1. Write a brief, but well written summary of the article.  Then a second paragraph discussing: What would a day without AC be like for you? Think of a typical day and whether it would be an enjoyable experience. Why or why not?

By Stan Cox

Sunday, July 11, 2010

Washington didn't grind to a sweaty halt last week under triple-digit temperatures. People didn't even slow down. Instead, the three-day, 100-plus-degree, record-shattering heat wave prompted Washingtonians to crank up their favorite humidity-reducing, electricity-bill-busting, fluorocarbon-filled appliance: the air conditioner.

This isn't smart. In a country that's among the world's highest greenhouse-gas emitters, air conditioning is one of the worst power-guzzlers. The energy required to air-condition American homes and retail spaces has doubled since the early 1990s. Turning buildings into [refrigerators](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070902341.html) burns fossil fuels, which emits greenhouse gases, which raises global temperatures, which creates a need for -- you guessed it -- more air-conditioning.

A.C.'s obvious public-health benefits during severe heat waves do not justify its lavish use in everyday life for months on end. Less than half a century ago, America thrived with only the spottiest use of air conditioning. It could again. While central air will always be needed in facilities such as hospitals, archives and cooling centers for those who are vulnerable to heat, what would an otherwise A.C.-free Washington look like?

***At work***

In a world without air conditioning, a warmer, more flexible, more relaxed workplace helps make summer a time to slow down again. Three-digit temperatures prompt siestas. Code-orange days mean offices are closed. Shorter summer business hours and month-long closings -- common in pre-air-conditioned America -- return.

Business suits are out, for both sexes. And with the right to open a window, office employees no longer have to carry sweaters or [space heaters](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070902341.html) to work in the summer. After a long absence, ceiling fans, window fans and desk fans (and, for that matter, paperweights) take back the American office.

Best of all, Washington's biggest business -- government -- is transformed. In 1978, 50 years after air conditioning was installed in Congress, New York Times columnist Russell Baker noted that, pre-A.C., Congress was forced to adjourn to avoid Washington's torturous summers, and "the nation enjoyed a respite from the promulgation of more laws, the depredations of lobbyists, the hatching of new schemes for Federal expansion and, of course, the cost of maintaining a government running at full blast."

Post-A.C., Congress again adjourns for the summer, giving "tea partiers" the smaller government they seek. During unseasonably warm spring and fall days, hearings are held under canopies on the Capitol lawn. What better way to foster open government and prompt politicians to focus on climate change?

***At home***

Homeowners from Ward 8 to the Palisades pry open [double-hung windows](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070902341.html) that were painted shut decades ago. In the air-conditioned age, fear of crime was often cited by people reluctant to open their homes to night breezes. In Washington, as in most of the world's warm cities, window grilles (not "bars," please) are now standard.

In renovation and new construction alike, high ceilings, better cross-ventilation, whole-house fans, screened porches, basements and white "cool roofs" to reflect solar rays become de rigueur. Home utility bills plummet.

Families unplug as many heat-generating appliances as possible. Forget [clothes dryers](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070902341_2.html?sid=ST2010070904277) --post-A.C. neighborhoods are crisscrossed with clotheslines. The hot stove is abandoned for the grill, and dinner is eaten on the porch.

***Around* *town***

Saying goodbye to A.C. means saying hello to the world. With more people spending more time outdoors -- particularly in the late afternoon and evening, when temperatures fall more quickly outside than they do inside -- neighborhoods see a boom in spontaneous summertime socializing.

Rather than cowering alone in chilly home-entertainment rooms, neighbors get to know one another. Because there are more people outside, streets in high-crime areas become safer. As a result of all this, a strange thing happens: Deaths from heat decline. Elderly people no longer die alone inside sweltering [apartments](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070902341_2.html?sid=ST2010070904277), too afraid to venture outside for help and too isolated to be noticed. Instead, people look out for one another during heat waves, checking in on their most vulnerable neighbors.

Children -- and others -- take to bikes and scooters, because of the cooling effect of air movement. Calls for more [summer school](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070902341_2.html?sid=ST2010070904277) and even year-round school cease. Our kids don't need more time inside, everyone agrees; they need the shady playgrounds and water sprinklers that spring up in every neighborhood.

"Green roofs" of grass, ivy and even food crops sprout on the flat tops of government and commercial buildings around the city, including the White House. These layers of soil and vegetation (on top of a crucially leak-proof surface) insulate interiors from the pounding sun, while water from the plants' leaves provides evaporative cooling. More trees than ever appear in both private and public spaces.

And the Mall is reborn as the National Grove.

1. Write a brief, but well written summary of the article. Then a second well written paragraph discussing your thoughts on dumpster diving. Would you partake in it? Why or why not?

**On Dumpster Diving**

LARS EIGHNER

**archive copy  
original source: <http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/m/jmh403/On\_Dumpster\_Diving.htm>  
accessed 1-26-05**

**Lars Eighner was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, in 1946, and he later studied at the University of Texas. He worked as an attendant and ward worker in a mental institution from 1980 to 1987 before finding himself homeless for three years. *Travels with Lizbeth* (1993), the book that includes “On Dumpster Diving,” recounts these years. It began as letters to friends explaining his circumstances and evolved into a series of essays on equipment that he had found in the garbage. Eighner later sent the essays to the *Threepenny Review* for publication. “On Dumpster Diving” shows Eighner’s uniquely powerful insights and unconventional, yet elegant, prose style, which is similar in some ways to the nineteenth-century fiction he enjoys.**

Long before I began [Dumpster diving](http://producer.csi.edu/cdraney/archive-courses/fall07/engl102/e-texts/eighner-dumpster.htm) I was impressed with Dumpsters, enough so that I wrote the Merriam-Webster research service to discover what I could about the word “Dumpster.” I learned from them that “Dumpster” is a proprietary word belonging to the Dempsey Dumpster company.

Since then I have dutifully capitalized the word although it was lowercased in almost all of the citations Merriam-Webster photocopied for me. Dempsey’s word is too apt. I have never heard these things called anything but [Dumpsters](http://producer.csi.edu/cdraney/archive-courses/fall07/engl102/e-texts/eighner-dumpster.htm). I do not know anyone who knows the generic name for these objects. From time to time, however, I hear a wino or hobo give some corrupted credit to the original and call them Dipsy Dumpsters.

I began Dumpster diving about a year before I became homeless.

I prefer the term “scavenging” and use the word “scrounging” when I mean to be obscure. I have heard people, evidently meaning to be polite, using the word “foraging,” but I prefer to reserve that word for gathering nuts and berries and such which I do also according to the season and the opportunity. “Dumpster diving” seems to me to be a little too cute and, in my case, inaccurate, because I lack the athletic ability to lower myself into the Dumpsters as the true divers do, much to their increased profit.

I like the frankness of the word “scavenging,” which I can hardly think of without picturing a big black snail on an aquarium wall. I live from the refuse of others. I am a scavenger. I think it a sound and honorable niche, although if I could I would naturally prefer to live the comfortable consumer life, perhaps—and only perhaps—as a slightly less wasteful consumer owing to what I have learned as a scavenger.

While my dog Lizbeth and I were still living in the house on Avenue B in Austin, as my savings ran out, I put almost all of my sporadic income into rent. The necessities of daily life I began to extract from Dumpsters. Yes, we ate from Dumpsters. Except for jeans, all my clothes came from Dumpsters. Boom boxes, candles, bedding, toilet paper, medicine, books, a typewriter, a virgin male love doll, change sometimes amounting to many dollars: I have acquired many things from the Dumpsters.

I have learned much as a scavenger. I mean to put some of what I have learned down here, beginning with the practical art of dumpster diving and proceeding to the abstract.

What is safe to eat?

After all, the finding of objects is becoming something of an urban art. Even respectable employed people will sometimes [find](http://producer.csi.edu/cdraney/archive-courses/fall07/engl102/e-texts/eighner-dumpster.htm) something tempting sticking out of a Dumpster or standing beside one. Quite a number of people, not all of them of the bohemian type, are willing to brag that they found this or that piece in the trash. But eating from Dumpsters is the thing that separates the dilettanti from the professionals.

Eating safely from the Dumpsters involves three principles: using the senses and common sense to evaluate the condition of the found materials, knowing the Dumpsters of a given area and checking them regularly, and seeking always to [answer](http://producer.csi.edu/cdraney/archive-courses/fall07/engl102/e-texts/eighner-dumpster.htm) the question, “Why was this discarded?”

Perhaps everyone who has a kitchen and a regular supply of groceries has, at one time or another, made a sandwich and eaten half of it before discovering mold on the bread or got a mouthful of milk before realizing the milk had turned. Nothing of the sort is likely to happen to a Dumpster diver because he is constantly reminded that most food is discarded for a reason. Yet a lot of perfectly good food can be found in Dumpsters.

Canned goods, for example, turn up fairly often in the Dumpsters I frequent. All except the most phobic people would be willing to eat from a can even if it came from a Dumpster. Canned goods are among the safest of foods to be found in dumpsters, but are not utterly foolproof.

Although very rare with modern canning methods, botulism is a possibility. Most other forms of food poisoning seldom do lasting harm to a healthy person. But botulism is almost certainly fatal and often the first symptom is death. Except for carbonated beverages, all canned goods should contain a slight vacuum and suck air when first punctured. Bulging, rusty, dented cans and cans that spew when punctured should be avoided, especially when the contents are not very acidic or syrupy.

Heat can break down the botulin, but this requires much more cooking than most people do to canned goods. To the extent that botulism occurs at all, of course, it can occur in cans on pantry shelves as well as in cans from Dumpsters. Need I say that home-canned goods found in Dumpsters are simply too risky to be recommended.

From time to time one of my companions, aware of the source of my provisions, will ask, “Do you think these crackers are really safe to eat?” For some reason it is most often the crackers they ask about.

The question always makes me angry. Of course I would not offer my companion anything I had doubts about. But more than that I wonder why he cannot evaluate the condition of the crackers for himself. I have no special knowledge and I have been wrong before. Since he knows where the food comes from, it seems to me he ought to assume some of the responsibility for deciding what he will put in his mouth.

For myself I have few qualms about dry foods such as crackers, cookies, cereal, chips, and pasta if they are free of visible contaminates and still dry and crisp. Most often such things are found in the original packaging, which is not so much a positive sign as it is the absence of a negative one.

Raw fruits and vegetables with intact skins seem perfectly safe to me, excluding of course the obviously rotten. Many are discarded for minor imperfections which can be pared away. Leafy vegetables, grapes, cauliflower, broccoli, and similar things may be contaminated by liquids and may be impractical to wash.

Candy, especially hard candy, is usually safe if it has not drawn ants. Chocolate is often discarded only because it has become discolored as the cocoa butter de-emulsified. Candying after all is one method of food preservation because pathogens do not like very sugary substances.

All of these foods might be found in any Dumpster and can be evaluated with some confidence largely on the basis of appearance. Beyond these are foods which cannot be correctly evaluated without additional information.

I began scavenging by pulling pizzas out of the Dumpster behind a pizza delivery shop. In general prepared food requires caution, but in this case I knew when the shop closed and went to the Dumpster as soon as the last of the help left.

Such shops often get prank orders, called “bogus.” Because help seldom stays long at these places pizzas are often made with the wrong topping, refused on delivery for being cold, or baked incorrectly. The products to be discarded are boxed up because inventory is kept by counting boxes: a boxed pizza can be written off an unboxed pizza does not exist.

I never placed a bogus order to increase the supply of pizzas and I believe no one else was scavenging in this Dumpster. But the people in the shop became suspicious and began to retain their garbage in the shop overnight.

While it lasted I had a steady supply of fresh, sometimes warm pizza. Because I knew the Dumpster I knew the source of the pizza, and because I visited the Dumpster regularly I knew what was fresh and what was yesterday’s.

The area I frequent is inhabited by many affluent college students. I am not here by chance; the Dumpsters in this area are very rich. Students throw out many good things, including food. In particular they tend to throw everything out when they move at the end of a semester, before and after breaks, and around midterm when many of them despair of college. So I find it advantageous to keep an eye on the academic calendar.

The students throw food away around the breaks because they do not know whether it has spoiled or will spoil before they return. A typical discard is a half jar of peanut butter. In fact non-organic peanut butter does not require refrigeration and is unlikely to spoil in any reasonable time. The student does not know that, and since it is Daddy’s money, the student decides not to take a chance.

Opened containers require caution and some attention to the question “Why was this discarded?” But in the case of discards from student apartments, the answer may be that the item was discarded through carelessness, ignorance, or wastefulness. This can sometimes be deduced when the item is found with many others, including some that are obviously perfectly good.

Some students, and others, approach defrosting a freezer by chucking out the whole lot. Not only do the circumstances of such a find tell the story, but also the mass of frozen goods stays cold for a long time and items may be found still frozen or freshly thawed. Yogurt, cheese, and sour cream are items that are often thrown out while they are still good. Occasionally I find a cheese with a spot of mold, which of course I just pare off, and because it is obvious why such a cheese was discarded, I treat it with less suspicion than an apparently perfect cheese found in similar circumstances.

Yogurt is often discarded, still sealed, only because the expiration date on the carton has passed. This is one of my favorite finds because yogurt will keep for several days, even in warm weather.

Students throw out canned goods and staples at the end of semesters and when they give up college at midterm. Drugs, pornography, spirits, and the like are often discarded when parents are expected—Dad’s day, for example. And spirits also turn up after big party weekends, presumably discarded by the newly reformed. Wine and spirits, of course, keep perfectly well even after opened.

My test for carbonated soft drinks is whether they still fizz vigorously. Many juices or other beverages are too acid or too syrupy to cause much concern provided they are not visibly contaminated. Liquids, however, require some care.

One hot day I found a large jug of Pat O’Brien’s Hurricane mix. The jug had been opened, but it was still ice cold. I drank three large glasses before it became apparent to me that someone had added the rum to the mix, and not a little rum. I never tasted the rum and by the time I began to feel the effects I had already ingest-ed a very large quantity of the beverage. Some divers would have considered this a boon, but being suddenly and thoroughly intoxicated in a public place in the early afternoon is not my idea of a good time.

I have heard of people maliciously contaminating discarded food and even handouts, but mostly I have heard of this from people with vivid imaginations who have had no experience with Dumpsters themselves. Just before the pizza shop stopped discarding its garbage at night, jalapenos began showing up on most of the discarded pizzas. If indeed this was meant to discourage me it was a wasted effort because I am a native Texan.

For myself, I avoid game, poultry, pork, and egg-based foods whether I find them raw or cooked. I seldom have the means to cook what I find, but when I do I avail myself of plentiful supplies of beef which is often in very good condition. I suppose fish becomes disagreeable before it becomes dangerous. The dog is happy to have any such thing that is past its prime and, in fact, does not recognize fish as food until it is quite strong.

Home leftovers, as opposed to surpluses from restaurants, are very often bad. Evidently, especially among students, there is a common type of personality that carefully wraps up even the smallest leftover and shoves it into the back of the refrigerator for six months or so before discarding it. Characteristic of this type are the reused jars and margarine tubs which house the remains.

I avoid ethnic foods I am unfamiliar with. If I do not know what it is supposed to look like when it is good, I cannot be certain I will be able to tell if it is bad.

No matter how careful I am I still get dysentery at least once a month, oftener in warm weather. I do not want to paint too romantic a picture. Dumpster diving has serious drawbacks as a way of life.

I learned to scavenge gradually, on my own. Since then I have initiated several companions into the trade. I have learned that there is a predictable series of stages a person goes through in learning to scavenge.

At first the new scavenger is filled with disgust and self-loathing. He is ashamed of being seen and may lurk around, trying to duck behind things, or he may try to dive at night. (In fact, most people instinctively look away from a scavenger. By skulking around, the novice calls attention to himself and arouses suspicion. Diving at night is ineffective and needlessly messy.)

Every grain of rice seems to be a maggot. Everything seems to stink. He can wipe the egg yolk off the found can, but he cannot erase the stigma of eating garbage out of his mind.

That stage passes with experience. The scavenger finds a pair of running shoes that fit and look and smell brand new. He finds a pocket calculator in perfect working order. He finds pristine ice cream, still frozen, more than he can eat or keep. He begins to understand: people do throw away perfectly good stuff, a lot of perfectly good stuff.

At this stage, Dumpster shyness begins to dissipate. The diver, after all, has the last laugh. He is finding all manner of good things which are his for the taking. Those who disparage his profession are the fools, not he.

He may begin to hang onto some perfectly good things for which he has neither a use nor a market. Then he begins to take note of the things which are not perfectly good but are nearly so. He mates a Walkman with broken earphones and one that is missing a battery cover. He picks up things which he can repair.

At this stage he may become lost and never recover. Dumpsters are full of things of some potential value to someone and also of things which never have much intrinsic value but are interesting. All the Dumpster divers I have known come to the point of trying to acquire everything they touch. Why not take it, they reason, since it is all free.

This is, of course, hopeless. Most divers come to realize that they must restrict themselves to items of relatively immediate utility. But in some cases the diver simply cannot control himself. I have met several of these pack-rat types. Their ideas of the values of various pieces of junk verge on the psychotic. Every bit of glass may be a diamond, they think, and all that glistens, gold.

I tend to gain weight when I am scavenging. Partly this is because I always find far more pizza and doughnuts than water-packed tuna, nonfat yogurt, and fresh vegetables. Also I have not developed much faith in the reliability of Dumpsters as a food source, although it has been proven to me many times. I tend to eat as if I have no idea where my next meal is coming from. But mostly I just hate to see food go to waste and so I eat much more than I should. Something like this drives the obsession to collect junk.

As for collecting objects, I usually restrict myself to collecting one kind of small object at a time, such as pocket calculators, sun- glasses, or campaign buttons. To live on the street I must anticipate my needs to a certain extent: I must pick up and save warm bedding I find in August because it will not be found in Dumpsters in November. But even if I had a home with extensive storage space I could not save everything that might be valuable in some contingency.

I have proprietary feelings about my Dumpsters. As I have suggested, it is no accident that I scavenge from Dumpsters where good finds are common. But my limited experience with Dumpsters in other areas suggests to me that it is the population of competitors rather than the affluence of the dumpers that most affects the feasibility of survival by scavenging. The large number of competitors is what puts me off the idea of trying to scavenge in places like Los Angeles.

Curiously, I do not mind my direct competition, other scavengers, so much as I hate the can scroungers.

People scrounge cans because they have to have a little cash. I have tried scrounging cans with an able-bodied companion. Afoot a can scrounger simply cannot make more than a few dollars a day. One can extract the necessities of life from the Dumpsters directly with far less effort than would be required to accumulate the equivalent value in cans.

Can scroungers, then, are people who must have small amounts of cash. These are drug addicts and winos, mostly the latter because the amounts of cash are so small.

Spirits and drugs do, like all other commodities, turn up in dumpsters and the scavenger will from time to time have a half bottle of a rather good wine with his dinner. But the wino cannot survive on these occasional finds; he must have his daily dose to stave off the DTs. All the cans he can carry will buy about three bottles of Wild Irish Rose.

I do not begrudge them the cans, but can scroungers tend to tear up the Dumpster, mixing the contents and littering the area. They become so specialized that they can see only cans. They earn my contempt by passing up change, canned goods, and readily hock-able items.

There are precious few courtesies among scavengers. But it is a common practice to set aside surplus items: pairs of shoes, clothing, canned goods, and such. A true scavenger hates to see good stuff go to waste and what he cannot use he leaves in good condition in plain sight.

Can scroungers lay waste to everything in their path and will stir so one of a pair of good shoes to the bottom of a Dumpster, to be lost or ruined in the muck. Can scroungers will even go through individual garbage cans, something I have never seen a scavenger do.

Individual garbage cans are set out on the public easement only on garbage days. On other days going through them requires trespassing close to a dwelling. Going through individual garbage cans without scattering litter is almost impossible. Litter is likely to reduce the public’s tolerance of scavenging. Individual garbage cans are simply not as productive as Dumpsters; people in houses and duplexes do not move as often and for some reason do not tend to discard as much useful material. Moreover, the time required to go through one garbage can that serves one household is not much less than the time required to go through a Dumpster that contains the refuse of twenty apartments.

But likely strongest reservation about going through individual garbage cans is that this seems to me a very personal kind of invasion to which I would object if I were a householder. Although many things in Dumpsters are obviously meant never to come to light, a Dumpster is somehow less personal.

I avoid trying to draw conclusions about the people who dump in the Dumpsters I frequent. I think it would be unethical to do so, although I know many people will find the idea of scavenger ethics too funny for words.

Dumpsters contain bank statements, bills, correspondence, and other documents, just as anyone might expect. But there are also less obvious sources of information. Pill bottles, for example. The labels on pill bottles contain the name of the patient, the name of the doctor, and the name of the drug. AIDS drugs and antipsychotic medicines, to name but two groups, are specific and are seldom prescribed for any other disorders. The plastic compacts for birth control pills usually have complete label information.

Despite all of this sensitive information, I have had only one apartment resident object to my going through the Dumpster. In that case it turned out the resident was a university athlete who was taking bets and was afraid I would turn up his wager slips.

Occasionally a find tells a story. I once found a small paper bag containing some unused condoms, several partial tubes of flavored sexual lubricant, a partially used compact of birth control pills, and the torn pieces of a picture of a young man. Clearly she was through with him and planning to give up sex altogether.

Dumpster things are often sad—abandoned teddy bears, shredded wedding books, despaired-of sales kits. I find many pets lying in state in Dumpsters. Although I hope to get off the streets so that Lizbeth can have a long and comfortable old age, I know this hope is not very realistic. So I suppose when her time comes she too will go into a Dumpster. I will have no better place for her. And after all, for most of her life her livelihood has come from the Dumpster. When she finds something I think is safe that has been spilled into the Dumpster I let her have it. She already knows the route around the best Dumpsters. I like to think that if she survives me she will have a chance of evading the dog catcher and of finding her sustenance on the route.

Silly vanities also come to rest in the Dumpsters. I am a rather accomplished needleworker. I get a lot of materials from the Dumpsters. Evidently sorority girls, hoping to impress someone, perhaps themselves, with their mastery of a womanly art, buy a lot of embroider-by-number kits, work a few stitches horribly, and eventually discard the whole mess. I pull out their stitches, turn the canvas over, and work original designs. Do not think I refrain from chuckling as I make original gifts from these kits.

I find diaries and journals. I have often thought of compiling a book of literary found objects. And perhaps I will one day. But what I find is hopelessly commonplace and bad without being, even unconsciously, camp. College students also discard their papers. I am horrified to discover the kind of paper which now merits an “A” in an undergraduate course. I am grateful, however, for the number of good books and magazines the students throw out.

In the area I know best I have never discovered vermin in the Dumpster, but there are two kinds of kitty surprise. One is alley cats which I meet as they leap, claws first, out of Dumpsters. This is especially thrilling when I have Lizbeth in tow. The other kind of kitty surprise is a plastic garbage bag filled with some ponderous, amorphous mass. This always proves to be used cat litter.

City bees harvest doughnut glaze and this makes the Dumpster at the doughnut shop more interesting. My faith in the instinctive wisdom of animals is always shaken whenever I see Lizbeth attempt to catch a bee in her mouth, which she does whenever bees are present. Evidently some birds find Dumpsters profitable, for birdie surprise is almost as common as kitty surprise of the first kind. In hunting season all kinds of small game turn up in Dumpsters, some of it, sadly, not entirely dead. Curiously, summer and winter, maggots are uncommon.

The worst of the living and near-living hazards of the Dumpsters are the fire ants. The food that they claim is not much of a loss, but they are vicious and aggressive. It is very easy to brush against some surface of the Dumpster and pick up half a dozen or more fire ants, usually in some sensitive area such as the underarm. One advantage of bringing Lizbeth along as I make Dumpster rounds is that, for obvious reasons, she is very alert to ground-based fire ants. When Lizbeth recognizes the signs of fire ant infestation around our feet she does the Dance of the Zillion Fire Ants. I have learned not to ignore this warning from Lizbeth, whether I perceive the tiny ants or not, but to remove ourselves at Lizbeth’s first pas de bourrée. All the more so because the ants are the worst in the months I wear flip-flops, if I have them.

(Perhaps someone will misunderstand the above. Lizbeth does the Dance of the Zillion Fire Ants when she recognizes more fire ants than she cares to eat, not when she is being bitten. Since I have learned to react promptly, she does not get bitten at all. It is the isolated patrol of fire ants that falls in Lizbeth’s range that deserve pity. Lizbeth finds them quite tasty.)

By far the best way to go through a Dumpster is to lower yourself into it. Most of the good stuff tends to settle at the bottom because it is usually weightier than the rubbish. My more athletic companions have often demonstrated to me that they can extract much good material from a Dumpster I have already been over.

To those psychologically or physically unprepared to enter a Dumpster, I recommend a stout stick, preferably with some barb or hook at one end. The hook can be used to grab plastic garbage bags. When I find canned goods or other objects loose at the bottom of a Dumpster I usually can roll them into a small bag that I can then hoist up. Much Dumpster diving is a matter of experience for which nothing will do except practice.

Dumpster diving is outdoor work, often surprisingly pleasant. It is not entirely predictable; things of interest turn up every day and some say there are finds of great value. I am always very pleased when I can turn up exactly the thing I most wanted to find. Yet in spite of the element of chance, scavenging more than most other pursuits tends to yield returns in some proportion to the effort and intelligence brought to bear. It is very sweet to turn up a few dollars in change from a Dumpster that has just been gone over by a wino.

The land is now covered with cities. The cities are full of Dumpsters. I think of scavenging as a modern form of self-reliance. In any event, after ten years of government service, where everything is geared to the lowest common denominator, I find work that rewards initiative and effort refreshing. Certainly I would be happy to have a sinecure again, but I am not heartbroken not to have one anymore.

I find from the experience of scavenging two rather deep lessons. The first is to take what I can use and let the rest go by. I have come to think that there is no value in the abstract. A thing I cannot use or make useful, perhaps by trading, has no value however fine or rare it may be. I mean useful in a broad sense—so, for example, some art I would think useful and valuable, but other art might be otherwise for me.

I was shocked to realize that some things are not worth acquiring, but now I think it is so. Some material things are white elephants that eat up the possessor’s substance.

The second lesson is of the transience of material being. This has not quite converted me to a dualist, but it has made some headway in that direction. I do not suppose that ideas are immortal, but certainly mental things are longer-lived than other material things.

Once I was the sort of person who invests material objects with sentimental value. Now I no longer have those things, but I have the sentiments yet.

Many times in my travels I have lost everything but the clothes I was wearing and Lizbeth. The things I find in Dumpsters, the love letters and ragdolls of so many lives, remind me of this lesson. Now I hardly pick up a thing without envisioning the time I will cast it away. This I think is a healthy state of mind. Almost everything I have now has already been cast out at least once, proving that what I own is valueless to someone.

Anyway, I find my desire to grab for the gaudy bauble has been largely sated. I think this is an attitude I share with the very wealthy—we both know there is plenty more where what we have came from. Between us are the rat-race millions who have confounded their selves with the objects they grasp and who nightly scavenge the cable channels looking for they know not what.

I am sorry for them

1. Write a brief, but well written summary of the article. Then in a well written second paragraph discuss how you respond to this taxing of junk foof and soda. Do you agree or disagree and why?

**Let Them Drink Water!**

What a fat tax really means for America.

[](http://www.slate.com/id/2229156/)

Not long after the attack on Pearl Harbor, in the winter of 1942, physiologist [A.J. Carlson](http://www.the-aps.org/about/pres/introajc.htm) made a radical suggestion: If the nation's largest citizens were charged a fee—say, $20 for each pound of overweight—we might feed the war effort overseas while working to subdue an "injurious luxury" at home.

Sixty-seven years later, the "[fat tax](http://www.barrypopik.com/index.php/new_york_city/entry/fat_tax/)" is back on the table. We're fighting another war—our [second-most-expensive](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/03/17/MNBVVL9GK.DTL) ever—and Congress seems on the verge of spending $1 trillion on [health care](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.html). Once again, a bloated budget may fall on the backs of the bloated public. Some commentators, following Carlson, have lately called for a tax on fat people themselves (cf. the [Huffington Post](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-ridley/forget-a-fat-tax-tax-the_b_283868.html) and the [*New York Times*](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/16/magazine/16FOB-wwln-t.html?_r=1&ref=magazine)); others, like a team of [academics](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.html) writing in the current issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, propose a [hefty surcharge on soft drinks](http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/NEJMhpr0905723) instead.

The notion hasn't generated much enthusiasm in Congress, but fat taxes are [spreading through state legislatures](http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Legislation/Illinois-raises-taxes-on-candy-and-soft-drinks/?c=qHmZgAH9qXvlWkpvqXoYtA%3D%3D&utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%2BDaily): Four-fifths of the union now takes a cut on the sales of junk food or soda. Pleas for a federal fat tax are getting louder, too. The *New York Times* recently [endorsed a penny-per-ounce soda tax](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/14/opinion/14mon3.html?_r=1&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1253099576-MMQ8KIJN4DV11uq59iEBdA), and Michael Pollan has made a convincing argument for why the [insurance](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.html) industry may soon [throw its weight behind the proposal](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/10/opinion/10pollan.html?_r=2&pagewanted=all). Even [President Obama said he likes the idea](http://www.menshealth.com/cda/article.do?site=MensHealth&conitem=cf2237c26ab93210VgnVCM10000030281eac____) in a recent interview with *Men's Health*. (For the record, Stephen Colbert is against the measure: "[I do not obey big government; I obey my thirst](http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/227615/may-13-2009/st%20ephen-s-coke-party-protest).")

For all this, the public still has [strong reservations](http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x1318.xml?ReleaseID=1247) about the fat tax. The state-level penalties now in place have turned out to be way [too small](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6T80-4WJ2CG8-1&_user=10&_coverDate=09%2F30%2F2009&_rdoc=9&_fmt=high&_orig=browse&_srch=doc-info(%23toc%235072%232009%23999549996.8998%231439069%23FLA%23display%23Volume)&_cdi=5072&_sort=d&_docanchor=&_ct=13&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=88798821259d3361d9556d143cd16e6c) to make anyone [lose weight](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.html), and efforts to pass more heavy-handed laws have so far [fallen short](http://www.gouverneurtimes.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1877:paterson-to-cut-13b-from-budget&catid=62:new-york-state-news&Itemid=69). But proponents say it's only a matter of time before taxing junk food feels as natural as taxing cigarettes. The latter has been a [tremendous success](http://contexts.org/graphicsociology/2009/04/08/cigarette-tax-smoking-rates/), they argue, in bringing down rates of [smoking](http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE4AC6XX20081113) and [death from lung cancer](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/lung/statistics/trends.htm). In theory, a [steep tax on sweetened beverages](http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/360/18/1805?ijkey=0dfbe164cedcc55039a36681fd3386e30eb2c8a6&keytype2=tf_ipsecsha) could do the same for overeating and [diabetes](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.html).

It may take more than an analogy with tobacco to convince voters. As my colleague William Saletan points out, the first step in policing eating habits is to [redefine food](http://slate.com/blogs/blogs/humannature/archive/2009/05/15/redefining-food.aspx) as something else. If you want to tax the hell out of soda, you need to make people think that it's a drug, not a beverage—that downing a Coke is just like puffing on a cigarette. But is soda as bad as tobacco? Let's ask the [neuropundits](http://www.slate.com/id/2200606/pagenum/all).

Junk food literally "alters the biological circuitry of our brains," writes David Kessler in this summer's best-seller, [*The End of Overeating*](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1605297852?ie=UTF8&tag=slatmaga-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=1605297852). In a previous book, Kessler detailed his role in prosecuting the [war on smoking](http://www.amazon.com/Question-Intent-American-Battle-Industry/dp/1891620800) as the head of the FDA; now he's explaining what makes us fat with all the magisterial jargon of cognitive neuroscience. Eating a chocolate-covered pretzel, he says, activates the brain's pleasure system—the dopamine reward circuit, to be exact—and changes the "functional connectivity among important brain regions." Thus, certain foods—the ones concocted by industrial scientists and laden with salt, sugar, and fat—can circumvent our natural inclinations and trigger "action schemata" for mindless eating. Got that? Junk food is engineered to enslave us. Kessler even has a catchphrase to describe these nefarious snacks: They're [hyperpalatable](http://bloggingheads.tv/diavlogs/21958?in=18:53&out=19:16).

Try as we might, we're nearly powerless to resist these treats. That's because evolution has us programmed to experience two forms of hunger. The first kicks in when we're low on energy. As an adaptation, its purpose is simple enough—we eat to stay alive. The second, called [hedonic hunger](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17531274), applies even when we're full—it's the urge to eat for pleasure. When food is scarce, hedonic hunger comes in handy, so we can stock up on calories for the hard times ahead. But in a world of cheap food, the same impulse makes us fat.

That's the problem with junk food. Manufacturers have figured out how to prey on man's voluptuous nature. Like the cigarette companies, they lace their products with addictive chemicals and cajole us into wanting things we don't really need. Soda is like a [designer drug](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Designer_drug), layered with seductive elements—sweetness for a burst of dopamine, bubbles to prick the trigeminal nerve.

It's hard to draw a line, though, between foods that are drugs and foods that are merely delicious. Soda and candy aren't the only stimuli that "rewire your brain," of course. [Coffee](http://www.scienceblog.com/cms/your-brain-and-caffeine-20789.html) does, too, and so do [video games](http://www.nytimes.com/external/venturebeat/2009/09/01/01venturebeat-playing-tetris-could-be-good-for-your-brain-s-6445.html), [Twitter](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1153583/Social-websites-harm-childrens-brains-Chilling-warning-parents-neuroscientist.html), [meditation](http://blogs.wsj.com/informedreader/2007/11/11/meditation-rewires-the-brain/), and just about anything else that might give you pleasure (or [pain](http://www3.signonsandiego.com/stories/2009/aug/24/1c24rut212347-stress-can-rewire-your-brain-keep-yo/?uniontrib)). That's what brains do—they learn, they rewire. To construe an earthly delight as hyperpalatable—as too good for our own good—we're lashing out at sensuality itself. "Do you design food specifically to be highly hedonic?" Kessler [asks an industry consultant](http://books.google.com/books?id=AWVq7juJ8rEC&pg=PP1&q=%2522highly%20hedonic%2522&f=false&q=%2522highly%20hedonic%2522#v=snippet&q=%2522highly%20hedonic%2522&f=fa) at one point in the book. What's the guy going to say? "No, we design food to be bland and nutritious. …"

It's ironic that so many advocates for [healthy eating](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.2.html) are also outspoken gourmands. Alice Waters, the proprietor of Chez Panisse, calls for a "[delicious revolution](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alice-waters/want-to-teach-democracy-i_b_276420.html)" of low-fat, low-sugar lunch programs. It's a central dogma of the organic movement that you can be a foodie and a health nut at the same time—that what's real and natural tastes better, anyway. Never mind how much fat and sugar and salt you'll get from a [Wabash Cannonball](http://www.artisanalcheese.com/prodinfo.asp?number=PC-10168) and a slice of [*pain au levain*](http://blogs.sfweekly.com/foodie/2009/03/serious_bread_acmes_levain.php). Forget that *cuisiniers* have for centuries been catering to our hedonic hunger—our pleasure-seeking, caveman selves—with a repertoire of batters and sauces. Junk foods are *hyperpalatable*. Whole Foods is *delicious*. Doughnuts are a drug; brioche is a treat.

Some tastes, it seems, are more equal than others.

A fat tax, then, discriminates among the varieties of gustatory experience. And its impact would fall most directly on the [poor](http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/full/87/5/1107), [nonwhite](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/12/081211121925.htm) people who tend to be the most avid consumers of soft drinks and the most sensitive to price. Under an apartheid of pleasure, palatable drinks are penalized while delicious—or even [hyperdelicious](http://www.amazon.com/Eclectic-Gourmet-Guide-Greater-York/dp/0897322797/ref=ntt_at_ep_dpi_1) —products come at no extra charge. What about the folks who can't afford a $5 bottle of [POM Wonderful](http://www.pomwonderful.com/100_percent_juice.html)? No big deal, say the [academics](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.2.html) writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine*; they can always [drink from the faucet](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/13/us/13water.html). Here's how the article puts it: "Sugar-sweetened beverages are not necessary for [survival](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.2.html), and an alternative (i.e. water) is available at little or no cost." So much for *Let them eat cake*.

We've known for a long time that any sin tax is likely to be a burden on the poor, since they're most prone to unhealthy behavior. (James Madison [fought the snuff tax](http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/LIBRARY/studies/nc/nc2b.htm) on these grounds way back in 1794.) But you might just as well say that poor people have the most to gain from a sin tax for exactly the same reason. It's also possible that revenues from a fat tax would be spent on obesity prevention—or [go back](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.2.html) to the community [in other ways](http://yglesias.thinkprogress.org/archives/2008/12/soda_taxes.php). There's a knotty argument here about the vexing and reciprocal interactions among health, wealth, and obesity. (I'll try to untangle some of these in my next column.) It's not clear whether, and in what direction, a soda tax might redistribute wealth. Whatever you think of the [economics](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2009/09/let_them_drink_water.2.html), though, raising the price on soda—and offering water in its place—will redistribute pleasure.

I don't mean to imply that any such regulation is unjust. We have laws against [plenty of chemicals](http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/scheduling.html) and [behaviors](http://www.gambling-law-us.com/State-Law-Summary/) that are as delightful as they are destructive. These are, for the most part, sensible measures to protect our health. What's disturbing is the thought that the degree of government control should vary according to who's using which drug. In April, the Obama administration [called for an end to a long-standing policy](http://articles.latimes.com/2009/apr/30/nation/na-crack30) that gives dealers of powdered cocaine [100 times more leeway](http://www.drugpolicy.org/drugwar/mandatorymin/crackpowder.cfm) than dealers of crack when it comes to federal prison sentences. Let's not repeat this drug-war injustice in the war on obesity. We may be ready to say that foods are addictive. Are we ready to judge the nature of a delicious high?

1. Write a brief, but well written summary of the story. In a second well written paragraph discuss if you were a citizen in this town, would you take part in the lottery? Why or why not. Why do you think the citizens continue to hold the lottery knowing full well what the outcome will be?

THE LOTTERY

by

SHIRLEY JACKSON

The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a fullsummer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26th. But in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroixthe villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy"eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their men folk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conductedas were the square dances, the teen club, the Halloween programby Mr. Summers who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a roundfaced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called, "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men, Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued. had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into he black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put way, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves' barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make upof heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearingin of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory. tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on. "And then I looked out the window and the kids was gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty seventh and came arunning." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good humouredly to let her through: two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your, Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully, "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you. Joe?" and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now." Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar." several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar." he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me. I guess," a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband." Mr. Summers said. "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen vet." Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Mr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I’m drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Jack." and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said, and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the namesheads of families firstand the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions: most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi. Steve." Mr. Summers said and Mr. Adams said, "Hi. Joe." They grinned at one another humourlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen." Mr. Summers said. "Anderson.... Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more," Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row.

"Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast,” Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark.... Delacroix"

"There goes my old man." Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said. "Go on, Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next." Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hand, turning them over and over nervously

Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt.... Hutchinson." "Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.

"Jones." "They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live hat way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries." Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke.... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box.

Then he called, "Warner." "Seventy seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy seventh time."

"Watson" The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers, holding his slip of paper in the

air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened.

Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saving. "Who is it?" "Who's got it?" "Is it the Dunbars?"

"Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at

the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers. "You didn't give him time

enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie," Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little

more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family.

You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well

as anyone else."

"It wasn't fair," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe." Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family; that's

only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far

as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said.

"There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed.

"Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't fair. You

didn't give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that."

Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto

the ground where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

"Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

"Remember," Mr. Summers said. "Take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one.

Harry, you help little Dave." Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davy." Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just one paper." Mr. Summers said "Harry, you hold it for him." Mr. Graves took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Nancy next," Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box "Bill, Jr.," Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, near knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Tessie," Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Bill," Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be." Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

"All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill Jr. opened theirs at the same time and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

"Tessie," Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank. "It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper, Bill."

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

"All right, folks." Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. "Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Mr. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath, "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head.

Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.