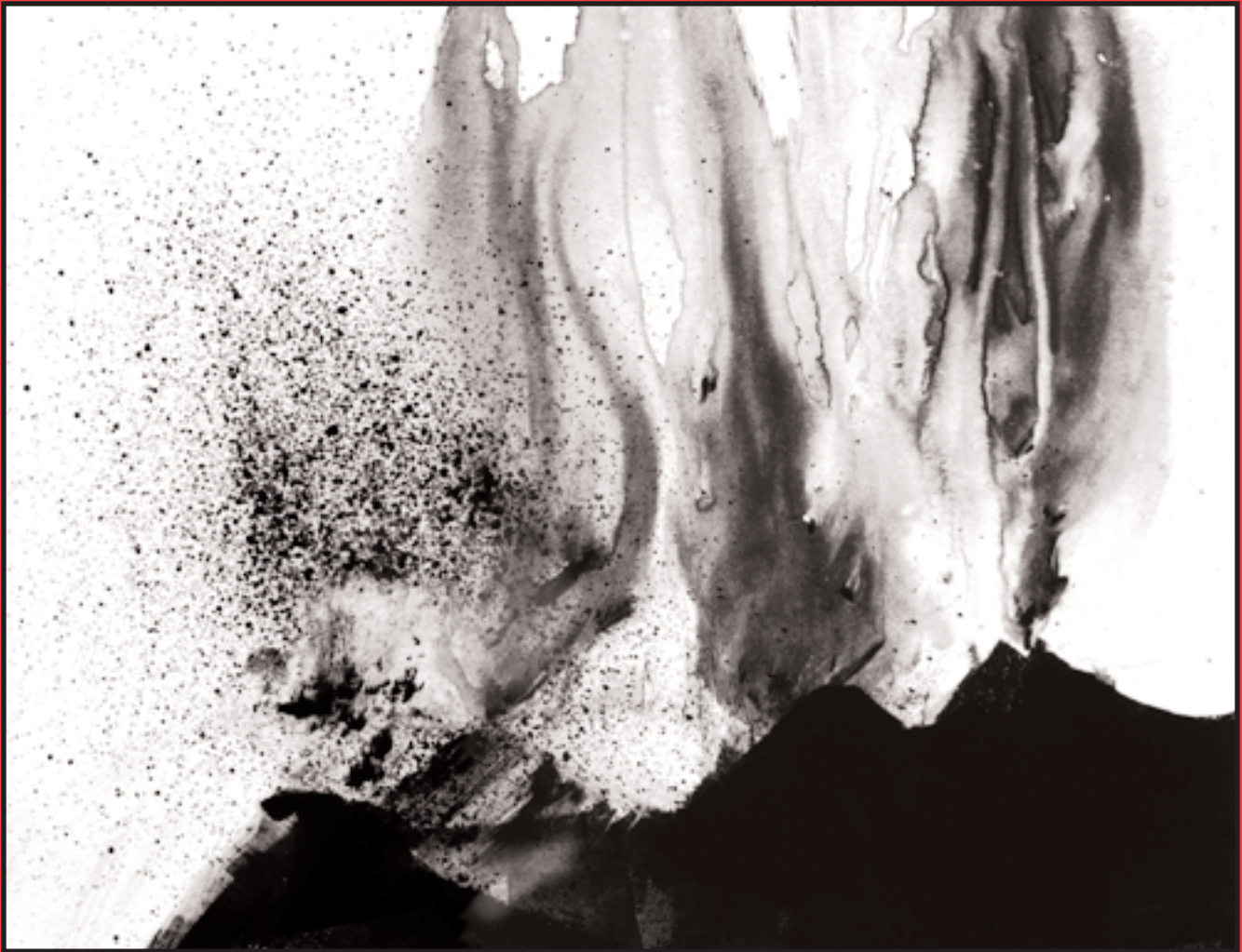


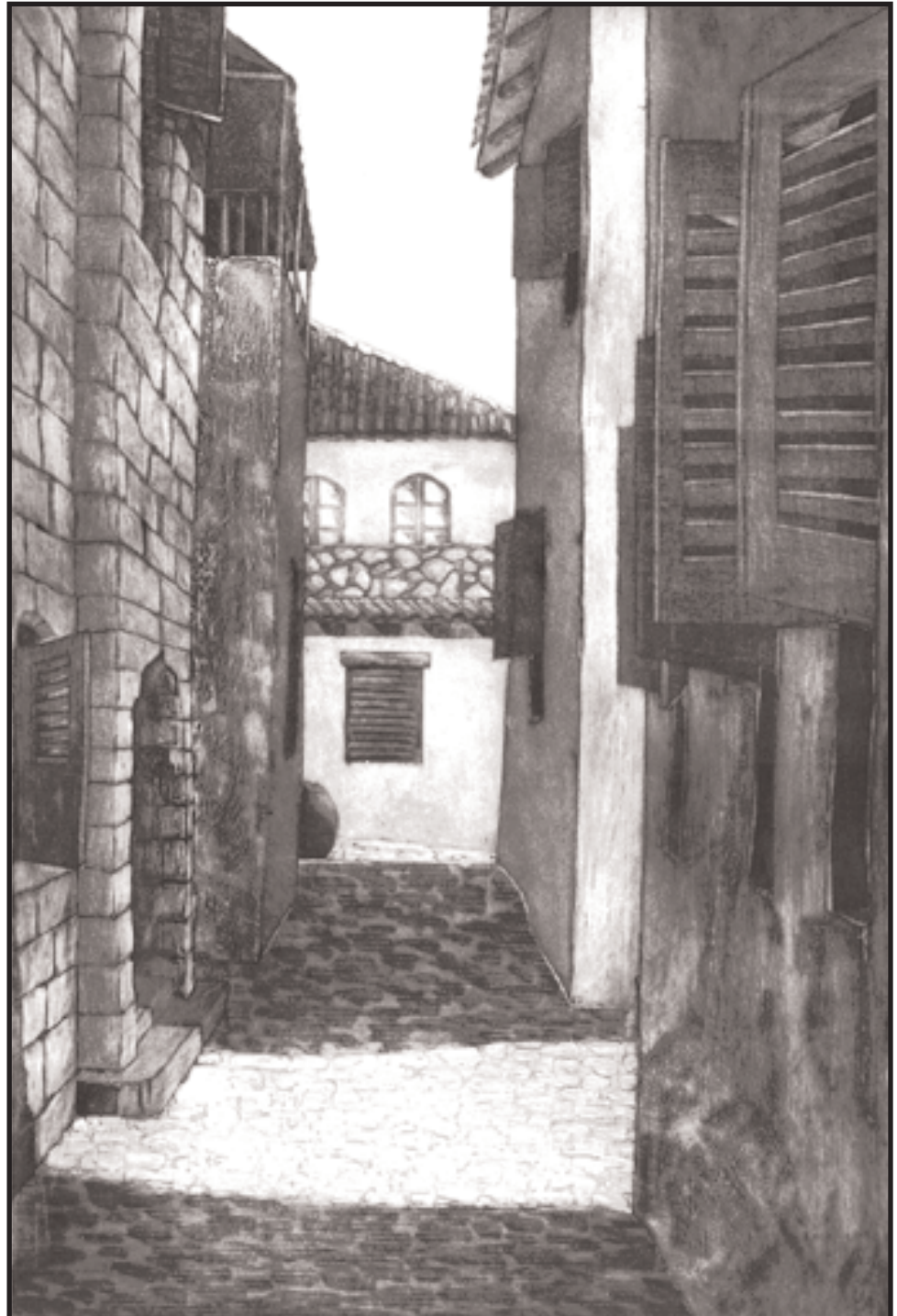
VOLUME 21 NUMBER 2 *DECEMBER 2002*

Bridgewater Review



BRIDGEWATER STATE COLLEGE

**Etching: A Street
in Altos de Chavon,
Dominican Republic
18" x 12"**



As artist Diane Nicastro and her husband Rob travel the world in pursuit of their passion for scuba diving, Diane takes photographs and does drawings that later serve as

resource material for paintings and graphics that she develops in her home studio after she returns. As the work displayed on the inside front and back covers attests,

her preferred subjects are architectural studies. Diane graduated from Bridgewater State College as an Art Major in 1988.



**Pencil Drawing:
The Monastery
of Saint Catherine,
Sinai, Egypt
15" x 12"**

Editor's Notebook Keeping the Home Fires Burning

by Michael Kryzaneck

It's important sometimes to reflect on how we live in the United States compared to the rest of the world, especially those countries of the less developed world. It is not enough to state that we are rich and they are poor or that we are "advanced" and they are "deprived." Being an American in the global economy means that our wealth and power come at a price, particularly an energy and environmental price. A little data may help drive this point across. The United States has about 280 million people, or 5% of the world's population, but we consume 22% of fossil fuels and we generate 24% of carbon dioxide emissions, the key contributor to global warming. Furthermore, an average American uses 185 gallons of water a day, a figure that only means something when compared to the 8 gallons of water a day that are used by a resident of Senegal. And when it comes to plain old overkill, an American consumes about 53 times more goods and services than a resident of China.

One common defense of these excesses and disparities is that the United States is the world's most developed nation and as a result consumes more as it creates wealth, fosters innovation, and provides for the general welfare of its citizens. But there is a contrary view. Becoming the world's most powerful country, the United States has built its wealth upon a foundation of consumer greed and corporate irresponsibility. Americans are not just satisfied with having all the latest consumer "stuff," they have to have all the biggest, energy-draining, environmentally dangerous "stuff." From gigantic SUVs to golf courses on the desert to oversized mansions to throwaway diapers, beer cans and paper plates, the American economic culture is one huge consumer machine with a thirst that is unquenchable.

It should come as no surprise that the United States gobbles up the world's resources in order to enhance its economic standing; after all ours is a market-based system that responds to consumer demand and private wealth accumulation. The United States has not become the wealthiest country in the world because it has been reluctant to transform the resources on this planet into everything from computer chips to potato chips. The defenders of American energy use hold firm to the belief that our future as the world's great superpower depends on a continuation of full-scale energy use.



But the real issue about American wealth and resource utilization is more of a matter of balance and proportionality than of sustaining the current growth pattern. Americans, both consumers and corporate leaders, need to ask themselves whether it is necessary to feed the thirsty machine with ever larger items that suck up energy and destroy the environment? We have forgotten about conservation in this country and we certainly have forgotten about living in a way that is modest and efficient. Madison Avenue advertisers tell us that we need all this "stuff" and we march in lock step to the checkout counter. That Senegalese farmer who gets by on a little water or that Chinese worker who lives a meager existence is not even on our radar screen.

So how do we as a country begin to change our buying and living habits so that there is some balance and proportion to our consumer culture? The realistic answer is that such a task is nearly impossible and may take a generation of buying habits to change. The beginning of bringing balance and proportionality back does, however, begin with national political and economic leadership. Governmental and business heads need to express to the American people that economic growth can be achieved through efficiency rather than through excess. This country needs leaders who talk about fuel efficient cars not gas guzzlers; this country needs leaders who advocate for more housing not eight bathroom mega-homes; and this country certainly needs leaders who accent the importance of conserving all its natural resources rather than expending them in a reckless manner.

The 1990s were the golden years of consumer consumption in the United States. We lived well and enjoyed the benefits of residing in the wealthiest country in the world. But now in the 21st century it is time to think about a consumer diet and stopping the machine from eating away our future.

—Michael Kryzaneck is Editor of the Bridgewater Review

Philosophy and Popular Culture: A Philosopher Seeks Value in *The Simpsons*

by Aeon J. Skoble



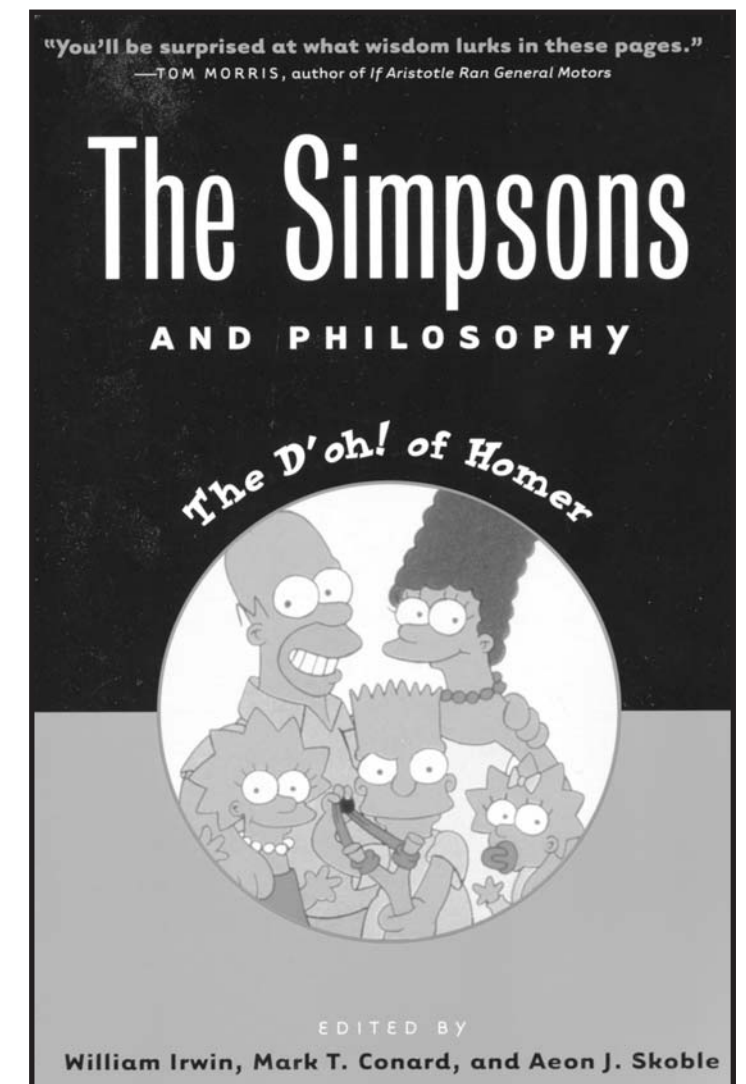
Photograph by Greg Thomas

What possible value to philosophy is popular culture? That question is put to me as often by non-philosophers as by philosophers, but for the most part it is academics and intellectuals who ask it. Non-academics tend to ask the opposite question: what relevance to popular culture is philosophy? As a co-editor of philosophical books on the television program *The Simpsons* and on the films of Woody Allen, and a contributor to similar volumes on J.R.R. Tolkien and on the television program *Seinfeld*, I need to have an answer for these questions.

There are different ways of connecting philosophy to popular culture. One way is to act as though popular culture objects are no different from high-culture objects, and thus are equally profound. After all, the argument goes, Shakespeare and Sophocles were "popular culture" in their day. So if these great dramas are fit subjects for philosophical analysis, why not a Top-40 song or a sit-com? But this argument is weak. The mere fact that some popular-culture artifacts come to be considered high-culture doesn't entail that all of them could be. More to the point, not all popular-culture objects are sufficiently interesting to lend themselves to philosophical discussion.

I favor a different approach. Since some objects from the popular culture have greater depth than others, they are better vehicles for motivating philosophical thinking, especially among people who might not otherwise consider such questions. So one answer to the question about the value of popular culture to philosophy is that philosophers can sometimes use popular culture objects to encourage interest in philosophy. In general, the arts are frequently invoked by philosophers as examples or illustrations of attitudes, consequences, or dilemmas. The point of doing so is typically as a short cut to getting students or readers to conceptualize a problem. The best works of high art are perfectly suited to serve this need, as it is frequently their grappling with such mat-

ters that makes them excellent in the first place. One is hard pressed to find a more compelling and dramatic investigation of the theme of law versus civil disobedience than Sophocles' "Antigone." Shakespeare's "Henry V" is perfect for discussions of the tenets of Just-War theory. Ibsen's dramas offer endless inquiry into themes of conformity and integrity. Hemingway, Beethoven, Aeschylus, Camus—the list goes on and on. It's plain



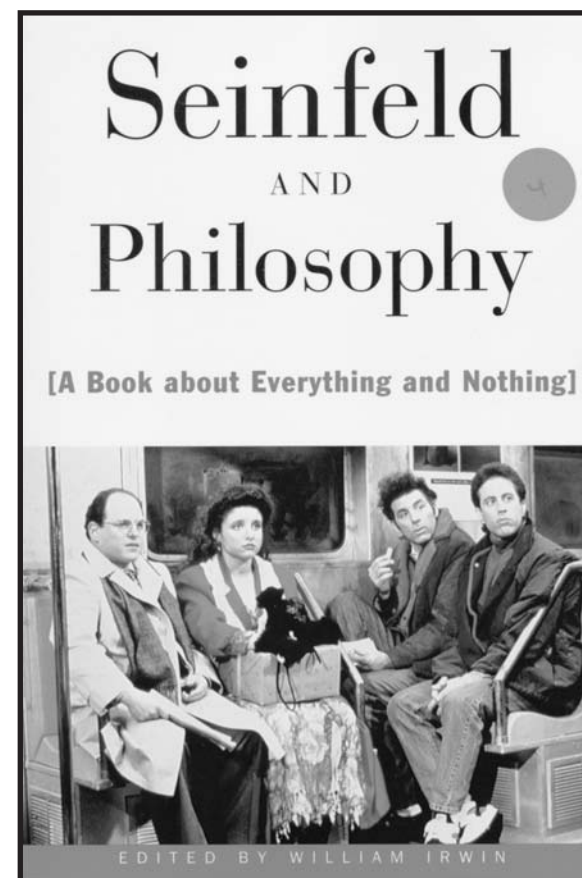
enough that the arts are of tremendous value to philosophy, in terms of the ways in which artists can prompt contemplation of philosophical problems in a way that is different from the discursive style of philosophical argumentation. But philosophers' ability to appeal to the arts is limited by the audience's familiarity with the arts. Sad as it is, any reference I might make in class to Ibsen these days would be a complete waste of time. But popular culture has the advantage of being, well, popular. For every one student who might recognize a Sophocles reference, a hundred will recognize a reference to *The Simpsons*. Recognizing that fact and trying to find ways to take advantage of it doesn't entail that sit-coms are "just as good" as our best dramas. In terms of finding ways to generate consideration of philosophical questions where it otherwise would not occur, there's no getting around the appeal of popular films and television programs. That's one way to establish a common language with students, and indeed with non-specialists generally. To whatever extent high art is valuable for communicating, or motivating interest in, ideas, popular art can not only serve the same goal, but to a broader base.

The Simpsons, as it happens, is rich in satire, unquestionably one of the most intelligently written shows on television. Satire is always an excellent vehicle for motivating thought and discussion, through its ability to mock and exaggerate. An animated, weekly, sit-com-format satire is all the more versatile in this regard, but the satire of live-action comedies such as *Seinfeld* is also effective. In *Seinfeld*, the lead characters' frequent deliberations about what should be done in certain situations has been profitably mined as a catalogue of different schools of ethics. (Popular dramas, of course, can also be effective vehicles for exploring philosophical problems. More than one episode of *Law and Order*, for instance, has offered avenues for consideration of the nature of evil, and corollary problems of free will and responsibility.) Not every television program effectively communicates philosophy—not even every good program. Some comedies are funny without having much in the way of philosophical substance. The many layers of satire, irony, and self-reference that we find in *The Simpsons* is what enables it to serve this communicative function.

For example, it is fair to say that American society is conflicted about intellectuals. Respect for them seems virtually to go hand in hand with resentment. This is a puzzling social problem, and also one of great importance, for we sometimes seem to be on the verge of a

new "dark ages," where not only the notion of expertise, but all standards of rationality are being challenged. This clearly has significant social consequences, and is an issue well worth exploring. I have argued that *The Simpsons* skillfully illustrates this American ambivalence about expertise and rationality. Homer, the father, is a classic example of an anti-intellectual dolt, as are most of his acquaintances, and his son Bart. But his daughter, Lisa, is not only pro-intellectual, she is smart beyond her years. She is extremely intelligent and sophisticated, and is often seen out-thinking those around her. Naturally, for this she is mocked by the other children at school and generally ignored by the adults. On the other hand, her favorite TV show is the same one as her brother's: a mindlessly violent cartoon. Her treatment on the show, I argue, captures the love-hate relationship American society has with intellectuals in a clear enough way to facilitate thought and discussion.

One might respond that this is a poor example, since only intellectuals worry about the problem of anti-intellectualism. But the ambivalence I note is a real concern for all, as illustrated clearly by Jonathan Swift's parable of the—wait, only three percent of students have read Swift—ok, as illustrated clearly by the *Simpsons* episode in which Lisa and the other intellectu-



als take over the town. In this episode, Lisa joins the local chapter of Mensa, which already includes Professor Frink, Dr. Hibbert, and Comic Book Guy. Together they end up in charge of Springfield. Lisa rhapsodizes about the rule of the intellectuals, a true rationalist utopia, but too many of their programs alienate the regular citizens of the town (including, of course, Homer, who leads the charge of the idiot brigade). It would be easy enough to see this sequence of events as a satire on the way the average person is too stupid to recognize the rule of the wise, but more than that is being satirized here. Also under attack is the very notion of rule of the wise—the Mensans have some legitimately good ideas (more rational traffic patterns), but also some ridiculous ones (censorship, mating rituals inspired by *Star Trek*), and they squabble amongst themselves. The Mensans offer something of value, especially in contrast to the corrupt regime of Mayor Quimby or the reign of idiocy that Homer represents, and Lisa's intentions are good, but it is impossible to see this episode as unequivocally pro-intellectual, since one theme is clearly that utopian schemes by elites are unstable, inevitably unpopular, and sometimes foolish. But neither is it anti-intellectual, since we are clearly not meant to favor an irrational mob rule as the only alternative to rationalist elitism. Pure majoritarianism is as arbitrary, and potentially tyrannical as Lisa's philosopher-kings would have been. What a lucid exposition of the fundamental problem of democracy this pop culture artifact turned out to be!

It is actually true, I suspect, that utopian schemes by elites tend to be ill-conceived, or are power-grabbing schemes masquerading as the common good. But it is actually not the case that the only alternatives are mob rule or oligarchy. The framers of the United States Constitution hoped to combine democratic principles (a Congress) with some of the benefits of an undemocratic elite rule (a Senate, a Supreme Court, a Bill of Rights). This has had mixed results, but in contrast to other alternatives seems to have fared well. Is all of our society's ambivalence about intellectuals due to this constitutional tension? Surely not. That is part of it, but more likely than not, this ambivalence is a manifestation of deeper psychological conflicts. We want to have authoritative guidance, but we also want autonomy. We don't like feeling stupid, yet when we are honest we realize we need to learn some things. We respect the accomplishments of others, but sometimes feel threat-

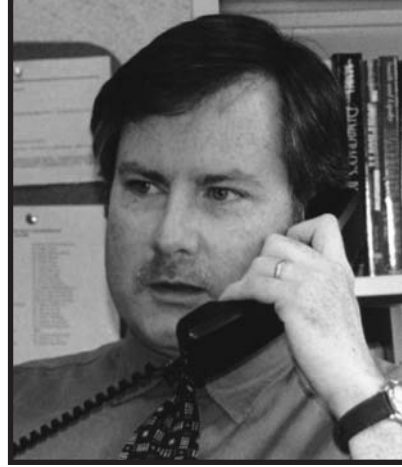
ened and resentful. We have a respect for authorities when it suits us, and embrace relativism in other cases. The "we" here is, of course, a generalization: some people manifest this conflict less than others (or in a few cases not at all), but it seems an apt description of a general social outlook. Unsurprisingly, *The Simpsons*, our most profoundly satirical TV show, both illustrates and instantiates it.

Other issues that have been fruitfully explored in *The Simpsons* include the role of the family, women's roles, religion and society, frameworks for ethical discourse, thought and language, artificial intelligence. Other popular culture artifacts offer similar opportunities for motivating exploration of profound issues. *The Matrix*, for example, is a popular science-fiction film which uses a classic philosophical theme about the nature of reality and the basis for our knowledge claims. *The Lord of the Rings*, first a popular novel and now a popular film, enables exploration of issues ranging from moral corruption to environmental ethics. Is every popular book, movie, and television program equally worthwhile in this regard? Hardly. Are they the equivalent of history's best works of literature, deeply profound in a way that illuminates the human condition as never before? Rarely. But they may sometimes be just deep enough, or funny enough, to warrant serious attention, and the mere fact of their popularity means that they can effectively help us here in the academy reach both our students and those outside the academy, encouraging them to consider, at least briefly, though hopefully thoroughly, the things we find of vital importance.

—Aeon J. Skoble is Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Government Reorganization in the Fight Against Terrorism

by Brendan Burke



Photograph by Greg Thomas

“This is an administration that will not talk about how we gather intelligence, how we know what we’re going to do, nor what our plans are. When we move, we will communicate with you in an appropriate manner.”

“Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success.”

—President Bush at the outset of the war

Like most Americans under forty, I have little experience with America at war. Short engagements like “Desert Storm,” Grenada, and Panama hardly qualify; they were over almost as soon as they began. Now, we’re faced with the real thing, the war on terrorism. But as President Bush warned us, this is a war fraught with confusion. What are we to make of this war, when even the successes are secret and the failures are rich fodder for a media starved for some form of coverage? How do we balance hidden positive outcomes with media overkill pertaining to governmental mistakes?

First, it is important to remember that there have been some clear successes, at the outset in Afghanistan and on the domestic front (probable terrorists captured in Buffalo and Portland, Oregon for example). Second, it is useful to consider success not only from specific threats or incidents averted, or in contrast, to judge the fight on terrorism as a failure when the terrorists pull off specific attacks. Our approach to considering this war needs to involve a longer view, a pattern of effort over the years. As citizens outside of the military or public safety realm, we need to assess whether our governmental leaders appear to be learning over time about better ways to handle the threat of terrorism. There are some encouraging signs, based on recent history, that the government is retooling its organizational capacity in responsive and effective ways to deal with the terrorism threat. This essay discusses two recent failed military and public safety efforts, which have been followed with encouraging reorganizations and reforms that have laid the groundwork for a successful war on terrorism.

BLACK HAWK DOWN, AND LESSONS LEARNED IN WAR

The movie *Black Hawk Down*, based on the book by journalist Mark Bowden, displays in heartbreaking fashion some of the worst of American diplomacy, military decision-making, and tactical choices in modern times. In October 1993, the United States was involved in a conflict with Mohammed Farrah Aidid, a Somali warlord who controlled a portion of his country with a brutal hand. The Battle of Mogadishu was intended as a rapid insertion of Airborne Rangers and Special Forces troops to kidnap two of Aidid’s lieutenants. Soldiers would be dropped in from helicopters, take their prisoners, and be removed from the hostile city center by a Ranger ground unit in trucks and Humvees. But the American forces were taken off guard by the hatred and fervor of the locals. The American troops thought their enemy was a narrow group of Aidid’s close supporters, where in fact, many citizens of Mogadishu joined in the fight against the Rangers. Two Black Hawk helicopters were shot down with surface-to-air missiles, and the raid on Aidid’s leadership team turned into a recovery effort of Ranger units and helicopter crews, stranded in the narrow streets of the ancient city.

The movie focuses on the struggle of these elite American military forces to survive in the streets. In the end, over one hundred American troops were wounded, and nineteen died, while over a thousand Somalis lost their lives. Bowden’s book covers the environment of this conflict in rich detail, and describes some of the reasons for this catastrophe. This battle was fought with the wrong forces for the task; with a misunderstanding of how they were perceived in the community where they fought; and with problematic coordination and technical support.

The American forces in the Battle of Mogadishu included two of the best tools in our arsenal. The core of the strike force was a unit of Airborne Rangers, an elite, select group of soldiers who are well-trained and well-equipped for rapid strikes. In Mogadishu, the Rangers operated from helicopters based at the city’s airport, with the ability to move quickly to all points in the city where they were needed. The American effort also included a handful of Special Forces troops. These are the most elite of all American soldiers.

Why couldn’t these superior American troops prevail against a band of apparently disorganized Somali youths? Bowden builds a case that it was the very elite nature of the American presence that inspired a highly emotional hatred of the invading forces. The American troops were unaware of the negative symbolism that they portrayed. When Kevlar-clad warriors swooped overhead in well-armed helicopters, Aidid’s soldiers could criticize them as the real aggressors. Bowden tells of how the helicopters would kick up frustrating dust storms throughout the sandy streets of Mogadishu, and even pull the corrugated metal roofs off of slum dwellings with the backdraft of their propellers. Aidid’s forces may have been autocratic and violent toward Mogadishu’s citizens, but the warlord’s troops could claim that at least they weren’t imperialist invaders bent on destroying neighborhoods and homes. Once the battle began, the hatred for Americans proved to be a significant rallying device for Aidid’s lieutenants. American soldiers found themselves in a fight not against a handful of well-armed Aidid regulars, but instead greatly outnumbered by a vast mob of street fighters of varying capability.

The book and movie describe one other tragic component of the Battle of Mogadishu, involving battlefield coordination. American troops on the ground operated with “eyes in the sky” officers in a helicopter and even higher, in a Navy spy plane. The idea is that the spy plane can see the entire battlefield, the road grid, and opposing forces spread throughout the streets. When the first of two Black Hawk helicopters was shot down in the middle of the city, Rangers on the ground quickly organized a rescue party. Mogadishu’s streets are unpaved, narrow, and have no signage and few recognizable landmarks. In theory, the Navy plane should be able to direct the rescue unit’s Humvees across the city to the downed helicopter, even in a manner that avoids certain neighborhoods where Aidid’s forces may have blocked streets to create ambush situations.

In practice, this coordinating system failed tragically. The core of the problem was that the spy plane’s directions were relayed to the Humvees on the ground through the intervening command helicopter. This created a time delay, which confounded instructions to the lead vehicle on the ground. In the spy plane, the navigator saw that the rescue convoy should take a left turn at the third intersection. He passed this direction on to the helicopter, but by then the lead Humvee had driven past the first intersection. As a result the convoy of Humvees took several wrong turns, into blind alleys

and ambushes. At one point, the convoy was only six blocks along main roads from one of the downed helicopters, but the misdirection sent the convoy through fifty-five blocks of back roads in the city, with time wasting away for the downed helicopter crew. The convoy was under steady fire from roof tops and side streets during this time. Eventually, the rescue force was so depleted through injuries that their mission was called off.

Fast forward to 2001, and the War in Afghanistan: America’s military preparations show that we learned sufficiently well to avoid the mistakes of Mogadishu. First, the United States and its allies fought the Taliban while using a concept called “steering, not rowing.” The broad idea is that government workers need not, and maybe should not, be the ones to carry out governmental goals. We see this increasingly in the delivery of domestic governmental services, such as in the use of non-profit agencies to deliver state-ordered welfare programs. In the context of war in Afghanistan, the Rangers and Special Forces have had a much reduced, but more focused and productive role. One of the core competencies of the Special Forces is to train indigenous military forces in weapons use, tactics, and in the moral and ethical use of both while in the war zone.

Instead of engaging in battle (“rowing”), Special Forces soldiers trained Northern Alliance units (“steering”) in what were clearly quite productive techniques to win the early phase of the war.

Why was this a superior strategy in 2001? After the September 11 attacks, Osama bin Laden called upon Arab nations to join together in fighting against America—much the same way that Aidid had called upon Somalis to ignore his own atrocities, and focus on outside threats from America. If the war in Afghanistan had been fought predominantly with American soldiers, Al-Qaeda would have had a powerful recruiting tool, to create local opposition to the anti-terrorist effort. Clearly, this strategy allowed the war to proceed more smoothly from the outset; the potential for opposition to coalesce against an “outside threat” was reduced, since the Taliban were engaged in a battle predominantly against other Afghans from the Northern Alliance.

This is certainly not the whole story. The fight against the Taliban continues. The stability of the new government under President Hamid Karzai is tenuous, and there are still varied criticisms about the moral and ethical ways of the new government. But the main message remains: The United States made a better start in this fight as a result of difficult lessons learned in Somalia.

See **Table I** for a full summary of the organizational improvements made between the engagements in Somalia and Afghanistan.

TRAFFIC AND DOMESTIC LESSONS LEARNED

During the summer of 2002, we were shown the plans for “the most extensive reorganization of the federal government since the 1940s.” President Bush announced a huge realignment of most of our domestic security apparatus, involving approximately 170,000 Federal government employees from agencies as diverse as the Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Administration, and the National Institutes of Health. This mammoth bureaucracy would be called the Department of Homeland Security. Indeed, no government program so large had been intended for implementation on such a tight time frame since World War II.

Up to this point, coordination of domestic effort in the war on terrorism had been in the hands of the White House Office of Homeland Security. Its director, Tom Ridge, had resigned as Governor of Pennsylvania in the days after the September 11 attacks, and had worked in conjunction with Attorney General John Ashcroft to plan and set policy for the fight against terrorists. Ridge is the identified leader of these efforts, and was thus called the homeland security “czar.” The Department of Homeland Security proposal was initially well received by both Republicans and Democrats in Congress, but met with delays and opposition to its specifics. The key question in Congress surrounding the Department of Homeland Security: Is it better to have a coordinator of the anti-terror effort in many agencies, or a monolithic department, including almost ten percent of the Federal workforce within its boundaries? Eventually Congress and the President reached a series of compromises and passed legislation establishing the Department of Homeland Security.

Modern organization theory tends to point us toward solutions that are more flexible and responsive to changing demands in the operating environment. A common form is the “matrix,” which involves the establishment of leadership and planning networks both by functional area (such as public health threats) as well as by site (such as in the New England region). When a specific functional area rises in importance, that network becomes the focus of overall effort. Advocates of matrix management contend that the old hierarchy is outdated and hard to reorient in a crisis. They can point to the greater responsiveness of a more fluid, pragmatic military strategy in Afghanistan as part of their supporting evidence.

But on the other hand, a case can be made that consolidation of many units has a better chance for success. First, the current domestic security structure is convoluted, and appears to be impossible to manage. The Homeland Security Department established an array of agencies with a role in the domestic war on terrorism. The **organization chart** shows twenty-two cabinet or department level organizations, and 119 functional agencies as playing a part in this fight. This chart despite its expansiveness ignores two other complex circumstances: Each cabinet-level agency is aligned with at least one Congressional committee to help in setting policy; and many of the 119 functional areas are further supported by state and local units and agencies. In many instances, it is not the entire agency (such as the Department of Interior) which would fight terrorism, but a much smaller police unit within. This deepening of the organization complexity raises numerous questions and political problems. Would the Interior Secretary, for example, easily concede to a Department of Homeland Security request to free up these police forces to fight terrorism, as opposed to some other part of Interior’s mission?

Second, the coordination of many agencies has already been tried, and has met with more failure than success. The best comparable example of matrix management at the Federal level has been in the war on drugs, where the White House Office of Drug Control Policy operates under a “czar,” a coordinator of far-flung agencies with a stake in controlling the importation and use of illegal drugs. We can look to some of what occurred in the movie *Traffic* to see the failure of a “czar” to coordinate a widespread effort with multiple and competing policy goals. *Traffic* is the story of the war on drugs; similar to *Black Hawk Down*, it is based on documentary evidence, but with a few more liberties to make the story interesting. *Traffic* is a rich, textured movie, with an ironic plot line about a committed drug “czar” with a horribly crack-addicted daughter, and a compelling contrast between “street-level” drug enforcement officers in San Diego and Mexico.

The drug “czar” and the Secretary of Homeland Security sound like powerful positions, but their actions are constrained by the complexity of the issue and the variety of the participants in the policy area. Chances are, the office holder won’t outlast the problems. In reality, Governor Ridge shares his authority, especially with the Attorney General. The coordinating function can be overstated, whenever separate agencies, with different missions and legislative sponsors, disagree.

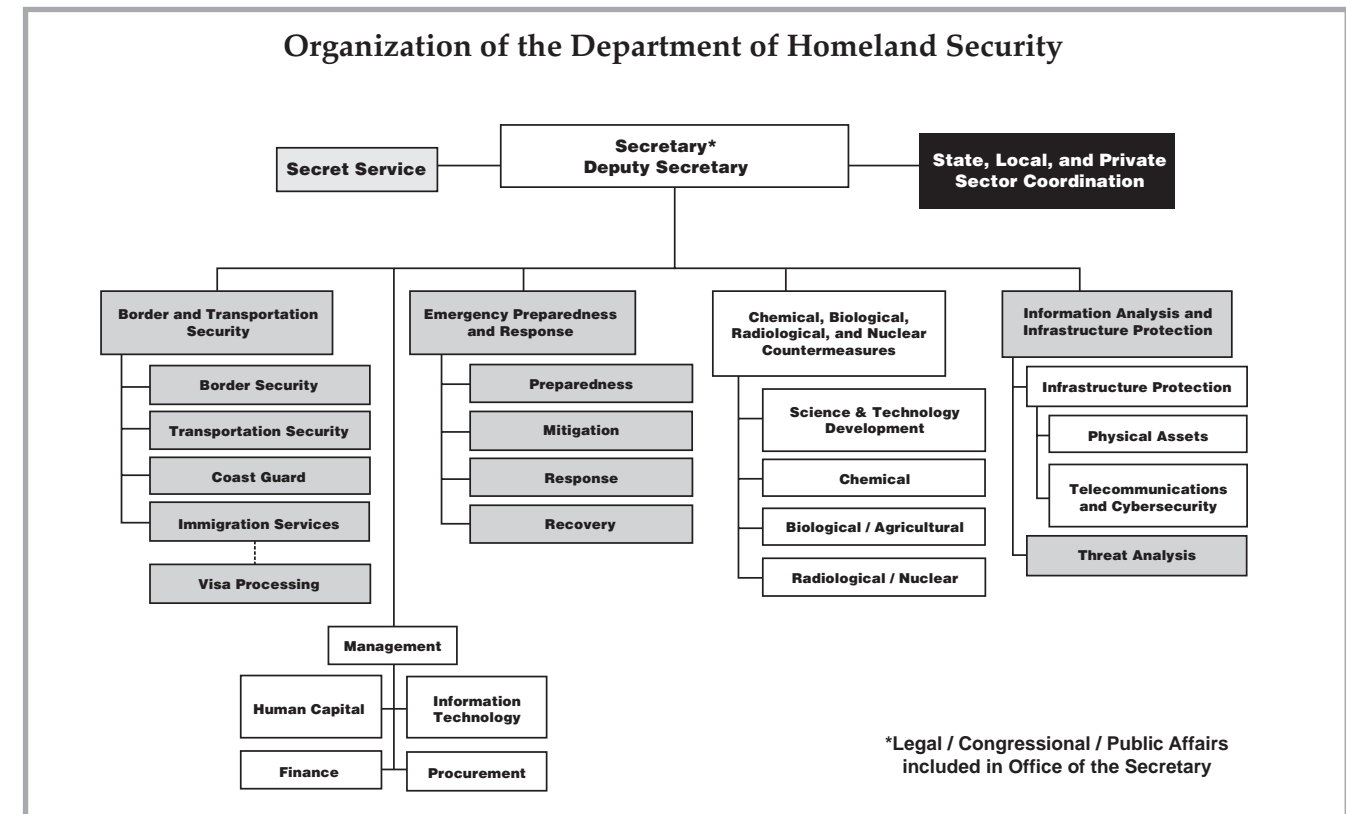
In the movie, Judge Calloway “manages by walking around” traveling to the agencies and places that matter in his job as the “czar.” He only hears of the difficulties, no successes, in the War on Drugs. A supervisor at a bor-

der checkpoint in San Diego says that he’d like to be able to attest that they’re catching forty or fifty percent of the drugs that “mules” try to smuggle into California, but in reality, he estimates that seventy percent of the drugs get through. While on an airplane back from San Diego, with representatives from the FBI, DEA, and other agencies, Calloway tries to initiate a brainstorming session—but nobody has any new ideas. Even worse, each agency leader is afraid to reveal any ideas in front of the other agencies that compete for limited budgetary resources.

The War on Terrorism is different. It is encouraging that in organizing for this war, we likely won’t make the same mistake of having a White House “Coordinator” in charge of the effort. Here’s one argument in support of the consolidation of all, or at best most, resources to fight terrorism.

Table I
ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS MADE BETWEEN THE BATTLE OF MOGADISHU AND THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Organizational Aspect	Mogadishu	Afghanistan
Lead Military Forces Used on the Ground	U.S. Rangers most prominent, but with some Special Forces soldiers involved	Some U.S. Special Forces, mostly in a training and support capacity, with local Afghani militias most prominent (e.g., Northern Alliance)
Policy Focus	U.S. intervention, with use of a few paid local informants	U.S. assistance, support, and coordination of sympathetic local Afghani militias
Metaphor for War Effort	“Rowing”	“Steering”
Public Relations Consequences	The U.S. seen as intruder and aggressor	The U.S. seen as supportive of local autonomy
Cooperation within U.S. Military Forces	Lacking; U.S. Rangers and Special Forces were rivals, competing rather than cooperating toward goals	Enhanced, as the merits of conventional and non-conventional forces are recognized
Battlefield Coordination	Leadership uses traditional top-down, command and control, from the air and remote posts; “Eyes in the Sky” orders confounded as they reach soldiers	Leadership allows a more fluid, pragmatic, and empowered responsiveness at the centers of action; relays of information are also reduced, through the use of enhanced technology



Ashton Carter, the Coordinator of the Preventive Defense Project at Harvard, points out the difficulty of specifying our goals in this war. He asks, Is fighting terrorism to be considered in the same vein as conventional war? Not exactly; we do not work against nations, through treaties, with identified combatants. Is fighting terrorism like fighting crime? Again, this is not a good match; there is much more to this fight than finding perpetrators and bringing them into the criminal justice system. The war

ahead may be closest to disaster response and recovery; that was the most important part of reestablishing New York after the World Trade Center attacks, but we wouldn't want to stop there. The fact is, the war against terrorism falls into all three policy areas. But all three focuses have distinct political and bureaucratic cultures. The intent of the Department of Homeland Security is to give a high degree of command and control when the policy focus needs to change, from crime prevention to disaster recovery to emergency preparedness. This wouldn't be possible under a system where all of the terror-fighting agencies were able to retain their own identity. See **Table 2** for a summary of the contrasts between the "czar" approach used in the War on Drugs and the consolidated approach toward domestic organization in the war against terrorism.

CONCLUSION: HAVE A LITTLE FAITH?

"At the end of the day, do [federal workers] serve the broader interest of homeland security where they are? Or is it conceivable that they should be cross-trained, or should they be moved into a different role? Who knows? We just don't know."

—Tom Ridge, 10 July 2002

Is Tom Ridge's comment reassuring, or discouraging? Some may be frightened that even he doesn't know the answers. I see it differently: Ridge cannot predict the future, and we should respect his honesty in this regard. Further, we should be pleased that the government is trying different options, even ones that buck current trends and philosophy on organizational improvement.

This essay does not predict success or failure in the war on terrorism, but it does point toward the strong potential that our governmental leadership and organizations are learning from the recent past. The fighting in Afghanistan was dramatically different from the successful war effort in "Desert Storm" back in 1991, or the failed one in Mogadishu in 1993; we need to give credit to our leaders that they got it right, at least late in 2001, even if there are future unforeseen problems in Afghanistan in months or years to come. If the reorganization underlying the Department of Homeland Security winds up a failure, at least it won't be a repetition of the most comparable recent failure, in the manner of our organization to fight the War on Drugs. That is the main lesson: We can't predict the future, but we can and truly are learning from the past.

—Brendan Burke is Assistant Professor of Political Science

Table 2
CONTRASTS IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE BETWEEN THE WAR ON DRUGS AND PROPOSED FOR THE DOMESTIC WAR ON TERRORISM

Organizational Aspect	War on Drugs	Domestic War on Terrorism
Programmatic Representation	Wide; many agencies have a stake in this fight	Wider; terrorism is an even more varied and widespread threat than drug violence, sales and use
Coordination of Effort	Limited; agencies remain independent but are organized as members of a "team"	Strong, at least in theory; all agencies and programs serve the same chief
Description of Organizational Structure	Matrix, with the ability to treat regional problems or functional problems, under the guidance of a "czar"	Hierarchy, with all resources and agencies operating under the orders of the Secretary of Homeland Defense
Agency Autonomy	Maintained relatively intact; only in certain situations and under specific circumstances does an agency's broad mission need to focus on the shared problem	Significantly reduced; the mission of agencies and programs within the Department is made more narrow and focused
Structural Advantage	The matrix is well equipped to respond to a changing external environment, in theory, as long as the "czar" has real coordinating power	The hierarchical agency should be able to reduce internal dissent among separate agencies and programs, as long as the resources are not too diverse and diffuse

Teaching Information Literacy

by Ratna Chandrasekhar



Photograph by David Wilson

If a modern Rip Van Winkle, a person who last visited a library 20 years ago, should suddenly awaken, he or she would be in for a shock. Gone are the bulky wooden structures containing hundreds of drawers, the catalogues which once held a separate card for each book in the library's collection. Instead, entering the library, Rip would see banks of computers, providing access to a vast quantity of information from books, journals, and newspapers as well as from libraries, websites and databases around the world. Today, information can be retrieved far more quickly and efficiently than ever before. Yet this marvelous technology has brought with it new problems and challenges for students and teachers.

As academic librarians, my colleagues and I at the Maxwell Library are continually at work developing new instructional strategies to meet the needs of Bridgewater students and faculty. The internet has transformed the way research is conducted and made finding information a great deal easier. But it has created challenges too. The sheer quantity of information available can be bewildering. It's common for a student researcher to enter her topic in a search engine only to discover, a few seconds later, several thousand 'hits' or matches. How can she limit this topic to make it more manageable?

Even more critical is the need to evaluate and analyze information. Decades ago, when the only materials available were those in the library's own collection, students could generally assume that the books and articles they found could be trusted. In the new world of electronic information, however, students need to become aware of the difference between materials available through databases that the library subscribes to and those accessed through search engines on the internet. Databases provide material that may or may not have been published in print form and is generally from valid sources. Often references found on databases have been peer reviewed and may even be available in full text. Students using search engines, such as Yahoo, will find a vast amount of material, but nothing has been pre-selected and all sources appear equally valid. Nothing on the screen tells the user whether or not the information he is reading is accurate, whether the

author is reliable or prejudiced, a recognized authority on his subject or a 7th grader. Library users must be aware of the significant differences between general internet searches, which provide no easy way to distinguish between the trivial and the significant, and the databases, which facilitate academic pursuits.

Programs promoting information literacy grew out of the need to teach students to use electronic sources effectively, and to evaluate, synthesize, and cite sources correctly. To achieve this goal, Bridgewater's academic librarians have adopted several strategies. *Introduction to Information Resources*, a required course which introduces students to the resources and services available at the Maxwell Library, has an internet component focusing on search engines, web sites, etc. When customized instruction is requested, librarians work closely with individual faculty members to design sessions to meet the needs of students in a particular course. The number of information literacy sessions offered at the Maxwell Library has increased steadily over the past few years: during the academic year 2000-2001, 5602 students participated in 246 bibliographic sessions. In addition, the library offers a number of forums to introduce faculty to the ever-changing world of information. We encourage collaboration between faculty and instructional librarians in an effort to improve the methods for teaching students how to be better researchers.

Librarians are playing an active role in developing strategies to promote information literacy. We want to provide the resources and services necessary to have BSC students graduate with a solid understanding of the new information technology.

—Ratna Chandrasekhar began working at the Maxwell Library in 1980 and was a Senior Librarian at the time of her death in October, 2002. She served as Acting Director of the Library from 1991 to 1994. Ratna understood the enormous potential of computer technology and was instrumental in creating a classroom within the library dedicated to teaching the basics of computer-based research. Well known in the campus community for her dedication to students and faculty, Ratna was a beloved and valued member of the library staff.

The African Contribution to Brazilian Portuguese:

To what extent did the speech of slaves influence the mother tongue?

by Fernanda Ferreira



Photograph by Greg Thomas

As any English speaker who has visited Jamaica, South Africa or Ireland knows, a language can take very different forms in different places. As soon as people migrate to a new land, their language begins to change. Thus, American English assimilated words such as *chipmunk* and *raccoon*, derived from Native American languages, just as Australian English assimilated *kangaroo* and *boomerang*. The same process occurred in my first language, Portuguese: the variety of Portuguese spoken in Brazil, where I grew up, differs in many ways from the “mother” tongue spoken in Portugal. Just as many different factors contributed to the development of the American English we speak today, the same is true with modern Brazilian Portuguese.

As a linguist, I am fascinated by the causes of linguistic change and by the relationships between languages. When I began to study Caribbean Spanish, in graduate school, I was struck by its parallels to Brazilian Portuguese. For example, I heard Dominicans and Puerto Ricans sometimes pronouncing plural words with no /s/ at the end, as in the phrases *doh niño* ‘two children’ and *tus hijo* ‘your sons.’ I remembered that my own relatives in Brazil would often say these same phrases in similar fashion: *dois menino* ‘two children’ and *seus filho* ‘your sons.’ I began to wonder if the linguistic parallels between these two languages could be a function of a common ethnic ancestry. Further research led me to be more open to the possibility that African languages, introduced to Latin America by slaves, contributed to both Brazilian Portuguese and Caribbean Spanish. Eventually, my dissertation topic centered on the possible contribution of African speakers to the evolution of these two Romance languages.

The question of whether or not the Spanish of the Caribbean and the Portuguese spoken in Brazil share a common African imprint is a controversial one. To be sure, both of these geographical regions imported massive numbers of slaves. Scholars generally accept the idea that Africans, forcibly brought to the former American colonies, contributed non-Latin words to Spanish and Portuguese, such as *birimbau*, a musical instrument, and the word *caçula* meaning the youngest child. In addition, the cultural contribution of Africans to the musical, religious (*Candomblé*, *Santería*) and culinary traditions of both Brazil and Cuba, for example, is indisputable.

The controversy focuses on the issue of how extensive the *linguistic* contribution of Africans to Spanish and Portuguese was. Scholars point to examples reported in early fifteenth century texts, where Portuguese-speaking Blacks, often depicted in negative light, produce “mistakes” or reveal a particular way of speaking typical of a second-language learner. In the following examples from the sixteenth century, the “mistakes” are in bold-face.

1) *Boso seria muito bó;*
vaca ne Francico paia;
*tenha **seis filho** e mi so* ‘six sons’
nam temo comere ni migaia...
—(O Clérigo da Beyra, Gil Vicente)

2) *¿Eso me le si señor, delante*
***de la honras** de [...]* ‘of the honors’
Anagoras, señor, y dícame señora Clavela:
callan, fija Guiomám aprender ben a colar
***la flores** [...]* ‘the flowers’
—(Comedia de los Engañados, Lope de Rueda)

In standard Portuguese the above phrase “seis filho” would be pronounced “seis filhos” and in standard Spanish “de la honras” would be “de las honras” while “la flores” would be “las flores.” In sum, number agreement would be present in the standard dialects of these languages, while the lack of plural /s/ would be an aspect of the non-standard speech.

Many scholars believe that Africans must have spoken a *pidginized* Portuguese or a Portuguese with a distinctive non-native sound as they arrived in the American colonies. Much as English today is an international language of computers and technology, in the sixteenth century Portuguese was the “foreign” language that sub-Saharan Africans must have heard most often: it was the virtual *lingua franca* in an age of scientific discoveries and maritime travel.

It should be said, however, that slavery did not begin with the European colonial powers; it was practiced centuries earlier by African tribes. However, slaves in Africa (before the arrival of the Portuguese) were pris-

oners of war, defeated warriors who later were incorporated into the victorious tribal group and were nonetheless considered human beings. The new type of slavery started by the Portuguese was essentially dehumanizing: Africans were considered objects rather than fellow human beings. In fact, slaves were counted and negotiated in terms of *piezas*, literally “pieces” of merchandise. Thus the difficulty in determining from historical data the exact number of slaves brought to the American colonies, since one *pieza* meant one healthy young male, or any number of women and children. But more importantly, the astronomical numbers of the transatlantic commerce in human lives made it inherently different from the slave conditions previously present in Africa. In total, it is believed that more than nine million Africans were sold into slavery to the American colonies over the approximately three hundred years from 1500 to 1800. The greatest numbers were transported to the Americas from the 17th century (roughly more than one million) to the 18th century (approximately six million). That period coincides with the pre-industrial mercantilism in the American colonies, the cotton *plantation* system in North America and sugar mills in Northeast Brazil, as well as the gold rush in the south-central region of Brazil.

As ethnographer Katia Queiroz Mattoso has explained, slave laborers in Brazil fell into five different socio-economic categories: they could be workers on sugar and coffee plantations; miners of gold and diamonds; Black *gauchos* or cattle ranchers; urban slaves, known as slaves “for rent”; street sellers who performed a wide variety of activities and finally domestic slaves, found mostly in the large plantation houses.

The possibility of attaining freedom was very different in each category. The slave who worked in the sugar fields had very little possibility of getting his “letter of manumission,” which was the document given to an ex-slave that certified his freedom. A similar situation applied to the domestic slave, who was constantly observed and did not have the economic means of becoming free. On the other hand, the *gaucho* had some possibility of escaping slavery if he saved enough money. For the slaves who were able to win their freedom, life was by no means safe, since they could at any time be arrested for “suspicion of being a slave.” The different types of slaves and the situation of ex-slaves are important in the discussion of linguistic evolution because the participation of ex-slaves in a slave society considerably shaped the relationships between them and the slave owners. For example, news of the slave

revolution in Haiti in 1791 reached the American colonies and gave hope to Brazilian slaves, possibly creating escape initiatives. The *quilombos*, or societies of slaves who had escaped captivity, were constantly being built and organized, as well as being persecuted and destroyed. The speech that thrived in these isolated societies is studied to this day. One example is the dialect of *Helvécia*, spoken by a group of Brazilians living in the state of Bahia, a largely Black community. It could be argued that the *Helvécia* dialect is a window into what “Black Portuguese” would have sounded like had this particular variety been spoken by more main-



Portuguese-speaking Brazil.

stream Brazilians.

In general, it is assumed that the ratio of native to non-native speakers is a good indicator of the resulting language variety in a largely multiracial society. In the case of Brazil, the numbers of Black Africans in comparison to the white population during the three centuries of slavery could give an indication of the language Brazilians spoke at that time. By most accounts, close to 3.6 million Africans were kidnapped and transported to Brazil between the second half of the 16th and the middle of the 19th century. Thus, the demographic dis-

tribution of people of diverse linguistic backgrounds gave Brazil not only a multiracial but also multilingual makeup. The information presented in the table below summarizes the different racial backgrounds of inhabitants of Brazil, which in turn may indicate the possible linguistic background of the non-native speakers of Brazilian Portuguese.

HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF BRAZIL	1538-1600	1601-1700	1701-1800	1801-1850	1851-1890
	%	%	%	%	%
African	20	30	20	12	02
Black Brazilian	00	20	21	19	13
Mixed ancestry	00	10	19	34	42
Indigenous	50	10	08	04	02
Total of Color	70	70	68	69	59
White Brazilian	00	05	10	17	24
European	30	25	22	14	17
Total White	30	30	32	31	41

The numbers in the table show that the population of color has always been more numerous than the white population in Brazil. It is also clear that in the very beginning of colonization (1518-1600) the indigenous population (whose first language was not Portuguese) were more numerous than the Africans or the white population. However, this native population, which comprised half of the inhabitants in the first century of colonization, was reduced to 4% and 2% in the 19th century (that is, in the periods of 1801-1850 and 1851-1890, respectively). What was the linguistic background of indigenous Brazilians? One author, Aryon Rodrigues, calculates that there were around 1,175 different indigenous languages in Brazil, of which 85% were lost after the colonial period. Nowadays, although this number has been reduced considerably, Brazil is still one of the most multilingual countries in the world, with approximately 180 languages spoken by some 260,000 indigenous people.

During the next historical period (from 1601 to 1700), there were more Africans than any other ethnic group, diminishing the linguistic impact of the indigenous languages. Later, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the number of those born in Africa steadily dwindled, while at the same time, the number of Black Brazilians and those of mixed ancestry increased. These numbers reflect the high degree of racial mixing that existed in Brazil and might clarify the complex racial and linguis-

tic situation particular to that country.

What are the ethnolinguistic origins of the Africans who arrived in Brazil? Apparently speakers from several different linguistic groups (including Mande, Kru, Gru, Kwa and Bantu) arrived in Brazil during three centuries of slave trade. Of these, the Bantu group came in the greatest numbers, comprising between 35% to 65% of all African slaves. It is approximated that of the African languages that contributed to Brazilian Portuguese, the Bantu languages (*Kikongo, Kibumdu* and, to a lesser extent, *Umbundu*) were the biggest suppliers of African-based conversational words. In other Caribbean countries, such as Haiti, the ratio of people of color to the white population is much higher: people of African descent comprised around 90% of the Haitian population. It is not surprising, then, that Haitian Creole is one of the languages now spoken on that Caribbean island.

Because of this multilingual tapestry in Brazil, the Portuguese language became the essential unifying mode of communication in a developing nation. Thus, a 60% to 40% ratio of Black and white population that was present in Brazil might not warrant overreaching conclusions about the development of Brazilian Portuguese, but it gives any linguist food for thought. In addition, some scholars believe that the presence of so many popular as well as cultured varieties of the language almost guarantees that no overreaching explanation about the origin of the more non-standard variety of Brazilian Portuguese can be attained. Heliana Mello argues that “the likeliest scenario [of language contact in Brazil] was a process of imperfect language shift to Portuguese by the African and Amerindian populations and their descendants.” By “imperfect language shift” it is understood that not all accepted grammatical norms of European Portuguese were maintained by later generations.

The possible scenarios regarding the development of Brazilian Portuguese (i.e. natural linguistic drift or the contribution of African languages) should run parallel in discussing particular linguistic patterns. Judging from the large presence of people of African descent in Brazil, it is probable that non-native speakers of Portuguese were at least potentially able to make a significant linguistic contribution to this Romance language. More comparisons of non-standard varieties of European Portuguese as well as Portuguese-based Creoles (such as Cape Verdean) could give scholars other important pieces of the puzzle.

—Fernanda Ferreira is Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages

The Iceland Suite

Monotypes

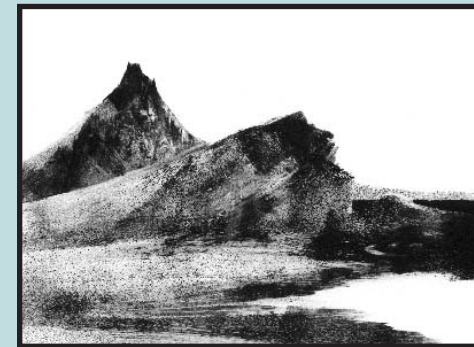
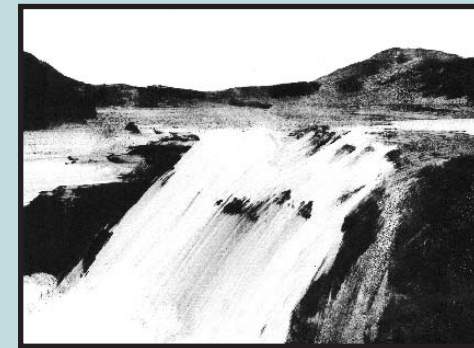
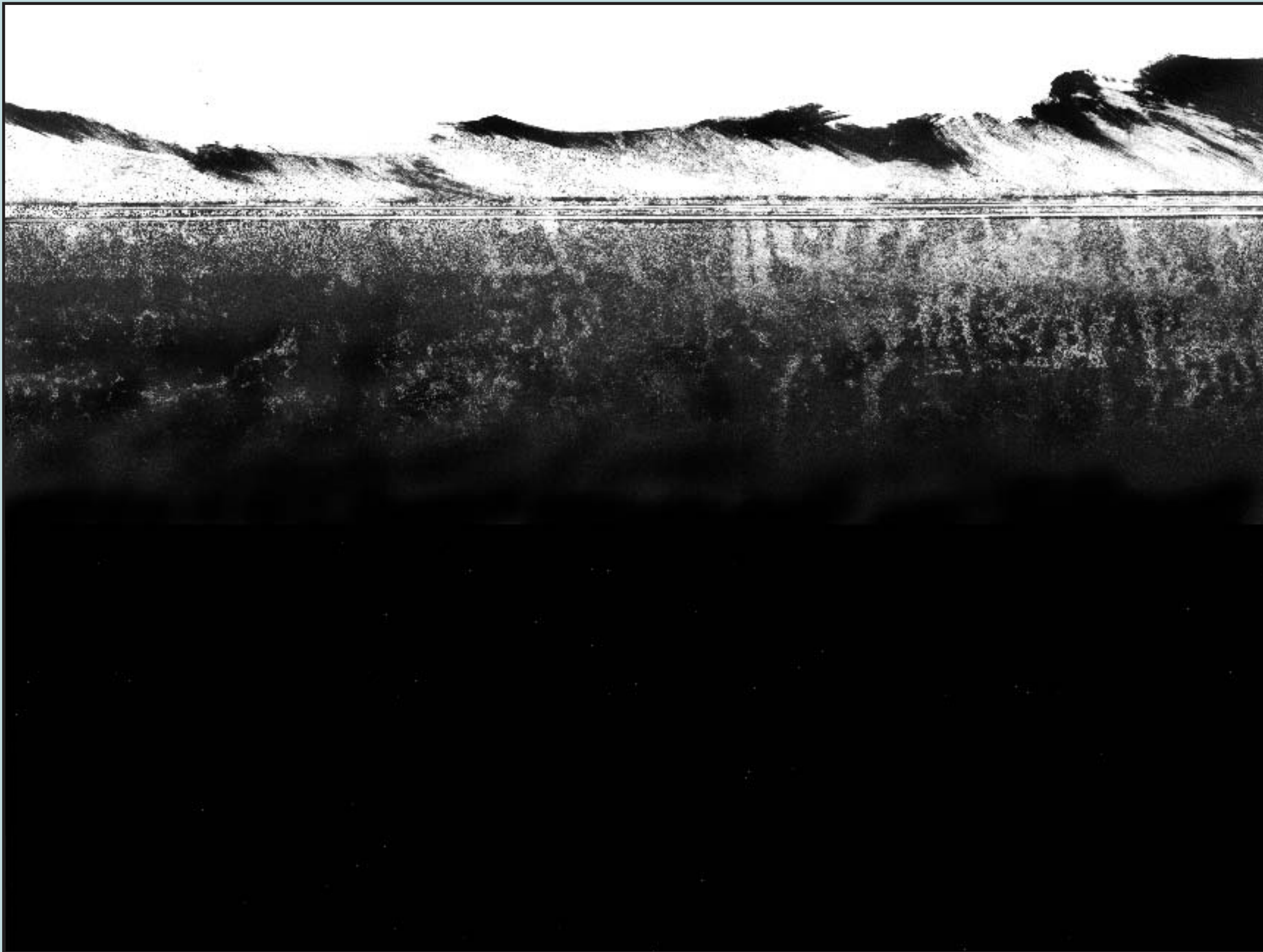
by Joan Hausrath



Photograph by Greg Thomas

While traveling in Iceland in June 1999, I was greatly taken by the variety of forms and textures as well as the dramatic expansiveness of the treeless Icelandic landscape. Not only did the visual beauty of the countryside move me, but I also responded with awe to the natural phenomena of volcanoes, glaciers, steam, water, and wind and how they left their impact on the terrain.





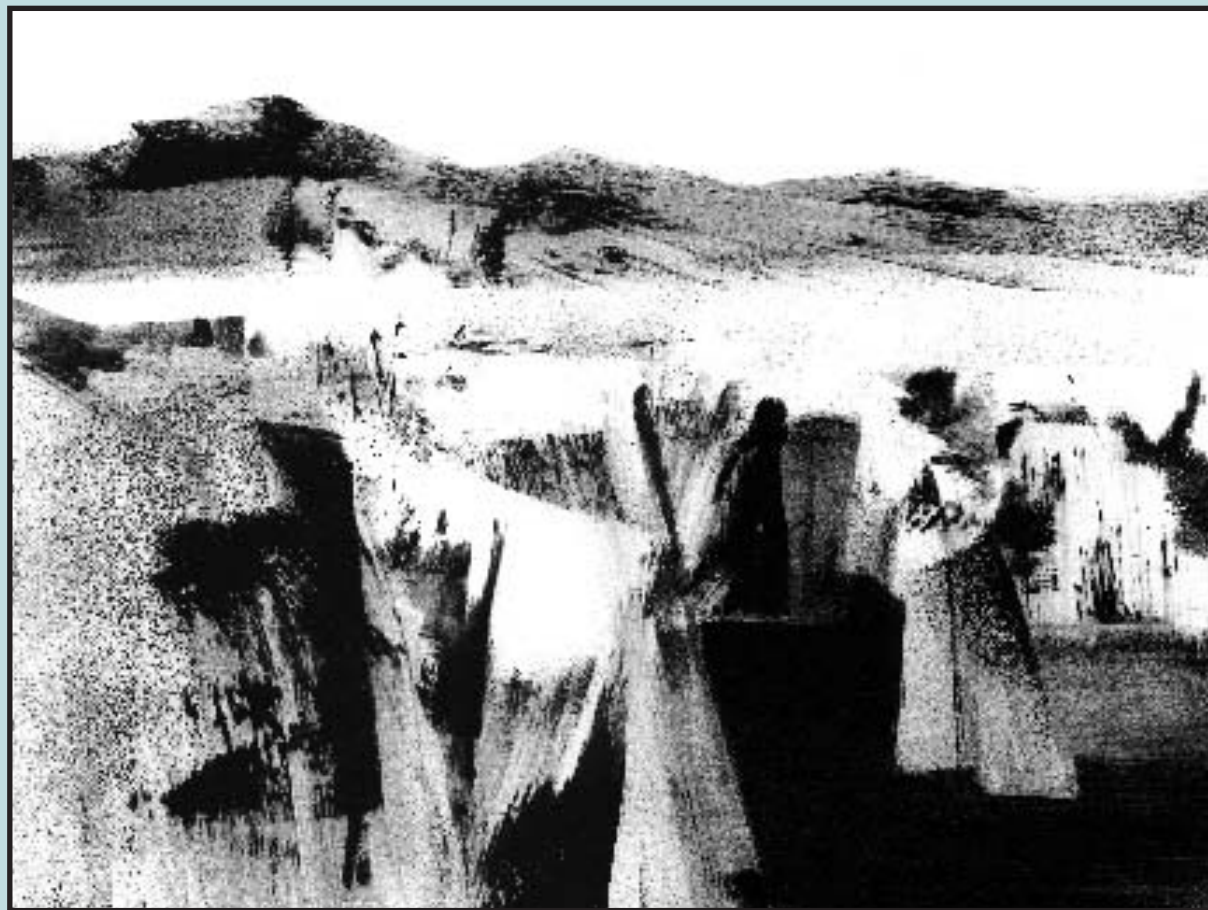
After returning from the trip, I made a number of exploratory drawings and several monotype* prints inspired by what I had experienced. My goal was to capture the essence of the rugged beauty of Iceland through scale, form, and technique. My images were based on memory and on the photographs that I took during my trip.

I set out to create a portfolio of twenty 9" x 12" monotype prints, to explore the spirit of the Icelandic landscape—the variety of surfaces, textures, and forms created by volcanic eruptions, lava, glaciers, erosion, flooding, vegetation, and steam and thermal waters. In developing twenty different images, I challenged myself to express in each a primal connection with the earth using a minimum of graphic definition. For painterly and textural effects, I utilized the properties of the monotype process where ink was applied and wiped, as well as the properties of the ink itself—its viscosity, its solubility. The prints display an economy of visual form. To convey a sense of drama and starkness, I chose to use black and white. Seven prints from the portfolio are on these pages and on the cover.

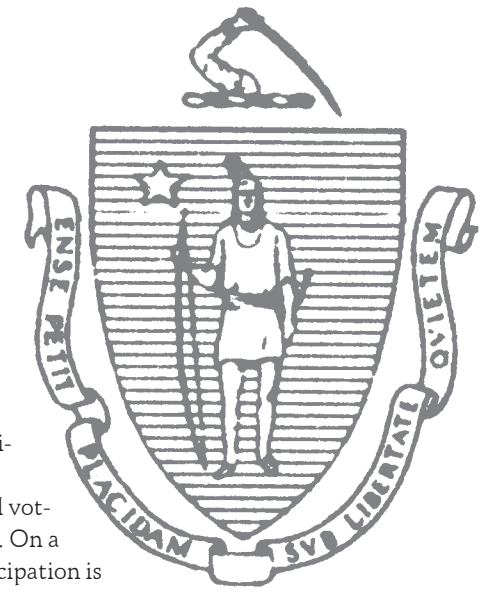


"A monotype is a one-of-a-kind print. I begin with a drawing. Referring to the drawing, I apply ink to an acrylic plate using brayers and brushes; I wipe and manipulate the ink to create the image. I print the inked image: placing a sheet of damp paper over it, I run paper and plate through an etching press. If the print needs further development, I print over it. Often I am not satisfied with the image as it is first printed, so I remake the print and modify the image. Sometimes I re-ink and reprint and even overprint the same image three or four times. The ink that I use is water-soluble and does not require the use of solvents. It dries permanent and archival."

—Joan Hausrath,
Professor of Art



Faculty Research Note "Memo to the Governor" Citizen Participation in Massachusetts by Members of the Political Science Department



During the period from February 25–March 11, 2002 a scientific survey of Massachusetts citizens was conducted by a research group which included Professor Victor DeSantis of the Institute of Regional Development and Professors Michael Kryzaneck, Brendan Burke, David Hill (now of Valdosta State University) and Mark Kemper, all of the Political Science Department. The purpose of the survey was to understand the political attitudes and behaviors of a random sample of citizens across the state, especially with respect to participation in the political process. The research was part of a larger study of key public policy concerns commissioned by the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Society for Public Administrators. The complete study will be presented to Governor Mitt Romney in January in book form under the title of 'Memo to the Governor.' The essential parts of the study on participation are presented below.

To examine citizen participation of Massachusetts national elections the survey asked the respondents to report the approximate frequency of voting in presidential elections across their adult life, and whether or not they intended to vote in the upcoming midterm elections. To explore citizen contact with government officials the survey asked respondents whether or not they had contacted a government official within the last twelve months. Finally, respondents were asked several questions regarding their participation in community politics, such as attending town meetings, serving on governmental and non-governmental boards, and working with others to solve community problems.

The data shown in **Figure 1** suggest a moderate to high degree of citizen participation in presidential elections. Fifty-eight percent of respondents stated they had voted in every presidential election, and another 21.1% stated they had voted in more than half of the presidential elections during their adult life. While these data do indicate a high degree of overall participation, it is

important to compare participation across demographic groups due to the differential voting rates across social groups. On a national level, electoral participation is strongly related to social characteristics.

The data in this project suggest this pattern is also present among Massachusetts respondents. Age, education, income, and length of residence are all positively and significantly related to electoral participation, which indicates that individuals from higher socioeconomic groups, older Americans, whites, individuals who attend church frequently, and those with longer tenure in the current community report a higher frequency of voting in presidential elections.

Questions were also asked regarding respondents' intention to vote in elections of November, 2002. Eighty-seven percent of respondents stated they intended to vote in the fall elections. There are several potential reasons for this very high proportion of respondents reporting the intention to vote in the 2002 elections. One is simply that a larger proportion of respondents stated they intended to cast a ballot in the upcoming election than will actually show up on Election Day. Additionally, with a relatively high profile gubernatorial race in November many respondents may have been influenced to state their intention to vote due to the increased publicity given the race. Finally, there is the possibility that in the wake of September 11th politics and duty to country became more salient to citizens.

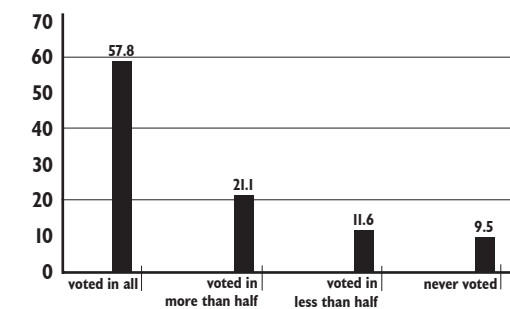


Figure 1.
Voting History
of Respondents.

As with presidential elections, there are systematic differences across social groups in the prospective report of voting. Individuals from higher education and income groups, older Americans, union members, individuals who attend church frequently, and those with longer tenures of residence are significantly more likely to state their intention to vote in the elections.

The second type of participation examined was initiating contact with local, state, or federal government officials. As shown in **Figure 2**, 25.2% of respondents stated that within the last twelve months they had initiated contact with a government official. This number is consistent with national data that suggest that between 20-25% of citizens report a contact with either a local or national government official. There are also systematic differences across demographic groups in contacting government officials. Individuals from higher educational and income groups, men, and union members are all significantly more likely to initiate contact with a government official.

The final category of participation considered was community-based participation. The first question used to gauge participation within an individual's community asked the respondent to report his or her approximate frequency of attendance at annual or special town meetings over the last five years. As **Figure 3** indicates, a relatively low 20% of respondents reported attending



Figure 2. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Contact With a Government Official.

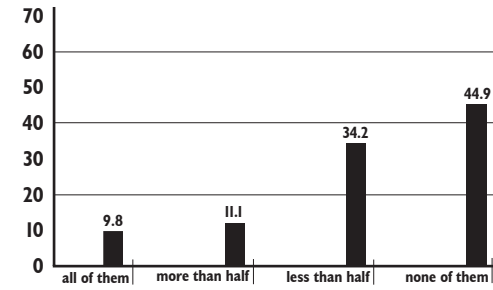


Figure 3. Respondent Town Meeting Attendance History.

more than half of the town meetings over the last five years, with only 9.8% of respondents claiming to have attended all town meetings. Clearly, a much smaller number of citizens are participating than in the other forms of participation considered here. This is in large part due to the high degree of initiative required to attend a public meeting that lasts an entire evening (or possibly several evenings). As with other types of participation, town meeting attendance differs systematically across social groupings. Older Americans, individuals from higher educational and income groups, individuals who attend church frequently, and those with longer tenures of residence in their community are significantly more likely to attend town meetings.

The next question asked respondents whether or not they had served in an elected or appointed status on any official body in their community. **Figure 4** indicates that only 12.4% of respondents stated that they served on a community governing body. As with town meeting attendance, the time and effort required to serve in an elected or appointed position reduces the proportion

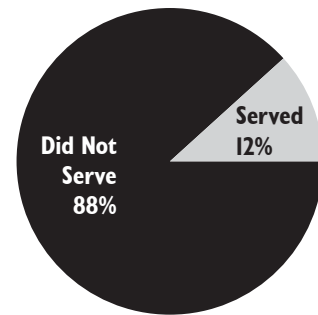


Figure 4. Percentage of Respondents Serving on an Elected or Appointed Board.

of citizens engaging in this form of participation. As one would expect, there are demographic differences among those claiming to serve. Older Americans, whites, union members and those with longer tenures of residence in their communities are significantly more likely to serve in an elected or appointed capacity.

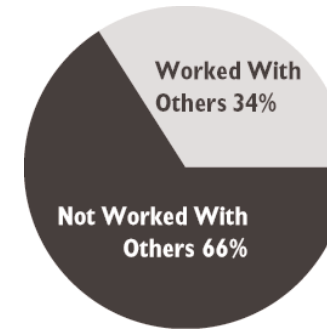


Figure 5. Percentage of Respondents Working With Others to Solve a Community Problem.

Respondents were also asked whether or not they had worked informally with others to deal with an issue facing their community. As shown in **Figure 5**, a higher percentage (34%) of respondents stated that within the last twelve months they had worked with others in their neighborhood or community to deal with a community issue or problem. As with the other forms of participation considered here, there are differences in participation rates across demographic groups. Individuals from higher education and income groups, union members and those individuals who attend church services frequently are significantly more likely to work with others to solve community problems.

Finally, respondents were asked whether or not they had served in a leadership position in a non-governmental organization within their community. **Figure 6** indicates that 37% of respondents stated that they had served in a leadership role in a non-profit organization. As with all the other forms of participation considered here, there are differences across demographic groups. Individuals from higher education and income groups, union members, and individuals who attend church frequently are significantly more likely to serve in non-governmental organizations.

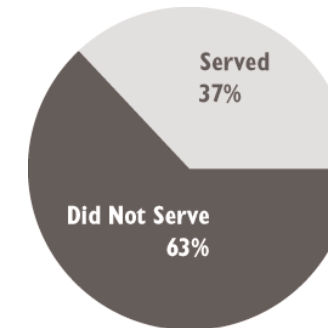


Figure 6. Percentage of Respondents Serving in Non-Governmental Organization.

There are several patterns worth noting in the data presented above. First, the level of citizen participation in Massachusetts is not substantially different than the national average. Second, with the exception of serving on an elected or appointed board, all forms of participation considered here are skewed toward higher education and income groups. This is consistent with national data that suggests the participatory arena is skewed toward those most capable of participating. Finally, membership in unions and attendance at religious services are significantly related to most of our measures of participation. This is not surprising. Participation in secondary associations such as unions and churches or other religious organizations imparts civic skills upon an individual that make the act of participation easier. Additionally, membership in secondary associations places a citizen in a social context which increases the likelihood of recruitment into political or community activity.

Cultural Commentary: “Murcan,” Through and Through

by William C. Levin

When Dick Arney (Republican, Texas), retiring Majority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, heard that Boston had been chosen to host the 1994 Democratic convention, he said that the choice of Boston made sense because “If I were a Democrat I would feel a heck of a lot more comfortable in Boston than, say, in America.”

I was offended. I am a Bostonian and a Democrat and am as easily baited by such insults as a Texas congressman would be if his willingness to electrocute teenaged prisoners had been questioned. And I am an American who argues that Massachusetts actually is one of official states. But I must confess that I am well protected from such slights. The fact is that I am able to put my Boston/Democrat/Massachusetts identity aside pretty quickly after loathing Dick Arney for just a few moments. (May he make piles of money in private industry only to be jailed for illegal accounting practices and be granted probation only on condition that he co-host a small-market radio call-in program with Mollie Ivins.)

Yes, I am a Bostonian and a Democrat. These are part of my identity. I moved here for college in 1964 and have never considered living elsewhere. That nearly 39 years accounts for just about 70% of my life, and though people born in a place may reserve the term “true native” for themselves, seventy percent is a passing grade in my book. And I have been a registered Democrat since I was old enough to register to vote. Native enough. But identity is a funny thing. I am also a husband, teacher, home and boat owner, and many other things. I find that on any given day these elements of my identity are likely to be much closer to the front of the identity line than the city I live in or my political party affiliation. When I get up in the morning I never hoist my brief case thinking, This Boston Democrat is ready to commute, by gosh! No, I am at such a moment a husband (“Bye, honey. I’ll pick up dinner”), and a teacher (“What in the world am I supposed to cover in the research methods course today?”).

The multiple-components understanding of identity becomes clear when we in the behavioral sciences attempt to measure it. In 1960 a social psychologist named Manfred Kuhn attempted to measure identity (he used the term “self-concept”) with a measure called the “Twenty-Statements Test.” Sometimes the solutions to apparently difficult research problems are pleasingly simple. Kuhn’s method of measuring self-concept required one simple question—“Who am I?”—answered with twenty different responses. For example, a person might answer that she is a female, lawyer, Bostonian, American, Catholic, home owner, sister, daughter, tennis player, runner and so on, until she had given twenty responses. The sum total of the answers is assumed to form the multi-faceted identity the respondent carries. Kuhn found that the identities people revealed on his test varied greatly among his respondents, though he did find patterns. For example, children tended to define themselves in very specific, behavioral terms, such as saying that they were nice to a brother or good at games. By contrast, adults tended to define themselves in broader, more abstract categories such as father, teacher, Protestant, or homeowner.

Subsequent research using the Twenty Statements Test has revealed that adult Americans differ greatly in the way they think of themselves. Given that our identities are typically formed of a conglomerate of sub-elements (with the possible exception of Texas politicians, who seem to have room for only one or two items on their list of responses to the Twenty Statements Tests—as in Texan, Republican, uh, Texan, Republican. Did I say Texan yet?), it should come as no surprise that the relative importance of any one of these identity elements is found to vary with the circumstance in which the individual finds him or herself. For example, when I am at home having dinner with my wife, that component of my identity that is the teacher is less salient than are my husband and homeowner aspects. This is not to



Dick Arney.

suggest that identity is just a moment-to-moment reconstruction project. Much of the research on identity clearly shows that the overall package of elements that forms the identity of an individual is relatively persistent and stable. But we do know that the ways in which individuals reshuffle the components of their identities is adaptive to the circumstances in which they find themselves. For example, research by the sociologist Louis Zurcher found that during the turbulent 1960’s college students tended to define themselves in terms of personal and behavioral characteristics such as ‘smart,’ ‘fun-loving’ or ‘committed,’ while in the more stable 1950’s college students tended to define themselves in terms of social categories and memberships such as ‘Protestant,’ ‘college student’ or ‘middle class.’

In my undergraduate class on the subject of discrimination in society, I have often begun my semester by asking my students to individually answer the Twenty-Statements Test. My aim is to make it clear to them that each is, to one extent or another, a member of a group which has probably been subjected to prejudice and discrimination at one time in American history. Those students who identify themselves as ‘Irish-American’ or ‘Italian-American’ can then be shown the vicious cartoon depictions of their immigrant ancestors that were published in mass circulation American magazines before the turn of the century. It is my hope that then the material of the course will seem as immediate and real to all the students as it usually is to my African American and female students. However, within the last few years, and especially this year, the answers my students have given to the test have not worked out as I expected.

First of all, the ethnic group memberships generally have been slipping down, and eventually off the students’ lists. Specifically, hyphenated, white ethnic group memberships such as Irish-American or Italian-American are often not important parts of my students’ identity structures, if they make the list at all. When I ask students how they made their identity selections, I hear more and more that they are ‘just American,’ and do not think of where their family members emigrated from, except on rare occasions. Part of this is due, of course, to the process of assimilation. Most of my students are now many generations removed from the painful stories of the flight from persecution, poverty and starvation that motivated their ancestors’ arrival

here. They live in places like Bridgewater, Whitman, Pembroke and Scituate where ethnic foods may be searched for (if they are there at all) in specially marked sections in the supermarket. They live in the suburbs, for goodness sake, where there are no ethnic neighborhoods to keep the language, the stories and the knowledge of ethnicity alive. Often these were not only forgotten over time, they were horrors from which their survivors wished to flee as soon as possible.

But I also believe there is a more important reason that my students are so willing to call themselves ‘just American’ just now. In addition to the trend of assimilation, there is the overwhelming influence of terrorism and terrorism threats against the United States which since September 11th of 2001 seem to have powerfully rewritten all of our identity lists. In response to the attacks on America that come from beyond our borders we are Americans in a way we seem to reserve for times of urgent need such as war. For months after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, there wasn’t an American flag to be had from any source. They were all displayed on our lawns, highway overpasses and truck windows. We became Americans first because we felt we needed to, and, though the early intensity of the response has waned some, we are still responding to events as Americans all. It is still in the political and cultural air that it is unpatriotic to question the prosecution of what has been called the war on terrorism.

It is a well-documented principle in sociology that external threats increase internal cohesion in a group. Attack a country and its people, in an adaptive response for their own survival, will draw together while ignoring any previous internal differences among themselves. We are Americans more than usual because we feel we have to be if we are to defend ourselves. This time a component of our identities has jumped up for more than a moment. We are not just fending off a casual insult. We believe we are fighting for our lives.

—William Levin is Professor of Sociology and Associate Editor of the Bridgewater Review

Cultural Commentary: Leaving it all Behind

by Lee Torda



Photograph by Greg Thomas

I.

One day on my drive home to Brighton I found myself stopped in a long line of traffic in Brookline. I watched drivers jerk into reverse and U-turn directly into oncoming traffic just to go back the way they came and avoid the wait. Every once in a while a car driven by, I am sure, the worst sort of person would race ahead into the turn lane only to race back over to the right when the light changed, cutting people off, slowing things down for everyone just waiting to do what they were supposed to do. When I got to the light just such a car pulled up beside me. The creeping gave him away, that slow sidling of his car forward and forward still, evidence that he intended on insinuating himself anywhere he wanted to be. He was trying to look self-righteous. I actually was self-righteous: when the light turned green I punched the gas, and my Civic rattled past the man, keeping him stuck in the wrong lane. I did this with intent and some malice. And, as would only be right, I watched a silent rant pour out of his mouth as I did so. Then, for reasons I'm not entirely sure of, I blew him a kiss goodbye.

I left my driver blocking the turn lane, unable to get where he wanted to be, swearing at the world and at me. I didn't know where he needed to go and why he was in such a hurry. And I didn't care. That's when I knew I should turn in my gun and my badge and take the train to work.

In all honesty, it is not more convenient to take the commuter rail; it saves me neither time nor money. I am up at 5:00 AM—an hour of the day I wasn't sure actually existed six months ago because I, for one, had never seen it. I catch the B train on the Green Line at 5:50, change at Park. I'm at South Station by 6:30 to catch the 6:40 outbound. A 12-ride commuter rail pass—less than two weeks of riding to work—costs what it would take me to fill my gas tank for 3 weeks

worth of driving. The fastest the B train ever is—ever—is when I'm on it at 6:00AM, and it still takes forty minutes to get to South Station. Then there's another hour on the Commuter Rail to Bridgewater. It's forty-five minutes in my car if I make the lights, and there aren't any accidents.

But there are almost always accidents. And when you drive you get in your tin can and drive around cursing at all the other people in their tin cans. You get up in arms about pedestrians. You vow that when you are too old to drive you'll know it and willingly surrender your license, unlike the people in front of you trying to turn left—or perhaps not trying to turn left at all but only not remembering to turn off their signal.

II.

On the train I eavesdrop on lesser and grander dramas, suddenly implicated in something bigger than myself just by brushing past and up against the people I ride with. It's an odd intimacy you feel when you smell your father's cologne—something you've not smelled for three years now—on the man you don't know standing next to you on the T.

Once I saw a young couple fighting right at the top of the stairs at South Station. A pale blonde was hissing something through tight lips. All I heard as I rushed past was "Well then we'll have to." You'd wonder the whole way home, too, what they had to do—and whether it was something tragic or to stop and get a bottle of red instead of white.

I watched a perfectly sane looking woman—well-dressed, fur-collared coat—lick each and every page of the book she had seemed, only the second before, to just be reading. I thought at the time that I've wanted to swallow books whole, too.

On the train to Bridgewater, a young Latina screamed obscenity after obscenity at her baby's father because the father's mother wouldn't bring the baby to where this young mother was supposed to pick the baby up.

Then she hung up on him and called a girlfriend. The ugly moment past, she was suddenly laughing. I admire easy anger that is spent and then gone, not like the kind you keep with you only to have slip out in inappropriate ways at people who don't deserve it.

On the train I have witnessed the greening over of one season into another, the vague progress of the Dig, a pregnant woman growing more pregnant, conversations between friends, and full, ripe love. The most generous thing I've seen is how riders leave finished newspapers tucked away for the next reader—an odd little gesture of good will between individuals who don't otherwise seem to notice each other.

III.

Riding the train, days hum. Meetings must end by a certain time and cannot start prior to the regular arrival in Bridgewater of the early train somewhere around 7:45. The impossibility of extending myself beyond these decided points is delicious to me. I seem incapable of making such decisions for myself and am grateful for the train for doing it for me.

The one thing that I've learned about riding the train is that you must think carefully about what you can carry. At first I found that I would carry too much—too many bags, too many papers to grade, letters to write, bills to pay, books to read. There is no way I could have gotten done everything I fit into my bag. So I started to unload.

When I drove I thought nothing of carrying two or three bags—even, obscenely, four—I'm not entirely sure what I was carrying. And it wasn't as if I got a third or even a quarter of whatever I was carrying done, but I took comfort just from carrying it around. Now I can't pretend that anything more has gotten done just by virtue of me carrying it. I've learned to forgo that luxury. Not that there's any luxury in the actual carrying: mules carry. But there is luxury in the idea that what I carried was important. It's a luxury to worry about stacks of papers and unread articles and not about where your baby will be dropped off or what to do about being pregnant or that your father is dead and gone.



I imagine, as I get on the train, that I'm leaving everything behind me, that worry and work, all of it, will fall away like the houses that loom up momentarily in the growing dark along side the tracks only to recede again into dark and blank. But it isn't that way on the train, really. Whatever I may be leaving behind, I am still careening towards something else. I am forever in the middle of coming or going on the train, right there in the dense, strangling thick of everything.

—Lee Torda is Assistant Professor of English

News from CART (Center for the Advancement of Research and Teaching)

CART grants enable faculty and librarians to pursue research projects. Two grant recipients, Michael A. Krol, Assistant Professor of Geology and Julia Stakhnevich, Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages, explain their recent work.

GEOLOGIC INVESTIGATION OF THE BLACKTAIL MOUNTAINS



Michael A. Krol

The earth rumbles. The ground shakes. Then a violent explosion occurs, sending plumes of hot ash and rock debris thousands of feet into the air. This is not a science fiction movie starring Ben Affleck. This is what I envision taking place in southwestern Montana. Not to worry, this is not happening today, but 40 to 45 million years ago. The science of geology is very much like the work of a detective. We tend to work backwards to reconstruct what happened to rocks in a particular area and how these rocks have changed through time. We study the rocks we see today at the earth's surface and try to determine, using a variety of techniques and instruments, where, when, and how they formed, as well as what happened to them since they formed. These are the fundamental questions I am trying to answer in my research in the Blacktail Mountains of Montana. This work is part of a collaborative effort with my former undergraduate advisor, Dr. Peter Muller of the State University of New York at Oneonta. Peter and I have remained colleagues and good friends

since my undergraduate days at Oneonta. We have worked together on several problems involving Appalachian and Adirondack geology over the years, resulting in several publications.

The work we are conducting in the Rocky Mountains is ideally suited for undergraduate student involvement. We hope to include students from both SUNY-Oneonta and Bridgewater State in our research study.

The geology of the Blacktail Mountains promises to make this work exciting for years to come. There is a wide range of rock types present in this area, some of which geologists call metamorphic rocks. These are rocks that have undergone a textural or chemical change as a result of variations in temperature and pressure found deep inside the earth. Some rocks are volcanic in origin, resulting from the forceful emplacement of liquid magma very close to or on the earth's surface. The work we have begun in Montana will examine the geologic history of these rocks. This area is particularly interesting because the rocks span a tremendous amount of geologic time. The metamorphic rocks are approximately 2.5 billion years old and the volcanic rocks are as young as 40 million years old (young in regards to geologic time). As part of our study, we will attempt to reconstruct the formation and evolution of the Blacktail Mountains using petrology and mineralogy, which are the study of rocks and minerals, and structural geology, the study of how these rocks are deformed.

During the summer of 2002, we conducted two weeks of fieldwork in the Blacktail Mountains. A CART grant I received last year made the preliminary phase of this project possible. The fieldwork consisted of basic geologic mapping, which forms the backbone of our research, and sample collection for laboratory analysis. Our mapping has already identified several locations where we disagree with the interpretation of published maps. Samples we collected have been cut and ground down to very thin slices. These slices are so thin that light can pass through them so we can study them with an optical microscope. By studying these "thin sections" we can accurately identify and determine the

mineral composition in each rock unit and look for variations, which may tell us something about the origin of these rocks, and whether or not they interacted with any other rocks.

My focus in performing this type of research is to promote our undergraduate research program among our earth science students. Our students benefit tremendously from involvement in active scientific research, including learning to formulate ideas and hypotheses, and drawing conclusions based upon the geologic data they collect. The ultimate goal of our work is to reconstruct the geologic events of an area that has witnessed a very long and complex history.

POP CULTURE AMERICANISMS IN MODERN RUSSIAN



Julia
Stakhnevich

As a native speaker of Russian, I have been fascinated with the recent changes in the vocabulary of my native language. An influx of foreign terms has become a conspicuous trait of the modern Russian language. With the fall of the iron curtain and rapid development of a market economy, new linguistic resources were actively sought out in order to either name a multitude of newly available goods, concepts and objects or to differentiate between various meanings. On the other hand, due to the political climate, the attitudes towards the West have changed so dramatically that a simple equation was created in the minds of many Russians between prestige and anything originating from the West. Consequently, foreign borrowings, especially those with origins in American English, have become popular and common in the language.

The purpose of my research project was to conduct a sociolinguistic analysis of recent loan words both in the discourse of current Russian popular magazines and newspapers and in the speech of native speakers in everyday conversations. Specifically, I concentrated on the examination of the semantic domain of popular

fashion, the lexical field that has been heavily influenced by the American culture of Hollywood. The transient nature of fashion-dominated popular culture and its subsequent need to align its vocabulary with the ever-changing trends and styles explain why this terminology is one of the most susceptible areas to borrowing from one language to another. During the spring semester 2001, I conducted a text analysis of popular Russian magazines and compiled a bank of newly adopted Anglo terms in modern Russian. Examples of these new additions to the Russian lexicon include such terms as *top model* "top model," *fitnes* "fitness," *strech* "stretch," *bouling* "bowling," *parti* "party" and many others. From the grammatical standpoint, many of these recent newcomers to the Russian lexical system also represent an intriguing tendency in Russian grammar, namely its veer towards analyticity. Analyticism can be broadly defined as a syntactic tendency to express grammatical meaning through fixed word order, governance and context. Alternatively, the use of inflexions exemplifies a synthetic syntactical structure. Within Modern Russian, the tendency toward analyticism in the otherwise synthetic language led to a noticeable rise in the spread of analytical indeclinable constructions that do not utilize native inflexions to indicate gender, number and case. This tendency is especially noticeable in non-agreement noun phrases such as *stech tkan'* "stretch fabric," *fitnes programma* "fitness program," *sumka-bodi* "cross-body messenger bag," and *risunok peisli* "paisley pattern."

The second phase of my project consisted of a field trip to Moscow, which I took in summer 2001. During this trip I observed and recorded conversations with native speakers in order to investigate if and how the terms that I had previously found in the discourse of mass media were used in everyday conversation. While in Russia, I concentrated on the examination of how female native speakers of Russian used Americanisms in their interactions, what sociolinguistic factors influenced their lexical choices and what sociocultural attitudes these choices reflected. The results of this second phase of the project indicated that such factors as age, social status, and English proficiency as well as electronic literacy governed the lexical choices of the project participants, making them either accepting of new loans or reluctant to use them. The findings also showed that the participants negotiated their values, beliefs and identity through their lexical choices, often using Americanisms as a means to indicate their membership in a speech community of educated career-oriented professional women. The participants creatively changed the structure of the loan words introduced to the Russian language through mass media, often russifying their pronunciation and morphological structure, thus claiming their ownership of these foreign terms and transforming them into indispensable elements of Russian vocabulary.

Poetry

by Donald Johnson



LOST IN NEW ZEALAND, LOST IN THE FIFTIES

It looks like central West Virginia
in 1958. The two-lane road climbs
past tobacco barns and shotgun houses,
narrows at every bridge, so everyone waits,
sometime. And I'm as lost as I was then,
the night Dreama Pennington left me six miles
up a holler off Coal River Road, and I had to thumb home
barefoot and shirtless, holding my Levis up
with one hand because she had my belt,
and had seen me at the Dairy Queen with Reba Workman.

The fisherman I stopped to ask said
Ngatimoti is four miles west, though
all the posted distances and speeds
are in kilometers that this old Ford's
round dials can't calculate. The radio's static
blurs the disc jockey's lead into "back-to-
back-to-back Oldies but Goodies,"
repentance songs that last until the next
country store where I buy chesnes and crackers,
cold beans, and enough Steinlager for the drive

to Okarito. With new directions,
Brenda Lee, the Platters, Brothers Ames and I
apologize our way along the coast –
sorry for old mistakes, for being young,
and middle aged and older, ashamed of lost heads,
cold eyes, and blind hearts, spiteful words
and silences, hard looks, and hot licks
on the wrong pianos, good booze, bad company,
lust gluttony and sloth, thoughts of suicide
or worse, and getting caught with Reba Workman.

Night pours out of the mountains. Eighty miles south
the long bridge I've heard about at Hokitika waits:
one lane, cars approaching both ways, and up
the center, railroad tracks. You could come her,
Dreama, sit close on this Crown Victoria's
tucked and rolled upholstery, our faces smoothed
in the soft dash lights. Mellow on good beer
and the purr of customized dual mufflers,
we'd bear down on that bridge in the dark,
doing a legal hundred on the wrong side of the road.

SCATOLOGY

(In Memory of John Maher)

Circles of matted grass in the orchard
tell me nine deer slept last night beneath the brown husks
of cider apples, uncurled after the hoar frost fell,
and tip-toed uphill into the yellowed hickories.
In each bed, scat gleams like oiled buckshot.

"Scatological." The last time we talked, our first
conversation in thirty years, I said that word,
and you smiled, remarking how it came so naturally,
and how I'd changed since high school. You probably
knew what that word meant then. You, the most promising
of us all, eaten up with cancer at fifty-four.

Last night, watching the World Series, I thought
of our playing a whole seven games between
the Yankees and the Dodgers one night on your mother's
kitchen table. I won. Pitching Don Newcombe
in four games, my arm tired just throwing the dice.
Eighteen years later, in Honolulu, I read a small
notice in the sports pages listing Newcombe
as a patient in Kaiser Hospital. They thought
he might die from liver disease. I lived two miles
away and thought of visiting him, but didn't.

Two days after last Christmas, I'd packed the car,
and was ready to leave when my father called me
into the cold garage to help him free the rusted knuckle
on the tractor's stabilizer bar, confessing
as our hands curled around the pipe wrench
that in the last two years his body had turned to shit.

In the past two weeks, another friend, a colleague's wife,
and a student who had dropped my Keats course
died. Still another friend called from Boston
three nights ago to say he had disconnected
his father's life support after a heart attack and stroke.

I didn't visit you, either, John, didn't call or write,
though I knew you were dying in Atlanta. No words
seemed natural, and you were my age and promising.

Yesterday, the second morning in a row, while the deer
ghosted from the stiff grass in the orchard, I rolled over
in bed and awoke with the room turning around me,
not in dream, nor metaphor, but spinning, really spinning,
so that for the first five minutes after getting up I walked
around holding on to things. Holding on to things. Shit.

HANGOVER FLY

Tied to imitate
 a fat, white nymph,
 the hair of the dog
 dead now four years
 still takes trout.
 Its wet bristles criss-
 cross my thumb like scars
 barbed wire inscribes
 when I shake loose
 the hook boned
 in the rainbow's jaw.
 Afraid I couldn't do it
 after, I dug her grave
 in the rain
 while she watched,
 half-blind and deaf,
 nosing the slick clods
 until the clay stained
 her muzzle rusty.
 Her damp fur clotted
 on my hands when I
 lifted her into the truck.

All day I have followed
 my nymph downstream
 to where the river braids,
 spills to one sound,
 and disappears in shadows.
 My legs are gone
 to the cold. My backcast,
 collapsing in tired loops,
 threatens to bury my hood
 past the barb in the
 loose, graying folds of my neck.

Don Johnson, who was an English department faculty member at B.S.C. from 1971–1983, currently teaches at East Tennessee State University where he has served as both department chair and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He lives on the banks of the Watauga River in a house that was built in 1791.

"These poems came from several different sources. The New Zealand poem came out of a trip to the South Island about ten years ago. I was struck by how similar the landscape was to the area in West Virginia where I grew up. It was also amazing to me the extent to which American culture had become so much a part of the day-to-day lives of the Kiwis—old rock and roll songs on the car radio, American cars from the fifties and sixties, etc. It was strange driving an old American car on the left side of the road, however. "Scatology" is pretty straightforward. It originated in a conversation with a high school friend at our 30th reunion. I had not seen him since the night we had graduated from high school. He went on to Princeton and a good job with IBM, and I drifted into the study of English literature. A few years after the reunion I heard that he was dying of cancer and then that he had died in Atlanta. His passing led to the other thoughts on death and vulnerability. The poem about the fishing fly is true. I do have a fly tied from the hair of a dog I had put down just before the trip to N. Zealand. She literally nosed around the grave I was digging for her before I took her to the veterinarian."



"Lost in New Zealand, Lost in the Fifties" and "Scatology" appeared in *Graven Images: Studies in Culture, Law and the Sacred*, Vol.#3, 1996.

"Hangover Fly" appeared in *Louisiana Literature* 15.2 (Fall, 1998).

Faculty Profile
 Veronica Côté

by Barbara Apstein



Photograph by Greg Thomas

Why does a young woman choose to become an airplane pilot? Veronica Côté, Assistant Professor of Aviation Science, confesses that as a girl she had no special interest in flying. When she was a Brockton High School junior, her father, the late Peter A. Bizinkauskas, who was at the time a professor of Elementary Education at BSC, told her that the College had started an Aviation Program and suggested that she might want to consider becoming a pilot. Something clicked: "I'd always had an interest in space exploration and in my wildest dreams I was an astronaut," says Professor Côté, who grew up watching the space shuttle flights of the early 1980's. Although she had never been inside an airplane, she applied to BSC, was accepted, and started flight training during her freshman year.

As soon as she began flying, Professor Côté was convinced that she had made the right decision. "Pushing up the throttle in my little Piper Tomahawk at the Norwood Airport, I felt as though I belonged in the air," she recalls. "I flew three days a week, I soloed on November 22, 1982 in Piper Tomahawk N23222 (most pilots remember the day and plane of their first solo flight in the same way people remember their birthdays), passed my Private Pilot license the following June and commercial license and instrument rating in August, 1985 and became a certified flight instructor by November of the same year."

After graduating from BSC, Professor Côté worked as a flight instructor and charter pilot and later for Brockway Airlines (a regional partner for Piedmont), flying a Beech 1900, a 19-passenger commuter plane. Although many passengers disliked the cramped seats of the Beech 1900, Professor Côté recalls, she loved it. "It's a great airplane—fast, powerful for its size and a joy to fly," she says. "I learned as much about flying in my first month for the airline as I had in all my experience up to that point." Professor Côté also recalls that it was a hectic, exciting time to be involved in the industry. "Deregulation was less than ten years old and the airlines were making up the rules as they went along. Executives were trying to figure out how to run an airline when the old rules no longer applied. I considered it post graduate education at its finest."

After a brief teaching stint at BSC, Professor Côté returned to Brockway, where she received a promotion: she now flew a larger aircraft, the SAB 340, "a revolutionary regional airliner at the time," which carried 34 passengers as well as a flight attendant. A year later, she was upgraded from First Officer and became the youngest Captain at Brockway Airlines.

Unfortunately, the Persian Gulf War of 1991 and the spike in fuel prices, along with decreased demand, forced Brockway into bankruptcy. "I like to say that I was forced into early retirement," says Professor Côté. Sadly, thousands of other experienced pilots lost their jobs at the same time.

Forced to re-think her future, Professor Côté remembered how much she had enjoyed teaching. Members of the BSC Aviation faculty, with whom she had maintained contact, urged her to work on a Masters degree, and the following year Professor Côté—now married to a fellow pilot—applied to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. She was accepted and moved to Florida for a year. In 1995, on her daughter's first birthday, she defended her Master's thesis and was awarded the Master of Aeronautical Science degree. The following fall, she accepted a full-time position at BSC as Aviation Coordinator, and when the new School of Management and Aviation Science was founded a few years later, she became Chair of the Aviation Science Department. Teaching aviation, she discovered, was in its own way just as enjoyable as flying: "I loved to help students discover the joy of flight and to share my experiences and insight with them."

Professor Côté strongly believes in the value of a liberal arts degree for aviation students. "The well rounded education offered by BSC's liberal arts curriculum," she notes, "helps shape the students' ideas and provides them with the opportunity to look inward to discover something about themselves and outward to discover something new about their world." She points out that