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EDITORS Mindae M. Kadous
Jodi Rowland

EDITOR-IN-TRAINING Stacy Colombo

WEB DESIGN Michael Zaremba

LAYOUT Mindae M. Kadous
Jodi Rowland
Stacy Colombo

SUBMISSION REVIEW COMMITTEE
Charles Colleran & Jason Cotugno
Matthew Cotugno & William T. Harvey & John Karbowski
Megan Lindley & Melissa Macko & Alyssa Osinski
Linda Wert

ALUMNI ADVISOR A. L. Higham

FACULTY ADVISORS M. J. Iuppa
Theresa Nicolay, Ph.D.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

A new year has arrived, blowing in not only drifts of snow, but new frustrations, fears, and hopes. Here at The Angle, the New Year has also brought changes to our staff and our publication. We have extended our magazine to the web with an innovative Web site that captures The Angle's mission and creative works. We are confident that this will be a great addition to the magazine. In addition, Stacy Colombo joins us as the next editor-in-training and will be working with Jodi Rowland as co-editor of The Angle in Fall, 2003.

This issue, in particular, deals with emotional and thought-provoking topics. With the new uncertainties that are plaguing personal and world relations, it is important that we provide writers with a voice and our readers with different viewpoints. We believe this promotes free expression of ideas, whether or not The Angle staff agrees with all the ideas published within this magazine.

We hope that you will continue to find The Angle an expressive, creative platform. We promise to present the best talent that resides in this college community. The next Angle deadline is March 31st, and we encourage you to submit your artwork, poetry, and prose.

Thank you,

Mindae M. Kadous, Editor
Jodi Rowland, Editor
Stacy Colombo, Editor-in-Training
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ANGEL'S HOME GROWN AWARDS

READERS' CHOICE

FIRST PLACE  GEORGE CASSIDY PAYNE . . . FOLK SONG
SECOND PLACE  WEGDAN ASHAKI . . . THE CRY OF THE HORSEMAN
THIRD PLACE  JOSHUA TOMASZEWSKI . . . STEPH'S CHOICE

ART PICK

ART AWARD  JAMES STANCZYK

JODI ROWLAND
GEORGE CASSIDY PAYNE

FOLK SONG

“We do not admire the man of timid peace”
Teddy Roosevelt

“We are all fools for Christ sake”
St. Paul

america, america
Lighthouse overlooking
Gulag’s hellish harbors
Your vanity served their madness

You knew about the bed bugs all along, didn’t you?

america, america
You carved a hole in Iron mountain
You built yourself a hidden fortress
Where no man could see you sell liberty

You pardoned vivisections
Performed on Marines
In underground laboratories in Nanjing
The rape of honor still screams

America, america
Time you start looking after
Your own future?

For as you mobilize against al-Qaeda spies
A forgotten war you waged—is still being fought
Off the coast of Hiroshima.

Babies are being slaughtered in the wombs
Of mothers going bald from leukemia
Fathers shit themselves in straw tombs

america, america
Where synthetic sickness looms
Your legacy is not far behind

Tell me Mr. Truman
Tell me Harry,
Why was there a second boom?

Yes, I hear you singing america!
Loud enough so you can’t
Hear yourself think.

“Babies are being slaughtered in the wombs
Of mothers going bald from leukemia
Fathers shit themselves in straw tombs”
MINDAE M. KADOUS

WESTERN SANCTUARIES

From a splintering wicker chair on our screened-in porch, I watch the thunderheads rolling off into the West, leaving only the soft patting sound of rain falling on dirt. Trush lies next to me, head high, ears falling back, sniffing the soaked air. I smell it, too—cowboy cologne. At least, that is what my mom calls it, and every other western romantic. It scents this desert after every rain. It’s derived from the earth, from a plant called sagebrush. I have never smelled it anywhere else.

I watch Trush perk up his ears to the distant bark of our neighbor’s Great Dane. The hairs of his rust-colored coat are lifting slightly in the wind... I was in second grade when I went to pick him out. The litter was very small—just him and his brother. I remember the family we bought him from. They lived in a trailer park on the southwest side of town. I think there were maybe six or seven children, some were missing shoes and others shirts. They all just stood there and watched me, trying to decide between the two. When I got down on my knees, Trush came running over to me. His brother just huddled next to their mother laying by the door. I could tell he did not want to go, but Trush, Trush was different.

He starts to whine and scratch at the floppy screen door. He is restless, he wants out. So do I. I lean over and nudge the door open, watching him go down the steps and towards the palo verde tree. He loves to lie at the base of it and roll around on the cool ground after a rain. I tie my running shoes a little tighter and walk out on the glossy gravel. The late afternoon sun is pushing its way through the clouds, tinting everything in the same light. Though I have tried, I cannot describe the color. I have never seen it in a box of crayons, or any prism. I know how it is made though—mixing a warm southern rain with a setting western sun.

"I know how it is made though—mixing a warm southern rain with a setting western sun"

I pick up my feet and begin to jog. I jog around the side of our house, past the tall pine trees. I can hear the wind sifting the needles, a sound that exists only because of Christmases that we felt the need to plant. I start to jog faster down the back slopes of our four acres. Past our empty stables, past old, hollow riding jumps whistling as the wind tunnels through them. With strong steps, I dig my way up dirt banks lining the wash, all full of seasons that have been dumped. The small rocks and dirt collect around my ankles and slide down between my socks and skin. As I make my way down the other side of the bank, sticks and weeds are tangled to my laces. I kick them off and keep running through the heaps of sand dunes and the sagebrush that covers the wash and snags at my socks and bare legs.

I am running past houses, pools, barns, silos, and fences: I am running past backyards. I can see rusted metal chairs and tables turned upside down. There is a yellow truck tilting without a left front tire. It sits next to an old, wooden barn that is
worn and black, splintering up at all ends. There is house with a pool full of floating rafts and foam noodles. It has a blue slide that curves toward the water. By the back gate, a cracked, green hose coils up in the corner, and a shovel lies next to a newly dug hole. I am running past two old bikes with cards stuck in the spokes, a deflated basketball lying in a puddle, a tire swing hanging from a mesquite tree, and a garden thriving of bottle brushes and gerber daisies.

There is white fencing lining a ranch full of horses that are kicking up the fresh soil. A backlight turns on. A woman’s voice calls out to a young boy that it is time for dinner. The boy sits on the ground crying and yelling out to his mother that he cannot find his cap gun. I am running past an overgrown yard full of tumbleweed and catclaw and piping that has been stacked up against a maroon and white horse trailer. Next door, a white-iron table and chairs cover a huge porch, and a chiminea sits off in the corner of the deck. A golden retriever is digging in a sand volleyball court that is set up a few yards down from the porch.

“... sanctuaries fastened with ornaments, layers of information about our lives and who we are.”

I think to myself that this is it. Backyards filled with rights and wrongs, hobbies and dreams, hopes and sorrows, pride and laziness—sanctuaries fastened with ornaments, layers of information about our lives and who we are.

It is getting dark out and I can feel the hot breath of the Southern night on the back of my neck, and my shirt is beginning to feel damp. I climb back up the dirt banks and onto our property. I slow my jog and lighten my steps. I walk towards my house, trying to cool down. Over to my right sits an historic silo that crumbles a little more every year. Historians dated it back to the days of the Cowboys and Indians. My brothers used to dig out bullet shells in its clay walls. Now, every once in awhile, my parents find teenagers hanging out in it, lighting bonfires, drinking, and making out.

I walk around the side of my house, past my mom’s garden where a wooden windmill creaks and teeters in the wind. As I approach the screened-in porch, Trush sits up from under the palo verde and starts to flop his tail from side to side. I call him in with me and he trots over, covered in loose dirt and burrs. We sit on the porch together. Carefully, I pick off what’s gathered on his coat; his wet nose and tongue push up against the back of my leg. I know it is the sagebrush that he smells.
LINDA WERT

FIRST GEAR

My first time behind the wheel
Engine humming, in rhythm
with the blood coursing through my veins.

Hands quivering touching for the first time
exploring the curves, feeling the heat.
Shift into gear, ready to move
With an explosion of power the engine roars.

I’m nervous, he’s floored
Momentary stop of breath, life, time.
We’re moving now, my heart’s racing.
I feel powerful, sharing his power.

Speeding up, I’m exhilarated
I need more, keep it going.
We end in exhaustion
No longer innocent.

JOSHUA TOMASZEWSKI

AT OUR BEST

I hear before I see.
Light, caressing ambience of a cotton trumpet.
An angel’s chorus, the harp of lips and tongue.
   I smell before I see.
The seductive aromas of fresh baked bread and cooked onion.
Candle flicker and flower petal carried from open window.
   I feel before I see.
A blanket womb twisting, contorting.
Finding, then losing the perfect spot on the pillow.
   Suddenly I see.
Blurry from the vibrating glow of a rising San Diego sun.
Haze of white walls and empty spaces.
   Kick off the sheets.
   Eat Breakfast.
   Read the newspaper.
She feeds the cat and waters the plants.
We make love.
Take a small nap (11 minutes).
CD player opens, swallows.
Two seconds later, dance with Sir Duke.
I want to place you in front of me
floating on the water’s surface,
the surface where my dream
meets my reality.
I want to feel
the coolness of the
deep water blue ocean
around my sinking sand toes—
like refreshing liquid
pouring down my throat.
I want the fresh breeze
to sweep me from behind
knocking my momentum,
my freedom, my hands
into the glassy, rippling water.
I want to know how the power
of this water does not submerge me—
it is not confined in an ice cube,
it is not narrow as a stream,
it is not angry like rapid falls,
and it is not lost inside of me—
Instead, it is I who am lost
inside the contents
of this watery world.
I want to shut off the dying sun,
turn the cotton candy blue clouds
and butter cream yellow light
to darkness, and close my eyes
as the sea rises to the sky.

"Instead, it is I who am lost
inside the contents
of this watery world."
Megan Lindley

Wisdom Stars

His eyes seem to be shooting off firecrackers
Like the finale of a 4th of July display
Alternating one and then the other
Then several times over
To others they appear
More like puls—ing yel—low
Lights on a railroad crossing sign
The difference—the glimmer, only she is able to see
Reminding her of the stars above

She looks to them for answers and inspiration
As they twin—kle one by one
Almost as if they are winking
Trying to tell her something
If only she could interpret the meaning

Stacy Colombo

Rippled Waters

Standing on the aged, sable brown planks
of the deck in the early hours of
the day, just as the sun awakens
and begins to raise its head, its beam
of beauty outnumbers the fog amid
the cool, damp day. The smell of
the morning dew upon the velvet grass
and the perfume of the earth’s
breath, induces a sense of tranquility
and remembrance. The image of my
sister and me swimming in the waist-
dee p water, surrounded by seaweed covered
boulders, sparks a memory of innocence.
Looking back on the games of Marco
Polo and the handstands performed underneath
the lemon grass green water, I shed a
tear, for I know we are no longer children.
A Single Parent’s Love

It is quite interesting how love
Or the word love that is
Can bring 2 people who really don’t feel each other physical bliss
And sometimes more than just physical bliss come out of this
More times than less
People are blessed
With opportunities to be put to the test
Of parenthood, though a concept often misunderstood
By many
It takes 2 to tango right?
But most times women left
To deal with painfully swollen breasts the size of mangos
And raise seeds all alone
18 years of post-partum depression zone
Father hmmm unknown
9 months of gestation brings forth the replenishment of the nation
While some on a permanent vacation
From responsibility, the ability to respond
I wish I could wave a wand
To enforce behavioral correction
But you have to want to change
Many men and women disillusioned by a forked tongue
Thinking someone’s special heart they have won
Never once thinking
The prize was yet to come
Months later after relations have broken
Good times, bad times, growth spurts, smiles, laughs, cries,
Poor little puppy eyes
Night terrors, nightmares, night prayers
First words, first tooth, first step, first poop in potty
Sips from auntie’s toddies
And so much more is in store and make it all worth it
This is truly life’s reward
Keep single mothering, single fathering
Don’t let little things keep bothering you
They are just distractions from what we have to do
One day a help mate will come to you
Don’t be just a baby daddy
And stop all of the baby momma drama
Because we can’t continue to put our children through trauma
Use the word love correctly and love your child
Unconditionally
Love yourself
Men you must stand up for your baby
If you don’t trust the condition your child is in
Fight till you win, fight till the end
Please don’t confuse anything that I say
Individual situations fall victim to circumstance everyday
Our precious babies Minnie reflections, we see them everywhere
We must educate them, love them and handle with care
Support single parents
Believe me when I say that it is hard
So hard sometimes I wonder why
Then Confirmation comes every time I stare into my daughter’s eye
A SINGLE PARENT’S LOVE

JOSHUA TOMASZEWSKI

STEPH’S CHOICE
WRITTEN FOR S. P.

There’s a spring in your step,
As it should be—
Rose petals tip and
Kelly green leaves dip
Under weight of drifting scent.
It’s the fragrance of love
From here to New York City
Or wherever you decide to roam.
In life, what you do makes happiness,
Rarely does it matter,
What others do for you.
Let the heart race
As if it were the first steps
On the moon’s rubber surface
Let it bounce and float
Weightless
And free to be inspired.
So as time passes and
you look back,
Nothing will be left
Except unexpected joys
And satisfied desires.

“Let the heart race
As if it were the first steps
On the moon’s rubber surface
Let it bounce and float . . .”
Looking at her saddens me within.
In the last few months she has become old.
She will die soon for the end is near.
The lines in her face keep me under these covers.
Watching her limp across the room gives me pain.
I grab for my pillow that much tighter.
I hear her snore and see some movement that pacifies me.
The operation that was supposed to save her, weakened her permanently.
There are no golden years within her four walls.
I threw it all out.
In the darkest corner of my closet,
under my old soccer cleats, dance tutus, and yard-work clothes,
in an old gray, plastic Hannaford bag went our relationship.
The old emails,
the Guns n Roses CD with our song on it,
*Patience*,
the pom-poms from your homecoming game,
movie ticket stubs,
the orange paper puzzle piece,
the Snoopy lollipop wrapper,
the diamond necklace,
the beanie baby,
the coloring book,
The Xmas card,
the picture your imaginary brother drew me,
the candle from Lake George,
the beer cap from camping,
the $70 French silk tie I never gave you,
alongside the black lace bra and panty set
with the hot pink flowers you only saw on me once,
the 6th grade soccer picture,
when your sweatpants were too short,
glasses engulfed your face,
and your goofy smile.

7 years later was
the 4th of July cooler speech.
Then you told me you wouldn't say "those 3 words" to anyone for a long time.
Or the "f" word.
You held me for the first time and
2 months later you cried when I said
"all I wanted was for you to love me."

You loved me.
Sitting in a Seattle parking lot, you said the "f" word.

For some reason, I have left your heart.
But I know you're my soulmate.
I know.
I think you've forgotten me,
but you,
your face is still vivid in my mind,
my heart
every time I blink . . .
millions of times every day . . .

you are forever a part of me.
I love you and I swear to God,
that I will never really throw that bag away.
Megan E. Herrman

Poem to a Football Player—Dicktator

You said Lucille Clifton is a worthless, racist bitch,
and I disagreed.
I think you are frightened by her honesty.
It's funny that you find a poem
about menstruation disgusting
when your mother, and grandmother, and sister—
if you have one, all bleed.

But if you fall down on your little football field,
and cut your face
you consider that blood
to be heroic, noble, and brave.

“Girls like me blow
your facade.
Boys like you lack the
ability to go deep.”

Smart girls frighten you
because they easily decipher you,
and rub you the wrong way.
Girls like me blow your facade.
Boys like you lack the ability to go deep.

In your life you have seemingly never had to
beg for anything—except to get laid.
You so cold, angry, stealthy
have been sex denied
again and again and again
by girls like me.

Maybe you hate me
because it probably wasn’t a stupid girl
who left you limp and angry
when she told you no—

It was a girl like me.
GEORGE CASSIDY PAYNE

REVELATION

You came through the bathroom window
In a beam of white euphoria,
Silver honeycomb smoke,
Undetectable & Unmistakable;
knee caps
thrown against the tub
Inertia sacrificed to his perfect timing
Pulling at the shower curtain;
I can not speak,
Can only spurt insane syllables
*** *** ***
Tears! Tears!
That magical alien language
At long last I hear you!
Telling me it’s ok not to go to church.
Telling me it’s ok not to shoplift.
Telling me that we are eternity
Right now.
Telling me that my mother is only a phone call away.
Telling me that I am never given more
than I can handle.
And you are love.
Thy will be done.
My name is Faris
My home is Gaza
Day and night I pray for change
But the enemy of peace continues to oppress
Siege, curfews, bullets through the air,
Crops and cattle bulldozed away
The occupation must end now and today
Tanks with no mercy pound ambulances into walls,
With no reason crushed parked cars
Apache warplanes, F-16s up so high
Demolish refugee homes
Destroy innocent lives
Inhumane marks, leave no soul untouched
For the shot was heard around the world
I am Faris, the horseman
My cry is loud
My cause is just
My struggle is known
From the north to the south
From the west to the east
I was born free
So let freedom ring
From Gaza to Jenin

Faris Odeh became known as a Palestinian legend the day he was photographed throwing a rock at an Israeli tank. The picture is known in newspapers as “David and Goliath.” Odeh was shot and killed by Israeli soldiers on November 9, 2000, a few days after the famous photograph was taken.
PRAISE FOR THE AUTHORS

Megan E. Herrman’s “A Poem to a Football Player—Dictator”
is filled with brutal truth and provocative flare.
—Alyssa Osinski, Submission Review Committee

“The Cry of the Horesman” is a spinal tap of imagination.
—Charles Colleran, Submission Review Committee

George Cassidy Payne writes with passion and relevancy that raises
social consciousness.
—The Angle Editors

“Recycle” is a realistic journey into a relationship in a bag.
—Megan Lindley, Submission Review Committee

Joshua Tomaszewski delivers an adoring tribute filled with
graceful rhythm and poise.
—Linda Wert, Submission Review Committee

This issue is listening to the unsaid, said.
—M.J. Iuppa