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# dialogue

**The Truth**

Volume 41: Issue 5

*2009*

# Dialogue: The Truth

Calvin College's Journal of Commentary and the Arts  
April 2009

Volume 41: Issue 5

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## Editorial

Miranda Brouwer and Ryan Weberling

What is the Truth? We hoped to get a better idea by calling for submissions with the topic "The Truth", calling for photography and non-fiction. We opened the door wide to any interpretation of what the truth is to Calvin College. What we recieved is contained on these pages. Do you think they tell the truth?

When I was about 4, I drew with crayons on the wall in my parents house. When they asked me if I did it, I told them that my younger sister did it (she was too short at the time to reach as high as the top of the coloring.) My parents wanted to teach me a lesson, so they invited my uncle over and filled him in on their dilemma. He asked, "Who made this beautiful artwork?" I answered jumping up and down, my hand in the air, "I DID! I DID!"

*ialogue* is Calvin College's student-run journal of commentary and the arts, published multiple times yearly, including a music CD. *Dialogue* is a magazine dedicated to enhancing productive discourses, nurturing artistic growth at Calvin, as well as engaging culture through images, words, and ideas. We welcome submissions of articles, reviews, essays, literature, and visual art of every sort, as well as responses to *Dialogue*. Submissions, questions, feedback, and all other correspondence may be addressed to the editors at [dialogue@calvin.edu](mailto:dialogue@calvin.edu).

The shoes on the Danube Promenade stand as a memorial to the Hungarian Jews who were shot into the Danube by the Arrow Cross militiamen in 1945. The victims left their shoes on the bank as they fell into the water. It actually happened, it's true. So, this is picture is a way of sharing the true horror that happened on the bank and is remembered by the humble shoes that remind any who walk in front of Budapest's Parliament.

Jenna Sue Vanden Brink



**(Untitled)** Jenna Sue Vanden Brink



**(Untitled)** Amy Crouch



**(untitled)**

by ana wen

scattered thoughts over coffee, promptly forgotten. shrugged shoulders  
and estranging motives from the conversation spares the mind. uncomfort-  
ably close to diving deeper. turn the attention away, but thoughts progress.  
motivated by unexplained and awkward drives. for something behind the  
words of a homeless man. sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is  
truth. the teachings of an innocent criminal propelling x many lives to live  
and day for truth. the idea of truth. the hope of truth. the promise of truth.  
the truth of truth. not hiding just out of sight, but aware and knocking.  
merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.  
misused and abused but truth is only a constant. clear but unclear. defined  
but undefinable. so simple but so complex. the human mind verses the  
universe. cynics find a niche and run with it. dreamers find a dream and  
sleep with it. rambled sentences later and still not much closer. but  
thinkers find their questions and see truth in them.

submitted by Alice Scogin





**S-Bahn to Sachsenhausen Than DeJonge**



## Vibrant Transportation Than DeJonge

**(Untitled)** Sarah Vander Molen

Americans are addicted to prostitution when it comes to food. We neither know nor care where it comes from. We don't really care who supplies it. We want it when we want, where we want.

America's agricultural system has become a monoculture, growing vast amounts of corn – not the sweet corn that you would eat on the cob, but corn that is indigestible until it is processed. Look at almost any ingredients list on a label of processed food: I guarantee that at least one of the ingredients is made from processed corn (high-fructose corn syrup, dextrose, xanthan gum, and MSG all come from corn). Why so much corn? Because we have too much and we need to get rid of it. In corn-farming towns of the Midwest, mountains of corn go unused every year. We will never be able to consume it all, but farmers continue to grow hundreds of thousands of acres of it because the government subsidizes it. Farmers get paid a sum of money merely for growing corn, and this doesn't include the meager profit they get from selling it. Growing all this corn year after year devastates the soil and forces farmers to rely on harmful fertilizers and chemicals to keep the corn growing.



However, not all the corn that farmers produce goes into our processed foods. Much of it is fed to animals raised in CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations), particularly cattle. Corn is not part of a cow's natural diet. In fact, eating corn makes their digestive tract acidic, encouraging the survival of acid-resistant *E. coli*. Guess who eats the infected cows? *Salmonella* ends up on our tomatoes and spinach and in our peanut butter because, somehow, whether it is because the tomato, spinach, and peanut farms are on their own stream of CAFOs or some other reason, the plants end up with fecal matter on them. Guess who eats the infected plants? Beef cattle raised in CAFOs are kept in cages that are usually too small to allow the animal to move around. The cows live standing in their own excrement; no farms will take their manure to use for fertilizer because it is toxic. The cattle are also fed parts of other slaughtered cows (the fat and the blood). Cows are naturally herbivores and, naturally, not cannibalistic. Eating parts of other cows spreads mad cow disease. To prevent this, some CAFO directors have, instead, fed cow parts to other animals, such as chickens. Unfortunately, chicken parts are also fed to cows, thus completing the circle.

Egg-laying hens are kept in tiny cages, too small for the hens to spread their wings. Because of their confinement, many hens have taken to rubbing their breasts against the wall of the cage, thus rubbing off their feathers and some skin. Chickens raised for meat are kept in larger cages because the breast meat is too valuable for the chickens to rub.

Pigs are raised in cages lined in rows. Pigs are more intelligent than dogs and prone to depression when raised in CAFOs. Often, pigs will bite on the tail of the pig in front of it, the victim pig too dulled to respond. As a solution, pigs' tails will be docked off in early youth, without anesthetics. The "surgeon" will leave behind a small stub of tail, not by accident, but to keep a piece of tail so sensitive that a pig will respond when another pig chews on it.

All of this occurs in the modern food system, but I was ignorant of it until January when Interim began and I took a class called "What's for Dinner?" After my class every day, I went to Knollcrest for dinner and I usually resorted to eating corn-processed cereal and milk from corn-fed cows. This is not a bash on the dining halls or the people that eat in them, because most of America is completely ignorant about the goings-on in the food industry. Why is that, though? Why is it that we care more about knowing our hairdresser, plumber, or computer technician than we do about knowing who provides us the food that goes into our bodies? After all, we are what we eat.

I have a good guess: price. As long as the consumer's number one priority is cost, we are going to turn a blind eye to the treatment of animals that cause us to become sick, to the high amount of fossil fuels that are used to transport out-of-season food from all over the world into our kitchens, and to the biased farming regulations that favor huge, monoculture farms and push small, sustainable farms into extinction. Why is price the top priority for food consumers instead of quality and health? In the long run, the poor-quality food we are consuming now will cause all kinds of health problems that will require large amounts of money to remedy.

I think the biggest problem is that we are seeing food not as a gift, but as a given. We feel entitled to food because we have the means to procure it. We can get as much food as we want if we overlook such things as quality, integrity, and justice because cheaply-produced food means cheap food.

I'm not suggesting that everyone becomes a vegetarian. I'm not a vegetarian. I just think that we should all take the time to consider where our food comes from and if that's acceptable to us as children of God who have responsibility over creation.



**(Untitled)** Silas Wolff

## (Untitled)

Silas Wolff

The first real day of our oppression.  
The great grey heavenly depression,  
But alas its the time and the natural progression.  
The kids look outside transfixed on the worlds icy complexion.

Trees striped of their leaves replaced with pillows of snow.  
The wind blows giving onlookers a wonderland show.  
Spears of dripping crystal protrude from ledges  
Adding beauty and danger to winters cold pleasures.

Kids of little age bundle up warm  
To fight, to sing, and catch snowflakes on their tongue.  
The seasons may change but their spirits do not,  
Running and screaming without a care in the world.

Pure white snow falls from a glowing gray sky  
But I stay warm inside by the growing fire light,  
Starring out my window snowflakes dance in flight  
Even though the world is colorless and cold beauty is always in sight.

Get lost in the wind, get lost in the cold.  
Experience it all before you grow too old.  
The season called winter is here but not to stay.  
Take up your jackets and heed what I say.





**(Untitled)** Jenna Sue Vanden Brink 14



15 **(Untitled)** Jenna Sue Vanden Brink

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This is a glimpse of an ethnographic museum in Croatia that has fallen into ruins. It once belonged to the church, but was brought under state control, and now belongs to no one. These memories of real, everyday Croatian life and culture are disintegrating in this neglected building.

Jenna Sue Vanden Brink

**Experts Agree...**

Ryan Weberling

We asked some of the English professors about what poems they consider to be especially important and enjoyable. Here is what they recommended to you, dear reader.

Linda Naranjo-Huebl: “Perhaps the World Ends Here”, “Remember” by Joy Harjo

Lew Klatt: “Poppies in October” by Sylvia Plath

Jane Zwart: “Musée des Beaux Arts” by W. H. Auden

Jennifer Williams: “The Waste Land” by T. S. Eliot

Debra Rienstra: “Gratefulness” by George Herbert

S. Felch: “Purvey Translates: In ipso enim vivimus et movemur et sumus” by Thom Satterlee



**American Unilateralism Than DeJonge**



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*Thanks to all those who submitted their work, and thanks also to our  
readers. Enjoy!*

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