



COPPER MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

the
Copper
Penny

The Copper Penny

(A Scholarly On-Line Journal for Copper Mountain College)

Throughout existence, objects often portray meaning. For example, the historical importance of copper is evident by its use in legends, art, medicine, trade, and technology. Its metallic brilliance is enshrined in the word “liberty” that beams forth from America’s copper penny. Like the Statue of Liberty, plated with copper, its green coloring offering evidence of natural weathering, the copper penny endures. This journal is intended as a beacon of liberty, a celebration of expression, and the renewal of meaning.

---- Aimee` Percy (2010)

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The Copper Penny title was selected after a college-wide “Name-the-Journal” contest, won by CMC student Aimee Percy. The judges were Greg Gilbert, Cathy Itnyre, and Carolyn Hopkins. The CMC Foundation awarded a \$100 prize to Amy, who was honored at a college literary journal reading on May 7, 2010. An explanation of Aimee’s selection of a title is on the journal’s cover and, thus, the first entry in the table of contents.

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Editor's Note: Dr. Donald Sachs penned the following essay and submitted it to CMC's literary magazine, *Howl*, shortly before he passed away in 2009. I told Donald that I would prefer that his submission appear as the first essay published in a new, as yet unnamed, online journal at CMC. As a result, I am proud to be the sponsor of record for this first entry. – Sincerely, Greg Gilbert.

A Window on China

by Donald C. Sachs

The year is 1966 and Chen Ming senses that something is not quite right with her family. Her mother and father seem to look worried lately and there is definitely less laughter in the house. Her father is a distinguished professor of history at the University of Chungking, a large and famous university. Chen Ming, being only fourteen, doesn't know much about her family's finances, but they live in a large house, she and her younger brother, Chen Lun, always have new clothes for school, and the family enjoys long summer vacations each year. So, Chen Ming guesses that the problem is probably not about money. Several weeks pass, and Chen Ming's parents appear to become more agitated and apprehensive. Then, one night Chen Ming wakes to the sound of sirens and what appear to be flashing lights outside their house. There is a pounding on the front door and she hears one of her parents running down the stairs. Chen Ming leaps out of bed and runs out of her bedroom onto the landing at the top of the stairs.

Chen Ming is immediately reminded of the story her mother had told her: When her mother was a teenager, there were flashing lights outside her house, followed by a loud pounding on the front door. When her mother's father, Chen Ming's grandfather, opened the door, several Japanese soldiers lunged through the entrance and began shouting and waving their guns. The soldiers ordered everyone to get dressed and to come with them. The family was loaded onto a military truck and taken to an internment camp. The family was confined to this camp for more than a year, under the most miserable conditions. They gained their freedom in 1945 when the Japanese surrendered to the Allies. Chen Ming's mother told her this story only once and never mentioned the incident again.

As Chen Ming watches, her father opens the front door. Several young men rush inside and begin talking very rapidly in loud voices. The men are not dressed in military uniforms, but they are armed with clubs and appear very menacing. Most of the men are quite young--they could be university students. The men told everyone to get dressed quickly and pack one suitcase per person. Each member of the Chen family did as they were told, and they were loaded onto a large bus. Several other families from their neighborhood were already on the bus, everyone looking anxious and afraid. There were approximately forty people on the bus, counting the children. The ride was long and very bumpy; they had two rest stops along the way. Looking at the position of the sunrise, Chen Ming determined that the bus was headed in a westerly direction.

They had been traveling for about eight hours when the bus convoy stopped for the final time and everyone was unloaded. When all the people were herded together, it appeared to be a very large group. Chen Ming saw that there were several of her schoolmates among the assembled people. One of the men in charge instructed the father of each family to come forward to receive their assignments to their living quarters. Chen Ming's father stepped forward and was given a slip of paper with a number on it, and the family followed one of the men to their new home. They soon came upon a large group of concrete block houses; however, to call them houses would be a gross exaggeration. When Chen Ming entered their house, she saw a total area that was not much larger than her bedroom at home. There was a rough wood floor and the house was divided into two small rooms: one room for sleeping and the

other was the living area. The fireplace provided the only heat and they were told that all the bathroom and laundry facilities were provided at a central latrine, which was located some distance from their house. This arrangement reminded Chen Ming of her family's visit to Chetzu Falls one summer; however, that trip lasted only one week and Chen Ming was sure that they would be living in this house longer than a week. The young man who had been their guide told them to read the list of instructions and rules which was tacked to the inside of the front door, then he left them.

Every family member gathered around to read the paper:

NO RECREATIONAL DRUGS OR ALCHOLIC BEVERAGES PERMITTED
TOBACCO SMOKING PERMITTED BETWEEN 7PM & MIDNIGHT
ALL LIGHTS OUT AT MIDNIGHT; ALL RISE AT 6AM
SIREN WILL SOUND AT MIDNIGHT AND AT 6AM
WORK GROUPS WILL ASSEMBLE AT PICKUP POINTS AT 8AM

MEAL TIMES: BREAKFAST 7AM (MESS HALL)
LUNCH 12 NOON (AT WORK STATION)
DINNER 7PM (MESS HALL)

(A map was provided showing the location of the mess hall, the latrines, the pickup point, and the school)

At the bottom of the page, they read the following:

Chairman Mao greets you all with warm regards. He says, "Be happy in your work for the Communist Party of China."

After reading this, the Chen family looked at each other, puzzled as to what was in store for them. Chen Ming's father motioned for the family to gather around him. His voice took on a serious tone as he said, "It appears that we are going to experience some very challenging times in the weeks and months ahead. There shall be hardships related to our living conditions and there may be periods when we become discouraged and fearful. During these times, we shall help each other. However severe this ordeal may be, we shall survive it as a family."

The family was in the process of unpacking their clothes and personal items when the siren sounded for dinner. They walked to the mess hall, which was located near the center of the group of houses. It contained long wooden tables and benches, and it was large enough to accommodate about three hundred people. The meal was served cafeteria style. Chen Ming liked most foods, so she found several choices appealing; however, her brother was quite another story—he found little that he would eat. His mother said nothing, knowing that when he was hungry enough he would eat what was offered. During dinner, the loud speakers in the hall poured forth with speeches by Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai of the Communist Party of China, telling everyone about the grand victory of the proletariat over the evils of capitalism.

The next day, Chen Ming's mother and father were told of their work assignments and the children were told where they would attend school. After breakfast, the Chen family went off to their respective places. Chen Ming's father joined a farm work detail that was harvesting alfalfa; he drove a large bailer for half a day and helped with the farm accounts for the other half day. Chen Ming's mother found herself in a factory setting working at a large sewing machine; her task was to sew a portion of a man's military shirt.

Chen Ming and her brother found the schoolhouse. It was the largest building in the complex and contained enough classrooms to accommodate grades K through 12. When they entered the building, Chen Ming and Chen Lun saw several children who they knew from their neighborhood. They were all anxious to talk about what had happened to them and their families. Many of the children were fearful about what might happen next; some thought that they might be separated from their parents. These conversations were stopped abruptly when a man with a bull-horn demanded their attention. He said that the students must go to the classrooms corresponding to the grades they were in at their former schools; maps would be handed out to help the students to find their proper classrooms. Teachers would be available to help the younger students find their classrooms. The maps were passed around and the students dispersed. Chen Ming was two grades ahead of her brother, so they separated, promising to meet at lunch.

When Chen Ming found her classroom she saw that it was equipped with the bare essentials—student desks, blackboards, and, of course, the flag of The Communist Party of China. There were about thirty students in the class and they were talking in low voices when the teacher entered. He immediately blew a whistle which filled the room with a shrill, ear piercing screech. Silence and fear invaded the room. The teacher said, “When you enter this room, you will be silent until you are called upon to speak. The school day will be divided into two parts: The morning will be devoted to the study of Chairman Mao’s revolutionary vision as described in Mao’s Red Book. The afternoon session will include instruction in the other educational subjects. The proper books will be distributed to you as required. Are there any questions?” No one seemed brave enough to ask any questions. So, the teacher passed out copies of Mao’s Red Book and the class began.

Of course, these children knew that Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai were the leaders of their country, but they had not been schooled in the detailed background of the social and political aspects of China’s rejection of communism as practiced in Russia. Beginning in the 1960’s, The Communist Party of China (CPC) experienced a significant ideological break from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and from what Mao referred to as “Russian Marxist revisionism”. Mao’s peasant revolutionary vision and his so-called “continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat” stipulated that class enemies continued to exist even though the socialist revolution seemed to be complete. This reasoning gave rise to Mao’s “Cultural Revolution.” The principle was that the portion of the society that was well educated, lived in the large cities, and were relatively prosperous, should have a greater appreciation for the portion of the society that did not have these advantages.

Mao decided that the best way to “level the playing field”, as it were, would be to place many of the city people in a rural working-class environment. The theory was that this process would result in the city people having a greater appreciation for the contribution being made by the rural population to China’s prosperity.

It now became apparent to Chen Ming, as well as to all the families of their community, that they had become active participants in this “Cultural Revolution”. This knowledge did not make their experience any easier to endure. The Spartan living accommodations, the restrictions on their freedom, and the difficult physical labor thrust upon adults who found it difficult to perform—all of this contributed to a community of very unhappy people. However, in most cases, the people slipped into the dull routine of work and living. Occasionally, a family would be missing from the community—no explanation was ever given and no one asked where they went.

The Chen family lived in this community for more than two years. At the end of that time, they and several other families were transported back to Chunking. The Chens were allowed to occupy their former house; however, the house brought back too many bad memories, so they moved to another house. Chen Ming’s father resumed his professorship at the Chunking University. The family seldom spoke of their experiences related to the Cultural Revolution.

EPILOGUE

The year is 1987. More than twenty years have passed since that frightful night when Chen Ming woke to sirens and flashing lights. As most historians look back on the Cultural Revolution, they conclude that it did not achieve its objectives. In fact, some would say that it delayed China's progress both socially and economically. Even before Mao's death in 1976, the Chinese leadership realized that the country was falling behind the rest of the developed nations. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping the country moved toward economic reform. In reversing some of Mao's "extreme leftist" policies, Deng argued that a socialist country and a market economy model need not be mutually exclusive. While asserting the political power of the Party itself, the change in policy generated significant economic growth.

Concerning the Chen family, Chen Ming's father died in 1981 at the age of 56; he never fully recovered physically from the rigorous farm work experience. Chen Ming's mother now lives with Chen Ming, Chen Ming's husband, and their two sons. Chen Ming, after graduating from the university with a degree in economics, went on to earn a Masters of Business Administration and began working at one of the largest banks in China. She is now the Assistant Manager at the bank's Beijing branch. Her husband is an architect and he is one of the principal partners in his firm. Chen Ming's brother dropped out of university after his second year, teamed up with two of his friends, and started a small electronics company designing hand-held calculators. Their company grew rapidly and when they reached three hundred employees, a large corporation purchased their business. Chen Lun now works as an independent consultant to the electronics industry. He and his girl friend live in Shanghai and they have no children.

When the family has a reunion, they marvel at how much China has changed in twenty years. No one in the Chen family is a member of the Communist Party of China.

Faculty Sponsor: Greg Gilbert 6-9-10

Editor's Note: Cyndera Quackenbush is a graduate of CMC.

Imaginal Theatre
By Cyndera Quackenbush

“Everything you can imagine is real.” Picasso
“There is another world, and it is this one.” Paul Eluard

You have been led here by the Enticing Woman. Her dark red lips and dimpled cheeks, her boyish black hair and suggestive smile have you by the throat, and her mystery by the heart. You follow her heavy-hipped walk down a darkened corridor, the clack of her T-strap heels echoing against the many closed doorways. Her scent, like a smoky rose, entwines your mind, the thread of Ariadne, and snuffs out warning whispers that might ask, “Where is she taking me?” She suddenly stops, looks back at you with her piercing blue eyes; one of them winks. She reaches into the cleavage of her pink dress and pulls out a ring of large, ancient-looking keys. She hands you one. It seems to glow in your hand from the warmth of her breast.

“But where will it bring me to?” you ask, coyly. She kisses you, long and sweet. A bite of cognac still rests on her lips – and also yours. Before you can slide the key into the shadowy door lock, it swings open unexpectedly. The light of the room inside almost blinds you and the face of an older, bearded man emerges. His eyes resemble that of the Enticing Woman and you fear he may be her father.

“Where have you been?” He grunts at the woman. “Enough of this flowery seduction! We need to get organized, orient our visitor and send her on her way. We don’t have all night. Ah, traveler! Please forgive our rudeness. You must be very confused.” After this little lecture, he welcomes you into a pleasant room where many different people are arranged. Children and animals are also present, playing in the corner, and there is a door to a vast museum of objects, as well as a door to the great outdoors. You are seated with this bearded man before a great fireplace.

“Where am I?” you ask. He chortles at the question and the rest of the room resounds with laughter.

“Well, where did you last know yourself to be?” He asks.

“Well, I had just sat down at home and had begun to read the paper of a certain graduate student... I must have fallen asleep. This must be a dream! The one I had just picked up – an odd name it was – Cyndera Quackenbush.”

“Well, then, you have arrived. Welcome to Cyndera’s Image Theatre. We all reside here as actors. But I suppose, you will want more proof that we exist. I am sure we can conjure some evidence for you. We do wish to be taken seriously here, and we will call forth the necessary experts as we proceed.”

“Well, it is hard to not believe someone exists when they’re sitting right in front of me. But I guess I wish to speak to Cyndera herself.”

“Ah, yes, I understand. You, the Reader, have met the Seductress who lured you here, and you have met me, the Director,¹ who oriented you to this inner world. Now it is Cyndera’s Ego you want contact with.”

A part is made through the crowd of actors and a young woman emerges. A large crown of gold and many-colored gems rests awkwardly on her head. It looks too heavy and a bit uncomfortable. The Director

¹ “Personifying not only aids discrimination; it also offers another avenue of loving, of imagining things in a personal form so that we can find access to them with our hearts. Words with capital letters are charged with affect, they jump out of their sentences and become images.” (Hillman, 1991, p. 46)

gives her his seat, and Ego Cyndera smiles as she faces you. She is more familiar, this appearance of Cyndera.

“You are Queen of this Theatre?” you ask.

“Well, there is certainly that illusion. I have been given the crown. I give the orders around here, but it is a heavy cross to bear and I am often powerless to control the characters and dramas that perform on stage. I am really just one of many peers around here, and I am learning to accept that.”

“I see. Tell me more about the history of this Theatre. And why have you brought me here for your Imaginal Psychology Final Assignment?”

Ego Cyndera smiles – she seems to be holding back a laugh, or some profound secret. “It is hard to tell the history of this Theatre, it is indeed very, very old. But I can tell you how I came upon it, with the help of Memory – a re-imagining of a past I experienced in the outside world.”

Memory emerges from the fireplace. She has blue hair, transparent eyes and fast, feathery wings of silver erupting from a white, flowing gown. She is like fluid fire, yet produces for the room a large, solid screen that immediately begins to play a sort of silent film. It shows a fascinated girl of about eleven years old peering around her much older brother’s shoulder. They are also watching a film: *Steppenwolf*.

Time blurs by. The same girl, but now at the age of 16, is reading a book under the sunshine of a spring day: Hermann Hesse’s *Steppenwolf*.² She reads the following aloud:

It is the world of your own soul that you seek. Only within yourself exists that other reality for which you long. I can give you nothing that has not already its being within yourself. I can throw open to you no picture gallery but your own soul. All I can give you is the opportunity, the impulse, the key. I can help you to make your own world visible. That is all. (Hesse, 1963, p. 199-200)

Time blurs by again. A young woman, now, is typing at a laptop computer. The same book rests at her left side, but is surrounded by a multitude of others. *Blue Fire* by James Hillman. *The Archetypal Imagination* by James Hollis. *Inner Work* by Robert Johnson. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* by Carl Jung. *The Masks of God* by Joseph Campbell.

“This is where Cyndera exists as we speak. After a long childhood of wishing that a magic theatre could actually be a reality, she discovered that indeed it had been waiting for her all along. In the day as fantasy, in the night as dreams, these persons await to be engaged, spoken to, acknowledged. Through her education and reading, she found an entire school of thought, the Archetypal School, which addresses an approach to these figures.”

Cyndera in the film picks up *The Cambridge Companion to Jung* and reads the following:

What is now known as the school of ‘archetypal psychology’ was founded by James Hillman with a number of other Jungians in Zurich in the late 1960s and early 1970s.... For archetypal psychologists, analysis is not only a “talking cure” but also a “seeing cure,” which values the visual at least as much as the verbal.... The imagination is not secondary and derivative but primary and constitutive.... The imagination relativizes, or radically decenters, the ego – demonstrates that ego, too, is an image, neither the only one nor the most important one but merely one among many equally important ones.... In the philosophical controversy over the one-and-the-many, imaginal psychology values multiplicity over unity.... imaginal psychology is polytheistic (or pluralistic) in orientation. It is not a religion but strictly a psychology. It does not worship the gods and goddesses. It regards them metaphorically... (Adams, 1997, pp. 103-5,107-10)

² For the scene between Harry Haller and the Chess player, used in my class presentation, please see Appendix A.

“And so Cyndera was called to a new perspective of herself, of her personality. For so long fooled into thinking she was only one, the various personages began to present themselves. In what way could she begin to honor these images?”

The film darkens briefly. Two candles are lit and illuminate a large table. Heavily ringed hands slowly arrange face cards in a cross pattern. The Magician. Justice. The Devil. The Priestess. Tower of Destruction. The Lovers. The Fool.

“The Tarot!” You call out in recognition.

“A journey through the Tarot cards is primarily a journey into our own depths,” a woman’s voice calls out from the crowd (Nichols, 1980, p. 1).

“She felt she could capture these presences by bouncing off the archetypal images presented by the twenty-two Trump cards of the Marseilles Tarot Deck.³ She knew her own cards would be more personal than the originals and she also knew that twenty-two images would never tap the extensive Theatre alive within her. On the other hand, where would she ever find the time to deepen her relationship to even a handful of these figures? Like so many before her, she had to temporarily settle for quantity versus quality, and many of these newly reclaimed figures have not yet the power to speak.”

“So why do it?” You ask. “If the outer world will continue to demand so much time, and there are so many flesh and blood people on the outside to love and pay attention to, why continue at all?”

A gentleman pushes his way to the front of the crowd. He is old, but with a wiry strength and a tongue not afforded to the others:

This investment, this commitment to inner life, increases its importance and gives it substance. The interest one pays soon pays interest.... This faithful attention to the imaginal world, this love which transforms mere images into presences, gives them living being, or rather reveals the living being which they do naturally contain, is nothing other than *remythologizing*. Psychic contents become powers, spirits, gods. (Hillman, 1991, pp. 84-85)

“James Hillman?” You ask, incredulous.

The room erupts uproariously into laughter.

“A reflection of him, yes, but not literally,” laughs Ego Cyndera, “Please remember where you are – this is a Theatre. Though, I will admit, we are often very convincing. Please continue *Mr. Hillman*.”

Polytheistic psychology refers to the inherent dissociability of the psyche and the location of consciousness in multiple figures and centers.... The persons I engage with in dreams are neither representations of their living selves nor parts of myself. They are shadow images that fill archetypal roles; they are personas, masks, in the hollow of which is a *numen*... (p. 44-45)

“Hence,” responds Ego Cyndera, “my realization that I am among peers here. Though I am still afforded far too much credit, there are many, many here far more important than I.” Ego Cyndera smiles a sad smile and you notice for the first time her terrible posture, slouching from the weight of the crown.

“How did you access this Theatre in the first place? What brought you here?”

“Please allow our next expert, James Hollis, to explain the process.”

Another voice, as if over a loud speaker, echoes throughout the Theatre:

Apparently, what is real and omnipresent is energy; what allows us to stand in relationship to that mystery is image; and what generates the bridge is an autonomous part of our own nature, the archetypal imagination. We are never more profoundly human than when we imagine. This linkage

³ Please see Appendix B for all twenty-two images of my personal Tarot.

with the infinite has of course been the intent of the great mythologies and religions, the healing creative and expressive arts, and the dreams we dream each night. (Hollis, 2000, p. 11)

“So, merely the Imagination?”

Ego Cyndera smiles that secretive smile you are beginning to recognize:

“I am learning to never say ‘merely the imagination.’ Recognized or not, especially in the traineeship in which Cyndera must show herself, the imagination is vital and ever-present, waiting to be engaged and drawn from like a well of waters limitless in its life and depth. Allow Robert Johnson to speak to this.”

Another voice is heard:

If we think about it even briefly, it should be clear how foolish it is to denigrate the imagination. Humans depend on the imagination’s image-making power and its image-symbols for poetic imagery, literature, painting, sculpture, and essentially all artistic, philosophical, and religious functioning. We could not develop the abstract intelligence, science, mathematics, logical reasoning, or even language, were it not for our capacity to generate these image-symbols. (Johnson, 1986, p. 24)

“I think I am beginning to understand – and I certainly appreciate the voices you have called upon. So even though you are not all real, you are as important as the outside reality...”

A cringe, then that smile: “It is not a question of Real or Not Real, but a question of what is allowed to become Real. When so much is invested in our so-called outer world, it becomes our only reality. When I spend time and notice the details of the inner characters, they spring to life as they were intended.”

“And why do you keep smiling at me like that?”

“Well, I suppose we should let you in our guilty secret. We’ve been holding back our laughter this whole time as you’ve been discovering our Theatre as a so-called outsider – the Reader. You see, you are as much a part of this Theatre as we are. This dialogue, that you believed to be a part of so independently, is really being dreamed up and written by Cyndera as we speak.”

The Memory screen reveals this image of Cyndera again. She is smiling that same smile – straight at you.

“Just like in a dream you think that you are separate from us, that we are all parts of your dream. But the reverse is true. You are a character of our Theatre and you always have been. We, dear visitor, are dreaming you.”

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Appendix A

I found myself in a quiet twilight room where a man with something like a large chessboard in front of him sat in Eastern fashion on the floor. At the first glance I thought it was friend Pablo. He wore at any rate a similar gorgeous silk jacket and had the same dark and shining eyes.

“Are you Pablo?” I asked.

“I am not anybody,” he replied amiably. “We have no names here and we are not anybody. I am a chess player. Do you wish for instruction in the building up of the personality?”

“Yes, please.”

“Then be so kind as to place a few dozen of your pieces at my disposal.”

“My pieces—?”

“Of the pieces into which you saw your so-called personality broken up. I can’t play without the pieces.”

He held a glass up to me and again I saw the unity of my personality broken up into many selves whose number seemed even to have increased. The pieces were now, however, very small, about the size of chessmen. The player took a dozen or so of them in his sure and quiet fingers and placed them on the ground near the board. As he did so he began to speak in the monotonous way of one who goes through a recitation or reading that he has often gone through before.

“The mistaken and unhappy notion that a man is an enduring unity is known to you. It is also known to you that man consists of a multitude of souls, of numerous selves. The separation of the unity of the personality into these numerous pieces passes for madness. Science has invented the name schizomania for it. Science is in this so far right as no multiplicity may be dealt with unless there be a series, a certain order and grouping. It is wrong insofar as it holds that one only and binding and lifelong order is possible for the multiplicity of subordinate selves. This error of science has many unpleasant consequences, and the single advantage of simplifying the work of the state-appointed pastors and masters and saving them the labors of original thought. In consequence of this error many persons pass for normal, and indeed for highly valuable members of society, who are incurably mad; and many, on the other hand, are looked upon as mad who are geniuses. Hence it is that we supplement the imperfect psychology of science by the conception that we call the art of building up the soul. We demonstrate to anyone whose soul has fallen to pieces that he can rearrange these pieces of a previous self in what order he pleases, and so attain to an endless multiplicity of moves in the game of life. As the playwright shapes a drama from a handful of characters, so do we from the pieces of the disintegrated self build up ever new groups, with ever new interplay and suspense, and new situations that are eternally inexhaustible. Look!”

With the sure and silent touch of his clever fingers he took hold of my pieces, all the old men and young men and children and women, cheerful and sad, strong and weak, nimble and clumsy, and swiftly arranged them on his board for a game. At once they formed themselves into groups and families, games and battles, friendships and enmities, making a small world. For a while he let this lively and yet orderly world go through its evolutions before my enraptured eyes in play and strife, making treaties and fighting battles, wooing, marrying and multiplying. I was indeed a crowded stage, a moving breathless drama....

“This is the art of life,” he said dreamily. “You may yourself as an artist develop the game of your life and lend it animation. You may complicate and enrich it as you please. It lies in your hands...” (Hesse, 1963, pp. 218-220)

Faculty Sponsor: Greg Gilbert

Greg Yarbrough
Professor Gilbert
English 035
November 02, 2010

The Villain in Mythology and Literature

My grandmother loved to tell stories. Now, saying that my grandmother told stories is like saying that Michelangelo painted a ceiling once, or that Richard Petty drove cars for a living. The woman was blessed with all the gifts of personality, memory, mimicry, and elocution required to turn a story into an event. We grandchildren would impatiently squirm in our seats on Sunday evenings until dinner was over, when she would guide our little clutch into the living room where a curtain was pulled back onto worlds full of cowboys, knights, and Confederates.

My grandmother had fun telling stories. Her delight in describing places, people, and circumstances was a physical thing that had a palatable energy that swept audiences to wherever she was going. And not just the juvenile audiences. Our parents, quietly sipping coffee at the dining room table, would gently drift by ones or twos into the living room to watch the show. At the time, I really didn't think much about that, but thirty years, later two thoughts come to mind: that my grandmother was a storyteller long before she was a grandmother; and that her first audience of children drifted back into their mother's living room because they still enjoyed hearing her stories too.

This energy manifested itself through her characters. And she had a wide range from which to choose. Whether a gallant knight, or a damsel in distress; she was able to paint in the minds' eye of an audience the exact image she wanted to convey. But the characters she did the best with, the ones that she seemed to have the most fun with, and the ones that I remember most are the villains. To this day, there are certain mannerisms, dialects, or voices that I hear that remind me of nothing else but my grandmother's mustached proprietor, evil Yankee cavalryman, or her favorite – "Old Scratch." As talented as she was, she always seemed to double down with the bad guy.

So why was that?

What about villains make them more interesting to an accomplished storyteller? More to the point of this paper, why are villains so interesting to humans in general? Even closer to the point of this paper – so close that it actually is the whole reason for it in the first place - is an exploration of the purpose, importance, and characteristics of the villain in mythology and folklore. What role do they play inside the stories themselves? What do they say about the cultures that produce them? Finally, what do they say about humanity as a whole? Central to these questions and the key to understanding the villain's purpose, importance, and why they are the way they are, are three themes that need to be explored in detail: the propensity of the villain to mirror the hero; the duality of their nature; and, the closeness of villainous and human behavior.

Act I

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

"Pleased to meet you, hope you guessed my name..."

("Sympathy for the Devil," by Mic Jagger/Keith Richards 1968)

Darkness is the womb of myth: darkness of the night, and the darkness in people's hearts and souls as they struggled with the fears and questions that the physical darkness created. The fear created fire. Fire wounded the darkness, and created islands of light and warmth in which humans could take shelter. It was around this shelter that people first felt safe enough to begin dealing with the questions that remained

from a darkness that wasn't quite as intimidating as before. Why was it dark? What, or who, caused the dark? A million different questions arose from a million different fires over millions of years. The answers to these questions were the first stories.

Centuries passed as early humans continued to tell these early stories. Then, after a certain amount of time had passed, the stories (and people) weren't so early anymore. The fires no longer were out in the open, but in houses, halls, and palaces. The stories, which at first were designed to merely explain the world, had developed into a sophisticated way to entertain it. Stories became important early sinews of civilization, binding groups together through shared experiences and beliefs. Stories became myths, and formed the cornerstones for early religion (Bowker 20). Using these myths, religion dealt with two main tasks: to regulate human behavior, and to explain the unexplainable (Sproul 5).

Moreover, they still entertained.

From the earliest fire on the middle of a plain in Africa, entertainment had been the key attraction to stories. People, then as now, would not pay attention if something didn't catch their interest (Thursby 72). To that end, it developed that stories required seven things in order to be effective. The first seven (plot, setting, theme, rising action, conflict, and resolution) could be grouped into good material. These were important, but it was the final element, good characters that turns out to be the most important (Thursby 69).

Myths tell different stories in different ways. One of the most popular and effective was (and remains) the "hero's story"; or a story that told of a god, being, or person that triumphed in some form or fashion. Joseph Campbell, in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, laid this story, or "hero's journey," out in steps that are consistent throughout many cultures (Campbell 1). The point of the hero's journey is for the hero to discover some sort of truth, device, or design that provides a boon to humanity (Campbell 40). While on this journey, and discovering this boon, the hero is opposed by one or more antagonists (also known as villains); and while the hero is the marquee player in any "hero's story" and gives the audience something to cheer for, it is the villain that usually provides the moral lesson - and the fun (Klapp 94).

In early myths, heroes were usually the attractive characters that the audience wanted to emulate. The audience loved Hercules' strength, Beowulf's courage, and Esfandyar's devotion. These characteristics need to be displayed, and villains that share the same strength as the hero facilitate this. Gilgamesh's strength being opposed by an equally beefy Humbaba; Brer' Rabbit out-witting Brer' Fox; and Daniel Webster out-debating Old Scratch are all examples of a hero being truly tested by an equal adversary.

These examples show one of two main reasons that "mirror imaging" a hero and villain is effective in telling a story or relating a myth: providing substance to the victory (Garry 456). How many normal mortal warriors slain by Achilles get even a footnote in the *Iliad*? Would anyone care if Hercules slew an alley cat instead of a lion (or those annoying serpents)? Hero's have special abilities, and thus don't win immortality swatting flies. They have to win on at least a level playing field against opponents that equal, if not exceed, their strengths and abilities. Presenting the villain as a mirror image also allows some depth of character to the villain. This depth leads to the second main reason for "mirror imaging": contrast.

By contrast, the author is referring the moral lesson that may or may not be drawn from any "hero's tale." With villains and heroes that share similar traits but a different morality, the audience can compare the lifestyles, motivations, and actions of two identical characters. It is easy to see why religious leaders, especially in a pre-literate world, would be attracted to this type of myth. It illustrates to everyone in an entertaining fashion exactly what is desired in a true believer (the hero), and what happens when a true believer falls away from the faith (the villain) (Sharp 182).

This contrast isn't only effect with religious myths. Holmes and Moriarty do the same thing for a secular audience that Peter and Judas do for the Christian: provide a contrast in morality between two similar people. In these cases, the hero personifies what can be accomplished with one's better angels as guides while the villain gets to take the strengths out for a joyride of sorts (Glassner 88).

In summary, mirror imaging of the villain provides two main functions to the hero's story: it allows substance for the hero's victories, and it provides a contrast between at least two characters with similar strengths. What the myth and the storyteller do with these varies with the myth and the teller.

Act II

Here, There, and Everywhere

"You best start believing in ghost stories, Miss Turner. You're in one"
(Captain Barbossa, *Pirates of the Caribbean: "The Curse of the Black Pearl"*)

Possibly the most interesting characteristic of the villain is the ability to cross over, survive, and operate in different planes of creation. Coyote travels between the animal and human world. Loki shifts shape, place, and gender. Satan travels between Heaven and Earth in the "Book of Job." A common trait shared by many villains is the ability to get to where they need to be in whatever manifestation they deem to be the most likely to be successful (Seal 229). Some myths, such as the story of Snow White or the Garden of Eden, use this ability as an illustration of the evil intent and nature of the villain. Other myths, such as the story of the theft of Thor's Hammer or any of a number of Coyote stories, use this trait not as a way to develop a character, but to move the story; or possibly as a way to inject some humor into the narrative. Both use of the device is valid, and both techniques have a long history in storytelling. Heroes display this ability to a certain extent, but not nearly with the frequency or panache of the villain. Heroes usually *journey* to a destination to complete a task, while villains usually just *appear*. Heroes disguise themselves with cloaks, masks, and camouflage; while villains change themselves into whatever they wish. The hero has to operate within the rules of the physical world, while villains bound as they please (Alford 83). At first glance, this disparity would appear to be a boon for the villain, and put the hero at an impossible disadvantage.

At first glance-yes. But in this case, one shouldn't shed tears for the hero. Myths and stories look out for them in other ways, and this ability for the villain to move and shape shift exposes a more basic and vital advantage that the hero has, both physically and psychologically: the advantage of belonging (Leeming 179). When one peels back the ability to shift from place to place, a deeper issue is revealed; the shape shifter, the travelers need that ability because they travel a lot. They need to move around constantly. Why would such beings need to move constantly? Because they do not belong anywhere; they do not have a home (Flora 915).

This ability to skirt the edges of existence, this duality reveals two deeper and tragic truths about the villain. As mentioned before, the villain has no home. The ability to move comes not just from a desire to cause mischief and chaos, but also from a need to be able to leave quickly when one's welcome is worn out. Like the poor relation that hops from home to home, the villain is a character that finds itself fated to live on what it can get away with as opposed to what it can do. Satan has been cast out of Heaven with no other way to survive. Morgana has no choice but to oppose Arthur. Both of these characters, and many others, find themselves without a home because of the second truth that is the cause of the first: they are outside of societal norms.

Grendal lives on the edges of the swamp and spies on the Danes in Heorot. Ravana inhabits the island of Lanka and magically spirits Sita away before Rama knows anything about it. Loki is never quite gets into the fold as a full member of the Norse Gods. All of these examples have something about them that places them outside the accepted norm of the society that developed their myths: Grendal is a physically repulsive giant, Ravana has an evil heart, and Loki can never be taken at his word. The society that brought life to all of these villains found a place in their stories for these characters, but not in their hearts. So, when the first storytellers introduced the first "hero's tales" around the first fires, the hero was warmly

welcomed around those fires to inspire the young and give comfort to the old. The villain was driven back out into the darkness. The villain gets around. With nowhere to stop and catch its breath, it has to or it will be run down by something. While a manifestation of the marginalization of the villain in regular society, this ability can be used to benefit humans (Leeming 8).

Prometheus and Coyote both bring fire to the earth. Loki finds Mjollnir. Hermes finds Persephone. All of these are examples of villains, those on the outside of regular society, using their talent to contribute to the common good. It's interesting to note that one of these beings found full acceptance into their society because of their actions.

In summary, villains and their nodding acquaintances, tricksters, often possess the ability to shift both shapes and planes of existence. This ability is one of the traits used in their contests with heroes during a "hero's tale." While this trait may seem like an unfair advantage to the villain, the hero compensates in many ways. Indeed, instead of being an unfair advantage to the villain, it reveals a larger truth about the villain that ensures victory for the hero each and every time: acceptance. The hero is the epitome of the society that created it, so it must win in order for the society both to draw the lesson intended from the tale and to feel good about itself. The villain is forced to bounce along the edges of existence.

Act III

We Are the People Our Parents Warned Us About

"You will always be fond of me. I represent to you all the sins you never had the courage to commit."
(*"The Picture of Dorian Gray,"* by Oscar Wilde)

Heroes personify all that is considered good in a society. Even Gilgamesh and Henry V turned themselves around into people for whom their parents would feel pride. As noted earlier, stories and myths use these characters to illustrate what is expected from a good citizen. But does this caricature represent the reality of a society? In two words, probably not.

Heroes tend to personify all the things for which humanity strives; villains tend to personify what humanity fears to become (Leeming 179). All the human sins; everything from greed to wrath, and everything in between are represented in some form or fashion by a villain. This personification is the main reason that villains exist (Porter 35). Society's values, and their opposites, are never better illustrated than with a story. Villains have, will, and shall continue to provide the "or else" to their audiences. Be like the hero, "or else" that which happened to the villain will happen to you. The problem for the audience is that heroes are rare. Individuals that can overcome the common temptations that characterize human existence are few and far between, while those that succumb to the usual everyday pitfalls are abundant. In this way, the villain, with all his or her sins and failings, truly represents humanity.

The role of the villain as a closer representative to humanity than the hero does two main things: on one hand it re-enforces the religious aspect of a myth or story, and, on the other it provides an outlet for popular opinion to be expressed without fear of retribution (Test 42). First, if the villain shares the sins of the audience, the storyteller can use this to create an atmosphere of real fear in the audience. The villain faces the same consequences inside of the narrative that the audience will face if it don't change its ways. After the storytelling is over, the storyteller could look out over the disturbed audience and point out that if it doesn't quit doing whatever the villain was doing in the story, the same fate awaits it. Satan at the end of the book of "Revelation"; Falstaff being dunked in the basket of clothes by the merry wives; and Gordon Gecko being arrested are all examples of the cautionary nature of villains. The villain shows an audience what it is and what can happen to it, while the hero shows audience members what they can become.

The second effect of this villainous personification of humanity has little to do with the religious aspect of a myth or story, and much to do with how much fun they can be. Villains, being on the edge of

society and with nothing socially to lose (either in real life or in the narrative), can say and do things that reflect the common mood or opinion. Dialogue attributed to the villain can be directed at the story itself, or to other issues that are affecting the audience and their society (Test 45). Characters in *Gulliver's Travels*, *Dante's Inferno*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost* all direct dialogue towards social conditions in their society. Thus, while the villain serves as a warning to the audience, he or she can also serve as the audience's mouthpiece. In this guise, the villain often loses the evil connotation of the "villain" and morphs into the "trickster." Like villains, tricksters still live on the edge of society and have no real home or people to call their own. But their motivation in their stories has less to do with malicious intent and more to do with basic survival. Tricksters don't have to kill or condemn to survive; they just have to "get over." Coyote stealing fire, Tom Sawyer tricking his friends into painting the fence, and Brer' Rabbit getting thrown into the briar patch are all examples of a trickster "getting over" on another (often someone in authority) in order to survive. In this manifestation, the trickster/villain rarely uses violence to obtain what he or she wants; instead using guile and cunning. The opponents of the trickster are usually led to believe that they have defeated the trickster, and in his defeat the trickster usually has a suggestion as to what the consequences of this defeat should be. Thus, Brer' Rabbit winds up in the briar patch and out of danger, and Thor is humiliated by Loki. In the end, the trickster has won by out-witting his or her opponent (usually in a position of authority over the trickster), and often in such a way that the losers don'tt even realize they've been had.

In summary, villains tend to be closer to the audience in behavior and attitude than the hero. Villains share the faults, failings, and weaknesses of their audience. This character flaw provides two main literary opportunities for the myth/storyteller. First it allows the storyteller to vividly illustrate the consequences of villainy; both allegorically through the villain and in reality to the audience. Secondly, the character flaw allows an audience a safe outlet for opinions or attitudes that might not agree with societal authority. The first serves a religious (or official) function for the myth. The second allows for the characters to have a little fun, and expanding the entertainment value to the myth. It is interesting to note that the best examples of using a villain to speak for an audience occur after in printed works and not in myths and stories that are performed live.

Fin

"The more successful the villain, the more successful the picture"
(Alfred Hitchcock)

The darkness still exists. Just beyond the glow of florescent light - just inside the flicker of a television screen that has just been turned off, just beyond the reach of a set of headlights - the darkness remains unconquered with all its ancient fears and questions. Humanity still uses myths and stories to fight back against the darkness (Schultz 245). Granted, television sets and movie screens have replaced firesides and hearths, but the same stories exist - sometimes in the same form, often updated, that relate ancient lessons to new audiences. Thus, in 2525 and in 3535 and in 5555, if humanity is indeed "still alive," we should expect that Hercules will still be completing his tasks, Thor will still be swinging a hammer, and Paul Bunyan will still be swinging an axe. Myths and stories, whatever the medium, will still be the primary means to reach an audience in an effective and entertaining fashion. Therefore, heroes will survive. Humanity will welcome them inside the light. They will continue to provide protection against the darkness, and they will continue to be models for human and societal conduct.

If the hero survives, so must the villain. Villians will continue to provide the most entertaining and effective platform to both hang the vices of humanity and provide a counterpoint to the hero. They will continue to exist just outside the light, casting shadows that nip at the flames and scare humanity. As with

the heroes, villains will evolve as human development changes the context in which they are introduced. Even today, villains are adjusting as times change: for example, Gordon Gecko as a modern Mephistopheles. Villains will probably continue to serve as social sounding boards, saying things that need to be said. Al Pacino's Satan in *Devils Advocate* provides biting and accurate observations on modern society and humanity. In this guise, the villain will turn the mirror not just on the "hero" but on the audience as well. Mind you, they will get no reward out of it. Regardless of the narrative, in the end the villain will wind up an outsider, ostracized by the society from which it was created and banished into the darkness.

My grandmother loved to tell stories. While her stories were solely to entertain, and at least in the author's experience were never told around a campfire, they did create an impression on their audiences and (at least in the author's case) did provide rudimentary social lessons. "Be nice to others," "never quit," and "listen to your parents" were all lessons learned in my grandmother's living room. All courtesy of an assortment of characters that ranged from a dogged tortoise to a wolf that liked to dress in drag. Heroes and villains were there, always.

Heroes provide the comfort that humanity still yearns for as it stares into the darkness. It's possible that humanity, with all its advanced technology and knowledge, needs heroes now more than ever. Questions answered have a way of generating new questions, and the darkness rather than receding becomes deeper. So, while the hero comforts and protects, the villain will continue to question and seduce. Satan will continue to tempt Eve and plague Job. The Sheriff of Nottingham will continue to oppress the population, and Perseus will always bring fire down from heaven. In narratives, the hero will continue to be the girl-next-door that can be counted on to be there when needed, while the villain will continue to be girl that gets humanity locked up for speeding in Dad's car after curfew. My grandmother knew that a great story needed the sizzle that could only be provided by a villain. Darkness was the original villain, and as long as humanity believes that their questions and fears reside in the darkness, the villain in its many forms will continue play its vital role in both human society and the human psyche. Maybe this is not the most intellectual way to deal with the mysteries of the universe, but it seems to be working. And it can be a lot of fun.

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Faculty Sponsor: Greg Gilbert

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English 50
May 18, 2011

A Modus Operandi to Ace a Test

Are you having problems studying for a test? You are reading, yet nothing is registering in your mind. People have different styles of studying, and some study in a brief way that makes them forget the concepts they have learned. You want good results; however, to do so you need to sacrifice your time and effort, but you always end up wasting that precious time and effort. What you need is a method that will help you study.

First, during class, you must listen to the instructor. You should try to comprehend everything he or she said. If ever you do not understand something, do not be afraid to ask. Second, while you are listening, jot down all the important words and examples that the instructor has written in the board or said. Underlining or highlighting the most important words will be great help for reviewing. Put dates in your notes for every class session so that your notes won't get mixed up. Third, keep your notes all together because losing a page will cause you confusion. Using a binder or notebook is best so notes won't fall anywhere. Fourth, for reviewing, make a summarization of your notes on clean sheets of papers where you list all important words and formulas with definitions and examples. Summarizing your notes will make studying anywhere convenient; for example, while you are hanging out with friends, while riding on the bus, or while taking a break at work. Fifth, make a questionnaire. You can make a questionnaire out of your assignments or practice problems from a textbook. You can also find some questionnaires online. Questionnaires will help you to know which part of the lesson you are having problems with. Sixth, write the important words and formulas over and over again. With this action, not only the brain will remember, but also the body. Memories reside in two places, which are the brain and the body. In fact, the memories of the brain can be forgotten, but the memories of the body cannot be forgotten. You might be surprised if your hand just writes the answer. Seventh, while studying, eat sweet things like chocolates and candies or drink beverages which are rich in caffeine like coffees and teas. Sweets and caffeine can make the brain active. Apples though are much better than sweets and caffeine because apples have a natural sugar that is much more effective in stimulating the brain. Finally, on the day of the test, don't open your notes. Suddenly opening your note will stress your brain, and you will be nervous in the process. It is important to have a calm heart while taking your test. Closing your eyes will help you rest the brain. Build some confidence and do not be anxious that you might forget a word because those words won't go anywhere.

Studying has never been easy; in fact, there is no such thing as an easy way. Working hard will give you better results. Doing things halfheartedly will only result in regrets because time will not reverse itself for you to amend the things you have done.

Faculty Sponsor: Ellen Baird

A Meeting of the Minds at Copper Mountain College

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who was involved in creating this paper; your hard work and dedication was greatly appreciated. And a special thank you to S. Marshall and Autumn Meadows; their support became the back bone of this entire project.

Thank you to all Faculty and Students who participated in the surveys created by Ann Yonushonis and Barbara Griswold.

We, the students of Introduction to Human Communications SP001-02 Spring 2011, would like to dedicate this paper to our professor Greg Gilbert. His caring perspective of his students has influenced the minds of many.

“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”

- Epictetus, Greek Philosopher

Abstract

The present paper, authored by students of the Copper Mountain College class Introduction to Human Communications, Section 01, is a result of communication theory in practice. Within the process of composing the paper, twenty students divided into groups, divvied up responsibilities, including research, writing, documentation, editing, and typing. Through this process the class collectively decided that the ability to be an effective communicator at the classroom level requires qualitative interpersonal relationships between student and teacher, including the capability to motivate with positive reinforcement, possessing the skills necessary to be a competent listener and having empathy on both sides to build and maintain an efficacious relationship. This paper will discuss reasons why we communicate as human beings, how to communicate effectively with one another, and how students, faculty, and even the staff at Copper Mountain College can apply communication theories to help maintain impersonal and interpersonal relationships at school, and how to apply it to everyday life.

Keywords: Language, communication, channel, communication competence, decodes, encodes, dyad, environment, instrumental goals, self-esteem, self-concept, mediated communication, effective communicator, perception-checking, transactional communication model, empathy, qualitative interpersonal communication, perspective-taking, noise

A Meeting of the Minds at Copper Mountain College

“If there is one unifying theme that crosses all disciplines, it is communication. Communication is our window to basic literacy and academic excellence. This process requires a vast repertoire of skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating” (OSPI). Communication at CMC determines how well students learn at the college level. For instance, suppose that a student and teacher are discussing a research paper, but the teacher is not explaining the directions for the assignment well enough for the student to understand. Concerns that the teacher has with the paper are not adequately addressed, which, in turn, translates to a less than satisfactory grade and an inadequate learning experience. Though, attending communication courses in college can help explain more extensively how communication works and the factors that play into communicating effectively, a communication course is not required. For teachers and students to be effective communicators they must understand the concepts that explain why we communicate and what makes communication effective. Touching on some of the more vital communication theories and practices is the central aim of this paper.

Language is the communication of thoughts and feelings through a system of arbitrary symbols, such as voice, sounds, gestures, or written symbols (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.161). To communicate effectively within the classroom teachers and students must first agree to establish respectful processes, rules that involve nonverbal communication, transactional and mediated models of communication, noise, sensitivity concerning culture and identity, group dynamics, self-monitoring and empathy, and an understanding that successful communication involves active participation by all involved. To begin, a teacher and student must observe the basic rules of communication: staying at a respectful, yet comfortable distance from one another, maintaining a degree of eye contact, expressing thoughts clearly, and observing body language and other nonverbal clues, such as a frown or smile. A simple conversation

between two people, also known as a dyad, has numerous factors involved such as noise and self esteem playing a major role. Language has a life of its own and it will evolve when a person begins a relationship with another.

The transactional communication model depicts the process of sending and receiving messages; it also explains how, noise, perception, and interpretation factor into the content of messages being sent and received. Noise can come in many forms, both internal and external/outside. A student might not be fully attentive due to such internal noise as a preoccupation about relationship or budgetary issues. In a poorly managed classroom, students may be interrupted by outside noise, such as other students disrupting the class, the teacher wandering off topic, and others who are texting, which is also considered a form of mediated communication. In transactional communication psychological "noise; distractions that disrupt transmission," may originate from many environments (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.10). Psychological noises within a communicator can be negative or positive depending upon the self concept, perceptions held by oneself and "self esteem; evaluations of self worth", being high or low (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.41). In a classroom there can be negative or positive transactional communication depending upon the climate in the classroom. "Classroom climate refers to the emotional tones associated with students; interactions, their attitudinal reactions to the class, the students' self concept and the motivational satisfactions and frustrations. In classrooms with positive climates we find students and teachers collaborating to accomplish goals along with feelings of positive self security, and warmth" (Schmuck & Schmuck, 2003 p.937). In many respects, these same principles can apply to mediated communications as well.

Mediated communication is communicating through online sources such as email, social networks, online class discussion boards, texting, etc. Messages can be passed back and forth from teacher to student to give proper instruction to the students (Brockett, 1994). The instant feedback afforded by mediated communication allows for an effective communication loop between students and teachers, even within the classroom setting itself through the use of PowerPoint, video clips, text messaging and tweeting. Sometimes mediated communication can be hard to adapt into in the classroom environment. "It takes time and effort from both parties to make it work correctly" (Reed, 2000). Mediated communication can help to individualize instruction even within a group setting.

Participation and group work can make lectures more interesting, which helps students remember more of the material because in groups people have to negotiate with others to reach a consensus, and that such communication personalizes knowledge, thus allowing it to have greater relevance in one's life. While group interactions are important, it is also important to be aware of the broad range of experiences that comprise each group.

Demographics play a vital role in CMC classes. California's community colleges have a diverse group of students attending classes; such diversity includes age, race, culture, religion, and gender. It is important to learn how to communicate effectively when attending school and understand why we communicate, particularly as it relates to respecting one another's unique characteristics.

To answer the question of why we communicate we must first understand the significance of communication. Without communication we would not be able to function in our world today as we all do. Without contact with other humans, people would experience solitude as a painful condition rather than a pleasurable one (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.5). Besides the very basic concept that people require human contact to stay sane, there are also underlying concepts of communication that may not be visible to the untrained eye, including physical aspects, identity needs, and instrumental goals.

Concerning the physical aspects of how relationships benefit our health, medical research has confirmed that lack of social relationships can jeopardize coronary health to the same degree as cigarette smoking, obesity, and lack of physical activity (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.6). If we were to compare the human body to a classroom at Copper Mountain College, we could see how a lack of communication in the

classroom could have similar negative effects as a lack of communication has on the human body. If a classroom completely lacks in functional communication, the class would be ineffective and the teacher would not be able to accurately tell the students what they need to know. An example is when a professor relies exclusively on lecture and examinations. His or her students are, in effect, confined to their seats and cannot personalize the course content through structured interactions. Thus, they are relegated to silent compliance with an authority figure and a system of reportage, an education/communication model that is devoid of vitality and positive energy. In such a classroom, the student is, in effect, isolated, even among the other students.

Identity needs are next on the list of reasons why people communicate. Communication does more than just enable us to survive; it is how we find ourselves in this giant Petri dish that we call Earth. For example, if a person was deprived of human contact until they were eighteen years of age, this person would have no sense of self or have any idea how to interact with people because they would have no ideals, or opinions. Lack of communication in the classroom would have a similar effect on the student body and they would have no idea how to complete assignments. If the instructor does not know how to effectively communicate to the class what he or she wants out of an assignment, the students will not be able to give what the instructor is expecting.

Researchers have found that communication is vital to social satisfaction. "Theorists have argued that positive relationships may be the single most important source of life satisfaction and emotional well being in every culture" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.8). Lack of communication in the classroom would create social tension and make for an ineffective classroom setting. In order to have a functional classroom everyone should be courteous to all others in and out of the classroom setting. If everyone stayed open minded to their classmates' ideas then everyone can work toward the common goal of trying to understand others perspectives and gaining the knowledge needed from the class.

Finally, the practical or "instrumental goals: getting others to behave in ways we want" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.8). Instrumental goals can be extremely basic, such as a teacher explaining an assignment. However, it also encompasses more important goals, such as career goals. Without the use of practical goals in the classroom, little of educational value would be successfully accomplished. Teachers and students need to be able to see each others' points of view and then proceed to communicate what they expect from each other.

"Classrooms are social settings; teaching and learning occur through social interaction between teachers and student. By using transactional communication whereby students and teachers reciprocate in trying to understand one another, democratic teachers help build a climate that is participatory, relaxed, personal, and supportive" (Schmuck & Schmuck, 2003 p.971). In the transactional communication process there are two communicators "occupying different environments", such as a teacher to student or student to student (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.10-13). Each person has their own "environments; fields of experience that affect how they understand the other's behavior" as part of the transactional communication process (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.11). These different environments come from physical locations, personal experiences and cultural background. In transactional communication the background that communicators have in common are shared environments. As the shared environment becomes smaller, communication becomes more difficult" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.11). For example, if one student is shy and reserved and another student sociable and outgoing they may find it difficult to have a conversation unless they find a related topic and can establish a sense of empathy for one another's situation.

"Empathy is the ability to re-create another person's perspective in life, to experience the world from the other's point of view, by simply letting that person know of your care and respect for them" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.108). An effective communicator will listen to understand how others perceive cultures, gender, social and relational roles in the world. Empathy has three dimensions: perspective-

taking, emotional evaluation and a genuine concern for the welfare of the other person (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.108).

Perspective-taking withholds any judgments by setting aside all opinions that interfere with the ability to understand another person's perspective. In the transactional communication between two environments this effort develops an open "channel; the medium through which the message passes", for the receiver to listen to the sender's message without the interference of psychological noises (Adler & Proctor II, 2010 p.9). Perspective-taking is an effective communication tool to help each other understand how we each perceive the world. In the article "Caring Teachers," two seminal studies, Monroe and Obidah, and Blackburn, identified the ways a majority of teachers and minority students become out of sync with each other by misinterpreting each other's intentions and actions. From this perspective, "caring teachers are those who seek to develop cultural competence when interacting with students from different backgrounds and strive to understand the perspectives of each student in the classroom" (Anderman & Anderman, 2009 p.140).

The second dimension of empathy is emotional evaluation. With the transactional communication channel open to sharing perceptions an effective communicator will use an emotional dimension "to get closer to experiencing other's feelings: to gain a sense of their fear, joy or sadness" within (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.108)." Students perceive teachers as caring when they make attempts to understand and connect with their students as individuals" (Anderman & Anderman, 2009 p.139).

Empathy's third dimension is showing "a genuine concern for the welfare of the other person" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.108). With a genuine concern from a caring teacher, an effective communicator will channel positive support to the student by giving encouragement to do well in class." With compassion, they express their belief that their students can do better and are willing to work with students to improve their work" (Anderman & Anderman, 2009 p.141). Positive encouragement given to students can help their self concept and create the desirable behavior to achieve better grades. Achieving better grades in class develops positive thoughts of oneself and a higher self esteem. Successful efforts in the development of communication competence will also be reflected in how one encodes and decodes the sense or meaning of messages.

In the transactional communication model the sender "encodes; puts thoughts into symbols (usually words)" when sending a message to the receiver (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.9). Actions and words can be influenced by inner noises and perceptions distracting the message from each environment. An effective communicator with empathy will "decode; make sense of the message" while dealing with their own psychological noises (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.10). When teachers or students are unable to understand a message, they should not permit defensive noises to build-up within them that override the transactional communications, but rather, they should use the tool of "perception-checking; which provides a better way to handle your interpretation," to decode the message (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.103).

There are three elements of perception-checking: behavior, interpretation and a request for clarification. Give "a description of the behavior you noticed, at least two possible interpretations of the behavior and a request for clarification about how to interpret the behavior" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.105).

Effective communication from a caring teacher can expand the classroom into a shared environment through qualitative interpersonal communications. "Teachers press students to develop relationships with them and with their peers," by developing qualitative interpersonal communications with group interaction (Anderman & Anderman, 2009 p.139-140). Just as effective communication matters within the classroom; it is a skill that travels well in the world beyond. "Interpersonal skills, group work and

empathy are important ingredients of modern business, where employees must communicate well for their business to be productive and profitable" (Schmuck & Schmuck, 2003 p.972).

"Qualitative interpersonal communication occurs when people treat one another as unique individuals, regardless of the context in which the interaction occurs or the number of people involved" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.17). In qualitative interpersonal communications there are five features: uniqueness, irreplaceability, interdependence, disclosure and intrinsic reward.

The first feature of qualitative interpersonal communications is uniqueness. Caring "teachers create room for students to have a voice in the classroom" through the "development of unique roles and rules" created within a group (Anderman & Anderman, 2009 p.140). With group activities the students and teacher are developing a shared environment with one another. "Classes with clear and understandable formal roles and nurturing and supportive informal roles are stronger than classes with just one or the other" (Schmuck & Schmuck, 2003 p.972).

Irreplaceability is the second feature that occurs when interpersonal relationships developed within a group become unique. This feeling can benefit a student, teacher and the whole group. "Classrooms groups become more successful as they pursue both task and social-emotional goals"(Schmuck & Schmuck, 2003 p.972).

"The third feature of qualitative interpersonal relationships is interdependent" (Adler & Proctor II, 2011 p.18). An article in the *Encyclopedia of Education – Group Processing in the Classroom* states that "a group is a collection of interdependent, interacting individuals with reciprocal influence over one another. Interdependent means the participants mutually depend on one another to get work done; the teacher's part is to teach as the students strive to learn" (Schmuck & Schmuck, 2003 p.972).

Disclosure is the fourth feature of interpersonal relationship. In impersonal communications where students and teachers do not know one another and no personal information is not disclosed. When the relationship is interpersonal there is more comfort to share information that is personal. "Disclosing important information suggests a level of trust and commitment to the other person that signals a desire to move the relationship to a new level" (Adler & Procter II, 2011 p.18). For example, "a caring teacher may employ strategies such as personal disclosure, where they share information about themselves to create space for relationships in the classroom" (Anderman & Anderman p.140).

The qualitative interpersonal communications fifth feature is intrinsic rewards. The intrinsic reward is when the teacher and student can find the time in the classroom together "personally rewarding" through what they learn and teach (Adler & Procter II, 2011 p.18).

An effective communicator discovers in a classroom group that through empathy, listening, positive reinforcement and interpersonal communication that there is an intrinsic reward for a positive classroom climate.

Faculty members at Copper Mountain College possess broad knowledge which the student must draw from in order to achieve educational goals. Goals of teachers are to pass along this knowledge through various communication forms, not the least of which is the course syllabus, materials, and overall course plan. According to Guilbert (2002) "when learning objectives lack clarity, learners and teachers will face operational difficulties."(p.1)

For an instructor, communication has the additional responsibility of facilitating and initiating communication methods and styles. For the student and instructor, both are at the mercy of the confines of the institution and the practices and policies it houses. Each college has its own set of guidelines and policies in place to aide in the communication of the faculty and student body. Here at CMC, the Academic Freedom Policy 4030 reflects the goals of the school as it relates to communication. It clearly states that students and faculty can communicate freely and further that the "common good" depends on it. (Copper Mountain College, 2008)

However, many times there are major disconnections between the students understanding of the ability to express “free and uncensored ideas,” written or otherwise. Students simply don’t know that they can freely express how they feel and that the policy of the college supports that action. The disconnection, regarding students understanding of the Academic Freedom Policy, can be easily remedied if faculty members are willing to make room in their curriculum to discuss it and who it will benefit. Faculty members may find that this “freedom of expression” opens the door to “authentic relationships” between faculty and learners. Students would become liberated from communication restrictions and learn to be better communicators, while in addition actively engaging in their own learning process. Other benefits to introducing ideas about freedom of expression, as it relates to the effective communication at Copper Mountain College, is that it can open the door to actually teach students how to communicate the very ideas that they struggle to speak about in the first place. CMC administration may find that students’ complaints decrease and relationships between students and faculty become more gratifying.

In a survey taken by CMC students, fourteen out of twenty-one students believe that the faculty is effective at communicating. There are many communication skills that the faculty demonstrates on a daily basis. For example, a student said his teacher shows confidence, organization skills, is knowledgeable in the topic, taught with humor, and is very enthusiastic. Most faculty members use many means to communicate with their students and can be very flexible and understanding to student’s needs. Some give personal contact numbers, have flexible office hours, and some professor’s use after class time to meet with students.

The faculty members use many methods in the classroom to teach students, such as PowerPoint’s, whiteboard, class lectures, and Blackboard. Whiteboards are in the classroom where teachers can show examples of what they are teaching, and Blackboard is an online site that instructors use to post assignments and answer the student’s questions. Blackboard is proving to be a useful tool for teachers to post assignments and grades. If utilized properly by the instructor, this website can eliminate questions about grades, with students having access to their grades themselves. It helps get rid of the messy paper trails or any excuses about misplaced homework. Although technology can be sensitive at times and does not replace interpersonal communication, it adds another dimension. Teachers also use group work, paired student interaction (dyad) as well as small and large group interactions in the classroom.

Some students in the survey said they felt there were faculty members at CMC that do not communicate effectively, do not stay on task, and one student that felt as if some of the faculty did not care if the students understood the class material. If the faculty shows students they care and are involved in their success, it will help with the student’s self-esteem and may even produce a better environment in the classroom. (Cranton, 2006 p.5-13).

Out of twenty faculty members and staff that were asked to take a separate survey, only five of the faculty responded to the class, none of the staff responded. This is important to note because the communication between CMC and its students is essential to a student’s success. In the process of working on this paper, students were confronted with a situation that potentially could have delayed the outcome due to a “communication breakdown” between faculty and staff. Most of the five faculty members who responded feel that they have good communication with their students and that most of the time it depends on the students’ willingness to communicate. Another issue worth mentioning is that students do not come to office hours or call when they are having issues with the class or assignment.

There are ways that communication can be improved at CMC. Faculty can, in general, be more proactive about approaching the students. The faculty should, when possible, encourage face to face communication with students in case they may have more questions. Face-to-face communication allows for additional physical cues (body language, tone of voice, eye contact, etc) to be recognized. Email is also good for communication so students can keep any personal issues private. Such mediated communication

is not hampered by physical and temporal proximity. Two of the biggest obstacles in teacher student communication are timing and schedules. A way for the faculty to help with teacher student communication is to let students know that they are open for discussion, allowing the students to want to come to them about issues they are having, whether it involves grades, problems with assignments or personal issues in class.

Copper Mountain College is effectively closing the gap on communication by hosting a Facebook page and Twitter account. Students can now get up to date and real-time announcements sent to their phones daily with notifications of cancelled classes, and upcoming events on campus. The Greenleaf Library hosts their own Facebook page to encourage students to ask question and get answers remotely; it saves time, which is usually a precious commodity for college students. Soon, most of the departments in the college will have their own mediated communication web site, or social networking page as a means to communicate with students without the hassle of making appointments, or standing in lines unless necessary (Griswold, p.3). As a result of considering CMC against a background of current communication theory and practices, the students of section one of Introduction to Human Communications believe that while the college provides a healthy communication climate, there remains room for improvement that encompasses greater support for diversity, an increased reliance on group interactions, and a fuller application of mediated instruction.

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Faculty Sponsor: Greg Gilbert