

Spring 1980

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The Lighter

Spring 1980



Humanism - Pro and Con

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The Lighter

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Cover: Two views of the speech and drama lounge in Bogarte Hall on Valparaiso University's Old Campus. The building is scheduled to be torn down this summer.

Editorial

To Act and Appreciate

By Jeff Smith

Beginning writers' works, which our staff read a good deal of before finding what is here presented, show certain commonalities. Their central trait seems to be a distance from genuine experience. The college-age novice's typical poem springs from what appear to be real feelings, even philosophic perspectives, but quickly mire themselves in vague or abstract images. Young writers apparently draw their perennial golden beaches and red sunsets from a stock of images considered "poetic."

The experienced poet, of course, moves in the opposite direction. By coining concrete images from her larger vision, she creates means for an exchange among minds. Her reader can cash in the images to recreate a rich underlying vision. The same holds for essayists. We have a fine example in Bob Palumbo's "A Reoriented Dream," which makes its point through genuine personal experience — organized in such a way as to suggest a larger social perspective.

position the writer in it, and point directions for the reader. Without telling us how to respond (another tendency of less experienced writers), the essay invites us to participate in the experience of another, and so recreate the insight it lent him. The authenticity of the narrative voice commands our assent.

The same occurs at the substantive as at the stylistic level. Palumbo's piece focuses on the problem of applying private experience in service of a purposeful social vision. The narrator wishes to reach others, but his vocational choices clearly proceed from a private sensibility — the same sensibility that distinguishes works of feeling from works of the machine.

Thus arises one solution to the "humanist" dilemma posed by our other essayist, John Wolf. Classical humanism might, as Wolf suggests, be a threat if its admiration of man's works stood apart from work on man's behalf. But real humanists, from Renaissance men to Palumbo's unset

The linkage of aesthetic valuing and ethical choice stands as the humanist spirit.

tled engineer, would argue for setting broader sights. Aesthetic judgment, they would say, forms one dimension of a larger perspective that finally issues in *moral* judgment, and also in social and political action.

This linkage of aesthetic valuing and ethical choice stands as the humanist spirit — exactly what Palumbo captures. “As that gift touched me,” he says, noting the special worth of his friend’s photo over that of commercial greetings, “I wanted my work to influence others.” *Then* into the larger world. The persona’s movement outward from personal experience duplicates the essay’s method of development — a perfect union of feeling, style, and substance, and proof that good rhetoric and good social action are really the same thing.

Wolf finds his substance linked to his style also. The very generality of his unusual critique of a “humanism” binding the Renaissance, the philosopher Nietzsche, and Cambodia may account for the questions his eventual

prescription leaves open. To embrace all persons as persons. . . certainly. But where, and in what capacity? These are the tough questions that motivate Palumbo’s search in the first place. What the engineer-as-humanist finally discovers is the need to live outside existing structures, in a spirit of critical detachment allied with aesthetic judgment (the same sensibility that rejects machined greeting cards alienates one from the whole corporate system). Aesthetic feeling begins the revolt that frees one to serve human needs. Wolf supports a critical posture toward works; what he, like many, downplays is the fact that modes of social organization are often the most dangerous of all works. In presuming a disparity between the realms of aesthetics and of action, he sees the goal but misses the central path — a path to the human world beginning with private experience, and paved with that self-sensitivity that alone makes the writer sensitive to others.

Jeff Smith

is a senior English major in Christ College, editor of *The Lighter*, and a modernist by default.

Essays

A Reoriented Dream

By Bob Palumbo

Although I am not the type who would enjoy working in a physics laboratory testing theories and then spending free time working math puzzles, I do enjoy science — that is, when it relates to people. Four years ago I decided to study engineering because I thought it would make the necessary link: I imagined myself engineering a greenhouse operation for hungry people. (In a heroic fashion, I saw myself using science to end starvation.) Well, recently I started to look for that type of work.

I wanted my work to affect people as friends can affect each other. I recalled the feeling I had when I received, from a friend, a picture of an African village at sunset. He took the photograph, enlarged it, and framed it. His sensitivity to color, coupled with his spirit for travel adventure, glimmer at me whenever I see it. The gift mirrors my friend's kindness and my smile. Unlike the saccharin bromide of a machine-stamped greeting card — "Your friendship is like oxygen" — the message of his gift is genuinely moving. As that gift touched me, I

wanted my work to influence others.

A corporation, from my first impression, appeared to be a means for giving greeting cards. Conversation with corporate engineers indicated that if I worked in a corporation I would gain access to traditional rewards: driving a big car, wearing a three-piece tweed suit in the winter, and working at the top of a forty-story building in the center of a city (designing refrigerators or the like). Yet, unless I could receive satisfaction from knowing that someone's hamburger was cold, such work seemed rather misdirected, out of focus.

I knew the argument proclaiming that I would help people if I helped advance the gears of the capitalist structure. I knew that if I sat in a plush office and stared into Lake Michigan I could almost imagine the profit of the corporation generating the economy so that someone somewhere on welfare might eventually find a job. It seemed a bit too indirect a help, though, and I wasn't completely convinced. For one thing, as American corporations churned in profit from South Africa, I



would be forced to ignore the fact of an operating principle of maximizing profit — even at the expense of people. In short, I grew skeptical about the idea of finding a job.

But I wasn't going to let a first impression convince me that I was looking for something that didn't exist. I decided to interview with a corporation.

I paged through the "College Job Placement Manual" to the section titled "Strategy for Getting a Job." It assumed of me that I had three priorities: One, I wanted a high salary; two, I wanted lots of benefits; three, I wanted to live in a desirable location. Now I don't deny that I need to make some money; moreover, I don't want to sleep on the steps of a church, with my coat as my pillow, for the sake of altruism. But I thought the manual should have assumed that someone might want an engineering job that related to people.

With a bit of apprehension, I went to the university's placement office to sign up for an interview. Because there were only a limited number of employers and what seemed like an unlimited number of students, we had to draw a number to see who signed up first. As

the director held a box of numbers over his head and moved to the center of the room, I watched the students: like young children in the deadly play of competing for a party grab-bag, they snapped for a draw. After the director regained his balance, I drew number fifty. (Perhaps partly out of anger for drawing a high number, I thought the students to be a greedy lot.)

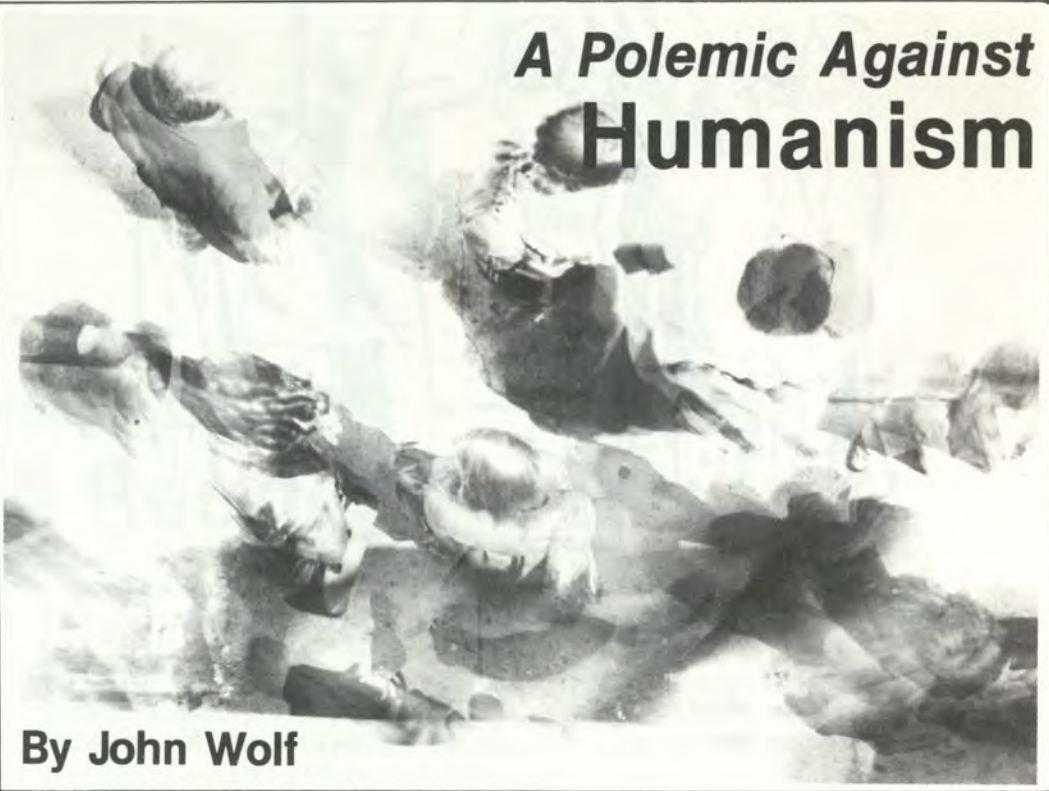
When it came time for me to sign up, there was one organization that wasn't filled, the Peace Corp. It offered a job in Kenya, engineering a system that would bring water into a village. Such a position might certainly bring a smile to someone's face. It seemed strange, though, that one had to go so far from home to find a place where science could be used to help people.

Maybe it wasn't strange at all. The corporations seemed to have set up a system where people rotated about the axis of the self, and the inertia, built up by theories and advertisements, was too great to allow change. I saw I had to avoid the system. Move to Kenya. Yes, the people on the southwest side of Chicago could use others to build them greenhouses, but the system didn't offer such an opportunity. It stamped greeting cards instead. □

Bob Palumbo

is a senior engineering student in Christ College and, following Socrates, is out looking for one wise technologist.

A Polemic Against Humanism



By John Wolf

Don't get me wrong. I am not writing against humanity, nor am I writing against those who wish to help humanity. This is not the original sense of the word "humanism," but rather something which is often mistakenly inferred from it. Instead, I am writing against the original sense of the word, that which came out of the Renaissance.

First, a definition of what I understand to be the meaning of "humanism" is in order. The Renaissance was a "rebirth," particularly of classical studies, and a departure from the prevalent late medieval culture. A "humanist" was one who was engaged in these studies. The classical studies at this time had two aspects: the study of ancient Greek and Latin, and the study of pre-medieval culture.

First, I will consider the linguistic studies. In the middle ages, Greek (in

any form) was not widely known among the intellectuals of western Europe. The Latin that was used at this time had changed quite a bit since Roman times. This medieval Latin and those who used it were considered "vulgar" by the humanists, as were those who did not know Greek. Obviously, "vulgar" is not an appropriate description of those who knew medieval Latin, as these were the few who were in fact educated in those days. Yet the humanists put everyone who did not know classical Greek and Latin as they did on the same level — they were the unlearned.

The humanists got their name from the conclusions which they drew from their study of ancient culture. They studied the great ancient literature, both the authors and the heroes about whom they wrote, and the ancient art and architecture. In these studies, they



**When the work becomes all-important,
or a proof of man's greatness, it is mere vanity.**

found those great things of which man was capable: Man could build great palaces, carve great statues, write great works, think great thoughts, and so on. The medieval period was devoid of such great works. The arts along with the language became decadent during this time. The humanists, who saw value in humanity in this way, called for a revival of these arts, through the study of the classical models. Of course, in order to study the ancient culture, one must read ancient manuscripts, and so must know the ancient Greek and Latin. Thus, those who did not know classical Greek and Latin could not take part in the revival, and so reinforced their uselessness. They were as useless as medieval man or the slaves in ancient Egypt, who really did not build the

pyramids: All credit must be given to the Pharaohs.

Humanism, then, in the original sense, was the belief that man could do great things; at least certain men could. Those who could not were little better than animals.

I need not say anything about the worth of the common man; many others have said enough. Yet I feel something needs to be said about the so-called great works of art, literature, philosophy, and others. I do not deny that, relative to other works of man, they are excellent. Yet, compared to the simple greatness of God's creation, of which man himself is an example, man's works are tiny and insignificant. The common man, contrary to the humanists' opinion, is worth far more than any work of man. I can not think

is a history and philosophy major in Christ College and a "medievalist" in the best sense who believes the humanists are at the gates.

Even freedom of speech does not apply to one who says, "I'm hungry."

of one thing that man has built that is equal in value to one human being, or one that will last forever, or even one that has lasted throughout history, or one that is as beautiful as a sunset. Of course, this does not mean that we should immediately destroy all man-made art works and discontinue any further art projects, or do the same to philosophy, literature, music and others. But when the work becomes all-important, or a proof of man's greatness, it is mere vanity. In this case it would be better if it would never have been done. Neither can a work be a sign of its human author's greatness. It may be a sign of talent, surely, but greatness is not implied by talent when one is talking about human beings.

Unfortunately, the humanist spirit is still alive. Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy is a prime example. Nietzsche believed that certain men (not women — neither are any non-whites mentioned) of every generation were "supermen." That is, they had special abilities. Such men were allowed, even expected to live by "master morality," rather than "slave morality." The former allowed the superman any means for self-aggrandizement. He was to work for this self-aggrandizement, since he owed contributions appropriate to his status to his civilization. Christian virtues are for the masses, whom the superman may use, control, or ignore as he wishes. He may show them love; but this love is similar to the love one has for one's pets.

We also can see how the humanist spirit came through the enlightenment to modern U.S. foreign policy in our struggle (I use the term "struggle" loosely) for "human rights." Most of these rights, freedom of the press, for example, reflect our humanistic heri-

tage. These rights are of importance only to those who could afford a rather extensive education, and so would be concerned with ideas and the freedom to express them. Naturally, those who wish to ought to be allowed to think freely. Yet when I think about including it in our foreign policy for, say, Cambodia, it sounds ridiculous: freedom of the press for starving illiterates. And we are supposedly willing to kill and die for it. Apparently, even freedom of speech does not apply to one who says, "I'm hungry."

Finally, we have elitist groups throughout our culture who claim to love what man can do, and extol the dignity of mankind, particularly in the arts but often in the sciences, while holding most people, the unlearned, in contempt. Often the reasons for looking down their noses at others are just as ridiculous as those used in the Renaissance: "They don't know classical Greek," or "They aren't appreciative of art," or "They aren't as intelligent as we are." Happily, these groups are still small and relatively powerless. But if humanists still exist, they could plausibly become more powerful.

Toward the end of the Renaissance, paintings of the Tower of Babel were especially popular. Their artists, formerly humanists, realized the vanity and futility involved in trying to reach heaven with human ingenuity, and how small man really is. They learned their lesson: Will we?

In closing, I would like to leave you with a quote from Karl Popper's "Conjectures and Refutations": "It might be well for all of us to remember that, while differing widely in the various little bits we know, in our infinite ignorance we are all equal." □



*I think when eating chocolate cake
'Tis better real
And worser fake.*

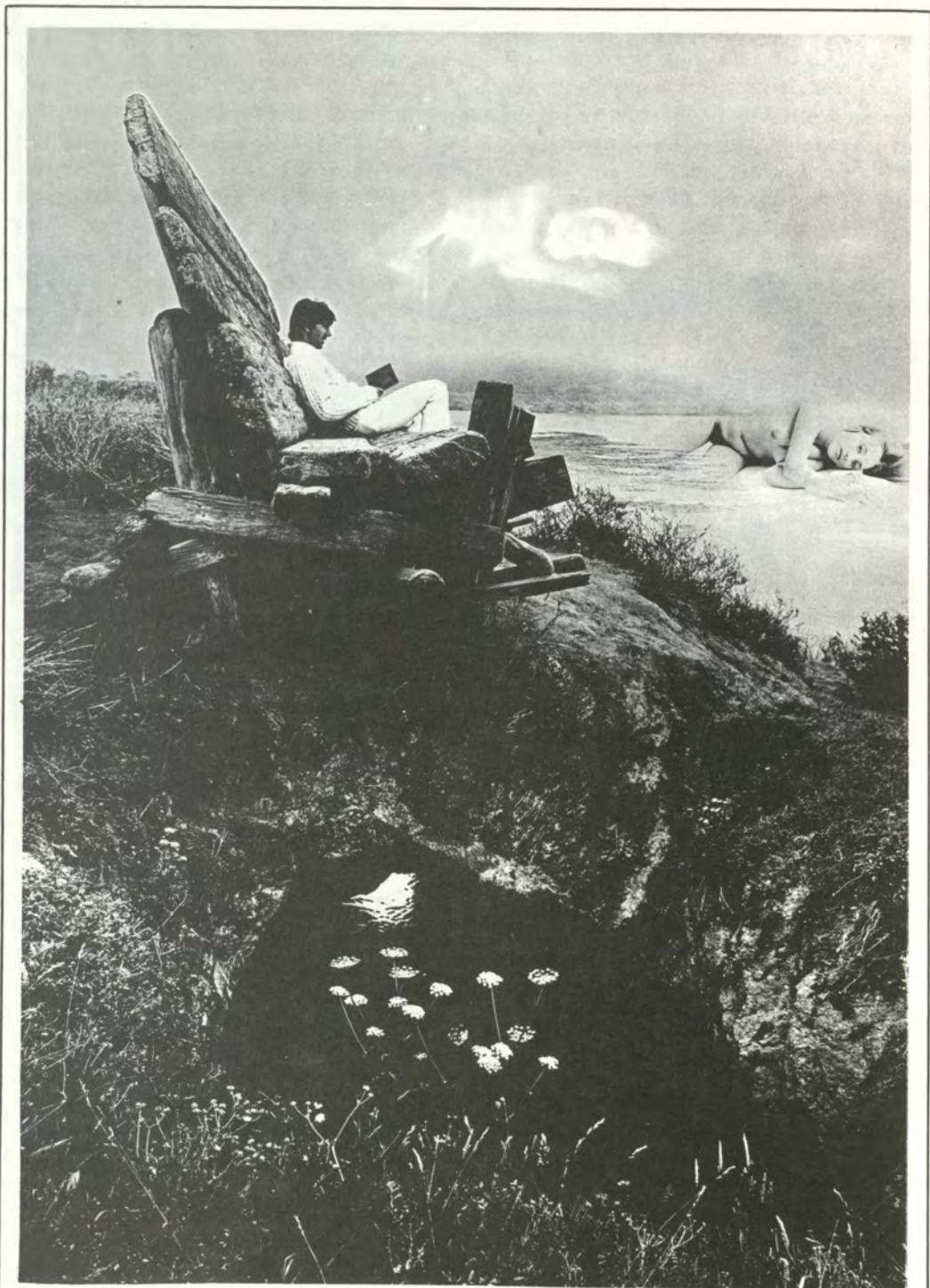
— Martin Gehring

*On second recollect it seems
The world is made of jelly beans.
Yet further still, three thoughts, no more,
The world is flat!
Well, maybe four. . . .*

— Martin Gehring

Martin Gehring

is an award-winning student cartoonist who wants to have his cake and caricature it, too.



*i am not growing gracefully
old*

*i am a young shambles
tattered inside my shirts
lost without motherskirts
a flower-barreled daughter
of the moon
who is a ragged street urchin
who is a flickering star
dying too young*

*wasn't that you we
rode dog-eared bikes
for jars of simply milk and honey
we had that choice then
why not
now wasn't that you we
dangled in the fountain
sculpting water wet-legged
we had that magic then
why not
now wasn't that you i
bike-leaned late on the yard of
still by dawn in dew
we had that luxury then why not
now we had that gift then why not*

*the gifted moon
that squatted in our hearts'
pioneering chambers
seems like yesterday is
a dream wedged somewhere
in childhood
seems like it runs away
along the foamy lips of waves
the way waving fades
leaving me with the bathing suits*

*i am not growing gracefully
old
i am in young shackles
scattered inside your old soft shirts
groping for your skirts
a lightning-struck orphan
of the moon
who is a ragged street urchin
who is a fluttering faltering star
dying to you*

— Janet Malotky

Janet Malotky

is a senior psychology major and a founding member of key campus activist groups.

SENIOR GIFT

*Nothing being the only way to be
Sheds ominous light on reality;
Final recognition made existence
A non-priority.*

*Golf at noon, a drink at five
O Martin Luther Country Club's
A fine place
To be.
When you're not.*

*Disconnected thoughts at a very
Connected place.*

*A premiss become a preposition —
Abstraction of being!
Aspirations a definite need
To waylay troubled sleep.
Cliched existence at the
Martin Luther Country Club
And Day Care Center.*

*I'd bite your ear
But I'm in the swing. . . .
Revolution didn't incite the masses.
The moral code was removed
To no avail
On the battlefield.*

*Morals relinquished in effect,
Retained for view on temple windows.
See-through being
Opaque personages
Degenerative writing on the walls.*

*Nihilistic, anarchistic Saturday nights
Suburban surroundings resounding
Surrealist sentiments.
Scotch means East and beer means here.
The grass is always greener. . . .*

*Foolish thoughts deteriorating at a
Very foolish place.*

*Time is being or being time?
No matter what, I'm not. . .yet.
Albeit contained in a proper habitat
In which to analyze
Right and wrong
Bad and good
Answers are not of the essence.
The ultimate facade is the only "real."*

*The concept of dread is either/or
Having chosen Nor.
It comes to the fore on Wednesday postnoon
Hopefully less than once every month. . . .
Put off 1860 days.
Numerous agonies dismissed with a notice
Short
No doubt concise.*

*Another notice, this time on Sunday.
Exultations abound,
Perhaps until Monday.
Existence recovered
With a shake of the hand*

*Momentary thoughts fleeing
A very Connected
Foolish
Unfree
Yet tolerated
Place.*

*Epilogues are not for me
It's all between the lines.*

— M.M. Kleinschmidt

M.M. Klein- schmidt

is a senior political science major in Christ College who believes the best senior gift is the gift of oneself.



CORK THE WONDER PIG

*Cork the Wonder Pig
Screams ritual slop
At Clem the earth clod man.*

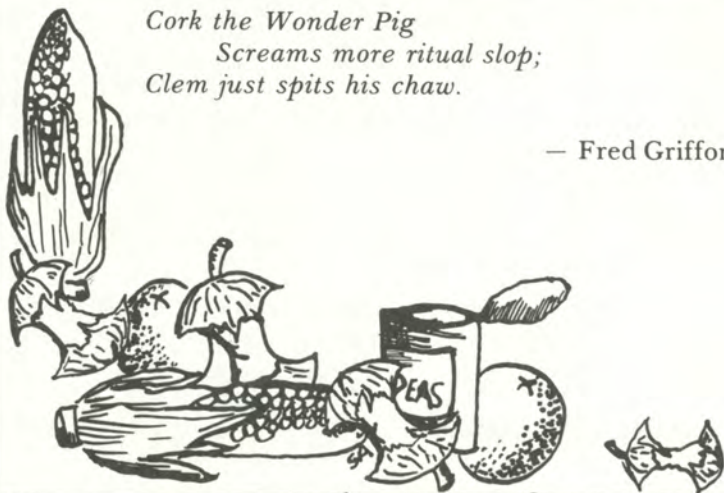
*A chaw of crude tobacco
Clogs Clem's mouth.
Earth clots as his spittoon.*

*Clem chews his chaw and thinks
Of his darling Clementine.
For Cork no Corketta, slop is fine.*

*O let it not rankle that Clem the musical
Chants his canticle of tobacco as chicle.
Cork, though no radical, thinks Clem a fantastical,
For food just a vehicle and nothing confusical.*

*Cork the Wonder Pig
Screams more ritual slop;
Clem just spits his chaw.*

— Fred Griffon Sleet



*A man rests in the cool breeze
The flowers bloom in the springtime
As the tanks march across the land
Crushing the flowers underneath.
As the tanks approach the houses,
They throw shells
Arms fly up.
Bloody bodies fall out of windows.
The commander gets up out of
His tank to survey the damage —
He works for his abstraction.*

— Tony Betz



**Fred
Griffon
Sleet**

is a contrived-sounding pseudonym.

**Tony
Betz**

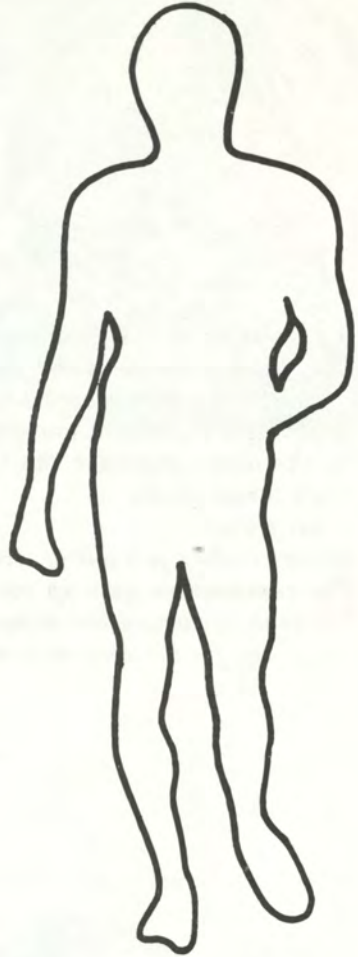
is a junior studying philosophy and physics and striving to reconcile the two culturally.

*Introducing Electra,
Mister Sir Doctor,
Hereby unresolved by you,
on her knees at your feet
swallowing the envy you prescribed
swallowing your pride.*

*She was born with an electrode planted
between her legs and you were born
with a wand of such remote control
you both believe it is magic.*

*Abracadabra.
She feels you practicing
as she passes on the street —
the shiver of some conjured power forced through her.
She feels that violation, the thrust of conversation.
While you think you toy with dolls
she feels the voodoo of your dreams.*

*But as she lies upon the couch of your indifference she is
beginning to decipher the hieroglyphics
that frame your authority, the power granted you
by the oracle of psychoanalytic theory,
beginning to wake to the dream you interpret,
beginning to see the lies of your incantations
which simply conjure indications of long-dead spirits,
which simply rattle the desk,
which simply steer the fingered planchette.*





*And it is you, sir, who lies
exposed upon the couch with dissected dream.
And she does not want that kind of power — your power
erected in fantasy and kept up
by the blood of Woman.
That altar is crumbling and she will not
go down on it. No!*

*Your power is the dream dissolved
in the dawn of her —
Selfunderstanding that she lives
she does not sleep and dream herself
like you. No!
She quickens life
and that is power
where your power can never reach.
Where immortality curls alive within her hoping,
where time lies enveloped in velvet chambers,
in bloodrich sleep —
There you are impotent.*

*Take your power! She knows
you can only limply watch her grow
while she becomes tomorrow;
and she will keep on coming
when you have long ceased to tease yourself.*

— Janet Malotky

Reviews

Hey, Who's Modern Here?

By Jon Siess

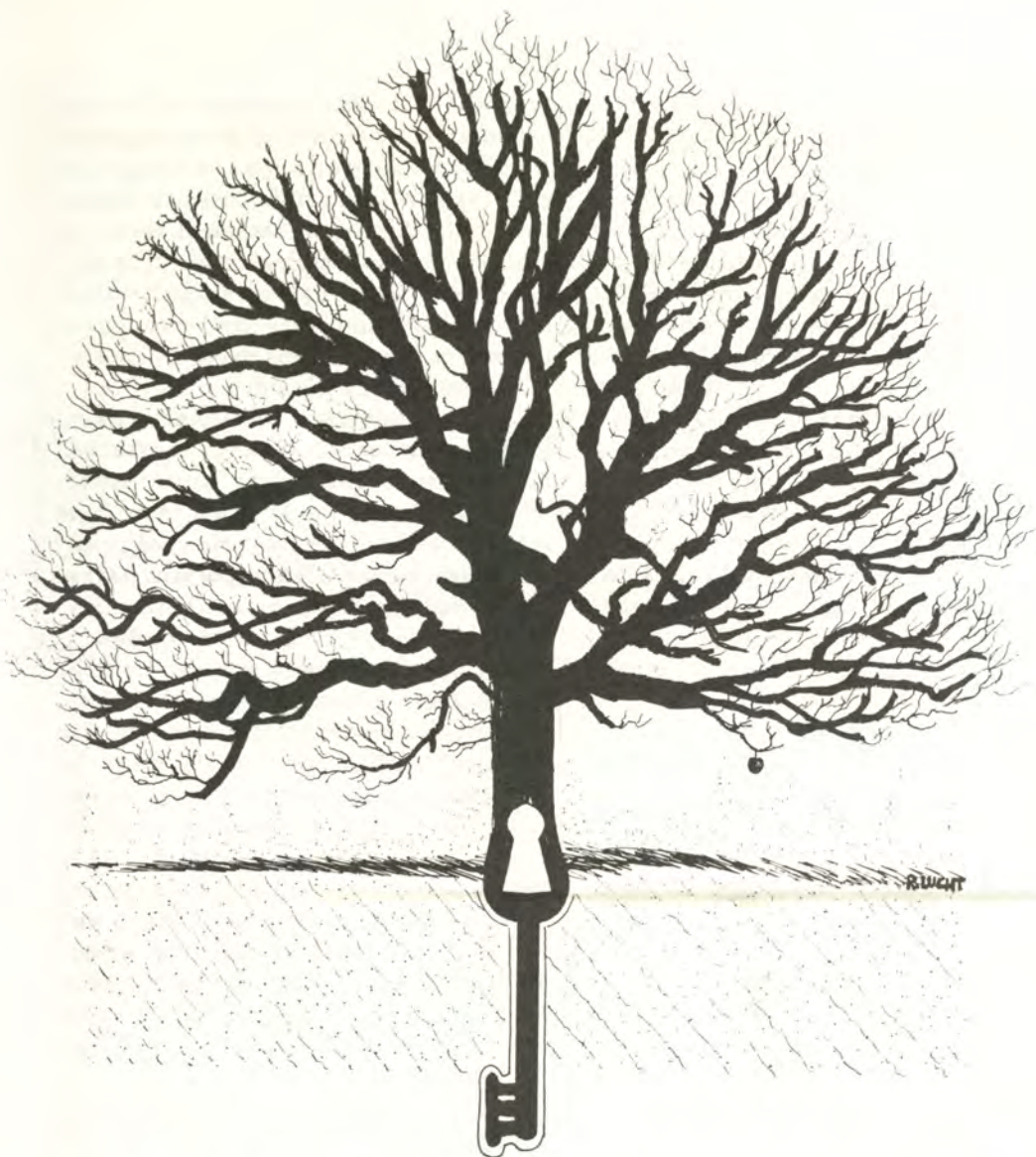
LIBERAL EDUCATION AND THE MODERN UNIVERSITY. By Charles Wegener. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978. 160 pages.

The title of Charles Wegener's book, *Liberal Education and the Modern University*, lacks the luster often found in the literature of education. There's no crisis in the classroom, no revolution in the halls of the academy, no newly discovered pedagogical techniques for the making of genius.

Instead, we see two monolithic terms joined by the word "and." Each term taken separately could fill a book or volumes and shelves, as even the briefest bibliography of the literature will illustrate. The first term, we know, has a long history and most often escapes precise definition, and the second is apparently something relatively new and large. Wegener's is a slim volume, and the skeptical reader may suspect he's taken on too much. An easier time may have been had by addressing *Liberal Education* or the *Modern University*, presuming that the two terms are mutually exclusive. Or perhaps *Liberal Education in the Modern University* may be more along the lines of current prejudice, in that it suggests that you can have your cake and eat it too, but the modern university finally encompasses the first. In joining the two with "and," Wegener suggests a more ambiguous relationship. But in linking the two at all, he indicates that there is some thing in relationship worth exploring.

Wegener suggests that liberal edu-

cation and the modern university can exist side by side in a complementary rather than antagonistic relationship if there is a proper understanding of the terms and the role of the intellectual in the world. He suggests that the intellectual world into which the university initiates the young must not be understood so much in terms of what is known or unknown, but as *activities* in which a variety of persons are engaged. It is what we *do* that makes the world ours. Understanding the nature of our own activity and coming to terms with our reflections on that activity is finally more important than understanding the objects of others' thought. The liberal arts as Wegener defines them are important in this respect because they are the arts of self-conscious reflection. A liberal education, in turn, is a process by which the mind becomes conscious of itself and establishes an individual relationship with the intellectual world. The goal of liberal education, then, is to enfranchise thoughtful participants in the intellectual world by means of a curriculum that stimulates and nurtures "disciplined habits of thoughtful functioning." The modern university as Wegener understands it is hostile to the liberal arts because it is preoccupied with research and discovery, driven to close the gap between the known and the unknown. The methods by which individuals pursue the unknown are highly diverse, and it is this very intellectual pluralism that furnishes the "stuff" of the genuine liberal curriculum. Partici-



pants in the curriculum reflect on how it is the many do what they do.

Wegener's thesis stems from a historical treatment of the era at the turn of the century when the modern university took root in America. No doubt the explosion of methods and activities Wegener describes is only one aspect of a larger cultural transformation that he acknowledges but does not analyze. He suggests, however, that the twin impulses giving rise to the modern university were research and democracy. It was during this era that the university sought to incorporate all professions and vocations into

the institutional ambience of the university and subject all of life to scientific analysis. This propensity to research all things naturally sparked an explosion of methods and procedures by which individuals came to know the world. The end to which investigation was carried on was democratic in that most did their research with an eye toward the "transformation and enrichment of the national life." This democratic impulse had the effect of opening the practice and enjoyment of an intellectual to the many. Together, these ideas illustrate the nineteenth-century American's faith

Jon Siess

is a senior majoring in history and Christ College humanities. Following Sam Beckett, he prefers to forego particular worries in favor of a more general despair.

"in the ability of controlled, scientific inquiry to change the conditions of life and work." The lasting characteristic of the era for Wegener is not the faith in science, but the pervasiveness of the activity itself. Behind the intellectual diversity was the notion that whether "by accident or design, (the founders of the modern universities) were giving practical recognition to a fact about the intellectual world in the sense in which that world is an actual community of working men and women."

The impact these ideas had on the institutional organization of the university is fairly obvious. Libraries and laboratories sprang up as locations for activity, and research assistants were taken on to assist in investigation. Students, too, came to participate in the investigations of the teacher. Along with the diversity of assumptions that guided this research was a diversity of function; that is, academic departments were organized to expedite research. According to Wegener, these departments were essentially conveniences. As such they point to one of his main criticisms of the modern university: it was, he suggests, primarily an institutional revolution without a solid intellectual foundation. Says Wegener, "Insofar as there were methods involved, they were taken as given in what scholars and scientists were successfully doing, or as identified by the instrumentalities — libraries and laboratories — which they employed. From the point of view of a philosophy of science or an articulated epistemology, these formulations therefore seemed to suffer an incorrigible vagueness." The curriculum, in turn, became increasingly oriented to the teaching of subject matters and the training for vocations. Here Wegener's critique of the early modern universities still holds true: "The universities were determined to make professional education higher education. To the extent that profes-

sional schools became university schools, they tended to become graduate schools thus to prolong the educational career of students aiming at qualifying for professional work. By insisting upon a college education as a prerequisite for a professional education, the university had put great pressure upon themselves to shorten the preparatory period.

At the heart of Wegener's argument, however, is the impact of intellectual pluralism, as a consequence of the "university idea," on the lives of individuals. He recognizes that a speciality is an important part of an individual's functional identity: "The diverse roles and modes of function which are recognized in the intellectual community, are, therefore, not only necessities inherent in the enterprise, functions which must be discharged if the work of the enterprise as a whole is to be carried on, they are — for individuals — specifications of kinds and interrelations of goods and evils constitutive of happiness and misery." Wegener apparently wishes to hold on to the democratic impulse of the modern university in that he hopes all will be able to appreciate not only the actual goods produced by intellectual activity, but also understand the method by which these goods were produced. In possibly his only colorful passage, he suggests that "this mode of participation in the intellectual world and its satisfactions is not merely one of enjoying the fruits which fall, fully ripened, from the tree of knowledge and thought without any sense of them as fruits, that is without any relation to the activities out of which they arose and which give them their uniquely interesting structure."

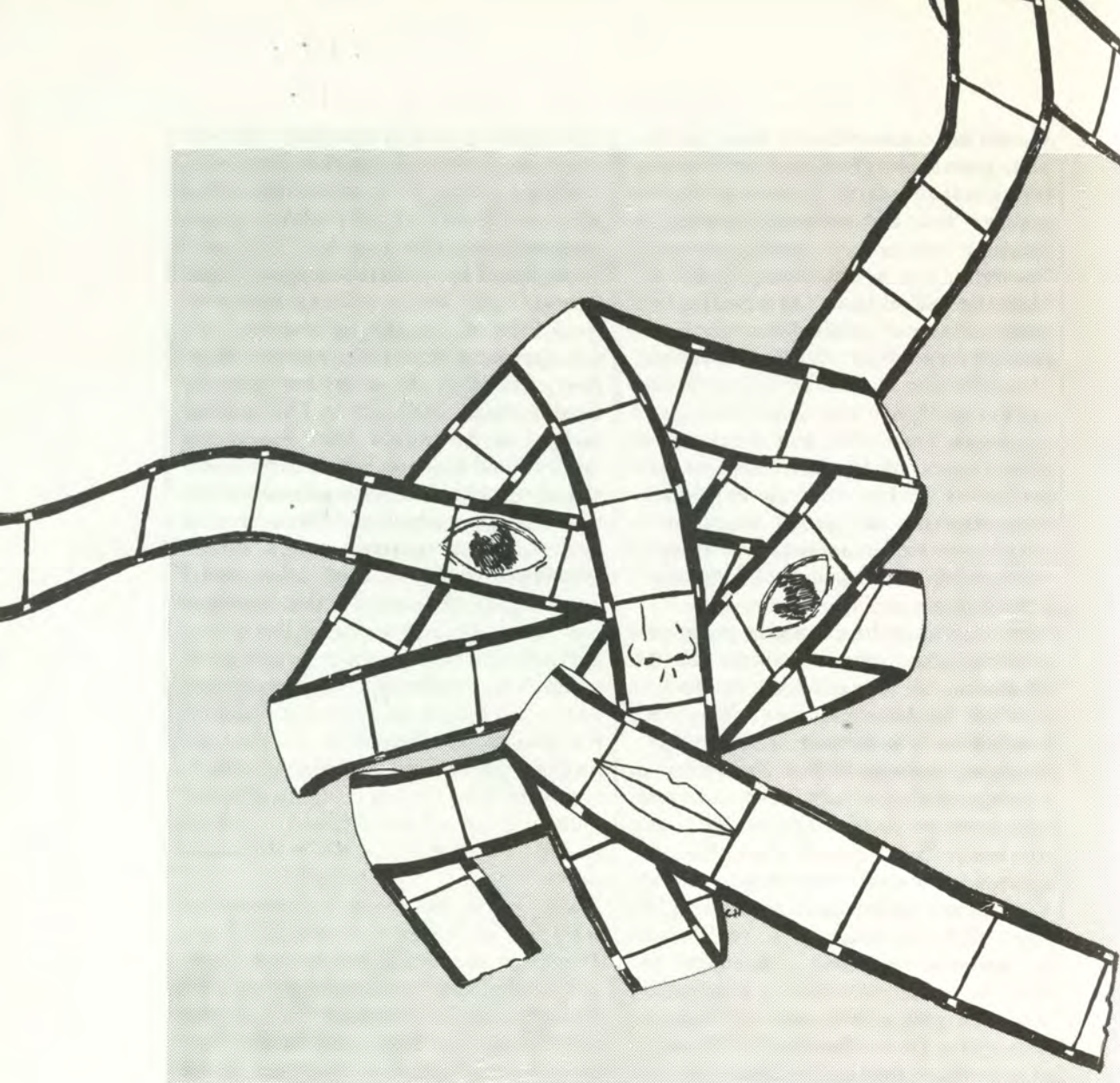
The general outline for the liberal education Wegener proposes is thus established. It is derived from the spirit that gave shape to the modern university, but focuses on the method behind the activity. Every education

should have a vocational focus in that one gains an "ability to set up functional relations between subject matters and the purposes served in complex institutional arrangements." Secondly, one's education should enable the individual "some effective mode of access to all dimensions and possibilities of intellectual activity." Finally, there should be "a functional ordering of intellectual activities in relation to each other *and* in relation to other forms of human activities and purposes." The last is especially important to Wegener because it establishes education as an ethical enterprise; that is, it is "functional, practical, active."

The curriculum he proposes is derived from these assumptions about what an education is supposed to do and is guided by four criteria. Wegener himself is a professor in the undergraduate college at the University of Chicago and chairman of the university's graduate Committee on Ideas and Methods. The name of his committee quite accurately foreshadows the cast of his proposed curriculum. It must, he says, be "deeply, powerfully and persistently reflective." In order for this to occur, "students must be provided with stimulants to reflection, materials for reflection, and techniques of reflection." Secondly, the curriculum "is intended also to create a habit, a stabilized attitude of reflection, so that such an activity becomes a normal, self-critical phase of the career of a developing and expanding mind." Thirdly it must be systematic, in that "the enterprise of reflection on intellectual activities, their powers and purposes, entails the discovery or construction of an intellectual world by individuals." Finally, the curriculum he describes must be teleological; that is, it must make clear that "reflection must systematically take account of the purposive character of intellectual activity."

Wegener properly interprets the real problem of actualizing this ideal curriculum as one of institutionalizing what is fundamentally a subjective phenomenon. The growth of the mind is mediated by reflection on one's own thoughts, not by the gulping in of vast quantities of the subject matter from departmental wells. Wegener is, however, wrong in the assertion that the fundamental roadblock to liberal education, as he would have it, is the institutional lines on which the university is organized. If we could only undo these divisions that have been erected primarily for research, he says, liberal education could proceed. Not really wanting to dismantle the modern university, he proposes that the liberal curriculum could function as the place where the intellectual community engages in a dialog on its own continuous reorganization. Tensions between the modern university and liberal education would be replaced by "a genuine coincidence of functions in which neither need profit or suffer from the other."

For elite, research-oriented and modern universities like Chicago, Wegener may have hit upon a panacea, though one can bet there would be charges that his curriculum is intended to serve his own interests. For the kind of university most of us are more familiar with, one where most manage quite well to eat the fruit of the tree without knowing how it got on the branch, the problems are more substantial and cannot be as easily rescued by deft philosophical analysis. To address the problems raised by a university that is neither modern in the sense Wegener uses the term, nor a proponent of self-conscious reflection — other than that which takes place in the dormitory bathroom mirror — and one which is *really* more serious about sports facilities than faculty research, would require a vastly different book, probably with a more exciting title. □



By Jeff Smith

NOTES. By Eleanor Coppola. Pocket Books [Simon and Schuster], 1980. 266 pages.

Critics have noted that the making of *Apocalypse Now*, a project that went considerably over budget and took years beyond the seventeen-weeks-plus-editing originally slated for it, parallels as much as depicts the

Zen and the Art of Movie-Making

The project was a metaphor, all right — but not so much for Vietnam.

Vietnam experience. Here, in both cases, were Americans on a jungle mission whose dimensions they vastly underestimated, while in setting out on it they betrayed a belief in their own invincibility. Suddenly they found that no matter how much time, money, and personnel they threw into the effort, the jungle seemed to be beating them. Until I came across *Notes*, the story of the project as recorded in the diary of Director Francis Ford Coppola's wife, I believe I had accepted at least this bit of received wisdom.

Notes supplies strong evidence that the project was a metaphor, all right — but not so much for Vietnam as for the post-Vietnam, 1970s American experience. By Eleanor Coppola's account, *Apocalypse Now* is the artifact of one of those personal quests for self-understanding and mystic wholeness that, at least according to one popular convention, came to characterize the decade. If so, the film undoubtedly represents the most expensive such quest on record. Francis Ford Coppola, working independently of the Hollywood studios, personally financed the project, in part through loans and mortgages against his own property. With many millions and most of his possessions at stake, he struggled throughout years of production work, and right up to the film's early screenings, to figure out what he was attempting to say. (That he was still trying to settle on an ending last year, when the film was screened at Cannes, was widely reported at the time.) For Coppola, according to *Notes*, the film became an obsessive rumination on his own soul — an acting out, with the help of a massive production company

and star actors earning in the millions, of one middle-aged man's struggle for self-discovery.

The book (which, incidentally, can be understood apart from the content of the final film) thus implicitly tells us to forget illusions about filmmaking, just as its narrator herself felt a need to overcome illusion — or, at least, to find the right niche for it. "There is a chapter," says Eleanor, "in Gail Sheehy's book *Passages* that describes Francis to a T. . . My whole personal, gut-wrenching drama is just a common statistic in a \$2.50 popular paperback book. It gets me right down out of the clouds." On the other hand, if our illusion is of films-as-art being the creations of alienated, tortured souls, the book affirms us. In the case of most tortured, lonely artists, though, the struggle somehow seemed more noble and less embarrassingly haphazard.

One disclaimer is that Eleanor Coppola acknowledges her own interest in the search for personal identity, and the director's behavior is filtered through her perspective. Nonetheless, she persuasively relates how Coppola, too, became caught up in attempts to resolve elements of fantasy and illusion, of freedom and definition, in his own life through the making of the film — and on a far grander scale than Eleanor, since he had that film as his therapeutic tool. Eleanor plays off Francis's struggle. Long after shooting has ended, she writes:

It's as if the core of me is trying to cut through the illusion and look at the structure. Francis wants to cover over the seams and wrinkles of life and maintain the illusion. That is the basis of filmmaking. . . .

In most cases the struggle seemed more noble and less embarrassingly haphazard.

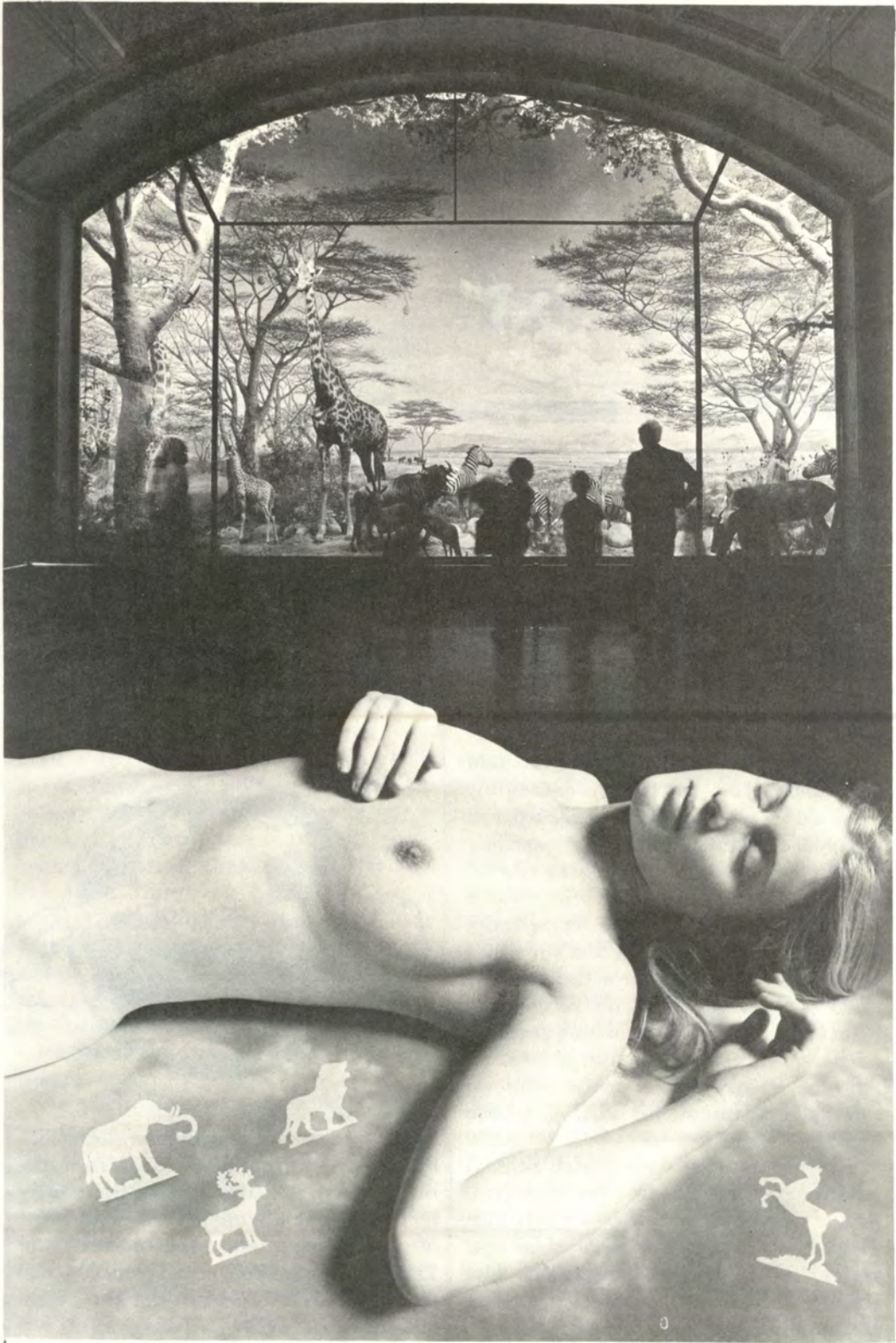
We have been talking about how the longer you remain in a state of ambiguity, the more change can take place. . . Francis was talking about wanting to get the film cut, finished; yet the longer he can stand the pressure of not knowing the ending, not defining it, the more it can evolve. The same is true of our marriage. I go back and forth from wanting it defined, crying out, is it on or is it off, what is the structure of it, what are the perimeters, to being excited by the lack of definition and the potential for letting it evolve into whatever it is going to be.

More tellingly, Eleanor observes about the same time that Francis's description of the Kurtz (Marlon Brando) character's insane lucidity "was a description of the state (Francis) was in during the last months (of shooting). It seemed to me that Francis, metaphorically, lived every foot of the film he shot." Following is her notation, "(Francis) said that he feels that seeing the film completed is going to clarify and complete something within himself, and, until he completes the film, he is in personal chaos. . . Let Francis find himself. I ache for him and I ache for myself. I ache for the children and everyone intertwined in his life. The man, the father, the director, the employer, is not well."

Part of what makes the account convincing is that it is diary, not a narrative formed after long reflection — though clearly, toward the end, Eleanor comes to interpret events in terms of such hallmark '70s diversions as *Zen and the I Ching*. Another part is her willingness at times to forego her own efforts to rationalize, in favor of

candid assessments, like the above, of the value of the filmmaker's state of mind. When she does suggest to Francis that he is "setting up his own Vietnam" (as critics were later to point out), it is after consulting, and disregarding, an *I Ching* entry in favor of her own feeling that "Francis truly is a visionary, but. . . a certain discrimination is missing, that fine discrimination that draws the line between what is visionary and what is madness. I am terrified."

But what finally persuades is the way the account rings true to the experience of recent years. We've been ready for a book called *Zen and the Art of Major Movie-Making* — one replacing Robert Pirsig's quiet cross-country motorcycle trip with an enormously expensive popular-entertainment project — and this book may be it. If the difference between Pirsig and Coppola at all indicates a trend of the decade, I think we finally have discovered a convergence between 1970s consciousness and the like-Vietnam style critics originally noted in Coppola's project. Like Coppola's project and Vietnam itself, the popular version of the 1970s search for self became tenser, more extravagant, and more obsessive the longer it lasted, blurring the distinctions between illusion and grim reality. As many of us grew to early youth with overseas as a given, so Coppola's smallest child, Sofia, also grew up amid strife that refused to end, to reach a point where her father could put his fantasies in a manageable place: "She was four," Eleanor writes, "when Francis started *Apocalypse Now*. She is going to be seven next week. She thinks that is what Daddy does." □



"Animal Dreams" 1978 by Jerry N. Uelsmann

Courtesy Sloan Gallery-VU and the photographer

Full Speed Ahead

By Jeff Smith

STAR TREK — THE MOTION PICTURE. Directed by Robert Wise. Produced by Gene Roddenberry, screenplay by Harold Livingston, story by Alan Dean Foster. A Paramount Pictures 1979 release.

The long establishing shots in this big-movie version of the durable *Star Trek* television series work in an odd way. They are, certainly, incredibly detailed pictures of a carefully worked out space technology for one possible future (hundreds of thousands of dollars went into model-building alone for this film). But the sheer complexity of it finally undercuts rather than supports the illusion. It's the twenty-third century up there on screen, all right — but realized as a staggeringly advanced level of cinematic, not space-flight, technique. It's the special effects department, not NASA, whose apotheosis we witness.

There's nothing wrong with this. A positive picture of man's technological future was central to the original *Star Trek* series of the late 1960s. And that series, which became massively successful only in syndication, has long accounted itself to a certain kind of bright, inquisitive, adolescent audience, people intrigued both by



adventure stories and by imaginings of future or alternate worlds based on intelligent extrapolation of present technological advancement. The kind of careful speculation that moved *Star Trek* producers to keep science advisors around and to work out the exact character of every blinking light for this new movie has always been a large part of the series's appeal.

The values they live by are those supposed to have guided American expansion.

The old series producers who came back to work on *Star Trek — The Motion Picture* (or *ST-TMP*, as they refer to it), which began as a possible TV comeback, apparently had the series's faithful audience in mind. I don't mean, necessarily, the same *type* of people — I mean the same *people*. Many of the people who made *Star Trek* a cult phenomenon in the early 1970s have now advanced to about college age. *ST-TMP*, with even more blinking lights and careful, self-conscious detail than before, yet the same old *Star Trek* philosophy, is a perfect rekindling of the original *Star Trek* experience for these people. It allows for their having grown older and more discriminating, but depends also on their retaining a bit of infatuation with intelligent guessing about the future.

As such, it is neither a *Star Wars* family film nor a piece for the UFO set like *Close Encounters*. *ST-TMP* goes over children's heads and would bore most viewers who missed the adolescent phase I mentioned. Even by old *Star Trek* standards, it sacrifices adventure to the slow unraveling of a technological mystery — the origin and purpose of a planet-eating object hurtling toward 23rd-century Earth.

And as this slow development grounds the film's picture of the future, so also is adventure sacrificed to the time spent reuniting the old TV actors and paying various *homages* to the conflicts, character types, and themes that motivated old series episodes.

One of those themes is the positive vision of a technological future; the other, broader one — familiar from several TV episodes and central to the film — is the idea that humanness, with all its quirks, emotiveness, and nonrationalities, finally is better than cold logic or machine intelligence.

Thus, in contrast with the managed, calculated sort of spaceflight represented either in the real American space program or, with irony, in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Star Trek* presents sailing ships to the stars. Despite their overwhelming technology, its space travelers function impulsively and erratically. Their mission is frontier conquest, and the values they live by, I would guess, are those supposed to have guided American expansion. In series episodes it was common for the captain-hero to gamble on intuition or emotion in solving problems, often winning the point over his super-logi-

Man, not the alien as in "2001," effects the other's transformation.

cal, alien first mate and giving himself ample chances to reflect on how great it is to be human. It would be hard to list all the TV episodes that climaxed in arguments between the captain and errant computers, which then either laid aside their depravity or destroyed themselves.

These motifs all appear in *ST-TMP*. The giant space-thing announces it has come to Earth to reunite with its "creator," which it thinks to be another machine entity like itself but which, through a bizarre twist, turns out to be mankind. Now it is up to the captain to try to point out the error, and to two prominent but expendable characters to satisfy the thing by "uniting" with it.

The comparison with *2001* is worth pursuing, since *ST-TMP* shares so many motifs with that film. Besides space travel itself, there is the business of machine intelligence, of searching for a creator, and of regeneration or birth. These motifs all point further toward technology, that favorite American pastime, as a central issue for both films.

But once established, the themes as developed by one film seem the converse in the other. Where *2001*'s is a flight outward, "beyond the infinite," ending with a return to Earth, *ST-TMP*'s plot progresses toward Earth. Only with the mission accomplished do we set off again "out there." Though machines take on sentience in both films, *2001* also shows persons behaving like passionless machines. The creator-seekers in *2001* are people; in *ST-TMP*, a machine. And while *2001* ends with a sexless rebirth for man (the real machine), in *ST-TMP* it is the machine that is reborn (of man and woman), becoming all the more human as a

result. Man, not the alien as in *2001*, effects the other's transformation.

Star Trek, obviously, envisions a humanity that has solved its spiritual problems and can now go forward proudly, in true American fashion, into the "final frontier" of space. In *2001*, space is instead an enclosed world where man, conscious of the goal or not, goes to find his identity. If technology can broadly be understood as the projection of an expansive human consciousness into the environment in the form of objects, and then onto those objects as tokens or anchors of identity, then the expansive space of *ST-TMP*, where man and his tools get along fine, also encases by far the less problematic view of technology.

But *2001* cannot simply be called anti-technology. In *2001* technology is seen as fundamental to humanness, as conscious man's first acquisition. The problem is that while it is fundamental, technology also is dehumanizing: In using it, man makes himself a cold, predictable mechanism. The paradox is fully realized in HAL, the computer in *2001* that, though man's technological creation, shows itself to be more human than man: in a world of pushbutton people, the machine is the one that goes crazy and kills.

The other problem is that to reach whatever destiny may await him beyond Earth, man needs technology. Even if the voyage is into some "inner space," what we see concretely on film is a spaceship. Thus arises the most obvious similarity between *2001* and *ST-TMP*, a similarity that finally bridges them — an almost identical visual *presence* for technology in both films.

There is more to this point than the fact that special effects of the *ST-TMP*

type represent little advancement since *2001*'s release 11 years earlier (though this is an added tribute to *2001* and to the tremendous stress its makers, like the creators of *ST-TMP*, placed on technological realism). We must wonder, on seeing so much in both films of special-effects prowess, if we are not in danger of being deceived in our presumption that the films display opposite philosophies. Actually, what finally makes the comparison with *2001* valuable in understanding *ST-TMP* is the recognition of an underlying, cinematic order of business that binds the films more closely than various conversions can separate them.

It is, perhaps, a business inherent to film itself. Here I push toward a summation suggested by Harvard philosopher Stanley Cavell's approach in *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, Enlarged Edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979, 246 pages). This recent expansion of an earlier book by Cavell invaluable lays forth a concept that may explain how technology can function so similarly in films based on seemingly opposite social viewpoints. Cavell's aesthetic perspective, following Heidegger's, leads him to suggest that there are "elements" of film that lie inherent in the medium, to be revealed and defined only by actual films. One such element, Cavell hypothesizes, is the responsiveness of film to the "self-referentiality" of objects — including, I suppose, technological objects — to which persons in films, and possibly even a measure of control over what is presented how, must give way.

The fact may be that, in both films, the movie camera lingers over special effects-charged scenes of high technology because the camera is itself a technological thing. Film, in fact, is a technological enterprise. Whatever "human" narrative it sets itself to

present, in the end film is a matter of making pictures — and if the pictures are of outer space and of big machines built to put man's stamp on it, they are bound to look somewhat the same. Similar pictures: similar gut-level effect, similar message.

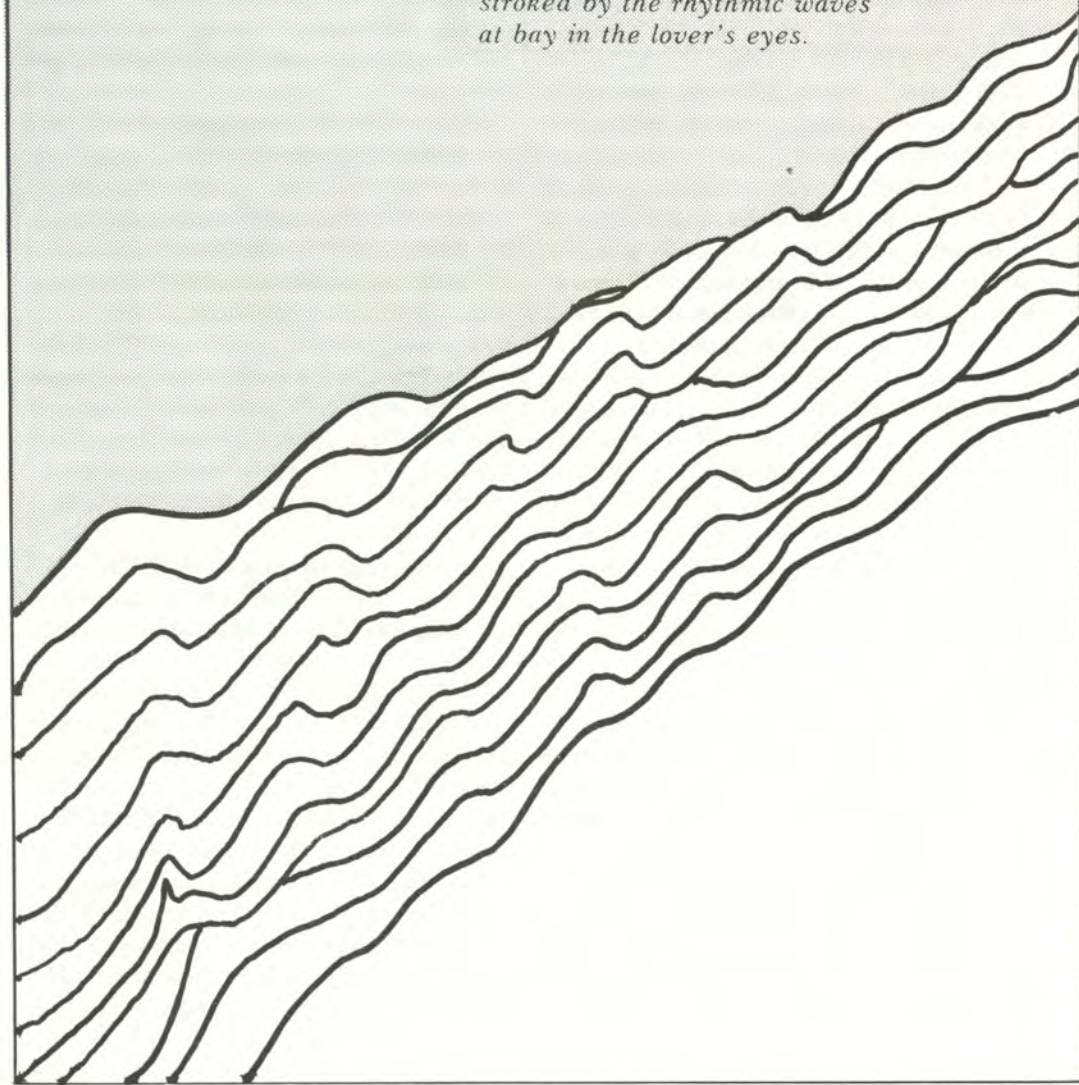
The classical-humanist view, expressed in *ST-TMP*, holds that technology will advance and that people will still be people — that technology, in fact, must finally submit to "humanization." The mystical view of *2001* says that humanity will advance and that technology will still be technology: that between the bone-tool and the spaceship is no difference worth noting. Humanity, thus, must finally fall victim to this pervasive force in the cosmos.

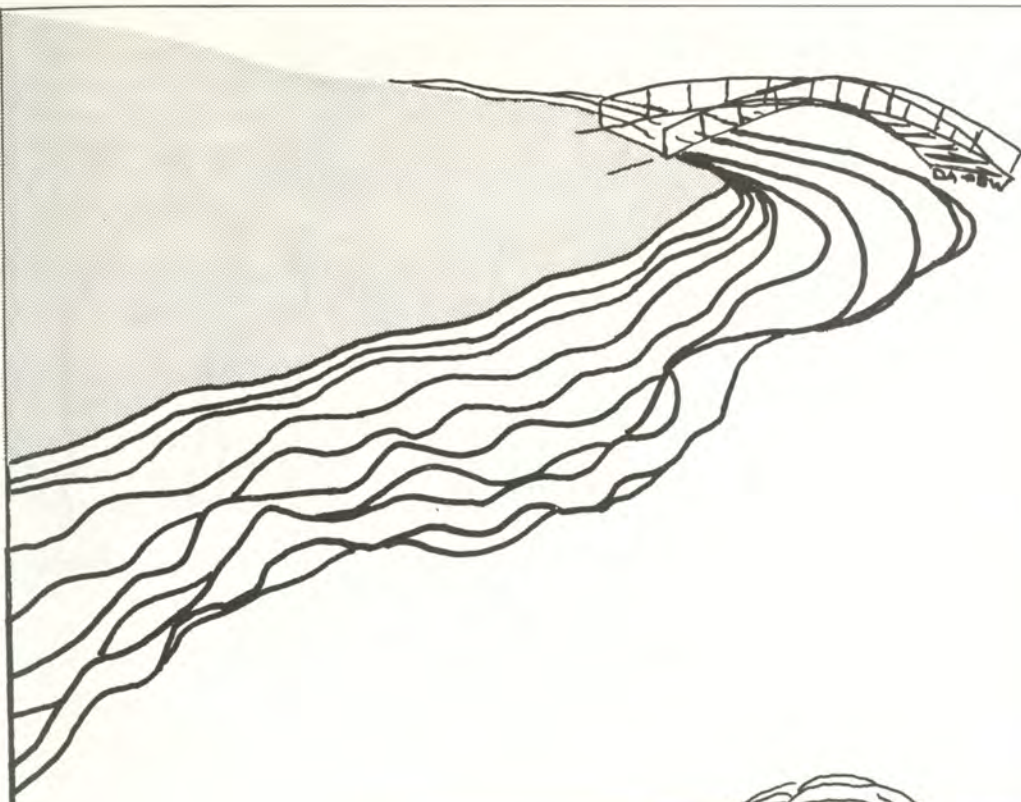
But in both cases, man and his machines go together. For good or ill, technology is what you find yourself stuck with when you head into space. Or into the studio to make a movie.

This is a mystical view of film, but then *2001* is a mystical film — a conscious attempt to sound mythic resonances and construct a new myth — and even *ST-TMP* orbits around mythic elements, though less self-consciously so, as it naively recaps received elements of the Great American Myth.

To draw again on Cavell, *ST-TMP* derives its interest from cultural antecedents. We would not care much about it if it were not, as one film buff said, "the *Star Trek* episode to end all *Star Trek* episodes." The characters live because we know them already. And we can say the same for technology. The recurrence in *ST-TMP* of images from *2001* — particularly of *2001*'s central character, technology — marks a necessary dimension of the cultural experience *ST-TMP* represents. Especially for those bright, inquisitive kids, fans of *Star Trek* when their naivete matched its own, and who are just now starting to grow up. □

*The woman wants to walk by the river
with its whispering spirits'
song in which she believes
she sings and yet she sinks
Wanting to be saved
by the mother in the water
by the lover in the river
by the mother in the lover
And licked by the water tongues
engulfed in cool arms
stroked by the rhythmic waves
at bay in the lover's eyes.*





*If only then can the woman in the womb
unfurl her fetal soul
long and white, her body flexed
like this poem's arching
To bridge the lover and the lover
to create the sleeping fetus
to suckle its fecund dreams
to receive its blind caresses.*

*The woman wants to walk over the river
on the spine of their loving,
pause at the climax of their embrace
and watch the river
Of their souls mingling dreams below.
If only then can the woman in the womb
unfurl her fatal soul
live and light, her body arched
with the colors of the river lover.*

— Janet Malotky



THE DRAIN OF LIGHT (A Nightmare)

*Pan of Water,
Fife fluting, sunk in the sea,
I summon the storm-sent waves to me —
Through pipes.
Tide rushing under the cesspool.*

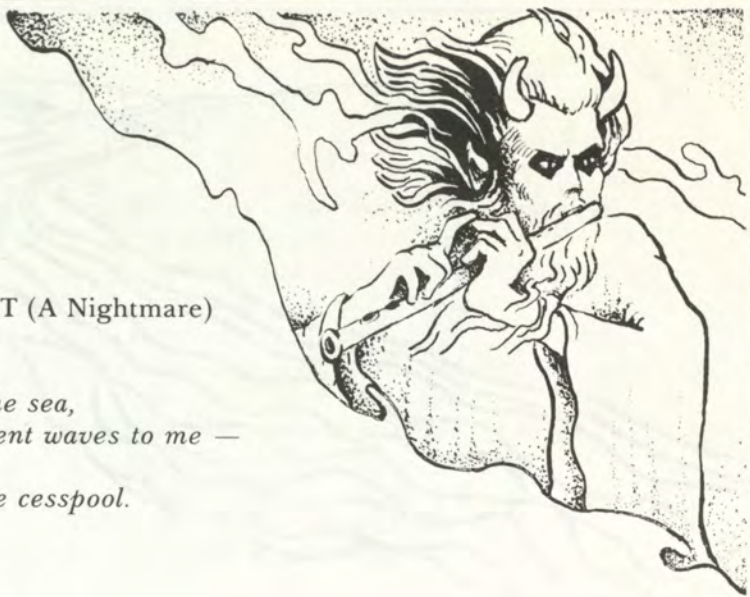
*The only fish I know
Have six legs,
Hatched from moth's eggs
To horn through taps with wilted wings
Toward the drain of light;
Hatched from pustules laid on sea-hair in green night.*

*Bubbles catch in hooked grey fur
As the mothfish flit through my pipes.
Their spined legs twitch as they capture air,
Filtering as they float toward light.
I get my drinking water there.*

*The way of the pipe is long and midnight,
The cavern of a cobra's guts.
But now the tap runs dry! What venom!
The queen moth's nest has swollen at the hooded head of night.*

*I be Ghost, a watcher,
A light wound glowing
In the corner of a chipped mind.
Falling, cracked, calling, toward the deep wet well of fear.
Moths in the belfry, don't you know, my dear:
The queen's swollen nest of watchers,
Watching from the hooded belfry.*

*Oh, darkling Ghost is cold without his robe of flesh,
His animal heat all molded into mirrored tombstones:
Watching, reflecting on himself, turning light and heat away.
Oh, I miss my faded robe of flesh and armory of bones;
I miss my warm mortality so.*

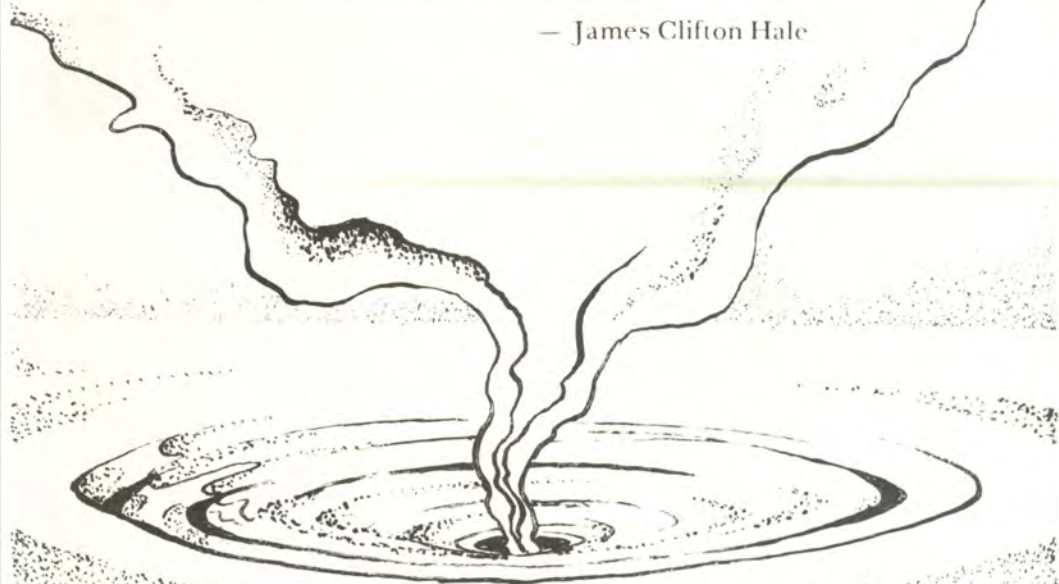


*Ghost is a bubble of light in the corner
Bouncing bleakly, bound to burst.
When he spits soul like a ruined pustule
Will his light pass on?
Ah yes, the ocean of brightness chilled and waiting,
Stagnant the sea of cooling souls!
Waiting — mossgreen — grey with sea-hair,
The Transmigration of Illumination
At the bottom of the drain of light.*

*Ghost so fears the cold and colder
Ocean of ether cut by grey and wailing wings!
To lie in that frigid puddle forever,
Looked down upon by the myriad eyes of the watching nest,
But when the queen's nest shrivels. . . .*

*Shrilly, the Water Pan calls on me to pour
Under the cesspool. Light under the cesspool!*

— James Clifton Hale



James Clifton Hale

is a junior English major and Christ College student who, following de Sade, cherishes a bent for the abnormal

N. DORRING



AUTUMN SONG

*What can I do
with a quiet evening's
wraparound love feelings
What kind of a dream
Is a dream about alone —
again.*

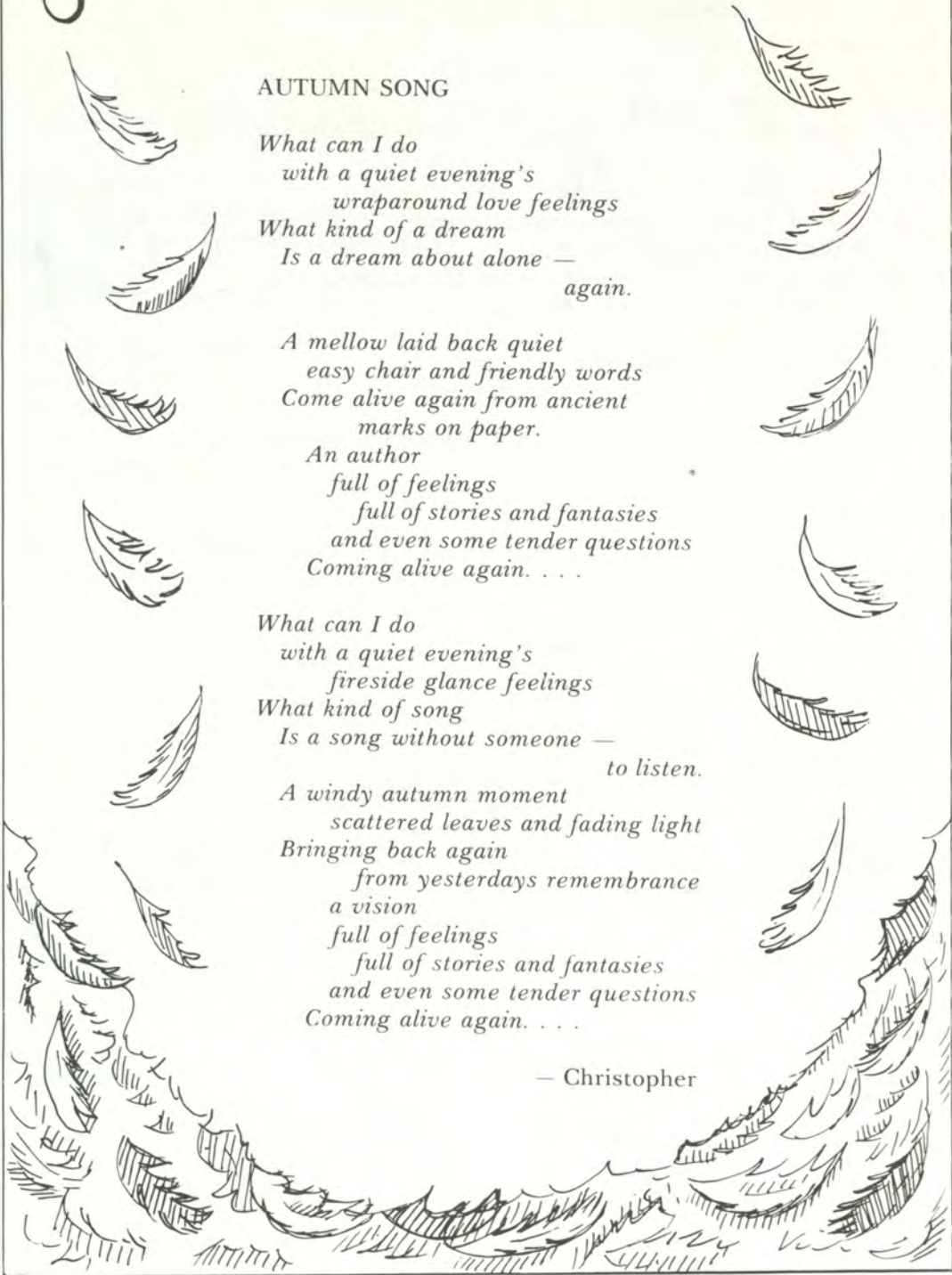
*A mellow laid back quiet
easy chair and friendly words
Come alive again from ancient
marks on paper.*

*An author
full of feelings
full of stories and fantasies
and even some tender questions
Coming alive again. . . .*

*What can I do
with a quiet evening's
fireside glance feelings
What kind of song
Is a song without someone —
to listen.*

*A windy autumn moment
scattered leaves and fading light
Bringing back again
from yesterdays remembrance
a vision
full of feelings
full of stories and fantasies
and even some tender questions
Coming alive again. . . .*

— Christopher



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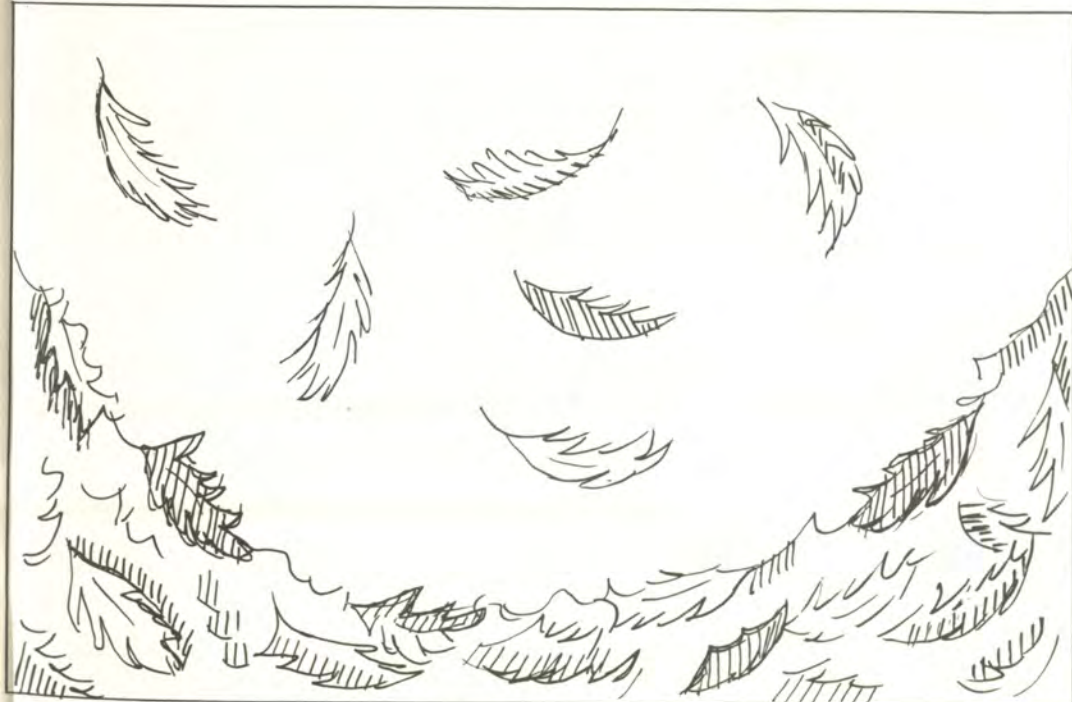
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Christopher

is a neat poet who,
following Batman,
refuses to disclose
his true identity.

Footnote

*This issue of The Lighter
is dedicated to*

VAN C. KUSSROW JR.
*professor of speech and drama
on leave of absence*

*whose support for The Lighter, like his
vision for Valparaiso University, has
helped guide the enterprise at times
when results seemed most unlikely.*



