

genesis

fall 78

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## Invitation to Artists

The Spring 1979 edition of GENESIS will feature a section solely devoted to artwork. The length of this section will be determined by the number of accepted submissions. Any type of drawings may be submitted, although black-and-white ink sketches, such as the artwork in the current edition of GENESIS, are preferred. Photographs may also be submitted. All artwork will be reproduced in black-and-white. Artists whose work is not accepted will be notified by mail; those desiring the return of their work must enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

## Instructions to Authors

Manuscripts are invited from all persons who have been students at IUPUI at any time during the last eighteen months prior to submission. Manuscripts of essays, fiction, or poetry, on any topic, may be submitted at any time to GENESIS, Student Services Office, Cavanaugh Hall, 925 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202. All manuscripts are considered by an editorial board elected by the English Club and the Philosophy Club. Authorship is not revealed to the board until a manuscript has been accepted.

All submissions must be accompanied by a separate title sheet containing the author's name, address, and telephone number. Essays and fiction should be typed on a sixty-space line and double spaced. Manuscripts of less than sixteen pages will be given first consideration. *Manuscripts must be submitted in duplicate.*

Authors whose material has been accepted will be notified prior to publication. Authors who wish to be notified of rejection prior to publication date—and all authors who wish their manuscripts to be returned—must include a self-addressed stamped envelope with their submissions. Any manuscript submitted too late for the current deadline will be considered for the next issue. Prizes of \$25 are awarded at the discretion of the editors for the outstanding entry in each of the categories of essay, fiction, art, and poetry.

## Won't You Please Buy An Organ From This Man?

David Mick

David Glen Mick is currently a graduate student in the Department of Health and Hospital Administration. He graduated with an A.B. degree in philosophy and English from Indiana University and he also holds a M.A. in English from the University of Texas. He is a frustrated philosopher turned health administrator, or is it the other way around? Co-winner of the poetry prize in *Genesis* for the fall of 1977, he has published poetry in other journals and magazines such as *Analecta*, *Winter's Half*, and *Cairn*. For his short story in this issue, he has won the *Genesis* prize for fiction.

Fresh out of place, a dangling proposition I was, newly crowned Master of Arts in English Literature by the Hook-Em Horns Oil Conglomerate—more commonly known as the University of Texas: employable as hell. So I put all those words to work and penned a letter to my old childhood chum, the inimitable Herbert Erdy; surely, he could use an extra hand and foot. He replied:

Dear Dave,

We need another organ salesman—the job's yours!  
As soon as you get back to Muncie, stop in and see me.

Herb Erdy  
Manager, Music Wonderland  
Muncie, Indiana

I scotch taped Herb's letter to my bathroom mirror, near where I often meditated my plight. Those five years of pre-pubescent piano lessons were finally paying off. I was now being blessed with the opportunity to charm make-up-caked spinsters and schizoid housewives by playing on the organ "Somewhere My Love" indefinitely. But only until the d.p. (down payment) was thick in my fist.

As a fledgling organ salesman I was eager to learn the art of musical manipulation. My first week on the job I climbed aboard the various organs, caressed the grain, twisted the knobs, and struggled to learn the smooth slide from "Yellow Bird" into easy installment plans plus six weeks of free group lessons. Herb tutored me; he was the Socrates of Sales Pitches.

"One of the best lines you'll ever use," Herb instructed, "is when you've finished your demo songs and hyped up the hoopla of owning an organ. Now you've got

'em in your office and you've drawn up the papers, but the old man doesn't want to part with part of his stash. So you turn to the wife and say 'Bonnie, would this organ make you happy?' She stares straight ahead and says 'Yeah.' And you turn to the husband, that stingy bum, and say 'Bob, you wanna make Bonnie happy, don't you?'

Herb shrugged his shoulders rhetorically. "What's he gonna say," Herb asked, "no?" Herb's cheeks fattened into a grin as he emphasized, "it works everytime."

Frequently those first weeks Herb and I would stand toward the back of the showroom and watch as people entered the store and wandered about the pianos or organs or both, like nervous, curious chickens.

"Fish?" I asked hungrily. Fish was what Herb called customers who looked like probable buyers. Herb could smell them 100 feet away.

"Not fish," he answered, "better!" He glared at the prey. "Not fish . . . whales!"

golumpf.

golumpf.

In walks a stout woman of fifty with a beehive hairdo and legs like a gladiator. Behind her tags along a gaunt, lonely looking man in a gas station attendant's shirt, chain smoking Camels.

"Whales," Herb whispered. "Now watch."

golumpf.

golumpf.

I was silent, abashed at this revelation. Forty-two minutes later Mr. and Mrs. Earl Ueker were the overwhelmed owners of a \$2,600 Tone-O-Sizer organ. Mrs. Ueker preferred an out-of-stock model, the Spanish Sierra Oak, but Herb convinced her that her husband, a mechanic by trade, could easily refinish a white French Provincial by stripping the paint and brushing on some speckled lacquer. I told Herb later he ought to patent his idea on speckled lacquer before someone else invents it. Still, I never saw a more or less euphoric man and woman as Earl and Beatrice Ueker as they left Herb's office clutching colorful brochures and a small stack of Herb's business cards. What had they heard that so mesmerized them? I had much to learn.

Three weeks on the job, not even a whale to my credit. Herb called me into his office for a pep talk. It was early

August and the annual county fair was rapidly approaching. Music Wonderland always had a tent of organs at the fair and Herb frequently bragged of how many organs he sold at last year's fair: 23 in 9 days. To Herb the fair was a salesman's Eldorado. People would wait all year for the fair and some would drive many miles to endure the heavy August heat, to walk circles ceaselessly around the midway, to be barked at, taunted, and tempted to open their wallets and purses just one more last time—all in the name of Fun. Herb gurgled with enthusiasm.

"Time for Big Bucks, Dave. You'd better brush up on all your demo songs, especially "Petticoat Junction"; that train whistle at the end never fails. I want you to be prepared at the fair because there'll be hundreds of people walking past our tent. All you gotta do is hook their attention with a couple of songs—let 'em stand in the sun while you're playing—and then invite 'em into the air conditioned trailer. Tell 'em you got more organs in the trailer where they can cool off and relax. You can demo your songs in coooooool comfort and they'll buy . . . they won't wanna go back into that hot sun . . . they'll buy . . . the temperature's gonna be over 95 . . . be cool . . . they'll buy . . . they'll buy."

Opening day of the fair I planned an early, ambitious start. The temperature was 79 degrees at 8 a.m. and the country road fog had a viscous smell of ripened sweet corn. I arrived at our tent around ten o'clock. Beside the tent was a long, white trailer, complete with air conditioning, perspiring thermoses of icy lemonade, and three of our most expensive organs. Herb introduced me to Mindy, a young girl Herb hired to play the organs under the tent. The game plan called for Mindy to attract and entertain the crowds while Herb and I mulled about, extolling the pleasures of music, and trying to hook fish. But Mindy was no minnow. She claimed to be 16, looked like she was 23, and had that pubescent propensity to talk like the proverbial trucker.

My initial inclination was a fascinated observation of this peculiar fantasy event called the county fair. Most amusing were the men who were unmysteriously drawn to our Circe organist, those husbands with their tugging children and frizzy wives. Those guys weren't listening to Mindy's "Moon River." They had paid the admission fee—

admittedly or not—to browse about and glimpse not only Mindy, but all the other proud-breasted high school girls who populate such fairs. But there, under our tent, the wives became envious of Mindy's musical endowments and some threatened revenge by pulling checkbooks from their handbags. Yet, some mothers were sincere; they envisioned their children as suburban Stravinskys. So, at least for Herb, it was "into the trailer we go."

Herb sold three organs by two o'clock that afternoon and I was still fishless. As I came back from the Coke booth I noticed a family of five huddled around Mindy. I heard Herb: "Go get 'em, Ahab." I tucked in my shirt and rambled up and announced, "Hi! I'm Mindy . . . (er) . . . She's Mindy . . . (pointing to the virginal nymphet). I'm Dave. Do any of you folks play the organ?"

The husband did not smile.

"Yeah, I did once," the wife drawled in between chomps on her gum, "but, you know, once you got kids, you know, you don't have time anymore to be playing with organs."

The husband was expressionless and the sweat glimmered on the nape of his neck.

"How about if you folks come on in the trailer over here where I can show you a beautiful inexpensive organ just delivered to us last week. It's air conditioned . . . the trailer, that is . . . and plenty of cold lemonade too."

Single file up the thin iron steps. I play just one song—"Don't you folks love organ music; I sure do"—and the ten-year-old brat shoves me off the bench and insists I teach him "Stairway to Heaven" immediately. My underwear feels like a soggy, bunched-up wash cloth. Dad slurps lemonade loudly until Mom plops six-month-old Katy on Dad's thigh and proclaims: "Now it's my turn."

I graphically explain our color-coded note system and Mom keeps repeating her interruption: "I wanna hear that breezy Hawaii sound." We start with a South Pacific rendition of "When The Saints Go Marching In" and end four bars from the bottom when I notice Dad's wet pant leg—not lemonade.

"God Damn it," the husband hisses. "We can't even spend a couple of hours at the fair without this kid peeing all over the place."

Then he apologizes. "Look, I'm sorry about this. You know . . . kids . . . you know."

I was desperate: "But wouldn't you like to own an organ?"

"Sure, but I just filed for bankruptcy. The meat packing plant shut down last year and my unemployment comp ran out three weeks ago, you know."

I nodded my surrender. The wife laid the baby on top of the organ and sorted through the diaper tote bag that read "I go where baby goes." Then Herb opened the trailer door, probably to see if I needed help in making the sale. He saw the naked baby sprawling on our Mediterranean Pecan, and slowly shut the door.

## The Origin of Confusion

The tongue, that blunt  
clapper of a  
muffled bell; it  
tilts through thrusts, bursts  
distance with words  
without guilt.

—David Mick

## Five Minutes Before You Died

(for Robert Lowell)

You climbed into the cab gabbling  
your destination: "Florence or forty-second!"  
The rain slurred like your euphony  
and beaded up on the mustard yellow  
hood. You were an aging lion,  
a white mane brushed back, back brushed,  
peering into the sleek streets, always feeling  
almost alone, with the strangely stained seats,  
the uncomfortable vinyl. Everywhere were  
clumps, piles of New England leaves, that  
cool humid night. Was it yet  
another recitation, another Ginsberg  
growling, or for the applause  
like a lioness purr? And still boldly  
escaping Berryman's elegy. But then  
the bing! of the meter, the windows  
fogged, years of hard earned words,  
pride, unquestioned adulation. You breathed  
broken and yearned for the canvas  
like a boxer before the blackout.

—David Mick

## The Lesson

Stephen J. Cooper and Heinz J. Rhodes

**Stephen J. Cooper**—Psychology major. I have worked in the past as an air traffic controller, a high school teacher, a factory worker, and a truck driver. Presently, I work for Conrail, am a full time student and write for the *Sagamore*.

**Heinz J. Rhodes**—Working towards a degree in computer technology, while at the same time getting his certificate in drafting. Heinz is from Germany and has been in this country since 1960. Presently, he is serving time at Pendleton and expects to get out at the end of this year.

Although we've never met, we've been corresponding for the last six months. The story was written over a three month period in which it was sent back and forth between us.

Also, we are both published poets. Heinz was published in the *Free University Broad Sheet*, and my work has appeared in *Genesis* and the *College Poetry Anthology*.

"Four weeks of basic, but I've finally got it," he thought as he sat on the edge of his tightly made bunk examining the M-16 he'd just been issued. He was fascinated with its lightweight strength and futuristic design; he thought of how much his father would appreciate such a fine weapon.

As he began the methodical task of cleaning the rifle, he remembered the hunting trips with his father and how they would walk over the stubbled fields of harvest remains while their English setter ran ahead in search of pheasant and quail.

"Always give every man a fair shake," his father had told him, "no matter what he seems to be, or even what color he is. Get to know everyone you meet, then you'll know which ones to trust and which ones to walk away from."

"What if they don't let you walk away Dad?"

"Then you fight 'em fair and square. Even if you don't win the fight, you'll still have your pride. And the next time, they'll let you be."

"They will?"

"Sure. Most bullies are looking for someone to push around so they can feel big and tough. As soon as they know you'll fight back, they'll go looking for someone who won't."

"But what about if I meet somebody and he don't fight me fair? What if his friends and him gang up on me?"

"Well, if he's not fighting fair, then you don't have to either. Or you can run. There's no shame in running from an unfair fight."

"I'll just scare 'em off with my .22. That ought to send 'em running," he said half kidding.

"Don't you ever do that son." His father's tone commanded his attention. "A gun is not for scaring people. If you ever have cause to point one at someone, you'd better be sure you're ready to use it." His father's deeply tanned, wind-creased face stared intently at him for a moment. "If you're ever in that situation son, don't ever hesitate cause that'll get you killed."

"I hope I never have to, you know, *really* kill someone," he said with sincerity.

"I hope you don't have to either son," and with that the lesson had ended.

He'd been thinking about this conversation for the past week. It had taken place in his early childhood, but with surprising clarity the words flowed through his mind.

A week earlier he'd had a leg cramp in formation and his platoon had lost points at the reviewing stand. It wasn't the first time he'd screwed things up, and upon returning to the barracks, his two burly drill instructors decided that he needed a "private session." For this purpose, they entered the storage room at the end of the barracks.

As soon as the door closed, the two husky men began shouting obscenities and throwing body punches. He went down quickly, and while one of them kicked at his ribs, the other pulled on a pair of skin-tight black leather gloves. They dragged him to his feet and immediately the leather-sheathed fists began pounding into his face. The session ended as he fell unconscious on the blood-splattered concrete.

And now they'd issued him a rifle, and as he finished cleaning it, he took the two brass cylinders he'd been carrying for a week out of his pocket, thoughtfully weighing them in his hand. Then he quickly shoved them into his clip, smiling as he imagined their twitching bodies on the polished floor. He slid the clip into the magazine and positioned himself behind a large pillar.

After a few minutes he heard the two instructors entering the barracks for their afternoon inspection. Several times as they walked toward his hiding place, he started to jump from behind the pillar and cut them down. With intense pleasure he imagined the horror in their eyes as they realized what was about to happen. Two quick

squeezes of the trigger and they would never again do what they had done to him.

At first, he convinced himself that he was just waiting for them to get closer so he could savor the looks on their faces, but as they passed within a few feet, he slowly began to realize the truth. Quietly, he removed the clip and slipped it into his pocket.

The sergeants left the barracks as he replaced the rifle at the end of his bunk. He laughed as he thought how lucky they were, and smiling he thought of his father and headed for the gym and a good workout with the body bag.

### **Flare-Up**

Temper  
is a strange  
and smokeless flame  
that consumes  
with no  
whiff  
of  
warning

—Caroline Owens

## My pocket has a hole in it.

On Easter Sunday 1966, I led my Platoon into an  
ambush. . . . .

When I regained consciousness  
the sounds of combat were overwhelming  
and I was amazed at their separateness.  
Grenades, M-16s, ChiCom Assault Rifles, machine guns,  
and the screams of my comrades  
all seemed to be whirling inside a giant mixer  
which was blending a horrible parfait swirl  
of traumatic, reverberating noise  
that was amplified and broadcast  
in 50-Channel PSYCHOdolic Stereo.

I heard, rather than felt,  
the gurgle of the 'sucking chest wound,'  
and I recall a strange feeling of indifference  
as I stared at the ugly, gaping hole  
where my right shirt pocket had been.  
The oozing, frothy bubbles of dark-red blood  
were as black and thick as motor oil.  
Charlie Company lost their XO  
when he took a hit like this,  
and they said he lived a bad hour.  
I hope I don't cry,  
I always wanted to die good.  
This doesn't hurt as much as I thought it would.

"Hot Shot," she had said,  
"Just wait till your ass is on the line  
and you'll start whining and praying like everyone else."  
Well, it is. . . .and I ain't. . . . .  
I'm glad I took out that extra insurance policy.  
Don't think about those three little blonde kids back in  
Indiana.  
Hey, you notice how thick and lush and soft and cool  
the carpet is on this jungle floor?  
Oh well, if there is a God, I'll apologize.

—Hadley

## Structuralism: Its Ideological Implications

William D. Nolan

William D. Nolan is a Senior, majoring in English. He and his wife, Erin, whose birthday occasioned the poem printed in this volume, live in the northeast sector of Indianapolis. He enjoys reading, listening, writing, talking—and, above all, being educable. He plans to teach.

His essay "Structuralism: Its Ideological Implications" was written for a class in Advanced Expository Writing taught by Professor Mary V. Blasingham. For the poems in this issue, he is co-winner of the *Genesis* prize for poetry.

"Structuralism" seems well on its way to becoming a "buzzword," a term applied freely (in some cases, indiscriminately) to various and diverse phenomena—as, for example, was "Existentialism" a few years ago.<sup>1</sup> "To call oneself a structuralist," writes Jonathan Culler, "was always a polemical gesture, a way of attracting attention and associating oneself with others whose work was of moment . . ."<sup>2</sup> Polemical use of a term often plays havoc with its meaning; surveying the battlefield, Richard and Fernande De George write, "Structuralism has been described as a method, a movement, an intellectual fad, and an ideology. Each of these characterizations is in part valid."<sup>3</sup> While these characterizations are indeed somewhat valid, they are by no means equally so, at least not as topics of serious discussion. Clearly, it is an ideology and as a method that structuralism is most delightful and instructive, *dulce et utile*. Its utility is suggested by its fruitful use in linguistics, literary criticism, mathematics, psychology, and in nearly every other field of inquiry.

With its many "heads"—linguistic, critical, mathematical, and so on—Structuralist methodology may seem, like the Hydra, nearly impossible to embrace completely. But methodology implies ideology, as Professor Robert Scholes reminds us;<sup>4</sup> and the Hydra's many heads are ultimately connected to a common body, which might be thought of as containing the ideological "backbone" of structuralism.

Ideologies, like terminologies, are often distorted in polemical use. We might therefore hope to find structuralist ideology at its best in the thought of those who are

not consciously, admittedly, or polemically structuralist. That such exist is argued by Roland Barthes when he writes,

We can in fact presume that there exist certain writers, painters, musicians, in whose eyes a certain exercise of structure (and not only its thought) represents a distinctive experience, and that both analysts and creators must be placed under the common sign of what we might call *structural man*, defined not by his ideas or his languages, but by his imagination—in other words, by the way in which he mentally experiences structure.<sup>5</sup>

The "structuralist imagination," in Scholes' phrase, is at work in an essay by Sam Keen entitled "Reflections on a Peach-Seed Monkey or Storytelling and the Death of God." The latter half of the title refers to Keen's assertion that the traditional "stories" (or myths) which "served to establish the metaphysical identity of traditional Western man are losing their credibility and their power to inform life. . . . Each people had its own cycle of stories which located the individual within the tribe, the tribe within the cosmos, and the cosmos within the overworld."<sup>6</sup> Modern man feels alienated from his fellows and from the world because the traditional "stories, of which the body of Judaeo-Christian myth is an example, are no longer supported by any authority strong enough to command the respect of an unprejudiced inquirer."<sup>7</sup> This *lapsus auctoritatis* has most recently been formulated as "The Death of God."

Let me call attention to an aspect of Keen's argument which is very clearly structuralist, namely his emphasis upon the function, not the nature, of stories. Barthes, again: "The goal of all structuralist activity . . . is to reconstruct an 'object' in such a way as to manifest thereby the rules of functioning of this object."<sup>8</sup>

Keen reasons further that, since the old stories are no longer plausible, "Our starting point must be individual biography and history. If I am to discover the holy,<sup>9</sup> it must be in *my* biography and not in the history of Israel."<sup>10</sup> An incident in the history of Tennessee—albeit one which will probably never be found in the chronicles of that state—serves to illustrate his point. As a child he watched while his father, "using a skill common to all omnipotent

creators," carved a small monkey from a peach-seed. Young Sam asked for it, and was told, "This one is for your mother, but I will carve you one someday." Someday nearly never arrived; but years later, his father sat one day in the shadow of oncoming death, thinking of his life and trying to assess in what measure he had succeeded and failed. His son told him, "In all that is important you have never failed me. With one exception, you kept the promises you made to me—you never carved me that peach-seed monkey." Shortly thereafter, Keen received a small package in the mail; in it was a peach-seed monkey. Two weeks after that, his father was dead.<sup>11</sup>

Had the essay ended with this, it might be difficult to understand how, exactly, the story of the peach-seed monkey comes to bear on the problem of failed mythologies and alienation; but mythologies often elicit commentaries, and Sam Keen's private myth is no exception (though rarely are mythopoeisis and exegesis performed by the same person):

For me, a peach-seed monkey has become a symbol of all the promises which were made to me and the energy and care which nourished and created me as a human being. And, even more fundamentally, it is a symbol of that which is the foundation of all human personality and dignity. Each of us is redeemed from shallow and hostile life only by the sacrificial love and civility which we have gratuitously received. . . . That civility which separates men from the lower animals depends upon the making and keeping of promises, covenants, vows, and contracts.<sup>12</sup>

In writing as he has, Keen has drawn attention to the manner in which his story—and comparable stories in each of our private histories<sup>13</sup>—can put him—and us—in touch with that which has "unity, depth, density, dignity, meaning, and value." Here, then, is the structuralist imagination at work. Keen's metalanguage, his discourse on the linguistic artifact which is his story of the peach-seed monkey, serves to render intelligible that artifact as it comes to bear on the topic at hand. Barthes might say that Sam Keen has reconstructed the object, i.e. the story, in such a way as to manifest its functions.

Keen's commentary on his story has, in effect, transformed it into a metaphor whose tenor is what he calls "a

matrix of promise too rich and intricate to detail"<sup>14</sup>—and my commentary on his essay has, I hope, rendered it intelligible as an example of the structuralist imagination at work. Structuralism is the method whereby an object—a peach-seed monkey, or an essay—is shown to be no mere isolate entity, but part of a larger pattern. "Man," writes Robert Scholes, "is part of an orderly and intelligible system."<sup>15</sup> In this grand system, a father's last gift to his son is no mere curio carved by a Tennessean, made with skill and artifice, signifying nothing; nor is Keen's essay simply the work of a free-lance writer who hunts and pecks his hour upon the page, and then is read no more. To structural man, the one is a relic, the other a parable; and they both may be said to appertain to a system of belief whose first article of faith is the intuition, "metaphysical" because unprovable empirically, that experience—and the world that engenders it—is meaningful. This may prove too sweet to swallow, for those of us whose palates have grown accustomed to existentialism, with its steady diet of bitter, meaningless absurdity. If, however, we can ingest this new and ambrosial insight, we shall find ourselves rapt by the recognition—a true re-cognition, a "knowing again"—that the world is no more absurd than we ourselves make it to be; that we are no more alone than we ourselves allow ourselves to be. Isolation is illusion.

The structuralist imagination, as we see it functioning here, makes plain the essential relatedness of man and man: we are all human only insofar as we are part of the "matrix of promise," the web of humane giving and receiving. As an agent of unification, structuralism may therefore in the end prove to be not a Hydra, but that most benevolent of mythic creatures, that most elusive Unicorn: a believable belief.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>This brings to mind the protagonist of *Fritz the Cat*, a feature-length animated cartoon released some five years ago. Being fond of the adjective "existential," he was asked what the word meant; whereupon he replied that it had roughly the same force as "groovy" and "far-out."

<sup>2</sup>*Structuralist Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 3. This discussion is itself somewhat polemical; but I use the term "structuralism" not as "a way of attracting attention and associating" myself with any movement, fad, or what-you-will, but as a way of attracting attention to what appears to be an important aspect of its ideological implications.

<sup>3</sup>*The Structuralists: From Marx to Levi-Strauss*, edited with an introduction by Richard T. De George and Fernande M. De George (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1972), p. xi.

<sup>4</sup>*Structuralism in Literature* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>"The Structuralist Activity," in *The Structuralists*, p. 149.

<sup>6</sup>In *Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Norbert O. Schedler (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1974), p. 83. From Sam Keen, *To a Dancing God* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 82-105.

<sup>7</sup>P. 93.

<sup>8</sup>"The Structuralist Activity," p. 149.

<sup>9</sup>"Holy" being rather vague, Keen defines it as referring to "anything in my experience that gives it unity, depth, density, dignity, meaning, and value" (p. 93).

<sup>10</sup>P. 93.

<sup>11</sup>Pp. 93-94.

<sup>12</sup>P. 94.

<sup>13</sup>"Freud's . . . great discovery (which we usually associate with the name of Jung) was that once the individual recovers his own history, he finds it in the story of every man. . . . In the depth of each man's biography lies the story of all men" (95).

<sup>14</sup>P. 95.

<sup>15</sup>*Structuralism in Literature*, p. 200.

## Nocturne

Our headlights drill through solid night.  
 Too sure sometimes of what waits at the well's end,  
 I let a sort of half-sleep  
 insinuate itself behind these eyes  
 that guide the drilling lights. If you  
 could see my face in the green gleam thrown back  
 from the dashboard . . .

— but you sleep.

— William D. Nolan

**Birthday Poem**  
**(3/18/77)**

No time for caution: you were born.  
Not accident, for men are sunblind moles  
in the strong light,  
and accident a word we've made  
that masks our blindness to purpose ever mutable,  
a world brought forth from itself.

Still no time:  
The minutes burn through my fingers  
like kite-string when the March wind roars.  
Already my skull-shape shows, my hair retreats.  
I want to say  
"I love you like lightning loves a steeple."  
I draw a breath to speak  
but the simile already is wrong. Or  
"I love you as rivers love the sea,"  
but my mouth is dry,  
my tongue a fish floundering.

No time, no time  
for caution, absolution, revision.  
Some year I'll learn to love you without caution,  
I'll learn to let the errors stand.

—William D. Nolan

## Fragment (from a lost tragedy)

*Protagonistēs:* I gashed the broad night with a petulant  
dirk  
and chanted myself strophes of gibberish,  
fouled the bright morning.  
The last blaze of autumn seared my sight;  
my dauntless mouth turned it to ashes.  
At my hand, blood was spattered,  
deceits sown, grief gathered in baskets  
abundant.

*Khorēgos:* Ye citizens, behold the once-praised  
Warrior:

This is the man too frightened for his fear-  
fulness,  
who bartered fruit for armor and a sword.  
Too weak at heart to slay his weak heart's  
weakness,  
more smart than wise, he sought wisdom  
in words.

*Khoros:* No more the keen blade  
shall dredge bright blood-bays;  
Lost, lost the soldier's skill,  
strength to arm, quickness, courage,  
in dull disuse.

Red speech,  
blood-bright mouths the quick blade made,  
lost, quiet.  
To him shall be the pointing finger,  
crookt remark.  
Speak no more shall red-lipt wounds,  
but shall mouths of slaves and of children  
mocking,  
agape in agora.

*Protagonistēs:* I am broken; it is finished.  
There is nothing.

The wreckage falls about my head,  
my dirk is dulled,  
my name I have made nothing.

I shall put off my armor:  
Off, you borrowings.

Come with me, lady, leave we through the  
gates  
of this searing city, home of both our  
fathers.  
Let us wander,  
let's have nothing,  
seek out wisdom.

You've given me a pear-tree; I'll hold the  
ladder.

—William D. Nolan

## A Fury

Greek fire rolling above  
and sound of steel on bronze and sticks on drumheads,  
far away.

We have set forth in breathless morning  
across this battlefield domed over  
by the sky that rains debris of days in jagged fragments  
down on the field, sometimes spattering craters,  
or on the road. We crush the still-warm shards beneath our  
bootsoles.

We've come here through remembered gates  
like the last of earth and the first of earth;  
we remember the gates we've shut behind us  
only as we have traveled through them;  
the image persists;  
Greek fire trails its light-trace through the sky  
as it crackles earthward.

Battle-fire blazing in morning air,  
Phoenix-flame gracing the one tree, out at field's-edge, in  
the still grove.

We, breathless, pick our way over the battlefield  
crunching 'cross broken glass past smoking shellholes,  
toward the field's edge,  
dodging always-falling wreckage of the two great airships  
that have crossed their ways by accident  
and will now collide forever:  
the silver blimp christened Time  
and her escort ship, the Memory.

—William D. Nolan

## Extensions

An orange line cut into indigo  
a silver spider on the wind,  
the jet contrail flares  
from zenith to horizon,  
its heart caught in the failing light.

Below on black ribbons  
cruisers with twin taillights sail  
stitching red and amber streamers  
thinly through the dusk.  
A memory of Mondrian:  
space enclosed by line  
unrealized.

—H. John Schaefer

H. John Schaefer is a graduate student in education. He presently lives in "Lord have mercy" Shelbyville and has published in the *Ballantonian*, *Stoney Lonesome I and II*, *Indiana Writes*, and *Alkahest*.

## Satin Doll

### Colleen Bolden

Colleen Bolden, a senior majoring in journalism, considers her writing merely an extension of herself. Future plans include law school. Both of her stories that appear in this issue of *Genesis* were written for a class in creative writing taught by Dr. Mary Louise Rea. "Satin Doll" has been published previously in *Womankind*, an Indianapolis based magazine.

"Satin Doll, that's what we called her. All the fellows thought she was the finest thing walking," my grandmother said. "I didn't know we'd end up on opposite sides of the same family then, back in the forties." She continued, "Collester was built like a brickhouse, with long coal black hair, a super tiny waist and shapely legs—the only girl in her family so she was able to look like a doll. Yes honey, your Aunt Collester was a regular man-killer back then."

Grandmother paused before she added, "She's still a good-looking woman. You can see a lot of that Indian blood in her; you know her mother was a Cherokee. I remember when she was doing hair. She went to school right there in the Walker Building, down on Indiana Avenue. Yeah, graduated from Madame C.J. Walker Beauty School. Her father owned a barber shop on the circle but later moved the business over on the Avenue. Honey, Collester could step out in a different outfit every weekday and change up twice on the weekends. I mean shoes, hat, coat and purse to match. Me—I was glad to have a coat. I guess that's the difference between those who have children and those who don't. But, the good Lord watched over us just the same."

I smiled as grandmother told me more of Aunt Collester. I could picture her a real satin doll. Once I asked Aunt Collester about her nickname. She blushed and admitted that she was a "clothes horse." That same afternoon we reminisced; first she'd remember a story, then I'd recall an incident. We laughed especially hard over one time when I was six.

That day Auntie was kind enough to be my babysitter. Because I was young, I didn't like to stay at her house—it

was old, it smelled old and it was filled with old people.

During my stay at Auntie's, she demanded that I "sit still and be quiet." This was difficult for a six-year-old surrounded by old folks, dressed in drab clothes, smoking filterless cigarettes and soggy cigars. The grown-ups spit tobacco into half-filled coffee cans used as spittoons, watched the six o'clock news and spoke of aches, pains—and who's died, who's sick and who's who. They'd yawn and doze, wheeze and snore and their heads would drop from their shoulders but they'd catch them before they fell off. Certainly, I twitched in my seat from boredom and I was willing to make any noise to break the monotony.

Auntie cautioned me again by saying, "Children are to be seen, not heard. Speak only when spoken to." She came and sat next to me, maybe for added encouragement but probably to be close enough for a "pop." I held my breath through most of our sit-together, closing my lungs from the smoke. I noticed her feet were swollen; they were fat, and there was no difference between her ankles and the meaty parts of her leg. She had on pink house slippers and socks on top of her stockings. I saw patches of light and dark pigmentation on her legs—like the skin of a dairy cow. Her hair was always braided except when she got dressed up and that wasn't often. She wore a printed house dress with a night shirt on top. Her fingers were short, stubby and wrinkled with four diamond rings piled on her ring finger while the rest were bare. Her glasses hung at her neck, like a necklace, attached to a chain, the frame of one side held together by masking tape. She'd doze off to sleep if I sat quietly but if I took a deep breath, she'd awaken quickly.

I had to do something. The commercial between the news and the Reasoner Report seemed prime time to escape, so at this point I blurted out, "I have to go to the bathroom."

She excused me from the room and I left with the intentions of making my short trip as long as possible. In the bathroom, I found glistening bottles of cosmetics and red tones of rouge and lipsticks. I inhaled colognes and toilet waters. I was a grown-up woman putting on makeup.

The fantasy ended abruptly. I sensed the presence of Aunt Collester before I saw her image in the mirror; perhaps I was too successful in my attempt to make my

trip longer, or perhaps the scent of perfume lured Auntie's nose to the bathroom. I looked at the switch in her hand and burst into tears of fright. I felt pain before the first lick. But Aunt Collester gave me a forgiving smile and pointed me out of the bathroom with the switch.

As we ended our story, Auntie said "See Sweetie, I wasn't really going to whip you but I sure did scare you good. We didn't have no trouble with you that day."

All my life I've spent much time with Aunt Collester. I used to be afraid of her: she was a witch in a haunted house. The rooms were dark and dreary. All the shelves were dusty—newspapers stacked in corners, piled in chairs and under tables—yellow and as old as I was. I remember her copy of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and the basement door that opened from the kitchen floor and the upstairs where old people had died.

Today, the picture hasn't changed much but my fear is gone. Her house is historic, like a museum, full of old and unusual items. I spend hours in this drawer or that closet or in conversation that explores her years. At my last visit, we cleaned out a closet and found shoes that she used to wear, back in style again by coincidence—my size. I brought home a bag full, like new because she had hardly worn them. And before I left, she gave me her fox coat.

I had the coat cleaned. I got dressed up in it and went over to Aunt Collester's. When she saw me in her new old fox coat, she smiled and said, "I always felt elegant in that coat. Don't you?"

"Yes," I answered, "I do feel elegant—just like a real satin doll."

## The Last Time

Colleen Bolden

Thunder shook the window and I sat up, wide-eyed and tense, listening. I had learned, out of necessity, to distinguish the breathing patterns of my family. I listened for a long slow wheeze for my mother and a shorter, more rapid breath for my brother. But I listened most carefully for a heavy, gruff snore for Daddy. He was absent from the house, like many nights, this night. Now I rested, uneasy waiting.

I didn't dare sleep, not yet, not much for the past two years. I would nap during the day because I knew that Daddy's mood was unpredictable at night. I never felt safe until after he was asleep, so I came to have built-in mechanisms, like a smoke alarm, which alerted me to danger. As time went on, these mechanisms became sensitive enough to recognize Daddy's car coming down the street. I had learned all the sounds in our area, like Mr. Walker leaving his house at eleven-thirty during the week and Mr. Moore coming home from work at twelve midnight. Any other car would probably be Daddy's.

As I sat in bed, I remembered nights from the past, like the time I heard Daddy slam his car door hard. He walked to the house quickly. I wasn't sure what to expect but his step indicated that he was upset or even worse—mad. He stepped into the house and even while downstairs, he threw a chair against the wall and a picture across the room. Then he stomped slowly to the steps, pausing, slowly up one step, waiting, and thumping on another, thinking, plotting who knows what. I slid to the bottom of my bed hiding and praying, "Oh dear God, please don't let him kill us. Please."

Would tonight be like the past? Would Daddy come home and pass my door in a rational state going straight to his room to sleep, or would he sit downstairs quietly in the dark for hours, planning something bizzare like the time he tried to bash-in Mamma's head with the iron? These questions raced through my mind until again, in reality, it started to happen.

I heard Daddy coming down our street. He hit his breaks hard enough to make the car skid. He walked to the front door quickly and when he shook his keys the sound shook fear into my soul. Then I heard something—a foot kicking in the door. It hit the wall. "Goddamnit Martha," he roared, "where the hell are you?"

I jumped from my bed and looked downstairs. There Daddy stood, like a stout soldier, firey-eyed and red in the face. He started to curse and his eyes whirled towards the back of his head. His fingers pointed and he hissed out his words like an animal in attack. Sweat beaded up across his forehead. I ran to get Mamma but she was already beside me. We got into my bed. She was against the wall and I was closer to the door and while trembling, we held one another.

Daddy started up the stairway, more powerful with each step. He went directly to his room looking for Mamma. He went to my younger brother's room but Davey was alone, asleep. He stalked through the house, room by room, looking for Mamma and telling her, "I'm gonna beat you 'til you're softer than pulp."

When he opened the door to my room, the light from the hallway flashed on my face, not on Mamma. Then Daddy wandered off into the darkness of the house. We didn't know where but we could hear him in the distance bellowing, "Martha, I'll teach you to file your taxes alone. I'll kill you."

Mamma got out of bed and eased the bedroom door open. She peeped out into the hallway but she didn't see Daddy. She planned to go down the steps and out the door, fleeing in only her gown, but just as she started, she saw Daddy and Daddy saw her. He had a gun. Mamma turned and ran back to her room. She searched for her gun and found it before Daddy got there. From my bedroom, I telephoned the police. Daddy was mad enough to use his gun and Mamma was scared enough to use hers. When I got to

their room, I saw Mamma shoot once at Daddy. The bullet broke the mirror. She shot again, but the bullet left only a hole in the wall. Five bullets—like giant sparks—before the gun jammed. Daddy stood tall and unhurt.

Mamma threw her gun and started to run but there was no where to go. The room closed in on her and she found herself in a corner. Daddy pursued her like a hunter closing in on his prey. He drew back his fist and plunged it into her face. The force threw her body against the wall. She cried, "Please David, please don't kill me." Blood mixed with tears around her mouth. A knot, the size of a golfball, had risen on her forehead and because of pain, her eyes would no longer hold a steady position. All the space of the house was packed into this corner and here her body collapsed to the floor. She was limp but I heard her whisper, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want." Still, Daddy hit her hard and continuously as if there was no God.

I ran to help Mamma. I stepped between them, stooped and hugged her. She hugged me back and sighed, "Thank God." Daddy dropped his gun, turned and left the house. The police never arrived. I wiped Mamma's head with cold towels and helped her walk back to bed. The house was quiet and my brother still asleep. I started downstairs but stopped on the landing. I sat on the window seat with tears, long and deeply rooted, dropping off my cheeks. Gazing out the window I asked if this would be the last time. No one answered. The rain had stopped but the moon was still covered with thick, gray, fleeting clouds.

## The Trained Blues

Marcy Wenzler

Marcy Wenzler, 26, is an evening division law student and graduate assistant in the division of labor studies.

Strange music, the sound of trains. Sharp, piercing notes locked together in a mystery of noise, music, progressions. Some shaggy conductor, some modern must have heard this and tried to interpret it for the starched-black audience. But this train is merely playing the intersection, downtown Indianapolis, rubbing back and forth, lazily; perhaps waiting for the excitement of speed. Sound of impatience. That sound fits me now. That sound keeps me away from the law. The flips, claps of briefcases, shuffling, stirring of smallprint pages, trying to break up this fantasy, this love affair with a midtown train.

I remember a fuller sound. Of deep, late-night trains, forever distant, wandering. Don't all children know the sound of night trains? Me thinking that tracks shift in the dark, like sand shifts, and the passengers never knowing where they might end up. And some shaggy conductor understanding the movement and interpreting passages for some Pullman audience. The squeaks of this machine, the lyrical argument between track and train, remind me of a high-pitched whale song slowed down. The notes sounded carefully, each full of meaning, relating to others the pains and joys of its travels. The song related, whale breaches in exultation, knowing its tale to be told.

I'm waiting for this train to do likewise, to double up and in a frenzied leap to breach tracks and escape into time and fantasy. I have tracks before me—contracts—and my own kind of breach.

Red-sweatered children bail and roll from a blue van angle-parked on the grass in Military Park. The train is silent now. Back to the track.

Within me is some unfounded determination.

**Buffalo**

Fast as a slug  
 Slow as the moisture laden  
 August wind  
 I run  
 Through the night.  
 Pounding out the rhythms  
 Of a body  
 Gone to rust  
 From disuse  
 It feels good  
 To move again!  
 Locust sing  
 Night birds peep  
 The clouds barely seen  
 In the moonless sky  
 Hang motionless  
 Allowing only a couple stars  
 Their access  
 To my eye.  
 Pounding around dark holes  
 Wading through fine sand at intersections  
 Rhythmically  
 Going mindless  
     One  
     Two  
     One  
     Two  
 On and one  
 Between street lights  
 Panting and moaning  
 With a confident smile  
 Like the Tin Man  
 When Dorothy provided the oil.  
 Vague thoughts  
 Moving at the corners  
 Of my mind . . .  
 Thoughts of writing a new poem  
 Of conflicts with those around me

## GENESIS

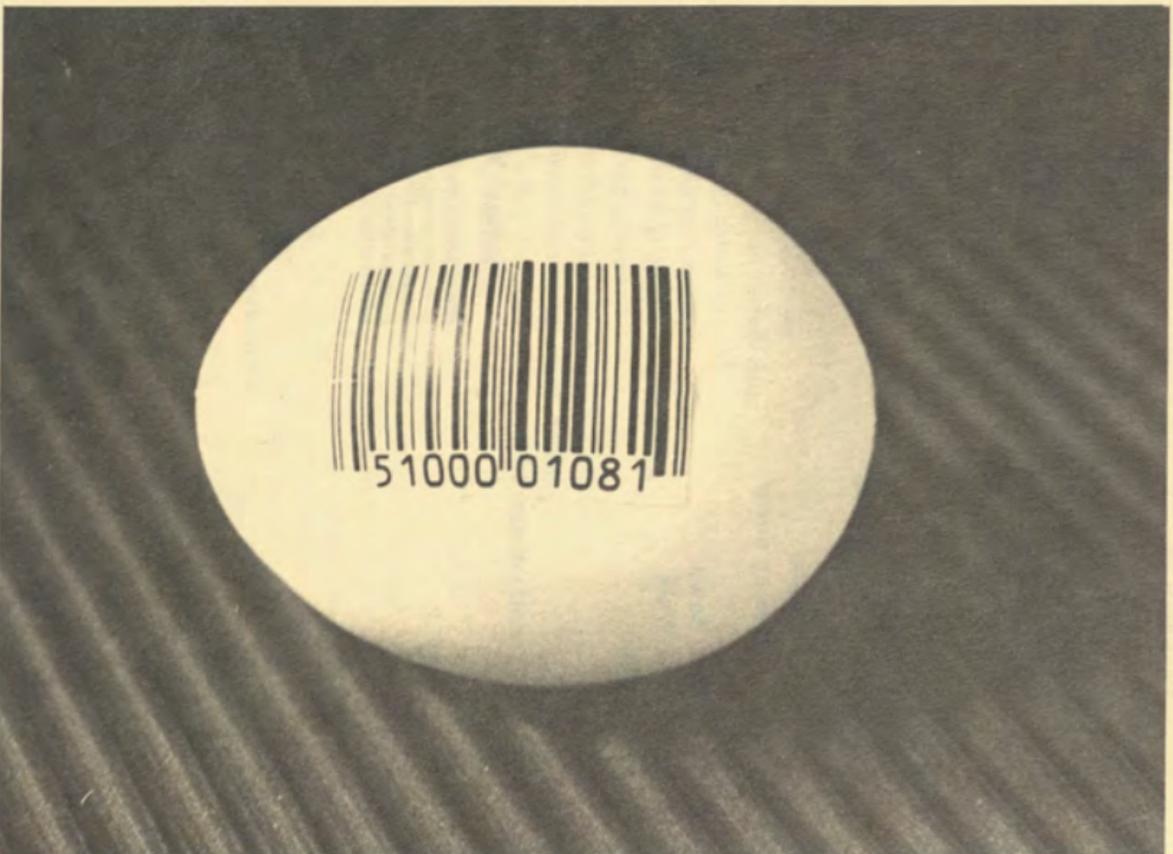
Of medicine and study  
And my wife.  
Pounding on  
Miss her  
Gonna be another month  
She's only been gone one week . . .  
Lightning bug flickers  
Seems rather too high  
In the air  
Guess it must be  
Playing too.  
Can't keep this up  
For long  
The rhythm  
Is breaking down  
Better  
Slow down  
And Walk.  
(Sigh)

### —Michael Wenzler

**Michael Wenzler, 25,** is an obscure medical ecobiologist who suffers frequent self-induced seizures of unreality.

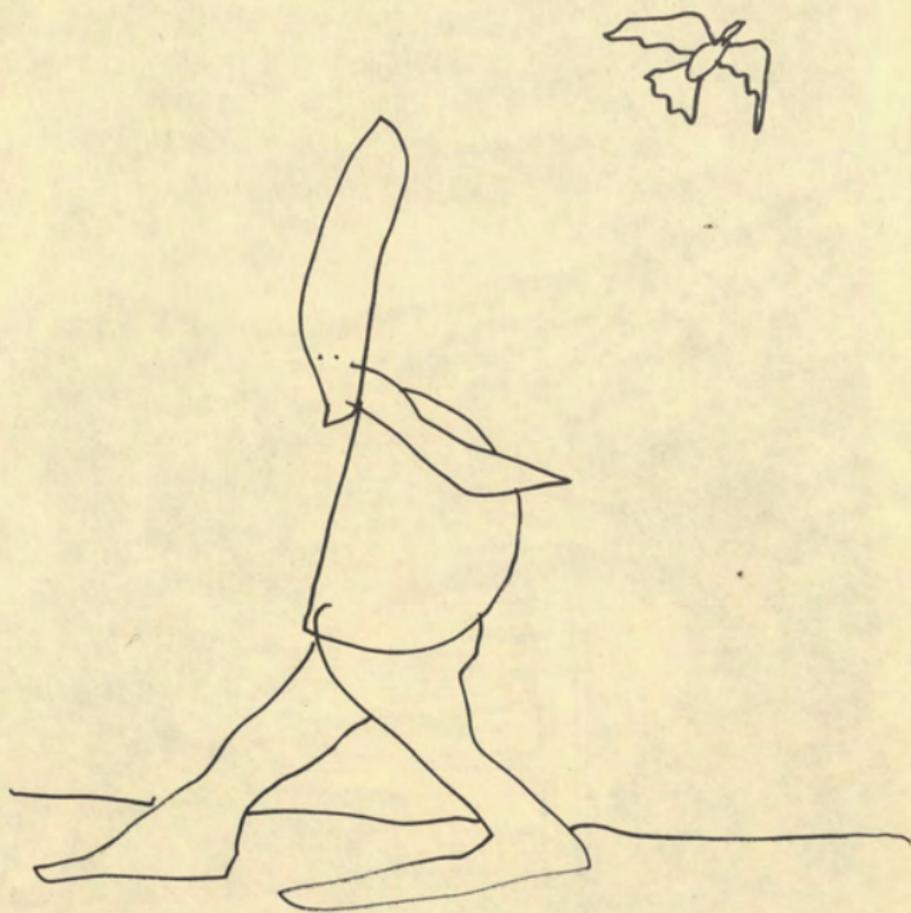
GENESIS

**Evidence of Man**

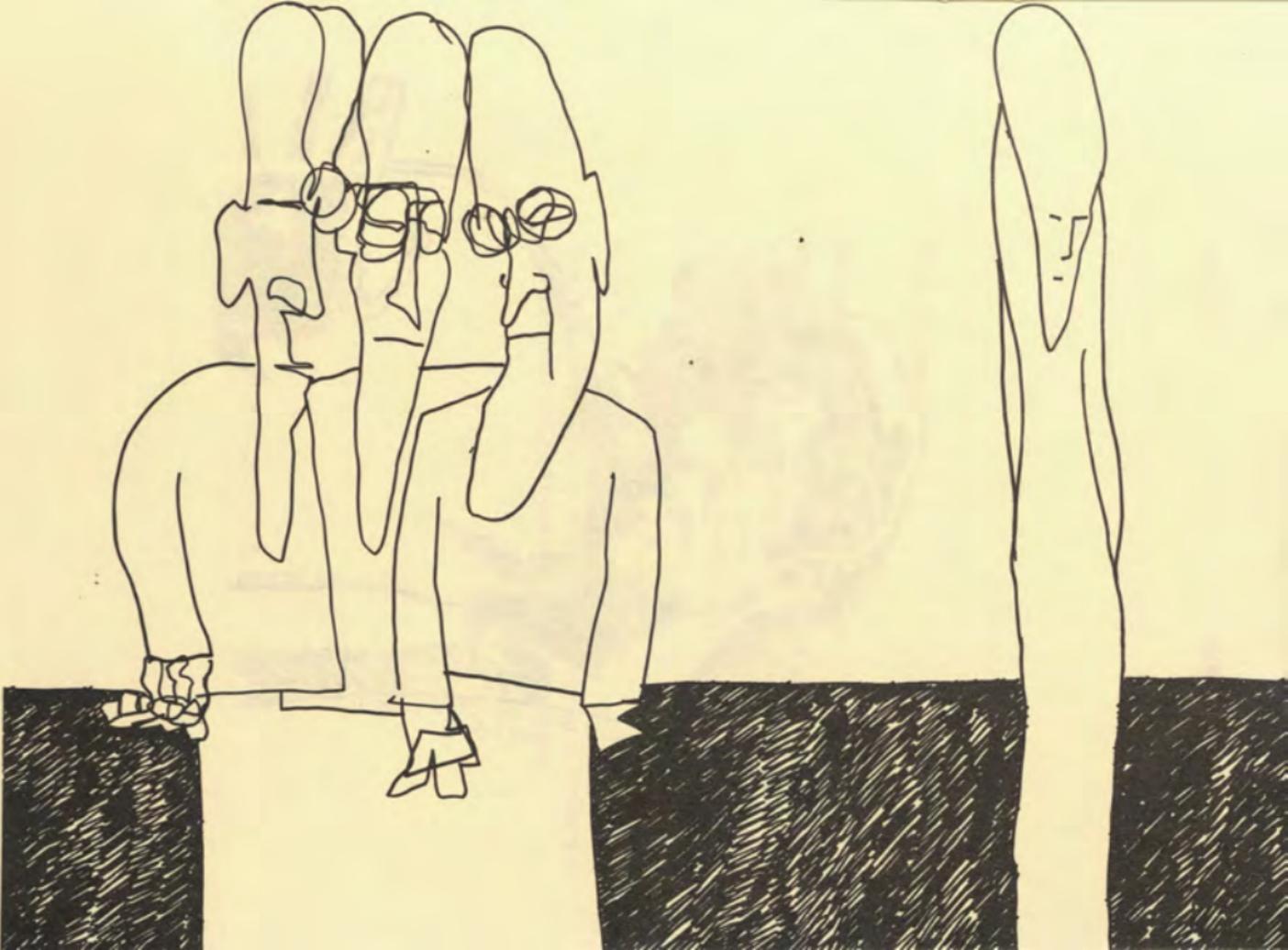


— Maryellen Arthur





—Steven Levine



—Steven Levine



## The Artists

Maryellen Arthur, "Evidence of Man."

Mike Drippe' is a student of philosophy and an artist, who, when not involved in solving the enigmas of the world, creates art that furthers those enigmas. This particular creation is entitled "The Origins of Philosophy."

Steve Levine, two line drawings.

Tom McCain is a history major and a commercial artist who also does cartoons and artwork for the *Sagamore*.

## Don't Call For Me

Wooden  
 Tulip pen in hand  
 I slow the day  
 From the frenzied  
 Whirling dervish  
 To a more rhythmic progression of ideals

Sitting,  
 I dream.  
 Dreaming,  
 I sleep . . .  
     And in my sleep  
       I fall  
        Down  
        Endless  
        Skies of  
        Sundown  
        Clouds and  
        Radiant light  
        Slowly,  
        Consciousness  
        Fades  
        As my cold  
        December body  
        Warms . . .

Warmth  
 I feel a peaceful radiance  
 Filling my body  
 The sunlight  
 Through my eyelids is a soothing red  
 I roll to feel the moss covered rock  
 Beneath  
 My fingers stroke the moist velvet surface  
 As my eyes open  
 A green more alive than any  
 I've known before

## GENESIS

Bursts into my mind  
Contrasting so completely  
From the red  
A moment ago.  
A gentle sloping hillside  
Covered with a dense yellow fern grass  
Birch trees scattered here and there  
An aqua stream flowing  
    about the hill  
A dense forest of autumn colors  
    beyond.  
Above the sky  
Is peopled by great thunderheads  
With streaks of ice crystals  
Far above.  
Moment by moment  
I see the tops of the thunderclouds  
Boil  
As warm updrafts  
Shoot aloft  
So much motion above  
So little below.  
No sound  
Not even a gentle wind  
Except, now the soft sucking  
    sounds of the brook.  
Naked, I am poised  
Most ungracefully  
Upon the moss  
Breathing deeply  
The fragrance of the place  
Without wind  
The smells change  
Constantly  
They activate a memory here  
An emotion there  
Slowly helping  
To unwind my self.

## GENESIS

A faint breeze  
Moves the hair  
On my back  
And as I turn  
I see a white possum  
Sitting silently  
Watching  
Me.  
The dark, deep eyes  
Are calm and knowing  
The mouth  
A trace of knowing  
The humorous answer  
An imperceptible, gentlemanly  
Nod of recognition  
A bow of friendship  
And a non-verbal greeting  
A thoughtful pause  
Head tilted to one side  
And then fading . . .  
Gone.  
A stronger breeze  
Fronds move in waves  
Birch leaves ripple  
Sun side  
Under side  
Sun side.  
Slowly standing  
Carefully treading  
To the bank  
Gazing into the water  
Moving so seductively  
Embracing the shores  
Life, in a myriad of shapes  
Drifting by  
Indescribable.  
Lying down in the warm  
Water  
Letting the current  
Steal my presence.

GENESIS

Drifting in midstream  
Floating  
Clouds and limbs  
And flowers and leaves  
Dancing by overhead.

Thinking gone  
Feeling complete  
Liberated from the winter world  
In an eternal world  
Of always-summer  
Don't call for me  
    My ears are beneath the water  
    I am free.

—Michael Wenzler

## The Killing of the Squirrel

I think I'll build a  
wooden heart. I'll  
poison it parrot green,  
and carry it in a painted crate,  
and laugh while it screams,  
"Oh!" "Oh no!" "Oh no!"  
and I'll bury it squawking,  
and glittering,  
and splintering,  
like axed wood in August.  
I'll bury it under the  
squirrel's wintering tree.  
And then,  
with the sea in my mouth,  
I'll cut four legs  
from my limbs and I'll table  
the top with marble and you  
may feast on fish eggs and  
marshmallows and gum drops  
and limes,  
until—  
the tear's needles that  
pierce my eyes are gone.

—Ethel Kersey

## Malaise

Lady, don't you know you can't seduce loneliness.  
It rests, like the latticed fingers of early light  
on your left breast.  
It will rise in your throat with its own rasping voice  
carrying the salt of the crying you never hear,  
or whispering the sigh  
that stitches thought to lie  
persimmon on the tongue.  
It will last a lifetime, lady.

Lady, don't you know it was a thief who peeled your bones  
that winter morning, jauntily wrapping  
the skin of you  
in a discarded candy bar wrapper?  
Now, even your eyes sweep  
the bare earth unlidded,  
wary with waiting.  
Lady, you're like the cactus cracking from the  
heat of its own loneliness.

—Ethel Kersey

## The Color of Cerise

Sometimes,  
Mr. Bakerman, when I'm alone,

I smell your fat  
hissing my feet

and I leap, oh yes,  
I bloom from the burning,

like a popcorn sky-rocketing  
to the top

of the heap,  
the round, fat, mound,

bone-faced, to be  
shoveled out and consumed.

Little Aryan girl,  
You — WASP — you!

Shut up!  
Go play with your tinker toys.

You've no right to  
run with the big boys.

Even that model  
mademoiselle couldn't.

With her word pies baked  
to dust in her mouth

she died. I've a shelf  
in my mind, Mr. Bakerman,

where I hide from you,  
for awhile.

—Ethel Kersey

Ethel Kersey takes courses as a non-degree graduate student while working at the Blake street library as a reference librarian.

Morality cries, "I see!" (the creation)  
Cognition asserts, "I understand!" (the creation)  
Aesthetics whispers, "I am!" (the creator)

—Sandy Tatay

Sandra Meadows Tatay is a student in the school of life, but at the university she is a junior, majoring in Philosophy in the School of Liberal Arts. This is her first published work.

You dip your fingers  
Nimble weavers  
Into my neck.  
My passions rise like incense  
For your enjoyment.  
My words separate beneath your fine eye  
Crusts of creativity removed,  
Scraped up  
Beneath your lead-lined fingernails  
You've taken my tongue  
A laughing blue Egret snatched it up  
In his liquid silver jaws.

Now you've broken my pencils  
Left me in a bed of empty canvas and  
Invisible ink  
Now  
You throw your head back onto my lap and smile  
Waiting for me to stroke your hair.  
Outside my window a bird sings  
Struggling in your symbolic grasp.  
Listen,  
Once I saw a sable fox run smiling  
With pure acid in his teeth.

—Lisa Cox

To whisper  
Through paralyzed lips  
My locked throat words  
Broken into oily black spots of  
Black Widow reason  
Bashed  
Against the red hourglass of your tongue.  
To fill your eyelashes with sleep glue  
And green fingers to trace your larynx  
Up to your eyes.  
To run scaling dead skin across the  
Completeness of your face.  
To send drops of acid hurling downward  
And mice to nibble wholeheartedly  
The red webbed lace  
Between your fingers  
To send books without words  
And pictures without lines  
And moments scalding in lunacy  
With moons bright images to be cut  
And peeled across your death mask.  
To give this and more,  
I love you

—Lisa Cox

## GENESIS

### I.

Dionysus  
Set you up your idol  
Worship my fruited  
Wine-filled gaze.  
Upon vanquished knee cartilage  
Bury your ochre beard in  
My eyebrows  
Settle you up  
Amid my knees  
You are the only god left  
Who smiles.

### II.

Earliest Prudence  
Swallowed whole by your father  
Was it hard for you to take?  
Did you kick the shingles from his throat  
Dig your nails into his tonsils?  
Here's a silver coin  
Buy yourself a knife.

### III.

Grey-Eyed  
Athena  
To prove your art  
You turned her into a spider  
She wove her colors better even than you  
One meaning she weaves now in all her webs,  
A god's wrath is not so godly a thing.

### IV.

Zeus  
Purloin yourself into our hearts  
Turn yourself into a cockleshell  
To hide from her peacock eyes  
And ride laughing  
Into Olympus  
With a snake on your back.

## GENESIS

V.  
Pluto  
Purple-haired  
Only half a god  
Leather clenched between sweaty palms  
Straining  
And  
Churning  
As your black ID's  
Came scratching through the earth  
Persephone thought she saw thunder  
Erupt from that field.

—Lisa Cox

Seeing you  
Unexpected lightning  
From a cloudless sky  
Your lady at your side  
Her eyes like brown moss  
Tree-filled and soft  
Cried out  
You took her hand  
Assuring how little I meant  
And searched my face  
For something you'd left  
And whispering martyrdom  
And empty July nights  
I smiled

—Lisa Cox

Lisa Cox, 19, is a student at Herron, has taught three courses at Free University, (Creative Hypnosis, Progressive Relaxation, and Witchcraft), and loves drawing, philosophy, and writing poetry. For her poems in this issue she is co-winner of the *Genesis* prize for poetry.

## Jill

### Elizabeth Hostein

**Elizabeth Hostein** started college at 39 and went on to receive a Master's Degree from Butler University. She is married and has three daughters. One daughter is studying in France, another is a student at Indiana University, Bloomington, and the third is a student in the Noble Shelter Workshop. Presently, Elizabeth is teaching at the Cold Springs School for the Handicap.

Her short story, "Jill," was written for a creative writing class taught by Dr. Mary Louise Rea.

Her alarm was set for five o'clock. Our appointment was at one. I looked at the mass of long, brown hair that curled at the ends and the large, wide, brown, often haunting eyes, now covered in sleep. White, ghost-like skin and the well-developed ten-year-old body showed partially from under under the covers. She was tall for her age, with broad shoulders, slim hips, and unusual hands—the long fingers like a pianist's.

I quickly entered the bedroom and began to finish the packing for the trip, knowing that I would once more have a sleepless night.

I could hear her stir in the early morning darkness, bumping the furniture in her room, dressing, checking her suitcase. The bed had squeaked while she slept—restlessly, awakening, then dozing—frightened. She'd taken her bath the evening before and laid out her clothes.

At five, the house was cold and my robe was not adequate as I hurried down the stairs. We had never gotten up this early before. For her the darkness was a scary monster. The water splashed against the basin—she was brushing her teeth—now it stopped—silence. She was combing her long, brown hair. It fell below her waist making curls on the very end, causing Brooke and Tracy to be envious. She had no friends.

"Hurry! Mom," she called. "I'd like some waffles, please." Her skip echoed on every other step.

She sat down and began eating her favorite breakfast. Food was something she never refused—she drank her milk, wiped her mouth with the napking—never a sound.

"Oh! I forgot to make my bed."

"We will excuse you this time. This is a special day."

She finished her breakfast; then her father loaded the station wagon. He'd always favored her—the first born, with melting brown eyes and a smile, a special smile for him—and now, to pay her tuition, to help her, he would borrow thousands of dollars on his life insurance. From the first, she'd call him Morton. When she was little, he would pick her up, swing her high and sit her on his shoulders. Now his face was prematurely lined and sad.

A large, blue suitcase marked *Jill - 131* stood in the hall. It was still new. She had chosen it last year. It contained the required clothing list—fourteen pairs of under pants, eight pairs of slacks, twelve blouses, all marked 131.

During the past month, we had altered hand-me-downs, repaired seams and holes, taken up hems, and bought several new things. Jill had helped, threading the needle and cutting the labels, one by one, from the roll. Marabell, she decided, would be the doll to go along—she'd use the red sled this time and maybe next year they'd teach her to ice skate. Every afternoon we'd talk about the nuns—why they wore black, why they must have devoted their lives to God, and their reasons for the constant praying and hope they must give the world. Some of this she could understand—other times she would sit and smile with that vacant stare.

We'd practiced using the telephone. It would be long distance, I explained, and when we called to say hello, she couldn't waste money sitting there.

She'd asked, "Why must I hurry? You'll be on the other end."

"It's expensive calling long distance. Jill, you'll be approximately five hundred miles from home and we will be anxious to hear about you and your new experiences," I answered.

We'd promised to write a letter once a week. She would have to ask Sister Carol Marie to read it to her, and perhaps, when Sister had time, she would write a letter home.

Last fall, Sister Carol Marie had said, "Use only the first name—then the identity could be kept secret—just in case." So the sled had 131 painted on it and Marabell's right leg displayed 131 awkwardly. Marabell wouldn't have liked this. She was a classy doll.

Ever since November I had worried. Would they discipline her harshly? Would they really understand? Brooke and Tracy felt guilty now that she was actually leaving. They envied her—she was the oldest and going away.

Often the safety patrol boy would tell her she was a blue fairy. He would not let her go across the walk until she fluttered her wings and flew. She thought the school children liked her, and she would do it. Then the fourth graders chanted, "Blue fairy, blue fairy," and made her flop her arms. Brooke and Tracy would rescue her—all three in tears, running home. Maybe St. Coletta's would be the solution.

After breakfast, she watered her begonias and hugged Troubles.

"Be good," she said, "I'll be back." She kissed his whiskers. The whiskers were special—she remembered the times she had trimmed them. She stroked his head and held one nail-polished paw between her fingers, rubbing it against her cheek. Brooke and Tracy began to cry.

"Be brave, be brave like me," she called as she climbed into the station wagon. "The time will go quickly."

Once we were on Route 30, the sun rose as the morning progressed. Super highways, restaurants, trucks and buses, great expanses of space hovered over and ahead of us.

After lunch we put gas in the station wagon and continued to chatter, listening to the car radio. Jill's questions came rapidly. What would her new friends be like? Would the nuns always wear the same dresses? Would they have a dog? Would they have a big cat like Troubles?

When we left the main highway, Jefferson appeared. One main street, postoffice, furniture store, a bank and Woolworth's came into view. St. Coletta's was five miles down an asphalt road that passed simple country houses, cows grazing in fields, an occasional barn with a silo, and miles of open space.

In front of us, huge yellow brick buildings stood out like giants. The main dormitory, with two elongated wings on each side, housed the girls. A large church with a gigantic gold cross loomed into the sky and cast a shadow on the barren fields. Shrubs made a fence, with tall pines and firs hiding the panorama from the main road.

At the very top of the hill behind the school stood a ranch house. When you inquired about who lived there, the nuns would give out no information, but the newspapers and television were always reporting that Rosemary Kennedy had been its resident for years.

The school was a four-hundred acre farm that housed five hundred people, of various ages and needs. Those who could benefit from academic studies went to the regular school, while the others were taught a trade or skills for leisure time.

We parked the car in front of the main building. Jill jumped out with her blue suitcase and we walked up to the main door. She pushed the bell and a buzzer let us into a small entry way. High above was a circular stair in front of a double glass door. She bounced along, bumping the blue suitcase. I climbed more slowly, tugging a black plaid case and duffle bag. Morton balanced Marabell in one hand and manipulated the big red sled in the other. He held his head rigid and looked above Jill. I kept thinking, "I can't cry or she'll cry."

At the top Sister Agnes opened the big glass doors.

"Hello," she said. "Welcome to St. Coletta's. May I help you?"

"Yes, we're the Hosteins from Ohio, and you are expecting Jill."

The staircase appeared larger as we curved our way to the upper glass door. Sweat poured from my hand. "I can't cry because she'll cry." She seemed too simple and trusting to go away and leave—all five hundred miles.

Jill clutched her blue suitcase. Morton stood rigid, looking nowhere. We squeezed her hand. She fitted her fingers between his. I repeated, "You must be brave. Do what they want you to. Then you can learn more. You can even learn to read."

"Yes, Mama, I'll be good. Don't let Brooke sleep in my room. Tracy can play with my old doll and take care of Troubles."

We entered through the glass door into a hallway covered with an oriental carpet and walked along to a small private sitting room. As you entered you could feel the good-byes and the tears. According to the plaques on the wall, each piece of furniture had been given to the school. An antique sofa and two Queen Anne Chairs looked in-

viting, but we all stood there when Sister Carol Marie led Jill away. A Rubens Crucifixion scene hung on the wall. Morton was looking up above the painting; a tear slid down his cheek. As I gazed at the Crucifixion painting, I asked, "The answer? Please have an answer."

## Storybooks

I've sensed a lack of mutuality here lately  
A feeling that perhaps I've missed the significance  
Of your silences and omissions  
Of things not done by you and words not said  
Innocently I attributed it all to shyness  
To your being the strong and silent stereotype  
Remaining taciturn in the face of your deep emotions for  
me  
But then in a slow dawn it came to me, so clear  
Now I wonder, with great shame;  
What am I doing here?

— Caroline Owens

## Consolation

I am not a versatile poet  
I write of my pains far easier than my joys  
When I am hurt I go to my room  
And play with my words like toys.

— Caroline Owens

## Shadows

Spectacular in psychopathic technicolor,  
my multicolored memories  
are haunting me,  
taunting me,  
beckoning, bickering,  
flickering on and off.  
Some are bright  
and some are soft,  
the red is bad,  
but olive-drab's insane.

Once I wore my crew-cut hair  
with a uniform  
that was adorned  
with brightly painted plastic crap,  
and more than that,  
the blood of other men.

The Far East Crusades  
were a shameful waste,  
I surely wasn't meant to taste  
forbidden fruit  
from monsoon rains,  
or know the thrill  
it is to kill,  
and want to sleep  
at peace again.

At old war movies  
I tend to cry,  
for the "good guy"  
is always welcomed home  
with joyful eyes  
and tearful sighs,  
but when I returned  
my world was gone.

## GENESIS

Absence makes the heart grow fonder,  
"lonely" caused my Love to wander.  
Vows and rings  
are binding things  
that cannot bend  
but fall apart,  
like people do when love departs.

Basic black with rounded heels  
and haunted eyes  
that won't reveal  
the summer dreams  
we used to share  
until she felt I didn't care  
because I wasn't with her, there.

My epitaph contains no wrath.

IT'S ALL IN VAIN

FOR IN THE GAME OF PROVING I'M A MAN,  
I'VE ENJOYED AS MUCH AS I CAN STAND!!

—Hadley

## And She Shall Die No More

*"And Death shall be no more: Death thou shalt die. . ."*

— JOHN DONNE

### Pauline H. O'Guinn

Pauline H. O'Guinn is a senior with majors in English Literature and Language and Psychology, and a minor in Modern Lit. She is interested in all forms of creative and interpretive art. Her work was written for Professor Blasingham's advanced expository writing class and is her first publication.

Why didn't I mourn her when she died? Why was there no special sense of loss when she was buried? Why was there no feeling of guilt or anguish when the final breath was drawn? It took some time to comprehend. And when the coffin was being lowered into the ground, and the icy winds blew the canvas grave covering with huge gushes that made sharp flapping sounds, I came to know that I had done my mourning for her while she lived.

Shall I hope or despair? Shall I weep, or be silent? Shall I mourn again, or be resolved? She wakes eternally. Every formulation of the situation is explored, and every possible result of the forthcoming findings of a suffering heart lays bare before me as I remember.

Death—she was always surrounded by death, or so it seemed to me. So when the time did finally come that she was to encounter death on its most intimate terms, the confrontation seemed almost as much a part of what her essence was as any other aspect of her substance. The final act itself was like the placing of that last tile in the mosaic that was her life. It provided the necessary tension that held a span together, time in this case. It formed a shroud. In the great montage that is this world, somewhere, between the beginning and the end, engulfed in modes of sorrow, was her life, but always there was death.

My first strong memories of her occurred at another celebration of death, my father's, when I was only five. Later I was told she had already given over to death two small children. She was to mourn her mother, father, and five of six brothers and sisters. She comforted, and cared for, and mourned another spouse in later years. There was,

as long as she was living, life—but there was also death. It was as though that pall of death was never completely raised from her. As I grew older the feeling was oppressive for me and with a unity of thought and feeling I wanted to be able to help her, to provide solace, to make her happy. Through all those years she lived, she never seemed, to me, to be happy. I mourned her all my years and death was present like a specter from my first memories of her until her final day.

In the between years I keenly felt a responsibility, foolishly of course, to compensate and was severely saddened that I could not accomplish my most desired goal. Yes, the specter was always present, sometimes most blatantly obvious, other times just faintly so. In my youthful and idealistic innocence, I could not know, nor could I have understood, the problems of an adult adjusting to, or failing to adjust to, the human condition. And I could not distinguish among those things one cannot change, those things one does not want to change, or those things one does not even know can be changed.

She never seemed to be quite comfortable with life. What kind of primordial images from the collective unconscious filled her sleepless nights? I know that along the way she thought that she would welcome death more than life—when her hope was low. There was the note I accidentally found addressed “To whom it may concern. . .” It must have been a desolate hour when, alone, she composed those soulful words. How do children find things supposedly well concealed? I used to close the door from time to time to see if that ominous message was still in place until one day, it was no longer there. I never spoke of it to anyone; she never knew. Then there was relief, almost forgotten now. Her spirit had found a *locus*, now it was secured. But I had mourned.

In later years she planned her funeral down to the smallest choice. She was, oh, so independent—sufficient unto herself—to endure as long as she must. She put her house in order, although it was a long and solemn wait before rest and sleep did come. God, or fate, was too kind to inflict the mockery of physical agony on her frail person—until the last few months.

## GENESIS

A negligent hospital staff allowed an accident to occur. Painful surgery and the inability to ever walk again was the result. I mourned her more deeply than ever. Later, somewhat resigned, we kept the somber night vigil—told not to hope. But she surprised us; we found how strong her spirit was, had always been.

It seemed appropriate that when the time came for her to leave us, it was a day in December and snow blanketed the ground. My sorrow ended in the winter; the tragic rhythm flow continues. When spring has come again and death shall be no more, I shall know that I have looked death in the face and I was not afraid. From one of modest fortitude, who did not know how to surrender to the poignant demands of this ordered and disordered world, I have my heritage. I do not mourn her now because I mourned her then. The love she gave, the courage she embodied sustains me now—and I am proud.

our  
father who does art in heaven  
how did you know my name?  
thy kingdom come  
art will be done  
in my heart as it is  
in heaven

he caught me writing something about van gogh, careers in  
art  
and sleeping around  
this made me want to write louder  
it's the heart susi the heart after all  
we play punk music real loud and  
all join in on the la la la's  
we can live here  
let's hear it for the heart and dedication and van gogh eyes  
i wanna be a real artist

give us the pay our daddies said  
would make us blind but good in bed  
and forgive us our trespasses as we  
forgive those who do do art in heaven  
and lead us not into careers in art but  
let us make some money  
for your art is the power and the glory  
but ours is the heart forever

ah zen

— Pamela Sue Keller

*Pamela Sue Keller is an  
immigrant from the land  
of dreams.*

## J

Wafted by chance winds  
 A common spider  
 Void of vivid colors  
 Floats on from one locale.  
 Nervously pacing, racing,  
 She marks first her new nest's site  
 Then from her nondescript body  
 Flow aimlessly thin milky threads.  
 The labor goes on, weary days pass;  
 The fibers silken at the air's touch.  
 Still without pattern, the disorder grows  
 As the threads proliferate and tangle.  
 In spurts her terror at the change increases.  
 Then at last and suddenly spring's green-gold lights  
 A web of marvelous intricacy.  
 Each thread interlocks with countless others,  
 Each one trembles with fragility,  
 Each, a necklace of dew diamonds;  
 Together her plain body's threads  
 In unbreakable union  
 Give a shaky toegrip,  
 All she needs to live.

## — Jenny Lee Park

**Jenny Lee Park:** full-time secretary, part-time Women's Studies student at IUPUI. She has an Education B.S. from Oklahoma University, is still exploring Indiana. This poem's major inspiration is Jenny's daughter, Juliet Morgan, now 7 years old and beginning to spin her own interdependencies like all good feminists.

## Shooting Baskets

In this green world glowing  
between sunset and storm-break,  
a shirtless farmboy shoots baskets  
against the wall  
of the faded barn.

Caught up in the hollow bounce  
assured in motion  
in the muscle of his youth;  
he pivots and shoots,  
the magic line: desire,  
through heavy air  
the sure arc  
from fingertips to hoop.

Nearer, thunder booms  
like impacting boulders;  
his heart taps beneath his skin,  
he jumps  
flinging a rainbow of sweat  
a crown of dreams  
from his brow;  
sectionals, regionals, sweet Jesus  
the State, all in one shot.  
His grace is in striving.

The dirty rain begins  
and he rubs the chill  
from his smooth arms  
as summer light fades;  
though his hands cling  
to the dark ball  
he knows he is born to the line  
of the land and the arc  
of the plow.

## Running into the Sun

Running into the sun  
all my life,  
a glistening bone  
                                  my body sings  
over the broken fields,  
                                  songs  
fragile legs sustain:  
the dread of miles,  
the weight of weariness,  
the doubt in muscles,  
veins bursting deep inside like rockets.

Earth is only  
                                  thin as paper  
stretched taut,  
                                  a drumhead  
from dawn to dusk accepting  
my pale tattoo,  
the next dumb footfall.

I exist in exhaustion  
blind to the rushing end;  
flesh does not hold  
what the heart denies.

— H. John Schaefer

(Two giant pandas in  
National Zoo face breed-  
ing problem. This,  
frankly, won't do. Sad.  
Barren pair causes news-  
paper fuss; People's Republic  
gave those "bears" to us.  
Masters and Johnson can't  
always advise; visit to  
Chinese zoo opens our eyes.)

### Chinese Counsel Notes

Traveling zoo keepers  
learn ancient fact:  
too many calories  
complicate act.

No lovers' quarrel, no,  
nothing like that;  
only thing wrong — penned up  
pandas too fat.

Zoo people, wiser, re-  
duce pandas' food —  
lessen their obstacle,  
lighten their mood.

Bears hug in earnest; too  
clumsy when stout.  
Sleeker, slim pandas will  
surely make out.\*

\*Re problem, breed pandas:  
*File.* Keep in touch.  
Possibly Westerners  
all eat too much.

—Jane Tilford

Jane Tilford dallies with  
dactyls and studies  
philosophy.

