Dialogue

Staff and writers of Dialogue

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What kind of grinder should you use? If being traditional pleases you, use a mortar and pestle or a box grinder. Be prepared to take some time, though, and realize you will not have a consistent grind for all your effort. Since we live in the late twentieth century, however, an electric blade or burr grinder might be more appropriate. I use a blade grinder and have yet to be disappointed with the results.


I would encourage students to become aware of the societal pressures which influence our decision-making. Seniors know well the pressure that says, "Normal people get married in their early twenties. If you don’t marry you are a real loser!"


**CONTRIBUTORS**

*Amy Anderson* is a double major in art and art history. One of her hobbies is to study the adverse effects of no natural lighting and poor ventilation on fellow art students.

*Rebecca Bamford* could be reached for comment but didn’t have one.

*Claire Basney* grew up in Houghton, NY, which had a college but no grocery store. She began writing poems in high school, having drawn pictures of stories since she could hold a pencil.

All *Tanya Black* aspires to be in life is a cat. She not the cat quotes Alice Walker: "Oppressed hair puts a ceiling on the brain."

*Phil Boersma* says, "...all I know is, if I were a Transformer, I wouldn’t be Shockwave. I mean...what a wuss-ass!"

*Mike Byl* states, "I have given myself up to the process. I have no idea going in. Ultimately, it is absurd to believe we have any control whatsoever."

*Chris Doelman* told us that when Ralph Wiggum was told that he had failed English he exclaimed, "Me, fail Englsih? That’s impossible!"

*Kristi Dykstra* is a junior English major who works at Damon’s where, of course, she wears nude nylons although not by her choice.

*Megan Halteman* is a freshman philosophy major, whose life’s ambition is to see Mr. T play Othello.

*Besty McCasen* encourages you to eat hominy grits.

*Benjamin Nava* is a studente mexicano de "quasi-intercambio." Le encanta el cine, la fotografia y la comida muy picante.

*Marie O’Dell* prefers to refer to her future as the "glorious unknown."

*Carin Palasrok* likes people who smile a lot and actually say "hi" when you pass them.

*Ann Speyer* and *Amy Ray* have the same kind of running shoes.

*Jane E. Tebben* is a non-traditional student with a double major in English and religion. She is a single mother with two children, Mark and Kate.

*Tami Vanden Berg* lives with her harem of five men at 415 Giddings. If you’re interested in joining, call 774-6842.

*Sara Zuiderven* was trampled by a crazed cow as a child and now suffers lasting emotional scars.

*Peter Zylstra* likes trees.

On the cover: Orange Sweater, from two sides by Julia Anema, oil on board, 6x8"
POETRY

[untitled]
by Sarah Byker

Nude Nylons
by Kristi Dykstra

Jane E. Tebben: Four Poems
Realism on the Wall
Black Butts
Awaiting A Rising
Extended Lent

Scented
by Claire Basney

Details
by Sara Zuiderveen

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Descriptions of Reality
Hilary Putnam, a leading Anglo-American philosopher, speaks of his experience as a scientific materialist, and other issues that shaped his career.

ESSAY

Shalom for the People in the Pews
by Ann Speyer

Christians have struggled with the issue of homosexuality. In this essay Speyer explores a non-traditional answer to the question of acceptance.

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by Kelley Evans

Poisoned Ivy, by Toni A.H. McNaron, confronts the homophobic and heterosexist policies of the Academy.

Keeping the Historical Faith
by Megan Halteman

C. Stephen Evans’ book, The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith, argues the importance of a historical Christ.

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Duane’s Night Out
by Tami Vanden Berg

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by Sarah C. Vos

Editorial
by Gary DeWitt

Cartoon
by Gary DeWitt

Staff Notes
by Gary DeWitt
What has four years of education and over 50,000 dollars gotten me?

It's an unfair question to ask, one loaded with insinuations and implications. Still, the question has lingered with me for the past few months, and I will doubtlessly spend a few more searching for possible answers.

The question is as unfair as the one I find myself answering: "So Sarah, what are you going to do with your degree?" It makes me belatedly jealous of engineering, nursing, computer science, and education majors. Their answers lie at their fingertips, while I mumble some nonsense about waitressing or moving out west, neither of which inspire the listeners. A diploma should lead to a real job. They answer with a falling "Oh," smile plasticly, and say, "Well, you'll figure it out."

I like to think that life makes sense, that some sort of explainable progression of cause and effect exists. Society strives to put events into logical order. In newspapers journalists analyze political situations, following one mistake to a scandalous cover-up. In classes we trace how one historical thought leads to another, how Aristotle responds to Plato or how structuralism evolves into post-structuralism. The methods that proliferate from Marx and Freud allow for the same kind of economic and psychoanalytical analysis: "If she hadn't grown up in a poor neighborhood, if she had not been abused verbally by her parents and physically by a neighbor, she wouldn't have shot him."

Such an analysis emphasizes the pull of causal progression, stripping individuals of responsibility and placing blame on their environments. Three summers ago, when I worked at a day camp for emotionally and behaviorally disturbed children, we worked against this deterministic attitude by reminding the children that they had choices, especially when they misbehaved. The choices were supposed to make the children feel responsible for their actions.

For me, it felt patronizing: "Ashley," I told one of my charges as she kicked my shins, "You can either calm down and return to the classroom, or you can continue losing privileges." In one way, we offered the children options; in another way, we threatened them—"If you don't stop kicking me, you won't go swimming."

Ironically, as we reminded the children of their responsibility, we excused their behavior in our heads and in our conversations with each other. These kids had lived places where existence meant violence and abuse. It was impossible not to excuse their behavior—I could not imagine functioning normally if I had seen what they had seen. Working with those children blurred the lines of causality; I didn't know when society should say, "Enough—you as an individual, not your environment, are responsible."

The emphasis on this type of causal progression not only strips individuals of responsibility but also leaves them stranded without choices, bouncing from one result to another. When we believe that an action sparks a definite result, which sparks another, and so on, actions become treacherous. I buy a pack of cigarettes, and the results proliferate out of control: a cancer cell divides in my lungs, the tobacco grower makes a penny, the tobacco company donates three to the N.R.A., and another molecule of ozone falls apart. Decisions paralyze the actor who fears the results.

In a way, causal progression makes sense; no one lives in a vacuum. Events, actions, and the people surrounding an individual have real influence on the individual's actions, beliefs, and thoughts. On the other hand, our ability to account for possible influences is inadequate. Perspective blinds us to some influences while highlighting others. The Enlightenment belief that rationality can provide adequate explanations of the world has weakened, shaking our faith in causal progression. In the sciences, some reject causal progression completely, viewing the world as a chaotic, unpatterned mess; everyday I stir cream into my coffee, yet I cannot predict [even mathematically] how the cream will diffuse. This totally absence of causal progression, does not make any more sense than a strong view of causal progression; both views free individuals from responsibility.

Our language and culture breed faith in causality,
entrenching us in its grip. A millionaire’s success is attributed to industriousness; a bum’s failure is attributed to alcoholism. These situations appear to be results of previous acts; attempting to think of them as random events, unrelated to previous lifestyles and situations, is absurd. Yet sometimes unthinkable things happen, the causal progression eludes us, and we cannot reason the results away: a woman kills her children, a man walks into an elementary school cafeteria firing a machine gun. We do not know who to blame—the environment or the individual. Chaos looms, threatening our explanations and stranding us in no man’s land, between cause and effect.

Three summers after that camp, I am leaving this institution. I have read books, written papers, and taken notes. I have sat in bars with friends, had coffee with profs, and eaten dinners with my roommates. Yet all this is ending, and I cannot find the effect. It seems that I should find closure, intuit some end result to which the past four years have led, but my attempts fail. I stand between cause and effect, the past and the future, my hand grasping a piece of paper.

—Sarah C. Vos •
Amy Ray: Opening Parameters

Over the past ten years, Indigo Girls' music has taken the college music scene by storm, spreading like a sunset over thunderous Georgia skies. With a strong sense of place and of passion, Amy Ray and Emily Saliers have transfixed their listeners with poignant lyrics and soulful music. Playing everything from electric guitar to mandolin, they create an introspective folk sound. Their lyrical topics speak of relationships—between ourselves and the environment, among each other—and of the struggle with their religious background. On March 26, they brought their talent and passion for music to Calvin. Their set included unreleased material from Shaming of the Sun—the Indigo Girls' newest album.

In the following phone interview, Dialogue staff member Amy Sitar talks with Amy Ray about the group's progress as musicians, activists, and women. Photograph of Amy Ray is courtesy of Sara Zuiderveen.

Dialogue: Let's begin at the beginning, how did you get started?

Amy Ray: It's hard to remember. We grew up together and started playing music in high school, just playing cover songs. We would play in little clubs, but then we spent a little time away from each other, going to different colleges. Later we transferred back to the same school in Atlanta. We played more together and put out our own records, and we were an independent band for awhile. As we played more we started writing more songs and doing more original stuff, and then we got signed. I guess you can say we started in 1980.

Dialogue: How has your vision changed through all these years, from 1980 to now?

Amy Ray: It really hasn't changed. We still play music because we love to play it, and we have a good time. We haven't compromised our value system; I don't think we have ever gotten carried away by the money or any of that celebrity stuff. You deal with it. You deal with your ego off and on, and you learn how to be normal. But for the most part our vision hasn't changed. We've grown and explored different attitudes, and we've hopefully gotten better at what we do.

Dialogue: Your new album is different; you're using more instruments.

Amy Ray: Yeah, it is a lot different. First of all, it's much more electric than anything we have done. But at the same time there are a lot more Appalachian instruments on it too: banjo, dulcimer, and mandolin, in particular. We took the very extreme folk and the very extreme electric directions, and we combined them.

Dialogue: It works well. Let's go back a little: how would you describe your college years?

Amy Ray: They were fun, but my first year wasn't so fun. I was at a school I didn't enjoy and had that Freshman thing going on. There was turmoil and there were good times too, which I think is the way everyone describes their college years. I worked a lot. I played a lot—four to six nights a week—and I studied in between it all. Academically I had a great time, and I wish I could go back. There were so many classes I didn't take, because I was always so busy. At the time I was playing a lot, which was what I wanted to do. Emily played a lot too. We played together, but we also played solo. And I think Emily had a good time in college. She liked the academic environment. So I think, she probably would tell you she enjoyed it and misses it.

Dialogue: I'm wondering how you write, and when you write, and for whom you write.

Amy Ray: Well, I just write. I
write probably for anybody else. I write because it comes through me and onto the paper. I probably write for myself. I can't answer that for Emily. She tends to like to write in an environment that is very quiet and focused. I tend to start writing my songs in an environment that is very chaotic and finish them in a more focused environment. We have different writing styles, obviously.

Dialogue: As for this soon to be released album, how far back do these songs and experiences go?

Amy Ray: All of them were written in the last two years. The experiences probably go back further, at least some of them.

Dialogue: Could you talk about your 1995 "Honor the Earth" tour and how it was different from other benefit tours?

Amy Ray: I think the difference was that the tour lasted over a month, and the whole tour was a benefit. Also, we incorporated a lot of things besides a special event, because raising money is important and raising awareness is equally important.

Dialogue: I get a very clear sense that you want Native Americans to own the movement too.

Amy Ray: Oh yeah. The function of the "Honor the Earth" campaign was to fund grassroots groups that are native-run. The strategies and targets are chosen by indigenous peoples—it's their thing. We give out money to

What is causing a rift is not basic fundamental beliefs, but fear....That fear creates racism, sexism, homophobia....It has become important to dialogue about it, and the next step is action.

Dialogue: How did this all start out? How did this interest start brewing?

Amy Ray: We have been involved in environmental work ever since we got started, as far as raising money goes, and this is an extension of it. We hooked up with some people through our environmental work that were working on specifically indigenous issues. We both felt it was important and saw a really great grassroots network out there that needed some funding and some attention. So that's what happened.

Dialogue: You're right, environmental issues and the Native American movement are so closely tied. There's a vivid sense of place in your music. What specific places have inspired you, with what places do you feel a close affinity?

Amy Ray: The South is a continuing inspiration to me, Georgia specifically. I spent a lot of time in the last couple of years driving around and just camping here and there. It is hard to name a particular place because
I feel like every place is just as important and moves me in a way that no other place does. I just got back from Mexico, and I'm sure that's going to come out in something. Alaska was kind of a profound experience for me too.

Dialogue: How did your new album *Shaming of the Sun* come about?

Amy Ray: We had been working on the songs for a couple years. A lot of them grew out of things we discovered about ourselves during that time, and musically we were messing around with bluegrass and electric instruments, with Emily playing the piano. Also, listening to a lot of other people's music frees you up and separates you from what you have done before. We went into the studio with the idea that we were going to use all these different producers to help us, and we ended up with the guy that originally produced our last couple records. But he was only there for a couple weeks to help us out. He wanted to help us get started and from that point on we decided not to bring in any more producers. We worked with our engineer, David Leonard, as a co-producer. It was a very grassroots, organic type of experience. And I think it was very different from the records we have made before.

Dialogue: I'd like to talk about your faith a bit. It seems like there are as many definitions of faith as there are of love, but I'm wondering if your definition of faith has changed throughout the years, and how that change manifests itself in your music, your life, and your love?

Amy Ray: Well, I have faith in a lot of things. And I have faith in myself. And I have faith in the mystery of life, whatever that means. But I don't think it has changed that much for me. My spiritual leanings have pretty much always been the same. I'm kind of a pagan at heart that has been brought up in the Christian tradition. So my imagery and word usage is very Jesus-oriented. I find that I have a relationship with Jesus because it was important for her to do it. She went through her own political and social enlightenment about how to stand up against homophobia and stand for her rights as a gay woman. For me, I seem to be getting more candid in general. It is probably just something that comes out.

Not only about the gay issue, because I felt that way for awhile, but in general. I felt like it was time to say what I meant. That comes with growing up and having self-confidence. It's hard to be candid when you feel insecure in general about yourself and life, and I think that that is an important discussion on college campuses. What is causing a rift is not just basic fundamental beliefs but fear. You feel scared it's going to take something from you. We operate within the parameters that we are used to, and when the parameters change it scares us. That fear creates racism, sexism, homophobia, all those things.

For me, it has become important for everyone to dialogue about it, and the next step is action. I think we, as gay women, have talked more directly about it in the last three years. But we have been addressed more directly about it too. For awhile, for some reason, people didn't address us about it. It was always kind of a mystery to me and I think we forced the issue a little bit to address it. And then there were times where we felt so invaded about our personal lives that we didn't want to talk about it just because it was personal.

I'm kind of a pagan at heart that has been brought up in the Christian tradition. So my imagery and word usage is very Jesus-oriented...
Mother: Batahola, Nicaragua

photograph 7 5/8 x 9 3/4"  Betsy McCanse
"You – sitting in the pew next to me." Two men sat on folding chairs pushed together forming a makeshift pew. They enacted a liturgical drama for people who, indeed, sat in pews, and since the sanctuary was full, everyone sat next to at least one fellow human. The audience had gathered at Trinity United Methodist Church for an all-day seminar on the Bible and homosexuality, featuring author Robin Scroggs, and the drama was a part of the worship service that began the seminar that Saturday morning.

As the two men continued the drama, each speaking aloud his internal wonderings about the other, the people in the sanctuary considered each other too, silently echoing the questions: "What are you afraid of?" "Are you lonely?" "Would you think differently of me if you knew whom I love?" Surely the variety of answers was as diverse as the people congregated there – from teenagers to grandparents, from Catholic and Christian Reformed to those still searching for their own beliefs, from straight to gay, from clergy to college students. All had come, bringing their own stories and experiences, wanting to further their understanding of the Bible and homosexuality. During this day, they went on to share worship, learning, lunch, and fellowship, trying to keep open minds to create a judgement-free environment of listening and acceptance.

The environment at the seminar that day was, unfortunately, very different from the places the people returned to afterwards. Many at the conference were themselves homosexuals, and many of them grew up in and were still affiliated with denominations offering gay Christians little or no place at all. These human beings with so much to offer are denied acceptance unless they either keep their orientation a secret, agree to remain celibate, or switch to a Christian denomination that will support and accept them. Some feel rejected and are pushed to the point of leaving Christianity altogether. Amidst a world of brokenness and hostility, it is the church's mission to reach out in love, to work toward the shalom that characterizes Jesus' perfect example. In order to be consistent with this mission, the church should present and support a responsible, practicing lifestyle as an option for Christian homosexuals.

Currently, most Christian denominations do not in word or deed treat this as an option that complies with God's law and Christian doctrine. The Christian Reformed denomination, for example, starts with this stated position: homosexual orientation is not something chosen by the individual but is present at birth or determined early in life. Having such an orientation is therefore not a sin, and the church should treat all homosexual people with compassion, not condemnation. But to comply with God's laws and be allowed full participation in the life of the Christian Reformed church, homosexuals must lead celibate lives. Acting on a homosexual orientation is a conscious choice of the individual to go against God's law and intended order, so any outward expression of homosexuality is a sin. If a homosexual person refrains from acting on his or her orientation, he or she is welcome to full participation in the church.

While those who hold this official statement claim to "love the sinner while hating the sin," the actions and attitudes displayed by many people, specifically Christians, are quite a different matter. At best, homosexuals receive intolerance and ignorance from the Christian community; at worst hostility and violence. Far from setting
Coorong Desert, South Australia
photograph
slide 1 3/8 x 1"
Sara Zuiderveen
itself apart as a Christ-centered refuge, the church enforces with a divine wallop messages which categorize gays and lesbians as dirty, twisted, and perversed, and make them the butt of jokes. This unwillingness to view homosexuality as an issue that needs dialogue is disturbing, and a near-refusal to let the needed dialogue take place only serves to promote homophobia among straight Christians, and despair among homosexual Christians. The despair of many homosexuals is most drastically evident in those who reject Christianity, unable to reconcile the perceived dichotomy of their sexual orientation and their religion. They feel they must choose one or the other: as practicing homosexuals in the church, they are not only condemned by doctrine but frightened by the rejection that awaits them.

It is this combination of doctrinal condemnation and actual persecution that keeps homosexuals locked inside the church closet leaving them with three basic survival options: silence, celibacy, or the search for a different Christian denomination. Silence involves keeping sexual orientation a secret from the church and being perceived as a "person in the pew" who has chosen to remain single. This option spares the individual from the hostility that homosexuals almost always feel from the church but forces the individual to live a lie, and not be accepted as he or she fully is. A celibate homosexual person is open about orientation, but must, in order to be a homosexual and a good Christian, live a celibate life. The homosexual may not enter into a loving, monogamous relationship with another human being; this is a sacrifice that must be made for God's kingdom. If neither of the first two options seem reasonable, a third option is to find a more supportive denomination within the framework of Christianity, such as Methodist or Metropolitan Community Churches.

Some view the Christian Reformed Church's position on the issue, and the above options, as perfectly satisfactory and acceptable. They cite Bible verses that specifically condemn homosexuality, stress that God created us male and female, and remind us that we all must bear our crosses. But as more Christians gain insight into the plight of homosexuals, they must truly grapple with the issue in a new light. Personal experience is often what forces this re-evaluation, whether this experience is the discovery of a close friend or relative's homosexual orientation or the recognition of one's own homosexual orientation. Either way, the black-and-white dichotomy that once put heterosexuality on one side and relinquished homosexuality and sin to the other side is blending into a very foggy gray.

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There are only six texts in the Bible that deal specifically with homosexuality, three in the Old Testament and three in the New, all of which are of a condemning, negative nature. The first mention occurs in Genesis [19:1-25], where the men of Sodom demand that Lot send out his two male guests, so they can sexually assault them. Sodom was destroyed for its great sin very soon after, and people credit homosexuality as the primary sin that brought God's wrath down on the city. But does this story mean to condemn homosexuality or the men's vile treatment of visitors and their intentions of gang rape and violation? The issue of homosexuality might be marginal here, with the focus on how the men of Sodom wanted to treat Lot's guests. Their actions would be equally abominable in a heterosexual context.

The next text comes in the law book of Leviticus, where homosexuality is mentioned once in 18:22 and again in 20:13. The verse in chapter eighteen...
is part of a code for holiness and purity which forbids a man to lie with another man under the heading of "unlawful sexual relations" [NIV]. Following this prohibition, the reference in chapter twenty calls the action "detestable," saying that both parties involved are responsible and must be put to death. When pointing to these references, however, one must keep in mind that they are part of the old covenant of law which Jesus tore down with the temple curtain when he gave his life on the cross. Some of the laws and regulations from the old covenant are still applied today, but others are disregarded as completely obsolete. If we obey the verse forbidding homosexual activity, shouldn't we also obey the forbidding of intercourse while a woman is menstruating, found three verses before? And do couples who have intercourse during the woman's monthly period then deserve to be "cut off from their people," as prescribed in Lev. 20:18? Cases like this make our inconsistencies obvious and raise the question: "Who are we to pick and choose which laws we will follow and which we will dismiss?"

Homosexuality is not directly referred to again until the New Testament, where Paul mentions it in Romans 1:26-27. This is the most extensive text, as well as the most difficult to interpret. These verses present homosexuality as a result of people turning away from God so much that God gives them over to "sinful desires" and "shameful lusts."

The only two remaining references to homosexuality in the Bible are very brief, one found in I Corinthians 6:9 and the other in I Timothy 1:10, both examples of "sin lists." In the NIV translation of Paul's letters, the I Corinthians passage asks "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God?" and then lists "male prostitutes" and "homosexual offenders" among the ten or so specific examples. Similarly, in I Timothy Paul states that the law is not intended for those who are righteous, but for "lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious..." followed by a list of such people. In the Greek, the word used in this passage [arsenokoitai] is the same word that the NIV translated as "homosexual offenders" in I Corinthians, but here it comes out "perverts," not actually naming homosexuality as such.

Before drawing any conclusions from these New Testament passages, there is more we must consider. First of all, anyone who would use these last three Bible verses to condemn or promote, for that matter homosexuality must bear in mind that no such word existed in the Greek language, from which we derive our translations of the New Testament. There are various Greek terms that suggest various aspects of homosexuality, but there is no exact translation.

Marriages are in no way required to fit these expectations, and if a marriage deviates from the norm, people take note. Likewise, there is a modern model for a homosexual relationship, but it is very different from the image of homosexual relationships that existed during Biblical times.

Just as there are models today, there were also models in Paul's time.
Marriage, for instance, was quite different given a patriarchal society where women were solely regarded as property and the bearers of children. Though a homosexual orientation was unheard of, same-sex relationships still existed as something outside and against people’s “heterosexual nature,” and most of these took the form of pederasty. Such relationships were characterized by an older man acting as the lover, and a young boy as the beloved. The two would sometimes develop emotional ties or the boy would be merely a prostitute or a slave. The gist of such a relationship was that the lover bestowed gifts and attention upon the beloved in exchange for sexual favors. Pederasty was the normative guideline for homosexual relationships at that time, so whenever anyone spoke or wrote of same-sex relationships [in condemnation, as in Paul’s letters, or praise, as in Plato’s Symposium] we have no reason to believe they were referring to anything other than pederastic relationships.

The perfect model of Jesus’ life on earth can provide us with two things we need: divine guidance and human reality.

The two main Greek terms used in the verses from 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy, malakoi and arsenokoitai, further support Scrogg’s idea by referring [respectively] to the passive and active partners in such a relationship, usually within the context of prostitution. The Romans passage does not use these words, but we have no reason to believe that Paul was addressing anything other than the model of pederasty. Such a model is a far cry from the orientation-based model we have today, so surely there is room for some doubt that these passages directly condemn a lifelong, loving, monogamous partnership between homosexual adults.

We can see that in the heated debate over homosexuality, the biblical references condemning it can no longer be used as “hard evidence.” This leaves room for questioning and dialogue to occur. Though there are many variations among views and many faces of the issue, the conclusions are sometimes reduced to two: either homosexual activity is allowable within Christian guidelines, or it is not. Both conclusions have been considered from many angles, and it is impossible to say that one has an edge over the other. Both conclusions have an equal burden of proof, and the tension between religion and sexual orientation continues to build. In cases like this, where do we turn for guidance? What do we tell the friend who has just told us he is gay or the two women who want to make a lifetime marriage commitment to each other? The perfect model of Jesus’ life on earth can provide us with two things we need: divine guidance and human reality.

The perfect model of Jesus’ life on earth can provide us with two things we need: divine guidance and human reality. If we look at Jesus’ ministry on earth and try to model our own after his, it can give us direction and a new way of looking at this difficult issue.

Interestingly enough, Jesus himself never addressed homosexuality, but during his life on earth, Jesus was known [and hated] for loving. In a world full of hate, he overflowed with love for all, and the world could neither understand nor accept that. In her book Gender and Grace, Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen describes Jesus’ ministry and the message of the Bible as a whole, as “an unfolding drama in which God’s salvation is made available to more and more groups previously considered marginal.” The kingdom of God is like a small mustard seed that grows into a huge tree, or like the yeast that spreads through all the dough. God’s love is for everyone, and forgiveness and salvation are for all who claim Christ as Savior and live in the light of this knowledge. Wolfhart Pannenberg writes “Human beings are created for love, as creatures of the God who is Love.” This perceptive statement [and incidentally, Pannenberg does not think homosexual activity is ever in harmony with God’s guidance] has implications about how we should treat love: we fulfill God’s purpose by loving God our creator, we fully express this God-given purpose in ourselves by loving our fellow created humans, and we fully love our fellow humans by allowing them to fulfill and express themselves through their own loving relationships with creator and created. To deny anyone full access to either of those relationships is to deny them an essential part of being God’s human creation.

Jesus also empowered and enabled people to serve. People came to Jesus broken, uncertain, and rejected, and he sent them away healed and accepted. He loved them as they were, and from this vantage point they were empowered to go out and serve others, spreading the good news and rejoicing in God’s unconditional love for themselves and others. The Samaritan woman is an excellent example of someone shunned by Jews and even her own people, but eager to go out
Self Portrait  
graphite drawing  
18 x 23 3/4"  
Marie O'Dell
and tell many about Jesus after being filled with his love. Homosexuals as a group are in a similar position; they are shunned unless they deny a part of their humanity. Norman Pittenger points out that "For homosexuals as a group, there is no alternative to burning, unless, of course, they are all charismatically gifted with the precious gift of celibacy." If Christians limit people because of who they are and require of them a lifestyle which the Bible says is only given as a special gift, we are crippling, not empowering. The people who feel forced to remain be transformed, then expect God's help in achieving this goal? Above all, we must remember that it is God and only God who does the transforming, and the direction in which God leads us may not be the direction we would presume. The first step in the process of transformation is the realization that God loves us exactly the way we are. There is nothing we can do, no improvements we can make that can increase God's love for us. With this realization, our barriers crumble, and we no longer need to be defensive of who we are. When these barriers are removed, we are truly open to God's transforming power, and God is then free to shape us as God sees fit and lead us where God would have us go.

Love, empowerment in Christ, and openness to transformation are essential to the spread of Christ's shalom. Right now, the church offers no shalom for gay Christians—Christians who wish to form lifelong, committed relationships involving their thoughts, feelings, souls, and yes, their bodies. celibate and forego the loving life-partner relationship available to people born "the right way" are constantly belittled by this sacrifice. This hardly puts them in a position to share the good news, let alone believe it themselves, when they are not themselves full beneficiaries of God's grace and love.

Finally, in our re-evaluation of traditional views we should examine the redeemed Christian's call to transformation. Many maintain that homosexuals should undergo a change of orientation for Christ and that if they truly want to walk in God's ways, this transformation will happen. God will remove their homosexual tendencies making them heterosexual, or at least able to live in celibacy. But is this really what the amazing process of God's transformation is all about? Do we decide how we and others will be allowed the full joys and responsibilities of a committed same-sex marital relationship. The joys would include love, support, sharing, acceptance, and physical intimacy. The responsibilities would include faithfulness, monogamy, trust, the sharing of burdens, and other guidelines by which Christian heterosexual marriages abide. It would be an important and a welcome step in the journey toward reconciliation with self and others and shalom for all "people in the pews." For we are all created by our God who is Love; we live in a time when we do not have to earn God's approval, but can rejoice together in God's grace.

Bibliography and Recommended Reading:

"Revelation and the Homosexual Experience." Christianity Today Nov. 11, 1996. [3-article feature]


"Sexuality and Homosexuality in the Christian School." Christian Educators Journal December 1996. [4-article feature]


Interview

Descriptions of Reality
A Conversation with Hilary Putnam

Hilary Putnam has contributed significantly to perennial debates that span the breadth of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy, from logic, philosophy of mathematics, and philosophy of natural science, to metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and the philosophy of mind. He has recently been appointed Cogan University Professor at Harvard University [one of fourteen faculty members to be distinguished with the title “University Professor”], and has been honored as President of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association and of the Association of Symbolic Logic.

Professor Putnam recently gave the Jellema lectures at the Midwest Regional Meeting of the Society of Christian Philosophers, April 10-12. He delivered two papers, “God and the Philosophers” and “Negative Theology.”

In the following interview, conducted by Robert Huie via fax, Professor Putnam clarifies and explains his past work and gives a taste of his present philosophical explorations. Photograph of Hilary Putnam is courtesy of Sara Zuiderveen

Dialogue: During the Gifford Lectures you delivered, you remarked, “As a practicing Jew, I am someone for whom the religious dimension of life has become increasingly important, although it is not a dimension that I know how to philosophize about except by indirection” [Renewing Philosophy]. You also relate that, when you began as a philosopher of science, you left unreconciled your religious streak and your [seemingly atheistic] scientific materialism. With your move away from scientific materialism, have your beliefs become more reconcilable to your work in philosophy? Does your vision of human flourishing include or leave room for a religious dimension?

Putnam: Yes, I do feel my beliefs and my work in philosophy have become easier to reconcile. As an example of how hard they once were to reconcile, here is something I wrote in 1975, in the Preface to the first volume of my first collection of papers [Philosophical Papers, vol. 1: Mathematics, Matter, and Method]:

What is true is that at that time I did not see how to philosophically defend my beliefs in the objectivity of ethics or in the existence of knowledge outside the sciences. But I did have those beliefs, even then.

“Since the philosophy of science is, after all, not all of philosophy, it may be well to say a word or two about wider issues. It will be obvious that I take science seriously and that I regard science as an important part of man’s knowledge of reality; but there is a tradition with which I would not wish they are not knowledge at all... Science at its best is a way of coming to know, and hopefully a way of coming to understand both some of the nature and some of the limitations of human reason. These seem to me to be sufficient grounds for taking science and philosophy of science seriously; they do not justify science worship.”
Those words were written at the height of what you refer to as my "scientific materialism." As you see, "scientific materialism" is not quite a correct description. What is true is that, at that time, I did not see how to philosophically defend my beliefs in the objectivity of ethics or in the existence of knowledge outside of the sciences. But I did have those beliefs, even then. Indeed, I was trying to combine a naturalist metaphysics with the conviction that there was something more to the story than metaphysics. But the naturalist metaphysics and the conviction couldn't both be right, and I saw that and gave up the naturalist metaphysics.

**Dialogue:** You have asserted that "We can and should insist that some facts are there to be discovered and not legislated by us. But this is something to be said when one has adopted a way of speaking, a language, a conceptual scheme." [Many Faces of Realism]. If we do not have access to a reality of things as they are in themselves, on what grounds are we to choose one conceptual scheme over another? Or one moral vision over another? What is the "ideal epistemic situation" for making claims about morality?

**Putnam:** The term "conceptual scheme" seems to be one that my readers put their own content into, unfortunately. My examples of alternative conceptual schemes are all from quite restricted parts of language, and from scientific language at that, e.g., mereology [the calculus of parts and wholes invented by the Polish logician Leśniewski] versus set theory, or again, the example of different possible formulations of quantum mechanics. In a recent article Jenny Case has suggested that I call these not "conceptual schemes" but "optional of these "optional languages." These cases are puzzling because it looks as if the different options make different statements about "reality," e.g., about the number of objects there are in the universe of discourse of the scheme, or about whether those objects are wave-like or particle-like, etc.

My reason for invoking these cases was not to defend "relativism" but to point out that reality sometimes [not always!] admits of alternative and superficially incompatible correct descriptions. My solution is that each of these alternative languages enables us to describe reality correctly, and that the incompatibility is not a real one because, taken as wholes, the alternative descriptions even give the same information. [They have, in a deep sense, the same structure; and in scientific cases it is often the structure that is the invariant reality, not the objects.] But such alternative conceptual schemes are still relatively rare: if I say there are three chairs in the room and you say there are four, we really do disagree. Really incompatible statements cannot both be true.

Since I think that each of the descriptions truly describes reality [when we realize what the rules are that control that description], I don't agree that there is one description, the description "of how things are in themselves" that we lack access to. Look at my little example of "Carnap's World" and "The Polish Logician's World" in The Many Faces of Realism. Is anything "hidden" in that case? You see how things are and that they can be described either way. That is how
The Taking  
drypoint  
17 5/8 x 24"  
Mike Byl
they are "in themselves": they are such that both descriptions are correct, each in its own terms.

I use these cases because I believe they are perfectly compatible with common sense realism, but not with metaphysical versions of realism. It is important, I believe, to distinguish the two. It is essential to my argument that in such cases we don't have to choose one conceptual scheme over the other, because they are both correct. I think you are using "conceptual scheme" to mean "any system of beliefs," and that isn't what I was talking about. In the case of real genuinely incompatible alternative systems of belief, you do have to choose; and, if you are rational, you do that by trying to rely on your total experience to consult with others, to be experimental if experiment is possible, not to dogmatize, etc.

The "ideal epistemic situation" for making claims about morality, is, of course, an ideal limit, not something that it makes sense to reach. But to the extent that we become wiser, more compassionate, more aware as William James put it of "the cries of the wounded," more able to listen to one another, we approach it. There is a lot of wisdom in Pragmatism, I believe, and a lot of wisdom in Habermas' idea of an ethics of discourse as well. By Pragmatism I mean James and Dewey, not Richard Rorty, by the way.

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The reason we are willing to count a description as true can be, in part, that it gives a coherent way of describing a certain state of affairs.

Dialogue: How does your commitment to "conceptual relativity" situate you with respect to "irrealists" such as Nelson Goodman and Jacques Derrida? What are the social implications for cultural pluralism or multiculturalism?

Putnam: In part, I hope my answer above will have clarified this. In *Renewing Philosophy* I draw a sharp line between conceptual relativity, which presupposes that there is something out there to be described that we did not make, and Goodman's "irrealism" and Derrida's "deconstruction." If conceptual relativity has implications for cultural pluralism they are modest: part of what I was trying to show is that in certain cases coherence is not just a means to truth but serves partially to constitute truth. The reason we are willing to count a description as true (for example, the descriptions I used as examples in *Many Faces of Realism*, p. 32) can be, in part, that it gives a coherent way of describing a certain state of affairs. But our ideas of coherence are influenced by history and culture. Recognizing these facts can make one sensitive to the criticism of our standards of coherence on the part of those who feel those standards are designed to marginalize women, or people of color, or gays, etc. It should not lead one to give up the idea of objectivity as something both demanded of us and something humanly possible, however difficult.

Dialogue: You have written, "The
value of equality is, perhaps, a unique contribution of the Jewish religion in the culture of the West. . . later, of course, the idea of equality was detached from its specifically religious roots" [Many Faces of Realism]. What is the fate of secular images of morality? On the other hand, do the Jerusalem-based religions have a place for the modern liberal values of rationality and intellectual freedom?

Putnam: Suppose that in the year 420 of the Common Era someone had asked St. Augustine, "What is the fate of pagan images of morality?" I am sure he would have said that some of them contain valuable insights and others have to be discarded. Similarly, in "The Eight Chapters," his introduction to his commentary on The Ethics of the Fathers [a tractate of the Talmud], Maimonides wrote, anything that we find of value in secular images of morality [in Kant’s emphasis on the role of reason in morality, in Hume’s insistence on the importance of sympathy and impartiality, etc., etc.]. There is no one "fate" that all secular thought is fated to undergo.

Moreover, there is of course a place for the liberal values of rationality and intellectual freedom in the Jerusalem-based religions. Rationality is something that religious thinkers have long been concerned with [that is why the great medievals paid so much attention to Aristotle’s thought, which represented their culture’s paradigm of rationality]. Intellectual freedom is a more recent value, but I would say that we have learned—learned from the history of inquiry itself—that rationality requires intellectual freedom.

Dialogue: Jurgen Habermas and Putnam: Putnam: Saying, as I did, that the values of equality, intellectual freedom, and rationality are deeply interrelated is not the same as claiming that those values suffice to derive all of ethics: indeed, I criticized Habermas and Apel precisely for supposing the contrary, and I wrote [in the sentence following the very sentence you quote], "The moral I would draw from this is more Aristotelian than Kantian: we have a rich and multifaceted idea of the good, and the parts of this idea are interdependent."

I do believe that freedom and equality are based on being created in God’s image; it is the unique dignity that gives us that fundamental ground of those values in the eyes of a religious person [and the possibility that those values can survive as genuine religious values, and not just as a presumed right to “do pretty much what one wants to do,” in a wholly secular society is not something I feel much optimism about at the moment]. I will not comment on each of the cases you list individually—each of them presents hard ethical issues, none of which can be resolved in a line or two—but simply say that I do believe that mentally ill persons and young children possess
intrinsic human dignity. They are worthy of equal respect, although that does not mean that we have to, for example, give infants the right to vote. I believe that animals deserve compassionate treatment; but I do not believe that we have to treat them as equals. But all of these are issues on which both religious and non-religious philosophers split; one cannot draw a simple dichotomy between a religious and a secular position here.

Dialogue: You have written, "James believed, as Wittgenstein did, that religious belief is neither rational or irrational but arational. It may, of course, not be a live option for you because you are either a committed atheist or a committed believer" ["Renewing Philosophy"]. Do you agree with James and Wittgenstein here, as you do on some other matters? What does this mean for traditional apologetic efforts in the philosophy of religion?

Putnam: I don't quite agree with James and Wittgenstein here. Of course, religious belief isn't in accordance with the standards of rationality appealed to in empirical science, but that is not surprising, since the subject matter is so different. The belief in God has, I think, both rational and transrational [rather than simply "arational"] aspects. On the one hand, the belief that humanity and the world makes no sense without a Creator is rational in the sense of corresponding to convictions about what rationality demands that are extremely old and extremely deep seated: the idea that those convictions have been "refuted" [by science, or by David Hume, or by Immanuel Kant] is one I view with suspicion. On the other hand, the God of monotheism is profoundly beyond what we can claim to coherently comprehend; I am committed to the belief that reason, when applied to the nature of God, leads to a sense of paradox. I don't believe religion can be based on or defended by appeal to a "theory of the nature of God." [In this sense, I am against "foundationalism" in philosophy of religion as elsewhere.]

As for the question of what this means for traditional apologetic efforts in the philosophy of religion, I would say that while philosophical inquiry into faith can be valuable as a way of replying to misunderstandings, or a way in which members of a community of faith "make sense of what we do," or [at a deeper level] of drawing out conceptual connections of great depth, it does not seem to me to be a vehicle for bringing anyone to faith [at least not by itself]. In this connection, I will close by quoting something I say in a paper that will appear in a few months:

"... while the potentiality for [religion], the possibility of making it one's own, is a basic human potentiality, the exercise of that potentiality is not a real possibility for every human being at every time. For some human beings it seems never to be a possibility [although something deeply spiritual in them may find another mode of expression]. I myself believe that it requires something experiential and not merely intellectual to awaken that possibility in a human being. Indeed, if I met a person who had been a diehard atheist, and who one fine day came to believe in God simply on the basis of a metaphysical argument, I do not know what I should think. It could be, of course, that the metaphysical argument was simply the trigger that released something deeper. But if the belief in God were simply a belief in the strength of a certain philosophical argument? [As David Lewis claims to firmly believe in the existence of real possible but non-actual worlds on the basis of a philosophical argument?] On the supposition that that is all that was going on, I would say that this was not belief in God at all, but a metaphysical illusion."

NOTES

1 This does not mean, in my view, that they are merely "constructed" by our culture; that view makes genuine intercultural dialogue impossible!

I took these pictures in Rainbow Canyon, a valley high in the mountains. Instead of photographing the mountains, which I think is nearly impossible unless you’re Ansel Adams and you carry a view camera everywhere—which I am not and do not—I chose to photograph things a little less monumental in size. I tried to make these images have a monumentality all of their own. They are more than just pictures of a beautiful landscape.
Elemental photograph 9 x 13 3/8"
Confluence photograph 8 3/4 x 13"
Convergence photograph 13 1/8 x 8 3/4"
Duane's Night Out

by Tami Vanden Berg

Mary felt a guilt like she had never felt before. She lay in bed and watched Wheel of Fortune. As much as she hated game shows, she had little else to do in that bare, sanitary room. Her head ached and kept her from reading. The doctor had stitched it up quite nicely, and it was healing. But she still couldn't hold a book with the IV. A bouquet of white daisies—her favorite flowers—sat on the night stand. Her mother had brought them in an attempt to cheer her up.

Tomorrow I leaves this place, she pondered gladly. Eventually, the decision would have to be made—could she go back? She couldn't help but think of him. Where was he now? They must have sent him away. Everyone had told her that it wasn't her fault. We all make mistakes, they said. She had only wanted to make the world a little better. If she had only looked twice at the clock before she had spoken, she wouldn't be lying in St. Stephen's Hospital. More importantly, he would still be at Lakeside.

* * *

"You'll get used to it," Amy explained. "I went home after my first day, convinced I would never return. But here I am, three months later, an assistant manager. Sometimes I still think about leaving, but..."

Mary listened as the chubby lady with the bad perm walked down the long hallway lined with closed doors. Signs made from construction paper were duck-taped to them. Mary read them as she walked: "Robert's Room," "Abby's Abode," "Duane's Den."

"We house 28 men and women," Amy continued. "On the first floor we have the residents with serious physical illness, as well as mental illness—mental illness only, on the second. Both floors are tough. The first floor requires a good deal of personal care—changing diapers, giving showers, things like that. On the second floor, you only have to keep the residents from raising hell." Amy chuckled and Mary joined hesitantly.

"So, Mary, do you have any questions?"

"Um, what do you mean, exactly, by 'raising hell'?"

"Well, the residents have different kinds of illnesses—schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive syndrome, bi-polar disorder... Have you ever taken a psychology class?"

"No."

"Good. Each of them has an unique illness. Some are similar, but each resident has his or her own needs. You don't need to know what illness they have, but you do need to know each individual as a person. These are human beings, not statistics. Get to know what each person likes, what makes them happy. And more importantly, you've got to know what pisses them off because some residents can be aggressive."

They walked into the large room at the end of the hallway. "This is the day room. The residents can watch TV, talk with staff, or play board games here."

It reminded Mary of the waiting room at her dentist's office: two tables with mauve chairs stood against the back wall, two light-blue couches faced the television in the center of the room, a fake plant sat on an end table, a few folding chairs were scattered about the room, and a swirling mauve and light-blue carpet stretched across the floor. Everything matched dreadfully well. The only slightly homey object in the room was a blue glass lamp sitting upon a back table.

A middle-aged man sat in a folding chair in the far corner. He wore a dark sweater and dress pants. His slicked-back hair shone almost as brightly as his shoes.

"Hey Duane, you look nice today!" The man flashed Amy a big smile and waved. "That's Duane, he's the one to watch. And that's Abby, by the TV, and that's Robert, next to her. He thinks that Abby is his girlfriend. Just don't let him kiss her. She may injure him." Amy chuckled again. She turned to Rob. "Hey Rob,
"What's goin' on?"
Rob glanced at her.
"Most of our residents are—"
"Can I have a cigarette?" Rob gave Amy his full attention.
"No, Robert, it's three-thirty—you can smoke at four o'clock. You know that." She turned back to Mary, "The residents may smoke one cigarette each hour, on the hour."

Amy led Mary across the swirling carpet to a small adjoining room. "This is the smoke room," she explained. Six white, plastic lawn chairs with scattered brown streaks of melted plastic lined the wall. Two wooden tables stood at each end, supporting several overflowing ashtrays.

The residents are only allowed to smoke in here. Staff distributes the cigarettes and lights them. Residents are not allowed to keep their cigarettes or lighters. They'd burn the place down." Amy chuckled. "Some need to wear aprons before they can have their cigarette." She said as she pointed to several burn-proof aprons hanging in the corner.

They re-entered the day room. "Do many residents smoke?" Mary asked.

"Everyone on this floor, and a few from downstairs who can't make it up here on their own. Sometimes a compassionate staff will bring them up for one. You'd be surprised—some of these people claim they can't take a shower without our help, but they'd climb Mt. Everest for a cigarette!" Mary caught herself laughing before Amy had finished her sentence.

Now Amy was serious again. "We're terribly short-staffed. We have the money to hire twice as many staff, we just can't keep them." Amy paused as they both examined the day room. "You'll do fine. I hope you'll be here for a long time. You'll be working up here tonight. If you have any questions, just ask. I'll be around." Amy left and Mary was alone with the three residents. She wondered if anyone would help her. Her training seemed brief. Looking around the room once again, she decided to try to get to know the residents.

"How ya doin', Duane?" She asked as she approached his corner, "Mind if I sit down?"
"N-no, no, s-sit down, sih sit down, yeah." He flashed her a grin and waved. Mary sat next to him on the light-blue folding chair. She tried to think of something to say, but she had never been good at small talk.

"M-Mary," she held out her hand. Shawn walked past her to a mauve couch and put his feet up. Mary stood for a moment, then went back to her chair beside Duane.

"P-Pizza Hut, Pizza Hut."
"Yeah, Duane, we're goin' to Pizza Hut. But you look like you're ready to go to the prom!" Shawn laughed heartily. Duane and Mary joined in.

"We just gotta wait for Amy to come up here, then we can go." Shawn explained.

"A-Amy, Amy."
"Yup, Duane, we've gotta wait for Amy."

"Duane has been talking about going to Pizza Hut, but I didn't know who would take him." Mary said hesitantly. "Yup, we're goin'. When he earns eight tokens, he gets to go out for dinner—any place he likes."

"Tokens?"
"Yup, each day Duane isn't aggressive, he earns a token. See that?" Shawn pointed to a poster that read "Duane's Tokens". Eight squares were drawn on it, and a yellow laminated "token" was velcroed to each square. "Duane's been real good, haven't you, Duane?" Shawn nodded as if he was answering his own question.

"Yeah, P-Pizza Hut, Pizza Hut." Suddenly, Amy peeked her head through the doorway, "Okay, I'm here."

"All right, Duane, go get your coat."
Shawn stood and stretched his arms. Duane stood up, sat down, stood again, swayed to the left, steadied himself, and then began walking. Mary looked on with interest.

"Have fun, Duane," she encouraged as he walked out through the doorway.
Geisha  pastel and conte drawing  17 x 23"  Tanya Black
* * *

Amy turned to see Mary arriving at the locker room.
"So you're back for another night."
"Yeah, it went smoothly last night. I mean, I felt a little inept at first, but after a while I was more at home. I just talked to the residents, there weren't any problems really. Although Robert did accused the janitor of being a Russian spy sent to assassinate him."
"That's typical. Well, you can stay on that floor tonight."
"All right."

Mary placed her coat and bag into her new locker and headed up to the second floor. As she climbed the stairs, she passed Shawn.
"How you doin', Shawn? A big Bulls fan are you?"
"No, I've had this shirt forever."

Mary whistled as she walked down the same hallway she and Amy had traveled a day earlier. The day room was filled with residents, and she was proud that she remembered all of their names.
"Duane, how was Pizza Hut? I didn't see you when you got back."
"P-Pizza Hut, Pizza Hut. Got some pizza. Some pizza?"
"Yeah, I bet it was good. Too bad I couldn't go."

Mary forced a laugh and turned to Robert.
"P-pizza, pizza. I got some pizza."

She turned back to Duane, "I know you did, Duane."
Duane stood up, sat down, stood again, swayed to the left, steadied himself, and walked toward her. He lost his balance every few steps, but then regained it. As he drew near her, Mary realized he was well over six feet tall—at least a foot taller than she. His expression was stern. Mary stepped back.
"I got some p-pizza, pizza!" He gave her a serious look.

Amy's words of warning came flashing back to her. Some residents can be aggressive... Duane is the one to watch out for...
As Mary's heel hit the wall Shawn appeared in the doorway.
"Duane, what are you doing?"
Mary took a deep breath as Duane turned toward Shawn.
"I got some p-pizza, some pizza."
He explained to Shawn.
"I know you do, Duane. Would you like a piece?"
"Y-yeah, yeah. Pizza."
"Okay Duane, I'll be right back."
"O-Okay, okay, Shawn."
Duane smiled and staggered back to his favorite chair. Upset with herself for panicking, Mary sat quietly on the couch. Shawn returned with almost an entire pizza.
"Duane has some left-over pizza from last night," he told Mary.

Soon the residents began gathering around the smoke room and Mary noticed that it was four o'clock. She hurried to the nurse's station to get the cigarettes.
"Six at a time," she warned as they

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**Nude Nylons**

Blue shirt, Black skirt
iron didn't work again and...
the splattered famous sauce on blue shirt,
the famous sauce that forever lingers in nostrils,
as Nude Nylons moves toward dark-hole spaces

The finger-smudged glass pane pushes smoke around
formless shadows at the bar and...
A whirlwind of whistles, a scream from Unsmiling Manager,
as Nude Nylons moves toward starch-white kitchens,

Order balanced on arms of hope and dreams of emerald bills,
the unbuttoned collar and marching under-eye blackness whisper the truth and...
Nude Nylons is punched in, automatic, and invincible.

—Kristi Dykstra

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scrambled for the six plastic lawn chairs. "The rest of you will have to wait until there's an empty seat."

"Robert... Robert," Mary was searching for a pack with his name markered on the side. "What kind of cigarettes do you smoke, Rob?"

"I don't know," he answered.

"Aha, you're a Basic-man—Basic Filters, that is."

When Mary had finished passing out the cigarettes, she lit them. Then she remembered Duane did not get one.

"Duane, are you gonna smoke?"

"Y-yeah, yeah. C-cigarette, cigarette."

"No, Duane," Shawn interrupted, "Duane smokes at half-past, don't you, Duane?"

"F-four thirty, four thirty."

"That's right, Duane," Shawn said as he pulled Mary aside, "See... Duane has trouble getting along with the other residents in close quarters. He smokes by himself."

"Oh, sorry," Mary could tell the situation was touchy and felt badly about her mistake. Shawn and Mary sat on the couch.

"I better tell you a few things about Duane," he began, "He is obsessive-compulsive. He was almost beaten to death several years ago in an alley and suffered major brain trauma. He can't handle any sort of change. He has these rituals—standing and sitting, smiling and waving. Don't ever disturb them. His brain focuses on only one thought or emotion at a time. When he asked for pizza, that was all that he could focus on, until he got it. He becomes aggressive when he feels his needs aren't being met, or when someone tells him he can have something and then doesn't give it to him."

"Wow. I didn't know any of that."

"Well, now you do."

"Amazing. You are back for a third day?" Amy turned to see Mary walking into the day room.

"Yeah, it's going well; I'm really getting used to it, like you said I would. I'm still trying to get to know the residents."

"Duane hasn't given you any trouble, yet, has he?"

"No, not at all."

"Great. Well, I'll be around if you need me." Amy smiled and left the room. Mary sat on the couch next to Abby.

"Hi Abby, how are you? It's so cold out! It'll be Christmas in about a week." Abby weighed about 90 pounds and looked about fifteen.

"What did you ask for this year? I asked for a new car."

"No, not really. Just a stereo for my car." Abby stared at the swirls in the carpet.

"Well, I'll talk to you later then." Mary walked over to Duane.

"How you doin', Duane? Did you have a good day?"

"H-hi, hi! He waved to her, "I'm f-fifty-three, fifty three years old."

"You're gettin' up there, Duane."

"Y-yeah, yeah," he smiled, "My f-father, my father was in the war."

"Oh, yeah?"

"With that man, th-that, that bad man. Killed all those people."

"Stalin?"

"St-Stalin, Stalin, yeah, Stalin," he grinned and extended his hand. Mary shook it and smiled back.

"N-no, no, not Stalin."

"Oh, Hitler." Mary said.

"Y-yeah, yeah, Hitler. It was Hitler." Duane shook her hand again.

"Well, Duane, I'll be back. I gotta go do the cigarettes."

"WHEEL! OI! FORTUNE!"

The residents relaxed after an early dinner in front of the TV. Mary slouched in her chair, resting her elbow on the arm of the chair. She supported her head with her hand. She wasn't used to the second-shift hours.

"C-cigarette, cigarette," Duane sat across from her at a table.

"You want a cigarette, Duane?" She glanced at the clock and saw one hand on the six. "Okay, I'll go get you one."

"Y-yeah, yeah, a cigarette," He grinned extra-large.

Mary returned with his Pall Malls—he wouldn't smoke any other cigarette.

"What are you doing?" Shawn had just arrived from the dining room.

"I was just getting Duane a cigarette."

"It's only six o'clock."

Mary turned to see that the other residents had already gathered at the smoke room door.

"Oh, no. I'm sorry Duane, I thought it was six thirty."

"C-cigarette."

"You have to wait, Duane. I made a mistake."

"C-cigarette, it's right there," he pointed to the Pall Mall in her hand.

"Duane, Mary made a mistake. You'll need to wait," Shawn said.

"Sh-she, she said I could have a c-cigarette."

"Calm down, Duane."

"C-cigarette!" Duane turned to Mary. "Y-You, you said I could have a cigarette! You b-bitch!"

"Duane, I know, I'm sorry. I made
a mistake."

Then it happened.

With more grace than Mary thought possible, Duane reached across the table for the blue glass lamp. He grabbed it with both hands, lifted it above his head and thrust it at Mary. She turned and covered her face with her hands. The lamp shattered when it crashed against her skull. Mary fell to the ground with a gasp.

* * *

"Yes, Pat, I’d like to solve the puzzle...."

"Go ahead, Barb."

"A penny saved is a penny earned!"

"That’s right!"

Mary shut off the TV. Where was he now? They must have sent him away. Probably to another home. "How you doin'?" It was Amy.

"Hey, Amy! I’m goin’ home tomorrow."

"Great!"

"Amy, what happened to Duane?"

"Amy examined the white tiles of the floor."

"Amy, they sent him away, didn’t they."

"We had to, Mary. This isn’t the first time this has happened. I mean, it was never this serious before, but we do have to think of the safety of the other residents."

"I know, but—"

"Mary, you didn’t see what happened that night."

"Tell me."

"You weren’t the only one hurt."

"I know, he went after Shawn."

"Yeah, and all the residents had gathered for their smoke. They saw the whole thing. They can’t handle seeing that sort of thing—especially from Duane. They’ve been afraid of him since he flipped over all the tables in the smoke room. Abby’s lit cigarette was knocked onto her lap. It sat there until it went out. She has suffered so much abuse in her lifetime that she no longer speaks. She deserves to feel safe. The janitor walks by with a broom and Robert thinks he is trying to kill him—imagine what he thinks of Duane. They can’t live in the same building as Duane anymore."

A small tear dripped off Mary’s nose. "I guess he didn’t earn his token," she forced a smile.

"Yes, but we finally got rid of that terrible carpet,” Amy chuckled. "It always reminded me of a dentist’s office."

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Birch intaglio 8 3/4 x 11 7/8" Peter Zylstra
Realism on the Wall

The emergency room a night,
intensive care a week,
then 42C, where Dr. Housekamp explained
the Hospice program to us kids.

I go ahead
while Mom rides with Dad in the Am-bu-cab
to the re-arranged condominium.

In place of the loveseat,
a hospital bed,
chrome,
overlooking the bay window,
next to Dad’s favorite picture of the ocean crashing rocks,

and I stood waiting and watching the sea.

My father is dying.

One allowed image, the rebel wave,
one allowed Remonstrant smashing the shore,
yet reined in by sovereignty,
Dad’s favorite theme.
A comfort like the moist spray in the oxygen tube;
like Dad’s favorite question and answer of the Catechism.

Henry, your next door neighbor, visits.
He takes both your hands and the two of you sing,
not a Psalm as I would expect,
but “Safe in the Arms of Jesus,”
Host of the Heavenly Hospice.

I lift my eyes to the ocean,

Eternal Father, strong to save.
Black Butts

My family, we’re not euphemistic.
We say shit.
Emphysema.
Dying. Dead.

But when the Am-bu-cab brought him on the stretcher,
Dad lay with his hands behind his head,
elbows bent cocky.

And someone tied a red kerchief around the green canister in the corner
and put a baseball cap over its gauges,
while Mom put the long tubing under
all the rugs she knew she bought for a reason in Shipshewana.

I once knew a lady who turned black
where you touched her arm.
"Emphysema," she said.
In the hospital, I had covered my father’s already blackened behind with his robe,
like a son of Noah.

It’s the damn cigarettes.
And the smoke houses where he cured his hams.
Retired now twenty years.

His bowling buddy stops in.
Dad shows him the new-fangled buttons on his bed.

He’s worn out before I finish making tea.

Carbon dioxide poisoning.

Ashes to ashes.
Awaiting A Rising

Does lipstick rot at the same rate as flesh?
for the last thing I did
was kiss his pallor forehead
impulsively
before they shut the casket
that we left out
in the cold March wind
and he, his Wedding Garment but a suit with suspenders
and no long underwear.

I always kiss him to say goodbye,
he taking hold on my wrist
answering "Bye now little girl."

A rectangle gray,
with a red and white spray,
helps to keep the worms away,
for awhile.

"He who believes in me,
Though he die,
yet shall he live."

But how long, O Lord?

And will the stain still show when
In his flesh he sees his God?

Extended Lent

Come, see the place where he is lain;
the fresh outline cut in the grass.

Flowers for Highest Festival
I place like an embrace eternal
on the small dirt mound,
while I cry
"Abba"
to my father
who lies like Lazarus did.

This Day arrives too soon.

For I doubt not thy victory, O Grave,
still swallow thy sting.

Dust thou art;
to dust thou shalt return.
untitled] oil on canvas 24x30 Rebecca Bamford

[photograph: Sandeep Kumar]
Voicing the Oppressed
by Kelley Evans


"No society can afford to lose dedicated people called to serve."
-Toni A.H. McNaron

We have come to understand that institutions shape us as whole persons, and not only they are ostensibly conceptualized; the Academy does so much more than educate. For students academia is a venue to mature socially as well as ideologically; together the experiences of college help to form the student's worldview. In the same way, those who work in the academy—faculty, staff and administrators, are shaped by the institution. Personhood is fulfilled in relationships with students and colleagues, involvement in the community of a college or university, and engagement in research and scholarship. The full involvement of the self is not only beneficial but necessary in order to develop a persons full potential.

Imagine, then, that you, as a professor, could not share with your coworkers what you did over the weekend with your family. If your life partner were terminally ill, you could not expect the support of your coworkers in your bereavement. In the classroom you would have to avoid all personal references and illustrations, rendering all study abstract and removed. In your research you could not focus on your true area of interest; halfheartedly you struggle to write less meaningful articles and books to secure a precarious position in your department.

This was the reality of Toni A.H. McNaron's life during the first twelve of her 30 years as a professor in the English Department of the University of Minnesota. In her book Poisoned Ivy: Lesbian and Gay Academics Confronting Homophobia, she explores her journey and the journeys of her fellow gays and lesbians in academia across the nation. In painful detail she examines their lives in a world of homophobic oppression, reflects on the climate for homosexuals in the Academy then and now, and assesses the effect of homophobic discrimination on academic institutions.

Toni McNaron spent her most recent sabbatical completing an ethnographic study of gays and lesbians in academia, which, along with her own life, is the basis for the book. With the help of friends and networks, she distributed 865 open-ended questionnaires to "out" and closeted' gay and lesbian academics across the country. The questionnaire asked requisite demographic questions, and then asked the respondents to describe some of their lives as academics, for example: their degree of "outness" on the campus, the sources of support and of hostility they perceive on their campus, and how their being gay or lesbian has affected their work and professional status. Out of the 304 respondents 276 were used for statistical analysis, although narratives from the entire respondent pool were included. McNaron then did a follow-up interview with 20 respondents, and she received 100 responses to an e-mail follow-up questionnaire. What resulted is a powerful statistical and narrative base for her documentation of oppression in academia.

Upfront about the limitations and the potential (and inevitable) biases in the study, McNaron adds to her credibility and integrity through honesty. A "shockingly low" number of racial and ethnic minorities responded. She could not possibly hope to reach a large portion of closeted gays and lesbians. She also admits her bias towards lesbians, as she is more familiar with the lesbian experience, although the ratio of male/female respondents turned out to be comparable: 136 women and 127 men.

McNaron also speaks from an "out" position as an academic and does not hide the motivations for her project: "This book could show how destructive prejudices can be, not only to the human beings involved but to the goals of their own institutions". Her arguments for gay/lesbian rights do not stem from theology or biology but from 12 years of hellish silence as an English professor. The accounts of
her first years of teaching are grim; fear of exposure prevented her from speaking openly with any other gays or lesbians on campus. For instance, she relates how she and her partner suspected that another couple on campus was "like them," but were left to guess from afar for a long time. Finally, the couple invited them over for tea at their home, and they went with anticipation. However, even in the relative safety of the couples' own home, neither couple felt comfortable in talking about the shared life they had. The afternoon proved to be exhausting and stressful; conversation was relegated to innocuous topics, and McNaron and her partner left without any sense of furthered solidarity.

This kind of ostracization is difficult for heterosexuals to understand. Minorities of all kinds have gained voice in this century of civil rights and multiculturalism, but the homosexual minority still suffers from isolation and silence. Out of this silence, McNaron gives voice to those who have none in their communities, and their poignancy is remarkable:

"Because the "ins" often seem to turn away from publicly supporting or giving energy to lesbian and gay issues, I often feel very lonely. I find this a hostile and painful aspect of campus climate. Sometimes, I really don't know how I survive, except perhaps for the rewards of teaching... The lack of community or the ill-wishes towards such a community of lesbian faculty members, I find frustrating, contributing to my sense of going to work on thin ice with nobody else out there with me. Now that I write about this I realize how stressful this is for me" [39].

Even more disturbing is the violence she cites towards homosexual faculty:

"A gay professor told me of having the door to his office torched soon after he had agreed to interview for the school paper about being gay. Then his new door was defaced with sexually explicit and violent graffiti... A lesbian science professor reported receiving pornographic mail under her office door, which promised to rape her as the 'solution' to her being a lesbian" [39].

These happenings on college campuses are indicative of the general climate of hostility. McNaron tells these events not to sensationalize, but to raise the consciousness of the reader.

Although these stories are an important part of her book, McNaron focuses also on the positive changes which take place when institutions open up to dialogue and when professors are free to claim their sexual orientation as a part of themselves. For herself, she describes a renewed sense of purpose and voice after she came out in the classroom. Since adopting a lesbian-feminist viewpoint in her writing she has published extensively; during her first 12 years she published little. She shares others' stories of increased energy for professional study and prolificness when professors finally involved their whole selves in their work. She quotes a positive story from a gay professor: "My research and scholarship languished until lesbian/gay studies came of age in the academy and I realized I had something to say that was connected to my lived experience and to my teaching." Another, a lesbian librarian states, "I feel more alive than I've ever been because I am being me" [98-99]. As with other minorities, gays and lesbians perceive the world around them through a unique filter which observes things directly related to an oppressed existence. This filter, when allowed to flourish in celebrated diversity, benefits the whole Academy by allowing faculty to develop to their full potential.

Broadening to the scope of institutions and activism on a larger scale, McNaron also analyzes the extent of change in institutional attitudes and

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**Scented**

If I smell thick brown carpet, violin varnish, and old Barbie dolls, it is Grandma and Grandpa—the home in the hill. Sniff narrow blue-trimmed stairs and the mirror, glazed donuts, and Calliope, the Cartoon Express, it is Grandma and Granddad's white home between bricks. But smell the earth of potato, and pie, wood-stove smoke, and the typing of a poem, that's home.

—Claire Basney
Bos woodcut 18 x 34 1/2" Phil Boersma
policies towards homosexuals. She documents the progress made and the strategies which have worked well to introduce change; she notes such key factors in success as "out"spoken faculty, advocates in the administration, and committees devoted to gay/lesbian issues on campus "especially those appointed by a college president reporting directly to the president." However, she also describes a painfully slow process and a hostility which still dominates many campuses, and she cautions against a false sense of victory. One university finally added "sexual orientation" to their policy of non-discrimination after 21 years of campaigning by advocates. Even after long years of working for change, McNaron states and documents many times that words and policies have not meant action. Many universities maintain positive rhetoric but little or no action to support homosexuals. This snail's-pace reform is disheartening, at best, and despairing, at worst, for those who live daily in fear of hostilities. Hostilities on the institutional level take on more than just a verbal or physical form: they hurt through reticence and neglect, and they work to perpetuate discrimination in hiring and promoting practices.

Although McNaron covers the range of institutional successes and failures, a consistent method for assessing progress is elusive. She speaks about her joy in seeing her partner's name added to the "spouse" list in the university directory; yet when a respondent recounts changes such as being able to bring partners to social functions and being included in anti-discrimination clauses in school policy, she deems them "miniature gestures" and a "shriveling of expectations". Although she indeed has a point when she states, "If I lower my expectations too much I allow those with power over my life to continue to dole out rhetorical crumbs at minimal cost to them or the system they serve," it's difficult to think of change happening any quicker when the marginalized population is invisible for the most part. When asked about this dichotomy in a brief e-mail interview, McNaron made this reply: "The tension will continue, and I am all right with that. We have to be excited by gradual steps without becoming overly grateful to the powers that make them possible. WE have to be constantly vigilant for MORE change." Even through the struggle for recognition, she again demonstrates the balancing game that characterizes lives of gays and lesbians.

Perhaps due to her position as an English scholar and not a sociologist, McNaron gives little attention to the larger societal factors involved. She rightly acknowledges that schools are a societal institution and exist contingently upon fulfilling the expectations and norms of society. She blames the heterosexist structure of the Academy and not individuals for the perpetuation of homosexual discrimination. She touches on the pull of heterosexist alumni and donors who threaten to withdraw funding. But she writes comparatively little on these aspects, which are all major barriers to the acceptance of homosexuals in academia. However, she does maintain a sense of overarching vision. In the same e-mail interview she attests that, "REAL change only takes place in one human heart at a time, but MEASURABLE change demands large scale government intervention I believe."

Reform in academic and government institutions must occur simultaneously. What McNaron lacks in broad social theory, she replaces with anecdotal, situational evidence and strategy for change. Rather than impersonal abstraction, she assigns human voices to the problem at hand and the real stories of how they have coped and changed. This in itself is an essential component to breaking down prejudices: it is well known that exposure to the 'other' who is feared is the best way to break down prejudicial barriers towards that other. McNaron's book allows many previously silenced voices to be heard. Just listening to these voices and beginning the dialogue can start the healing process.

Institutions of higher learning are hailed as a haven for the sphere of ideas and the dialogue which pursues them. Ideally and symbolically they provide a safe venue in which to discuss and test our perceptions and beliefs about the world; however, this insulation which prevents distraction and enables conversation has the potential to shield us from the full range of ideas, becoming a fence which undermines the very purpose of the institution it serves. Poisoned Ivy takes a courageous step towards insuring that the hallowed walls of the Academy do not become lines of demarcation. Strengthened by the stories of others, McNaron creates a powerful work which demands attention and a response. Her fluid writing style complements and connects numbers and stories to produce an exceptional piece of interdisciplinary scholarship, and a poignant, motivating work of
Throughout the study McNaron provided a way for respondents to answer anonymously and maintained strict confidentiality for the remainder of the respondents. Although some respondents wished to have their names included in her book, most did not. She excludes names and identifying information from their stories—a sad reminder that the majority of campuses are still incredibly hostile to homosexuals. We at Calvin, even more sadly I believe, might be included in that hostile majority, a scarring flaw in our mission as a Christian college.

2 Although questionnaires were sent all over the States, a concentration of respondents came from the Midwest region, partially, McNaron admits, because she herself is located there and had more networks through which to distribute.

3 Statistical analysis was limited to those who had been in the profession at least fifteen years. McNaron wished to focus on how the atmosphere in the Academy had changed for homosexuals, and she felt that this would be best shown by those who had spent extensive time there.

Keeping the Historical Faith
by Megan Halteman


The project of reconstructing the historical Jesus is not a new enterprise. For over a century, historians and New Testament scholars have searched for historical insight into the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In the last decade the debate has taken place in "The Jesus Seminar," a widely publicized group of scholars for whom the historicity of Jesus is highly questionable, and several months ago in the popular magazine, *Atlantic Monthly*. From such inquiries arise questions concerning the reconcilability of the Jesus who existed in history and the Jesus who holds important theological significance for Christians. In his book *The Historical Christ and The Jesus of Faith: The Incarnational Narrative as History*, C. Stephen Evans speaks boldly out of the fray, considering whether or not Christians can continue to accept the church's traditional portrayal of the gospel's Jesus as historically accurate in its basic tenets. Furthermore, Evans addresses why the gospel's historicity is important and whether or not we are able to gain meaningful knowledge of it.

From its outset, the book emphasizes the necessity to affirm the gospel story's historicity. According to Evans, the historicity of Jesus is a vital and enlivening element of faith; emptying the story of historical content voids much of the meaning in the story. This contention is apparent even in the title; by coupling the words "Christ" with "history," and "Jesus" with "faith," Evans immediately eliminates the potential for a sharp distinction between the Jesus who walked the streets of Palestine and Christ as the instrument of salvation. For Evans, history and faith are inextricably intertwined in the incarnational narrative, the story of Jesus. In his own words, "The fundamental reason why history seems to me to matter is simply this: The historical character of the gospel implies that salvation is made possible by the work of Christ."

Evans contends, if the gospel story is divested of all historical legitimation, the significance of the atonement is undermined, and several particularly formidable problems arise. For instance, if the incarnational narrative did not actually take place in history, its importance becomes little more than that of a moral example we should emulate. Understood this way, humans should be capable of improving and even perfecting themselves. According to Evans, such a view fails to acknowledge the extent and seriousness of human sinfulness, and thereby undermines the concept of atonement which bridges the gap between fundamentally sinful humans and a perfect God.

Another difficulty arises when the gospel is interpreted as an illustration of the character of God, rather than an actual historical occurrence. If the atonement is...
regarded as merely an explanation that God atones for our sins rather than an event rooted in history, the necessity of a relationship with God is diminished. According to Evans, "Salvation is not merely recognizing some abstract truth about a timeless God but coming into relationship with God in the historically concrete person of Jesus of Nazareth." Through Christ's participation in history, God's character is demonstrated rather than revealed propositionally. Metaphysical concepts become rooted in physical actions, and a different, deeper kind of relationship becomes possible.

Once it has been acknowledged that the historicity of the incarnational narrative is important, one must consider whether or not the basic tenets of the traditional gospel story actually did occur in history. For Evans this involves showing that the gospel story is not logically impossible and does not contain irreconcilable, internal contradictions, which he demonstrates by first refuting arguments which dismiss the incarnation as an implicit impossibility.

Evans addresses some specific arguments that refute the possibility of the incarnation on the grounds that it is a logical contradiction. In response to these contentions, Evans points out that the burden of proof falls on the side of those trying to prove incoherence; it is reasonable to believe that any widely accepted doctrine is coherent unless proven otherwise. Defenses of the incarnation's logical possibility, therefore take the form of rebuttals. Particularly, Evans looks at refuting the logical impossibility of a fully human and fully divine Christ. One rebuttal defends both the humanity and divinity of Jesus by suggesting that he may have voluntarily divested himself of certain divine characteristics.

Details

Sure, I've seen Colorado—
—from 40,000 feet, of course.

Detroit to Denver to L.A. in 6 hours and 17 minutes.

My view is untoppable.
I see it all on one grand platter.
I am spared any mundane detail.

Yet, I suppose there are those like my brother
who seems to think he has the time
to wander from place to place.
He once told me of his trek upon a gravelly mountain road
during which he sat entranced by—how did he say it,

"an old barn and fallow field
of wind stroked poplars."

He even recalls, "a shy, proud
tomboy selling a hued harvest arranged
with the care of a florist,
in one of those carbon-copy,
dead-end towns found by accident, then lost forever."

Granted, you may value these episodes of his...
but could he get from
Detroit to Denver to L.A. in
6 hours and 17 minutes?

—Sarah Zuiderveen

44 DIALOGUE
regards the knowledge of the incarnational story as based on other things we know or believe,” whereas the Reformed account claims that the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit justifies the incarnational stories. When taken in tandem, the two accounts provide a more convincing account than either by itself. Evans believes that the Church uses the Reformed story in understanding how Christians gain the knowledge they claim to have, and uses the evidentialist story to convince others of the truth of the incarnational narrative.

Evans is careful to make sure that applications to practical life come through clearly in the book, making the book generally accessible to anyone with an interest in the question of Christ’s historicity. He includes a chapter entitled, “Historical Scholarship and the Layperson: A Case Study,” which follows the inquiry of a hypothetical individual who navigates his way through the labyrinth of Scripture, experience, critical scholarship, and skeptical claims in order to draw his own conclusions. Through the experience of “James,” readers are given tangible insight into methods of conducting their own search for the validation of the gospel’s historicity.

The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith commissions the lay person to actively participate in a dialogue that might, at first glance, seem to be confined to scholars and intellectuals in an ivory tower. Evans provides the fundamental tools by which those who are not experts may arrive at responsible, informed conclusions. By emphasizing the practical nature of the subject matter and the necessity of embracing convictions regarding it, Evans effectively takes difficult-to-grasp ideas and roots them in practical application. Though the book is quite accessible to the layperson, effectively including nonexperts in the dialogue, the nature of the subject matter sometimes necessitates explanation that may seem tedious to those without an interest in epistemology, for example. Even while giving detailed explanations of philosophical schools of thought, Evans is careful not to alienate the amateur. The book does not presume any extensive prior knowledge in a particular area on the part of the reader, though background in philosophy or New Testament scholarship is certain to provide a helpful context from which to begin. Furthermore, the preface recommends selections to specifically read or omit for those with particular interests or prior convictions or for those who simply cannot commit the time to read the entire text.

The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith presents a comprehensive look at a topic which has made its way to the forefront of discussion amongst both scholars and non-experts. It provides knowledge that is essential to the formulation of informed conclusions, but remains accessible to those without the expertise.

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**STAFF NOTES**

Angela Ajayi desires to assume an ambiguous existence.

Julia Anema agrees.

If Sarah Byker had 3 wishes, she would first wish that poems would read like snapshots. Then she’d wish that poems could read. Then she’d wish they could talk. And then, she’d wish she could ask them what they saw. What, that’s four wishes? Well, screw you!

David DeHaan disagrees with that most strenuously.

Gary DeWitt wants to remind freshmen to keep their Dialogues. They might get his cartoons in five years.

Kelley Evans will soon be fleeing to North Dakota for her life.

When two and two make five, Michael Heerema will have more fun.

Rob Huie has 564 calories and 39 grams of fat.

Rebecca Lew will be studying blue ice in Alaska next year.

Joseph Moore has learned to look cheerful while under the table he pushes a fork into the back of his hand.

Jonathan Peterson continually contradicts himself.

Joel Schickel’s dream is to have a house with a two-stall garage and a white picket fence.

Amy Sitar echoes the Indigo Girls: “Maybe all that we need is to meet in the middle of impossibility.”

Abram Seen is an English major who has learned to believe everything he reads.

Sara Vanderlugt is a senior English major who enjoys juggling and eating jujyfruit. After graduation she hopes to coin a phrase like, “Show me the money.”

Sarah C. Vos looks forward to a more perfect world where deadlines do not exist.
Praha River Ride photograph 7 3/8 x 9 1/2" Chris Doelman
FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

Clip N' Date (Yo' ass)

One free alcohol policy violation*
*On-campus only, present to R.D. to redeem, no expiration date

Don't have a car for the "big date"? We, the security officers, understand. Rent an escort car overnight for only $5. Gas included.

ATTN: Math Majors!
Free Personality.*
*Results not guaranteed.

"Free strip of acid" map
Common = JTS = (not to scale)

Smoke indoors--one day only.
May 14!
Just show this official coupon. We repeat, May 14 only.

(Phew)
Fiancé
(Seniors only)

Get out of this world free
For $10 dollars off "A" Zondervan books.

One extra point on your GPA for every green gideon you can produce.
(No one related to or affiliated with gideons included. May participate)

APRIL/MAY 47