

The



Growl

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Vote

Student Council Elections

Your needs as a student at Humphreys College can't be heard and acted on if you don't vote in the upcoming Student Council elections. The offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Student Representatives are empty and ready to be filled. You can vote this Thursday and Friday, November 5th and 6th, during open hours in the Main Office or the Registrar's Office. For more information, see Dr. Chabot.



A New Quarter In The Tutorial Center

Michael Duffett, Tutorial Services Coordinator

One of the nicest things about being a teacher in the quarter system we have here at Humphreys is that we get to see new faces twice more frequently in the year than those working the traditional two-semester-per-year system. And if you work in the Tutorial Center, as I do, it is doubly nice, nice to the power of four, as our new Math tutor, Tracy Quist (whom, incidentally, if you have needs in numbers, I urge you to meet) might say. What I mean by all this is that we tutors see new students not only more frequently but on an individual basis, one to one, the best way, in my opinion, to learn.

It might interest those of you out there who do not know me to know that I was educated primarily in this way. All one was absolutely required to do at the University in England where I acquired my education was to visit a tutor with a weekly essay. And the tutor did not read it. He sat in an easy chair - mine was in the habit of pressing cloves into oranges to make pomanders (check the dictionary if you need to) - while the undergraduate read to him. Lectures, seminars, all the other paraphernalia of intellectual life at college level, were - and, as far as I know still are, for the University has been there since the thirteenth century - entirely the responsibility of the student.

That's what distinguishes the tertiary level of education from all others you have undergone so far. You are here because you want to be. Nobody is wielding a big stick.

So come on over to the Tutorial Center and be one of the new faces. I'll tell you what a pomander is.

For Those Who Fear Love or Death

I spent an entire week of my life
Standing on the edge of a dark pool
Throwing stones into the silent water
Watching ripple after ripple float outward and disappear
Until finally, on the eighth day, it came to me;
In this life where nothing is forbidden
Neither is anything permanent.

-- S. C. Mead --



BELOVED

A film review by Prof. Cynthia S. Becerra

Without a doubt the movie *Beloved*, an October release, challenges its viewers just as Toni Morrison's award-winning novel does its readers. Although the Pulitzer Prize has sanctioned the book as an American classic, the movie based on the novel may not find as many viewers as the book has reaped readers since its publication in 1987. Moreover, the film, well directed by Jonathan Demme, will leave even the well-seasoned viewer of similarly provocative, historically based works like *Schindler's List* groping for words to describe it and to deal with it. However, it is a movie that is not only worth seeing but also worth discussing.

Inevitably, some people—misguided critics-- have labeled *Beloved* as a ghost story, but that is not only an oversimplification of the theme but also a disservice to the quality of the work, including the screenplay by Adam Brooks, Akosus Busia and Richard LaGravenese and the subtle but effective cinematography by Tak Fujimoto. The story revolves around the haunting spirit of a baby girl killed by her own mother, a runaway slave, who slays her child so that the slave master cannot have her. Set in rural Ohio during pre-Civil War through post-Civil War, the narrative journeys back and forth through flashbacks of the past, as the viewer is first introduced to 124 Bluestone Road through Paul D., a former slave, who is invited into the possessed house by Sethe.

Led by Oprah Winfrey as Sethe, the strong cast dramatizes the inhumanity of slavery by humanizing their characters. For example, Paul D., honestly portrayed by Danny Glover, reunites with Sethe after the Civil War, bringing out a kindness in her that she is cautious about revealing after having suffered rape and beatings at Sweet Home, the ironic name of the Kentucky farm in which she, Paul D., and her husband were enslaved. Paul D. is a former slave who is confused yet sometimes elated by his new freedom. In one scene in a Cincinnati slaughterhouse, a co-worker explains to him that just because one can't see the chains, it doesn't mean that they are not there.

Although Paul D. courts Sethe, he is unable to compete with a young woman named Beloved, who shows up on their doorstep following the unconsummated family's joyous return from a carnival. Beloved, played by Thandie Newton, invades the household taking the attention away from Paul D. As Denver, Sethe's only surviving daughter, dotes on Beloved, Sethe becomes infatuated with Beloved's obsessive need to be near her and to know her. Cast aside, Paul D. retreats to an outdoor shed, where he is eventually seduced by the primitive, child-like Beloved.

Denver is the first to believe that Beloved is the spirit of her older sister who has—somehow—come to life. However, after she watches the life of her mother sucked out by this insatiable spirit, she is the one who seeks help from outside. Responding to the ghostly image of her paternal grandmother Baby Suggs, who had been a spiritual leader and healer, she finds help in Cincinnati from both black and white supporters who had given her grandmother the house on Bluestone Road.

Played artfully by Kimberly Elise, Denver evolves into a strong young woman capable of supporting her mother in spite of her near insanity and physical breakdown. The fervent climax culminates as a group of black women who come to exorcise the spirit, as embodied in Beloved, from the old house. As Beloved dances naked and pregnant on the porch with Sethe beside her, the women pray for her removal. Within minutes, she vanishes. The only traces of her are left on Sethe's agonizing face.

However, unlike Beloved, the ghost of Sethe's slain child, the horror of slavery does not leave so quickly—or so easily. Jonathan Demme, who also directed the empathetic *Philadelphia*, has skillfully portrayed the visceral flashes of torture, of dehumanization, of unnatural acts perpetuated by slavery and oppression. Through the narrative Toni Morrison captured the consciousness of a nation—perhaps the world as noted in her winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993—and now Oprah Winfrey has courageously brought it to the screen for many more to see, to confront, and—perhaps—to understand.

Ultimately, *Beloved* is not meant to entertain but to make us flinch at, to respond honestly to our past, our own American Holocaust.



No School: Monday, November 9, Veteran's Day Observed

Say "Thanks" to a veteran.