

Spring/Summer 1996

IN MEDIAS RES

IN THE MIDDLE OF THINGS

Despite his [Homer] hastens to the outcome and snatches the laurel into the middle of things [in medias res] as if he well knows matters and what he has no hope of being able to establish in his treatment, he leaves out, and so he lies, and singles false things with true.

—Homer, *Art Poetica*



Inside...

- CFR 90.5 in Saskatoon
- Retiring Philosophy Professor Jim Penna
- Symphony conductor Dennis Simons
- First Year students: Lost in Wonderland?
- The IMR staff (again) displays its brilliance
- Book reviews
- Fawad Azizi: To Canada From Afghanistan
- Poetry, Fiction, and much, much more!

In Medias Res

A Literary Journal



The Death of Imagination

by Allan MacLeod

There is an insidious disease spreading throughout North America which threatens the very survival of our nation as we now know them. It is an apparently benign but deadly disease which they wish to govern. There was a time when a politician might be elected for his or her ignorance of Europe

which they wish to govern. There was a time when a politician might be elected for his or her ignorance of Europe

The first is a lack of interest in reading anything that is not required for work, and in particular a lack of interest in reading complex and thought-provoking novels. If the diseased person does actually pick up a book or novel to read for the sake of reading, it is likely to be either an adventure or a fantasy novel in which black and white are the predominant colours, the enemy is clearly the enemy, the hero is pure, the friend is loyal even unto death, and after many harsh struggles, including ordering the machinations of traitorous governments, the good and virtuous win out.



"Those who cannot think become the instruments of evil"

or Asia, but today we seldom accept that he or she may not even know where Vancouver is. The disease likes to cuddle up to politicians who cannot articulate a thought clearly and who have but the honest grasp of fundamental facts, like the

The second element of the syndrome is the colonization of the sufferer's imagination by the images of television, Hollywood movies, video games, and glossy ads. Increasingly, people see

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A conversation in the middle of things, friendship without exclusiveness, thinking without dogmatism, argument without rigidity, always remaining... IN MEDIAS RES



The Faces of Christianity: Can there Be a Jerusalem Without an Athens?

KEVIN CORRIGAN

This article was originally a keynote address at a Symposium inaugurating a doctoral program in Catholic Studies at Loyola University of Chicago in September 1997. Part I of this address appears in this issue.

I have chosen this title because, for me, it sums up a good deal of my upbringing and general experience as a Christian and a Catholic. I grew up in a small town, as it were, in the middle of a sea of individual facts in my home town parish, just about all of whom evoked the same brand of basic North of England Catholic piety: duty, moral, visiting the sacraments, expiation, mercy, indulgences, and the consecration, at times overwhelming, that the faith is really all there is to accept, but this meant top grades (altruistically) and that to

Church, for example, was a terrible mistake. I was, of course, aware of other faces somewhere on the horizon of my pre-adulthood consciousness, though muted glimpses of a television program called *The Brain's Trust*, which I was not allowed to watch, the unforgettable, but rather puzzling and utterly opposed to the other, and while

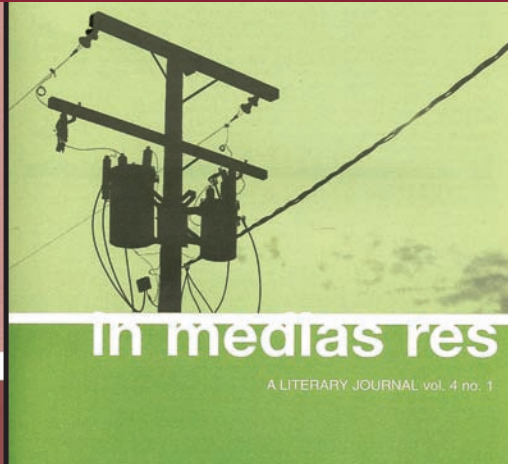
utterly ignored faces of the philosopher, Bernard Russell, and, somewhat, Paul Hays, compelled me to realize that not responsible some people—mostly the "university crowd"—did not believe in God. So I walked study that there were two certainties, each utterly opposed to the other, and while

This issue of *In Medias Res* is dedicated to the memory of Scott Truitt

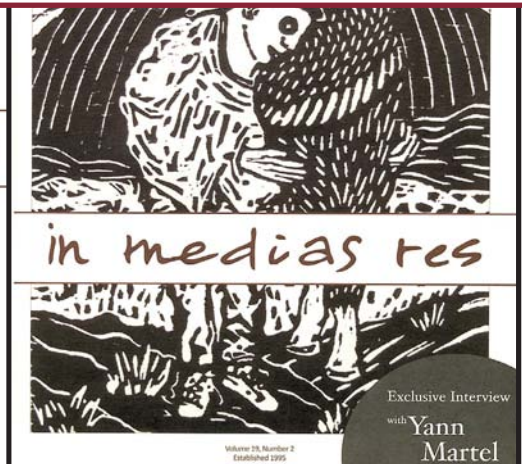
"Your cause of sorrow Must not be measured by his worth, for then It hath no end."

Macbeth 5.7.73-74

20th Anniversary Edition



in medias res



EDITORIAL POLICY

In Medias Res is a journal devoted to the dissemination of the liberal arts in light of the Christian intellectual tradition. Our publication's title derives from the Latin language, the ancient tongue of the Western Academy and Church, and denotes the state of being "in the middle of things." We select a broad range of publications, such as articles, essays, travelogues, reviews, poetry, fiction, and art, which represent the thought cultivated in various programs studied at the University of Saskatchewan. Indeed, the university must contain something of all these disciplines to be called a *universitas*, a whole which has sufficient diversity and

depth to merit its name. Situated as we are amongst many ideas, both within the University and the wider world, we are well-advised to reflect critically upon the principles that constitute our culture. The purpose of this paper, then, is to foster the intellectual growth of our University's students, to confront the philosophy of contemporary society, to reflect upon the Western tradition, and, peradventure, to incite the human soul. Students, faculty, and alumni are encouraged to contribute to this publication, and anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the Editorial Board is most welcome to contact us for further information.

All submissions and inquiries may be directed to
inmediasres@stmcollege.ca
 Visit us online at www.stmcollege.ca/imr



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: "Thinking in the Middle of Things"	3
ARTICLE: "Saskatoon's Community Enhanced by Big Brothers Big Sisters"	7
ARTICLE: "A Seedy Bit of Business"	9
SOCRATIC PESTILENCE: "Was Canada's participation in the Great War justified?"	10
POETRY: <i>E. A. Tamor, James Hawkes, Jazmin Kurtenbach</i>	12
PRO et CONTRA: "Should universities students be required to take a course on Canadian history or politics?"	14
CULTURAL EVENT: "IMR visits Mendel Art Gallery"	16
SHORT FICTION: "Puff"	18
TRAVEL JOURNAL: "Reflections on my time in the Dominican Republic"	20
ARTICLE: "To Tinder or not to Tinder?"	22
REFLECTIONS: "Beginnings of the Middle of Things"	23
BOOK REVIEWS.....	27
POSTCARD STORY	28

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The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the editorial board or of St. Thomas More College.

Thinking in the middle of things

from antiquity to the contemporary world

Kevin Corrigan | Emory University

Twenty years ago, we were privileged to help found *In Medias Res*, to highlight the experience of finding ourselves “in the middle of things” and of trying to make sense of waking up into a world that can be the source of wonder, puzzlement, joy and pain. Several years later, STM and Arts and Science jointly founded the interdisciplinary CMRS program that developed the work of *In Medias Res* as part of an innovative, collaborative curriculum, and I was fortunate to be its first Director before leaving for Atlanta in 2001. My thoughts here are intended to mark this occasion with special thanks to everyone who has been and who continues to be a part of this achievement. Since we all enter into life “in the middle of things” with a longing, perhaps, for something better or more than our present or previous state, I will say a little bit here about the “more.”

There is a fragment from Parmenides’ famous poem (6th Century BC) cited by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* Book 4 (4th Century BC) that I think characterizes something of the human spirit. It runs as follows:

For as each has a mixture of much-wandering limbs, so is the mind of human beings; for it is the same thing which thinks, namely, the nature of the limbs in human beings, in all and in each human; for the more is thought (Parmenides, fragment 16 *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Diels-Kranz (DK); Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4, 1009b 21; Theophrastus, *De Sensu* 3 (DK. Test. 46, I 226).

Whatever Parmenides might have meant in the above passage, namely, that mind results from the mixing of qualities in the body (if a mind-body distinction is not simply anachronistic at this stage in the 6th Century BC), what is striking about this view is that thought is not a question simply of balance, equilibrium or equality of physical qualities (e.g., the hot and the cold, according to Theophrastus), but rather of two

fundamental features: First, it is a question of surplus, or “more.” Thought is not reducible to its constituent parts or mixture; its intrinsic characteristic is to go beyond any constituent part or to be a capacity to think beyond every line or boundary imposed upon it. And second, mind is a function of “much-wandering limbs,” that is, it needs many instruments or disciplines.

Something like this, I suggest, is what gets embodied in the idea of college or university life, namely, the freedom to transgress or cross boundaries in every direction, the freedom for thought to go beyond even itself, and, the much needed, and complementary sets, of constantly developing disciplines to unpack and form the learning boundaries—or “disciplines”—(*disciplinae* in Latin)—to frame this (rather alarming) freedom.

Something like this, I suggest, is what gets embodied in the idea of college or university life, namely, the freedom to transgress or cross boundaries in every direction.

The natural tendency of modern life has been to cut down the multiplicity of disciplines for many practical reasons—business requirements, jobs, simple utility, etc., but despite the natural flux in disciplines and inter-disciplines, and the discovery of new disciplines and the disappearance of older demarcating lines, we *need* the broad divisions of the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences (and their individual and cross-divisional collaborative functionings) for several reasons: first, to avoid adopting only a single viewpoint; second, to cultivate a broad range of arts and sciences and the integration of different collaborative perspectives; and third, to open the human subject to dimensions not necessarily reached by any single discipline. This requires, in my view, the challenge, fundamental to any real enterprise of the human spirit, to go beyond the single viewpoint or discipline and to stand, however imperfectly, in the collaborative “middle of things” among different viewpoints necessary for any grounded epistemology.

Let me, first, take up the need for more than a single

viewpoint. The reason that this is even an issue is because people have often assumed that a single discipline should be a model for every other discipline. At the end of the 19th and well into the 20th Century, physics was just such a model, apparently built upon a mechanistic view of the universe (nothing intrinsically wrong with this—the complex 17th and 18th Centuries are often under-appreciated) and upon a coherent system of demonstrable facts (again, not surprising since from Kant on “truth” has come to mean “consistency” rather than earlier versions such as “adequateness” to “reality”).

It is one of the great ironies of history that this mechanistic model has been turned on its head, not only because of electron microscopes, uncertainty and chaos theories, but because physics now appears to be built upon various cosmological theories that postulate diverse intelligible entities from gravitons to mathematical strings, the existence of some, or even most, of which has not yet been observed or demonstrated. From the latter part of the 20th Century, predominant emerging models seem to be either business or neuroscientific. But in the case of the business model, it remains unclear how far it is possible to incorporate any systematic view of ethics, for instance, into good business practice (despite common-sense calls that any *sustainable* business practice requires morality—but whose morality, and whose rationality?). And in the case of neuroscience, despite optimistic forecasts that the answers to everything, including consciousness, morality and spirit, are to be found exclusively in the isolated brain, it is surely absurd to suppose that successful localized experiments (and the fashions built upon them just as much in the sciences as elsewhere) will rid us of the need to see Rembrandt, Chagall, hear Mozart, Beethoven or Pushkin or read Shakespeare and the Bible. Increasing localization in the study of the brain, anyway, seems to require a simultaneous complementary holistic approach.

However, these monolithic models are plainly insufficient as soon as we look more closely at the nature of knowing itself and any balanced epistemology based upon our experience. First, as Michael Polanyi has argued (*Knowing and Being*, Chicago, 1969), if the only two disciplines we had possessed earlier in our history were

physics and chemistry, then we should never have been able to predict the future existence of machines, much less the mechanistic model that is supposedly intrinsic to physics and chemistry. If a “boundary condition,” in Polanyi’s terms, is extraneous to the process it delimits—in Galileo’s experiments on balls rolling down a slope, for instance, if the angle of the slope was not derived from the laws of mechanics, but chosen by Galileo; or in Galileo’s famous telescope observations of the Moon and Jupiter, the interpretation of what he was seeing was not in fact derived from mechanics or astronomy but from art and what he knew about perspective; and if the same holds true for “machine-like boundaries”, namely, “that their structure cannot be defined in terms of the laws which they harness,” then “if the structure of living things is a set of boundary conditions, this structure is extraneous to the laws of physics and chemistry, which the organism is harnessing. Thus the morphology of

living things transcends the laws of physics and chemistry” (Polanyi, 227).

In other words, we need all the disciplines, not just physics and chemistry, in order to understand physics and chemistry

In other words, we need all the disciplines, not just physics and chemistry, in order to understand physics and chemistry themselves in their broader setting.

themselves in their broader setting. Physics is important for theology, philosophy and literature just as they are important to it. To live within a single discipline is like living in a two-dimensional universe. To move between disciplines or to listen to, and test other people’s voices is like waking up into three or multidimensional space.

In my view, this does not mean that the older hierarchical view of disciplines should be retained, namely, the view that theology and philosophy should transcend all other disciplines. It should mean instead, I suggest, that the limiting conditions of any one discipline may only be seen from the different perspectives of other disciplines, and that, in this case, philosophy, history, theology and literature are as much in need of physics, chemistry and biology as are the latter in need of the former.

But why do we need the broader range of arts, humanities, social and natural sciences we have today? Most people do not understand much about contemporary art, dance or music; and if polls are to be trusted, most of the population enjoys the benefits of scientific advances but is blithely unaware of muons or anti-muons and could not tell the difference between

a virus and a bacterium. In fact, virtually no one alive today could estimate the relative speeds of the earth, sun and solar system if the heliocentric hypothesis is correct as we all proudly assert. So for all our presumed sophistication, very few of us are capable of really living in a post-Galileo, post-Copernican universe if we have no idea how fast we must be travelling if the earth goes around the sun. Something close to a calculation of the actual speeds involved if the heliocentric hypothesis is correct were first formulated by Ptolemy and then by Plutarch in a literary-philosophical dialogue written in the 2nd Century, but then rejected precisely because they so obviously offend the apparent facts of our common-sense experience. So my overall point is this: even failure to get things right may be just as important an indicator as success of the vaster collaborative effort required to get at the “truth” of anything. We need to transform our solitary perspectives and to recognize what we risk losing if we lose sight of the integrating, collaborative work that is, or should be, involved in anything we do.

So how does a grounded epistemology that I mentioned above propel us into the middle of things and pose the question of going beyond the single viewpoint? There are 4 basic questions we might naturally ask ourselves about our position in the world, and these questions propel us literally into the middle of things.

Question: (1) First, what is it like to be me? Or who am I or who should I be?

Question: (2) what is it like to be you? Or what’s going on with others?

Question: (3) how do I look to you or to other beings?

Question: (4) what do I or we actually observe in the world around us?

As E. F. Schumacher puts it in *A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York, 1978)[his take on Moses Maimonides’ classic of the same title], the possibility of integration is destroyed when “one or several” of these questions (from self-knowledge (Question 1) to thing-knowledge (Question 4)) remains unasked or when a question is approached “with instruments and methodologies appropriate only in quite another field”. In other words, to obtain any clear integrated view of reality we need

to relate and integrate these questions or to recognize that while “little can be learned about human nature by anyone who confines his studies to the field of appearances (Question 4)... Similarly little if anything can normally be learned about the mineral [world] from studies of one’s own inner experiences” (i. e., Question 1).

At the same time, Question 4, (or the province of the natural sciences) must be able to inform Question 1 (self-knowledge) since we know it to be true—and not only for evolutionary biology-- that any understanding of human nature is genuinely approachable only by examining the nature of other things, namely, other species, plants and things. And again, if we do not even recognize, much less integrate, Questions 2 and 3, namely, the second-person standpoint (which Martin Buber famously summed up in the I-Thou relation), then we may miss altogether what it means to be human. As Herman Cohen, a “Neo-Kantian” who taught at Marburg at the turn of the 20th Century, puts it, the very possibility of any meaningful morality depends upon the integration of the second-person points of view (Questions 2 and 3) with the first- and third-person perspectives (Questions 1 and 4): “self-consciousness cannot mean the consciousness of the self as a unique person... Self-consciousness is in the first case determined through the consciousness of the other. The uniting of the other with the one generates self-consciousness for the first time ...” (*Ethics* 212-3; 10a-b; Trans. Gibbs 206-7).

In sum, self-knowledge is surely necessary, but it is worse than useless if it is based only on the “I” or first-person perspective. It must be balanced by an equally intensive study of the second, third, and fourth questions. Similarly, knowledge of other things, whether descriptions and appearances or instructions to make things work, is intensely valuable, as showers and airplanes make clear, but it can be practically useless if I cannot communicate with others or with myself or if my life has no real meaning. In other words, the very possibility of our being persons capable of living in a world that transcends our own egos depends upon our capacity to step into the often uncomfortable, middle of things and to strive, however imperfectly, to integrate the many dimensions that make any “me” possible.

Of course, in real life we have to make practical choices

and these choices will sometimes close doors of opportunity, doorways to paths we might have taken. But perhaps the most important point for our integral development as human beings is that we remain aware of what might have been or, indeed, of what should be the case, if not for ourselves then at least for others as a proper imaginative possibility for the future of civilization. Charles Darwin comments with dismay upon what he takes to be the atrophy of parts of his mind and imagination, namely, the loss of what he calls “the higher aesthetic tastes” such as a taste for Shakespeare, Milton, Gray, Byron, etc. in favor of his mind seeming “to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of fact”, and he goes on to suggest that the “loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature” (*Autobiography*, 1876, in *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, ed. Francis Darwin, vol. 1, London, 1888, pp. 138-9). I think that what Darwin points out for the aesthetic tastes may also be true for many humanists and artists if they fail, or refuse to acknowledge dimensions of sensibility or rationality in the social or natural sciences: opportunities not taken or refused. But just think conversely for a moment what life would be like if we had no idea that our lack of living, emotional empathy with others really meant something or if we had never developed, or were never to develop, a moral capacity and an intellectual or spiritual imagination.

And this brings me to what is, to some, the most obvious and, to others, the hardest “more” of all. Why do we need to go beyond the moral imagination? Surely to do the right thing for the right reason in the right situation is sufficient unto itself? We do not need any further human or divine approval beyond the successful moral action itself.

There are and have been, of course, many answers to

these questions. I simply want to point out that if we only look to ourselves, if we make our own species-ego the benchmark for all judgment, then we miss the much vaster richness of the universe and we risk missing the different goods of other species, plants and things. We risk, above all, missing a dimension that makes everything possible, not just our own species. As Aristotle observed many years ago (*Nicomachean Ethics* 6, 7), we are only one item, one species in the cosmos - and not necessarily the best. We therefore need not just human understanding, but *sophia* (wisdom or divine understanding), a viewpoint that goes vastly beyond our own range of self-interests to include all things, but a viewpoint whose necessity arises within or in the middle of the much narrower frame of our own experience and in which we can, with humility, share. Whatever we call this, and however we frame it within our various disciplines, groups etc., it does not belong exclusively to you, me, or any group, and it is, therefore, not an “it” or a “thing” or even a viewpoint anymore, but if anything, the “more” that makes everything else possible and that Parmenides—over 2500 years ago—dimly intuited to be the basis of human psychosomatic existence. To find oneself in the middle of things, therefore, and to long for something more may at times be uncomfortable, but it expresses who we are and who we might be in terms of a greater dimension than ourselves, or than anything else, for that matter.

So *In Medias Res* is a project that provokes the “more” in everything—and I congratulate you on this occasion, your twentieth birthday.

Kevin Corrigan is currently the Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Interdisciplinary Humanities and the Director of The Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts and is also associated in Classics, Philosophy, Religion, and Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies at Emory University, in Atlanta, GA.

Ars Poetica by Horace

He always hurries to the main event,	SEMPER AD ADVENTUM FESTINAT
rushing his readers in the middle of things	ET IN MEDIAS RES NON SICUS
as if they knew the story already	AC AUDITOREM RAPIT

Saskatoon's Community Enhanced By Big Brothers Big Sisters

 by Naomi Zurevinski

Big Brothers Big Sisters provides the Saskatoon community with an experience that is based on friendship — something everyone desires and identifies with.

Their mentorship programs offer a break from schoolwork and the daily grind by creating the opportunity to connect with people from different backgrounds and walks of life.

“It’s good for people to have an understanding of other communities and other cultures and even just to reconnect with the elementary level,” said Cheyenne Lawton, a volunteer of the Big Brothers Big Sisters In-School Mentorship program.

Lawton is a first year student in the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. She began the program during the winter 2014 school term and meets once a week with a grade six girl from St. Michael’s elementary school. They spend an hour together doing various activities like board games, crafts or cooking.

“Every time I leave, I leave feeling really grateful that I’m able to be a part of the program because it’s a different experience from what I experience in school and my regular life,” Lawton said.

Josh Howie, a sixth year Kinesiology student at the U of S, is another volunteer for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Howie is involved in the traditional mentorship program and has been paired with his little brother — currently in grade 12 — since 2010.

“I wanted to add more to my life other than just going to school and going home,” Howie said. “I wanted to be committing more to my community than I had previously.”

Big Brothers Big Sisters offers many different programs, suitable for varying commitment levels, interests and personality types.

The In-School Mentorship program calls for adult volunteers who meet once a week for an hour at the

school with the child they are partnered with.

“The really neat thing about that program is that the school identifies the kids that need the mentor in their life,” said Kim Megyesi, executive director for Big Brothers Big Sisters in Saskatoon.

For the traditional mentorship program, big brothers and sisters are matched to a little brother or sister and are required to commit to a minimum of three to five hours a week for a year-long period.

“They do things in the community and go and hang out and just build a relationship in the way that you would with a friend,” Megyesi said.

Big Brothers Big Sisters also offers the Youth In Care program, designed specifically for kids in foster care, the Club Connect program, a program that began in fall of 2013 for children who are new to Canada and the Go Girls! and Game On programs that provide an athletic twist to mentoring.

One of the stronger assets of the program is the matching process, which takes age, gender and interests into consideration.

“It’s based on best fit, so we find out what the mentor’s activity interests are, we find out what the little’s activity interests are and then we [match] based on that,” Megyesi said.

Due to the thorough matching process, the likelihood of partners forming a friendship is very high.

“I see a lot of similarities in myself and her when I was her age. I’ve really found it easy to connect with her,” Lawton said. “They do a great job.”

The matching process makes for a pleasant experience as partners move into building a relationship.

“It’s not as abrupt a process as people think it is. It’s very smooth because they set it up that way,” Howie said. “Your match is going to be great and you’re going to be set up for a smooth transition.”

One of the largest challenges with the program is the wait list for the little sisters and little brothers. For

SASKATOON'S COMMUNITY ENHANCED BY BIG BROTHER BIG SISTERS

little sisters the wait time is approximately six months from registration. However, little brothers have a very lengthy wait time — up to three years before they are matched up.

“We currently have a 200 people waiting list for the littles,” Megyesi said. “There are more kids that are coming in that need big brothers and there are less male volunteers. It’s frustrating for a parent when they come in and apply and they find out that it’s going to be three years before their son is matched.”

While mentorship might not be for everyone, there are a variety of benefits that Big Brothers Big Sisters offers mentors, mentees and the wider Saskatoon community alike.

“For these kids it’s having someone that supports them and that mentally they know throughout the whole week that they’ve got somebody who cares about them. They’re going to show up to see them and that’s what it’s all about — it’s about that support,” Megyesi said.

For kids who have mentors there is an increased likelihood that they will stay in school longer, graduate high school and are less likely to be involved in certain behavioral issues.

“One of the most staggering stats is that 78 per cent of kids who came from a social systems background no longer rely on that form of income when they have a mentor in their life,” Megyesi said.

For volunteers the benefits are also numerous — especially for university students, who currently make up 18.5 per cent of total volunteers.

“We make it fit for university students, we make it easy on them since it’s during the school day — it’s easy access and it’s in a controlled environment,” Megyesi said.

Working with someone of a different background and age category also has a significant impact on volunteers’ lives.

“It has solidified my choice in career path. I shifted into medicine and it really drove home that medicine would be the way for me to go because you get to help people on a whole new level and I’m really interested in that,” Howie said.

Lawton plans to continue with the program as long as she can fit it into her schedule and recognizes the importance of letting kids know that university education is a future possibility.

“If there’s a kid that maybe doesn’t know somebody who’s going to university they can just learn a little bit about what it’s all about,” Lawton said. “I think any experience getting to know somebody is a learning experience.”

As a learning experience where all parties gain, the program is very well-rounded overall.

“We both benefit immensely. It’s not as one-way as people think it is,” Howie said.

While mentoring to another person might seem like a large responsibility, we all have the ability within us to build relationships — which is what mentorship is all about.

“I think a lot of people are nervous because when they hear the word ‘mentor’ they think that they have to be perfect to do it. It’s not about perfection; it’s about having a friendship,” said Megyesi. “We all have friendships and we all know what it looks like to be a good friend or to have a good friend. It’s really about just being a friend and hanging out with somebody.”

Visit bbbssaskatoon.org for information on Big Brother Big Sister programs, events and to apply as a volunteer.

A Seedy Bit of Business

By Richard Medernach

You need a few things to grow food. Soil, water, sunlight and seeds do the trick. It's easy not to think about seeds too often, especially if you don't grow your own food. There should be no doubt about their importance however. Perhaps you have a farm or a garden yourself? Do you save seeds? Share them with neighbours and friends? I must admit that I usually just buy seeds for my garden though my wife does save poppy seeds from year to year. For thousands of years now, farmers have been the stewards of our invaluable plant genetic heritage. Planting, tending, and observing their crops and saving seed from the best plants to be used for the next year. The biodiversity achieved over time with this system is astounding. There are some 5000 varieties of potatoes in the world.¹ This biodiversity is very important for people, especially those of us who like to eat.

According to the FAO, "Plant genetic resources are the basis of food security and consist of diversity of seeds and planting material of traditional varieties and modern cultivars, crop wild relatives and other wild plant species."² The loss of biodiversity, in part due to increasing corporate seed control, is even more astounding. According to the FAO, some 75% of the world's food is from 12 plant and five animal species.³ In North America, we've lost about 90% of our fruit and vegetable biodiversity in the past century and Indonesia has lost approximately 10,000 varieties of rice.⁴ With a small number of huge corporations controlling most of the world's agricultural seeds, the loss of seed diversity is easy to explain.⁵

And it's a seedy bit of business – trying to control the world's food supply – which has pitted the likes of Monsanto, DuPont and Syngenta against the likes of thousands of family farms in Columbia, Haiti, Zambia, and even right here in North America.

So what's wrong with companies controlling seeds? They have labs and scientists working on better varieties, don't they? They are increasing global food production, aren't they? Well, these things are rarely as cut and dried as that. According to the partner organizations of Development and Peace, here are the key issues regarding the rights of farmers to save and share seeds.

- Almost a billion people are going hungry in the world today, not because of lack of production, but because of injustice.
- Food sovereignty is the best way to address this issue. This is not precisely the same as food security. It's a broader perspective that involves local populations having some control over their food supply.
- Small family farmers are the stewards of seeds – their local expertise and traditional methods feed billions of people.
- Their local varieties are better adapted to local conditions.
- Small family farms, and in particular, women farmers feed much of the world
- The right to save and exchange seed must be protected – especially in the Global South.

I encourage you to have a look at Development and Peace's Sow Much Love campaign to learn more about this issue.

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Potato>
2. www.fao.org/biodiversity/components/plants/en/
3. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5609e/y5609e02.htm>
4. www.devp.org/sowmuchlove
5. www.etcgroup.org/content/just-3-companies-control-more-half-53-global-commercial-market-seed

*Socratic Pestilence:
The Campus Gadflies Ask...*

Was Canada's Participation in the Great War Justified?

For each journal issue, members of the In Medias Res editorial board assail the University of Saskatchewan's academic community with a quasi-philosophical question, after the fashion of Socrates. For this issue, we inquired about the value of the *artes liberales*.

"For citizens of a modern, independent Canada, it is difficult to imagine going to war just because Britain did. However, because of the deep ties between the Canada and Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century, fighting in the Great War alongside our mother country was really the only option."

Hannah Cooley – History

"I believe that Canada's participation in the Great War was ultimately justified. It is a proud moment in our history and it is important to remember the sacrifices that were made. I think it was justified because it played an important role in shaping Canadian values. It brought Canadians together and created a great sense of patriotism within Canada. It also sent a message to the rest of the world that Canadians will not stand idly by when their friends and neighbours are being attacked."

Mitch Graw – Political Studies

"'Bad men need nothing to compass their ends, than that good men should look on and do nothing.' I believe Canada had an obligation, not just as an independent nation but also as a member of the British Empire, to participate in the Great War. Furthermore while war itself is despicable it may at some point in time be a necessary evil."

Alexander Quon – English

"The Dominion of Canada's entry into the Great War was justified in the sense that once Britain joined the War Canada was duty bound to come to her aid. Betraying Britain, as the Liberals chose to do in 1956, would have been cowardice amounting to treason. This is a separate discussion from whether the Great War was itself justified. In that case the War was a mistake, and the British Empire should never have entered a war which swallowed the lives of hundreds of thousands of British Subjects to prop up the godless French Republic and toppled the Romanov, Hohenzollern and Hapsburg dynasties – replacing

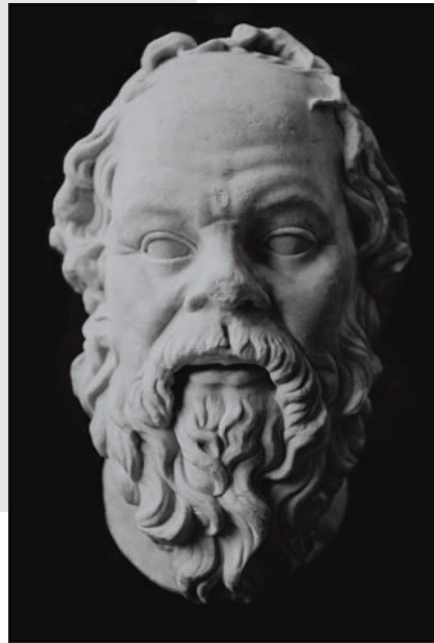
them with regimes which each vied with one another to sink to new depths of wickedness. Nevertheless, although the 'Great War for Civilisation' actually left Western civilisation in ruins, once the sword was in Britannia's hand 'Ready Aye Ready' was the only answer that Canada could honourably give. "

James Hawkes – History, CMRS & Political Studies

"While I don't think one can ever justify participating in a war, considering the grievous cost of war. It was inevitable that Canada would participate in the Great War based on her strong ties to Britain. The hypothetical questions some use to attempt to justify

participation in a war because "things would be worse if the other side won" is ridiculous as we can never know for certain what could have happened. It's a futile attempt at releasing guilt associated with the many young soldiers whom needlessly lost their lives."

Jazmin Kurtenbach – Psychology



"In order to appreciate Canada's entrance into the war people need to recognize that we were a predominately British country both ethnically and in our view of the world. We loved the empire and the security it provided. These days people tend to think of us being forced into a war we had no appetite for. This cannot be further from the truth. We wanted to fight Germany. Britain was our mother country and we answered her call for help. Just as we did in the boer war. Britain entered the war in order to protect Belgium and correct the balance of power that had been shifting in Germany's favour. The arms race and the militarization of Germany only came about because of the German kaiser's desire to have an empire like that of Britain. Unlike Britain, Germany wanted to conquer parts of the European continent. Britain was quite happy to maintain her empire. This German build up of arms destabilized the world order. Austria-Hungary went to war against Serbia unjustly so Russia went to war against Austria-Hungary justly. Germany sided with an unjust ally and France sided with the just allies. The British Empire (including Canada) went to war to honor a treaty that was supposed to ensure Belgium independence. Germany, already at war unjustly sought to take a quick route to France through a small neutral country which it had plans to annex. To justify this war we need to ask ourselves the question, "what if Germany had won?" Do people honestly believe there would have been no annexations by imperial Germany on

the European continent? would the Germans have attempted to bring about world peace through the League of Nations? would the German Kaiser have voluntarily given up his vast powers in order to become a constitutional monarch like George V of the British Empire? would Belgium's independence be restored? would the territorial integrity of France be respected? would she still have her colonies? and what about the Slavs? would there have been a Poland? Czechoslovakia? Serbia? Luxembourg? I think we know the answers to these questions. As Canadians we were lucky to have inherited British Liberty. The new waves of immigrants coming to our country in the early 1900's came because they wanted to escape serfdom and poverty. They wanted the liberty and tolerance Canada provided. Britain saw a threat to these values. And we saw it too. That is why we followed them into war. That is why we did not complain when we were asked to lend a hand. Liberty was at stake. And though it was a long, bloody and costly war our cause prevailed. In its aftermath we tried to build a better world. Canada gained a greater degree of independence. Many will argue it gave us our independence. If you consider all of this I believe the Great War was justified. If you prefer the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman or German brand of imperialism perhaps you would disagree with me. Canada as it is today only came about because our young men in 1914 took up arms for king and country. "

Erik Carey – Agriculture



Poetry

DIES IRAE

Dies irae!

Such a perplexing name.

O great and terrible day!

How awesome is your coming.

Those on the right long for it;

The sinister tremble in anger.

Domine ne in furore tuo arguas me!

Great and terrible,

Frightening and comforting.

The end and the beginning;

Not yet nor again.

Such a perplexing name:

Dies irae.

E. A. Tamor

HADES DREAMING OF PERSEPHONE

I know that I'll never possess thy love

I see that I shall never hold your heart

For you belong beneath the sun above

Whilst I belong to the dark depths below.

But in my dreams you snuggle at my side,

My heart so buoyed I could almost fly.

Where is the harm in such pretty dreams?

Do not all deserve a moment of sun?

For these reveries are as close it seems

As you shaver be my dearest one.

But idle dreams are never enough my use

Stay freely, or not, that is for you to choose

James Hawkes

THE NORTH WIND

Boreas rages anew

E'er against the children of man;

Stealing the warmth from their cheeks

Like Oreithyia from the banks of Ilissus.

On his breath is the snow;

From his wings comes a trail of frost.

Not with a thunderous voice,

But with a silent whisper he flies

Bringing darkness and a pale shadow,

He covers the earth in a gloomy shroud.

The vitality of Ge is hidden away

As Kore descends into the Hidden Lands.

When he'll turn back and end his onslaught,

And let the verdant sprigs return

No one can tell.

Now the spring seems far away

And summer but a dream,

For Boreas rages anew.

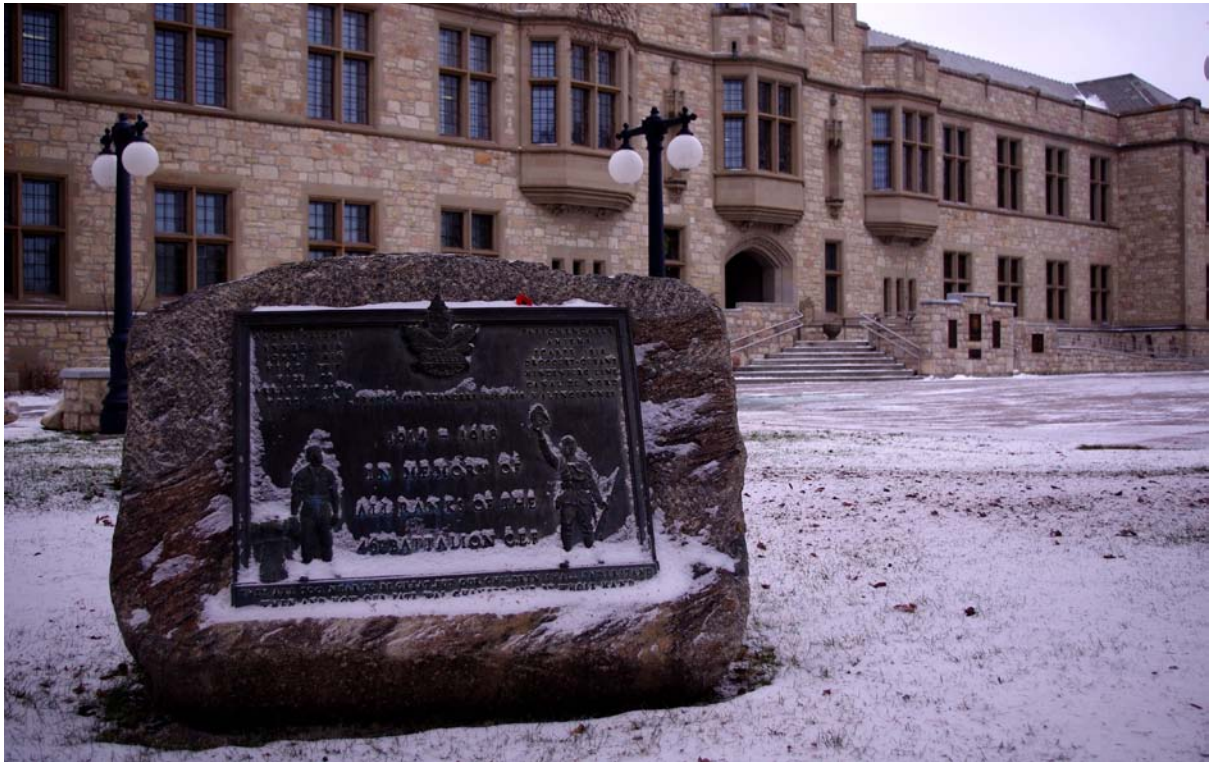
E. A. Tamor



THE MAN BEHIND THE MEDALS

Though age left him faded and worn,
 from the triumph and loss of war,
 his great-granddaughter knew him not for the gun he weil'd
 but rather for the art he carefully skilled,
 upon the backs of bills and scraps,
 always being the cause of laughs,
 from tickling wriggling toes,
 and squeeking while blowing his nose,
 that peaceful fatherly man,
 fought through to the very end.

Jazmin Kurtenbach



JAZMIN KURTENBACH

A POPPY IN A PUDDLE

Just the day before it bathed in the sun's rays
 red on black, the pride of the Realm and
 all bowed their heads in respect
 now the drums are stilled,
 it lies alone
 half drowned.

James Hawkes

Poetry

Pro et

By Dr. Charles Smith,
Professor of Political Studies

Should university students take a course on Canadian history?

Few would debate the notion that public education is a societal good. When 19th century liberal reformers debated the merits of public education, they did so on the principles advocated by liberals such as John Stuart Mill who maintained that education played a central role in moulding a critical thinking citizenry. While Mill was concerned about the coercive nature of State directed education, he admitted that public education was a necessary good. In his words, societies needed a

...national education; as being, in truth, the peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns--habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another (John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* 1859, Chapter V).

Taken to its logical conclusion, Mill recognized that people were only free (or had liberty) when they acquired the necessary skills to question those with political power.

In many ways, Canada's system of public education places at its foundations the principles endorsed by Mill. Canadian educators, politicians, unions and other like-minded individuals have long advocated for a public education system that teaches an eclectic mixture of mathematics, science, languages, humanities and social science. And really, how could it be otherwise? How can any society claim to be educating its citizens without passing on the basic tools of inquisitive inquiry necessary for democracy to thrive? If education is only a presentation of unqualified facts or a romanticization of the status quo than it is not education at all but rather a tool of legitimation for ruling powers.

At its roots, a healthy democracy requires that its citizens be given the basic tools to challenge societal authority. In fact, no aspect of education should be void of critical analysis. Perhaps a hypothetical example best defends this point. Mathematics seems like the quintessential discipline void of any critical analysis. Mathematics is, after all, a rational formulistic study of numbers and equations that simply (or perhaps not so simply) requires its students to learn those numbers and formulas. Yet, what happens when those numbers and equations are used to create a computer virus? And what if that virus is used to steal critical state information or shut down a power plant providing electricity to a community? Now we have entered the realm of political and moral ethics. Without a source of critical grounding of the broader debates surrounding ethical reasoning, terrorism, the rule of law and so forth, the mathematics student it is not really educated at all.

There are countless other examples. The point in all of this is that all citizens in a democracy must be taught the basic principles of critical analysis. As the goal of a critical education is to lay the foundation for the future than education must be grounded in what Karl Marx believed is "ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be" (Letter from Marx to Arnold Ruge, Kreuznach, September 1843). If the goal of education is to both interpret and change the world, then social science and humanities education should be mandatory for all secondary and post-secondary students.

Contra

Students be required to take courses in history or politics?

By Dr. Bryan Wiebe,
Professor of Philosophy

First, Canadian history and Canadian politics are fascinating and useful. The value of these courses is not at issue. Studying Canadian history or politics is excellent. But our question is whether it should be required. Falling in love is also very good, but no authorities should require it. I shall argue that requiring students to take a course in Canadian politics or history would raise practical issues, is contradictory in purpose and likely harmful to Canadian society.

The practical issues arise because students can study abroad. Some of our best students win scholarships to study at Oxford, Harvard and other foreign schools. These places would not share the proposed requirement. Would we refuse to accept these students later in our graduate schools? Would we require Canadian companies to hire only graduates of Canadian colleges? And what of foreign students studying in Canada? Will they all be well served by their knowledge of Canadian history or politics on returning to their own countries? And if we allow an exemption for them, what then if they later decide to stay?

The proposed requirement would be contradictory in purpose, because the goal of having someone truly learn about something is undermined by coercion. Being forced to take a course will result in binge cramming and regurgitation followed by the desire never to think about “that stuff” again. But the value of taking these courses would only be realized if students become informed citizens who would think about “that stuff” for the rest of their lives. Dogooders are often tempted by the supposed short-cut of coercing people to do what is good for them. But this tends to suck all the beauty and goodness out of most worthy undertakings. Finding the “teachable moment” requires patience, not more regulations.

The proposed requirement would be harmful because it encourages the attitude of credentialism already too rampant in Canadian society. I once had a friend who took a Bachelor of Education degree. But when he had his first job, he found he was unable to continue due to the constant stress; he had to find a different career. Getting the credentials to be a teacher, does not really make you a teacher. The reverse is also true: just because one has never gotten the credentials to be an X, does not mean that one cannot be a good X. Plato had the gall to start what was essentially the world’s first university without having any university degree himself! None of his faculty had any degrees! Today’s credentialist attitude would automatically consider such an institute to be totally “Mickey Mouse” if not fraudulent.

In what job or career would success be impossible, merely due to one’s not having taken a course in Canadian politics or history? One might suggest: Professor of Canadian history or politics. Not necessarily. My understanding is that Michael Scriven, contemporary polymath, once held the rank of “University Professor” which entitled him to teach courses within any department he chose at his university. (Other universities enticed him away from that position.) Whether or not he had ever taken a course in some area, he would have been welcome to teach it!

So I recommend that students take courses in Canadian politics and history for the inherent value these courses offer, rather than to fulfill just another requirement.

IMR VISITS MENDEL ART GALLERY

CULTURAL EVENT INTRODUCTION

This fall, members of the In Medias Res editorial board visited the Mendel Art Gallery's 50th Anniversary Exhibition entitled Modern Visions. The exhibition features art from a variety of the Gallery's collections as well as art from previous exhibitions to celebrate 50 years in Saskatoon.

I - Do you think there's a disconnect between how a piece of art is viewed during the time it was created and contemporary interpretations?

JAH: Yes there can be a disconnection, it is quite easy for a meaning that was obvious to one generation to become very obscure to the next. This can render what was intended to be fairly accessible art highly esoteric, it is a particularly serious problem in the present when dealing with art that is informed by Biblical or Classical imagery, as educational standards in those areas have slipped precipitously in recent generations. Another element is that distance can alter our perceptions, those in the present will tend to appreciate a piece from the Great War differently from how it would have affected our great-grandparents who had a more direct experience of the conflict for instance.

JMK: Absolutely. As social norms and mores change over time it becomes more difficult to understand what the artist's original statement was without prior knowledge of the time period it was created in and who its intended audience was. The mores and values of a certain period of time are ingrained within the brushstrokes of a piece whether its as a way to perpetuate these values or to rebel against them. And as contemporary viewers we may not understand the complete picture while looking at a snapshot of history.

JDK: In a word, yes. Although one can use history to try and reconstruct the context in which the original artwork was created a modern viewer can never experience or recreate the exact same context and the emotions and prevailing thoughts of the day today. For example "Der lebende Leichnam" (or "The Living Corpse") by Walter Gramatté was produced in 1919 and contains a dedication "Für Tolstoi." Tolstoy wrote a play which premiered posthumously in 1911 by the name of "The Living Corpse." Although we can speculate about how it was viewed originally in the aftermath of the First World War in Germany, the modern viewer can never have the same experiences of those who originally viewed it and so although the interpretation may be similar, it will have changed since then.

II - Is there a particular piece that stands out?

JAH: In the Mendel Art Gallery I think my favourite was Manitou, I enjoyed the use of colour and texture in the piece, and it was the sort of painting which allowed you to project onto it what you thought. I think it seemed to be a scene of apocalyptic destruction but that may just have been me!

JMK: While there were many that stood out, the first one that made a profound impression on me was "Der lebende Leichnam." by Walter Gramatté. It appeared both macabre and beautiful and seemed to portray a deep loss. This haunting piece reminded me of the work of Roman Dirge.

JDK: To me the "Sault-à-la-Puce, Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré" by Cornelius Krieghoff stood out the most. It is an oil on canvas work painted in 1860 at the river near Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré. I really enjoy landscapes and I think that Krieghoff captured the movement of the waterfall and river beautifully as well as the splendid Quebec fall colours. I have a sense of familiarity with the painting from the time that I visited Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré and saw very similar scenery to this one.

Modern Visions: 50th Anniversary Exhibition

III - Does art have an intended audience? And does it affect the meaning?

JAH: Art, particularly the modern art which is so dominant at the Mendel, tends to be designed for a limited, highly elite audience. Whereas more traditional art tended to have either a didactic purpose, or a simple æsthetic one, and so was intended to be appreciated by the average person at least on a superficial level, conversely this type of art requires spending time cultivating an appreciation for it, something which is really only the prerogative of the elite.

JMK: Yes and no. Each piece varies from having a specific purpose with a symbolic meaning that only those “in the know” will pick up on, while others are more general such as those created for aesthetic purposes. In many ways, art seems to be intended for the elite as the conspicuous consumption of art is what gives each piece its value. The work of Jackson Polluck, for example though many could argue that his work is nothing more than what the average person with a bucket of paint could do, is the highly valued by the elite and as such are bought and sold for millions of dollars.

JDK: I believe that art does have an intended audience and that it does affect the meaning. A painting that is intended for devotional use in a church has a different audience (worshippers) than a painting of a serene pastoral landscape intended for those who lived their whole life in cities in order that they can enjoy nature, such as the many paintings from the Romantic era. The meaning changes when the audience changes, the devotional image being placed in a museum is no longer used to reflect divine realities to worshippers but looked at for its beauty and historicity. The same landscape has a different meaning to someone in a rural area than the intended audience of those who do not normally experience the outdoors.

IV - Do you think art has progressed?

JAH: If one peruses the works of the Old Masters you can find incredibly detailed, beautiful borderline photographic paintings of which the skill employed is essentially unsurpassable, so in a technical sense no art has not progressed. In an æsthetic sense Art has actually declined, due to its deconstructionist tendencies and general prioritisation of the transgressive.

JMK: That depends. If you are looking at it from a viewpoint where one masters skills to create a masterpiece and have patrons for whom they paint and that is how they progress, then no. It hasn't progressed. But in a way I think we have progressed. There are greater opportunities for all to engaged in some creative activity, like painting, though there are still notions that creating art for the sake of creating art is a waste of time. The arts and humanities are seemingly becoming less valued in favour for knowledge in science and math.

JDK: I think it is difficult to say whether art has or has not progressed. While I usually prefer the older styles of art I also know that art serves a specific purpose in the context in which it was produced and that will affect how it looks.

Puff

by J. McGhee

Puff, puff, pass to the left. But no, we're passing to the right for some reason, and I've never done this before so why am I doing this now? Try anything once, but I had promised myself not to ever try this, and yet here I am. Why am I here again? Oh yeah, him.

I looked at him from across the circle, watched as he sucked smoke trailing off the end of the joint. The joint I had acquired for this very occasion. He looked excited. Tonight was supposed to be the ultimate experience. Get high, and listen to *Dark Side of the Moon* on vinyl so I could understand the "full" experience. We were both nervous about this. I can't complain though, I was the one who said this was okay. I was the one who got the stuff that made this activity possible.

He looked so God damn happy. I had already spent more time than I could keep track of freaking out over this, all internally, all away from him. He had no idea just how much time had been devoted to mulling this idea over, and over, hours spent agonizing over how to explain why I was so against a plant. Or maybe he did understand, after all he had kicked this habit just for me before I could even verbalize why. He understood, and even when I told him he didn't have to stop for me, he gave me that look and said "You're more important than drugs".

And I'm laughing. And they're both smiling at me now, enjoying the show while I try to reign in my giggles.

"She's the picture of stoned, look at her eyes; she's melting in the chair." And I had melted in the chair, but that was okay. I was happy. I could feel my face smiling, and that was okay too. They could finish that joint just fine without me. I wasn't nervous anymore. I felt languid, relaxed. This might just be okay after all.

Awake. I was awake. And I was awake again. A small jolt and awake once more; and awake again.

Awake and aware; my body, I could certainly feel my body. It felt different, strange, a familiar feeling. Why was it familiar?

And awake; I knew then just where I'd felt this same heavy lethargy, like my body was unable or unwilling to move. Heavy like I had no voice, any attempts to speak would come out as air, a whisper. I had felt this back in the dark barn, in the tall grass,

underneath that guy, in the way of that swinging axe, stuck in the stairwell, always unable to scream for help, always unable to warn the others. This was the same feeling that featured in all of my worst night terrors, the ones where I woke up screaming, or worse unable to scream.

I began to panic, and jolted awake one more time. I wasn't in any of those places. I could still move, still talk. I looked at his brother and tried to breathe. You're awake, this is real, and you are awake.

"Listen to the heartbeat" someone said, and then I was aware again. I could feel my own heartbeat racing in my chest. It felt like it might burst, it hurt. And breath, deep breath, exhale, repeat. I refused to panic, but I was already halfway there.

Jolt awake.

I knew I wasn't sleeping, but every time I jolted back into reality it felt like days had passed. I began to panic again. Time was slipping away from me. I'd never been so concerned about time running out like this. It was time to breathe again. Think. Why is it like this? Is it always like this?

Each thought passing through my head felt like a day ending again. Why? Why was I feeling like this? I was blinking.

Every time I closed my eyes, another day was over just like that. If I tried hard enough, and put all my effort into concentrating on my eyes, the days stopped passing by. But then I'd jolt awake, and have to start all over again. It felt like I had been battling with myself for hours already, but it couldn't have been that long, we hadn't even flipped the record yet.

"The album art makes sense when you're high".

This is what they told me before we started. I was holding the sleeve, and was staring blankly at it, and then I began to focus. The awful feeling went away when I began looking at the black, so I put the sleeve over my face. It did make sense; it was easier to just keep my eyes closed this way. That was until the nightmarish feeling came back. You're awake, don't panic, and breathe.

I'd only ever had one serious anxiety attack before in my life, and I didn't want to experience another. The end result had left me in a shaky, sweaty, sobbing mess on the bathroom floor. God, did I ever hate vomiting.

Short

Another day passed in my mind, and I jolted awake, and my heartbeat was racing, and I kept trying to breath, and then I looked at him. I said his name, and his attention was on me. He could make this better, I knew it. I don't know if my voice gave it away or not, but his brother left in a hurry, and then I was sitting on his lap, breathing into his neck, and he was rubbing my back, and leg and it was better. I could still feel my heartbeat pounding away, but it was alright because I was alive in the lap of the man I love. I may have been seconds away from a complete meltdown, but he had stopped it in its tracks.

I listened to the music as time passed, but not in days, and my eyes were closed, but I wasn't trapped in my body, and I answered his questions with minimal effort. This was alright. This was okay. I was not going to lose my mind here. I could not wait for this to be over.

A new sensation—my feet were burning, and so was my skin underneath my clothes where his hands were touching. I could feel my clothes, and I wanted to take them off, and I wanted his hands on my skin. His kisses were making the space between my thighs heat up, even if both of us had mouths dryer than the desert. If only we were lying down in bed together. But his brother was here again, so I settled for shifting in his lap, rubbing my legs together, enjoying the distracting heat that was making this almost okay. More time passed.

I remember the woman's voice, the record being flipped, and his questions asking if I was doing alright. He asked that a lot, and I lied, "I'm doing just fine", I'm sure he could tell; the panic was still there, just being ignored. I kept thinking about how excited I was for

this to be over. Worst of all, I remember feeling guilty for not enjoying this feeling like I was supposed to. How were they enjoying this? Perhaps they didn't have the same nightmares that I did.

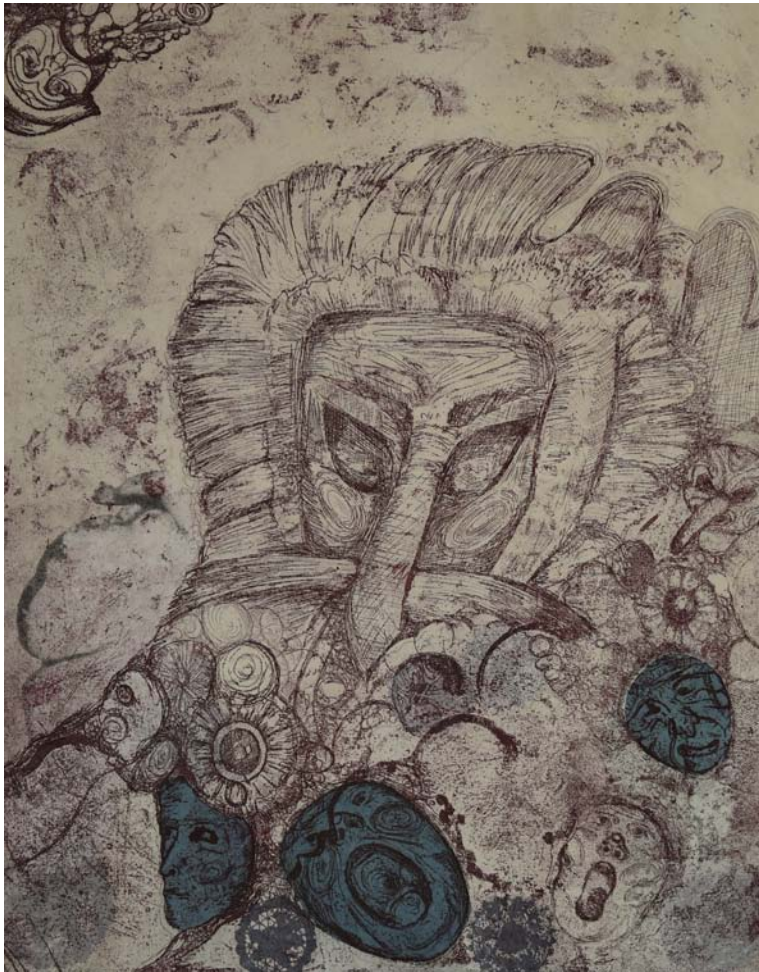
The basement was an alright place to be, it wasn't until I made it up the stairs and to the living room that the real panic set in. My world was turning round and round, and I knew it was coming. My body was going to fight this the whole way, tense, sweating, and trying to breathe through my teeth, nothing was helping. My body couldn't handle the anxiety anymore, so the wait for the inevitable began. At least time was no longer

passing in days, just in long slow breathes that weren't going to help this time. I'm not sure which feeling was worse.

"I think I'm going to be sick", and there he was, rubbing my shoulder with his arm around me. He was also there holding back my hair while I vomited in his bathroom. Talk about having too much... I felt so terrible, I didn't want to ruin his night, but it was too late for that. He had looked so excited in the basement. It had been so long since he'd last indulged because of my reservations. I didn't want him to have to change for me like that, so I guess I tried too hard to change for him instead, and failed miserably. He was

there, walking me up to his bed, provided me with a glass of water, and a just-in-case bucket. I felt terrible, and so much better at the same time. I knew there was no way to salvage the situation, and make him feel not like a horrible human being. One thing was for certain, I would not stop loving him, nor would I love him any less after tonight. Tonight had been my choice, it was my doing. He could hold no blame for this in my heart.

And then I fell asleep.



ARTWORK: CORINNA WOLLF

Reflections on my Time in the Dominican Republic

By: Shannon McAvoy

This past summer I participated in the Intercordia program through St Thomas More College. The Intercordia Program was founded by Jean Vanier, a humanist, philosopher and theologian and the primary intent of the Intercordia experience is not to change the world but to change our understanding of the world. This called me to be attentive, respectful and curious while I spend two months working on a coffee farm and living with a family in the Dominican Republic. Intercordia encourages participants to enter into a host community/family with a desire to learn and an attitude of openness and non-judgment and focuses on relationship with the people we encounter so we can know who they are and what they value. My placement was with the Federacion de Campesinos Hacia el Progreso (Federation of Farmers Toward Progress – FCHP). The FCHP is a federation of farmers in the mountainous region of Bonao, Dominican Republic. Their work combines socio-economic development with good stewardship of the environment. The Federation is the result of the struggle waged by hundreds of villagers residing in that area, when they faced devastating actions resulting from the construction of the White River Dam, the attempts to exploit a gold mine in El Higo and the ravages of Hurricane David. The desire of the members of the Federation to actively care for, and become stewards of, the environment resulted in the undertaking of projects in: compost production, raising chickens, goats and rabbits, the establishment of a greenhouse, active participation in reforestation activities, fire control and reporting of tree felling. These activities allowed the community to see that they could work towards undertaking larger projects collectively.

The reason I was motivated to compile this article is to bring awareness to the FCHP because three leaders from the FCHP will be coming to St Thomas More College on a speaking tour from March 6th to 8th! The other Dominican Intercordians and I strongly believe in the mission and work of the Federation and want to invite as many people as possible to come learn more about the Federation. To share more about my experience with my Dominican host family, with my Federation volunteer work and with the community we were volunteering in, I have decided to share a few excerpts from my journal entries while I was in the Dominican this summer. Please stay tuned for more information about the speaking tour in March.

Observing my Host Mother

My host mother's name is Altagracia. The inside and outside of my Dominican house was painted a beautiful creamy mint color and every doorway and window was decorated with lace. The front yard area was draped with exotic flowers that my host mother had planted over the years. Every morning she feeds the chickens that run free around the house with leftover rice. She always makes the sound "chi-chi-chi-chi-chi-chi" in a loud, high pitched voice. She works very hard to keep the house spotless and clutter free and would let me help her with the dishes. Every day she cleaned the cement floors and cleaned my room (my room took up half of their small house). She has made her house a treasure even though they had very little money. Their poverty was evident in the many inconveniences she faced on a daily basis. Whenever she was doing dishes her sink would clog up and she promptly reached to the overhead wood panels and cleared it with her long metal rod. Also her broken umbrella that she cannot afford to replace would always shut on her while she is walking in the rain. My host mother is working hard to bring her family out of their economic situation and she goes to school on Sundays from 9-12. She is now working on her grade seven and received help from her children with her schoolwork. Her biggest accomplishment is evident in her three children. They are polite, well behaved and obedient.

Learning to Work Under a Dominican Boss

Tonito was our boss during our volunteer placement at the Federation. He was always the first one to start work in the mornings and the last one to throw in the towel at the end of the day. He

works and lives at the Federation's 'El Centro' from Monday to Friday and sometimes Saturday and visits with his family at his house on the weekends. This is a sacrifice that he makes in order to be committed to his work at the Federation. To be honest, my first few work days with Tonito were difficult for a few reasons. First of all, his Spanish is very hard to understand and he can easily come across as very harsh and serious. So, all of us did not know where to direct our oozing volunteer keenness and energy. We kept asking in our broken Spanish, how we could help without getting any specific direction in return. Eventually, we figured out that we must follow his lead and lend a helping hand to those he has already given direction to.

The Effect of our Presence in the Community

Myself and the three other Intercordians decided to attend a weekly community meeting in Bujuc Apastado. I was particularly interested to find out how this strong community was tackling their big community issues like their need for a better road going to the community, their lack of access to clean drinking water and how they would put a stop to some recent theft in their community. However, the first and almost only thing on the agenda was to discuss and plan our going away fiesta. They proposed that there needed to be a six person commission to plan further details of the fiesta yet they still talked about almost every detail as a whole group. They brought up the fact that one of us had mentioned that they wanted live music and talked about how they could make that happen. They talked about what food that they could serve and how they will go door to door asking for donations to make a big stew or 'Sanchocho' as they call it. Others mentioned that they could not afford to give money but they would bring bananas, yuca or provide the meat. Because we saw that most of these families do not have enough money to buy their own food on a daily basis, we all offered to chip in to provide for the party. However, in unison they all firmly insisted that we were not allowed because this was the community's gift back to us. Then the conversation drifted to different people sharing how special we were to them. One lady mentioned how happy she was that we had all ate a meal at her house and that she had taught us how to cook chicken. A different person mentioned how they were not sure how we would possibly communicate with them at the beginning because of our broken Spanish but shared how now we are able to have many conversations with him over the course of our time in his community. Then a host Dad mentioned that he has to go pick up his Intercordian late into the night because she doesn't want to stop playing with the kids in the community. I then realized that we knew every single person at the community meeting and had made an effort to form a unique relationship with each of them. Surely our presence worked to unite this community and get them to work together to plan this party for us. I have lots of hope that this community has been strengthened and reaffirmed by our presence and will be able to tackle other big issues in the future. I will never forget the love that this community has showed me by planning this fiesta and by the daily acts of self-giving and generosity while I was there.



Maxima and I. She's teaching me how to dance the Bachata.

To Tinder Or Not To Tinder?

BY NAOMI ZUREVINSKI

At the frontline of the texting, technology and dating mix is Tinder — a popular mobile app that sets up conversation (and more) between mutually interested users.

Tinder is designed to make things easier for users to attain some quick sexual action. This way, the whole “do you like me or not?” game is boycotted. However, it baffles me when users attempt to Tinder for more than sexual relationships and are left confused or upset as to why their attempts are predictably unsuccessful.

Tinder is the epitome of “hook-up culture” and demonstrates that when it comes to most things — even dating — people want them quick, effortless and easy. While this may seem like a good idea, I don’t think dating or meeting people can or should be that simplified.

For those unfamiliar with the app, Tinder allows you to set up a profile and then proceed to flip through the photos of other Tinder users. While you flip through, you rate each user with a heart or an “X” determining whether or not you are interested in them. If two people select the heart for each other, then they will be matched up and can start a conversation.

Tinder seems to be used for a few different purposes. Sometimes users are interested in meeting up to chat or grabbing a coffee — and in that sense the app can function as an online dating tool. However, rating people on their attractiveness level usually indicates that you are interested in one thing only. The real purpose of Tinder is, well, you know. The one bonus about either of these cases is there isn’t really any guessing as to whether you and your match are attracted to each other — that’s usually a given. Why even go on Tinder if you aren’t going to play the Tinder game though? If you are looking for love on Tinder, beware of disappointment. It is difficult to know what users’ motivations are, so while one partner may want a wholesome dinner and a movie, the other might not be so naïve. This leads to unrealistic expectations — partially because you know nothing about the other person aside from what their Tinder profile says about them.

Tinder cannot serve a purpose beyond hook-ups because flipping through photos of people

and giving them either a heart or an “X” sends the subconscious message that physical attractiveness is the most important quality someone could have. Anyone you deem unattractive doesn’t make the cut — and the more matches you get, the more attractive you must be.

Becoming caught up in rating people on their level of attractiveness not only is shallow but can lead to some interesting situations that are unlikely to occur outside of the Tinder atmosphere. Messages that are downright creepy and blatantly sexual are frequent, but so are the messages with an innocent, “I’m new to the city and trying to make friends.” Nice try — clearly this is not a friendship app.

Since the app makes things so effortless, people are less likely to put in the time and effort that a relationship requires. Ladies, don’t be expecting your Tinder match to pick you up for dinner. But this applies to both male and female users; any element of working for a relationship (or whatever you’re working for...) is gone. And therefore users usually get what they want and then head back to their iPhone the next time they’re in the mood.

Tinder takes the fun out of dating, getting to know someone and liking more than just their appearance. Two people can literally just have texting conversations and a few quickies with no strings attached, no heartbreak and no awkward moments. But without those things you also miss out on so much more.

Obviously there is no app of a similar kind where people list off their personality traits. Anyone looking for a dating relationship should probably steer clear of Tinder because relationships based upon looks usually don’t work out.

Of course, it’s not all bad. I have a close friend who actually went on an awesome date with a great guy that she met on Tinder and they are still good friends. And I’m sure there are some dating success stories out there that started on Tinder. Perhaps love at first Tinder match is a thing, but those cases are definitely the exception to the rule.

Tinder usually leads to quick, temporary and fleeting gratification. If that’s all you really want, then go ahead and Tinder it up. But don’t be too quick to throw all your matches into the fire.

Beginnings of the Middle of Things: Reflections on IMR at 20

Collected and Edited by Sarah Powrie

"...the end of all of our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time" T. S. Eliot

In *Medias Res* refers to the literary technique of starting a story in the middle of its unfolding, so that crucial prior events are represented in hindsight through the retrospective musings of various literary characters. For instance, Homer introduces Odysseus toward the end of his ten-year journey home to Ithaca. As readers, we learn of the journey's beginnings through Odysseus's recollections, as he recounts how he blinded the Cyclops, Poseidon's son. Only when nearing his journey's end does Odysseus recognize the high cost of his clever triumph against the Cyclops, acknowledging it to be the cause of his long-suffering exile over the sea. In many respects, the technique of *in medias res* captures our lived experience of chronology. We are born in the midst of histories and circumstances, the shaping power of which we come to grasp only later in life through our own retrospective reflections and those of generations before us. Hindsight fashions scattered events into causal sequence; the once uncertain future becomes immediate and then transforms into the seemingly inevitable past. As *In Medias Res* marks its twentieth anniversary, it seems fitting to cast a backward glance toward the journal's early history, since such reflections may yield insight into present and future possibilities.

The journal and its title sprang from the imagination of Professor Elena Glazov-Corrigan, who taught Shakespeare, critical theory, and European literature at STM during the 1990s. She had grown up in the former Soviet Union, the daughter of a dissident. Her family was forced to flee Russia in the early 1970s and begin a new life in North America, learning a new language and political culture. This formative experience of exile made Elena sensitively attuned to marginalized voices. Her most cherished literary figures were either ex-patriots or political outsiders: Antigone, the dissident who challenges the tyrant Creon; Viola (of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*), who is a foreigner in Illyria and must assume a disguise to protect herself; Prospero, the bookish magician of *The Tempest*, who is banished from the kingdom he should rightfully rule; the poet Dante, recalling his home city of Florence with bitter contempt and aching yearning. Each of these figures inhabits the social margins and looks upon

a broken world desiring to change it. Variations of these literary types are manifested in every generation of student, in their aspirations for the future and frustrations with the present. Perhaps, the originating vision inspiring *In Medias Res* grew from Elena's desire to create a home for exiles, so that contemporary Antigones, Violas, Prosperos, and Dantes would have a creative space in which to write, dialogue, form friendships, and imagine the future.

IMR became such a space. Meetings were rowdy, joyous, carnivalesque occasions. A quick overview of titles reveals the range and character of the journal's interests: "The Subjective Experience of Time," "Why Study a Dead Language," "God, Faith and the X-Files," "How I Read the New York Times in Moscow." Professor Allan MacLeod of STM's Political Studies Department, who had a seemingly inexhaustible knowledge of opera and Continental Philosophy, was a member of the editorial board, and he wrote a series of articles on the artistic vision of Glenn Gould. Kevin Corrigan, Dean of STM during 1990s and Elena's husband, was an honorary member of IMR, since as Dean he was already tied to twenty-odd different committees. Kevin seemed to be always in motion, but he would make cameo appearances, offering a clever quip from Diogenes or Socrates in true peripatetic fashion. In spite of enjoying the Dean's support, IMR was unable to secure funding from STM. From its inception, the journal was a mendicant society. Elena would take a collection of students with her to beg local businesses to advertise in the paper. Even so, our funds rarely seemed enough to cover production costs, and Elena would sometimes finance the paper using her and Kevin's Professional Development Fund (a fund that faculty use for research-related expenses). In my innocence, I had imagined this fund to be one of many mysterious, institutionally based reserves of money. Only later did I recognize their personal sacrifice.

What follows is a collection of voices that once shaped and in turn were shaped by IMR. While a reflection on IMR's past, these stories also represent a constellation of future possibilities for today's students, who currently read and edit the journal and who continually face that unfair question, "what are you going to do with that degree?" There is no clearly defined roadmap of internships and entry positions in the liberal arts. The sequence of steps is uniquely forged, making it the more challenging and the

BEGINNINGS OF THE MIDDLE OF THINGS

more meaningful. Today's students stand in the midst of their own unfolding histories, and so the answer to this and other questions has yet to reveal itself. Perhaps, the reflections of previous student editors might shed light on the world of possibilities unlocked with a liberal arts degree.

Len and Michael Epp were among the first members of IMR's editorial board when it began in the mid-1990s. Elena was thrilled, interpreting their presence as a propitious omen: "Every successful Shakespearian theatre troupe had twins." Len and Mike bore a vague resemblance to that iconic pair of theatre masks representing comic and tragic art. Mike was a light-hearted, generous spirit with a mischievous wit. He looked like a cross between a Romantic poet and a grunge band guitarist with his long curly hair. Len was a pensive existentialist with sardonic tendencies. Len was to be found either in the IMR office or STM's smoking lounge (the last haven of its kind on campus). He was devastatingly clever, and his capacity to eviscerate his opponents' arguments inspired fear and awe.

Mike Epp, now Associate Professor of English at Trent University in Ontario, recalls the journal:

The best part of IMR for me was getting to meet bright colleagues and bright, helpful professors. I wasn't the most social person at the time, and had few acquaintances interested in talking about literature, so though the meetings could sometimes be dull, and sometimes too full of unnecessary handwringing, they were actually kind of exciting, too. Working on IMR also gave me the chance to get to hang out at STM, which was a nice change of pace - it was a bit smaller, a bit friendlier, and a bit more old-fashioned (in the good ways).

I've had the good fortune to become an English professor, and in that context see my time at IMR as part of what ended up being a meaningful continuity of engagement with literature, and literary folks, on campus. I remember quite clearly the encouragement I received from one professor [Pat Kelly] to adapt for IMR a course paper I'd written on *Wuthering Heights*; the process was exciting and a bit unnerving. This feeling was leavened by the professor's insistence that the article be accompanied by a picture of me in an old college robe, reading a big tome through a magnifying glass...

Thanks, IMR! And all the best in the next twenty years.

Len writes:

When I think about *In Medias Res*, two things stand out for me after all these years.

First, we were all very lucky to have met a professor named Elena Glazov-Corrigan, who organized the various professors and students who founded and ran *In Medias Res*. For Elena, being a professor was a calling, not a job, and she and her husband Kevin made STM a very special place to be for those students

and professors who could appreciate the value of their energy and their vision. Elena created *In Medias Res* not just because the U of S had no artsy newspaper, but also because she wanted to give students the experience of creating and running a publication. This kind of initiative, with a view to the impact it could have on the community and on the future lives of the students involved, was a rare thing to encounter from a professor at the U of S at that time. The second thing that stands out for me is more personal. My experience as the founding editor of *In Medias Res*, at Elena's invitation, taught me something very powerful: that the things around were made by people, and that anyone - even I - could be one of the people who makes new things. I know this seems like an obvious thing to people who are natural organizers, but I was not, and it changed my life profoundly.

Without that insight, it's unlikely I would have designed my own interdisciplinary master's program. Without that experience and IMR on my CV, I probably would not have been given a place at Oxford's Balliol College to write my doctorate in English. And while there, I probably would not have cofounded the university's sole graduate student newspaper. Like IMR, it is in its own modest way an important contribution to university life there, and for some students the first publication where they see their names in print - as IMR was for me.

After completing his D. Phil at Oxford, Len worked as an investment banker in London, England. He moved to Montreal, becoming one of the confounders of the Montreal International Poetry Prize.

John Corrigan edited a poetry column called "The Morning of Form," which first appeared in the fall of 1996. John was like a young Leonard Cohen: a poet-songwriter, who was bohemian, self-confident, irreverent, and lyrical. Of all the religious iconography to be found within STM, he claimed, the statue of Dionysius was for him the most uplifting and inspirational. Elena said that he was an image of Shakespeare's Prince Hal, dabbling in youthful rebellion before the onset of responsibility. At coffee houses, John would play guitar and sing his music with his cigarette-roughened voice. In 1997, John and I took a seminar class together on the early modern poet John Donne. It was a formative class for each of us. John's seminar presentation interpreted Donne's "Metempsychosis," an early, unusual, overlooked poem describing a soul's transmigration through various animal species. Elena had dismissed the poem as fatuous; and yet, for John, it became an important interpretative lens. Though John would redirect his intellectual focus to 19th-century American poetry, he retained his interest in transmigration as a poetic principle. His first book, published with Fordham University Press, is titled *American Metempsychosis: Emerson, Whitman and the New Poetry*. John is now a faculty member of National Cheng Chi University in Taipei, Taiwan.

SARAH POWRIE

Joel Deshayé joined IMR in the fall of 1997. He was a sympathetic listener with a radiant smile. His gentle ways were needed to dilute the concentration of strong personalities on the editorial board. Joel writes:

It was the publication and context that helped me to start imagining myself as a writer, and it helped to acquaint me with writers (e.g., Guy Vanderhaeghe and Tim Lilburn) and professors (whom I remember especially fondly, e.g., Elena Glazov-Corrigan). Stepping into the world of professors who advised us at IMR was a privilege. Although I was entirely out of my depth, I was eager to learn more of what they knew, and IMR humanized them and made knowledgeable people and knowledge less intimidating. It helped that the undergrad/grad students running the journal were brainy too—and open-minded and humanistic.

What would I tell my undergraduate self if I could go back in time? Joel, I might say, you're involved in this journal and community, but you should be even more involved—in this and in other communities around campus. Be writerly, yes, but meet more academic/philosophical/literary people through common projects... Community is more resilient when it has a purpose besides staying in touch. Mutual interest can be enough, but purpose is better.

Joel completed his Ph.D. in English at McGill University. He is now an Assistant Professor of English at Memorial University, Newfoundland. His book, *The Metaphor of Celebrity: Canadian Poetry and the Public 1955-80*, is published with the University of Toronto Press.

Danielle Dubois joined IMR in the fall of 1998. Danielle was a philosophy major, and though she appeared shy, she was in fact keenly attuned to others around her, having astute observations of human behavior. In the Spring 2001 issue of IMR, Danielle wrote of her uncertainties for the future:

I am now 21 and every time my German professor asks the question, "Was willst du werden?" (What do you want to be?) I come up with a new answer... Unsure as to what I want to be I find myself apprehensive at the thought of abandoning the life of a student. I feel I can sympathize with what the Germans call the ewige Student, the eternal student. Apparently, after ploughing through more essays and books than I can count—which nevertheless always seem too few—I will receive a piece of paper that testifies that I have fulfilled the requirements to obtain an Honours degree in Philosophy. Do the people who hand out these diplomas know that I still lick my plate when people aren't looking?

After leaving IMR, Danielle lived in Germany for a year, improving her spoken German. She completed a Master's degree at the Université de Montréal and a Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University, writing her dissertation on the medieval mystic Marguerite Porete. During her

graduate school years, Danielle was a visiting researcher at Harvard's Villa I Tatti in Florence and at the École normale supérieure in Paris. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Religion at the University of Manitoba. (It has not been confirmed whether she continues to lick her plate.)

Asked of IMR, Danielle writes:

Encountering the journal as an undergraduate was to be exposed to a maelstrom of ideas much bigger than oneself. It brimmed with possibility—for thinking and writing of course, but also for community. Faculty and students interacted on a level I have seldom since seen, brought together by a shared vision of the importance of the liberal arts. Long life to IMR!

Sarah Guérin joined IMR with Danielle. She initially majored in microbiology, but the irresistible pull of the liberal arts led her to art history. According to Elena, for whom each person's character corresponded to a Shakespearian archetype, Sarah was an incarnation of Viola. She was a vibrant personality, with strong enthusiasms for beauty and ideas. Sarah writes:

Looking back, these were heady days of self-discovery and learning. It is surprising to me now, as it was not at all clear then, that the activities we engaged in while editing IMR, the academic writing, peer review, proof reading, and copy editing – though I must say thankfully never again the particular beast of layout – have become the daily activities that measure out my professional life. Back when I was co-editor with Danielle, she was the philosophy major whose academic pursuits most closely mirrored the editorial remit of the journal. Then, I was still a microbiology major, and the fact that I was welcomed to co-edit a liberal arts journal went a long way to nurturing my eventual 'conversion' to the humanities.

Let me indulge in an anecdote that comes quickly to mind. Danielle and I were finishing the layout on the Spring issue, and we had spent the whole day working on the tiresome task in the computer lab (a detail that certainly dates us!). As the end always seemed in sight, I remember we not only worked through lunch with no pause but also dinner, leaving us ravenous around nine or ten in the evening. In a typical undergraduate move, we satiated our hunger that night at a newly opened chocolate buffet in town. This must have been in mid-March, as in the next days we successfully sent off the Spring volume to the printers at St. Peter's Abbey. Soon after, on April 1st, early in the morning Danielle greeted me with terrible news – the Abbey's printing house had tragically burned down the night before, destroying not only the press but also the only two copies of the disks that we had sent to them! I was horrified. All of our work and the work of our colleagues on IMR had gone up in a puff of smoke. Completely deflated, I spread the news around the college... to what I'm sure were choruses of giggles, for I had fallen completely for an April Fools Day joke. While the skills learned during my time at IMR are certainly important, it is the experience of an academic community that

BEGINNINGS OF THE MIDDLE OF THINGS

remains in my mind the most important. Elena Glazov-Corrigan and Kevin Corrigan were still then the driving forces as academic advisors to the journal (and so much more!), and I think it is fair to say that their energy pushed everyone involved to a higher state... It was a true passion that was ignited during my years at IMR, and at the College, and I remain indebted to those experiences for shaping my present and my future.

After leaving IMR, Sarah went to the University of Toronto, completing a Ph.D. in Art History. She held fellowships at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Columbia University, and the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, England. She is now an Assistant Professor of Art History at the Université de Montréal.

A Coda in Lieu of a Conclusion:

Readers with a taste for narrative complexity are invited to confer with other IMR alumni from the 90s who, though not represented here in print, were once and continue to remain presences at STM-- Celene Sidloski, Daniel Regnier and Carl Still. Doubtless their own accounts will revise, extend, and contradict this history, thereby opening into another conversation about the beginnings of the middle of things.

in medias res

is seeking EDITORS for the upcoming editions



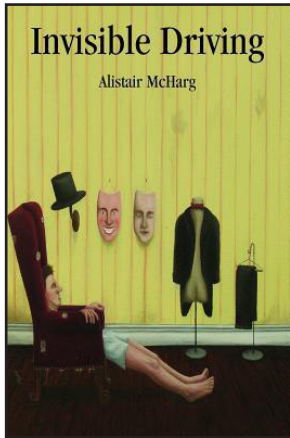
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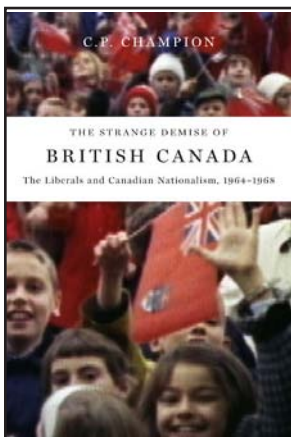
INVISIBLE DRIVING

by Alistair McHarg

Reviewed by Jazmin Kurtenbach

Mental illness is often used as a plot device or some boring trope in novels that have nothing better to explore. Often these books come across as crass and in poor taste, however his memoir penned by Alistair McHarg offers hope that soon other novels will offer such raw truth as he did. In this short book, he details a period of his life in which he had his second major manic episode after his first wife divorced him. Lost, sleeping few hours a day, jobless and caring for his young daughter shows honesty that most authors don't have the guts to do.

He offers an honest look at Manic Depression through the eyes of someone who has struggled with it, seen the other side and wants to tell the reader every dark, rocketing, and out there thing he did and thought. While I would recommend this book to anyone, I would especially urge those interested in psychology to read this book; his explanation and lived experiences not only are in accordance with the symptoms listed in the DSM but go way beyond and offers an exercise in empathy.



THE STRANGE DEMISE OF BRITISH CANADA:

The liberals and Canadian Nationalism, 1964-1968

by C.P. Champion

Reviewed by James Hawkes

The Maple Leaf Flag, Canada as a nation of peacekeepers, the notion that Canada's national identity is not having a national identity. Many of these 'facts' that Canadian students are indoctrinated with, on the topic of what it means to be Canadian and what Canada is are views whose ascendancy can in many cases be traced back to the Pearson ministry of half a century ago which ushered in a radical discontinuity in Canadian culture. The narratives erected by the victors of this culture war have often seemed unassailable, with Liberal values and symbols

permeating Canadian identity while the symbols & values of the vanquished have been cast into outer darkness. This book challenges this Liberal historiography, offering a revisionist approach to these events, re-examining traditional accounts of the Flag Debate, military unification, and the entire Liberal project of refashioning of Canada with a critical eye. Champion clearly demonstrates that Canadian Britishness has never been monolithic and that the vicious attacks upon the overt symbols of Canada as a British nation actually came from within a deeply British part of Canadian society, responding to the same trends of a crisis of Britishness and self-loathing that would also afflict Britain. French-Canadians and other minorities were often disinterested or even opposed to these changes. The failure of the new flag to ever catch on in Quebec (even federalists continue to propose new flags e.g. the Duality Flag) demonstrates how utterly unnecessary changing Canada's flag from a banner under which Canadians had fought and died to one which a recent Liberal leader admitted was "a passing imitation of a beer label." Champion's book represents a growing trend for Canadians to no longer blindly accept the self-serving narratives defending the outcomes of these political struggles. This sea-change can be seen in the revival of once archaic and forgotten phrases such as 'Dominion of Canada' and the recent restoration of the royal honours to the Canadian military. Perhaps it is the liberals who are on the wrong side of History?



JAZMIN KURTENBACH

POSTCARD STORY

"What's a postcard story? A postcard story is a condensed piece of storytelling in no more than 250 words. Use drama, poetry, humour, and dialogue to write one. Anything goes. There are no restrictions except the word limit. Stretch yourself by writing short." *Guy Vanderhague*

Dear Fr. Dr. Basil Markle,

There is much that I need to tell you, and little time. It is coming. I have peered too long into the abyss, questing down forbidden pathways in search of knowledge far beyond the limits of mere human philosophy and science. I know that you warned me against this path, that I so, confident and determined to make my academic mark, foolishly pursued. I know that you said that there was nothing to learn in the darkness, and that by no means should I leave our sunny White House on the Prairies to study in that hoary New England university upon the Miskatonic River, to their cavernous library with its fætid tomes... but I did not listen. Now it is too late for me. I can hear the muffled creak of the floorboards, as if a great amorphous mass were slowly advancing down the hallway. Advancing towards my door, armed with a sinister intelligence and an inhuman cruelty. It is coming for me, I have learned too much though I have scarcely scratched the surface, my only consolation is that no trace of my dissertation on the Liber Ivonis & the Pnakotic Manuscripts will survive. I have already consigned those pages, and all the notes I brought here, to the flames. There is a purity to fire I think. There are some things mankind was never meant to know. Go to my family's farmstead and burn any notes you find. I am out of time & space, it is seeping under the door! I shall place this postcard in the pneumatic tubes, may some god let it pass to you!

15 March, 1937.



In Medias Res

St. Thomas More College

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ST. THOMAS MORE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

By James Hawkes