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Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, Editors

The City of Disney, Book III

The Philosophy of Consolation or Bombs and Prayers

[Daniel R. White](#)

Augustine of Epcot

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,--
Hamlet, *Hamlet* 5.2.8-11

Stultitia loquitur:

Tametsi quorsum tandem attinet mei uelut umbram atque imaginem
finitione repraesentare, cum ipsam me coram praesentes
praesentem oculis intueamini? Sum etenim uti uidetis, uera
illa largitrix eon, quam Latini STVLTIAM, Graeci MORIAN
appellant.

Erasmus, *Moriae Encomium (In Praise of Folly)* 4-5

Folly speaks:

And what purpose does it serve, even if it were possible,
definitively to render a mere shadow and image of me, when you
may see me in person, face to face, with your own eyes? For I
am as you see me, the true benefactor of things, whom the Latins
call Stultitia and the Greeks Moria.

The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever [We were] born to set it right!
Hamlet 1.5.189-90, amended

Why is it, Lord, that sometimes you move our hand, despite its good intent, to err, if not, by our making that error we are to learn some larger truth or partake of some larger good that, had the error not been made, would have been obscured? So in my last Missive to you, my Confessor, you allowed my finger to slip so that--my Friend and fellow Philosopher, Boethius, forgive me--I miskeyed (for, as you know, Author of all Scripts, the stylus has been replaced by the keyboard in the Era of In-formation) the title of that Meditation on human finitude, *De philosophiae consolatione*, so that it appeared to read not "On the Consolation of Philosophy" but rather "On the Philosophy of Consolation"

(Philosophia consolationis)! But there are slips of the finger and sleights of the hand, my Truth, and sometimes only You know the difference. There is also, I fear, a species of Error in which every alternative is false and no one can win: the Double Bind, my Psychiatrist, which, when it comes to inhabit not only the Family but also, in good Roman style, the Republic, generates Political Schizophrenia.

This "going astray," as the root of the vernacular "error" in the *errare* of ecclesiastical writ signifies, is a tiny seed, surely incomparable with those great wanderings from the True Way that Man-kind and Woman-kind too have taken, from the day when that brave Homeric seafarer Odysseus wandered off to Troy, and Sappho set out in search of Aphrodite. He went astray over hostile seas, a friendly sorceress, a fanged serpent and a voracious whirlpool, to mention only a sample of his travails, *planasthai*, to wander, just as those *planets* did in the ancient sky of Ptolemy. Our Dante's Persona, too, strayed from *la diritta via*, "the true path" marked by the stars as he found himself wavering "In the midst of the journey of our life," a soul lost in a Dark Wood, yet illumined at morning by the ray of the rising sun. And she, poetess of Lesbos, lifted her song to the goddess of Love, at once fearing and yearning for Her arrival in a chariot born by sparrows, "Again," signaling what Nietzsche would call the "eternal return" of that chaos called "sexuality," animator of life and the very Noise of evolution.

A seed, Lord, is not just a thing but a source, a pod from which may grow *les fleurs du mal*, as Saint Baudelaire, that Gardener of the Soul, once described them. Desire would turn their cusps to flame, sending their floridity into a fiery ascent toward the Heavens and their gross matter in a descent to Earth as ash, their vegetative souls wavering in the Breach, were it not for my onetime discovery that error, too, is part of the good. Indeed, my Signifier and Signified, sin, though evil from the perspective of the human will, may be a good activity when viewed in light of the vast *historia* of life, for You shape error into truth, space into form, through the sculpting winds of time and action or, as St. Darwin would say, even more to the point, through the trial *and* error of nature's, and its Architect's, selectivity. For if "nature" itself exists as a form which in turn contains all things quick and dead, how could its vast body be shaped except in some metaselection of universes, as in the cosmic scope of Your mind, You are known not only as Lord but as MahaVishnu the cosmogonic dreamer of worlds? From the trials and errors of Your Subconscious, *kama* or Erotic Desire arose as the *Eperon*, the spur of what St. Derrida likes to call *differance*, to ripple the surface of dreamless sleep and churn up fathomless worlds. All of this is Your Profusion, my Instigator, these Cosmic Flowers on whose petals are written the histories of variegated peoples, indebted not only to Truth but to Error, the wandering of bodies and minds.

This, of course, is none other than what St. Erasmus called Folly (Stultitia / Moria) and St. Foucault, with a Giocanda smile to Tradition, wrote of in his *Histoire de la Folie a l'Age Classique*. Here, at the Rise of Modernity, my Engine of Spirituality, the goddess Folly was given a bad rap, taken from the street where she once reminded the Reasonable that their cogitations were sculpted from a bedrock of dream, the eudaimonious (an adjective fashioned here from Our Arisotle's *eudaimonia* or "happiness") that their bliss is plucked from the Tree of Sorrow, the Chaste that theirs is a desire cooled from the

embers of brazen Carnality, the well housed that their Comfort is shored up amidst Streets of Misery, the Enlightened that their Stars of Intellect trace the Tattoos of Culture on Space's Dark Body and, finally, the Moral that their Good, whose Form was emblemized by Plato's Sun, only shines "upon the cheek of night," as Romeo once said of his Folly, Juliet, "like a rich jewel in an Ethiop[e]'s ear" (the Bard perhaps slyly picturing the Imperialism of the Spirit that made Europe imagine Itself as the Crown Jewel of civilization whose destiny it was to Enlighten Africa and the Americas- *Romeo and Juliet* 1.5.44-47). This Goddess, *Folie*, banished from the Ideals of the Civilized West, nevertheless appears, in what St. Freud called the Return of the Repressed, to haunt the Body Politic with Forbidden Fruit.

A seed, semen, is sometimes also a sign, *semeion*, as you well know, Archaic Logos, and in either case may be a cause of happiness or, I daresay, of great consternation. Our collective happiness was deferred, my Gardener, by a *semen mali*, a seed of evil which was, by a miracle of etymology, my Author, an apple seed, for You inspired the writing of our Latin tongue in such a fashion that the word for evil and that for apple would be the same: *malum*. Thus Adam and Eve or, as some argue, Eve and Adam, tasted of that forbidden fruit not only to discover that their nakedness was made public but also, no doubt by Your design, our Architect, to write history, for it was by that willful *semeiosis* of tasting the *malum* that a seed was planted, not in the Womb, lord, where You intended it to go, but in the very locus of speech, the mouth (*in ore*), leading humanity from its speechless (*infans*) infancy into a state of Il-locution, where sin and semeiosis are inseparable: into history, Lord, over which You look with promise and despair, as we turn seed to word, and to Stain, our squabbles echoing down that cavernous river called time.

This is how the first Pilgrims left Eden, our Agent, and their children left Vineland to form their own Kingdom, Amerika, at whose apex must needs sit one who embodies its historical Destiny, our Originator. So Here, Now, I delve, with your Light, into the Mystery of our Origin and our End, so see why it is that St. Thomas-- with a prescience born Beyond the Zero but transmuting Gravity's Order, the path of the Rocket and, more lately, the destined trajectory of the Cruz Missile, into a Rainbow, Lord, your symbol of Hope--Pynchon once said, in his Proverbs for Paranoids: "If they can get you asking the wrong questions, they don't have to worry about answers" (*Gravity's Rainbow*, Proverb 3, p. 251). So when Amerika's Leader not only is Tempted by Sin but also Succumbs to Her entreaties, we do not serve him with a large Rotten Apple, as this would connote a certain Amerikan Hero, Johnny, who inseminated the countryside with the fruit that led to Hester Prynne's inscription, for the Crimes of Dimmesdale if not for her academic inclination, with a large Scarlet A. Rather, in honor of that State not only known for Newt but also for its contributions to Cotton, and Slave labor, whose principal City has recently come under the satirical scrutiny of Tom Wolf, we serve our Leader not only with articles of Monica's soiled clothing, to remind him of his ties with Sin, but also with articles of Im-Peach-ment. (In Your divine wisdom, too, you named the Peach [*malum Persicum*] and Other strategic fruits after the Apple, anticipating this expansion of Sin.)

I have noticed, for the record, that the Iraqis are again periodically running for cover, or pretending to in proportion to their assessments of the relative delusionality of Amerikan strategy as it takes Shape in a curious correspondence to the *post coitum* moral contortions of the Restless Giant. For not Only have the sabers been rattled and the Missiles Cruised, during our recent National *psychomachia*, but also the Rockets have flown, to strike at "Terrorists" plotting indiscernible yet definite threats to National Security, Social Security already being so deflated by Republican Largess as to make a pitiful target, and so as to put the People's Future-that shining place where all good Citizens go, as they went to Virgil's Elysium, to bathe their memories in Lethe, Forgetfulness, and return to the national Stage to be the players in a farce called Plutocracy-Beyond the Zero of Impecuniousness. St. Pynchon was worried, too, about that very, virtual phenomenon, Plutocracy Beyond the Zero, which has just arisen, Fortunately, St. Folie, by the chance convergence of words on my screen, since he intimated what Progress really meant for the Elites who are selling the Future, along with the Forest, in a New New Deal, Cancelling the Old New one. Our St. Thomas (Pynchon) makes that meaning Clear, in the Persona of Father Rapier, S.J., regarding the New Plutocrats and their New Magical arts of Bioinformatics: "I think that there is a terrible possibility now, in the World. We may not brush it away, we must look at it. It is possible that They will not die. That it is now within the state of Their art to go on forever-though we, of course, will keep dying as we always have. Death has been the source of Their power" (*Gravity's Rainbow* 539). And, I might add, It still is, Their capital gains spiraling *ad infinitum*, leaving a corkscrew trail in the breeze, revealing the true Manifest Destiny of their Race: Life Beyond the Zero for Them, Entropy for Us. Remember that Pluto is the Greek lord of the Underworld, who took Persephone for a season of every year because she had eaten those pomegranate (*malum Punicum*) seeds, driving her Mother Demeter, goddess of the Harvest, to despair, the Winter of her Discontent. The Kratos of Pluto, the Rule of the Wealthy, the true Sub-Text of the Plutonic Melodrama now put on by Washing-ton, has only with the most spindly gestures been attenuated with vestigial tokens of democracy by Once and no doubt Future Clinton, canceling the Promise of People's Power, instead offering a Pit-tance for the Workers, a school here and there for the Under-Class, a little concern for the preservation of the Bio-Spheric Aquarium that supports life for Us but is of little use to THEM. That Drama, "The Impeach-ment of Bonzo," is modeled on a script once pirated and amended by Hamlet, who called his production the "Murder of Gonzago" or, more to the point, the "Mouse-Trap": "the play's the thing,/Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king" (2.2.614-615; 3.2.239). Ours is a melodrama of some interest, my Producer, as I observe its events unfolding scene by scene, for like Hamlet's ruse its Revelation is of a guilt more Subtle and an Insidiousness more Clandestine than the Tele-Vision would have Consumers Believe. For William and Monica are Babes in the Woods of Desire, standing on stage in Peach Cotton Suits inscribed with the Red Letter A, while offstage behind the curtains peer Eyes Empty of Life but Full of Greed. Help me to see, my Vision, behind the curtain, and to hear the murmurings of decadent Power floating, through Lips shaped in jagged *M*, on Washing-ton's infernal breath.

The Death of Bonzo or The Foxtrap

Date: 16-18 December 1998

Scene I: Cast on Stage in startling similarity to characters in Bergman's troupe, doing the Dance of Death, except they're dressed, early it seems, for a New Year's Eve party in Washing-ton.

Narrator: Has the President "shattered the confidence of the Amerikan people" as his Ac-Cusers insist? Has his Affair with Monica Stained the Republic's garments indelibly, her Whiteness ever tainted not only by Sex, but also by Lies and, of course, video and audio Tape?

Everyman: It was only talk, oral intercourse, not sexual intercourse.

Vice: But was it *enjoyable*?

Virtue: Was it *meaningful*?

Death: Was it a rebellion against ME?

Life: Was it reproducible?

Might: Was it Useful?

Violence: Whom, and how many, can we hurt by its Uses?

Scene II: Debate in the House of Representatives, Impeachment Hearings. Nothing unusual.

Scene III: Sudden break, 5PM Eastern Daylight Time, CNN News Flash:

Time Magazine's Senior Foreign Correspondent in Baghdad, Christiane

Amanpour: "There is anti-aircraft fire visible; there are streams of red smoke floating down, just like the Fourth of July. There is no sign of incoming activity. The Iraqis could just be firing into the air, in anticipation of air strikes."

Various advertisements cut in, selling everything from exercise equipment to vacations on Credit.

CNN LIVE, Christiane Amanpour: "I'm standing on the roof of the Ministry of Information; you can now hear behind me the call to morning prayer, mixed with anti-aircraft artillery." *Ghostly green landscape through night lenses of television cameras; haunting echoes of chanting in background.* "We standing here have been able to hear a sustained series of bombings by the US and British forces..."

Scene IV:

EVERYMAN (*from the Oval Office*): "Saddam Hussein must not be allowed to threaten his neighbors with nuclear weapons, poison gas or biological weapons."

CHORUS OF OTHERS:

Sun Yuxi, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman, to reporters: "The United States has not received permission from the U.N. Security Council and took unilateral action in using force against Iraq, violating the U.N. charter and international principles."

A Palestinian man, surrounded by schoolboys, in rare agreement with Republicans: "Clinton, the dirty dog, wanted to cover up his filthy sexual crimes by hitting Iraq."

Protesters clash briefly on the edge of Bethlehem with Israeli soldiers who fire rubber-coated bullets at stone-throwers. A boy aged eight is hit in the leg.

Commentator for Al-Jazeera, an "outspoken satellite channel beamed from the tiny Gulf Arab state of Qatar" (CNN): "For Monica Lewinsky they hit Afghanistan and Sudan. And now, for Monica's eyes, they hit Baghdad."

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott: "I cannot support this military action in the Persian Gulf at this time. Both the timing and the policy are subject to question."

Saddam (*audio Message to the Iraqi people, CNN Live*): "The Evil Ones have bombed a number of targets, thinking they can break your resolve."

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in New York: This is "a sad day for the United Nations and for the rest of the world."

Scene V: Morality Cast

VIRTUE: Is this "Death of Bonzo or *by* Bonzo?" That genitive in the title of this little drama could well mean that Bonzo is undergoing character assassination by Republicans in the House or that he is engaged in some killing of his own.

DEATH: If there WAS a rebellion against me, it's been quashed.

LIFE: NO one likes me.

VIRTUE: Why is it that the only "weapons of mass destruction" we ever *see* are wielded by the United States and its Allies?

Madeleine Albright: "There are a number of people who criticize us but we are the United States..."

LARRY KING LIVE:

Larry: "Senator [John McCain, R, Arizona], does this give you pause to hear prayers [rising] and bombs falling at the same time?"

Wolf Blitzer (Senior Whitehouse Correspondent, CNN, the name being more telling than anything he could possibly say)...

Sen McCain: "I'm a little concerned about Ramadan limiting these activities."

HORATIO: Al Gore (*paraphrased*): "Thankfully there are very few such critics and...they will be joining the bipartisan consensus against Saddam Hussain. We're not going to let him get away with it; this action is the correct action. You know we tried to make the inspection regime work and so we're exercising our option to use military force to degrade his ability to employ weapons of mass destruction. I think that people all around the world are really fed up with Saddam Hussain. In 1991 I was one of those who broke party ranks and supported the Gulf War."

THE TARGETED OTHER: Iraq's UN Ambassador, Nizar Hamdoon: "Bombs are falling on the cities of my country. This is like a fireworks display enjoyed by the viewers of CNN."

CHORUS OF OTHERS:

China's U.N. Ambassador Qin Huasen, visibly angry as he emerges from a Security Council session earlier Wednesday evening, learning of the attack only after the fact: "There is absolutely no excuse or pretext to use force against Iraq."

Russia's U.N. ambassador, Sergey Lavrov, to the U.N. Security Council: "In carrying out this unprovoked act of force, the U.S. and the United Kingdom have grossly violated the charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and the generally recognized norms and rules of responsible behavior...As a result of this military action, the lives of ordinary people are in danger."

MIGHT: Defense Secretary William Cohen: "All the reports that I've seen to date, and they are very preliminary, would indicate that we've achieved a good measure of success in both the targeting that we've had in mind and what we were able to carry out" (ABC's "Good Morning America").

NARRATOR (*BBC's Richard Downs., NPR Morning Edition*): "We have the bizarre spectacle of Wedding parties in the City while the Cruz missiles and bombs are coming in. Thursday nights are a popular time for weddings in Bhagdad."

VIRTUE *Associated Press, CNN website, Strike on Iraq*): "I think Clinton should be impeached for killing Iraqi children," said Ariella Ghanooni, a University of Iowa student who was one of 50 protesters who gathered in downtown Iowa City.

VIOLENCE (*"Arab-American groups condemn attack; public response mixed," CNN website*): "The United States and Britain plan to continue military attacks on Iraq as the Iraqi people prepare to enter the holy month of Ramadan."

FRANCE-SOIR (*Le Monde diplomatique: "Revue de la presse française"*): "L'expression 'Renard du desert,' le nom de l'operation de frappes aeriennes n'est pas particulierement heureuse. Le "Renard du desert", c'etait le surnom donne au marechal allemand Rommel qui commandait l'armee d'Hitler en Afrique, la celebre "Afrikakorps"... 'Desert fox' ou 'Renard du desert,' c'est le nom d'un site Internet nazi base en Arizona, et qui vend par correspondance des objets souvenirs ou des chants e la gloire du IIIeme Reich."

VIRTUE: "The Desert Fox is almost always the ENEMY on late-night American TV!"

VICE (*"House Republicans rally 'round their admitted adulterous leader" CNN website, mainpage*): "House Speaker-elect Bob Livingston said the new revelations about his past extramarital 'indiscretions' won't drive him from his leadership role. 'To those who are investigating me or others of my colleagues, please understand that I will not be intimidated by these efforts.'

VIRTUE (*CNN website*): "Outside the White House, demonstrators carrying banners that read 'Don't bomb Iraqi civilians' scuffled briefly with two men in military fatigues, holding banners saying 'Kill Saddam' and 'Good job Clinton,' who walked into their demonstration."

EVERYMAN: I'll just do my job and let the Congress do theirs.

VIRTUE: Killing Iraqi Children?

VICE: Are you and Monica getting back together after the impeachment?

DEATH: This is MY victory.

Scene VI: Impeachment Debate in the House Continues.

House Democrats, responding to acting Speaker Ray LaHood's rule that members cannot compare the behavior of fellow representatives to the allegations against President Bill Clinton. Speaker-to-be Bob Livingston revealed Thursday that he has had multiple extra-marital affairs. ("Highlights from the House impeachment debate," CNN website):

"Resolved, that William Jefferson Clinton, president of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors." (House reading clerk Paul Hays, reading the resolution of impeachment-)

"Boo. Boo."

VICE: Boo Boo?

FADE

The Double Bind, my Unraveller, is that most Daemonic of Knots any strand to which, if pulled, simply tightens the whole, so that if one is bound within it, any alternative one chooses to loosen one's bonds binds one all the tighter, becoming convoluted as my own sentence is in writing this, until the breath gives way. St. Gregory (Bateson) once Postulated, in ruminating on the Ecology of Mind, my Evolutionist, that sequences of communication between parent and child, if they exhibited the Double Bind, would be a sufficient cause for schizophrenia. The strands of that deadly Knot are woven from three cords: a primary negative injunction, as when the Parent says, "Do not do so and so, or I will punish you" or "If you do not do so and so, I will punish you"; a secondary injunction, in conflict with the first, at a higher level of Abstraction and, like the first, backed by Force or by Signals threatening Survival, e.g., "Do not question my love of which the primary injunction is (or is not) an example"; and, finally, the deadliest stand of all, my Escapist, a tertiary negative injunction that prohibits the Schizophrenic Novitiate from commenting on the Coils encircling him, "Do not comment on the trap implicit in the first two injunctions" (Bateson 206-207). Now I have Noticed, Hierarchy of Worlds, that this Bind is bound not only 'round novitiates of the Oedipal Family, but also 'round those of the Oedipal Polis, in a parallel that did not escape Our Sophocles when long ago he traced the mortal coils of Thebes. In that city, Power of Memory let me recall, the King was caught in a Terrible Knot at once familial and political.

A scandal of sexuality merged, there in the Primal European City, with a scandal of politics and with still a larger demise of the Human and Natural Orders. Indeed, as I Look at the Events on the Amerikan Stage I see a genre mixed of Melodrama, Tragedy and Farce. Recall that Oedipus and, forgive me my Moralist, his Mother, Jocasta, were Coupled in the Knotty Bed of Incest, to create a scandal so fierce that she was driven to suicide, he to self-blinding, and the polis into pestilence. She was his Reward, in the ancient Phallic Economy, for solving the Riddle of the Sphinx and taking the Helm of the City (Sophocles, lines 391ff.). The Primary Injunction offered by that Egyptian Enigma was, "If you do not solve the Riddle and save the city, I will punish (eat) you," (Pseudo-Apollodorus 1.349) So he solved it. But soon a storm arose, for the former King, Laius, had been murdered at a Place where Three Roads Meet (line 730) and a terrible familial scene, the breaking of the most Fundamental Taboos, inhabited the Royal House. The Secondary Injunction, required, Un-Fortunately, that the hero solving the riddle must Pay, saying in effect "Do not question the justice of your punishment for solving the Riddle," and Oedipus doesn't (until years later in *Oedipus at Colonus*, lines 985-1000). For what mortal could understand the Mystery of that Creature who walks on four legs, then two legs, then three, my Intelligence, except one who is condemned to play out the Roles of Child, Man, and Blinded Exile? The Answer was not Easy. So the Brave Captain Oedipus, as it becomes Public that he has engaged in Shameful Sex along with Regicide and Patricide, with the help of the Prophet Tiresias is revealed as the "Pollution" (*Oedipus Tyrannus* line 1425) destroying Thebes and is forthwith impeached and banished. His Enlightenment (*anagnorisis*, lines 1185ff.) is his Demise, furthermore, for

to describe his Situation is to reveal what he has done and thereby tie off the Bind, as the Tertiary Injunction Requires, Commentary being Hazardous then as now. So Oedipus is Silenced by Creon and sent packing, led by his Revolutionary Daughter: Antigone.

Happily, Lord, there has not Yet been any Incest revealed at head of the Amerikan state, and the Murder is confined to Others loosely associated with the Sphinx. Unless, of course, Sadam be seen as Clinton's Father and Monica his Mother, which would create interesting Family Reunions. But the KNOT is similar, both for the King (Elvis) and His Subjects: HE has acted out the melodrama of Phallic Power by Solving Amerika's Riddle, taking as his Prize a Young Woman. That Riddle, the Amerikan Knot, my Beast-Master, "How to be a Pachyderm and a Jackass at the same time?", "dramatizes the oscillation of Imaginary Oppositions around a Real Identity, the very Logic of Domination, in the Symbolic Exchange of the Plutonic Economy. The Bind is, "If you succeed in solving this Riddle, They will punish you (say, with a sex scandal). The second injunction is, "Do not question Their Integrity as They smear you." The Third and perhaps most interesting injunction is, "You must not point out that this whole drama is contrived to get the Public *asking the wrong questions.*" The Young Woman amidst all this, as in a play by Our Aeschylus, and one by Sophocles too, has become Electra, vanquishing the Mother/Wife (not to mention Jurist), St. Hillary, by playing the Daughter allied with the Father. He, Agamemnon (Clinton), has gone off (Kings used to do their own fighting, my Crusader) to the Trojan Wars to kill WEST ASIANS (again, You may let US recall, as the result of a scandal related to the abduction or, more likely, voluntary flight of Helen from what was shaping up to be a respectably lurid and dismal History of Family Politics), which no doubt had something to do with cracking the Riddle of the Sphinx: Intelligence being Strategic Then as Now.

These are mostly the Parents we're looking at, of course, oh Father of Family Values, "we" being, for dramatic and, I Admit, Historical purposes mostly the Chorus, occasionally the Prophet, who in both plays Comment at their own Risk. What worries me, my Social Worker, is that what we are witnessing is a Drama of Power whose Roles and whose Script are cast at a level more Abstract and more Fundamental than their Players know. Like Oedipus or Agamemnon or Jocasta or Helen or Electra, they are playing Parts they cannot easily transcend. Even Clytemnestra, who took Power in the City from Agamemnon, ended up caught in the same "skein" with which she enmeshed her Husband, herself falling at the hand of her Son Orestes. Aeschylus saw this, even more ominously, as the "skein of stars" enveloping humankind. How deeply is the Phallus inscribed in our culture, Lord, that our Leader's tristes in the Oval Office are so easily displaced into mechanical penile forays, those Cruz Missiles of Amerikan Desire, thrust into Iraqi Air Space? Bared Presidential Secrets notwithstanding, (St.?) Flynt, How many Affairs of State Lie beneath the bulging threads of pomp and circumstance, the Suits, in the Congress of the United States? Is there a Thread we can pull to loose the strangling bonds of Amerikan politics? Presciently, again, St. Thomas (Pynchon) says, in the Persona of Pirate Prentice: "For every They there ought to be a We. And in our case there is. Creative paranoia means developing at least as thorough a We-system as a They-system-...." (*Gravity's Rainbow* 638). I intimate, my Vision, that, just as long ago Our Revolutionary of the Roman Street, when asked by his Apostles whether to pay tax to the

Empire, said, *Redite Caesaris Caesari*, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," and with that Cut the Knot of Imperialism to start a New Dispensation, so WE also, Our Zapatista Satyagraha, Martin Luther King, Jr., Spirit of Non- Violent Rebellion, can create a Viable Alternative. HE too was routinized, as Revolutionaries will be, my Humility, but from the Chorus may arise a Pen, a Communicative Strategy, sharp enough to Free us. Then we may Breathe in Peace again. In the Interim, my Choreographer, here on New Year's Day before the Millennium, I wait by Palatial Steps, offering this choral Ode to Liberation.

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Daniel R. White is an Associate Professor in the Honors College at Florida Atlantic University, where he teaches critical theory and cultural studies. His recent works include *Postmodern Ecology: Communication, Evolution and Play* (Albany NY: SUNY Press, 1998) and *Labyrinths of the Mind* (Albany NY: SUNY Press 1998).

The Book of the City of Ladies or *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames* (finished by 1405), is perhaps Christine de Pizan's most famous literary work, and it is her second work of lengthy prose. Pizan uses the vernacular French language to compose the book, but she often uses Latin-style syntax and conventions within her French prose. The book serves as her formal response to Jean de Meun's popular *Roman de la Rose*. Pizan combats Meun's statements about women by creating an allegorical city of ladies. She By: Disney Book Group
Illustrated By: Disney Storybook Art Team. Coming Soon. Blue Spot.