

A Socratic Dialogue

Introductory Note:

The topic discussed in this dialogue is apathy at Clark. The dialogue takes place between Mac, the wise elder statesman in the office of WheatBread, and Jonathan, the self-deceived ass-picker who claims to have his finger on the pulse of the Clark population. Jonathan strolls into the office during the WheatBread twenty-four hour issue.

Mac: Good afternoon, Jonathan. Thank you for coming down to help with our twenty-four hour issue. Your wisdom and wit will surely help add to our production.

Jonathan: That's right, daddy-o. I figured I'd swing on down, drop some knowledge on yo' ass, and head on out. So, is there anything you want me to write about?

Mac: Well, someone as wise and clever as yourself must have ideas. If not, I'm sure anything you write will come out much more intelligent than anything I could possibly create.

Jonathan: Yeah, that's true. Well, what have people written so far?

Mac: Well, no one has come down as of yet, but I'm positive that Clark students will get involved with an idea and project as creative as this one.

Jonathan: Don't be so sure, Socrates. A lot of students here don't give a shit about what goes on. I wouldn't get my hopes up.

Mac: Really? Clearly Jonathan, you have a much better concept of students' attitudes than an old man such as myself. Please, elucidate; what is it that makes people here "not give a shit" as you so eloquently put it?

Jonathan: Apathy, man, apathy. Folks 'round here aren't nothin' but self-satisfied, apathetic lard-asses.

Mac: Hmmm... I have no doubt of the correctness of your statement, for I've never known you to be wrong before. However, if you could, please, tell me why you think students here are so apathetic.

Jonathan: Take a look at the shows that are put on here, man. PEC puts on shows at least a couple times a month, and almost nobody shows up. They take place right on campus, in the basement of our student center, and yet only forty people or so regularly show up. If this isn't apathy, then I don't know what is.

Mac: Well, it seems that you would be right, this must be a case of apathy. These bands are assuredly bands that would be appealing to the general public, correct?

Jonathan: Not necessarily. I mean, everyone has different tastes in music, and sometimes the bands aren't all that great.

Mac: So maybe it isn't apathy after all that causes the lack of attendance at these shows, but rather a lack of quality in the performers?

Jonathan: Well, not necessarily Mac, you can't trip me up that easily. I know your sneaky ways. You have to remember that the concerts are right on campus, which means it's a five minute walk at most for everyone. Surely they could get up and at least check out the band to see if they're any good.

Mac: Yes, but when do most of these concerts take place?

Jonathan: Usually some weekday night.

Mac: But isn't that when students are most busy?

Jonathan: All right, maybe that's true.

Mac: So it would seem that apathy is not the cause of this lack of attendance at all, but rather the lack of appealing bands, and bad scheduling.

Jonathan: Okay, wise-ass, if you're so smart, how do you explain the lack of involvement in so many groups here on campus.

Mac: I'm sorry, Jonathan, again you'll have to expand on this idea for me. I wasn't aware of a lack of involvement in student groups.

Jonathan: Well, of course there is. Look at the low numbers that turn out for Zoon Politikon meetings, Speakers Forum, etc. Christ, even *WheatBread*, a ray of light piercing the murky waters of student publications, is lacking in underclassmen participation.

Mac: Forgive me, I don't know much about the student organizations here on the bucolic Clark campus. Are these the only organizations here?

Jonathan: Are you for real? Of course there are other organizations.

Mac: Well, how many are there?

Jonathan: Wow, for someone who talks so hoity-toity and shit, you're one dumb motherfucker. There are dozens of groups here.

Mac: Dozens? By Zeus! Surely you don't expect every student to be able to concentrate on his studies and involve himself in dozens of groups!

Jonathan: Naw man, you're missing the point.

Mac: Well, if I may be so bold, could you please tell me the point? I am but a dullard, after all.

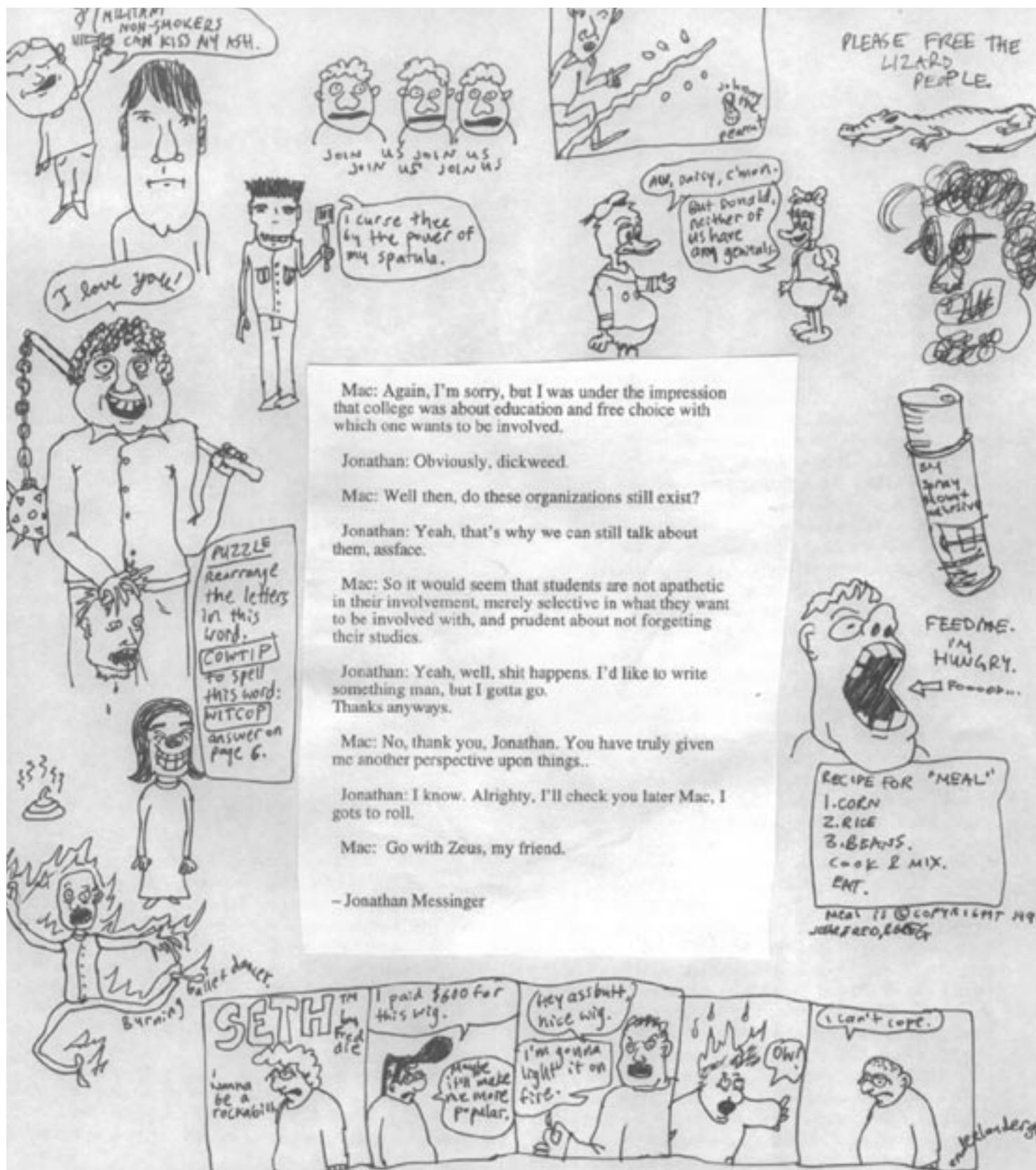
Jonathan: The point is that it's a student's duty to get involved with as many things as possible in college. That is what college is for.



The 24-Hour TIMELINE continued...

8:48 pm, cont'd — Emily suddenly remembers something that happened (or her internship that day). She says that an editor was talking about Bruce and saying something about how he "is a genius and no one understands, etc." Zack is silent. "I just wrote that exact thing," he says to her. Both turn away, shocked and disturbed. They have just shared a thought.

9:02 pm — Zack annoys staff working on issue, thoughts of impeachment fill the heads of staffers who are busy at work.



The 24-Hour TIMELINE continued...

- 10:07 pm — "Born in East LA" blares from ROC-U.
- 10:26 pm — A practical joke is played on Zack as he uses ROC-U's computer to check email. The joke has varied success.
- 10:35 pm — Mollie, Zack and Mac leave for Store 24.
- 10:40 pm — Emily leaves for a top-secret assignment at the Palladium.
- 10:47 pm — Mollie, Zack, and Mac realize the irony of the situation: that [cont'd]