



Editor's Introduction

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Computers hold enviable traits, and a few characteristics stand out. The devices learn and preserve data quickly. And what's more, to pass on knowledge to a new computer, a simple command contacts the vast tower of memory storage, and in seconds, knowledge is uploaded and retained. An entire library of information can be uploaded and then processed into a synthesized document in the time it takes to make a cup of coffee.

The comparison of computers to humans is stark. Shakespeare's seven stages of man in *As You Like It* paints the ritualistic nature of human existence. The *infant* has no ability to care for himself until he learns rudimentary skills, such as feeding himself. Once accomplished, he is then shuffled off as a *schoolboy* to begin uploading data into his mind, a torturous adventure of a decade, perhaps several decades. His mind turns to romance as he becomes a *lover*, a game with rules learned through experience and the training becomes a difficult taskmaster on his emotions. His strength soon becomes apparent to the State, and his life as a *soldier* begins where his education is continued on the battlefield. The stakes are high, higher than ever before and life is felt at its top.

Life continues. His mind turns to *justice*, where his acts are used to weigh those things not readily apparent, such as which course a man must take based on personal fulfillment and personal creed. What decisions are just? Which course causes malice and pain to others? Here, his education and experience serve him well and the labor he has undertaken over the course of decades protects his waning strength. Finally, he returns to the last vestiges of life, a *second childhood* of sorts, where he can no longer care for himself, and the end approaches.¹

Computers, in this fledgling Technology Age, learn all a human can learn and more in a fraction of a second. Why then, pursue knowledge? Why do we need to learn, or even have memories, when we enjoy all the information at the tips of our fingers? Why must we read an entire book when all we must do is ask a question into a device that instantly provides an answer? Why learn when

¹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2009), act II, scene 7.

our computers have all the right answers, when the books we read may be dated or simply wrong? And most importantly for our purposes here, why publish another academic journal?

Individual imagination, when engaged, leads to the deepest sense of connection to the cosmos of God's creation and to God Himself. As you are about to see in the articles we offer, the relationship with God stands as preeminent. We are created to create and to enjoy the creation of Him and our fellow humans. For example, the emotional connection between two people on a date can bring joy when the evening's planner follows the script of his heart rather than the algorithm best designed to get what he wants.

And yet, technology has its place. He may use technology to find the perfect recipes to make her favorite meal, but the work to understand the recipe, mix the ingredients, and aesthetically plate the meal is an art of his own creation and skill. Her use of technology gives directions first to his house, then how to soothe his burnt hand from touching a hot skillet, and finally, directions to the closest sushi restaurant. Thankfully, through the clever use of combined tactics, the evening is not ruined.

Academic journals also have a place in our age. They allow the author to use experience gained through hard work and research in a format best designed to pass on knowledge. The work uploads data to the reader's mind. The journal allows for the reader's imagination to spark, where connections are created in the mind by living off the experiences and feelings and understanding of another, an understanding an algorithm simply can't produce. The reader quickly jots down ideas in a journal and responds to the article's author, and soon, a conversation ensues. In this process of learning, a key piece of humanity is experienced which a tower of memory cannot convey—relationship. Because human connection, based on understanding, respect, and compassion through the dialectic, is a connection offering a joy we cannot truly grasp. This very act is what Shakespeare was doing when he broke down life in to seven stages.

The flagship issue of *The Classical Connection* offers two intriguing articles that invoke the imagination. The first, by Joshua Snell, challenges the reader to understand better the nature of our actions and what our true purpose is by comparing Christian and Buddhist views of evil. The second article, by Michael Barros, brilliantly explores the roots of Halloween and a Christian's thoughtful response.

As you set the journal before you, and as the coffee is brewing, take a moment to anticipate the knowledge you are about to upload into your brain. Notice the human connection that comes with the imagination and creation of human authors and how it associates with the stage of life you are currently

enjoying. True, the thirty minutes it takes to read the articles is far less than it takes to upload them onto the computer. I trust, however, that you will step back with not simply more information in your head, but that you'll enjoy the process of putting it there. I know I did.

Bibliography

Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*. Edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2009.