

## Fourth Year Thesis Titles and Abstracts—April 2008

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May Alston

*Pulling Weight: Justifying Federal Intervention against Overweight-Obesity in the United States*

To say obesity is “on the rise” in the United States would be to seriously understate the growth curve. Some 65 million American adults and over 11 million American children qualify as obese, a designation indicating significantly altered baseline health status and increase risk for serious peripheral health problems.

This thesis outlines the implications of the American obesity epidemic and offers ethical arguments for paternalistic intervention to reverse the trend on a national scale. The paper begins with some attention to the history, current status, and associated implications of American overweight. With its connotations for aesthetic appearance and physical fitness, overweight-obesity is a particularly sensitive issue freighted with centuries of cultural implications. Only relatively recently has obesity taken center stage as the morbidity and mortality factor du jour: body weight is no longer merely a private choice or a personal burden, but rather the result of countless factors deserving of public concern.

After explaining the difference between epistemic and ethical considerations of public health intervention to demonstrate that overweight-obesity is indeed a public health issue meriting ethical consideration, the thesis focuses on the ethical bases for—and objections to—intervention in the lives of adults and children, which republican democracy considers distinctly as agents and thus as objects of government-sponsored action. As paradigmatic actors in the social contract, adults have theoretically inviolable powers of self-determination. Ethically justified intervention in adult lives, therefore, must facilitate individuals’ abilities to autonomously promote their own best interests. As less educated and/or personally mature, children both invoke the stronger protective responsibilities of public health and derive unique benefit from public health intervention in the long term.

Unlike medical ethics, the terrain of public health ethics maps interaction between individual liberties, the public interest, and external factors like cultural norms and commercial or political influences. Large-scale health initiatives can be notoriously insensitive to individual values and life circumstances. But “paternalism” needs not be a

dirty word: to the contrary, paternalistic intervention represents a plausible strategy for improving individual decision-making and behaviors in the face of widespread ignorance, misinformation, and social justice issues that keep individuals from making rational choices regarding their own health. I argue that adequate public health response to overweight-obesity is no longer a simple matter of publicizing the problem, but of enacting appropriate paternalistic interventions to interrupt this country's slide toward potentially deadly widespread overweight.

## **Kaitlin Clary Bottock**

### *فقط الجهاد ستحرر* *Only Jihad will Liberate: The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism among Palestinian Refugees in Arab host countries*

Islamic fundamentalism has surfaced in Palestinian refugee communities; but fundamentalism has only gained power and support in some of the countries in which these communities are located. This thesis studies the rise of this movement within refugee communities in order to discern what factors lead fundamentalists to attain power. I argue that the rise in Islamic fundamentalism in Palestinian refugee communities depends on the domestic opportunities afforded it by both the state and society of the country in which these communities exist. I define fundamentalism as the designation for activities that advocate the use of the Qur'an and shari'a, and employ Islamic principles as a political platform in their operations.

As the potency of fundamentalist movements among Palestinian refugees varies across countries, the factors that precipitate its rise must too vary from country to country. Despite the fact that many scholars claim fundamentalism to be innate to the refugees themselves, I argue that this is not the case. My first chapter outlines Palestinian refugee history in order to provide meaning to refugee identity. No matter where they live currently, they share similar experiences of exile and face challenges in their host countries. I contend that with the defeat of Arab nationalism in 1967, Palestinians set off in search of a unique identity separate from other Arab nationals.

My second chapter will look at the events that constitute a modern revival of Islamic fundamentalism. I will argue that fundamentalism began its ascent after the Arab defeat in 1967, but only appeared as a major global player after the Iranian Revolution in 1979. Since 1979, an array of events have brought fundamentalism to encompass a broad scope of activities, including national government, political opposition, resistance, transnational military force, and at times, terrorism. I argue that this revival provides valuable support to refugee fundamentalists, but I maintain that domestic opportunities are necessary to translate fundamentalism into action, activity, and operation. I support this claim using Sidney Tarrow's refutation of the Strong Transnational Thesis.

I use the case studies of Jordan and Lebanon to provide evidence for my argument. I contend that these cases clearly show that fundamentalism does not result from

characteristics intrinsic to the refugee community, but instead depends on the domestic context it operates in. In Jordan, the state tried to assimilate the refugees into society. The Hashemite monarchy took steps in order to curb Palestinian influence in the country, especially after Black September in 1970. The regime fostered a relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, which absorbed many marginalized fundamentalists. This relationship also moderated the policies of the Brotherhood. Although other groups and organizations exist, they face the regime's repression mechanism. The Jordanian state has curbed opportunities for fundamentalists. In Lebanon, fundamentalists have successfully executed and expanded their operations, ranging from militant groups to social and philanthropic organizations. They benefit from autonomy of the camps, and segregation from a sectarian society. They also capitalize the failure of the state to provide goods and services for refugees. The sectarian nature of state and society has provided opportunities for Islamic fundamentalism in refugee communities in Lebanon. These cases clearly demonstrate that Islamic fundamentalism requires domestic opportunities in order to establish itself in refugee communities.

### **Peter Robert Brewton**

#### *Kingdom in the Ghetto: How Christian Organizations Embody the Kingdom of God in the American Inner City*

This thesis analyzes how Christian organizations try to embody and bear witness to the Kingdom of God. Christians believe that the Kingdom of God is the ultimate reality that defines human experience. The story of its entry into the world in the person of Jesus Christ constitutes, in the words of the theologian Karl Barth, the “real history of the world.” Christians attempt to live as if the Kingdom is indeed the ultimate reality of their lives. They celebrate its presence, participate in its advance, faithfully pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Like Christ, Christians and church communities try to embody the reality of the Kingdom of God with their words and by their actions.

Located on Perry Hilltop in Pittsburgh's North Side, the Pittsburgh Project is one such organization. Pursuing the vision statement that “Pittsburgh will be called a City of Truth, where once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets each with cane in hand because of age, and where the city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there,” the Project fixes poor homeowner's homes and runs after-school programs, which teach Christian principles as well as academic and social skills. Its influence on the author—as well as his experience growing up in a low income inner city neighborhood—deeply informs this thesis.

The first half of the thesis examines the dynamics of urban poverty in the United States. As a compromise between the most prominent perspectives on urban poverty—the structural position and the ‘culture of poverty’ position—I construct a model of urban poverty that contains three points of agency: the social structure, the cultural structure and the individual. The social structure is an ordered and interconnected system of legal,

political, economic, and social relationships. It contains roles that define individuals' relationships to others. The cultural structure is system of symbolic relationships between observable phenomena and hidden meanings. For example, the cultural structure defines a wink as a conspiratorial signal, or theft as a profound challenge to the victim's status. Both the social structure and the cultural structure exist in a dialectical relationship with individual human agency. They simultaneously constrain it and are transformed by it. Thus, the model is a three-way dialectic that resists attempts to synthesize it into a neatly packaged, universally applicable model.

Chapter one outlines how social structural forces have caused and maintained the phenomenon of concentrated urban poverty, focusing on housing discrimination and the loss of jobs created by deindustrialization. It concludes by describing the social characteristics of concentrated poverty and beginning a dialogue with the cultural position.

Chapter two presupposes and defends the argument that cultural structure is an ordered system that exists in dialectical relationship to human agency. It then summarizes the main characteristics of ghetto culture and continues the dialogue begun in chapter one.

Chapter three responds to the content of the first two chapters by providing a Christian theological perspective on the individual, culture and social structure. It presents a Christian vision of the fully human life, looks at Christ as a model for cultural engagement, and articulates a Christian vision of social justice.

Chapter four describes the Pittsburgh Project in detail. It highlights how and where the theoretical and theological points developed in the first three chapters apply to the Project's vision and programs. It then evaluates the effectiveness of the Pittsburgh Project in engaging and mitigating urban poverty.

In the conclusion, I briefly summarize and critique the main points and identify further areas of research. I end by suggesting some possible ways that the Project can flesh out its embodiment of the Kingdom of God by further engaging the structures that affect its local context.

**Margaret E. Byrne**

*Dirt Poor: Women and Land Ownership in Africa*

My thesis explores the challenge that African states face when they have competing political commitments to cultural groups and gender equity. It proposes a resolution through the development of inclusive dialogue and the enablement of marginalized voices. By voice I mean the ability to participate and to be heard. I consider the demands for justice of traditional, tribal groups along the same standard as women's claims to rights: group rights and women's rights are valuable insofar as they enable voice. Laws of land ownership and inheritance that exclude women are unjust and cannot pose to represent the interests of the group. The most just approach to conflicting claims for group rights and women's rights takes into account the voice of the individual and the value of the community.

Chapter one provides the theoretical groundwork for the debate between cultural leaders and women's rights advocates. Of the three prominent groups of thought—multiculturalists, liberal feminists, and deliberative discourse theorists—none fully take into account the limits on women's voice in her cultural community. Multiculturalists like Will Kymlicka identify the significance of membership in a community to individual development, but do not fully acknowledge intragroup conflict, especially beyond the formal, public sphere. Liberal feminists like Susan Okin identify gender hierarchies, but present too impatient a separation between women and their communities. Monique Deveaux and other deliberative discourse theorists resolve intragroup conflict as a mediation of political interests.

I propose a fourth approach to balancing the conflicting claims to culture and rights. Having a voice enables marginalized individuals to become full citizens in their groups—to invest in the community, articulate their needs, and to have ongoing involvement in the resolution of intragroup conflict. In order for voice to be realized, I identify four necessary factors, namely commitment to inclusiveness, democratic structure, support, and a women's coalition.

In chapter two I identify three factors that significantly influence the debate to make land law more inclusive. First, customary land law, which governs most women's access to land ownership, is based on a false premise of cultural authenticity. Second, capitalism has weakened the social network that used to support women with only indirect access to land. Third, the incidence of affirmative action legislation to correct historical inequalities sets a positive precedent for correcting women's exclusion from land ownership.

Exploring recent controversy in Uganda and South Africa around gender inequality in recent land laws, chapter three shows that there is a need for strategies to navigate cultural practices of tribal groups and the constitutional rights endorsed by the state. Such strategies will be successful only insofar as they can resolve conflicts without either reinforcing women's subordination within cultural communities or dismissing the importance of community-based membership in the culture.

Cultural norms block women's access to their rights. The solution to this stagnate in land law reform is found within the cultural group, not in opposition to it. A counterpublic of women's voice challenges the traditional leaders who have defined the "group tradition" up to this point. When women members of the group are given a voice, the articulation of culture will not be positioned in opposition to women's interests.

## **Daniel Rhyne Coates**

### *From Strangers to Neighbors: Building Community in Ciudad Bolívar, Bogotá*

I describe the community building experience of the grassroots development foundation Laudes Infantis in the neighborhood of Bella Flor. Bella Flor is a neighborhood at the very edge of Bogotá, in a massive migrant settlement called Ciudad Bolívar. I frame the

neighborhood's story with the idea of marginality; the notion that slums and their residents are disconnected from larger city life. I then turn to Bella Flor in an attempt to render accessible the richness of everyday life and the residents' experiences in Laudes Infantis. Ultimately, Bella Flor's story shows the capacities of people who are so often distanced in academic and popular discourse.

First, I set out the background for a full understanding of Bella Flor's transformation. My initial chapter is a description of the growth of Ciudad Bolívar within Bogotá and Bella Flor within Ciudad Bolívar. Here I pay special attention to residents' organizations, noting their character and content. In Bella Flor, I pay special attention to the relationship between public services, community organizations, and the city government. My next chapter furthers the contextual work by providing a description of daily life in Bella Flor. In this section, I pay attention to the richness of movement in the neighborhood, residents' safety, as well as the nature of the community. This chapter can be conceived of as a demonstration Laudes' success building a cohesive neighborhood in the face of harsh social and economic conditions

I then turn to a description of Laudes Infantis itself, describing the structure, services it provides, and its methodology. Today, residents of Bella Flor make up the entire staff of Laudes Infantis in the neighborhood. The foundation's growth has been simultaneous with the development of Bella Flor. Indeed, there is little difference between the community and Laudes. Residents both work in the foundation and receive its benefits. Community members who receive services are asked to repay the foundation by giving their time or skill in another area of its work—an institutionalized barter system.

In my fourth chapter I give the word to residents. I follow their descriptions of the personal transformations that form the basis of Laudes' success today. I describe how, under the leadership of Jackie, a former social worker who began the organization in late 1999, Laudes has built trust between residents. Community building is a process, and residents describe how making relationships and having positions of responsibility in Laudes gave them the self-confidence to be more assertive in their lives. Involvement in Laudes also created a tight knit web of connections between people living in Bella Flor, injecting a collaborative ethos into the neighborhood.

My fifth chapter is an analysis of Bella Flor's development and Laudes' work with relation to the larger political status quo. I describe how Laudes grew as a rejection of clientelistic gifts-for-votes relationships with politicians and other outside entities. Then, using a comparison with Peronist brokers in a shantytown in Buenos Aires (and drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu), I illustrate how even in its rejection of the status quo Laudes incorporates aspects of clientelism into its operations. Because the neighborhood was so new (it is at the very edge of the city), Laudes was able to embed a positive set of social relations that continue to define Bella Flor today.

Their success, while funded by some NGOs and government programs, is founded on what residents and Jackie did with the only resource left to them in economic hardship: each other. Their story, and success, presents a critique to the idea of marginality, and shows how those we think are distant are actually quite close.

**Rebecca F. Elliott**

*Where the Kids Have No Names: Celebrity Activism and the Popular Western Discourse on Africa*

I argue that celebrity activism creates and promulgates a popular Western discourse on Africa that visually, emotionally, and politically reinforces unequal relations of power between Westerners and Africans. In their “activism,” celebrities use language and imagery that marginalize African voices, thereby asserting an authoritative “truth” about Africa and Africans. The “truth” they articulate—that Africans, understood very generally, are perpetually beleaguered and in need of Western rescue—favors charity from Western “rescuers” over the political reform that would alter those unequal relations of power. By rendering these issues “non-political,” celebrities squeeze out political deliberation, which is essential where structural poverty, disease, and conflict are concerned.

My research shows that Western celebrities exercise immense discursive power over what their audiences understand as “true” about Africa. This makes celebrity activism a political practice, because the popular Western discourse on Africa shapes the public opinion that forms around African issues. What Westerners think is “true” about Africa and Africans will inform how and to what extent they lean on their own governments and pressure international organizations to intervene in African issues. Hence, the popular Western discourse on Africa has profound material effects on the daily lives of hundreds of millions of people, who largely do not influence that discourse.

Given that immense discursive power, I investigate what celebrities are saying to Western audiences about Africa. I analyze three contemporary cases of celebrity activism: Live 8 in 2005, the July 2007 “Africa Issue” of *Vanity Fair*, and Angelina Jolie’s and Madonna’s adoptions. I show how, in each example of celebrity activism, African voices were marginalized, eclipsed by the celebrities who would presume to speak for them. I also explain the intensely visual nature of celebrity activism. Celebrities are self-consciously on display and they communicate with their audiences in a visual way. I explain how images, particularly images of suffering, can exploit and objectify their subjects while misleading and exhausting their viewers. I provide close readings of some of the images employed in celebrity activism and demonstrate how they act as a communicative site that marginalizes African voices.

Celebrity activism as we know it today began with Live Aid in 1985. I use Live Aid as a case study because of its importance as a precedent, and because it provides an example of the confluence of celebrities and exploitative images in the popular Western discourse. Live Aid became a spectacle that celebrated the generosity of Western audiences while describing Africa as “a world of dread and fear.” The emotionalism and stereotyping that came out of Live Aid unleashed an enormous charitable effort in Western countries, but it came too late and did not address the structural causes of the famine. Political deliberation about famine might have prevented future famines in Ethiopia and elsewhere.

My research concludes with a strategy for discursive contestation. The last chapter explains the importance of voice with reference to Jürgen Habermas' public sphere theory. Rather than find a way to get (multiple, competing, diverse) African voices into *the* public sphere, I propose that we widen the discursive space with multiple publics. African "counterpublics" provide a space for the articulation of diverse and competing identities, needs, wants, goals, and strategies. Through deliberation as peers, counterpublics empower their members to lodge a collective, coherent, and sustained attack on the discursive power of celebrities. They can contest the stereotypes and emotionalism of celebrity activism, and reassert the political questions that get sidelined in favor of charity.

## **Wyatt Fore**

### *Amazing Gays: A Case Study in Christian Queer Activism*

I argue that Soulforce exemplifies a substantive shift in the way that the contemporary lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) movement treats the fundamentalist Christian movement. Although the two movements have historically taken a strongly antagonistic position relative to each other, the dramatic victories and defeats in the early and mid-2000s have caused the LGBTQ movement to reconsider its strategy in the way that it engages religious ideology. Rather than writing off conservative Christianity as an unchangeable adversary, Soulforce engages directly with the fundamentalist right to make the case for a Christian social justice approach to LGBTQ issues.

Because Christian moralistic claims regarding sexual orientation and gender identity are the basis for the continued oppression of LGBTQ people, Soulforce contends, a purely secular approach is insufficient to achieving freedom. Rather, Soulforce aims directly at the root of that oppression—the fundamentalist right—through direct action that specifically recalls the Civil Rights and Indian Independence movements. Furthermore, Soulforce purposefully focuses on individuals and Christian institutions to transform the contemporary LGBTQ movement from one focused on politics to one focused on broader social change.

Although the LGBTQ movement has historically written off the fundamentalist right as an unchangeable adversary, Soulforce exemplifies a new sort of re-evaluation of that relationship. In contrast to seeing Christianity and LGBTQ people as fundamentally irreconcilable, many Christians are beginning to cite Jesus explicitly as a figure for social justice to justify freedom for LGBTQ people. Although mainstream LGBTQ organizations continue to focus their efforts on a secular approach to the movement, there is a growing awareness that an us-versus-them approach to Christianity has not translated well into the struggle for LGBTQ freedom, evidenced by the increasing attention that mainstream LGBTQ organizations are paying to matters of faith.

I argue further that Soulforce adopts a fundamentally different model for achieving freedom for LGBTQ people. Whereas mainstream LGBTQ organizations conceive of people and institutions as along a typical political left-right continuum, Soulforce maps out

identities, and then works within those identities. Thus, to mainstream organizations, the LGBTQ movement will succeed by moving from the left wing to the center, and then to the right wing. Soulforce, however, makes the case for LGBTQ freedom from within non-political Christian identities, rather than from a politically left-wing perspective as a method of targeting oppressive ideologies directly.

### **Mai Omer Hassan**

#### *Between Turbans and Ostrich Feathers: The Beginnings of the Second Sudanese Civil War*

I investigate the causes of the Second Sudanese Civil War. I argue that the underlying grievances within society influenced—but did not begin—the war. Instead, actors used specific opportunities to advance their interests within the context of broadly-held societal grievances. I study the specific opportunities that actors used to advance their individual positions along with how those opportunities were influenced by underlying societal grievances.

Many theories on this war detail how the underlying grievances propelled the country into war. In Chapter One, I examine the political, economic, and social state of Sudan before the Second Civil War. With this background established, I analyze the literature on established reasons for why the Second Sudanese Civil War began. The existing literature points to the underlying grievances left over after years of colonial rule, grievances resulting from cultural differences between northern and southern Sudan, or grievances resulting from Sudan's economic situation. While these factors influenced the beginning of the war, and help explain social support for the Second Sudanese Civil War, these grievances did not ignite the war. Broadly-held societal grievances suffer from free-riding problems. Individual actors have no incentive to join a mass resistance movement and engage in a catastrophic and life-threatening war unless they can achieve an added benefit that they would not have received had they not joined the movement.

Within northern Sudan, President Nimeri attempted to secure his political power in this unstable political environment by appealing to northern Sudanese society. In an attempt to gain popular approval and political backing from rival political parties, Nimeri abrogated the Addis Ababa Agreement, implemented shari'a law uniformly across Sudan, and dissipated the Southern Regional Government. Yet, these incendiary actions were only possible because of the rise of pan-Arabism and Islamic fundamentalism within northern Sudanese society, Big Man politics, and international support. These factors allowed Nimeri to attempt to consolidate his power even though that consolidation occurred through more broadly destabilizing actions.

Within southern Sudan, President Nimeri's actions and the subsequent loss of southern autonomy provided an opportunity for southern rebels to band together and create the Southern People's Liberation Army (SPLA). In Chapter Three, I discuss the situation within southern Sudan, and how this situation was conducive to a future rebellion. The abrogation

of the Addis Ababa Agreement provided southern rebels with an opportunity to begin this rebellion. The SPLA formed around the idea of an inclusive southern identity; instead of banding around a single ethnic group, SPLA leaders attempted to create a minimum-winning coalition of diverse ethnic groups in the region so as to become the main resistance group in the southern region, and to be victorious against the national army. While the SPLA focused on common southern grievances, individuals joined the SPLA because of the opportunities that this army provided.

**Jennifer Meghan Hayes**

*Civilian Nuclear Power and Just National Policy Practices: A Rawlsian Analysis of Reactor Siting*

This thesis concerns itself with the connection between reactor siting policies and political justice in the United States and to a lesser extent the UK and France. Of particular focus is the general lack of attention afforded meaningful public participation in the formulation and implementation of civilian nuclear power. The use of John Rawls's political conception of justice serves as a device to navigate the competing demands of the aggregate welfare and of the individual liberties of each citizen. The fundamental ideas and the two principles of justice operate as checkpoints for the basic structure, procedure, and outcomes of the US nuclear policy system.

When focusing on public justification, political liberties, and the difference principle, three simple markers arise for evaluating nuclear policy. These are simplicity, safety, and democracy. A system that mitigates safety hazards while respecting the space of each individual is key to just policy. Nevertheless, without simplicity, the system becomes obscure and prevents the meaningful participation necessary for a democratic society.

The US system has erred on side of complexity and lack of democratic participation. While the activism of the 1970s introduced public participation, the result was only a pale imitation of meaningful political engagement. Today, public fear and misunderstanding of the technology and associated risks prevent meaningful participation. Debate surrounding nuclear power rarely moves past these hurdles. Scientists quickly dismiss the public as irrational and uneducated. In turn, the public perceives scientific support of nuclear power to be much less than it is in actuality. The information gap, inherited from the technocratic, closed-door decisions of the Atomic Energy Commission, persists in the current political milieu in a more subtle form.

Four chapters comprise the body of the thesis. Chapter One introduces the science and history of nuclear power in the United States. Chapter Two examines Rawls's philosophy and offers concrete criteria for just nuclear power. Chapter Three surveys the possible risks associated with nuclear power generation and establishes the actual burdens those living near reactors bear. Chapter Four integrates actual policy practices of the United States, France, and the United Kingdom with the evaluative standard established in Chapter Two. The chapter systematically compares the history, structure, procedure and outcomes

of the three policy systems. It finds that the US system, while inefficient, has the greatest potential to adequately respect the inviolability of the individual. The French system, though appealing by utilitarian measure, does not do so. The United Kingdom's policy system trespasses upon the individual and also lacks efficiency.

The awesome potential of nuclear power must not be scorned. If the US used recoverable domestic coal reserves for all energy needs, reserves would be depleted in less than 100 years. If the US used all depleted uranium stores for all energy needs, four hundred years would pass before stores were depleted. (Galen Suppes and Truman Storvick, *Sustainable Nuclear Power*, (Boston: Elsevier, 2007), 2, xv). It can and should be used to support future energy demands. However, we must do so cautiously, continually examining the liberties of citizens.

### **Grace Kittredge Healy**

#### *Big Steps, Small Footprints: Environmental Ethics and Its Implications for the Theory and Practice of Rural Development*

In 1944, a group of American scientists gathered in the hills outside Mexico City at the newly founded International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT). Their goal was to reduce rural poverty and extreme hunger by engineering an agricultural revolution in the developing world. By the late 1960s, leaders of developing nations around the world heralded this "Green Revolution" as a miracle— its innovations in high yielding agricultural technologies bringing the promise of prosperity to rural villages. By the early 1970s, however, the fields and farms of the Green Revolution were already showing signs that these new technologies were too good to be true. The high outputs and rapid accumulation of wealth experienced in the villages of the Green Revolution could not overshadow the rapidly accelerating environmental degradation and social instability.

These unintended consequences of the new agricultural technologies indicate a deep conceptual contradiction inherent in the logic of the Green Revolution. On the one hand, it sought to improve the lives of rural villagers. On the other, the Green Revolution sought to dominate and manipulate the natural environment, and to suppress the spontaneous productivity upon which rural livelihoods depend. This conceptual contradiction underlying the Green Revolution suggests a broader gap in our collective understanding of the value of nature, and our relationship to it.

Environmental ethics is a branch of philosophy which seeks to articulate the norms of attitude and behavior that should guide our interactions with the natural environment. The goal of this thesis is to explore the potential for environmental ethics to contribute a new ethical perspective to the theory and practice of rural development. Taking the legacy of the Green Revolution as a guide, I will explore three different theories of environmental ethics, analyzing them in terms of their ability to reconcile a moral responsibility to encourage environmental integrity with the fundamental concern for human well-being. After examining the anthropocentric (human-centered) and bio-centric (life-centered) approaches

to environmental ethics, I will ultimately conclude that the eco-centric (eco-system centered) ethic offers both a philosophically sound and practically applicable approach to environmental ethics.

The eco-centric ethic suggests that eco-systems are inherently valuable and therefore are worthy of moral consideration. At its most basic, extending moral consideration to eco-systems requires that we seek, whenever possible, to support rather than diminish the integrity of natural systems. In doing so, we must seek to provide not only the environmental conditions for ecological flourishing, but also the social and economic conditions that enable people to act with concern for the natural environment.

In its conceptual foundations, the Green Revolution failed to acknowledge the intimate connection between human well-being and environmental integrity. The eco-centric environmental ethic can help fill this gap in our collective understanding of human's relationship to nature, by suggesting that humans should seek to promote ecological well-being, as ethically responsible members of both human and natural communities. In doing so, the eco-centric ethic can suggest an alternative approach to rural development which focuses on ecological integrity as a foundation for other development efforts. Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) is one such model of rural development. Using a case study of a rural development project in Rajasthan, India, I will argue that CBNRM not only reflects the principles of the eco-centric perspective, it can also lead us away from the Green Revolution model of rural development toward more ecologically and socially sustainable solutions to rural poverty.

### **Victoria L. Ingenito**

#### *The Imperative of Embryonic Stem Cell Research: A Comparative Study on the Politics of Research and Policy*

Every American at some point in their life will benefit from regenerative medical therapies. As the human body ages, tissues composing the eyes, brain muscles, bone and many other body parts begin to degenerate often leading to a greater risk of disease and debilitation. Today, American health care can only provide patches for these problems and the ailments that may follow as a result of body degeneration, but emerging research shows there may be more effective, lasting medical treatments on the horizon.

Many countries agree that embryonic stem cell research holds tremendous potential to revolutionize current health care and treatment strategies. Moral and ethical debates persist about the proper level of respect and the status we should attribute to human embryos. While these discussions continue to provide various ethical frameworks for the use of embryos in medical research, the actual science continues to push ahead. Governments in countries such as Great Britain, China, Singapore and the United States formed government regulatory frameworks to manage this delicate field of research while simultaneously encouraging technological advancement.

The United States regulatory structure limits the use of embryos and embryonic stem

cells in research to those created after August 2001. However, almost all of these stem cell lines have contamination with animal cells, genetic mutations and other impurities making them unfit for use in human clinical trials. Due to the inadequate amount of human embryos available for government funded research, an increasing number of American researchers are leaving the country to find better research opportunities around the globe. They often travel to Great Britain, where the regulatory framework allows more access to human research-quality embryos, funding and general support for developing this technology.

I explore the issues surrounding embryonic stem cell research regulation by contrasting the United States and British frameworks and tracing the legislative developments in both countries over the past 20 years. Understanding the differences between these two regulatory models shows how the United States can reorganize its oversight mechanisms. I argue that the United States government should immediately formulate its regulatory framework in a way that emulates the British system. These changes are crucial to preserving the salience of the moral and ethical debate and giving American scientists the resources necessary to bring the United States to a competitive level with other countries' research programs.

## **Nicholas Jordan**

### *Cash or Charisma? Three Arenas of Transformational Leadership*

The phenomenon of charismatic leadership has a long and controversial history. At least since the dawn of recorded history, charismatic leaders have created substantial change in our world. While there are many types of charismatic leaders, I have chosen to study charismatic leaders in three specific fields: social entrepreneurship, politics, and business. I argue that charismatic leadership, at least as social theorist Max Weber envisioned it, no longer exists in the field of business.

To set the groundwork for this argument, I first establish an understanding of Weberian charismatic leadership. Weber identified three types of authority: Traditional Authority, Charismatic Authority, and Rational-Legal Authority. Within the charismatic authority framework, unlike the paradigms of traditional or rational-legal authority, allegiance is owed to persons who possess charisma by virtue of their unique attributes and abilities. Weber's charismatic leader is a visionary, able to create transformational change by inspiring individuals to participate in his or her cause through both the outward expression of passion and the effective use of persuasion. A genuine love of the cause is requisite; the leader cannot be motivated by money, power, or fame. The charismatic leader must also possess natural abilities such as passion, optimism, and a sense of urgency. Equally important are certain skills that may be developed, or practiced, such as oratorical and interpersonal skills.

After establishing a lens through which to evaluate charismatic leaders, I examine the lives and efforts of two social entrepreneurs, Paul Farmer and Wangari Maathai, who have made great strides in medicine, politics, and the environment. These profiles illustrate that

charismatic leadership, as Weber envisioned it, exists in the field of social entrepreneurship. I then shift to the world of politics to profile Barack Obama. Once again, an analysis of Obama's leadership characteristics and behaviors demonstrates that charismatic leadership also exists in the world of politics.

Finally, I turn to the business realm, where leaders like Donald Trump and Warren Buffet have built powerful corporate empires. While an examination of these leaders reveals that they have tremendous transformational power, their influence does not come from their charisma. It comes from their wealth, connections, and powerful names. This examination also reveals that the success of the leadership shown by Trump and Buffet rests on their ability to consummate "deals," which in most cases depend primarily on money.

In business, people may like and want to believe in a leader. However, if that leader is unable to provide an appropriate return on investment, he will not be successful. As business leaders, Trump and Buffet do not require a following to do their jobs, and they likewise do not rely on those who would follow them. Unlike politicians and social entrepreneurs, these leaders rely on nothing more than their own assets, their shareholders, and their outsized reputations for success. As a result Trump and Buffet, and business leaders as whole, do not fit Weber's model of charismatic leadership.

## Anna Natasha Joukovsky

### *Epic Beginnings: History, Myth, and Revision in Ulysses and The Waste Land*

In his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent," T. S. Eliot argues that the synthesis of the timeless and the temporal, of the traditional and the original, is essential to the creation of canonical, lasting literature. I suggest that Eliot's theory reflects the creative dilemma of the Modern artist in particular, and his precarious place in history. The "burden of the past," or creative anxiety due to the greatness of prior accomplishments in literature, already weighed heavily upon the Romantics, and it only increased in the early years of the twentieth century. James Joyce's epic novel *Ulysses* offered a possible solution to this problem: to revive and revise myth, to create *ex materia* rather than *ex nihilo*—a solution that greatly influenced Eliot himself, particularly in his magnum opus, *The Waste Land*.

I argue that *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*, both published in 1922, have become the "twin 'myths' of Modernism" and the twin pillars of Modernist prose and poetry respectively, due to the similar juxtaposition in these works of the return to myth and the synthetic aesthetic—a new, distinctly Modern style of allusive fragmentism. William B. Worthen dubs *The Waste Land* "Eliot's *Ulysses*"—and in many ways, it is. But the means by which Joyce and Eliot arrived at a similar convergence of tradition and originality varied widely, and in works so similarly hyperconscious of history, the historical lives of the documents themselves are of particular critical interest.

Both as a literary technique and in the process of editing itself, Joyce's revisions were consistently additive: he attempted to remake history and myth through expansion and addition. Joyce originally conceived *Ulysses* as a short story, but it ultimately became the epic-length sequel to and revision of his first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Since *Ulysses* was published serially in episodes, Joyce wrote and published the beginning of the novel before he had a full idea of the rest. Hence I suggest that the novel is continually revising itself with each episode. Conversely, Eliot's revisions to *The Waste Land* time and again involve a subtractive process of cutting away the good to leave only the great. Though originally conceived as an epic-length collection of contemporary caricatures, the first edition of *The Waste Land* ran only 433 lines. Largely following Ezra Pound's extensive editorial advice, Eliot cut pages and pages of verse, and in so doing, I argue, he dramatically changed the nature and aesthetics of his poem.

As much the result of subsequent revision as original composition, *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* have become the iconic Modernist novel and poem respectively—but what exactly this means is debatable. Based on a comparative study of the final episode of *Ulysses*—"Penelope"—and the final part of *The Waste Land*—"What the Thunder Said"—I conclude that, while acknowledging the multifarious nature of Modernism, we can identify one key aspect of the movement as the emergence of unity, possibility, and affirmation out of fragmentation, horror, and despair. Synthesizing the great works, ideas, and emotions of the past into the present in order to change the course of the future, *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*—for all their technical difficulty and seeming intellectual elitism—are all-inclusive works that continue to be applicable to and provocative in our world today.

## Daniel Keyserling

### *From the Fool's Gold Mouthpiece: An Examination of Conceptual Metaphor and Rhetorical Technique in Presidential Speeches from 1941 to 2008*

I argue that major presidential speeches between 1941 and 2008 exploit the emotional impact of conceptual metaphors, and that the affect of those concepts on American audiences helped to redefine standards of political rhetoric. Emerging forms of media continue to force politicians and political campaigns to change how they communicate with the public, and as the length of sound bites shrink, politicians must frame their messages more concisely. In other words, there exists a symbiotic relationship between politicians and the press, the dynamic of which reveals details of how words affect emotion, and how emotion affects politics.

My survey of presidential rhetoric begins with Franklin Roosevelt both for the sake of concision, and because Roosevelt was the first president for whom the modern media establishment existed and mattered. Included in the chapter on Roosevelt are Harry Truman and George W. Bush, both of whose rhetorical strategies exhibit clear influences from Roosevelt. Armed with a clear understanding of the recent history of presidential rhetoric, I

then explore how political psychology and cognitive science affect how people interpret certain words, phrases, and ideas.

Using primarily from the research of George Lakoff and Drew Westen, as well as the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Richard Rorty, I outline how changing forms of media influence how theories of metaphor and the contingency of language occur in real audiences. The following chapter applies the theories of language and the historical analysis of Roosevelt, Truman, and Bush to Presidents Reagan and Kennedy, both of whom forged new styles of rhetoric that continue to influence politicians and rhetoricians. Reagan and Kennedy adjusted Roosevelt's conceptual metaphor of the United States as a sort of "noble victim" to a nation that carried "a torch that can light the whole world" to justify an increased presence in international affairs.

Finally, drawing from my own experience working within the communications operations of a presidential campaign, I deconstruct how a contemporary speechwriting team works, and what affect more theoretical concepts such as metaphor and emotional association have on day-to-day operations. I explore how the 2008 presidential primary campaign exemplifies many of the rhetorical techniques perfected by past administrations, and how the new media landscape affects how such techniques work in the world of 24-hour news.

## **Katherine Klem**

### *Untouchable No Longer: A Theory of Tobacco Control*

I argue that effective tobacco control in liberal democracies embraces three paradigms in succession. In order to lower the incidence of tobacco-related illness and mortality, the public must first accept that a problem exists—that smoking hurts the consumer's health and, at current rates, the wellbeing of entire communities. Second, it must also learn why tobacco has exacted such a significant toll, recognizing the role of tobacco companies. Linking the problem to agency imbues an understanding that societies can prevent this epidemic if they make the right choices. Educating citizens about the issue's effects and causes primes them for the third paradigm: enacting public policies that govern the manufacturing, marketing, and use of tobacco products over the long run.

This theory derives primarily from the U.S., where the tobacco control movement, if only intuitively or even accidentally, followed these three paradigms. Researchers from the public and nonprofit sectors, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, discovered evidence of causal links between tobacco use and lung cancer, among other diseases. Though the tobacco industry spent decades denying these findings, nearly all Americans believed that tobacco use proved harmful by the 1990s. And as the country entered the twenty-first century, Americans regulated tobacco with unprecedented vigor. Tobacco taxes increased, workers gained protection from secondhand smoke, and courts forced tobacco companies to keep the promises they made to the attorneys general.

Many activists and observers alike have failed to recognize the importance of the paradigm between these phases. During the 1990s, advocates helped the country scrutinize the actions of cigarette manufacturers. Pointing to the pervasiveness of this paradigm, every attorney general sued the largest companies, which ultimately agreed to pay billions of dollars, stop marketing to youth, and turn over millions of their internal documents. Whistleblowers confirmed what those memos revealed, and also showed that the industry had purposefully made cigarettes deadlier and more addictive than tobacco's natural form. Meanwhile states launched grassroots and media campaigns, the most successful of which youth led, that targeted tobacco executives. The public, then, came to believe that the problem of tobacco use began with corporate America, not individuals addicted, and citizens rejected its quest for profit that came at the expense of their own lives.

As this thesis shows, the theory of three paradigms also helps make sense of tobacco control in other countries. France, Japan, and Malaysia have never engaged their populations in sustained discussion of the tobacco industry's behavior. France limited itself to regulation and only casually warned citizens of smoking's health risks or the industry's actions. Japan has never focused the country's attention on any one paradigm, instead pushing health education and policy change concurrently. Malaysia passed bold laws early on but is only now talking about the reasons for their passage. All three countries still have high rates of tobacco use. Those in Malaysia are increasing.

Whether in Asia, Europe, or North America, tobacco use ravages public health, taking thousands of lives every year. To address this problem effectively, advocates cannot simply form coalitions or raise money to air ads. They must also strategically influence the norms that ground the behavior of citizens every day.

### **Aaron John Kornblith**

#### *On Your Knees: The Efficacy of Apologies in American Political Communication*

Most American politicians accused of wrongdoing instinctively react by denying the charges, withholding information and trying to spin away the evidence as fabrications by their political enemies. While this strategy may have once held some value, the changing nature of the modern news media has rendered it nearly useless.

The media now pounces on scandals with even the slightest trace of believability. In the resulting "feeding frenzy," as Larry Sabato puts it, all forms of media quickly adopt a damaging pattern of coverage that amplifies every negative finding, spurs a lengthy and exhaustive search for more damaging information, and speculates extensively on the fate of the politician in question. Denials and spin play to the media's worst features, heightening the suspicions of already distrustful journalists and making the possibility of bringing down a corrupt (or less than corrupt) politician all the more enticing for them.

Faced with these circumstances, I argue that offering full and frank apologies for personal wrongdoing represents the best strategy for a politician looking to mitigate the

political damage brought about by modern news media coverage of his or her scandal. When apologies meet the criteria of being substantive, plausible, prompt and impassioned, they allow politicians in some circumstances to short-circuit the feeding frenzy process, concentrating media and public scorn in the short run but ultimately preempting the devastating, drawn-out scrutiny and vitriol most feeding frenzies inflict. Even when the transgression sparking the scandal proves too damaging for the politician to survive, a well-crafted apology can still bring benefits in the eyes of the media and public.

I begin my analysis by tracking the development of press-politician relations over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup>. I show how the trends observed from this period have created a modern news media characterized by cynicism, intense competition bred from the commercialization of the news business, and technological advancements that have both fragmented and accelerated the flow of information.

To examine the role apologies play in this new dynamic of political communication and compare them with other strategies, I explore three case studies of recent scandals: Mississippi Senator Trent Lott, Virginia Senator George Allen, and New York Governor Eliot Spitzer. Senator Lott's comments in praise of former segregationist presidential candidate Strom Thurmond eventually cost him his post as majority leader, but his eventual apology preserved his career and allowed him to later reclaim significant political power. Senator Allen attempted to dismiss his now infamous "macaca" comment, and the resulting frenzy cost him his supposedly-safe Senate seat. And Governor Spitzer, revealed by the press to have patronized a high-end prostitution ring, faced insurmountable political odds but still managed to bring his frenzy to a speedy conclusion and regain some control over his image with a thorough and heartfelt apology.

Despite the forces continuing to transform political communication into a more adversarial and manipulative contest, I argue the efficacy of apologies in defusing those tendencies, at least on an individual basis, offers hope for a democratic discourse many consider to have significantly decayed. By putting apologies into practice and witnessing their effects, politicians can restore some of the dissipated trust responsible for that decay among their peers, in the media and within the general public.

## **Allison McNearney**

### *Exemplary Response or Misleading Success Story? An Analysis of Uganda's Fight against the HIV/AIDS Epidemic*

I argue that Uganda has earned its place among the most successful African nations to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In the early 1990s, the prevalence rate reached a high 18 percent among adults; as early as 1994, however, scientists were reporting a decline in infection. Today, the rate has leveled off, with UNAIDS estimating the current prevalence at 6.7 percent.

Despite this statistical proof, the international academic community continues to debate whether Uganda's response can be qualified as a success. I argue that Uganda has achieved clear accomplishments in the difficult fight facing most of sub-Saharan and southern Africa. This success features two components. First is the more common indicator of prevalence rates. The government-led coalition against HIV/AIDS affected a drop in infection from the highest rates on the continent in the early 1990s to securely below 10 percent. This involved significant behavioral change among the population, primarily through reduction in partners but also advanced by greater use of condoms and increased abstinence.

The second constituent of success concerns the unique response developed by Uganda to tackle the disease ravaging its population. Government officials ignored international prescriptions and acted in ways that specifically engaged with Ugandan social norms, customs, and experiences with HIV/AIDS. Under the leadership of Museveni, the government designed an innovative strategy to combat the disease that included the implementation of a multisectoral approach. Museveni encouraged a collaboration of organizations, ranging from the national to international and the well-established to the grassroots. While the government launched a vigorous prevention campaign, the non-governmental sector filled in deficiencies, especially regarding treatment and social services for people living with AIDS and their families. In an extraordinary development, Ugandan society collectively mobilized to form new community initiatives and support the government programs, their neighbors, and families. The mutual cooperation of all participating sectors allowed the Ugandan government to coordinate activities and present a cohesive national response.

Although Uganda has waged a successful campaign for the past two decades, the population faces a challenging fight ahead to sustain the declining prevalence rate. In order to respond to shortcomings in the current approach, the government needs to scale up its response to counteract the socioeconomic consequences of disease, growing complacency, enormous population of AIDS-orphans, and high infection rate in conflict-ridden northern provinces. While Uganda must continually improve its national response, it has achieved categorical success thus far. Other African nations caught in ongoing epidemics can learn from the main themes of this successful national coalition against HIV/AIDS.

## **Ben McVane**

### *Getting Better All the Time? Revisiting the "Darwinian" Argument for Inevitable Moral Progress*

I aim to assess critically the interpretation of natural selection as a process that leads to an increasing level of morality in human society. Specifically, I will address the question of whether contemporary accounts of biological underpinnings of human morality confer a higher degree of validity to the interpretation of natural selection as morally progressive than did Darwin's original thinking about the matter. I argue that modern evolutionary theory,

including the contributions of evolutionary psychology, does not strengthen any claim that morality in human society increases as an inevitable result of natural selection. My central argument focuses on a distinction between moral *capacity* and moral *inclination*, a distinction that I suggest can be extrapolated from a careful parsing of Darwin's *Descent of Man*. I contend that moral capacity and moral inclination are incompatible ideas; they conflict in the same manner as do the irreconcilable concepts of human free will and historical inevitability, thus burdening Darwin's project with the same logical contradictions as found in other historicist projects. The theoretical and substantive advancements of evolutionary biology can offer little to overcome this basic philosophical concern.

In chapter one, I outline Charles Darwin's evolutionary account of the development of human morality. Centrally, I assess the presence of any implicit teleology in Darwin's theory of natural selection, suggesting that while Darwin's language at times implies a teleological directionality to the process of natural selection, the actual mechanisms of the process do not support such a conclusion. In light of this, I consider the balance Darwin attempts to establish between the role of human agency and non-human natural forces in the development of morality. I suggest that distinguishing between Darwin's simultaneous account of the development of "moral beings" and the development of "moral sense" undermines any attempt to suggest that natural selection is a process of inevitable moral progress. If the development of "moral beings" is more central than the development of a "moral sense" (which I suggest it is), then Darwin's account of the development of human morality requires an active role for human agency in the instantiation of morality, and thus cannot be seen as an inevitable process.

In the second chapter, I suggest that concepts presented by evolutionary theory and evolutionary psychology since Darwin further refute the understanding of natural selection as an inevitably morally progressive process. I will continue to try to parse out the role of human agency and non-human natural forces in the development of morality, specifically outlining three concepts which emphasize the role of human agency in the natural development of moral behavior: niche construction, developmental robustness and the influence of culture. I also explain the rejection of the concept of "group selection" that formed the foundation of Darwin's argument for the inevitable development of moral behavior by the process of natural selection. These ideas support the conclusion that while natural selection may favor the development of moral capacity, the actual morality of a given era depends on the active role of human agency.

In the third chapter, I present the philosophical problems inherent in any argument that morality results from natural tendencies. I use Darwin's account of morality as a biological development for the basis of consideration. I suggest that Darwin's loosely articulated ethical theory best mirrors the moral philosophy of David Hume, and thus contains the same philosophical problems. I identify these problems by considering the Kantian criticism of Hume's philosophy, identifying the necessary commitments and assumptions that are implicit in Hume's ethical theory. I further look at the exaggerated nature of these problems in the Darwinian application of Hume's philosophy.

## **Nina Otchere-Oduro**

### *Tell Me I'm Black Enough: The Power of Discourse on the Contemporary Debate on Black Authenticity*

Right now, the African-American community is fixated on the question of what constitutes authentic Black identity in America. Senator Barack Obama's quest for presidency has placed him at the center of this public discourse. His bi-raciality as well as other factors has drawn members of the Black community to question whether he is "Black enough." Furthermore, this thesis analyzes the current discourse on Black authenticity. I argue that the contemporary discussion on Black authenticity allows for the conceptual fragmentation of the meaning of blackness in American society. I define Black authenticity as the perception or act of performing a "real" Black racial identity as opposed to an imitation or falsified version.

Although the ongoing debate on Black authenticity is intended to promote a singular image of Black identity, the discourse rather works in a contradictory manner as it enables multiple notions of blackness to emerge through discussion. This allows for various images of Black identity to surface, which maximizes the amount of available definitions of blackness in society. This is shown by examining the key arguments, their effects on society, and their relevance to Black identity. I rely on the premise that proponents of Black authenticity assume that there is a singular definition of Black identity that should be followed by all Blacks.

Because the discourse on Black authenticity does not happen irrespective of the ongoings in society, I utilize the key sociological factors that affect Black identity in society to examine the different sides of the conversation. Focusing on immigration, upward mobility, ideological diversity, and interracial relationships, I suggest that external forces are constantly influencing groups and individuals in society. Since these factors are the most prevalent forces that affect the discourse on Black authenticity, I analyze them in order to interrogate the different interpretations of blackness that exist in society.

Since the current discussion has real-world outcomes, I end the thesis with a discussion of its effects on the discourse on racial identity and the implications on society. Showing that the varying perceptions of Black identity contest the one-dimensional perception held by proponents of Black authenticity, I suggest that all the parties engaged in the discussion should lend their ears to opposing views. This will allow for the exchange of ideas and beliefs that can lead to an all encompassing notion of Black identity in the future.

**Blake Segal**

*Tiptoeing on the Threshold: Exploring Buddhist Conceptions of the Ultimate through Performative Meditation*

I argue that artistic performance, despite its explicit prohibition in Buddhist texts, provides an ideal opportunity for Buddhist meditation. “Performance” and the field of “performance studies” resist restricting definitions and are embraced more as workable concepts than static pictures of a single kind of “theater”. Performing Arts, then, can become whatever the performers wish it to be. Universal to the many manifestations of performance, however, is the motivating force behind their creation. Meaningful performance aspires to brush with some kind of ultimate truth. Art captures the unexplainable in human nature, gives structure to the nebulous concepts of what we cannot articulate, and deals with “the big questions” of this life and the void beyond. I suggest that performance, should the performers and audience will it so, can be viewed as legitimate Buddhist meditation as a part of the path to enlightenment.

Chapter One outlines ideas, concepts and doctrines of various Buddhist schools in an attempt to present a possible definition of the Buddhist worldview. It is shown that earthly existence, defined as the illusory realm of *samsara*, is constructed of constant, infinite performances. Buddhists recognize existence and the “things” which construct what we call “real life” to be ultimately “empty”. Our lives are performative insofar as there is no inherent value, no eternal, singular soul-like essence as a part of ourselves or our interactions with our world. We are “putting on”. Existence is a kind of balancing act where we cling to the conditional truth of being in this illusory world while we strive to understand the ultimate emptiness of all things. This world is on the threshold, real yet ultimately not real. The only way to transcend the ignorance of “how things really are” is to *experience* truth through meditation. Surpassing a mere intellectualization of religious dogmas, Buddhism demands of its practitioners to really practice, to learn by doing.

Chapter Two connects this Buddhist definition of reality with the process of performance. Relying heavily on post-modern performance theory and the acting theories of Peter Brook and Konstantin Stanislavski, I suggest that performance can be read as an ideal way for Buddhists to pursue encounters with ultimate truth. Conceiving the “self” in terms of character representation, the threshold position of the performance and setting as being in reality yet not quite in reality, and the constant work required to be fully “present” on stage lends the process of performance to be identified as a kind of Buddhist meditation. I try to show that the performance and Buddhist conceptions of truth can share a reciprocal relationship with each informing and bringing the other to a deeper sense of higher truth.

Chapter Three connects the theory established in the first two chapters by exploring existing forms of Buddhist performing art. By showing that there are some established connections between Buddhism and performance, the discussion about deepening the relationship can begin.

I hope to leave the reader with a greater understanding of post-modern performance theory and the potential for performing art to be accepted as a way for humanity to come into contact with “ultimate truth”, whatever that may be. For the Buddhist community, this connects performance with the *dharma* of the Buddha.

**Matt Sherman**

*The Microfinance Revolution: Making Business Sense Out of Poverty Alleviation*

I argue that the publicity and enthusiasm surrounding microfinance is well-intentioned but fundamentally misguided. The public image of microfinance has been shaped from one particular perspective. Few people outside the microfinance world understand the diversity of thought and action within that world. In this thesis, I describe the phenomenon of microfinance and explain the tensions within the movement. I argue that one paradigm of microfinance is best suited to the current needs of the movement even though it receives less attention from the public.

Microfinance is fundamentally designed to meet the financial needs of poor people. Despite their destitution, the poor have ways of generating income and have needs for managing their money responsibly. Most are self-employed and run small informal enterprises. Access to loans allows poor people to invest in their informal businesses and increase their incomes. Access to other financial services like savings makes the poor less vulnerable to sudden economic shocks and more capable of withstanding hardship.

There are two ways to understand microfinance. Some see microfinance as a humanitarian effort to lift people out of poverty. Others see microfinance as a business effort to expand the market for financial services. In this debate between poverty lending and commercial finance, I argue the latter approach is more appropriate considering the current state of microfinance. Commercial microfinance institutions can grow to massive scale because their operations are fully sustainable. Currently, only five percent of the global demand for microfinance has been satisfied. The commercial approach is necessary to expand microfinance services worldwide and achieve the fundamental goal of microfinance - the democratization of financial services.

Currently, the attention is largely directed at the other side of microfinance that focuses more explicitly on poverty. From Nobel prizes to international summits, the public image of microfinance has been shaped from this perspective. The general public, both proponents and critics, would do well to understand the other side of microfinance. With a fuller understanding of microfinance one can experience the growth of an enterprise with a social mission. The story of microfinance demonstrates the capacity of individuals to affect positive social change in other people's lives