

In This Issue

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La prochaine date limite:
le 15 février



NOTRE VOIX
NOTRE HISTOIRE

Of Gods and Monsters : le visage glendonien de la mythologie



Jordan Tzouhas

Gabriella Giordan
Rédactrice adjointe français

Du 23 au 26 janvier, les Productions Cœur de Lion ont mis en scène *Of Gods and Monsters*, une pièce inédite qui unit tout en modifiant les mythes grecs de Prométhée, de Perséphone et Hadès, ainsi que celui de la boîte de Pandore. À la fois traditionnelle et moderne, la pièce, écrite de manière rigoureuse et ingénieuse par des étudiantes de Glendon, tisse des liens entre les quêtes identitaires, amoureuses et familiales que mènent divers personnages mortels et divins tout à fait distincts les uns des autres.

En août 2018, la metteuse en scène, Delphine Guet-McCreight, s'est mise d'accord avec Brontë Link-New-

man et Sarah (Westy) Weston, afin d'écrire un scénario qui combinerait les trois mythes : « Brontë et Westy ont chacune écrit le brouillon de leurs histoires avec les mythes de Perséphone, d'Hadès et de Pandore. Il a ensuite fallu réécrire la plupart du texte, ce qui m'a permis d'y ajouter mes propres idées et le personnage de Prométhée, afin de former un tout cohérent qui aborderait les thèmes de la mortalité, de l'amour, des hiérarchies, de la religion et de la famille. »

Selon la metteuse en scène, les histoires tout à fait différentes mais connexes de Perséphone et Hadès offraient énormément de possibilités diverses de construction de l'intrigue. « Je voulais une pièce qui illustrerait plusieurs facettes du monde et des

différentes classes sociales », souligne Guet-McCreight. On a ajouté le mythe de Pandore pour accentuer les différences entre Perséphone, déesse de la terre et de la nature, Hadès, dieu de l'enfer, et Pandore, une mortelle prise entre les jeux des dieux. »

Prométhée a été ajouté plus tard dans le scénario. Le jeune titan, incarné par Jamie Salloum, est à l'origine de tous les obstacles de la pièce. Habillé de façon décontractée avec une veste et des pantalons en cuir, l'existence de Prométhée dicte indirectement toutes les décisions que prend Pandore, jouée par Jordan Lie, jeune mortelle « fabriquée » pour punir le titan, au grand désarroi des mortels.

(Suite à la page 3)

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Comme il fait froid, Glendon!

I hope everyone has been keeping warm in the crazy climates we've been experiencing lately. Il semble que l'hiver est finalement arrivé, et nous avons tous hâte qu'il se termine aussitôt que possible! It feels like with the snow and the cold came papers, presentations, and thesis proposals; I don't know about you, but I can't believe that the semester is already half over.

Pour quelques étudiants ou étudiantes, y compris moi-même, la fin de ce semestre sera la conclusion de leurs études à Glendon. I whine and gripe standing in my soggy boots in the salt and slush with snow hitting my face every morning just dreaming of the very last time I will ever have to take the 11 Bayview in my life.

Cela dit, je vous encourage à profiter

du temps qui vous reste ici : soyez reconnaissant(e)s des expériences que vous avez acquises et remerciez les personnes qui vous ont soutenus pendant vos études. These experiences and people are what shape Glendon for you, and its important to acknowledge

their meaning to you before your time is up, take it from an old lady like me.

À la prochaine,

- Sarah



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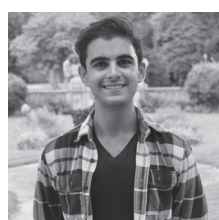
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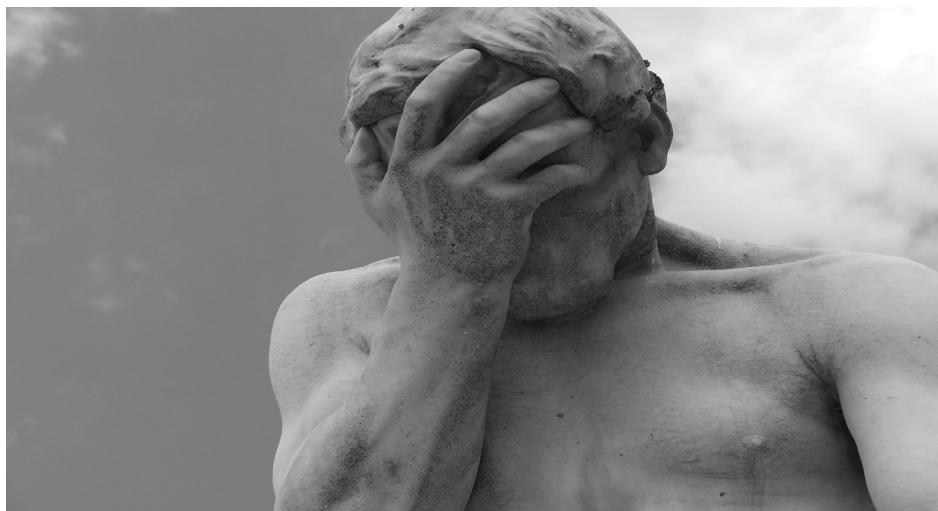
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Expressions

Why is Glendon So White?

Ayse Koca
Campus Editor

When contrasted with the Keele Campus, one easily notices the diversity lacking at Glendon. It's surprising to see that, although part of the same university, Glendon and Keele are immensely different in their racial and ethnic diversity. At the Keele campus, one sees the population of Toronto reflected more accurately within the student body; while at Glendon, international students contribute to a large portion of the multiculturalism on campus. If it weren't for the international student population on campus, the racial and ethnic demographics of Toronto are hardly reflected in the student, faculty, and staff population on campus. A stroll past the hall of Glendon alumni reveals the predominantly white history of Glendon graduates. Walking down the hall towards earlier years, it gets increasingly difficult to spot a person of colour in the composites.

Part of the reason for this overwhelming whiteness is attributed to the subjects of study at Glendon. Traditionally, enrolment in liberal arts colleges



is comprised mostly of white students. This can be attributed to the historical whiteness of liberal arts. Derived from Ancient Greece, liberal arts became the cornerstone of studying Euro-American civilization. The Greco-Roman origins of Liberal Arts which filtered through European, then American, civilization reflect the whiteness of the education provided at such institutions. Despite superficial liberal motions of inclusion, white supremacy and acts of hatred can be bred at Liberal Arts schools, which we unfortunately have seen on campus in past years.

Often, the study of Liberal arts is dominated by the white upper and middle class. It is conflicting that the study of liberal arts in itself promotes education for the sake of acquiring knowledge and preaches critical theo-

ries of society, whilst not applying those to itself. The composition of liberal arts colleges by mostly white students in the same economic class suggests that this knowledge is only valuable when taught to a certain race and class.

Glendon promises a diverse education to students that will challenge their views and acquaint them with students of backgrounds differing from their own. But what efforts are being made to diversify Glendon's student body, administrators, faculty, and staff?

Leadership is an important skill that Glendon aims to instill in its students. As a liberal arts college, Glendon produces journalists, authors, economists and policy advisors. These people have considerable influence within their occupations. Consequently, when a considerable portion of these

graduates are white, they uphold white spaces which further exclude people of colour and their narratives from such areas of influence.

This is not to say that the study of Liberal Arts is useless. Liberal Arts, and especially the social sciences, are necessary to produce leaders and critical thinkers. These areas of study provide students with a range of skills and methods of thinking that may not be developed by a STEM-oriented education.

It is also worth noting that course curriculums at Glendon often do make an effort to challenge white supremacy and class privilege (ex. the love of Marx at York). However, this is left within the curriculum. There is little if any effort to diversify the incoming student population, faculty, or staff. Reflective of the student population, the faculty, staff, and often guest lecturers on campus are also overwhelmingly white. There should be efforts to further diversify not only the student population, but also the faculty. Often educators of colour have expertise and specializations regarding race and ethnicity that white professors may be lacking. With a lack of diversity, a liberal arts education continues to give students perspectives from the ivory (white) tower.

Of Gods and Monsters (cont.)

Des scènes simultanées à l'action principale ainsi que des scènes se déroulant en enfer prennent place sur deux petits paliers superposés d'un côté de la scène. De l'autre côté, un rideau transparent met en évidence des personnages observant de loin l'action, faisant d'eux les témoins, en quelque sorte, du public. Au fond, deux escaliers mènent à une sorte de balcon, sous lequel se dessine un couloir. Les escaliers et le balcon produisent un effet de grandeur chez les personnages qui s'y trouvent. Cependant, cet effet ne semble pas s'appliquer aux mortels, êtres invisibles aux yeux des dieux.

L'éclairage et le jeu de lumière sont adaptés à la théâtralité de la pièce et illustrent avec succès le contraste entre les ambiances des scènes : le rouge assombrit le monde infernal des mortels et l'enfer même, tandis que

le bleu, le vert et le blanc illuminent l'Olympe. Le silence règne pendant la majorité des scènes pour laisser place au drame.

Le chœur, invisible quoique omniprésent, représente l'humanité souffrante. Recroquevillé et perché au-dessus des dieux, le chœur observe et commente tout ce qu'il voit, d'une voix unie, déchirée, sans se faire entendre. Lorsque Pandore regrette d'avoir ouvert la boîte mystérieuse que Zeus lui avait interdit d'ouvrir et essaie d'aider les mortels, le meneur du chœur, joué par Nicholas Mackenzie, crie d'une voix puissante et glaçante dans le vide : « Elle n'aurait pas eu besoin de faire quoi que ce soit de plus si elle n'avait rien fait du tout! » Les comédiens qui forment le chœur personnifient ainsi la misère. Leur sort touche sans aucun doute la sensibilité du public.

Il en est de même pour le personnage de Déméter, la mère de Perséphone. Incarnée par Elsie Abang, Déméter est entièrement dévouée à

sa fille Perséphone et la conduite de Zeus, son mari manipulateur, l'enrage. Leur fille, jouée par Allison Holden, est douce, discrète, solitaire et aimée de tous. Elle se lie d'amitié avec Pandore, dont le caractère ressemble à celui de Perséphone.

Pourtant, les deux adolescentes trahissent les attentes du public en défiant les souhaits de Zeus. Holden maîtrise son rôle de « bonne fille » qui est déchirée entre le désir de répondre aux volontés de sa mère et celui de connaître l'amour, mais qui finit par se plonger dans un amour improbable et ambivalent avec Hadès, soit Jirah Greaves, son parfait contraire.

Certains personnages, joués par des comédiens doués, suscitent des réactions de dégoût, de colère et même d'humour. Zeus (Jordan Stal) est égoïste, Épiméthée (Ryan Yacknovets) a un orgueil démesuré. Les Maux personnifient le mal et sèment le chaos, même si l'on se demande ce qui fait d'Espérance un mal. Madeleine Borg

interprète le rôle d'Hermès, messagère divine, par le biais d'un langage factuel et teinté d'ironie. Les personnages divers contribuent au développement de l'intrigue.

« J'aurais aimé que l'intrigue se corse un peu plus, mais dans l'ensemble, les bouts de l'histoire étaient bien liés », affirme Marie Gomez, une spectatrice. En effet, l'amour entre Prométhée et Perséphone, quoiqu'unique dans sa forme et incarné avec passion par Salloum et Lie, aurait pu être plus développé. De plus, le public ne voit pas Épiméthée lorsqu'il trouve le couteau fatal d'Hermès, ce qui suscite à la fois surprise et confusion.

Malgré tout, les comédiens incarnent avec grâce les forts liens émotionnels qui s'esquissent tout au long de la pièce. *Of Gods and Monsters* marque une importante transition théâtrale pour les Productions Cœur de lion, qui écrira et mettra sans doute en scène d'autres pièces originales.

Depression First Hand

Fresange Maleka
Contributor

#BellLetsTalk used to be one of the most uncomfortable days of the year for me. The endless tweets and retweets about checking in on your friends and knowing the signs of an anxiety attack terrified me. I mean, I still participated and used the filters like a “woke” person of my generation would, but it was all just an act. This time around, I’ve decided that I’m trading in the sharades for a more genuine look at mental illness. Here is a small part of my ongoing journey.

Coming to terms with mental illness can be extremely difficult. You think you’ve seen every symptom and faced every challenge when, suddenly, a whole new layer is revealed. One of the biggest issues I face when it comes to my own mental illness is the unknown. For instance, if you get a stomach flu you know it will eventually come to an end. You’ll rest, take your medication, and eventually feel normal again.

Depression is a completely different beast. I can get eight hours of sleep every night, take the antidepressants prescribed by my doctor, eat well, exercise regularly and still suffer. However, I’ve also gone through periods when I didn’t feel depressed at all. I’m happy, productive, and genuinely feeling better. It becomes almost unthinkable that I could ever go back to that

dark place.

But sometimes, without there even being an easily identifiable reason, I do. I’m suddenly back in the darkness. The heavy feeling has made its home in my chest once again, and now I’ve forgotten what it’s like to be okay. When I first started experiencing this up and down I didn’t know how to deal. I’d feel like my depression was gone forever, and when it would come back, I’d feel like a complete failure. I felt like I was failing my friends, my family and ultimately, myself. I couldn’t understand why I kept going through this cycle. Why couldn’t I just always be okay?

To this day I do not know the answer to that question. I might never know why I can’t just be “okay,” whatever that means. But, what I have learned is that depression and a stomach flu cannot be compared. There’s no way for me to miraculously be “cured”. That truth scares me almost more than anything. However, I still believe it will always be better than the lies I used to tell myself.

So, that’s where I’m at right now. I know it may not sound like much but accepting this reality has saved my life. I’ve learned to seek help when the lows are getting the best of me. I’ve learned that I deserve to enjoy all the happiness that I possibly can.

Even if my story is nothing like yours, I hope it can help you in some way. You are never required to share your mental health journey, but if you do, I hope you consider the power of what happens when we share our stories with honesty.



John Kemp

John Kemp’s Kitchen: In Praise of Fat

John Kemp
Health and Wellness Editor

Since about the mid-70s, we as a society have become increasingly wary of the effect that our diets have on our health and potential for disease. Some of the many culprits include cholesterol, sodium, various types of sugar, preservatives, colourings, and even flavourings. However, no one food component has been given as much heat by the public eye as fat.

It seems nowadays that whether you’re buying milk, cheese, chicken, or really anything that could possibly be associated with fat, the words “lean” and “low fat” are plastered on them as selling points. We avoid high-fat milk and eating too much sour cream, fried foods are a sin in-and-of themselves and don’t even get me started on butter. Fat, in our North American diets, has become enemy number one.

Now I’m no dietician, but when we get to the point where we need to process and remove things from our foods so far as to eliminate entire groups of macronutrients, I start to take issue.

There are many articles that will tackle this same issue, often stressing the importance of fat in a balanced diet and discussing its benefits in cell growth and insulation. This, however, is not one of those articles. Although I do agree that we physiologically need fat in our diets, I think there’s something to be said for needing it psychologically as well.

What I mean by that is that I think, above all else, that food should be enjoyable.

In our busy modern lives,

the role that nourishment plays has changed significantly from what it was even as little as 20 years ago. The formal family dinner of the Leave It to Beaver days is long past, and we now often eat on-the-go, dedicating relatively little cognitive effort to actually appreciating what we’re eating. Food has become, in many respects, a necessity rather than an indulgence. This, compounded by our collective contempt for fat, salt, sugar, and all the other components that make food enjoyable, makes for a rather dismal environment for food in our lives.

The larger problem with this is that it doesn’t only devalue food, it makes it the enemy. We become leery about each bite we take and each dish we order for fear that we might gain a few too many pounds or that we’re cheating on our diets by celebrating “cheat day” 48 hours too early. We start thinking of certain foods as “sinful” and ultimately associate the enjoyment of fatty foods with misbehaviour and negativity. This is not a healthy relationship to have with the very thing we need to live.

Instead, we should take a kinder, gentler, more balanced approach to fat and the foods that contain it. Perhaps rather than having five slices of ultra-low-fat-so-light-it-floats-off-the-plate cheese, one enjoys a couple slices of a lovely smoked gouda. Or maybe it’s thoroughly enjoying the big roast dinner on a Sunday night and having a lighter but equally as enjoyable lunch the next day. Either way, the idea in all of this is that we simply need to develop a relationship with fat and with food of all shapes and sizes more generally that emphasizes not substitutions and compromises, but balance, moderation, and enjoyment. After all, the great Julia Child did always say, “The only time to eat diet food is while you’re waiting for the steak to cook.” If that’s not wisdom, I don’t know what is.



How Getting a Breast Reduction Helped Me Unlearn Heterosexism

Anonymous

Getting a breast reduction was one of the most difficult, intimidating, exhilarating, and satisfying decisions of my life—in that order.

I had bad luck in the Russian roulette of genetics which granted me small measurements with a disproportionately large chest. Needless to say, my body strained to support what eventually became a chest in the size of 32G. Neck pain, back pain, deteriorating posture, and sexual harassment gradually became my normal.

I was no longer identified by childhood nicknames à la Lisa Simpson, but rather, I was the girl with the large chest, and nothing more. No amount of good grades or soul-searching led me to become more than that in the eyes of others (read: most men, some women).

When I wore high-neckline clothing to cover up, I was accused of enhancing the size of my chest. When I wore low-cut clothing, I was accused of showing it off. When I dressed to mimic other girls my age, I was accused of dressing inappropriately by sheer virtue of my figure. My ability to represent myself became trapped in a catch-22, and I was slut-shamed to no end.

What other people considered my defining characteristic, and some, equally derogatorily, my best trait, quickly became my biggest insecurity. Somehow it invited comments. Regardless of the people, the setting, or my efforts, it was always a topic of discussion.

For a few years, I tried to overcome this insecurity by embracing it. I would be the first to make statements about the size of my chest or crack a joke. I was always told to approach my insecurities with humour. But this didn't work. I was still a slut, just a self-proclaimed one now.

Men in my family barely looked me in the eye when I spoke. Men on the streets, many of them decades older than me, invited themselves into my life to compliment me with cheaply disguised intentions. Men who knew



me imposed personality traits upon me in hopeful misdemeanour. Male teachers commented as early as elementary school. I was one-third human, two-thirds sex symbol.

For four years I played with the idea of a reduction in the sterile environment of my doctor's office. A push-and-pull of pros and cons stretched endlessly across my mind. I bit my tongue every time before requesting a referral, for fear of losing a part of myself and my value. More accurately, I might say, a part of myself that others had defined for me in terms I didn't like and under circumstances I didn't want to be associated with.

Once I reached the point of suggesting a surgeon by name, my doctor sent me the referral. She told me to schedule an appointment—it could be strictly informative; I could always say no. My doctor detected what I could only detect in retrospect: I was already too emotionally invested, whether I realized it or not.

Luckily, my surgeon detected the same thing, scheduling my surgery date during my first visit to her office. Later, I would remember this as one of the most fortunate events in my life. Thus, the slow process of undoing societal notions of female value began. In

other words, healing began long before surgery.

Regardless of gender, people get breast reductions. But for a cisgender woman, getting a breast reduction forced me to face raw, vicious heterosexism head-on. So ladies, if you're even considering a breast reduction, it's probably a sign that you should get one. And if your experience will be anything like mine, keep a couple things in mind: First: men in your life will try to steer you off course, pointing out harm that will befall you and conjuring up every reason why you shouldn't. Whether they're your friends, your partner, your colleagues, your coworkers, your family, or just strangers—don't listen to them. They will treat it like the tragedy it never was and never will be. The only tragedy is continuing to live in pain and discontent to appease them.

Second: you are valuable in every sense. This is not negotiable. You are valuable naked and trembling of cold in front of the mirror after a shower. You are valuable baggy-eyed and slow in the mornings. You are valuable hairy and bare-faced. You are valuable regardless of the relative size of various body parts. You are valuable in pain and suffering, but also in your self-preserving demands. You are valuable in

your rawest, purest form by simple virtue of your humanity.

Since my surgery, I have encouraged numerous women considering a breast reduction to go through with it. Like me, many of them considered backing out, and are now glad they didn't. I repeat like a mantra: the only thing you will regret is not doing it sooner.

For the reasons I have mentioned above, the process is much more gruelling in the emotional sense than the physical sense. For many of us, a breast reduction can seem like we are removing something of value from our beings—this is simply not true, and anyone who claims that it is has deeply (and discriminatorily) misplaced their priorities in loving you.

The Problem with Prequels: A response to *The Crimes of Grindelwald*

Kaya Harris-Read
Chief of Operations

I grew up with the Harry Potter books and movies, and for a long time, as someone who loves to write, considered Rowling one of my inspirations. There are lots of things she does well, and credit is earned where credit is due. However, it seems that recently she has been rubbing a lot of her fans the wrong way. Although there are several reasons for this, the one I'm focusing on stems from a trap into which many creative individuals have fallen: making bad prequels. (I should mention, this will involve spoilers for the *Fantastic Beasts* movies.)

Understandably, when it was announced that there was to be a movie based in the Harry Potter universe, a lot of people were excited, myself included. And I genuinely enjoyed it. Even though it involves a storyline brought up in the Harry Potter books, it was separate enough from the original series to feel like its own story. There was some

fan service, but just enough so as to not be gimmicky. We got to see different magical creatures adapted to film that had been excluded from the original movies, a nod to those who had read the books, without it feeling forced or disingenuous. Unfortunately, the second installment to this movie franchise is a different story.

In order to illustrate common problems associated with prequels, I will draw a parallel with my favourite example of a bad prequel: *The Hobbit* movies. Although not based on a book written as a prequel, the movies fit into this category largely because if *The Lord of the Rings* movies hadn't been so successful, they would have never been made. What originated as an episodic, adventure-based children's book was turned into a three part high-fantasy epic packed with characters and references to the original trilogy, for no better reason than fan service. This is not to say that fan service is inherently bad, but when it undermines the plot and integrity of the piece of work in which it appears, it feels as though the artistic minds behind the project don't trust their work to hold up without constantly connecting it to the original storyline.

The Crimes of Grindelwald had a very similar flavour, as it rides on the coattails of the successful Harry Pot-

ter franchise and contains a lot of the same problems as *The Hobbit* movies. The appearance of Nicolas Flamel was exclusively fan service, and added nothing to the plot, much like Legolas in *The Hobbit*. And then there's Nagini. The introduction of her character undermines the three Harry Potter books in which she appears, because there was never any indication to the reader that this was more than just a snake. This was never a character we were meant to sympathize with, and the reader is supposed to feel jubilant when she is killed. The humanization of her character works against this, and changes the reading of the original books.

There are other references and name-drops throughout the movie. There were some that didn't raise any issues, but then there was the McGonagall cameo, which blatantly contradicted the timeline laid out by the original novels. As in she wouldn't have been born yet, let alone teaching. I took to the internet to see what other people thought about this plot hole, and while some people theorize that it could have been her mother, this goes against who she is credited as in the movie, and also what we know about her family based on what Rowling has told us. Some other people have brought up other suggestions, such as time travel. While usually I'm all for creative fan theories, to me

it becomes disappointing when people create these theories to compensate for lazy writing on the author's part. I don't blame people for assuming that there's a clever explanation; Rowling is a clever writer. But the McGonagall plot hole appears among several continuity issues, and other things which seem extremely unlikely based on what we know about the universe.

These problems with the movie wouldn't bother me if they only impacted the movie, but once you know something it's hard to pretend otherwise. It's hard to hold separate the information given by this movie that dampens the enjoyment of the original series. This illustrates what results from a bad prequel, the undermining of the works from which it is based. It is not just disappointing because I was looking forward to this movie and felt let down. It's disappointing because it undermines a series that was a huge part of my childhood. It would be untrue to say that it has been ruined for me. I still enjoy *The Lord of the Rings* and I'll still enjoy *Harry Potter* all the same. It's a disappointment because I believe that if this movie didn't fall into patterns so common of prequels, which the first movie avoided, it could have been a great stand alone series which, while complementing the *Harry Potter* stories, doesn't take it over.



Spider-Man: Into the Spider-verse Review

David Rosen
Contributor

There are certain moments in life that just stand out. These moments may be happy, sad, loud, quiet, intense, or reflective. What they have in common is how they manage to bury themselves into our minds and to utterly redefine us, sometimes immediately. For me, some of these moments take the form of cinematic experiences. Such experiences include my first exposures to *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, *Sense & Sensibility*, *Toy Story*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *There Will Be Blood*, and, more recently, *Moonlight*. These movies all came along suddenly and without warning, broke me apart, built me back up, and simply sent me reeling. In December of 2018, yet another film worked such magic on me.

I'm not a huge fan of superhero movies. Sometimes I enjoy them quite a bit, like when I saw *Iron Man*, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, or *Guardians of the Galaxy*. *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, however, was something else entirely. It's not just that it's a gorgeously animated movie in a time when we haven't seen groundbreaking animation from American studios, it's also what the film did to me. It has been a long time since I've spent the whole time watching a movie both laughing and crying (not simultaneously). The film is an emotional roller-coaster.

Spider-Verse has been getting really good press since its release. If you read the reviews, you'll see various aspects of the film praised, the animation and the writing in particular. It's true; both are superb. The writing is especially gratifying given that superhero films tend to prioritize good dialogue least. As well, its voice performances and character development are just fantastic. I think Shameik Moore is outstanding as the main character, Miles

Morales, and Jake Johnson gives one of the best performances of his career.

However, I want to talk about what the film does that very few others do. I think *Spider-Verse* manages to reach two audiences: comic-book fans and movie-lovers. What's more impressive is that it does so seamlessly. It speaks to both audiences with the same imagery and the same language. I went to see it with a couple of friends, both of whom are comic-book fans. I, on the other hand, fall firmly into the movie-lover camp (I'm practically comic-book illiterate). After the movie ended, we were all buzzing about the same scenes and the same characters, albeit for different reasons entirely. *Spider-Verse*, instead of being two movies rolled into one, manages to be a singular vision, enjoyable for anyone.

I also want to mention the music. In this case, I mean both the soundtrack and the score. The songs, generally blends of modern R&B, pop, and trap, fit the story extremely well. (The soundtrack is just okay outside

of the movie.) In particular, "Sunflower" serves as the perfect anthem for Miles (the main character). Daniel Pemberton's score, which combines DJ scratching, breakbeat, and orchestral music, is sublime. The score is great to listen to outside of the film.

I will shamelessly admit that I have seen *Spider-Verse* five times in theatres, and I want to see it yet again. It just speaks to me in a way that few films do, and I think it will have that effect on many people. It is, after all, a superhero movie; it's very easy to like. I also think that the message at the core of the film actually gets to the heart of why superheroes, and *Spider-Man* in particular, are important to our society.

Simply put, this movie rocks. See it as soon as you can, on the biggest screen possible!

A Review of A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships

Brianna Carrasco
Contributor

On November 31, British pop-rock band The 1975 released their third album *A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships*. The 1975 have reached tremendous success since their first album, but they took a brief hiatus so that lead singer Matty Healy could receive treatment for heroin addiction. The overall theme of the album is the impact of social media on our relationships, mental health, and lifestyle, along with stories of Healy's drug abuse. It definitely makes listeners question the current age of technology in which we live.

The 1975 starts every album with a remix of the same song, coincidentally titled "The 1975." In this version, the band sets the tone of the album by manipulating Healy's voice to sound robotic. They similarly make Healy's voice more electronic in "How to Draw / Petrichor." Another track, "The Man Who Married a Robot," is not a song at all, and is instead a poem nar-

rated by Siri. The song brings attention to how bizarre it is that literal robots like Amazon's Alexa have become so normalized. The theme of the modern technological age is present throughout all the songs on the album, but especially in these following songs.

The 1975 is known for their dance-pop ballads with the main purpose to make people sing at the top of their lungs. The pop-punk track, "Give Yourself a Try," is a great example of that, and tells listeners that it's okay to not have the perfect life like people pretend they have on social media. The title of "TOOTIME" is wordplay for the phrase "two-time" and is simply a tune about infidelity, especially over social media where actions such as liking somebody else's Instagram picture or texting another person, may be considered "cheating."

The jazz-inspired song, "Sincerity is Scary," talks about how people tend to hide behind a facade over social media. Matty discusses how being sincere and genuine over the internet is scary and vulnerable, which is why he believes people lie about their image online.

Fans of The 1975 know that the band never shies away from discussing important world issues in their music and the following songs are no

different. The song "I Like America & America Likes Me" is a heavily auto-tuned song with Soundcloud rap vibes about today's youth and gun violence in America. "Love it If We Made It" is by far my favourite song on the album because it is a song of hope. Healy told online magazine, Pitchfork, that he collected the headlines of newspapers for a year in order to write the song, whose lyrics reference political issues like police brutality, Syrian refugees, and Donald Trump's presidency. While Healy makes reference to the terrible things happening in the world, he repeats the line "But, I'd love it if we made it," meaning that he hopes the world will continue to push through the hardships.

The 1975 are also known for their deeply heartbreaking lyrics, which are definitely present in this album. "Mine" and "Be My Mistake" are both melancholic songs about being afraid of commitment and hurting someone who meant a lot to you. The song "Inside Your Mind" is creepy, piano-driven song about wanting to know what your partner is thinking, which includes gruesome, bloody imagery. Healy told Pitchfork, "'Inside Your Mind' is just the idea of sometimes wanting to know what your partner is thinking so much that you want to smash their head open to look."

As previously mentioned, Matty Healy took a break from music to check into a rehabilitation center to overcome his drug abuse, and the next songs express his internal struggle with addiction. "I Couldn't Be More in Love" seems like a love song, but it's about struggling with his addiction while making music for his fans. Healy apparently recorded the song the day before he went to rehab, and you can definitely hear the fear and raw emotion in his voice. "Surrounded By Heads and Bodies" is a short piece dedicated to a woman Healy met in his rehab facility and "It's Not Living (If It's Not With You)" is what he calls "the big heroin song," which explains his addiction in detail.

The album ends with the song, "I Always Want to Die (Sometimes)," which may seem a bit depressing, and while it is about depression, it's mainly about dealing with mental illness in the age of technology when most of our lives are online for the world to see. Surprisingly, it is a hopeful song about making it through the hard times. The song is the perfect way to end the album, which takes listeners through a range of emotions. The album is such a powerful comeback from The 1975 and I'm so excited for more music in the future!

Lionheart Productions Presents: Of Gods and Monsters







One in Ten Words

Is Field Trip Announcement a Farewell to Toronto Festivals?

Anastasiya Dvuzhylov
Contributor

With the announcement that Field Trip, one of Toronto's music and arts festivals, is going on hiatus, it seems like big musical events in the city are becoming scarcer. If it doesn't return in 2020, it will join Bestival, Warped Tour, and Riot Fest in the festival graveyard. While cities like Montreal seem to be thriving, why is Toronto on a downward spiral?

Riot Fest cited removing Toronto from their stops because of "local changes in Riot Fest's partnership." Union Events, the original organizer, had been bought out by Live Nation Entertainment in early 2016 and Riot Fest was one of the events that they decided to no longer support. Warped Tour founder, Kevin Lyman, had different reasoning behind ending his festival, citing a decline in ticket sales and band participation. Though a 25-year anniversary celebration is set to happen in 2019, Toronto doesn't seem like it will be one of the stops, marking the end of the punk rock heyday. UK-based

Bestival pulled out after only two years in the city, but these are all

international festivals. What about Toronto's very own?

Toronto Urban Roots Festival (T.U.R.F.) has been absent for several summers now, and Time Festival, though short lived, has yet to make an appearance since 2016. Edgefest is presumed to be defunct too, ever since its namesake 102.1 The Edge came to an end. Is this faltering scene caused by big corporate buyouts or have Torontonians lost their passion for festivals? Digital Dreams and Veld seem to be faring well but they're the new kids on the block.

The music festival decline may seem discouraging but it isn't an accurate reflection of Toronto's overall blip in the North American music scene. We're still a stop on almost every major tour with bands often adding two or three dates. Local venues may not offer the comfort of grassy patches and rows of porta-johns but the drinks are a hell of a lot cheaper. While this may be a downward trend, it can always be turned around. New public spaces like the Bentway are promising for the community, with Toronto bands like Brave Shores and The Darcys playing shows there. And if Field Trip does return, Toronto's music scene might just become a little bit louder.



Winter Events in Toronto: What Not to Miss

If you're around Toronto and hear of an event that might be of interest to our community, write to us at: metropolis@protemglendon.com.

Arts and Culture

Wildlife Photographer of the Year
Royal Ontario Museum,
Jan 13 – Mar 31

Stage Russia – Anna Karenina
Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, Feb 10

Toronto Black Film Festival
Various Locations, Feb 13 – Feb 18

Wavelength Winter Festival
The Garrison, Feb 15 – 17

Jukebox Hero the Musical
Ed Mirvish Theatre, Feb 20 – 24

The Artist Project
Exhibition Place, Feb 21 – 24

Winterfolk XVII Blues & Roots Festival
Various Venues around the Danforth,
Feb 22 – Feb 24

Impressionism In the Age of Industry: Monet, Pissarro, and More
Art Gallery of Ontario, Feb 16 – May 5

Career & Education

TechTO
RBC WaterPark Place, Feb 11

The Facebook Fix: How to Get Your Content Seen
Camp Tech, Feb 13

Annual Move Your Paws For the Polar Bear Cause – 1k & 5k marathon
Toronto Zoo, Feb 23

Community and Environment

Free Skating
Evergreen Brickworks, Every Friday –
Sunday until end of February

North York Community Blood Drive
St. Gabriel's Parish, Feb 11

Light Up! 2019 Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival – Celebrating the year of the Pig
Bond Education Group, Feb 18

Food and Drink

Oyster Sundays (\$2/shuck)
Eastbound Brewing Co, Every Sunday

Rose and Rose Wine – A Cake Decorating Workshop
230 King St East, Feb 16 – 17

Music and Entertainment

The 2019 Motorcycle Show Toronto
Enercare Centre, Feb 15 – 17

Tales of Two Cities
The Leipzig-Damascus Coffee House
Feb 21 – 24



Gulsvet Dela Cruz

Winter Lights at Ontario Place

Gulsvet Dela Cruz
Metropolis Editor

Winter's shorter days and colder weather definitely force me to work harder on not slowly slipping into a frozen lethargy. So why not try exploring Toronto a bit? I knew about the Aurora Winter Festival, but to be honest I'm a bit broke after the holidays and want to do something more... free? So, (among other reasons) I decided to try out the event next door to the Winter Festival and explore the Lights Exhibitions at Ontario Place.

It was not as packed as the more "touristy" and heavily advertised Winter Festival, but the aura definitely shouted winter holidays with trees strung with lights in a Christmas fashion in nearly every corner, as well as a festively lit skating rink to top it off. However, it was a relief that there were not too many people and, more importantly, barely any stores selling overpriced food and knick-knacks.

Most of the area was reserved for art pieces, making for a great, nightly

stroll. They were mostly centred around manipulating or directing light in the dark through structures to create various effects and symbolisms. The most intriguing one for me was Christine Dewancker's "The Faraway Nearby." It is essentially a spread of illuminated crystal towers of varying heights (reminiscent of Superman's icy Arctic fortress) along the lake, where from specific angles, you can see the towers line up to bring faraway backgrounds in closer view. Moreover, the backdrop on the lake facing west was beautiful—distant buildings in Mississauga and Etobicoke glittered with bright, tiny lights against the empty, cold sky. It was definitely a place I would want to just sit in for hours on end (if not for the harsh realities of winter and human body temperature).

The relative solitude and tranquility, as well as the emotional warmth brought about by the teeming lights throughout the winter night, made me more appreciative of the now-beyond social media. It's moments like these that give you a sense of just being. It takes you away from your reality beyond the moment, not having to work towards some goal or against some difficulty in life, but just to accept and appreciate the beauty of where you are.

Le gratte-ciel le plus grand du Canada : celui qui obstruera la vue des Torontois

Dana Vuckovic
Contributrice

En tant que citoyenne de Toronto, je crois que la construction du gratte-ciel de 306 mètres, nommé The One, qui se situera à l'angle des rues Yonge et Bloor et dont l'achèvement est prévu pour 2022, mérite un certain respect de notre part. Cependant, ce projet suscitera une grande indignation chez les Torontois. Malgré le zèle et l'enthousiasme débordant de Giles Robinson, l'un des concepteurs du gratte-ciel, je pense que les architectes du projet devraient fortement revenir sur leur décision de bâtir l'édifice, à cause de ses poutres métalliques gigantesques, de son revêtement extérieur peu flatteur et de sa hauteur démesurée.

Certes, son architecture à la fois moderne et classique nous fait penser à la magnificence des bâtiments de la Renaissance, mais ses poutres métalliques n'émerveilleront point les passants parce qu'elles auront caché l'immense beauté des fenêtres. À quoi sert-il de vanter la beauté d'une chose si elle ne peut pas être véritablement admirée? Par conséquent, le gratte-ciel aura l'air d'une prison dont la hauteur vertigineuse terrorisera les citoyens. La vue des passants et des habitants sera désagréable non seulement à cause de l'apparence carcérale de l'édifice, mais

également à cause des rangées infinies de boulons et d'écrous qui l'entourent. N'y a-t-il pas assez de structures métalliques qui nous cachent le charme rustique de la ville? Au moins, l'énormité de ces bâtiments servirait à abriter facilement le gorille géant bien-aimé, King Kong, qui en profiterait au maximum!

Faute d'un raffinement esthétique, le gratte-ciel ne s'intégrera pas à l'aspect urbain du quartier. Je concède qu'un revêtement extérieur en or apparaît dans toute sa splendeur, mais la brillance quasi aveuglante d'un tel revêtement n'ira pas bien avec certains bâtiments néo-gothiques. Norman Foster, le chef du projet, a beau mettre l'accent sur le style sophistiqué de l'édifice, l'élégance a-t-elle vraiment besoin d'être aussi tapageuse?

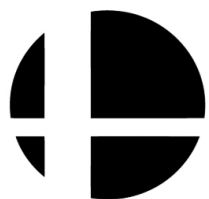
Construire le plus grand gratte-ciel au Canada est sans doute très impressionnant, mais à cause de la hauteur effrayante de celui-ci, les citoyens ne pourront pas apprécier à fond ses diverses caractéristiques, telles que le petit bosquet d'arbres au sommet de l'édifice. Effectivement, les gens auront mal au cou en essayant de trouver ce bois masqué par une centaine d'étages.

Je reconnais que la construction de ce gratte-ciel pourrait accroître le prestige de la capitale de l'Ontario, mais à quoi servira cet « honneur » si seulement les gens de la haute société peuvent l'admirer en y habitant et en fréquentant ses restaurants chics et inabordable? Comment établirions-nous une harmonie à Toronto si un bâtiment d'une telle valeur creuse l'écart social et économique entre les citoyens?



Klaus Johansson

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Finding Places to Find Yourself... and Racism: Studying abroad while “Brown”

Sabrina Sukhdeo
Issues and Ideas Editor

On the first day of my exchange in Copenhagen, I was greeted by the sight of the most adorable, well-mannered toddlers waddling their way to school—all of whom were blond-haired and blue-eyed. Along with the cobblestone paths and Danish-language road signs, it was one of the strongest reminders that I was far, far away from Toronto. The geographical borders of my life have only stretched so far as Vaughan, Etobicoke, and North York, so racial homogeneity was a largely distant concept to me. As the reality of my new home sank in, I began to wonder how much my brown skin would shape my life abroad.

Truthfully, it wasn't something to which I gave much thought while planning my exchange. I was excited about the opportunity to study political science through a non-North American lens. I wanted to experience independent travel, make a home

out of a completely unfamiliar city. And in my defense, studying abroad is frequently glamourized as a panoramic getaway, brimming with life-changing adventure and potential for self-discovery. Rarely mentioned is the fact that, in the same space you're given to discover yourself, others are discovering you, too. You're a traveller, but you're also a foreigner, and that label comes with a lot of baggage—especially if you're a Brown person visiting a dominantly White country.

The history of brown-skinned people voyaging to “White” lands itself is deeply political and fraught with negative stereotypes. Sometimes, we're a sympathetic cause: poor, desperate, and simply in search of economic and social refuge. Other times, we're a scourge, burdening government welfare systems, bolstering criminal activity, and stuck in our backwards cultures. We're an otherized monolith in either perspective, detached from our complexities—our different identities and our diverse motives for movement. Perhaps worst of all, we are refused the luxury of anonymity: the ability to travel without being subject to a hypercritical gaze, questioning our every step.

These thoughts formed the backdrop of my circumstances on ex-

change. Across the continent, the refugee crisis has taken a profound toll on European countries, sparking divisive debates and bringing humanity's ugliest inclinations to the fore. Denmark, of course, has been no exception. Danes have had to grapple with a flux of people who seem to be nothing like them, and have chosen in response to tighten their borders, render Denmark economically unlivable for immigrants, and even institute a burqa and niqab ban. To be clear, these policy decisions reflect the opinions of a dominant segment of Danish society that is undeniably hostile toward Brown people.

By the end of my four months abroad, though, I completed my exchange largely unscathed. Between the occasional “random” selection at the airport and the throwaway comments from some of my Danish peers about “lazy criminals” in Nørrebro, a dominantly Middle Eastern neighbourhood, I didn't experience anything radically different from the racism I've witnessed here at home. This could have been for any number of reasons. I have a cute White first name. I have a Canadian passport and my place of birth is Toronto. I speak English fluently and I don't have an identifiably “foreign” (read: non-American or European) accent.

Whatever the reason, the realistic part of me knows these privileges have allowed me to be the exception rather than the rule. I can't help but wonder about my experience had I appeared more strikingly, more stereotypically “Brown.” What if I wore a hijab? What if my name was less “White”? What if I had a passport from a Middle Eastern or North African country? The twinge of alienation I felt being a Brown girl in a sea of White people in no way compares to the very real threats of violence and discrimination that face others outside my unique position. However, more importantly, maybe my feeling of alienation foreshadows those threats.

As fortunate as I was to have had the space to explore Europe and grow as a person—as every student who embarks on an exchange ought to have—there is certainly merit in people of colour discussing the underbelly of travel. Racialized students shouldn't feel deterred from going on exchange as a result, but they should be allowed to prepare themselves for uncomfortable encounters. After all, studying abroad is about finding places to find yourself—not the stress and restriction of racism.

Could Howard Schultz be 2020's Ralph Nader?

Kameron Faridani
Contributor

Though not officially in the presidential race yet, on January 27, former Starbucks CEO and billionaire Howard Schultz announced that he would be exploring the possibility of running for president in the 2020 election. While it is unlikely that Schultz, who is running as an independent, will win the presidential election, by taking a centrist role in the race, his presence could expose weaknesses in the current left-leaning lineup of presidential hopefuls aiming to become the Democratic presidential nominee.

One of the biggest issues the Democrats face on the road to the U.S. 2020 presidential election is the lack of ideological diversity among Democrats who have announced White House bids. The policy platforms of many that have officially announced presidential bids, including Cory Booker, Julian Castro, Kamala Harris, Kirsten Gillibrand, and Elizabeth Warren, capture the party's leftward shift. Incredibly, all of the aforementioned candidates have adopted policies touted by Bernie Sanders during his 2016 primary run, including support for universal health care, free college tuition, and job guarantee programs.

This development demonstrates how democratic socialism has taken the Democrat Party by storm as Sanders was, for the most part, the



U.S. Department of Defense

lone advocate for these policies during the 2016 Democratic Party presidential primaries. This ideological shift in the Democrat Party could potentially alienate moderate voters, posing a major strategic problem in terms of casting a wide net for attracting voters in 2020. A Gallup poll released in December indicated that 54 percent of Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents say that they would prefer a "more moderate" Democratic Party. Consequently, the current lack of a moderate candidate among the Democrats running for president may create an opportunity for a more moderate, third-party candidate to play the role of an election spoiler. The most likely candidate for attracting moderate voters thus far would be Howard Schultz: an independent and self-described centrist.

What does Schultz bring to

the table? A lifelong Democrat, self-described fiscal conservative, and social liberal, Schultz has attacked Elizabeth Warren by calling her a "socialist," and is currently endorsing a number of policy positions contrary to those running for the Democratic nomination. This includes opposition towards both Medicare for all and increased marginal tax rate for Americans whose annual income exceeds \$10 million. In addition, Schultz has emphasized the need to address the national debt, and positioned himself as a vocal critic of President Donald Trump's proposed border wall while also supporting LGBTQ rights. As a result, Schultz is putting himself in an excellent position to attract the typical moderate Democrat voter that may not have felt comfortable voting for Sanders in 2016.

Adding credence to the possibility that Schultz's candidacy could play a significant role in the 2020 election is the fact that, in the past, independents have successfully induced the spoiler effect by splitting votes between candidates. For example, while only nabbing 2.74 percent of the popular vote, Ralph Nader cost Al Gore the 2000 Presidential election because a majority of the 97,421 Floridian voters who allegedly considered Al Gore their second choice cast votes for Nader instead. As a result, Gore lost the state of Florida to George W. Bush by a mere 574 votes.

Furthermore, in a development that perhaps draws more similarity to the current dynamics of the 2020 election, in 1992 fellow billionaire Ross Per-

ot ran an effective campaign in 1992 as an independent, winning 18.9 percent of the popular vote. Interestingly, Perot drew support mainly from self-described moderates. According to the previously mentioned Gallup poll, voters that traditionally support the Democrats appear to account for the majority of moderates going into the 2020 election. The majority of Democrat-leaning voters appear to want their party to be more moderate, while in contrast, 57 percent of Republican-leaning voters believe their party should become more conservative. As a result, it seems that a moderate like Schultz may find more success drawing away Democrat voters rather than Republicans. This would greatly impact the performance of any Democrat candidate in the 2020 election and could potentially increase the likelihood of a Trump victory.

Of course this doesn't necessarily guarantee a Trump victory in the 2020 election. A number of prominent Democrats including former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Governor of California Jerry Brown have been critical of the lack of moderate candidates currently running the in presidential race. Moving forward, perhaps more moderate candidates will emerge in the Democratic presidential primaries. A more moderate presidential candidate for the Democrats could be the simple solution the Democrats need in order to mitigate the possible threat Howard Schultz poses to the party if he decides to make his presidential bid official.

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Common Law and Civil Law Systems: Elementary Contrast

Christian Kaldjon
Contributor

What is the difference between the civil law system and the common law system? The answer typically given is that civil law is codified whereas common law is formed by case law. Although basically true, it is both simplistic and misleading. In fact, there are several key differences between civil and common law. It is appropriate to first define some key concepts:

Legal system: the set of laws in a country and the ways in which they are interpreted and enforced. For example, common law and civil law are two legal systems.

Civil law: a legal system that has its origin in Roman law. Civil law is a comprehensive system of rules and principles usually arranged in codes and easily accessible to citizens and jurists.

Common law: a legal system that has its origin in English law. Common law is a system of law based on precedent and custom rather than on written laws.

Precedent: a rule or principle of law that has been established through a previous ruling by a court of higher authority. Precedent means that the principle announced by higher court must be considered, and often followed, in later cases.

Jurisprudence: the science or philosophy of law. It helps establish a better understanding of the principles that lead courts to make decision by analyzing the legal reasoning, legal systems, legal institutions, and the role of law in society.

Having now clarified these ideas, let's turn to the main difference between common law and civil law: Historical growth. Historically, common law involved a single, centralized system of courts wherein the creators of the law were judges supported by a strongly organized profession that came to be attached to it—that is, the case-by-case system. Civil law, on the other hand, was not administered by judges but by universities and professors.

In the French system, the main



concern is clarity of expression, lucidity, uniformity and predictability of the law, so everything is codified. By contrast, common law developed as case law with a strong sense of reality and a flavor of judicial individuality. Thus, we usually see countries that follow common law without a written constitution and countries that follow civil law with a written constitution.

In theory, the role of precedent is the same in both systems—the difference is the degree of importance accorded. In common law, precedents are binding, whereas in civil law, the judge is not so bound and is assumed to decide every case upon the basis of their own judgment. In common law, it is a judge's decision apply to a specific case, and if a general rule needs to be created to fill the gap, legislators will do so in accordance to the judge's decision on the case. In common law, judges decision are the law. In the French system, the judge does not have to follow the decisions of others because laws already exist and are both specific and broad enough to be applied to different cases.

In the French system, the judiciary only applies the law created by the legislator. In practice, however, it is a little different. Judges in civil law tend to pay attention more to precedent for three main reasons: First, for stability

and predictability as the public must know what the law is and consistent disregard of precedent would be socially intolerable. Second, because the judges from lower courts know that their decisions can be appealed by a higher court. And finally, to save intellectual labor as judges are too busy in every single case to engage in an independent interpretation of law.

I will now examine the importance of statute law. In common law, judicial decision are the law. Judges in Canada, for example, answer cases in accordance to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and then those decisions become the new law. Rules, principles, and laws enacted by legislators (statutes) are usually secondary and come to support judicial decisions. In common law, statutes complete and support judicial decisions—in other words, statutes are secondary. The judiciary can easily appeal a law passed by the government or the legislature (known as the procedure of judicial review).

In the French civil law system, because of the separation of power from Montesquieu, the judiciary cannot create the law. The idea is that, because the courts deal with a case, they cannot be subjective enough to create the law. Therefore, their role is only to resolve a case by applying the

law. In order to avoid discordance within the court system, the "court of cassation" ensures that judicial decisions are uniform. In the French system, the government and parliament create the law in France because they are the representative of the people. If a statute is unfair and violates the code, or is unconstitutional, the case will be dealt by a specific institution, called the "conseil constitutionnel." Statutes are primary in the French system, and judicial decision are secondary as they support the statute. In the French code system, citizens are not bound by any rules other than those formally enacted statutes.

But how do lawyers approach the law? Lawyers from civil law tend to be more conceptual while lawyers from common law are considered more pragmatic. In civil law, lawyers usually start from a legal norm contained in legislation, and by means of deduction, makes conclusions regarding the actual case. On the other hand, a lawyer in common law starts with an actual case and compares it with the same or similar legal issues that have been dealt with by courts in previously decided cases, and from these relevant precedents, the binding legal rule is determined by means of induction.

Through the Window / When I Opened The Door

Anike Morrison
Contributor

Slender, ruler-straight planks of wood frame the world outside.
Potent sunrays slant into the house, creating diamond-shaped zones of heat on the carpeted floor.
Looking out the window, what do I see? Trees, swaying in the heavy breeze.

I cool my forehead on the hard glass, eyes closed and mouth open.
My hot breath issues a shifting, disappearing patch of condensation.
I hear a rushing, whispering sound.
Looking out the window, what do I see? Winter's heavy coat and stillness.

A capricious black squirrel catches my languid gaze.
Its small body moves in a sinuous wave across my field of vision and with a twitch it is gone up the maple tree.
Looking out the window, what do I see? Chickadees I wish I could shrink myself to accompany for a lark.

The air is surprisingly brisk and rays of sunlight twinkle off each fat, falling flake.
I stick out a black mitten; on its brushed surface I observe fractals: the sacred geometry of stars that have jumped from their place in the night sky And landed, shrunken, on my hand.

The miniature architecture of each fragile shape mesmerizes me.
A bitter wind slaps my uncovered face, prompting me to close the door and retreat into the warm house to observe the unfurling of a winter storm.
Through the glass, I see flurries stirred by the wind:
a whimsical white scene.

The children across the street escape from their pristine homes and frisk around in the abundant whiteness.
A snowman begins to take shape.
The sun, a dim orb, peers lazily from behind a thick cloud cover.
Looking out the window, what do you see?

Vrijdag in de trein

Dana Vuckovic
Contributor

As he glanced up to see what the silent passengers were doing, those who were conversely typing away at their technological fiends, he closed his newspaper, took off his black-rimmed glasses which accentuated the darkly, tired bags under his eyes, and leaned his head against the seat as he everlastingly sighed an exhausted breath of fatigue. Fortunately, it was Friday afternoon; that meant his wife would be preparing his favourite dish; a congratulatory way of celebrating the end of yet another capitalistically-infused week.

As he imagined her standing in the kitchen wearing her apron and wiping her face with the back of her hand as her palms were covered in flour, he could not help but want to feel grateful for the life he worked so tremendously hard to create. He had a loving spouse who endlessly supported him, whether that was when he lost his job for the umpteenth time or his mother to that deadly disease of sinful reproach. Despite the uncertain beginnings of his journey, he is now steadily working a modest job with a relatively satisfying salary, even though almost half of it is drained to pay for public transportation. He may dread having to empty every inch of his pockets for the increasingly high train fare, however, the moment he steps in the locomotive and finds a seat to settle down, he is overwhelmed by a joyous feeling of ease; finally, he can indulge in those 30 endearing minutes and travel home from Amsterdam in absolute bliss; well at least until the aggravatingly, distasteful tourists start hopping on.

He looked upon the settling sunset at a clan of patterned cows and philosophized about the two groups of tourists he categorically established. First, there are those who simply wish to visit the Netherlands for its undisputed capital of freedom so as their sober thoughts can turn into desirably drunk words.

You imbeciles! he thought, isn't our undoubtedly magnificent art, our advanced ecological mindset and tasteful bluntness not enough to satisfy your narrow-minded putrid souls? As his pulse rapidly raged in a turmoil of unsettled displeasure, he began to



think of the other tourists, those of the quasi-extinct race, who come here to explore the country's diversely charming cities, indulge in the spirit of the art museums and remember their stay on a most agreeable note; so much so that they decide to move and create a life of their own. How he envies those of the brave heart! He may think he has worked hard, but his efforts are incomparably effortless to those who have taken the grand risk of starting again in a country which, at times, may not always be the most welcoming. It is only natural to think of one's own life as that of the most challenging, but is it not also in our nature to learn and to empathize and to reflect on not solely the mission of oneself, but also of those who surround us, whether they be in the streets, the shops or in the train?

As he kept pondering about such abstractedly unanswerable questions, the door opened and a young, dark-haired woman wearing a grey hat entered. As her hat was covering her eyes, he could not speculate upon her as much as he wanted to, so he simply looked in the other direction and continued to count the endless array of

cows, thinking about how curiously funny it was to contemplate over such bizarre statements and such mysterious passengers. She sat right across from him and opened something that looked like a notebook. As she thoroughly read over it and started to write, erase, and then write more things with a pace of utmost haste, his station was called. He stood up, brushed past the woman's thin legs and stepped out of the wagon knowing that he would most probably never encounter the passenger again.

The moment the door closed and he stepped off, she put her notepad on her lap and looked up, her round, brown eyes desperately seeking for the door to open once more so the man could come back and continue exploring his thoughts. She wished to continue meticulously reading him as he did her so she could try to understand why such heavily dark bags encircled the luminescent green eyes of the enigmatic passenger.



The Classroom

Dana Vuckovic
Contributor

It's hot, it's boiling... My God it's scorching in here! I can't take it anymore! I want to rip off this white blouse and hear the breaking of its delicately woven seams; the call to which my Tarzan will respond. Or rather, he might simply swing by this Godforsaken classroom which attributes more of its resemblance to Dante's Inferno rather than a most scholarly and erudite environment reserved for the brightest, most innovative of minds of our soon-to-be future leaders.

My God, now I'm even starting to sound like one of them. As Monsieur le professeur continues to so interestingly divulge about the anatomy of the mouth and the position of the tongue when pronouncing typical French phonemes such as /e/, I can't help but look at his widespread grin as he licks his lips after each articulately pronounced syllable. His teeth are a staled yellow; the colour of a sporadic smoker who, despite his several attempts at quitting, can't resist the sweet sound of his cheap lighter bringing rise to its iridescent flame which unfailingly makes love to the tip of a long, suave and perfectly smooth cigarette. His smile, one of both innocence and playful mischief certainly knows how to beguilingly charm my fellow camarades who, whilst listening ever so carefully to the lesson, are rubbing sweat off from their foreheads and playing with their deliciously artificial strawberry-flavoured gum by

pulling at it with their long, acrylic nails. Pop! There goes that bubble you've been so laboriously concentrated on creating; her and the way her plump, ruby red lips smirk at Monsieur's each and every phrase.

She takes out her mirror to precisely reapply the rouge and meticulously rubs her lips together in a state of matrimonial intimacy. Due to the classroom's perversely petit size, I'm unavoidably glued right next to her. I smell her overwhelmingly pungent perfume, I hear her bangles tap against the desk each time she picks up her pen and I see her feline eyes scrupulously target her next prey. She asks le Monsieur: "S'il vous plaît, pourriez-vous ouvrir un peu la fenêtre, il fait tellement chaud ici, non?"

The gentle hush of the wind brings upon a most exuberant moan; garments of clothing majestically dance from one desk to the other, hair elastics are ferociously pulled off to free a wild tangle of long flowing hair and laughs—oh such free-spirited liveliness! The growling wind's pace quickens and the crescendo of the banging window against the frame deafens my ability to think, my desire to learn, my willingness to concentrate; albeit the alarming epiphany of liberal consciousness soon subsides. The window, now closed, leaves my wonderingly curious thoughts astray and I'm once again confined to the inescapable realm of obsolete despair: the classroom—oh what a heavenly utopia!

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