

EDITOR'S NOTES

The essays in this number of the journal seem to consolidate around issues of remembrance, aesthetics, and the science/science-religion question. In their analysis of the presidential election, "Looking Back, Looking Ahead: Presidential Politics in 2008 and 2009," David A. Dulio and Peter F. Trumbore conclude that Obama won the election because of prevailing conditions and his ability to control the issue (the economy), his effectiveness in raising campaign funds, and his successful get-out-the-vote campaign. That he was running against a perceived failed presidency did not hurt. But because Dulio and Trumbore believe that Obama's win did not "represent a significant ideological shift to the left by American voters," they remain convinced that his success in governing for the next four years will depend on improvement in the economy—that what contributed to his win now presents his greatest challenge—his ability to craft an effective health-care program, and to get voters and the congress not to focus on the impending mid-term election. Though a memorial, Alice Horning's "He Dressed the Part" touches on teaching excellence and the transformative power of a first-year experience. Her emperor does have clothes. Set in the turbulent 1960s, Gary Shepherd's essay finds sociology "a perfect fit for the times," and so embarked on a career in it. It explores how a profession and a life can be shaped. "Memoir Construction," by Gordon Shepherd, treats the importance of memoir in the context of the Mormon faith and mission work. According to him, "the most important aspect of memoir writing is an authentic framework of historical facts enlivened and made meaningful by cogent dialogue." The essay is also about disclosure, the collaborative research undertaken with his brother, the construction of a manuscript for publication, and what informed his interest in the sociology of religion. Absent

the psychological depth, angst, and tragic death of the protagonist in Willa Cather's short story, "Paul's Case," Bill Byrne's "Brushes and Rushes" treats humorously his playful encounters with celebrities, "fantasy relationships," which, Byrne discovers, are "easier to form than real ones."

Rachel Smydra and Cynthia Miree analyze the ethical grey areas of collaboration when it becomes difficult to quantify the individual from the group contribution. The essay also pursues an ideal of genuine collaboration. In "Artistic Intelligence," Mary Wermuth insists that intelligence is not measured by a mathematical formula but comes through diverse forms of creative play. Chris Brockman's "Rach-Three" recalls his years as a student at Oakland in the 1960s when concerts at Meadow Brooke Outdoor Theatre were free to students. Brockman recalled hearing Rachmaninoff's *Piano Concerto No. 3*, which caused him to leave the grass where he was sitting and stealthily make his way to an empty seat to be closer to the performance. The impression the piece made on him literally transformed his life. "What gets ignored," Brockman finds, "is that many of Rachmaninoff's works are more than typical; they are epitomic. The exquisite *Symphony No. 2*, the two wonderful suites for two pianos and the hauntingly beautiful *Vocalise* are good examples of this, as are many of the composer's extensive work for solo piano." Brockman's experience calls to mind the lovely lines from John Milton's sonnet tribute to Shakespeare: "Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving, / Dost make us marble, with too much conceiving."

In Book 8 of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the angel Gabriel, in a lovely anaphora, pauses to instruct Adam and Eve on the mystery of the creation: "calculate the stars, how they will wield / The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive / To save appearances, how gird the sphere / With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er, / Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb." Gabriel then turns to the earth, declaring, "Earth sitting still, when she alone receives / The benefit," and shortly thereafter ruminates: "What if the sun / Be center to the world, and other stars / By his attractive virtue and their own / Incited, dance

about him various rounds?” David Garfinkle’s “Cosmology, Doom, and Gloom: Some Copernican, Anthropic, and Malthusian Musings” examines this very Ptolemaic, cosmological view that occasioned the Copernican one, effectively removing “the earth from its privileged place at the center of the universe.” Garfinkle looks at the way the Hubble Law (relating to the motion of galaxies) and the cosmic microwave background (light from the Big Bang explosion stretched into microwaves by the expansion of the universe) seem to present challenges to the Copernican principle. Garfinkle’s and Jude V. Nixon’s review essay, “Late-Victorian Science-Religion Interface/Divide,” uses Matthew Stanley’s semi-autobiographical study of Eddington to examine the co-existence between science and religion in the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth century. Folland’s essay on the nursing shortage theorizes that while the monopsonist’s plan is to keep wages of RNs low, increasing wages brings more RNs into the labor force.

Related to the essay by Garfinkle and Nixon, James Dow’s “Religion and Science” uses Emile Durkheim’s views on the nature of belief and knowledge to present an historical and epistemological argument for the fundamental differences between religion and science. In “Mathematics on Probation,” Serge Kruk dispels the myth that the math department is on probation, as though an academic department really can be—I’ve never heard of it. More importantly, Kruk argues wisely that, pedagogically, mathematics is a language, and as such the ability to proceed to higher levels requires competencies at earlier and more fundamental levels. Jonathan Benefil tells of his experience on the Euler Tour to St. Petersburg (Russia), Basel (Switzerland), and Berlin (Germany), cities where the famed mathematician, Leonhard Euler, lived and worked. The journal number also showcases literary pieces, with poems by Gerald Rice, Carla Butwin, Alice Carleton, Kellie Hay, and Pamela Light.

The journal concludes with Brian Murphy’s memorializing Bob Hoopes, whose shaping influence on the faculty at Oakland was, he believes, second only to that of Woody Varner,

and William F. Buckley, whose visit to Oakland made clear his love of freedom, aversion to elitism, and challenge to conservatism and unexamined liberalism. Murphy's other essay reviews Roy Kotynek's and John Cohassey's recent book, *American Cultural Rebels: Avant-Garde and Bohemian Artists, Writers, and Musicians from the 1850s through the 1960s*. We covet your submissions, which, if received and accepted by June, will appear in the fall issue of the journal. I am again grateful to Dawn Schricke, editorial assistant, along with the Honors College staff, Dawn Deitsch and Karen Conn, for their assistance with the journal.