet Halley, and it was hailed as proof of the Newtonian system.

This argument proposed by Yeomans finds opposition in an essay by David Kubrin. In his paper, "Such An Impertinently Litigious Lady," Kubrin proposes that the primary stimulus for Newton's integration of comet orbits within his system was Robert Hooke's propounding of his own system of the world.<sup>20</sup> Ultimately it does not matter against whom he reacted, but that he reacted at all. Kuhn's interpretation of scientific progress does not allow for a theory conceived independently of the "old" scientific paradigm. Newton shows his influence most profoundly in his insistence on giving comets a real purpose in his cosmology. Much of his research dealt with alchemy: "In 1687 Newton believed that an aqueous fluid was a universal substrate capable of being transmuted into all the manifold forms of gross matter."<sup>21</sup> The prob-

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 101-102.

<sup>20</sup> David Kubrin, "Such An Impertinently Litigious Lady," in *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants*, ed. Norman J. W. Thrower (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 55-80.

<sup>21</sup> Sara Genuth, "The Teleological Role of Comets," in *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants*, ed. Norman J. W. Thrower (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 229-307.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 70-72.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 70.

lem he encounters is that, for him, this fluid being capable of transmutation also allowed for depletion. He solved this by proposing comets as the means of rejuvenation, both for the Earth and the sun.<sup>22</sup> This further supports the idea that for him comets orbit in closed paths. As they circle the sun they gradually fall ever inwards, until eventually they impact the Earth or the sun. We have already seen the roots of this belief that comets have purpose in Aristotle's account of comets. One should be cautious in ascribing too much to Newton's alchemical designs, though. At first he disagreed with the notion that comets ran in conical sections. As Kuhn has pointed out, scientists will not change paradigms capriciously. Newton could have integrated his alchemical concepts with rectilinear cometary motion; comets moving in straight lines can still hit both the sun and the Earth.

Another, more compelling, view of comets emerges from Newton's integration of their orbits with those of the planets. Here we take up the issue of comets and superstition. Up until Newton's cosmological theory, including the periodic orbits of comets, most Europeans believed strongly in the role of comets as omens. After the return of Halley's Comet in 1759 this belief began to die. Lalande said of its return, "The universe beholds this year the most satisfactory phenomenon ever presented to us by astronomy, an event which, unique until this day, changes our doubts to certainty and our hypotheses to demonstration."<sup>23</sup> This contrasts with an earlier account given in 1066, which said, "In the year of our Lord 1066, a comet appeared in the heavens, which portended great changes in the kingdom, the slaughter of the people, and multiplied miseries inflicted upon the land."<sup>24</sup> Through his achievement of regulating the motion of the comet according to predictable and calculable rules, Newton provided the necessary environment for later scientists to research comets without encumbering themselves with portentous beliefs. That these later scientists mature in a time that at least questions the validity of assigning such qualities to comets is important; otherwise they might not change at all. Remember the Gestalt pictures mentioned earlier. The people living in 1066 firmly believed that comets were omens of di-

saster without question; comets as omens in that time would have been much like a tautology, they were so by definition. Scientists after Newton would not have the same belief; they would not see comets in the same way. So could they formulate theories without having to deal with restructuring their world view. To see that such a restructuring is extremely difficult one need only look to the opinions of the people of Newton's own lifetime. Having matured in a time that still held to many of the superstitions surrounding comets, they found Newton's theory difficult to accept. Even Newton could not free himself completely from such concepts.<sup>25</sup> This leads directly to the view of our modern observers. Why do they not react in alarm at the comet? Newton had revolutionized the view of a comet's periodicity.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Cited in James Howard Robinson, *The Great Comet of 1860: A Study in the History of Rationalism* (Cleveland: John T. Zupal, 1986), 112.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>25</sup> Kubrin, "Such An Impertinently Litigious Lady," 63.

## 1997 PLS SENIOR ESSAY TITLES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Director</u>
Bales, Melissa	The Significance of the Nude in Nineteenth-Century European Painting	Benedict Sarnaker
Bassler, Sarah	Learning Justice: The Moral Development of Children at High Risk for Delinquent Behavior	F. Clark Power
Becker, Justin	Exploring the Internet Phenomenon	Benedict Sarnaker
Boever, Matthew	The Discovery of God	Frederick Crosson
Borst, Anton	Jonathan Swift and the Passion of Reason: The Deconstruction of Rationalism in <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>	Michael Crowe/ Christopher Fox
Cahill, Robert	The American Citizen: An Aristotelian and Tocquevillian Perspective	Walter Nicgorski
Coolican, J. Patrick	A Philosophy Written in Blood: Hegel and the Consciousness of National Socialism	Frederick Crosson
Costello, Carlene	A Sensuous Clearness of Conception: Interpreting the Poet-Painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Modes of Expression via Love's Inextricable Tie of Soul and Body	G. Felicitas Munzel
Craft, James	The Development of Greek Tragedy	Gretchen Reydam-Schils
Deeb, Elyse	The Revision of Metaphysical Intent: The <i>Bhagavad-Gita</i> in <i>Four Quartets</i>	Stephen Fallon
Dodds, Emily	Equality in Public Schools: A Proposal for Reform	F. Clark Power
Dougherty, Katherine	Truth and Justice in Post-Apartheid South Africa	Gretchen Reydam-Schils
Fiscus, Jessica	Engineering the Good Life: A Consideration of Intergenerational Justice and Future Personhood in an Age of Genetic Engineering and Fertilization Technology	Phillip Sloan
Flanagan, Brien	An Analysis of the School-to-Work Education Reform Program	Cornelius O'Boyle
Flynn, Jessica	The Stone and the Shell	Henry Weinfield

Friedewald, Vincent	~ Fossil Poetry ~ Discovering the Nature of Language and the Emersonian Archetype for Expression	Frederick Crosson
Hahn, Sheryl	Denying our Past, Destroying our Future: The Phenomenon of Holocaust Denial	Kim Paffenroth
Haines, Erin	Moral Development and Children Living in Poverty	F. Clark Power
Hogan, Daniel	The Spirit of Truth: Milton, the Quakers, and Calvinist Protestantism	Stephen Fallon
Hogan, Jennifer	The Artistic Mastery of Renoir	Benedict Sarnaker
Hogan, Katherine	The Sanctity of Definition in Dante's <i>Divine Comedy</i>	Henry Weinfield
Jones, Albert	Morality and Politics Interpreted through Cicero's <i>De Officiis</i> , <i>De Re Publica</i> , and <i>De Legibus</i>	Walter Nicgorski
Locher, Emily	The Dangers of Rationalism: Dostoevsky's Denunciation of Science and Mathematics	Michael Crowe/ David Gasperetti
Luck, Allyson	Circularity in T.S. Eliot's <i>Four Quartets</i>	Henry Weinfield
Lynch, Ryan	Machiavelli's <i>Prince</i> : Securing Employment for an Intimate Revenge	Stephen Fallon
Martin, Amanda	Philosophical Love versus Human Love: Progress and the Missing Element	Gretchen Reydam-Schils
Matthews, Alexandra	Beyond Reason: Dostoevsky's Journey from the Underground to God	Kim Paffenroth
McCarthy, Meghan	Homeless Families in America: Gender and Poverty	Michael Crowe/ Ann Power
McGoldrick, Erin	The Effect of Hope and Habit on Juvenile Delinquency	F. Clark Power
Moore, Colleen	The Risks of Reading: Narrative and the Experience of Divestiture in Jane Austen's <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> and Augustine's <i>Confessions</i>	Collin Meissner
Myers, Steven	Idea for a Perpetual Peace in the Ghetto: Kantian Ethical Decisions in the Inner City	G. Felicitas Munzel
O'Keefe, Patrick	Life After Auschwitz: The Human Triumph over Suffering	Kim Paffenroth

Pecson, Brian	The Problems of Reductionism in Cognitive Neuroscience	Phillip Sloan
Poggi, Christopher	One Man's Justice: The Noble Failure of Rawlsian Political Liberalism	Walter Nicgorski
Puzio, Kelly	An Interrupted Life: Transforming Loneliness into Love	Phillip Sloan
Ryan, Meagen	Dewey vs Hutchins: The Debate over the Role of Metaphysics in Education	G. Felicitas Munzel/ Alven Neiman
Speaks, Jeffrey	Wittgenstein and the Art of Philosophy	Cornelius O'Boyle
Staudt, Brian	Chinese and Western Astronomy in Pre-Modern Japanese Politics	Michael Crowe
Stein, Lauren	Towards the Idea of Human Perfection: The Role of Revolution in Karl Marx's Theory of Social Change	Cornelius O'Boyle
Swiney, Beth	The Imprisoned Soul: The Problem of Insufficient Grace in John Donne's <i>Holy Sonnets</i>	Henry Weinfield
TePas, Michele	Sexuality: A Call to Self-Gift	Frederick Crosson
Treacy, David	The Well-Ordered Nation: Models of Political Society by Plato and Thomas Hobbes	Walter Nicgorski
Turner, Mark	James Madison and the Pragmatic Ideals of the American Government	Phillip Sloan
Walker, Carmen	Poetry and Pattern in <i>Four Quartets</i> : T.S. Eliot's Reconciliation of Theme and Form	Stephen Fallon

## ALUMNAE/I NEWS

Editor's note: Please write directly to your class correspondent. We continue to need class correspondents for some years.

**Class of 1955**  
(Class Correspondent:  
George L. Vosmik  
P. O. Box 5000  
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**Class of 1958**  
(Class Correspondent:  
Michael J. Crowe  
PLS  
U. of Notre Dame  
Notre Dame, IN 46556)

**Class of 1960**  
(Class Correspondent:  
Anthony Intinoli, Jr.  
912 Georgia St.  
Vallejo, CA 94590)

Added by the PLS office:

**Jerry Murphy** is Vice President, Government Affairs, Siemens Corporation. He gave a panel presentation on human rights and WTO accession for China at Harvard University recently, arguing for the U.S. balancing culturally-based rights concerns with a commitment to peace and domestic stability, and economic development in China. Jerry's address is 5400 Blackistone Rd., Bethesda, MD 20816.

**Class of 1962**  
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John Hutton  
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**Class of 1965**  
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**Class of 1966**  
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**Class of 1967**  
(Class Correspondent:  
Robert W. McClelland  
5008 West Connie Drive  
Muncie, IN 47304)

**Class of 1968**  
(Class Correspondent:  
Ned Buchbinder  
625 S. 16th Ave.  
Westbend, WI 53095  
phone: 414-334-2896)

**Ned Buchbinder** is your new correspondent. He would like you to write or call with any information for *Programma*.

Added by the PLS office:

**Peter Herrly** is a colonel for the U.S. Defense in Paris. He enjoys French, military history, studying French art, and French literature. He is having a great time and continues to credit PLS with the wide-ranging interests which have helped in the military and abroad.

**Class of 1970**  
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**Class of 1977**  
(Class Correspondent:  
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Room 630C, School of Business  
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Bloomington, IN 47501)

Added by the PLS office:

**Kenneth Taylor** is a professor of philosophy at Stanford University. He wants everyone to look for his first book this fall: *Truth and Meaning* (Blackwell). His address is 279 Hillview Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022.

**Patter Sheeran** writes, "I married Tom Birsic (ND '76) 19 years ago and have 2 children—Bryan, 14, and Kelsey, 4. I'm pleased to report that my niece Margaret Cholis, now a junior at ND, has followed in my footsteps and is in the PLS program. Although I ended up running systems and operations for a mutual fund company in Pittsburgh, I attribute my strong communication and analytical skills to my 3 years in GP."

**Class of 1979**  
(Class Correspondent:  
Thomas A. Livingston  
517 Fordham Avenue  
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Added by the PLS office:

**Greg Gullickson** is a psychologist. His new address is 2665 Concord Circle, Iowa City, IA 52245.

**Class of 1980**  
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Mary Schmidlein Rhodes  
#9 Southcote Road  
St. Louis, MO 63144)

**Class of 1981**  
(Class Correspondent:  
Tom Gotuaco  
4475 Callan Boulevard  
Daly City, CA 94015)

Added by the PLS office:

**Annette Lang** is a lawyer for the U.S. Department of Justice. She practices environmental enforcement for the Department of Justice. Annette thinks back fondly of classmates and professors in PLS and sends her best wishes to all of you. Her address is 1140 N. Utah Street, Arlington, VA 22201.

**Class of 1983**  
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Laurie Denn  
5306 Malibu Drive  
Edina, MN 55436)

**Class of 1986**

(Class Correspondent:  
Margaret (Neis) Kulis  
1203 Harvard Terrace  
Evanston, IL 60202-3213)

**Class of 1987**

(Class Correspondent:  
Terese Heidenwolf  
41 Valley Park South  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
heidenwt@lafayette.edu)

After graduation, **Marty Loesch** spent one year in Colorado in the Holy Cross Associates Program living with fellow PLSers Bud Luepke, Julie LaChapelle, and Tom Stewart. He then returned to Notre Dame and even to Alumni Hall, where he was assistant rector for three years, to complete a law degree, an MA in International Peace Studies, and an LLM in International Human Rights Law. He moved to Seattle to work for a private law firm for a year and a half before forming a law office with some friends in 1994.

Marty writes that he loves the Northwest and this summer went on a six-week sailing adventure to circumnavigate Vancouver and the Queen Charlotte Islands. He doesn't get as much reading done as he would like but did enjoy reading Czech authors (Kundera, Klima, and Kafka) prior to a visit to Prague. His address is 3711 58th Avenue SW, Seattle, WA 98116-3018, mcloesch@aol.com.

**Tim Noakes** has dedicated most of the past 10 years to competitive cycling. He has raced throughout Europe and hopes to spend the 1999 season racing on a French-based team. To take a brief break from cycling, he spent four months working in a hotel in Galway, Ireland, where he had the chance to row with an Irish collegiate rowing team. Tim lives in Palo Alto, California and works in the Rare Books/Archives Department of Stanford University. He can be reached at 661 Forest Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301 or by e-mail at tnoakes@sulmail.stanford.edu.

**Class of 1988**

(Class Correspondent:  
Michele Martin  
9449 Briar Forest Dr. Apt. 3805  
Houston, TX 77063-1048)

Added by the PLS office:

**Nikki Butkus Parish** is an interior designer for commercial architectural projects in Philadelphia. She is married to Francis Parish, "an incredible Dutchman who is now at Wharton for an MBA." Nikki is learning Dutch and travelling the Northeast and planning a trip to Asia and South America. Her address is 1530 Locust Street, #14A, Philadelphia, PA 19102-4428, and e-mail is francis.parish.wg99@wharton.upenn.edu

**Class of 1989**

(Class Correspondent:  
Coni Rich  
7701 Atlantic Ave., Apt. 360  
Margate, NJ 08402-2861  
e-mail: BASCJR@AOL.COM)

**Coni Rich** writes, "Well, I am alive and well in New Jersey, and dying for news of you and the Program! I am still the Operations Manager for BAS here in the Atlantic City area, and have just put a bid in on my first condo (yikes!). Good news is that it's a block from the beach, so I'm hoping for lots of visitors! (HINT HINT)."

**Class of 1990**

(Class Correspondent:  
Barbara Martin  
2709 Mildred, Apt. 3A  
Chicago, IL 60614)

Added by the PLS office:

**John Blasi** is a manager for Andersen Consulting Enterprise Solution Center. He was with the Holy Cross Associates in 1990-91 in Phoenix. John says he enjoys mystifying people with the fact that a "Great Books" major can succeed at a business and tech consulting firm. John married Kathy Stolv in July 1995, and they

bought a new house in Chicago this past January. Their address is 2311 W. Hutchinson, Chicago, IL 60618.

**James Otteson** received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Chicago and is currently an Assistant Professor of philosophy at the University of Alabama. This past summer James, his wife, Katie (LeJeune) Otteson (ND class of '90) and their two children, Victoria and James III, moved to Alabama. At the university, James has been placed on a committee to design a new core curriculum for all undergraduates. Their address is 513 Woodridge Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35406.

**Class of 1991**

(Class correspondent:  
Ann Mariani  
36 East Hill Road  
Brimfield, MA 01010)

Added by the PLS office:

**Danielle Bird** is currently an acquisitions editor in Indianapolis. Her new address is 3070 Colby Lane, Apt. F, Indianapolis, IN 46268.

**David Glenn** was married to Peggy Edwards last June and is currently Vice-President/Senior Risk Control Consultant for Aon Risk Services in Chicago. Their address is 432 W. Wellington Ave. #407, Chicago, IL 60657.

**Class of 1993**

(Class correspondent:  
Anthony Valle  
147-55 6 Ave.  
Whitestone, NY 11357)

Added by the PLS office:

**Ramira Alamilla** is currently in her third year of teaching at her former high school in Salt Lake City. She loves teaching and is applying to graduate schools. Ramira hopes to eventually teach on the university level. Her address is P.O. Box 562, Salt Lake City, UT 84110.

**Class of 1994**

Added by the PLS office:

**Michelle Baker** writes: "After graduation, I worked for a year as a database manager and research assistant for a corporate intelligence group and then returned to academia. In December, I hope to receive a master's degree in government and foreign affairs from the University of Virginia. Post UVA plans are as yet unmade. This summer I made a PLS pilgrimage of sorts—I tagged along with my father on his summer teaching assignment in Crete. Given the hours and hours I spent in the 'company' of all those dead Greeks, I thought it'd be sacriligious not to go visit Athens, so I spent a day climbing up and around the Acropolis."

**Class of 1996**

(Class correspondent:  
Stasia Mosesso  
351 Ayrhill Ave.  
Vienna, VA 22180)

**Stasia Mosesso** is your new correspondent. She wants her classmates to write to her with information for *Programma*.

## SUMMER ALUMNI/AE SEMINAR 1998

PLS 501. John Henry Newman's *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*  
1 credit, Tillman (10-0-1)

1:00-3:15 a.m. MTWTF, 6/30-7/4

*An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (1870) is the challenging mature work of John Henry Newman (1801-1890) on the relation of ordinary reasoning and imagination to religious faith. In a letter to a friend concerning the object of the book, Newman wrote, "You can believe what you cannot understand; . . . you can believe what you cannot absolutely prove." In his early Oxford University Sermons, he had described ways in which we "reason well and argue badly." And in his *Philosophical Notebook*, he wrote, "We can imagine things which we cannot conceive; . . . we can believe what we can imagine, yet cannot conceive." These issues come together in Newman's psychologically penetrating description and analysis of just how it is that we come to give assent—in both ordinary affairs and in matters religious. The course will entail close reading and discussion of the text (University of Notre Dame Press, paperback, 1979). M. Katherine Tillman is a Newman scholar, and a member of the Program's faculty.

## MANY THANKS TO CONTRIBUTORS

### Contributions to the University Designated for PLS since the Last Issue

Teresa M. Abrams  
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I would like my old friends and teachers to know where I am and what I am doing these days.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Present Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Special Activities \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Address \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to contribute the enclosed amount to (specify) special award fund of the Program\* \_\_\_\_\_

Comments including any suggestions on what you would like to see considered in *Programma*:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\*Make checks for the Nutting, Bird and Cronin Funds payable to Program of Liberal Studies and designated to the appropriate fund. Those for the Rogers Scholarship should go directly to the Development Office. All contributions are tax deductible and are credited at the University and on Alumni/ae records as a contribution to the University.

\* \* \* \* \*

Send contributions, information or inquiries to:

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# MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

# DRAW ON YOUR MEMORIES!

Celebratory symposium and ceremonies honoring

## FREDERICK J. CROSSON

upon his retirement as Cavanaugh Professor of the Humanities  
in the Program of Liberal Studies

May 1, 1998 (Friday)  
University of Notre Dame

\*\*\*\*\*

Whether you can come or cannot come, please note this and do contribute if you have a special memory of Professor Crosson and his teaching:

A faculty committee is assembling a gift to be presented to Professor Crosson on this occasion, consisting of greetings, letters, testimonials, memories, etc., from former students and friends. Send your paragraph, page or letter to:

Professor Michael Crowe  
Program of Liberal Studies  
215 O'Shaughnessy Hall  
University of Notre Dame  
Notre Dame, IN 46556

EVENTS (All are open. If you wish to attend the departmental dinner at the end of the day, please return the form at the bottom of the page along with a check for \$25 as soon as possible.)

Symposium on Religion and the Great Books.  
1:15 to 3:30, Center for Continuing Education  
Chair, M. Katherine Tillman

Presentations:

- Otto Bird, "Religion and the Great Books: Reflections from the Founding"
- Walter Nicgorski, "The Natural and Ultimate Horizons: Leo Strauss and the Great Books"
- David Burrell, C.S.C., "The Original Multiculturalism"

Roundtable discussion of topic with Professor Crosson and former students and discussion open to the floor

Mass of Thanksgiving

4:00 Alumni Hall Chapel, Nicholas Ayo, C.S.C., and Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C. concelebrating

University Open Reception in Honor of Professor Crosson

5:00 to 6:30, Main Lobby of Center for Continuing Education

Departmental Dinner

7:00 Lower Level Dining Area, Center for Continuing Education

Clark Power, master of ceremonies

Testimonials and toasts, open podium and informal remarks

\*\*\*\*\*

If you wish to attend the Departmental Dinner on May 1, please complete the form below and send it along with your check of \$25 (payable to the Program of Liberal Studies) to the address above. Please respond as soon as possible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Special Dietary Request \_\_\_\_\_