



# DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

## Spring 2018



## ENGLISH HONOURS SUCCESS

On April 24, 2018, two superb Honours theses passed oral examinations with flying colours. Both earned top marks. The Department lauds the hard work, insight, and talent of authors **Alexis McCormack** and **Luke Beirne**:



### WHAT DOES AN IDENTITY DO?

**Alexis McCormack** defended her manuscript of poetry, *seul: overwinter*, completing all requirements for ENGL 4196 Honours Thesis in Creative Writing. Thesis supervisor Dr. Kathleen McConnell, Second Reader Prof. AJ Ripley.

*"This thesis addresses identity, its construction, and ultimately its purpose — what does an identity do?"*

- McCormack, from *seul: overwinter*.



### WEAPONIZING LITERATURE

**Luke Beirne's** academic thesis in theory and the Modernist period, *Official Culture: The Vital Center of the Cold War*, met requirements for ENGL 4996 Honours Thesis in English. Thesis supervisor Dr. Matte Robinson, Second Readers Dr. Dennis Desroches and Dr. Dawn Morgan.

*"Though the realm of literature is often a beautiful one, it is never an innocent one, and it cannot afford to be treated as such" (82).*

- Beirne, from *Official Culture: The Vital Center of the Cold War*.

This newsletter will provide information about the Department, including recent events and notices about events to come. We will also include book reviews and other articles of interest to our readers.

We would be delighted to receive contributions from faculty, students, and alumni. Please contact Dr. Dawn Morgan (dmorgan@stu.ca).

The Department congratulates Dr. Beth McKim on her retirement as of July 2018.

EDITOR 2017-18  
Hannah Zamora (BA Hons 2018)

FACULTY ADVISORS  
Dr. Dawn Morgan | Dr. Beth McKim

# CONGRATULATIONS ARE DUE!

## RESEARCH ESSAY PRIZE IN ENGLISH

The Department and faculty adjudicators congratulate graduating student **Fatema Zohra Akbar** for her essay, "Politics of Home-making and the Use of Setting in Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve*." Akbar's essay was written for the course, ENGL 3443 World Literature: India, taught by Dr. Tony Tremblay. Akbar's essay was selected from numerous entries on the basis of its intriguing thesis, persuasive arguments, exemplary structure and writing, and depth of research appropriate to its topic.

## DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH PRIZES

The Department congratulates recipients of the English Prizes awarded for high achievement at each level of study:

- *Prize in English in First Year*: **Emily Patterson**
- *Edwin Flaherty Prize for English in 2nd Year*: **Emma Rhodes**
- *Prize in English in Third Year*: **Evan Mersereau**
- *Bishop Hill Prize for English in Fourth Year*: **Hannah Zamora**

## CREATIVE WRITING PRIZES

- *David Adams Richards Prize in Prose*: **Evan Mersereau** for "I Shall Be Elsewhere," about what mental illness feels like.
- *Robert Clayton Casto Prize in Poetry*: **Sara Nason** for "hiraeth," a poem taking its title from the Welsh word for the nostalgia felt for a place not familiar to you.
- *David Velensky Prize in Creative Writing (all genres)*: **Alexis McCormack** for prose works, "Rose Gold, inspired by human connection and meaning-making, and "POV," about inheriting the trauma of domestic abuse, with accompanying poem, "Dumpster Kitten."

## TED DAIGLE DRAMA AWARD FOR 2017-2018

English Honours student **Nolan Goguen** shared the Ted Daigle Drama Award for 2017-2018 with student **Wei Qing Tan**. Congratulations to both graduating students, who contributed to the vibrancy and professionalism of theatre at St. Thomas for four years while completing the Bachelor of Arts.

## ST. THOMAS EARLY ENGLISH DRAMA SOCIETY AWARD

Congratulations to **Telina Debly**, recipient of the 2018 STEEDS award. Debly is a Human Rights, Political Science, and Great Books Major who played the Leader of the Men's Muses in the 2018 production of *Lysistrata*.

*The two choruses unite in Lysistrata, left to right: Wilson Kennedy, Ben MacDonald, Brendan Reynolds, Ginelle Longley, Telina Debly, Julia Reid, Bella Baldin, MacKenzie Currie.*



## THE BUSIE BODY (1709) RETURNS TO NB

STEEDS brings Susannah Centlivre's early feminist comedy, *The Busie Body* (1709), back to the New Brunswick stage in 2018-2019. *The Busie Body* was the first English theatre production ever mounted in the province as far back as 1789 when it was performed in Saint John, as this Editor learned through seemingly unrelated research for the New Brunswick Literary Encyclopedia (NBLE) under the direction of English faculty member, Dr. Tony Tremblay.

Watch for notices around campus for how to get involved in STEEDS in 2018-2019.

## TRANS TIPPING POINT

**Alexa Fae McDaniel** attended a writing retreat in Victoria, BC in early May 2018 with financial support from the Departments of English, History, and Sociology, as well as the Office of Research Services.

McDaniel was invited after submitting "self-writings" for publication in *Trans Tipping Point*, an anthology of writing by transgender youth from across Canada. The collection will be published by the University of Victoria.

McDaniel is a History Major who has completed several creative writing workshop courses in the English program.



# MEDIEVAL LITERATURE CONFERENCE

Medieval Epic and Romance students attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Medieval Literature Conference organized for the Honours Seminar taught by Dr. Andrea Schutz.

Left to right: Whitney Beals, Eliza Bond, Ashley Fanjoy, Simon Paulin, Fatema Zohra Akbar, Kira Chisholm, Sarah Maddox, Nolan Goguen, and Sara-Jade Russell-Richards.



## 4<sup>th</sup> MEDIEVAL LITERATURE CONFERENCE

*Subtlety and Subversion: Explorations of Identity and Power in Medieval Epic and Romance*  
March 24, 2018

### SESSION 1 – 9-10:30

- **Nolan Goguen** – Two Bros, Chillin’ in a Hot Tub: Exploring Companionship and Affection among Men
- **Sara-Jade-Russell-Richards** – Trapped in a Tin Can: Containment, Identity and Madness in Chretien de Troyes’ *Story of the Grail*
- **Ashley Fanjoy** – Monster Mirror: Costumed Performance of Identity and Reflected Hybridity in “Bisclavret” and *Emaré*

### SESSION 2 – 11-12:30

- **Fatema Akbar** – What’s in a Bond?
- **Whitney Beals** – Cheatin’ Chastity: Adultery in the Lais of Marie de France
- **Eliza Bond** – Voices from the Shuttle: Feminine Subtext in *Beowulf* and *Emaré*

### SESSION 3 – 1:30-3

- **Sarah Maddox** – Nobody Puts Baby in a Corner: Women as Subliminal Shifters in Medieval Epic and Romance
- **Simon Paulin** – OOH Shiny! The Dangers of Mishandling Treasure and Objects in *Beowulf*, *Sir Orfeo*, and *Emaré*
- **Kira Chisholm** – Changing keys: music as the bridge between the symbolic and semiotic in *Sir Orfeo*



# ROAD TRIP!

## ENGLISH STUDENTS PRESENT RESEARCH AND CREATIVE WRITING AT ANNUAL ATLANTIC UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH CONFERENCE

STU English students attended the Annual Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax from March 2-3, 2018.

Left to right: Dr. Matte Robinson, Thalia Ackroyd, Hannah Zamora, Sara Nason, Evan Mersereau, and Luke Beirne. All presented papers or creative writing at AAUEC 2018.



### PRESENTERS

- **Thalia Ackroyd**, short story, "The Countdown" for ENGL 2123 Creative Writing: Strategies
- **Luke Beirne**, essay, "The 'Vital Centre' of the Cultural Cold War" for ENGL 4996 Honours Thesis
- **Evan Mersereau**, essay, "Watching Thoreau Watch Birds: Modern Thoreau Criticism as Contemporary Fullerton Critique" for ENGL 3416 American Literature
- **Sara Nason**, essay, "Our Fellow Critters: An Animal Rights Reading of *Moby Dick*" for ENGL 3416 American Literature
- **Hannah Zamora**, essay, "John Wayne, John Ford and the Myth of Irish America" for ENGL 3483 Irish Film I.

### AAUEC HOSTED BY STU MARCH 2019!

Watch for notices around campus to get involved

Contact Dr. Andrew Klein  
klein@stu.ca

or Dr. Dawn Morgan  
dmorgan@stu.ca

## FAMOUS LAST WORDS: A NOTE FROM HANNAH ZAMORA, EDITOR



I am looking down into the valley from this place on the hill. I've gazed at the steeples, the bridge, and the river from the steps of George Martin Hall, from the office where I worked last summer, and from the windows of the library. I've watched the trees change from green to fire to naked gray. The first time I saw that view, before I'd decided to come to STU, I did not know how often I would see it over the subsequent four years. I did not know with what delight and familiarity it would nestle in my mind.

The images I've used here are clichés. But they are also enduring, recognizable to any student who has spent time at STU. The images spiral forward through time. There's something comforting yet mysterious in their persistence.

When I look down that hill after graduation, not knowing when I will do so again, the trees will be green again and I will still be growing.