

PSR students enjoy a hike.  
Photo contributed by  
Jeremy Arnold.



**LOGOS**  
 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF  
 PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION  
 SEPT/OCT  
 2010  
 Λόγος

## Beginning (Again) in Love

### Love Everlasting

J.T. HILS, MDIV '13

*I heard a song, sang one million strong, don't feel alone. – "Blues or Astroblue?" howie&scott*

I spent today celebrating love in what appears to me to be a city consumed by it. Hope abounds with the ruling today that Proposition 8 is unconstitutional.

I arrived in the Castro about an hour before the rally started and watched people slowly fill Harvey (continued on page 11)

### The Kid Becomes

### Catholic - Is it Alright?

### Looking at Conversion and Sexual Issues with Open Eyes

HANNAH MECASKEY  
GTU/DSPT MA/MDIV '10'

I've been reading the Summer Issue of Equality Magazine, browsing through the interview with Julianne Moore, recent star of film "The Kids Are Alright." It stirs a lot of thoughts about the Prop 8 disagreement between many (continued on page 9)

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# 2010

## Gulf Oil Spill No Longer a Concern at PSR

NANCY BACON, MDIV '11

FINALLY, we can all breathe a sigh of relief and dedicate ourselves once again to the vital ministries we are dedicated to at PSR. The oil spill that has held us captive all this time, the worst environmental disaster in United States history, is over. The ocean has renewed itself and all those little fish in the sea are going to be just fine. While a few people died, as well as birds, sea creatures, and a host of tubeworms, there is good reason to believe that the toxin dispersants sprayed over the gulf will not harm a thing. Our efforts are paying off. We can continue to consume carbon products just as before. Really, there is no more need for us to obsess over our culpability or continue our diligent practices of self-reflection. It is old news.

So, why can't I get over the loss of those tubeworms? Considering worms may seem offensive when so many human lives have been affected, not to mention other animals. Environmentalists seem so ridiculously out of touch when there are more pressing needs in the world, and at PSR. (cont'd on page 7)



## Thoughts on the Meaning and Symbology of the Gulf Oil Spill

STEVE SANCHEZ, MDIV '10

The purpose of this article is to begin to understand what is going on with the Gulf oil spill disaster, and to find initial ways of seeing meaning in the event. My personal context in viewing this is from that of a fulltime chaplain who works with people from all income levels and ethnicities. I am also one who suffered injustice in a cult that was very religious and new age. I was born in California to middle class family of divorce. Ethnically my parents are Spanish, Portuguese, and Mexican.

In this paper I will look at three aspects of the disaster: the first being trauma on society, the

second being the event as symbology, and in the third, I will look at some of the systemic political issues brought to the fore by this event, especially as these issues relate to the symbology.

Mike Bruner, an msnbc.com writer and editor, wrote:

The vast oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has been more traumatic than Hurricane Katrina for coastal residents, with 30 percent of those interviewed apparently suffering mild to serious psychological distress, according to a survey by a health care provider released Thursday.

The survey of 406 Gulf Coast residents, conducted for the nonprofit Ochsner Health System, found that the mental health impacts from the BP's Deepwater Horizon spill were greatest for residents of Louisiana, the young and the poor.

Eighteen percent of Louisiana residents were suffering "probable serious"

(cont'd on page 5)

## FALL 2010 FOOD ADVISORY BOARD

### We Want Your Family Recipes!

TERRY YASUKO OGAWA, MDIV '13

In the interest of building community, D'Autremont is accepting the submission of family recipes from students. If the recipes are within the capabilities of the staff and the budget of the dining hall, the recipes will be incorporated into the menu rotation. Email [food@ses.psr.edu](mailto:food@ses.psr.edu).

Additionally, you have any **questions, comments or suggestions**, please email the above account. Emails will be reviewed by students at PSR and CDSP and, when appropriated passed along to Andy. Thank you.

## For You Word Nerds

TYLER GARDNER, MA '12

Considering the name of this newsmagazine, I thought it appropriate to include a short column discussing different words, their origins, connotations and meanings.

### Clue

Colonel Mustard, in the library, with the candlestick. Oh, how I used to love making such allegations as a child. The board game *Clue* somehow never ceased to entertain, especially with the help of its many spin offs including video games, card games, puzzles, a book series, plays, Broadway musical, and Hollywood film. The film is hilarious by the

way; when it appeared in theaters in 1985, it had three different endings released to different theaters. So appropriate.

Interesting enough, the board game *Clue* is actually a North American version of the British board game *Cluedo*. Weird right? Do the British know something about the word clue that we don't?

The Oxford English Dictionary indicates that clue is a later spelling of the word clew or  
(continued on next page)

for  
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### Noah's Wife: A Midrash

CAROLINE KNOWLES, SKSM MDIV '10

Whatever you may have heard, it was all much worse than you can imagine. To this day, I shudder remembering being cooped up with sheep and lions, rabbits and roaches—yes, Noah couldn't resist even the roaches, the mosquitoes and fleas when they came dancing around. They crawled and flew on board, or tucked themselves between the toes of the giraffes and badgers. All of this—in the name of starting the world over!

You would think we'd at least have a bunk to sleep in to ourselves, but no. I'd wake up and there'd be two cockatoos preening themselves and ripping up our straw mattress for a nest, a pair of mice eating the crumbs off the sheets. At least the cobras had the good sense to crawl behind the siding and make themselves scarce most days, when they weren't hunting for duck eggs.

What with the rain pounding down, sloshing over the decks, all the ports and hatches had to be tight. You could faint with the smell. Twice a day, my daughters-in-law would haul up barrels of dung of every kind, dump them over the side. That was in between kneading and raising the bread and banking the cook fire in the galley. Bread, nothing but bread, enough for everyone, for forty days and nights—with no help from the men folk, you can be sure.

Noah was the worst of them. He and his boys were bound they'd have their forty casks of wine on board—they jettisoned my pots of lemon seed and barley. There my good husband was, reeling drunk every night, staggering around in what he fancied was a captain's turban, and wanting sex every night; though God knows his pee-pee was so shriveled up from being pickled in alcohol, it was little use to him or me.

If there was any land to go aground on, we'd have been goners. Well, he'd never been on water in a boat before, used as he was to his vineyards and fields. But like he said, there was no use to steer when there was no place to land. So there we were rocking and going nowhere, waiting for the world to begin again.

# JAM CIRCLE

CHELSEA MASTERMAN, MDIV '13

Do you love music? Want to *make* some music?? Whether you are a beginning or an expert musician, singer or dancer you're invited to join the new JAM Circle at PSR!

Our mission statement is: "Attuning to the Spirit through creating music together." The JAM Circle happens every other Friday in the PSR Chapel at 6:30pm. The next one is on October 29. Please come together with us as we build community, hone our musical skills for various aspects of life (including worship) and practice self-care through the creative outlet of music.

You're encouraged to bring along anything you feel like playing and/or sharing – such as chords, lyrics, instruments and equipment. If you have none of those things, please bring yourself! Witnesses are welcome too. For future events, please join our Facebook Group: "JAM Circle at PSR."

## Word Nerds

(cont'd)

clewe, which, as a noun, refers to a ball of yarn or thread. Apparently our modern use of the word clue, as piece of evidence or insight that leads us to a conclusion or destination, comes from the use of a ball of yarn or thread in ancient narratives and mythological stories. In stories where men went on adventures into unknown forests or found themselves in need of passing through an impossible labyrinth, they brought a long a ball of thread, a clew, and by slowly letting out thread as they went, were able to help guide their way in and out of such a place. In 1385, in his story *The Legend of Ariadne*, Chaucer wrote, "By a clewe of twyn as he hath gon The same weye he may returne a-non ffolwyng alwey the

thred as he hath come." Now if you can look beyond the Old English distractions of that sentence, you

can see that the ball of twine is the character's plan to find his way back. From here, it seems pretty easy to understand how clue came to represent threads of evidence that put one "on the track towards discovery."

As for the British calling their detective game *Cluedo*, instead of referring to an earlier or more correct form of the word clue, it appears our clever linguistic counterparts were simply punning on the Latin word *ludo*, meaning "I play". As punny as the word might have been, it somehow didn't make it over the Atlantic.



Photo by Maja Gray

# Symbology of Gulf Oil Spill

(continued from page 2)

or “probable mild-moderate” mental illness based on the K6 psychological distress scale – more than double the rate found in a similar survey conducted in July 2007, two years after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the state, the survey found. Fourteen percent of Floridians, 12 percent of Mississippians and 10 percent of Alabamans were similarly afflicted, it said (Mike Brunner, msnbc.com).

I believe that the effects of trauma are cumulative. For the people in the gulf, perhaps this is one of the reasons the trauma of the oil spill was 30 percent higher than the reported trauma at the time of Katrina. The Gulf spill came on top of two deeply effecting events, namely, 9/11 and Katrina. The idea of the cumulative effect of trauma parallels Prof. Archie Smith’s idea of ‘history bleeding through’ (Siblings by Choice). Very briefly put, his idea states that unresolved traumas of generations past, such as the enslavement of African Americans, resurfaces in the lives of the subsequent generations. This process is very often clumsy and violent, especially if there is not some level of individual and national grieving, acknowledgement and practical restoration. Part of the role of social justice is to bring awareness to what is bleeding through and to fairly define and execute restoration. When trauma builds a people lose the sense of being in a safe place, a place to land or rest their mind. This is especially true for people who have lost their homes and livelihood. When the grief and trauma bank is full, a person’s nerves are strained too far. The soul and nerves of the person are experiencing pain in the form of fear, anxiety and/or contention. The pain of it extends to both the physical and the mental/emotional/ and spiritual; the pain begins to overload the body/ mind system. Legal and bureaucratic procedures can be very difficult for the traumatized. The physical component of trauma leaves a sort of imprint on the nerves and the mind, and this imprint becomes easily triggered with subsequent disturbances. A big part of trauma is the sense of not having control of where and when disturbance is going to come again, and a person’s ability to

resource out of it diminishes. A person in trauma tends to shake, and is easily agitated.

In this light, social justice is a vital compulsion in all of us. In regards to the gulf oil spill, at this point there seems to be a decent level of awareness of restoration, but this is a big issue and yet to be determined. During the event and in the immediate aftermath, it seems to me there was a terrible sense of loss and powerlessness. For the sake of balance, I think it is important to add here that overly ‘fawning’ to trauma can be disabling to those who suffer from it. The end objective is to recover our national and individual strength, so it is important to watch that we do not disable people by over extending handout programs.

Another significant way to understand the Gulf oil spill is the symbology of it. The event itself hits at the heart of all our major socio/political issues, such as the economy, the environment, and the ethics of our political system as a whole. The symbology can apply to all of these aspects, and could be defined in this way: it was an ongoing leak of a black, toxic substance into the life giving ocean waters, and it was caused by human error that went on for a long time (about three months). In terms of the human mind this image corresponds to vital energy leaking out of the psyche without control. This is the pathology and danger of trauma. In terms of the planet as a living body it is comparable to toxins being mixed in the blood. This can be seen as an image of the corruption of our national integrity. In an actual way this corresponds to the actual effects of loss of work, homes, animal life, the environment, and other things.

Now let’s look at the symbology of this disaster in terms of our national system and politics. I believe the disaster is essentially an accident of human error in the sense that it is not a purposeful event, or in other words, not a conspiracy. It is an inherent danger of drilling, a risk taken for the sake of our communal need for energy and oil products. It is also coming out that there were compromised practices in the drilling technology, which is a whole other matter for research.

With all the intense emotion around this, as evidenced by the volumes of angry letters seen on the many social networking sites, there is a tendency to find someone or something to

demonize. In my view, President Obama fell into this when he proclaimed that the leaders responsible at BP would be persecuted to the full extent of the law. While accountability certainly needs to be sought, the timing and quality of this statement seemed more to appease the angry than to address the priorities at the time.

I see the oil spill as symbolic of the spiritual drain that is taking place in the soul of our country. The image of tons of oil leaking into the ocean month after month is a nightmare. There is a similar drain leaking from our country in a spiritual way, and there are many aspects to it. The huge deficit that the country operates under is a sign of this drain. The deficit is becoming so big that politicians are losing the moral value of keeping a budget. Mr. Obama treats the deficit as if it means nothing, and continues spending. This is diluting and weakening the soul of America. The massive bailouts don't really work for the long term, because they offer a free ride to too many people, they are an artificial device, and they weaken our sense of moral responsibility. Too many people become complacent and lose motivation to produce. This appeals to people who have experienced trauma for a time because they are in a weakened state, but people need to find, and act from, their inner strength. In reality the bailouts just mortgage the future. They instantly create inflation because the money for it is in effect printed; this money is not based on real goods produced. The bailouts keep

adding to the deficit, and business people feel more and more distanced from working in a system with integrity. Obama-care for health insurance also doesn't work because it takes away from producing the best product in the free-market. Reform is necessary, but the expectation that people are going to get a free ride in health care feeds the moral dysfunction. Obama-care is a drain on the country because it is poorly conceived and is not economically sustainable. All this is a sign of how the country is being drained.

When disasters like this happen many people want to scapegoat corporations for all the country's greed and ills, and while this is certainly true, it may not be the main cause. We all need to learn from these events to act with greater integrity and accountability in our lives and business practices.

I believe the way that the economy recovers is when business people produce goods and services of real value. Now, many business people are terrified of starting a business. Too many government regulations are piling on and handcuffing them. In part of my research I found that while America is complying with many of the new environmental regulations, the rest of the world powers are not, and this gives them a big advantage.

Many people say that capitalism simply leads to greed and profit seeking. This is sometimes true, but the person who is motivated in this way eventually gets

exposed. The person who succeeds in the long time is the person who gives the best service for the best price. The person who succeeds cares about the customer. The company I work for is a model of this, which is Kaiser. Kaiser wants to be a world-class corporation that is dedicated to good, affordable service, and providing the most up to date technology and procedures, and it is working. The company is economically healthy and a vibrant place to be. The ethnicity of the staff, percentage wise, is about the same as the patients we serve. As we speak they are putting thousands of feet of solar paneling on the roof. This is how real recovery takes place. Recovery takes place from the ground level; it takes place from the people and entrepreneurs who have the spirit and ingenuity to produce real goods that sell and move society forward. When real money is produced from real goods the deficit can be managed, which in turn builds a strong internal spirit. This is what shores up the leak; it is a very scary thing right now on the ground level to go into business, because there are a growing amount of regulations to deal with. We need to encourage business by reducing taxes and manageable regulations, so people have the chance to succeed on the open market. The constant manipulation of the interest rate is also a masking of the problem. It is an artificial way of recovery. People need to have less debt and buy when they can really afford to. Emotionally, these artificial regulatory efforts are equivalent to dissociation, or,

in other words, they exacerbate the damaging 'leak' in the soul of America. People want the easy way out from Mr. Obama. It will never work. We need to face some of the pain of coming back to reality to get strong in our economic system.

Secondly, if we look at context of capitalism and democracy, it is not, in its origin, about economic greed and mercenary motives. There is no doubt, as I said, that that often becomes the motive for some people, but the true context of America is in the desire to be in covenant with God. In God we trust is the heart of our origin. We need to re-learn in our modern situation to value this tradition. It is an expression of the innermost desire of most people. It is how we are tethered to God. This is a big subject that I cannot fully develop here, but is not just idealism. Too many progressives want to overlook the events of our history. This not to say that the American system is not corrupted. We have committed many sins, but this does not change the fundamental reality from which we have grown. It does not make sense to throw the baby away with the bath water, which is what socialistic objectives tend to want to do. Our country is rooted in the Golden Rule, and love for God. The health of our country can be seen in the great religious vitality of our nation. Open any yellow pages and you see thousands of different churches of all kinds offering their services. This religious freedom is a sign of health; it produces very lively theological dialogue. Most countries around the world do not have this kind of religious variety. People are sick of deceptive politics and as a result there is a civil awakening that is taking place.

Now here is an essential philosophical point to consider about capitalism and democracy. This is a point that most people don't seem to think about. Philosophically humanity's best expression of its true nature comes out in freedom. Humans must be in freedom for salvation to be worked out. Democracy and capitalism are humanities best option for living in true freedom. I believe human freedom itself exists by the power of the Lord alone and it manifests as an equilibrium between the forces of heaven and hell. In this sense freedom is sacred. Human beings need to, and deep down want to, fight for the destiny of their soul. Democracy and capitalism can also bring out the worst, but this is the beauty and essential truth of the matter - the

worst also must be seen for what it is so that it does not become hidden. In capitalism neither good nor evil can readily hide. When evil can hide, and is buried, and unseen, masked over, as it has always proven to be in communism, it becomes like poison in the blood, death to the human spirit. This is the meaning of the Biblical statement that we are to be hot or cold. Evil must be seen to be illuminated. So democracy and capitalism are humanity's best bet for working out its destiny and salvation, because its creation inherently comes from being tethered to God. Communal and tribal societies also work when there is a deep belief in God, but these usually manifest in much smaller and less modern settings. This is why the US has been a light to the world, a conscience in the world, and controversial. It provides the playing field for the light of religion and social activity to reach its potential, its greatest variety, and its truest tolerance. Big government and socialism tends towards a lukewarm state, where people rely on free rides more and more.

## No Longer a Concern

(cont'd from page 2)

Should Christians bother themselves with worms, for Christ's sake? So many forms of human injustice, along with time and money shortages vie for our attention. Surely caring about a tubeworm is going too far.

Does God's loves for the world (John 3:16) even include tubeworms? Is it possible God cares for the least of creatures as much as people? Maybe it's not about who God loves more, but can we see God in the least of creation? I've killed many worms in my life, without remorse, yet these worms have hooked me.

While considering whether I could lament worms, I read these words from Rev. Michael Schlatter's autobiography, "I know that the ways of God in His sanctuary are unsearchable, and that He often accomplishes great ends by the smallest and most inadequate means."<sup>2</sup>

I thought of the least-being-first parables, and the Son of Man residing in the "least" of people in (Matthew 25: 31-46.) A friend reminded me of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31.) The rich man had to walk past Lazarus lying at his gate every time he left his house. Yet the rich man

did not see him. Lazarus or a tubeworm, what difference did it make?

The Lazarus story ends with the rich man in the agonizing flames of Hades, begging Abraham in heaven to send someone from the dead to warn his siblings. Abraham refuses asserting people should have listened to Moses and the prophets and that they wouldn't even listen to someone raised from the dead.

Could we be missing God's attempts to communicate with us, to save us from ourselves? Could our heating planet become Hades? Earth is warming due to human use of oil, coal, and natural gas which has increased natural greenhouse processes heating up the planet.<sup>3</sup> Throughout history, the earth has experienced changes in temperature, but never at such rapidly increasing rates.<sup>4</sup> If these rates of greenhouse gas from CO<sub>2</sub> do not change, by 2100, scientists agree that surface temperature could easily increase between 2.7 to 11 degrees Fahrenheit.<sup>5</sup>

Ethicist James Garvey has written that a difference in only 5 or 6 degrees of global surface temperature corresponds with our planet's ice ages.<sup>6</sup> "The world is moving towards the opposite of an ice age, whatever that might be," states Garvey, but different regions will experience it differently.<sup>7</sup> Some places will become cooler and in other areas heat will kill and threaten water supplies for billions of people.<sup>8</sup> Crops will be affected, some diseases will thrive, intense storms could be frequent, many humans and other life forms will die.<sup>9</sup> Unjustly, the greatest harms will

impact people least responsible and the most vulnerable.<sup>10</sup>

There is a cosmic order to the universe of which humans are a part. An unjust ordering is "hierarchical, anthropocentric, androcentric, classist, and racist," states theologian Eleazar Fernandez.<sup>11</sup> I imagine my just religious guide, Jesus, and without words I know what his ministry has shown: I am to love my neighbor, which implies doing no harm. Caring for the atmosphere we all share is inseparable. From theologian Fernandez's perspective, focusing on our economy rather than ecology, or hiding an oil spill with dispersants, is sort of like rearranging furniture in a house with a bad basement; "changes may be visible but are not structural."<sup>12</sup>

We are creatures, earthlings, and we are playing god, altering our atmosphere and destroying resources necessary for life. Our glorified cycle of economic and technological progress does not include the earth in its model. There is no recognition that the earth's resources are required and there is denial that any vital ones could run out or not be synthesized. Certainly, we should do everything we can to end poverty, hunger, and human injustices, but earth stewardship is foundational. Do we see the connection? I assert my power to sing inclusive language and refer to God with varied pronouns, but do I see the women whose lives will be erased by my continued style of living?

The Earl Lectures on Environmentalism and care of creation several years ago was outstanding. What's happened at

PSR since? The student group, TREES, has become active on campus, but a host of competing academic priorities prevent me and perhaps many others from getting involved. What will it take for PSR and other GTU seminaries to weave eco-justice throughout our curriculum?

How could that happen, when this beloved community is over-burdened already and the economy is vexing our spirits?

Privileged environmentalists, talking about dead fish, oil soaked plants, and worms, seem out of touch and blatantly classist. We don't want to go there. It wouldn't be popular or perceived as rational. No, we won't go. Like Jonah, we resist taking up this cause with all of our senses.

Yet God specifically "appointed" a fish, a bush, and even a worm to minister to Jonah on God's behalf (Jonah 1-4.) What could we learn inside the belly of that fish? What could that environment tell us about precious, rare elements, like air and water?

From inside the fish, Jonah laments and says, "I called to the Lord out of my distress, and he answered me...those who worship vain idols forsake their true loyalty." When Jonah finally understands this, God tells the fish to set him free. He goes to Nineveh and proclaims that humans and animals should wear sackcloth and lament. They are to turn away from lesser things and toward God.

Later, Jonah worships the bush God gave him, because of its shade. God sends a worm to devour the bush. Jonah becomes

upset over losing his bush and sulks. But God said, "You are concerned about the bush...should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?" God was pleased that Nineveh and all of its animals were saved.

What bushes do we seek and worship more than God, or life?

Tubeworms create bushes that harbor other animals. Through an exchange with the bacteria that live upon them, they dissolve carbon dioxide in the ocean.<sup>13</sup> They can grow to be ten feet long and live for over 200 years.<sup>14</sup> I lament the tubeworms. If God chooses a worm for agency, doesn't that imply God's presence throughout creation?<sup>15</sup> The name "Jonah" means "dove," a bird that flies through the skies carrying messages to and of the earth.<sup>16</sup>

Jonah is a prophet of few words. His story is one of action. May we, like the folks of Ninevah, turn again toward God, as we lament the Gulf's hidden, ongoing tragedy and take action in this community, "so that we do not perish" (Jonah 3:9) as Lazarus' privileged neighbor.

## Notes

1. Michael Schlatter, "The Journal of Rev. Michael Schlatter" in *Colonial and National Beginnings*, vol. 3, Charles Hambrick-Stowe ed., (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1998), 298.
2. Carol Robb, *Wind, Sun, Soil, Spirit: Biblical Ethics and Climate Change*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 5.
- 3-8. James Garvey, *The Ethics of Climate Change* (London: Continuum, 2008), 6-28.
9. Carol Robb, *Wind, Sun, Soil, Spirit: Biblical Ethics and Climate Change*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 9.
- 10&11. Eleazar S. Fernandez, *Reimagining the Human: Theological Anthropology in Response to Systemic Evil* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004), 188-190.
- 12-13. Stephane Hourdez and Chuck Fisher, "Cold-seep Tubeworms," NOAA, <http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/O2Mexico/background/tubeworms/tubeworms.html>, (accessed September 22, 2010).
14. Inspired by a Christina Shults (Siva) sermon at Sycamore UCC in 2010. yet these worms have hooked me.

## Becomes Catholic

(continued from front page)

Christian churches, mine having a very strong stance that differs from the typical PSR sexual ethic.

I write as a Catholic in your midst, a convert about a year and a half old in my Catholic faith... working with a desire to see unity spread throughout the world, but particularly within the Christian faith, embracing a diversity of understandings and traditions. Coming from a very conservative Christian upbringing in Ohio, I am familiar with denominational dogmatism, and have always pushed towards the "forbidden" dimensions in the confines of my particular denomination's brand of faith, Catholicism being no exception. In fact, my interest in the Catholic Church partly began because it was "forbidden" in the somewhat

Presbyterian-Baptist roots the churches I found myself amongst early in life.

I was raised to value above all a personal relationship with Jesus and peace with all of me. Being blessed to grow up in a family who does primarily believe in the universality of Jesus' message to love, doctrinal constraints have always taken second place to loving others. I have come to view Jesus as the boundary-spanner for all issues in life: race, religion, gender, class and anything else you could imagine. This is not to simply these issues as somehow existing within these classifications and categories, but to acknowledge that in the messiness of all these things, there is a peace possible in the approach I have learned with Jesus. I am young, I hardly hold all the answers, but beginning in this short article, I hope to write a series exploring the subjects of conversion and conversation within the many denominations of Christianity to come to a

I write as  
a Catholic  
in your  
midst, a  
convert  
about a  
year and a  
half old in  
my  
Catholic  
faith...

place of personal peace with other individuals, which to me is the epiphany of heaven-on-earth.

In the dialogical relationship I have with Jesus, I have come to believe that holiness is a way of living, dancing that fine line between a boundary-less existence and legalism: holiness requires the entirety of a person's being, but how can a person become whole in order to live holily without a community that will nurture that person into holiness? This is what I hope to move towards in this written conversation with you.

So, I am Catholic now, a member of a community with a particular liturgical identity and philosophy underpinning my theology. The Catholic Magisterium has made clear its perspectives on many sexual issues that in our liberal Independent Republic of Berkeley are usually disregarded, and even laughed at. So the first issue I want to raise is that of diversity: it seems to me that often diversity tends to mean that the most liberal perspective in the room with the most accepting standards should be allowed to set standards for all other perspectives and beliefs. I would like to suggest, differing, that perhaps diversity is a peace with one's own beliefs in a way which permits the variation between conservative and liberal. I think often times we with the more open perspectives cannot understand how anyone could believe any differently. But in doing this, I think we fail to validate the beliefs and upbringing which have formed the more conservative opinions.

In a way, to say that a more conservative sexual ethic is "wrong," or even label it "intolerant" (unless it is dogmatically so), is invalidating the persons who hold these beliefs. I am not suggesting that we need to accept actions of hate or injustices that rob people of rights we believe they hold, but suggesting a mode of communication that may not leave a wake of bitterness in the trail of proactive conversations. Before we can attempt to communicate our beliefs and views, we must first understand those with whom we discuss, so we must listen before we engage. I realize there is a place and time for the more demonstrative protests, the louder speech, but at this place in the lobbying for equal rights, I wonder if perhaps it is time that both parties on the opposing sides of the Prop 8 argument listened to one another again. And what, after listening and going through the process of questioning all our presuppositions, shall we do if we find we simply cannot agree? Let's begin the conversation there next month, with some more specific examples.

I would like to welcome engagement, to be incorporated in next month's piece! Write me at [hmecaskey@op.dspt.edu](mailto:hmecaskey@op.dspt.edu)

## New Shoes

PATRICK RYAN , MTS '11

*The distant gentle calling back*

*A time I do remember*

*When journey life at last was named*

*A leaving of false shelter*

*Now time to stand now time to go*

*My journey calls me either*

*The river deep fear path begins*

*New shoes to brave life's weather*

*No try to thought or had a need*

*To wake loss with loud thunder*

*To kiss again for one last time*

*And send to sleepless slumber*

*Path through walk in sick and kind*

*Stumble time to falter*

*Stop and think of words kind unkind*

*We spoke to one another*

*Hard nailed boots forth feet so sturdy*

*A way to self and other*

*Where journey now I seek to find*

*Will other people follow?*

*Pathway find a journey forth*

*Peace justice sister brother*

*A greater kinder kingdom time*

*To love one and each other*

*I used to walk with head bowed down*

*Seeking gold, knee deep in sin*

*Now I walk with head held high*

*I bow only to my King*

## Love

(continued from front page)  
Milk Plaza with flags and placards in many hands. I took some pictures, but mostly I just watched the people gather and prepare to release an amazing amount of joy. Though not yet legal because of a stay issued by the judge, I saw a Jewish wedding performed in front of the hundreds gathered. Finally, shortly before we started to march, my mother found me and we hugged as she exclaimed, "There's my son!"

I helped push Mom in her wheelchair down Market Street for the two mile trip to City hall. I handed her the signs I had picked up, as well as my camera, so I could focus not only on guiding her, but also on the sights and sounds around me. Mom, for her part, used the camera with gusto, taking hundreds of pictures.

I heard cars honk as they passed going the other direction, and the crowd responding with boisterous cheers. I saw a woman in her SUV wipe away tears from her eyes as we passed her stopped at a stop light. I saw people lining the streets, ignoring momentarily the produce of the farmer's market to smile and wave at the procession. I met a young boy wearing a Sharks sweatshirt and his mother, letting her take a picture of us after we took a picture of them. I head

celebratory music from the truck in front of us, and saw people dancing in their buildings. I looked up to see people on their balconies 20 stories high joining in the festivities by watching from above. I heard a 13 year old girl speak of the acceptance her own family faces now, a girl that that could have been me 15 years ago. I saw dancing in the streets at the end of the rally, a continuing outburst of joy that headed back to the Castro for the rest of the evening.

Love.  
That's what  
it's all about.

After Mom, Erin, and I went to IHOP for a very late dinner to soothe my hunger headache, I had a chance to reflect on the day that had passed, and the past years as well. Was it a decade ago formalized my hopes for the future with the argument over Prop 22? No, it was before that.

I saw stains on some windows today at Harvey Milk Plaza from thrown eggs, and I thought of all the eggs thrown at our house growing up. I remember the time I came home to find someone had thrown an egg through my open

second story bedroom window, splattering yolk all over my wall, ruining what I had placed there. I remember high school friends, and thinking very hard about whom I wanted to invite to our home based on how they might react to my family. I remember sitting in a church in the Castro ten years ago last month, watching my mother marry another woman, not caring if it was legal or not. (Incidentally, I was there. I saw it. They are married, laws be damned!) I remember hiding my family in college for a few months before I figured out it wasn't worth it, and instead decided to stand up for myself, for my family, and for love.

Love. That's what it's all about. I remember sitting in my dorm room six years ago, watching the news unfold like it did today, from the steps of City Hall in San Francisco, wondering if my mother was there, standing in line to be married (again). The joy I felt for the bold action from the first person to earn my vote for life, Gavin Newsom, was tempered by the fact that I was sitting in Crete, Nebraska, not the most conservative part of the country, but not far from it either. I wanted to encourage the love I saw from a thousand miles away, and found the best way I could do that was to join with countless others from the Heartland by leading our PRIDE group to send flowers to a couple waiting in line.

Love. I thought of my own wedding, and how every

argument I had for gay marriage became insignificant to one that day. Nothing else mattered to me then than the love I felt for my wife (and, of course, still feel). They say that your wedding day should be the best day of your life, and for me, it was. How on earth can I deny that feeling to anyone else. How can I tell someone else their love can't be as good as mine? I can't, and I won't, and any other argument pales in comparison to that.

Love. Someone I love once told me (at Camp Caz, no less, the site that would later host my wedding) they admired my capacity for love. I couldn't appreciate that sentiment then as much as I do now, and things slowly fell into place as I thought of this. After all I've been through, love has been my driving force.

Love. Love made me quit my job. More accurately, I realized that while I have talents that served useful at Walmart, they were not my best ones. I couldn't fulfill that capacity for love and do my job to the best of my ability. Unfortunately, it seemed as though the two clashed. I left Walmart telling my manager that I needed to do something in which I could help people, but I realize now it was more than that. After today, I see that my best talent is love, and though loving can be hard sometimes, it's by far the best thing in the world, and there are places more conducive to that than Walmart. So I walked away from a secure, good paying job two months ago for the great unknown. I took time for myself, and then took time to apply for seminary, a leap I know many of my friends were and are confused by.

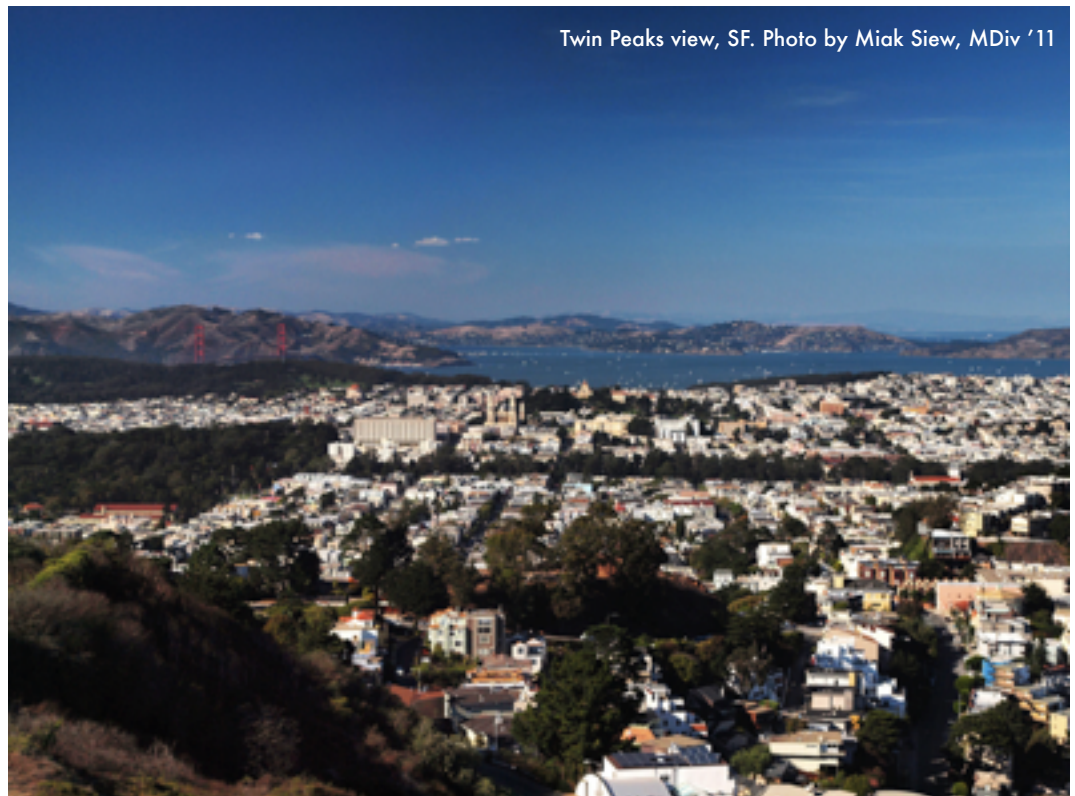
Some say God is love. I'll let you decide if that's true for you.

I thought of these things as I drove through the night, and soon found my drive

accompanied by music and tears. An emotional day, no doubt, but these tears of joy had been yearning to be cried for so long. Of course, the right music helps, and I found it in the words of the Beatles (All you need is love!), Queen and David Bowie (Why can't we give love one more chance?), Coldplay (Lovers, keep on the road you're on.), U2 (In the name of love! What more, in the name of love?), and Tom Petty (You belong with your love on your arm, you belong somewhere you feel free.). And, of course, my drive started magically with the words that comforted me so many times on this journey, the words of a dear friend and a wise man, stated again:

I heard a song, sang one million strong, don't feel alone.

So I drove and cried and thought and hoped. It's not the end of the fight, but it's a good step in the right direction, a step I could be present for this time. Today has been an incredible day for me, to witness so many in the fight for love. I know this: it may take a few days, a few years, or a few lifetimes, but love always wins. Always. And now I know I want to dedicate my life to love, wherever that may lead me.



Twin Peaks view, SF. Photo by Miak Siew, MDiv '11

# GO! Great Outdoors, a New Student Group

JEREMY ARNOLD, MA '12

Do you love to hike? Do you love to camp? Or do you just love spending time outdoors in general?

Well, there's a new student group here at

PSR that seeks to build community in just that: a common love of the great outdoors, which is obviously where we get our name ("The Great Outdoors," acronymed as "GO")! We seek to experience the outdoors together through hiking, camping, and more, by, as one student put it, "getting off Holy Hill and into the holy hills (and valleys, beaches, etc.)."

We will have monthly "Holy Hill meetings" where we plan outings and events, discuss the outcomes of previous events, and talk about the possibilities of how we can best build community in creation. Our first official meeting will take place on Friday, October 8th at noon on the patio of the PSR dining hall.

We will have biweekly "holy hills (etc.) outings" (usually taking place on weekends) to destinations that are nearby. There we'll spend the afternoon or day hiking, hanging out, labyrinth-walking, picnicking, camping - whatever strikes your fancy! Remember, if you come to the monthly meetings, you can voice your opinions on places you'd like to go and things you may want to see and do!

Once a semester we will have a larger camping/hiking trip. We're not sure where we're going this semester, but it will be 2 to 4 days at the beginning of reading week in late October. We'll discuss some specifics at our first Holy Hill meeting on the 8th. Next semester we'll be going to Yosemite. Be excited.

So, come - take advantage of the wonderful opportunity you have living here, and let's experience being outdoors together in community.

PLEASE contact me if you'd like to be placed on the mailing list to get all news and events pertaining to GO. Or you could just join our Facebook group: "The Great Outdoors (GO)."

Hope to see you outdoors!

For more information, contact Jeremy at [jarnold@ses.psr.edu](mailto:jarnold@ses.psr.edu).



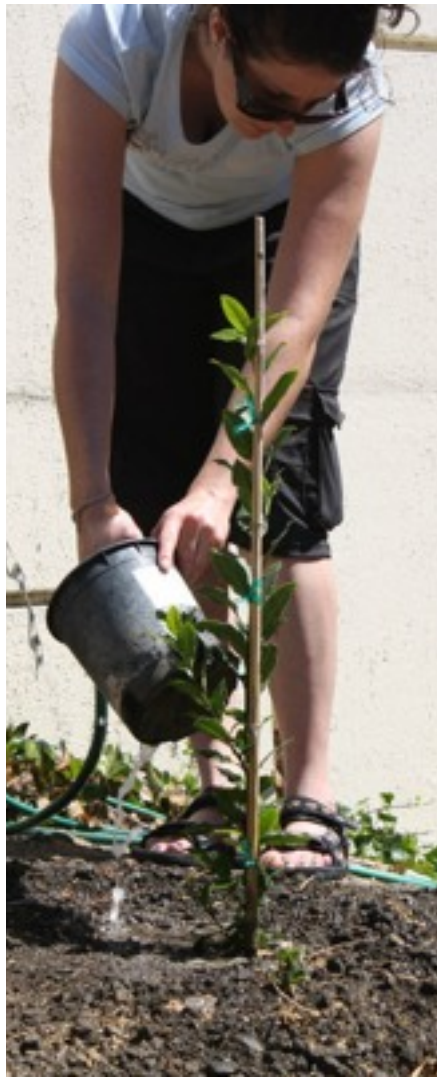
The GO! Great Outdoors group goes hiking, dogs and all! Photo contributed by Jeremy Arnold, MA '12.

# PSR Garden

LIZ BYRNE MA '11

It's August and the garden is in full swing as we enter the late-summer early-fall planting season, meaning the garden is super busy with everyone working on different projects. As the current vegetable crop continues to thrive in the garden between Kofoid and Arch, we have expanded to renovating the area behind the chapel. So far we have planted a number of butterfly bushes (particularly because they attract so many excellent butterflies and hummingbirds), a number of native plants and some tasty edibles, including cumin and echinacea. Our next planting goal is to develop an herb garden in a section of the current community garden.

As a group we are also looking into applying for some grant money in order to take over some unused spaces around campus and plant them with edibles. Additionally, we are trying to secure work study money from the school to fund student work study positions.



Hopefully with the influx of additional funds we can increase the amount and variety of crops grown and continue to build a diverse seed library for successive PSR students. Another goal of the garden for this year is to build an online information site containing educational material about all the plants being grown in the garden and some tips on how to use some lesser known vegetable crops in your cooking.

Though the garden itself is still in some ways in an organizational process, the best way to stay involved is to join the Facebook page or email [garden@ses.psr.edu](mailto:garden@ses.psr.edu). There are no set times to garden now (particularly because everyone's new semester schedule is in flux!) but checking on the Facebook page for updates on when people are gardening is a great way to catch up on what is happening.



Jeremy Arnold, Chelsea Masterman and Jason Guy work on the hillside garden. Above: Chelsea cares for a plant.

# editor page



## Hello, 2010-2011!

Welcome! I am so thrilled to begin my second year as the editor of Logos. My name is Megan Dowdell and I am a PhD student and resident at PSR. I am so thrilled that we have a lot of energy amongst the newly configured Logos Editorial Board! Its members have interests in writing columns, proofreading submissions and celebrating community!

In preparing for the first editorial board meeting, I sent the new members a little bit about what I think Logos is. I thought I would share a piece of that with you:

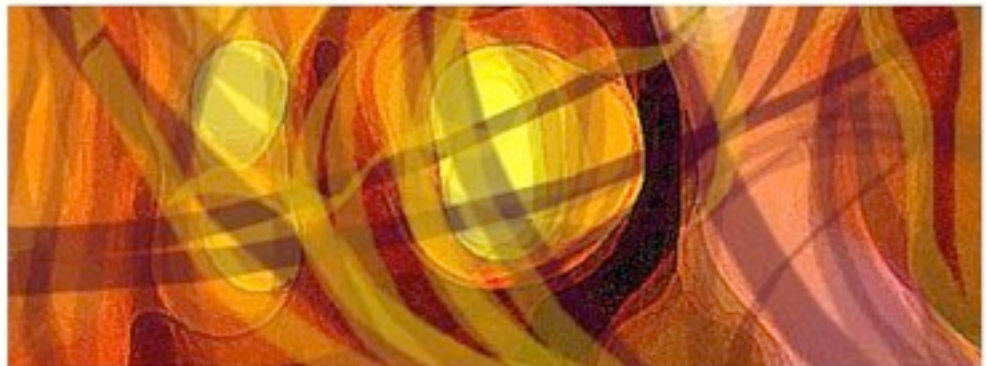
**What is Logos?** Logos is the community newsletter of PSR. We accept anything of interest to the PSR community from PSR students, staff, faculty and families as well as students from GTU member schools. We love artwork, poetry, rants, games/puzzles, reflection papers, sermons, coverage of events, you-name-it. Logos is committed to justice, voices of dissent and the margins, and community awareness. Logos comes out (for the most part) once a month. It has an editor (yours truly) who is paid and hired by the CAPSR council. This past year, the submission process has involved publicized deadlines that are flexible to the needs of the author (as well as the editorial board and editor) and individual asks for submissions on particular topics or events or student groups. This worked exceedingly well and as a community endeavor, Logos nearly tripled in size from years past! WAHOO!

**What isn't Logos?** Logos IS NOT an academic journal, a collection of student work, a newspaper, a magazine, a literary paper, or a set of ads. All are welcome to submit whatever they want.

Logos is NOT themed, except when it is. While we do not publicize a theme ahead of time, depending on the season or the interests of a group of authors or members of the editoria board, a themed section may be created, or theme might organically "appear." Logos is NOT pretentious. Logos does not take itself too seriously and hopes you will celebrate the beautiful mixities that take shape in its publication, which is never without error! Logos is NOT fixed or without exceptions! So, all of the above is subject to change and up for discussion! For example, while Logos is not right now an academic/literary journal, a special issue that was this could be really fun, don't you think?

**What is the Editorial Board?** The LOGOS Editorial Board is a support team for all aspects of LOGOS production, accountable to CAPSR and in particular, contributing authors and potential contributing authors. Facilitated by the LOGOS editor, the Editorial Board meetings are four to five times per semester, although duties and communication continues between meetings. In addition to the work of producing LOGOS, the Editorial Board members also focus their attention on the questions: "Who is/is not being heard? Whose voices need to be lifted up? How does/does not LOGOS tell the story of today's PSR?"

Welcome first-year students. I invite you to join Logos, follow us on Facebook.com and bring your gifts to Logos.



"The Mystery...Unsaid," a photo painting by Cynthia A. Rose, '01, '04

# gratitude

for our readers,  
for our contributors,  
for new editorial board  
members,  
for continuing editorial board  
members,  
for fresh starts,  
for summer weather in  
October,  
for campus pastors  
for hugs,  
for the Spirit for bringing us to  
print and showing us how to  
communicate in Love and for  
Justice.



BART. Photo by Miak Siew

## Thinking of seminary?

### Think of **PACIFIC SCHOOL of RELIGION**

Located in the exciting environment of Berkeley, California, across the Bay from San Francisco, Pacific School of Religion (PSR) has been committed to serving God by equipping historic and emerging faith communities for ministries of compassion and justice in a changing world since 1866. Its Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (CLGS), founded in 2000, was the first such center at an American seminary.

A multid denominational Christian school, PSR offers Master of Divinity and Master of Theological Studies degrees; an MA degree in conjunction with its next-door neighbor and theological partner, the Graduate Theological Union; and the doctor of ministry degree. In addition, PSR offers six certificate programs, including one in Sexuality and Religion. For more about all of our programs, visit [psr.edu](http://psr.edu).

## a tradition of boldness

## In the Next Issue...

- Faculty Interviews
- Poems!
- Your Work Here

Submit your reviews of books, films and plays. Submit your doodles. Submit a ramble or rant. Submit your best paper from last year. Get your professor, partner or pet to create a work of art and submit it to LOGOS! Bring your voice to the PSR Community.

### SUBMISSIONS/INQUIRIES

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