

McGill Chaplaincy's

# Radix

April 2005



Perspectives on Death and Dying

# From the Editor's Desk

Sometimes it seems as though the primary task of religion and spirituality is to take up the challenge of addressing death—not only talking about it, but processing it, comforting the dying or the bereaved, and asserting an existence beyond this present life. People turn to God when life as we know it is threatened, and not often before.

On the other hand, Canadian theologian Douglas John Hall has observed that since it's not unusual now for death to come ninety or a hundred long years after birth (for lucky westerners, at least), the fundamental question of religion has changed from, "Is there anything after death?" to, "Is there anything before death?" Now that we're not worried from day to day about dying, we're worried that there may be no purpose or meaning to our day to day living. The questions of life and death are closely interrelated.

You probably haven't been able to help hearing about the Terry Schiavo case. Schiavo, before her recent death, was a woman in a persistent vegetative state, caught between her parents (who wanted her to be allowed to live) and her husband (who wanted her to be allowed to die). I'm not ignorant of the fact that a lot of the hype over this situation has been the result of political and/or religious posturing. However, contemplating a person in such a condition really makes me question the meaning of the terms dead and alive.

How do we define life against death? If you listen to the right, you'll hear answers that pertain to the body's biological state. If you listen to the left, you'll hear about "quality of life," and other such phrases. If one of these definitions appeals to you, you'll probably have no trouble forming an opinion about what should happen were you to find yourself in Schiavo's position. However, I'm not so sure that either of these definitions is adequate. What is it really that makes life special? Is it because it's something *given* to us? Or is it because we *make* something out of that gift? If it's both, where does that leave Terry Schiavo?

In this, the final issue of *Radix* for the academic year, we offer you perspectives on death and dying, ostensibly. But between the lines are perspectives on the meaning of life. We don't all have the same views, but we do agree that life and death are things that cannot go undiscussed.

All good things must come to an end, and so it only remains for me to thank some people who are very important to *Radix*: the editorial board, whose tireless efforts have produced creative and thoughtful submissions of word and image; the staff of Chaplaincy Services, who have supported the production of each issue in a variety of ways; and you, the readers, who empty our stands, thus letting us know that *Radix* is a worthwhile effort.

Aimee Patterson Read

<p><i>Radix</i> is produced by McGill students for McGill students, so . . .</p> <p><b>the views expressed are those of our contributors and are not (necessarily) shared by McGill Chaplaincy Service or its chaplains.</b></p>	<p>We're proud to print on <b>recycled paper</b>. Unless you save up your <i>Radix</i>s for a rainy day, <b>please double the recycling by handing this magazine on to a friend.</b> (Then make sure they recycle, too!)</p>
<p><b>Submission Guidelines:</b></p> <p>We welcome student articles, art, reviews, responses, photos, comics, poetry, and anything else you might think of. Submissions from all faith perspectives are encouraged. Artwork must be accessible in black-and-white or grayscale. Article length is about 500 words. Submissions are subject to editing for length, content, and style. Contributors retain copyright, but <i>Radix</i> retains the right to reprint submissions in our online archives. Submissions may be made to the editor at <b>radix@yours.com</b>.</p>	
<p>Visit <i>Radix</i> online at <a href="http://www.mcgill.ca/chaplaincy/radix/">http://www.mcgill.ca/chaplaincy/radix/</a></p>	
<p>Watch for the reincarnation, er, resurrection (or whatever religious metaphor your prefer) of <i>Radix</i> in September of 2005!</p>	

The *Radix* Editorial Board: Aimee Patterson Read--Editor and Layout Designer ♦ Bob Bergner--Anglican Rep ♦ Ros Bourgault-Gervais--Pagan Rep ♦ Natalya Demberg--Religion and Culture Rep ♦ Poonam Dhir--Hindu Rep ♦ Laura Gallo--Agnostic Rep ♦ Donna Hakimian--Baha'i Rep ♦ Dany Horovitz--Jewish Rep ♦ Gurjit Kaur Tora--Sikh Rep ♦ Tara McElroy--Catholic Rep ♦ Sara Parks Ricker--Art Rep ♦ Justin Pulikund--Catholic Rep ♦ Shahana Safdar--Muslim Students' Association Rep ♦ Indi Samarajiva--Cover Designer ♦ Amanda Unruh--Atheist Rep

**About the Cover:** The cover features a photo of a man who lost both his infant children in the recent tsunami. In the original photo he is visiting one of their graves and decorating it with bits of driftwood. Here those decorations are replaced with the symbols of Sri Lanka's main religions—Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism. In times of death and dying people run to temples, mosques, and churches, and those places take them in. The photo appears courtesy of [www.sarvodaya.org](http://www.sarvodaya.org), a Sri Lankan grassroots movement. **About the Artist:** Indi Samarajiva is a McGill graduate. He is a Buddhist in that he tries to meditate and be nice. He now lives in Sri Lanka where he does freelance web-design and teaches Photoshop at the National Institute of Business Management. Visit him at [www.indi.ca](http://www.indi.ca).

All symbolic drawings in this issue are by Sara Parks Ricker. Sara is a multi-talented artist and student of Greco-Roman Judaism.

Dear Editors of *Radix*,

I congratulate you on your efforts engaging in dialogue between different beliefs and faiths. The February/March issue, *Faith in Science*, was very interesting and I offer these observations and this comment from the periphery of learning.

It has been observed that basically faith/belief systems are either closed or open systems. Religions tend to be closed systems, where basic assumptions are supported and defended. Science tends to be an open system, in the sense that its assumptions are open to challenge and change. In a closed system what is "true" is always "true," while in an open system, what is "true" may turn out to be, given the proof, inadequate (as in not the complete "truth") or simply not "true" at all. Interestingly, science has had and still has its faithful, who seem to hold scientific "truths" in a closed system manner, in other words, religiously. Scientific truths should not be viewed as ultimate heights but perhaps as steps toward the still unknown or beyond the known.

Western religion once concerned itself with both ethics and science. Unable to control and integrate new information, religion slowly lost its jurisdiction over science (and possibly as a result lost the moral high ground with respect to ethics as well). Science has since evolved into an open system search for "truth."

And so it seems that "truth" evolves, just like everything else. If this is so, perhaps the problem lies in the inability to distinguish the difference between the fossils and living.

Yours faithfully,

Allan Youster

Birks Reading Room

References: Rocks of Ages, Stephen J. Gould; The Sleepwalkers, Arthur Koestler

## Letter to the Editor

# Shuffling Off That Mortal Coil, Hebrew Style

*"the dread of something after death,—/The undiscovered country, from whose bourn / No traveler returns,—puzzles the will" --Hamlet III.I*

There's an old Jewish adage: "Where there are two Jews, there are three opinions." This saying can be attributed to the concept of Judaism and death. In Judaism, there is no clear-cut, across the board consensus on the issues of death and the afterlife. Unlike the New Testament, the Old Testament, apart from certain verses which themselves require a bit of "imaginative interpretation," does not thoroughly discuss the afterlife.

Belief in the eventual resurrection of the dead is fundamental in Judaism (barring Reform and other liberal forms of Judaism). This resurrection will take place in the messianic age, also known as the world to come (olam-ha-bah). There are, however, wavering beliefs in some of Judaism's mystical schools that claim that this resurrection is not a one-time thing. Rather, one theory holds that only the righteous are "held back" so as to help mend the world (tikun-olam). Another theory maintains that only those who are not pure are held back. Those familiar with Buddhism should be able to see the correlation.

The Jewish "heaven" is called Gan Eden (the Garden of Eden). This is not the same place Adam and Eve populated; it is instead a place of spiritual perfection. Descriptions of this garden vary from rabbi to rabbi. Some liken it to the pleasure of sex; some claim that it is like a sunny day (too bad for all those that get sunburned real easily). Unfortunately, to go straight there after death is really hard. The vast majority first head down to Gehinnom (the Jewish word for hell). The rabbis also disagree on this place. Some state that angels in the form of our sins visit us to purify us through pain. Some liken it to the Christian hell. Others declare that all are allowed to see their lives in an objective manner. Residence in Gehinnom, however, is not eternal. At the end of this period, one's soul is pure and is allowed finally to ascend to Gan Eden. The duration of one's stay there cannot exceed twelve months. But remember, time is not always relative.

"The world to come" is considered to be a higher state of being. It is thought that this world is like a training ground for preparation for the next world—like going from law school to the firm. One prepares by performing acts of loving-kindness and Torah study. The Talmud states that all of "Israel" (the spiritual state) has a share in the world to come. The size of that share is determined by one's actions here on earth. Some good news for Gentile readers out there: if you're righteous (whatever that means), you also have a share in our world to come. Maybe in that world, we can all finally live in peace. . . .

Avi Kuzniecky

Avi is a U1 Honours student of Religious Studies.



Photo by Bob Bergner

*OWUO ATWEDEE-- "The Ladder of Death," West African Adinkra symbol for the importance of living a good life to be a worthy soul in the afterlife*



## Life After Life: The Baha'i View on Death and Dying

The Baha'i perspective on death and dying is unique and very inspiring for all those who are faced with this issue. The main tenets of this subject are in continuation with many of the world's monotheistic religions, although the concepts of heaven and hell are formulated in a very different way.

Rather than envisioning a Zoroastrian-rooted idea of heaven and hell as two distinct locations to which the soul travels upon death, Baha'i theology emphasizes a much more metaphorical idea in which all souls return unto God. Heaven and hell then become an individual nearness to or distance from God. An important characteristic of this heaven is that it is devoid of both time and place, and can never be fully grasped by human minds. It is believed that upon death the soul disassociates itself from the body and enters into this other reality—a Divine paradise, if you will, in which reunion with the Beloved is found and all the tests and trials of this world disappear.

The way in which a soul comes to exist in the Divine paradise is through virtuous deeds and thoughts in this world. This does not necessarily mean being in positions of power, or gaining wealth and fame. Rather, it means living a moral and detached life, with one's thoughts fixed upon the Beloved. Forgiveness is also hugely emphasized; it is often explained that God is all-forgiving. Thus mistakes one has made in this life will be forgiven if the seeker approaches God with pure and sincere motives.

The relationship between the body and the soul is an interesting feature of Baha'i theology. The soul is compared to the light of sun, which is ever strong and radiant. The body on the other hand, which is like a mirror, has the ability to reflect the beauty of the light of the sun, but the quality of light it is able to reflect is dependant upon its purity. Therefore, whether or not the body exists, the soul will continue to give off light and travel to the next world. In short, when death does approach, it should be seen as a positive and encouraging stage in which the bird, which is seen as our soul, is able to break from its cage, which is this world.

*NYAME NNWU NA MAWU-- "God never Dies, therefore I cannot Die," West African Adinkra symbol for God's omnipresence and the spirit's immortality*

Donna Hakimian  
Donna is in a comparative Middle Eastern Religions and History student with one year left in her program. [www.bahai.org](http://www.bahai.org)

# Dying to Live

Death: a taboo. A concept rarely spoken of, an omen reserved for the sick, aged and persecuted. For us, death is a reality that never surfaces in our minds, a truth that is never contemplated—yet an overwhelming fear residing in our hearts, reminding us of a day that will always be dreaded, a day when our eternity ends. We may never be ready to receive death, but death has already been destined: it will receive us. It seems too far away to think about, and so we don't think about it. Most of us live a life in which we perceive immortality as a reality, our reality. We live in a timeless realm of enjoyment, sadness, happiness, pain, strife, struggle, and fear. But the question remains, "What happens after we die?" My aim is to explain the Muslim's belief regarding death and what comes after.

With every beginning there must come an end, and we are no exception. In Islam, just as birth, death marks a new beginning. Muslims believe that once humans takes their last breath, their souls are instantly retrieved by the angels. The body may be buried and hidden under the soil from the remaining humans, but the "deceased" human is fully aware of his or her surroundings and fate. The last person that walks away from the grave is heard by the one lying beneath. As soon as the last person leaves, the angels come to the human lying in the grave and ask several crucial questions determining that one's fate. If the person was righteous, Muslims believe that the grave is vast and illuminated. If the person lived wrongfully, the grave is rigid and tight to the extent that the person's ribs are forced to cave in.

Muslims believe in the Day of Resurrection. God has the power to give people life, and create them out of nothing, so why should the human be arrogant enough to suppose He does not have the ability to revive the human once again? The Qur'an illustrates this: "Does man think that We shall not assemble his bones? Yes, We are Able to put together in perfect order the tips of his fingers" (Q 75: 3-4). The Day of Resurrection is a day when the whole human race will be brought back to face its destiny. One naturally wonders, is this really possible? Will humans truly live after they have been buried under the earth, deprived of oxygen and light for years and years? Can there really be a life after life? In the Qur'an, this question is answered countless times: "Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth, Able to create the like of them? Yes, Indeed! He is the All Knowing Supreme Creator" (Q 36: 81). For Muslims, the Universe no doubt had a beginning and, just like all other creations, will encounter an end.

The afterlife can also be logically understood when thinking of justice. Our life in this world is plagued by corruption and inequality. Muslims believe the afterlife is where all humans who have ever lived are forced to come to terms with their actions, and are dealt with accordingly by God. This does not imply that the Muslim lives the present life in a state of constant yearning for the hereafter, ignoring one's material needs, for God does not demand this in Islam. It only entails a more focused attitude where the goals and objectives of the Muslim are in tune with the life to come. The Qur'an explains, "And the life of this world is nothing but play and amusement. But far better is the house in the hereafter for those who are the pious. Will you not then understand?" (Q 6:32).

The human is born and lives and will one day, eventually, die. The Muslim never ceases to remember the reality that his or her life can be taken away at any second, all by the Grace of God. But the inevitability of death is neither frightening nor daunting. It is but the completion of the worldly life and the commencement of eternity.



Photo by Bob Bergner

# All There Is

Death  
Your life is over,  
Have you done with you wanted with it?  
Any regrets?  
That was your chance to change the world.

Your heart stops, breathing stops, brain stops.  
You are done,  
Finished.  
Like a candle put out with licked fingers.  
No extra smoke.  
You and your body are done.

*Amanda Unruh*  
Amanda is a Religious Studies major and is not as morbid as this poem implies, as she enjoys singing, dancing, and teasing cats.



## "Death Cleaning Up"

# Bringing Death Back to Life

The following are excerpts from an interview conducted by Laura Gallo with Dr. Vanessa Sasson, Lecturer in World Religions with McGill's Faculty of Religious Studies.

Laura: How have students responded to the course you teach about death and dying?

Vanessa: They can't get enough of it. People want to talk about it. Even if there's a discomfort at the beginning, students want to talk about it.

L: Do you think that has something to do with the fact that we don't talk about death outside of the classroom?

V: I think that has a lot to do with it. We want to have these conversations but we don't know how to do it without hurting people, without breaking social etiquette, or without getting into territory we don't know how to function in. We don't actually know what we do with our dead, so there's a lot of misconception about it. . . . I think secularization is a [big] part of it. We have very little left of the sense of the sacred, and can't even imagine a corpse as something sacred. The corpse becomes so secularized and so materialistically orientated that it is just material. So the notion of caring for the dead, washing the body, and honouring it just grosses us out.

L: Do you think that all religions have in common beliefs in the afterlife or reincarnation and death rituals?

V: I don't think they have it in common, but what they all share is an attempt to find answers to those questions. No religion has a clear-cut answer as to what happens after life; they're all struggling to formulate their answers. The problem is that in our culture. . . we have an obsession with the beautiful and the hygienic. . . and the young and the sanitary. Bacteria terrifies us. We are so sanitized that we can't be around a corpse. It makes any relationship with death very, very difficult.

L: Buddhists will often meditate on death. What is the purpose of this?

V: One of the most fundamental teachings in Buddhism is the recognition of impermanence. . . . Our suffering is to a large degree a result of our looking for permanence—hoping that our bodies stay young and being upset when they don't. Liberation in Buddhist thought is a freedom from the expectation of permanence. . . . There's a long history of Buddhist monks meditating in cremation grounds. You sit in the presence of death until you truly understand the impermanence of life.

L: Do you think this can be helpful in accepting death?

V: It can be helpful but it can also be destructive if you're not in the right mind frame. . . . But in the right space, with the right teacher, and the right environment, this really can be helpful to freeing yourself of illusions that you will be around forever, of needing that to be true. It's literally meant to be a liberation of some kind—to free yourself of attachment to your body, so that when it decays—not if—it's okay because you knew it would.

L: What are some death rites in religious traditions that you find particularly inspiring?

V: The body washing ritual produced by Jews and by Muslims. It's a performance where the bodies are washed by members of the community, and the ways in which it is done are very delicate. It's done right after death, and the body is disposed of right away. When the body is being washed you don't speak, you don't laugh, you don't gossip, you're not on your cell phone, you pay attention because you recognize that the body was a vessel for a soul. . . . The body is always covered; it's never exposed, so that the body being washed is not violated. It's respected. It's considered to be a religious task. It used to be done this way in Christianity; family members would wash their dead at home. But in the 40's and 60's it started to fade as funeral homes became big business. Now we send our dead off to paid workers, and it's just a job for them. Something is lost.

L: So you think death becoming a business has been destructive?

V: I understand how it's happened, but when we render everything to the business model, some things are lost. I really do appreciate that the Jews and Muslims have been able to maintain it to this day.

## A Life Story

I think over again my small adventures, my fears  
Those small ones that seemed so big  
For all the vital things I had to get and reach  
And yet there is only one great thing, the only  
thing  
To live to see the great day that dawns and  
The light that fills the world.

--Old Inuit Song

I used to serve as an on-call chaplain at the Montreal Children's Hospital. In few places do life and death, hope and despair collide more forcefully than in neo-natal wards. While the first focus is, of course, the healing of those tiny bodies, the whole family often needs care and support.

Do you remember the big ice storm that hit the Montreal area in January 1998? I happened to be on call that first chaotic weekend, at a time when all the city was paralyzed and powerless. Saturday afternoon I was called in to be with an Inuit family who had been flown South with their gravely ill newborn boy. The family—mom, dad, grandmother and aunt—had been given the results of tests confirming the baby boy had a serious congenital illness and would not survive. I sat with the family as the staff removed the life support equipment, and handed the child into his mom's arms to be cradled for his remaining minutes of life. I can still remember the warm, quiet room, the little stuffed basketball and teddy in the now empty bassinet.

Life slipped away, and we said some prayers together, the family following along in Inuit prayerbooks. I asked if there was anything I could do for them. With hardly a pause, they exchanged thoughts on this, and the grandmother, who spoke the most English, asked, "Could we take off his clothes?" I drew in the nurse with this request, and she immediately helped undress the boy, and placed him gently on his flannel blanket, surrounded by his stuffed toys.

Something seemed to relax and open up in the family, as they lovingly touched the perfect little boy. Because of his weakness, he had been swiftly whisked from his mother into intensive care at birth, and they had known him only through all the paraphernalia of acute care. They arranged his toys, took photos, laughed gently, and fondled each little limb. They asked me to take a group photo, which I did. The moment lasted as long as seemed right, then they accepted the nurse's suggestion that she would take the body to be prepared for the flight home.

I asked if there was anything more I could do. "Yes," they said, "we need to find out where there is a mall open so we can bring gifts home from the South." (With the power outages, many businesses were closed.) The nurse made some inquiries, found out where they could go and the buses that would take them there. They thanked us, there were handshakes and hugs, and they left. Life had been celebrated, death grieved, and it was time to move on.

Sometimes, when I see beautiful images from the North, I think about that little boy, and the love that illuminated his brief days, "in sure and certain knowledge of everlasting Life."

Rev. Gwenda Wells

Gwenda Wells is the Director of Chaplaincy and the Ecumenical Christian Chaplain. She believes in the subversive power of gratitude, music-making, and community building.

"Death," a Germanic

# The Four Last Things: Death, Judgement, Hell, and Heaven

*Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray thee Lord my soul to keep.  
And if I die before I wake, I pray thee Lord my soul to take.*

Humans, it is said, are the only animals conscious of their own mortality and their impending death. However, few of us like to think of death and our ultimate destiny. Often, we do everything we can to coat these striking realities with euphemisms, or to put them out of our minds completely. We have to remind ourselves that, as Cardinal Newman says, "Death is certain and judgement is real, and eternity is forever."

Death makes it impossible to be on one side and the other at the same time—the divide is absolute and total. The Catholic Church, affirming the unequivocal teaching of Jesus Christ, has maintained that at that decisive moment in every human's existence, we are, to put it rather bluntly, either for Christ or against Him. The fragility of human existence has reminded me, especially during this Lenten season, to once again try and live in the perspective of eternity. I should be ready to face Christ in the next instant—to realize that here I have merely a temporary home, and that my true home is somewhere beyond the stars, in the presence of the God who created me. This is not to say that I am allowed to be indifferent to the human condition. One of the reasons of course, is because death is followed the judgement.

Catholics hold that when a person dies, the soul separates from the body and immediately faces a particular judgement. Many have forgotten that Christ will be a judge. In talking about judgement, our Divine Lord tells us that how we are to be judged will be based on what we've done on our earthly sojourn—on the good that we have done and the sins we have committed. St. John of the Cross, following the words of St. Augustine, said, "In the evening of life, you shall be judged by love." I must remember not only that Christ forgave the woman caught in adultery, but that when the unrepentant sinner comes before Him, our Lord is going to say, "Depart from me, you accursed, into the everlasting fires prepared for the devil and his fallen angels."

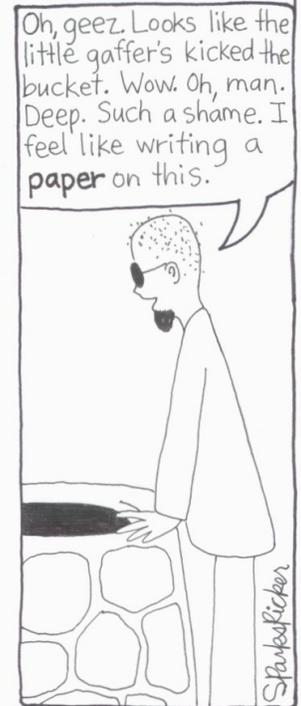
This reality of eternal damnation—the hell of those who are cursed to be apart from God forever—must not be forgotten, though it need not be dwelt on excessively. Hell is a part of revelation. I cannot deny it, no matter how uncomfortable it makes me feel, and interestingly enough, Christ spoke a lot more of hell than he did about heaven. The Church has always taught that those who die in a state of mortal sin descend to eternal punishment in hell immediately after judgement. Here the damned suffer the eternal separation from God, in whom alone a person can possess the life and happiness for which one was created and for which one longs.

But God always planned that we should be close to Him forever. He wants us to be a part of Him, and our eternal beatitude is to see His face, which means the fulfillment of every possible happiness beyond all our capacity to dream or hope or imagine. We know that human happiness is fleeting, that even the most particular moment of ecstasy is only momentary. But the wonderful thing about heaven is that it is eternal; our possession of God will satisfy and complete every hope, and we shall live in love unending: "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee."

*Justin Pulikunnel  
Justin hopes against all hope.*



Photo by Bob Bergner



Comic by Sara Parks Ricker

# Religion and Culture

## Death and Dying: Eternal Egypt



Scene from the Book of the Dead, painted papyrus (1336-1294 av. BCE.), 39,7 x 93,2 cm

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is currently hosting a part of the British Museum's Egypt collection. I went to check it out and actually paid for one of those audio guides to learn more about this ancient civilization. It turns out that almost every single art piece at the exhibition was linked to the theme of death and dying. The ancient Egyptians looked at death from both materialistic and spiritual points of view. On the one hand, they filled their tombs with artifacts from real life. On

the other hand, they believed the trip to the World of the Dead to be dangerous and mystical.

During their lifetime, the ancient Egyptians prepared for life after death by building fancy tombs and temples in which to keep their bodies, making sure that they would have the same lifestyle in the afterlife. They didn't see death as an end to their existence, but rather as the beginning of a new one. In the afterlife, one could still have a family, work the land, fish, hunt, and enjoy the same commodities one had in real life. The ancient Egyptians decorated their tombs with images from the real world. They filled them with statues of gods, family members, and depictions of food, gold, etc. The goal was to reach eternal life through art. Old men would put statues of young and strong lads in their burial chambers in order to become young again in the afterlife. The whole idea of the mummy comes from the belief that the body must remain intact after death if it is to come back to life. The burial chambers had a fake door for the spirits to escape back to the world of the living. The latter was decorated with images of gods and the told the biography of the deceased.

The trip to the World of the Dead was believed to be very dangerous by the ancient Egyptians. The Book of the Dead contains spells that would help one to get through the afterlife. When there, Osiris, the God of the After World, would interrogate one and ask one to declare innocence of 42 crimes. One's heart would then be weighted against a feather, and, if heavier, it would be eaten by a monster. Scenes from the book of the dead were depicted on stone plates and papyrus. The exhibit presented a very well preserved copy of the Book of the Dead, complete with colorful images and Egyptian script.

The outlook that the ancient Egyptians had on life and death is both different and similar to the Judeo-Christian tradition. Westerners, too, thrive for a higher being after death. The whole idea of heaven is the search for eternal bliss. The ancient Egyptians wanted to reach eternal life, but they didn't imagine it as something completely different from their life on earth. In fact, they made sure to have the same lifestyle after death than during life, filling their tombs with all sorts of things that we may call artificial.

These artificialities, however, are great works of art that help us learn about this ancient civilization. I strongly recommend the exhibit to those interested in history and art.

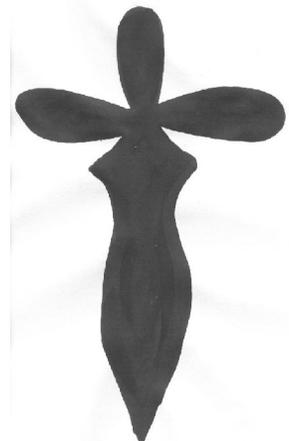
Natalya Demberg



"Eye of Horus," used in Egyptian funerary

"Ancient Egyptians believed that upon death they would be asked two questions and their answers would determine whether they could continue their journey in the afterlife. The first question was, 'Did you bring joy?' The second was, 'Did you find joy?'"

—Leo Buscaglia



"Heraldic Dagger," indicates the dead in genealogies... Or obsolete words in dictionaries

## Prayer to be Cancelled at Spring Convocation

Recently, McGill's former Secretary General Robin Geller announced the removal of the traditional benedictory prayer from the convocation ceremony. Following a question from Board of Governors Athletic Rep Matthew Howatt, the decision to remove the prayer has now been sent to the Senate.

This decision is not supported by McGill Chaplaincy Service. Removing the prayer reflects poorly upon attitudes toward religion and faith at McGill. While not part of secular classroom study, faith remains an important part of the lives of many students, faculty, staff members, and their families, and the convocation prayer is an age-old McGill tradition. The invocation and benediction request the blessing of God upon the university in its task of intellectual leadership and pray that McGill graduates may use their gift of education for the good of all in a spirit of global community.

If you disagree with the decision to remove prayer from convocation, make your voice heard. Offer your representative on the Senate your views:

SSMU VP of University Affairs: Andrew Bryan, ua@ssmu.mcgill.ca

PGSS Masters Senator: Roland Nassim, senate1.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca

PGSS PhD Senator: Essam Hallak, senate2.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca

PGSS Postdoc Senator: Shahin Zanghenepour, senate3.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca



### McGill Student Parents' Network (a service of McGill Chaplaincy)

We provide support to students who are parents.

Regularly we offer: informal childcare, babysitting, friendly visits to households, and monthly support group meetings.

Interested families should contact Haley:  
398-4104 mcgillspn@yahoo.ca

The Muslim Students Association of McGill  
We offer:

weekly study circles, free Islamic educational materials, services during Ramadan, lectures/conferences, prayer facilities, library (Shatner building, room 430)

3460 McTavish Street, Rm. 14  
ssmu.mcgill.ca/msa  
msamcgill@montrealmuslims.ca  
398-3001 ext. 09849

Visitors from other faiths are always welcome

Want to Connect  
with Sikh Students?



Contact the  
Sikh Students Association

mcgill\_ssa@hotmail.com

Share a HOT VEGAN LUNCH at the  
RABBIT HOLE CAFE

A Collective Vegetarian Kitchen

3625 Aylmer, downstairs • Fridays, 1-5 pm

Donations of \$1 or a non-perishable food item are appreciated

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Food depot, nutritional tips, and support  
3625 Aylmer, 1st floor • Fridays, 1-5 pm  
call 398-4886 or email  
foodforthought@yellowdoor.org

### Great Day!

Celebrate spring at the

### New Earth Voices end of year concert

To be held at the Montreal Diocesan College on  
April 10th, 2005 at 3 pm

Freewill offering proceeds will be given to the  
St. James Community Centre, a service offering meals  
and art therapy in the downtown community

For more information call 398-4104

McGill Ecumenical Chaplaincy's

### St. Martha's-in the Basement Good food for Body and Soul

Please share our Bible study, worship  
and a simple vegetarian supper  
Wednesdays at 6 pm

basement of UTC (3521 University)

Call Gwenda Wells for more info:  
398-4104

### Hillel House



Wed. 12:30 pm: discussion on Jewish topics  
with Rabbi Jackman

Thurs. 1:30 pm: Jewish feminist movement  
with Dov Whitman (plus free pizza!)

3460 Stanley Street (Hillel library)

Contact Rabbi Jackman for chat, questions,  
or learning Jewish texts

845-9171 rabbi@hillel.ca www.hillel.ca

### The Yellow Door...Volunteers needed!

The Yellow Door Elderly Project is seeking volunteers to work with seniors living in and around the McGill Ghetto. No major time commitment required—flexible hours, just a couple of hours per month! Great opportunity to contribute to community spirit

If you would like to become a  
Yellow Door volunteer  
call 398-6243  
or email:  
elderlyproject@hotmail.com



### Montreal Diocesan Theological College

3473 University Ave.

Daily Christian worship--all are welcome!

Morning Prayer, Mon.-Thurs.: 8-8:30 am

Evening Prayer, Mon.-Thurs.: 4:30-5 pm

Holy Eucharist, Wed.: 11:30-12:30 and

Fri. 7:30-8:30 pm



Buddhist Meditation  
McGill Chaplaincy  
3600 McTavish, #4400

Thursdays 3-4 pm

(includes discussion and Q&A)

3521  
University  
Street

849-2042

Join students and staff of the  
United Theological College  
(of the United Church of Canada)  
each Wednesday for worship and  
fellowship.  
Begins at 11:45am



This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.  
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.