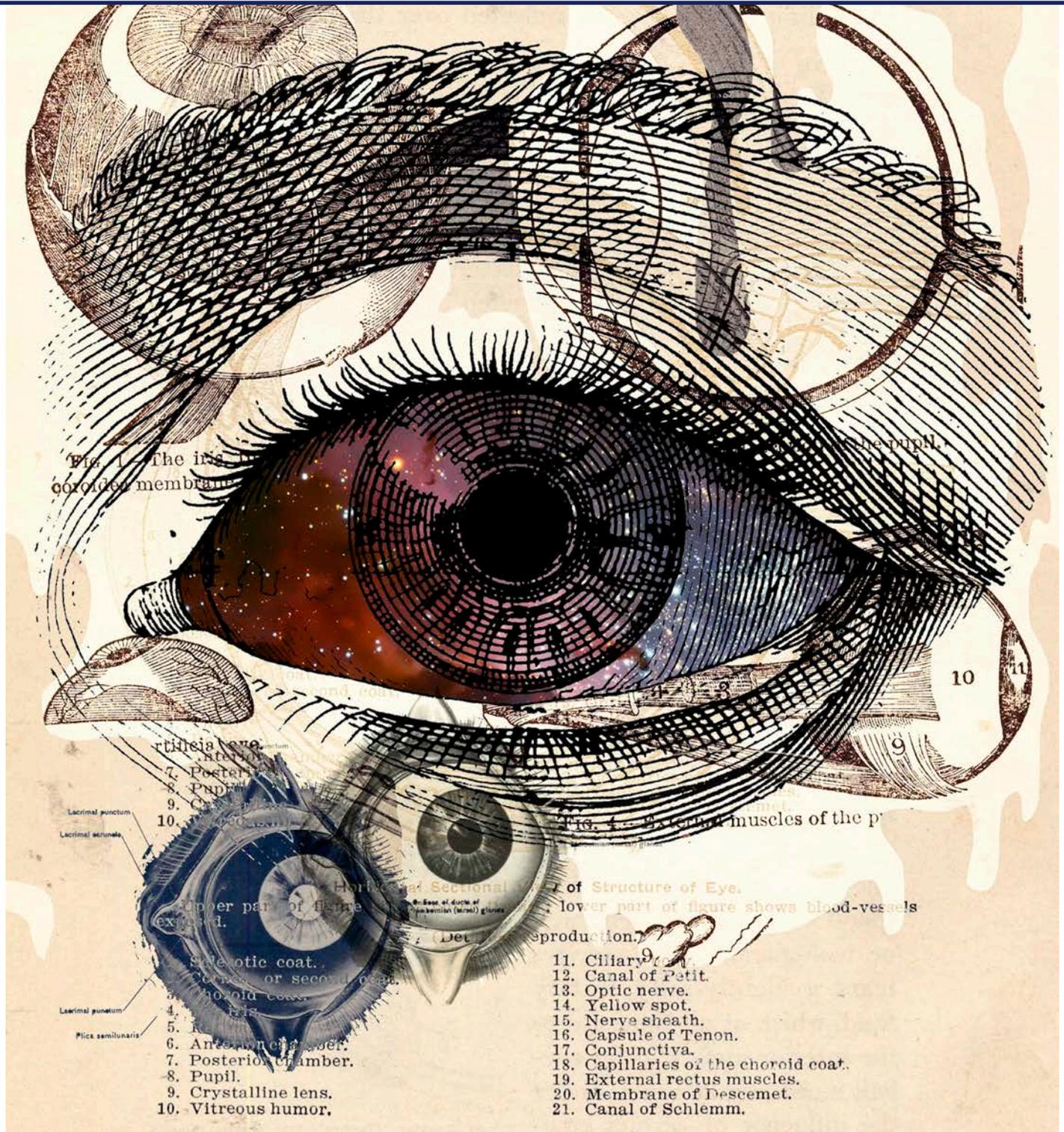


in medias res



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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Considering Canada's 150th Through Canadian Literature

By Dr. Wendy Roy | Department of English

2017 marks the 150th anniversary of Confederation, the year Canada as we know it came into being. But for scholars of Canadian literature, 1867 is an arbitrary and problematic date. In his 1989 study *A History of Canadian Literature*, literary scholar W. H. New made it clear that the category of “Canadian literature” pushes a number of boundaries. He wrote, “The term ‘literature in Canada’ poses a problem: ‘Canadian literature’ is not bounded by citizenship (there were writers before there was a ‘Canada,’ and there have been immigrants and long-term visitors since, for whom Canada has been home). It is not restricted to Canadian settings. Neither does it imply some single nationalist thesis” (2).

When I teach Canadian literature in university classrooms, I keep these ideas in mind — and a few more! I begin with texts written long before 1867. I include the 1769 novel *The History of Emily Montague* by Frances Brooke, who spent only five years in Canada a hundred years before Confederation, but whose book was the first written and set in this territory. I include exploration narratives by writers such as trader Samuel Hearne, who was guided by Nêhiyaw (Cree) and Dene men on overland expeditions to the Arctic Ocean in 1769-70. I include excerpts from *Wacousta*, the melodramatic 1832 novel by John Richardson that was one of the first by an author born in Canada. I include settlement narratives by two British sisters who moved to Ontario: *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836) by Catharine Parr Traill and *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) by Susanna Moodie. And I include poems by Isabella Valancy Crawford such as “Said the Canoe” (1884), which personifies a First Nations’ technology of travel.

The study of 19th-century Canadian literature, however, also includes works written and published after 1867. These include poems by the significantly named Confederation or late Romantic poets, writers who were born in the decade of Confederation and who worked to create a new national literature for Canada. The most well-known of this group are Charles G. D. Roberts, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Bliss Carman. Their poetry is especially interesting to me because I was born in and grew up a few kilometres from a Saskatchewan town named in 1909 after one of these poets, Lampman, who had died ten years previously at the young age of 37.

For my money, Lampman is the best of these authors, with poems that explore the natural world as well as the potential devastation to human relations caused by technological advances and environmental degradation. The words of “The Railway Station” (1888), with their critique of the rush, noise, and at the same time isolation of the world of technology, are still relevant today. So, too, are the apocalyptic negatives of “The City of the of Things” (1894), which predict that the urban will become a place of desolation that eventually kills even the humans who inhabit it:

Nor ever living thing shall grow,
Nor trunk of tree, nor blade of grass;
No drop shall fall, no wind shall blow,
Nor sound of any foot shall pass....

In my opinion, the study of the Confederation poets must be complicated by including authors not conventionally considered part of the group, such as Six Nations/Mohawk writer E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake). She was born in the same decade as

Lampman, Roberts, and the others, and her work exhibits some of the same aims as these poets, in addition to aims related to her heritage. In my study of poets of the late 1800s, I contrast the assimilationist and fatalistic poems of Duncan Campbell Scott, one of the architects of early twentieth-century government policies toward Indigenous peoples in Canada, such as “The Onondaga Madonna,” with poems by Tekahionwake such as “The Cattle Thief” that demand that readers in Canada attempt to understand an Indigenous perspective on First Nations-settler relations.

The inclusion of writers such as Tekahionwake highlights a problem in New’s argument: he does not mention narratives by Indigenous peoples from long before “Canada” was conceived. In order to give a complete picture of the literature of this land, such early creative works must be woven into its fabric. Thus we must begin not with Frances Brooke’s novel, but with much earlier oral narratives. My personal favorites are stories of how the Hotinonshón:ni — the people’s own name for the group that Tekahionwake was born into — became an association of five and then six nations, and of the tenets that allowed them to live together in harmony. An examination of “The Great Binding Law” and “Traditional History of the Confederacy,” two texts that are the result of the translation and writing down of this oral history from long before Europeans appeared on the scene, demonstrate that meaning can be carried by highly metaphoric images through generations of storytellers, and even through translation into another language and from the oral into the textual.

As we study Canadian literature into the twenty-first century, we must continue to expand the traditional canon by including works by women, by non-Europeans, and of course by Indigenous writers. We need to reconsider modern realism in Canada by including not just Sinclair Ross’s 1941 *As for Me and My House* but also Martha

Ostenso’s 1925 *Wild Geese* and Ethel Wilson’s 1954 *Swamp Angel*. We need to reconsider the nationalist poetry of writers such as E. J. Pratt by bringing in revolutionary or critical responses by poets such as F. R. Scott, Dorothy Livesay, and P. K. Page. And when we turn to postmodernist and decolonizing literature in Canada, we need to make sure that we include not just work by writers such as Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, Michael Ondaatje, Margaret Atwood, Rohinton Mistry, and Madeleine Thien, who write about life outside Canada as well as within, but also powerful works by First Nations authors. These include Maria Campbell’s 1973 *Halfbreed*, about the place of Métis peoples in Saskatchewan; Tomson Highway’s 1998 *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, about the devastating effects of residential schools; and Eden Robinson’s 1996 “Queen of the North,” about the effects on contemporary young people of an oppressive past. They also include poetry that writes back to colonialist perspectives, such as Marilyn Dumont’s 1996 “Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald” and Beth Cuthand’s 1994 “Post-Oka Kinda Woman.”

This issue of *In Medias Res* contains poetry, fiction, and works of visual art by some new Canadian writers and artists that ask us to rethink literary, artistic, and social relations in Canada. “A Potato Cutlet” by Momina Khan proposes food as a marker of otherness in Canada, “The Backyard” by Curtis Fontaine imaginatively meditates on our so-called national sport, and photographs by Shannon McConnell and Kathlyn Joy Zales contrast the cityscape of Saskatoon to rural grain elevators, churches, and abandoned farm buildings. But even if the contributions to this issue don’t specifically point to Canada, they all expand on and challenge our notion of what it means to live in, write about, and picture Canada in 2017.

Excerpt from “Old Man Prose”

By Zach Rychlo

He woke up angry from dreaming about his Father. The wind whipped at the tent walls. His lips were dried and cracked. He knew he would walk far today. When he had emerged from his tent, it didn't feel like the early morning. The air was dry, but warm wind made it feel humid. The gray clouds flew swiftly over the swinging trees. It chilled him.

He decided not to eat breakfast, so he packed his things. He did it with a silent head. Today he would try to get to Rudy Landing, 22 kilometres northeast through the Rudy passage. If the weather worsened, he would have to stay at Two Forks River—only 5 kilometres away, but he knew he wouldn't be staying there. Nothing made him work harder than the feeling of irritated discontentment.

His mind remained closed with frustration as he walked, but his pain shouted at him. Everything felt sore, especially his hip. His limp worsened everyday. There was a sharp pain in his lower back that seemed to spread down his leg. It didn't affect his pace, though; not today. When he felt this way, a lump sat in the back of his throat and he would clench his jaw constantly. Regardless of whether or not he was alone, he wouldn't speak very much. When he did, his voice sounded different—lower and more husky, like he had aged.

By noon his mind was fully at work, not interacting with the things around him, only with his past. This made him walk faster. The sun began to peer through the clouds and the wind began to settle by the time he reached Two Forks. The sweat that wet his hair made him feel refreshed. He sat down on some sphagnum moss by a fallen tree where the sun penetrated the forest. His knees cracked and popped as he sat down and his hip cramped with pain. He laid his head against the fallen titan, feeling true exhaustion after how fast he had walked in the past hour. The lump in the back of his throat began to well up. He began to weep.

Twenty minutes later, his eyes were closed and swollen. It felt good to have his eyes closed. He didn't want to stop crying. There are times of subtle contentment that tend to be ignored because they are during sad times. This was one of them. He didn't want to move because he was so comfortable.

“Love is the most difficult thing,” he thought.

The dried tears created tight streams down his cheeks that made him open his eyes. He saw movement to his left and watched a young deer and an old buck grazing about ten yards away. They weren't together, only near one another. He watched them in complete silence until the young deer disappeared into the darkening forest and the buck sat down to sleep. He wouldn't move until the other got up and walked away.



Kathlyn Joy Zales, "Ghost Town "

What can you as a citizen do to build a better Canada?

In each journal issue, members of the *In Medias Res* editorial board ask the University of Saskatchewan community a question...

I think that personally I should change the little things I do and don't do in my day-to-day life. Whether it is holding a door open for someone, picking up garbage off the street, or paying closer attention to my recycling habits. This will begin the process of changing my ways of living and hopefully touch the people around me and cause them to do the same. From there, hopefully it will be like dominos and everyone will eventually make a little change in their lives and therefore cause a huge change in our society all together.

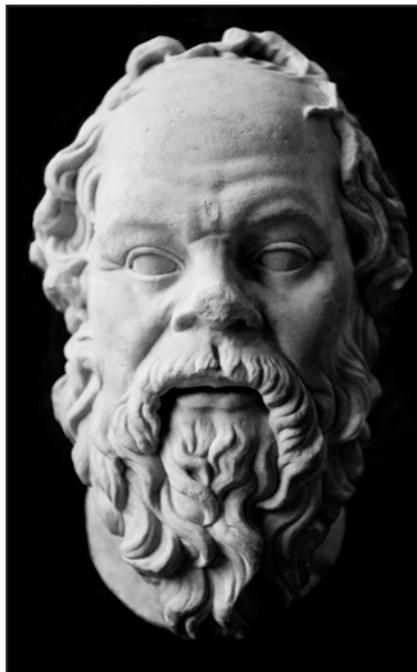
– *Katelyn, Arts and Science*

Educate myself on the problems that are happening and see if there's anything that I can do about it. Or help volunteer at a soup kitchen.

– *Cheska, Arts and Science*

Vote. Talk to your MPs about things that you are passionate about and that you think deserve attention.

– *Alyssa, Kinesiology*



To build a better Canada, citizens can give back to their communities through volunteerism or monetary donations. Additionally, individuals should take the time to learn about the diverse groups within our country and about the issues that affect us as a whole. More specifically, citizens can learn about what actions are necessary to remedy those issues, and take part in said actions to the best of their abilities.

– *Kali, Business*

Something that I could do to build a better Canada is to give up more of my time to do volunteer work.

– *Amanda, Education*

Something I could do to build a better Canada could be to donate food and essentials, or volunteer at my local homeless shelters.

– *Amanda, Arts and Science*



Jasmin Redford, "Jobs vs Gates"

2017 Heritage Festival of Saskatoon

On February 5, members of the *In Medias Res* editorial board attended the 2017 Heritage Festival of Saskatoon at the Western Development Museum. The festival featured exhibits celebrating the history, culture, and diversity of Saskatoon.

Which exhibits stood out?

Festival highlights included displays on the history of Indigenous peoples in Saskatchewan, stories of Saskatchewan suffragists, models of ships, and information on cultural centres and societies within Saskatoon. One exhibit we particularly enjoyed was that of the Saskatoon Norwegian Cultural Society. We found it interesting how exhibits such as this one work to establish community between cultural groups. We also enjoyed visiting the archives table from the Saskatoon Public Library and browsing through free prints and photographs. It was wonderful to learn that these archives are accessible to the public.

The importance of cultural events

Events like the Heritage Festival celebrate the diversity of Canada by studying its past, displaying its present, and looking into its future. It is very important to reflect on our history as a nation, as it can bring us together. Moreover, these events show people the different activities and organizations our community offers.

Saskatchewan people really take pride in who they are. Those of us from out-of-province have noticed the pride Saskatchewan people take in their Saskatchewan Roughriders, or the support they give to Saskatchewan competitors in major competitions. There is a sense of global awareness in Saskatchewan people, and it is exciting to see many ethnicities and cultural backgrounds being celebrated in our community.

Celebrating Canada's 150th

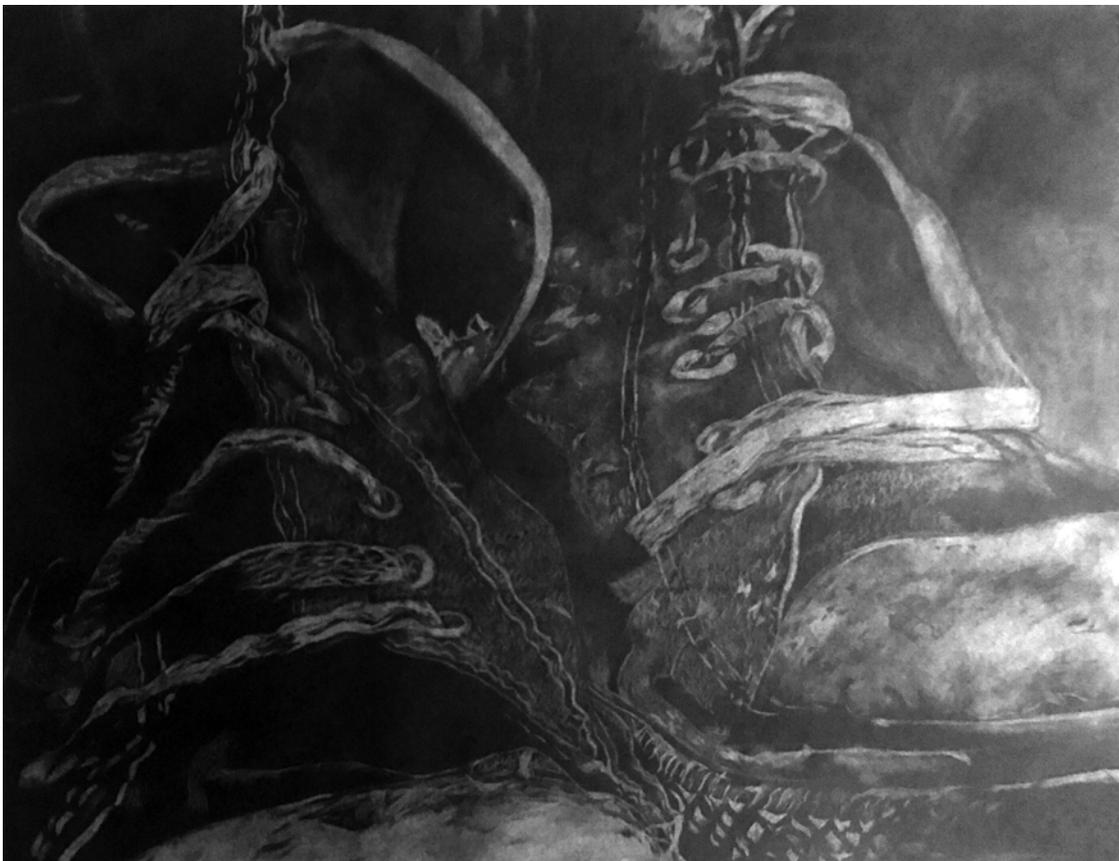
This festival celebrated all the amazing people who live in our country by showcasing the many different cultures of Canada. It also brought attention to Canada's diverse environments and natural beauty. Parks Canada participated in the celebration by offering free passes to all the national parks in Canada, which were available to everyone at the festival.

We were pleasantly surprised by the level of community support and participation at this event. People of all ages and backgrounds enjoyed the festival, and it was heartening to see that shared enthusiasm for the many heritages of this city.

The Backyard

By Curtis Fontaine

The lights come on in the backyard, shining off the ice. Dad and I turned the garden into a hockey rink (don't tell Mom). I tie my skates on a cold night in small-town Saskatchewan, the laces cutting into my bare hands as I pull them tight. I hit the ice with my brothers, Kyle and Jarrett. We skate, our steel blades echoing across the neighbours' yards and onto the street. The crossbar pings and the wooden fence shakes from the rubber bullets being launched off our sticks. I feel the crisp hard puck on my blade when Jarrett passes it to me. There's a camaraderie between brothers as we cut into the hard ice, the crack and click of water beneath. Mom brings out hot chocolate and asks if our feet are cold. We keep skating. Snow begins to fall, blowing like a shaken snow globe, transforming the backyard into a translucent world where all things are possible. Suddenly, I am Phil Esposito, I am Yvan Cournoyer, I am Paul Henderson. The puck leaves my stick with imagination; it's game eight of the '72 Summit Series and I flip the puck over Tretiak's pad. I see the neighbours peek through their curtains to watch. The Tragically Hip write a song about it, call it the "goal that everyone remembers." Mom comes back out, says it's time for bed. "Just ten more minutes, Mom," I plead, and before I know it, there's beanstalks the size of hockey sticks sprouting from the garden, and Dad's hitting me grounders. Now I am Ty Cobb, I am Willie Mays, I am Babe Ruth. I field the ball between my legs and throw it towards Dad, taking the head off a lawn gnome (don't tell Mom).



Rabiya Malik, Inverted Graphite, "Converse"

A Potato Cutlet

By Momina Khan

I dwell in contested spaces
 the betwixt and between
 constantly surprised
 by twists and turns
 views and vistas
 fission and fusion

Morning, as usual,
 in the kitchen
 beckons the thrumming of pots
 boiling of earth's edible wares
 the fry pan sizzles
 aroma of masala lingers in every nook
 pinch of savoring spices and herbs mixed
 tantalizing desi fried potato cutlets ready
 the gardening of lunches, and
 clicking of a gratified lunchbox

In sleep wiped from early eyes
 making a motion down the stairs, as usual,
 asking about his lunch for the school day
What are you making, mama?
 Fried potato cutlets, your favorite
 (refusal to accept the known)
No, I don't want to take these to school
 (request to embrace the unknown)
Can I have pasta instead?
 But it's what you love, my son
I do, but I don't
 opening the lunch box at home
 is different from opening it at school
No one, none of my friends, brings it for lunch

Moment of silence, awkward spaces of mothering
 unsettling emotions, into the abyss of the bizarre
 in between spaces filled with uncertainty
 realizing my son making sense of his duality
 grade two, a process of self discovery
 seeing self in relation to self and others

Identity negotiations in a cold white land
 Stems from what others think of me
 'Others' who I look different from
 in a struggle of self legitimation
 not only color, race, religion, and language matter
 but also and even
 a potato cutlet

Postre, el despertar

By Ani McGinnis

The cock hath crowed to the moon
and I am at a loss for words.
For she hath also sung at noon
to bring the beauty of the morning sun.
But the song hath not struck my eye,
as the tune had met my tongue.

I thought I knew the taste of love's first kiss
when it transfers through heart and lip.
Yet, this bird sings at noon and I dare not miss
what chance may bring at this humble hour.
I am lost in the delicate cream,
entranced by its sweetness and power.

I thought my soul full and rich before
but this time I want, no, need another.
I am addicted like those who are poor
in spirit to change for the better.
One more puff, I think, that's all I need,
but the song stops until tomorrow, forever.

Postre, el hurto

By Ani McGinnis

The road is long and I am weary.
My thoughts grow damp, cold, and dreary.
I've come too far to have met my match.
But she hath stole with an unbearable snatch.
It is gone from me, so now I wait
to see what comes of my loveless fate.
She hath stole it! I yelled inside.
'Cause now I have nothing, just my pride.
The last of my love is gone from me.
You know she ate it? The savagery!
My days are long apart this time of year.
And she, most aware, of my deepest fear
that I, just a man, cannot live without my love.
Now just the consumption of
it is my lasting memory.
I've lost my taste, my tongue and ear for melody.

The cream! No, my senses can no longer feel.
Puff, like magic of a man who sold his soul to the
devil.

Gone like it is something I never knew.
For my love she ate, and I miss you.

PRO

By Hannah Roberts | Editor

In their day-to-day life, Canadians have more pressing challenges and concerns on their mind than the implications of Canada's continuance as a constitutional monarchy. Yet this lack of concern itself highlights one of the reasons Canada's present system of governance might be due for a change: the fact that there can be a King or (currently) Queen of Canada without that being meaningful enough to people to seem either unproductive or important.

The face of the monarch is on all our currency. The Royal Family continue to be news items and, in the case of wedding hype or baby excitement, ambassadors of fashion and trends. The names of royal figures designate streets, cities, and landmarks. This may seem the extent of the monarchy's influence on daily life, but living in a constitutional monarchy does cost Canadians something. In 2016 Business Insider estimated that Canada spends over fifty million a year to maintain the institution.¹

One of the common defenses of Canada's link with the monarchy is that it is an essential part of Canadian culture and identity. Yet even this issue of *In Medias Res* asks if Canada should "cut ties with the British Monarchy". In the minds of many Canadians, the monarchy is not a fundamentally Canadian institution. It is understood to belong to Britain and to the past—to the historical narrative of the development of British-led colonialism and the formation of a government initially less democratic and representative than is strived for now. The prominence of the monarchy in Canadian government does not speak very significantly to the current realities of Canada's identity as a nation comprised of a variety of backgrounds and cultures, many of which have little to do with Britain.

Should Canada Cut Ties w

New citizens of Canada must affirm their allegiance to the monarch as part of taking the Oath of Citizenship:

*"I swear (or affirm)
That I will be faithful
And bear true allegiance
To Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second
Queen of Canada
Her Heirs and Successors
And that I will faithfully observe
The laws of Canada
And fulfil my duties
As a Canadian citizen."*²

It is noticeable that a head of state neither born in Canada nor residing there features more prominently in this oath than the country which new citizens are joining. Lawyer Peter Rosenthal notes in *The Guardian* article "Royal rejection: naturalised Canadians recant oath of allegiance to Queen" that "Canadians born in Canada never have to swear allegiance to the queen, unless they have certain jobs".³ Consequently, as the article shows, new Canadians are speaking out on the monarchy more than those who never have to take the oath.

Some Canadians consider themselves supporters of the monarchy, but few think of themselves as subjects. If a reigning monarch were to take actions that threatened or challenged the independence of Canada and its citizens, Canadians would not uphold this pledged allegiance. And if the power that the monarch holds is more symbolic than real, then what is the point? Continuing ties with the monarchy has real costs and implications for Canada's identity, and must be justified by more practical reasons than sentimentality and nostalgia.

1 Better Dwelling. 2016. "It cost Canada \$43 million to support the royal family in 2015." *Business Insider*. Business Insider. <http://www.businessinsider.com/canadas-cost-to-support-the-royal-family-in-2015-2016-9>.

2 Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Communications Branch. 2015. "Oath of Citizenship." Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Communications Branch. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/cit/ceremony/oath.asp>.

3 Kassam, Ashifa. 2016. "Royal rejection: naturalised Canadians recant oath of allegiance to Queen." *The Guardian*. *Guardian News and Media*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/31/naturalized-canadians-recant-oath-to-queen-royal-monarchy>.

Contra

with the British Monarchy?

CONTRA

By Dr. Keith Carlson | History

Settler colonialism continues to marginalize Indigenous people and alienate Indigenous lands, and it is Canada's monarchy, not Canadian democracy, that has served as one of the most effective checks on its excesses.

Scholars such as Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini have shown that settler colonialism is a distinct form of colonization characterized by settlers who displace Indigenous people so as to exploit Indigenous lands and resources. In settler colonialism, colonists arrive and they stay. Indeed, within a few generations they no longer think of themselves as colonizers occupying other people's lands, but rather as inheritors of land that their forefathers and foremothers have passed to them. In settler colonialism Indigenous people are socially, politically, and geographically ostracized. For instance, Canada's Indigenous people were forcibly moved onto Indian reserves, prevented from purchase fee simple lands or from fully engaging the capitalist economy, denied the franchise until long after they became a minority in their homelands, and excluded from decision making processes relating to their lands and resources.

Settler colonialism elects governments that represent settler colonial interests. Over the past two centuries it has been the Crown that has served as the principal non-Indigenous protector and defender of Indigenous interests and rights. In 1763, over strenuous opposition from settler colonists in the 13 colonies, the monarch proclaimed that all remaining unceded Indigenous lands could only be occupied by settlers after nation to nation treaties had been concluded. Resentment toward the Royal Proclamation of 1763 became a justification for settler colonists for the American revolution of 1776. In 1858 (twenty years after the Durham Report recommended responsible government in the Canadian colonies, and a decade after responsible government was actually implemented in Canada), the colony of British Columbia was deliberately established as a Crown colony with no elected legislative body. This was done in large part because settler colonialists could not be trusted to respect and protect either Indigenous rights or the honor of the Crown. Between 1871 and 1921 the Canadian Crown signed 11 treaties with the Indigenous people of what became the prairie provinces. In signing these covenants Indigenous people understood the Crown to be entering into a covenant that committed the state to intercede to defend Aboriginal rights and interests in the event of conflicts with settlers. In 1982 Indigenous people

invoked their relationship with the Crown to wrestle from the Canadian settler colonial government formal constitutional recognition of their rights. And in 1995, Indigenous people in Quebec reminded settler Canadians that their relationship with the Crown stood outside the theatre of settler colonial politics. They asserted that their relationship with the Crown prohibited the Francophone majority from having the authority to withdraw the lands of the province of Quebec from Canada without their consent.

Perhaps a useful way to frame all of this is to consider how, unlike in the United States (another settler colonial state) where the president is both the head of the government and the head of state, in Canada our prime minister is never more than the head of the settler colonial government. Canada's governor's general (who unlike our elected prime ministers have in recent years included women of colour from marginalized ethnic communities) are non-elected officials appointed by Her Majesty the Queen to represent Her interests as head of state. Of course the governor's general always leave the running of the government to the prime minister and parliament. But as the unelected representatives of the Crown governor's general do not answer to, nor are they accountable to, a settler colonial constituency. For all practical purposes, their role is to represent and defend the concept of the honour of the Crown – i.e. the honour of the Canadian state. This is a subtle but not unimportant role. As the embodiment of this set of principles and ideals, the Crown has been recognized by Indigenous people as holding the power to transcend and undermine core elements of settler colonialism.

As Canadians we have the freedom to oppose, criticize, and even hate our head of government without fear of being perceived as opposing the Canadian state. Unlike our neighbours to the south, we have never had a parliamentary equivalent to the US congressional committee on un-American activities. Indeed, as Indigenous people have so ably demonstrated throughout our history, opposing and challenging our government's commitment to advancing the interests of settler colonialism has on occasion been a means of bolstering the honour of the Crown, and thereby decolonizing features of settler colonialism. The monarchy is not the only way to achieve this, but it has done more in this regard over the years than Canadian democracy.

Say That Again

By Azures Ides-Grey

DEMETRI: I would not believe that it was June if not for the colour of the lilacs. The purple reminds me of the sky last night, as if the clouds had partaken in the Eucharist. Clouds are one with the sky, so why then would the Spirit of God ever be in need of that?

ROMAN: What do you *not* believe, then?

DEMETRI: I believe that it is June.

ROMAN: You aren't answering my question.

DEMETRI: Very well, then.

ROMAN: Lay waste to every thought that surrounds you at this very moment. Thought is so very fickle, so transitory; as people, we forget thoughts. Is there anything we can't forget? Surely, not thoughts! Thoughts must always tip toe on the tightrope of the psyche. A good thought ought never to be forgotten, and yet, such a thought can never escape the *possibility* of losing its balance. If it wobbles and plummets to its fate, it becomes nothing—something that's even less than pathetic. Tell me, is there a particular time when you forget your thoughts?

DEMETRI: I have a lot of thoughts. I guess I get caught up in the moment. I remember once when I was catching the bus, it was unusually crowded, but I found a seat near the very back. Sitting across from me was a young man adorned in the most normcore of clothes; he told me that "fragmentation is clarity." Who did he think he was, telling me this? It was postmodern indulgent nonsense of the highest order! But the most tragic thing about it was when he got up and left. Just walked through the exit. Seconds earlier, I could stare across from me and see a man there; all it took to change that was for him to get up. It was a profound loss of control. The thought has never left me and I can't imagine it ever will.

ROMAN: Never you mind that! So, what's on your mind these days?

DEMETRI: Not much at all. You?

ROMAN: I've been thinking quite often about the arts. You know, I dreamt the other night about this faceless painter. I watched them compose a painting of two friends having a discussion outside a left-bank cafe. Shortly after the painter had finished, the canvas became completely empty! Initially, I was in dismay, but to my surprise, the canvas became full again. But this time around the details were added in reverse. Somehow, it all still made perfect sense. What adds to your vigor this hour, monsieur?

DEMETRI: Not much at all. You?

ROMAN: Never you mind that! So, what's on your mind these days?

DEMETRI: I have a lot of thoughts. I guess I get caught up in the moment. I remember once when I was catching the bus, it was unusually crowded, but I found a seat near the very back. Sitting across from me was a young man adorned in the most normcore of clothes; he told me that "fragmentation is clarity." Who did he think he was, telling me this? It was postmodern indulgent nonsense of the highest order! But the most tragic thing about it was when he got up and left. Just walked through the exit. Seconds earlier, I could stare across from me and see a man there; all it took to change that was for him to get up. It was a profound loss of control. The thought has never left me and I can't imagine it ever will.

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DEMETRI: Very well, then.

ROMAN: You aren't answering my question.

DEMETRI: I believe that it is June.

ROMAN: What do you *not* believe, then?

DEMETRI: I would not believe that it was June if not for the colour of the lilacs. The purple reminds me of the the sky last night, as if the clouds had partaken in the Eucharist. Clouds are one with the sky, so why then would the Spirit of God ever be in need of that?



Shannon McConnell, "Make it Grain"

The Dog

By Quinnton Weiman

I am not a hateful person. While I would like to chalk up this virtue to some innate gentleness (my father is Catholic after all), I give credit to a very terrible thing instead; that, and how my mother washed the blood and terror away with her steady nerves and compassion. For the first five years of my life, before my parents' divorce, my family and I lived in a housing project called St. Paul's Place. It was deep in the alphabet jungle of Saskatoon's west side, and even deeper in my memory--squat rows of utilitarian duplexes, their wooden slats painted in vibrant colours. This gave the complex the flavour of some favela in Rio, but much unlike a slum, the project featured an open plan. There were no front yards to speak of, but rather one long and wide stretch of lawn that spanned the entire block. In my dim memory, neighbors shared short and amicable summers out on this shared lawn, sunbathing or sharing beers in the shade of the towering cottonwoods that lined the street.

Much of my early childhood was spent out on this communal lawn with my siblings and the other neighborhood children, while parents took casual shifts watching from their steps or lawn chairs. This world must have all been very alien to my young mother, who had grown up with her Jewish family in the relatively stodgy core of suburban Toronto. She had somehow found herself plucked from the big city, rearing a family in a wooden sardine can with my dad and his extended family, the always cheery faces of Saskatoon poverty. Nevertheless, she claims to have enjoyed the unconventional layout, and credits the neighborhood and our long-term residence on the west side of the city as crucial to the growth and character of my siblings and I, for better or worse.

I was with my mother on the chipped wooden stoop of our apartment on a late summer afternoon. A neighbor walked his dog nearby. This neighbor was one of those maladjusted teenage boys that every neighborhood knows and begrudgingly tolerates. The dog, a pitbull, was a cringing thing that he gleefully tormented with chains and cruel words. The dog had been trained to be murderous — it pulled at its chain and yelled ferociously at anything it was pointed at. That afternoon, a neighbor's kitten had been put on harness to romp and roll in the grass. My mother and I had been watching this kitten play in the setting sunlight when the boy came by, stopped at the sight of the defenseless creature, and let his dog off its leash.

I do not remember screaming. I do not remember my mother trying to scare and beat the dog away, or trying to pry the creature's jaws off of the struggling cat. But I certainly saw it all. My mother, no doubt realizing the futility of trying to save the kitten, took me inside, where I screamed at her at the top of my three-year-old voice.

“I hate the dog! I hate him! I HATE THE DOG!”

My mother held me against her and did what she could to calm me. Still recovering herself, she tried consoling me — not with any words of mutual fear and anger, but by telling me that I was wrong.

“Quinn. You can't hate the dog. The dog doesn't know any better. It's nature that makes him do that. He can't help it.”

“I hate the dog! I hate the dog!”

“Quinn. We do the same thing. We kill animals and eat them too. That's what meat is.”

According to my mother, the look of surprise on my face pulled me right out of my hysterics. I thought about this for awhile, wide-eyed, then declared defiantly, “Then I won't. I won't eat meat from any cows or pigs or chickens or horses anymore.”

My mother always recounts this line as though it were the punchline of the anecdote, but I was very serious. Whether it was the attack itself, my mother's words, or the later sight of my uncle scouring the yard with a garbage bag for the remaining bits of cat, the event had touched me in such a visceral way that I remained a vegetarian for several years after. But I can't hate the dog. To do so would be to concede to a cruel and mundane world, where dogs eat cats and children can do nothing but hate them.

Interviewing Amy Janzen on her ENG 496 Internship Placement at Sherbrooke Community Centre

Tell us about your internship. What project are you working on?

I am interning at Sherbrooke Community Centre in Saskatoon. It is a care home that focuses on an Eden Alternative philosophy... The focus is giving this Elder-centred method of care, where the Elder or resident ([‘Elder’ is] a term for resident)—they guide how they want to live their life around Sherbrooke. There are lots of pets and children, plants; there’s a pool, there’s a physical therapy and an occupational therapy facility. There [are] tons of activities going on that are structured basically in a variety of ways, so the resident can kind of choose what they want to participate in [at] any given moment. There’s lots of flexibility in their lives.

What I’ve been doing there is working with a group of grade six students that are at Sherbrooke for the whole year and we have been interviewing different Elders every week. The grade six students have been documenting those stories. In addition to that, I’ve been doing my own interviews and documenting the stories in a variety of ways, either [through] prose or poetry. I’ve also been working with the art group and artist-in-residence, and she’s been gathering a bunch of visual art pieces for these Canadian stories. The main focus and the main subject is “Canada 150” and [collecting] 150 Canadian stories. We’ve so far gotten about 70 stories, and so we’re at the midway point, which is kind of neat.

For me, my project ends [March 29]. It’s the last day and we’re doing a big celebration where we’re basically honouring everything that we’ve accomplished so far. That said, it’s gotten a lot of buzz around Sherbrooke and the CEO now wants to see it turned into a book, and so we’re probably going to be working even closer with the communications leader. The artist-in-residence, as well, she’s going to help us turn it into a really nice visual piece. And then I’m going to be working with the grade six students still, and then I imagine I’ll probably be doing some more interviewing over the next few months, just to get a few more stories from some of the people who weren’t available.

What is the final goal? Will the project be displayed anywhere for the public to look at?

Yeah... So, it's semi-public [on March 29], the celebration, anyone can come from the public or we've invited a lot of family members. So, what we're going to be doing is I'm emceeding with one of the students and then we're going to be inviting the kids to come up and read... I have about eight kids that are going to be reading different stories, and then they also have a sign-language club and they're going to be signing "O Canada" with some of the Elders, and then they came up with their other song. And then we're displaying some of the artwork on easels around our celebration, or around the Tawaw Centre. Long term it could turn into—we really want to turn it into a formal document. It might be a book. Originally I thought, just like a really nice dossier, but with the artists and residents and then with the communications leader... I think we're going to try to move to something bigger and more long-lasting.

What's your favourite aspect of your internship so far?

I really liked when I got to do the awesome interviews. That was really neat. I met some really interesting Elders... I got to do four different interviews and each Elder that I interviewed was so different in so many ways. I mean, one Elder—he was very well-educated and travelled all around Canada, and then was in a really tragic accident and then has become paralyzed. Didn't really know what he was going to do with his life, didn't know how he was going to be perceived, and didn't really want to continue. And then a friend of his taught him how to paint using his mouth and he found something to live for in continuing to relearn the things that he used to love to do. And now modern technology has enabled him to continue to research and he has a doctorate in history, and so now he can conduct research again, he can read again. He does his artwork, which is phenomenal—the pieces that I have... they're so impressive, you'd never know that he painted them out of his mouth. There's another Elder that I interviewed who is Indigenous and he taught me a lot about different Indigenous artwork and that was really cool, really impressive. And then being able to turn those into their stories and then read the stories and have them be moved by the fact that they're now in print and feeling special. Because a lot of the Elders, they feel really special by being included.

Has this work changed your perspective on Canada's 150th?

A little bit. I guess the big thing for me is that—I mean, the big project was to get 150 stories to commemorate Canada's 150th story—but I think what's the most important thing that's come out of this is that everybody has 150 stories at least, or... many stories to tell. It doesn't necessarily mean that they're more "Canadian" than the next, or doesn't necessarily mean that they're "Canadian"; but it's just important to tell everyone's story.

How do you think this will help you in your future career?

I think that the one thing that I really had to use in this program, this internship, was adaptability, because every week was different, every day was different, and there was a lot of... Even going from neighbourhood to neighbourhood—some Elders were always available because they just hung around the room or they just hung around their house. And then there were other neighbourhoods where they were just so active and they were always doing things, that even if they said they were going to be there they would go out on the day we were going to conduct the interviews. Then halfway through the time when a student was interviewing someone else they'd show up and then we'd have to kind of move around. So flexibility, adaptability, was something that was really, really used and I think that that's something very applicable in daily life and future careers.

MORE ABOUT THE COURSE

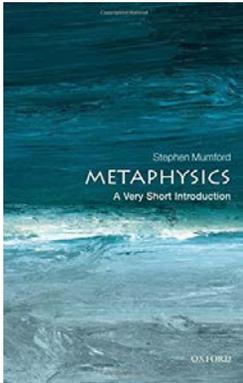
For her internship, Amy Janzen participated in English 496: Career Internship. Students in this course gain three credit units while interning at local organizations, where they learn to apply the skills they have learned in their English degree.

For a course description, visit artsandscience.usask.ca/english/undergraduate/400.php. For more information about applying for the course, contact Professor Kathleen James-Cavan (kathleen.james-cavan@usask.ca) in Arts 321 or Diana Pitoulis in Arts 319.



Amy Janzen presenting her poster "150 Canadian Voices" at the English Awards Ceremony.

Book Review



Metaphysics: A Very Short Introduction

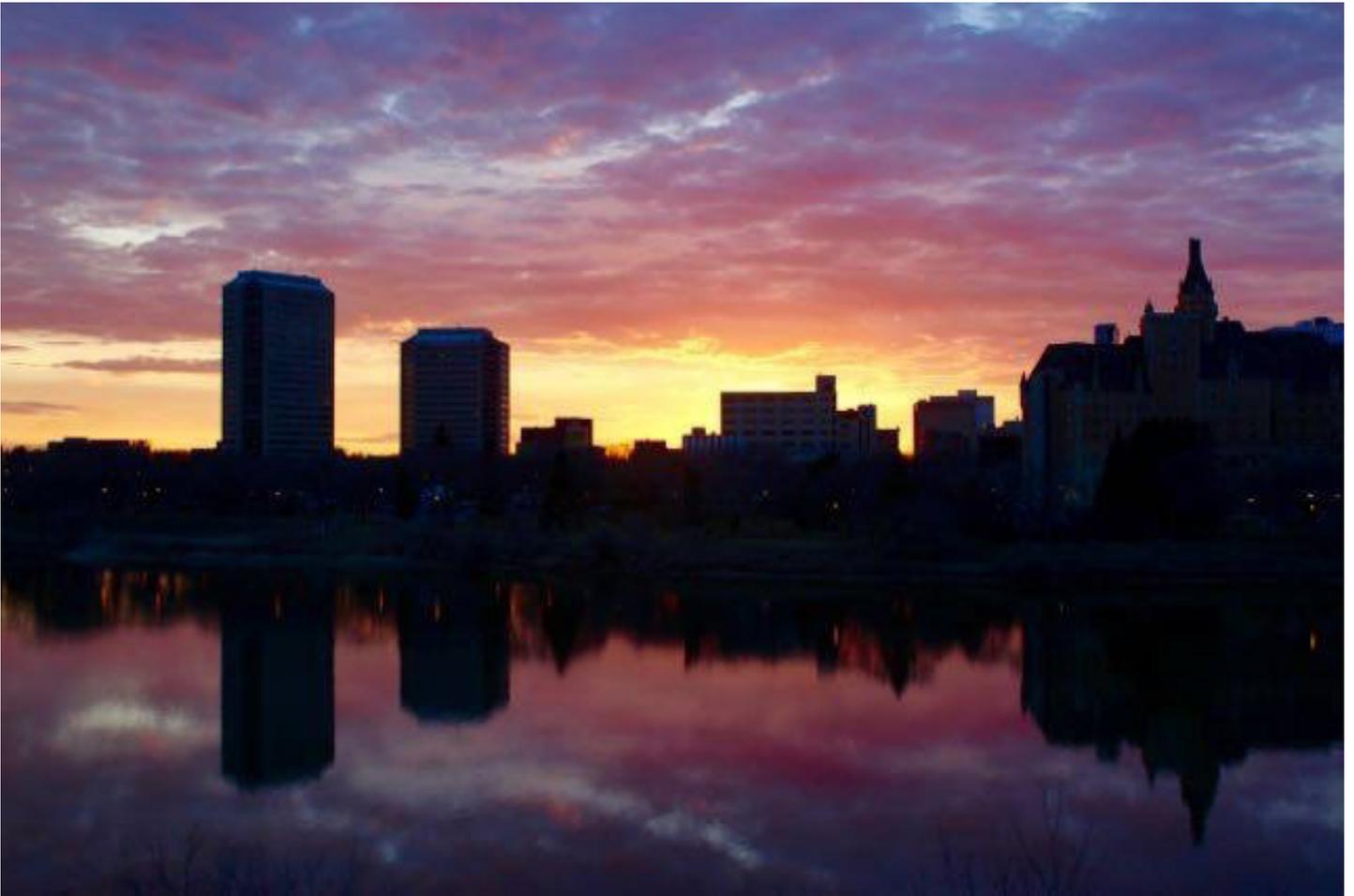
By Stephen Mumford (Oxford University Press, 2012)

Reviewed by Graham Wall

Metaphysics: A Very Short Introduction will probably disappoint two groups of people: 1) existentialists, and 2) New Age proponents. This book might be too cold for some existentialists due to its analytic nature. It doesn't focus on the meaning of life per se, but it will make you question the implications of common things such as tables, cats, and circles. The type of metaphysics which Mumford employs is that of the western philosophical tradition, rather than that of eastern philosophy. Unlike eastern metaphysics, this book doesn't often refer to spiritual ideas (though there are exceptions, like Plato's circle mentioned in chapter two). If you're looking for a book which provides fun thought experiments and questions, I would highly recommend *Metaphysics*. If you're looking for a follow up to the Deepak Chopra book you just read, prepare to be underwhelmed.



Kathlyn Joy Zales, "Linear Motion"

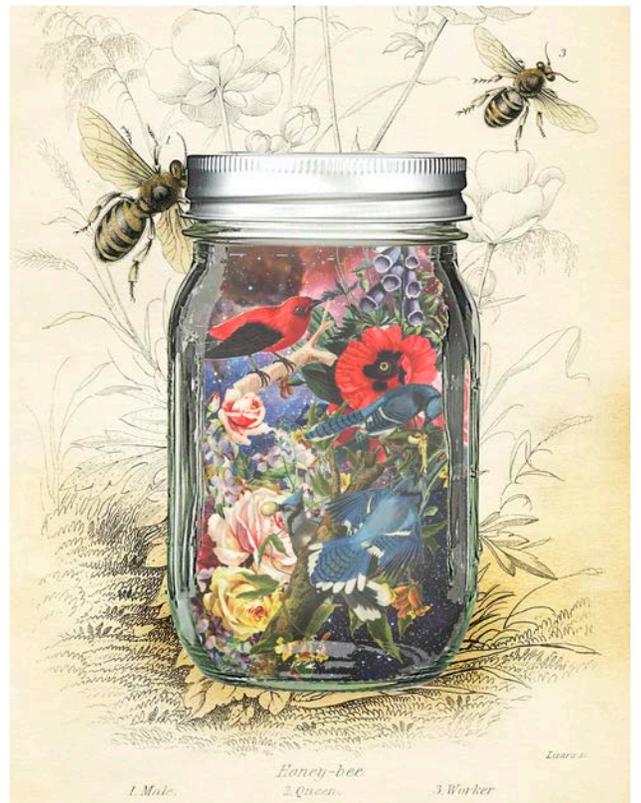


Shannon McConnell, "Right Side of the River"

The Burden of Gravity

By Shannon McConnell

From behind the pane
of his ward, Paul watches
a colony of seagulls glide
up from the Fraser. Their mocking
squawks scatter. Paul longs
to detach from the burden
of gravity, hollow his bones,
and sprout dark feathers all over
his smooth adolescent skin.
He's eager to join
the other birds on the green
sun-bleached shingles outside
his window; silent
and crouching between
folded wings, waiting
for freedom's lifting breath.



Valerie Warwick, "Forbidden Love"



Sandra Chan, "Distance Traveled"

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*

Adam Eternal

The Hero lay sprawled out on the battlefield, face-down in the mud, uniform dyed reddish-brown. Dying.

With great difficulty, he rolled over onto his back, exposing his wounds to the clear night sky, and shouted, "Ha! You can't kill me! I have undergone the wonders of creation and now I will live forever!" He was addressing the Writer.

Just then, the sky went dark and thunder erupted. Anvils plummeted from the black clouds and forked lightning shot into the Hero's mutilated body, which burst into flames and melted into a bloody paste. The soggy Earth swallowed the remnants like a sponge.

But when the Writer looked at what he had written, the Hero was still there! He had survived! The Writer heard the proud voice come again. "You will get old and wither. I, on the other hand, have no physical form. I will survive long after you have gone to dust."

The Writer pushed himself away from the desk, the chair's wheels scraping hardwood as they rolled across the room. He needed to go for a walk.

And then only the Reader remained.



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By Graham Lehnert