



# 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.

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# CONTENTS

PROFESSOR'S INTRODUCTION: "Technology and the Humanities" ..... 3

SHORT FICTION: "The Quarter-Day Man" ..... 4

POETRY: "A Garden" ..... 7

SOCRATIC PESTILENCE: "Which do you prefer: books or e-books?" ..... 8

ESSAY: "A Word Study on *Vampire*" ..... 10

POETRY: Momina Khan, Anthony Elliot Marcie Seymour, Azure Ides-Grey ..... 12

PRO ET CONTRA: "Discourage the use of computers in the classroom" ..... 14

SHORT FICTION: "Thus a Child Pays Off" ..... 16

STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE: "Mediaeval Felines Love Their Biscuits" ..... 18

POETRY: Zach, Rychlo ..... 19

POSTCARD STORY: "The Coaster" ..... 20

POETRY: Momina Khan ..... 21

SHORT FICTION: "Drip Drip" ..... 22

FACULTY FILE: "Interview with Dr. Zachary Yuzwa" ..... 24

BOOK REVIEWS AND POETRY ..... 27

POSTCARD STORY: "Vibrant Haze" ..... 28

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# Technology and the Humanities

by Dr. Jon Bath | Art & Art History

Director, Humanities and Fine Arts Digital Research Centre

*You have not discovered a potion for remembering, but for reminding; you provide your students with the appearance of wisdom, not with its reality.*

- Plato, Phaedrus

As I observe hallways full of students with their gazes turned downward, and talk at conferences to an audience of glowing apples, I find it difficult not to extend Plato's argument against writing into a critique of our reliance on computer technologies. No longer do I need to remember my mother's birthday (May 30), who the bass player in Twisted Sister was (Mark "The Animal" Mendoza), or even who spoke the above critique of writing from Phaedrus (King Thamus of Egypt) – all I need is the rectangle of glass and silicone in my pocket and a reliable internet connection. It is only when one of those two things is missing, such as when I am on an airplane or in a locale without internet, that I come to realize that much of my personal and professional life has become dependent on having constant access to the internet. And as the number of places without internet continues to shrink, so does my need to remember.

However, to focus strictly on the negative impacts of communications technology, as the media tends to do with headlines such as "Does the Internet Make You Dumber?" (Wall Street Journal) and "Rise of the 'selfie': Narcissistic fusion of cellphone cameras, social media enters the cultural lexicon" (National Post), and to use this space to rant against that student who spends all class updating Facebook (yes, I can tell you're not taking notes) would be to elide the exciting possibilities that these technologies offer us as teachers, students, and scholars. Plato may have railed against writing in Phaedrus, but we only know he did because it was written down. Advances in communication technologies are transforming all walks of life, including the liberal arts, and I'd like to look at one example: the rise of open access scholarship. What I find even more interesting, though, is how technology is being transformed by the liberal arts; rather than being simply passive consumers and/or critics of technologies developed by those on the other side of the campus, artists and humanists have been, and must continue to be, active partners in their development.

A landmark study on the effect of a communications technology on Western thought is Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. Published in 1979, it obviously pre-dates the internet, but it builds upon earlier assertions, such as Marshall McLuhan's *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), that a fundamental shift in Western thought occurred because of the spread of information enabled by the invention of the printing press in the 15th century. Eisenstein

argues that the shift from manuscript to print was fundamental to the Protestant Reformation, the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, and the rise of European nationalism because print provided stability to ideas, as opposed to the changeable nature of manuscript transcription, and enabled these newly "fixed" ideas to spread widely. Her argument has not been without its critics, with Adrian Johns, in *The Nature of the Book*, perhaps being the most vocal in pointing out that the so-called stability of the printed text is actually an intellectual construct much at odds with the actual production of a book, but Eisenstein's argument has become mainstream and used to imagine how the rise of information dissemination through the internet might similarly impact society.

One of the great promises of the internet is that it will enable a faster and more egalitarian means for publishing, sharing, and finding information. As long as one has the requisite hardware (i.e. a computer or at least a smartphone) and an internet connection, one can both read and publish electronically without being restricted by traditional means of control such as publishers or the cost of printing (of course other systems of control, such as the state, continue to live on through entities such as the NSA and the Great Firewall of China). One result of this latitude has been much hand-wringing about the quality and veracity of online information, with concerns about the accuracy of Wikipedia articles near the top of that list. But what the Wikipedia community has shown is that systems of control do re-assert themselves. Errors and vandalism are found and corrected in Wikipedia, and at a shockingly rapid rate. Anyone can start a blog or post photos to Instagram, but in order to work your way up to search engine rankings so that your work can actually be found, you must pass review by the community, in the form of having others link to your material. Furthermore, previous bastions of peer review, academic journals, have increasingly moved away from physical production and towards electronic publication.

The convergence of community-driven resources such as Wikipedia and more specialized academic publications is due, in no small part, to changing opinions about public access to scholarly work. When academic journals existed in print their readership was limited by subscription; only subscribers or people at institutions which subscribed had access to the work. As these journals switched from print to electronic form they attempted to preserve this structure,

and preserve their often exorbitant subscription fees, by locking down access through university library systems and journal aggregators such as Jstor. But this business model is being successfully challenged by the Open Access movement. Closely related to the Open Source computing movement, which similarly believes that both the public and the end product are improved when code is made available to everyone, Open Access (or Open Science, as it is often called in Europe) is based on the principle that everyone should have access to academic work, thus it must be made freely available on the internet. This does not mean, as critics of Open Access often argue, that peer review disappears. Open Access journals still partake in the peer review process, they just cannot charge for their product. This is obviously forcing a wholesale reevaluation of the business of academic publishing, and no one has yet found an entirely satisfactory solution for how to fund these new enterprises. But a solution will be found, especially as an increasing number of national funding agencies, including Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), make publishing of Open Access results mandatory for all research projects funded by government grants.

Much like the changes wrought by the printing press, Open Access online publication has the potential to significantly alter the way research is disseminated and used. No longer will students at underprivileged universities be unable to access research because of the high subscription costs of academic journals. This removes one of the primary barriers for success for students and researchers at many non-Western academic institutions. Perhaps even more importantly, it allows the general public to access academic scholarship. Much like the dissemination of religious texts through printed vernacular editions, Open Access will enable the public, should they so desire, to stay abreast of the latest research and read it for themselves, thus making a new era of citizen scholarship, and innovation, possible. Wikipedia has shown the power of citizen scholarship, and one can only imagine what would be possible if everyone had access to the full range of published research.

One of the major critiques of Elizabeth's Eisenstein argument about the influence of the printing press, or narratives such as the above about the potential liberating effects of online Open Access scholarship, is that they attribute too much agency to the technology and forget about the people, and politics, that create and use the technology. It is tempting, especially if you are not technically-minded yourself, to think of computers as some sort of magic black box that the humanities need not bother themselves with understanding. But to do so is to put yourself at the mercy of those who control the technology and just blindly accept what others tell you, something that traditionally the humanities

are (thankfully) not very good at. Which is probably why humanities scholarship has been one of the major drivers of technical innovation. At this point I could bring up that Google had its beginnings in a Stanford Digital Library Project, or that the one of the first HTML code editors was born at Toronto's Coach House Press; however, as I only have space for one example I would like to talk about the work of Father Roberto Busa (1913-2011).

In his obituary to Busa, Stefano Lorenzetto notes, "If you surf the internet, you owe it to him and if you use a PC to write emails and documents, you owe it to him. And if you can read this article, you owe it to him, we owe it to him." For it was Busa who convinced IBM that computers could be used for text and not just numbers. He wanted to create a concordance, an index of all the words in the works of Thomas Aquinas and where exactly they were used. This concordance would have to cover a corpus of over eleven million words, so Busa thought that perhaps he could leverage the newly emerging technology of the computer to assist in this task. In 1949 he travelled to New York to meet with Thomas Watson, head of IBM, to determine if this was feasible. Watson initially balked, arguing that computers

could not process text, but Busa convinced him it was worth the effort to try. Watson agreed to give the project IBM's support for free and they embarked on what turned out to be a thirty year project. The impact of this conversation for current

communication technologies is difficult to overstate, and we must not forget that the very fact that we can use computers to process text is thanks to a classicist.

Steve Jobs declared during the launch of the iPad2 that "It's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our heart sing." Apple's success as a company is due in no small part to their understanding that their products are bought and used by humans, and thus perhaps they should not just rely on engineers to make the most efficient, and ugly, device. But Apple's devices can also be seen as a cautionary tale about handing over control to a black box; they seem easy to operate because they have taken all your options away from you. Thus I'd like to close by encouraging all humanities scholars to use those mental facilities that are no longer required for remembering who the original script-writer for Conan the Barbarian was (Oliver Stone) to learn at least a little about how the technologies in our lives work and to peek inside a few black boxes. It is our responsibility as humanists.

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*One of the great promises of the internet is that it will enable a faster and more egalitarian means for publishing, sharing, and finding information.*

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# The Quarter-Day Man

*by Sarina Fehr*

There was a realist woman in the library. She held a book in her hands, but she looked through it, as if it was only a sort of window. The gentleman approached her.

“That’s a lovely book you’ve got,” he said.

“Oh?” said the realistic woman. “I guess so.”

“For how much would you be willing to part with it?” asked the gentleman.

“What?”

“It’s only a question.”

There was silence in the library. The old books perched on their old shelves and paid them no mind.

“It’s not worth much,” said the realist woman. “It’s just a silly old romance.”

“And yet it is worth everything.”

“My ex-boyfriend gave it to me,” said the woman, scowling. “I don’t know if I even want it any more.”

“Say you could have anything for that book. What would it be?”

“What, are you a genie or something?”

“Hypothetically,” the man said. “What would you give up the love story for?”

The woman’s eyes flashed. “Well. I’d have the jerk leave her and come back to me.”

“Oh, easily done,” said the man, and he held out his hand.

The woman paused, and then slipped the book into the gentleman’s gloved hand.

She heard her name being called. She turned around, and smiled. There was a blank look on her ex-boyfriend’s face. He did not know how he’d gotten there. He smiled.

“It was always you, wasn’t it?” said the boyfriend, echoing the pages she had just parted with.

The woman nodded happily, and as the man in front of her filled her vision she gradually forgot the book, and all the things she’d thought she loved in it.

The gentleman left the library but nobody marked his passing, not even the old librarian wrapped up in an equally old book, who normally would have glared at his

loud presence. Indeed, she did not even look up at him, or she would have noticed the battered romance book in his hand and wondered what he was doing with it.

There was an amiable stranger on the bus, wearing a fedora the colour of engine-exhaust.

“That’s a lovely hat you’ve got there,” said the gentleman, leaning over the seat divider as if chatting about the weather.

“Ah, well, you know what they say about hats,” smiled the amiable man. He did not particularly know what they said about hats, but it was a friendly nothing to say.

“For how much would you be willing to part with it?” asked the gentleman.

“Oh, I don’t think you’d want it,” said the amiable man. “It’s quite old—second-hand, at that.”

“Ah, but you seem quite attached to it,” said the gentleman.

“Well, I’d have to break in a new hat if I wanted one,” smiled the amiable man, who was now beginning to feel somewhat uncomfortable. “And, and well, it used to be my fa— well, never mind.”

“You have something in mind, don’t you? Perhaps someone?”

The amiable man tried one last escape, and said, “Well, pay off the mortgage, of course. What else?”

“Indeed,” said the gentleman. “What else?”

There was a pause as thick and sour as smoke. “I’d forget the bastard,” said the amiable man, and then blushed, because he wasn’t used to swearing, and certainly not in front of strangers. He was beginning to feel cross with both himself and the man who had prompted the crossness.

“Certainly,” said the gentleman. He sat in the seat, and waited. After a long pause, the amiable man, feeling rather less amiable, doffed his hat and handed it to the gentleman.

When he got to his home, his wife greeted him with a kiss and asked, “Where did you leave your hat?” “What hat? I don’t think I wore a hat out this morning. Don’t be stupid.” The amiable man’s wife frowned, but thought perhaps he was just tired, and said no more about it. She did not see the gentleman who stood out by the street, looking deep into the window. He turned and passed on after a moment, and the amiable man’s wife set to making supper. The amiable man, passing an old family portrait in the hall, thought it odd that there was a stranger in it, standing



next to himself and his mother. He supposed he must have simply forgotten the man's name, and ceased to think about it.

There was a homeless woman in the alley behind the mall. She pushed a shopping cart festooned with ragged ribbons of plastic bags, and she muttered to herself as she walked.

"That's a lovely coat you've got there."

"Eh? Who'zat?" the gentleman came into view, smiling just as if the ragged woman was a well-off young lady whom he was complimenting. "T'ain't a nice coat. Barely keeps out the cold. Ne'er been warm yet. Whad'u want?"

"For how much would you be willing to part with it?"

The woman frowned at him, wondering if this was some sort of trick. The wind ripped through the streamers on the cart and pulled at her ragged hair, moaning its way through the alley.

"Go' it for 'undred dollars," said the woman. "A hundred dollars it is," said the gentleman, and pulled a tight roll of money out of his pocket.

"Two 'undred!" said the homeless woman, showing the gaps in her teeth. "I said two hundred dollars!"

"Of course you did," said the gentleman, smiling broadly. "Of course, my mistake."

He handed the woman a stack of bills, still warm from his pocket. Numbly, the homeless woman shrugged out of her ragged parka and handed it to the gentleman, eagerly counting the bills. The coat stank of smoke and the foulness of having been lived in, but the gentleman took it in both arms anyway.

The woman hurried across the street, leaving her cart behind. A car honked at her, and she waved her skinny arm at its driver, bare skin in the falling snow. The gentleman watched her enter the establishment across the street, pushing through the door and demanding a drink. The bartender looked up as she came in and settled her in a corner where she wouldn't bother or be bothered by the other guests, and where she would not be immediately in the way of the servers with drinks. It was not out of kindness so much as duty, for the bartender hated to see people out on the streets in this weather. He did not see the gentleman across the street, or he would have wondered why he was holding a ragged parka and standing in the cold.

There was a small boy on the playground, though it was cold. The other children had all gone home, but he had stayed behind to play on the swings. He had a toy on his lap, a bright-red plastic truck, and he imagined that the truck too was enjoying the ride on the swings.

"That's a lovely truck you've got there," said the gentleman.

The small boy said nothing. He wasn't supposed to talk to strangers.

"For how much would you be willing to part with it?"

"You can't take it," said the small boy, suddenly afraid.

"Oh no, I wouldn't do that. But would you sell it to me?"

"Not for a zillion dollars!" said the small boy, because he was used to having tricks played on him.

"Perhaps not," said the gentleman, "but perhaps something else? Candy? More toys?"

The small boy had been warned against taking candy and toys from strangers, and again he said nothing, dragging himself to a stop. The rattle of the chains ceased and he could suddenly hear the sound of the snow as it was whisked before the wind, a quiet sweeping sound.

"Who gave you the truck?"

"Mum and dad."

"Oh yes? And do your friends have trucks, do you play with them at recess?"

"No."

"No, your friends don't have trucks? Or no, you don't play with them?"

"I play by myself."

"I could make them play with you," said the gentleman. "I could make them stop teasing you."

The small boy set the truck in the snow. It seemed far too red in the blankness of the snow, shocking against the white.

"You'd never have to lie to your parents about another birthday party," said the gentleman.

The small boy pushed the truck with his toe, and it plowed a small trail in the snow.

"For real?" the small boy asked.

"Certainly. You would have so many friends."

The small boy used both hands to push the truck towards the gentleman, and the gentleman picked it up reverently, as if he too thought of it as a friend. The small boy waved at the truck, turned, and began to walk across the field, towards home. He did not even make it across the field before a party of children, boys yelling and jostling,

overcame him and they fought in the snow until they were unbearably cold. A moment ago the small boy would have run away from them rather than bear their taunts and childish cruelties.

Only one other child was on the playground. She was kneeling in the sand, kneading sand and snow together as if in some ancient and inexplicable ritual. She did not heed the boys' shouting, and her only serious thought was that she had only a few more minutes to play before her mother came to drive her home. The gentleman paused as he passed her, but the girl did not look up. Scowling just barely, the gentleman moved on.

There was a girl walking on the tracks. Her face was turned up to the sky, though there was no sun to touch her. The wind whipped at the corners of her hair and settled snow over the shoulders of her jacket. If the girl was surprised to see someone else up on the train tracks she said nothing.

"That's a lovely scarf you've got there," the gentleman offered. Unlike many of the other items he had bought that day, this time it was true. The scarf looked soft, the wind blowing it around the girl's face like streaks of vivid red paint.

"Thank you," said the girl.

"For how much would you be willing to part with it?"

"Hmm?" said the girl, smiling as she frowned. "Oh, I couldn't do that. I'm keeping it for someone."

"Truly?" asked the man. Both he and the girl had stopped now, and balanced on the rails in the unruly wind.

The girl nodded, and looked out into the grey sky. "I

"You could give me the scarf in exchange for his return."

The girl laughed, a sound that echoed against the far riverbank like a church-bell pealing. Her cheeks were ruddy and her eyelashes were coated in snowflakes, most unlike the gentleman's usual clients.

"I think that would defeat the purpose," she said easily.

"But you'd have your friend back," responded the gentleman.

"He's been gone for a long time," the girl said slowly, still looking off into the clouds, where a streak of sun was visible behind the mists. "I don't think he's actually coming back. Or if he ever meant to. Maybe once I would have given this to you, but now... well, I think I'd like to hold onto it, more for what it means to me than what it ever meant to him."

"Are you sure?"

"Good day, sir," said the girl, and stepped around the man so she might continue on her way. The gentleman nodded as she passed, and watched her go.

As the girl reached the curve in the tracks and was about to leave them behind, she turned around to make sure the man had not followed her.

She thought he must have left the tracks and plunged into the trees, because she could no longer see him. It did not matter, for a moment later she had forgotten the man entirely.

## *A Garden*

She was a garden just yesterday. To her, I held many meanings. My lungs, some cold dirt. My head, an iron gate. My heart held many flowers – an inner kaleidoscope. But she began to see me as a stranger. And she began to see a stranger, seeing them as someone like me. And I would wait, and wait, and wait. But she would not wait to be strange. She knew she was a garden and she knew – she knew I was. She was the air and with that air she gave my lungs many days. She was the patience above the ground, behind the iron gate. She was the one who held death at a whisper. But she became tired of that whisper, and allowed death's voice to enter. At the sound was my exile, though she remained. A garden I was, a garden she is, without me.

**by Azure Ides-Grey**

# *Which do you prefer: books or e-books?*

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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.

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“I prefer books because I like the feeling of having a physical book in my hands. I find it easier to concentrate on and less straining on my eyes.”

- Wynter, *Nursing*

“I generally prefer books. The feeling of the paper in your hands, and the smells of publishing are all moments of comfort for me. However, I also like e-books for the versatility, the in screen lighting for reading at night, and not having to haul a hardcover book anytime while travelling..”

- Anonymous, *Psychology*

“I prefer books because I find it hard to read large amounts of information on the computer. I get very distracted when reading e-books.” - Brit, *Sociology*

“I prefer books, because I find it easier to read when I have a physical copy of a text. Reading from a screen tends to distract me, and I haven't yet found the same immersive reading experience with an e-book as I have with a book.”

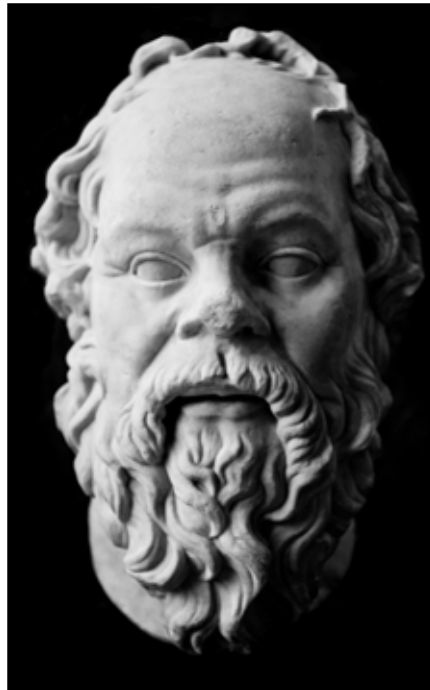
- Christina, *CMRS*

“Call me old fashioned, but I'm 100% in support of reading a book as opposed to an e-book. For one thing, a book never runs out of batteries, and how badass does it look to have a shelf full of books in your home? But from a creative point of view, an author presents a book in a certain way (with the cover, type of paper, font, etc)

that seems to get lost when reading an e-book. Reading a regular book eliminates the middleman - you don't have to pay the person converting it to a file the e-book uses, for the licensing to that e-book company, and for the actual e-book reader itself. E-books just remind me of *Fahrenheit 451*, where books become illegal; perhaps books won't become illegal, but they may become obsolete and I can't support that thought. I like the feeling of curling up in

a blanket with a warm drink and holding a book in my hand. To put a bookmark in it. To give a book as a gift. It means more than skimming your eyes over a screen for a few hours. We already do enough of that as it is.”

- Brett, *Social Work*





“I prefer e-books for I find they are more convenient than books. I find that it is easier to highlight key terms and if i forget a concept I can easily look it up by the search option. I also like how I can copy a word to define it if I want to make other notes on it. Lastly I prefer how I can zoom in the page to read the words easier.”

- *Uyen, Psychology*

“Well I like both. From a student standpoint, having e-books as part of our library catalogue is fantastic when it comes to writing essays. I recently had to check-out 10 large books and a set of journal articles because there were not enough online academic resources. So in that respect, e-books are great resources and the university needs to increase its offerings. However, I like reading fiction and textbooks in paperback. There’s something so special about curling up for an entire afternoon with a good paperback book. You get into a sort of trance and hours pass. It’s great.”

- *Jazmin, Psychology*

“I do prefer real books, since it’s just a more comfortable experience and [a] homey experience, I guess. As you’re reading on the couch or something with a nice book, it’s just more satisfying, and seems like you’re accomplishing more because you can see your progress. But I really should get more into e-books or something because it saves on paper a lot, so there is that. However, sometimes E-readers break and you can’t keep reading like you can with a book if you get it wet or something.”

- *Jordyn, Biology Graduate Student*

“In the end I would probably prefer real books. I did have an E-reader for a while, but I just think [of] the fact that you have to buy the book. E-books are cheaper, but then you have an E-reader and eventually they get old and there’s always new models coming out. But books, there’s no new models of books. You have a book from three hundred years ago and it’s [the] exact same as a book that comes out tomorrow. And I like the idea of having a physical book. Just being able to flip ahead in the book is something you can’t do with an e-book; you can’t just flip to a page... I don’t know. I don’t really like [e-books]. For e-books, they do have one great positive: the fact that they’re so much better for the environment than regular books. Obviously the E-reader [itself] costs stuff to make, but you can have thousands and thousands of e-books and they don’t take up trees and trees and trees. So that’s something that’s kind of tearing me from real books, but in the end real books still win out. I also like having a real book library, something that you can just look and say “I want that.” If you have like a thousand e-books, you have to search, like “Okay what am I thinking I’m looking for?” You can’t just kind of look through a whole digital library. A real library, sure it takes up space, but you have it all laid out there [and] it looks impressive.”

- *Eric, alumnus of Political Studies*

“I will always be biased in favour of actual books. I admit I haven’t given e-books a fair chance, and I should, but I just don’t like reading on a screen. There’s just something so authentic and personal about owning and reading a physical book.”

- *Jaclyn, English*

# A Word Study on Vampire

By Linda Huard

From Bram Stoker's iconic *Dracula*, to the sparkling sensation of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*, vampires pervade our culture. Although *Dracula*, a name nearly synonymous with *vampire*, is known to be from Transylvania, folkloric legends of vampires do not originate there, and neither does the word *vampire*. Despite popular support for a Slavic ancestor of the word, many theories exist as to the origin of *vampire*, and the only thing scholars interested in its etymology can agree on is that the history of the word remains unclear. What is clear, however, is how *vampire* entered the English lexicon. Entering as a loanword from German through medical literature, *vampire* transitioned from a term applied to a curious illness and disturbing observations of the dead into the literary figure popularized by nineteenth century writers. During this time, vampire characteristics that twenty-first century English speakers are familiar with were established. From the time of its introduction to English, *vampire* has become a well-recognized word that will likely have a similar lifespan to that of the creature it delineates.

Although the origin of *vampire* is highly contested, evidence suggests the word entered the English lexicon as a loanword from German in the early part of the eighteenth century. The OED has the first recorded use of the word in the year 1745, but Miller states that the "word 'vampyre' entered English literature in 1732, its first appearance (in a London periodical) occasioned by a rash of vampire sightings documented in several parts of central and eastern Europe" (3). This periodical was the 1732 edition of *The London Journal* where "there appeared an almost verbatim English translation of Flückinger's January 7th report of the exhumation of 'the Vampyre Arnold Paul'" (Perkowski 127). Between 1724 and 1760 waves of an epidemic illness swept through Serbian-speaking villages of the Habsburg Empire, and reports of curious deaths reached Austrian military committees. The victims were said to have been attacked by revenants who could be identified through the condition of their exhumed bodies, which were found to be undecayed, with hair and fingernails grown, and mouths gorged with blood. Barber suggests these vampire sightings were "an ingenious and elaborate folk-hypothesis that [sought] to explain otherwise puzzling phenomena associated with death and decomposition" (3). A limited understanding of decomposition coupled with poor burial techniques and high exposure to corpses caused the alarming theory of vampirism and resulting panic as

people struggled to account for their observations. These claims were taken seriously and government officials were dispatched to address the issue.

Military doctors, having heard about the vampire phenomenon, were sent to investigate and it is "[f]rom the official medical reports and their reception in journals and pamphlets the German 'Vampir' made its way into the vocabulary of nearly all European languages" (Kreuter 60). Specifically, it was the vampire deaths occurring in Medwegya in 1731 that would spark discussion across Europe in both learned circles as well as in the public sphere as the interest in vampires grew. One Nürenberg journal which included seventeen articles on the events of 1732, became renowned due to the Serbian incidents. Printed in Latin, the journal had an international audience, and learned treatises and dissertations began to be published in "Leipzig, Halle, and Jena as well as London, Amsterdam and Vienna" (Bräunlein 714). The 1730s saw the discussion of vampires turn "from a military and medical problem into a media sensation" with the growing popularity of newspapers, and "the word 'vampire' quickly took root within the German-speaking world and travelled from there into other European languages (715). *Vampire* was not restricted to scholarly works and its presence in the mass media during the 1730s and 40s allowed for the vampire's second life as a prominent figure in the writings of nineteenth century authors.

By the middle of the eighteenth century the vampire debate had taken on the vocabulary of superstition with the medical community highly suspicious of the legitimacy of vampires. As these creatures were relegated to the realm of fantasy by learned communities, the vampire became a figure of literary myth. Within a century, *vampire* transitioned from a word used to describe a medical phenomenon and otherwise unexplainable observations of the dead into a term prevalent in media and popular literature. According to Perkowski, the first instance of a vampire as an English literary figure occurs in Robert Southey's poem "Thalaba the Destroyer" (1801). At the head of Perkowski's chapter "The English Literary Vampire" the following excerpt of Southey's poem is included:

...through the vampire corpse  
He thrust his lance; it fell,  
And howling with the wound,  
Its fiendish tenant fled. (127)

Perkowski points out that the vampire here serves as a

secondary theme, and it would not be until 1819 with Dr. John Polidori's short story 'The Vampyre' that vampires would take on a central role. Polidori's "story started a vampire craze in England," and although he kept aspects of the folkloric vampire, he added the characteristics that a twenty-first century audience has come to expect (Miller 6); "unlike the reanimated corpse of folklore, [Polidori's] vampire is a tall, gaunt, and pale aristocrat dressed in black, whose distinguishing feature is his seductive power" (7). Vampire literature prospered in the Victorian era, as "the vampire figure easily lent itself both to romantic Gothic fiction and to a culture morbidly fascinated by death, the funereal and the supernatural but at the same time threatened by the alien or different" (Day x). In this way, *vampire* began to mean an otherworldly being suited for the pages of a Gothic novel rather than an actual reanimated corpse. The vampire introduced by Polidori and proliferated by numerous writers in the Victorian period

and onwards solidified the characteristics associated with vampires; it is the literary vampire of the nineteenth century rather than the reanimated corpse of the early 1700s that twenty-first century English speakers think of when they use the word.

Although scholars do not agree on a distinct point of origin, plenty of support exists for a Slavic ancestor to the word and this is likely where the word originated. Wherever *vampire* came from, it entered English as a German loanword in the early part of the eighteenth century through academic literature and the media. Vampires have captivated English speakers since the mysterious deaths of the early 1700s and continue to do so today meaning the word *vampire* has had an interesting as well as thriving usage throughout its history in the English language.



ARTWORK: Shae-Lynn Smith, *Conceal*, Graphite/Charcoal

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## Who Are We?

By Momina Khan

Integrated not assimilated  
 Different but one  
 Not the same but equal  
 Different races but identical in humanity  
 Not a single story but a complete plotline  
 Different languages but one voice  
 Several accents but similar in expression  
 Many cultures but parallel in compassion  
 Different colors but with the same red blood  
 Autonomous but interconnected  
 Neither Us nor Them  
**We are Canadians**

ARTWORK: Momina Khan



## Ropes

By Anthony Elliott

I find it difficult to move  
 I sit as a ship which has lost all wind  
 In its sails  
 Casting the last cannonball  
 As an advancing armada approaches  
 And I am  
 Aimless

It can be difficult to focus  
 Putting pen to paper  
 Provides pointless scribbles  
 Sarcastically swaying through my thoughts

Each scribble tightens like knots  
 Drafted like sailors who  
 Drink their nights away  
 Not understanding  
 Their work holds together the day

My father's a sailor  
 And I feel as if my mind is  
 His old blue bag of sailing  
 Ropes

To him  
 An unlimited source of creation  
 Each task requires  
 No explanation

Just reach and receive the  
 Right rope  
 As if inside is a  
 Miniature man mitigating the mess

To me  
 That old blue bag  
 Seems a test

I must reach in and pull out  
 The answer I am looking for

More often than not  
 I will receive ropes that don't fit  
 Even more often  
 I turn the blue bag into an even  
 Messier mystery  
 Searching through history to find  
 The starting point  
 But never quite getting there

I am just now learning that it is okay  
 While you may never find the end  
 You can always pull the ropes  
 They may loosen or tighten  
 The ropes will always move

# Untitled

By Marcie Seymour

I lost her.  
I don't remember the day,  
Or the time.  
I just woke up one day,  
Only to find,  
She was gone.

Her dark thoughts,  
Though minuscule at the beginning,  
Became unbearable at the end.  
The pain started dull, barely there,  
Then, as if flowing slowly through her veins.  
Like the deep red blood, only darker.

There was no comfort for her.  
No cure.  
The darkness consumed her entirety.  
And I suppose,  
I lost her before she was really gone.  
Did I really have her at all?

But then the fall came,  
And I revisited her cold corpse.  
Regrettably, I admitted defeat long before.  
The fading life from fall to winter,  
Only reminded me of her own transition,  
Animation slowly materializing into mortality.

Looking at her corpse,  
I attempted once more,  
To bring her back.  
One kiss on her cool, black lips,  
I showed her a love of the truest affections.  
Alas, my last futile attempt had failed.

Somberly, I returned to my previous dwellings.  
While, behind me,  
There was reincarnation of someone lost.  
The process was cumbersome,  
It was painful,  
Trying to return the light to her soul.

All through the winter months,  
My love labored to return.  
Slowly, she could feel the life  
Extending throughout her,  
Overcoming the darkness that was once her  
prison,  
Until the day she was completely reborn.

The day she came back to me  
I didn't know what to think,  
Of the girl looking back at me.  
Her long locks were now short.  
She looked as if she had just fought a battle,  
But there was no mistaking the rose of her  
cheeks.

I smiled at her, finally,  
Understanding her struggle and strife.  
And she smiled back at me  
Through the mirror.  
And we vowed to never forget,  
The darkness that destroyed her,

The darkness that also gave her the strength to  
come back to me.

## open/close

eyes open and close. here and gone. like wings of butterflies. taking them somewhere else. open  
yourself up. bleed vermilion under azure skies. fear not the scythe. this is who you are. fear not  
the reflection. but let your soul ache. for this is blessed. be not satisfied until you're one with  
Everything. let Him perfect your faculties. the sins are in your cells. but your cells will lose  
someday. and your soul shall win in Paradise. forever. close your eyes and bask in meaning.  
shelter yourself from meaningless clouds. He is Metsudah. let his words be your carapace. abhor  
all vanity. abhor all pride. imbue yourself with Love.

by Azure Ides-Grey

Poetry

**PRO**

## Given the research indicating that learning, we should discourage the

By Dr. Carrie Buchanan | Psychology

Although very few students and instructors deny that using computers is important in achieving academic success while attending university, the effectiveness of using computers in the classroom while attending university lectures has been called into question. More specifically, scholars disagree on the effectiveness of note-taking on laptops and other electronic devices while in the classroom. Fueling this debate is research that suggests longhand note-taking is more effective than typing notes into one's personal laptop. Studies have also revealed that laptop use in the classroom distracts the user and peers from attending to and processing lecture material. Thus, rather than being an aid to learning, computers in the classroom have a negative impact on the overall classroom environment and on the academic success of the user.

Note-taking is essential in recording material shared in lectures, and some research suggests that when compared to typed notes, handwritten notes are more strongly associated with learning performance. For example, Mueller and Oppenheimer (2014) conducted three different experiments examining university students' note-taking medium (pen and paper vs. laptops), quality of notes taken (low vs. high word count; verbatim vs. generative), and learning performance (factual vs. conceptual-application knowledge). All participants were exposed to a lecture wherein they were asked to take notes, but results revealed that students randomly assigned to the longhand note-taking condition outperformed students assigned to the laptop note-taking condition on both immediate and delayed assessments of learning (particularly in answering conceptual-application questions). Furthermore, they found that handwritten notes were of a higher quality than notes taken on laptops which may explain the differences in learning performance. The researchers concluded that students who handwrite notes summarized in their own words what they were hearing which may lead to better processing and encoding of lecture material than "mindless transcription" more typical of students who use laptops to take notes (p. 1162).

Differences in learning performance are even more evident when comparing the learning outcomes of students who use laptops strictly for note-taking purposes and students who multitask on their laptops during a lecture (e.g., student take notes but also checks email, browses the Internet, and/or watches a movie). Indeed, Fried (2008) found that university students' self-reported laptop use during lectures was associated with decreased attention to lecture and a poorer understanding of lecture material, and this relationship was especially strong for students who reported multitasking during lectures. Furthermore, 64% of the participants reported that they were distracted by other students in the classroom using laptops during lectures. Thus, these students recognized that laptop use during lectures impaired their ability to concentrate on and process what was being discussed in class and that others' use of laptops during lectures also impeded their ability to learn.

The veracity of survey research describing laptops in the classroom as being detrimental to learning for both users and peers is substantiated by experimental studies that have similarly examined these relationships. Sana, Weston, and Cepeda (2012) found that compared to students randomly assigned to a note-taking condition (i.e., participants were asked to strictly use their laptops for note-taking), students randomly assigned to a multitasking condition (i.e., participants asked to complete certain online tasks while taking notes on their laptops) made notes that were of a poorer quality and they scored lower on both factual and conceptual questions testing their comprehension of the lecture. In a follow-up experiment, they found that compared to students randomly assigned to a pen and paper note-taking condition where they were not in view of multitasking peers, students using a pen and paper to take notes but sitting in view of multitasking peers did not differ in terms of quality of notes taken but they did score lower in answering both factual and conceptual questions about the lecture. Therefore, updating one's Facebook profile, watching a hockey game, or playing games while taking notes on a laptop is clearly detrimental to the user's ability to learn. But even more disturbing is that engaging in these activities is disrespectful and harmful to peers nearby.

Students and instructors must carefully consider if the benefits outweigh the costs in using computers in the classroom. Banning computers from classrooms would be an extreme response to this problem given some students have needs and abilities that require being able to use laptops for note-taking. Furthermore, the use of computers in the classroom likely can be very effective where active learning is encouraged through computer use. However, there is compelling evidence that the classroom environment and students' academic performance can be negatively impacted when laptops are used for note-taking. This is particularly true when students use WiFi capable devices in classrooms with wireless connectivity given laptop use can create distractions that impede the learning of the users and their peers.

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# Contra

## computer use is not as effective for use of computers in the classroom.

**CONTRA**By *In Medias Res* Editorial Board

While there are studies which show that students learn more effectively by taking notes with pen and paper as opposed to typing them on a computer, this does not mean that computer use should be discouraged in a university setting. Research, such as that of Sana, Weston, and Cepeda (2012), which shows that those asked to multitask by performing certain online tasks while taking notes on a computer perform worse than those who take notes with pen and paper, merely shows that students are poor at multitasking, not that computers are the problem. It may be beneficial for a study to be undertaken where students are asked to take notes on the computer with it in “airplane mode,” and those taking notes with pen and paper are asked to complete certain tasks on paper at the same time. Most likely the results would be similar to those of the first study, showing that those asked to multitask perform poorer, not necessarily those who use computers.

Even though computers connected to WiFi in classrooms may present more distractions to students because of all that they can access, it is still each individual’s decision as to whether they will indulge these distractions or not. Those who use computers to do things other than take notes have chosen to do this using their own agency, and if they perform poorly as a result of it that was their decision to make. Students who are prone to distraction but would still like to use a computer have multiple resources available to them, from simply turning their WiFi off on their laptop while taking notes to installing any number of study plug-ins for their internet browser which block internet access for a length of time. Distractions are also not a computer-only issue and may also affect those taking notes with pen and paper from daydreaming to worrying to doodling. All of these can be done if a student is under stress or not motivated.

In today’s university setting, computer technologies are a very integral part of many day to day activities in and out of class. Professors use PowerPoint presentations in lectures, these same presentations may be posted on BlackBoard before or after class, assignments such as essays are written on computers and sometimes even submitted online, extra resources are supplied through BlackBoard, and some students even take classes online. With all of these things requiring a computer, for students to be discouraged from using computers in class to take notes while their professors use copious amounts of electronic resources sends a mixed message to students about them.

Finally, computer use by students in the classroom should be up to each individual student. Each is free to look at the information presented before them in the form of both academic research and their own anecdotal experience knowing what method works best for them. This agency to choose and find out what method works best for each individual person is part of the university experience. Most degrees prescribe the core subject, while allowing for electives which each student can choose. The schedule is often quite free as well, leaving it up to each student to study or not in their own time or do the assignments, and giving them the freedom to succeed or fail based on their own actions. And while each professor is able to individually encourage or discourage computer use as they see fit in their classes based on their own experience, a university policy which actively discourages computer use for taking notes is one which does not fit in well with what the university currently encompasses.

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doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2012.10.003

# Thus a Child Pays off

by Adity Das Gupta

Born in the outskirts of Rajshahi city, Rabeya Mohsin was the fifth of Kamal Mohsin's nine children. Her father cannot be considered affluent by our urban standards, but by the suburban standards of a neglected city he could be deemed well off as he could provide his children enough to eat, necessary education, and two sets of clothing per year. He also had a good plot of land to his name.

Rabeya's parents stopped at their ninth child only because they had finally received Allah's boon, a son to bring honor to their family and carry the family light towards the future. As is common in such families, Rabeya's older sisters were married off fairly young, to families not much higher in the social stratum than theirs. Rabeya overheard that her sisters' marriages were arranged only after her father had made an honest appraisal of how much wealth he could afford to part with, and still leave enough for his son. She accepted that her fate would be the same.

Just as it was foreseen, marriage proposals arrived in waves when Rabeya was in class eight. Rabeya, being fairer and prettier than her other sisters, was expected to have a better and richer husband chosen for her with a similar or lesser dowry than that given for her other sisters. Soon it was decided that Rabeya was to be married off to Amin Rahman (a man in his late 20's) from a nearby village. Rabeya was never asked for her opinion nor did she look forward to being asked. In fact, she would not have known how to react if her opinion had been sought, for opinions were a luxury that a woman could not afford.

Within a few weeks of the announcement of the decision, a haldi ceremony was arranged, and she was married two days later. All the ceremonies were small (unpretentious), and she did not get to see her wedding attire before the event, let alone choose it. She found out after the haldi ceremony that her husband was an engineer in Dhaka, and had to stay in Dhaka for work for the greater part of the year. Taking his wife with him to Dhaka would



ARTWORK: Keleigh Fehr

be inconvenient for him, so she was to remain with his family and help his mother and sisters with the immense load of housework. Rabeya wondered if she should be feeling sad at her husband's refusal to take her along. Then she rationalized that it was alright for her not to shed crocodile tears; after all, she hardly knew the man.

Rabeya's new life brought her new responsibilities, more housework, and a lot more people to please. In exchange for her services she would get more than enough to eat, at least one set of clothes a month, and a room to herself (when her husband was not visiting of course). This was much more than Rabeya had hoped for. Listening to her sisters' horrifying tales had lowered her expectations of married life.

Rabeya had tried in vain to form an opinion about her husband. He was neither good nor bad. He had never raised his hand or his voice to her, but then he had never spoken a single word to her beyond what was absolutely necessary. Amin's infrequent visits home only meant that she had to stay awake longer after doing the day's work, and that she had to lose the privacy that her room provided her. She had finally concluded that she did not dislike her husband, but only wished that he would come less frequently because she felt more attached to the comforts his home provided her than to him.

Rabeya became pregnant less than a year after her marriage. Pregnancy was bliss for Rabeya, she was excused from housework, taken care of, and her husband's visits became even less frequent.

It was during her pregnancy that Rabeya's feeling of unbounded possessiveness for her unborn baby became apparent to her. She realized that she was the only one with a right on her baby, not even her husband. What was his contribution? Nothing she reasoned.

Rabeya confidently stated to anyone who asked that she was going to have a boy. Nine months flew by and one bright morning Rabeya gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. Her in-laws and husband were flooded with congratulations from relatives and neighbors. This angered her, because she felt that the only one who deserved to be congratulated was her.

As the days passed Rabeya's possessiveness reached fever pitch; she hated anyone who cuddled her child. When anyone suggested that her son should become an engineer like her father, Rabeya cringed. She felt deeply offended that no one asked her for her opinion. When her child fell ill, no one, not even his father, offered any help. Rabeya felt that her sole claim to her son had been granted.

On the day of her son's akika, Amin along with his family decided to name Rabeya's son Omar Amin Rahman. Rabeya's rage exploded like a fire that had been festering in her for a long time. Rabeya, who had never protested anything in her life, surprised even herself with the strength in her voice as she protested. She argued that her son had to have her name as well, because she was the one who gave birth to him, fed him and cared for him. Her in-laws were not about to give in that easily. By the end of the day she was branded as crazy.

That night Rabeya tossed and turned in her bed, and by the end of the night she decided she was going to leave with her child. She scrounged up all the money she had received in her wedding, and the contact numbers of anyone in Dhaka who might be able to offer her temporary shelter and a job. Three days later, Rabeya packed a few of her belongings, wrapped her baby boy in a warm cloth, and stealthily left her in-laws' house while everyone was asleep.

Life in Dhaka was not easy; she got a job in a garments factory and did small tailoring jobs to earn extra money. Despite having to work so hard for a living, she enrolled her son in the best school she could afford. Looking back she was happy that she felt no remorse for leaving a comfortable life.

Sixteen years later, Rabeya brushed her careworn fingers across her son's name in his SSC certificate. Omar Rabeya Mohsin. Her years of fighting and hardship had finally paid off. A satisfied smile slowly touched her lips.



# Mediaeval Felines Love Their Biscuits:

## *Counting Coins at the Canterbury Cathedral*

It was a rainy Tuesday morning when I ventured with bare legs and a red raincoat in to the whimsically groomed gardens of the Canterbury Cathedral. I was the picture of tense contentment, taking in the breathtakingly green garden of the lush damp landscape, dotted with pebbles, garnished with iron-wrought gates and surrounded by garden walls of massive white stone.

I had just walked into a sacred space with a cup of Starbucks coffee in my hand. I could not quite feel at peace, pinned under the slate-coloured skies- whose grey canvas electrified the colours of the grass and the blue veins in the white of my legs with a grand and divine simplicity. My open-toed shoes succumbed to the heavy dew of the grass and my feet grew soggy, firmly planted in their plotted base. Clearly, I had not been ready for what I was unknowingly about to encounter.

The sun was not around to wake me on this young June morning, but I was determined to be the first of my colleagues up and out of bed. I hurried in to the day with the speed of any student late for the first string of first-year classes. There was no time to waste when walking on towards town without the added security of the daily schedule, the time clock, coffee money, cellular phone and laptop computer- complete with charging cord and English voltage converter. I took great pleasure in knowing I would be the punctual student ready to take on the tasks of the day, counting coins in the collection of curiosities at the Canterbury Cathedral.

My ticket to this unique opportunity was the collaborated brain-child of the department of English and the Museum of Antiquities. Myself and small handful of students had been selected to assist in the research-based inquiry of the eccentric Canon, John Bargrave's numismatic collection. A selection of Ancient Greek and Roman coins -as well as some coins from the mystic East were to be documented, analyzed and calculated for a pioneer project concerning the area of digital humanities.

I felt like the luckiest girl alive. It had been the first time I was ever to visit a place with history stretching back more than three hundred years. It would be my first time abroad, and my first time leaving the country as an independent traveller. I had the determination, the gumption and the wherewithal to put all that I had into the project.

The trip was going to be a new scholastic wall to encounter, scale over and drape with the flag of my own scholastic accomplishment. I walked into the situation like all of the weathered explorers of old- with an ignobly discerning, driven and clinical mind.

The town of Canterbury lies at the bottom of a sloping hill, whereupon Kent University sits and overlooks the sheep-dotted stony plains of its majestic homeland, the Kent countryside. Commuters were whizzing by me in tiny white cars; even in a place as old and gorgeous as England, driver's faces still looked stoic and paralyzed by the same mundane regimen of the early morning commute.

Somehow, watching others wishing they were elsewhere while in a land you only thought was possible to tread in the realms of your dreams humbles and sobers you.

The city was tranquil, but already busy with the droning hum of lorries, bicyclists and tourists eager to squeeze every drop of the day into their own fishbowl of campy relics, overpriced restaurants and tchotchke shops selling (then newlywed) Will and Kate souvenir spoons.

The local Starbucks -located right beside the cathedral walls -was a madhouse. Baristas fled from one corner of the counter to the other, leaping between cherry danishes, Cornish pasties, pots of tea

and cups of strong coffee. They somehow managed to retain the ease and grace of Swan Lake dancers as they did so, but I couldn't help but be reminded of home and all the lackadaisical comforts of campus as I inched forward in the lineup. I could shut my eyes and be back in the lineup of the Murray Building. Clearly, ancient history had hastily made way for man's impatient modernity.

Equipped with caffeine and a firm, determined agenda, I made my way through the gates of the Cathedral, already somewhat deterred by the city's hurried civilization outside of its walls. I was saddened to see such a timeless monumental site of theological, literary and Classical history had appeared to become synonymous with today's high maintenance complacency. And my dependence on all of it was not any better.

But then I stepped into the garden. And I found myself placed among the transcendental colours of a finely glossed mosaic, as fine and as old as the images of glass that grace the cracked and cloistered abbeys of St. Augustine. The world around me was silent. The clamouring of the commuting cars and shopkeepers were choked down by five centuries worth of stone walls, gargoyles and ivy. I began to fill with all that was quiet and colourful -just as the sky fills with feathers when an owl silently spans his wings upward to the overhanging nimbus. All that remained of my prior life was a paper cup and a plastic lid.

I was taken in by the church's serene severity of presence. Years and years and ever-more years of history fled by me in the wind as they chased the strands of my hair and the wet blades of grass between my feet.

I was not alone in this masterpiece. A few monks had come out to look upon the day and the dwelling they had adorned as cloak of comfort from the outside world. One was sitting on a stone bench and when he saw me coming nearer the church, he smiled at me and bid me good morning.

He was stroking something between his feet; a firm, orange bundle of scrawny muscle and sinew was weaving its way in and out of his grasp like a simple wind-up toy. It was one of the many cats which the monk said had made its home within the walls of the cathedral property for years.

"His line stretches further back than anybody really knows," he proudly said as I sat beside him and tried my hand at stroking the saucy critter -who clearly trusted all caressing privileges exclusively to the men of the cloth. Sparrows sang in the trees above us.

"All the way back to the Mediaeval times?" I asked, astounded. The cat came towards me and nimbly sniffed my fingers.

"Before that, I would wager," he smiled, reached behind him and brought out a small green box.

All at once, the cat sat upright and stared at the tasty merchandise.

"He's rather fond of biscuits," the old man said, shuffling a few kibbles out of the box.

The cat happily gobbled the demure offering, and made sure to lick the monk's hands clean before turning towards the church, where he eventually disappeared behind a large wooden pilaster. Most likely off to eat some church mice whose line stretched back even further than his own.

For me, the trip was no longer for the intellectual collection of data to hoard and bring back to the surface of society; it became a requiem for the gentle reflection and solitude it took centuries for man to carve and refine with their spiritual yearning. It was one of the best journeys of my life.

Though I plan to travel abroad soon, it will be with the added wisdom I have learned from the cats of the Canterbury Cathedral.

**by Colleen Smith**  
*A study abroad experience CMRS 498*

## *Running With the Bison*

I was asleep in her curly ruff  
When the wolf's howl bit the crisp morning mist,  
Fear filled the unstable air of the rolling grassland  
And swelled a rumbling mass of waking Bison,

My bare feet thumped through the dew covered grass  
And pounded like drums with the beating bison  
Who ran like a herding river of rolling rapids-  
That swept the hills in their chaotic wake

The earth trembled in subjection to the stampede  
(A means that was greater than its sum)  
That swirled the dust and dirt of the ground  
In this cyclical routine of predator vs prey

Although wolves nipped at our heels  
I had an epiphany of the eternal:  
Our chase was only their hunger  
My heart filled with high frenzy  
As I began to run within the streamline hurricane

I want to run with the bison again,  
Because the uncontrollable attempt  
To escape the wolves that chase

- Zach Rychlo

## *Love Poem*

I want the waves of your gentle embrace  
To lap at my heels, and submerge my ankles in a two. step. dance.  
Carrying me away from this rocky outpost  
Or preparing to dive headfirst  
So we can start swimming

I whisper to you while we are alone,  
Out of fear of discovery  
Of my own detached deliverance:  
The nagging narcissitic need  
To prove my existence-

Existen-tialism: now that is a word worth looking up  
My mind creates, my mind destroys  
But we exist together-

-so let's go out  
Because life does not stop for us  
So let's start swimming

- Zach Rychlo

# The Coaster

by Travis Heide

Brown. That homely combination of all the colours of the rainbow splashed one on the other with abandon. Mingled shades and moods. Curious thing.

I'm decorated with the Eiffel Tower – the one in Paris, though I was made in China. I've seen lovers come together, friends come closer. I've heard many enemies who could not hear each other. I've gathered an eye-catching collection of ring-shaped stains, every shade of gold, bronze, and black to tell of their tales and their spills. Their upsets. A crack runs through me, just fine enough to trace. I'm made of strong material, or so these years have helped me to convince myself.

At present I bear the burden of a steaming cup of something. Conversation rises in heat; voices crack under the strain of years. The back of a hand meant for a face meets me instead. The back of that hand burns with bubbling liquid everywhere. For my part I hold my peace, fall to the floor and cleave in two pieces. Right along that crack that once ran through my centre from god knows when.

I do not feel the least bit sorry for my lot; that fragile coffee cup that lost its handle, however, was by many years my junior.

ARTWORK: Hailey Mullock





## Parent & Teacher Engagement...Co-creating The Art of Knowing

By Momina Khan

*Teacher of my child, let me know what you know that I don't know*

*And what you need to know that I know as **parent of your student***

We both need to know what we don't know

Together we unlearn what we know and learn what we need to know

Let's talk about knowing and unknowing, teaching and learning

You know the student you have in your class is my child

I know the child I share with you is your student

I know you teach him how to speak English

You know I teach him how to speak his voice

I know you teach him how we all are the same

You know I teach him how we all are different too

I know you teach him how to share with others his culture

You know I teach him how to live between two cultures

I know you are scared to talk to him about his faith

You know I am scared both for him and his faith

I know you teach him how to find the right answers

You know I teach him ways to pose hard questions

I know you teach him how to read and write a story

You know I teach him ways to tell and live his own story

I know you have expert knowledge on how to teach your student

You know I have personal knowledge on how to nurture my child

I know you are a teacher and teaching is your profession

You know I am a parent and protecting is my position

*Let's make a mutual pledge about our child and student*

*Let me know how I can help you in teaching and knowing your student*

I know no other way that you can come to know my child than... **Compassion**

# Drip Drip

by Nigel Town

“No.”

“Why?”

“You know why.”

I knew. Whenever this conversation comes up, the classic “No-you-can’t-repaint-your-room-because-the-first-time-nearly-killed-me-so-appreciate-the-damn-colour”, it invariably ends the same way; that resounding “No” like a verbal hammer hitting the last nail on the coffin of my argument. It’s made breakfast into a bit of a battleground every day. I swear I can hear the ring of metal on metal some days, the clash of her words and mine shaking the room like a splitting planet as we calmly bite our toast in turn. They say that mother knows best, but I happened to know that if the walls of my room looked like they’d been drenched in an engineered-to-be-awful combination of egg yolk and piss for another day, I was going to run for a wrecking ball instead of a paintbrush. Deciding the coffin wasn’t quite airtight yet, I pushed:

“I only know that you keep saying no. Seriously, I’m telling you I’ll do it all, you don’t have to do anything except make sure I don’t die an early and unwanted death from the fumes.” I swallow another bite of toast. The one making this law-school-honors worthy argument, by the way, is me, Sawyer. As you can tell, I’m the epitome of persuasion. I really don’t know how I haven’t disarmed mom over the table yet, and I’m trying to figure it out when she brings out the hammer again.

“Those walls are never going to be repainted, not by me, not by you, not by goddamn Picasso.” Towards every person mentioned she stabs a labour-scarred finger. In dearly departed Picasso’s case, she waves vaguely, as if he silently occupied everywhere from the fridge to the staircase that marks the boundary between kitchen and living room. I’m about to illustrate the fact that Picasso’s specialty was canvas and not wood (my half-filled mouth’s already open, in fact) when she completely annihilates that speeding train of thought clear off of its polished, shiny tracks.

“The walls wouldn’t like it.”

I nearly choke. That one’s new. We’ve been going at it for months with hardly a difference in the wording of our to-and-fro, so from where is she pulling this gun out? And did I hear that right? The walls?

“Yes.”

Oh, guess that was out loud. What the hell does she mean, ‘the walls wouldn’t like it?’

“What the hell do you mean, the walls wouldn’t like it?” We’re going with out loud again. But oh god, even the volume difference between thought and spoken word has nothing on the universe-exploding look her eyes have and are stabbing into mine, blue skies invading the mud of a swamp. And then,

“Exactly what I say.”

Alright, consider me creeped. She’s never said anything like that before. Is my mom crazy? Breaking off the assault of her gaze and turning to the ocean-colored openness of the kitchen (why on earth did my room not look like that?), I tried to laugh it off with a “okay I won’t piss the walls off”, but the humour evaporated the second the words sailed out of my mouth. The atmosphere had charged with something I didn’t like. Hell, if you ever meet someone that does like what that room was pressing into me, run. It’s September but right then and there I would swear to you that I felt November needling its chill through my nerves. Running, why is that-

“Oh man.” This to the radiating green digits on the neatly cleaned face of the neatly clean oven that were telling me I had six minutes to get my insolent butt to school. Bolting to my feet and swiping my jade green bag with the war wounds of too many school years off of its kitchen chair pedestal, I run out of there so fast I remind myself later to check the fraying carpet that bows to the front door for scorch marks. I hear mom calling after me, but I’m putting too much space between us too fast for them to make their landing in my ears. I jerk the knob, explode out of the recently opened space and tear up all twelve blocks in my rocket flight to school.

If you are kind, you’ll kill me. If you’re very kind, you’ll kill me quickly. Either way, spare me the medieval torture of Monday morning algebra. The teacher, Ms. Glynn, is squealing out equations with a voice that’s part hissing tea kettle and part dog whistle (at least I’d imagine, and it’s not my best move). Nails-on-chalkboard-voices aside, it’s hard to concentrate on matters such as what  $x$  is this time and not on the fact that my mom said the walls would rather that I not repaint them. What are they going to do, drip on-

“Sawyer.” Crap.

“Yes?”

“What is x?”

Something I wish you’d shut up about, I scream into the echo of my thoughts. My eyes swivel to the board where a triangle has been crudely sketched with seemingly everything but a straight line. The x surrounded by a half circle marking the angle sneers at me, daring me to offer an answer regarding its identity.

“Um.”

“We don’t have all day Sawyer, come on.”

I stare at the drawing, and it stares back. Time crawls agonizingly slowly. I’m ready to surrender when I feel something drip onto the back of my neck. What? I rub my palm onto the splash site and see yellow as I bring it back into sight. What the...? I crane my neck back and look up, squinting against the ceiling lights. I can hear the math goddess say that the answer isn’t on the ceiling from the other side of the Grand Canyon that has become my classroom. Not only is there no answer, there’s nothing leaking. I bring my wet palm to my nose for inspection. Paint.

I look around. Did anybody else see that? Did anyone but me feel that? Their faces tell me that they didn’t. For the second time I hear the shrill scream demanding an answer. No wonder you’re a Miss, I think. As if in agreement (as well as an act of ultimate mercy), the bell blares at us to move on to the next torture session of a lesson. As if personally cheated, Ms. Glynn announces that I’ll have the answer for the class tomorrow. I mutter as I join the wave of bodies that flows out of the room into the hallway, moving on through the day, wondering how that garish canary yellow paint dropped onto me out of thin air.

Only the normal brand of weird happened for the rest of the day: girls laughing at the caveman-in-a-football-players-body’s tasteless jokes and teachers not dying of boredom from what they were trying to get through their students heads. As I walked away from the building, free for the night, I wasn’t sure what to make of what happened that morning. I mean, paint? And what about what my mom said? Weird. Just plain weird. Before I knew it I was walking up to the front door of the house. I fished my key out of my left pocket and let myself into the dark room on the other side. Wait, dark? Since when did mom turn the lights off?

“Mom?” Silence. Silence and darkness. Two-for-one special and we are full up on emptiness. I’m thinking I’ve had just about enough weird for one day when I cross into the kitchen and see a piece of paper on the table. Oh no. Nothing good ever happens when mom leaves a note. Seriously scared now, I pick up the paper with a hand that’s shaking as much as a twig in a hurricane. In large, scrawled letters like a first graders’, it reads “CHECK YOUR ROOM.”

I don’t think my heart has ever moved this fast. As it goes bump-ba-bump-ba-bump at a pace worth checking tempo for, I drag my legs up the stairs one at a time like they’re anvils. Breathing hard and sweating bullets, I open the door to my room slowly. The creak is monstrous. At least, I think that’s what monstrous is until my eyes take in the rest of the room.

In the center of the floor is a bucket of yellow paint, and the walls are dripping red. It takes me all of a second to recognize that it’s not paint. Feeling as if my knees are going to buckle with so much as a breath into the depths of what now feels like a sea, I walk forward, my eyes darting back and forth as if they could make any sense of the nightmare into which I just stepped.

I feel a drop fall onto my neck.

Nearly crying now, I look up, thinking about what a horrid parody of math class this is, trying to find what’s dripping blood instead of an angle marked in chalk.

What’s left of what I assume to be my mother’s body (am I still thinking clearly?) is suspended from the ceiling with what looks like her own muscles, her skin ripped to shreds and most of it, I now see, is still floating in the air all across the room, like dust in sunlight. Her stomach gapes open like a black hole, its past contents now piled directly underneath her in a mess of bile and blood. This is it, I think. I’m going to die. The walls are alive and are going to kill me. They’re going to torture me and leave their plaything out on display. With that thought comes a sudden moment of clarity: mom tried to paint the walls. Then, anger. Why would she do that? She was the one who warned me in the first place! Turning myself around (had that angle been 180 degrees?), I break for the door. Only, there is no door. Where it had been is now just another whole, solid wall.

On the floor, there’s a clean paintbrush.

# Faculty File

## Interviewing Dr. Zachary Yuzwa



Dr. Zachary Yuzwa is an assistant professor in the Department of History at St. Thomas More College. He won the USSU Teaching Excellence Award in 2014 - 2015. He teaches classes in Latin; Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies; and Classics. His research interests include Late Antiquity, and Latin Literature. [He was kind enough to answer a few of IMR's questions....]

### **Tell us who you are and how long you have been at St. Thomas More College?**

My name is Zachary Yuzwa. I've been at STM, since when, I think, this is my second year here, 2016. So the fall of 2014 I guess is when I first arrived at STM. I taught one semester here at STM and then actually took a parental leave so this really is just like my third semester of teaching at STM. But I teach, I'm in the History Department, but I teach courses in Classics, in Latin, CMRS, that's our Classical Medieval and Renaissance Studies program, also some History courses. I haven't taught a lot of courses, I haven't been here that long.

### **What is your favourite part of being a university professor?**

Honestly, the teaching. Right. In some ways I always imagined that most professors their answer is the research, spending time in the library right. And I love that. Like I really do love that and I always want more time to do that. But there is something about being in the classroom where all of a sudden, I mean it doesn't always happen but, where you feel all 50 or 100 or whatever many people in the classroom all of a sudden focus on one thought. And there is something in the atmosphere that changes. And it's funny because I'm not obviously a particularly mystical person in any way but you can feel something tangible in the classroom when that happens. Last night we were, I teach this Classics 104 course which is the Classical Mythology course, and we were reading the Iliad in the class. And this poem is just incredible. It's a 2800 year old poem written in a crazy dialect of ancient Greek but despite being almost 3000 years old it's just so intensely relevant. It's about war, a war poem essentially. But it's sort of ambivalent even as it celebrates war it's ambivalent towards war. And some of the ways that they describe moments of trauma and of violence in the poem, we were talking about it and you could just see like I felt like I was just talking about it or hearing about it when other students were talking about it in the class I could feel my stomach turning because it is just so... But everyone in the class, or it felt like everyone, all 100 students or whatever,

were like dialed in to that bit of literature. It's incredible. So teaching. Those moments are what make the teaching so exciting. They don't happen that often right but when they do it's pretty incredible. It's really fun.

### **What is your favourite classical myth?**

My favourite classical myth! Interesting! There are different ways to answer your question. To think about it in terms of texts right, what ancient mythological text do I most enjoy. And it's not even close, it's *the Iliad* of course. But as I was saying it is an incredible poem about a short span of time near the very end of the Trojan War. And it's motivated, the action in the poem is motivated by this guy Achilles, the greatest Greek warrior, his decision to sit out the rest of the war. He was sort of offended by Agamemnon who is the leader of the Greeks and he says "I'm done. I'm not going to fight any more." And it's essentially about his rage. This poem it's about rage, it's about the consequences of that rage and all of the destruction that Achilles causes because of his rage and the destruction that he suffers himself as a result of his rage. It's an incredible poem. But there are other ways to answer it right. We could talk about a myth more broadly or a specific story within a mythological framework. And there's lots of endless interesting stuff of course. It's just these are the craziest stories you could ever imagine. But I'm pretty fond of the Orpheus myth. He's sort of a Greek hero in a way but he's a hero not for his martial valor like someone like Achilles or Herakles or Jason. But he's a hero because of his poetry essentially. And he's sort of the first or a proto-poet in a way and his poetry can, it's basically a life giving poetry. He can make rocks dance right. And he's about to marry his hometown sweetheart Eurydice when on their wedding day she's accosted by a satyr and flees from him. And in her flight she steps on a snake and is bitten poisoned and dies. And Orpheus is completely stricken by grief. Just absolutely torn apart. And he's sitting there by the river singing his mournful song causing the nymphs of the river to cry and nymphs turn to him and say "Listen to your song! You can bring this song down to Hades and sing it for Hades and he will be so moved by your poetry that he'll let Eurydice return



to the land of the living.” And so Orpheus says “Yeah, yeah I’m going to do that.” So he goes down to hell and he sings for Hades and Persephone and Hades is so deeply moved by his poem that he agrees to let Eurydice return to the land of the living. But on one condition. That one condition being that Orpheus as he leads her out of hell can never look back at her. And they make their way out through all these obstacles until Orpheus can see a glimmer of light, sort of at the end of the tunnel so to speak, and he knows they’re about to return to life. He’s about to return Eurydice to life when he hears her scream out, cry out, in pain or something and he doesn’t know what it is. And his first instinct is what you do when you love someone dearly. He looks back to help her and all that he sees is her disembodied shade fading into the ether. It’s wrenching right. One of the things so incredible about these myths, and some are just crazy and you can’t understand why people spent time thinking them up and writing them and reading them and doing all that, but some of them like the *Iliad* or in a very different way like the Orpheus myth speak so directly to human experience it’s so easy to understand. Even as it’s in the context of a supernatural story these are deeply, deeply human stories. They tell us something about ourselves. About the past for sure but also about the present.

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“Even as it’s in the context of a supernatural story these are deeply, deeply human stories.”

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### Which classical language do you prefer? Greek or Latin?

I love Latin. I’m better at Latin, which is why I love Latin. My colleague, Professor John Porter, often talks about how far inferior Latin is to Greek, and there’s often this sense – a lot of people agree with this actually – there’s a sense that there’s sort of like an innate spirit, a sort of a liveliness, in Greek literature that’s lost somehow in Latin. Latin authors are deeply influenced by Greek literature and very explicitly engage with the Greek literature that came before them. And I think it’s easy to read that self-conscious engagement as somehow a step away from originality, from sort of aesthetic power, in a way. But I don’t buy it. I don’t buy it at all. Obviously, I will sing *The Iliad* to high heavens. I mean it’s an incredible, incredible poem, but something like *The Aeneid*, a Latin poem written by Virgil – you know, what, 800 and some years after *The Iliad* was recorded – in the first century B.C.E., it’s a different kind of poem even as it sort of explicitly engages Homer. It’s a different kind of poem, and obviously far more self-conscious, not the product of an oral tradition but rather the product of a single author sitting down and taking on a very literary endeavour. But there are moments of real sort of poetic fervour in the poem, and beauty in the poetry that Virgil’s writing. In book 2 of *The Aeneid*, Aeneas, the hero, is in Carthage at the Court of Dido, who will eventually become his lover, whom he will eventually abandon, of course, very famously, but he’s telling Dido the

story of the destruction of Troy at the hands of the Greeks. And telling it from a Trojan perspective, which is some extent different than what we get in *The Iliad*. Even as *The Iliad* is very sensitive to a Trojan perspective, it’s obviously written from the point of view of a Greek and with the Greek actors at the forefront. But Aeneas is telling this story about how he’s fleeing. It was told by the gods to flee Troy and found a new city, and he has his old father Anchises on his back, his young son Ascanius holding his hand, and his wife just behind him, as they’re running from the city down to the harbour to get on all the boats that haven’t been burned and just get the hell out of there. And they get down to the boats, and they’re all getting on, and Aeneas looks around and his wife isn’t there. And, of course, it’s a moment of panic – I mean, you can imagine this so perfectly, right? I mean, you look around and this person

dearest to you in the world isn’t there to be saved, [and] you have no idea what to do. He runs back into a burning city filled with Greeks looting and killing, and he is sort of frantic, running through the

burning city, when again all of a sudden, he encounters his wife, Creusa, but she’s a ghost. And she tells him to go, to go: “you must go; you have this new destiny.” But Aeneas can’t leave, can’t look away from her, until there’s sort of the final moment in their encounter: he reaches out for her, and the way that Virgil puts it is once, twice, three times he goes to put his arms around her neck but all that he grasps is air. And that power is there in Latin literature, I think, [in] Latin poetry. It’s really beautiful. I work on much later stuff. I work on like fourth and fifth century Latin literature, which again has a very different purpose, [and is] also very interesting, and more powerful than it’s given credit for, but very different than something like *The Aeneid*. But still really beautiful; I mean Latin poetry, Latin literature, is a lot of fun. Really, a lot of fun. Latin is fun to work with. I really love teaching Latin. I love the way that students can encounter Latin. It’s really cool. We’re reading Catullus in my Latin class right now: great Latin poet, sort of first century B.C.[E.] Latin poet. [A] love poet, but a sort of society poet and all this stuff as well. And it’s really cool to see the students sort of read – I mean [in] some ways read poetry for the first time, and in a different language, a language that’s thousands of years old, right? It’s really cool to think, but as they learn to sort of first get some meaning from the poem, but also to hear the music of the poem – we’re talking about meters a little bit in class – and hearing the rhythms and the music that underlies the poem, is really fun. So, partly my answer is Latin because I spend so much more time with Latin, and whenever I spend time with Greek texts, I’m reminded: “Oh yeah, this stuff is really good.” And Greek is what I loved first. I started both Greek and Latin my very first semester of university, and I did a Greek class and a Latin class every single semester for all of university. And it was Greek that I was most excited

about. I thought I would go to grad school and study maybe Greek linguistics, I thought. And there's something really cool about Greek because when you look at it, it's so deeply formed, right? ... You look at [it] on the page, and it just looks so weird, right? It looks so foreign, and for an eighteen-year-old kid, that's exciting, right? The foreignness of something is really exciting. So no, I definitely loved Greek first, but found my way to Latin over time. And now, like I say, I spend so much more time with Latin that it's... you know, you love the things that you sort of see all the time... It's sort of, I think, familiarity. We often joke [that] familiarity breeds contempt, but obviously it's the exact opposite, in some way: the more that you spend time with a person, a book, doing any activity, the more that you love it. And I think that's what – for me, at least, that's what's happened with Latin.

### **What is the value in learning/studying/teaching classics today?**

Well I think my answer is the same answer that I gave – maybe that was the second question when I was talking about *The Iliad*. Reading literature like this, first of all it is so deeply formed, and so strange, and seems like it comes from a different world in some ways. And that's exciting, I think, first of all, but what's even more exciting is when you spend time with that literature, that on first glance is so strange as to be off-putting, you eventually come to see that this is human literature, and it says something about being human. What it meant to be human, yeah, in Archaic Greece, you know 2800 years ago, but also what it means to be human in Canada in the 21st century. It's so immediately relevant, in a way that often surprises me, I think. I mean I know that... when you teach the liberal arts, you sort of learn all the pieties about how to defend the liberal arts. Obviously they're worth defending, but so often those sort of defenses ring hollow in a way until you're in the classroom, and you're talking about this bizarre text from 3000 years ago, and you get those moments, like I was talking about in the first question, where it's like everyone is transfixed by this text and you have a hundred people in a room all thinking about the same thing. And whatever the focus of that thought is, is powerful. I mean, it doesn't really matter what the content of the thinking is, but to think that these are texts, this is literature that can get a hundred people all at the same time completely immersed in a thought is pretty awesome. And I mean, that's not just Homer, of course; that's Homer, that's Virgil, that's the New Testament, that's Cervantes, or Shakespeare. I mean, these texts have that power – they force you, in some ways, through their strangeness – they force you to see sort of, maybe (this sounds really grand in a silly way) the human condition from a different perspective: through a different

lens, through different eyes, that sort of thing. And that's pretty important.

### **Do you have any thoughts on the digitization of medieval manuscripts and things like that?**

I'll say that... I'm not a digital humanist, in any sort of strong sense of the term. Like everyone, every scholar in the world, I would assume I rely on technology to do my work, and I benefit to a great extent from the work that other people have done doing things like digitizing manuscripts and all of that. For me, I think what's cool about the digital humanities approaches that I'm familiar with now [is that it] seems like it accomplishes two things. One is methodological, first of all. It allows us to look at things in a different way, I guess. By virtue of the power of computers it allows you to sort of sort through much larger sets of data than any one person could on their own, and that's really valuable. And for me, in my work, it's as simple as something like a database that has every single piece of extant Latin literature, searchable in all manner of ways. But that's really powerful, and that's a small thing, but it means that I can sort of set my attention to other things. There was a time (one hundred years ago, even just 150 years ago) when a Classics professor would be expected to just have every piece of ancient literature at his fingertips – on the tip of his tongue, in a way. And I can't do that. I wish I could do that – that would be incredible. But also I don't have to do that because of this sort of push towards digitization over the past thirty years or so. And that's really exciting. But what's even more exciting, when you're talking about these digitized manuscripts is the question of access. The potential for [digitization in general] is to make certain artifacts, objects, certain tools for working with these texts, artifacts, objects, [or] whatever, accessible to far more people. And in some ways I think that potential is to some extent untapped because things are naturally behind paywalls and all of that, and for good reason, obviously; I understand why that is the case. But hopefully we can get to a point where this sort of digitization – it already does expand access dramatically. By virtue of sort of being at the U of S and being able to use our library and the resources it provides, I have access to things I could never have dreamed of having access to here in Saskatoon in the middle of the Canadian prairies even twenty years ago. And I can do the work that I want to do because of that work that's already been done. And if I were here twenty years ago, it would be really hard in some ways, and so that's exciting, and it just seems to me that that access needs to expand further. But I think those are the two big things, and they're both really exciting. Even as my day-to-day work isn't about doing digital humanities, it benefits constantly from work that other people have done.

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ARTWORK: BERNICE DAO

## Book Review



### **The Secret History**

By Donna Tartt (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992)

Reviewed by: James Hawkes

As with many mystery novels this story begins with a murder. But, unlike in most of these novels, questions of who and how are revealed on the very first page. Instead, Why? is the question which reverberates through its pages. A young college student seeking to escape his past and reinvent himself becomes fascinated with a small and elite group of Classics students, and rapidly enmeshes with this seductively tight-knit group.

It is a fascinating study of how close, but also destructive and temporary the friendships forged in universities can be, in addition to the profound isolation which can be found even on crowded campuses. However, I would be remiss if I did not also recommend the novel for its prose, the elegance of which not only ties into the greater theme of æstheticism and further drives home the almost Victorian quality of the melodrama which drives the plot. Nonetheless, there is no redemption, nor even true guilt to be found in these characters who instead remain coldly beautiful and entirely distant throughout.





ARTWORK: ASTRID ALAS

## 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*

### ***Vibrant Haze***

*The park lamps glowed warmly above the colourful haze surrounding the park. No one noticed the haze. Just me. The Faeries full of colour, full of life, were flying and laughing throughout the park. No one noticed the Faeries. Just me. The twinkle of their laughter sounded like chime bells upon my human ears. The laughing stopped when they noticed me. Faces full of happiness turned to ones of curiosity as they regarded me. Pa once warned me of Faeries, yet with how beautiful they look it cannot be possible. They cannot be the ones I have heard about. The Faeries that lure you to their homes and feed off the youth. These faces full of intrigue, full of curiosity, could not possibly become the monsters described to us as kids.*

*They flew up close to me, examining my weathered clothing and playing with my matted hair. One drifted close to my face and looked me dead in the eye with a smile upon his face. With deceptively delicate hands he brushed some coal off my face, and pulled some straw out of my hair. His miniature lips touch my forehead before he flew away down the path. He stopped near the bench, turned back and beckoned me to follow. This faerie who seemed so harmless, so eager for a new friend convinced me to move my feet. The colourful haze surrounded me as I continued my slow pace past the warm glow of the lamps, into the dark park.*

*Warmth surrounded me as I continued walking. Warmth I have so dearly missed.*



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*By Faedina*