The Best of the Whitesell Prize Competition
2013–2014

The Writing Center’s Phyllis C. Whitesell Prizes for Expository Writing in General Education

11th Edition, Fall 2013
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Preface

The Writing Center’s Phyllis C. Whitesell Prizes honor excellent student writing in Franklin and Marshall’s General Education curriculum. Each year the Writing Center invites submissions and awards a prize for the best essay, one research and one non-research, written in a course that fulfills the First-Year Writing Requirement and for the best essay from a Foundations course. This booklet contains the prize-winning and honorable mention essays from this year’s competition.

Named for the emerita Director of F&M’s Writing Center, the Whitesell Prizes serve several goals. In addition to honoring both Phyllis’s dedication to teaching writing and the achievements of the College’s students writers themselves, the Whitesell Prizes seek to add to the vitality of the College’s General Education curriculum by getting students to think of their intellectual efforts as ongoing enterprises (revision, often after the essay has been graded and the class is completed, is a requirement of the competition). Also, by involving faculty and Writing Center tutors in the judging of the essays—and by making this booklet available to the College community—the Whitesell competition hopes to foster a fuller awareness of the interesting work being done in our Foundations and First-Year Writing Requirement courses.

My great appreciation goes to this year’s Whitesell Prize judges. Professors Padmini Mongia and Beckley Davis and tutors Rhya Ghose ’15 and Nina Chiappetta ’14 awarded the prize in Foundations. Professors Kimberly Armstrong and David Ciuk along with tutors Shanni Davidowitz ’14 and Nicole Zee ‘14 were the judges for the First-Year Writing Requirement competition.

Many thanks go to Judith Stapleton for compiling this booklet.

Daniel Frick
Director, Writing Center
May 2014
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Whitesell Prize Winner

“A Battle of Conscience: Repression and Salvation in Les Miserables”

Melissa Schlags

Assignment:

Franklin & Marshall College
FRN115: Professor Gasbarrone

Write an argumentative or persuasive essay of 3000 words (roughly 12 pages). The following description from Purdue OWL explains the nature of the argumentative essay.

What is an argumentative essay?

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/05/

The argumentative essay is a genre of writing that requires the student to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.

Please note: Some confusion may occur between the argumentative essay and the expository essay. These two genres are similar, but the argumentative essay differs from the expository essay in the amount of pre-writing (invention) and research involved. The argumentative essay is commonly assigned as a capstone or final project in first year writing or advanced composition courses and involves lengthy, detailed research. Expository essays involve less research and are shorter in length. Expository essays are often used for in-class writing exercises or tests, such as the GED or GRE.

Argumentative essay assignments generally call for extensive research of literature or previously published material. Argumentative assignments may also require empirical research where the student collects data through interviews, surveys, observations, or experiments. Detailed research allows the student to learn about the topic and to understand different points of view regarding the topic so that she/he may choose a position and support it with the evidence collected during research. Regardless of the amount or type of research involved, argumentative essays must establish a clear thesis and follow sound reasoning.
A Battle of Conscience: Repression and Salvation in *Les Misérables*

**I. Introduction**

Victor Hugo worshipped the idea of progress and envisioned a world where “‘Reality [is] governed by truth’” (1004). Ideally, poverty, violence, and ignorance would be eradicated in Hugo’s future. Despite the collective undertones of the word “progress,” it holds significance for the individual as well. Hugo cautions, though, that “those who do not welcome the future should consider this: in denying progress it is not the future that they condemn, but themselves” (1230). Social reforms and self-improvement are two subtypes of advancement that Hugo describes in his 1862 novel, *Les Misérables*. This internal development propels societal progress, which ultimately drives human behavior. Throughout the narrative, Hugo demonstrates that only those characters courageous enough to descend into their consciences can evolve morally.

The theme of personal growth is most prevalent within the characters of Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert. Valjean is a peasant tree-pruner who is imprisoned after stealing bread for his starving family, whereas Javert is a police officer who is born in jail to a fortune-teller and convict. Valjean and Javert are from distinct backgrounds, but society thrusts both characters into the position of outcast. Each views the world differently while they are alive, and this affects how the world views their deaths. Specifically, Valjean shapes his principles from interactions with others, while Javert allows the legal system to dictate his moral code. Since Valjean’s code is more humane than Javert’s, it enables Valjean to be nearer to G-d. Hugo permits Valjean to die with a peaceful conscience, rather than die in turmoil, like Javert. Thus, how Valjean and Javert each reflect on their past contributes to the emotional states of their
psyches at the time of their deaths. Both characters ascend spiritually from the depths of their
grotesque consciences, although the timing and extent of this transformation depends on whether
they internalize their own salvation.

II. Reflections on the Past

Valjean

Valjean does not attempt to shield his past from his conscience. Images of his affliction
from prison appear relentlessly in his meditations, but he does not let them overtake or destroy
his character. Even before his encounter with Monseigneur Myriel, Valjean allows his past to
permeate his thoughts in a constructive light, so he is able to learn from them (Hugo 96). Upon
meeting the bishop, Valjean glimpses the notion of a more promising future: a future in which
he is no longer a “‘vile wretch’” (Hugo 117). Valjean experiences such an intense catharsis with
the bishop that he breaks down in tears for the first time since his incarceration (Hugo 115). This
seemingly trivial event, the act of weeping, is the turning point in which Valjean sees himself
objectively. Hugo writes that this “Excess of suffering … had made him in some sort a
visionary” (117). Valjean does not merely grasp the bishop’s influence on a fundamental level,
but he is able to shed his former ego and mold what remains into a more upright version of
himself.

This visionary quality enables Valjean not only to continually overcome ethical obstacles,
but also to pursue moral development. In such a quagmire as the Champmathieu affair, Valjean
debates with himself, but eventually chooses to reveal his real identity to the court.  

1. The character of Monsieur Myriel is the bishop of Digne, France.

2. The police have mistakenly identified an innocent man, Champmathieu, as Valjean. To
save this man, Valjean relinquishes the false name of Monsieur Madeleine, mayor of
Montreuil-sur-mer, in favor of his actual name of Jean Valjean, escaped convict. The police
decision tests his resolve, since the more righteous path requires self-sacrifice. His second time in prison threatens to dismantle the memory of the bishop’s compassionate teachings because Valjean is again exposed to the bitterness of injustice. However, when he rescues Cosette from the Thénardiers and subsequently ends up in the Petit-Picpus Convent, this leads him, once more, to G-d. Valjean evolves further while residing at the convent, where he is “confronted by locks and bars, but these protected angels” (Hugo 490). As he compares the physical prison of the justice system with the austere and secluded atmosphere of the convent, “All pride left him; he looked unsparingly at himself, felt his weakness and often wept” (Hugo 491). Moreover, Hugo scholar and professor Kathryn M. Grossman notes that “As his [Valjean’s] pride tumbles into an inner abyss, his reflection reaches sublime heights” (32). When his suffering increases, he steps outside his human form and looks objectively at his life. Valjean’s introspective thoughts, his religious surroundings, and the flexibility of his own spirit lead him to feel he is once again in the bishop’s, and by association G-d’s, presence.

**Javert**

In contrast to the learning-by-experience process that Valjean practices, the inflexible Javert hides his past from himself. As Javert was born in prison, he presumes “that he was outside society with no prospect of ever entering it,” and he “[hates] the vagabond order to which he himself belonged” (Hugo 165). Javert is ashamed of his past, and would have proudly imprisoned his parents if circumstances warranted it (Hugo 166). His “contempt, aversion and disgust for those who … transgressed beyond the bounds of law” consumes him (Hugo 166). Furthermore, his desire to eradicate those people from the world is a manifestation of his yearning to erase and dissociate from his familial background. Javert believes that he is eventually capture Valjean; once again, Valjean experiences the hostility of prison bars (Hugo 394).
incapable of becoming a member of society and realizes that there are two groups outside of society’s bounds: “those who prey upon it, and those who protect it” (Hugo 165). This notion is more than a desire for order and justice: it is a means to escape his past.

Yet, the high-minded path that Javert takes embitters him further. He resents the way his upbringing makes him feel, and it causes him to think that society has limited him to one of two preordained paths. This core belief drives his reasoning for the rest of his life; to him, there are only ever two unequal options, that of the law or anarchy. Such rigidity disadvantages him in that it does not promote any moral growth. Indeed, Hugo dehumanizes Javert by frequently comparing him to an animal. Hugo claims that animals “are no more than shadows, He [God] has not made them educable in the full sense of the word,” while human “souls … have been endowed with … the power to learn” (164-165; 165). Javert’s stone-like soul makes him incapable of thinking for himself, and thus, he is devoid of any personal development.

Despite Javert’s spiritual shortcomings, he is just as devout to the law as one might be to religion; “his duties were his religion” (Hugo 166). In order to flee from the mental wounds of his childhood, the only reasonable choice for Javert is to join the police force. Hugo’s diction is noteworthy when he writes “[Javert] belonged to the police” (164). Javert is neither a member of the police nor does he work for the police – he belongs to them. Subconsciously, he serves the law in exchange for its protection from his past. In the process, he simultaneously pursues the injustices of society while hiding behind the law.

Further Analysis
The manner in which Valjean and Javert each internalize their past defines their ethical standards; it is these codes that are crucial in determining their abilities to change. Valjean’s visionary quality enables him to forgive himself for his past sins and let the bishop’s soul merge with his own. The result is a man who craves to evolve spiritually, thereby embodying a more humble and considerate soul. Moreover, by adopting Cosette, Valjean continues to experience moral advancement; as painful as it is for him, he not only loves her, but teaches her how to love and be compassionate as well.\(^3\)

Even though Valjean maintains an intimate relationship with G-d throughout his lifetime, his moral burden does not diminish. As literary critic Harry Goldgar states, “revolutionary progress feeds on ruin. Thus the artist, as Hugo says in an unpublished note, ‘struggles with God’” (350). Two primary examples of Valjean’s struggle include whether to reveal himself to society during the Champmathieu affair and fifteen years later, to Cosette and Marius after they have wed.\(^4\) Of this latter decision, Hugo writes “how often had Jean Valjean been darkly joined in mortal conflict with his own conscience!” (1141-1142). Within every turmoil, Valjean distinguishes between virtue and injustice through his faith in G-d. Hugo informs the reader that

\(^3\) The encounter with M. Myriel instills tenderness in Valjean, in addition to the notion of passing it onto others. One of the most significant and virtuous influences that Valjean has over Cosette is in teaching her compassion. This indirectly provides Cosette the ability to love Marius. It should be noted, though, that the love Valjean and Cosette have is different from the love between Cosette and Marius. Valjean is grateful for his effect on Cosette’s life, but is dejected when he realizes that if Cosette is with Marius, she will be estranged from his own life. Despite the anguish that this understanding imparts, the principle of passing on compassion is in accordance with his conscience.

\(^4\) Plagued by a guilty conscience, Valjean decides to expose his past to Marius. Ever since Valjean has lived in the convent, he has used the pseudonym of Ultime Fauchelevent to portray Père Fauchelevent’s fictitious brother. While Valjean was mayor in Montreuil-sur-Mer, he saved Père Fauchelevent from being crushed by a cart and arranged for him to become a gardener at the Convent of the Petit-Picpus. It is this name that Valjean had given to Marius before acknowledging the name Jean Valjean.
he believes that “there is no end to conscience, for this is God himself” (1143). In spite of Valjean’s discerning ability, borne from his visionary quality, he is still cognizant of the more alluring, errant path (Hugo 1142). Such a path of darkness would betray his conscience, and thus, G-d. Since he continues to be plagued by indecision, he is never truly free from struggle. Hugo implies that because Valjean makes the effort to wrestle with his conscience, he is able to interact with G-d.

Although Valjean does not feel bound by the literal wording of the law, he holds himself to a higher form of justice: his conscience. Even when Valjean’s own happiness is at stake, he surrenders his false identity as Fauchelevent to Marius in favor of his true one, Jean Valjean (Hugo 1148). Indeed, when Valjean reveals his past life to Marius, Valjean does not believe himself worthy of happiness, explaining he is “‘an outcast from life’” (Hugo 1150). Valjean’s resolve to expose himself allows him to remain true to his high moral standards, which grants him some serenity. The chapter title, “The seventh circle and the eighth heaven,” is indicative of Valjean’s state of mind. He is in a personal hell for distancing himself from Cosette, but he realizes this is the only way to live with his conscience. It is one’s self who is the true adversary, as Valjean proclaims “‘I have been exposed, I am pursued – by myself!’” (Hugo 1150). Through Valjean’s words, Hugo warns that appeasing one’s conscience is hell itself, but perhaps reaching such an innermost circle of hell places one near to G-d (Hugo 1150). Valjean’s constant clash between right and wrong facilitates his moral evolution. Hugo’s message is that Valjean’s conflict leads him to G-d, and that is why Valjean’s struggle is sublime.

It is through this internal battle that Valjean seals his transcendence in death. Hugo writes “it is not improbable that the bishop was present in those last moments of his [Valjean’s] life” (1198). Valjean’s ability to reveal himself one final time to Cosette and Marius
demonstrates his love for them and his desire for their happiness over his own. Hugo draws connections between Valjean and heaven when he writes that Valjean’s “spirit grew in splendour, and the light of the unknown world was already visible in his eyes” (1198). Knowing at last that Cosette and Marius are content, Valjean can “die happy” with “the light from the two candlesticks … upon his face” (Hugo 1200). This light is significant, as it represents the memory of the bishop and G-d’s blessing upon Valjean as he dies. Therefore, Hugo demonstrates that self-examination and compassion are imperative for a rewarding life, but that those who triumph over their conscience will be closest to G-d.

Unlike Valjean, Javert sees the church, not G-d, as an authority figure. After Valjean exposes his identity to the court, escapes from the holding cells, and returns to his apartment, Javert inspects Valjean’s residence. Seeing the honest Sister Simplice kneeling, Javert is almost ashamed to be present in the same room. Specifically, he is in awe of Sister Simplice due to his respect for her authority as a member of the church. Hugo writes that “in his [Javert’s] religious faith, as in all things, he was both superficial and rigidly orthodox. It goes without saying that for him the highest authority was that of the Church” (274). Hugo’s word choice is deliberate: Javert reveres the social construct of the church rather than a religious deity.

Additionally, Javert truly believes that he is acting for the only superior entity that he acknowledges: the law. In fact, the law is synonymous with his moral code. For instance, Javert wishes to be terminated from his job after falsely identifying Monsieur Madeleine for Jean Valjean: “now I have slipped, I have committed an offence, and there it is. It is right that I should be dismissed and broken” (Hugo 200). Javert feels that the only logical consequence of his mistake is to be removed from his position as inspector, as dictated by the confines of the law. He therefore lacks the capability to interpret the spirit of the law that he has been tasked
with upholding. As such, his legal paradigm does not permit any individual exceptions to the written law. Javert holds himself to this strict form of justice because doing anything else would be illogical.

Since Javert views legal justice as the only way to live righteously, he excludes all forms of kindness and mercy from his life. Furthermore, he not only fails to show compassion to others, but he also does not understand how to receive it. When he is finally granted absolution from Valjean, Javert is stunned: “I find this embarrassing. I’d rather you killed me’’ (Hugo 1040). Javert is humiliated since he believed Valjean to be a worthless creature, seemingly incapable of such an altruistic act of setting him free. He is further confused because not only has Valjean let Javert go, Valjean also discloses his address to Javert so that Javert can re-arrest him after the battle. Hence, this event traumatizes Javert, and “his whole person bore the imprint of uncertainty” (Hugo 1104). “His sense of duty,” once so precise, becomes “impaired, and he could not hide this from himself.” (Hugo 1104). Javert realizes that the law does not account for every virtuous course of action, and he can no longer hide behind it. He must now hold his own conscience accountable, and he must examine his thoughts to navigate through the chaos. However, he is not used to such introspection: “he had never seen more than one straight line,” and this process is “singularly painful” and “terrible” (Hugo 1104; Hugo 1105; Hugo 1107). He again reflects that “The police force had been his true religion,” but “Now he became conscious

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5 After the Revolutionaries form the barricades in Paris, France, they capture Javert for being a police informer and sentence him to death. When Valjean eventually joins their ranks, he requests that he be allowed to kill Javert. Before the forthcoming battle commences, Valjean takes Javert to the edges of the barricades; instead of killing Javert, Valjean releases him. As a result, Javert realizes that there are two distinct paths he can choose: either let Valjean remain free or arrest him (Valjean is breaking parole). Yet, these options contradict one another and force Javert to separate the ideas of moral and legal justice.
of God and was troubled in spirit … faced by a superior with whom he does not agree, he can only resign. But how resign from God?” (Hugo 1106; Hugo 1106-1107).

Yet, is not the realization of G-d as the supreme authority figure Hugo’s grand vision? Why is it that Javert must die – is there no other choice? The only other logical path for Javert to follow is to become deeply religious and compassionate. Javert could recalibrate his internal compass to follow religion piously and live out the remainder of his life in a monastery. If this is a possibility, why does Hugo not grant him this opportunity? The answer is conscience: similar to Valjean, Javert seeks to appease his conscience, though each character is driven by different motivations. Despite Javert’s “glimpse of … an abyss above him,” he still feels “guilty of an unpardonable infraction of the rules” (Hugo 1107). His conscience, now exposed in a new light through Valjean’s mercy, is open to all the self-judgment that he has shielded himself from. Javert is mystified at the true source of authority, but now that “Authority was dead within him … he had no reason to go on living” (1107). The only way to be aligned with his newly acknowledged superior, G-d, is to perish.

III. Meditations in the Sewers

Although the conscience in Les Misérables is a place for Valjean and Javert to undergo self-examination, it is the unconscious that drives their behaviors. Professor Rosalina de la Carrera connects the unconscious to Sigmund Freud’s concept of a “memory-trace,” or neurological storage of memories (840). Both Freud and Hugo viewed the physical landscape of a city as not just functional architecture, but as a memory of history. Since memories are stored

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Michael Craig Miller, psychiatrist and senior editor of Harvard Health Publications, discusses Freud’s use of the term “unconscious.” Although Freud used “subconscious” to also denote “unconscious,” there is some debate as to the meanings of both words. In de la Carrera’s article, as well as in this paper, use of the word “unconscious” does not refer to a physical state of conscience. Rather, it indicates the “mental content outside conscious awareness” (Miller, “Unconscious or Subconscious?”).
in our unconscious, the segments of cities that Freud and Hugo found most nostalgic are, then, represented by the archives of memories found in the unconscious. For Hugo, the place in old Paris with the most memories is the sewers (Robb 383). Given that the sewers are hidden from the world and the unconscious is hidden from the individual, the sewers serve as a metaphor for the unconscious memory-trace. Just like exploring one’s unconscious, entering the sewers is sublime. For it is there that Valjean undergoes introspection once more. Despite his bitter feelings toward Marius, Valjean chooses the righteous path to rescue Marius for Cosette. Cosette’s reunion with Marius ultimately leads to her happiness, which is of utmost importance to Valjean. It is symbolic, then, that Javert does not descend into the sewers and is not led to transcendence. Therefore, Hugo implies that the sewers are a place for sublime inner revolution. For although “There is darkness,” the truth “teaches us” more about ourselves; salvation can be found in the darkness of the sewers and the unconscious (Hugo 1065).

IV. From Agony to Grace

Valjean

Valjean embraces the notion that he must self-critique, but also acknowledges his own transformation from the depths of his past. Through his reflections after stealing money from the boy Petit-Gervais, Valjean is able to distinguish “the black limbo of prison” from the “radiance of virtue” (Hugo 116). After the police capture Valjean and imprison him a second time, he later saves a man on the ship Orion.7 When Valjean plunges into the ocean to escape from the chains of prison, he is presumed dead. Yet he rises from that “unfathomable darkness” and “abyss”

7. During Valjean’s second interval in prison, his unit is working on the Orion. One of the crewmen aboard the ship is about to fall into the ocean, and Valjean seeks authorization from his superior to attempt to save the man. After receiving permission, he successfully rescues the member of the crew. While returning to his post, Valjean slips on the edge of the boat and plummets into the ocean, thereby escaping the chains of prison.
which is the sea in order to save Cosette (Hugo 102). According to Goldgar, “The ocean itself is chaos; [but] chaos supplies life” (350). The ocean, seemingly symbolic of hellish destruction, is rather a metaphor for creation. Valjean’s vertical decline leads to a spiritual ascent because it allows him to rescue Cosette from the Thénardiers. Valjean is symbolically reborn when he becomes Cosette’s father. In doing so, it brings him back to light and back to life.

Valjean metamorphoses further after he and Cosette escape Javert’s pursuit and end up in the Petit-Picpus Convent. When he is in a prison again, this time in the convent, he must be buried in a grave in order to reenter the convent from the outside. Only when he has literally risen from underground can he obtain a job as a convent gardener and secure Cosette’s enrollment in the convent’s school. Hugo tells the reader, “The convent itself, with Cosette, sustained and completed the transformation of Jean Valjean which the bishop had begun” (488). When Valjean compares the previous prison with the confines of the convent, he is redeemed once more, bathed in “a shadow filled with light, a light filled with radiance” (Hugo 489). In his transition to conquer his pride, he is in awe of G-d’s forgiveness, humbled once more. As professor and Hugo scholar Victor Brombert states, “Salvation is to be found below” (113). Since Valjean recognizes this principle and understands that he exemplifies it, he is able to live through his transcendence.

Javert

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8. Now that Valjean has faked his own death, society believes that Valjean is dead. Consequently, he is able to retrieve Cosette from the Thénardiers without as much fear of Javert.

9. Five years after Valjean’s encounter with the bishop, Valjean becomes the mayor of Montreuil-sur-mer, France, using the alias of Monsieur Madeleine. He becomes quite successful and the town prospers from his manufacturing improvements. Over time, the memory of the bishop begins to fade, and with it, Valjean’s modesty (Hugo 488).
Conversely, Javert does not comprehend the idea of salvation from below until much later in his life. His myopic view of society blinds him to the redemption he could otherwise attain. Instead, he is relegated to be obstinate, so set in his moral code. Nonetheless, his own brutality breeds the chaos in the world that he so desperately wants to escape from. The justice system to which Javert belongs condemns the wretches of society and, in particular, the lower classes and convicts. Perhaps if civilization had not judged these people so harshly, Javert would not have felt compelled to join the police force in order to be accepted. Paradoxically, his position in the judicial system facilitates the callous treatment of the oppressed masses, which is the very thing that provokes Javert’s anguish to begin with. In his quest to rid himself of the grotesque nature of his upbringing, he unconsciously seeks transcendence through pursuit of the law. But this hunt for perfection disarms him, leaving him vulnerable to the mercy of his unconscious. Through Javert’s resolute nature, he attempts to arm himself against evil. It is ironic that he ends up indulging himself in the belief that he is invulnerable to something as inconsequential as reflection. Accordingly, he fears self-examination; he finds it “torture” (Hugo 1105). In his search for perfection, “Javert’s ideal was to be more than human; to be above reproach” (Hugo 1106). When he fails himself, he can run no longer, and there is no other option than to deny himself of existence.

Since Javert is unable to evaluate his conscience, he is incapable of developing morally. It is only when Valjean spares Javert’s life that his value system is transfigured. His world collapses, and he is left with the guilt that has built up over his lifetime. However, he has left those emotions unattended for so long that it is unbearable to confront them: “The glimpse of chaos” “[breaks his] soul … by the presence of God” (Hugo 1107). Unfortunately, it is too late for Javert to live through the vision of benevolence that he discovers. Brombert notes that “The
revelation of this bond between spirituality and the underworld is in itself a powerful religious experience … He [Javert] destroys himself, testifying to an intolerable truth” (117). The truth that Javert discovers is that letting Valjean remain free is more virtuous than arresting him, even though it contradicts with his prior beliefs. It is this epiphany that is unbearable for Javert. Additionally, Javert is “amazed” at “Valjean’s generosity towards himself,” and even admits “admiration for a convicted felon” and that Valjean was “near to the angels” (Hugo 1106). Nevertheless, Javert destroys himself without realizing that he, too, could be near to the angels and attain redemption.

Further Analysis

For Hugo, salvation is sublime. Brombert states “All of human destiny, the narrator [Hugo] explains, is summed up in the dilemma: loss or salvation” (117). For Valjean, then, the only way to sustain G-d’s blessing is through the sewers of Paris; if he can withstand this test, rising from the “‘grave’” that is the sewer, then it will be sublime (Hugo 1075). The sewers are therefore a place of transcendence: “The pupil dilates in darkness and in the end finds light, just as the soul dilates in misfortune and in the end finds God” (Hugo 1078). Hugo further alludes to Valjean’s redemption by repeatedly remarking that Valjean puts his faith in G-d to find a way out of the black sewers and into the light (1077-1078). When Valjean surfaces from a pit in the sewers, he “[falls] on his knees … his spirit absorbed in the thought of God … his soul filled with a strange lightness” (Hugo 1089). Hugo does not grant Valjean complete deliverance, though, because Javert immediately confronts Valjean upon emerging from the underworld. This final liberation is only reached after Valjean makes one last righteous choice to reveal himself to Marius. Valjean’s reward is seeing Cosette’s happiness with Marius as Valjean dies, ultimately establishing the family he never had.
Javert never truly survives the last testament of wills, and thus never benefits while he is alive. Contrary to Valjean, Javert does not comprehend the notion that one can rise from the depths of society, nor does he realize he follows that principle. Although Javert was born in prison, he has ascended through the ranks of society to become an esteemed inspector of the police force. In the eyes of the legal system, Javert’s strict form of social justice is warranted, and even encouraged, thereby supporting the argument that Javert, too, achieves salvation from below. Yet, Javert never understands this concept; he can never rise from the darkness that he subjects himself to. Hugo writes that those who outlive the barricade exist as if in a chaotic daydream: “we are no longer fully conscious of what we have seen. We have done terrible things and do not know it. We have been caught up in a conflict of ideas” (1035-1036). Instead of dying with a content heart and conscience, Javert dies with a nightmare. He cannot confront his inner demons; he knows he could never satisfy his conscience. How can he possibly continue to go on living when he knows he would be betraying a part of his conscience? He cannot. Conversely, Hugo allows Valjean to make righteous decisions and be at peace with his conscience; for he possesses something that Javert has only recently uncovered: “the secret of God” (1159).

Hugo scholar Richard B. Grant states that Hugo believes “the only way to achieve personal salvation is to go down boldly into the underworld of the unconscious and face its dangers” (907). This idea is projected onto Valjean’s character, as reflected in his thoughts throughout the novel and his journey into the sewers. Moreover, Professor Richard Lehan notes that “Hugo’s characters seem to have to pass through the land of the dead before they can be redeemed” (106). Indeed, through death Valjean can be content at last, knowing he has provided happiness for future generations. Javert transcends in death as well, despite that he cannot live
through his prophetic revelation. Nevertheless, Hugo leads the reader to believe that Javert’s soul is redeemed by G-d. In fact, both Valjean and Javert descend into the ocean to find their eventual salvation. After Javert battles his conscience, he, too, finds peace in death. Once again, a downward plunge into the ocean results in redemption. The physical setting of the ocean is essential to Javert’s death, as it is a place of divine renewal. It is appropriate, then, that Javert acknowledges G-d’s spiritual authority only at the end of his life. Hence, Javert must plummet into the sea in order to ascend into heaven. His suicide is therefore justified by G-d’s implicit exoneration.

V. Conclusion

The extent of transcendence that each character reaches can be attributed to the differences in how each regards their past and views the concept of salvation. Both Valjean and Javert lead deeply troubled lives and overcome challenges to reach positions of authority and respect – Valjean as a father and Javert as an inspector. However, Valjean’s flexible soul enables him to become a visionary, and Hugo thus places him on the path to redemption early in life. Hugo implies that Valjean’s transformative journey is the one an individual should strive for, since it brings Valjean closer to G-d. Even so, Javert’s pilgrimage is no less sublime, especially because he eventually recognizes G-d as his superior. Yet, due to Javert’s tenacious nature, he is unable to provide or receive compassion, nor does he express it to himself. When Valjean is lenient towards Javert, Javert’s moral code is decimated; he no longer has a rulebook to live by and does not possess the knowledge to write the next page of his life. Despite that Javert cannot live through his salvation, his soul awakens in death. The inner chaos that Javert experiences in the minutes before his suicide demonstrates the significance of reflection. This level of analysis is facilitated for each character by a personal mentor. Valjean explores his
conscience before he first enters prison, and the bishop strengthens Valjean’s spiritual progress while his conscience is impressionable. Javert attempts to cloak his unconscious with the literal meaning of the law, thereby rejecting any form of contemplation. Although Valjean implicitly provides similar guidance to Javert, it occurs too late in life to nullify his past transgressions, as it did for Valjean.

Hugo’s broader message is that one should continually scrutinize their conscience to avoid being blind-sided at any point in life. Yet, even those with the deepest awareness of their unconscious will still experience some inner turmoil or chaos. And death, for Hugo, is the resolution of all chaos. But introspection in life determines how your soul will fare in death. Those who dare self-examination and enter that dangerous labyrinth of the mind will be able to die with peace in their soul.
Works Cited


Works Consulted


First-Year Writing, Research Category

Honorable Mention

“Able v. City of Lancaster, PA”

Alyssa Robinson

Assignment:

Franklin & Marshall College
AMS160: Professor Kibler

Amicus Curiae Brief/Research Paper

This assignment asks you to take a side in a hypothetical or recent First Amendment controversy. You will present your argument, based on substantial secondary research, in the form of an amicus brief, or “friend of the court” brief, which is a document written by an interested person or group (not party in the litigation) to lobby the court. An amicus brief is more than taking a side in the case; it is meant to help the court understand the broad impact of its decision, so you may speak broadly about the implications of the case.


**Court Cases**


Statement of Interest

The amicus curiae is the Cato Institute, a public policy research organization dedicated to individual liberty, limited government, and free markets. A non-partisan organization founded in 1977, Cato is named after Cato’s Letters, a series of essays published in 18th-century England that envisioned a society free from excessive government power. We desire to inhibit the growth of the “nanny state”, the collection of laws and regulations that control how individuals live their lives. Specifically, we oppose laws banning minors from purchasing video games deemed violent or sexually explicit because the government should not act as a parent to America’s youth, and evidence suggests the industry’s existing self-regulatory system is effective. Lancaster’s law is unconstitutional because it fails strict scrutiny analysis and would have a chilling effect on adults; it equates violence with obscenity and it treats video games differently than other media. Amicus submits this brief because it hopes to convince the Court that violent and sexually explicit video games cannot legally be restricted to minors.

Argument

A. Laws regulating video games fail strict scrutiny analysis. Violent video games do not lead to actual violence.

Video games constitute speech protected by the First Amendment, as judges have determined in each court case dealing with video game regulations. Laws such as the Family Entertainment Protection Ordinance that restrict video games based on their content are subject to strict scrutiny. The Family Entertainment Protection Ordinance fails strict scrutiny analysis because it does not present a compelling state interest. In seven court cases, the court rebutted the states’ claims to have compelling state interests. We will discuss these cases individually, as
they pertain to our argument. Russell Morse, writing for the Loyola of Los Angeles Entertainment Law Review, emphasizes that in each case, the state had two general interests. They are “preventing violent, aggressive, and antisocial behavior which may lead to real-life harms perpetrated by minors” and “preventing psychological and neurological harm to minors who play violent video games” (Morse 9).

The first interest is not convincing because evidence shows that video games do not lead to aggression and violence. Proponents of video game legislation point to a few studies that claim such a link, but these studies are flawed. Christopher Ferguson, a psychology professor, explains the faults of these studies in his book *Adolescents, Crime, and the Media*. For example, the Taylor Competitive Reaction Time Test (TCRTT) allows participants to set a “noise blast” punishment for their opponent should their opponent lose in a “reaction time” game (there is no actual human opponent). However, this is not a good measure of aggression because the noise blasts are not damaging (the participants also receive these punishments). Moreover, other studies use modified versions of the TCRTT in different ways, thus the test lacks standardization. As Ferguson argues, “researchers can measure aggression however they want and […] can pick the outcomes that best support their hypotheses and ignore outcomes that do not support their hypotheses” (7).

Significantly, violent games are generally more difficult to learn than nonviolent games. Most experimental studies cut off gameplay after a short amount of time, which often leads to frustration among participants playing violent games; participants playing nonviolent, simpler games seem happy in comparison. Researchers thus misattribute frustration as a product of the violent content, when it is probably due to mastery of the game (Ferguson 111). In addition, many studies do not control for factors such as innate aggression, gender, exposure to family
violence, or genetics. A 2008 study found that “exposure to family violence during childhood and aggressive personality traits were predictive of self-reported violent criminal behavior. Exposure to violent video games was not predictive of violent behavior” (Ferguson 113). Another study involving young boys found that “the boys’ personalities determined their aggressive behaviors” (Ferguson 113). Even the US Secret Service and US Department of Education “have concluded that video game playing is not predictive of extreme violence” (Ferguson 115). Furthermore, almost 90 percent of boys play violent video games, so the fact that any one boy who commits a crime plays video games is irrelevant (Ferguson 115). Perhaps even more telling, as violent video games have gained in popularity—starting in the 1990s—youth violence has decreased (Morse 9).

Courts have found supporting evidence to be lacking for video game laws. In Video Software Dealers Association v. Maleng (2003), a court struck down a Washington law restricting minors’ access to violent video games. The court held that “the belief that video games cause violence […] is not based on reasonable inferences drawn from substantial evidence” (Morse 6). In Entertainment Software Association v. Granholm (2005), the court recognized “there is an equivalent amount of data disproving a link between violent video games and aggression” (Morse 7). In addition to providing evidence proving a link between violence and video games, states must prove violent video games lead to imminent violence.

State laws regulating video games do not meet the Brandenberg standard for incitement. In order to prove that playing violent video games leads to increased aggression and actual violence, a state must meet the strict standard set forth in Brandenberg v. Ohio (1969), which declares that states may regulate only speech which is “directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action” (Morse 9). In Ashcroft v.
Free Speech Coalition (2002), the Supreme Court confirmed that “the government may not prohibit speech because it increases the chance an unlawful act will be committed ‘at some indefinite future time’” (Morse 9). Unless a video game explicitly directs the player to engage in immediate violent action, it is protected expression. None of the laws states have tried to pass “include findings that the depiction of violent images in video games, or the playing of violent video games, direct players to commit unlawful violent acts” (Morse 10). Unless it causes imminent violence, violent content cannot be regulated as harmful to minors.

B. The ‘harmful to minors’ standard cannot be applied to violent video games. Violence is not and should not be a category of unprotected speech.

The second interest is not compelling because the only ‘harmful to minors’ standard was created by the court in Ginsberg v. New York (1968) and later altered in Miller v. California (1973). In both cases, the standard only applies to sexually explicit media, not violence (Morse 10). Violence in the media is not widely viewed as harmful to minors. Arguably, it is a part of growing up; children generally express interest in violent media when they are ready for it. For example, in “Writing the Child in Media Theory” Jonathan Bignell argues that “viewing horror films is seen […] as a means for children to test their own maturity, and the significant number of children who view horror films which are not certificated for their age-group is taken as an indication both of children’s desire to enter the adult cultural world, and of their determination to test the limits of their own vulnerability as non-adult, non-rational subjects” (136). Bignell points out that “the child as a subject who might participate in [discourses around the mass media] remains largely silent” (127). This raises the question: to what extent must children be “protected”? Why not allow them to explore more “mature” media? After all, most children have
families to guide them in this process, and arguably the government should not become so involved in parenting America’s youth.

Case law supports our argument. In _American Amusement Machine Association v. Kendrick_ (2001), the court declared, “people are unlikely to become well-functioning, independent-minded adults and responsible citizens if they are raised in an intellectual bubble. […] Violence has always been and remains a central interest of humankind and a recurrent, even obsessive theme of culture both high and low. It engages the interest of children from an early age. To shield children right up to the age of 18 from exposure to violent descriptions and images would not only be quixotic, but deforming; it would leave them unequipped to cope with the world as we know it” (_AAMA v. Kendrick_ 5). In _Interactive Digital Software Association v. St. Louis County_, the court struck down an ordinance barring minors from purchasing, renting, or playing violent video games deemed ‘harmful to minors’” unless they are accompanied by a guardian. The court “rejected the argument that the county had a compelling interest in ‘assisting parents to be the guardians of their children’s well-being’” and “held the county may not limit the Constitution’s force to aid parental authority” (Morse 6).

C. Arguments that such laws fall under the category of obscenity are invalid.

Proponents of such legislation point to something Christopher Clements of the Boston College Law Review calls the “variable obscenity doctrine” (Clements 3). Proponents argue that even speech that does not meet the Miller test for obscenity may be obscene to children, and they refer to _Ginsberg v. New York_ (1968) for support. In _Ginsberg_, the court determined that sexual content that is not obscene for adults may be obscene to children, and so children may be legally restricted from purchasing such material. However, the _Ginsberg_ decision relied on the standard
for obscenity set in *Roth v. US* (1957), therefore does not take into account a work’s value as a whole. The Family Entertainment Protection Ordinance places a Mature rating in line with the Miller test for obscenity. This ordinance is similar to the Safe Games Illinois Act of 2005, (which was struck down); however, unlike the ordinance in question, this act did not include the third prong of the Miller test (Morse 6-7). The third prong of the Miller test requires the work, taken as a whole, to “lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value” (*Miller v. California*). The ordinance in question adds on to this prong “for persons under [eighteen]”.

Previous cases do not support Lancaster’s law. First, the Miller test only applies to sexually explicit material; this law entwines violence and sexual content within the category of obscenity. While legislators could attempt to regulate sexually explicit video games (not violent games), even then, most video games would not pass the test. The “sexually explicit” portion of the Safe Games Illinois Act was found unconstitutional because the majority of video games do contain serious value. As Morse argues, “most video games contain complex storylines and are masterpieces of graphical art [and] players learn lessons and battle classic quandaries. Such characteristics are similarly found in […] other media protected by the First Amendment” (11). In *Entertainment Software Association v. Granholm* (2005), a Michigan law which “add[ed] sexually explicit video games to the state’s obscenity laws” was preliminarily enjoined because it was unlikely to survive strict scrutiny (Morse 7). In *Video Software Dealers Association v. Schwarzenegger* (2007), the video game industry challenged a California law restricting the sale of violent video games to minors and requiring labeling of such games. The law included all three Miller test factors in its description of violent video games, and the court struck down the law (Morse 8).
Furthermore, “what is suitable material for persons under the age of eighteen years” is quite subjective. While the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) does rate video games with “prevailing standards in the adult community” in mind, enforcing the ratings gives the ESRB undue power to decide what is appropriate for each age group. After all, how is a seventeen year old fundamentally different from an eighteen year old? In our opinion, Joe Able made a reasonable decision to sell two M rated games to a seventeen year old.

Why limit children’s natural curiosity and growth? In Harmful to Minors, Judith Levine, an American author and civil libertarian, argues, “the adult world has established an adult psychic censor that will not admit of children’s growth and experience. […] Today’s eight-year-olds are yesterday’s twelve-year-olds. […] There isn’t this innocence of childhood among many children, what with broken homes and violence” (7). As mature media becomes more and more available to youth, they are “growing up”—learning about the real world, even about those things their parents don’t want them to know. Why is this necessarily a bad thing? Indeed, the 1970 U.S. Commission on Obscenity and Pornography suggested that exposure to sexually explicit material could “facilitate much needed communication between parent and child over sexual matters” (Levine 12).

Clements points out that Justice Brennan, author of Roth v. United States, found three problems with obscenity jurisprudence: “the lack of clear standards for obscenity, the chilling effect on speech, and the stress placed on the judiciary” (10). The creator of the obscenity doctrine “grew to resent” it (10). Brennan would dislike the Lancaster law because it is vague and would cause courts to struggle to categorize video games as either obscene or appropriate.

D. It is unconstitutional to treat video games differently than other media.
In both *AAMA v. Kendrick* and *Brown v. EMA*, the Seventh Circuit and Supreme Court, respectively, discredited the argument that video games are uniquely harmful due to their interactivity and thus should be regulated differently than other media. In *AAMA v. Kendrick*, Judge Posner argued, “all literature [including all forms of media] is interactive” (6). Posner also argued that forcing parents to accompany their children when they play violent arcade games, as the ordinance dictates, is impractical (6).

Justice Scalia made the same argument in *Brown*. In this case, the Supreme Court struck down a California law which prohibited the sale of “violent video games” to minors and required that violent video games be placed in packaging labeled “18” (*Brown v. EMA* 1). The Court found that the statute violated the First Amendment because it “did not preclude minors from having access to information about violence in other forms” and “abridged the First Amendment rights of young people whose parents thought that violent video games were a harmless pastime” (*Brown v. EMA* 1). Both cases demonstrate that video games should not be treated differently than other media and that such regulations are “only in support of what the State thinks parents ought to want” (*Brown v. EMA* 3).

History shows that new forms of media trigger face-offs between the media industry and government (Ferguson 160). In *Brown*, opponents to the legislation at hand argued that since “there would be no logical principle to limit the content-based regulation to just video games, […] sustaining the contested statute would open the door to government censorship for violent content in other media as well” (Lee 13). We agree with the opponents that video games should not be regulated more than the television or music industries. In “Marketing and Policy Considerations for Violent Video Games”, author Kelly Anders points out that “the gaming industry is not the only seller of violence. Many argue that the entertainment industry,
specifically film and television, was showing blood and gore when video games consisted of bouncing white balls” (273).

E. The Family Entertainment Protection Ordinance fails strict scrutiny analysis because it is not narrowly tailored to fulfill its interests. Lancaster’s law does not use the least restrictive means to fulfill its interests.

The means Lancaster chooses to achieve its interests are overly restrictive. The Lancaster law is not the least restrictive way to limit children’s access to video games. State actions are unnecessary. The alternatives, parental guidance and industry self-regulation, are sufficient means to control youth access to mature content. The ESRB does a good job of self-regulating video games. Studies show that 89% of parents are involved in the purchase of a video game for their child, 75% of parents regularly check the rating of video games before purchasing them, and 80% of individuals under seventeen were turned away by retailers when attempting to purchase an M-rated video game (Clements 6-7). In “Children’s Media Policy”, author Amy Jordan notes, “Industry lobbying groups provide a countervailing force against advocacy groups, touting the sufficiency of their own efforts at self-regulation and advocating for their First Amendment right not to have the government interfere with their speech” (237). The gaming industry has won every case it has fought, and one reason for this is that their regulation efforts are effective enough at limiting youth access to mature content. Also, Clements argues, “parents have an array of additional electronic parental controls at their disposal to help them decide which games are appropriate for their children” (10). In addition, Lancaster’s law would have negative effects on the gaming industry and adult community as a whole.
F. The ordinance would have a chilling effect on protected speech for adults.

Retailers, fearing criminal charges, may refuse to carry video games with Mature, Adults Only or Pending ratings. These video games would have to be carefully tracked in stores, just like tobacco products and alcohol. Arguably, many stores would not even bother to carry them. How would these games be monitored? Would managers place them in glass cases, under lock and key? Such strict regulation would create an undue burden on retailers, not to mention adult customers, who would have to cut through red tape to purchase such games. We have already argued that most employees will not sell inappropriate video games to children. Making this common law an actual law is unnecessary.

Furthermore, fear of a Mature or AO rating would produce a chilling effect on video game manufacturers as well. Developers may stop producing violent games with sexual themes because they fear poor sales and community scrutiny. This would deprive adults of the right to play and enjoy such games. In *Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union* (1997) the court struck down a law designed to protect minors from indecent material over any communication line, and the Supreme Court held that “the government may not limit speech to ‘only what is fit for children’” (Morse 11). Taking this argument further, we argue that it is too idealistic and burdensome to “protect” children from supposed harm in the media by enforcing penalties on retailers who sell a questionable game to a younger player. Why punish the retailers? Why not allow the parents of America’s youth to oversee and check up on the games their children buy? Reasonable parents would find out if their children bought inappropriate video games and stop them from playing if they do not want them to.
Conclusion

The Family Entertainment Protection Ordinance is unconstitutional because Lancaster does not present a compelling interest, the law is not narrowly tailored and it is not the least restrictive means to safeguard children from inappropriate content. The law incorrectly entwines violence with obscenity, and violence is not unprotected speech. There are ways to keep violent and sexually explicit video games away from young children; namely, parental supervision, involvement, and knowledge of the ESRB rating system. Enforcing the rating system gives the ESRB undue power to decide what is appropriate for each age group. This is a very subjective matter, and instead of government-enforced standards for age-appropriate media, we argue that children’s parents should decide what games they allow their children to play. Video games should not be treated differently than other media such as television, books and music. Although there are television shows with ratings in the corner of the screen, there are no laws prohibiting minors from watching these shows, and it is up to their parents to monitor the shows they watch. The case is similar for music; minors can easily purchase “explicit” rated songs on iTunes. Video games constitute creative expression, just like all other forms of media. Lastly, enforcement of the ESRB rating system would make video games harder for adults to purchase and would create an undue burden for retailers. It would cause a chilling effect on the gaming industry itself. Amicus hopes that the Court will consider our argument and in its wisdom strike down this law, in support of the First Amendment and precedent cases.
First-Year Writing, Non-Research Category

Whitesell Prize Winner

“Anthropomorphization of Landscape in the Hudson Valley”

Heather Nonnemacher

Assignment:

Franklin & Marshall College
ANT150: Professor Bastian

Memo #1: Ghosts in the Hudson Valley

Discuss one (1) of the questions below in an organized, argumentative memo.

1. Using material from all of Judith Richardson’s *Possessions*, as well as Washington Irvine’s story “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” explain why the landscape of the Hudson Valley might be considered a character in the valley’s history and in fiction set in the area.

   Hints: First, what is meant by the use of “a character” in the question above? Can “a character” be anything other than a person? Secondly, how and why have the people living in the Hudson Valley seen their landscape as having personality—and what sort of personality does it have in Irving’s text? Is the landscape not only personified but ghostly? Give concrete evidence for your argument from both Richardson and Irving.
Anthropomorphization of Landscape in the Hudson Valley

From thick forests to rolling thunder, the landscape of the Hudson Valley is disorienting. In order to understand such a particular environment, residents attribute human form and personality to natural landmarks through the use of folklore and haunting. This allows for people to interpret an unfamiliar landscape in human terms. The haunted Valley landscape in both Judith Richardson’s *Possessions* and Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is dependent on human emotion and culture for its character and role in the region’s history.

Because the Hudson Valley landscape is so unpredictable, its dominant personality trait is an ability to evoke fear of the unknown. In Jervis McEntee’s painting *Over the Hills and Far Away*, the artist plays upon feelings of isolation in a Hudson Valley scene with no civilization in sight (McEntee 1878). The artist uses shadowy forests, looming mountains, and a dark color scheme to capture the Hudson Valley’s mysterious personality (McEntee 1878). Just like the landscape itself, McEntee’s painting is full of ambiguities. Patches of color with indistinct shapes and a foreground that fades to black show that many features of the landscape are unknown (McEntee 1878). Blanks in what residents know about the landscape are filled with familiar human qualities. However, these qualities are not always positive because the landscape is seen by many residents as untamed and therefore unsafe. Richardson describes how natural features are often personified as threatening: “Throughout much of human history and society, mountains have been perceived as active and ominous powers, while forests seemed terrifying and bewildering places” (Richardson 2003: 13). Residents are able to justify and make sense of their fear by giving human-like traits to the landscape. This enables them to communicate with the
land just as they would a person. Anthropomorphizing nature is a way to turn inexplicable phenomenon into something citizens can understand by associating it with fathomable human traits. The landscape’s threatening and mysterious demeanor is shaped by a human desire to make sense of the unknown. This desire not only accounts for the landscape’s personality, but it also contributes to the region’s haunted history.

Folklore enhances the landscape’s ability to evoke fear and curiosity in Hudson Valley residents by creating an expectation of hauntedness. For example, Irving’s protagonist Ichabod Crane is especially responsive to the landscape’s ominous personality. As Ichabod wanders home at night after reading “Mather’s direful tales,” the landscape seems to come alive and “every sound of nature, at that witching hour, flutter[s] his excited imagination” (Irving 2006: 168). The landscape is not provoking such a reaction on its own, but does so as a result of Ichabod’s choice of reading and the social expectations which accompany it. The haunted history of the region has long been established before Ichabod arrives. In order to assimilate into the culture of Sleepy Hollow, Ichabod takes a special interest in listening to and sharing ghost stories with other residents. Not only is Ichabod influenced by the region’s hauntedness, but he actively seeks it out in order to establish himself in society. The effects of these expectations are heightened by Ichabod’s interest in the supernatural, as well as his “appetite for the marvellous” (Irving 2006: 168). It is this willingness to participate in the region’s haunted reputation that makes Ichabod so receptive to the landscape’s personality. His exposure to the region’s folklore enhances his perception of the landscape as a character.

Not only is the landscape’s personality influenced by Hudson Valley folklore, but individuals can shape the landscape as well. The mood of Ichabod Crane alters the author’s description of the landscape at different points throughout the story. Under the impression that
Ichabod will have a fulfilling evening with Katrina, the narrator sees the landscape in a positive light on the way to the Van Tassel’s party: "It [is], as I have said, a fine autumnal day; the sky [is] clear and serene, and nature [wears] that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance” (Irving 2006: 178). The landscape mirrors whatever Ichabod is feeling. When Ichabod feels hopeful, the narrator interprets the landscape in an optimistic way. Accordingly, when Ichabod’s night does not turn out as well as he anticipated, the author’s description of the landscape takes on a darker tone: “The hour [is] as dismal as himself. Far below him, the Tappan Zee [spreads] its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land” (Irving 2006: 185). Irving uses the landscape to intensify the reader’s experience of the mood of the protagonist, whether a feeling of eagerness or one of disappointment. Its responsiveness to human emotion establishes the landscape as a character that is able to interact with others. It also shows how the landscape’s perceived emotion is interpreted in terms of human emotion. The shift in Ichabod’s mood combined with the contrasting descriptions of the landscape leads the story to its supernatural climax when Ichabod supposedly meets the headless horseman.

The headless horseman and similar ghosts are just as much a part of the landscape’s personality as the natural features, since ghost stories are often rooted in specific locations or landmarks. In the Hudson Valley, such sites include “haunted cemeteries, houses, mountains, bridges, and factories. There are Spook Rocks, Spook Hollows, and Spook Fields” (Richardson 2003: 3). Through haunting, these locations establish a close relationship with the inhabitants and remain a part of the regional history; however, there is nothing inherently haunted about these landmarks, meaning that without human personification their character would not exist. The eeriness of these locations is derived from human emotions and folklore. Residents tie
human spirits to the landscape through haunting, making the landscape anthropomorphous. In addition to the headless horseman, Irving mentions other ghosts that inhabit Sleepy Hollow:

Many dismal tales [are] told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailing [are heard] and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which [stands] in the neighborhood. Some mention [is] made also of the woman in white, that [haunts] the dark glen at Raven Rock….The chief part of the stories, however, [turns] upon the favorite spectre of Sleepy Hollow, the headless horseman, who…[patrols] the country; and…[tethers] his horse nightly among the graves in the church-yard (Irving 2006: 183).

Each of these ghosts is associated with a location. Regardless of whether this location is a tree, a glen, or a church-yard, the location is included even in a brief description because it is essential information. While the landscape as a whole may evince a threatening personality, these ghosts contribute to a more intimate and nuanced sense of character that is particular to certain locations. Ghost stories that touch upon human tragedies such as war and death make these ghosts, as well as the landscape in which they are intertwined, more relevant to the living. Because these ghosts take on a human form as opposed to appearing as lights or shadows, their attachment to the landscape allows residents to see the world through a human lens. The landscape’s personality is dependent on human interaction with the landscape through haunting.

Landscape in Judith Richardson’s Possessions and Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is an essential character in the haunted history of the Hudson Valley. However, its personality is only a derivative of human feeling. The landscape draws on human fear of the unknown, human folklore, and human history for its character. Nevertheless, this dependency on human beings does not negate the landscape’s ability to interact with citizens of the Hudson Valley.
Valley. Haunting uses these emotions and fulfills a desire for residents to understand and communicate with a diverse and often frightening environment. This communication is valuable because it allows residents to more effectively incorporate the landscape into the region’s culture and history.
Works Cited


Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
First-Year Writing, Non-Research Category

Honorable Mention

Euyn Lim

“Truman’s Dilemma: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Atomic Bombs”

Assignment:
Franklin & Marshall College
HIS171: Professor Stevenson

1. Imagine that you are Harry S. Truman. You have to make a decision between dropping the atomic bomb and invading Japan. You are going to describe your decision-making process.

2. Introduction. For your first draft, you will write down what you plan to look at to make your decision. Then follow this organization.

3. You first consider reasons for not dropping the bomb. You may draw these reasons from the BBC film, Flyboys, and the various readings in Empire Reader. This section of your paper should be about two pages.

4. Then, as President Truman, you search the sources that we have read in class for reasons that suggest that you should drop the bomb. You explain your decision in about two pages.

5. Because we know that Truman decided to drop the bomb, the conclusion should say why you found the reasons to drop the bomb so persuasive.

6. You may want to write a second concluding paragraph. If Truman had known the results of dropping the bomb, would he have made a different decision?

7. After you have discovered your conclusion, go back and write an introduction. You need to suggest the question that you will be exploring and mention what evidence that you will look at. You should write no more than one half to three quarters of a page, and you should not repeat your paper’s conclusion or content.

8. Notes. Should follow second note form. Give the author’s name, put a comma, and then put the page number.
Truman’s Dilemma: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Atomic Bombs

President Harry S Truman’s decision to use the atomic bomb stands on a tipping point of history. After four years of attrition, diplomacy, and an ultimatum, the war in the Pacific theater had ground to an impasse in which no belligerents could agree on the terms of surrender. The military dominance of the United States had overwhelmed the Japanese forces, but the imperial government of Japan persisted in its refusal to surrender. The August, 1945, detonation of the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki came at a time when a decisive action could end the protracted warfare but created a precedent that remains controversial to this day. That no sources present definitive answers to the costs and benefits of the decision10 points to the wide range of military, diplomatic, and ethical deterrents and incentives that informed Truman’s decision-making process.

By August 1945, the deterioration of Japan’s war-making capabilities had approached a critical stage and, for Truman, called into question the necessity of atomic bombs as a means to end the war. The Battle of Midway, in which the U.S. Pacific Fleet had sunk four Japanese aircraft carriers, damaged six battleships, and destroyed three hundred planes, had crippled the Imperial Japanese Navy’s ability to conduct a “decisive” naval offensive.11 As General George Marshall noted during a June 1945 Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, the blockade of Japanese shipping had taken advantage of this situation and effectively cut off Japan’s supply lines. The

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10 Walker, Empire Reader, 218
11 Bradley, 120.
declining Japanese Navy indeed posed little threat to the blockading Allied naval forces.\textsuperscript{12} Furthermore, the relentless napalm-bombing of mainland Japan had, since its commencement in March 1945, incinerated the industrial heartland of Japan. That practically every industrial target “worth hitting in Japan” lay in ashes suggested little incentive for recourse to such drastic measures as atomic bombing.\textsuperscript{13} Truman knew that Japan could not, in the words of Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki, “carry on this war indefinitely.”\textsuperscript{14}

Further compounding the legitimacy of atomic warfare for Truman were alternatives that many authorities considered viable at the time. Continued bombardment and blockade of Japan constituted a “strategy of strangulation,” whereby the United States could pressure Japan’s cornered leadership while minimizing Allied casualties.\textsuperscript{15} Japan’s wartime production had ground to a near halt with the loss of territories in South East Asia, a vital source of war-materials such as oil, rubber, and steel. The combination of strategic bombing and blockade had aggravated the situation by shrinking Japan’s industrial production to half of pre-Pearl Harbor output.\textsuperscript{16} Further decline seemed inevitable as the bombers and blockaders operated against negligible resistance.

Another alternative called for the Soviet Union’s entry into the Pacific War. After the collapse of the German Reich, the Soviet Union had promised at Yalta to commit more troops to its far eastern borders and help facilitate Japan’s downfall. Indeed, a day after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, one million Soviet troops flooded into Manchuria, forcing the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Empire Reader, 221.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Empire Reader, 222.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Bradley, 279.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Empire Reader, 222.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Bradley, 329.
\end{itemize}
beleaguered Japanese government to abandon its troops and colonists.\textsuperscript{17} Modifying the demands of unconditional surrender also offered Japan a compelling incentive for capitulation. The preservation of the imperial institution, albeit reduced in power, would satisfy the demands of the Japanese militants clamoring for conditional terms of surrender and placate the Japanese populace, who regarded the emperor as a god.\textsuperscript{18}

The last and perhaps the surest alternative, an invasion of Japan proper would administer a \textit{coup de grace} for the moribund nation. In a June 18 meeting, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed that the planned invasion of Kyushu, the prelude to an assault on the Tokyo plain, would provide “the least costly worthwhile operation” since Okinawa.\textsuperscript{19} Though the prospects for a successful Honshu invasion remained unclear, the record of General Douglas MacArthur’s operations in the Pacific showed a U.S.-Japanese kill ratio of twenty-two to one and predicted similar results in Kyushu. General Marshall also informed Truman that the invasion of the island would yield less severe challenges than the assault on Normandy produced. He further emphasized that air power alone could not force a surrender within a reasonable time frame. After all, the Germans had persisted despite the Allied bombing raids of 1944 and 1945.\textsuperscript{20} For Truman, the invasion plan offered a reasonable chance at ending the war on American terms.

Truman, however, saw other reasons to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In a 1953 letter to Professor James L. Cato of the University of Chicago, the president conveyed General Marshall’s opinion that the invasion of Japan proper would entail a quarter of a million to one million U.S. casualties and stated that the other military officials present at the

\textsuperscript{17} Bradley, 299.
\textsuperscript{18} Walker, \textit{Empire Reader}, 205.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Empire Reader}, 222.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Empire Reader}, 223-224.
meeting agreed with Marshall’s estimate.\(^{21}\) Furthermore, Japan’s willingness to face annihilation seemed to surpass the previous predictions of U.S. military officials. Japan had rejected the Potsdam Declaration, an ultimatum that gave it the choice between surrender and “utter and complete destruction.”\(^ {22}\) The imperial government had instead organized the Patriotic Citizens Fighting Corps; as citizen-soldiers, they would wield primitive, makeshift weapons to make a “heroic last stand.”\(^ {23}\) The fall of Saipan in 1944 and the ensuing \textit{gyokusai} suicides of civilians left a notorious precedent that demonstrated, to a stunned Marine Corps, the extent of the imperial indoctrination.\(^ {24}\) Unbeknownst to Truman, the last Japanese soldier to surrender would emerge out of the jungles of Lubang, the Philippines, in 1974.\(^ {25}\)

In the context of such totality, the atomic bombs held some outstanding merits in comparison to the drawbacks of the alternatives. A conditional surrender would not satisfy the outraged public in the United States and risked a revival of Japanese aggression. Truman would certainly lose electoral support if he pursued a measure softer than an unconditional surrender.\(^ {26}\) The belated Soviet declaration of war made “little military contribution” to the capitulation of a Japan already reeling from the first atomic explosion and the prolonged isolation from the outside world.\(^ {27}\) The Soviet advance into the region would extend the Communist sphere of influence, an undesirable outcome against the backdrop of mounting U.S.-Soviet rivalry. The mountainous terrain of the Japanese archipelago conferred advantages on the defenders and precluded any short-term success for the United States invasion forces. Japan’s intent to “dispose

\(^{21}\) Truman, \textit{Empire Reader}, 219.
\(^{22}\) Bradley, 295.
\(^{23}\) Bradley, 299.
\(^{24}\) Bradley, 145-150.
\(^{25}\) Stevenson, “Ending the War: Conferences & Bombs.”
\(^{26}\) Walker, \textit{Empire Reader}, 206.
\(^{27}\) \textit{Empire Reader}, 209.
of” the 350,000 Allied prisoners-of-war in the event of an invasion only compounded the matter.  

For Truman, atomic power offered a remedy for these complicated factors. Most palpably, dropping the atomic bombs would stop the needless deaths of American personnel without committing substantial manpower. By exploiting Japan’s shattered antiaircraft resistance, the B-29 pilots, the only American personnel liable to danger, would complete the missions in relative safety. Though the atomic explosion would result in staggering civilian casualties, Truman knew that it would bring an end to Colonel Curtis LeMay’s firebombing campaign and save more Japanese lives in the long run. Deployed at the rate of 14,000 tons per month, the liquid napalm had leveled Japan’s industrial centers and had scorched hundreds of thousands of civilians. The infernal aftermaths of these extensive firebombing missions—death by asphyxiation, charred remains, and disfigured survivors—seemed to justify an alternative that could, by a display of awesome force, exact a surrender and terminate the carnage.

As President of the United States, Henry S Truman had at his disposal vital pieces of intelligence that contributed to his fateful decision. But within the purview of his office, he did not anticipate the severity of the outcome of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: a combined death toll of 200,000 civilians. Had Truman known the results of dropping the bombs, he would have stood by the order. As the leader of a war-weary nation, his priorities lay in American lives, U.S. interests, and victory on U.S. terms. The success of the Manhattan Project gave him a feasible means to accomplish this three-fold goal. Any moral scruples about vaporizing civilians seemed to pale in view of the disproportionate benefits of atomic power and of the equally terrible costs

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28 Bradley, 294-295.  
29 Walker, Empire Reader, 212.  
30 Bradley, 298.  
31 Walker, Empire Reader, 212.
of the months-long napalming of Japan. This line from Truman’s 1953 letter to Professor Cato summarizes in retrospect the rationale behind his final decision: “Dropping the bomb ended the war, saved lives, and gave the free nations a chance to face the facts.”

Foundations

Whitesell Prize Winner

“Ballet Pantomime: The Preservation of Storytelling”

Halley Gradus

Assignment:

Franklin & Marshall College
FND112: Professor Brooks

Project objectives:
For each general research area linking movement to a specific disciplinary approach, develop a set of interrelated questions, establish a literature base, and undertake investigations of the stated questions. This research is to be presented in both oral form to the class and written form to the teacher on the date assigned for those in your research area (see reverse side). These investigations must include a comparison to approaches studied in class, particularly those in assigned texts. The research should not be merely a duplication of class learning; rather, you must select research questions, directions of investigation, and literature beyond, but connecting to, the material assigned and covered in class. Your research should be rich in citations and evidence.
Ballet Pantomime: The Preservation of Storytelling

“Don’t be afraid to look directly into their eyes as you march. Remember, you are calling them to battle,” remarked the African Dance choreographer Sonya Mann-McFarlan in order to help her dancers embody the choreography’s spirit of war. As one of Sonya’s dancers, I focused all of my attention on executing each movement with power and determination so that the audience could easily detect the element of war embedded within the choreography. Consequently, I was surprised when, after the show, my friend expressed how impressed she was by the piece’s ability to represent the empowerment of women. Even though I originally believed that the meaning of the choreography was fairly evident, I realized after listening to my friend’s reaction that the movement could be understood in ways that differed from Sonya’s intention. Although I am not a choreographer, I can imagine the difficulty of creating a piece knowing that the art of dance leaves much room for interpretation. In classical ballet, which is narrative in nature, this room for interpretation can hinder the meaning of a work and, as a result, endanger the audience’s ability to follow the ballet’s story line. If classical ballet is so dependent on a particular understanding of movement, how do choreographers and dancers ensure that the audience can comprehend the story behind the dance? Since the eighteenth century, choreographers have used ballet pantomime to prevent misinterpretations. Pantomime solidifies the meaning of movement within a ballet by associating specific and easily identifiable gestures with particular emotions, conversational cues, and descriptions.

Most notably, dancers use ballet pantomime to express distinct emotions and, resultantly, preserve the intended meaning of the ballet. Before analyzing how dancers display emotions
through ballet pantomime, it is important to understand the nature of emotion in the realm of dance. As a performer, a dancer is expected to portray particular emotions on stage, whether or not the emotions coincide with the dancer’s off-stage emotional state, to convey certain meanings. Dancers, therefore, must utilize movement to ensure that the correct emotion is being expressed. In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, Darwin emphasizes that displaying emotion through “outward signs” of expression makes an individual more vulnerable to the emotion being expressed (Darwin 65). Consequently, by outwardly expressing emotions through movement, dancers are able to surrender themselves to the emotion that is relevant at that point in the piece. When dancers momentarily convince themselves that the emotion they are displaying is genuine, the audience is able to easily perceive the dancer’s apparent emotional state. According to Roger Copeland and Marshall Cohen, “Because of the inherent contagion of bodily movement, which makes the onlooker feel sympathetically in his own musculature the exertions he sees in somebody else’s musculature, the dancer is able to convey through movement the most intangible emotional experience” (Copeland, Cohen 22). While perceiving a dancer’s movement, therefore, an audience member subconsciously processes the relationship between the dancer’s body and his or her own body to experience, to some extent, the sensation of the movement. The ability to understand the way a particular movement feels allows the audience to decipher the emotion embedded within the movement. In this way, movement is critical in aiding the audience to contextualize each dancer’s emotional state in relation to the dancer’s character and the story of the ballet itself.

Although choreographers rely on the audience’s subconscious comprehension of movement to convey an emotion, they also use specific gestures that are directly associated with the intended emotion to prevent misinterpretations of meaning. Gestures using the face play an
essential role to expressing particular emotions while performing. Since ballet does involve an aspect of acting, performers express emotion through facial movements that can be easily identified due to their frequent appearance in every day life. Therefore, studying the movement of the facial muscles to express emotion outside of the realm of dance helps develop an understanding of the role of facial gestures in ballet. For instance, Darwin describes how the facial muscles move to express the emotion of grief: “The eyebrows not rarely are rendered oblique, which is due to their inner ends being raised…The corners of the mouth are drawn downwards, which is so universally recognized as a sign of being out of spirits, that it is almost pro-verbal” (Darwin 177). Because certain facial expressions, such as grief, are easily identifiable in society, the audience is able to decipher such expressions on stage. Performers, consequently, utilize their facial muscles to mimic, and even dramatize, the facial expressions used on a daily basis to portray the desired emotion. By relating the performer’s facial expressions to those of “real life,” the audience can determine a character’s emotional state at a particular moment in the ballet.

Despite the importance of facial movements, the story of a ballet also relies on the gestures of ballet pantomime to convey emotion and protect the meaning of the work. In conjunction with the context of the gesture within the ballet and the dancer’s facial movements, ballet pantomime allows the audience to accurately understand the emotional state of a particular character. For instance, there are numerous gestures in pantomime that are executed to convey sadness. Joan Lawson describes one of these gestures in Mime: “Raise hands as for CRY, but cup them only slightly round cheeks so that fingers reach eye level. Now run fingers lightly downwards to chest, trickling them as the go, so to speak” (Lawson 111). Because this gesture mimics the act of tears falling down the cheeks, the audience can easily detect that the character
is crying, which is usually the result of sadness. However, one might argue that crying can also be associated with joy and, therefore, the meaning of this gesture could be interpreted in different ways. This is where context comes into play. For example, in the Pacific Northwest Ballet’s production of *Giselle*, the dancer who plays Giselle utilizes the gesture for sadness after convincing herself, by picking pedals off of a daisy, that Loys did not love her (*PNB’s Giselle-Pantomime Translation*). If an audience member were to witness this gesture without having seen the rest of the ballet, it is possible that he or she would not associate the motion of crying with tears. However, given the context of the situation set up by the rest of the ballet, the audience is able to understand that Giselle loves Loys and would be sad if Loys did not love her back. If the audience member is still not convinced that the gesture implies sadness, the dancer’s facial expression, possibly that of grief described previously, should verify that the character is, in fact, sad. In this way, gestures play a key role in the conveyance of emotion from the stage to the audience.

Besides enabling the audience to perceive and contextualize emotion within a ballet, pantomime allows the audience to understand the conversations between the story’s characters. Much of this comprehension stems from gestures that allow conversation to be understood outside of the realm of dance, including regulators. In *Biological and Cultural Contributions to Body and Facial Movements*, Paul Ekman discusses regulators as being fundamental gestures of conversation because they establish the speaker and the listener within a conversation and determine when these roles reverse (Ekman 41). Regulators, therefore, are essential to demonstrate if and when a response is requested. For instance, when a speaker cannot find a word to express what he is trying to say, he might snap his fingers until he thinks of the
appropriate word. This indicates to the listener that the speaker is not finished talking and that the listener should not begin talking (Brooks).

In ballet pantomime, regulators work in a similar fashion as they do within verbal conversation. Certain pantomime gestures propose a question and request an answer from the listener, such as the gesture for asking “why?” According to the article “Talk to Me, Dance with Me,” this question is asked by opening both arms “outwards towards the other character” (Emilia). This not only poses a question to the listener but also indicates that the speaker (or, in the realm of dance, the non-verbal speaker) is done communicating and the listener can now respond. Similarly, when the speaker wants another person or a group of people to listen, he will tap “the face close to the ear” (Emilia). For example, in the scene titled “Carabosse and the Lilac Fairy” within the Royal Ballet’s production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, Carabosse quickly taps her ears twice to demand the attendants of Aurora’s christening to listen to her curse (Emilia). Regulators like these allow conversations to develop within the ballet and, more importantly, allow the audience to follow the conversations. Without such regulators, the audience would only be able to perceive the dancers’ movements as expressions of emotions or as descriptions rather than as interactions between characters. Therefore, recognizing the conversational qualities of movement in ballet is essential to understanding the relationship between characters and the story of the ballet.

In addition to allowing the audience to comprehend character relationships through conversation, ballet pantomime also provides a means of description to ensure comprehension. According to Lawson, descriptive gestures “are used to describe the look, feel, taste, smell and sound of something, or to describe some event or circumstance, often happening off-stage” (Lawson 69). In ballet pantomime, gestures that represent the fundamental human senses or a
particular situation are often considered to be emblems. Ekman defines emblems as gestures that symbolize a particular word or phrase (Ekman 40). Emblems are essential in representing the senses on stage because the audience often cannot experience sensations that the characters are supposed to be feeling at a particular instant in the ballet. For example, without emblems, the audience would probably not be able to register the temperature of a given setting or character. To indicate that a character is hot, therefore, an emblem is needed. Lawson describes the emblem that represents the word “hot” in detail: “1. Raise R hand straight upwards to centre of forehead, fingers drooping, elbow pressed out side-ways. 2. Draw fingers across to R temple. 3. Flick fingers outwards and drop arm to side. 4, 5, 6. Repeat movement with L hand. 7, 8. Raise and lower both hands twice with fingers held loosely” (Lawson 97). This movement directly symbolizes the word “hot” so that there is little room for misinterpretation. Another example of an emblem that indicates a sense is the gesture for the word “darkness,” which is a perception of sight. To perform this gesture, the dancer will raise his hands above his head with his palms facing the ceiling. He will then move his right hand over his head and hover near the left side of his forehead. The left hand then moves in the same fashion (Lawson 90). Although the lighting of the stage might help the audience visualize the darkness of a particular scene, the emblem for “darkness” reassures that the audience knows that the setting is dark.

Additionally, emblems are used in ballet pantomime to describe particular activities, circumstances, or events. For example, according to “Talk to Me, Dance with Me,” when the story requires a character to call a particular person or group of people engage in the activity of dance, his “hand circle one another above the head, the arms moving from first to third position” (Emilia). In the Royal Ballet’s production of *Sleeping Beauty*, King Florestan invites Aurora to dance for him and the other spectators (“Sleeping Beauty Aurora Variation 1”). This emblem
informs the audience that Aurora is about to perform a solo and allows the audience to understand that, because the King asked Aurora to perform this activity, he is proud of his daughter. Since character relationships are vital to the comprehension of the ballet’s story, as noted earlier in the description of pantomime as a means of conversation, emblems that represent particular activities play a very important role in the ballet. Emblems that represent life events, such as death, are also necessary to ensure that the audience understands the story of the ballet. Lawson articulates the gesture for death as descriptively as possible: “1. Raise both arms through demi-seconde. 2. Move hands together just above waist level until outsides of thumbs are touching, fingers flat and palms facing floor. 2. Draw hands away from each other sideways on an absolutely flat plane” (Lawson 90). Because this gesture has a particular word associated with it (“death”), the meaning of the word cannot be misinterpreted. In this way, ballet pantomime utilizes movement to describe a particular event to the audience to prevent misunderstandings.

Despite the ability of ballet pantomime to allow choreographers and performers to communicate meaning to the audience, many dancers believe that pantomime is actually jeopardizing the sincerity of dance by stifling room for interpretation. In “The New Ballet,” Michel Fokine expresses that, by assigning particular gestures to express emotions, portray conversations, and to describe situations, ballet pantomime caused dance to develop into an “acrobatic, mechanical, and empty” art (Fokine 103). This argument is based on the idea that pantomime suppresses the choreographer’s and the dancers’ ability to express themselves freely through movement. As a result of this limited movement vocabulary and rigid structure of conveying meaning, the dance becomes insincere. Those who agree with Fokine argue that this insincerity removes the human qualities from the dance. For instance, in “A Modern Dancer’s Primer for Action,” Martha Graham writes, “In a dancer’s body, we as audience must see
ourselves, not the imitated behavior of everyday actions, not the phenomena of nature, not exotic creatures from another planet, but something of the miracle that is a human being, motivated, disciplined, concentrated (Graham 136). Graham elucidates that in order to give dance meaning and convey this meaning to the audience, choreographers must abandon dance pantomime and use movement that is naturally expressive rather than gestures that are rigidly defined. When audience members perceive these natural, human-like movements, they are able to immediately relate and understand the intended meaning.

Although the gestures used in ballet pantomime are rigid in meaning, they are not unnatural nor are they representative of “exotic creatures.” Story telling is essential to the preservation of the human past and the development of the future. It is not considered unnatural or insincere to alter the colloquialisms of every-day conversation when narrating or writing a story. Why, then, should it be considered unnatural to alter movements that are deemed more demonstrative of human life and existence, such as movements initiated by breath or contractions, to narrate a story through dance? Since the meaning of a ballet is the story that it tells and human development relies on story telling, one form of dance does not better depict what it means to be human than another. To understand human existence through movement, one must study both modern dance, which exemplifies what it means to “be” human, and ballet, which demonstrates how humans understand and preserve how it feels to “be” human. An audience is able to relate to both forms of dance even if the meanings of the work are conveyed in different ways. Consequently, ballet cannot be regarded as insincere or “empty” because pantomime actively assures that each movement has meaning.

Ultimately, the appreciation of dance as an expressive art form is dependent on how the audience perceives movement. Choreographers can choose to incorporate movements that have
explicit meanings or movements that allow a significant amount of room for interpretation. However, each member of the audience interprets movement based on their own past experiences and personal opinions. Because dance is subjective in this way, choreographers that choose to explicitly express meaning, including ballet choreographers, often find it difficult to prevent misinterpretations. This difficulty can be extremely problematic because ballet is a form of story telling. It is critical, therefore, that the audience understands the meaning of classical ballet choreography because any misinterpretations can result in an inability to comprehend the story. Consequently, classical ballet choreographers often rely on ballet pantomime to ensure that the audience’s interpretation of meaning aligns with the choreographer’s intended meaning as much as possible. Within a ballet, pantomime allows the audience to accurately interpret the meaning of movement by representing different emotions, conversational cues, and descriptions with particular gestures. Through these representations, the audience accurately perceives the narrative quality of classical ballet.
Works Cited


Lecture. I believe that the definition of the word regulator that we developed in class was more precise than Ekman's definition. The definition of this term helps the reader understand conversation in real life and prepares him or her to apply it to dance.

Copeland, Roger, and Marshall Cohen. What Is Dance? Readings in Theory and Criticism. New York, NY: Oxford UP, 1983. Print. This source is essential to connect Darwin to the thesis. Darwin discussed why emotions are outwardly expressed while Copeland and Cohen how the audience subconsciously perceives and interprets the expressions of emotion. This allows the reader to begin to understand how the expression of emotions allows the audience to accurately interpret meaning.

Darwin, Charles. The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1965. Print. Darwin is essential to introduce the idea that emotions can be expressed outwardly. His description of facial expressions help the reader understand how dancers express emotions. The reader is then ready to learn how larger gestures express emotions and how the audience perceives this information and interprets its meaning.

Ekman, Paul. "Biological and Cultural Contributions to Body and Facial Movement." The Anthropology of the Body. Ed. John Blacking. London: Academic, 1977. 39-77. Print. Ekman is essential in this essay because of his discussion of regulators and emblems. Regulators help the reader understand the conversational aspect of dance pantomime while emblems help the reader understand the descriptive aspect. This explains the actual gestures that are used and allows specific gestures and their appropriate meanings to be
discussed.

Emilia. "Talk to Me, Dance with Me." The Ballet Bag. The Ballet Bag, 28 Aug. 2009. Web. 24 Feb. 2014. <http://www.theballetbag.com/2009/08/28/talk-to-me-dance-with-me/>. Similar to Lawson, this article defined particular gestures within dance pantomime that were easy to understand. These descriptions help the reader visualize the gestures. In addition, this article provided videos to help me better understand the gestures so I could accurately depict them to the reader.

Fokine, Michel. "The New Ballet." Dance as a Theater Art: Source Readings in Dance History from 1581 to the Present. Ed. Selma J. Cohen. New York, NY: Dodd, Mead &c, 1974. 102-08. Print. Fokine serves as a perfect way to introduce the counter-argument that pantomime takes away the sincerity of dance by assigning particular meanings to movements. His idea that ballet is "empty" because of pantomime gave me room to explain how pantomime gives movement meaning.

Graham, Martha. "A Modern Dancer's Primer for Action." Dance as a Theater Art: Source Readings in Dance History from 1581 to the Present. Ed. Cohen J. Selma. New York, NY: Dodd, Mead &c, 1974. 135-43. Print. Along with Fokine, Graham suggests that the rigidity of pantomime takes away from the meaning of dance. Her idea of meaning within dance has to do with using the natural qualities of human movement. This counter-argument allows me to demonstrate that pantomime does not take away from being human because it allows stories to be told, which is fundamental to human existence. In this way, pantomime gives ballet meaning.

excellent description of what pantomime is and how it is used in ballet. For my purposes, her descriptions of specific gestures are extremely helpful to give the reader the ability to visualize pantomime.

PNB's Giselle-Pantomime Translation. Perf. Pacific Northwest Ballet. YouTube. YouTube, 08 June 2011. Web. 24 Feb. 2014. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfs882PTSHg>. This video serves as an accurate depiction of the gesture for sadness previously described by Lawson in a real ballet ("Giselle"). In this essay, this video serves to show the importance of context when deciphering facial expressions. Therefore, the reader can begin to realize that there are many factors that influence how we interpret meaning.

"Sleeping Beauty Aurora Variation 1." YouTube. YouTube, 25 Dec. 2011. Web. 24 Feb. 2014. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0w6TZnQOq4>. This video is useful for two reasons. First of all, it accurately demonstrates how the gesture for "dance" is used in ballet pantomime. It also suggests the relationship between characters, which helps the reader realize how pantomime helps the audience understand the story of the ballet.
Foundations

Honorable Mention

“Mirrors of Humanity: The Divinities of Antiquity”

Euyn Lim

Assignment:

Franklin & Marshall College
FND180: Professor Bastian

Choose one of the questions below for your essay. This should be an analytical piece, 3-5 double-spaced pages in length. Use evidentiary quotations from our readings to help make your argument. See the style sheet for proper citation and bibliographic style for this class.

1. What part(s) do divinities play in human affairs in the ancient world, and why do you think it was important for ancient peoples that divinities were personified (i.e. had distinct personalities and/or divine functions)? Give specific examples from our assigned texts.
Mirrors of Humanity: The Divinities of Antiquity

Divinities used to rule the world of ancient Mesopotamians, Hebrews, and Greeks. Perched atop the world’s summit, the gods, singular or plural, fashioned the cosmos, gave rise to mankind, and maintained complex relationships with these people in surprisingly human ways. The popular conception that the ancients concocted these gods merely to explain the natural world and justify their actions, while logical, fails to appreciate the depth of insight the ancients vested in them. In understanding the myths of the ancient Near East and Greece, it is important to realize that the world of these personified divinities not only explained the natural world but also reflected the ancients’ understanding of the limits and potentials of humanity—of themselves.

At a cursory glance, divinities and their actions dominate the ancient myths and offer explanations for the natural world. The Hebrew Bible, for example, opens with an acknowledgement of God’s creative power and an account of the world’s inception: “In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth…” (Gen. 1:1 New Revised Standard Version). The God of Genesis then proceeds to create all life forms and to mold “humankind in his image” (Gen. 1:27). The Babylonian creation myth, alternatively, traces mankind’s origin to the conflict between the mother-goddess Tiamat and the warrior-god Marduk. The epic recounts how Marduk’s victorious cohort use the blood of Qingu, Tiamat’s general, to create humans so that “the works of the gods [may] be imposed” (Dalley:261) on them. In Theogony, the poet Hesiod sings of the chaotic beginning of the cosmos and the battle between the Titans and the Olympians. In addition, Theogony reifies all natural phenomena and abstract concepts in the
form of divinities, such as Poseidon the sea-god and the Furies, the “prosecutors of the transgressions of men and gods” (West 1999:9). To the ancients, for whom the supernatural were patently real, these acts of creation and facts of divine presence gave order, structure, and familiarity to an otherwise mysterious universe.

The ancient divinities also legitimized the people under their tutelage, shaped their history, and mandated certain rules. The Hebrew God’s covenant with Abram, for instance, creates a God-given prerogative for Abram to claim the land of Canaan: “for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever” (Gen. 13:15). His promise to make of Abram “a great nation” (Gen. 12:2) lends divine support for his descendants’ growth into “a politically independent” (Coogan 2007:27) nation. Hesiod’s *Works and Days* describes the father-god Zeus as not only sovereign in deciding men’s legacy but also instrumental in administering justice: he rewards a righteous man, but “a whole community together suffers in consequence of a bad man who does wrong” (West 1999:44). Even in *Gilgamesh*, a Mesopotamian epic that revolves around a mortal hero, the divinities’ hands are tangible. The god Enlil, by deciding to kill Gilgamesh’s beloved companion Enkidu, sets the former on a quest for eternal life and, eventually, transforms the oppressive king into a ruler who “restores the Eanna temple and the massive walls of Uruk” (Mitchell 2004:69). As seen in the Bible, *Works and Days*, and *Gilgamesh*, divine patronage and intervention helped the ancients forge a sense of distinction, fulfilled administrative purposes, and guided their moral choices.

Beyond these explanatory and administrative functions, however, the ancient divinities played a much greater, philosophical role: their actions embodied the paradox of mankind’s limits and potentials. The God of Genesis, for instance, appears anxious to guard the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life from Adam and Eve, whom he created “in his image” (Gen.
1:27). The couple’s expulsion from the paradise after their eating the Fruit of Knowledge underscores humanity’s misfortune, but it also shows how godlike they could have become by eating the Fruit of Life. In Greece, too, the divinities are wary of mankind’s potential. When the Titan Prometheus delivers fire to mankind, Zeus checks its power by creating Pandora, “an affliction for mankind to set against the fire” (West 1999:20). By unleashing all “grim cares” (West 1999:39) upon mankind, Pandora introduces toil and illness into the world of man. Likewise, in *Gilgamesh*, the mortal hero’s earthly power alarms the divinities to such an extent that they decide to “balance” (Mitchell 2004:74) his force with a new creation, Enkidu. When Gilgamesh ventures into the gods’ realm by slaying the monster Humbaba and the Bull of Heaven, the gods decide to claim his beloved companion’s life and remind Gilgamesh that, for a mortal, everything is “a puff of wind” (Mitchell 2004:93). Ironically, these stories of human limitations highlight the magnitude of human potential. By suppressing mankind’s possibilities, the gods, perhaps unwittingly, show their fear of humanity’s latent godlikeness.

In the cosmic dramas that unfold in the Near East and Greece, the divinities’ power may seem to diminish the importance of humans. The gods’ role in controlling nature and mandating moral choices indeed decide the course of human affairs, from their understanding of the natural world to the development of nations. A closer examination of the workings of these divinities, however, reveals a more complex picture. In putting a check on mankind’s power, the divinities play a significant role in addressing both the limits and potentials of humans. That the deities present themselves in a personified manner in all three regions—Mesopotamia, Israel, and Greece—points to the fact that the ancients, in their similarity to the gods, had a profound understanding of their limited nature and appreciation of their godlike potentials.
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Honorable Mention

“Identity as Paradigm: Scientific Revolutions and the Search for Self“

Anh Nguyen

Assignment:

Franklin & Marshall College
FND126: Professor Bentzel

In your final paper, you should choose a text, film, art work, etc, that you have studied in another class and write a paper in which you relate it in some way to a text we have studied in this class. The paper should be about five pages in length, 12 point Times, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins and a “work cited” list. It should contain an effective thesis statement, introduction and conclusion, and it should introduce evidence (quotes) from the works you are discussing. You will be paired up with one or two other members of the class who are doing a different topic to do a peer review of your paper, which [our preceptor] will facilitate.
Identity as a Paradigm: Scientific Revolutions and the Search for Self

In his 1962 book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn defines “paradigms” as scientific achievements that share two characteristics. First, they are fresh and substantial enough to convince science practitioners in a given field to put aside their differences to follow a common idea or set of conduct; and second, they are also challenging enough to provoke scientists to work and find ways to resolve the open questions (Kuhn, pg. 10). By the time Dan McAdams’ *The Stories We Live By* was published 35 years later, Kuhn’s model of how scientific revolutions take place had come to be considered one of the most influential books in the English language since the end of World War II, his term “paradigm shift” used ubiquitously even in fields other than the sciences. It thus should not be much of a surprise to see McAdams use the phrase “paradigmatic truth” to indicate the kind of truth employed by scientists and logicians, contrary to “narrative truth”, the kind of truth told in stories (McAdams, pg. 29). By comparing the phases of the Kuhnian scientific revolution to those in McAdams’ process of constructing a personal myth, this essay aims to point out how these seemingly completely different processes actually correlate, while still maintaining their own separate fundamental values. In their own ways, they both contribute significantly in helping readers understand the world around and within themselves.

According to Kuhn’s six-phase model, the process of a scientific revolution starts even before a paradigm appears. The first step in this process is called the “preparadigmatic state”, “a condition in which all members practice science but “their gross product scarcely resembles science at all” (Kuhn, pg. 113). In this phase, there may be scientific research conducted but no
particular common theory or consensus that the majority of scientists in a field share. McAdams’ theory of how personal myths develop starts from the earliest stage of human life, infancy, in which children gather information spontaneously and unconsciously thanks to various influences from the world around them (McAdams, pg. 35). These experiences would later impact the life stories they are going to construct by giving the narrative tone to the myth. With these definitions, the Kuhnian preparadigmatic state has a pivotal role similar to that of the infancy stage in McAdams’ theory: while not necessarily setting the tone for the course of the scientific revolution, it contains the research and smaller-scale achievements that amount to the emergence of the paradigm, much like how influences from mother, father and other nurturing figures during the earliest years of life set the fundamental tone for the personal myth. The first steps of these two processes both correspond, and differ from each other.

From the researches and results achieved in the first phase, the second step of Kuhn’s process occurs: a paradigm emerges. The concept of paradigm here relates closely to “normal science”, defined by Kuhn as the achievements attained by a community of scientists under the paradigm, often recorded in scientific textbooks as reference for future generations. On the other side, the next stage of life story development occurs in the preschool period, when children reach the preoperational stage of cognitive development and start to learn how to follow rules. This stage provides the personal myth with imageries, some of which would become defining moments and representations in the stories they would tell as adults. The preschool stage corresponds to the second step in Kuhn’s structure, the emergence of the paradigm, for this period gives children the rules and imageries for their personal myths, much like how the paradigm sets up a backdrop for continued scientific research to occur more effectively. Both of these steps establish a system of rules for its subjects, be they scientists or children aged three to
six, to follow.

The period of practicing and accomplishing with normal science is the third step of the model of scientific revolutions. Slightly diverting from the pattern of the first two analyses, this step actually corresponds to two of the remaining stages in McAdams’ theory: the elementary and late childhood stages. Elementary school is when children develop cognitive concrete operations – they start to have more logical and systematic thoughts and realize that there are goals and desires that characters in stories are trying to achieve. The component given to the myth in this stage is motives, which continue to change and develop over time. These motives come to stabilize in late childhood, the next stage, when formal operations are developed in the children’s minds. Children begin to have certain themes and motifs that they are most interested in, sorted into either of the two great categories: agency and communion (McAdams, pg. 71). In other words, these are the periods when children know to obey rules given to them without question, so instead of bothering about the rules they develop and go on to stabilize the motives for the personal myths. Similarly, during the normal science phase, scientists adhere to the already established rules of conduct and ideas of the paradigm and just focus on practicing science and gathering new achievements. McAdams’ elementary and late childhood stages and Kuhn’s ‘normal science’ both have the subject prioritize achieving something else rather than thinking about the predetermined rules.

The next and fourth step in the process of scientific revolutions witnesses the appearance of an anomaly, a “violation of expectations” (Kuhn, pg. 9), an instance where the paradigm does not apply; however, for some time it may not be seen, and even if seen, may not be considered anomalous. As more and more anomalies occur and persist over time, people come to acknowledge them and are obliged to come up with resolutions (Kuhn, pg. 18). Then follows the
“crisis” state, in which various answers and theories that do not fit in with the reigning paradigm are proposed, even ones that have previously been discarded. Scientists who have had accomplishments and gained senior status under the paradigm may find a lot of ways to justify and minimalize the appearance of anomalies within their communities, sometimes employing even totally unreasonable explanations (Kuhn, pg 77). These two phases are mentioned together here because they collectively correspond to McAdams’ fifth stage of myth development, adolescence. In this period, the adolescent encounters vastly significant physical and mental changes and begins to conciously acquire an ideological setting for their myth – a system of religious or ethical belief that their life stories will be built in. They may find identity to be a problem as the changes in their bodies make them see the world in a different light and question their reality. The problem causes them to enter the psychosocial moratorium, where they explore various new alternatives of identity that they did not think of before (McAdams, pg. 75-77). The drastic changes and disruptions one experiences during adolescence are similar to the anomalies and crises the scientific community goes through when the paradigm fails to explain persistent incidents. Just like how anomalies make scientists question the validity of the paradigm, the major physical and cognitive changes during puberty cause adolescents to reconsider their previous views of the world – they start to ask of ways their lives and identities could change given different circumstances. The psychosocial moratorium, in turn, reminds one of the scientific “crisis state”. In the moratorium, teenagers experiment with various alternatives in their lives to find the ideology that sounds best to them, a suitable ideological setting for their life story. This is similar to scientists looking into various new theories and ideas while trying to deal with conflicts within their own community. The adolescents and the scientists in both of these
cases are confronted with major disorders in their previous beliefs and have to find out new ways to resolve them.

But eventually with time, a new paradigm will gain dominance, which is the sixth step to Kuhn’s process called “revolutionary science” (Kuhn, pg. 86). Here the cycle starts again, with the open question of whether actual scientific progress has occurred after all. The two structures being analyzed diverge significantly at this point, as the construction of a personal myth does not restart after adolescence but rather continues into young adulthood and will not stop until much later in life (McAdams, pg. 36-37). The divergence proves that Kuhn’s structure indeed has more ‘paradigmatic’ purposes, to put it in McAdams’ terms; it is not intended to give meaning to life and later generations like McAdams wanted his theory to help people do, but rather put the history of science in perspective and inspect scientific progress more comprehensively. McAdams’ theory, on the other hand, has proven to be more of a ‘narrative’ nature, intending to give new meanings to readers’ perspectives, which McAdams confirms himself: “[…] I encourage you, the reader, to begin the exploration of your own personal myth. […]” (McAdams, pg. 14).

While they may seem far from related at first glance, a careful analysis has shown the Kuhnian structure of scientific revolutions and McAdamian personal myth development to actually be parallel in a lot of ways. At the same time, there are differences of a fundamental nature between them, present in the fact that one of the structures is cyclic while the other is a continuous process throughout a person’s life. The Self contained in the personal myth may be constructed systematically at first, but there are certainly many aspects of it that one has to find out in other, unexpected ways. A scientific theory, after all, is different from a story, even if they are equally important in bringing values to people’s lives.
Works Cited
