



WASHINGTON AND LEE  
**SPECTATOR**

THE Student Journal of Fact and Opinion

McCain's  
chances

Have we  
outgrown  
ODACs?

Spitzer and the  
legislation of  
morality

Spring at Washington and Lee



Dear Devoted Spectator Fans,

In honor of Allison Chopin's article on self-reflection, the editors of this fine publication have decided to reflect on our most recent semester. The Washington and Lee community, it seems, has faced more than its share of scandals and challenges. As a result, student publications, the role of the media at Washington and Lee, and the student body's ability to hold

one another accountable has been called into question.

While the resulting negative effects on the campus have been debated at length among students, faculty, and other members of the W&L community, we would like to highlight the positive effects. Student publications as a whole have been reminded of their role on campus - while we strive to be entertaining, it is not our primary function, and certainly not something for which accuracy, integrity, and journalistic standards are sacrificed. We have been reminded of our priorities, of our responsibilities to our readers, and of the extraordinary power of the written word. In honor of our renewed awareness and as an example for other publications and for future members of the Spectator, we would like to issue an apology to the Japanese Tea Room and its associated faculty and staff. In our last issue, we printed a factual error regarding the financing of the team room's construction, which occurred entirely through the generosity of donors, not tuition, as we suggested. Please forgive us for our carelessness and rest assured that we will take great pains in the future to prevent its recurrence.

Best,  
Jennifer Sanow  
Editor-in-Chief

Monica Chinn  
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# WASHINGTON AND LEE SPECTATOR

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## MISSIONS STATEMENT

The W&L Spectator is a non-partisan publication dedicated to promoting the free exchange of ideas in an environment where meaningful debate and ideological diversity are often lacking. We, at staff, seek to serve the W&L community by infusing it with the ingredients necessary for a balanced educational experience. These ingredients include conservative, libertarian and classical liberal thought. We believe that peace is best achieved through strength, that utopia is nowhere, and that true equality is blind to race, creed, sex, and sexuality. We take it as our mission to expose the inadequacies of the non-traditionalist ideas that do not understand and fail to work with our student body. We strive to adhere to the beliefs of the student body that the administration often overlooks. We invite the active participation of any student or alumnae who shares our vision and would like to join our movement.

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# *The Hunt for the Red November*

*Scott Centorino*



COLLEGE REPUBLICAN'S SCOTT CENTORINO EXAMINES REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE JOHN MCCAIN, REVEALING HIS STRENGTHS, HIS WEAKNESSES AND WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN THE RACE.

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# BEYOND REFLECTION:

## PEERING THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS



The title of Lewis Carroll's 1871 sequel to Alice's *Adventures in Wonderland* coined a phrase that has been used with many different connotations since its publication. The book was entitled *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*.

First used in 1526, the term "looking-glass" most frequently refers to a mirror. The only notable literary use of "looking-glass" prior to Carroll's appears in a short work called "The Looking-Glass of Lao," written by 18th century Anglo-Irish writer Oliver Goldsmith. The piece is written as a letter, and the writer describes a dream in which he observes several female figures approaching and examining themselves in a mirror. He suggests that in many ways the mirror image is an accurate portrayal of the persons it reflects, but in some ways it is not. Some have suggested that this mirror reflects the contents of the mind and not just physical appearance.

Until Carroll's novel, the only philosophical sense of "looking-glass" would probably refer to introspection or self-observation, i.e. looking at oneself in a mirror. Because of the nature of reflections, however, the word can also be used as an adjective to describe the reverse or opposite of what is

normally expected. Carroll, being a logician and mathematician, brought this puzzling meaning into light by sending Alice into the world behind the mirror. Alice's looking-glass world is governed by a twisted, backwards system of reasoning.

Often labeled "looking-glass logic" by scholars, Carroll's logic demands that events happen in reverse. For example, the character of the White Queen, insisting that she can remember things before they happen, describes: "There's the King's Messenger. He's in prison now, being punished, and the trial doesn't even begin till next Wednesday, and of course the crime comes last of all." Thus "looking-glass" can refer to anything that seems reversed. This gives a new and interesting twist to the phrase "mirror image," which usually describes something that is an exact copy.

Another sense of the term stems from sociology and psychology. Charles Cooley formed the idea of the "looking-glass self" in 1902, suggesting that people form their own identities based on the judgments and opinions of others. He theorized that people imagine the way they must appear to others, gauge the opinion of others based on this image, and

then develop their sense of self based on this knowledge. Here society is used as the mirror for self-observation.

A related psychological idea, called the Alice-syndrome by some scientists, describes the way people behave when they enter a situation or environment that seems bizarre and nonsensical compared to what they expected, like the strange, reversed world that lies behind the mirror in *Through the Looking-Glass*, or the world of Wonderland in the first Alice book. Patients have distorted space, time, and body images and often suffer from hallucinations.

So what are Carroll and these other great thinkers suggesting about the implications of the looking-glass that reflects ourselves, the opinions of others, and our world in reverse? And why does this phrase, "Through the Looking-Glass," keep surfacing in modern culture?

There may not be a direct answer to these musings, but one cannot deny that the phrase continues to reverberate in our culture.

A quick Internet search of the phrase revealed hundreds of articles written with the same title, "Through the Looking-Glass," commenting on an array of topics as diverse as Hindu religious beliefs, public health, and the Bush administration. The authors of these articles usually have in mind some kind of introspection or observation, perhaps one that leads to a change of belief. Thus it seems either interpretation of the phrase—the mirror or the reversed image—can apply.

Having survived the winter and Fancy Dress and now embarking on Spring Term, there may be a lot of looking-glass gazing in store for us as students at Washington and Lee. Enough

can never be said for the value of introspection: examining our inner selves through the mirror. And we must not forget to look beyond the superficial image reflected by the actual mirror and find some way to probe deeper.

We must also decide if we agree with Cooley's assessment of the looking-glass self. Do we define and develop our selves based on how other people perceive us? Do the opinions of professors, parents, and fellow students matter more than our own personal dreams and ambitions? Though it is no doubt positive to consider how we portray ourselves to others, this should not be the only foundation of our identities.

And what about looking-glass logic and the Alice-syndrome? We frequently find ourselves shoved into unique situations that challenge our beliefs, behaviors, and systems of reasoning. We dwell in a world that makes very little sense most of the time. How do we deal with this? Well, we do our best, and we may or may not come out completely changed, for better or for worse. Sometimes the feeling of being lost in a world of nonsense will push us to discover our finest qualities. I would advise that we seek out these challenges. Don't shy away from the nonsensical or the unique, and never be afraid to step through the looking-glass. ♡

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DO WE DEFINE AND DEVELOP OURSELVES BASED ON HOW OTHER PEOPLE PERCEIVE US? DO THE OPINIONS OF PROFESSORS, PARENTS, AND FELLOW STUDENTS MATTER

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ALLISON IS REFLECTING WHILE LAYING ON THE COLONNADE. FEEL FREE TO JOIN HER, OR E-MAIL COMMENTS TO CHOPINA@WLU.EDU

FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE? CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COMMA AND AN APOSTROPHE? LIKE MAKING OFFENSIVE COMMENTS WITH LITTLE SUPPORTING EVIDENCE?

If you answered yes, or grunted in assent, to any of the above questions, then the *Spectator* is the place for you! We need obnoxious, inflexible, and frustratingly dense writers to compose articles - and by articles we mean political diatribes - for the magazine. Contact us at [spectator@wlu.edu](mailto:spectator@wlu.edu) or come to our next meeting if you are interested.

# THE ODAC TRADITION:

BASED ON CONVENIENCE  
RATHER THAN ABILITY?



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- Men's and Women's Lacrosse
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- Men's and Women's Outdoor Track and Field
- Men's and Women's tennis
- Men's and Women's Cross Country
- Football
- Baseball
- Softball
- Field hockey
- Volleyball
- Equestrian
- Swimming
- Golf

Since Robert E Lee assumed the Presidency of Washington College in 1865, our university has been destined for a special place in the halls of American higher education. Many of America's top liberal arts colleges have become increasingly uniform, offering similar experiences and priding themselves on similar values and goals. Washington and Lee remains distinct among its increasingly amorphous peer institutions. During the 1860's our university perfected its unique educational cocktail, blending together its traditions of honor, civility and student self governance with academic excellence and an interdisciplinary focus. As Washington and Lee rises in the national rankings and is seated in its deserved place among the most the most selective educational institutions, the University must remain true to these values. The recent 10 year plan released by President Ruscio and the board of Trustees showcases Washington and Lee's commitment to its distinct character while successfully entering the new millennium.

That being said, we believe that the 10 year plan is missing one key addition: a switch to the appropriate athletic conference.

As our nation's college applicants begin their search for an institution at which to spend their next four (or five or six?)

years, those considering Washington and Lee University are most likely looking at schools with similar high caliber academics. Hamilton, Williams, and Middlebury are schools many consider on par academically with W&L (although we Generals know the truth). However, when Washington and Lee athletic teams take the field, they do not regularly compete with those schools. Although some of our teams will compete against these schools in matches, these specific competitions are exceptions, for they all belong to NESCAC (New England Small College Athletic Conference), a conference consisting of schools popularly dubbed the "little ivies." The same could be said about Swarthmore, Johns Hopkins, and Gettysburg, but when it comes to athletics, these institutions also compete against each other, in the Centennial Conference.

W&L prides itself on our rich tradition of student-athletes. On both the playing field and in the classroom W&L sports teams have consistently proven themselves to be in a league apart from those with which they compete. This discrepancy is evident in both our admissions statistics and in many of our team's impressive conference records. The athletic department has already realized this and regularly competes with schools such as Gettysburg and Swarthmore. Many of the teams that

W&L plays outside its conference are W&L's academic peers. The low number of cross applicants between Washington and Lee and other ODAC schools and our University's need to play schools outside our athletic conference for healthy competition, creates the impression that Washington and Lee is a conference apart from the rest of ODAC. Already, Washington and Lee men's swimming has left ODAC and joined a different athletic conference. Washington and Lee men's and woman's tennis regularly schedule up to four required ODAC matches in a single day, even pitting their B Squad against some of their in-conference competition. Woman's Cross Country recently won its fourth consecutive ODAC title.

Has geographic convenience superseded other more important factors in determining our athletic conference?

Many ODAC schools Washington and Lee regularly competes with are within a one hour drive of Washington Hall. Beyond a similarly sized student body and accreditation as a four-year college, Washington and Lee shares little in common with the majority of ODAC schools. We do not need to stay in ODAC any longer.

The last thing Washington and Lee needs is for ODAC to become a school tradition. ❖



GRANT RUSSELL AND DENIS O'LEARY ARE DEVOTED GENERALS FANS. THEY CAN BE REACHED AT RUSSELLG@WLU.EDU AND OLEARYD@WLU.EDU WITH COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS.

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# EVERYTHING WASHINGTON & LEE

**Size of a trash can used for grain buckets:**

**85 gallons**

**Ratio of flavoring to spirits:**

**1 to 1**

**Hours it takes to tube the Maury:**

**3 hours**

**Number of beer you should plan on bringing:**

**10 - 12 ounce cans**

**Alumni who got arrested on Alumni Weekend:**

**3**

**Oldest recorded alumni actually partying**

**81**

**Number of frat houses:**

**16**

**Number of frats for the 2008-09 academic year**

**12**

**Number of frats on critical probation for 2008-09**

**2**

**Number of sorority houses:**

**5**

**Number of sororities for the 2008-09 year:**

**6**

**Number of shirts worn at Fiji Islands:**

**0**

**Number of years since the last Albery Sidney-Harry Lee Race on the Maury:**

**60**

**Times women have competed before this year:**

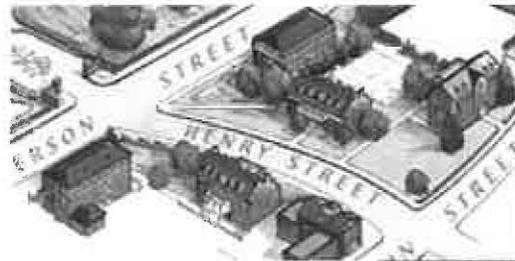
**0**

**Number of weeks in spring term:**

**6**

**Number of Weekends with major events:**

**4**



Photos Courtesy of Google Images

# NON SEQUITUR

## THE LOST ART OF THE ARGUMENT

Bad arguments are easy to make, but often hard to spot and harder to counter. I'm writing this article to assist the average arguer in exposing the flaws of some depressingly bad arguments.

### The apples-and-oranges fallacy.

*Your comparison is flawed because you're comparing two different things.*

Of course one compares different things. The alternative is to compare something to itself, and where's the sense in that? When you make a comparison as a part of your argument, what matters is whether the objects of the comparison are different in any way that's relevant to the issue you're debating. Simply saying, "That's different," is a mindless counterargument. Force your opponent to explain the relevance of the differences he points out, and respond by explaining why those differences are in fact beside the point.

Also, watch for your opponent to accuse you of "equating" the concepts that you're comparing. Point out that you're not equating them—you acknowledge that they're different, but the differences don't matter to the issue you're discussing.

### Whoever profits from the crime is guilty of it.

I have often heard it argued that twenty-first-century Americans, who have never owned slaves (and, in many cases, whose ancestors never even set foot in this country until after slavery was abolished) should pay reparations to the descendants of slaves, because all Americans have benefited from the evil of slavery, and thus in fairness should pay something for it. Does this stand to reason? Let's consider a few other applications of the principle that whoever benefits from a wrong, whether he caused it or not, should pay for it.

Lyndon Johnson profited handsomely from the assassination of John Kennedy. Should Johnson have paid reparations to the Kennedy family? Your humble author owes his very existence to the Holocaust—my maternal grandfather was born and raised in Hungary, my maternal grandmother in what is now the Slovak Republic, and had the Nazis not exterminated their families, they would not have had occasion to flee

and meet each other. Should I therefore pay reparations to the descendants of other Holocaust survivors? Likewise, a person who is conceived through rape owes his existence to the rapist. Does that mean he should pay reparations to his mother, or to other rape victims?

The reader will likely object that there is no sound analogy between the examples in the preceding paragraph and the example of slavery. But that would miss the point. The point is merely that just because a person has benefited from an injustice, it does not follow that the person should pay even partial restitution for that injustice if he did not bring it about.

### So what's your explanation?

*We agree that X is happening. I say that the cause of X is Y. You disagree—but you have no explanation of your own. You can't sensibly reject my explanation if you don't have a better one.*

Obviously the speaker has never taken a multiple-choice test. If he had, he would realize that you don't always have to know the right answer in order to recognize something as a wrong answer. By way of illustration: the first time you see a thoroughbred, you don't have to know that it's a thoroughbred in order to know that it's not your mother. (Assuming, of course, that your mother doesn't have equine looks.) Some explanations are so transparently stupid that they should be rejected even in the absence of a competing explanation. When you point out the flaws in the assumptions

underlying an argument, it's no answer for your opponent to say, "So what's your explanation?"

For example, many argue that the reason for racial and ethnic disparities in standardized test scores is racial or cultural bias in the tests. Typically they point to the racial disparity between black and white students' success in answering the "oarsman : regatta" analogy question on an old version of the SAT I, while ignoring the huge racial disparities for math questions on the very same test—disparities that cultural bias obviously can't explain. I myself have no idea what the reason is for these disparities, but (at least with regard to the math section) whatever the reason is, bias isn't it.

THE POINT IS MERELY  
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NOT BRING IT ABOUT.

**Nobody's perfect. In fact, nobody's even close.**

*I can't believe you're not voting for [candidate] just because you don't agree with him on every issue! You'll never find a candidate who agrees with you on every issue, you know.*

This argument is strong enough if used properly, but it rarely is used properly. It's usually aimed at a voter who disagrees with the candidate on multiple major issues instead of a few minor ones. The reasoning error is to minimize the difference between the voter's positions and the candidate's.

Example: as a conservative, I can never vote for John McCain. McCain's defenders say that I shouldn't rule him out

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WHEN YOU AND YOUR  
OPPONENT HAVE VERY  
DIFFERENT IDEOLOGIES, YOUR  
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SOMEONE WHO USUALLY  
AGREES WITH YOU HAS SIDED  
WITH YOUR OPPONENT IN A  
PARTICULAR DEBATE.

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just because I don't agree with him "on every issue." But to say that I don't agree with him "on every issue" is such an understatement that it's practically a lie. Should I vote for him anyway just because nobody's perfect? Of course not. Just because you can't have a perfectly sterile operating room doesn't mean you should do the surgery in a sewer. Likewise, just because I can't have another Calvin Coolidge doesn't mean I should settle for the man George Will rightly called "the favorite Republican of those who regret that there are Republicans."

**How can you not want children? You were a child once.**

I don't like children, I don't like spending time with them, and I find none of their traits even a little endearing. Many people have told me that it makes no sense for me, as a former child, to avoid the company of children.

The first problem with this question is that it makes no sense to challenge someone's feelings about children. Likes and dislikes live below reason. Everybody knows what children are like; the question is whether children are appealing enough to you (if appealing at all) to be worth the trouble it takes to raise them. That, in turn, depends on feelings that won't be changed by an argument. Even if your preferences change when you fall in love, that change isn't going to be driven by reason.

Another problem is that the question assumes that you

should like, and should want to spend time with, whatever you used to be. But that's ridiculous. Before you were a child, you were a fetus, but that's no reason to want to spend your time with fetuses. And if someone used to be a jerk but then grew out of it, you wouldn't think it strange if he told you he doesn't enjoy the company of jerks. Just because you were x once upon a time, doesn't mean you should seek the company of x.

For those of you who like children, the rest of us extend your family, or your future family, our best wishes. Now kindly shut the hell up and leave us alone.

**The Buddy Bears Fallacy.**

*How can you not agree with me? Even [someone you admire intellectually] agrees with me! And he almost never agrees with me!*

When you and your opponent have very different ideologies, your opponent will often be tempted to point out that someone who usually agrees with you has sided with your opponent in a particular debate.

Example: "Even Justice Scalia doesn't interpret the Constitution that way!"

Your Response: "He should."

You and your ideological brethren aren't bound to agree on anything in particular, besides the constitutive principles of the ideology you share. If your opponent thinks that your position on some issue contradicts your ideology, he should make that argument. But if he's just saying that one of your brethren disagrees with you, you should answer: "Yes, he disagrees with me—and he's wrong, and here's why..." ♡

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ALAN WILLIAMS IS CLEARLY READY TO GRADUATE FROM LAW SCHOOL. HE WELCOMES CONGRATULATIONS - OR QUESTIONS - AT WILLIAMSA@WLU.EDU.

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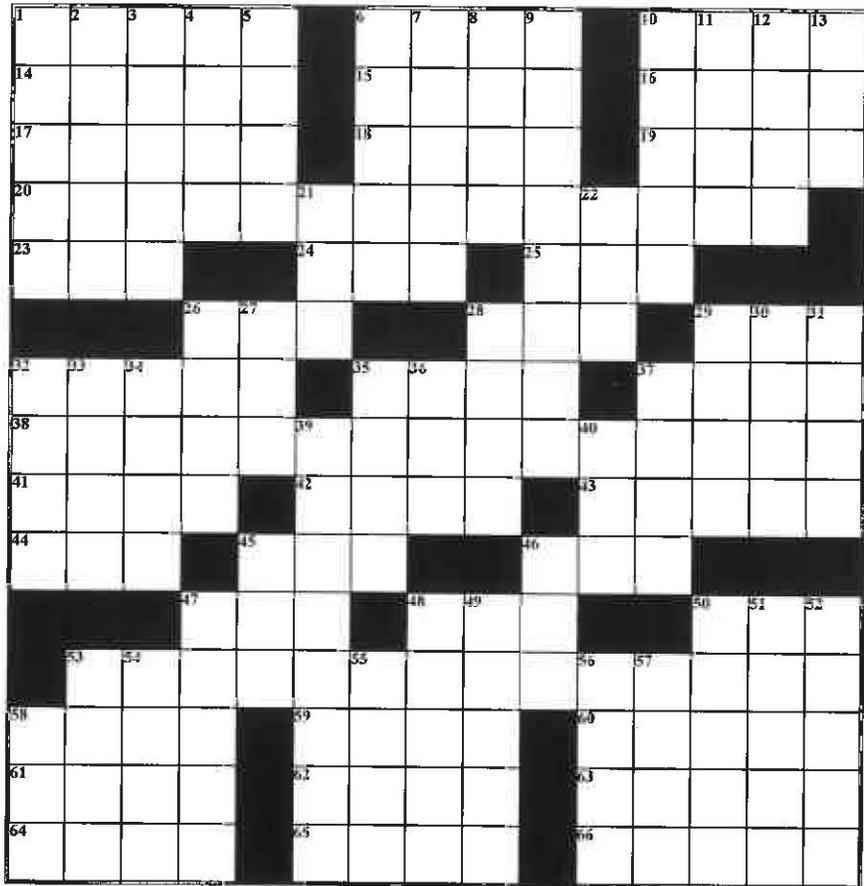
BIRD'S EYE VIEW by Neville L. Fogarty

ACROSS

1. Plastic discovered in 1933
6. Symptom of malaria
10. Alexei Mikhailovich, for example
14. Delight
15. Forsaken
16. \_\_\_ mater
17. Concluding musical passages
18. Forget an object's place
19. "Clue" weapon
20. They're on the left, from one eagle's perspective
23. \_\_\_ Paulo, Brazil
24. Response to a quest.
25. Dr. for animals
26. At the stern
28. Auto gp. founded in 1902
29. US agency promoting consumer protection
32. Speak pompously
35. Desire
37. \_\_\_ vera
38. They're all around, from one eagle's perspective
41. Chef Bobby
42. The Emerald Isle
43. State with 254 counties
44. Spanish "to be"
45. \_\_\_ Lingus
46. "Science Guy" Bill
47. Sum
48. Environmental prefix
50. Democratic symbol
53. It's on the right, from one eagle's perspective
58. Computer operator
59. Drew Barrymore film "\_\_\_ After"
60. Violet starter?
61. Jai \_\_\_
62. Mailed
63. Like Fran Drescher's voice
64. Unthinking routine
65. Concordes (abbr.)
66. "Give me a chance"

DOWN

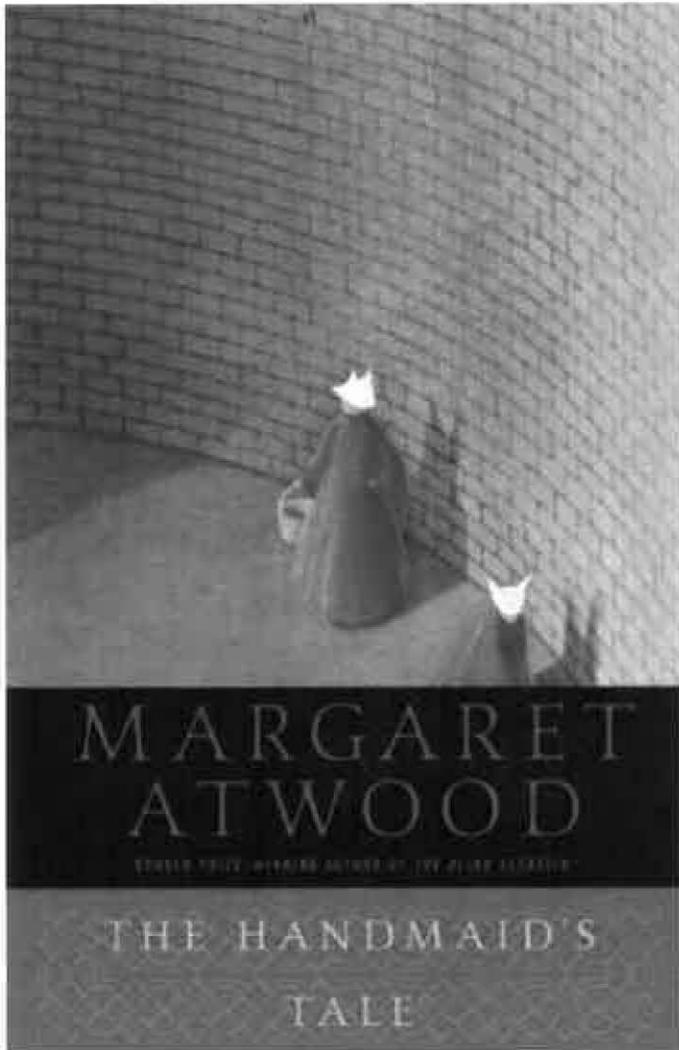
1. Religious denominations
2. Hawaiian "hello"



3. Half of a 1978 Elvis Costello song
4. Perfume from flowers
5. Sparrow's home
6. Wrench also called a hex key
7. Simpletons
8. It's in the name of two constellations
9. Lessen the strength of
10. Deck with 21 trumps cards
11. Hinder
12. Units of electric current
13. 1979 film "Norma \_\_\_"
21. Munch
22. Mens \_\_\_ (guilty mind)
26. Counselor (abbr.)
27. SNL alum Tina
28. It may be a penny
29. Linseed
30. Japanese for tiger
31. Type of underground pool
32. Murders, to John Gotti
33. Agitate
34. Great distance
35. Sound of a blender
36. Type of tank
37. Suit to \_\_\_ (fit perfectly)
39. Like a pristine garden
40. Hog's home
45. "Much \_\_\_ About Nothing"
46. Head
47. Mountaintop nest
48. You might create one on Facebook
49. Mint brand
50. On edge
51. Head for the hills
52. Common sedimentary rock
53. Norwegian capital
54. Like an iceless drink
55. Currier's partner
56. Litter's smallest member
57. Resembling a wing
58. Former union of Egypt and Syria (abbr.)

# THE HANDMAID'S TALE:

WHERE LESS IS  
DEFINITELY NOT MORE



In a country persistently distracted by such monikers as Atkin's, South Beach, and—dare I say it—carbs, it isn't any wonder why there is such a large market for light beers. And why not? Same bottle, same price, and less calories than the original, sure, but less taste, less substance, and less filling shouldn't go unnoted either. Enter the 1990 movie from Volker Schlöndorff: *The Handmaid's Tale*—the greatest cinematic metaphor for light beer we've had in quite some time.

Whoever said less is more surely hasn't seen this movie. Based upon Margaret Atwood's meticulous dystopian novel of the same name which depicts the journey and subservience of a 'handmaid' in the ex-United States theocracy of the Republic of

Gilead, the movie has condensed Atwood's 308 pages of pure genius into an hour and a half of choppy scenes, lines written—and delivered—with inappropriately tuned emotion, and inexplicable poignancy. It makes the movie seem less like a chilling vision of the future and more like a low-budget science fiction flick. This isn't just light beer. It's flat light beer.

Objectively, screenwriter Harold Pinter's adaptation has its masterful moments. The exchanges between the handmaid, Offred (originally named Kate; 'of' was added to each commander's first name and delegated to their handmaids), and her commander beautifully illustrate the reduced role of women in society and how forbidden their relationship—he sees her after hours in his locked study allotting her reading time and hand lotion—is in this society. The Commander is played by Robert Duvall, who seems to understand the confused, complex character he plays. Perhaps, however, he was just as befuddled with the direction of the movie as we were. The only actor to fully portray the substance of their character was the surprisingly well-cast and effective Elizabeth McGovern as Kate's steadfast and unyielding friend, Moira. Her portrayal of an imprisoned free spirit who keeps her head even as she is 'persuaded' by this new government (who conducts public executions where they entice public 'citizens' to involve themselves) to fall into line and conform is unnerving. She must have read the novel before showing up on set.

The narrowing of the book's original plot ultimately dilutes the story too much. What was taken out were critical and crucial happenings, what was added took away from the overall—and purposeful—imperfection, and what was left was so far gone that it wasn't even a logical progression of events, book or no book to compare it to.

I can recommend this movie to any persons wanting to more fully and completely revel in Margaret Atwood's genius in its pure, unadulterated, and now more perfect form; its intricacy and attention to detail foil sharply with its seemingly watered-down 109-minute silver screen counterpart.

They say that only the best of movies have you leaving the theater wanting more, and in that respect this movie is undoubtedly one of the best of the year.

Because I want a drink. That's not light beer. ☘

MONICA CHINN IS MAKING MOVIE  
PRODUCERS CRY AND WELCOMES  
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# THE HUNT FOR THE RED NOVEMBER



With the eternal media buzz surrounding the eternal war between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama dominating the political scene, it can be easy to forget about that other guy- John McCain. You know, that Republican also running for President. Whoever wins the Democratic nomination, which will almost certainly be Mr. Obama, will have the support of all major portions of the base behind him, despite recent bad blood. Barring the loss of John McCain's sanity or the most massive political realignment since the 1960s, young people, union workers, minorities, and academics will support the Democratic nominee in November.

On paper, John McCain should not have a chance. President Bush's approval ratings are at a point where he has not only no coattails, but no coat. We are mired in an equally unpopular war with no tangible and no feasible conclusion. Ethics violations and corruption are visible in the administration's shadows. Perhaps more importantly (just ask Bush I), the economy is in a state of perpetual "almost a recession," otherwise known as being in recession. Obama and Clinton have each raised more than three times that of John McCain and both have far more enthusiasm than John McCain's still relatively skeptical base.

However, John McCain does have a chance, and a

good one. He is not the favorite, but Democrats would have had to nominate Dennis Kucinich for him to earn that title. The odd blend of McCain's stance as a moderate/maverick Republican, more experience than twice Obama and Clinton combined, relative separation with Bush's troubles in Iraq but close association with Bush's recent surge success, and his quick securing of his party nomination have all created a perfect storm for Democrats. This flurry of fortune is perhaps the only way the Republican nominee could come within 2 points of Obama and actually beat Clinton according to RCP averages.

Fate has handed John McCain the opportunity to continue one of the most unlikely political comebacks in American history and be-

come President. With all the Democratic excitement and funding he will undoubtedly be opposing in November, he faces a great challenge. But challenges are nothing new to John McCain. There are several strategies McCain could use to help him win in November against a very powerful Democratic electorate.

No matter what happens in the Democratic primary mess, John McCain will not be the better speaker in debates, orator at speeches, or most youthful organizer. Obviously, he must play to his strengths. What McCain must do, especially if he faces Obama, is represent the candidate who "gets it." He must present Obama or Clinton as intelligent, reasonable, well-educated and well-meaning candidates, but only attractive on paper. But they haven't been in the trenches, either figuratively in the Senate or literally.

His military experience will take McCain a long way. In a debate, he should wait for Obama or Clinton to mention how difficult it is for soldiers in Iraq with families and how the nation must bring those troops home. At such a time, McCain needs a big moment. He has to squint his eyes, look tough but sympathetic, and, in a gruff but emotional tone remind the public that he was a soldier, that he knows what it is like to want to come home.



As commander-in-chief, our troops will know that their superior has been through what they've been through, not simply debated about their experiences in the Senate chambers. They can have the confidence that he would never wish that struggle upon a fellow American unless the cause was worth their sacrifice.

To that, neither Obama nor Clinton would have an effective response. Obama's argument would be that the war is a failure, and that he had the judgment to not support the war from the start. However, McCain must emphasize that whether the war was right or wrong, we're in it and we need to find a way to win. With the surge, McCain, not Obama, had the best judgment and stood up to the transient winds of polls, supporting an ultimately successful movement.

Because McCain has secured his nomination, he has enough time to frame the race the way he wants it to be framed. He must not let 2008 become 1960, and instead try to make it 1968. In other words, if McCain fails to mold the type of race 2008 will become, he will ultimately resemble the qualified and experienced Richard Nixon, only to be made to look old, bumbling, worn, and tired by the youthful, charismatic John F. Kennedy, potentially mirrored by Barack Obama. In such a case, Obama would use his charisma and brilliant articulation to simply run circles around McCain and sink him as a third Bush term and the candidate of the past.

However, if John McCain can successfully use humor and reinvigorate his softer side, he can become the Richard Nixon of 1968. In 1968, Nixon had the most worn name in politics after his loss in 1960 and an additional gubernatorial loss in 1962. He was aging in the era of the baby boom. His old, established style had become almost comical. But, with Nixon's forced mastery of television and the mess during the

1968 Democratic primaries (sound familiar), Nixon framed himself as the candidate of the common man, the guy who "gets it" with real people. Both Obama and Clinton are vulnerable to this attack if McCain chooses to make it. Their ideas are so lofty that McCain could swoop in and steal white male and working Democrats if he convinced them that the Democratic candidate was lost in the clouds and that he, John McCain, was right here in the United States, thinking practically, like the rest of us.

Even though the economy is John McCain's weakest spot, it is certainly no strong suit for Obama or Clinton either. In politics, when you have a weakness, it is often best to attack from that point, as it is both surprising and appears to strengthen your own weakness. McCain must come out and say that though his opponent is talking about bring America back together, he is focusing on bringing your wallet back to its normal size. While his opponent talks about restoring America's moral standing in the world, he is talking about restoring jobs Americans used to have. If done effectively, he can become the very aware Bill Clinton instead of the very aloof George Bush of 1992.

Simply put, John McCain needs to dig deep and highlight qualities he already has. His experience can not possibly be overstated. An opponent might claim that because he has been in the Senate for over 30 years, he has become an insider. What this country needs is change, not more of the same, accusing McCain of being part of the problem. In classic McCain style, he must simply strike back and say, "Well, you certainly haven't been part of a solution." ❖

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SCOTT GRAHAM CENTORINO IS WRITING MCCAIN'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH. HE CAN BE REACHED AT CENTORINOS@WLU.EDU.

# NOTES ACROSS THE POND

## THE ELECTION FROM THE BRITISH PERSPECTIVE



After spending the last six months or so in England, British politics remain a mystery to me, except for a few certain facts: everybody hates Gordon Brown—Tony Blair’s replacement—though no one can say exactly why. The Liberal-Democrats—who make our Liberals seem almost sane in comparison—are fair game for both Liberals and Conservatives. And lastly, a few lucky politicians from the past three decades or so, forgotten by all but their constituents, are held up as paragons of political virtue and spoken about in the loving tone that men usually reserve for power tools and Aston Martins, and women for designer clothing and expensive jewelry, while world-renowned figures such as Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher are slandered as tyrants.

The British, unfortunately, do not share my confusion over foreign (in this case, American) politics—at least, they don’t think they do, though some of their views of America—kindly provided by the totally unbiased BBC News Network—are so strange that I sometimes wonder if we’re even talking about the same country. For example, apparently several decades ago the United States secretly conquered the British government in a quiet, yet vicious coup—at least, that’s the only explanation I can think of for the reasoning behind statements like “It’s the United States’ fault that Britain was dragged into Iraq.” Now,

I admit that my knowledge of current events isn’t as great as it could be, but last time I checked, Britain was an autonomous country that had the capability of making its own decisions. Clearly, I was mistaken.

The fact that this is a presidential election year for the U.S. makes my young friends even more eager to “talk politics” with me—especially since they seem certain that they can convince me of the wrongs of my conservative ways. That Hillary Clinton will win and become the first woman President and bring the United States out of the Dark Ages and into the world of Enlightenment and tax-supported National Healthcare seems as certain and as unstoppable as the sun rising in the east to the Brits (except for one brave young soul, a contrarian Welshman, who actually admitted that he thought Bush was a good President). The fact that Hillary seems to be having some trouble winning the support of her own liberal comrades—what with a verbally explosive husband, Obama’s cult-like popularity, and the New York Senator’s own “misspoken” statements acting as stumbling blocks in her sprint to power—is of little concern to British citizens intent on interfering in American politics. As one resident of London stated, “Bill was amazing; why wouldn’t you want Hillary?” Indeed, if the Brits had their way, it would be only a matter of time before we silly young Yanks bowed in

obesance to the great Billary.

Barack Obama has not fared so well in British media and thought, however. Much like many American Conservatives, the British view Obama with a little wariness and a good bit of bafflement over his reception as the next Messiah by American Liberals. When asked for their thoughts on Barack, a group of Oxford students answered with, "There's nothing really there, is there?" and, "Oh, he's a great laugh!" Interestingly, however, none of the Rev. Jeremiah Wright scandals have made their way into British news; in fact, Obama is almost a non-entity in Brit-

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ish eyes, not even worthy of making the news. The Brits just can't understand how Obama can be such a powerful political threat to their beloved Hillary, and they seem just as baffled as I try to explain to them why I take such great delight in watching Hillary and Barack rip each other's eyes out—figuratively, of course.

On the other side of the spectrum, the British media have thoroughly enjoyed ripping the Republican presidential candidates apart, though the only ones who made any impact across the pond are Mike Huckabee (the religious fanatic), Mitt Romney (the Mormon—'nuff said), John McCain (who's out for revenge for the years he spent as a POW), and Fred Thompson (the chap from the television show). The British watched Huckabee with the same fear and wariness that they would a rabid dog, and were only too relieved to watch him being put down; after all, Huckabee was an evangelical—you know, one of those religious nut-jobs from the Deep South, where people talk like Forrest Gump and haven't quite figured out indoor plumbing. I did manage to make several Brits splutter, however, when I pointed out that Huckabee was from Arkansas, the same state that produced their beloved Billy (whose bulbous-nosed portrait, by the way, leers down at students in the dining hall of University College, Oxford, where he spent his Rhodes years—without, just so you know, ever receiving his degree). Romney, on the other hand, was a Mormon, and while the Brits know next to nothing about Mormons, they're certain of one thing: "If Americans got all fussed about Bill going at it with an intern, what'll they do about a Mormon?"

Fred Thompson was little more than a blip in the British media, an interesting tidbit for viewers ("And the Americans might vote in another actor for political office—just like Reagan and the 'Governator'!"), while McCain's bad press (he's been quietly insane since his days as a POW, in case you didn't

know) was dwarfed only by Huckabee's fanaticism. Recently, however, McCain seems to have lured the British people into complacency with his benign, grandfatherly exterior: the Brits seem to have decided that McCain will be a worthy opponent for Hillary, once she wins the Democratic nomination—that is, they think that he'll be no match for her wit and prowess. I personally can't wait for the first Clinton-McCain debate; there's no doubt in my mind about whose wit and prowess will overthrow his opponent.

England is a beautiful country, and its citizens are, for the most part, kind and polite and oftentimes even sensible. I've made many wonderful friends here that I hope to keep forever—and I just pray to G-d that come November they'll be horribly disappointed when the American people send their beloved Billary back to Arkansas (metaphorically) to eat chocolates with Forrest.

many wonderful friends here that I hope to keep forever—and I just pray to G-d that come November they'll be horribly disappointed when the American people send their beloved Billary back to Arkansas (metaphorically) to eat chocolates with Forrest. ♡

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## TOP TEN WAYS TO GET KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL

10. Stealing kisses from Mimi Elrod
9. Exposing the secret embezzlement of financial aid dollars by the Science Center for construction of a time machine.
8. Disagree with any one of the 95 Theses
7. Working for the W&L Spectator
6. Requiring a pledge to speak slowly and distinctly.
5. Exercising constitutional rights of free speech.
4. Exhuming Traveler for your biology paper on Mad Cow Disease.
3. Requesting that overpaid professors work at least 14 hours a week.
2. Dodging the condoms hurled by LIFE brownshirt
1. Perpetuating the myth of student autonomy

## PROS/CONS OF BEING A WASHINGTON & LEE STUDENT

### PROS

- ⚡ **High-maintenance chicks**
- ⚡ **Hollins girls**
- ⚡ **Co-education**
- ⚡ **Lots of drinking**
- ⚡ **Greek System**
- ⚡ **House mothers**
- ⚡ **Honor System**
- ⚡ **Everyone looks just like you**
- ⚡ **Campus is a national landmark**
- ⚡ **College Democrats number fewer than 8**

### CONS

- ⚡ HIGH-MAINTENANCE MALE GROOMING
- ⚡ LONG DISTANCE PHONE RATES
- ⚡ FAT CHICKS
- ⚡ DRUNK FAT CHICKS
- ⚡ DARTMOUTH COLLEGE MOVEMENT
- ⚡ DRUNKEN HOOK-UPS
- ⚡ EC MEMBERS THAT THINK THEY'RE CHARLES BRONSON
- ⚡ YOU COULD STAND TO LOSE A COUPLE POUNDS
- ⚡ CAN'T DRIVE CAR ON FRONT LAWN
- ⚡ ANOTHER 8 GREEKS BOUNCED FROM W&L

**FROM THE SPRING 1999 ISSUE!**

# LEGISLATING MORALITY:

## THE CASE OF ELIOT SPITZER AND THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY



*Prostitution will always lead into a moral quagmire in democratic societies with capitalist economies; it invades the terrain of intimate sexual relations yet beckons for regulation. A society's response to prostitution goes to the core of how it chooses between the rights of some persons and the protection of others.*

- Barbara Meil Hobson

The United States government's insatiable desire to squelch materialistic and physical pleasure has met with disastrous results. It has been and remains a crusade of irrationally zealous proportions, ironically resulting in pain, suffering, and tyranny. Prostitution, recreational drug use, and gambling, either despicable vices or means to personal pleasure and fulfillment – depending on your perspective – are subject to intense investigation, prosecution and punishment. Eliot Spitzer is yet another victim in this campaign against immorality. His actions may have been wrong. They may have been immoral. Yet morality is for every individual to determine for him or herself, not for government to legislate.

Like our policy on drugs, the counter-intuitive measures placed on prostitution have resulted in various indirect and unintended consequences, causing the public far more harm than good. Steve Chapman argued recently in a *reason.com* article, "Outlawing this commerce [prostitution] serves mainly to make things worse, not better. It assures income to criminal organizations with long experience evading the law. It makes prostitutes vulnerable to abuse. It prevents measures to protect the health of providers and patrons. It exempts an industry from the taxes and fees that legitimate businesses have to pay. [And] it squanders police resources that could be used to fight real crime, while clogging jails and courts with offenders who will soon be back plying their trade." Chapman's points are extremely relevant and should be taken seriously. But the issue here is not of the practical, tangible consequences of an illogical policy. The concern is the violation of individual liberty by government. It is not the duty of the government to impose a moral code and standard onto its citizens.

Democracy is one of the finest double-edged swords ever to be wielded: the beauty of governing ourselves accompanied by the curse of majority rule. Majority rule in and of itself is

not flawed, but it is based on the degree of character and intellectual capacity of its constituents. Its successes far outweigh its failures, as ancient barbaric institutions such as slavery and segregation in this country have been slowly eradicated due to a democratic, humanistic shift in thinking. But herein lays the curse: the speed of change in majority opinion. Change is difficult for people to accept and adapt to. Watching their values, or supposed values, succumb to progressive evolution is even harder to endure. But the privileges of democracy do not provide a window for the majority to impede on the rights of the minority. Individual liberty is the backbone of the United States. Democracy is a facilitator of self-governance. To confuse the relative importance of each is to create only a façade of self-rule.

The climate concerning prostitution and other “non-traditional” sexual practices in this country is only one of many illustrations of Tocqueville and Mills’ concept, ‘the tyranny of the majority.’ Do the desires of the majority supersede the rights of the individual? History is ripe with examples of majority abuses, and the practice endures. Why? Mill states it best. “Men’s opinions...on what is laudable or blamable are affected by all the multifarious causes which influence their wishes in regard to the conduct of others, and which are as numerous as those which determine their wishes on any other

subject. Sometimes their reason; at other times their prejudices or superstitions; often their social afflictions, not seldom their antisocial ones, their envy or jealousy, their arrogance or contemptuousness; but most commonly their desires or fears for themselves – their legitimate or illegitimate self-interest.”

The great irony of the democratic paradox is that it

DEMOCRACY IS ONE OF THE FINEST DOUBLE-EDGED SWORDS EVER TO BE WEILDED: THE BEAUTY OF GOVERNING OURSELVES ACCOMPANIED BY THE CURSE OF MAJORITY RULE.

is the individual, who commonly fears beliefs and practices not his or her own, that works to suppress other individuals’ desires, not some fundamental collective majority. But because the ability to stamp out a certain practice is difficult on the level of the individual, a person must turn to collectivism for power. Individuals create a collective in order to justify their suppressive actions against those with alternative lifestyles. As Ayn Rand has definitively pointed out, collectivism is nothing more than individuals congregating under the guise of collective self-interest. Yet from the multitude rises democratically-achieved perceived knowledge. Knowledge then is ripped from the individual, molded to fit the collective will, and forced back on the individual, its composition utterly transformed from the beliefs once held. Liberty exists only to further strengthen the will of the whole.

Liberty, in its most pure form, is not dead. It simply is not allowed to live.

*Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.*

- John Stuart Mill ♡

THE SPECTATOR STAFF HAS ABSOLUTELY NO DESIRE TO SPECULATE ABOUT WILL HENSON’S ACTIVITIES, HE CAN BE REACHED AT HENSONW@WLU.EDU



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