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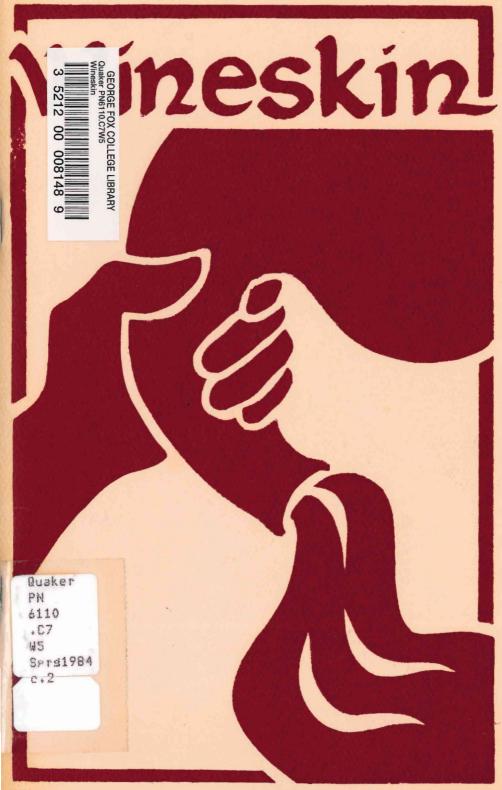
Spring 1984

Wineskin, Spring 1984

Mark Coterill ed.

Benjamin Jeffery ed.

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Wineskin

Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.

Matthew 9:17

Shambaugh Library

Volume I, Number 1

Spring, 1984

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Gift

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Note from the Editor

"Literature that is not the air of its contemporary society, that dares not pass on to society its pains and fears, that does not warn in time against threatening moral and social dangers, such literature does not deserve the name of literature; it is a facade."

> Alexander Solzhenitsyn from: Letter to the Fourth National Congress of Soviet Writers

I'm with Alex. Fortunately, a statement such as his can be used in the United States as an explication of duties rather than in defense of rights. But the explication does nothing if not heeded. So we have decided to publish Wineskin.

When we first announced the journal I had "fears" about receiving enough material to print a quality publication. My fear was unwarranted. The number of submissions we received, almost one hundred, and the content of those submissions, proved to me that there are plenty of student writers at George Fox College who know that Christianity isn't all happygo-lucky and also know there's nothing criminal about saying so.

It is my hope that the sculpted abstracts found in Wineskin will direct toward truth. It is also my hope that new wine will continue to be poured into Wineskin in the future.

*

- -

6

Mark Coterill Co-editor

And you said

And you said What are your thoughts? & I said "How pretty you are, Your tossed Red hair and Winded eyes, And those rose cheeks."

From each gold-green Eye you said I don't think so, & Shock your own thoughts.

7

Richard Lentini

Studying

lying here in the greeness

trying so to concentrate

on this book lying smartly

under shadows of kites

taught by the sun and wind

and merry-goround clouds Ballad of a Mad, Green-eyed Monster

Spend it leisurely. Follow your hysteria. Here comes the allure of So much for so little. Untamed impulse. A bedeviling convenience.

Richard Lentini

Richard Lentini

Nietzsche's Coin

We shall Write an elegy For God.

If people Will believe Such nonsense.

Apart

Apart -like the two arms of a drawbridge opened, taut cables straining against the weight of Separation, the trembling beams anticipating Reunion.

Richard Lentini

The Bones Under My Plate

Y sit alone At my table for too Many and watch life Pass me by, somehow Tastefully tucked inside The mashed potatoes.

Smashed into blood red sweet Are the cranberries, my Heart's joy--though they cling Like gossip to my teeth-

And the fine company I am honored to entertain At no cost to them, excuse My honesty and don't mind Please if I hide the Bones under my plate...

The mutton undercooked And wet, not yet time I guess, to delve into Another Though my heart waters And sings its cranberry song--

Not yet time, I say, And I still the stirring of The bones under my plate

The bones which are My own.

The bones have lost their faces In my heart I Cannot tell the first From the last, Yet they cry and beg Recognition In this time of not yet time--

Their cry is unified By the commonality of their death --through the din of other thoughts--

At the on-and-on-and-on Of the dinner.

Fred Tillman

The Lazarus Poem

Laz'rus-in untimely way--Decide upon to die one day, To mix with Bible piety Emotional variety.

But Jesus, omnipresent friend, Be outa town and missed the end.

3 days, thus, did Laz'rus lie And up to highheaven the stench did fly!

So, making the best of a bad situation, Jesus turned a wake into celebration-yes, Laz'rus walked but he never said Whether life were best or best were dead.

Fred Tillman

Still Life

I sit in silence. Time for now slowed Body feels as mind thinks-fingers of stillness touch my soul. Eye Talk

we look eye to eye. Like fixed north to north. Our focus a smile that speaks turn away.

Bob Besel

The Dream

We've been best friends ever since the first day of third grade. We shared many adventures, growing up together. Ben was always big for his age, and as we got older this natural size and his habit of lifting weights everyday gave him a distinct advantage over our peers. Nobody ever gave Ben a bad time. Nobody gave me a bad time either--he was my best friend.

We were sixteen and had just received our passports to the real world, the coveted Driver's License. Everything seems different when you are first driving someplace without an adult in the car. You must know that adventurous, almost euphoric feeling of freedom right after you got your license. Well, that's how we felt. Instead of going to a party or something like that, we would just drive around. We didn't go cruising like everyone else; instead we would drive down a road that we were not familiar with and see where it went. One drive was more than we bargained for.

This particular experience occurred in the summer between my sophomore and junior years. We had decided to do something that evening but we couldn't think of anything thrilling. So, for lack of anything better to do, we went to McDonald's to junk out and get our B.G.L. (Blood Grease Level) up into operating range. This done, we decided to drive around for awhile. It seemed a totally normal Friday night.

Ben was driving the "Toy," his family's grey Toyota station wagon, and I reclined in the passenger seat, digesting, while staring at the roof and watching the street lights as their harsh illumination beamed in and out of the car. I was in an almost hypnotic state from the rhythmic glare of the lights, the hum of the engine, and the sound of the tires on the asphalt when suddenly Ben grew tense.

"Lock the door," he said nervously.

"Why?" I said.

"Because I had a dream about this."

"You had a dream about what?"

"I had a dream about this," he repeated. "I had a dream about this, now sit up and lock the door."

I sat up and noticed that we were in an area that I did not recognize and asked, "What are you talking about?"

"I had a dream about what we are doing now. I dreamed that I was driving the 'Toy' and you were with me, and we were in this area."

"Is that all you remember?" I said. "What happened in your dream?" We made a left turn.

"I remember making that turn in my dream. Then I remember we took a right, then we turned right again onto a long straight street and drove clear to the end of it." He said slowly, "I don't remember which way we turn when we reach the end. The rest is a blur except that it is something bad, something really bad."

We turned right.

Now I know Ben quite well, since we've been friends for so long. Because of this he can't con me, but trying to do so is one of his favorite pastimes. He can fool everyone else, but he can't fool me. This just makes him try harder to fool me. In view of this, I did not believe a word he was saying, and I let him know as much. "Quit trying to con me," I said.

"I'm not," he pleaded. "Lock your door."

I saw then that he was sincerely scared and that beads of sweat were breaking out on his forehead. I locked my door.

We turned right again. This time onto a street that was long and straight. There was something eerie about this street. It had wall-to-wall houses on both sides, but it was as if there was nobody home. It was about 9:30 p.m. and the only lights that were on in the whole neighborhood were the small, identical streetlights--one next to the driveway of each house. The whole place reeked of "The Twilight Zone."

"Do you remember anything else yet?" I asked apprehensively.

"Yeah," he said very slowly. "I remember that, well, I'm still not sure which way we turned at the end of this street, but the road we turn onto turns into a gravel road. We drive down the gravel road to a dark spot with trees all around, and there are houses being built there. We see a girl that we know running down the road."

"What does she look like?" I interrupted.

"She has long blonde hair and is wearing a T-shirt, blue jeans, and socks. I remember that we stop to talk to her and she screams at us to get out here before it is too late. I remember trying to turn around in the gravel. When *it* happens . . ."

"When what happens?" I asked desperately.

"Something terrible, I'm not sure what, I just know that it is something bad and evil."

New I was scared. It's not comforting to see someone 6'4", 230 pounds of muscle shaking with fear. We could now see the end of the street getting closer and knew that it was now or never. Either we turned around now or we kept going and found out what the end of the dream had in store for us. We began to feel an almost irresistable force drawing us forward. We had to make a decision now! Ben decided.

He practically screamed, "I'm getting out of here!" as he hurriedly executed a "Rockford" style U-turn, narrowly missing a mailbox. We sped back the way we came and did not stop until we got to my house where we were spending the night. We ran inside and locked the dor, practically barricading ourselves upstairs in my room. Ben told me to go down to the basement and make sure the sliding-glass door was locked. I can think of nothing worse than to have to check to see if the sliding-glass door is locked, at night, when you are scared. As I started down the first of two flights of stairs Ben yelled, "What if it comes up the stairs while you're gone?"

Great, I thought, thanks a lot Ben. "My shotgun is right there and there are three boxes of shells under the chair."

"But Greg, what if it's not alive?"

"Then it can't hurt you," I answered, trying unsuccessfully to convince myself. I checked the door and literally flew up the stairs, yelling as I went.

The next hour was spent discussing whether the girl was sill out there someplace and needed our help. We said she didn't. Our fear did not abate as we were the only ones in the house and it got stormy outside. Then we heard a noise outside. We froze. Something was at the door. The dog barked and we heard the door open and something came in.

"Hi boys! We're home!" I heard my Mom call.

Current Advent

Somebody forgot the basket, didn't know how to plait reeds or was tired... too tired to search farther than the alley, with its convenient receptacle, for a place to leave a child.

newly born, his mewing heard by the bag-lady, stencilled alley woman Egyptian princess incognito.

Grey eyes among coffee filters and cat food cans, stretching arms... there is no sister watching from behind the rush-hours and this mother isn't waiting.

On Unfairness

My excuses for not writing were always so good... Yours for dying wasn't even original.

Sharon Gilmore

Sharon Gilmore

Unnamed.

I

tread water at your window... And, unwished upon, move on.

Hindsight

If given the chance now, I would certainly inform you of this fact:

You never were the axis upon which my world turned anyhow.

Sharon Gilmore

Sharon Gilmore

Portland at night

Walking along the banks of asphalt creek beds, I watch night's concrete tongue stretching Into steel canyons. Lights flicker sleepily--Broken starlight That sizzles as it touches the river.

My shadow rudely mimics me Wriggling up and down between cracks in the sidewalk. He walks with a surer pace, He glances my direction.

Street lamps bow like wilting flowers Ro passing cars, Their lights flouncing off polished paint jobs, Creating oily rainbows On the ribbed sides of truck trailers.

I stop to listen--Crickets Defying the commanding snorts Of distant truck engines. Here, I find only loneliness And weeds pushing up through cracked cement.

Chopping Wood

Pines sound questions, Oaks shrug their shoulders. Rain soaked soil Reaches out Clutching the fence posts Smoothing the folds Of an aging garden.

Burning leaves crackle Beneath chalk gray muslin That is predictably calm.

My hand's stiff grip The dismembering swing The cold smile of the ax blade.

Scott Young

Critique, Isogesis, and Fugue

The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down.

Seeing is good,

seeing into the future is better.
Believing is good,
believing into the future is better;
and worse, because
even a Prophet's vision is dubious of fulfillment,
and his epistemology starts riots
here and there.

The ax is laid at the root of the trees.

The rest of us know nothing of what we really want, nor how to find it, nor how to get it if we did; labor on in semi-darkness, semi-seeing what we're semi-doing.

The ax is laid at the root of the trees.

Ha! Trees, you little dummies, if the word of escape fell on your oaken ears, would your oaken noggins know what to do?

The axiology is laid at the root of the trees. Little tree, look up to heaven and sing: to the Gardener-General of every blight on you, every worm in you; let ax fall on disease and parasite; let ax pass over your own root and pith. Stretch in secret to seize the stars; consider your meddling, seek this teleological flaw in the sky that you yourself have effected.

The axiology is laid at the root of the trees. Ha!. So sing-you little dummiesof the Big Fat Fool Syndrome, of how you would so soon be that cord of firewood were God to heft his axiology, already at the root of the tree.

Ha! God, you big joker; scare us to death, then cover us over with grace.

Benjamin Jeffery

For Sarah

That last day I cried; next day cried a week should have cried sooner. So much you didn't see, I couldn't tell you.

You didn't see me stumble and fall in the underground: King's Cross to Heathrow; or smear the omnibus window with tears, reeling blind and feeble.

Finite tears cease after a while I smile again, search other faces, yet on a still night haunted by your name.

Benjamin Jeffery

Bridge

Fleeing afternoon I turned back toward the bridge where we had sat where we had said our lines to each other, been fast friends. The path was overgrown; I sloughed through mud, brambles and rain water to reach at last the stream the bridge crossed.

I found the bridge demolished, its broken beams overwashed, askew in the mud. One last plank stretched over the stream, but moss grew on it. It looked too slippery to walk on anymore.

Benjamin Jeffery

I challenged a Christian once. Sure, he said, I have a nice house, A nice car, I can "pinch an inch." But Jesus is my pal-He has just really blessed me. The poor? I pray for them, and I just really do care.

David Hagen

Tinted glasses.... The more you see. a flower blooms/ a stomach bloats The more they tint.

Tinted glasses The older you get, a child smiles/ a bomb explodes The dimmer you see.

i could complain: "I'd rather be blind!" But that's not true. Half the glimpse I cherish.

Vince walked with him for a long time, quietly, watching the expression that never changed, while Father Lenehan, momentarily inspecting each morsel of death, loaded his box.

Father Lenehan checked his watch. "Do you have time for a chat, son? I've got some fresh biscuits."

"I guess so. Just have to be home for supper." "Fine."

Still carrying the box, Vince followed him into the parish house where he lived behind the church. It was dark inside, and Vince felt cool and damp after being out in the hot spring air. He followed the black form through the sparsely furnished living room, into the kitchen, and toward a large, locked door at the back corner of the house. The priest swung his key-ring out of his pocket, shook it, and located the right one. He hefted the door open, and, a penetrating, nauseous odor rolled out, "Formaldehyde," he said and smiled. "You can set the bees on the floor in there.'

Vince peered into the room, straining his eyes to adjust to the black. "On the wall to your left, son." He stepped in and groped for the wall, hoping Father Lenehan wouldn't think to close the door and lock him in. He felt the switch and pushed it. He blinked in the glaring light.

Little forms of pink and white flesh floated in mason jars piled on shelves up to the ceiling. There were stuffed birds and rodents harging about, but mostly still and silent forms in suspending liquid.

"You may se it down in the far corner." He realized he had been just standing there, holding the box. He carried it ot the corner,

Suspended Death

One of the stained glass windows had broken and was replaced by a clear window, and Vince could see Father Lenehan's bees racing to and from the three white bins near the church pond from where he sat in the fifth pew. It was early May and the bees labored feverishly, working themselves to death in about six weeks. Some would lose strength in midair and fall to the ground, pulled down by the precicus cargo they carried in tiny sacs in their legs. They would spin in circles there in an entanglement of wings, legs, and grass, and they would die.

Vince often stopped by after school to watch the bees, and once he saw Father Lenehan picking up the corpses, one by one, and putting them in a black box about the size of a shopping bag. There was no wind, and the other bees paid no notice of him; but one would, now and then, land in his hair, and he would softly brush it out with his hand. Vince watched him for a minute or two going about his work in the same solemn fashion with which he lit the candles before Sunday morning mass. He was a tall man with a dark face and deep-set eyes. His homily most often concerned death and the importance of regular confessions and dutiful prayers. It was Father Lenehan who suggested the registration of the congregation each Sunday mass, for to miss this service without exceptional excuse was at least a venial sin. Vince had neither spoken with him in the past, nor planned to that day, but his stare caught the priest's attention, who motioned for him to come to him.

"Come to see my bees, have 'ya now? Here." He handed Vince the black box and dropped another corpse in. "They die honorably."

29

David Hagen

slowly, careful not to bump anything. He set it down and looked about. "What are...what do you do with them?"

"Study them...dissect them."

"It's quite cold." He folded his arms, and the two studied each other between rows of flesh. The priest was leaning against the open door.

"It's refrigerated. It keeps them fresh."

He looked into the jars while Father Lenehan watched him. "Are any of these..I mean...Have you ever...studied...humans?" Father Lenehan smiled. "Not often. None of them are human."

It was strange--the way he smiled. The room was very cold. The formaldehyde was making Vince dizzy. He started walking toward the door. "I guess it's time for me to go home."

"Wait a minute, son." He placed his hand on Vince's chest to stop him. "I was hoping you could help us out. You see, we're very short of boys this year." He was looking straight into Vince's eyes, who began to tremble. He didn't answer. "You would be very useful to us. You'd be serving your parish--your God." He still couldn't answer. "Well," he took his hand off his chest, "I hope you'll consider it."

Vince stepped out into the kitchen, and Father Lenehan turned off the light and locked the door. They walked back through the living room and the priest opened the front door. "Being an alter-bey is an honorable duty," he said. Vince took a deep breath of fresh air and stepped outside. He walked a few steps and turned to face Father Lenehan.

"I'll let you know, Father." His voice seemed high.

Cather Lenehan smiled. He reached down and picked up a dead bee, then disappeared behind the door.

Closing Night

The janitor came and cleaned up The mess we made on stage. He put away the props, And the make up, And swept up any sign that we Had ever performed. When he had finished, He left nothing untouched but the lights, Which themselves slowly receded into darkness. Then the janitor turned the key and locked up. I gave him a standing ovation, Free to be Dead

The Plague of a Humanity Both Blessed and Cursed Condemned to be free Free to be Condemned

The Tragedy of Thought A Neglect of Opportunity Programmed to be free Free to be Programmed

The Delusion of Words Truth is discarded Deceiving to be free Free to be Deceived

The Despair of Mankind Creation without Escape Free to die Dying to be Free

Conscience Doth Make Cowards (so he says)

To be or not to be? To become or to rot? To walk head down on railroad tracks or to stub a toe on a tie and see trees?

Are trees outside two iron rails? Or is gravel between timbers a place where treasures hide?

Trees and treasures, and other things-some joy to me, fear to you, some joy to you, fear to me.

33

What to see and what to ignore? What to flee and what to explore?

Mark Coterill

Shambaugh Library

Bill Schniedewind

Upon Discovery

"I can do this!"

Silence. Eyes evade mine. No one responds. The hazy stage offers nothing now. Have I vanished? What did I say? Will I ever re-materialize?

"Maybe I can't."

Let's Just be Friends (if we must)

To be what should have been long ago is now, after tear, an imperative.

Mark Coterill

God Needs to Take a Math Class

I used to think God was a great mathematician. It seemed logical Someone who put together something as complex as the universe would be a math whiz. I'm disillusioned. Perhaps God is not good in math since He's the first to exist and no one else existed to teach him all the rules. After carefully scrutinizing the Bible, I have come to the conclusion that God needs to take a math class.

Even before a child learns how to count, he knows one plus one equals two. In Genesis 2 God says one plus one equals one. Because this equation is a word problem, most people don't notice it says that. What it actually says is man shall cleave, or add when correctly translated, to his wife and they shall become one flesh. The equation is simply adding one and one, but God missed it and said one plus one equals one. I even checked the problem out on my calculator, but God still missed a first grade math test giveaway.

The saying "Like father like son," also applies to God and Jesus. Since the Father thinks one plus one equals one, Jesus thinks so, too. In John 10:30, Jesus says, "I and the Father are one." The Jews were so incensed with His poor mathematics they started to stone Him. The Jews were really sensitive about sloppy mistakes.

With a so fundamental problem in simple addition, I hesitantly looked at God's multiplication. I wasn't surprised to find that God violates the first rule of multiplication: anything times zero equals zero. It's embarrassing to discover the first verse in the Bible violates this basic rule. Genesis 1:1 says "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This is a word problem that, when deciphered correctly, reads one times zero equals everything. A clear violation of the first rule. Again, I tried the problem on my calculator to make sure I wasn't wrong. How He worked around this law is beyond me.

As one might imagine, Someone who made such fundamental mistakes would run into problems in everyday situations. Jesus' disciples faced the consequences of Jesus' poor math when Jesus threw a party for 5,000 of His closest friends. It takes a lot of pizza to feed 5,000 men. The women weren't counted because they were all on diets. But according to my calculations, Jesus still needed 1,670 large pizzas. His math was so had He thought he only needed five leftover pizza crusts and two sardines. Jesus' Pizzaria was open. The disciples and I must have had the same math class because they agreed that Jesus didn't have enough supplies for 1,670 pizzas. Probably because they knew there wasn't even enough supplies to feed them. Maybe they wanted some sauce and cheese on their pizzas. Maybe they didn't like sardines. No matter which reason, they knew Jesus would quickly run out of pizzas. After the party the disciples picked up twelve baskets of pizza crusts. I don't understand; if Jesus was so bad at math, how could He finish with more than he started?

God's Gap

U Fail Not I a lot

Jim Elliot

Seducing the Muse

I need you For tonight only

Come into me Give me your joys

Though I love only When papers are due

In sin u ate Death into Life.

Eve

Gary Holton

Jesus Hospital

A continuing saga Young Dr. Willdare, Surgeon General To the Holy Rolling Empire

Video needle Intravenous grace Turn up the worship Drown out the life

William Stafford in RC 140

He stood, softened by years of words. His eyes, gentle and distant with private visions soon to be known, looked across the room of the expectant participants of his words. He spoke. And as the vision of his words danced first slowly then with quickened swayings of imagination; the students sat bemused by the rhythms of his dancers. And they too shared in his softness of years.

Gary Holton

On the way to the beach in Autumn

Wisps of vapor soft greyness crowning bottle-green billowed hills, set as vibrant jewels in the moist valley; rise before us as specters of Autumn's spirit. A road, gleaming from rain burdened clouds, is, as a seam, stitched through the robe of this land. The glimmering hills permit with graciousness, this road to lie in their verdant folds, like a cat dozing in the lap of on old man.

Not Muses At All

Dulled by academia, coffee-stained, I doze on the sofa at 4:00 a.m. Voices! From heaven the muses descend, murmuring my--

Hold on. Not muses, but buck-toothed puppets: Kubla, Kahn & Ollie, explicating poetry.

Then, Snow White arguing Christian Beliefs with the Seven Deadly Sins of whom I can name, oh no only four.

Guy Edmonds

Wineskin

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