



Progeny

Spring Edition 2006

**Poems
Prose**

**Plays
Photos**

Progeny

Spring 2006

Poetry ♦ Prose ♦ Photos

Defiance College

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Editor's Acknowledgements

There has been a time to laugh, to lament, to build up and break down within Progeny this year. But through it all we have gathered together to create.

I would like to thank my associate and assistant editors for creating not only a publication this year but a Progeny this year. Without devotion, desire, and drive we could not do what we do.

Thanks and gratitude to Lauren Brown, Alicia Johnson, Nicholle King, Sara Leininger, Myree Mills, Stephanie Rupp, Siobhon Smith, and Mary Winters.

I would also like to express my thanks to MC Harper, the respectful and savvy mentor of Progeny, Robyn King and Siobhon Smith for their aesthetic assistance and graphic guidance, Amy Drees for her technical support, and finally The Hubbard Company for the printing of Progeny.

This edition of Progeny is unique. The topic of “Doors, Clocks, and Telephones” . . . of Human Portals is one that so many of these works reflect whether intentionally or by accident. I think we as humans all experience times of transition, of growth, of trepidation in life. It is these works that allow their authors to express or expel the feelings of life. Thank you to each of you for sharing.

Your editor,
Abby Reichard

The Face in the Mirror

We will have to face our own mortality one day.
When you do what will you be able to say?

Fame, fortune, success is what society demands . . .
More money, bigger better things.

We tend not to look at the inside qualities of any man.
Remember they hurt as we hurt, they bleed as we bleed.

We measure success by how well we achieve temporary things . . .
“I’ve got to have that dress, all my friends have one.”

When I looked in the mirror, I saw everything told to me . . .
“You will never amount to anything, that’s not good enough.”

And I believed, I truly believed this for far too long.
Then one day talking with a pastor, he said “We love you.”

But I rolled my eyes and started to walk away.
He said “Wait a minute come back here . . .
“Look me in the eye and say Thank You.”

The tears rolled from my eyes.
I knew that moment something changed inside.

Not that day but not long after I started to like myself.
I could look myself in the mirror without contempt.

With much work and effort, I succeeded in loving myself,
Which has made the hurt less painful.

This is the most important lesson one can
Learn in life the gift of self acceptance.

Lisa Roddy



**My Roommate Robyn King and Her Strange Habits Part 1
— Sharonda Fudge**

Anguish

Look around,
what do you see?
See books and papers
scattered everywhere,
representing scattered thoughts.
See people pulling away,
being pushed away first.
See her feeling better,
waiting for reality to set in,
revealing her unwanted place,
a future full of fear.
Look around and see
someone
struggling so damned hard,
being held back
by a stronger internal force.
Look around and see
simulating healing,
counterfeiting healing,
struggling still.
Look around and see
the detour sign,
not straight ahead.

Karlie Nickeson



Roof — Misty Erford

Fragile Collapse

I am conscious of the fact
that outside that Picture Window . . .

Window, picture this . . .

A history of time sliding past me,
us resting on a pulled-out couch.

(That does nothing for my hair)

Him being tedious again

Mindless

Mindful

of the Future

History sliding past me

on a slick downward hill

with no breaks

Even with what medicine is today,

No breaks

As we fall

No breaks

Now time flying past us,

It is a picture perfect

Collapse

No breaks

No end

To what is Left.

Abby Reichard



Self Portrait — Adam Szech

Effects of Time

Time is gone.
Minutes wasted.
Seconds put to shame.

What have I done?
Have I really lived?
Have I made a difference?

People helped.
Ideas formed.
Situations conquered.

Time is gone, but not wasted.
Minutes wasted, but not on frivolous things.
Seconds put to shame, but not in my life.

Mary Winters



Sundial with Arching Form — Abby Reichard

Anger Rising

Each dry season I came to your city,
looking only for work.

And I endured your constant scorn and contempt.
With anger rising, I hoped your day would come.

Knowing only village life,
I was so unlike you and your city.

You saw me only as I appeared,
while you looked down upon me.

And I carried the burden of your hatred.
With anger rising still, I knew your time was at hand.

So today, like so many others,
your hatred has become more than I can bear.

And this season, I am not in your city looking for work . . .

I am here to change our lives.

Tim Rickabaugh



In Cambodia — Ken Christiansen

Anger Reigns

Back from the West, I have arrived to rebuild . . .
as you have requested.

I am pleased to see that our city rests again . . .
yet the streets seem strangely quiet.

And being anxious to serve, with so much to offer . . .
why do you stare straight into my soul.

Brother, why have you brought me here?
What role can I have, behind these walls and wire?

And I am suddenly aware of the echoing screams . . .
and the death and suffering that lingers here.

Am I here to witness the face of our enemies
as they confess to their crimes?

NO!

Sitting before you now, I feel the power of your hatred.
And I realize that I am your captive until death arrives . . .
to release me from your grip.

Tim Rickabaugh



Toul Sleng Torture Prison, Face in
an Archive Photo — Mary Catherine
Harper

Fulfilled

Just staring at these
unaware pages.
Pacing my thoughts as they come.
Groping in the dark,
wasteful land
of dead trees
that developed into such
fruitfulness.

I'd like to think of this writing as a
necessary gift to be used.
But I really know, nay
I have yet to discover . . .
How unassuming,
How tasteless, how fruitless a
gift can be
unless given and received
with Grace.

Abby Reichard



Banana Muffins — Elizabeth Schoonover

The Portal

Its polished brass stood still as night,
giving way to the future of my life
as I washed off another gray day.

I'm gone, slipping melted away,
no longer here, my troubled whole
closing itself on a crying face.

Escape me, transfer me, connect me,
for it is only then that I have the nerve
to walk through that door left ajar.

A question lingers in my mind
as my old skin is left behind . . .
What's on the other side?

Lauren Brown
Alicia Johnson
Siobhon Smith
Abby Reichard
Stephanie Rupp
Mary Winters



I Like to Sing in the Shower — Elizabeth Schoonover

Parallels

I pass the flowers in the hall,
not noticing them anymore.
They've been dead in the vase a week,
but I only recall it when I'm
 (in the shower)
 (driving to work)
 (half asleep)
 busy with life.
Someday I'll get around to it—
Until then, brittle husks grace
empty chambers . . . so still, so sterile,
so alone.
I don't even remember
why you gave them to me in the first place.

Rachel Baker



Mass — Abby Reichard

Reflection on Hin Kaingch of Cambodia

When Hin Kaingch was a young woman, her nation, Cambodia, was caught up in a civil conflict that resulted in the genocide of about a million of its citizens. The infamous Toul Sleng prison and Choueng Ek Killing Fields, where innocent Cambodians were tortured and then buried in mass graves, are the legacy of the Cambodian genocide of the late 1970s. Hin Kaingch raised a family during those years of starvation and forced labor. Even after the genocide, life was extremely difficult. In the past thirty years, she has lost her husband, her sons, and her daughter, who has left behind four children. Hin Kaingch, who is herself blind, is raising these four grandchildren in extreme poverty on the outskirts of Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia.

Recently, a group of Defiance College students and faculty traveled to Cambodia to give immediate aid, serve the educational and economic needs of the Cambodian people, and learn more about the long-term needs of people in that “corner of the world.” Hin Kaingch revealed to them that two of her grandchildren were eager to continue their education next year as they enter their middle school years but could not walk the long distance to the middle school. Dr. William M. Finerty, a member of the DC Board of Trustees and Cambodia trip doctor, supplied bicycles.

What follows is the translation of a key part of Hin Kaingch’s story and a reflection by Carolyn Gilgenbach, who transcribed the interview of Hin Kaingch and her grandchildren.

The Bicycles

“They all go to school. They walk to school, two fifth grade and one third grade. They still stay one more year at close by school that is walkable, but the next year come, they got to go further. They really do need the bike.”

As I listen to and transcribe this story of Hin Kaingch’s grandsons, I keep picturing the many bicycles hanging from our garage ceiling, bicycles that have been hanging from that ceiling for years, no longer used by our children. I go home and look at these bicycles. I see secondhand useless bicycles, but through the eyes of a Cambodian child, I see a true desire for education.

Carolyn Gilgenbach



Untitled — Abby Reichard

Lines that Carry

In long dart straight lines
Held by wooden pillars
Spread down a long path
That goes beyond its material post

A sharp buzzing
Bright color signs
Moving closer
Closing ones eyes

In the distance
Voice are heard
In a collage of sound
Melting into a wave of feelings

One voice
In a sea of many

Siobhon Smith

The Light of the Candles

The light of the candles
sings me a song of a different life
light blue for peace, red for love
green for nature, orange for passion
royal blue for prosperity
all things for my better life.
All the candles glowing in the night
giving me a new vision
clearer than before.

The smoke of the candles
and the tears on my face
the realization I will miss this life.
As the wind runs its fingers
through my hair, it is time to go.

As I stand up, the wind blows
my hair around my face
inviting me to follow.
I head toward the door
to my new life
to be seen nevermore in the old.

Myree Mills

You

I sit back and see a part of me in you,
for you with your blue eyes so pure,
so true,
show me the depth of this thing called life
with all its many views.

I read different philosophies,
ways to live,
ways to understand the hard things in life,
but when I'm with you they seem easy,
life feels too good to be true.

In your eyes so pure
and true
I see the things I love.
We may not like all of the same things
but the fact remains
things are not the measure of character.

I look for people who are pure
and true
and in your deep baby blues
I have found shining through
a piece of me in you.

Ernest Clover



Horse Lovers — Melissa Headley

My Muse

No trauma.
No pain.
What the hell am I supposed
to write about?

No inspiration.
No creativity.
Where did it all come
from before?

No love.
No sorrow.
How am I supposed to write
the “Great American Literature?”

No tears.
No smiles.
Wait. This doesn’t seem
right.

No heartache.
No heartbreak.
Why am I complaining?
What’s this about?

No rage.
No anything.
I’ve lost my muse.

Kaycie Atchison



Contemplations — Juanita Phippen

Cradling the Past

Sound ringing,
chimes you hear in your head.
Knocked Over,
Black and Blue,
and Death laughs at you.

You may be cornered,
it may be then
you see that final Angel coming forth
delivering men.
That insight, flee or fight
Delivered you from Death.

Time creeps by,
Stalls and Idols,
idolizes those days gone by,
like they were that much better.
Only your Black and Blue Soul makes you think so.

A reminder ringing in your head,
of what Death last said.
As you lifted your eyes to the Great Divine,
He murmured,
“Fine! Live!”

Abby Reichard



My Roommate Robyn King and Her Strange Habits Part 3
— Sharonda Fudge

Clichés for a World Torn Apart

Like a needle in a haystack
The forgotten veteran is a needle in a needle stack
Hay in a hay stack
Tryin' to keep warm with his coat, hat and backpack
You choose how to word it
It's iniquity at its best.
You step over him every day when you walk to work
You hand him a dollar as you think to yourself and smirk
You're always being noticed and always feeling wanted
Remember this man is why you're "free, so go ahead and flaunt it."

If home is where the heart is
My home is getting cold
Its been ripped out, stomped on, torn apart
And its startin' to feel old
Can my home possibly withstand the inhumanity?
The foundation's strong but I have my doubts in this calamity
I need to re-enforce my home but I'm not sure what to use
I've never seen two by fours or concrete take so much abuse
I guess my heart, my home, my hands, my feet
Will brace for the worst and not let the worst succeed.

When in Rome do as the Romans do
So go ahead and hate on him
The rest of them are doin' it so why not play their game
Go ahead and hate 'cuz he doesn't look or act the same
Go ahead and profile because you are that weak
Do you feel like a king when you humiliate the meek?
Maybe not the meek but the strong
Because we've put up with your naiveté for way to long.

Apathy has become the "Cliché" that tears our world apart
We say we want to put a stop to it but we don't know where to start
Let's start with ending apathy and instilling some humility.

Eric Stricklin

The Simple Life

Candy, pigtails, and recess.
The sun shining everywhere I walked.
Life was nothing but laughter and games.
Remember when it was that simple?

Cootie shots, popsicles, and playgrounds.
Butterflies flying throughout the sky.
Chasing them was the highlight of the day.
Remember when it was that simple?

Now it is not so simple.
Life is not all fun and games.
The standards are set higher,
The expectations greater.

But are the expectations really that high?
Is it really that tough?
Is working ~~through~~ life the only way to survive?
Cannot laughter be a part of life?

Sure, not every day is full of laughter and games.
Sure, not everyone is getting cootie shots and eating popsicles.
But I will survive, I will make it In this simple life.

I do not have to worry about where I am going to sleep.
I do not have to worry about when I am going to eat.
Sure, the sun does not shine everywhere I walk,
But at least I can walk freely.

So my life may be filled with stress.
It may be filled with palm pilots and pocket calendars.
Every day may be packed with different too many events.
But at least I am surviving.

I am surviving in my simple life.
My life where I know where I am going to sleep.
My life where I know when I am going to eat.
My life where the sun does shine.

My simple life.
Mary Winters