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children
churches
& daddies

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the boss lady's editorial

Do Profests Equal Violence?

Years ago, I was photographing a march of women walking the streets of Urbana, but on that same say, Rodney King was convicted of a police brutality crime. The black community was outraged, saying that the white man was holding them down, and a large group of people started their own rally that night which seemed to take center stage from



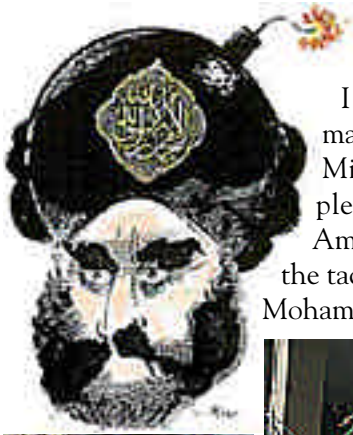
photo taken for the women's rights parade

the women's rights parade... Later in the evening I went to Union Square, where the women's rights parade was supposed to end, and a ton of black people were together there, yelling and protesting together. We went out that night for only a little while, because everyone in town was agitated — and apparently commiserating outdoors with their friends. I went home, but I heard the next day that in light of the Rodney King trial 23 fires were started on school property, and most of them were of books in libraries.

I thought, this isn't nonresistant violence, this is out and out violent and what they're destroying are opportunities for learning and not ideas. But protester advocates would say, "Yeah, but do these books hold what the *white* man wants you to learn? Is *this* how he alters our perceptions?"

Then I heard about one of my best friends, a white man, he was hit once by a black man in the street while he went out that night. The doctor said that they had to have a roll of quarters in their hand or brass knuckles because with one hit, there was a clean break of my friend's jaw. For six weeks my friend's jaw was wired shut, and he had to throw pizza or meat loaf in the blender so he could eat something instead of ice cream while he tried to recover.

It was after this that I wondered the value of violence in protesting. Does the violence get anything positive done? After the Rodney King protest, did we get any closer to racial harmony? And after people were hurt, did anyone learn anything from this pain? The libraries that had fires replaced the materials that were lost, so these protests and violence didn't stop this anglo-saxon form of education, it only



cost money and made people bitter.

I thought this was an isolated incident, until I made the connection in my head to current Middle East protests. now, I'm not referring to people trying to violently stop armed military American soldiers from invading their land, but to the tactless release of a cartoon — yes, a cartoon — of Mohammed with a bomb as his turban.



News reports stated that “The anger has also resulted in attacks on several Danish diplomatic missions in Asia and the Middle East, and other European diplomats have been threatened.” And In addition to this, Lebanese demonstrators have set the Danish embassy in Beirut on fire. CNN has reported that the leader of the world’s largest Muslim organization has joined other world leaders in condemning violence over the publication of cartoon caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed, but there is still a large amount of violence over this cartoon



And yes, maybe instead of violence, people could retaliate with, well, *more* cartoons. I heard on *The Daily Show* 02/09/06 (yes, I *do* see the irony in the fact that I’m using *The Daily Show* as a news source...) that Israelis have come up with a non-violent way to protest the cartoon’s existence... They posted a contest in their newspaper for people to design cartoons about the Holocaust (Seriously, there was a newspaper that legitimately had a contest for cartoons about the Holocaust).

Four killed, 20 wounded as protesters storm US military base in southern Afghanistan in protest against Muhammad cartoons

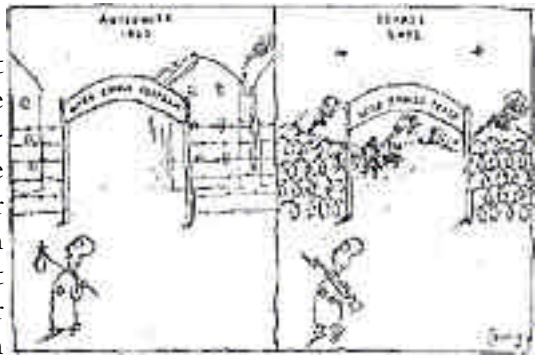
February 8, 2006, 1:07 PM (GMT+02:00)

The deadly clashes between police and protesters in the town of Qalat resulted in the 11th death this week in countrywide protests.

I heard on *The Daily Show* 02/09/06 (yes, I *do* see the irony in the fact that I’m using *The Daily Show* as a news source...) that Israelis have come up with a non-violent way to protest the cartoon’s existence... They posted a contest in their newspaper for people to design cartoons about the Holocaust (Seriously, there was a newspaper that legitimately had a contest for cartoons about the Holocaust).



And yes, this idea of Holocaust cartoons is tacky, but some Israelis even said that any cartoons submitted about the Holocaust wouldn't be a fair comparison to the cartoon about the founder and prophet of Islam with a bomb for their turban, because a cartoon about what the once-ruler of Germany did to Jews is not the same as saying Islam's founder is only interested in bombing other people.



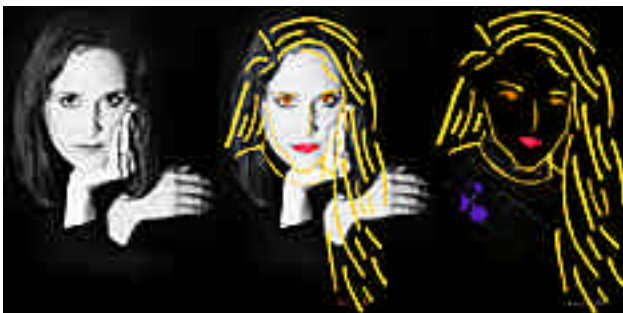
The only thing that confuses me about using violence to protest this cartoon is that they are protesting that Islam's founder condoned violence, and that Muslims condone violence. Understood, but then I ask: why are they protesting with bombing and setting fire to buildings? Why are they protesting with violence?

Now, I can understand offense taken at any cartoon making fun of a religion. I could imagine that Christians would be up in arms if images of Jesus was somehow made fun of (though I wonder how appropriate it is for Kanye West to imitate Jesus for a cover of **Rolling Stone**, apparently *that* didn't offend anyone...), but I think us American citizens wouldn't set buildings on fire if someone did this.



Wait, did I just say that? I just told you the story of people protesting the Rodney King trial, where *libraries* were set on fire. My friend even had to go to the hospital because of riot violence — not because he did anything wrong, but because of the color of his skin.

So, maybe there *are* people who *don't* know that violence isn't the answer. Other than teaching by example, I don't know the next step to getting people to learn.



Janet Kuypers[®]
 Janet Kuypers
 Editor in Chief

news you can use

ASSISTED SUICIDE: A MORAL RIGHT

In upholding Oregon's physician-assisted suicide law, the Supreme Court reached the right result for the wrong reasons.

BY THOMAS A. BOWDEN

Since 1997 Oregon physicians have been permitted by statute to help their patients commit suicide. On Tuesday the Supreme Court upheld this controversial law, reaching the right result for the wrong reasons. By basing its decision on legal technicalities, the Court managed to avoid addressing the real issue: an individual's unconditional right to commit suicide.

The Oregon law permits a doctor to prescribe a lethal dose of drugs to a mentally competent, terminally ill patient who makes written and oral requests, consults two physicians, and endures a mandatory waiting period. The patient's relatives and doctors are powerless to engage in legalized "mercy killing," as they cannot apply on the patient's behalf, and the patient himself administers the lethal dose.

In 2001 Attorney General John Ashcroft decreed that any doctor prescribing such a dose would violate federal law against dispensing controlled dangerous substances without a "legitimate medical purpose." Consequently, the case reached the Supreme Court as a technical debate between federal and state governments over which one should regulate the practice of medicine. On Tuesday the Court ruled that the state of Oregon could permit assisted suicide, despite the federal law.

But who was missing from that debate? The individual patients whose lives were at stake.

What the Supreme Court should have done was bypass legal technicalities and revisit its 1997 decision in *Washington v. Glucksberg*, which held that individuals have no constitutionally protected right of suicide, and hence no right to obtain assistance in that act.

What the courts must grasp, if they are ever to resolve the battle over assisted suicide once and for all, is that there is no rational, secular basis upon which the government can properly prevent any individual from choosing to end his own life. When religious conservatives use secular laws to enforce their idea of God's will, they threaten the central principle on which America was founded.

The Declaration of Independence proclaimed, for the first time in the history of nations, that each person exists as an end in himself. This basic truth--which finds political expression in the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness--means, in practical terms, that you need no one's permission to live, and that no one may forcibly obstruct your efforts to achieve your own personal happiness.

But what if happiness becomes impossible to attain? What if a dread disease, or some other calamity, drains all joy from life, leaving only misery and suffering? The right to life includes and implies the right to commit suicide. To hold otherwise--to declare that society must give you permission to kill yourself--is to contradict the right to life at its root. If you have a duty to go on living, despite your better judgment, then your life does not belong to you, and you exist by permission, not by right.

For these reasons, each individual has the right to decide the hour of his death and to implement that solemn decision as best he can. The choice is his because the life is his. And if a doctor is willing to assist in the suicide, based on an objective assessment of his patient's mental and physical state, the law should not stand in his way.

Religious conservatives' outrage at the Oregon law stems from the belief that human life is a gift from the Lord, who puts us here on earth to carry out His will. Thus, the very idea of suicide is anathema, because one who "plays God" by causing his own death, or assisting in the death of another, insults his Maker and invites eternal damnation, not to mention divine retribution against the decadent society that permits such sinful behavior.

If George W. Bush were to contract a terminal disease, he would have a legal right to regard his own God's will as paramount, and to instruct his doctor to stand by and let him suffer, just as long as his body and mind could endure the agony, until the last bitter paroxysm carried him to the grave. But the Bush administration has no right to force such mindless, medieval misery upon doctors and patients who refuse to regard their precious lives as playthings of a cruel God.

Conservatives crave to inject religion into the bloodstream of American law, thereby assisting in our own national suicide. However, they cannot succeed without the Supreme Court's consent. Sooner or later, the Court must confront the main issue, and decide whether an individual's right to life includes the right to commit suicide.

*Thomas A. Bowden, an attorney, is a writer for Ayn Rand Institute (<http://www.ayn-rand.org/>) in Irvine, Calif. The Institute promotes the ideas of Ayn Rand--best-selling author of *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead* and originator of the philosophy she called "Objectivism."* Copyright © 2006 Ayn Rand® Institute. All rights reserved.

poetry

the passionate stuff

It stands like a silhouette in the distance,
A pinnacle with dark blazing light
Shining amber fire from within
the waves of approaching humanity
Huddled before the shadow and before the flame

Tattered feet bend with white washed soles,
Scrubbed clean for this sacrosanct shrine
Where they can rest as they await the embrace
Of learning, the crisp brightness of volumes of lore
The shadow of waiting, to crest the hill and find release
As all come in their journey blissfully ignorant
Despite all they have learned.

It is a long way to go
traversing sweeping expanses
So long spent
Each speck of dust studied until its features
Become as well known as their own

Ever onward and upward, a progression building
To a crescendo and a climax in a house of light
Like a construction of ideas resting atop a wave
Library of Alexandria, bringing enlightenment
To be swept across sand onto muddy banks
Where happy memories are deposited for rainy days

Always Learning

by Eric
Bonholtzer

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



ODE #3 TO A CHROME ZIPPO LIGHTER

Kenneth DiMaggio

Every time you made that
hollow sharp-sounding click

--a little bit of stylized menace

--a little more of your own death

That seemed like it was going to be
never when you still had to be expelled
from junior high school
and know the taste and smell
and feel

of the flesh whose blossoming
started separating it from yours

so what
if in the meantime
your black Converse high
tops t-shirt and denim
jacket with the collar turned up
made you look like a punk

--that palm size piece of polished metal
that could kiss like the tip
of your old man's welding arc

ws your illegal hoodlum badge

That is why it was so easy
to get taken away



Scream.
art by Edward
Michael O'Durr
Supranowicz



Head Spin Hand
Behind Back 01,
art by
David Matson

--surprising both
yourself

and the four older bullies

who did not think
they would actually have
to pummel

to get you to un-vice what
would no longer be yours to make menace

but not without a smile that seemed
to be *thanking them*

--Pow!

Oh you could easily
get a couple of dollars from your paper
route money to buy another chrome
Zippo lighter

--but not *something*
that could get broken
but never taken
like the stainless steel
buckle that was slung across
a *soul* entering adolescence

a thing that you soon learned
needed no fugitive or criminal

a thing that just needed to smile
when something big like God

was going to teach you a lesson



Leave No War
Behind, art by
Jay Marvin

www.jaymarvinonline.com

Where the Question Has Marked

Michelle Greenblatt

When i coffee and cigarette the morning
just right so that my eyes don't spider
tears, wrinkling, upstream uninhabitation
of my chest cavity i silverly deliver a poem
in a crisp and drunken (from a coffee &
adjectival) way, my mouth flinging smiles
at whomever walks by w/goodmorning
on their tongue

at i sit. sit here. right where the place
the question has marked & the exclamation
has pointed tho neverwhere the period
has ended for that is not a good place
for me, no, as i approach the questions
form themselves; i don't much even have

to think they're pulled on tight but I pull
them on tighter.

i coffeed the morning burned it today so
maybe this poem of mine won't knock at my
door quite right but all the more reason for the
subject to be how even the morning can fail
me it's true but i fail the morning too the custom
er of morning the purchaser of regret the returner
of dreams this one's no good give me sadness
i say take the dream back.

2.14.2005

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Art by Nicole
Aimiee
Macaluso

Hilton Garden Inn*

Paul Telles

A Barbie doll
Reads the news
On CNN.

Traffic I'll
Never see
Scrubs the air

With sound.
White noise or
Off-white music?

Will sleep allow
Me to really
Not care?



Forbidden Vanity,
art by Lara Chauvin

* A mid-priced Hilton chain often used by business travelers or at least by me when I travel on business.

Departure Edwinna Bryant

The pieces of my heart,
Please, do gather yourself

My falling tears,
Please, learn how to stand still

The trembling of my lips,
Please, go back to sleep

The shaking of my hands,
Please, let go of what you never had

The Gettysburg Address: Twenty-First Century Edition

Michael Ceraolo

Eleven score or so years ago
our fathers brought forth on this continent
a new nation,
conceived
as the ultimate tax dodge,
and
dedicated to the proposition
that some are more equal than others
and
ever since then we have fought wars
for the furtherance of those two objectives
Now
“It is for us the living”
“to be here dedicated to
the great task remaining before us”,
that
government of the people,
by the people,
for the people,
shall just once be instituted here on earth

Quiet Moon

Thomas Rucker



The quiet moon sets, like
a gentle, golden lamp.

It's light covers over the
night.

Casting images of trees,
like ghostly tall figures
that linger motionless,
through the mellow light.
Refracting slowly, in the
eastern awakening.

Tick, Tick, Tick,

Mia Marie Collins

tick, tick, tick.

Damn that \$3 clock.

So loud and so constant,
a reminder of where I am,

What I have to do.

What I need to do.

Tick, tick, tick.

Time is slipping by
and I have wasted too much.

People say I'm young,
nothing to worry about,
but they don't know what I know.

Tick, tick, tick.

Youth is no safety net
when met with Fate.

The world is young yet
it will perish that way.

Tick, tick, tick.

I will not. Not here
listening to the incessant
heartbeat of life
as it makes love to my despair.

Tick, tick, tick.

Is it getting hard to breathe in here?

Stale and thick,
like Death, like Death.

Tick, tick, tick.

My Best Recovery Place Run By This Government

I am in US VA Hospital
so early in my morning
after US subcontractor
used up their resource
Medicares A Medicare B
USA disproportionately
the way the French are
discriminating against
a American Image Maker
leader of a free world
Today you is pneumonia
from an AIDS infection
Tomorrow we perfection

© 2005

Frank Anthony



Redcoat Return, art by Aaron Wilder

CHIPS IN MY EARS

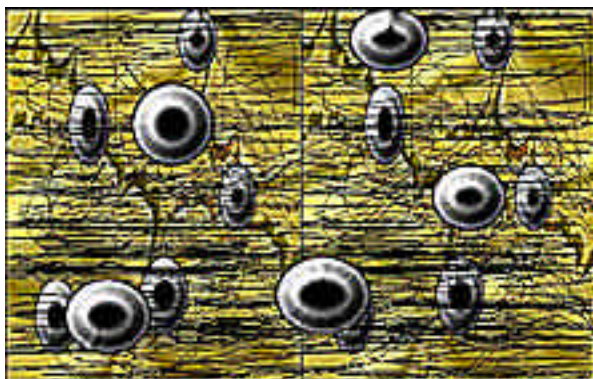
Joshua Gray

Listen to the frozen silence of my childhood. Listen as sound escapes these ears, like it always has. Was it music or measles that caused this deficit? I still remember those fat earphones I wore...

I remember middle school. I remember the boy who walked around with a blue baseball cap covering curly red hair. An aid limped over his left ear, transforming itself, altering his voice, keeping it mechanical, strained. His plastic ear kept him from life. Embarrassed, I froze.

I have lived my life pretending the mere sound of speech is enough, regardless of the words themselves. You have two chances to speak up, then I'll construe those sounds myself. No liability

Here. But enough. Screw vanity. Vulnerability takes too much effort. I've decided to hear what I hadn't. Now, I baby-sit computer chips in my ears; microphones announce sound Through these fragile pets, and I listen to the hum I make as I thaw.



Vision, art by
Mark Graham

The Chieftains

David Cory

The two Chieftains rest,
surrounded by trees
along a creek,
Eyeless,
headlights gone,
wheels gone,
bellies on the ground,
they face northeast, toward Detroit,
like blind pilgrims facing Mecca in prayer.



They are relics
of the twentieth century, named
for Native Americans
who were extinguished
to make way
for industry and agriculture,
for Henry Ford and Cyrus McCormick.

The vehicles' rusting chrome trim
once reflected
postwar American optimism.
Their substantial steel skins,
now pierced by hunter's bullets,
are dulled and corroded by the elements,
the once glossy brown of the older sedan
rendered into a palette
of umber, burnt sienna, and russet.

The white top of the newer two-tone two-door,
which gleamed in the fifties,
is now a dirty eggshell.
The lower surfaces
show only muted traces
of the original copper red

amidst the rust.

Helpless against
destructive human impulse,
the windows of both are shattered,
like all abandoned fenestrated artifacts
of civilization.

Exposed to man and nature,
only vestiges of the interiors remain--
tatters of upholstery, rusted springs.
There is no trace
of the cardboard shelves
behind the back seats
which, baked by sun
through the rear windows,
had emanated a peculiar dry aroma.



Gone are the hood ornaments
from these namesakes of Chief Pontiac--
in 1949
an amber translucent likeness of the chief
which morphed into a sleek faceless airplane
in 1955.

The enormous engines,
stripped of some components,
lifeless under skewed hoods—
the straight-eight Silver Streak
and the V-8 Strato Streak--
are monuments to
America's addiction
to fossil fuels.

One car carried me,
newly born,
home from the hospital,
the other to Little League games.
The Chieftains, like their drivers,
my parents,
roll no more
down life's highway,
but rest,
forever rest.

Permission to Speak

Lorraine Grund

The way my body remembers
to keep a soft extra layer of flesh,
to wear pants not skirts
it leaves no chance of being robbed
again of innocence already stolen
or of being painted with bruises
the slow progression

of blue purple brown
the final yellow,

and I've given myself permission
to speak now,
of the man, neighbor of my childhood,
and the innocence he took from me,
he said he'd kill me if I told anyone
to the young girl in my class
her pain her posture her poetry like mine
letting her tears fall
and now I cry for her
not me

and I've given myself permission
to speak now
of the booze that didn't help,
that didn't erase the hand-prints
left on my broken mind,

the bottles that I threw out and shattered
like the glass in my car's backseat
a fourteen-year-old boy crashed
his big gotta-show-I'm-a-man-now Bronco into,
the shattered glass everywhere
but not where my daughter sat

and I believe in something
I couldn't believe in before
that I've been given a second chance
by someone or some thing

and I've given myself permission
not to believe in the god
of the people whose eyes are clouded
with righteous-winged hate
and can't see the bloody hanger
by their dying daughter
who needed permission
their daughter dying of shock
so that they wouldn't have to

or the boy with bleeding wrists
because they called him a faggot
and he was their son

and I've given myself permission
not to listen to my father,
who says I should get married
and I don't care
if an ancient book or
the state of Texas says that
I must obey my husband
or else or else
he has the right to rape me
and I say
no thanks
here's your ring



Polaroid Big, art by
Mike Hovencsek

and I've given myself permission
to speak of the pain
of the injustice
of the truth
that finds me in between
the lines of this poem,
and to forgive
the transgressions of others
but never to forget
lest others, like the girl in my class
may suffer the same
pain and injustice in silence.

And the courage I've found to speak
is from the knowledge that

the silence is the only thing that can
kill me.

Wanting to be Saved

DeAndrea Johnson

I was never given a chance from the start.
I was the problem;
the thorn in your side;
but somehow I expected you to understand.
You knew my story—from birth.
My silver spoon was removed from my mouth
only to be replaced by a rusted rattle;
to shake all my dreams and split them in two.
And one day you decided to take my rattle and shake it yourself.
I can't believe some of the things that I've been through;
the stinking men that wanted to taste my youth
-and at that moment I wanted to be saved-
The rejection of a Venetian that shared my chromosomes;
never having a place to plant seeds to bear ripened fruit.
All the nights I felt alone.
Why should I know rejection by its first name?
Why do I end up always the one to blame?
But, innocent I stand, ready for punishment, unashamed.
I don't give a fuck about what others may think; how I am a disappoint-
ment to the perimeters they feel I should fit.
Yeah, I may be annoying and a burden when y'all wanna do yo' thing, but
when there's a favor needed to be filled, I become your favorite.
No one returns my phone calls.
No one gives me a ride.
I rely on men to give me my full supply
because as hard as I want to be, I know I want love and it's so hard to obtain.
-I just want to be saved-
As simple as it may seem,
how easily my heart may soften to receive some sympathy given to me.
-just save me-

Buttercups



**Daffy. art
by Cheryl
Townsend**

Cheryl Lambrecht

God bless myself
I've never seen
So many Buttercups

Everywhere I look
All I see
Are golden Buttercups

On the lawns
And in the gardens

And from seed we planted
Zinnias and Marigolds
In the side garden

Around the house
There are Morning Glories
and Hollyhocks
Petunias and Pansies

And in the backyard
There are Lilacs and Roses

And daily we tend to and water
Our Lilies and Phlox
And watch the Impatiens grow

I've never seen
So many Buttercups
Buttercups on my boulevard

Water Ban

Jeff McMahon

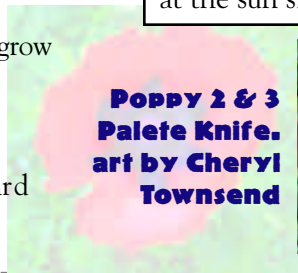
Maple street church parking lot
by the old Cumberland farms
bathed in orange splatterings
on the last day of the water ban

Signs read "Voluntary," as water
flowed into the sewers
and the lakes and rivers
swallow the wispy clouds.

The Mill Pond looked like a turf
and no one would have guessed
the boy who drowned their last winter
thought the ice was glass

and the clear light passed through
as he sprinted down the hill
to the frozen snow

and stared up
at the sun sliding away.



**POPPY 2 & 3
Palette Knife.
art by Cheryl
Townsend**



Rolling Doubles

Molly Wendtland

I'm always playing Monopoly;
rolling the dice and periodically
moving more spaces on the board –

Hating that I'm limited to circling around
with only thirty-six possibilities, even though I
always seem to land on a different square

That puts me in jail –
then everything starts over;
doubles are all I can roll.



Release
Me, art
by
Aaron
Wilder

Cafe Jezebel

Story Rhinehart

PRAIRIE

Emily Griskavich

His eyes glint
as he watches me let the stream
flow through my hands like hair.

The tall grass is yellow-brown
where so long ago it was green with promise.
It has been bleached
like the once-vivid hues
of his children's laughter.

His eyelashes close
over the wet smooth
gray stones of his eyes.

I know his head and brows
would be as gray as the stones in the stream
if he didn't color them
back into brightness.

As I catch his eye, his chuckle
is heavy with absence.
He touches my face, his hand gritty
with dirt and flakes of dry leaves.

When he comes to me, his wheat-blond hair
falls near my face as the wind
breathes across the waving grass.

My flesh like a window
Open to a crooked river

We were sitting in the Cafe Jezbel
I started singing in your ear
You didn't look at me

You stirred the rum & coke with your finger
Took a gulp
Of a crooked river

I remember the night I met your wrist
Or the fat on your hips
You didn't look at me

I am standing in puddles
Where the graffitti stains
This crooked river

I see your body like a city
Each part an avenue I eventually came to know
You didn't look at me
Stnading in a crooked river



Sign Language, forwarded
by C Ra McGuirt

Fermentation

Kathryn Alison Graves

This is the way it has always been
white on the outside, red on the inside
it wasn't until my finger slipped that I felt the sting
funny how nobody really knows what I am talking about
until the time of festivities have passed
and they begin to gossip

What some think of as pleasure has begun my pain
and my certainties are now hanging
as fruit of the vine not yet picked
not yet a part of the crush

I never said a word to him how
the other makes me feel
and it is killing me
within a fold of lies is what I serve
until I am true to myself
I am bottled within this vintage

I am separated
good from the bad
and then the barrels are laid out
in a slow procession
of fermentation
and in the glass remains
my residuals
what is left

Screaming for your attention
producing what is required of me
as fluidly, and as easily as words
and this is where I remain
one taste as bitter
as the first
and between my empty bottles....



**White Sands, art by
Briean Hosey**

THE CULT OF DAD

Katherine
Wing

We are the spawn
Of the big fish in that little
Little
Pond

Circle all the wagons
“They”, out there, are crazy
Lazy
Wrong

Narcissus, uneasy, knows all
Wide eyed, cowed, we open wide and swallow
Every
Little
Lie

BELTINGS

Luis Cuauhtemoc
Berriozabal

I don't know why I hit my face.
It's probably just a way to fend
off the belting from my father.
I got tired of it and decided
I could do as good a job of
hurting myself. I need no help.
I don't obey and I'm punished.
But I have no control of my
actions or of the voices I hear.
I fake attacks, seizures,
because they leave me alone.
The first time I had a seizure
they worried for me. It was the first
time I ever felt loved by someone.
I don't get beltings anymore.
But I can't stop beating on
my own face. It's part of my illness.

WALKING MY DOG ON A TUESDAY AFTERNOON

Christopher Fog

I see a dog, in a fence
his tongue hanging out
looking at my dog
looking at him
he's playful, mine not so sure
I lead him to the nose
and they touch
planes ream the sky
and the sounds of cars a little way off
don't matter
because the dogs are touching
the world spins along
through space and time
my feet hurt because my shoes are old and worn
I walk my dog away
the other one looks on, happy
they met
and all is well



Release, art by
Rose E. Grier



Gravity, art by
Adriana DeCastro

MY POEMS ARE NOT MY CHILDREN

Mather
Schneider

my poems are my
birth control

One

Kenneth W. Anderson, Jr.

We sat trying not to touch
hands.
But a moment did occur
when I felt her soft fingers dance across
in a rush of conversation
about old books and poems.
A very old book inked in 1858,
and a poem about a woman
digging up her life
and burying her husband.
Between sips of gingerbread coffee
she read to me more words,
beautiful touching words.
And every once in awhile,
between smiles,
her fingers gently graced mine.

Lost Ant

Rangzen Shanti

Moonlight gleams through my bedroom
Swirling in and out of reality and cosmic vibrations
Tickle upon my leg, I open my eyes to see an ant
Alone and alienated from the horde
Had he been born a worker, but acted a free thinker?
Or maybe he was bred a warrior, but became a lover
Surely he lost his way
Society gave him his directions

-Mukwonago, fall, 2005

The Seaside Music Of Postponing Rocks

Christopher Barnes, UK

Walks in sixths, toeing tips of gullies
is a bird across the crisp
diadem of ocean,
slap-dash irruption.

Waves wet into wet, rolling
grayer than sky, taps turned on
(asphodel sand
caught in the sun's thumb-thrumb

strum)

wavering through lighthouses
incondite shivers flashing – inklings
darkling middles, chords
flaking
flaking...



The Blood Came in Drops

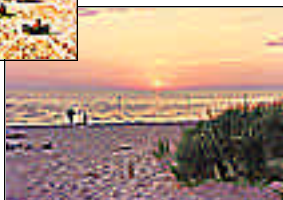
Calvin Becker

The sandpiper gargled
The freshly lit worm
Caught on the telephone wire
As the hail storm
Gently sliced her index finger

The light hit the razor
The blood came in drops

The flesh of the wound
Was like a rain swollen willow
Bent double by the wind
Only the matchsticks worked
In the electrical storm

The light hit the razor
The blood came in drops



Void

Preston Williams, Jr.

Somewhere there is a valley
That shoulders two imposing mountains.
One shouts like Vesuvius
The other holds secrets,
Covered in a drab cloak - olive.
 Trees shaded
 Boulders buried
 Cut off
 Pulse pinched
The shouting's roar unheard
Reverberates and echoes
Against the crackless cloak.
If nothing there to hear it
Is a noise made?
In between the two
No distinguished division
Except the negative cat
A black panther.
Bristled fur rises from its back
 Spiked
 Startled
 Aroused
 Aware
It divides the tension
Pierces through
With ease.
Cloaked lets out a grin.
Shouts get louder
Saliva thrown into the valley.
 Burns
 Then recedes
 Sinks
 Then stales
Panther immune

Always comes - everyday
Shouter spews more
As the cloak is pulled over further
The whiskers twitch on the
Panther's face like a freshly
Killed snake with nerves firing.

Contract and
Sudden relax
An eye bulges
Then still.

Sensing the tight air
The panther's muscles
Double in size and power
Empowering shoulders
Rippling back
Angular jaw
Cut haunches

The screams are silenced.
It sees the monster growing
In the valley and
Wonders when his screams
Will be answered.



the Ward, art by
Nick Brazinsky

Gangstas with British Accents

Jessica
Bechtold

After I attended a musical
in Piccadilly Circus,
walking beneath the Time Square style lights,
I got a glimpse of home:
three guys wearing Roca Wear
strutting instead of walking
one stride long, one short,
one stride long, one short,
pulling on the crotch of their pants
as if their dicks would fall off
if they let go.

Their hats were on crooked,
sideways and forwards,
Compton style,
like they couldn't decide from which direction
the giant Coca Cola sign was glowing.

Their standard oversized,
down to their knees, white t-shirts,
baggy pants and Timberlands screamed,
"I'm from the LBC"
or Compton or L.A.

But when they spoke of
"rollin' out that night"
they sounded nothing like Snoop Dogg
but rather like Hugh Grant,
speaking with the accent of The Queen Mum.

I kept waiting,
wondering no longer if they'd ask me
"what up girl?"
but instead if they were going
to turn around and ask me if
I wanted some tea and crumpets.
I was again, very far from home.

Echoes Down the Rabbit Hole

Tyler Joseph
Wiseman

Funny how you called it
a yellow brick road,
to me it's the color of lightning
flashing off of rain soaked
black-top highways-
foreboding, rattling
with the death knell
of a spiritual regeneration

Somehow even the sweetness
of this swan song refreshes me
the way your melody always has,
like the way salt crystallizes
on your cheeks, or the rainbow
drinks up clouds and sunshine alike-
solving of it's elemental chemistry
rarified innocence

Look like, after my tempest,
after the top heavy weariness,
and all that's to be done has been said
when the tiles soak up the sun again
those bricks are golden

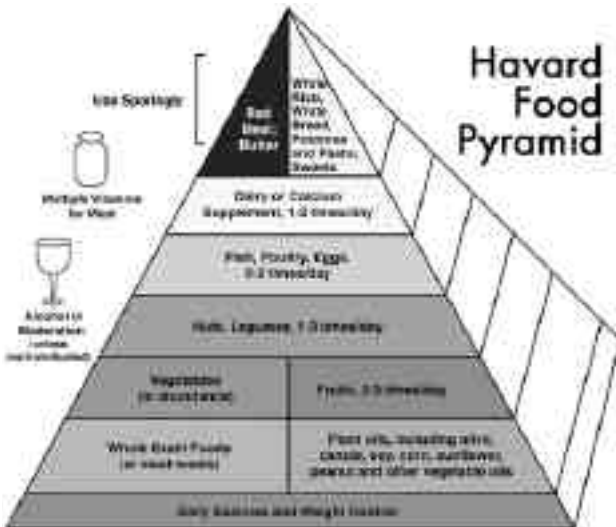


from *State of Desire*
State of Being, art by
Stephen Mead

Super Size Me

Michael Ceraolo

Grotesquely overhyped tripe
of the socially pseudo-significant stripe;
it should have been called Stupid Size Me:
some mental giant decides
to eat every meal every day for one month
at the world's most famous fast food restaurant,
and go for the gluttony when asked to,
and stop exercising for the whole time too
And he plays it straight, wasting great comic potential:
he is shocked, shocked (honestly) to realize that
the road of excess leads to the palace of poor health
And it's even more difficult to ignore that
the master of the obvious now passes himself off as an expert
I have an idea for his next film:
take the guideline that two drinks a day may be beneficial,
then have two drinks at every meal for a month
Scenes of you puking, pissing yourself, falling down
ought to be hilarious



performance art

Select pieces from the live Chicago show
Dreams, 02/03/04

realistic dreams

I had a dream the other night; my dreams
are different from other people's dreams:

other people's dreams aren't realistic, but
mine always are. They stay with you longer

that way, they make you think they really
happened. Recently I had a dream that someone

wanted to hurt me; they wanted to hurt me
and they followed me and appeared in the

same town as me and one day I was standing
at a street corner and they were just standing

there, talking to someone else, on the other
side of the street. So I panicked, and I turned

around and started running, ran down the block,
dropped what was in my hands off at my house,

and kept running. I don't know how far I ran,
or where I was running to, all I can remember

is what I was running from.



The Dream



I walked past the slide
almost stepping on the boulder in a children's marble game.
As I stopped at the swing set,
I heard two girls talking.
Slap bracelets, plastic purses, bows in their hair.
The blue-eyed blonde said to the brown-eyed brunette,
"If you dream that you die,
you will."
Those brown eyes exploded with fear.

As I walked away,
I stopped and leaned against the jungle gym.
The memories bombarded me--
Why did I have that dream?
Why did I stop myself?
Why didn't I die?



It was four years ago.
I was walking in a field
where the brown weeds stood a foot tall,
almost entirely covering the wretched, abandoned train tracks.
The pollution-grey sky
occasionally hurled its anger at the ground,
making rippling waves in the dead grass and straw.
I never asked why I was there.
Holding my denim jacket closed with one hand
I put my left hand in the coat pocket.
I felt the cold steel in my hands
and pulled the .22 pistol out into the light.
The polished silver-grey barrel
reflected my fingerprints.
I never asked why it was there.
I stopped walking,
switched off the safety,
turned the gun toward my stomach,
wrapped my finger around the trigger,
pressed my eyes shut, and fired twice.
But I opened my eyes

and stared at the waving weeds
as I felt the heat and the force radiate through me.
As I stood there, I began to hunch over
and all of my senses slowed down.
The weeds moved slowly, and as I started to walk,
my steps became shorter, yet longer to take.
Feeling dizzy, I couldn't even think.
But I knew it should hurt, and I waited for the pain,
but I just wasn't dying fast enough.
So I tried to keep walking,
but it felt like I was falling,
and I turned the revolver to my stomach again and fired.
I felt the jolt. I felt the force. I felt the heat.
But it just wasn't working.
I just wasn't dying.
So I moved the gun to the side of my head.
One shot rang out.
My ears were ringing --- slowly but violently.
Why wasn't I dying?
I shot at the temple again, and once more.
Walking, slowly, now used to the heat
and only feeling tired.
Then a voice in my head told me to stop the dream
and I woke up.
Beads of sweat dripped down from my temple.
I tasted them
to make sure it wasn't blood.



I pushed myself away from the jungle gym
as I watched the girls on the swing set.
The brunette stared at the blonde in innocent amazement.
They're all just lies.
I turned around and walked away,
kicking the dead grass.

A dream about murder.

I had a dream last night, it was different from my usual dreams, usually I dream about stuff that seems pretty real, somewhat mundane and at most usually frustrating. But I don't know if it was the wine I had at the Thanksgiving feast at Rachel's down the block, or if I heard some strange story on television earlier, but I dreamt about murder.



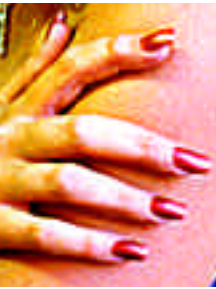
Dave and I were staying at a hotel, I don't know where the hotel was, but it was on a body of water, I think it was a lake, not an ocean or anything. And I remember at some point, it was dawn in the dream, I went for a jog, I noticed two good-looking men outside while I was on my jog, and then I went down the hill to the water. I wanted to jog along the water. But they had it roped off - I don't even know who "they" would be, but the area along the water was roped off, maybe until full daylight, maybe then lifeguards would be there to protect the people. But the point is, I couldn't jog along the water, so I sat down at the bottom of the stairs by the water's edge, right in front of the ropes, and watched the water. And a woman came along down the stairs, and sat down next to me to watch the water, too. I remember thinking that I didn't like her being so close, I like to keep a sense of personal space, but then it occurred to me that there wasn't much space for her to go since the whole area was roped off. And the thing is, I don't even like to jog.

Oh, so anyway, I don't even know why I went for a jog or at what point in time in my dream this jog occurred. But I know that in the dream I killed someone. It occurred before my dream technically started; I don't remember anything about the murder, I don't know if it was me alone that did the killing or if Dave was there with me, all I know is that I killed a guy, I don't know why I killed him, but I killed someone in another room in the same hotel, someone who I didn't even really know. And the thing is, I was wearing fake nails during the murder, or at least that's what I inferred in the dream, because I thought I lost one of them at the scene of the crime and the main part of the dream was me in the bathroom removing all of my fake nails because they might implicate me in the murder.

So I was removing my nails, they were plastic nails glued on to my real nails, and they weren't even painted, they were still just white plastic. And



as I was removing these fake nails I was dropping them on the floor because I was ripping them off so frantically, I didn't want anyone to be able to link me to this murder. So when I got them all off, I was still worried that I had a little glue left on my real finger nails, so I was trying to scrape that off, and then I was trying to pick up all the fake nails off the bathroom floor. They all fell just to the right of the toilet, and were on the tile floor, and I remember as I was picking them up I also



picked up a dust ball and a used piece of clear tape. I remember thinking that was odd, because usually hotel bathroom floors are clean, they're cleaned every day. So anyway, I kept picking up the nails, trying to make sure I got them all, occasionally dropping one of them back on the floor because I was so hectic and so nervous. This made the whole procedure take up most of my dream.



Once I had all of the nails, the only thing I could think about was how to dispose of the nails, and the rest of the dream became a frantic effort to figure out how I could get rid of them so that they could not be traced back to me. I thought that I could just flush them all down the toilet, but then I thought that there might be a chance that one of the nails wouldn't go down and would just stay at the bottom of the toilet and I wouldn't notice it and think I was home free but in actuality I'd be leaving a huge piece of evidence in my own hotel room linking me to the murder. Then I wondered if they'd have a way to sift through the sewer water from the hotel, so then I thought that I shouldn't flush any of them down the toilet, but go to various public rest room around town and flush a few at a time.



Then I started to worry that if the nail I left at the scene of the crime took more than just the glue with it, that it actually took some of my nail with it, then I would have left DNA evidence at the scene of the crime and there would be nothing I could do.



And then I started to wonder if I actually lost a nail at the scene of the murder, or if I was just overreacting.

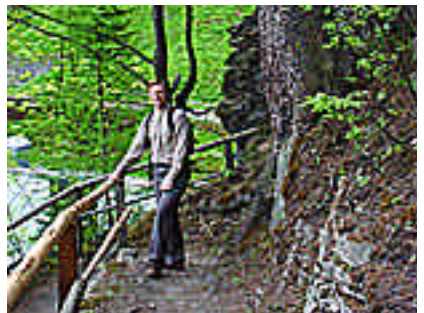
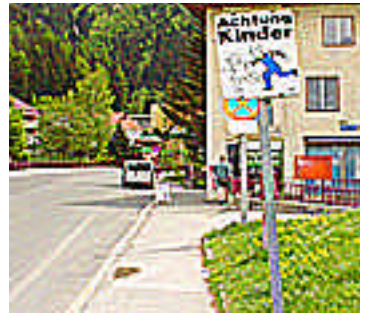
And then I wondered if anyone had even found the dead body yet, all this time laying there on the floor of their hotel room. And then the phone rang and I woke up.

Dreams

01-19-04 Three

Once I had a dream
that I went for a hiking walk
though the suburban-like streets
to get to a forest preserve
with Tom.

It's strange,
I never spent time with Tom,
but we were meeting up
to go for a walk together.
Well anyway, he came by,
and he even brought a burrito
for me to eat,
because he thought I'd be hungry.
I thought that was really nice of him,
and we started walking down the street
(to get to a forest preserve),
and I opened up the wrapped burrito
and took a bite.
And I don't remember the taste in my mouth,
but I know there was chicken in this burrito,
and I thought he knew I was a vegetarian.
So I got really angry,
and I said,
'hey, wait, there's meat in this.
Didn't you know I was a vegetarian?
You had to know.'
And I just got so angry,
maybe he didn't know
and he was just trying to be nice.
But he was a meat eater
and I wasn't.
maybe, in my dream, we were together
and we really don't know each other at all.



children
churches & daddies
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