

SUMMER 2014

# TANGENTS

THE JOURNAL OF THE  
MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM  
AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

*Six Months after the R  
fication of a Treaty o  
Peace between*

IN THIS ISSUE...

*Essays by*

Lisa Lapin, Timothy Noakes

Bob O'Donnell, Helen Peters

*Personal Essay by*

Cheri Block Sabraw

*Poems by*

Jennifer Swanton Brown,

Katherine Orloff

## PUBLISHING NOTES

This publication features the works of students and alumni of the Master of Liberal Arts Program at Stanford University.

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# TANGENTS

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VOLUME 13

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

We are proud to present this issue of *Tangents*, the Journal of the Stanford Master of Liberal Arts Program. For the thirteenth volume, we have chosen a diverse group of works by students and alumni, including:

- ✧ A timely piece on Jackson Pollack's painting *Lucifer* that will soon be featured in the new Anderson Collection gallery opening at Stanford in the Fall of 2014.
- ✧ A discussion of the conflict between the American Leadership Council of Women Religious and the male hierarchy of the Church.
- ✧ A delightful personal essay that reveals a new and frightening DNA thread.
- ✧ An analysis of the little known but important World War I poem *In Parenthesis*, and its relation to the King Arthur story.
- ✧ An article asserting that the Confederacy's fiscal policy was a crucial factor in its defeat.
- ✧ Two poems.

✧ ✧ ✧ ✧

We welcome Roxanne Enman as our new Associate Editor.

We are indebted to Theda Firschein for her contributions as a reviewer.

Be sure to learn about this issue's contributors, highlighted on the last page.

We hope that our choices will give you hours of enjoyable reading, and that they will inspire future contributions.

✧ ✧ ✧ ✧

Your feedback on the contents of this issue would be appreciated, and may be sent to [oscarf1@earthlink.net](mailto:oscarf1@earthlink.net)

REMEMBERING JOY COVEY (1963-2013)

Linda Paulson

Dear MLA friends,

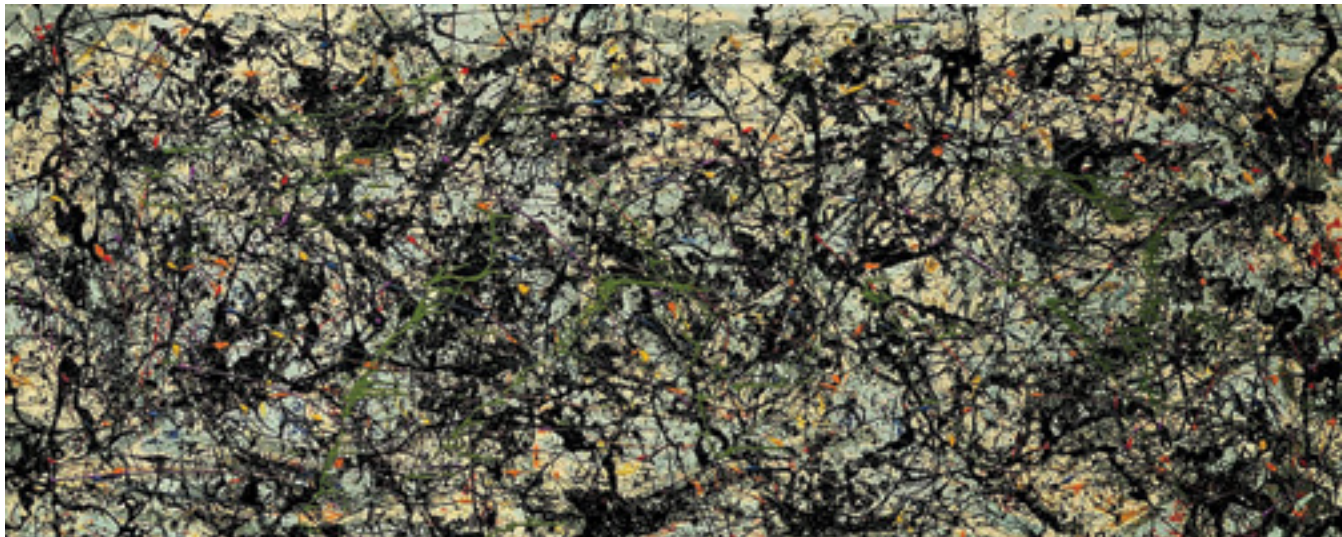
It's with deep sadness that I write to you with word that Joy Covey, who entered the MLA Program in 2009, died in a bicycle accident on Wednesday afternoon, September 18, 2013. Joy was proceeding unconventionally in the MLA Program—as was her thoughtful way. A retired CFO for Amazon, Joy was balancing her work with the NRDC and her own Beagle Foundation, with her studies at Stanford. But nothing took precedence over her 8-year-old son Tyler, with whom she rescued wolves and grizzlies, and traveled across the world in pursuit of their shared interests in the environment.

After an unconventional undergraduate education, Joy found herself at Harvard Business School, pursuing a JD/MBA, where she remembered discovering that her background in the liberal arts was lacking. In a 2002 *Harvard Law Bulletin* interview, she described her introduction to Harvard: "I was completely intimidated by the rest of the class. Not having finished high school and having been fairly utilitarian in the way I went about college, I didn't have a deep liberal arts background. So we'd go to lunch and people would talk about their favorite seventeenth-century poets, and I'd be thinking, 'Could I even name five poets? From any century?' It wasn't until we got our first-semester grades back that I started to realize that everything was going to be OK." Everything was OK indeed, as she went on as CFO of Amazon to shepherd that unconventional company through its IPO and into the uncharted waters of 21st-century business success. She is largely credited for putting in place the financial model that still serves that company. But Joy held on to her memory of those poets she didn't know, and came to the Stanford MLA Program to find the liberal arts background she'd skipped.

To say that Joy thought out of the box is to sell her short. She was fearless, innovative, and courageous in everything she did—also calm, curious, and unassuming as a student, a peer, and a friend. She brought with her to seminars a deep intelligence, a fierce engagement, and broad experience and creativity. We will remember her as a splendid colleague, and as a good friend. Anyone who spent any time with Joy will know about her beloved son Tyler. In all of my conversations with Joy, whether about an idea for her thesis, a research project related to her family history, or a discussion about her progress in the program, the subject inevitably became Tyler. I know that all of us who knew her are keeping Tyler and her family in our thoughts.

Sadly, Linda

# JACKSON POLLOCK'S *Lucifer*



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## *Mind, Motion, and Maturity in a Mid-Century Masterpiece*

by Lisa Lapin

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"*Lucifer* was one of abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock's favorite paintings," his wife Lee Krasner wrote. Pollock was loath to part with the work in 1948 when it was first exhibited in the Betty Parsons Gallery in Manhattan, nor did he change his mind in 1950 when a collector offered him \$1,000.

Financially destitute, living without running water in his Long Island farmhouse,

Pollock insisted that *Lucifer* should fetch at least \$1,600, and he kept the painting. With threads of shiny black industrial enamel and plumber's aluminum paint evenly laced above an open backdrop of cream and blue-gray, squirts of bright purple, yellow, orange, blue and red, and a final running layer of moss green, *Lucifer* both rises toward and falls away from its viewer. The 105-inch horizontal canvas has no beginning, no end, no top, no bottom. Pollock's work is described as free, chaotic,

lyrical, monotonous, enchanting, sloppy, crowded and claustrophobic. But "enjoyment" is what art collector Harry "Hunk" Anderson says he has received from *Lucifer* every day for the 42 years he has owned it, further proclaiming, "It is the best of the best."

### **[LUCIFER] IS A PICTURE THAT PUTS ONE IN AWE...**

*Lucifer* is one of the most important paintings in Jackson Pollock's repertoire, a pivotal work in which

Pollock achieved the confident pinnacle of his pouring, dripping technique—with more depth of field, more contrast between dense and loose, more color experimentation and, to many, more freedom of motion and emotion than the dripped works that preceded it. Although little studied by scholars, *Lucifer* represents the crowning achievement of Pollock's artistic maturity to that point in time. *Lucifer* will be gifted to Stanford University by Harry (Hunk) and Mary Margaret (Moo)

Anderson in September 2014, along with 120 other works from the famous Anderson Collection. *Lucifer* is expected to be one of the highlights of the collection when it is displayed to the public in the new \$36 million Anderson Collection gallery. The Anderson Collection is known as one of the most outstanding private collections of post-World War II art in the world. At the October 2012 groundbreaking ceremony for the Anderson Collection museum, Stanford art professor Alexander Nemerov chose to speak of *Lucifer*, “that miraculously is coming to Stanford,” and described the painting as

an array of whirls and skeins and drops of paint in colors of black and silver and green and blue and purple against a cream background. This is a picture that I think puts one in awe when one is in front of it ... one is in awe of the sustained enchantment, the sustained trance, that the artist must have been in in order to make such a thing. As we think of novelists absorbed in their craft, or a composer writing a piece of music, and being so within that zone of making, so this Pollock painting invites us to think of magnificent acts of human creation of which every single element is an integral part of the whole, magically and mysteriously almost without the artist himself being aware that is what he is doing, but everything somehow finite and within his control.

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#### A BRIEF HISTORY

*Lucifer* belongs to a family of abstract Pollock paintings that were revolutionary for their time, distinct in that they had no focal point and were not representational of any object or form in nature. Unlike other Abstract Expressionists who were part of the genre referred to as the “New York School,” Pollock’s “drip” paintings also were pioneering in that he used no brush and no easel—preferring instead to work while pacing around his canvas spread across the floor, using a variety of implements to splash his color (Falkenburg and Namuth 51). As one of these innovative works, *Lucifer* has been highly valued though seldom exhibited—with just four private owners since its creation. *Lucifer* first transferred from Pollock’s personal collection to New York psychological chemist Mark Grant, presumably as payment for services, some time before Pollock’s death in a car crash in 1956. Then, in the early 1960s, the work was purchased by entertainment lawyer and movie mogul Joseph Hazen and his wife, Lita

Annenberg Hazen. In 1970, after two years of persuading the Hazens to part with the treasure, *Lucifer* was purchased by the Andersons (Anderson 2012).

*Lucifer* has been on public display, cumulatively, for little over a year since it was first painted in 1947: at the Betty Parsons Gallery (1948) for which it was first created; at the Museo de Arte Moderna de Sao Paulo, Brazil (1951); a Pollock retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1967); at UC Berkeley (1971); at NY MOMA (1988-89); and in 2000-2001 as part of The Anderson Collection at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (MOMA, O’Connor 1978, Anderson 2012). The painting is primarily known through print representations in exhibit catalogues and a 2000 MOMA poster. The Andersons first identified the work and ascertained its importance after seeing the 1967 MOMA catalogue, but they had not seen *Lucifer* in its original form until their 1970 purchase.

According to Frances O’Connor who, in the early 1970s produced a complete chronological *catalogue raisonne’* of Pollock’s life work, *Lucifer* was the 185th known work made by the artist. O’Connor collaborated with Pollock’s widow, Lee Krasner, to determine the chronology, and placed *Lucifer* as the very last painting Pollock completed in 1947, and the last of the seventeen he provided to Betty Parsons for the January 1948 gallery exhibit (O’Connor 1978).

It is significant that *Lucifer* was created at the end of 1947, during a highly productive, settled and relatively secure period in Pollock’s otherwise impoverished, itinerant and irreverent life. That date, at the age of 35, marked the second year of Pollock’s marriage to artist Lee Krasner, and his second year of living in a Springs, Long Island farmhouse on a \$300-a-month stipend from benefactor Peggy Guggenheim. It was also the year that Pollock moved his studio to the barn on his rural property, where he could spread his canvas on the floor in ample space. From the end of 1946 to mid-1947 Pollock’s painting style evolved from mere expressionism to add abstraction, and he began experimenting with his radical painting procedure of dripping, pouring and splattering liquid paint on surplus maritime cotton duck canvas, using sticks, ends of brushes, syringes and other objects to spread the paint, and even pouring directly from the paint can.

In that wildly creative period, Pollock had the incentive to produce works for gallery exhibitions. He was not selling many works and had little means of subsistence. “If one deducts dealer’s commissions and routine working and living expenses, Pollock had a meager income ... he could barely survive” (Friedman,

198-99). With the exception of a few supporters, Jackson Pollock in 1947 was little known and was not a critical success. Betty Parsons didn't want to take him on, leery of his reputation as an alcoholic. As she explained at the time, "Pollock was dumped on my lap because no one else would risk showing him" (Solomon 174).

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### CREATING LUCIFER

In late 1947, at approximately the same time as he was creating *Lucifer* on the floor of his barn studio, Pollock made a rare public statement about his artistic method to New York School colleague Robert Motherwell. A portion of that statement, published in *Possibilities 1*, reveals Pollock's mental approach to his work at the time of *Lucifer*:

On the floor I feel more at ease. I feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be in the painting. ... When I am in my painting, I am not aware of what I am doing. It is only after a sort of 'get acquainted' period that I see what I have been about. I have no fear about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well. (Friedman 99-100)

In 1950, Pollock told filmmaker Hans Namuth that he worked standing above the canvas so that he could be both physically and mentally in the painting. "My method of painting is a natural growth out of a need. I want to express my feelings rather than illustrate them. Technique is just a means of arriving at a statement," Pollock said in Namuth's 10-minute black-and-white film. The Andersons point to evidence that Pollock was unreserved in his approach, so much so that at least two cigarette butts were added to *Lucifer's* composition, forming raised peaks among the already heavy skeins of paint.

In leaving more of himself, his activity, his energy on canvas, he has even permitted his cigarette butts to be swallowed by the paint and he has consciously made his handprints part of the composition, all as if to emphasize the extent to which he is his painting or at least literally in it. (Friedman 121)

While some observers argue that Pollock's drip technique reflects pure spontaneity, his 1947 drip works—particularly *Lucifer*—were not at all random. *Lucifer* is a reflection of confident decisions and an indication of Pollock's maturity as an abstractionist. One such decision was the sheer size of the canvas he chose, which at approximately 41 by 105 inches was physically the longest painting Pollock had dared to paint at that point. Pollock also decided to paint a random background of fields of color first, with blended patches of grey-blue and cream, forming a marbled foundation for *Lucifer*. Among other key decisions, Pollock used black enamel to form a skeletal "structure" where there was no other structure in the work.

Within his intricate lacework and layers of paint, Pollock left intentional open space in *Lucifer*, a departure from the claustrophobia of his other works in the same Parsons Exhibit. The gaps result in a depth of perspective similar to peering at a night sky—some stars appear closer while others recede, as do the peaks of paint and web-like intersections of *Lucifer*. Of other works in the same exhibit and created before *Lucifer* in 1947, such as *Full Fathom Five*, *Sea Change* and *Cathedral*, art critic T. J. Clark observes that, "they have surfaces still choked with matter and spaces only barely penetrable." Of *Lucifer*, however, Clark writes, "Nothing quite prepares the way for *Lucifer's* open rhythms" (Clark 51).

The splashes of color in *Lucifer* have widely varying widths, but remarkably even spacing—the result of consistent, controlled motion for the establishment of each layer. Employing a variety of devices to convey his paint, Pollock would pace around all four sides of his painting in a consistent rhythm—varying his motion from a flick of the wrist, to a dash of a forearm, to a more forceful bend of his upper torso at the waist and hips.

"When I am painting, I have a general notion as to what I am about. I can control the flow of the paint. There is no accident. I deny the accident. Just as there is no beginning and no end," Pollock explains in the Namuth film. At least a dozen different types of movement can be identified in the manner in which he spreads paint across *Lucifer*. Each layer, and each color, appears to have been applied with a different repetitive physical motion and a different application tool. This differs from the earlier works Pollock created for the Parsons Exhibit, which had more colors and layers applied in a similar fashion, though with far less variety.

*Lucifer* was likely painted very deliberately over several days or weeks of time, as most of the color and paint layers dried between coats, and do not mix in the work. Pollock selected colors for *Lucifer* that generated variety in the play of light and dark. The backdrop is



lightly colored, but dull. Against it, the webs of black enamel shimmer and reflect light. Pollock used liquid aluminum paint to create an active, reflective series of additional webs with the appearance of molten metal. He then interspersed sperm-shaped dollops of clear, vivid, bright color—purple, red, orange, yellow, royal blue—applied with either a syringe or even his thumb or finger. The final layer of *Lucifer* is a vibrant moss green pigment, which drips horizontally across the canvas in an element of surprise.

Jackson Pollock's personal affection for *Lucifer* was documented by Stanford art history student Mary-Margaret Goggin, one of dozens of Stanford graduate students who conducted research on the Anderson Collection in the late 1970s. In a 1979 letter to Goggin, Pollock's widow Lee Krasner wrote:

In answer to your questions concerning *Lucifer*, one, *Lucifer* was Pollock's own title; two, I always assumed he used the title to refer to Satan before his fall from Heaven; three, he did favor some of his paintings and *Lucifer* was one of them.

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#### REACTING TO LUCIFER

While Pollock had achieved a personal breakthrough with *Lucifer*, when it was first exhibited at the Betty Parsons Gallery, from January 5-23 of 1948, it received no initial critical attention and no interested buyer. The seventeen poured, dripped works were so ambiguous, so revolutionary, so unlike anything that had been exhibited before, that viewers puzzled over how to react or even describe such "radical" art. The handful of art critics who attended the show were varied in their responses. Critic Alonzo Lansford from *Arts Digest* wrote that "Pollock's current method seems to be a sort of automatism" (Coates qtd. in Friedman 117), while Robert Coates of the *New Yorker* stressed that Pollock's creations required too much work on the part of the viewer, and were too hard to understand. "Recognizable symbols are almost nonexistent," Coates wrote. "Such a style has its dangers, for the threads of communication between artist and spectator are so very tenuous that the utmost attention is required to get the message through" (117). Other critics referred to the works as "monotonous." At a 1948 Museum of Modern Art symposium, panelist Aldous Huxley said of Pollock's *Cathedral*: "It seems to me like a panel for wallpaper which is repeated indefinitely around a wall." Yale professor Theodore Greene said it "seemed a pleasant design for a necktie" (125). Pollock survived the ridicule by turning to alcohol, getting drunk on opening night, but he remained undeterred.

From 1948 to 1951, Pollock continued the style that he had perfected with *Lucifer*. During this highly productive period, *Life* magazine ran a profile with the headline: "Jackson Pollock: Is He the Greatest Living Painter in the United States?" (*Life* Aug. 1949). Pollock continued with the dripped, poured technique until 1951, when he reverted back to depicting rough pictorial representations of objects in simple black and white.

The 1947 works received renewed attention upon Pollock's death, at the age of 44, in a car crash—believed by many to have been suicide—near his Long Island home in 1956. After his death, the paintings that had been ridiculed at their first exhibit eight years earlier were now hailed as masterworks. "Pollock's most critical and exciting artistic contribution was reserved for the period that began with the aluminum pictures such as *Cathedral* in 1947 and continued through 1950," wrote Sam Hunter, director of a 1956 Pollock memorial exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art.

*Lucifer* did not appear in the 1956 MOMA retrospective with *Cathedral* and other works from 1947. In fact, *Lucifer* didn't appear publicly in the U.S. for nineteen years after its creation, a barrier to its future recognition and acclaim. *Lucifer* was at last featured in an exhibit at NY MOMA in 1967, where two decades after its creation, this one of Pollock's favorite paintings became a sensation among critics. "In the late 40s, in pictures such as *Lucifer*, Pollock bursts into the open with his dripped, poured, splashed and splattered labyrinths of oil, enamel and aluminum paint," art critic Jack Kroll wrote in *Newsweek*. "Pollock's great works are pictures of the presence of human consciousness." MOMA's head of painting and sculpture, William Rubin, wrote, "There is an airy transparency to the Webs. In the better pictures, they never seem clogged or opaque despite the multiplications of layers" (Rubin 14).

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#### THE ANDERSON COLLECTION

It was through the 1967 Pollock exhibit catalogue and conversations with their friend William Rubin at MOMA that the Andersons identified *Lucifer* as one of the artist's transformational works. They set their sights on acquiring it to add to their collection of "the best of the best" by New York School Abstract Expressionists. Pollock "did something that revolutionized art," Anderson said. "We are interested in new ideas. We ask, 'Have we seen it before? Would I have thought of it? Pollock was an artist we really needed to collect.'" *Lucifer* was on the Anderson's "short list," along with *Lavender Mist*, in part because it was a rare classic Pollock drip painting that was still in private hands and therefore "attainable." "We made it available

through our relationships,” said Hunk Anderson, who worked for two years through art dealer Gene Thaw to convince Joe Hazen to part with the work. They purchased *Lucifer* in 1970 for an undisclosed sum on the same day they purchased Picasso’s 1934 *Bull Fight*.

Anderson declines to critique *Lucifer* or to try to differentiate it from among Pollock’s other masterworks, “I am not an art critic or a PhD student. I am not as capable of verbalizing what I see. But I do think I see more.” Among the highlights of *Lucifer*, Anderson said, are the colors. “It is one of the most colorful in our collection,” which also includes works by Pollock’s contemporaries, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still and William deKooning. Anderson also sees Pollock’s method. “You look at it, and you can see how he painted it, how he painted on the floor and stood over it. That was an entirely new way of making art.” Up close, Anderson says he can identify “little figures” and “images” within *Lucifer*, but that it is “more important to step back” and view the painting at a distance, to feel the emotion expressed by the artist. Anderson said he has viewed *Lucifer* almost every day for the past 40 years. “And I still enjoy it. Period” (Anderson 2012).

Anderson says he isn’t interested in *Lucifer*’s monetary value, but rather its value to future students of modern art. “The value is the validation of your judgment as a collector. For me, it is the assembling of a great collection and this is one piece.” In gifting 121 works from their collection to Stanford, the Andersons said they want to assure that the totality of the collection can be appreciated for generations.

Art Professor Alex Nemerov likened the gift of *Lucifer* to the gift of a Shakespearean sentence: “Each one of his sentences falls newborn from the air, as a formed thing that has landed in his midst, as much a surprise to him as to anyone else.” The accolades some 65 years after its creation affirm that *Lucifer* already is known, and in time likely will become more widely known in the future as one of Pollock’s greatest masterpieces. The text that unfolds on the canvas of *Lucifer* is the story of how Pollock removed barriers to creativity, innovation and artistic experimentation for thousands of artists in the six decades since he painted this masterpiece.

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# FORSYTHIA

*by Jennifer Swanton Brown*

You are born  
and the forsythia is confused again in Georgia  
pushing out its yellow lips  
against December-short days.

You are born  
and the calla lilies rise in California  
on green limbs  
among the frost-stunned ferns,  
white cups for sky.

You are born  
and twenty-one years fly with their crows,  
that night's hail storm melting again  
every morning  
against your warm head.

Once, I held your spine in my hand,  
straight beyond my making,  
the spheres that had been buoyant in me  
unfurled.

Now you are white and yellow  
and waving with your own light,  
daughter, at the lip  
of an ocean  
you will taste  
in your own right.

*for Stella*



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T H E  
O N G O I N G  
B A T T L E

# A MATTER OF FAITH

B E T W E E N  
T H E  
A M E R I C A N  
W O M E N  
R E L I G I O U S  
A N D T H E  
V A T I C A N

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*by Helen Peters*

**T**he Gnostic Gospels portray a dispute between Mary Magdalene and the disciple Peter over the role and status of women in Christianity. Their conflict was part of a larger argument between Gnostics and representatives of the emerging orthodox Church over whether women could teach in the Church and whether private revelatory teaching should have the same authority as the official teachings of the priests and the bishops (Barnstone 578). Magdalene scholar Cynthia Bourgeault describes the struggle as one between “Peter, who represents a ‘stuck’ or conditioned way of thinking, and Mary Magdalene, who has broken free” (Bourgeault 75). Although Peter’s position ultimately triumphed, Mary Magdalene’s spiritual battle has continued to reverberate throughout the Roman Catholic Church for the past two thousand years.

In the 1970s, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), an association of women who are the superiors, or leaders, of their respective congregations, representing approximately eighty percent of American nuns, put on Mary’s mantle in a public clash with the male hierarchy of the Church. The LCWR’s interpretation of religious life and the role of women had taken them out of the cloister and put them at odds with the Church. It should be noted that the other twenty percent of U.S. women religious are represented by the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR), established in 1992 in response to the LCWR’s turn toward political

interests and dissent from the Church's teaching. CMSWR members differ from those of the LCWR in that they support the Vatican's position and they wear recognizable religious habits. While the Vatican (and the CMSWR) has adhered to long-held and traditional doctrines, the LCWR has embraced a more modern world that is buffeted by paradigm shifts in science, politics, economics, and religion. These differences have been unresolved for over four decades, with all sides caught in what has the potential to be a tragic stalemate. The recent election of Pope Francis I may, or may not, impact future discussions, but whatever the final resolution, the LCWR nuns have demonstrated the courage of women united in faith, and what they themselves call "a spirit of adventure."

The LCWR first aroused the Vatican ire in 1979 when Sister Theresa Kane, the organization's then-President and the only female speaker to greet Pope Paul II at the National Shrine in Washington D.C., urged the Pontiff to open all ministries to women. Her public exhortation again knocked on a door that had been firmly shut just two years earlier when the Vatican upheld the decision to bar women from the priesthood (Sacred Congregation 3). Sixteen years later, in 2005, the Vatican chastised the LCWR for what it labeled "serious doctrinal problems . . . characterized by a diminution of the fundamental Christological center" (Levada 2). With the Sisters standing firm, Rome issued a public report in April 2012 accusing the LCWR of challenging Church teaching on homosexuality and the male-only priesthood, focusing too much of its work on poverty and economic injustice. Furthermore, the Church wanted them to cease promoting "radical feminist themes incompatible with the Catholic faith" (Levada 3) and to keep silent on abortion and same-sex marriage issues.

To contain what the Vatican viewed as inappropriate political antics, the Church required the LCWR to report to Seattle-based Archbishop J. Peter Sartain, whose mandate included revising the group's statutes, approving speakers at LCWR-sponsored events, and even editing the organization's handbook to make it conform to settled doctrine. Nevertheless, the Sisters continued to resist the Vatican's heavy-handed approach, insisting instead on "adult relationships with our institutional Church" (Zina 2) and a process that would reconcile and uphold "our dignity as reflections of the divine equal to that of our brothers" (Brink 24). Elizabeth Johnson, the first woman to earn a Ph.D in theology at the Catholic University of America, encouraged the men of the Vatican to see that the "American sisters aren't a problem for the Catholic Church; they're an asset. They're demonstrating new ways to be communities of conscience in the world" (Nuns 1). The LCWR has taken action on issues of poverty and social justice, sexual ethics, ecology, and gender-based religious practices. Specifically, many members work within the wider framework of a liberation theology that interprets the teachings of Jesus within the context of unjust economic, political, or social conditions.

Who are the women of the LCWR the Vatican finds so troublesome? Founded in 1956, the LCWR is an association of the leaders of congregations of Catholic women religious in the United States, representing 1,500 member organizations and approximately 46,000 nuns, who average 74 years of age. Although grounded in Catholic traditions, the American nuns were first mobilized by the Second Vatican Council, convened in 1962, as a response to the challenges of political, social, economic, and technological change in the world *outside* the Church. The Council signaled the Church's new willingness to operate in the contemporary realm, altering its position as a solitary fortress of power and influence to one willing to create an "environment of dialogue, where the Church would engage in all the forces of the modern world" (Teicher 1). This message of equality, openness, and dialog struck a cord with many American nuns who were already influenced by the second-wave feminism of the 1960s that focused on gender norms and cultural inequalities. Many of these women stopped wearing religious habits, left convents to shape more independent lives in the communities they served, and began working in institutions outside the Church, including academia, social and political advocacy groups, and community organizations. Today, according to Sister Ilia Delio, the LWCR represents American nuns who are "nothing less than the evolutionary shoots of a new future" (Delio *Confessions* 3), committed to being agents of change within the Church and society, particularly on behalf of women and children.

In parallel with the changes in the day-to-day life of the nuns, female theologians also began challenging traditional doctrinal teaching. To the growing displeasure of the Vatican, a feminist theology developed confronting "the fundamental sexism of the Christian tradition" and the portrayal of God "in predominately masculine metaphors" (LaCugna 2). Drawing on the relationship of Jesus with Mary Magdalene as inspiration, this feminist theology centers on the belief that women and men share fully in human nature, as described in Jesus' message of transformation in the Gnostic gospels: "And when you make male and female into a single being / So that male will not be males nor female be females . . . Then you will enter the kingdom" (Thomas qtd. in Barnstone 554).

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Unaccepting of the androcentric images of God, feminist theologians ask “Is God male?” and wonder how the answer to that question affects the Christian understanding that to be human is to be created in the image of God, the *imago Dei*. Rejecting exclusively male metaphors for God, and opposing the legitimization of male dominance because of the physical incarnation of Jesus as male, feminist theology seeks other ways to think and talk about the divine.

Led by their belief in the fundamental equality of men and women, the LCWR joined other voices in the 1970s that endorsed the ordination of women in the Catholic Church. The Church responded in 1976 with the publication of the “Declaration *Inter Insigniores* on the Question of Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood” (Sacred Congregation 2). The Declaration acknowledges that “a few heretical sects in the first centuries, especially Gnostic ones, entrusted the exercise of the priestly ministry to woman,” while simultaneously recognizing that the Letter to the Galatians (3:28) states that “in Christ there is no longer any distinction between men and women,” and that Paul worked with several women to spread of the Gospel message in the early Church. However, the Church maintains that excluding women from the priesthood is justified because “Christ is man” and He “did not call any women to become part of the Twelve.” But, like Mary Magdalene, who stood up for herself and her gender when Peter questioned her ability to understand and share the Savior’s message (*Gospel of Mary Magdalene* in Barnstorm 586), the Women Religious refused to back down on the issue of equality. As a temporary concession, the LCWR has acknowledged the judgment of Church authority, but rather than abandon their original stance, they have simply stopped speaking publicly about the ordination of women. They continue to be concerned, however, that “the role of women in the Church be recognized . . . and that the Church be rightfully enriched by the gifts that women bring” (Gross 1). They deem the posture of the Church on the status of woman, as well as the Church’s position on gays and others, to conflict with the LCWR’s message of inclusion and community, and perhaps most importantly, feminist theology’s belief that accepted doctrine requires *re-interpretation*.

For example, Elizabeth Johnson uses the metaphor of “successive waves of renewal breaking on the beach” (*Consider Jesus* 145) to describe the development of doctrine in a living Church. She sees the Catholic Church’s fixation with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the flowering of various Maria cults over time, as the result of overemphasizing masculine images of God. She suggests that the characteristics attributed to Mary should be “transferred back to that source, so that the reality of the divine is thought ontologically to be compassionate, intimate, and caring, and is imagined to be such in female as well as male representations” (*Gospel of Mary Magdalene* in Barnstorm 514). Johnson turns to the image of Sophia as portrayed in Wisdom traditions from Egypt, Hebrew Scriptures, and Gnostic texts as “in reality God herself in her activity in the world, God imaged as female acting subject” (Johnson qtd. in Wells 334). In her 1993 book *She Who Is*, Johnson speaks of the Trinity as the Spirit-Sophia (God the Father), Jesus-Sophia (God the Son), and Mother-Sophia (God the Holy Spirit). Sophia, or wisdom, used in this way portrays the persons of the Trinity in their relationship to each other and the feminist values of community in diversity.

This commitment to diversity of opinion is clearly demonstrated within the larger feminist theological community itself. In contrast to Johnson, Cynthia Bourgeault, Episcopalian priest and modern-day mystic, views the whole idea of a feminine dimension of God as belonging to a false binary and the Trinity as “a doctrine that most of the world (and even much of Christianity) regards as contrived and irrelevant” (*Holy Trinity* 1). Her questions are “who and what is included?” and “who and what is excluded?” Bourgeault is more interested in the mystical, scientific, and historical dimensions of Christianity than in female images of God. This approach, however, is not completely shared by Sister Delio, who supports the notion of the Trinity, but tends to focus on one aspect, Christ, as the most inclusive term to use when talking about God’s presence in the world. She describes Christ as the “union of God with our humanity . . . and transformation in the divine life” (*Christology* 450). Delio focuses on Christ in the world and his message of the power of love, a love that can be seen and understood in both physical and mystical dimensions.

## THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AMERICAN NUNS AND THE VATICAN REMAIN UNRESOLVED,

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Asserting that “every age must discover Christ anew” (*US Catholic* 2), Sister Delio worries that theology has not developed in tandem with science since the Middle Ages. She believes that, “We now have an enormous gap between the transcendent dimension of human existence” and the physical dimension of science (*Unbearable Wholeness* xix). Delio proposes an integrated approach that includes theology, spirituality, philosophy, technology, and history. For her, the knowledge of science is fundamental to the undertaking of theology. She criticizes the Church for refusing to embrace “the prophets of a new age, especially those announcing new stories and new ways to think about God and God’s saving plan in Christ” (xv). For example, in direct contradiction of Pope Benedict XVI’s assertions that the theory of evolution is neither complete nor scientifically verified (Eddy 1), she

...WITH BOTH  
SIDES CAUGHT  
IN A TRAGIC  
STALEMATE.

views evolution as scientifically real and theologically inspiring. For her, the Big Bang is the word of God, spoken in the vastness of the universe and revealing a dynamic cosmos that should be embraced rather than resisted.

Delio’s interest in human experiences of transcendence led her to neuroscience and the work of medical researchers Drs. Eugene d’Aquili and Andrew Newberg of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine (d’Aquili). Their team identified areas of the brain involved in emotional, motivational, and sexual behavior, as well as with religious experience. Studies of Franciscan nuns and Buddhist monks suggest that prayer and meditation can create “a state of pure awareness, a clear and vivid consciousness of *nothing*.”

Yet, it is also a sudden, vivid consciousness of *everything* as an undifferentiated whole” (Newberg et al. qtd. in Delio *Brain Science* 575). Newberg and his colleagues propose that God can only exist in “your mind” and that “the mind is mystical by default” (577). Delio affirms the mystic as “one who, through prayer, enters into the mystery of God as love . . . connecting the head to the heart to see the world in its true reality” (*U.S. Catholic* 3). She interprets these and other findings as affirmation that humans, and perhaps the whole universe, have the potential for self-transcendence. Just as spirituality held an important place in the early Church, now spirituality, theology, and science must join in conversation to shape and guide the Christian life in service to the world.

This combination of feminist theology and Christian activism has motivated the LCWR to become involved in issues as diverse as human trafficking, climate change, water rights, immigration reform, and advocacy for social justice, while still maintaining their ongoing commitment to religious life. The LCWR embrace a world in flux, one full of uncertainty in almost every sphere. Instead of resisting change, they embrace the tools to navigate it, including contemplation, prophecy, supporting the marginalized, living in community, non-violence, and joyful hope.

As we move into 2014, it isn’t clear what will happen to the divide between these American nuns and the Vatican hierarchy. Last year, they and their supporters anticipated that the newly appointed Pope Francis I would take a more accommodating view of their position, but their hopes were dashed when he reaffirmed the “reprimand of American nuns issued by his predecessor” shortly after taking office (Goodstein 1). On a brighter note, since then Francis seems to be refashioning the papacy through a renewed concentration on service to the poor, living the example of a religious life through humility, an open commitment to non-violence, and a more decentralized Church. In his “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (the Joy of the Gospel), the first teaching document of his papacy issued in November 2013, he challenged the Vatican hierarchy to collaborate more with bishops, laypeople, and in particular women, telling the cardinals to give greater deference to the religious orders and what inspires them. “I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security” (Francis qtd. in Goodstein & Povoledo 1).

Pope Francis seems to share the LCWR’s commitment to the spirit of Vatican II and speak the language of community and inclusion that is so essential to these American nuns. For now, the LCWR is staying its course. President-Elect Sister Sharon Holland summarized the organization’s position in the *LCWR Update* of December 2013 in a message titled *Are We Almost There?*:

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, and he sent them out to preach, to heal, and to comfort.

We pray for the needs of our Church and world, and we continue to care for and visit the sick

and to promote affordable, equitable healthcare. We welcome the stranger, and work for just immigration legislation. As we educate and care for children, we promote gun legislation which could further protect their very vulnerable lives. We enter into sincere dialogue, hoping to heal communal and ecclesial relationships.

Holland's message echoes that of theologian and LCWR member Sister Sandra Schneiders who asserts that modern and future Women Religious are no longer "monastic communities whose members 'go out' to do institutionalized works basically assigned by the hierarchy as an extension of their agendas" (LCWR Update 1). Blind adherence to doctrine and dogma developed centuries ago and unquestioned obedience to an all-male hierarchy are no longer acceptable to the LCWR. These women have no plans to return to their cloisters or their habits. In a nod to Mary Magdalene, Schneiders sees Women Religious living in ways that are conducive to "preaching the Gospel freely as Jesus commissioned his itinerant, full time companions to do" (1). Hopefully, the response of the Church hierarchy will be to continue the dialog with the American nuns in a spirit of respect and openness. After all, as Sister Delio reminds them, "History will not remember what we wore, where we lived or how we prayed . . . in the evening of life we all shall be judged on love alone" (Delio *Confessions*). The nuns' aim to continue to express that love while remaining in the Church, a Church that does not require them to renounce what they see as their mission and purpose in faith.



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# ANOTHER LIKENESS

*by Katherine Orloff*

It would be better to greet you as water,  
To embrace you as light  
And know you as wind.  
Be brushed and buoyed by me,  
Held and washed over, my arms long to know you  
Differently.

Make me into league-like depths,  
And the air I no longer need to come up for.  
Leave me of another likeness,  
And I will know you still.  
I will love you better,  
I will be fulfilled.

# FORWARDING FRIGHTENING NEWS: A RECENTLY DISCOVERED DNA THREAD

*A personal essay by Cheri Block Sabraw*

## Daily News

**... electrocuted  
... when his Hawaiian  
steel guitar  
... fell into the pool!**

This morning I forwarded an article from *The Wall Street Journal* to my son about the SARS-like virus in the Middle East. You see, their nanny is traveling in Tunisia at this moment and will be home in several weeks to resume taking care of *my granddaughters*.  
My son and his wife may have had a good laugh or may have begun to worry that a genetic predisposition called FFN (forwarding frightening news) had now crossed into their lives.

#### CASE IN POINT:

What most of you do not know about me (because of my inherent modesty) is that, at the age of ten, I was one hell of a ukulele player. My teacher, Herbert Westphal, an old German who told us he had also taught several high-ranking D.C. politicians' kids and knew the President of the United States, insinuated himself into our family in 1960, or thereabouts. While most children I knew were taking piano, clarinet, or flute lessons, we were plucking the plastic strings of an instrument revered 2,500 miles to the west, oh say, around Oahu.

Let it be known that my little brother Stevie was much better than I was on the ukulele, but what I lacked in raw strumming talent, I made up for with my musical swagger. While Stevie went on to play the Hawaiian steel guitar, the banjo, and all types of guitars, I blossomed into an admirable dog-trainer, horseback rider, comedian, and sibling torturer.

My best songs on the ukulele — the ukulele that still sits silently in our basement, protected in its black case with a velvety material and flanked by my many brindle-colored picks — was *Hawaiian War Chant* and *Ain't She Sweet*. I moved on to master *Sentimental Journey* before embarking on a journey of my own, one that forced me to shave my legs every day and wear large pink-foam hair rollers the size of orange juice cans every night, so that I might attract boys instead of a 65-year-old German music teacher, and stop competing with a pesky little talented brat of a brother.

Mr. Westphal hoped to make child stars out of Stevie and me. Around our pool on hot summer evenings, Stevie and I would entertain my parents' friends who were sipping their tall drinks.

My father would say something like, "Cheri, why don't you and Stevie put on a little show for us? You know what I am talking about."

I'd feign interest and answer blandly, "What do you mean, Dad?"

Before long, say in about one minute, we'd retreat to our family room, and then begin "setting up" on the pool deck.

Two music stands, one chair (mine), and a Hawaiian steel guitar on its pedestal plugged into an amplifier, all materialized out of thin air.

Soon we'd regale everyone. Cindy, the third child, too young to hold a ukulele in her hands, would zoom in from the dark side of the pool deck and there, in the reflection of a lighted blue pool, the water wavering from a bay breeze blowing in, she would dance around to *Hawaiian War Chant* like a frenzied troll doll.

This morning, as I sent a news article via e-mail about the talented and sexy Magnus Carlsen, the world's number one chess player, to my son to satisfy my ongoing fixation on how to get my 10-year-old grandson admitted to Stanford, a memory of another older lady who impacted the life of my family came bubbling up.

That woman was my grandmother, Rosie. In her old age, she had taken to cutting out articles from the *L.A. Times* that related, she thought, in some way, to the dangers awaiting our family. She once sent a story of a dentist who had put razor blades in trick-or-treat candy. I remember my father, a dentist, asking my mother, "Joan, why the hell would your mother send us an article like this?"

Then, *the* article arrived in our mailbox. It told the sad story of a boy being electrocuted somewhere in Bel Air or Westwood when his Hawaiian steel guitar and the amplifier fell into a pool.



Rosie, this week you would have been 113. If you are around, say in the wind blowing down from our redwood trees this morning, or perhaps in the misty fog that caresses them, please stop in and have a cup of coffee with me. You will be pleased to learn that you live on.

Let's see now, that article this morning in the Personal Journal section, "Vegetarians Not Living Longer," or maybe that one about the blood pressure drug, Benicar, causing lung cancer ...

# David Jones's *In Parenthesis* and Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'arthur*: Parallel Visions of Terror Lurking Behind Beauty

by Timothy Noakes



In 1937, David Jones, an engraver and painter, published an epic poem, *In Parenthesis*, about World War I that won praise from such luminaries as William B. Yeats (“a work of genius”) and T. S. Eliot (“a masterpiece”). Based on his personal experiences, the poem depicts the movement of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers as they travel from England to France and prepare for the Battle of the Somme in July of 1916. During his time at the front, Jones witnessed some of the most horrific sights imaginable. Modern weaponry had devastated the French and Belgian countryside, creating a narrow swath of destruction that stretched from the North Sea to Switzerland. But amidst the ruins, Jones would recognize vital parallels to various

legends, historical battles, Romances, fairy tales, and myths. Forming the foundation of his poem, these literary and historical connections contributed meaning and relevance to the spiritually vacuous wasteland of the Western Front. Yet these parallels would also allude to a darker, more sinister element: the supernatural. Jones envisioned the supernatural as the manipulation of the natural world for destructive reasons, hidden beneath the illusive veneer of technology. This facet of technological advancements corresponds to the deceptive character of the enchantress found in Sir Thomas Malory's fifteenth century work, *Le Morte D'arthur*, a collection of Romance tales about the legendary King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

The enchantress represents one of the most enigmatic and mysterious characters in these Romance tales. Often appearing as extraordinarily beautiful young women, enchantresses wield deadly strength underneath the guise of innocence and purity and, through magic and sorcery, are capable of asserting dominance over a formidable and physically adept knight, most often for sexual purposes. Their underlying objective is to garner power, inflict bodily damage, and in so doing, break down the established structure of the Knightly Order. As Corrine Saunders writes in *Magic and the Supernatural in Medieval English Romance*, "Enchantment lends power over bodies; it is envisaged as a means of inflicting physical harm" (Saunders 250). Because of the deceptive and highly dangerous nature of the enchantress, knights are severely tested in their fidelity to their cause and forced to resist the seductive, alluring appeal of the ostensibly beautiful young maiden, or else suffer dire consequences.

Perhaps the most disturbing and deviant enchantress within *Le Morte D'arthur* is the witch Hellawes, who appears in the "Chapel Perilous" episode. Jones believed that this particular episode most accurately depicted war on the Western Front, illustrating not only the perverse power of technology, but also the sense of entrapment and anxiety felt by the soldiers in the trenches: "It was a place of enchantment. It is perhaps best described in Malory, book iv, chapter 15 — that landscape spoke 'with a grimly voice'" (Jones x-xi). Jessie Weston states in *From Ritual to Romance* that the Chapel Perilous motif provides a setting in which the hero must undergo

...a strange and terrifying adventure in a mysterious Chapel, an adventure which, we are given to understand, is fraught with extreme peril to life...and the general impression is that this is an adventure in which supernatural, and evil, forces are engaged. (Weston 165)

Jones takes the foreboding imagery of Chapel Perilous and re-presents it within his seven-part poem. Thus, if *In Parenthesis* is read as an incremental and meticulous rendering of this Malorian episode, then no poem is more suspenseful in its climactic build-up of the plight of soldiers as they march towards their terrifying destiny. Yet, it is imperative to remember that while these parallels to *Le Morte D'arthur* do exist, Jones is always presenting his own experiences as he proceeds to the Battle of the Somme. While his depictions of the Western Front are accurate and real, this in no

way negates the fact that his real experiences also bring forth legendary analogs.

Malory's Chapel Perilous episode begins when the sister of the wounded Sir Meliot de Logres asks Sir Launcelot to retrieve a "bloody cloth" draped over the corpse of Sir Gilbert the Bastard within a mysterious chapel. The cloth, she has been told, is the only means to heal Sir Meliot de Logres from his wounds (Malory 173). When Launcelot arrives at the chapel, he ties his horse to a gate and enters the churchyard where thirty grisly black knights with their shields upside down block his passage. Seeing the knights grinning and gnashing at him, Launcelot fears he will have to fight them, but when he raises his sword, the black knights move aside. Once inside the chapel, Launcelot, terrified, proceeds in near-complete darkness: "and then he saw no light but a dim lamp burning" (174). Finding Sir Gilbert the Bastard wrapped in the healing cloth, he cuts off a piece of the cloth and turns to leave. Immediately, the same knights accost him, demanding that he surrender his sword or else he will die. Launcelot refuses, swearing that he does not care whether he lives or dies. The black knights give way to him again. Once past these deathly figures, he encounters a "fair damosel" (174) who also demands that he surrender his sword. When Launcelot refuses, she asks him to kiss her, and he denies her request. The damosel, we find out, is the evil sorceress Hellawes, who confesses that if Launcelot had kissed her, he would have died. She would have then embalmed his body and daily would have kissed it, implying necrophilia. Hearing of her perverse intentions, Launcelot says, "Jesu, preserve me from your subtle crafts," (175) and escapes on his horse.

Jones takes these integral elements from Malory's Chapel Perilous and re-presents them in *In Parenthesis*, thus establishing the close connection between the soldiers and Sir Launcelot. Malory describes Launcelot leaving his horse behind which, in the medieval world, is a crucial extension of the knight's armor; without the horse, the knight becomes more vulnerable because he has abandoned a vital part of his own persona. In *In Parenthesis*, John Ball, the protagonist of the poem, experiences the identical predicament as Launcelot. He observes that the horses cannot accompany the regiment any further along the broken, cratered roads towards the front line trenches. As the drivers of the horses are ordered to turn around, the soldiers bid farewell to their animal counterparts:

Good night Parrott good night Bess.  
Good night good night---buck up...

They halted for the hurrying team;  
envying the drivers their waiting beds.  
(Jones 29)

Here the soldiers make their first entry into the dangerous environment of Chapel Perilous and, by leaving their horses behind, become exposed and vulnerable. The soldiers then proceed, in the same manner as Launcelot, through a gate on their way into the trenches:

Past the little gate.

Mr. Jenkins watched them file through,  
himself following, like western-hill  
shepherd.

Past the little gate,  
into the field of upturned defences,  
into the burial-yard---  
the grinning and the gnashing and the  
sore dreading---nor saw he any light in  
that place. (31)

The “burial-yard” eerily reinforces the sense that they are walking over corpses, and the “upturned defences” of the trenches call to mind the upside-down shields of the black knights. These ghostly knights, appearing large and intimidating, emerge on the Western Front as artillery guns that line both sides of the trenches. They, too, are large and dark, spitting out flames that are reminiscent of fiery tongues:

this all depriving darkness split now by  
crazy flashing... (31)

Modulated interlude, violently  
discorded---mighty, fanned-up glare,  
to breach it: light orange flame-tongues  
in the long jagged water-mirrors where  
their feet go... (36)

Rotary steel hail spit and lashed in sharp  
spasms along the vibrating line... (38)

The men, in complete darkness, find themselves surrounded by these noisy hidden machines that shatter the night with their explosive firings, corresponding to the menacing sounds of the black knights in *Le Morte D'arthur*, where “all those grinned and gnashed at Sir Launcelot” (Malory 174). The soldiers are terrified, but they must continue their march past these “creatures” who seemingly part before them as they make their way down the trenches.

Unlike the body covered by a cloth in *Le Morte D'arthur*, Jones portrays the destructive capacity of modern weaponry when the men approach the corpse of their countryman, known as “poor Johnny.” Jones

describes the corpse as being repeatedly ripped apart by artillery fire, and barely recognizable after a brutal, continued technological assault. Ironically, the “cloth” over the body manifests itself in the trenches as a layer of powdered lime-chloride, a disinfectant used to mask the smell emitted by decaying corpses all along the Front:

From this muck-raking are singular  
stenches, long decay leavened;  
compounding this clay, with that more  
precious, patient of baptism; chemical-  
corrupted once-bodies. They've served  
him barbarously—poor Johnny—you  
wouldn't desire him, you wouldn't  
know him for any other. Not you who  
knew him by fire-light nor any of you  
cold-earth watchers, nor searchers  
under the flares.

Each night freshly degraded like traitor-  
corpse, where his heavies flog and  
violate; each day unfathoms yesterday's  
unkindness; dung-making Holy Ghost  
temples.

They bright-whiten all this sepulchre  
with powdered chloride of lime. It's a  
perfectly sanitary war. (Jones 43)

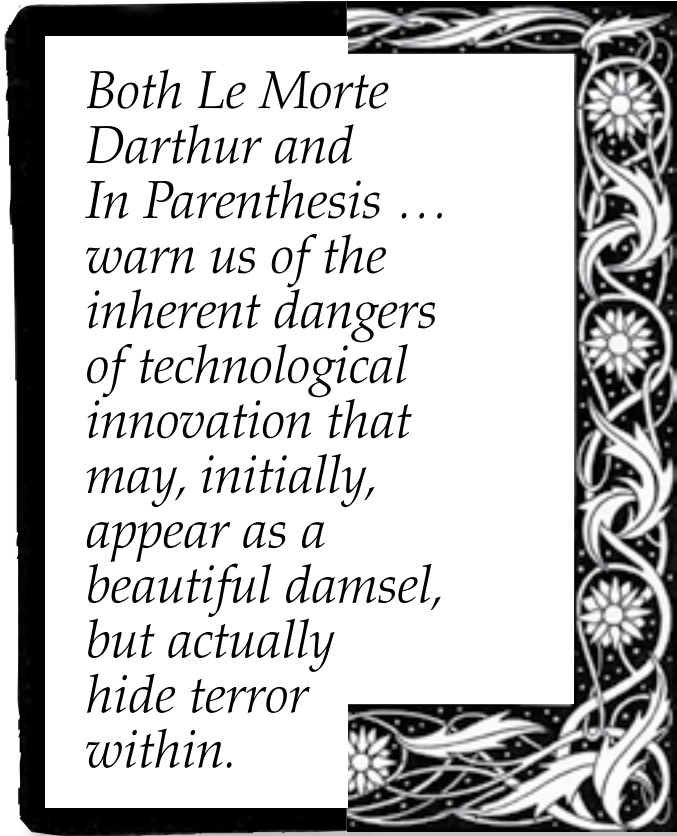
Not only do modern weapons defile the corpse, but the perversity of the modern age is underscored by the “chloride” dusted over the corpse. Falsely providing the impression of the sacred, the “bright-whiten ... sepulchre” is an attempt to convey the pure and holy atmosphere of a consecrated burial ground, but, in fact, it does nothing more than hide the horror beneath. Again, Jones presents the Western Front as one of dichotomy, where scientific advancements endeavor to conceal death's deviant nature. Jones elaborates this ironic duality of modern warfare when he bitterly writes of how doctors and scientists will deal with the fate of the wounded:

They can cover him again with  
skin—in their candid coats, in their  
clinical shrines and parade the miraculi.

The blinded one with the artificial  
guts—his morbid neurosis retards the  
treatment, otherwise he's bonza—and  
will learn a handicraft. (Jones 175-176)

Science and technology shroud their perverse work, precisely as do Malory's beautiful damosels in *Le Morte D'arthur*.

Throughout Part 3 Jones depicts the soldiers in a state of continued exhaustion from their nightly march. Malory notably introduces Launcelot in *Le Morte D'arthur* by describing his "lust for sleep." Launcelot claims of his first adventure, at the outset, that he never felt such sleepiness in "seven years" (Malory 152). When Launcelot finally succumbs to his exhaustion, four enchantresses kidnap him and steal him to their castle (154-155). Numerous times in *In Parenthesis*



*Both Le Morte  
Darthur and  
In Parenthesis ...  
warn us of the  
inherent dangers  
of technological  
innovation that  
may, initially,  
appear as a  
beautiful damsel,  
but actually  
hide terror  
within.*

John Ball similarly dozes off whenever his regiment must stop: "So he dreamed where he slept where he leaned, on poled material in the road's right ditch" (Jones 32). Ultimately, though, Ball commits a capital offense by falling asleep while on watch-duty, and Ball's relief-man berates him: "christ, mate — you'll 'ave 'em all over" (Jones 55). While implying the German army, a more sinister being is inferred in the relief's warning, i.e. in being awakened, Ball is saved from a premature encounter with the Sorceress.

Part 4 is an episode of stasis, entitled "King Pellam's Launde," where Jones intends the reader to fully grasp the despairing wasteland the soldiers must endure. It is as if Jones wants Sir Launcelot to stop and carefully look around at the Chapel Perilous grounds. By

portraying the soldiers in hiatus, which is an apt depiction of the long intervals between battles during the Great War, Jones allows his characters to move away from the immediacy of direct conflict; in essence, inactivity permits intellectualization, and, in these moments, the soldiers cannot help but demand validation of their demeaning world. Consequently, Jones prolongs the terrifying imagery of Chapel Perilous and compels the reader to share in the psychological and emotional struggle the soldiers experience in the "untidied squalor of the loveless scene" (75). The soldiers' only consolation emanates from a bond of friendship solidified through a common suffering, a bond that parallels Malory's Knights of the Round Table. They are one in their quest, and all soldiers, both in the present moment and throughout history, are part of this sacred community, representing, in effect, their only form of redemption.

But this quiet and symbolic interlude cannot persist indefinitely, and so the reader returns to Chapel Perilous where the next part of the adventure continues; Sir Launcelot still must encounter the Sorceress, and so, too, the soldiers must enter battle. While Parts 5 and 6, full of a number of premonitions about their immanent battle, increase the tempo of the poem, it is the climactic Part 7 where the utter horror of the modern witch Hellawes is depicted. It is important to recall that the first time Sir Launcelot met Hellawes she was a "fair damosel." For the men marching to the Western Front for the first time, John Ball captures the thrill of this anticipation: "He would hasten his coal-black love: he would breathe more free for her grimly embrace, and the reality of her" (28). John Ball has an innocent and naïve conception of modern warfare, a view that provides a false image of the reality awaiting him; thus, the fair damosel appears, seductively inviting John Ball towards her.

But it is only when Sir Launcelot refuses to kiss the fair maiden that he becomes aware of her true intent: to kill him and use his body as a means to satisfy her sexual desires. Jones takes this gruesome scenario and, once again, amplifies it to the extreme. The "modern Hellawes," or technology, seems at first a benefit to society, but to fully acquiesce is to fall prey to her. Beneath her façade exists tremendous potential danger, for what appears initially advantageous may later prove destructive. To emphasize the demonic nature of technology, Jones characterizes modern weapons as "some mean chemist's contrivance, a stinking physicist's destroying toy" (24). And after observing first-hand the effects of modern warfare on

such a wide scale, Jones can honestly disclose the true essence of the twentieth century Hellawes:

But sweet sister death has gone  
debauched today and stalks on this  
high ground with strumpet confidence,  
makes no coy veiling of her appetite  
but leers from you to me with all her  
parts discovered.

By one and one the line gaps, where her  
fancy will—howsoever they may howl  
for their virginity she holds them... (162)

The modern Hellawes sexually ravages soldiers by the thousands, taking full advantage of the immense destruction mankind has unleashed through its deadly inventions. Modern soldiers have been seduced by her, and thus, are slaughtered on a huge scale.

John Ball, caught in the maelstrom of battle, cannot help but identify himself with Sir Launcelot, and, in so doing, paraphrases a line from the Chapel Perilous episode:

Who's these thirty in black harness  
that you could see in the last flash,  
great limbed, and each helmed:  
if you could pass throughout them  
and beyond

—and fetch away the bloody cloth:  
whether I live  
whether I die. (180)

Surrounded by the corpses of the men from both armies, Ball questions whether he can pass through them in order to escape with the “bloody cloth.” Ball hears the frightened shouts of other soldiers who invoke Jesus Christ in the same manner Sir Launcelot does when he realizes that he is trapped in the “burial-yard” of Chapel Perilous:

...and Jesus Christ—they're coming  
through the floor,  
endthwart and overlong:

Jerry's through on the flank...and:  
Beat it! (180)

It is only when Ball is shot in the leg and wounded that he is able to crawl away and escape through the “gate of the wood” (186) and out of the enchanted grounds.

*In Parenthesis* is a work of incredible depth and can be read on numerous levels; it would be a discredit to limit this poem to simply one interpretation. Nevertheless, Malory's “Chapel Perilous” episode

provides the foundation for the narrative structure of *In Parenthesis*. In reading the poem as an amplification of Malory's harrowing tale, the poem becomes a gripping, powerful, and ultimately terrifying work, a horror story of epic proportions. When one reads the poem as such, the supernatural elements within Malory's *Le Morte D'arthur* appear more realistic and genuine while concurrently the mood evoked by the “Chapel Perilous” episode contributes to a deeper, more intense understanding of the soldiers' plight in the trenches. Jones, like Malory, could envision the adverse magical powers of technology, and having seen first-hand the sheer devastation brought about by technology, recognized the supernatural as a real presence in our lives. Both *Le Morte D'arthur* and *In Parenthesis*, as parallel works, warn us of the potential dangers of new technological innovations that may appear as “fair damosels” at first, but actually hide terror within.



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# DONE IN BY DEBT:

## *The Role of Fiscal Policy in the Confederacy's Defeat*

by Bob O'Donnell



The conventional view of the American Civil War is that the South's defeat was the inevitable result of greater Northern industrial power and population. The Confederacy, however, had many advantages in its war for independence. The most fundamental one was that it was not a war for control of the United States government, but an attempt to secede from it. Indeed, the American Revolution provided an appropriate model for Southern strategy. As in that war, those in rebellion did not have to win, but merely had to avoid losing.

Why, given this advantage, was the South unsuccessful? I believe that the fiscal policy of the Confederacy in its early months laid the foundation for its defeat. The decisions made then were to a considerable extent irreversible and restricted the range of future options available to the government. This is especially true of those decisions relating to tax policy. It is remarkable how little attention has been paid to this by many observers, who find it much more interesting to analyze battlefield tactics. Even today, one finds men in full uniform reenacting battles. To date, none have been found in Richmond, dressed in frock coats and top hats, reenacting fiscal policy.

The period primarily under review in this paper begins with South Carolina's secession in December 1860 and concludes in late 1861. It was during this period that the opportunity to impose significant taxes existed and was essentially allowed to pass. Consequently, while debt management and monetary policy were clearly important, they were perforce the direct result of the South's approach to taxation. Given that approach, it could not avoid issuing substantial debt, printing currency not backed by specie, and suffering from extreme inflation. Why then was something as obvious as the immediate need to impose significant taxes ignored? The answer lies in the nature of the Confederacy and its leadership.

The available data on income and wealth demonstrate that the financial position of the future Confederacy in 1860 was quite solid. Estimates of per capita income of free Southerners are in the \$125-150 range,<sup>i</sup> which is comparable to that of free Northerners. The total wealth of the Confederacy is estimated within a broad band of \$4.6-7 billion, of which 35-50% was represented by the illiquid value of slaves.<sup>ii</sup> While these estimates vary, they make one thing very clear. It was neither a lack of income nor of wealth at the Confederacy's birth that limited its ability to raise revenue.

While the South's financial resources were considerable, they were also rather illiquid. Consequently, the South depended upon access to the credit markets. It was an exporter of commodities and an importer of credit. Harold Woodman states it simply: "The financial center of the South was in the North" (169). His point is readily demonstrated by the fact that the total capital of Southern banks in 1860 was \$105 million while that of banks in New York and Pennsylvania alone was \$307 million (173). Losing access to credit would prove fatal to Southern hopes for independence.

The disparate nature of the states posed a special challenge. Per capita income ranged from \$131 in Louisiana to \$75 in Tennessee. Furthermore, the per capita income of the seven states of the Deep South that seceded first was at least 20% higher than that of the four states of the Upper South that seceded later (O'Brien 15). Ownership of slaves was also quite different among the states. Slaves represented approximately 46% of the

population in the Deep South (57% in South Carolina) but only about 29% in the Upper South (25% in Tennessee) (O'Brien 15). The interests of a plantation owner in South Carolina were fundamentally different from those of a dry goods merchant in Tennessee. These different interests among both states and individuals presented an enormous challenge to a government founded on the principle of states' rights.

Allan Nevins notes, "The Confederacy would

## *The failure of the Confederacy [to focus its economic power] was a significant cause of its defeat.*

have profited from a greater centralization of authority and from more drastic measures than Davis found feasible" (Richardson xxiv). It is a paradox that many of the policies necessary for the Confederacy's success required a strong central government that was an anathema to its founders. The obvious need to raise troops and fund them on a national basis was in conflict with the considerable powers that the states wished to retain. Indeed, the very meaning of "national" was at issue.

Given these constraints, the Confederacy needed a highly effective Treasury Secretary who could both balance these interests and establish fiscal discipline. This was not what it got. For this role, President Jefferson Davis chose Christopher G. Memminger, a South Carolina attorney. Memminger had no direct financial experience beyond having served on his state's Ways and Means Committee. Born in Germany in 1803, he was orphaned and brought to the U.S. at the age of three. David Eicher says, "Memminger was grafted into South Carolina society from complete anonymity" (64). By the beginning of the war, he had acquired a plantation and owned fifteen slaves.

Virtually all historians consider Memminger to have been a poor choice.<sup>iii</sup> Nearly all note his ineffectiveness in dealing both with his staff and with Davis's cabinet. Memminger resigned under threat of impeachment on June 15, 1864. Memminger was certainly in over his head; an effective Secretary would unquestionably have done many things differently. This is especially true of those areas under the Secretary's direct administrative control, where he approached incompetence. At the same time, however, even if the optimal policies had been advocated by Memminger, one cannot have confidence that Davis and the Congress would have agreed to them. Thus, while Memminger bears much of the burden, responsibility for its dysfunctional fiscal policy must be shared by the entire Confederate government.

It is clear that the government did have the constitutional power to impose taxation. Both its provisional and final Constitutions granted Congress the "power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises for revenue" (Provisional I.6.1, Final I.8.1).<sup>iv</sup> The only significant difference between the two was a restriction in the final Constitution on duties that might otherwise be imposed to "promote or foster any branch of industry" (I.8.1). The South as a staples exporter thus created a constitutional prohibition against protectionist duties. This was in sharp contrast to the protectionist policy in the rapidly industrializing North. It is therefore appropriate to treat Southern tariffs purely as taxes since their sole purpose was to raise revenue. It is also significant that the Confederate Constitution retained the provision in the U.S. Constitution that requires direct taxes to be apportioned among the states based upon their respective populations (Confederate I.1.3; U.S. I.2, I.9). This had two important consequences. First, it placed much of the burden of collection upon the states whose collection infrastructures were inadequate. Second, it allowed those opposed to taxation to delay it by questioning whether

the 1860 U.S. census was appropriate for this purpose. Conducting a census during wartime was not the highest priority of the government.

In the early months of its existence, the Confederacy imposed three types of taxation. The first was a 12.5% tariff on imports proposed by Memminger on February 18, 1861 and adopted shortly thereafter. He estimated that it would produce \$25 million of annual revenue, based upon an assumption of \$200 million of imports. The collection of \$1.9 million over nearly two years falls a bit short of \$25 million in one year. What happened? Simply put, Memminger's initial assumption about imports verged on fantasy. In addition, he failed to consider the impact of the Federal blockade. While the blockade was spotty and not wholly effective in keeping imports out of the South, it was very effective in keeping them out of the situs of taxation at the legitimate ports. It is amazing that Memminger failed to consider this, as the blockade was not exactly a secret. After all, Lincoln announced it at the outbreak of hostilities only two months after Memminger's proposal. There is no evidence that Memminger adjusted his estimate in the wake of that announcement. A further blow beyond his control came when Union forces captured New Orleans, the largest city in the Confederacy, in April 1862. My calculations from raw data provided by Ball suggest that the port of New Orleans accounted for 76% of Southern imports in 1860 (Ball 205). Its loss struck at the heart of the attempt to collect significant tariffs on imports.

Memminger's second tax proposal was an export duty on cotton. While the U.S. Constitution prohibited export duties, the Confederacy's Constitution permitted them if passed by a two-thirds vote of Congress. Congress soon took advantage of this provision (Todd 125). A duty of one-eighth cent per pound of cotton exported after August 1, 1861 was imposed as security for the first bond issued by the Confederacy on February 28.<sup>iv</sup> Based on the 1.5 billion pounds of cotton exported in 1860, Memminger expected the duty to produce about \$1.9 million annually (Ball 208). As was the case with import tariffs, this effort was also an abject failure. Incredibly, the actual amount collected during the remaining four years of the Confederacy's existence was approximately \$45,000. Based upon my own calculations from Ball's raw data, I conclude that the duty was applied to approximately 40 million pounds of cotton in a four-year period (Ball 210). This suggests that the tax could not have been collected on more than 5% of the roughly 8 billion pounds of cotton actually exported. That is stunning. In addition to feckless collection efforts, the blockade was once again a culprit. But it was a culprit hidden in plain sight. Schwab notes that cotton exports from Charleston harbor in the three months ended September 1, 1861 fell 99% from the same period in 1860 (238). Once again, the Treasury ignored evidence in real time and failed to adjust its projections. Moreover, while no commentator mentions it, tax policy affects behavior. I believe that once a tax was imposed on exports, it increased the already strong incentive to run the blockade and avoid the tax.

The third tax was the War Tax of August 19, 1861. After much debate, Congress imposed a tax of 0.5% on "the assessed value of taxable items recommended by the Secretary of the Treasury" (Todd 132). Provisions were made for the appraisal of property, and the tax was to be collected on May 1, 1862. Based upon Memminger's initial assessment of total Confederate wealth of \$4.6 billion, the tax was estimated to raise slightly less than \$25 million. When all the reports were in, the total appraised value was actually \$4.2 billion. By August 1, 1862, the tax had raised \$10.5 million. Another \$6.2 million dribbled in by the end of the calendar year (Todd 133). While this was the most successful of the taxes, it still fell well short of the estimate. Equally important, according to Todd, only three of the eleven states actually collected the tax. The others instead issued debt of their own and forwarded the proceeds to Richmond (133). Ball (225) maintains that only two states collected the tax while Schwab (289) claims that only Texas did. In late 1863, Jefferson Davis stated, "The public debt of the country was thus actually increased instead of being diminished by the taxation imposed" (Richardson 363). Since such a tax if fully collected would have reduced inflationary pressures, the perverse impact on the debt level noted by Davis is very significant.

Even if the War Tax had been collected effectively, the 0.5% rate was set too low to produce the revenue required. Why was the rate set so low? Much of the answer lies in the fact that since this was a tax on property, it taxed the value of slaves. It thus illustrates a fundamental tension in the Confederacy. Ball states, "To Memminger, the owner of fifteen slaves, the logic of taxing slave ownership seemed unanswerable. Yet it is clear that this viewpoint was far from universally shared. The Confederacy may have been founded to protect planters' property rights in slaves, but many planters were unprepared to pay" (216). Among members of Congress who owned no slaves or fewer than 20, 65% favored taxation. Among those owning 20 or more, 46% favored the tax (Ball 217). Thus, the benefit of continued slaveholding did not accord with the willingness to pay for that benefit. This paradox lay at the heart of the Confederacy.

It is indeed an interesting paradox. Simply stated, the plantation owners were prisoners of their own conservatism and self-interest. Faced with an existential threat to their entire way of life, they failed to recognize that the payment of a high financial price offered the only possible means of maintaining that life. Some who seek simple explanations call the war “a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight.” This is much too facile. Many plantation owners and their potential heirs gave their lives on the battlefield, while simultaneously rejecting taxes that would have increased their chances of success. At the same time, non-slaveholders volunteered en masse to join the fight for a host of reasons that had little to do with a defense of slavery. Such paradoxes fascinate the observer. Humans are complex creatures whose behavior consistently defies simple explanations. Nevertheless, the reluctance of the planters to accept taxation of property ultimately proved fatal to their own interests.

In contrast to this complexity, one conclusion is very clear. In the early years of its brief existence, when it had the greatest ability to impose significant taxes and lay a sound fiscal foundation, the Confederacy simply failed to do so. Under the most favorable interpretation of the data above, I estimate that the government collected about \$19 million of taxes in the first 22 months of its existence. While precision is not possible, no more than \$10 million could have been received in the first 12 months. One may compare these revenue numbers to expenditures that amounted to \$165 million in the Confederacy’s first fiscal year ending February 18, 1862 and rose to \$443 million in the second year (Ball 259). The South’s approach to taxation was simply inadequate, and set the stage for economic collapse. McPherson states it directly: “By 1862, the Confederate economy had become unmanageable” (442). Jefferson Davis finally realized this, but only very late in the war. In his address to Congress on December 7, 1863, he stated, “The state of the public finances is such as to demand your earliest and most earnest attention” (Richardson 361). He continued, “Taxation . . . must be the basis of any funding system or other remedy for restoring stability to our finances” (369). By then, the consequences of a naïve fiscal policy had become all too clear.

When a government chooses to spend at a rate well in excess of its tax collections, it must issue debt. The magnitude of the Confederacy’s deficit resulted in explosive debt creation. The flaw, however, lay not in the issuance of debt, but rather in the inherent mismatch of revenue and expense. While a complete analysis of Confederate debt management is beyond this paper’s scope, it is useful to outline some of its essential features.

As noted earlier, the government issued its first bond on February 28, 1861, nearly seven weeks before the war began. As expenditures accelerated without significant tax revenue, an increasing spiral of debt issuance ensued. Upon the resignation of Memminger in June 1864, George A. Trenholm, another South Carolinian, was appointed Treasury Secretary. His November 7, 1864 report determined the level of outstanding debt to be \$1.22 billion as of October 1 (Trenholm 5). This may be compared to the most generous estimate of Confederate Gross National Product in 1860 of approximately \$800 million (Ball 24). A ratio of debt to GNP in excess of 150% in peacetime is untenable if one needs continued access to the credit markets. It is even more serious in wartime when the continued existence of the borrower is at issue. At an average interest rate on its debt of approximately 6%, interest expense alone approached 10% of pre-war GNP. Furthermore, payment of interest in specie had been suspended in 1862 and “interest” was paid only in the form of additional debt. Having just been appointed, Trenholm plaintively stated, “The large and rapid issue of Treasury notes is the more to be regretted from the failure of the measures relied upon to sustain their value and reduce expenditures” (6). As far as “sustaining their value,” the first bond issued in February 1861 was now selling at less than 6 cents on the dollar in gold equivalent (Ball 127). In short, Trenholm had been placed in an impossible position as a direct result of the failure to impose and collect taxes in the first year of the government. Ball states, “A staple economy would be in the best position to bear heavy taxation at the beginning of a war before enemy incursions had depleted resources” (22). As increasing areas of the Confederacy came under Union control, the tax base was diminished. With a crushing debt burden, the consequences of failing to take early action on taxes became all too clear.

As night follows day, so does currency expansion follow debt issuance. Since gold and silver were inadequate to support the required money supply, coinage was extremely limited. The Treasury thus created paper currency in the form of notes. Currency in circulation expanded dramatically from \$85 million in April 1861 to \$440 million in December 1862. The result was a decline in the value of the currency in gold from one dollar to thirty-three cents (Todd 65). In a genteel kiss to Jacksonian Democracy, the founders rejected the creation of a national bank. Consequently, the Confederacy lost control of its currency. Nine of the eleven states issued currency of their

own (Ball 167). Woodman notes that Confederate currency was trading at an 80% discount to Alabama bank notes late in the war (235). In his own version of “outsourcing,” Memminger rejected the idea of a government printing office and contracted with private printers. Outsourcing the printing of the national currency is not a sound strategy. It provides a strong incentive for the printer to run the presses a bit longer in order to produce counterfeit currency. Periodic outbreaks of counterfeiting demonstrated the seductiveness of this incentive. Further, as the government contract was not always their most profitable one, printers often turned their attention to more profitable jobs, even when currency was desperately needed. Incredibly, the government’s need for currency occasionally exceeded its ability to have it printed (Ball 119). Ball attributes the loss of Vicksburg in significant part to the inability to have currency on hand to pay the troops (121). Thus, poor currency management had a direct impact on the effectiveness of the armed forces. Of course, its more serious result lay in the inflationary spiral it produced.

Many historians have commented upon the destructive inflation that developed during the war. Much of the commentary, however, ignores the source of the inflation and treats it as though it were the result of mysterious forces beyond the government’s control. While it is certainly true that inflation often accompanies war, what the Confederacy experienced was well beyond what one might normally expect. More important, it was far more extreme than it needed to be as a consequence of its fiscal policy in 1861.

Table 1 below demonstrates the magnitude of inflation during the war. It is a representative sample of various commodities taken from Schwab’s data. All values are set at an index value of 1 in 1860. To clarify the mechanics of the table, let’s take the price of coffee as an example. A change in the index is obviously greater when it moves from 1 to 23 (23x) than from 23 to 196 (8x). If the inflation often associated with war were the primary cause, one would expect to see an accelerating rate of inflation throughout the war. If, on the other hand, early fiscal policy caused the inflation, one would expect to see a very large rate of change in prices in the early years and a subsequent flattening or deceleration in that rate in later years. As the table demonstrates, most commodities experienced a greater rate of inflation in the 20 months from the beginning of the war through December 1862 than in the remaining 28 months of the war. This offers additional support to the thesis that early decisions on tax policy had an effect on prices that was both immediate and severe.<sup>vi</sup>

TABLE 1  
Monthly Average of Prices in the Confederacy<sup>a</sup>

COMMODITY	DECEMBER 1862	DECEMBER 1863	FEBRUARY 1865
Bacon	5	26	67
Butter	6	17	64
Candles	11	24	80
Coffee	23	79	196
Flour	3	12	83
Nails	13	44	91
Salt	42	55	172

Source: Schwab Appendix I

<sup>a</sup> All values are indexed to a level of 1 in 1860.

Economic disarray had a far-reaching effect upon the Confederate army. The increase in the price of salt offers an example of the difficulty of supplying nearly one million soldiers in the field under inflationary conditions. The inability to pay troops, as in the Vicksburg campaign, became increasingly common. Further, “A rise in desertions from the army in 1862 resulted in part from the distress of the men’s families” (McPherson 440). Many soldiers faced the choice of ignoring their families’ troubles at home or deserting their comrades in the field. Thus, the South’s economic troubles had a direct impact on the effectiveness of the army.

Humans are challenged when attempting to foresee the future consequences of current actions. Kierkegaard reminds us, “Life only makes sense looking backward, but must be lived looking forward.” Nevertheless, individuals

in positions of responsibility must make decisions under conditions of uncertainty and are subsequently evaluated based upon the results of those decisions. The fiscal decisions made by the Confederate government at its very birth played a significant role in defining the parameters within which it could operate. The ability of a state to effectively focus its economic power is a major determinant of its success in warfare. The failure by the Confederacy to do so was a significant cause of its defeat. To assert that it was the only cause would be a gross oversimplification. But it would be an equal oversimplification to focus only upon military strategy. That is what much of Civil War scholarship does to the exclusion of other factors. The Confederacy's defeat did not lie in the hands of Fate. To a considerable extent, it lay in the hands of individuals who failed to foresee the impact of fiscal policy decisions made in 1861.

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## NOTES

<sup>i</sup> Patrick O'Brien estimates the per capita income of free Southerners at around \$125, which is approximately the same as that of free Northerners (13). I have taken Douglas Ball's national income estimates for the South, divided by the free population, and come to an estimate just short of \$150 (Ball 24).

<sup>ii</sup> Richard Todd estimates the total wealth of the Confederacy at \$4.6 billion, roughly 50% of which was represented by the value of slaves (131). This is where most estimates center, though Ball derives the much higher number of \$7 billion, while using the same \$2.3 billion for slaves (300). John Keegan places the per capita wealth of free Southerners at roughly two times that of free citizens of the North (11). It is also well to remember that not all residents of the North were free.

<sup>iii</sup> The only exception seems to be Henry D. Capers who, at the age of 26, served as his secretary during the first year of his term. Many years later, Capers wrote a lengthy biography of Memminger that verges on hagiography. Among less biased observers, John Schwab offers the most favorable assessment. While granting that Memminger had "no particular fitness" for the role, Schwab argued, "It is doubtful whether any other secretary of the Treasury would have handled the Confederate finances in any very different or more successful way" (5). While his evaluation falls well short of an endorsement, it still seems very charitable. Ball, Todd, and others assess him much more critically.

<sup>iv</sup> The provisional Constitution was adopted by six states on February 8, 1861, and was adopted by all seven states on March 11. It was later ratified by them and the remaining four states when they seceded. (Copies of the Constitutions may be found in Richardson 3-14, 37-54.)

<sup>v</sup> The bond was issued for \$15 million with an 8% coupon and possessed the additional "sweetener" that the coupons could be detached to pay the duty.

<sup>vi</sup> In a detailed analysis of a specific commodity, Lonn confirms the magnitude of the increase in the price of salt (43-44). This had a severe impact on an army that consumed 500,000 hogs per year to produce salt pork, its main staple (Lonn 16). Throughout the war, hoarding of commodities became a common response to inflation. Woodman estimates that by the end of the war anywhere from two to four million bales of cotton had been "hidden away in remote places or in underground caches" (235-6). At the prevailing cotton prices in 1865, three million bales would be worth about \$1.2 billion (Woodman 227) in an economy with a pre-war GNP of \$800 million. Clearly, the economy was in complete disarray well before the end of the war.

## CONTRIBUTORS

CHERI BLOCK SABRAW (Personal essay: *Forwarding Frightening News...*) taught English for 26 years in the public school system until founding her own school, The Mill Creek Academy, where she taught literary analysis and composition for 14 years before retiring in 2011. She is a new host for a cable television show produced by Washington Township Hospital in Fremont. She lives with her husband of 42 years, Ron, in the hills above Mission San Jose.

JENNIFER SWANTON BROWN (Poem: *Forsythia*) published her first poem in the Palo Alto Times when she was in the fifth grade. She has degrees in Linguistics and Nursing, and completed her Master of Liberal Arts at Stanford University in 2012. She has been a poet/teacher with California Poets in the Schools since 2001 and joined their Board of Directors in Spring 2013. Her poems have been published in local journals, including *The Sand Hill Review*, *Caesura* and *The DQM Review*. She is a two-time recipient of a Fine Arts Commission grant from the City of Cupertino, where she recently served as a judge in their first city-wide poetry contest. In October 2013, Jennifer was appointed as the second-ever Poet Laureate for the City of Cupertino ([cupertinopoetlaureate.org](http://cupertinopoetlaureate.org)). Jennifer works at Stanford in the School of Medicine.

LISA LAPIN (*Jackson Pollock's Lucifer ...*) is Assistant Vice President, University Communications, Stanford University, where she serves as chief media spokesperson for the university. Lisa is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, a member of the Association of American Universities Public Affairs Council, and is active in numerous communications organizations, including the American Marketing Association and the Communications Advisory Board of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. Lapin spent 15 years as an award-winning reporter and editor at major daily newspapers, including the Los Angeles Times, San Jose Mercury News and The Sacramento Bee. She is currently a fourth-year student in the Master of Liberal Arts program at Stanford.

TIMOTHY NOAKES (*David Jones's In Parenthesis ...*) works at Stanford University in the Rare Books Library. Still very much interested in his

thesis topic, Tim is trying to publish an article about David Jones and Sir Thomas Malory. After publication, he will become famous and retire to the South of France, produce wine on a vineyard, and have lots of dogs to keep him company, but as that seems pretty far-fetched, he will remain in Mountain View with his present two dogs and continue to provide help to all the MLA students who parade into Special Collections.

BOB O'DONNELL (*Done In By Debt ...*) is a third-year MLA student with a lifelong interest in the American Civil War. He recently retired after 40 years as an equity portfolio manager with Capital Group (American Funds). Bob is a member of the finance faculty at the Haas School of Business, U.C. Berkeley, where he has taught for the past twelve years. He serves on the boards of the San Francisco Symphony, Summit Public Schools, The Hoover Institution and Sequoia Hospital. Bob and his wife live on the Peninsula, and he has two daughters. He enjoys golf, tennis, travel, and admits to being a long-suffering fan of Cal football.

KATHERINE ORLOFF (Poem: *Another Likeness*) is a professional ballet and modern dancer, as well as a dance instructor in the San Francisco Bay Area. She received her BA in English from the University of California, Irvine, where she developed an interest in African American studies. Now in her final year of Stanford's MLA program, she is currently completing her thesis on the African Colonization Movement in the United States.

HELEN PETERS (*A Matter of Faith ...*) is a fourth-year MLA student, currently writing her thesis on Virginia Woolf's use of "the language of dress" in her novel *Orlando*. After a career in the corporate world, Helen is enjoying a life that includes her work at Stanford and extensive global travel. Last summer's course on *Mary Magdalene: The Feminine Principle in Scripture, Literature and Legend* sparked her interest in how Magdalene's example is still influencing women and led her to the struggle between American nuns and the Vatican hierarchy that she covers here.

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