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Climbing Mount Washington

During my first semester of college I took a course entitled Adventure Concepts. The final project for the course was to succeed in accomplishing an adventure. I chose to hike up Mt. Washington. My partner Dave and I decided to go on April 28, 2010. It was early enough in the season so that it wasn't too warm for a long strenuous hike or too cold up at the top of the mountain.

Mount Washington, located in Jackson, New Hampshire is the tallest mountain in the northeast United States. The summit reaches an altitude of 6288 feet. It is not an easy climb, especially when hiking in snow on a warm day. The weather is unpredictable. The snow turns to slush and along with the melting snow come mud and mudslides. Mount Washington is in the pathway of several major storm tracks. The average annual temperature is 27.1 degrees, the summit temperature has never risen above 72 degrees, and the mountain holds the world record for a wind speed of 231 mph, recorded on the summit in 1934. The combination of the extreme wind, fog, wet and cold has dubbed Mount Washington, "Home of World's Worst Weather."

We did our best to pack correctly for this trip. However, we did manage to forget to bring crampons which made for some dangerous spills. The worst spill happened on the descent of our hike. We came to some slush and we both fell and started sliding down a narrow path. Dave turned just in time, but I wasn't so lucky. I kept sliding forward off of the path and headed for the edge of a high cliff. All of the branches that I tried to grab onto either broke loose or weren't attached to the tree at all. Luckily, the very last stick I grabbed was sturdy enough to stop me from going over the side of the mountain. I have never felt so alive in my life. The feeling wasn't fear, but excitement and exhilaration.

The correct gear is needed for hiking up a mountain. Light, breathable, synthetic clothing should be worn in layers to keep the sweat off of the body so that hikers don't freeze. A walking stick is highly recommended to help maintain balance in some rocky or unstable areas. Ski poles are recommended in the snow, because they have baskets at the bottom for support to prevent going through the snow. Crampons connect to the bottom of hiking boots and have steel points on the bottom to increase traction and keep climbers from slipping when ascending and descending the mountain. Other gear necessary to bring on a cold-weather hiking trip include a wool

sweater, trash bags, windbreaker, whistle, spare socks, rain gear, knife, first-aid kit, wool hat and mittens, extra food and water, flashlight and batteries, sunscreen, insect repellant, waterproof matches, map, compass and guidebook.

Dave and I chose to climb the Lion Head Trail, which is the combination of two different trails off of Tuckerman Ravine, the summer trail and the winter trail. The hike is longer and more dangerous because of the narrow, rocky trails that lead to scaling vertically up the mountain. The trail ends at the Alpine Garden, which connects back with the Tuckerman Ravine Trail above the headwall. We never made it all the way to the summit, because we had a slow start and it was already late when we arrived at the Alpine Garden. So we decided to go back down the way we came. Dave agreed that we would do this adventure again and complete it, but Dave died last November so I am going back there in April to climb all the way to the top. I am going to do this for both of us.

The rewards for making the climb are limitless, but the ones that stick out for me personally are the beautiful sights I saw along the trails, the deep dark colors of the evergreens that contrast with the pristine white snow on the branches and on the ground, the stunning, breathtaking views high above the tree line, and the crisp clean air that filled my lungs. I I also feel a sense of accomplishment. Not many people can hike up to the top. The climb is an amazing aerobic workout. It gets the heart rate up and keeps it up, building up the quadriceps, hamstrings, shins, and calf muscles. But most of all, it brings the feeling of being alive and of knowing that I just took part of such an exhilarating experience.

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The Trip that Changed My Life

It was a cold autumn night when my mother came home and told us to have a week's worth of summer clothes packed and to be ready to go by tomorrow. Thanksgiving was right around the corner so my brother and I had no idea what was going on. The first thing we thought was that we would be visiting our aunt in Florida for school vacation. My mom has always been big into surprises so she gave us each a blank manila folder. Our reaction was, "is this for homework?" I opened mine and inside was nothing but a US passport. We were ecstatic.

The hour-long ride to the airport was filled with suspense. We kept asking our parents for hints or clues, but all they did was smile. We arrived at Logan Airport and my mom went to check us in while my dad brought us to Dunkin Donuts. Mom met us there about 15 minutes later handing us our tickets to paradise. Destination: Dominican Republic.

As we walked to our room in the Dominican Republic, the first thing we saw was about a dozen beautiful flamingos frolicking in the quad. The resort was beautiful. It had everything from pools that led up to the blue, crystal clear ocean, to tennis courts, basketball courts, and even a small theater that held nightly performances.

After relaxing for a couple of days at the resort, my family decided to venture off into the city of Juan Dolio. My mom, a lover of horses, suggested that we take a horseback riding tour through a small village in Juan Dolio. After a ten-minute bus ride from our hotel to the horse ranch, we chose our horses and began our exploration.

When we first arrived at the village, I was shocked to see the vast number of differences just a few miles from where we were staying at the hotel. I had the overwhelming feeling that I was no longer in heaven. The homes were often one-to-two-room shacks with dirt floors, housing as many as three generations of family. We could see small children sitting on the floor watching Sponge Bob. It was amazing to see the smiles on these kids' faces, even though they had so little.

Next we visited a local school. Here we learned that education is mandatory for children only from kindergarten to eighth grade.

Our tour guide told us that further education was available, but that most families could not afford to send their children. While public schools were free, parents still had to pay for transportation and school uniforms. He told us a typical family makes as little as $2,000 a year, so it is difficult for them to afford these necessities.

We visited sugarcane fields, where we saw both men and small boys hacking at the stalks with machetes. We saw young girls walking to get clean water and balancing heavy pots on their heads. It was troubling to see how young the children were working and the many responsibilities they carried.

Music is very important in their culture. Traveling the dirt roads, I could hear merengue off into the distance and it seemed that as soon as we were close enough to hear the song fully, the natives got up and danced. With the little that the natives had, it was shocking to see their spirits so high.

My trip to the Dominican Republic started off as a vacation, but ended up being a life lesson, and has helped to influence my decision to find a career in which I will be helping people. We read and learn about countries less fortunate than ours every day, but seeing poverty in person has forever changed my views. My trip to the Dominican Republic has helped me to appreciate the small things in life and to be thankful for what I have.

The Inner Conflicts Relating to Outer Beauty

The obsession with outer beauty is everywhere—movies, magazines, television, and so on. Recently, a young model died because of an anorexia-related illness, the tragic result of society's pressure to be beautiful. In Wendi Kaufman's "Helen on Eighty-Sixth Street" and Raymond Carver's "Cathedral," a theme develops related to the importance placed on looks and beauty. Both stories challenge the characters to deal with their conflicting inner questions about superficial appearances relative to beauty.

In Kaufman's work, Vita sees only the natural, outward beauty in Helen McGuire, who has won the part of Helen of Troy in their school play. It's made even worse for Vita when she finds out that she won't be seen at all in the play. From Vita's point of view, the role of Helen symbolizes beauty. In Carver's story, the narrator finds it awkward being in the presence of a blind man named Robert. He does not understand how Robert could marry someone he could not see, going so far as to wonder if Robert would marry a Negro based only on her name—Beulah—thus creating conflict between the narrator and his wife.

The parallel between Wendi Kaufman's story and Raymond Carver's work is that both of the main characters—Vita and Carver's narrator—struggle with inner demons in the form of envy toward others who, in their eyes, possess a meaningful beauty that is as yet neither accessible nor conceivable in relation to the main characters' lives.

Kaufman deftly creates an aching view of a young girl's question about what beauty is, intertwined with an unspoken yearning for her absent father. Vita's mother seems to disregard the fact that Vita is at the age when the importance of beauty is a blossoming reality. But then it gets to the point that Vita is confused about the meaning of beauty. Because her mother battles with her own inner conflicts throughout the story, she is unable to sate Vita's craving for validation of her feelings. As the characters are approaching realization and resolutions, Vita's mother begins to open her eyes to Vita's inner turmoil, as revealed in the following interaction:

"What is beautiful?" I ask Mom before the play begins.

"Why are you so worried all the time about beauty? Don't you

know how beautiful you are to me?"

"Would Daddy think I was beautiful?"

"Oh Vita, he always thought you were beautiful." (Kaufman 95)

Vita probably doesn't know the answer to her question because, most likely, her mother never took an honest look at her daughter's struggles. Certainly her father didn't.

Interlocked with Vita's turmoil is the narrator's obsession with outward appearances in Raymond Carver's "Cathedral." One interesting feature of Carver's story is the fact that the narrator drinks heavily throughout, but Carver never mentions a drinking problem. Carver himself was an alcoholic.

The narrator in Carver's story appears to be more comfortable alone, whereas Vita in Wendi Kaufman's work is often left alone, to the detriment of her self-esteem. In "Cathedral," the narrator has a problematic self-esteem wherein he feels safe when he's alone. "My wife and I hardly ever went to bed at the same time" (Carver 122). He also is under the warped impression that a woman cannot feel beautiful unless a man can see her to tell her. In other words, a woman married to a blind man will be unfulfilled. "Imagine a woman who could never see herself as she was seen in the eyes of her loved one" (Carver 116). When Robert arrives, the narrator focuses on his appearance. The narrator has stereotyped blind people from the start. For instance, he thinks all blind people wear dark glasses; Robert does not. The narrator has a limited point of view that begins to unravel. As uncomfortable as he is in the presence of a blind man, the upcoming epiphany blindsides him—all it takes is for him to close his eyes to really see.

Because of her young age, Vita's struggles with her self-esteem and sense of beauty are more pronounced and bittersweet than those of Carver's narrator. Because of his callous attitude, the narrator is seen as a kind of second thought in his wife's eyes, especially when Robert arrives. Wendi Kaufman in "Helen on Eighty-Sixth Street" leaves the reader with an unanswered question: can Vita continue on admirably without the father she yearns for? Kaufman beautifully transitions from separateness and confusion to togetherness and understanding between Vita and her mother to begin their resolution of conflict. Raymond Carver in "Cathedral" seals the narrator's future at the end: Robert doesn't need to see the beauty in anything. He feels it, which is exactly what finally dawns on the narrator.

Kaufman and Carver skillfully lead their characters from places of isolation onto paths leading to enlightenment. In the conclusion

to Wendi Kaufman's "Helen on Eighty-Sixth Street," Vita takes to the stage in the role of Helen of Troy and delivers what is for her a defining line: "Do not envy me such beauty—it has wrought only pain and despair" (Kaufman 96). Likewise, Raymond Carver's "Cathedral" brings the narrator to a surreal place of vision: "It was like nothing else in my life up to now" (Carver 126). Because both authors treat beauty as a much deeper concept, their characters are thoughtfully guided to denouements that embody the emotional cleansing of their separate conflicts with outer beauty.

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Within, Without: What is a Monster?

People have always made their own monsters. The very concept of monsters is one that has captivated humanity since time immemorial. The idea of a being that is completely alien to, or indeed anathema to, what makes a human human has spawned countless answers to the question at the heart of the concept: what defines a monster? Is it simply not being human? Is it some trait or ability to cause harm to others that makes a being monstrous? Or is it something more, something less easily defined than common knowledge would have one believe? Putting aside the modern monsters of slasher films and trashy vampire novels for the time being, critics and poets have examined this question, and provided through their works answers which may not have been considered otherwise. Does a monstrous form make that person a monster by default? Does a monster have to be a concrete, external entity? In their own ways, Nathaniel Hawthorne's story "Rappaccini's Daughter" and Sylvia Plath's poem "Daddy" cause the reader to question what defines a monster – and whether the villains of these two pieces of literature are examples of what is normally defined as monstrous. After a cursory glance at its beginning, Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter" reads like every cliché monster story one could imagine: A young man, Giovanni, arrives in the city of Padua to pursue his studies, and happens across Dr. Giacomo Rappaccini, his daughter Beatrice, and the terrible secret they hide in Rappaccini's mysterious garden. Hawthorne quickly breaks out of preconceived ideas of what makes a monster, neatly flipping reader expectations on their head. Even so, it quickly becomes apparent that Beatrice most neatly fits the criteria for a monster.

Through his unequaled scientific skill, Rappaccini has infused his daughter with a deadly poisonous essence, and she has spent her life within the Doctor's garden of exotic and deadly plants, cut off from the world to protect her from causing harm through her slightest touch, her very breath. But despite her dangerous nature, Beatrice acts far from what people would

consider monstrous. Vivacious, intelligent, and sweet, Beatrice shows all the passion and love of life that any normal girl could be expected to show, including a desire to experience the outside world. Through their interactions, Beatrice wins the heart of Giovanni, despite his suspicions about some unusual events: insects dying by her breath, flowers wilting in her arms, an angry rash in the shape of her hand where she pulled his hand away from a particularly dangerous plant in the garden. Despite appearances, Beatrice is no monster, but the true monsters soon make their nature all too obvious.

Within Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter" two individuals stand in contrast to Beatrice, their selfish and unfeeling designs providing a foil to the girl's tragic innocence. The first, and most obvious, is Beatrice's father, Doctor Rappaccini. He is purely a man of science, seeming to give no thought to ethics or morality or the wellbeing of his own daughter; his sinister designs have turned his garden into a something "…whose productions are 'no longer of God's making, but the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy.' And all of this, as the story's climax makes clear, has been done for the enhancement of Rappaccini's own power" (Jones 193). Indeed, Beatrice's pitiable situation is a direct result of Rappaccini's lust for power, his deadly garden and poisonous experiments all aimed toward making Beatrice a weapon to use against whatever enemies he chooses. His machinations do not stop at Beatrice; when Giovanni confronts Beatrice after discovering that her poisonous nature has begun to transfer to him, Rappacini reveals that she is not aware of her effect on Giovanni, but he is, and his aim all along has been to provide a companion for his daughter, a token gift to his lethal pawn as he prepares to send them out into the world to wreak untold damage. A singularly amoral and unscrupulous man, Rappacini uses his daughter's body and her love for her first and only companion from the outside world to further his own aims. However, these aims fail because of the actions of a man just as monstrous, but more subtle, than the Doctor.

This man, Professor Baglioni, presents himself for most of the story as a friend and source of wisdom to Giovanni, first informing him of Rappaccini and his garden, and then, when Giovanni laments his inability to save Beatrice from her lonely

prison, the Professor provides what he assures Giovanni is an antidote able to render any poison innocuous, to free his beloved from the grip of her father and her own nature. Just before he gives Giovanni this antidote, he states, "I know this wretched girl far better than yourself" (Hawthorne 383). Thus, when Beatrice, in her despair over Giovanni's anger at her and her father's manipulations, drinks the antidote which she knows will end her life, what could have simply been a tragic end instead raises a question: if Baglioni knew Beatrice so well, how could he have not known the antidote would kill her instead of freeing her? The triumph mixed with the horror in Baglioni's last line, the last line of the story, "Rappacini! Rappacini! Is *this* the upshot of your experiment?" answers this hanging question neatly: he did know. In the end, Baglioni, Giovanni's trusted friend and confidante, proves an equal match to Rappacini, willing to end the life of an innocent to see his rival fail, and leaving Giovanni, now trapped and alone himself, in the hands of the true monsters.

In contrast to Hawthorne, Sylvia Plath explores the nature of the monster in a more internalized fashion through her poem, "Daddy." A railing screed against the abuse the speaker perceives her father heaped on her during her childhood and her own twisted choices because of this overwhelmingly broken upbringing, it would seem that the speaker's father is the monster in question in the poem. But, as with "Rappaccini's Daughter," the concept of monster is more nuanced than it appears on the surface. While the speaker's father was doubtless a despicable person and one of the root causes of the speaker's anger and cynicism, the monster, the true villain of the poem is not her father, long-dead by the time the speaker presents her anger in the poem, but the internalized pain and conflicted feelings she feels toward him that she has been unable to release"…the problem, of retaining one's individuality, that is, humanity, in the face of a repression that threatens literally to obliterate all distinctions among men" (Boyers 1: 386-7). She refers to him as "marble-heavy, a bag full of God, Ghastly statue with one grey toe/Big as a Frisco seal," As a child, the speaker lives in utter fear of her father; she refers to him and herself repeatedly in comparison to the Nazis and the Jews to hammer the point somewhat uncomfortably home. But at the same time, she

cannot bring herself to stop loving him, seeing him as a monolithic figure of adoration, the aforementioned "bag full of God" instead of the garbage he so rightly deserved to be seen as. Thus, his unexpected death leaves a huge, uncertain hole in her psyche, one she is unable to fill with anything but the desire to get back to her father, despite the torture he inflicted, because it was the only idea of a male authority she understands.

flicted, confused, and more than a little emotionally disturbed, the speaker attempts suicide to try to return to her father's side. When that fails, she moves to the next best thing, she marries a man in the mold of her father, suffering years of violence and the boot on her neck, because it is the only relationship she can understand, the only one her tortured psyche can accept as it clings to the memory of her father. It takes years of self-loathing and abuse for the speaker to finally realize that she has to let her father go, let *all* of him go, if she ever wants to be free, and finally, belatedly, she does: "If I've killed one man, I've killed two /The vampire who said he was you/and drank my blood for a year,/ Seven years, if you want to know. Daddy, you can lie back now" (Plath 408). Despite the unbridled anger of the final stanza–"daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through" (Plath 408), being the most strident example–much of the poem reads like a declaration of love, albeit in a deeply twisted and cracked form.

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Even when cutting all her ties to the past, leaving her abusive stand-in-father husband and letting her pent-up anger flow, she still says, gently, "Daddy, you can lie back now." One of the last poems Plath wrote before her tragic suicide, "Daddy" shows that monsters do not need to come from the outside, and do not need bodies to be defeated, but that they will cause damage just as deeply in return.

Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter" and Sylvia Plath's "Daddy" provide very different examples of what makes a monster, but they, and so many other stories, poems, and literry works of all kinds besides, are unified in most basic idea of what it means to be a monster. Appearance, power, violence, none of those things in themselves define what a monster is. Instead, it is that basic evil, that willful domination and harm of others for personal gain or simply for pleasure that forms the core of what

humanity defines as monstrous. One simply has to look back to any point in history to see a pleasant face, a striking figure, and a list of nightmares attached to the name, actions that make the skin crawl and the mind reel at the depths to which a nominally normal person can sink. People have always made their own monsters. It is simply a shame that the most terrifying monsters seem to be men.

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The Three Stages to Social Reform Used By Jazz During the Civil Rights Era

There is no denying that music is an extremely powerful form of art that has a great influence on culture. It is the purpose of this essay to discuss how music can support social reform through three steps: popularizing a form of art based on a folk tradition by one culture or sub-culture, intellectualizing the popular form into some degree of institutionalization, and using the intellectualized form to protest the status quo. A strong example is jazz, specifically during and surrounding the Civil Rights Era (1955-1968).Gordan Allport's The Nature Of Prejudice supports this theory. The following summary reflects the first and second steps jazz achieved in breaking racial barriers in the United States. Allport writes,

> ...although we could not perceive our own in-groups excepting as they contrast to out-groups, still the in-groups are psychologically primary. We live in them, by them, and, sometimes, for them. Hostility toward out-groups helps strengthen our sense of belonging, but it is not required. (42)

A clear example is Louis Armstrong, who by the late 1920s was celebrated as a great entertainer popular enough to perform on stages, radio programs, and television shows previously only available to white entertainers (Gioia 63). He was able to do so without succumbing to silly novelty or engaging in racially charged self-stereotyping, as many African American entertainers did in order to earn a living (Schuller 89). At the time of his death in 1971, newspapers described him as the most widely known American of his day (Gioia 69). This popularity played an important role in bringing African-Americans into the inner circle of many white communities across the country. If different levels of in-groups are based on social distance, as Allport suggests (39), then Armstrong helped increase the racial diversity in many of the nation's communities. On a local level, this blurred the line over which the rationalizations of negative feelings toward African-Americans emerged. In other words, it became more difficult for racists to rationalize their prejudices.

A turning point from entertainment to intellectual art (Step Two) is exemplified by Charlie Parker, who was the leader in an extremely difficult and popular style of jazz called be-bop. Parker was known as a very smart man, one whose passion for music was

facilitated by his curiosity and studies of the physics of sound and classical music (Gioia 205). Although easily accessible as exciting music to the average listener, the intelligence and theory behind Parker's harmonic structure is so complicated that it was nearly impossible to decode without studying with Parker or one of his contemporaries. Those who believed that African-Americans were intellectually inferior would now have the burden of others in their own community expressing support for this new art form. By the mid-1950s be-bop musicians were performing at some of the most prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall and Massey Hall (Gioia 224). Again, this turn of events began to remove more barriers between in-groups and out-groups within intellectual institutions and artistic communities.

Because jazz was seen as a highly intelligent and popular form of art, it became easier for jazz musicians to draw more attention to racial conflicts through the press. Louis Armstrong canceled a government-sponsored tour in response to President Eisenhower's timid reaction to the exclusion of black students at a high school in Little Rock, Arkansas (Margolick). Miles Davis, when mistaken for a loiterer, was beaten by a policeman outside of a venue during a set break, causing controversy when the story was covered in the press. In response to a lynching in Alabama, Billy Holiday performed "Strange Fruit," written by a white schoolteacher, reverberating emotionally with white audiences. When venue management refused to allow interracial jazz groups on stage, musicians organized boycotts and caused income loss for the venue. As a result, jazz concerts became less segregated on the stage as well as in the audience. This brings the discussion back to Allport, who expresses his findings on the effect of contact.

> Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e. by law, custom or local atmosphere), and provided it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interest and common humanity between members of the two groups. (281)

In summary, popularizing a folk medium such as early jazz, intellectualizing the popularized art form, and using the support of the public to demand social changes through protest transforms music into a powerful vehicle for influencing public views and behavior. Research does not suggest that jazz musicians in the first

half of the 1900s planned this path, but rather that they created an example that could be duplicated in the future. It is unfortunate that the same techniques can be used to control an age group's behavior with respect to superficial goals, such as to sell a product or to skew a community's political ideology. Nevertheless, through the common conscience of a great number of people, however, major social and economic changes were achieved for an oppressed group with the support of popular music.

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Improving Music Education Advocacy

In defense of music education, many advocates emphasize the importance of skills acquired by the study of music. This defensive stance is most likely the result of the diminishing support and struggling vitality of music education in public schools over the past fifty years (Petress 112). However, when debating whether music education is an essential element of a well-rounded education, most arguments seem ineffective at persuading the general public. The result reflects the lack of focus many advocates demonstrate when highlighting the unique qualities of music education as a necessity for intellectual thinking. When advocating for music education, it is important to support musical knowledge as something more than a supplement, but rather an important contributing component of a well-rounded education. It is too simplistic to think of music in terms of its whole character when studying its intellectual value, such as singing a song, or playing a scale. Rather, it is more important to view music through its individual and unique components. Along with music's long history and diverse qualities, these elements include theoretical thinking, disciplined concentration, memorization, and fine-motor skills. These components are observable, as follows: constructing a tempo by dividing time into equal parts; simultaneously thinking horizontally, diagonally and vertically to produce rhythms, melodies, and harmonies; and coordinating the eye, ear, memory, and hand during technical studies.

Just as important as drawing is for geography, math for architecture, and masonry for construction, the components found in music are important for many subjects, including math, language, science, and art. Many people believe that musical ability is a gift that only some children possess. Not only does scientific study show this belief to be false, but so does research on the evolutionary history of humans. One particularly intriguing study researched how infants recognize tone sequences, or melodies (Sacks76). The study showed that humans are born with perfect pitch, the ability to recognize specific tones without prior reference. This ability is commonly compared to seeing colors. Just as people know what blue looks like, those with perfect pitch know what an A-flat sounds like. However, this ability is lost as a result of the acquisition of language skills in most countries. Only about one out of one thousand adults

hold on to perfect pitch in most parts of the world. However, where Mandarin Chinese is spoken, the ratio is smaller due to their pitch-based language. This study shows that human beings are prewired for melodic understanding and are a musical species in nature.

An anthropological theory believes that the origin of rhythm was a necessary point in evolution that allowed humans to become a true bi-pedal species (Mithen 139). Although this theory highlights the core mental process that allowed musical communication to later be possible, it would be wrong to cite these sources in advocacy arguing that music made walking possible. However, when understanding how far humans have come in their ability to move, it is ludicrous to deny that musical acts, such as dancing, have been a contributing factor. Basic survival skills of early man may have relied on the presence of music and dancing to improve hunting skills and possibly sexual selection (225). Neanderthals may not have evolved into Homo Sapiens had it not been for the mental capacity to understand rhythm. Furthermore, the ability to solve arithmetic and algebraic functions may rely heavily on the brain's ability to process rhythmic processes. This finding is far more convincing than the argument that music improves math skills.

There have also been many impressive findings on the effects music has on psychological disorders. Music is a powerful psychological tool as well as a device for therapy. In one famous case a young man with severe Tourette's Syndrome found that he could successfully control spasms when engaged in drumming (Sacks 248). This effect has also been reported by patients suffering with Parkinson's Disease (249). Oliver Sacks reports many cases of psychological disorders and diseases that have been successfully treated through music therapy.

When overlooking the wide variety of instances where music plays an important role in everyday life, it seems that advocating for its acceptance into general education would be simple. However, acadamia seems to have simplified music's importance, and even most of the advocates cannot agree on why music is important. Over the past two decades, music advocates have been divided into two philosophies (Elpus 14). This first philosophy views music education in an aesthetic light. This belief encourages listening, performing, and composing music as an emotional and artistic form of education. The second philosophy views music education as praxial. This belief holds performance above all other forms of musical engagement. Leaders of each of these philosophies have been strongly debating each other scholastically for many years. However, both sides have a strong

distaste for music education advocacy. Bennett Reimer, who has been regarded as a leader of the music education aestheticians stated:

> [We] advocate for what we do when the question begging to be asked is whether what we do is valid....[To] put it directly, there is a positive relation between the efforts we have to expend in advocacy and the level of irrelevancy of what we offer. (qtd. in Elpus 14)

On the other side praxialist Regalski wrote:

> In lieu of making a difference musically that is widely recognized and esteemed by society, music educators engage increasingly in the politics of advocacy....[A]dvocacy in music education today is a compelling indication that music educators themselves recognize...the progressive marginalization of music education in schools. (qtd. in Elpus 14)

However, narrow views on music education by these advocates indicate the real problem: while music has such a rich diversity, history, and wide range of intellectual, physical, sociological, and psychological effects, it is counterproductive to define music education within the barriers of performance, composition, or listening. Music education has the ability to relate a wide variety of topics that work with history, art, math, language, science, and more. But still, advocates narrow the topic to the point where music education becomes a luxury.

For example, a common argument correlates the acquisition of musical intelligence with higher-than-average math skills (Schlaug et al 219). However, this claim is based only on correlation and cannot prove a cause and effect. It may be possible that those who are good at math may be more inclined to participate in musical training. Moreover, the argument holds musical education as a supplement rather than a core subject, which in turn, weakens the message of advocacy. In another example, the National Association for Music Education reports that students who participate in band or orchestra have the lowest lifetime and current use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs (Petress 113). Just as in the previous correlation with math, it could be argued that those who refrain from using drugs and alcohol, and those who are enthusiastic about learning and earn good grades, may be more likely to participate in their school's music program.

Citing correlations for debate is ineffective in persuading the public and should have ceased since the failure of the famous Mozart Effect study (Pietschnig, Voracek, and Formann). It is more important to emphasize music's unique elements and argue them as essential

factors in the development of the intellectual and social mind. The Atkinson-Shriffen Model of Memory gives a solid foundation in the search for music's key elements. According to the model, when a person processes input created by stimuli, it enters the sensory memory (Porter). From sensory memory, selected information is transferred to short-term memory, where 5 to 9 pieces of information can be consciously rehearsed (Miller). This is known as Miller's famous Magical Number Seven. Seven "chunks" of information, plus or minus two, can consciously be stored in short term-memory. Studies have shown that the performance of music can greatly improve this skill (Meinz and Hambrick). Since the performance of music requires a person's mind to repeat one idea until memorized and to use "chunking," which clumps bunches of information into groups, this skill can affect memory in a global sense and increase the volume of sensory memory in terms of informational value. The more music is performed, the more likely that the information will be sent to long-term memory, rather than lost, where it can later be retrieved for future use. In addition, increasing the number of connections between ideas makes future retrieval more possible. These connections are the mechanisms that create understanding. Being able to connect tree, leaf, green, rustling, bright, and birds allow people to understand that it is a sunny summer day.

When looking at how important music's role was in the building of civilization the public must ask what risk it may be taking in terms of of its community's advancement by removing music from general education. This requires an argument far more robust than has been presented in the past. It is easy to perceive how subjects such as math, English, and history are necessary for a well-rounded education. They all seem inevitable and innate. But music has been left out of this mix. Studies on the brain have shown that both music and language share many areas of the brain during activity (Wong et al 420). The more research is done, the more it seems as though most academic subjects evolved from or in connection with the skills that make music (Mithen). It is also clear that many people have gone on to be successful with minimal music education in their primary and secondary school. Musical ability is a innate ability that comes with being a human. Musical training can come in the form of a mother singing or playing clapping games with a child. It is clear to see how music education may be defended. Because it is a natural ability, improving the ability can be seen as an aide in developing other skills. But again, this argument can be harmful to the cause. It is more important to send a clear message that musical understanding

is not supplemental in becoming more intelligent, but rather a key component. And by nurturing that key component the education system can improve the probability of success for a more diverse set of students.

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HIS 119

Nomads: Connecting the Dots Across the Ancient World

As mankind evolved from living in small groups of hunters and gatherers, struggling to survive, and formed larger societies and the early civilizations, people were separated by vast distances. These distances could have led civilizations to grow and perhaps flourish in complete isolation. Were it not for the nomads, each civilization might have struggled alone to improve farming techniques, invent tools necessary to improve agriculture, gain knowledge of metallurgy, and develop systems of language and writing without benefit from distant people who were developing similar knowledge and technologies. Living in regions not suited to farming, the mobile nomads developed a symbiotic relationship with those who did. The nomads passed through, trading what they had in order to ensure their own survival, and carrying with them innovation, knowledge, and technology. This enabled each civilization to grow and prosper faster and more efficiently than they would have in isolation. Nomads also challenged these ancient civilizations militarily. Their expertise with horses and archery made them powerful at war, and their military successes helped shape and reshape the world. The nomads, then, served a vital role in the ancient world. Their way of life nurtured fledgling civilizations and propelled them toward maturity.

The early notion of the "pure nomad" who lived independently from towns and cities and gained subsistence only from animals and their products has been discredited. In his early 20th century work, A Short History of the World, H.G. Wells wrote that nomads must have lived much of the time close to villages and cultivated areas, "trading and stealing and perhaps tinkering, as gypsies do to this day." Wells believed that the difficulties of nomadic life strengthened the individual and brought benefits that aided their survival.

> In many ways this free life was a fuller life than that of the tillers of the soil.... He knew more of minerals than the folk upon the plough lands because he went over mountain passes and into rocky places. He may have been a better metallurgist. (Wells)

Wells believed that the process of smelting iron was a nomadic discovery, and archeological discoveries throughout sites from these ancient civilizations indicate that this type of technology was spread between civilizations by nomadic peoples (Wells).

Historian Thomas Barfield agrees with Wells. "Historically,

pastoral nomads have always been tied economically and politically to their sedentary neighbors. Without such ties they could not easily survive." Barfield finds a strong correlation between the structure of various nomadic societies and the structure of their neighbors in towns and cities, and believes this explains the growth of powerful nomadic states that formed in China and threatened the Zhou dynasty. "The centralized nomadic states that formed along China's frontier had the greatest impact on world history. Their combination of horse riding with archery, which created a formidable horse cavalry, made these nomads powerful." These nomadic groups controlled and grew wealthy from the Silk Routes, which connected civilization in China to those across the sub-continent and on to the civilizations of the Fertile Crescent. "Such wealth and influence allowed for creation of large, long-lived nomad empires in Mongolia that were the political equals of the powerful native Chinese dynasties with whom they warred" (Barfield).

In addition to the wealth of beneficial new ideas and technology carried by nomads, it is believed they also carried previously unknown bacteria and diseases from one civilization to another. Some of these bacteria would have been much less harmful in a nomadic society, in which people did not live in crowded conditions, but it was different in the cities. According to Karlen,

> Deadly epidemics remained relatively limited and infrequent for the same reasons they had been so among hunter-gatherers. People did not live densely packed together, which facilitated the transmission of germs from one person to another…When such diseases did jump from an animal source to nomads or villagers, they flashed through the population; soon most of the people in a community were either dead or immune.

It is unknown which city first experienced a devastating plague, but Karlen believes it may have been ancient Babylon, "whose name became a symbol of city life's pleasures and perils" (Karlen).

Indo-European nomads are thought to have originated from the steppes of modern day Ukraine and southern Russia. They were probably the first to domesticate horses, which enabled them to move faster, farther, carry heavier loads, and gave them a military advantage over troops on foot (Bentley).

The nomads of the Asian steppes were formidable warriors who constantly challenged the dynasties of China and effectively changed the course of Chinese history. Christopher Szabo states, "From the Scythians of ancient Greek chronicles to Tamerlane's Tatars,

steppe nomads have left their disruptive stamp on the histories of more sedentary civilizations from Germany to Japan." Their expertise on horseback made them mobile. Their use of a special composite bow made them fearsome. This bow was made from pieces of wood spliced together and then heated and bent into a very effective and powerful curved shape. The use of this bow was recorded as early as 700 BCE, and was in use by the Scythians up until the introduction of gunpowder around 1400 CE (Szabo).

Among the nomads of the Asian steppes, the Xiongnu are perhaps the best known for their military challenges to the Chinese Han dynasty, which weakened the Han's central control and eventually led to its dissolution. But other nomadic societies were equally successful militarily. In Mesopotamia the Hittites, also Indo-European nomads, challenged and overtook the Babylonian empire. Other waves of Indo-European nomads slowly moved to the west, into Greece, central Italy, modern France, and up into the British Isles. "For most of the first millennium B.C.E, Indo-European Celtic peoples largely dominated Europe north of the Mediterranean, speaking related languages and honoring similar deities throughout the region." To the south, nomadic Aryans filtered into the Indian subcontinent and built a large and powerful civilization (Bentley and Ziegler).

As societies of nomads expanded south into Persia and India, east into central Asia, and west into Europe, their native language of the steppes seems to have left a trail that ties together the many similar languages of Indo-European origins. The Indo-Iranian, Greek, Slavic, Germanic, Italic, and Celtic languages are all closely related, with similar grammatical structures and similar vocabulary. There are also significant similarities in the written alphabets of the Phoenicians, Hebrews, Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans. This suggests that the nomadic Phoenicians, traveling and trading throughout the Mediterranean, may have introduced their early, 22-character alphabet throughout the area (Bentley and Ziegler).

Nomads helped span the distances separating developing civilizations, serving as an early postal system in that ancient world. They spread ideas, technology, metallurgy, and improvements in both agriculture and warfare; all of which hastened the development of more mature civilizations.

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Saint Martin's Day: A Popular Celebration in Germany

On November 11th of every year German schools host the celebration of Saint Martin's Day. This popular German celebration is done in honor of Saint Martin of Tours, a man born in the Roman Empire, who was forced to join the military service at a young age, before he was baptized, and before he became Bishop of Tours. As a strongly religious person, Martin of Tours became widely known for his many charitable deeds. The most famous of his acts of kindness and generosity is dramatized in a play on Saint Martin's Day in Germany every year.

In preparation for that day some schools, usually elementary schools, let their students handcraft their own lanterns that will later be used in a lantern procession. Lanterns can also be bought in general stores around that time of year. Denise Kotulla explains the significance of the procession:

> To this day, the origin of the much-loved procession of lanterns is still unclear....It formerly symbolized the light that holiness brings to the darkness, just as St. Martin brought a flicker of hope to the lives of the poor through his good deeds. (Kotulla)

During the procession participants follow a rider, usually on a white horse, leading them through the streets that are lit up by the children's beautiful, mostly handcrafted, lanterns. The children sing songs about Saint Martin and about their lanterns. These songs are all well known throughout Germany. One of the most famous songs on Saint Martin's Day is the one that tells the story of Saint Martin and the beggar. What follows are the lyrics to the song, first in German and then in an English translation by this author:

St. Martin, St. Martin,
St. Martin ritt durch Schnee und Wind,
sein Ross, das trug ihn fort geschwind.
St. Martin ritt mit leichtem Mut,
sein Mantel deckt ihn warm und gut.
Im Schnee saß, im Schnee saß,
im Schnee, da saß ein armer Mann,
hatt' Kleider nicht, hatt' Lumpen an:

"Oh helft mir doch in meiner Not,
sonst ist der bitt're Frost mein Tod!"
St. Martin, St. Martin,
St. Martin zieht die Zügel an,
sein Ross steht still beim armen Mann.
St. Martin mit dem Schwerte teilt
den warmen Mantel unverweilt.
St. Martin, St. Martin,
St. Martin gibt den halben still,
der Bettler rasch ihm danken will.
St. Martin aber ritt in Eil
hinweg mit seinem Mantelteil. ("Sankt Martin")

****

St. Martin, St. Martin,
St. Martin rode through snow and wind,
his steed, it carried him apace.
St. Martin rode with spirits light,
his cloak enwrapp'd him warm and well.
In the snow sat, in the snow sat,
in the snow there sat a poor old man,
he had no clothes, wore nought but rags:
"Oh help me sir, in my great need,
or bitter frost will be my death."
St. Martin, St. Martin,
St. Martin reins the brave steed in,
it stands before the humble man.
St. Martin with his sword divides
his thick, warm cloak without delay.
St. Martin, St. Martin,
St. Martin gives him half the cloak,
the beggar hastens to give thanks.
St. Martin, though, has ridden on,
away with only half his cloak.

There are more verses to the song, but they are not as well known and are therefore not generally sung. Usually a small brass band goes along with the procession to provide musical support. After the procession, teachers, children and their families gather around a huge bonfire to see the play of Saint Martin of Tours. The rider that led

the procession, generally a parent or teacher, stars as Martin of Tours, while another takes on the role of a beggar. Oftentimes a boy slips into the role of the beggar instead. The story is told just as Sulpicius Severus describes it in his biography of Martin of Tours, whose disciple he was:

> So it came about that one day when he had nothing on him but his weapons and his uniform, in the middle of a winter which had been fearfully hard beyond the ordinary...he met at the city gate of Amiens a coatless beggar. This beggar had been asking the passers-by to take pity on him but all had gone past the unfortunate creature. Then the God-filled man understood...that this beggar had been reserved for him. But what was he to do? He had nothing with him but the cape he had on...So he took the sword he was wearing and cut the cape in two and gave one half to the beggar. (Severus 14)

After the play the person disguised as Saint Martin hands out Weckmänner to the children. Weckmänner are "baked goods in the shape of a man holding a clay pipe in his mouth" (Kotulla). These baked goods have mostly replaced the traditional goose dinner on the evening of Saint Martin's Day (Kotulla). Sometimes the children get their Weckmänner in the classroom after the bonfire event. Weckmänner can also be bought at local bakeries around that time of year.

When the bonfire event is over, families go home, but for the children Saint Martin's Day does not end there. Children, often in the company of their parents or older siblings, will then, equipped with a bag and their lantern, go from door to door in their neighborhoods to "beg" by singing Saint Martin ballads to the person opening the door to them. Children are then rewarded with treats such as oranges, nuts, chocolate, and, on a rare occasion, a few coins.

In Germany the Saint Martin celebration in fall is a time of year during which children can allow their creativity to unfold when handcrafting their lanterns, and during which they can have fun. But they also learn a little bit about the history of Martin of Tours and why St. Martin's Day is celebrated. According to Kotulla, "his kind and generous deeds are known to every child in Germany, Austria and Switzerland" (Kotulla). The sight of the white horse is a great sensation to the children as well. "Brimming with excitement, each child hopes to catch a glimpse of the man dressed in a medieval soldier's uniform and his proud steed as they lead the procession of children" (Kotulla). St.

Martin's Day continues to be an important holiday in Germany.

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ENL102

A Brief Discussion of Poe's "The Cask of Amondillado"

Revenge is the deliverance of just payback unto an individual by one whom that person has wronged. In "The Cask of Amontillado" the protagonist/narrator Montresor seeks retribution from a man he claims has done him wrong repeatedly. Careful analysis reveals, however, that this may not be a tale of revenge after all. Rather, Poe's short story is of grotesque murder, observed from the perspective of the killer himself. While not spelled out on paper, examination of missing details indicates the existence of an alternate plot, while simultaneous weighing of the thoughts and actions of the narrator paint a much darker image than that of an avenger.

Perhaps one of the key components that make this story so powerful is the detail Poe leaves out. Indeterminacy leaves much of "The Cask of Amontillado" open to interpretation. For example, "The thousand injuries of Fortunato" (Poe 727) are never discussed in any detail, which leads some literary scholars to conclude "…the injuries supposedly perpetrated by Fortunato are illusory…" (Gargano).

If so, Montresor may have rationalized the murder by attributing false injustices to Fortunato, perhaps even after he kills him. This would indicate that Fortunato may not understand why he is being killed, which contradicts any interpretation of Fortunato's lack of questioning Montresor's motive as a "mutual understanding" between the two characters.

In a tale filled with what are at times cruel instances of irony, it is fitting that the greatest of which is the only irony unbeknownst to the narrator. While Montresor sees himself as a righter of wrongs, "…Fortunato does not see Montresor as an avenger, only as an incomprehensible murderer" (Bloom). Whereas comedians depend on a laughing audience to fuel satisfaction, an avenger is satisfied only when his/her target understands the cause for retaliation. Like the punch line of a bad joke, Montresor's "revenge" fails to elicit the intended reaction from his target. Instead of punishing Fortunato, he merely kills him, and unknowingly harms himself in the process. Thus, the cruelest irony of all may be the blindness of the protagonist toward the damage he has inflicted upon himself.

Another important detail left from the text is the target of Montresor's monolog. With the last lines revealing that fifty years have passed since the murder, it is reasonable to believe that Montresor

may be on his deathbed. In conjunction with the opening words, "You, who so well know the nature of my soul…" (Poe 727), the image of an old man speaking with a bedside confessor seems apt (Bloom).

It is obvious that the murder has taken its toll on Montresor, for although fifty years have passed, he is haunted with vivid recollections of the fateful night (Gargano). Such a scene indicates the extent to which impunity has both eluded and been achieved by Montresor. In the fifty years since, no criminal or otherwise tangible punishment has befallen the narrator, indicating that he succeeds in finding immunity from retaliation. On the other hand, mental scarring is present, as evident in his vivid recollection of the dirty deed.

Lacking any indication of penitence, Montresor's "confession," tinged with the hue of pride, is akin to a "finest hour" tale. His lines of cruel verbal irony carry a sarcastic tone, and conjure the image of a deviant grin found on the face of a killer.

> "Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—" (Poe 728)

Montresor toys with his target, in the same spirit that a cat plays with a mouse before eating it. In what may be the most horrifying aspect of Montresor's character, he apparently thinks that there is nothing wrong with partaking in such cruel acts. Aloof to the moral implications, Montresor prides himself in his "triumph" over the foolish Fortunato (Gargano). Harold Bloom may best describe the final image of Montresor: "We are left with the image of a brilliant intellect gone awry, [who]…glories in his evils until the end of his days" (Bloom).

Disturbing is the image of an insane man on his deathbed, which may have been Poe's intention in creating Montresor's character. "The Cask of Amontillado" is the story of a murder committed under the false premise of revenge by the narrator. Narrated from the perspective of the killer, a deluded rationalist driven to prove he has successfully conquered his enemy (Bloom), the tale creates a disturbing image of how "justifiable murder" may exist only in the eyes of the murderer.

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ENL102

Into The Souls of Ancestry

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers," is a poem written by Langston Hughes. This poem was written when the author was merely nineteen years of age, during an era known as the "Harlem Renaissance," which was a time of cultural achievement for African Americans during the 1920s. The time period is important for the reader to know to help understand what the poet is writing about.

Langston Hughes wrote this poem in free verse, which sets it apart from the more traditional form of rhythmically metered poetry. Free verse does not set forth a particular structure; therefore, it gives poets more freedom in their writing. The poem consists of thirteen lines and five stanzas, and if read aloud can be compared to the musical sound of the blues. "Hughes poetry echoes the voices of ordinary African Americans and the rhythms of their music" (Meyer 1135). Hughes includes alliterations such as deep, dawns, dusky, also singing, sunset, soul, and bathed, built, bosom, which add to the poem's impact.

The setting of the poem brings the reader's imagination into the past and across the world as Hughes describes the rivers of more ancient and historical times, rivers such as the Euphrates, the Congo, the Nile, and the Mississippi. These rivers are used as metaphors, symbolizing the soul of the persona that takes shape as the poem is read: "My soul has grown deep with the rivers" (Hughes 1143). The reader senses that the voice in the poem is linking his soul to the souls of his ancestors while he describes various images throughout time. For example, when the reader hears the words "when dawns were young" and "I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it," as well as "I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went to New Orleans…" (Hughes 1134), the imagery that those words create brings the reader into the soul of the poet. The muddy rivers described can also symbolize the color of the black skin of the African Americans.

Hughes is searching for his identity while reaching back to his ancestry, and bringing his heritage forward to his own time, contributing to the theme of racial pride. Throughout the poem Hughes uses first person narration such as "I," "I've," and "My," but one can see that these words are not meant to refer to a singular person. "The "I" of the poem is not that of "a" Negro but "the" Negro, suggesting

the whole of the people and their history" (Hutchinson). The reader is led to see how strongly the poet connects to his ancestry, so strongly that he actually feels, he has experienced these things, and that all African Americans have these experiences in their blood line.

The time in history that Hughes wrote this poem plays a major role in the theme of racial pride, for the poet is at an age when he is searching for his way in life and seeing the battles of prejudice his people are faced with. Hughes takes great pride in his race and feels empowered to speak on their behalf. Hughes wanted his poetry to be "direct, comprehensible, and the epitome of simplicity" (Meyer 1135). "The Negro Speaks Of Rivers," tells the story of the lives and experiences of the African Americans since the beginning of time, giving the reader a good glimpse of the importance of racial pride through Hughes' poem.

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ENL 102

Young Goodman Brown's Coming of Age Tale

Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story "Young Goodman Brown" describes a walk that Goodman Brown takes through the woods of Salem with the devil. They travel together, and apart, passing churchwomen, reverends, and townspeople, who are all on their way to a secret gathering at the darkest hour of the night. Upon arrival at the gloomy meeting of the morally conflicted townspeople, Goodman Brown is thrown into an existential crisis, and turmoil pursues as he grasps at faith until he wakes in the woods as if his experience was but a dream. The trail that the travelers take through the woods and the people they meet are representations of a man's search for meaning and his question of faith as he becomes more knowledgeable of his fellow man and himself.

The short story begins with foreshadowing from the author that leads the reader to believe that what is to follow is a sort of bildungsroman for Goodman Brown. "Goodman Brown came forth… crossing the threshold" (Hawthorne 51). As an academic, one knows that the use of a 'threshold' is a literary device to tell the reader that the protagonist is about to experience a conflict that will question his values and, potentially, bring him to maturity. Hawthorne also reveals that Brown's wife is 'aptly named' Faith, revealing both the crossing of a threshold and faith within the first paragraph. It's reasonable to conclude that what is to follow is a test of faith.

As Goodman Brown departs from his wife, he notices that Faith peeps after him with "a melancholy air, in spite of her pink ribbons" (Hawthorne 51). Within the first page, there is the comparison of Faith being sad, or gloomy, in spite of the acceptance, love, innocence and self-worth that the pink ribbons represent. Interestingly, upon first setting upon the dreary road, Goodman Brown has "excellent resolve for the future," feeling "justified in making more haste on his present evil purpose" (Hawthorne 52). With the sudden introduction of Goodman Brown knowingly moving with 'evil purpose' goes beyond merely walking on a literal road. Here it could be said that he has already committed, or is considering committing to, an evil deed or action, which makes the description of what follows a metaphor for the human condition upon stepping out of ones faith.

> He had taken a dreary road, darkened by the gloomiest trees of the forest, which barely stood aside to let the narrow path creep through, and closed immediately behind. It was all as lonely as could be....[In] such solitude...the traveler knows not who may be concealed… [With] lonely footsteps, he may yet be passing through an unseen multitude.(Hawthorne 52)

The "dreary road" that Goodman Brown takes metaphorically represents the steps he takes to commit to an evil deed, and as the path "closed immediately behind" him he can no longer turn back from the actions he has decided to take. This could arguably stand for the fact that once one steps outside the boundaries of faith there is no turning back, leaving Goodman Brown "lonely as could be... in such solitude." At this point, he has committed to an act that he knows is evil, or outside of his moral standards, with the belief that others have not committed such a deed, and loneliness follows with a sense of judgment from his peers represented as the "unseen multitude" that is either hidden or out of his shameful sight.

As Brown continues, there seems to be instant regret as he asks himself, "what if the devil himself be at my very elbow!" (Hawthorne 52). He begins to realize that he may have committed an act so horrible that the devil walks with him, arm-in-arm. At that moment, he comes upon an elderly traveler who is described as being able to have been taken for his father and who has been waiting for Brown's arrival wielding a staff that "bore the likeness of a great black snake" (Hawthorne 52). The devil? Perhaps, but, the most significant part of the passage is that Goodman Brown apologizes for being late, admitting that "Faith kept me back a while," which could lead the reader to question whether or not he has doubted his faith before? If he has, he has stuck by faith's side until this moment when he begins to go into an existential crisis.

While walking with the fellow traveler, heading deeper into the woods and farther from faith, Goodman Brown reflects on his family, saying that his father, and his father before him, "never went into the woods on such an errand" (Hawthorne 53). Without a moment to breath, almost as if Mr. Brown were answering it himself, the traveler interjects saying that not only is he acquainted with his family as they "lashed the Quaker women" (Hawthorne 54) and "set fire to an Indian village" (Hawthorne 54), but he is also acquainted with every other Puritan. If the reader perceives this as a conflict within Goodman Brown, then one can assume that this is a stage in which he is showing

regret for committing a deed outside his moral compass. Following his regret, Goodman Brown quickly judges himself on the basis of an immature perception that his family, and his peers, stand untainted by such indiscretions of character, which he instantly interjects with a more mature reflection of their actions, deeming them equally responsible for evil deeds. Yet, he continues to wrestle with this conundrum, asking why they "never spoke of such matters" or, why even rumors had not driven them from New England. In a panic, he attempts to deceive himself by certifying their Quaker morals as concrete ideology. He declares that they are "a people of prayer, and good works to boot, and abide to no such wickedness" (Hawthorne 54).

Goodman Brown continues in his turmoil of despair, moral solitude and self-judgment as he comes upon Goody Cloyse, an old woman who taught him his catechism and who appears to know the devil well. She stops for a moment to talk with Goodman Brown's companion, as Goodman Brown himself hides in the woods, delaying her own journey to the dark communion of questionable worship. Enduring his crisis further, Goodman Brown concludes that he will not take another step to "budge on this errand. What if a wretched old woman do choose to go to the devil, when I thought she was going to Heaven! Is that any reason why I should quit my dear Faith, and go after her?" (Hawthorne 56). Internally, Goodman Brown is dealing with the idea that he should not fail his faith as a result of the feeling of being betrayed by the ideals that were preached to him by unfaithful figures and stick to what they preached and not how they themselves have acted.

As Goodman Brown sits in contemplation of whether there "really was a Heaven above him," a "black mass of cloud" (Hawthorne 59) directly overhead swiftly swept north, carrying a confusing and doubtful sound of voices that were clearly distinguishable as the accents of his own townspeople, men and women. "Then comes a stronger swell of those familiar tones, one voice, of a young woman, uttering lamentations, yet with an uncertain sorrow, and entreating for some favor, which, perhaps, it would grieve her to obtain. Brown exclaimed Faith! My Faith is gone!" (Hawthorne 59). Goodman Brown's conflict comes to a climax here when he realizes that there may be no Heaven. A heaven-less conclusion results in despair, which is represented by the black cloud that reveals not only is his own morally conflicted family as well as Goody Cloyse, but the whole town, everyone he knows, the reverend and indeed his innocent faith. One could say that the lamentation that his faith follows is uncertainly

sorrowful because it is unwittingly following the hypocritical sermons and empty ideals.

The story continues to follow Goodman Brown as he goes into a hysterical fit of complete rejection of value, wailing in laughter as he yells in isolation: "let us hear which will laugh loudest! Think not to frighten me with your deviltry! Come witch, come wizard, and come Indian powwow, Come Devil himself! And here comes Goodman Brown. You may as well fear him as he fear you!" (Hawthorne 59). He loses himself in his loss of innocence as he comes into the light of knowledge that all men must face. that there is good and evil within the deeds of ordinary men, and that these deeds are not always in line with what 'good' men preach. One would like to think that by the end of the story when Goodman Brown ends up waking up at the edge of woods, he realizes that he is the only one able to judge his deeds. Through Goodman Browns journey, Nathaniel Hawthorne reveals man's search for meaning and his question of faith through his actions as he becomes more knowledgeable of his fellow man and himself.

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"Death Note": A Glance at Good and Evil

"Death Note" is a Japanese story from the mind of Tsugumi Ohba, in which the writer spreads light on the question of the death penalty being good or evil, right or wrong. His story addresses a matter that is of great concern.

In "Death Note" a young criminal justice college student finds a notebook that contains instructions within it explaining how to kill someone using the notebook. The student, Light Yagami, takes it upon himself to judge criminals and execute them by using the notebook, the Death Note, in order to create an ideal world without crime. To kill using the Death Note, Light Yagami needs to write down a person's name in the notebook while thinking of his or her face. A person killed with this method generally dies by having a heart attack, unless the user of the notebook specifies otherwise. Publicly, Light soon comes to be known as Kira and people start to cheer him on and even worship him.

When it becomes obvious that the deaths of criminals are not mere coincidence, the Japanese police begin to investigate but soon come to the conclusion that they need more than just a cunning mind to solve this case. They need the best detective in the world: L. When L. starts to lead the investigation, he challenges Light Yagami directly without knowing who or where Light is, or how he manages to kill criminals without being present when they die. In the end Light defeats L. but must soon realize that another detective has taken his place: Near.

In Ohba's story everything revolves around good and evil. The question emerges whether what Light does is helping the world become a better place or whether his deeds are simply evil. Even the police wonder if the world would be a better place with Kira judging criminals. When, later in the story, Light Yagami joins the police, one of the police officers speaks his mind about Kira not being all evil: "I know that Kira is a mass murderer. But I can also understand the feeling of those people who look upon Kira as being their savior" (Ohba, Death Note 9: 106). Light responds to that with a comment of his own, showing that whether something is good or evil lies in the eye of the beholder:

> I think Kira understands this. That what he does is evil. Kira will sacrifice even himself to change the world for the better. That

> is the true justice Kira has chosen. . . . It is not our business to debate whether Kira is evil or not. That is up to the public and philosophers to decide. (Ohba, Death Note 9: 107-108)

He follows his comment with this remark: "If we catch Kira, then Kira is evil. If Kira rules the world, then Kira is good" (109). With that he points out that the victor of this battle is righteous and that this is what the world has always been like (109). However, he is confident that "the world is rapidly coming to Kira's side" and that "soon Kira will be justice" (109).

Tsugumi Ohba leaves it to the audience to judge Kira. During the final confrontation between Kira and Near, the detective says:

> Nobody can tell what is right and what is wrong. What is righteous and what is evil. Even if there is a God and I had his teachings before me, I would think it through and decide if that was right or wrong myself. (Ohba, Death Note 12: 143)

Ohba doesn't want to make a judgment of good or evil but rather to leave that responsibility to the audience: "Near's words toward the end about how justice is something that we all think about and decide for ourselves would probably be closest to my own beliefs" (Ohba, Death Note 13: 69). He explains his reserve: "Because the answers to those questions always eventually become ideological I decided from the beginning that they wouldn't be part of Death Note" (69).

Even though Tsugumi Ohba does not want to provide an answer about whether Light's deeds are good or evil, his story addresses the matter several times. When Light explains his plans to a Shinigami, a God of Death in Japanese culture, the Shinigami responds: "You do something like that, the only one left with a bad personality will be you" (Ohba, Death Note 1: 48).

Kira is captured in the end but many people still pray to him as their savior, indicating the hope that one day Kira might come back and make the world a better place once again. This shows that the innocent believe in Kira and what he did, but the police see it a different way: "The world might be more peaceful, but that's because people are afraid. A peace based upon murder and fear is not a real peace" (Ohba, Death Note 9: 106).

The question of good or evil, right or wrong, is heatedly discussed in today's world. Some people believe that "capital punishment permanently removes the worst criminals from society, reducing crime in the long run and saving lives" ("Capital Punishment"). According to the National Center of State Courts people

who are for the death penalty think that it is a deterrent to crime ("Capital Punishment"), which is just what the police in Tsugumi Ohba's story point out as being "not a real peace" (Ohba, Death Note 9: 106). This shows that the beliefs in Tsugumi Ohba's story are not too far from the views of people in the real world.

Opponents of the death penalty believe that putting people to death "sends the wrong message that killing is acceptable under certain circumstances" ("Capital Punishment"). That is another similarity between the positions of Ohba's characters and people around the world. Furthermore, opponents state that "there is still a possibility that innocent people will be executed" ("Capital Punishment").

As Tsugumi Ohba and his characters in "Death Note" demonstrate, one cannot give a definite answer to the question of the death penalty being good or evil, right or wrong. That is something people have to decide for themselves.

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Two Different Families, Two Similar Themes

Robert Frost said, "A poem begins with a lump in the throat…." Perhaps the following two poets began their works with that feeling, considering their common theme based on memory of family. Seamus Heaney reflects on his father and grandfather in his poem "Digging." Etheridge Knight remembers his entire family in "The Idea of Ancestry." Although the settings are starkly different, both poets expertly weave their way through melancholy feelings of inadequacy relative to their separate experiences.

The fact that Seamus Heaney and Etheridge Knight hail from different backgrounds makes for an interesting analysis of the similarity of theme in their works. Heaney, born in 1939 and the eldest of nine children, was raised in Ireland. Knight, born in Mississippi in 1931 and one of seven children, spent many of his quality years in prison. Nevertheless, both became successful poets in their own right. Their poems hint at a need for the presence of family in their lives, but even more telling is the appearance of a struggle in living up to the strength and integrity of their ancestors.

Seamus Heaney's speaker in "Digging" starts out sure of himself as a writer, but then hears his father outside the window working in the yard and his mind begins to wander in a tone of reminiscence. The speaker admires the hard work of his father and grandfather. "By God, the old man could handle a spade./ Just like his old man" (Heaney ll 15-16). Etheridge Knight's speaker in his poem "The Idea of Ancestry" also recalls his ancestors right from the start. "Taped to the wall of my cell are 47 pictures: 47 black/ faces: . . ." (Knight 1-2). Heaney's speaker is sitting at a desk and free to move about; Knight's is trapped in a prison cell. It makes no difference to either one—the mind is free to think, no matter the setting.

As "Digging" advances, Heaney's speaker feels inadequate for working with just a "squat pen" as compared to the hard labor of his father and grandfather. According to Enrico Terrinoni's analysis, "The two major metaphors, the pen as gun, and the pen as spade—which open and close this circular the poem [sic]—triumph among the childhood recollections that 'Digging' narrates" (1). Terrinoni also refers to Heaney's narrative as being "utterly minimalist." Knight's poem could also be considered minimalist. The speaker talks about his family

and his drug trouble with an easy, understated voice. John Pfeiffer states in his analysis of "The Idea of Ancestry" that "[A]dditional oral characteristics of the poem are in keeping with its elemental and emotionally simple meaning." Therefore, both poems are simple and minimal, but there is nothing easy when it comes to writing about family, and the digging up of memories that it entails.

Seamus Heaney is a quiet, private man born April 13, 1939, in County Derry, Northern Ireland. It could be that Heaney's upbringing as a Catholic in Northern Ireland brought him to a place of poetic minimalism. He may have withdrawn from the country's violence the only way he knew how—with his pen. The whole of "Digging" is devoted to the speaker's ancestors. Heaney subtly moves the speaker through admiration and respect for them. The speaker wistfully compares his pen to his father and grandfather's spade as if his pen represents a weakness or inadequacy. But as reflections and memories take hold, the speaker realizes that he will be able to follow in their footsteps, just with an instrument better suited to his talent.

Etheridge Knight was born in Corinth, Mississippi, on April 19, 1931. While serving prison time, he started writing poetry to counteract that lonely existence. In "The Idea of Ancestry," the speaker is coping with solitary mood swings occurring amid bars and cement walls. Knight, like Heaney, devotes the heart of his poem to his ancestors. Howard Nelson states in his criticism, "The pictures and his thoughts make him feel part of a vital human flow—the ongoing, complex, living thing a family that has a sense of itself can be—but at the same time sharpens his loneliness" (43).

Seamus Heaney and Etheridge Knight are faced with creating a yearning in their speakers at the start of their poems. Heaney's speaker has more of a rebellious tone: "Between my finger and my thumb/ The squat pen rests; snug as a gun" (Heaney ll 1-2). The speaker in "Digging" is feeling inadequate with only a pen to hold compared to the perceived manliness of his spade-wielding father and grandfather. Knight's speaker has a resigned tone, saying, "I am all of them, they are all of me;/ they are farmers, I am a thief, I am me, they are thee" (Knight 7-8). He envisions himself outside the familial circle, but he is one with himself, through thick or thin.

Heaney's speaker in "Digging" recalls bringing some milk to his grandfather, noting that as soon as he was finished drinking it, he went right back to work. Knight's speaker in "The Idea of Ancestry" recalls almost getting sober after spending time at his grandmother's home. Thus, the grandparents show strength and fortitude in the eyes of each speaker as they grapple with their recollections. Both poets revolve their works around the respect—and possible envy—they have for their heritage, with their grandparents seated in the hub. Knight's speaker shows frustration with thoughts of not being able to carry on the family genes. "I am all of them,/ they are all of me, I am me, they are thee, and I have no children/ to float in the space between" (Knight ll 37-39).

Heaney's speaker has an easier time with his resolve. "Between my finger and my thumb/ the squat pen rests./ I'll dig with it" (Heaney ll 28-30).

Even though Etheridge Knight and Seamus Heaney have different family histories, the message in their poems is similar. Knight presents an undertone throughout "The Idea of Ancestry" that his family was all about them against the world because of their African American heritage. Heaney's upbringing was without incident as implied in the milder "Digging," but he was a shocked bystander to the violence in Northern Ireland. Hence, the solitude of poetic thinking can open up memories from the past, creating regret in the present, and lead to a forthcoming realization of satisfaction and resolve with self. These poets can admire the tenacity of their ancestors and remain content with their individual efforts to continue the family tree in their own time, place, and way.

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