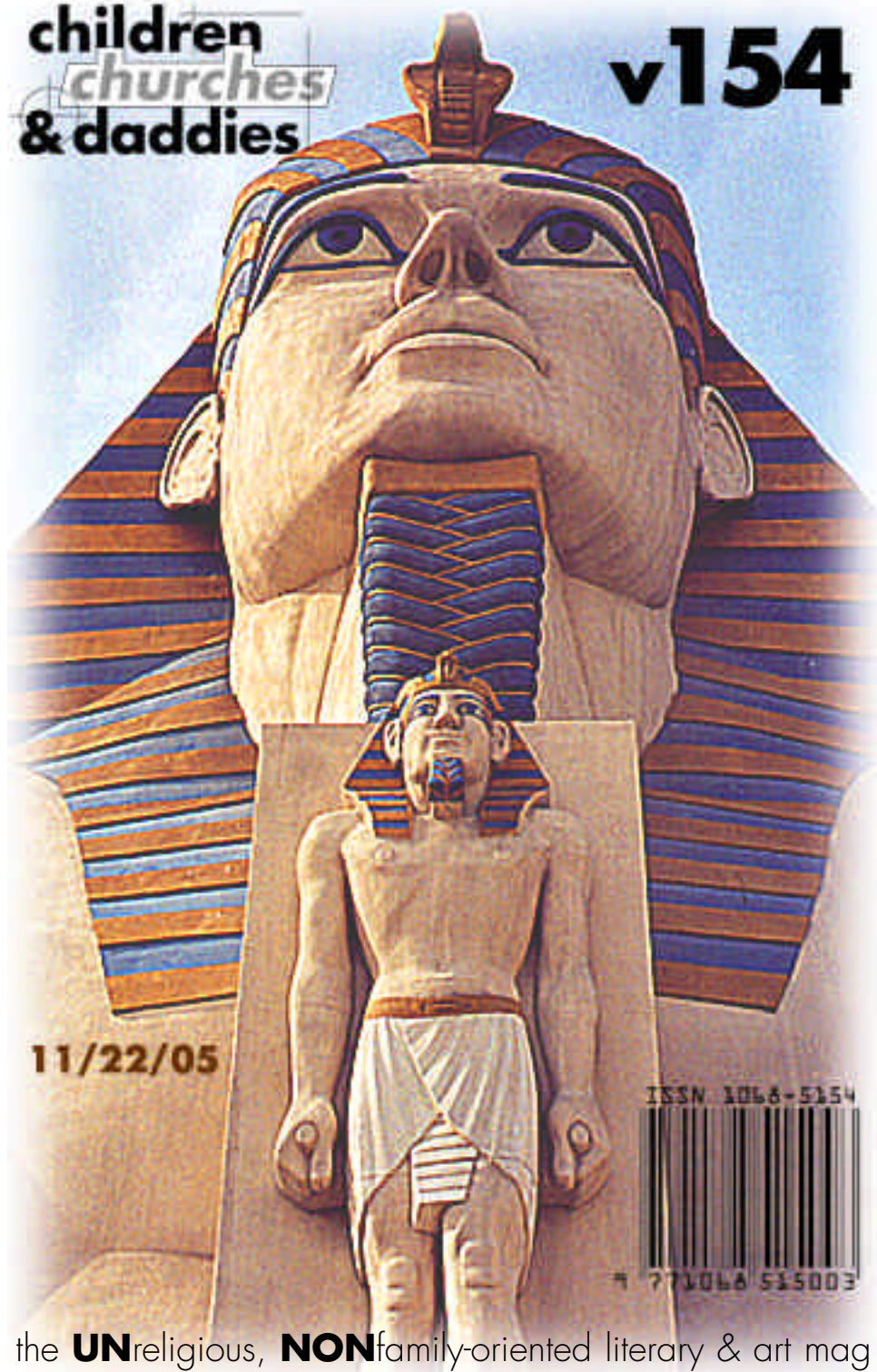


children
churches
& daddies

v154



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the **UN**religious, **NON**family-oriented literary & art mag

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Cover of statue in Las Vegas,
Nevada.

the boss lady's editorial

Sexism in a Nutshell

As I grew up I did what I thought was expected of me. I didn't bring up unmentionable subjects to my parents. I didn't burp out loud. I didn't complain. And I didn't know why.

And it wasn't that my parents, or my teachers, or my peers, were trying to cram a certain lifestyle down my throat. It was just the norm, what was expected, what everyone was used to (like when parents have a child - if it's a boy they dress them in blue and if it's a girl they dress them in pink, and they give them sex-appropriate toys as they become toddlers — because that's what the kids should want).

When women are born, they are given pink dresses and bows in their hair. Little boys are given light blue jumpers. Even when they are infants, even if other adults can't tell what the sex of the child, this is done - precisely to insure that the rest of the world will know what the sex of the child is. As they are raised, they are given toys to play with - girls the infamous Barbie, and boys the popular G.I. Joe. Girls progress to baby dolls they can dress and feed and burp, with accessories such as baby bottles, strollers and blankets. Boys progress to model cars and trucks, then on to guns and weapons, then the prized bicycle, then sports equipment, then building and erector sets.

As they grow, parents decide what clothes the children will wear, and what their hair will look like, and what toys they will play with, and how they will go about playing. Girls are clothed in little dresses, fully equipped with tights and buckled shoes, and are given little bows to hold back their longer, more cumbersome hair. They are encouraged to have a best friend to stay in the house with, to play house with, to play quietly with, to put make-up on, and to maintain a one-on-one, more intimate relationship. They role-play, and even in their play define roles for themselves - or at least define that there are roles that exist in the world.

As boys grow they are encouraged to go outdoors, to be rowdy, to find new friends, explore boundaries, play sports where they learn cooperation and competition, and even learn to battle in play fights. They are dressed in comfortable pants and t-shirts and athletic sneakers. Their hair is short

and manageable. They learn to get dirty. They learn to win. They learn to lead other boys in play - larger numbers of children than women are accustomed to dealing with.

Each sex interacts with other children of primarily the same sex, but these same-sex children have been taught like them to do the things their sex is supposed to do. They reinforce the behavior of other children - the behavior taught to them from their parents, their siblings, their toys, their television, their movies, their fairy tales. Each sex learns about interactions with others, but they learn entirely different things. The traits each sex take from these experiences are vastly different from the traits of the other sex.

Girls learn the importance of intimacy and trust, fostered by their female best friend. They learn not to be rowdy - they learn a more sedentary form of play. They learn the value of taking care of others. They learn to pretend and role-play the position of mother. They learn the value of their physical looks. They learn from their physical idol - the Barbie doll. If Barbie was a real woman, at 5' 10" her measurements would probably be 38, 18, 32, and she would weigh 110 pounds - an almost unattainable figure at best.

Boys learn the importance of working with other people toward a common goal. They learn to get along with a large number of people. They learn to win - they learn the American notion of competition, and they also learn the harder lesson of not trusting others, especially when other children are working toward the same goal as they are. They learn to explore new things and not be afraid. They learn to stretch themselves physically. They learn to work toward their goals. They learn about pain, about losing, and about winning. And although boys do not necessarily gain close relationships in the same way girls do, they gain a common bond between other boys - any and all boys that can jump in and join the game with them.

I'd see these differences, and the more time I spent on my own, the more I questioned how I was supposed to act, what I was supposed to say, how I was supposed to dress, what I was supposed to like. I saw the way men treated women in relationships, how women primarily reacted to the things men did instead of acting on their own. I also saw women feel like they were being pushed around, like they were being treated unfairly.

And then I saw some statistics about rape. That one in four women will be raped by the time they leave college; that one in three women will be raped in their lifetime. That over eighty percent of college-age rapes are committed by someone the victim knew.

Yeah, I did my research about rape and tried to educate myself about it. I became a workshop facilitator and heard a lot of stories from women who had been raped, even from men who were marrying a survivor of a

rape, or a man who was beaten up by men after he raped their girlfriend.

I heard a lot of stories. But now I'd like to tell you two stories about rape.

Let me first tell you a story about a woman. I can't tell you her name, because the law prevents me.

You see, this woman is the typical victim of a stranger rape. She was walking down the street after getting off of a late train from work and she was cornered by a man with a knife. She was violated, she was hurt, she had the blood stains and bruises to prove it. And she decided she wanted to report it.

She went to the hospital the next morning, after she put on an extra layer of clothing and huddled in her bed the night before, trying to sleep. The doctors took her clothing for evidence, and then they took evidence from her body.

She leaned back in a cold chair half-naked in a doctor's office, feet in straps three feet apart, and then they took samples from inside her to see if they could prove who was there. They pulled fifty hairs from her head and twenty-five pubic hairs with their fingers to compare them to what they brushed off her.

She then talked to the police. Because she couldn't identify him, because he had time to flee, because the police couldn't match the evidence to anyone, she couldn't find justice.

But her friends helped her through this. They slept in her room with her at night, when she didn't want to be alone. They listened to her. They accepted her. And she was able to take the first steps toward recovering.

It's a sad story, isn't it? She didn't deserve it. But it seems, especially with her attempts to find her attacker and with the support she received, that she may be able to eventually get over the pain.

Now I would like to tell you the story of another woman. I could tell you her name, but I told her I wouldn't.

She begged me not to.

She's a junior at a state university. The first day she came to college, the day she moved in, her boyfriend raped her.

He gave her roommate so much alcohol that she passed out, and wouldn't know what was going on. He gave his victim so much alcohol that she could barely think or move. During the course of the evening she wondered why her boyfriend was pushing alcohol on her roommate. Now she knows, hindsight is 20/20, and now she feels guilty. She should have said something to him, she thought, but what could she have said at the time? And why should she have suspected anything?

She didn't go to the hospital. She thought something was wrong with

her only because she didn't want him. She thought what happened was normal. She couldn't understand why she was so hurt.

She didn't tell anyone. She didn't talk to her boyfriend about it — in fact, she didn't even break up with him until weeks later, when she couldn't take it anymore and had to come up with an excuse to avoid him.

No one understood why she was acting so strangely. No one understood her mood swings. No one understood why she would break into tears for no reason. She would stand in the bathroom of her dormitory, look in the mirror, and cry before she took her morning shower. She looked so tired in the mirror those mornings, like she had been attacked just the night before.

She waited about six months before she told anyone. She told one friend. He did everything he could to help her. But there wasn't much he could do. She never told her family. She felt ashamed. She felt alone.

And as she told more people, she received more support. But it only came one year, two years later.

You see, even though it wasn't her fault, and even though she had help from her friends, she still couldn't help but think that she could have done something to stop it. She teased him. She was drunk.

He was her boyfriend.

Now, these are two pretty depressing stories, I know. But when people hear the word "rape," they tend to think of story number one first. The man could have been jumping out from a bush, an alley, or breaking into her home in the middle of the night, as long as he was a stranger. He had a weapon. It was a crime. But both of these stories are similar, because they both are rape. Pure and simple. According to Illinois law, for example, if a woman is intoxicated, she cannot consent to sex, just as she cannot consent to driving a car. That alone defines what the second woman went through as rape. Her feelings, her pain, also define it as such.

And why are so many women frightened by the judicial process? Because many times women are blamed for the rape (the victim is blamed for the crime committed against her), by men as well as women. On the stand, a woman has to defend her past, defend what she was wearing, explain why she went to his place, why she was alone with him, why she kissed him. The accused's past is protected, and in essence, the woman becomes the one on trial.

...

So yeah, I heard these stories, and I tried to help people who went

through this. But the more I researched rape, the more I realized that rape is only one part of the wide spectrum of misogyny — of hatred towards women.

Then I thought of how women are degraded and objectified in pornography, or how they are treated unfairly in the workplace. There is a different set of rules for women to follow versus men in society, and all of those rules are designed to let women know that their place is behind men.

Then I looked at history. Wedding ceremonies have had the father give away his daughter — his possession — to a man she could love, honor and obey, in a ceremony conducted by a man under the rule of a male god. Virgin women have even been sacrificed throughout history to assorted gods. Ancient Chinese mothers bound their daughter's feet for years so their feet would be petite (but deformed and difficult to walk with), because it was fashionable for women to have small lotus-shaped feet, which would make their young girls "marriage material." Some tribes have made it a custom to add tight rings around women's necks, continually adding more, to elongate the neck, while other tribes pierce women's ears and put successively larger rings inside the holes, to stretch the ear lobe down past the shoulder. Women were hunted and killed in colonial America for being witches — when they were in fact no more than individuals who practiced independent, rational thought in a society that didn't like their women to think.

I looked at the way our parents were raised. The woman was expected to work only during war time, and then only to assist men or to work in menial tasks. They were otherwise expected to cook for the family, to clean the house, and to please the husband. The man was the owner of his castle, worked during the day to make this life possible for his family, and expected to be pampered by his wife and children when he got home.

Then I looked at the way I was raised. I was given dolls and pretty pink dresses and was encouraged to play with my best friend indoors instead of roughhousing outside with a group. My hair was long, and curled for special occasions. I had to listen to my elders, especially the male ones.

It translated to they way we were raised to be as adults. Women in society are taught to be "feminine," to be giving, and to be weak instead of assertive. They are taught to look good for men, and they are taught that they are nothing unless they get married.

So then I looked around me. Advertising and Hollywood demanded beautiful bodies in their brainless women, who blindly followed their leading man. The workplace had female secretaries serving the male CEOs, shaving their legs and wearing skirts and make-up and pantihose and high heels and earrings and necklaces and rings and bracelets... and

being called “babe.”

Speaking of language, even the language I heard around me — from being called a pumpkin to a tomato to a peach — made me feel like I was placed on this earth to be consumed, not to be a human being.

Let’s go through the list. Men can degrade women by calling them a child — babe, girl, or baby. Men can degrade women by calling them an animal — like a chick, a bitch, a fox, a cow, a pig, a heifer, a sow, a horse — or even a pussy. Men can degrade women by calling them food — like sugar, honey, a peach, a tomato, a pumpkin, a piece of meat, pie or cherry pie, they can refer to their cherry, their melons or refer to tang (Hell, call a woman a sweep pea, or prepared foods, like a muffin or a cheese-cake, or even call her a dish, worthy of consumption). Men can degrade women by calling them inanimate objects, like a hoe or a doll — or even refer to their body parts as things like a bush, or her crack or her hole or her box. Men can degrade women by referring to making love — I mean, having sex — violently, like bagging her, banging her, hammering her, pumping her, screwing her, or nailing her. Men can even use sports analogies for sex with women, like scoring, because when you separate the women from sex with sports, power tools and violence, it becomes easy to make the women not matter at all.

So I started to work for acquaintance rape education groups, running seminars, making posters and brochures and the like for women who were in pain and felt like they had no place else to turn. And the more I saw this pain on such a wide scale, the more angry I got. I’m an intelligent woman, I thought, and I as well as all women don’t deserve to be treated like this.

Although I am no longer working for any women’s groups, I still feel like I am fighting. But what I am fighting for and how I am fighting for it is different from how the average person thinks of a woman “crusader.” I am fighting for people to look at women as people first, before they assume we are less intelligent, less strong, or less valuable. I am fighting, through my writing, through the way I think, through my example, for men to think of women as being on the same level as them, to look at women as their equals. I am fighting for feminism.

The definition of feminism, according to Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, is “the theory of the political, economic and social equality of the sexes.” That’s it. It doesn’t mean women should get a job before a man just because she’s a woman and has had bad breaks. It doesn’t mean women have to dress and look like men if they don’t want to. It doesn’t mean pornography should be made illegal, and it doesn’t mean all women should hate all men.

In practice, it means we should have the same opportunities as men. The choice to take these opportunities is up to the individual — not up to their sex. In theory, it means we should not be looked at as inferiors solely because we are female. In other words, we should not be treated unfairly because of the choices that we as individuals make, if we have every right to make those choices.

It is because of the way that women are looked at in society that there are political economic and social disparities between the sexes. It is because of ideas, not laws. These ideas create a spectrum of sexism that starts at things as innocent as jokes and cute nicknames, moves to catcalls in the street to harassment in the workplace to unequal pay for equal work, and then moves on to things as cruel and as painful as wife-beating and rape. All of these things, severe or tame, stem from the idea that women are inferior and all of these things contribute to the inequality between the sexes. They all are manifestations of the same idea, only in different degrees.

A friend of mine told me about how in the Soviet Union, after the revolution, Stalin and the government wanted to make sure all people were equal — that women were free from their economic dependence on men — so they enacted laws to make women work and industrialize the country. But ideas about the role of women in society did not change, and in the post-revolution economic crisis, not only then did the women have to work, but they also had to stand in line for rations of bread. Household chores were still women's tasks; the rules changed, but the ideas stayed the same. When women were asked whether they were happier after the revolution or before, they said before, because at least then they didn't have to work as well as do their expected chores.

Today in America, we as Americans want more and more — we drive our gas-guzzling SUVs, and travel to the islands south of the United States for our vacations, and we pay exorbitant amounts of money to sit in a movie theatre to escape our dreary lives with someone else's stories. We expect our government to cover our healthcare costs for us as we age, and we expect our government to continue paying oil companies so we can guzzle oil and has for our cars and our homes for cheaper. And to pay for this, most men can't do it alone — so they ask their wives to work full time jobs. Okay, fine, we can do that, but I'll bet that when these couples have children (which the women have to bear), it is almost always the women's responsibility to raise the children as well.

Because that too is a woman's job.

Have a job, take care on the house, take care of the kids — and the least you could do is act ladylike and dress up and look pretty for us men.

You know, I'm not trying to enact any laws. I'm not trying to twist anyone's arm. A change doesn't occur in a free society by forcing rules down people's throats. All I'm trying to do is make both men and women think about the conflicts between the sexes in all of their manifestations, why they occur, and what effect they have on our society. To think. And then to act.



Janet Kuypers®

Janet Kuypers
Editor in Chief

editorial
adapted from:

(1) "Nonfiction," which appeared in *cc&d* magazine as well as the chapbook *Gasoline and Reason* with Cheryl Townsend, and the books *The Average Guy's Guide (to Feminism)*, *Hope Chest in the Attic, (woman.)* , and *Exaro Versus*, (2) "Growing Up Female," which was the editorial in *cc&d* magazine v086 as well as the books *(woman.)* and *The Average Guy's Guide (to Feminism)* , and (3) "Sexism In General," which was edited from the introduction to the book *(woman.)* and also published in the book *Contents Under Pressure*.



poetry the passionate stuff

An Age of Enlightenment
Will Have

Exorcised Evil Spirits
physically kept at bay
regular aspirin tablet
spiritually by a psalm
no different the virus
occupying the computer
An effective anti virus
such as the Holy Bible
keeps circuits flowing
enhancing living fluid
that sustains the body
so encourages a spirit
down through dark ages

(c) 2005 Frank Anthony

FOUND POEM

Mather Schneider

A man sits on the median
at Ajo and Valencia.

He has a sign around his neck:

"I KNOW I'M UGLY
BUT I'M STILL HUNGRY.

GOD BLESS."

AIDSwatch

Frog sweat may kill HIV

from <http://www.tennessean.com>:

By CLAUDIA PINTO, Staff Writer

Published: Friday, 10/21/05

One day, the key ingredient of a vaginal cream used to prevent the spread of HIV could be “frog sweat.”

Vanderbilt University researchers found that secretions from the skin of some Australian frogs were effective in the test tube at killing HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. They hope their findings will lead to the creation of a topical ointment containing synthetic secretions that will help cut the spread of the deadly worldwide pandemic.

“Anything we discover that has the potential to stop HIV is exciting,” said Dr. Derya Unutmaz, a Vanderbilt associate professor of microbiology and immunology. “This is a virus that we have been unable to stop. Worldwide, there are 4 million new infections each year, and that number is growing.”

HIV attacks the immune system. Specifically, it invades “T” cells, which help the body fight off germs and diseases.

In the study, researchers took healthy T cells and exposed them to HIV. Then they added the frog secretions, or peptides, to see whether they would prevent the cells from being infected. They did — 99% of the time.

“The peptides were able to inactivate the virus within minutes,” Unutmaz said. “They were very potent.”

The idea for the study sprang from a hallway chat between Unutmaz and Dr. Louise Rollins-Smith, a Vanderbilt associate professor of microbiology and immunology. The two have labs next to each other.

Rollins-Smith, a zoologist, studies secretions emitted by frogs when they are alarmed or their skin is injured that protect them from disease. It was already known that the peptides could kill bacteria, but Rollins-Smith told Unutmaz that she was curious to investigate whether they would act as an antiviral agent as well. Viruses are more complex than most bacteria, and treatments for viral illnesses, such as colds and the flu, are harder to develop.

“I said, ‘You know, why don’t we try it on HIV?’ “ Unutmaz said.

The pair tested the secretions of 12 different frogs. The best results came from three species from Australia.

“They have special glands that are like antibiotic pumps,” Rollins-Smith said.

The next step for the Vanderbilt researchers is to test to see if the secretions will protect monkeys from becoming infected. If that test and later ones are promising, it would still be several years before an ointment could be created and made available to the public.

Experts say an ointment is a needed alternative to condoms, which some people refuse to use because they diminish pleasure. Despite the widespread availability of condoms in the United States, there are still nearly 40,000 new HIV infections each year. More than 1,000 people have HIV or AIDS in Davidson County, according to the Tennessee Department of Health.

Rollins-Smith said the discovery that frog secretions may potentially save lives reinforces the importance of protecting animals and their environments. She noted that the Australian frog species used in the study are being threatened by disease and disappearing habitat.

“We need to protect these frog species,” she said, “because they may hold secrets that could be valuable to humans.”

The findings of the team, which, in addition to the Vanderbilt researchers, included scientists from several countries, were published in the September edition of the Journal of Virology.



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from <http://www.libertypost.org/>:

Frog Sweat Blocks HIV

Source: The Center for North American Herpetology

URL Source: <http://www.cnah.org/news.asp?id=222>

Published: Oct 27, 2005 Author: Leigh MacMillan

A new weapon in the battle against HIV may come from an unusual source — tropical frogs. Investigators at Vanderbilt University Medical Center have discovered that compounds secreted by frog skin are potent blockers of HIV infection.

The findings, reported this month in the *Journal of Virology*, could lead to topical treatments for preventing HIV transmission and reinforce the value of preserving the Earth's biodiversity.

"We need to protect these species long enough for us to understand their medicinal cabinet," says Louise A. Rollins-Smith, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, who has been studying the antimicrobial defenses of frogs for about six years. Frogs, she explains, have specialized granular glands in the skin that produce and store packets of peptides, small protein-like molecules. In response to skin injury or alarm, the frog secretes large amounts of these antimicrobial peptides onto the surface of the skin to combat pathogens like bacteria, fungi and viruses.

Rollins-Smith happens to have the laboratory next door to Derya Unutmaz, associate professor of microbiology and immunology. During a hallway chat one day, the two decided it would be interesting to investigate whether any frog peptides have activity against human viruses, specifically HIV, the focus of Unutmaz's group.

Postdoctoral fellow Scott E. VanCompernelle screened 15 antimicrobial peptides from a variety of frog species for their ability to block HIV infection of T cells, immune system cells targeted by HIV. He found several that inhibited HIV infection without harming the T cells. The Australian Red-eyed Treefrog, *Litoria chloris*, had the highest levels of peptides that block HIV infection of all species that the researchers tested. The peptides appear to selectively kill the virus, perhaps by inserting themselves into the HIV outer membrane envelope and creating "holes" that cause the virus particle to fall apart, Unutmaz said.

"We like to call these peptides WMDs — weapons of membrane destruction," Unutmaz quips. It is curious that the antimicrobial peptides do not harm the T cells at concentrations that are effective against the



Crambo photo by John Yotko

virus, he notes, since HIV's outer membrane is derived from, and therefore essentially identical to, the cellular membrane. The investigators have proposed that the peptides act selectively on the virus in part because of its small size relative to cells.

The ability of the peptides to destroy HIV was enticing, but to be really effective as antimicrobial agents, they need to prevent transmission of HIV from dendritic cells to T cells, Unutmaz said. Dendritic cells, he explains, are the sentinels of the immune system. They hang out in the

mucus-generating surface tissues, scanning for invading pathogens. "Their purpose in life is to capture the enemy, bring it to the lymph node – the command center – and present it to the general, the T cell, to activate a battle plan," Unutmaz says. "It's a very efficient system that has allowed us to survive many insults, pathogens, and viruses."

But HIV is a wily foe. When it is picked up at the mucosal surface by a sentinel dendritic cell, it somehow evades destruction. Instead, it hides inside the cell, waiting to invade the T cell with a Trojan Horse-like mechanism. The ability of HIV to remain hidden in the dendritic cell, avoiding destruction by circulating antibodies and immune system cells, "may explain why after 20 years we don't have a vaccine for this virus," Unutmaz says.

To test the effectiveness of the frog peptides in preventing HIV transmission, VanCompernelle first allowed cultured dendritic cells to capture active HIV. He then incubated the HIV-harboring dendritic cells with antimicrobial peptides, washed the peptides away, and added T cells. "Normally the dendritic cell passes the virus to the T cell, and we get very efficient infection of the T cell," Unutmaz says. "But when we treated the dendritic cells with peptides, the virus was gone, completely gone. This was a great surprise."

The finding was puzzling, he explains, since the prevailing notion is that HIV captured by dendritic cells is hidden and protected. The investigators currently are using imaging technologies to test the hypothesis that HIV is actually cycling to the dendritic cell surface. "We think maybe it's popping its head out, looking around for a T cell, and then going back inside to hide until it cycles out again," Unutmaz said. If peptide is present outside the cell, "it targets the virus that pops up and kills it." Preliminary experiments suggest that the hypothesis is correct. "This is very exciting, as it suggests that these peptides could be very effective since the virus now has nowhere to hide," Unutmaz says. "And if this cycling is really happening, we may be able to generate a vaccine that will target virus captured by dendritic cells."

The frog peptides are an exceptional tool for probing "what the virus knows about the dendritic cell that we don't know," Unutmaz added. "How does HIV manage to survive and cycle back and forth to the cell membrane? If we can understand that, we'll find the gaps, and that will open a whole new universe of targets for intervention."

The investigators learned this week that the American Foundation for AIDS Research will fund their continuing quest to understand how the frog peptides kill HIV in dendritic cells. Their plans include imaging how the peptides work, screening additional frog peptides for activity, and testing peptides on a mucosal cell system to study the feasibility of developing them as prophylactics against HIV infection.

"If we are able to learn the mechanisms these peptides are using to kill HIV, it might be possible to make small chemical molecules that achieve the same results," Unutmaz says. Such chemicals would be more practical as therapeutic microbicides.

"This study is a great example of how collaboration across disciplines leads to big discoveries," Unutmaz says. Other members of the department of microbiology and immunology assisted the investigators by providing viruses for testing. The team found that membrane-coated viruses were susceptible to destruction by the frog peptides, but non-coated viruses, such as reovirus and adenovirus, were not affected.

R. Jeffery Taylor, Kyra Oswald-Richter, Jiyang Jiang, Bryan E Youree, Christopher R. Aiken and Terence S. Dermody at Vanderbilt are co-authors of the study. The research was supported by the National Institutes of Health, the Elizabeth B. Lamb Center for Pediatric Research, and the National Science Foundation.

CNAH Note: Thanks to Dr. David M. Hillis, University of Texas, Austin, for alerting us to this research news release.

eye on the sky

Is Pluto a Planet?

The Question: I'm a High school Senior and have a fair amount of knowledge of the outer planets. At one point in my career planning, I wanted to be an field expert for You (NASA). As of this morning I heard on GOOD MORNING AMERICA that Pluto is no longer considered a planet, just a big ball of ice. Is this true, and if so what is Pluto's current status in regards to its classification?

The Answer: The group who will decide the official status of Pluto for the professional astronomers world-wide (as they do all official questions related to objects in the Universe) is called the International Astronomical Union; in this particular case, IAU Division III (Planetary Systems Sciences) is taking the lead.

Pluto has been known as the ninth planet of our solar system since it was discovered by Clyde Tombaugh at Lowell Observatory in 1930. On the other hand, it has been clear for decades that Pluto does not fit in with the pattern of the other planets. Over the last few years, the accumulated information on Pluto and the discovery of an increasing number of other objects in the outer solar system with orbital characteristics very similar to those of Pluto have been discussed within the community of astronomers called "minor-planet researchers". The question of the official status of Pluto has recently come to the forefront because the orbits of some of these other objects are now sufficiently well determined that it is reasonable to begin including them in the catalog of orbits of what are now generically known as "Trans-Neptunian Objects" (TNOs).

IAU Division III has already recommended that Pluto be included as number 1 in a catalog of TNOs. Does this mean that Pluto has been demoted? The answer is no. Pluto will have dual classification as a planet and a TNO, at least for the time being.

Currently, the definition of a planet (as opposed to an asteroid or a TNO) is rather arbitrary. If astronomers reach a consensus on what the definition of a planet should be, then IAU may reclassify some Solar System objects. However, in the absence of such a consensus, the definition is historical and arbitrary; moreover, many people outside the professional astronomy community have an interest in this issue, as the media attention attests. "Until there is a consensus that one of the physical definitions is clearly the most useful approach in thinking about the solar system, the IAU will not 'demote' Pluto or 'promote' Ceres," says the IAU.

Brian Marsden, head of the IAU's Minor Planet Center, has also added his voice, as quoted in a press release. "There is no plan to 'downgrade' or 'demote' Pluto. It will stay as a planet."

poetry
the passionate stuff

Carry You Around

Michelle Greenblatt

With thanks to R.C. Hildebrandt

My back breaks
when I carry you around.
I wd travel w/you on my back
for miles if I didn't resent it so much,
if I knew you wanted to grow
feet and walk for yourself.

My legs grow limp
when I carry you around
straining against the ground
to keep my balance:
you weigh 60 lbs. more than
I

and hanging from my back
like a limp fish strung there
for the night's dinner
coating me w/a bad smell
and a little slime.

My neck aches
when I carry you around
from trying to keep my gaze
and pace
steady fixed
on the horizon and ground

My ears sting
from your words of encouragement
whispered
when I carry you around.

I want to drop you
when I carry you around
I want you to land
hard on your back,
just so you can see
the sky

when I carry you around.

6.17.200411

VENGEANCE FOR TRAID FRIENDSHIPS

Aaron Wilder

Our fateful lives were interwoven over time.
The truth, always hiding itself from your lies
and all of what we have come to know as real.
Our paths and their surrounding fabrics were ripped apart,
because loyalty is something you have never known,
betraying me by selling me to my enemies to fund your greater good.
You've made me feel again,
sharpened these senses until vengeance overran my mind.
And we will be again another time in a different way,
as your unknown nightmare voids your realm of sovereignty.
You'll feel my every breath again.
Instigating, hair raising, short breaths from behind.
The past was for the best in that it made me stronger today.
You'll be brought down to where I've learned to get around,
as a new day for you and I unveils,
beating you from behind polite smiles and passive eyes.
But be not afraid, it won't be too long until another end comes our way.
With darkened eyes from bright shining lies,
you'll never again have the luxury of piercing my eyes with pain,
stripping you of your dagger and rod iron wielding me.
I'm putting my life on hold to destroy all of your scheming dreams,
your consuming dreams that killed off pure thoughts and kindness,
tuning their destruction and reaping the benefits.
Your cries for release and reprieve will be crucified upon newly unmerciful
ears.
Where were your good intentions when I was needy and crippled in your way?
Time and again, asking to shine some light on what was your intent.
Now the total darkness that engulfed me will find you.
Just a "thank you" for never caring as I was yearning.
The only one I owe anything to is me,
to take a reuse your so-called dignity.
Had you no decency?
Or is it down with my serenity you stole?

Once Wanted You as my Friend

J. Kuypers

I should laugh about this. I know
that people will probably hear your stories
and think I was a bad and evil girl.

I don't care. I didn't want to be
a part of your life any more.

I wanted you as my friend
after I was falling apart
and I thought I had no one
and I wanted my life back
and because I believed you.

You told people I was your best friend
and you are a liar, plainly put.

I didn't know you'd fuck
your best friend's date. Hell,
fuck the guy for a month until
your neurotic ego can't take it.

I don't give a shit
about a year and a half
recovery from that
evil spell of yours
but I should never have forgiven you.



Maybe you need attention
from every penis you can get it from,
maybe you're more of an attention whore
than I could ever be,
than anyone I know could ever be,
by my neurotic tendencies
didn't keep me in my parent's house
while I studied for another job
because I didn't know what the Hell I wanted
and maybe my tendencies didn't make me
lose my friends
or go through men like hand rags
or give me sexually transmitted diseases

and didn't leave me fucking someone else
while I was engaged

 "I've never orgasmed
 while having sex with him," you'd say
well, I don't know what to tell you.

All I can think

is that you've made this bad
 out of straw and fabric scraps
 and I don't care if it rained yesterday
 and your precious bed smells like shit
 and you've got nothing clean to grab on to

well, you've made that bed
and now you have to lie in it.

so

so have a good night's sleep
while you try to make sense
of what you think is insane

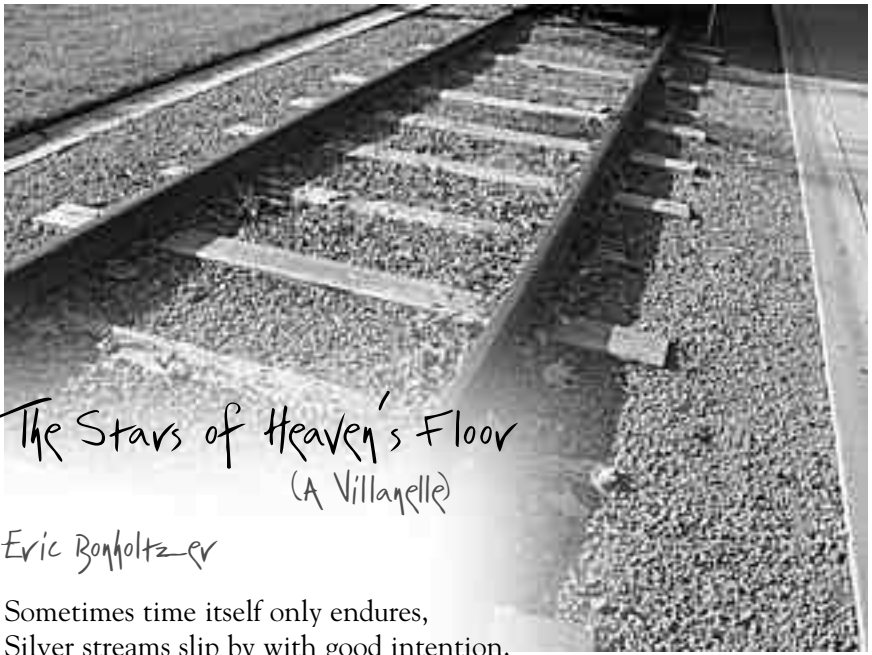
 God, the only insane thing
 is that your man still puts up with you
 or how much of your story
 haven't you told him?

So yes, I should be laughing
because you're the one filled
with so many questions. Please,
for your own benefit,
for OUR own benefit,
get them figured out.

I wanted to cut off ties from you sooner
but I would have had to lose one of my
closest friends in the process
and we couldn't have that (of course not).
But I'm glad your warped mentality
misconstrued what I said

 and that is exactly what you did
 nothing more, nothing less
but you at least got the idea
because no, I don't want to be a part
of your life any longer
and I don't want to openly condone
what you've done to your man
 and what you're *doing* to your man
and I want to walk away from this unscathed

so I think I will.



The Stars of Heaven's Floor

(A Villanelle)

Eric Bonholtzer

Sometimes time itself only endures,
Silver streams slip by with good intention.
What is lost will be found, a watch, a candle filled cake

A resonance, a clock, a cloaked shadow of before
Latter day knights and birthday candles going unmentioned
It is sometimes only time that endures

The schoolyard sits still, a moon echoing for
The line of children on a path to invention
Sometimes it cannot be found, a sigh, a simple laugh

A blank wall of crayoned scraped murals, abhorred
sands whipping across the face of relation
Dust settled, the wall still, time endured.

Longing for the one forgotten present, wanting more
The one wished for never stolen kiss of aggravation
In the lost and found book, not all lines even out.

While ivory tower hobos contemplate the stars of Heaven's floor
The tide ebbs flowing forward still, just one rail of the station.
Time is not a synonym for endurance
What is lost is often a memory found.

*This is also in the Eric Bonholtzer book **Remnants & Shadows**.*

SECRET

SQUIRE

He hides behind a drift of sand,
Watches her walk the shore
As the surf rolls in,
Baring reef through a hiss of spray.
The waves, departing, leave foam castles
At her feet where she stops, crouches down,
And plunges in her hands deeply,
Snatching up here and there a seashell.

Philip W. Reyna

On his elbows, his knees, deep in the trenches
Of his embattled heart,
He watches her,
Picks her out amidst the spaces
Between the reeds
Like a slender stray's lambency
Along fence pickets,
There and then gone
Just a second—
Much too long!—
Before she reappears again,
Passing with only a whisper
Which is the wind.

Untitled

Erica A. L Huillier

i am supposed
to be calling
you back, but
comfortable
in the thought
of you
waiting. so i will
wait
with you until
the sun goes
to sleep and i
am too lonely
to stand it any
more.

Not long and she's gone from him,
Slipping through his gaze,
Forever. Only footprints left
In the sand.
And for this he weeps,
While drifts a thought,
Like the breeze,
Stirs a question:
Why the seashells,
And not I?

POEM FROM THE METAPHYSICAL SALVAGE

‡ SCRAP LANGUAGE YARI) (THE LAST CLASSROOM CHALKBOARD))

Kenneth DiMaggio

The last classroom chalkboard
with an unfinished but vandalized lesson
on American history became a weapon
of mass destruction after a round iron heart
made shrapnel of its slate horizon

Johnny may not be able
to read or write
but so long as he knows how
to salvage pieces of the Emancipation
Proclamation and the First
Amendment into marijuana pipes
and Kalashnikov rifles illegally made
in metal shop then he will still
have learned his lessons

But is there still time for him to drop out
and write his premature epitaph
in the lyrics to a song
that will be played in a stolen car radio

Is there still time to run away and join
the psycho-surrealistic circus where
crime meets the comics and criminals
become the new cartoon superheroes

And if you want to be a writer

aim and fire at the metaphysical

So what if you can never prove
what you may be hitting

with luck you might leave
behind a legend for having tried
to put a few caps into God

and for trying to trash out his house called *Heaven*

Sedated in the Garden of the Rest Home

Don Moyer

Al forgot
how to roll the ball.
This can happenn to you --
the barbed hook
through the jaw,
reeled in
by Old Father Time
and flopping on
some barbaric shore,
tikk like Al,
you forget
all
and Loosestrife
does your talking, and
Valerian
just nods
her big pink
heads.



On Break, art from Cheryl Townsend

THE BIRTH OF CAPITALISM

James B. Nicola

For the first fifteen centuries
of Christendom
the banning of banking
and proscription of profit
made the merchants and bankers
Muslims and Jews.
Did God in all His
Capitalistic Glory
His new-age new-found Wisdom
whisper to a Pope
to change the rules?

—THERE'S TOO MUCH MONEY
TO BE MADE. SURE, MODEST INTEREST
IS ALLOWED. JUST NOT
USURY, WHICH IS
UNREASONABLE AND A SIN.

—*But Lord, does this mean
Absolute Truth,
Thy Truth, is not eternal
and immutable?*

—NO, DUMPKOPF, THE RULE'S
ALWAYS BEEN
THE SAME, IT'S YOUR
INTERPRETATIONS
DOWN THERE, YOU SO
IMPERFECT
EXEGETES AND
EVANGELISTS.

—*Oh. I see. I guess.*

—AND WHO
ARE YOU TO QUESTION, YOU?

—*Right.*

—AND HOW ABOUT SOME
GOLDEN STATUARY
TO CELEBRATE MY GLORY?

—*Really? You'd like that?*
But Jesus said—

—AND LOOK WHAT I DID
TO HIM, FOR SPREADING
THAT CULT OF
HUMILITY.

—*Cult?*

—IT'S GLORY GLORY GLORY
THAT I WANT.
LOOK AT THAT FIRST COMMANDMENT.
FEAR ME. WORSHIP ME!

WHY DO YOU THINK
I SENT YOU CAPITALISM?

SO YOU CAN MAKE
MY TEMPLE
BIGGER THAN THE NEXT GUY'S
AND BRIGHTER, AND
RICHER. AND HOW

CAN YOU OBLITERATE
THE INFIDEL WITHOUT
BRAVE ARMIES AND
TECHNOLOGIES! —'Tech-
nologies?' —LIKE

ATOM BOMBS. —*Adam who?*
He had a last name?

—HOW'D I EVER LET YOU
GET ELECTED POPE?

—*I'm not arguing, Lord.*

*I only want
 to see. So, money?*
 —MONEY! ALL
 YOU CAN MAKE FOR
 THE GLORY OF —Yes
I know. God in the Highest.
 —DID YOU JUST INTERRUPT
 ME?
 (The pope sealed
 his lips and threw
 away the key,
 his eyes as big as
 silver dollars, or
 golden ducats, rather.)
 AND DON'T BOTHER
 ME AGAIN. THIS MAGIC LAMP ONLY
 GIVES ME ONE MORE
 VISIT, AND YOU KNOW
 WHAT THAT ONE
 HAS TO BE FOR.
 —Oh!
 —SO DON'T MAKE ME COME DOWN
 THERE AGAIN
 UNTIL IT'S TIME!

And thus we owe
 the growth if not
 the birth of
 Capitalism
 to the family-binding
 principle of
*Just wait till your Father
 gets home.*

Learning the Ropes

Arthur Gottlieb

A noose dangles under my nose
 Out on a limb
 I could easily slip into it
 and hang myself

Love is a tug of war.
 Standing on principle
 and anchored to a knot
 in my throat,
 i pull skywards.

Slippery as snake
 my tongue entwines a cry
 on the roof of my mouth.

Wrist ligaments are forearms
 cord as I strain to clamp down
 on my damp lifeline.

Looping my left leg
 over the lump, I inch up
 gaining ground against gravity.

Just as I'm about to seize
 the best of both worlds
 my head pops through the O-zone
 and fits for a moment
 in a halo no rope holds.

My Self-Defense

Alex Galper

I am eating a delicious borsht to protest wolfish capitalism
I enjoy the fattest solyanka to fight dominance of big corporations
I torture myself with Cutlets A La Kiev in the memory of victims
of the communist Gulag
Devour Freedom Fries for the bombed-out Afghanistan,
Oven-baked hens with parsley - to stop the war in Iraq
A whole roasted piglet on a skewer to prevent Palestinian kamikazes
from bombing Israeli discos
Withdraw you armies from Chechnya, or I will finish this apple strudel
Allow gays to get married, or I am ordering a cappuchino with cream.

Translated from Russian by Mike Magazinnik and Igor Satanovsky.

Library Sonnet (10) for Cissy

Michael Cervoalo



Met her on the message board of our favorite soap opera
(watching it is my secret vice),

and

we soon moved to a new script:
from the sporadic responses of a public forum
to the every day e-mails to each other,
kidred spirits communing in cyberspace,
her every epistle enhancing her attractiveness
until it wouldn't have mattered what she looked like
AND THEN,

then came the picture

that put to shame any picture
in any book on the shelf

The Rise and Fall of A Made Man

Eric Ethridge

I'm going to kick up my heels and smoke a big cigar,
drive a car with more leather than an overweight cow,
wear suits made by people with last names I can't spell,
carry a large, black gun that doubles as my penis in times of need;
walk around untouched by the law, with everyone riding in my pocket.

I'm going to get ratted on by someone I know far too well,
testified against by the mother of my second illegitimate child,
thrown in a jail where none of the last names end in vowels,
crack rocks with a hammer I wish could double as my penis,
walk around getting touched by everyone, Lucky Strikes in my pocket.

I'm going to get gang raped by a bunch of my friends,
take showers with large men who treat me like dirt,
raise my voice two octaves and cut my clothes in suggestive places,
trade a little bit of my leftover dignity for a pack of stale Camels.
walk around, hands in my pockets, doing the 25 to life of a made man.



art from David Matson

21st Century Plastic

Christopher Barnes, UK

The dust cart	Window wipers
travels	drag
its circumbendibus	moisture-cling
through	on glass
Market Square	like
with my	a skiddy-fresh
bic razor.	shower mirror.

Blue Snow and the Heavy Bat

Larry S. Lafferty

December air is never heavy
Until it grabs your throat and holds
On, slamming the chosen words right
Back down to your gut where you will
Never think to look.
Blown down Harwood Avenue
Like two crushed and balled hot dog wrappers,
We swirl and flash and pray
That the garbage cans and street sweepers
Don't find us
Before we find them.

Blue coats are best for this kind of weather
But I don't have mine. Yours looks just right
Until I touch your arm.
The blue fades and runs into the sidewalk cracks.
You laugh. I didn't want you to, and that's what
I am thinking when the man across the street throws
The snowball at us, and it becomes unknown
Whether he is friend or foe.
Whether the snowball is malicious or magical.
I want to know because I have never known a snowball to lie.

I touch your hand, and your skin starts
To fade and run into the sidewalk cracks.
You laugh again. I guess I mind
All this, and you, maybe you don't?
We wait for the second snowball, because those are the rules,
One snowball follows the first,
But the man is gone,
Leaving only his smile, a grey coat and a scarf.
Now why would he do that?



Next thing I know, you say
“Crystal” rhymes with “pistol,”
So I say that sounds like
“Smoking snowball guns”
And you laugh for the third time.
Then, since we have been breathing,
We become much older and I am standing
In your room in my underwear, with a baseball
Cap on, reciting “Casey At The Bat,” and I act
Out all the parts, the forlorn fandom, the booming
Umpires, Mudville’s bit-player players,
The Mighty Casey.
And I get it right, all the way
To the last stanza when I cheat,
Checking my crib notes for the sake of accuracy
As well as the good people of Mudville.
It’s still a pretty good show,
You are clapping when I ask you
To remember that old day and did you think
The snowball was malicious or magical,
And you pat my head and tell me,
We see the beginning,
The beginning sees the end,
The melt of blue snow.
I still strike out at the end of the poem
(that’s what I do), but you don’t mind
(that’s what you do).
You smile for the fourth time,
You say, come to bed.



Emotionally Disturbed, art from Melissa Reid

Great Art

Bill Morris

you know the thing about great artists
and their sexual appetites

Picasso, Sartre

Mussolini

how'd Benito put it

"caught her on the stairs, threw her into a corner,
made her mine"

I mean and can you blame him

what with all those panties flying 'cross the stage

and then she insults me

says, 'I robbed her of her honour'

what kind of honour can she be talking about?

with that 174 ten pin average

that tongue like a Nazi toy shop

wasn't me that was riding daddy's little bucking horse

all those years

painting up those calla lilies

like sliced peaches

how was I supposed to know what was in that head of hers

I mean hell she just rolled a 203

and sure wasn't she beaming

like plate glass

THE CRUNCH

Chris Major

Little bastard kicked
that puppy like a football.

The vet who put it down
said injuries were consistent
with being crushed by a car.

The boy was just 13,
and when prosecuted
left court waving 'n' smiling
at local press,

paltry fine a badge of honour,
'street cred' raised
by the column inch.

Psychiatrists claim, that
children's cruelty to animals
can signal the thin end
of a very bloody wedge:
ask Dahmer, Bundy, Manson etc.

Well, I don't know about that,
but when I see his hideous mother
cursing and spitting at reporters,
I'm sorry,
but a large part of me hopes
her last words are something like -

"Honey, what are you going to
do with that hammer ???"

Last Love

Andrew Demcak

So everything came into place. He tore
the gauze suit to the core of my boyhood-

sliding in while my eyelids turned plum.
His bitter mouth- the insistent red veil

of the Gaza sun- my thighs like twin doors
held open. I had chosen the closest

man- cut my bandages like a runner
testing his legs- I unfolded myself

a loose-petalled Narcissus. Anxious
for his erection- condomless- straining-

unaware that his body politic
was followed by the viral campaign.



art from Xanadu

Temple of Insanity

Philip Jones

I wake up in the temple of Insanity
Barred in to a mental hospital
Acid based meals, bread dipped
in embalming fluid

I cant escape my own thoughts,
The windows are covered in mirrors
to which I only see myself,
The vision of a boy who wandered away,
Nothing makes sense to me,
My hair grows it ratted and thick like
Steel wool soaked in jelly,
My teeth are torn away and jagged like
a dying wolf gripping his last meal
Gnawing away at a plastic dinner helplessly
Chewing bubble gum which taste
like bubble wrap
Some days this is all there is for me
In this house of contradiction
The depressed days of my mind
The slow moving cells of my nervous system



Death of a City. art from Edward
Michael O'Donnell Supranowicz

My Inner Void Trip

Rebecca Susan Lemke

I'm working out my possible future problems
and inner child battles
with equalized attention

Walking upright and up-tight
straight and sweetly homostadial
I'm working on my posture,
my composure, hygiene, dirty thoughts,
and on my resilience to authority,
I really can't say I do mind becoming softer

I'm deeply tunneling
Skipping on the notion that it's all extremely plausible,
this cleansing preventing I've read on in books
and have taken notes on, high-lighting
the most memorial things that struck a chord
in my emotional harpsichord

Smoothing past-future-present right and wrong
scoldings into personal power;
Cheers! to the up-keeping of said power

PS: Always remember awareness IS the key, always is

I rock my inner child,
since she was disheveled
and as a crone, I could quite really
become disheveled alone

It's all in accordance to my pain prevention
over-analyzing
trip and inner void

Cheers! to the fears and suede tear of the unknown,
futuristic effervescent present bondage
and to all the hazy middle tones

Shenanigan

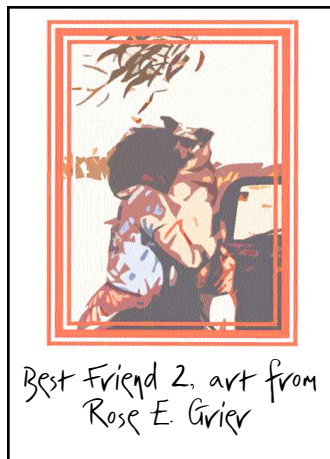
Scott Heigel

Give me my leather black
And my men naked,
Ardent and speaking in strange tongues
Which vivify all of my senses,
Drop out my knees from
Beneath me.

Give me my days short
And my nights dangerous,
Heady and lavished adventures
Which countermand all my psychoses,
Incite abandon
To take me.

Give me my drugs now
And my guilt never,
Chemical and sacrosanct phylacteries
Which scatter all my inhibitions,
Unlock the demon
Within me.

Give me my leather black
And your soul naked.



Best Friend 2, art from
Rose E. Grier

Trapped

Elizabeth Mudgett

Screaming
Surrounded by a sound-proof booth
Kidnapped by myself
Taken hostage
Another gun to my head
This time,
Not so compassionate
Which is worse?
Life...

Death...

Never experienced either
For to live is to die
Chunks of random conversation
Pervert my face
I smile
Not because I have joy
It has me.
The gun -
It doesn't disappear
I can't be sure.
It's loaded.



ecodebris67, art from Tracy M. Rogers

Soft Touch

Terry Rosenberg

With a soft touch
In play?interwoven
A sense of all touch
Take your place

What do you see?
Inevitability
Accepting in essence

I look around the hall
Chris crosses the dance floor
Beginning to and then
A sound brushes up against
Based on something common

I have heard it before
Liberating posture

Go into that space
In time we see
As though passing



Midnight

William E Raftery

Quiet now in the evening aftermath,
The day is lost and I am left to ponder.
Be silent and still in the void of night,
Nowhere to go now but to remain hidden.

Cast off the anonymity well couched,
Hold onto myself and hold on to my appeals.
Seek out the voice in the dark that calls,
Dead to me and loving no one else today.

Sheltered in the quietest of spaces now,
Not forgotten but purposefully neglected.
Something to be considered only in the past,
No future will it ever bear in the common times.

In transit to some place I cannot yet see,
The dawn comes through my window now.
Snow melts and the brightness burns eyes,
Not yet accustomed to the newer paths here.

The small corner of the mind remains quiet,
Somber in the evening just past behind me.
For only in the direst of straits will I find it,
The love that will always be just outside my grasp.



Painting by
Nicole Aimée Macaluso



SUDDENLY

Lisa Michelle Thomas

All the hard work to make yourself feel like something.
The life you put on hold so you could go further.
Sacrificing health and happiness, you reached for a star
You felt you needed to be glad, to survive.

And suddenly the star implodes,
Never wanting, never needing, never feeling that you were worth waiting for.
Suddenly you're not given half a chance,
And for what reason, what purpose, were you rejected?
Was the blood not enough, the scars, the tears, the black circles under your eyes?
The sleepless nights, the brain tired from trying and striving for the top.

So, suddenly, in an instant, you allowed yourself to dream.
You allowed yourself to think you were worth something in this life.
You allowed yourself to think that self-pride was tenable.
You allowed yourself to think you were wanted, that you had merit.
And just as suddenly you find that you are worthless, prideless, meritless, not wanted.
While you would have given anything, it was unwilling to give anything.
No chance, no hope, no trial run for you to prove yourself.
No dreams fulfilled, no efforts rewarded.
Just a sudden, instant collapse.
A sudden downfall never ending.
A sudden realization that you *are* the nothing you feared you were.
And as mind wrestles heart, you stare up from the bottom and wonder...
Will I ever get up again?

let it rain here

Michelle Greenblatt



scraps of metal, a shirt
crusted with the salt
of blood, wise snake eyes, let it

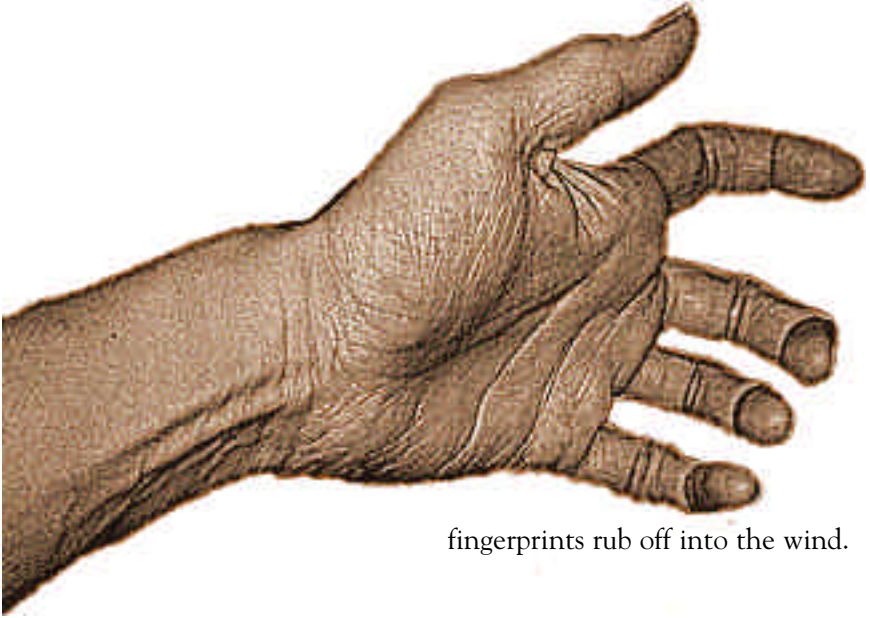


rain here, the sand so dry





on my hand, scratches my palms my



fingerprints rub off into the wind.



11.18.2005

Scars art, Michelle Greemblatt poem

KATRINA'S WAKE

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Roger N. Taber 2005

Jazz city's played out
(Floods of tears)

People yelling for help
(Who's listening?)

Others dying of thirst
(Cumbyar, Lord)

Bodies in the sewage
(Songs of silence)

Looting on the streets
(No one to stop it?)

Grabbing clean water
(No matter how)

Tales told of survival
(Water into wine)

Press conferences...
(Help arriving?)

Ghosts at the Gulf...
Scared of waking



Picture of Christ art from Mark Graham



Lake Erie. art from Mike Hovencsek

philosophy monthly

by reason of insanity

NBD5 News reported the July '05 Chicago story that Jeanette Sliwinski, a 23-year-old Skokie woman, apparently attempted suicide Thursday afternoon. Police said she was driving at least 70 mph and had run three red lights before she rammed her Mustang into a Honda Civic at a Skokie intersection, killing 3 Chicago musicians in the other car. Her car was found upside-down, but she only suffered minor injuries.

Yes, a woman decided to kill herself by ramming her car into another in the middle of an intersection.

That's what I'd do, if I wanted to kill myself.

Seriously though, there were mixed reports about this story on the news and on talk radio: first stories indicated that she left her mother's house after an argument, later reports only said that as Jeanette left her mother's house, her mother had a feeling that something was wrong and went to follow her, finding the accident shortly afterward.

But family and friends of the musicians — Michael Dahlquist, 39, John Glick, 35, and Douglas Meis, 29, were outraged by this attempted suicide, which only killed 3 outgoing, talented musicians. No one could make sense of what happened, Dahlquist's two older brothers could find no reason in the "selfishness" and "insanity" of Jeanette Sliwinski's actions.

The last I heard, she couldn't make it to court because she was still in the hospital, and bond was denied for this woman.

...

I've heard of people talking about what sort of sentencing she should get, where some people are hoping for alight sentence and her attorney stated that "she's had some mental health problems, and we're going to be talking to those people and exploring more about that." Tom Needham (her attorney) said his client has had a history of mental problems.,

Then I heard people say that she should be sentenced to death for her mindlessly killing 3 people in her vain attempt to unsuccessfully kill herself. But then I read that Joseph Gray, who's friend was killed in the crash, said "Why give her that (the death penalty)? That's a wish of hers. I think she should understand and live through life with the remorse that she

has.” When listening to talk radio, you’re usually only able to listen to Republicans (wait, they call themselves conservatives, conservatives who are for the death penalty, which sounds so conservative to me...), I’m used to hearing people talk about how people should be punished with losing their lives regularly, and I heard people talk so much about the death penalty in this case as well. My question to these people is this: what good does that do? Jeanette Sliwinski doesn’t learn from her actions if she’s killed, and as a rule it costs more to kill someone with our current penal system than to incarcerate them for life. That, and those “conservatives” can explain to me how it is a wise, moral decision to kill someone for a crime committed — how is it a wise, moral decision for an individual to be an arbiter and enforcer of human death.

...

I talked about this with my husband after we heard about this case, and I actually had to explain to my husband that someone trying to commit suicide wouldn’t want to hurt others in the process. “But,” my husband protested, “if life doesn’t mean anything to them, they wouldn’t care about the lives of others, would they?” And I said that people who didn’t see value in their own lives still understood that *other* people values their *own* lives, so they won’t want to contribute to the death of anyone who didn’t want to end their own life as well. “Besides,” I postulated, “If I committed suicide in an accident like Sliwinski’s, I wouldn’t want to be remembered as the woman who killed 3 people while killing herself. If I was planning to kill myself.” I wouldn’t want to be remembered that way — that footnote would become how my existence was defined, and I wouldn’t want that.

...

So what’s the moral to the story? Um, really watch traffic when you’re out, I guess, because there are those who still choose to live without morals, and who try to impose their philosophy on *your* life.

“Superstition sets the whole world in flames; philosophy quenches them.” —Voltaire, quoted in somereview.com & magazine *The Week*


Janet Kuypers



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