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Kyle Peterson -- Political Editor

Mike Young -- Fiction and Poetry Editor

## Editors' Notes

-- Kyle

First off, Happy New Year to everyone! As we settle back into the daily grind, I hope those who made a resolution are sticking to it, and to all I offer this quip from Winston Churchill, a man with extraordinary resolve: if you're going through hell, keep going.

Now, to all our readers, whether you've made a resolution or not, might I suggest two things that will add great benefit to your lives? The first is to submit at least one piece of writing to NOO Journal; be it an essay or monologue, poetry or fiction, send us what you've been working on, or write something for the occasion. The second thing is to commit a random act of kindness everyday, like taking out the trash without being asked, or sending a friend or loved one a card, or even flowers. How will these two things benefit your life, you ask?

Well, the first one feeds your creativity and maybe even your ego (in a good way); the second one feeds your soul, and the recipient's, hopefully. Both of these actions are cathartic because it feels good to take care of yourself as well as to do something kind for others. Not too painful, right? Regardless, I again wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope that you will enjoy this edition of NOO. ¡Ciao!

-- Mike

Once I was about to leave this apartment, but because of various circumstances and substances, I wasn't doing very well with the whole "walking upright" thing. Outside, on the way downstairs, I saw ice glint on the step below me, and then I stepped back and saw ice slathered across each and every step, water beads on the bannister. My ride, already at the bottom, rolled her eyes. She suggested slowness, perhaps one step at a time? And sure, with considerable yowling and wobbling, eventually I made it all the way down. I'm convinced it was my over-trepidation that ensured a safe journey: dude, there was a whole lot of ice. But let's say I were a more bouncy fellow, a fellow who might've enjoyed the thrill of slipping down those stairs. Let's say I were a plucky soccer player, instead of one who refuses to leap for headers. I might make blinding contact and shed brain cells. For God's sake, I might turn *fun*.

Paranoia gets a bad rap because it spawns people like me. But people scorn it because they can't imagine going to all that work. If our government is quietly milking profit out of Hurricane Katrina (which it is), if the mechanics of our political system corrupt even its most starryeyed members (which they do), well, that means that pretty much the only way to have fun is to embrace deliberate ignorance. Don't be silly, don't be paranoid, don't buy into the bearded people who sputter on about corporations, just relax.

But relaxation's ultimate success involves corpses, fun's neurological fire can't burn indefinitely, etc. So to keep things interesting, we must pursue a purpose beyond amusing ourselves, even if it means getting all serious every now and then. And to this effort, our issue features *selfless work* by *amazing human beings*. This is fact. I will back this up with boxing gloves. Witness J.R. Salling's cautionary tale or Shane Allison's poem about the glee of a small moral stand. Witness everything else.

And speaking of glee, it's not always a downer to eschew fun for serious considerations. Sure, the ice on those stairs scared me half to death, but if I hadn't noticed it, I wouldn't have noticed the way the moon fed the sprinkles of light, how the concrete steps seemed for a minute covered in a million little lanterns. How the ice, in its shiny, treacherous way, actually helped poor drunk little me find my way down to the night.

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# The Question of Killing

--Benjamin Harrison

**"Our age will be that of wars far more ambitious, far more barbarous than in the past." – Comte de Mirabeau**

**"What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence,"** wrote Ludwig Wittgenstein. The most effective weapons against silence ever have been simplicity and common sense, but never have the handlers of the world been so blind to the realities of power. As a result of this failure, the Western world is unable to differentiate between illusion and reality and, some might assert, Western culture has become less a reflection of its own society and more so a reflection of the residue from the fog of war.

One of the greatest misconceptions of the twentieth century was that we lived in peace. Certainly the West has been basking in the glow of a nuclear peace, the only other viable option being mutually assured destruction. However, if one lifts the veil of nuclear peace in developed nations, then a view of a new conventional world war rears its cataclysmic head. The result is a distorted view of what constitutes war.

In the nineteenth century, war was something that involved 'civilized' people on both sides. If only one side were 'civilized,' then it wasn't 'war,' but rather an adventure. In other words, an incident between Austria and Prussia involving a thousand dead soldiers was called a war. However, the fighting between the British and the Mahdi in the Sudan, which resulted in losses of multiple thousands, was merely an expedition. This mindset allowed us the beauty of thinking that the last half of the nineteenth century was peaceful.

This same mindset still enables us to ignore the violence that now surrounds the West. The developed nations (eighteen to be exact) are indeed at peace with one another and have been for the last fifty or so years. Meanwhile, as a direct result of the military violence that has been escalating outside the West during the same period of time, the lesser developed nations of the world are nowhere near 'at peace.' Instead, they are more or less in a state of general instability that will indeed affect all of us.

The thought that extremely high levels of violence in the world are a natural part of Western 'peace' would be absurd, if it were not true. This violence is rationalized by excusing it as part of the way the world works. **If this is the way the world works, does the world need an average of one thousand soldiers killed daily in more than three-dozen conflicts to keep 'working?'** This is a relatively conservative figure considering the difficulty in obtaining accurate statistics of ongoing conflicts. What are the casualties in the Cambodian countryside? In Burma or Surinam? A thousand soldiers a day is roughly equal to the number of French soldiers killed daily during World War I, a conflict that lasted only five years. In addition, five thousand citizens die everyday, both indirectly and directly from war. If you total the figures up over the last decade, the death toll reaches over three million soldiers and twenty million civilians. Keep in mind, however, that these figures do not include acts of genocide, such as in Cambodia.

In other words, while we have been able to relatively maintain an illusion of peace, much of the world is at war and has been for sometime. We are most definitely the exception, not the rule: our country's forty murders per month in Washington D.C. from gang wars pales in comparison to the thousands killed daily elsewhere in the world.

Periodically though, we manage to shift our focus on one of those conflicts for a short time. This usually involves some correlation between the event and the West—hostages or perhaps the involvement of a Western humanitarian group. **Photojournalists manage to keep our attention on these matters for at least the blink of an eye before we switch the channel or flip the page to something of greater interest.** And when a conflict pulls at our heartstrings, we view it as though it were an entity unto itself. Consideration is never given to the outlying nations involved. For example, when the war-related starvation of millions of Ethiopians was brought to national attention, we failed to recognize the surrounding people caught in the conflict—the Sudanese, Somalis, etc. The ability to focus our attention on one fashionable war at a time allows us to continue thinking that when the conflict ends, the world drifts back into its peaceful slumber.

Our myopia provides us with an artificial peace of mind. In our collective imagination we cannot see these forces struggling close around us, but they are there. Only the occasional terrorist attack on our own citizens seems brutal enough to force us to look around. Were it not for the media, we would be without knowledge of the thousands of terrorist attacks that happen annually around the globe.

For example, when a bomb went off in Paris in 1986, in an area dense with theaters, restaurants, and shopping centers, the sound of the blast could not be heard more than two blocks away. So, thousands of people went on happily eating, socializing and shopping, completely unaware that a few blocks away 150 people had just died — perfectly unaware that anything had happened at all until they got home in time for the evening news. This begs the question of why those people had to die. Based on their comrades' general ambivalence, these people were not killed to set an example, since no one even bothered to notice it happened. Rather, these people were killed to provide film footage and newspaper copy that generalized the incident in such a way that it would merit political impact—to remind us of the unacceptable level of violence in our modern world, even though we are at 'peace.'

You see, if we have an illusion of peace, then we can go on with daily life and the Western world can go on selling arms—the biggest business in the world and a huge percentage of the GNP—to underdeveloped nations that will in turn celebrate their democracy by slaughtering each other. For some odd reason those nations have enough money to buy our military surplus, yet they can't afford paper to print books on, books that might enable their citizenry to lead a more fulfilled existence through knowledge, if their citizenry is lucky enough to stay alive. What does all of this mean? It means we will have to pay \$2.21 a gallon for gasoline to compensate for the artificially inflated price of oil that these countries sell us to buy our old F-14's and murder each other.

Ultimately, the only viable solution to the question of killing is the answer of living. A dictator once quipped that a single death is a tragedy, but a million deaths is merely a statistic. I vehemently disagree. All life must be nurtured and preserved if we are to present a suitable world to those yet unborn. Silence begets violence, so we must let our voices echo through posterity. Do not render future generations into the hands and minds of indifference.

## Katrina: Natural Disaster or Cause and Effect? -- Simeon Newman



There is no doubt Hurricane Katrina was a devastating tragedy, affecting hundreds of thousands of lives and wreaking untold damage throughout the entire Gulf region. The magnitude of this tremendous storm, however, has revealed the US government's preference for private interests over public welfare. This configuration amplified the magnitude of the storm, and now forces us to decide on a course of action that will either allow political leaders to continue on this path, or on one that will prevent such future disasters. If we want prevention, we must examine the factors contributing to the devastation as well as necessary components of the rebuilding effort.

First is the issue of human induced global warming, a phenomenon supported by many in the world community. In 2001, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme to monitor global climate change, released its Summary for Policymakers, stating, "**[there is new and stronger evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributed to human activities]**" (5). According to the IPCC, the major reason for global warming is the over-production of greenhouse gases, which are "primarily due to the combustion of fossil fuels, agriculture, and land-use changes" (4). In the same publication, the IPCC also predicted that global warming will lead to stronger storms (14), and increased loss of life due to floods and storms (9). Despite the recent release of the IPCC's report, however, this trend has been discussed for some time.

In her work, "Global Warming: Why We Need A New Environmental Movement," Christine Frank reported that, "In the summer of 1988, . . . James Hansen of NASA's Goddard Space Institute reported to Congress that he was **99 percent certain that global warming, due to the human activity of burning fossil fuels, was underway.**" These are only two examples of the thousands of scientists worldwide who believe global warming is occurring due to human activities. Despite this international consensus, many in the United States, including political leaders, do not agree. For instance, in a letter responding to a constituent, Congressman Wally Herger of California wrote the following:

"Unless and until I see a profound scholarly and scientific consensus that global warming is indeed occurring with more extreme rates of change than those that have occurred historically, and that CO<sup>2</sup> and other emissions are primarily to blame, I do not believe that adopting legislation . . . is the prudent course of action for the Congress to follow. The economic consequences would be, in my opinion, too severe."

The difference in views between the IPCC and American Congressmen like Wally Herger is of concern to some people, and this will continue to be an issue of much debate.

The second issue stems from large shipping companies wanting easier access to gulf ports in the Mississippi River Delta area. The Mississippi River constantly deposits sediment in its delta area, forming many islets, which eventually become grasslands. **This grassland area would have acted as a natural hurricane barrier (Union of Concerned Scientists) had it not been removed by shipping companies in pursuit of profit.**

A third contributing factor was the lack of general precautionary measures to safeguard against possible problems. For instance, in November of 2005, John W. Whitehead of the Rutherford Institute wrote that in 2004 the Bush Administration cut funding for major hurricane and flood protection projects by millions of dollars. This should be of considerable concern to U.S. citizens, and it begs the question, "why cut our life-protection funding?"

Not only was necessary funding cut prior to the hurricane, but Robert Siegel, a National Public Radio reporter, estimated that 2,000 people were stranded with neither food nor water in the New Orleans Convention Center, with some of them already dead. According to Siegel, the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security didn't even know they were there. Furthermore, the Federal Emergency Management Association circulated a phone number to call for assistance that was invalid. Additionally, there was a shortage of rescue equipment for first responders and rescue personnel because much of the equipment was overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan.

After Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, reports flowed in about looting and stealing, a kind of anarchy in the streets. People across the nation, already upset about the massive suffering, were outraged that Katrina's aftermath was accompanied by looting. Feeling upset would be understandable if a person had heard just those reports, but according to the Doctors for Global Health, "as soon as

stores and private property were in peril, the police and military were ordered to "shoot to kill," a report corroborated by ABC News Online. This order came even though most of the looting occurring was due to a basic human need to survive.

On November 11th 2005, The New York Times reported that 200 police officers in New Orleans quit in the midst of the mayhem, and two officers committed suicide. One may wonder if some of this was due to the strange obsession with protecting private property instead of assisting the mass of hurricane victims, instead of serving and protecting—the reason the officers were hired.

Rebuilding the Gulf Coast region will be a long and arduous process and one that will require much better planning than previously exhibited. According to the Washington Post, on September 16th 2005 President Bush made a speech saying, "You need to know, that our whole nation cares about you, and in the journey ahead you're not alone. . . . And tonight I also offer this pledge of the American people: Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will do what it takes, we will stay as long as it takes, to help citizens rebuild their communities and their lives."

**However, before this speech, George Bush had signed away the Davis-Bacon Wage Protection Act, which had ensured that any worker working under a federal contract must be paid local prevailing wages.** With the act in place, the construction worker in the South would get an average minimum wage of \$9.50 an hour; with the act revoked, the worker can be paid down to the federal minimum wage, \$5.15 an hour.

After Bush revoked the Davis-Bacon Wage Protection Act, many people protested. Below is a portion of a letter that I sent to Congressman Wally Herger:

"Please use your power . . . to urge President Bush to restore Davis-Bacon wage protections for . . . workers who will rebuild the Gulf Coast. Lowering wages for people already in severe economic distress . . . must be reversed. . . . Prevailing wages for construction specialties in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama average just \$9.50 an hour. . . . should Gulf Coast workers earn less than that?"

Here is the response that I received:

"As you may know, the Davis-Bacon Act, as amended, stipulates that federal government construction contractors must pay their employees not less than the locally prevailing wage. . . . The fundamental purpose of the law is to help ensure that the local businesses can compete for government contracts, and that employee wages are fair.

With that said. . . presidents have the authority to suspend the requirements of the Act during a "national emergency." . . . As such, President Bush acted both within his authority and consistent with historical precedent when he suspended Davis-Bacon requirements for the reconstruction efforts in states devastated by the colossal wrath of Hurricane Katrina. . . . I believe it is important after a natural disaster to establish conditions that foster competition and will help keep reconstruction costs at a minimum. In doing so, I believe that rebuilding devastated areas could be completed in a more timely and effective manner. . . . Sincerely. . . Wally Herger."

In my view, Congressman Herger's position claims humans are to be used in a manner of "timeliness" and "effectiveness." His statements reflect the priorities of the US government, which serve private interests rather than protect citizens. **After their recent deathblow from the sea, Gulf Coast workers, already devastated by the hurricane, will now be paid less, meaning they will have to survive on less.** Though the Davis-Bacon Wage Protection Act was revoked in the name of cutting costs to speed reconstruction, the Washington Post reported " . . . Bush cited no price tag [for reconstruction in New Orleans, but] he committed the nation to a plan that officials and lawmakers believe could top \$200 billion." So, there is plenty of funding for reconstruction of New Orleans, but if the workers want to be paid more, it is up to them to stick up for themselves, as members of Congress stuck up for themselves by recently voting a raise in their pay.

In the end, the US government, which we pay to protect the US citizens ravaged by disasters like Hurricane Katrina, instead chose to ignore global warming, remove natural hurricane barriers, cut funding for flood protection, order "looters" shot on sight, and repeal wage protection for Gulf Coast workers. As events unfolded, the world bore witness to the result of government's preference for big business over public welfare. People will forever be at risk until we participate in planning for our future, since the government and big businesses have failed in doing so. It is time for working-class politics!

# Big Brother, Where Art Thou?

-- Kyle Peterson

"Papers, please." We've all heard those words before; for some they are only a phrase in movies about the old Soviet Union or Nazi Germany, but for the many who lived through the experience of such oppressive regimes, those words must bring back a flood of sad and bitter emotions. We Americans are blessed to live in a country that is, theoretically, the antithesis of our former rivals. Indeed, the foundation of American principles is the unalienable rights of the individual, the freedom to live according to our own means, without fear of oppression from the government. That is precisely why I am against National Identification cards. Implementing a National ID card would be a major step toward creating an all-powerful, intrusive government, the very thing our founding fathers fought against for our independence and attempted to safeguard through the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

In the horrific wake left by the September 11th attacks, we Americans have been forced to examine nearly every inch of our society and ideology. So effectively did the terrorists infiltrate our everyday life that the shock of the attack has been rivaled by its aftermath. Just forty-six days after the tragedy, as the dust was still settling, Congress rushed through its halls the USA PATRIOT Act (Public Law 107-56). **The PATRIOT Act was no less than the first step toward giving the federal government the potential authority to abuse our civil liberties**, particularly the Fourth Amendment, which states:

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

While the bill has some positive aspects—like allowing the CIA and the FBI to share information about terrorist suspects, something not previously permitted—it allows federal law enforcers to conduct secret searches of Americans' private property by suspending the Writ of Habeas Corpus (search warrant) if there is a chance of "adverse results" (Sec. 213 (b):1), provided that the search is not conducted on a "United States person" solely based on First Amendment rights. Section 215 of the Act allows FBI agents to request "any tangible things (including books, records, papers, documents, and other items) for an investigation against international terrorism or clandestine activities..." ((a):1), without specifying exactly what evidence is being sought after. An FBI memo sent on November 28, 2001, regarding National Security Letters (which request the aforementioned data), illustrates the loose wording of the PATRIOT Act and the potential for abuse. Page seven of the memo states the following:

The USA PATRIOT Act has greatly simplified the NSL process. The FBI official authorizing the issuance of the NSL is no longer required to certify that there are specific and inarticulate facts giving reason to believe that the information sought pertains to a foreign power, or an agent of a foreign power. NSLs may now be issued upon certification of relevance to an authorized investigation to protect against international terrorism or clandestine activities.

To make matters worse, Section 215 also places a gag order on anyone who is forced to provide access to the information (2d), thus eliminating any opportunity to challenge the validity of the information, or even face the accuser. To grant such discretionary power to federal law enforcement

agencies creates the possibility for abuse. It was Lord Acton, a British historian who remarked, "Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely" (New Dictionary).

If the PATRIOT Act is enough to make any good, government-fearing American cringe, then Department of Homeland Security should have the same tensing effect. Created on November 25, 2002 by the Department of Homeland Security Act (Public Law 107-296), it is the largest restructuring of the federal government in over 50 years, combining over twenty agencies (Britannica). Regardless of the PATRIOT Act or National ID cards, this massive reorganization of the government alone should be a cause for alarm because of the enormous bureaucracy it creates, as well as the new dual mission many agencies face: the General Accounting Office has repeatedly declared the creation of the Department of Homeland Security "a high-risk federal activity" (GAO-03-519).

**The recent disaster of Hurricane Katrina revealed just how ill-prepared our nation is for even a natural disaster, to say nothing of another major terrorist attack.** The government breakdown was caused in part by the lack of a clear chain of command, which the Department of Homeland Security, as the overarching agency, should have established now that Emergency Preparedness and Response is one of its missions.

No doubt, the federal government needed to be modified in order to face the threat of terrorism. Perhaps the government was hobbled by checks previously in place. However, both the PATRIOT Act and the Department of Homeland Security demonstrate the changing attitudes about the importance of security over personal freedom, an attitude Benjamin Franklin condemned when he said, "Those who would give up essential Liberty to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety" (Ben Franklin True Patriot Act). This then brings us to the question and purpose behind National ID cards.

Supporters of the card, like Harvard Law professor Alan W. Dershowitz, believe that a National ID card would be "an effective tool for preventing terrorism, reducing the need for other law-enforcement mechanisms- especially racial and ethnic profiling..." (Dershowitz, *Why Fear*, 591). Dershowitz proposes that the card would only contain commonly gathered information, e.g. driver's licenses, social security numbers, fingerprints, etc. By consolidating this information, it could then be entered into a general database, where verifying the information would be much faster and more reliable than methods used today. Regarding the card's security, Dershowitz argues that because of its uniformity, it would be difficult to counterfeit. The card could even be optional; a person would only need it if he or she were going somewhere that required one and those who had it would be able to pass through security check points more quickly (590).

In addition, in his essay entitled, "Thinking About National ID Cards," Dershowitz insists that the card "would eliminate much of the justification now offered for racial or ethnic profiling" (par. 11). He goes on to say that when a large number of African-Americans began attending Harvard, the security officers assumed they weren't students and often harassed them. When ID cards were introduced, the students only had to show their cards to prove they attended the university, thus eliminating much of the harassment. Dershowitz admits, however, that the African-American students had to show their cards more often than the white students, evidence that even with the card racial profiling is not eliminated, only its justification.

Clearly, the arguments put forward by Dershowitz and other proponents of National ID cards are strong, especially regarding racial profiling, which I believe is wrong since it assumes guilt before innocence and also encourages racism. However, none of these arguments assuage my fears regarding the constitutionality of such cards. The likelihood for abuse or misuse is one cause for concern.

In the first place, by consolidating information such as our driver's license and social security numbers, addresses, or even fingerprints, citizens run the risk of exposing all of it if their cards are stolen. Identity theft is rampant, but Dershowitz does not even address this critical issue. True enough, most ID information can be found on the Internet, but by consolidating it all onto a single card, this card becomes a one-stop-shop for anyone who can decipher the information, terrorists included.

The databases where such information would be stored are another concern. As Murphy's Law declares, "No plan is fool-proof, because fools are so ingenious." No matter how safe the government says the database would be, there is still the likelihood that someone could access it. Perhaps even the thought of such a bountiful reward would encourage would-be hackers to try their luck. After all, people do win the lottery on occasion, and the cards themselves are not exempt from counterfeiting. Most importantly, however, is the fact that by allowing the government to possess such a database, there is a chance that the government itself will misuse it. History does give us reason to believe that this could happen.

In WWII, we faced the similar question: is the enemy among us? So strong was the suspicion of Japanese-Americans sympathizing with their home country of Japan and causing an insurrection here that the U.S. placed thousands in internment camps. According to William Seltzer and Margo Anderson, both university professors, the government used data taken from the 1940 Census, information provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, to identify neighborhoods and individual residences of Japanese Americans, so that they could be rounded up and taken away (After Pearl Harbor, Chap. II). This can only remind us of the Gestapo in Nazi Germany. How ironic that while fighting fascism in Europe, our own government resorted to similar tactics; the double standard shown here reeks of hypocrisy.

Seltzer and Anderson also state that after the internment, the Census Bureau "deliberately" attempted to cover up its involvement (Chap. II). This is clear, undeniable evidence that the U.S. government has abused such information in the past when faced with a national crisis. It is also evidence that even in a free society we must continually protect ourselves from government intervention. We can never take our freedoms for granted. Thus, I must ask, "What would stop them from doing it again?" Hence the phrase, "Once bitten, twice shy," would be apropos.

Not only is there the real possibility of information abuse, but there is also the probability that the government would expand what is included on the card or how it is used. In a political essay titled "The Threat of National ID," the well-known William Safire discusses the eventuality that other information, including medical history, credit history, bank accounts, even information like voting records and political affiliation, could be deemed "essential." He continues, "Cops, of course, would insist on a record of arrests, speeding tickets, E-Z pass auto movements, and links to suspicious Web sites and associates" (587). Safire also counters Dershowitz's idea of an "optional" ID card, calling it a "dis-credit card" (587) because anyone who might refuse to obtain such a card would be regarded as suspicious. However, Dershowitz himself, says it best: "Anyone who had the card could be allowed to pass through airports or building security more expeditiously, and anyone who opted out could be examined much more closely" (590).

In truth, how long would those opposed to carrying the card be able to stand such scrutiny? A National ID card would, in reality, only be optional as long as someone fought against having one. Even then, how effectively could a person be able to participate in society if the card became the medium of exchange? Such an idea is not out of the question; the extension of the card's use coincides with a theory put

forth by Justice Benjamin Cardozo, who spoke of "the tendency of a principle to expand itself to the limit of its logic" (Thinking About, par. 9). This theory is also known as "mission creep." **It's frightening to realize that a simple card, introduced for our protection, could become a powerful tool that might work against us, devouring our individuality and personal freedoms.**

In his essay entitled, "Homeland Security Intelligence: Just the Beginning," Stephen Marrin, an analyst for the General Accounting Office's Defense Capabilities and Management Team, discusses the correlation between the progression of foreign intelligence operations and those of Homeland Security:

The study of foreign intelligence has demonstrated that... as the need of government power increases, so does the need for intelligence.... As the technological capabilities inevitably grow, however, threats to homeland security will increase in the future, and the need for greater domestic intelligence will increase correspondingly (par. 4).

Perhaps another way to interpret Marrin's thesis is to say that as our security measures increase, the severity of a terrorist attack is that much greater. If there were only one more chance for an attack, would it not be reasonable to assume that the terrorists would give it their all and "go for the gold", so to speak? This brings me to my final and most important point: a National ID card would not eliminate the threat of another attack.

If terrorist cells do indeed exist here in America, then members of those cells could very possibly be citizens of this country. Would they not be eligible for the National ID card? **Wouldn't their card allow them entry to the same secure locations as the rest of us?**

For example, the "Buffalo Six" were a group of Yemeni-Americans, born and raised in Lackawanna, near Buffalo, New York, who traveled to Afghanistan and received training from al Qaeda and also met personally with Osama bin Laden (White House, 4/20/04). Fortunately, they were captured and convicted for their treason. But why shouldn't we assume there are more groups just like this one living among us? A National ID card would only give law abiding citizens a false sense of security, which is exactly what led to the attacks of September 11th. How many times must we learn this horrible truth? The threat of terrorism is real, make no mistake, but to live in fear is to cripple and undermine our civil liberties. Fear makes us irrational and makes us do things that we will surely regret later, such as with the Japanese-American internment camps.

The expansion of the government since the 9/11 is clearly identified through the passage of the PATRIOT Act, the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and now, through the proposed National ID cards. Where will it stop? When will we the people draw the line? Realizing the threat exists is paramount but difficult to prove until after the fact. Consider the recipe for boiling a frog: fill a pot with water and place it on the stove. Put the frog in and then gradually turn up the heat; in this way, the frog won't notice the rising temperature and jump out of the pot. By the time he realizes what's happening, it's too late.

In the same way, allowing the government to take a foothold through a National ID card is like turning up the heat. In no time at all, we will move that much closer to being forced to give up other personal freedoms, the very ones we are struggling to protect elsewhere in the world. Just as the men and women of our military lay their lives on the line daily, we must strive to protect those unalienable rights that belong to all Americans. We must never take for granted our sacred freedom, nor let anyone ever usurp our most fundamental liberties. Not standing up for what is right is cowardice. But you know, I hear frog meat supposedly tastes a lot like chicken.

You

to

NOÖ: Monologues

--your thoughts and ideas ... in nutshell

## Introduction

We are trying something new this issue with our monologues, featuring a short-short essay, perhaps a "flash essay," instead of our old person-on-the-street blurbs. If you have any social, political, historical, or otherwise clever cultural mini-essays, monologues, etc, please send them to [editors@noojournal.com](mailto:editors@noojournal.com). We would also appreciate a definitive name, though we think "monologue" is very snazzy, and you would have to strain quite hard to convince us otherwise.



## A Parallel in History

-- Margaret Foley

History may never repeat itself, but events often seem to run on parallel tracks. After all, superpowers, wars, and dynasties are eternal.

Every age has its superpower. In the ancient world, it was Persia. From 521 to 486 B.C.E., the ruler Darius held dominion over thirty-five million people in an empire whose borders extended from the Indus River to the Aegean Sea, from Armenia to the Nile.

In 500, the Greek city-states along the Ionian coast, aided by an Athenian fleet, rebelled against Persia. After putting down the revolt, Darius mounted a campaign against Athens. At the battle of Marathon in 490, the greatly outnumbered Athenians defeated Darius and he was forced to return to Persia.

After Darius died in 486, his son Xerxes assumed the throne. His first few years were taken up with crushing revolts in Egypt and Babylonia. Then, he returned his attention to subduing Athens, history has it, to avenge the wrongs committed by the Athenians against Persia and against his father. Once again, Persia's superior forces were routed by the Athenians, and in 479, Xerxes slunk back home.

Some say Xerxes was defeated because he failed to commit the necessary resources. Whatever the reason, it was mission **unaccomplished**.

Send monologues to  
[editors@noojournal.com](mailto:editors@noojournal.com)  
or find us with our tape recorders!



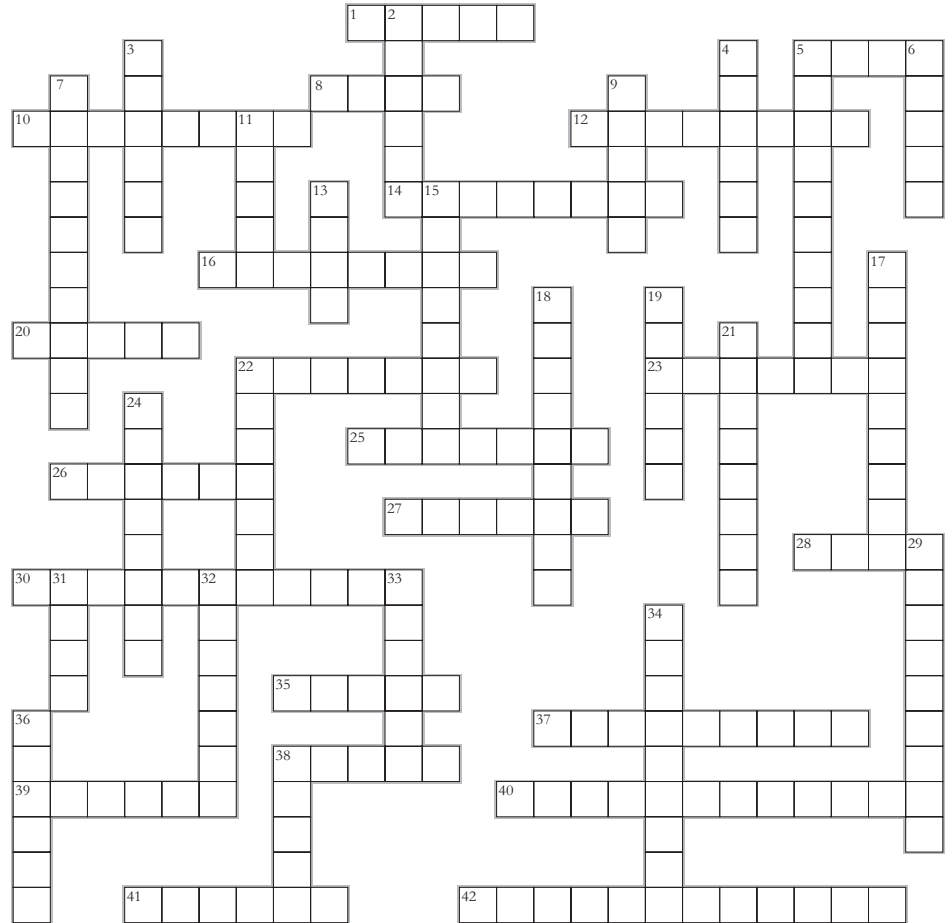
# Games & Graphics

-- Kyle Peterson (Crossword)  
 -- Shannon Wheeler (Comic)

## Across

1. A Greek order of architecture
5. There's 5,280 of these in a mile
8. A board used in framing walls
10. Provides lateral support
12. Tomb above ground
14. Platform for working up high
16. Essential piece of an arch
20. Slope or angle of a roof
22. Like stucco; used to cover walls
23. Circular building
25. The Washington Monument is one of these
26. Lateral force exerted by an arch, dome or vault
27. Locale of Opera House "down under"
28. Clay roofing material
30. Church built by Justinian in Constantinople
35. Hebrew and Egyptian measure
37. Roman temple
38. Cathedral in Florence
39. Decorative building front
40. Bridge in Florence; its name means "old bridge"
41. Rough plaster used on walls
42. House in Pennsylvania built by Frank L. Wright

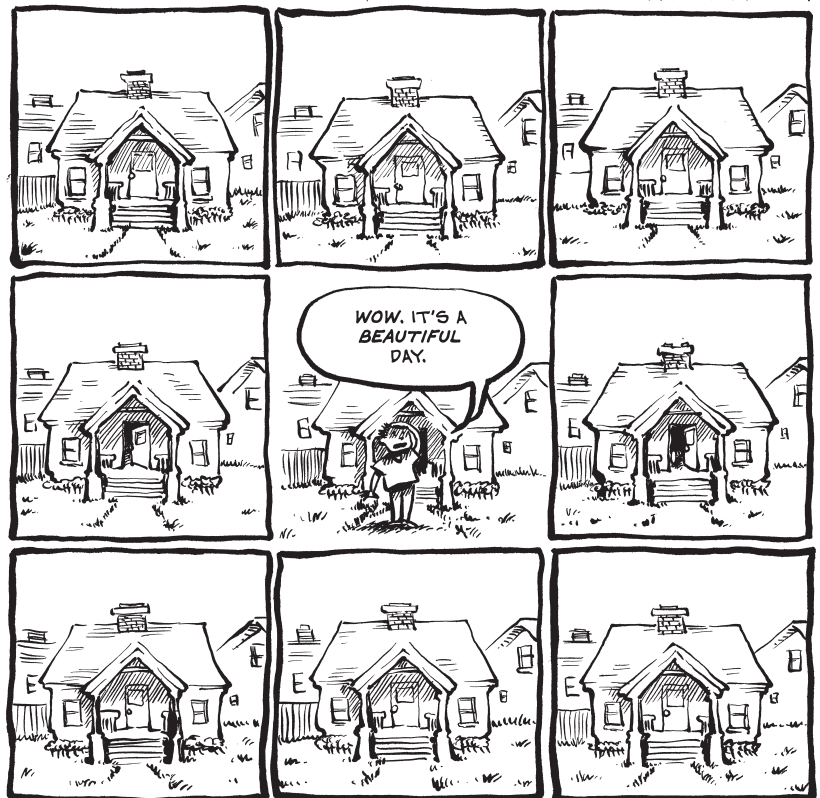
## Architecture



## Down

2. Ocular source of light in the Pantheon
3. Style of architecture or a teen style that anticipated and involves more work than emo
4. A pillar
5. The footing of a structure
6. Tallest building in Chicago, Sears \_\_\_\_\_
7. type of bridge
9. A strong box or an arch in the ceiling
11. Another word for rock
13. Church recess, altar site
15. Stiff building material
17. Length Chinese monument
18. Where Roman gladiators fought
19. Carrera is just one type
21. The Pope's Church in Rome
22. A porch with a roof supported by columns
24. Monuments located in Giza
29. A drawing of a building's exterior
31. St. Louis, MO. has a giant one.
32. The part of a church closest to the heavens
33. Courtyard surrounded by columns
34. Sits atop the Acropolis
36. Paris tower
38. Another Greek order of architecture

## TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



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# Red Lines

-- J. R. Salling



**There are lines on the mountain.** At least they look like lines from a distance, trails cut by foot and tumbling waters. "Stick to the main path and you'll be fine," the ranger told me. I have seen no one else today on a hike about ten miles from the car park and up the slope, leaving behind stacks of marketing forecasts and quarterly data. Escaping them really. I should have called the office to let someone know — Gerty, for example, would have been sympathetic — but it's too late for that now. I won't worry about that.

Resting in my old army surplus tent, I watch the light grow dim, and I listen to the first few drops of rain tap the canvas. I pull my pack inside. The pace quickens in a matter of moments, as I have anticipated, and becomes a downpour. Finding the rapid beat hypnotic, I press my hand against the fabric. This is a mistake. As water begins to bead up on the inside, I close my eyes, bracing for the inevitable collision. The drops tickle as they impact and then run across my face. I control the urge to scratch, remaining motionless, sightless, allowing the sensation to engulf my body. I flick out my tongue like a snake to see if I can pick up the scent of the wet canvas without inhaling.

When a droplet rolls from my forehead into the corner of one eye, I am unable to prevent both lids from springing open. The droplet is black and dances across my eyeball in defiance of gravity. This is no liquid. I swipe at the pretender in a panic, and then discover hundreds more tiny winged creatures, burying their jaws into my skin. I crash into the tent as I fight my way outside, rubbing, shaking, slapping, and continuing to do so until I'm confident every last one of them has been removed.

But the damage has been done. Standing in the rain, I feel the venom working its way through my body, and look at the rows of tiny bites, so close together, so linear that I imagine red lines have been etched into my skin. My flesh begins to burn with these parallel and perpendicular lines, with lines intersecting to create interior angles, vertical angles, complementary angles ... with red lines everywhere.

I start to run. Remembering what the ranger said, I try to follow the main path. But it's almost dark now and still raining. And there are so many, many lines.



# Destroyer

-- Randall Brown

**I**t was late, nine o'clock, and he had spent his Saturday night delivering the early version of the Sunday paper. His neck and shoulder ached as he threw the paper bag atop his purple Schwinn. He opened the door to the basement and walked down the steps to his bedroom.

It was as if a giant had picked up the house, shook it, placed it back upon its foundation. That's what he always first imagined. All five hundred beer cans, maybe more, he never counted them. They began first on the green paneled ledge around his bedroom, and then built up with wood slats, they rose all the way to the ceiling. Alphabetically, by brand, he organized them.

Now the beer can collection display lay scattered on the ground, the cans on their sides, upside down, dented, piled, rolled under the bed, desk, eight-track player. He pushed Kiss into the player. Opened the desk, took out the rock hammer. Picked up the wood slats.

Right away, skipping the dinner his mother left, he began building it up again, hammered out the dents from the inside with the tiniest of rock hammers. Ten, eleven, midnight. The green light of the stereo created an alien environment, in which he pounded, reached for another can, never left his seat. The cans were in alphabetic piles, a few more dents and he'd be done.

He looked up as he reached for the last dented can and there she stood, leaning in the doorframe, crooked, her neck craning toward him. Her dimples, the ones he shared with her, were the tiniest of dents like the thousands that covered the cans. Her eyes shone as the numbers on the radio dial, rocking back, forth, unstill.

"Couldn't be, could it? All of these. I didn't drink all of these."

"I trade the doubles at the flea market."

And now that image of the giant disappeared and he thought instead of how she tore his collection down. He pictured her as a great gale, arms spinning, hitting cans, here, there, popping them to the far reaches of the room. She must stare only at the walls then, seeing nothing, as if the collection has been flung beyond her.

She reached down. Picked up a can. They were all opened from the bottom, the triangles reminding him of vampire bites. An Olde Frothingslosh can, a chubby bent-over butt in the air.

She shook the can, as if drops would come out. He remembered his father's joke — that he was the only baby born with two heads. He imagined his foam-headed twin, how he used to create him with Mr. Bubbles in the bathtub, watch him slowly dissolve, pop, evaporate.

"So, back up it will go," she said, swaying in the door, framed.

Yes, and down it will come, a week, two weeks, maybe a month later. The whirlwind will blow through, as if to erase this world, as if his only purpose in life were to collect it again, pound away, surround himself with it.

"A sad song," his mother said. She winked at him, tossed him the can, and it floated, as if the dimpled cheeks and huge lifted-up skirt of the Olde Frothingslosh girl were a parachute, and together they watched her rise and fall, as Kiss sang "Beth" and he disappeared once again into their collection.

# SELF-PORTRAIT

-- Kelly Spitzer

**T**he day before Miss Rainey collected portfolios, Matty and Tyler got into a fight. They kicked holes in walls, chucked chairs through windows, and everything was so broken and loud I ran to the office and locked myself inside. Momma always said running was the best thing. She always said hide real good so he can't find you, don't never ever let him find you. That was before I came to live here, at Hilltop Home for Girls and Boys, but I figured Momma's wisdom still applied.

At first I just crouched under the desk where Lyle and Ms. Fox whispered to officers and everyone stood and shook their heads, and I squeezed my eyes shut, tight, till they burned, and I hoped no one would see me there. But Matty kept yelling my portfolio is not a piece of crap, you're a piece of crap, and Tyler said yes it is and no I'm not and in between it was whop, thud, smack, so loud I stuck my thumbs in my ears and prayed for it to stop.

We learned about portfolios from Miss Rainey. Miss Rainey had brownie-batter hair and turquoise earrings. Most days she wore ankle length skirts from India or Mexico, but never America, and her shirt-sleeves hung white and loose around her wrists like cartoon ghosts. Her first day, she stood in the middle of the front room with pink-chalked hands and said, "Portfolios are a way to express yourself. You can put drawings or paintings or stories in them." She smiled and freckles popped and she clasped her hands in front of her face so hard pink poofs exploded like mini atomic bombs. "And when you're adopted, you'll have something to give to your new parents," she said.

But everyone knew who they were really for — for people like Lyle and Ms. Fox and those officers they whispered to, and of course they were for those head doctors Momma always talked about. Everyone but Miss Rainey knew that.

Matty poked me in the ribs and said in a fake Miss Rainey voice, "Yeah, Francis. You can give it to your new parents," then he shouted to Miss Rainey, asked if she had a portfolio. She said she didn't, but we knew what it'd be if she did: all sunny rainbows and still seas.

In the front room, everything went quiet. I opened my eyes and lights flashed blue and red on the stale walls and I heard Tyler say, "Oh, Matty, maybe one of these fine pigs will like your portfolio so much he'll adopt you," and then everything got loud again.

Matty and Tyler were lifers. They'd been at Hilltop Home so long no one thought they'd get out, so when Miss Rainey said all those people out there wanting to adopt you, no one believed it but everyone got to

work. Then yesterday, Tyler bet Matty five comic books his portfolio would be better, then Matty bet Tyler five more comic books that he'd be adopted first. Not even the cops could settle that. They only made things louder and more broken and I knew the only way to cork it, as Momma used to say, was to prove that Matty and Tyler already had parents, that they didn't need new ones.

So I crawled to the back, to the metal cabinets Lyle and Ms. Fox pulled folders from when kids moved in or out. Course I knew it was wrong, but I thought maybe this was one of those exceptions to the rule, like me hiding in the office might be, so I pushed the metal latch and slid open the bottom drawer.

Inside, I found folders with names typewritten at the top. I didn't see Matty or Tyler, but mine was third one back and I sneaked a peek and found an envelope with a photograph inside. If I had five comic books, I'd of bet Matty and Tyler's folders had photos too, but before I could pull over a chair to check higher up, the door squeaked opened. I only had time to shove the picture in my pocket and inch the drawer shut before Lyle came around the corner and said, "Matty and Tyler are done. You can get out now," and he pointed his long, brown finger toward the door.

In the front room, everyone's face was pressed to the window and Matty and Tyler's portfolios lay in scattered pieces on the floor. I squeezed my way past a knee and under an elbow and through the fractured glass, watched Matty dangle his feet from the back seat of a cruiser while a man with plastic gloves wiped blood from Tyler's nose.

That night, Matty and Tyler didn't return from what Lyle called reevaluation, and after lights out, I took the photograph out of my pocket and sat between their beds, in the slice of streetlight shining in from the window, where, on clear nights, they let me stay up and read comics with them after curfew.

I set the photograph in front of me, and with the colored pencils Miss Rainey let me use, I copied the face onto a clean sheet of paper, mixing brown and white for the base and adding smudges of pencil lead around the eyes, blue and purple splotches under the cheekbones. In black letters, I wrote the date I found stamped on the back of the photograph: May 18, 2004. The day I was admitted to Hilltop Home.

The next day, I walked up to Miss Rainey and gave her my portfolio. She opened it and looked at the only picture inside, and for once, Miss Rainey's face darkened, like the skies of winter up north.



# Uncertainty

-- J. J. Steinfeld



"**You can't believe what just happened to me,**" a man says as he sits down a stool away, just as the bartender announces last call. The man looks slightly familiar but I can't place him. I smile, already having wasted three nighttime hours of the end of a lousy week. But I have no desire to talk to anyone about the problems of the week. He quickly orders a beer, tells me his name is Bertrand, but please don't call him Bert. And no, he wasn't named after Bertrand Russell the philosopher, but after a country doctor who had delivered both his parents and him.

I tell him my name is Norman, which isn't true. I've rarely made up a name, or lied, even to a stranger, but I simply don't want to give this man my real name. Before I can make something up about whom I was named after, he begins his enthusiastic story.

"There was a terrible accident right in front of me. Like watching it on TV, except it was louder and a heck of a lot more frightening. A magician in a gleaming sports car and a preacher in a practical four-door model, but with an open sunroof keeping an eye to the firmament, which I wouldn't categorize as practical," the man says. I decide we have never met before, but he does remind me of a co-worker three jobs ago. I go through the alphabet in my mind, and the second time through, when I reach E, I remember that the co-worker's name was Eugene. Tall and thin, like this man, but he didn't speak half as fast.

"How did you know it was a magician and a preacher?" I ask, my glass filled with equal parts of skepticism and Scotch.

"The driver's top hat and the first car's 'TRAVELLING MAGIC SHOW' lettering, and the clerical collar of the second car's driver was reflective if not religious in the street lights." Bertrand stops and looks into his beer glass.

"Please go on," I say, sipping the skepticism and Scotch, watching the man's eyes as he speaks.

"Well, I'm waiting to cross the street and they collide — the gleaming sports car and the practical four-door model, with a thunderclap of metal on metal. I thought it would be the end of me and I looked at myself to make sure there was no bleeding or injury. Then I heard screams for help and someone yelling for the police. I stepped closer to the wreckage, to see if I could help somehow, and I hear the magician say some words and the preacher mumbling a prayer. I'm straining to remember my first-aid. I took a first-aid course maybe fifteen years ago."

The storyteller stops to drink his beer, recollection and storytelling making him thirsty, I suppose.

"So, what finally happened?" I ask, abandoning my indifference and caution with strangers, my glass now empty.

"One of them died and one was saved by the jaws of life, you know, but I'm not certain which one."

"You don't know if it was the magician or the clergyman who survived?"

"I was in a hurry to get here before it closed. I'd been looking forward to a drink all day. I work late and then there was a mistake with the cash and I had to make sure everything balanced," Bertrand explains and closes his eyes in tiredness.

The lights dim and I leave the bar, then take a long, solitary walk home. A long, solitary, uneventful walk, I must emphasize. And if I have to guess, I would say it was the magician who survived, but don't ask me why. I don't even know why I gave the stranger a false name.

# Seventh Day

-- Thomas Jay Vinson



Over Columbus Circle, a steelworker sits  
on an I-beam and surveys his work.  
First light from dark, then dry land  
from the waters, and now — Manhattan,

a frozen throb in the harbor.

The oldest domestic animal endures a gray  
snap of short days and naps. A man wakes his  
daughter for a recital. The coffee shops  
are full, thousands on the same page about war  
and the weather. A veteran of the river wind  
huddles in a cardboard box by a fire. He sees  
a tiny dog in a jacket prance across the park

separated from its master.



'Park Ave. Christmas' / © Dave Beckerman ([www.davebeckerman.com](http://www.davebeckerman.com))

# What We Are

-- Thomas O'Connell



At a party he said,  
I am a forest, come and  
Get lost in me.

Girls, huddled on a couch,  
Drinking rum and Tabs  
Swooned and wished they  
Could say what they were.

I told them that I  
Am a grocery store  
In 1941, and they stared  
And wondered if they were  
Drunker than they  
Thought, while he scoffed

For he didn't understand that  
I am a pyramid constructed  
From cornflakes boxes; shelves  
Of stacked cans; a white butcher's  
Counter in the back with hand  
Written signs hanging on string;

A man, with a wide flat tie, more  
Like a bib, whose eyeglasses  
Reflect the light bulbs  
Dangling from the ceiling;  
Wooden bins holding green  
Beans, tomatoes, and red

Potatoes, all locally grown.  
And they would have shopped  
In me, had they known.





# The Night My Sister and I Boycotted Crow

-- Shane Allison

Pitch black flocks resting on the wires of telephone poles.  
My Daddy couldn't resist bringing them to their deaths with a pellet gun.  
They were like shooting paper ducks at the North Florida Fair.

Pelted by pellets in their crow hearts.  
One final caw, caw before tumbling into a thicket  
of blackberries. Thorns stuck into silken wings.

"No need to let a good bird go to waste," Daddy says.  
Thrown into the sink, Mama digs out innards  
and pellets. She tosses the head

in the blue trash can, plucks the feathers  
as they pile at her feet,  
cloak her leopard-printed bedroom shoes.

Tender pink meat rinsed beneath scalding water,  
baptized in seasoning salt, slices of celery over the eyes  
like pennies. Crow drifts on a raft of bell pepper,



carrots, fresh potatoes in the pot. Nothing like the scent of crow  
permeating through the house. "Y'all can come  
on eat now, the food's done," Mama yells from the kitchen.

She spoons mountains of rice, baby corn on our plates.  
A buttered roll is the great wall between the two.  
My sister refuses to eat the meat. She cries for the crow.

"Hush gal and eat," Mama tells her, but she refuses.  
Instead she makes a crucifix out of her knife and fork  
and mourns. So I too, follow suit, 'cause I never wanted it dead.

Anyway. Daddy sucks the bones whole, sops up its juices  
with them buttered rolls. He looks at us with greasy lips  
and says, "If you kill what you don't eat, that's a sin."

My sister and I refuse to give in and ask to be excused.  
"No," Mama yells. "Not until you don ate every bitta that bird."  
All I do is pick at it, push it around with my finger.

Daddy tires of our boycott and says, "Gone scrape  
out your plates." We leave them to fight and holler amongst  
themselves, realizing we have won this good fight.

# Cache Creek

-- Jim Corner



Now after weeks apart, we drive  
to the red plateau above the flow  
of earthy water, delve into our issues:  
the naked clay to guide us.

In Bermuda grass, green and lenient,  
we lie with heads rested on bent elbows.  
Lunar rays spill over our faces.

To speak of silence would break the spell,  
but chance slips into a code of secret places,  
like heated bodies sliding in circling water,  
that arms and organs cannot fathom.



# Dirty Laundry on the Stairs

-- Edmund Conti

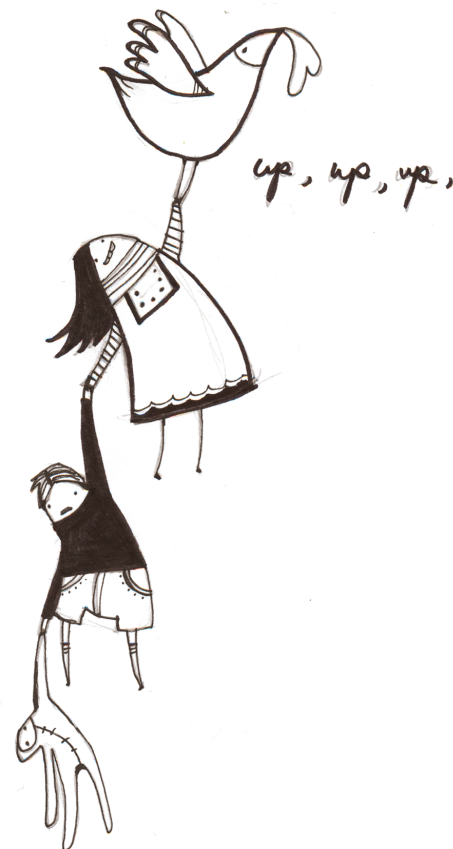


As my son  
climbed over  
the laundry

basket  
first the right  
sneakered foot

then the left  
skirted this  
obstacle

on the way  
to his  
bedroom.



# All the Kids Lost in the Woods

-- Luke Buckham

There was a heart floating in the air  
 above a coffin of moss  
 that I refused to grab when I was  
 eight years old. I'd wandered in the woods  
 suspecting the existence of such a heart  
 and wondering if it was mine  
 but when it bloomed bloody from the faint air  
 and faded the surroundings  
 I didn't grab it  
 though my chest felt empty —  
 and feels empty now, the forest behind  
 my old house having been felled  
 and made into toilet paper  
 wherein I blow my nose, remembering  
 how gently the heart throbbed  
 and how much of my own gentleness  
 I have rejected.



'Outer Space' / © Cathy Hartland ([www.cathyhartland.net](http://www.cathyhartland.net))

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## A New Career

-- Heather Christle

Be here at eight  
said the group leader.  
I was late but she  
said that was okay  
and handed me a kit  
just like hers  
a tin box full of nails  
and a hammer.  
I strapped my light  
to my head which  
was still in good shape  
and began reinforcing  
everything. When I  
reinforced you  
you seemed angry  
and attractive. When I  
reinforced the youth  
the group leader  
reinforced me and  
her outfit looked great.  
This job is not perfect  
but the pay is okay  
and I like working  
outdoors. The group  
leader respects us all  
and at home the kids  
love to shake  
my tin box and think  
of how close we once  
were to collapse.





## Contributor Notes

**Shane Allison** is the author of four chapbooks of poetry. His new book *I Want to F-ck a Redneck* is forthcoming from Scintillating Publications.

**Dave Beckerman** photographs whatever interests him, wherever he happens to be, usually New York City, since he's lived there for half a century. If the photograph continues to hold some fascination then he attempts to sell it.

**Randall Brown** lives outside of Philadelphia. He's a fiction editor with *SmokeLong Quarterly*, an MFA candidate at Vermont College, and a recipient of a 2004 Pushcart nomination. Work has appeared or is forthcoming in a number of journals, including *The Iconoclast*, *Ink Pot*, *Philadelphia Stories*, *The MacGuffin*, *Timber Creek Review*, and *Del Sol Review*.

**Luke Buckham** was born in the middle of 1980 and is currently living on a friend's couch in Keene, New Hampshire, where he works as a chef at a pseudo-Mexican restaurant. His print-only 'zine, *THE INAPPROPRIATE*, can be obtained by e-mailing him at [aworminmywall@hotmail.com](mailto:aworminmywall@hotmail.com) and asking him for a copy. His last published collection of poems, *Moonlight on Moloch*, is available for viewing & printing at <http://www.unlikelystories.org/buckham0305.shtml>.

**Heather Christle** Heather Christle was born and raised in Wolfeboro, NH. Her poems recently appeared in the new poets issue of *Octopus Magazine* ([octopusmagazine.com](http://octopusmagazine.com)) and are forthcoming from *Verse*, *LIT* and *The Pebble Lake Review*. She lives in Northampton, MA.

**Edmund Conti** has had poems published in the usual places that, not unusually, have mostly folded.

**Jim Corner** is Publisher and Owner of The Desert Moon Review. He holds a B.A. and M.A. from The University of Tulsa, Tulsa Oklahoma. He is a retired clergy of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). His poetry has appeared in many print and online journals. He lives in Mesa, Arizona with his wife, Kathy, and Rot/Dobbie mix Trudy.

**Margaret Foley** is a writer and historian living in Portland, OR. Her work has recently appeared, or is forthcoming in, *The Slavic and East European Journal*, *Mothersmovement.org* and *The Gator Springs Gazette*.

**Benjamin Harrison** studied neuroscience and philosophy at Baylor University before moving to Charlottesville, Virginia where he worked as an assistant editor at *The Daily Progress*. Recently, he relocated back to his hometown of Enid, Oklahoma where he works as a freelance writer and lives with his beautiful wife Traci and son Austin. In addition to writing, painting, and general philosophical musings, Ben can usually be found in the studio or playing live with his band Elastic July ([www.elasticjuly.com](http://www.elasticjuly.com)).

**Kate Hartland** lives in Cambridge, MA where she reports that there is no longer any road not taken.

**Katy Horan** works as a freelance Illustrator and Teaching Artist in New York City, where she spends her time eating yummy New York food, riding her bike in scary New York traffic, and making up voices for dogs she sees on New York streets. Visit her at [katyart.com](http://katyart.com).

**Simeon Newman** lives and works in Northern California, where he is a student at College of the Siskiyous and a member of the youth division of Socialist Action, a revolutionary Trotskyist party in the U.S.

**Thomas O'Connell** is a librarian living in the mountains of southwestern Virginia. His poems and stories have appeared in *Mad Hatters' Review*, *The Gator Springs Gazette* and *Magma Poetry*, as well as others.

**J.R. Salling** is a teacher, a rare book appraiser, and a former apartment mover. Publication credits include *Pindelyboz*, *Opium Magazine*, *Flashquake*, *Yankee Pot Roast*, *Zygote in My Coffee*, *Poor Mojo's Almanac(k)*, *Insolent Rudder*, *Journal of Modern Post*, *Rouse Magazine*, *Dead Mule, uber*, *Ten Thousand Monkeys*, *Copperfield Review*, *Rumble*, *Skive*, *Canopic Jar*, *Subterranean Quarterly*, *Defenestration & Thieves Jargon*.

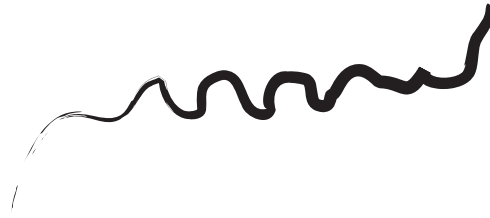
**Kelly Spitzer** was born to the mountain desert of southwest Colorado, but now lives in the Pacific Northwest despite frequent warnings of earthquakes, tsunamis and volcano eruptions. Her work has appeared in *Outsider Ink*, *Orchard Press Mysteries*, *The Green Tricycle*, *Monkeybicycle* and other publications.

**J.J. Steinfeld** is a fiction writer, poet, and playwright living in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. He has published a novel and nine short story collections, the previous three collections by Gaspereau Press: *Should the Word Hell Be Capitalized?* (1999), *Anton Chekhov Was Never in Charlottetown* (2000) and *Would You Hide Me?* (2003). His most recent publication is a chapbook of short fiction, *Not a Second More, Not a Second Less* (Mercutio Press. 2005). His stories and poems have appeared in numerous anthologies and periodicals, and over thirty of his one-act and full-length plays have been performed in various forms in Canada and the United States, ranging from staged readings to full productions.

**Thomas Jay Vinson** was born into a military family and was lucky enough to have lived in and traveled to many different places in the world. He has been writing, drawing, painting, and taking pictures for much of his life. He attended classes at the Boston Museum School of the Fine Arts and worked at the Massachusetts College of Art. He has participated in numerous painting and photography shows, is a published poet, and is currently working as a freelance photographer and writer in Manhattan.

**Shannon Wheeler** lives in Portland, OR where he writes and draws his weekly cartoon strip for various publications. His latest book *How to Be Happy* is in bookstores now. He is currently finishing up a *Too Much Coffee Man* opera. Find *Too Much Coffee Man* at [www.tcm.com](http://www.tcm.com).

# Submission Guidelines



## Please Send Us Your Best:

- **Short fiction** under 2500 words. We are looking for literary stories, honesty and evident craft. No specific genre stories, please. Our audience is mostly mainstream. **Please send 1 story at a time.**
- **Poetry** both lyric and narrative. We enjoy poems that are fun to read out loud and that tackle humans and their headaches head on. **Please send 1-3 poems.**
- **Monologues** under 200 words that deal with your personal reaction to current political and social issues. These should be as honest and flawed as our natural opinions tend to be.
- **Essays** under 2000 words that present strong arguments and fresh looks at current issues. In essays, we tend to enjoy reason over vitriol. We sometimes feature a unifying theme; check [www.noojournal.com](http://www.noojournal.com).
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Excerpts

-- After their recent deathblow from the sea, Gulf Coast workers, already devastated by the hurricane, will now be paid less, meaning they will have to survive on less.

**Katrina: Natural Disaster or Cause and Effect?** *Simeon Newman, page 5*

-- If this is the way the world works, does the world need an average of one thousand soldiers killed daily in more than three-dozen conflicts to keep 'working?'

**The Question of Killing,** *Benjamin Harrison, page 4*

-- It's frightening to realize that a simple card, introduced for our protection, could become a powerful tool that might work against us, devouring our individuality and personal freedoms.

**Big Brother, Where Art Thou?** *Kyle Peterson, page 7*

-- The day before Miss Rainey collected portfolios, Matty and Tyler got into a fight.

**Self-Portrait,** *Kelly Spitzer, page 12*

-- "How did you know it was a magician and a preacher?" I ask, my glass filled with equal parts of skepticism and Scotch.

**Uncertainty,** *J.J. Steinfeld, page 14*

-- There was a heart floating in the air / above a coffin of moss / that I refused to grab when I was / eight years old.

**All the Kids Lost in the Woods,** *Luke Buckham, page 20*

-- Pitch black flocks resting on the wires of telephone poles. / My Daddy couldn't resist bringing them to their deaths with a pellet gun.

**The Night My Sister and I Boycotted Crow,** *Shane Allison, page 17*