We live in an age where having a wide spectrum of thought ought to be considered the ultimate goal; in reality, however, brighter, even prismatic modes of viewing the world are often occluded. The ideal of creating a colorful palette in one’s mind reinforces the mission of Spectrum; as a journal dedicated to expository, argumentative, literary, and artistic ventures from across the disciplines, this journal tries to encourage all of us at K.C.C. to take up a single, unifying rallying cry: “Become a student of the world!”

The Spectrum team would like to express our sincere gratitude to the students, staff and faculty who have made the 2004 edition of Spectrum a possibility. Students of K.C.C.—this is your journal. We encourage all students to continue to send in written works to kapio@hawaii.edu. We look forward to reading and publishing more of your work.

Thank you to the faculty members who encouraged their students to submit their works and who used materials from Spectrum in their classes. In addition, we ask that you instill in your students a desire to submit their essays, perhaps even by offering extra-credit incentives to do so.

A special mahalo to the members of the Board of Student Publications, especially Winnie Au and Dustin McDunn, who have supported this year’s project from the start. And finally, we thank David Behlke, Koa Gallery’s director as well as Paul Staub and Tricia Izono, who helped us in photographing several of the pieces from the Spring 2004 Student Art Show.

Disclaimer: The opinions and viewpoints expressed in Spectrum are those of the individual authors presented herein, and do not reflect the views of this editorial board nor the Board of Student Publications at K.C.C.
Teen Pregnancy

Having sex responsibly requires being educated about contraceptions: knowledge is preferable to ignorance.

By Nicki Uechi

The discovery of birth control is one of society’s more brilliant ideas. Because the percentage of sexually-active teens is rising, the importance of birth control is at its peak.

Although it has been a "lifesaver" for many teenagers, using birth control is not 100% effective in preventing a pregnancy. There are millions of unwanted pregnancies each year due to ignorance regarding the availability and incorrect use of contraceptives. Far too many times I hear girls saying, "I didn't know if you're under 18 you can get birth control for free" or "I didn't know that the Planned Parenthood keeps all information confidential, even from parents." Middle schools and high schools in Hawaii should be introduced to the Planned Parenthood Federation and its policies to encourage sexually active teens to use contraceptives, as these reduce the chance of unwanted teen pregnancies.

Birth control (also known as contracep-
tion) is classified as any method used to prevent pregnancy and to control reproduction. Because most women are able to become pregnant from the time their menstrual periods begin until their periods stop, a woman could become pregnant at any time from about age 12 to sometime in her mid 40s or 50s. The use of birth control allows a woman in her child-bearing years to have sexual intercourse for the sole purpose of pleasure; it additionally permits couples to choose when to have a child. Many types of birth control are available, but they all serve the same purpose. The methods work either by preventing the ovary from releasing an egg, or by preventing the male's sperm from fertilizing the egg. The main point is that contraceptives reduce the chance of an unwanted pregnancy before one occurs, and it doesn't kill a baby. This point is important -- about 85 percent of sexually active couples who do not use birth control experience pregnancy within a year ("Birth control").

People have different moral beliefs about birth control. Because those who use contraceptives are "attempting to gain control over procreation," certain religions consider artificial birth control a sin. Religious beliefs are certainly to be respected, but do these people realize the harms of unwanted teen pregnancies on society or to the mother and father? The beliefs of "anti-birth control" groups should certainly be respected, but there must be exceptions to certain issues.

Can you imagine today's society without the discovery of birth control? Not only would the rate of unwanted pregnancies skyrocket, but it would cause many problems for the present and future communities within our society. Both parents' health (especially the female's), family life, educational goals, and future dreams would be truly affected by one mistake. More sympathetically, the couple is not the only ones who suffer the consequences. The innocent baby is also at a higher risk for health problems, and developing social problems while growing up. Is this what our society truly wants to accomplish?

We must realize that our society is centered around sex. Today's media plays one of the major roles in the causes of teen pregnancies. Teens are growing up in a society where peers, television, movies, music, and magazines portray that unmarried sexual relationships are common, accepted, and expected. The media often praises sex and irresponsible behavior. Music videos show nothing but licentious dance movements, while the song lyrics often imply that the main purpose of
A woman is to satisfy a man's sexual desires. Movies, soap operas, and sitcoms hardly ever show a married couple having healthy family relationships. Instead, single people are shown sleeping around, involved in affairs, and having children outside of marriage. Because people on television are usually looked up to as role-models, many young people think if their favorite star or television character does it, then it must be all right. In reality, people will not stop having sexual intercourse as a means of pleasure. As the number of sexually active teens is increasing, teen pregnancies are becoming more common among adolescents. No matter the consequences, sex will always be a major issue and a major concern in our society.

As centuries pass, the age at which teenagers experience sex for the first time is becoming younger and younger. Statistics show that eighteen percent of U.S. teenagers have experienced sex before the age of fifteen (Zuckerman). I am aware of a few twelve and thirteen year olds who rushed into sex. It is sad because a girl whom I knew in intermediate school was one of them, and she eventually became pregnant. Can you imagine a sixth or seventh grader parenting a baby? She could not even entirely take care of herself, but yet, she had the responsibility of caring for a baby. Young teens usually do not have the appropriate parenting skills to raise a healthy child, both mentally and physically, thus hindering their child's chances for good social development, and a successful future. Unfortunately, this thirteen-year old parent's life is ruined; she can no longer live her teenage life to its full potential.

There are many causes of an unwanted pregnancy, but the most obvious is having sexual intercourse without adequate contraception, in addition to the lack of proper use and knowledge of birth control. A large percentage of sexually active teens neglect to use contraception due to the fear of their parents finding out. Most teens feel too embarrassed to talk with their parents about sex due to the assumption of their parents' negative reaction towards the topic. Despite their parents' wishes, if a teen is determined to have sex, he/she will do everything possible to sneak around and hide. In doing so, they neglect to obtain birth control devices, often resulting in unprotected sex and unwanted pregnancies.

In order to encourage sexually active teens to use a method of birth control, obscure knowledge and information about access to birth control must be clarified. A representative from the Planned Parenthood Federation must be required to educate the school's students about birth control. This does not mean, of course, demonstrating how to put a condom on correctly, but rather introducing the policies of the Planned Parenthood Federation. The representative must explain that Planned Parenthood covers, and is in full support of all teens under eighteen to any testing or birth control supplements, and keeps all information confidential, meaning not even parents will be notified. This way, unconfirmed beliefs about obtaining birth control will be cleared, therefore encouraging sexually active teens to use birth control.

Pregnancy drastically affects a teenager's life. One bad decision can shatter all of one's dreams and goals in an instant. Abstinence is the only 100% effective way to prevent an unwanted pregnancy, but if that is not a choice, one's sexuality must be handled responsibly. There is no easy, one-step solution to avert teen pregnancy, but the correct and consistent use of birth control can work wonders in highly reducing the chances of an unwanted pregnancy.
Kyoto, The Place that Comforts My Soul

There, shrouded in mists, lies the quiescent majesty that was once Heian-kyo, heart of the Empire. As we enter into its kimono-clad layers, we enter into the resplendent home of Japan’s traditions and aesthetic principles.

By Sayuri Shirao

......

Despite the fact that I have traveled to various places throughout the world, I still need a place that comforts my soul as a Japanese person.

Even in Japan, most dominant cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya have completely westernized because of a pervasive, daily influence from the United States and Europe. Overall, these cities are busy and crowded, no longer preserving the Japanese traditions latent within them.

Kyoto is one city that still retains Japanese traditions. Kyoto possesses a serene energy and time passes slowly there. As a result, I am able to appreciate every minute spent in Kyoto. Every once in a while, I visit Kyoto to experience Japanese tradition and culture. Throughout my life, Kyoto is the only place that comforts my soul—Kyoto teaches me a sense of tradition and culture, and reminds me that I am Japanese.

My childhood experiences in Kyoto gave me many unforgettable memories of being Japanese. When I was a three-year old girl, our family moved to Kyoto due to my father’s business. We stayed there only for a few years, but I gained knowledge of Japanese traditions even as a young child. I still remember that I was very impressed by the beautiful, traditional shrines and temples from the very first time I saw them. The ancient temples were extremely magnificent, and I felt I was much smaller when compared to the huge temples. Even as a small girl, I was stirred by the temples’ rich history. We frequently visited temples such as Kinkakuji, Ginkakuji, and Sanzenmim temples to pray and make wishes for our safety, health, and good fortune. Every time I visited the temples, I could sense their calmness and profundity. I truly liked to feel the holy spirit in the temples because of the magnificent atmosphere of sacredness. I was able to feel the numinosous energy touching my heart as it made me feel pure and innocent. I thought that God was there and that he looked through my mind; thus, I swore that I would continue to be a good girl. My family also enjoyed traditional festivals, picnics under the cherry blossoms, traditional tea ceremony dishes, and so forth. Those experiences were very precious to me as a young girl in helping me to comprehend Japanese traditions. Kyoto has been a special place, which has continued to remind me of the Japanese spirit.

Kyoto is an ancient city that has preserved old Japan’s cultural heritage and natural scenic beauty. Kyoto was the capital of Japan for more than one thousand years and was virtually untouched during World War II. There are still innumerable historical places such as thousand-year old shrines and temples filled with Buddhist statues, and gardens filled with Japan’s natural beauty. Kinkakuji, the Golden Pavilion, for instance, was erected in the 14th century in 1397 as “a villa for the third Ashikaga Shogun and turned into a temple after his death” (Kyoto City Tourist Association 13). Kinkakuji is the oldest temple and survived even during the civil war period from 1467-1477; it is a three-storied building with a bronze phoenix on its top. With its green forest on the hill and a beautiful garden surrounding the building, Kinkakuji is replete with unique sights.

Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji are the most well known temples in Kyoto and represent different aspects of Japanese culture with regard to their aesthetic principles. For instance, Kinkakuji has an extremely intense, opulent impact because of its luxurious villa, which enchants all people who visit. There is both magnificence and serenity encompassed within this place. The Golden Pavilion, which belongs to a Zen Buddhist sect, stands in a beautiful landscaped garden and is mirrored in a pond called “Mirror Lake.” The pond is an obvious characteristic that makes the Golden Pavilion rather gorgeous as well. Declan Murphy observes, “as you walk through the gate, the Kyotok- chi (Mirror Pond) becomes visible—and with it the beautiful Golden Pavilion and its reflection in the water.” Murphy adds, “The pavilion and the pond on which it stands were designed to resemble the image of the Seven Treasure Pond in scenes of the Buddhist Paradise” (01). Therefore, people of all ages, from children to the elderly, love to visit Kinkakuji and admire its luxuriously beautiful heritage, as it seems that they’ve walked directly into the Pure Land.

The Silver Pavilion, or Ginkakuji temple, on the other hand, has the quintessential Japanese aesthetic sense of old. Wabi-sabi refers to a sense of flawed beauty, a beauty of things imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. Also, it means the beauty of things both modest and humble. In Japanese culture, being modest and humble is a high virtue. According to Leonard Koren, the author on “Wabi-sabi,”

The genesis of Wabi-sabi may well be the Buddhist word for suffering, duh-kha, which means Pervasive Unsatisfactoriness. A direct translation is more difficult: In Sanskrit duh means bad and kha means axle hole, so it means not holding your wheel of existence (Samsara) correctly for it to roll from the center.

Koren further interprets this as the need
to “Put yourself in the eye of the storm or suffer” (01). Indeed, patience and sufferance are primary Japanese virtues as well. I feel patience and sufferance in Ginkakuji. It does not have a sumptuous beauty and luxury as does Kinkakuji; Ginkakuji is quaint and has a sense of earthiness. There is a Zen sand garden, a sand model of Mount Fuji, and one of the most famous tearooms in all Japan. Even though there are always many tourists who visit, Ginkakuji preserves its calmness and quaintness of thought.

Kyoto was the capital of Japan for more than one thousand years and was virtually untouched during World War II.

Not everyone prefers Ginkakuji, especially the younger generations, due to its somewhat drab aesthetic sense of Wabi-sabi. People who know the Japanese heart of Wabi-sabi, on the other hand, comprehend Ginkakuji’s taste and its preciousness rather well. The largest cities in Japan no longer possess such an ethos of Wabi-sabi. City folk can get anything they want, and they selfishly tend to want even more. Thus, they become increasingly impatient and do not feel a sense of tranquility within their hearts. Furthermore, people are always busy, and the pace of life is extremely fast in the big cities, therefore, there is no longer time to touch upon and appreciate the aesthetic sense of Wabi-sabi. Only Kyoto has a serene energy which allows me to sense Wabi-sabi; Ginkakuji especially instills this principle in me. Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji have different aspects and elements regarding their heritage, yet both the golden and silver pavilions represent Japan’s splendor in the different ways they promote Japan’s unique aesthetic sensibilities.

Kyoto is the birthplace of fine Japanese traditions. In Japan, we have certain customs such as the tea ceremony, Japanese-style gardens, Japanese cuisine, cherry blossoms and so forth. The tea ceremony is a highly ritualized way of preparing and drinking tea and has been strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism. The ceremony itself consists of many steps that have to be learned by heart.

Associated with the tea ceremony, Japanese garden design has been an important Japanese art for many centuries. Traditional Japanese landscaped gardens in Kyoto are called Karesansui gardens. These gardens reproduce natural landscapes in a more abstract way by using stones, gravel, sand and sometimes a few patches of moss to represent mountains, islands, boats, seas and rivers. The author on Japanesegarden.com explains that “In Japan, karesansui are typically attached to Zen temples and monasteries. They are places for peaceful contemplation” (01). Karesansui gardens are strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism and are used for meditation.

Another tradition is that of Japanese cuisine and this can be enjoyed not only by taste, but also by appearance. A variety of lacquerware, earthenware, and chinaware is used for serving food. The food is displayed elaborately on beautiful dishes made by masters. According to an unknown author on Japan-guide.com, “Since antiquity, gastronomic culture in Japan enjoyed bountiful and diverse foodstuff taken from its fertile land and geographic features” (“Japanese Customs and Traditions” 05). Japanese cuisine represents traditional characteristics based on the culture and land.

Finally, the cherry blossom, or sakura, is Japan’s unofficial national flower. The cherry blossom has been celebrated for many centuries and has a very prominent position in Japanese culture. There are dozens of different cherry tree species, most of which bloom for just a couple of days in spring. The Japanese celebrate that time of the year with blossom-viewing parties under the trees with picnics, drinking, and singing. Such parties, when girdled by the gently sloping mountains of Kyoto, allow revelers the opportunity to witness the changes of the seasons. Thus, we are able to enjoy the fabulous cherry blossoms every April. Brilliant cherry blossoms dance across fresh green leaves, and the cool, blue water of summer changes to red, reflecting the fire-tinted trees on the mountains in fall. Snow falls gently on the temple roofs and drooping branches in winter. The natural beauty and cultural heritage of Kyoto during any season releases my stress and gives me a serene energy.

Kyoto is the heart of traditional culture and ancient history in Japan. “Kyoto was the capital of Japan for about thousand years from her establishment as Heian-kyo in 794 until the transfer of government to Tokyo in 1868 following the imperial Restoration,” reveals an unknown author in a book, Kyoto, published by Kyoto City Tourist Association (04). The book iterates that Kyoto is the “spiritual home” of the Japanese people (04). Nowadays, Japanese nationals have a variety of places to travel to and visit. However, it is very rare to encounter a truly Japanese place because most of the cities in Japan have been westernized over the last few decades. As such, Kyoto is seemingly the only place that demonstrates Japanese traditions that I should not forget, and it helps me to identify myself more sincerely as a Japanese.
Advancing Through Time

The modern advancements which we often take for granted today have their antecedents in the technologies of ancient civilizations.

By Diane Kawasaki

Throughout the ancient world, the advancement of technology aided in the constant rise of civilization. The cultures of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China, for example, grew as they encountered a more productive way of life. They developed written communication, new materials, engineering, and new inventions. As civilization progressed, people were able to further technology by learning lessons from the past.

All four civilizations fabricated their own form of writing. Written documentation became imperative as the trading era arose. Transactions were inscribed in clay tablets as a source of record-keeping. Through couriers, people had opportunities to send messages to far away lands. Writing materials also advanced with the written language. Papyrus was the chief writing material in ancient Egypt. The Egyptians made this early form of paper from the Cyprus papyrus plant. The Chinese also made progress by introducing wood, bamboo, and silk to the collection of writing materials.

The first languages were simple. A writer would draw an object like a fish or a broom to communicate to others. As civilization developed, it became increasingly difficult for symbols to express more complex ideas. In Mesopotamia, the Sumerians developed a new form of writing known as cuneiform. Cuneiform was composed of wedge-shaped characters which symbolized each word. The modern-day alphabet was derived from Egyptian hieroglyphics. Like ancient Sumerian and Egyptian scripts, the Chinese script was logographic, using symbols to represent entire words or phrases. The Chinese also used the phonetic method to depict words that could not be described through pictures. Though the written language served its purpose during ancient civilization, it is also substantial as we continue to study the lifestyles of the ancient people.

It was discovered that combining copper and tin created a stronger metal called bronze. The introduction of the new material played a significant role in civilization. As one scholar noted, “Bronze tools improved farming because they were sharper and more efficient than the copper tools they replaced” (22). Mesopotamia started the Bronze Age by converting stone tools and pottery to the new and stronger metal. In Egypt, the Hyksos adopted the making of bronze tools and weapons. The Indus people made extensive use of bronze, not only using the metal for tools and weapons, but also employing it for food storage. In China, bronze was used for ritualistic purposes rather than weaponry. Many still-intact items such as cups, goblets, steamers, and cauldrons were found from the Shang dynasty. These items were believed to be used for sacrificial rites. The Chinese also used bronze for cooking, storage, and mirrors. The four civilizations grew as the Bronze Age set the standard for a more advanced epoch of making tools, weapons, art, and pottery.

In these four civilizations, engineering also progressed. The Sumerians were the first to establish an irrigation system. Since the Tigris and Euphrates were unpredictable rivers, irrigation made it possible for inhabitants to live miles away from the river without losing their main source of water. The Egyptian engineers built the pyramids as resting places for deceased pharaohs. Their ingenious architecture still remains a mystery. The Indus valley cities were logically planned on grids with roads perpendicular and parallel to each other. The Chinese carried out one of the largest ancient building projects—the Great Wall, which served as protection from foreign invaders. Today, we still use many of the engineering methods of ancient peoples.

Although they had the same methods of doing a number of things, it was their unique inventions that separated them. All four civilizations made advancements which have continued to simplify our daily lives.
The Dravidians of the Indus Valley were the first to develop a drainage system: "Each house had a bathroom with a drain connected to municipal drains located under the major streets" (63). No other civilization had such an advanced sanitation system. The Chinese contribution during this time led to the development of the silk industry. Silkworms only fed on the leaves of the mulberry tree, which was found in China. Since China was the only source of silk, globally, the Chinese made prosperous trades with other civilizations for the highly prized material. The Chinese also used porcelain clay to make delicate pieces of pottery and art. Thus, the modern term “fine china” was introduced ("Formation").

Many technologies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China are still used today. From the ingenious invention of the wheel, early civilizations have paved the way for technological advances. Although they had the same methods of doing a number of things, it was their unique inventions that separated them. All four civilizations made great advancements which continue to simplify our daily lives.
Underneath Childhood Truths: The London Bridge

London Bridge is falling down
Falling down, falling down
London Bridge is falling down
My fair lady.
(tradition)

By Michelle Goedrich

... 

This is a rhyme we are all able to recognize. Whether a childhood song or a favorite game, the ditty connotes fun and festivity.

In fact, I can recall singing this song throughout recess while holding my friends captive between our arms. An image of an ancient, mystical bridge and a tower straight out of a fairytale, stories high and unbelievable, always lingered in my mind as it does in most children's minds when they sing this song. It wasn’t until I had the opportunity to visit London that I realized it was quite the opposite. After hundreds of years, the bridge has transformed into something no one would have expected. The actual London Bridge symbolizes the change people undergo as childhood fantasies are abolished and reality sweeps in.

I was looking forward to visiting all the sites associated with the London Bridge. We jumped on a boat to drift down the Thames to see all the famous landmarks. The London Eye was a magnificent spectacle that I couldn’t take my eyes away from, even as we passed under the millennium bridge. “There it is!” I shouted aloud, pointing to brilliant blue bridge before me; it was an image straight out of my childhood dreams. It had towers on both sides, with castle rooftops and ubiquitous windows. My jaw dropped as we passed underneath; the craftsmanship was superb and the detail was seemingly flawless. It wasn’t until the tour guide announced, “That was the Tower Bridge, built in 1899,” that I was pulled back to reality. It wasn’t the London Bridge at all; we moved up the river in anticipation, waiting to see the bridge so praised in song. We began to approach a few smaller bridges as we passed the Globe Theater, a Shakespearean dream, and the Tower of London. When, there it was...stretching across the Thames River, dreary and gray without any sliver of promise. I didn’t know what to think; was the guide mistaken, or did he suddenly get Alzheimer’s?

I was in disbelief as we floated by the bridge and passed a sign, which read, “London Bridge.” What! Are you serious? What had all those songs been about? This bridge wasn’t worth a song; it had nowhere to fall and possessed nothing to keep people captivated. We drifted on by and my head drooped, trying to comprehend what this meant. Most tourists have probably felt a similar pain as they realize the “real” London Bridge is nothing to brag about. Because the Tower Bridge is most often shown on travel posters to London, it has taken on the role of the London Bridge in most people’s minds. However, the London Bridge that stands today is not of that in the Medieval times; the bridge, “completed in 1973, is only the latest of several bridges to hold the name of London Bridge” (McCullough 1).

The first London Bridge is that of Medieval Times and was in operation for over six hundred years. Construction on the bridge began in 1176 when the time came to build a permanent bridge that the Vikings would not tear down. Henry II decided to levy a tax on wool products to help pay for it. The bridge consisted of nineteen piers on the river, none of which had identical arches. The builders may have been learning as they went along because even before the bridge was completed in 1209, sections had already fallen down or needed repair. However, the piers were well constructed in that six hundred years later, they were just as useful as the day they were built.

McCullough provided the reasoning behind its removal: “The decision to demolish and replace the bridge was prompted not by any structural deficiency but by the need for a wider bridge, and the ill effects of the bridge to the Thames itself” (McCullough 3). He continues to elaborate on its problems, “...sometimes the bridge was so crowded with pedestrians, carts, and animals that people were sometimes knocked into the Thames and drowned” (Pierce). Common to English drivers, the rule of the road regarding “keeping to the left,” originated with a 1722 decision of the Common Council, which was made to control the traffic on the London Bridge.

The bridge also had two defensive towers, one overseeing a drawbridge and the other on the south shore. “The defensive drawbridge tower became famous as the place where the heads of famous traitors were impaled on spikes for general examination by the populace” (McCullough 4). One unforgettable head was that of Thomas More, whose refusal to accommodate King Henry VIII’s push towards Anglicanism resulted in More’s execution in 1535. McCullough described the site: “His head is said to have stayed on the bridge for months in a pristine state, without a trace of decomposition, before it was eventually reclaimed by his family” (McCullough 4). However, usually someone had to have the job of placing each new arrival “among the rotting heads, quarters and skulls already there... and to toss superfluous heads into the river below” (Pierce). This explains the position description, Keeper of the Heads. The practice was discontinued in the eighteenth century after
The actual London Bridge symbolizes the change people undergo as childhood fantasies are abolished and reality sweeps in.

The tower was dismantled and the heads were moved to the South tower. It wasn't long before the bridge became prime real estate for all kinds of buildings and homes. In fact, we know that there was extensive building by 1212 because the building caught fire and resulted in history’s greatest bridge disaster. Thousands lost their lives after the southern end of the bridge caught fire and Londoners rushed onto the bridge to observe it. Soon afterwards, northerly winds blew seas onto the buildings on the northern end and the onlookers were trapped between the two fires. Hundreds jumped into the water only to drown and hundreds more tried to escape in overloaded, sinking boats. Those who remained on the bridge were incinerated: “The casualty rate was reported as three thousand, surely an exaggeration, but even if the figure was a tenth of that, the disaster would have still had the greatest loss of life in the history of bridges” (McCullough 4).

However unsafe it may have seemed, the buildings were promptly rebuilt. This was due to the popularity of the endless supply of water, both for usage and easy disposal of sewage. It must have been a relatively healthy environment because these conveniences were rarely seen in Medieval London; of the thousands of victims of London’s Great Plague of 1665, only two were residents of the bridge. The countless building on the bridge narrowed its width to as little as ten feet in places, but this did not stop traffic or events from crossing. “Often the houses on opposite sides of the bridge were connected with stabilizing beams, walkways, and eventually entire upper stories, resulting in parts of the bridge becoming tunnels” (McCullough 5). These buildings became decrepit and occasionally caught fire, resulting with gaps in the line of houses, before being replaced with larger and longer buildings. “It was one of these gaps, curiously, that prevented the great fire of London in 1666 from crossing onto the south shore of the Thames,” asserts McCullough (5).

Before 1750, the London Bridge was the only river-crossing in London, however, the Westminster was soon built and the London Bridge was regarded as unsightly and dilapidated. The old bridge was doomed after another fire started when a maidservant left a pail of ashes under wooden stairs and forty-three houses were destroyed along with several businesses, which forced the merchants to move. The bridge was declared a public nuisance and on July of 1823, it was demolished as City Council put out requests for designs for a new bridge. John Renner was the man with a solution and after convincing the House of Commons that his design was the one to build, the new bridge opened in 1831 to immense fanfare. However, this version of the bridge was not so fortunate and only lasted 140 years, “the victim of its own immense weight . . . in the late ’60s it was sinking into the clay of the Thames River” (“Rhyme or Reason”). London officials knew they would have to replace the bridge, but the question lingered of what to do with the old one—the one of children’s nursery rhymes...

A man named McCulloch came up with an interesting thought. He wanted to purchase the bridge and have it sent to the United States. He and a buddy did just that for an estimated $2.4 million, which was the highest price ever paid for an antique at the time. “For the next three years, workers disassembled the bridge in London and flew pieces to America where they were hauled to tiny Lake Havasu City where they were reassembled over a newly dug out lagoon alongside Lake Havasu” (“Rhyme or Reason”). The London Bridge, now in America, was opened in 1971. Legend has it that McCulloch thought he was actually purchasing the Tower Bridge. Nonetheless, Renner’s bridge still stands in Arizona today and serves as a major tourist attraction. Tourists can visit a makeshift London town at the foot of the bridge while tuning into a local radio station that impersonates England’s own network, B.B.C.

A final bridge has been built over the Thames today: “The current London Bridge opened for business in 1973” (Pierce). It stands a few yards downstream from that of the Medieval Bridge. As it turned out, practicality won over the superfluous designs of both the Medieval bridge and Renner’s. Today’s London Bridge sacrificed its reliance on excessive designs and instead serves a sensible purpose. However, in the process of minimizing the stature of the bridge, my childhood fantasies were also diminished, as being practical is valued in adulthood over having a childlike imagination.
Quality of a Sunrise

Haleakala, otherwise known as the House of the Sun, offers clarity and serenity through simpler elements.

By Christina Norris

As the plane descended between the West Maui Mountains and Haleakala, I gazed out of the tiny window.

I was drawn to Haleakala, my eyes scanning its slopes and observing the many square houses and subdivisions slowly engulfing its organic shape. I saw the sparkle of the observatories on the tip of the summit. I thought of the Silverswords and the Nene goose. My mind slowed and I became still. I thought of how Haleakala's awe-inspiring, natural beauty offers me the calmness and clarity that I need in my hectic and demanding lifestyle.

New Years Eve of 1999 was the year of the Y2K scare. My family and I were planning on celebrating the New Year's potential electrical outage on the slopes of Haleakala. We were going to view the first sunrise of 2000 on the summit. Personally, I thought it would be a very long and tiring night. After all, Haleakala rises up to 10,023 feet above sea level and to ascend the mountain, you must drive three to four hours up the slopes on numerous twists and turns.

Our journey started at 9 p.m. with my mom, dad, three siblings, myself, blankets, pillows, ski caps, gloves, and of course one bottle of champagne to celebrate the night; all of us were crammed into two cars. By the time we reached halfway up the mountain, it was just about to become midnight. We pulled both cars into a lookout spot that overlooked the isthmus of Maui. From this point, we were facing the West Maui Mountains and north shore. Popping open the bottle of champagne, we took a seat on the guardrail and watched the various fireworks that were exploding in Kihei, Wailea, Kāhului, Wailuku, and Lahaina. Being up that high made the fireworks look surreal.

Normally, the fireworks would be bursting and blasting high above me, but now, as I looked down upon them, I felt that they looked like little sparks flickering off a hand-held sparkler. We didn't witness a blackout like the news media said we would; instead, everything slowly became quiet and dark after the last of the fireworks had dissipated. The smoky haze from the fireworks that had engulfed the towns was gradually spent. You could barely make out the horizon, yet the night was crystal-clear and the stars twinkled on curtains of ebony. The moonlight blanketed the ocean and caused the rippling swells to illuminate and reflect the ghostly shine back on to the island. The stillness that crept over the island gave me a feeling of instant serenity. There was no traffic, no schedule, and no concerns--just stillness. To be so far from everything familiar and look upon the island from such a great height, made me put things into perspective on how relatively small my world actually is. Mark Twain described himself "seemingly hung in mid-air," as he stood on the slopes of Haleakala. (qtd. in Paine 1912) I too was in the balance of the vastness of the universe and earth. The picture of the island before me was beautiful and I was yearning for more of the beauty Haleakala had to offer me.

Our next stop was at Hosmer Grove because the Park Rangers don't open the gates to Haleakala National Park until 3:30am. Hosmer Grove does the job as a campground but has limited facilities. It is located at the 7,000 foot marker on the summit. My family and I took a short nap but were up and about once they opened the gates. As we drove, you could tell we were getting higher in altitude because of the chill in the air and from the wisps of warm breath turning into "smoke." Any pessimistic thoughts I had or felt were expelled with each breath I took of the crisp, clean air. I felt fresh and rejuvenated. Each turn I took, I felt that I left something negative behind and gained an extensive positive feeling. I was starting a new journey, a new year. The headlights of the car beamed brightly on the road and made my destination clear. I felt like I was becoming a new person with each breath and turn I took; I was cleaning out my body as well as my soul.

We arrived at the Haleakala Visitor Center parking lot and had half an hour before the
sun came up. Dressed in our “warmest” Hawaii clothes, we hurried out of the cars to get a good viewing spot. Passing the Silverswords, I thought of the many exotic plant and animal species Haleakala had nourished and grown.

Haleakala is home to the Silversword because of the cinder cones that they like to develop on. In the 1920’s, the Silversword (Argyroxiphium sandwicense ssp. macrocephalum) was almost extinct because of people taking the plants as proof of reaching the summit of Haleakala. A fact that also contributed to the problem was the cattle and goats feeding on the Silverswords. Over the years, during which the Maui Chamber of Commerce asked for help from Washington, DC, the Silverswords have dramatically increased in population (Loope and Crivellone 1986). These plants have withstood the weather that nature has brought forth, flourished on the slopes, and have overcome the possibility of extinction; their example makes me want to grow as a person, no matter what is thrown at me.

The Hawaiian goose (Nene), Hawaii’s state bird, also calls Haleakala home. Once the Nene were numbered at 25,000 throughout Hawaii (prior to the arrival of Captain James Cooke in 1778), yet now about 3,000 roam Hawaii today. The population that was reintroduced to Maui has a central location of Haleakala Crater. This is because of the vegetation among the lava flows and the pastures and grasslands on the slopes (Hawaiian Goose (Nene) pg. 1). Just like the Nene, I was growing here too. I hadn’t called Haleakala home for as long as the Nene had, but I felt like it did the nourishing for me just as well.

As I reached the cinder lookout in front of the Visitor Center and found the spot I would be viewing the sunrise at, I looked around me in the early light of dawn. “This would be the ideal place to grow mentally,” I thought. I could just sit and absorb the beauty of the mountain—watch the Nene go about their life in a natural setting, watch people photograph the splendor of the Silversword, watch the awesome colors of the sunrise. As Haleakala takes up the eastern portion of the island, it is home to world-renowned observatories. The observatories stand out like sore thumbs, making the area they occupy appear to belong on the moon or some far off planet. Situated atop cinder cones, I look to the ground that I am taking steps upon. The observatories cause great curiosity and questions within. What are they doing in the observatories? What have they discovered? What new technology will have the next honor of associating with them? I store those questions in the back of my mind, telling myself I need to ask more questions in life.

I turn my focus on what is about to happen. The moment we have traveled so far is here. My mind goes blank as I watch the first set of rays emerge from the clouds. The sky manipulates the colors between orange and red. It looks like someone has used their paintbrush to sweep yellow and gold across the earth. The natural light bouncing off the landscape shows Haleakala in its splendor. The lava cinders look like they have been dipped in gold. The Silverswords appear to be on fire. The shadows cast over the rugged slopes are slowly coming alive, moving steadily across the horizon. I now know what true beauty and serenity look like. My mind has erased whatever junk was stored in it before and has started anew. I have no thoughts of my busy life. I am focused on this one moment and appreciate it with everything that I am. When the sun glistens above the clouds only then do I snap out of my trance. Only then do I notice the crowd of people who have witnessed the pureness that I have witnessed. I want to applaud the performance of raw energy that the sun has given us, using Haleakala as the perfect theater. Haleakala has shown me calmness and clarity through an intense nurturing quality with rich colors and a gorgeous landscape. It has taught me the foundation that I need to build upon in order to nourish my soul.
Blessing of My Second Career

The dream of a garden builds a second career; a community nurtures that garden, made a reality. One man’s hard work becomes one institution’s centerpiece—one person’s efforts embodies the rigorous toil of many hands.

By Moriso Teraoka

How did the cactus and succulent garden get started at KCC? I had retired from Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard in 1985 and had decided to take some courses at KCC.

During the spring semester of 1988, I was taking a World Civilization course from Mr. O’Donnell. From parking lot B, I would walk up the steps and pass the bronze sculpture on my way to class. The weeds and the ice plants were overrunning the ground on the left side of the sculpture. I recall telling myself, “What a place to plant my cactus and succulents.” One of my hobbies was collecting cactus and succulents and I was convinced that my plants would be right at home here at KCC. After a few weeks of looking at the weeds, I decided to do something about it and turned to Emmet Calloway, the student council president. I approached him and wanted to know if the school would allow me to clear out the area and let me landscape...
the site with cactus and succulents at no cost to the school. My friend, Bill Jones, and I were going to donate all the plants from our backyard, which was overflowing with plants and would benefit from a little thinning anyway.

Pat Snyder, assistant to the provost, gave me a resounding "yes."

So during that spring break of 1988, five students from Nellie Queensell's botany class and I cleared the weeds and planted the cactus and succulents that Jones and I brought to school.

This was the beginning of our cactus and succulent garden, which has presently grown into unbelievable proportions.

Pat Snyder liked what was done and a month later asked if I would consider doing something to the barren area fronting the then new administration building. This was an area ten times larger than the site by the bronze sculpture and it was not an easy commitment to make.

It took me awhile to decide but eventually, I agreed to landscape the barren site. I realized what an overwhelming challenge I had taken on when the first swing of the pick bounced off the rocky ground. There was just one remedy and that was quite distressing because it required a lot more work. I had to build raised beds before I could plant anything. Throughout the summer of 1988, three, sometimes four days a week, I toiled at building planting areas, bordering each area with rocks that I carted from the construction site where the new library was being built.

Then one Thanksgiving Day morning, in 1988, while I was working on the cactus garden, the security guard on duty approached me and asked, "Is it worth it?"

I was just about to return the pickup truck key into the mail drop at the mail and distribution room. I had been in school since seven o'clock and had gathered three truckloads of rock and had unloaded the rocks at the garden fronting Iliahi building. I was dripping wet with perspiration and must have looked ragged for the guard to repeat, "Is it worth it?"

"Yes, I guess so," I replied and headed back to my car. Driving home, I started to wonder why the guard asked me such a question. I surmised that he thought I was getting paid, and to him it must have been unbelievable that I was picking up rocks on Thanksgiving Day. I had planned to add more planting beds to the garden and needed more rocks to make the raised beds. Thanksgiving Day was perfect for my efforts, nobody was around, the construction site was secured, and only the security guard was on duty.

For me, this incident was just another one of many reactions that I had been getting from the people who saw me in the garden. For me, such reactions made it all the more worth it, for the very reason that getting paid for my effort never ever entered my mind. I am my own boss, I do what I want to do, and I do it whenever I want to do and nobody can tell me what to do. This freedom to come and go as I please has sustain me for all these years, from the initial garden by the bronze sculpture, to the area fronting Iliahi building, to the area along parking lot B.

When I first started working on the barren patch fronting the Iliahi building, I never dreamt that the garden would affect a whole lot of people, both negatively and positively. My first response was during the summer of 1988 when the garden was in the initial building phase. A young woman and an elderly companion approached me. I thought they were going to ask me for directions to Kahala or somewhere toward Hawaii Kai. I was mistaken, for they thought that I was a landscaper and wanted my service to landscape their home in Hawaii Kai. It was a flattering request, and much to their surprise, I explained that I was a student who was doing the landscaping without any compensation. On another occasion, two young men approached me and asked if they could help. I said, "Sure, for free you can." Their reaction was that I was crazy for working in the garden for free. They quickly left.

Still on another occasion, a senior citizen taking his morning walk asked me, "Why are you planting cactus when everybody in this neighbor who was landscaping and building the garden. What could I have said but to thank her from the bottom of my heart that there were families like the Rosas, who lived on the Aloha Street. I began to realize that there are others like the Rosas who find satisfaction and pleasure in doing something for others.

As the garden expanded, the weeds became overwhelming and I could no longer keep the weeds under control. Fortunately and because of my close ties with the food service staff and students, they began to come out to the garden to pull weeds. One of the first students to offer help was Irene Kitagawa. "I made a pledge to help and I love to keep myself busy," she said.

After about three or four more years of my voluntary efforts, Vernon Wong, the maintenance supervisor, decided that I should be paid for what I was doing. I never expected to be paid for my labor but this compensation was nice to have.

Walter Schiess retired from his baking instructor's position in the fall of 1992 and began to volunteer his service to maintain an area of the garden until his untimely death in 1995. One of his cacti is over 20 feet in height today.

Harold Fujita, a graduate from the food service department and a retiree from IBM, began helping in the garden about five years ago. Last summer, I asked John Messina, Auxiliary Service Officer, for additional help. We now have a paid working force of six to keep the weeds under control. I hope to complete the landscaping of the area by Iliahi by the end of this year with our present work crew.

In 1989, I received a Service Award for work on the garden from Chancellor John Morton. In 1990, the school received one of four Beautification Awards presented by the Outdoor Circle and Lois Taylor, a Star Bulletin columnist featured the cactus and succulent garden in her weekly Friday column. In the spring of 1995, Walter Schiess and I were featured on Leslie Wilcox's, That's Life on Channel 2. Creating and maintaining the cactus garden was the focus of...
the interview. In the spring of 1996, Walter and I were featured on the UH Today segment of the NBC Morning News.

In the spring 1999 issue of the KCC's schedule of non-credit course, Ric Valdez wrote a news article about the garden. In the spring of 2001, Wayne Muromoto, then the Kapio advisor, profiled Harold Fujita and I in an article about the garden in Hawaii Herald, a local publication.

My goal that someday, the cactus and succulent garden be maintained by the combined efforts of the staff, students, and neighborhood residents started to congeal in the spring of 1998. Roy Onomura, the International Students Club president and Student Activities chair, organized a group of volunteers to spend a Saturday morning in the garden. "To give Morisco some help," Roy said. The outing was a huge success. The initial group wanted this project continued.

Today, student activities advisor George Higa schedules this session twice a semester and calls this project Cactus and Coffee.

The biggest change to the appearance of the cactus and succulent garden occurred in the spring of 2000. A pathway was constructed through the garden so that those in wheelchairs could get to the campus from the parking lot and bus stop. Architect Thomas Lim said that he took great pains to develop a plan that would preserve the garden while serving the needs of the handicapped. "True to his commitments, the pathway really complements the garden today."

The work I've done on the cactus and succulent herb garden has garnered many accolades—I consider these blessings. Recognition by the community college newspaper, the Outdoor Circle Beautification award, the Star Bulletin feature article, the TV station interviews and other expressions of praise are pleasant surprises that I truly appreciate. But the most cherished blessings that I have received are the expressions of gratitude by the faculty and the staff members as they come to school in the morning. The other morning, my former English instructor told me that she was going to have her friend come and see the giant aloe in bloom, with its huge clusters of flowers. "I've never seen anything like this before," she said. Another staff member told me that she looks to the garden to give her a lift each day before working.

These expressions of gratefulness give me a lift, too.

Visitors from Europe, Canada, the mainland USA, and Japan are always surprised to see the garden with the many different forms of cacti and succulents here at KCC. Pachypodiums with plumeria like flowers are from Madagascar. The Peruvian, as the name implies, is from Peru; the bumblebees just love to frolic in the pollen-filled flowers. The stepelia come from Africa; its star shaped flowers attract only horseflies because of its bad smell. The century plant is from Mexico; the Saguaro, Arizona; the golden barrel cactus, from Southern California. The aloe vera, used for medicinal purposes and growing in abundance, is from the Mediterranean region. These are only a few cacti and succulents that can be seen in the garden.

I cannot wait for the day when the cactus and succulent garden will be completely recognized as the product of a group of volunteers. Ultimately the day will come when the garden at KCC will be known as the garden planted and cared for by the community; then, the garden will truly then belong to the entire community.

The biggest change to the appearance of the cactus and succulent garden occurred in the spring of 2000. A pathway was constructed through the garden so that those in wheelchairs could get to the campus from the parking lot and bus stop. Architect Thomas Lim said that he took great pains to develop a plan that would preserve the garden while serving the needs of the handicapped. "True to his commitments, the pathway really complements the garden today."

The work I've done on the cactus and succulent herb garden has garnered many accolades—I consider these blessings. Recognition by the community college newspaper, the Outdoor Circle Beautification award, the Star Bulletin feature article, the TV station interviews and other expressions of praise are pleasant surprises that I truly appreciate. But the most cherished blessings that I have received are the expressions of gratitude by the faculty and the staff members as they come to school in the morning. The other morning, my former English instructor told me that she was going to have her friend come and see the giant aloe in bloom, with its huge clusters of flowers. "I've never seen anything like this before," she said. Another staff member told me that she looks to the garden to give her a lift each day before working.

These expressions of gratefulness give me a lift, too.

Visitors from Europe, Canada, the mainland USA, and Japan are always surprised to see the garden with the many different forms of cacti and succulents here at KCC. Pachypodiums with plumeria like flowers are from Madagascar. The Peruvian, as the name implies, is from Peru; the bumblebees just love to frolic in the pollen-filled flowers. The stepelia come from Africa; its star shaped flowers attract only horseflies because of its bad smell. The century plant is from Mexico; the Saguaro, Arizona; the golden barrel cactus, from Southern California. The aloe vera, used for medicinal purposes and growing in abundance, is from the Mediterranean region. These are only a few cacti and succulents that can be seen in the garden.

I cannot wait for the day when the cactus and succulent garden will be completely recognized as the product of a group of volunteers. Ultimately the day will come when the garden at KCC will be known as the garden planted and cared for by the community; then, the garden will truly then belong to the entire community.

The work I've done on the cactus and succulent garden has garnered many accolades—I consider these blessings. Recognition by the community college newspaper, the Outdoor Circle Beautification award, the Star Bulletin feature article, the TV station interviews and other expressions of praise are pleasant surprises that I truly appreciate. But the most cherished blessings that I have received are the expressions of gratitude by the faculty and the staff members as they come to school in the morning. The other morning, my former English instructor told me that she was going to have her friend come and see the giant aloe in bloom, with its huge clusters of flowers. "I've never seen anything like this before," she said. Another staff member told me that she looks to the garden to give her a lift each day before working.

These expressions of gratefulness give me a lift, too.

Visitors from Europe, Canada, the mainland USA, and Japan are always surprised to see the garden with the many different forms of cacti and succulents here at KCC. Pachypodiums with plumeria like flowers are from Madagascar. The Peruvian, as the name implies, is from Peru; the bumblebees just love to frolic in the pollen-filled flowers. The stepelia come from Africa; its star shaped flowers attract only horseflies because of its bad smell. The century plant is from Mexico; the Saguaro, Arizona; the golden barrel cactus, from Southern California. The aloe vera, used for medicinal purposes and growing in abundance, is from the Mediterranean region. These are only a few cacti and succulents that can be seen in the garden.

I cannot wait for the day when the cactus and succulent garden will be completely recognized as the product of a group of volunteers. Ultimately the day will come when the garden at KCC will be known as the garden planted and cared for by the community; then, the garden will truly then belong to the entire community.

Dead bodies and blood are everywhere; the backdrop is a low, enormous bloody sun. The music is seductive and haunting. Two men have their eyes locked on each other while the fog and fading light is all around them.

The son says, "Come, father, let’s embrace at last," but his voice has no love in it, only a faint hint of bitterness. They do embrace, but not out of love; instead, they grip each other out of hate. Their arms are their weapons. This is one portrayal of a classic scene: Mordred battles King Arthur to the death. This is how the scene is represented from the perspective of the movie Excalibur. Many writers and filmmakers have recreated this scene according to their own interpretation. Nothing impacts more than the way John Boorman, the filmmaker of Excalibur, captures this classic scene.

This classic scene derives from the history of the story of King Arthur, the king who united the British nation and who became a legend. His half sister, Morgan Le Fay, hated her half-brother for her own reasons and caused his downfall. She deceived him into lying with her. As a result, she conceived and gave birth to Mordred (Modred, Medrawd, or Medraut), who turned out to be King Arthur's first and only son. Morgan Le Fay embedded her bitterness towards Arthur into her son. Thus, Mordred grew up to hate his
father and lead the battle of Calmaon against the still-loyal knights of Camelot and their king.

When Mordred battles King Arthur in the movie Excalibur, the scene is bloody and beautiful. A wide shot reveals dead bodies and blood everywhere, with arms and armor no longer in use. There is no one present but Percival the perfect knight, Arthur the king, and Mordred the enemy. Percival is off to the side, leaving King Arthur and Mordred in the middle of the scene. When they face each other, the scene becomes misty and the camera blurs the outlines of body figures. When Mordred plunges his spear into his father, a wide-shot is used to accommodate the action. The two bodies become blurred, which presents Mordred as utterly evil. When King Arthur, characterized as true, good, and right, draws his sword through Mordred, the camera uses an extreme close-up to show the sword piercing directly into Mordred's heart. Blood comes out of Mordred's mouth and covers his face. The close-up does not show Arthur's face covered with blood in order for his righteousness to shine through. However, Mordred is fatally hit and dies quickly, making King Arthur the conqueror, and allowing good to triumph over evil.

The element that is most important in the scene is the bloody sun. It is in the center of the conflict—in the middle of the battle. The red sun represents death.

The accelerated score plays as the scene ends, depicting one portrayal of King Arthur's death. In the scene when Mordred is standing with his spear, the backdrop contains medieval weaponry. When King Arthur stands face to face with Mordred, he is alone, except for the faithful knight Percival. His standing alone before his enemy glorifies Arthur by symbolizing his purity.

Another symbolic aspect of the movie is evident when Mordred kneels before King Arthur as Mordred prepares to strike him. Apparently, Mordred tries to push his spear deeper into the king. The action of Mordred kneeling before the king is perceived as uncharacteristic for a man who desires to attain the position as king. As Arthur falls, he has someone to help him up, unlike Mordred who does not have anyone to help him, so he dies alone.

Lastly, the music is also an important element in the movie. The music is low as it brings the movie towards the death of the king. When Mordred strikes Arthur with the spear, the pace of the music suddenly becomes faster, symbolizing the final conflict. The accelerated score plays as the scene ends, depicting one portrayal of King Arthur's death.

There are many other portraits of this pivotal scene in various books and movies. Two notable portrayals are examples of variations in other movies that depict the Arthurian mythos. The most prominent differences among the various movies are the viewpoints that are depicted. These differences contribute significantly in making the scenes different.

There are different points of view of this scene in the movie Merlin. The story focuses on Merlin and the battle he is involved in with Queen Mab. The battle between Arthur and Mordred is not as significant as the battle shown in the movie Excalibur because it is not the final battle. When Arthur and Mordred face each other, there are others fighting around them. In the movie Merlin, both Merlin and Mab have visions of the battle. They race out to help but find that their magic is too weak to heal the wounds of Arthur and Mordred, respectively. The scene begins showing the valor of both Arthur and Mordred. There is some fast, pounding music playing in the background. The scene shows the exchanging of sword blows along with a lot of talking, but not one line to embrace the whole scene.

There is also a scene from The Mists of Avalon, which depicts the battle between Arthur and Mordred. The Mists of Avalon portrays Morgan La Fay, otherwise known as Morgause, as a good person. She envisions both Arthur and Mordred slaying each other. Morgause races to stop this from happening, but when she arrives at the scene of the battle, Arthur and Mordred are already mortally wounded. The vision Morgause has seen is the picture of the goddess between the predator and the prey. She sees Mordred as the predator and Arthur as the prey. She also hears a voice in her head and remembers that "the goddess keeps all things in balance, the predator and the prey. Without her, disorder and chaos will prevail" (Edel). The scene focuses on the goddess's eyes, which go back and forth between Mordred and Arthur, not wanting either to die. Morgause then races on horseback towards them with the pounding of the horse's feet as it runs, being the only audible sound. The scene magnifies her desperation to save both of the men whom she loves.

The main element of the King Arthur story and history can be depicted in many ways. The combination of color, the scene portraying the setting bloody sun, various camera angles, and music all contribute to producing this classic scene in the movie Excalibur. The scene takes the necessary time to develop the setting, action, and does not waste time on unnecessary dialogue. However, the movie Merlin does not emphasize the battle scene because it is not the final battle, thus rendering the scene as not as vital to the movie. In addition, The Mists of Avalon does not emphasize the battle scene because the women of Avalon fight the true battle. The movie Excalibur has but one element to describe the entire scene—the bloody setting sun.
The End, in Theory

Death—it’s something we all will wrangle with at some point in our lives. At Ka‘ena Point, said to be the departure point for newly deceased souls, several friends have a unique debate on the topic.

By Scott Richardson

Stephen called up his friends Ulysses, Edith, Kevin, and Enid one day to see if they would join him on a hike.

Stephen called up his friends Ulysses, Edith, Kevin, and Enid one day to see if they would join him on a hike. He wished to hear their opinions on a subject he didn’t want to discuss over the phone. Of course, they all agreed, as he was their friend and he sounded serious. On Friday morning, they met at the end of the road near Mokule‘ia, parked their cars, greeted each other warmly, and began the trek out to Ka‘ena Point. The first hour went by as the group exchanged pleasantries and chatted about how life was treating them. None wanted to bring up Stephen’s reasons for the outing, wishing to leave it completely up to him as to the “when and how.” As they neared the Point, they settled into the walk. And Stephen chose this time to begin his dialogue. He stopped the hike and directed his friends to a shady outcropping.

Stephen: See that rock near the water over there? Hawaiians call it the Spirits’ Jumping-Off Place. It’s where souls go after the body dies. They climb up the rock and jump off towards the ocean in order to move on to the next stage, which makes this an appropriate place to talk. I appreciate you respond-
Edith: You're right. Who is to say that how I feel about the situation is more "correct" than what he feels. I'm afraid this is a subject on which I can't argue. It hits so close to home. Stephen, how can I help you best?

Stephen: I didn't bring you here for intervention. I just want to think about it a little, outside my own head—talk about it with people I trust and who trust me. You two haven't said anything yet...

Ulysses (Utilitarian): What can be said? I believe we should all act to promote the greatest good, and, thus, the least amount of pain, for the greatest number of people. Have you considered the ramifications of this? What about your Mom and Dad? Your brother and sisters? Your grandma? Your friends? Taking your own life would tear us all apart. Is it worth all the suffering that will result from your death?

Kevin (Kantian): Never mind the consequences. We shouldn't act in fear of the results of our actions, but we should seek the reasoning of an action. Let's talk about why you want to do this. I want to hear your reasons. A logical decision is the only one that ought to be made. If I could better understand what you are thinking, I could be more supportive...or at least have a basis on which to argue against this decision.

Stephen: I don't know. I'm feeling overwhelmed, I guess. I always thought that if I had some direction, I would feel better about my life. But for the first time in a long time, I have direction...and still I get weighed down by emotions, finances, decisions, family, world politics and ethics...it goes on and on. I fail to see a point in it all and I just don't want to have to search that hard anymore.

Kevin: It seems that much of your decision is based on your emotions and your reactions to your environment. What if everyone who felt oppressed like that ended their lives? Where would society be?

Edith: But that's just it, Kevin. People die all the time—by natural and accidental causes and by suicide, as well. Yet, society survives. We all go on. There is constant replacement-regeneration. It is in the individual to decide his or her own fate.

Stephen: Back up a bit. I hate to divert from my feelings on this, but I fail to see why emotion—as a source for action—is less "reasonable" than you all are giving it credit for. What, Kevin, is the source for your actions?

Kevin: Pure rational thought. We must be able to back up all of our decisions throughout life with logical and verifiable reasons for those actions. It's what separates man from beast.

Ulysses: And yet, many "beasts" have shown the capacity for rational thought and learning. I agree that we should not give ourselves up, whole-heartedly, to our emotions, but...

Edith: It seems to me that many reasons have emotion at their core.

Stephen: Right. For example, why is lying looked down upon?

Ulysses: Because if everyone lied, we would not be able to trust implicitly and society would break down.

Kevin: Is everyone in agreement with that?

Kevin: Certainly. One person should not be allowed to do something that everyone else isn't allowed to do. It's a way of maintaining harmony and dignity.

Stephen: And yet, isn't it the fear of this breakdown of trust that initiates the common "law" against lying? And think of the anger and hatred that would result from such a breakdown.

Enid: Fear, anger, and hatred are powerful emotions. All I'm saying is, we shouldn't discount the power of human emotion. And my compassion for Stephen helps me to see his situation a little more fully, now that the heat of it has diminished a little.

Kevin: But don't you see how transitory emotions are? Passion is a strong reactant. I agree. But logic and reason are the basis of human progress. We can sustain any civilization with the proper tools. And we can support Stephen, by showing him that taking his life would serve no purpose other than to ease his suffering, most of that, emotional in nature.

Enid: And to what end? I dare say that none of us can be with him 24 hours a day to give him our support.

Stephen: Nor would I want you to. It's not just about my emotional state. I don't think I'm crazy. I've had a good life and good times and happy thoughts still happen by these days. I just don't know where it all leads.

When I finish school, I'll get a job, with only two weeks or a month of vacation a year, just so I can pay the massive bills on a house and car, which both need constant maintenance. It's an endless, pointless cycle. At any rate, I didn't want you to try to talk me out of this. I merely wanted you to hear how suicide figures into the various theories you all subscribe to.

Edith: Well, I don't see that it conflicts with Self-Interest. However, I think effecting a change in your life might show you that self-interest can be interpreted in other ways than "ending a prolonged suffering." Consider the happiest times in your life, or perhaps I should say the most productive, overall, and then live your life for and in accordance with that happiness.

Ulysses: By Utilitarian standards, the greater good of all of the people in your life...
will not be served by killing yourself. There are too many who will wonder about you and question themselves regarding the why’s and if’s to justify that extreme.

Kevin: Though society would cease to exist if everyone killed themselves when at their lowest, it would never come to that. Though it could be argued that accepting one justifiable suicide sets a hypothetical imperative, I think assuming it could reach such a catastrophic proportion is false.

Enid: And I must respect your autonomy as a human being. I don’t think it is the only course of action, but you have the capability, the intelligence, and the right to react to your own emotions.

Stephen smiled warmly at the lot of them: Food for thought, huh? “Let’s head back,” he said. There was not a lot of discussion on the hike back to the cars. Most of the time was spent in thought and small-talk. At the parking lot, they hugged good-bye and drove to their respective homes, deep in conversation with themselves.

Don’t Blame Video Games

The media says video games teach violence to kids and some adults believe the media’s claims. But there is no concrete evidence to support this assertion.

By Melvin Faylogna

A little 2-year old girl is at a party playing with other children about her age. They all are having a good time playing with the toys available to them.

Most of these toys are little kid’s toys like Legos, toy cars, or wooden blocks. This girl then sees an interesting object, a mini toy rifle. She picks it up, puts her hand around the handle, gently cradles the rifle stalk with her fingers, and starts making motions involving pulling the trigger and feeling the gun’s fake recoil. She smiles and laughs as she guns down her grandfather, who flails wildly about and falls to the ground. The grandfather acts as if he’s been shot, wailing quite loudly. So where did a young innocent child learn how to commit such acts? Nowadays, video games are being blamed for planting such acts into kids’ minds. Yet one can’t blame video games for her disturbing behavior in this case. I know because this little girl is my niece—her family doesn’t have any gaming consoles and her parents won’t let her play such games anyway.

I question, therefore, why video games are getting the primary heat regarding violence nowadays. The media says video games teach violence to kids and some adults believe the media’s claims. But there is no concrete evidence to support this assertion. Take the above example regarding my niece’s behavior. That is why the media and adults should take
into account other factors of violence before blaming video games for influencing violent acts. By not doing so, video games get a bad and evil reputation but video games should not receive blame for the violent crimes that occur in our nation.

I personally have been a gamer for over 10 years. I have tried about every type of game there is, from puzzles, role-playing games, to first person shooters. I feel that violence is a factor in almost all of the ones I have played, even if it was just a simple jump on the head of an enemy. I also feel that without this element of violence, video games wouldn't be as entertaining. Without violence, life itself would be boring. We, as mortal beings, need to see, and are tuned into seeing strife and struggle just like how the Romans did with gladiators fighting within the Coliseum. Video games provide much of this concept—life has conflict in it. The popular first-person shooter "Doom" has been a darling target of the media's after the Columbine shootings took place. Many blame "Doom" for providing the two high school kids with lessons on how to kill. I played "Doom" before, and while I will admit that it was certainly violent, in no way did it make me want to go on a shooting spree in the same way that one does in the game. As for this violent incident in Colorado, "Doom" was far from the root of the problems these boys had:

In a journal written a year before the attack, Harris wrote of his and Klebold's (the Columbine shooter suspects) plans: "I'll be like the LA riots, the Oklahoma bombing, WWII, Vietnam, Duke [Nukem] and Doom all mixed together ... I want to leave a lasting impression on the world. (Associated Press, par. 06)

These teenagers clearly were troubled and they wanted to do something violent just for fame. Out of the six comparisons made, four were from real life events, and two were from video games. Violence was a part of their motive, but to target video games as being solely responsible for their murderous intent seems irresponsible.

I feel that I pick up more violence by watching television than playing video games. In TV shows, there are more violent shows like fist-to-fist fighting, gun shows and hunting shows, fictionalized gladiator battles, and especially the news. Consequently, when something happens like the Columbine shootings, why isn't there more exploration and analysis of the shows these kids watched? There isn't a game out to reenact the Oklahoma bombing or 9-11, nor are there plans to market such games. It's because video games are a tiny medium when compared to television that we shouldn't scapegoat games as a crucial determinant for violent crime. The television industry is too big for the media to touch, and it is also one form in which the media is able to reach out to the world. It would be hypocritical for the media to blast television like how they do with video games—TV as a medium is everywhere.

Science has found some evidence linking how our environment around us can have an impact on hormone levels and also our genes. One example is "environmental factors such as prolonged trauma can potentially result in changes to fear and anxiety levels." (Etherington, par. 12) But even if there is evidence, there is no direct proof that pinpoints video games as the direct cause of such violent behavior, one that boosts up our level of rage. When compared to other countries that have an abundance of extreme violence in fiction-based entertainment, such as Japan, the United States will still have more killings. Etherington of BBC News points out that "Japan provides a similar study where fictional violence is arguably more widespread than in the US, but the country's murder rate is around 800 per year in a population of 127 million. In New York, there were around 600 murders in 2003 in a population of eight million." (Etherington, par. 17)

Although there are many studies, not much credible work has been done yet and there is no direct prove that links violent video games with violent behavior. My bottom line is that media can't prove or have such proof that there is a direct connection between violent video games making someone violent (and if they do, I will always be proof of a viable counter-argument). The media exploits violent acts done by troubled teenagers and puts exaggerated blame on the video games they have played. So as Eminem once asked in his song "The way I am," where were the parents at (regarding the teenage shooters of Columbine)? Parents and adults ultimately get the choice of what their child sees and does. If the media wants to blame video games for violent acts, they have to also blame the adults who let their kids play these video games and those who do not monitor their child or teenager's behavior. The parent must help discipline their child and point out what is good and bad, acceptable and unacceptable for the child to do well in this society. As for my niece, the one who doesn't play video games anyway, a simple "that's not appropriate" in a disapproving tone made her drop the toy rifle. So my point is that video games are for everyone, but not all are appropriate for some. Adults must determine which are appropriate. Troubled teens and people need immediate attention and guidance because it is their troubled minds that are telling them to kill and pull the trigger, not the video games they played.
Hawaii’s Landfill

If you were an alien landing on Oahu in the year 5003, how would you explain the contents of what we call a “landfill?” Would this be an artifact for the ages? Can a landfill dually be a museum?

By Diane Ko

Captain’s Log, Field entry 5003103: The year is 5003; my crew and I have landed on an island called Oahu located on 200 N Longitude and 155°W latitude on the planet Earth.

This island is part of an archipelago chain located in the Pacific Ocean. My objective with my team was to excavate, collect and analyze objects found on this island and to possibly theorize how past inhabitants lived. We surveyed the island and the area west was the site we chose to excavate first. Our ship docked near an enormous mountain and this site was our home base. The prominent mountain had a paved gravel pathway leading to the top summit area. The vistas from standing on the summit were excellent, lending views of the North and East side of the island. The surreal mise-en-scene had the semblance of a central gathering place for the human inhabitants. My background research undertaken regarding the human species of this island revealed the original ancient ancestors to be Hawaiian in ethnicity. Later with time, other ethnic groups settled into the islands. One special research notation I found very interesting was in a journal in the year 2004. It was reported that each human inhabitant generated about four pounds of...
Our team used the Quadrate Belt method in the excavation of this mountain to collect specimens. The findings were from the ten quadrate plots starting from the base of the site and moved up the summit. Each quadrate measured out at 6 meters square with 15 meters intervals between each quadrate plot. The specimens collected on this mountain have yielded mainly inorganic items. It was observed that the past human inhabitants buried their disposable items in layers. This discovery was made in the excavation and the sampling of quadrant 10-A near the summit, where the results yielded the careful layering of items comprising of many inorganic containers and items.

The specimen data sheets have provided an interesting array of the items found. The excavated specimens were separated into two groups, the containers of edible and non-edible items. Some of the containers of the edible items analyzed were the plastic bottles of “Coca cola” and “Pepsi.” These beverages were consumed and must have been very popular due to the amount of containers found. There were many aluminum containers bearing the unique label of “Spam.” We can only conclude that the pinkish product within the container, now a dirty and rotten brown, must have been a favorite food item for the past inhabitants on this island. We uncovered numerous paper wrappers printed with the iconic symbols for the McDonald’s golden arches and for Burger King. Other food containers indicate it once held Vienna sausages, Heinz Ketchup, Pringles, and P.O.G. The non-edible containers analyzed indicate that they once held hair shampoo, body wash, and laundry detergent. Many other unidentifiable plastic and paper items were collected and tagged as unknown items. We collected some samples and recorded the others.

Sifting through the assemblage of items found in the mountain and reviewing my notes, I was able to formulate my theory that the human inhabitants that once lived here were a society of an impetuous nature. By the studied results, I have theorized that the past inhabitants had very little time to harvest their own food and cook their meals, which once originated from fresh produce and livestock. It was their shortage of time to cook, which promoted the popularity of these huge companies such as “McDonald’s” and Burger King” who were able to satisfy the great appetite and demand for products. The amount of discarded canned and bottle items, demonstrates the human inhabitants’ fondness for the “Fully-cooked, ready to eat” meals. Examples of the “Fully cooked, ready to eat” meals were the ever-popular “Spam” and “Vienna sausages.” They also consumed a voluminous amount of the oddly-shaped “Coca cola” and “Pepsi” beverages. The other items that we excavated and analyzed were of non-edible consumption and used in their everyday life.

The human inhabitants consumed a lot of disposable items and did not believe in the recyclable ideals perhaps due to their religious beliefs. Everything points to a society where the frantic hurriedness and the ideals of “use once and discard” were normal. As for the enormous mountains which they termed “landfill,” I could only speculate that perhaps they wanted to preserve their memories of the consumption, thus practiced the concept of burying their consumed items. In remembrance, the human inhabitants created in tribute—a monument similar to this mountain. The creation of the “landfill” has the resemblance to the practice of the original ancestors of this island who once built huge stone temples in reverence to their gods.


“Kyoto.” Kyoto, Japan: Kyoto City Tourist Association, 1982.


“Bloody Setting Sun”


“Quality of a Sunrise”


“Don’t Blame Video Games”