

NuSense

IDENTITY



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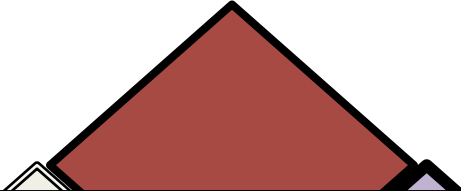
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Feature Article

Lindsay Smith


A Most Fortunate Identity Crisis: An English Major Under the Guise of a Biologist

Imagine my excitement to land a position with Parks Canada as a Resource Conservation Assistant. Sure, I am an English major – but that hasn't seemed to stop me before. We English majors are adaptable. We are the epitome of transfiguration! Put us in any situation and we will blend in with the others as if we were meant to be one of them. While creating a new identity as an established Biologist, I am thrown into a moral warfare–face to face with Mortal Combat–I am an English major, how can I ever fit in with the science crowd? Thankfully, I have had the opportunity before throwing myself into this position to have taken several Biology classes. Vertebrate Zoology, Anatomy and Physiology, Microbiology... please don't fail me now.



The phone interview had gone swimmingly well: “Describe the procedure for documenting wildlife.” Or... “If you encounter someone who is terrified of snakes while you are in the middle of a live show, how would you handle it?”... or what about “Name one of Ontario’s endangered species and describe it.” As I listen to the incoming questions, I smile slyly into the phone. I am born for this... I AM an English major. I have been trained for this: defending my opinion, crafting intelligent responses instantaneously, confidence is steaming naturally – I own this. Biology questions? I can wing it! The more questions I answer, the better I feel –painted turtles, stinkpots, blandings, black rat snakes, ribbon snakes, and all their other reptilian cousins?... no problem.

The first day on the job I am greeting with bird call memorizations, flora identification charts, trees, and more. While speaking with my colleagues, our degrees became the central topic: “What type of science are you studying?” and “What was the focus of your thesis?” While I listened quietly to the various scientific discoveries my colleagues had contributed to uncovering in the lab, all I could think of was my thesis regarding the conflict between the Hobbits, Orcs, and Elves in Middle-Earth, or my fascination with a race within my readings of Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*–I was definitely overwhelmed with their scientific knowledge. I knew that my time was coming. They would ask me what I was studying. “So Lindsay, what’s your story?” I think to myself: “How do I construct this, what’s my thesis, do I have a supportive argument, should I throw in a quotation by Walt Whitman: “I chose English to ‘spread my seeds of knowledge!’?”



I look up and blurt out before thinking: “I, well, I am an English major actually.” The silence is so loud that you could just hear the quiet hum of the computer. My supervisor is the only one whose face doesn’t seem contorted in shock or fear – or both. There does seem to be an overwhelming level of panic that arises in a room when someone admits to being an English major. It’s an interesting phenomenon you see, just watch what happens with the dynamic in a room when an English major walks in. Almost immediately, the conversation level deepens, word choice changes, and all eyes turn towards you while they worry whether or not they have said something grammatically incorrect.

After overcoming their initial shock that there was an English major in their presence, I am quickly reminded to mention my credentials in Biology and my being bilingual. “Don’t forget, Lindsay,” said my supervisor, “we hired you for your French skills and your obvious knowledge of wildlife and your experience with GPS, right?” It was clear from that moment, that I would have to put away my ‘Englishness,’ at least try as well as an English major can hide his or her natural tendency to analyze and look into things much deeper than the average Joe might, if I ever wanted to fit in with Parks Canada’s Resource Conservation sector.

So as the summer months progressed and I had endured rigorous canoeing certification, memorized most of the bird calls in Eastern Ontario, and could finally recognize swamp flora as well as every type of tree imaginable, it was clear that I had infiltrated the system. I was now a member of the Biology team. I was fully masquerading as a Biologist according to those around me. Lindsay, the English major, had pulled a Sherlock Holmes. But instead, I was a regular Cooper’s Hawkeye. My daily routine had transformed dramatically. I never thought that as an English major I would be balancing in a canoe while trapping and tagging 38 pound snapping turtles in the middle of the swamp while ensuring no one’s toes were haphazardly removed as a result of a turtle bite, or having to paddle out into the deepest part of a swamp to listen for the threatened Least Bittern’s cooing. I have even had the pleasure of being puked on by an African python among many other things.

Yet, through all of my adventures as a Biologist, my concept of identity has not changed. What and who I am is not necessarily reflective of where I am, or in what situation I find myself in, but rather it is something that has developed during my years here at Nipissing. If this experience has taught me anything about identity, it has confirmed that I am an English major and will remain an English major at heart no matter what life throws at me – whether it be snakes, turtles, or birds, or whether it just be the regular shenanigans of life, I will be prepared.



Samantha Kurtzer
"Identity and Transformation" (2012)

Christine Clarke

What's Wrong with Equality?

Over the past year, the *niqab* and the *burqa*, traditional Muslim 'head gear,' have been coming under attack here in Canada. In December 2011, *The National Post* ran an article about the Canadian government's ban on face coverings during citizenship ceremonies. Since I live in my own little bubble, I came to this question rather late and did not have a particularly insightful grasp of what was actually happening. Before sitting down to write this article, I traced some of these bans and policies as represented by Canada's popular newspapers like *The National Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, and mass media outlets like *CBC*.

These now-online sources had one particular element in common. The comment sections had hundreds of posts most of which were discriminatory, biased, while others were overtly racist. Obviously, I am not going to give them the airtime they do not merit by quoting them here. What is important to note is that those leaving less than flattering comments were in favour of the policy changes.

One argument that weighed in favour of banning the coverings was that they interfered with the Canadian values of openness, equality, and social cohesion. Many articles I looked up quoted those same three values. I have to ask about the innate hypocrisy in that statement.

As a Canadian, I take openness to mean valuing and respecting difference. I am not a Muslim. I do not know what it is like to be a Muslim or to wear a *hijab*, *niqab*, *burqa*, or *chador*. What I do know is that these are traditional articles of clothing worn by Muslim women. I know that many Muslim women like wearing these clothes and do so to adhere to their religious beliefs. I would resent my government telling me what I could and could not wear in public. I would certainly challenge the implication that what I choose to wear has anything to do with patriarchal values or oppression. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was odd for women to wear pants. A century later, women walk about public spaces freely in pants, skirts, or dresses without much censure.

This brings me to my second point: social cohesion. What on earth is this "social cohesion" of which these media speak? To me, it means participating positively in the community, respecting others, and refraining from consciously breaking the law or doing harm to others. Canada is supposed to be a great multi-cultural nation. As the Oxford English Dictionary tells us, the prefix "*Multi*" means "plural."



Brittany Lamers
"Untitled" (2011)

When viewed in the context of Canadian multiculturalism, this should mean that Canadians respect and value difference, including how this “apparent” difference is being exercised in the great Canadian nation. How can a cultural practice be singled out of an allegedly cohesive whole?

Like any other ideas, religions travel, they are borderless. Native Canadian citizens may choose to become Muslim, may be Muslim. How can we then claim our commitment to multiculturalism if we single out our own people and claim that they are different, hence not Canadian?

I saved "equality" for last as I do have some experience with inequality. Equality means giving everyone the same rights regardless of who they are and where they come from. If we are free to practice our individual religions and exercise our beliefs (within the parameters of not harming others), how can we place limits on freedoms related to one particular group?

The fact that the comment sections of these articles and clips are littered with racist, discriminatory, ignorant ramblings should be an indicator of how backward such policies are. choose and believe. Perhaps, it is time we lived up to the rights and freedoms as defined in Canada's Multicultural Act.

Academic Life

Leah Misener

“Do What Scares You”: Writing and the University Student

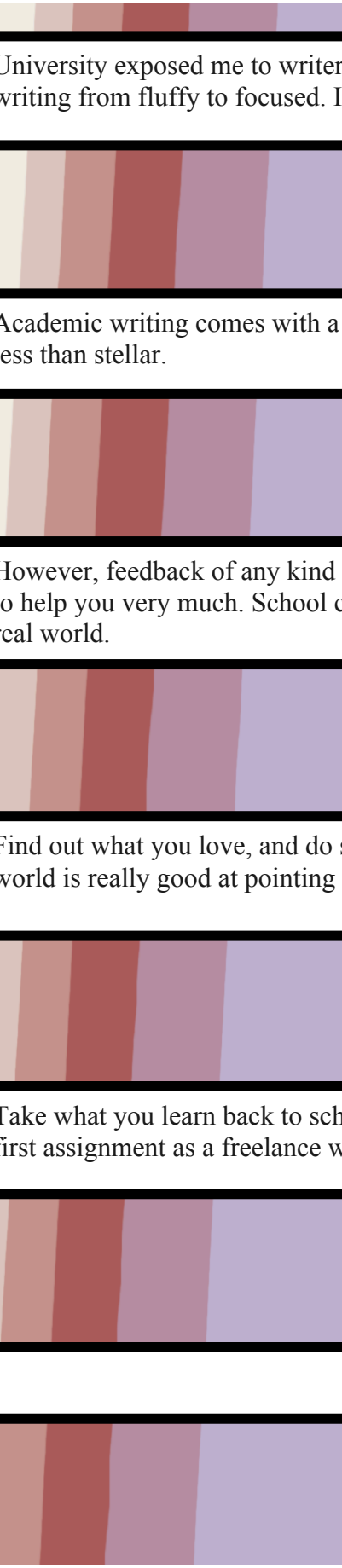
When people ask me what I did last summer, I tell them I had the best job in the world. It was stressful, frustrating, and I never knew what I was doing. I worked as a freelance writer for a local newspaper. The best part of telling others about it is that I never have to lie about loving my job. Being a writer is full of pressure, elation, exasperation, excitement, and the more-than-occasional loss of cool. That's a typical assignment, and no two are the same.

I started out working at school with the communications office on campus, writing 400- word blurbs for NU News, conducting interviews with visiting speakers, musical groups, and events that happened to interest me. A trip off-campus for a story had me bumping into a reporter from the local newspaper. After a few furtive questions, I had two new contacts in the business. Four months later, I was off on my first assignment as a freelance writer.

The point is I didn't just fantasize about my dream job. I got out there and worked it. Developing a working relationship with other people is the most important skill a writer can have. This task is about as much fun as going on a blind date: you may never know what's going to come of it, but be prepared nevertheless for the worst possible scenario. Yet, I love working with tough people. They have a passion for what they do. Even though they can be nit-picky and dissatisfied with nearly everything, I can't help but be fascinated by the energy they put into their work. Inspiration from these passionate few gives me energy to follow my own passion, regardless of how hard it is. Easy assignments are boring assignments.



Brittany Lamers "Fractured Innocence" (2012)



University exposed me to writers that I never would have read otherwise, and that diversified my writing from fluffy to focused. It gave me a better grasp on how to tell a story.

Academic writing comes with a captive audience who will not hesitate to let you know if your writing is less than stellar.

However, feedback of any kind is rare in professional writing, and if it comes at all, usually it is too late to help you very much. School can help, but you need to get out there and see what it's like out in the real world.

Find out what you love, and do something to get real experience. Do what scares you. The working world is really good at pointing out shortcomings. Don't get discouraged.

Take what you learn back to school and work at it until you get it right. Only after I was fired from my first assignment as a freelance writer, did I know exactly what I needed to improve.

The important part is trying and doing.

Rebecca Sullivan Quiet in a Surreal World

Art

World

Marica Villeneuve
"Untitled" (2010)

Marica Villeneuve, a first year Bachelor of Fine Arts student at York University, was kind enough to share with me a very personal and beautiful piece of artwork she completed for a visual arts project in high school in 2010. This piece called *Untitled* represents a moment suspended in time when Marica feels utterly alone and full of inspiration. A meticulous realist that likes to experiment with surrealism, Marica tells me that this particular work reflects her identity. The darkness of the cityscape is significant because of its relation to her own artistic world.



"I do my best work at night," she says, "when everything is quiet and time seems to stop." The broken clock of the clock tower represents time stopping and the balloon symbolizes a spark of inspiration. Marica explains, "There is always an interesting tension between peace and excitement when I am creating something. On one hand, I feel completely calm. On the other hand, I am enjoying myself so thoroughly that I can't contain my energy. Art is an essential outlet for me."

I ask her more specifically about the meaning behind the balloon. She tells me that red is her favourite colour, but that it is the image of the man inside the clock that excites ideas about identity, who we are in this age of constant hustle and bustle.

"What motivates us?"

"What binds us?"

"Who are we?"

These are some of the questions Marica is striving to address in her art.

Academic Contributions



Katelynne Lo Presti

Venice Giveth and Venice Taketh Away: The Venetian Labyrinth as a Graveyard of Men in *Comfort of Strangers*, *Death in Venice*, and ‘Don’t Look Now’

The geographic duality of Venice as a place of land and water is mirrored in the dual literary constructions of Venice as a romantic escape and a fatal labyrinth. Although the physical landscape of Venice has been extensively searched and mapped, it continues to baffle and confuse visitors. However, this disorientation has more to do with the mythic structure of the city than with the physical landscape. As Ruth Padel claims, “labyrinths allow for the doubleness of meanings, world and self, subjective and objective, two edges, two faces on one thing” (83). The labyrinth of Venice is explored by lovers in Daphne du Maurier’s “Don’t Look Now,” Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice*, and Ian McEwan’s *The Comfort of Stranger*. Each of these works depicts the seductive - destructive relationship within Venice, the Cretan myth transposed from Greece to Italy. These lovers escape to Venice in hopes of resolving their personal issues. The classic Cretan myth suggests that the resolution to these problems awaits the hero in the centre of the labyrinth. For the lovers, this resolution appears to be sexual fulfillment. The hotel therefore becomes a potential reprise from the chaos and danger of Venice.

However, even within the romantic and mythic structure of Venice, the sexual satisfaction is superficial while the violence with which the men are attacked suggests that they are not heroes. Prior to their arrival in Venice, these men lack the power and autonomy necessary to face the very demons that bring them to Venice. Thus, it is not the labyrinth that ensures the death of men “Don’t Look Now”, *Death in Venice*, and *The Comfort of Strangers*, but rather the men’s own demons that devour them.



The construction of Venice as a city of both sea and land makes it a unique and intriguing tourist experience. It is also this combination that leads to the stereotypical depiction of Venice as a romantic place for lovers to escape the domestic problems of common life. This extensive tourist industry of Venice has allowed the city to be mapped and searched; however, the landscape still disorients and confuses tourists. Arguably, this disorientation has more to do with the mythic foundations of the city than its physical layout. In du Maurier's "Don't Look Now", Laura and John come across two canals that they had previously walked the day before; however, despite their familiarity with the route, they find themselves unable to correctly navigate their way. Furthermore, once John makes up his mind that they must have followed the left bridge, Laura finds that the alleyway branches off again in multiple directions and begins to lose faith because the "place was like a maze. They might circle round and round forever" (du Maurier 16). In *The Comfort of Strangers*, Mary and Colin encounter a similar disorientation with the maze-like quality of Venice, which is emphasized by Colin's repeated lament about forgetting to bring maps with them as they attempt to explore the city. However, even when the couple remembered the maps they "frequently became lost, and could spend an hour or so doubling back and around, consulting (Colin's trick) the position of the sun, to find themselves approaching a familiar landmark from an unexpected direction, and still lost" (McEwan 12).

Mann's *Death in Venice* explores the complexity of Venice on the mythic level rather than the physical landscape as most of Aschenbach's narrative occurs from the Lido. Aschenbach's view of the city is ill defined: "such was Venice, the wheedling shady beauty, a city of fairy tale, half tourist trap, in whose foul air the arts had once flourished luxuriantly and which had inspired musicians with undulating lulling licentious harmonies" (Mann 104). This doubling of Venice as both nightmare and fairy tale embodies the convention of the labyrinth as being both a protected space as well as a voyage or adventure landscape. Wendy Faris compares this to the Greek dichotomies of forest and house. However, it is evident that this comparison is more complex in the labyrinth of Venice, as exemplified by the fact that rigid dichotomies do not exist, resulting in disorientation from the place being both secure and vulnerable (7-8). When searching for the twins, John is told that it is likely he would find his friends because the "whole world meets in Venice," but not everyone will survive (du Maurier 22).

The past pervades the present in Venice. Its labyrinthine structure forces the characters to confront their demons. Aschenbach is faced with the "sudden urge to flee... an urge to flee his work, the humdrum routine of a rigid cold passionate duty" (Mann 8). He knows that he can find this freedom in the "unique, fairy-tale-like location" of Venice (Mann 26). Similarly, Colin and Mary hope that Venice will be a catalyst to the faltering passions in their stagnant relationship. The trip symbolizes an important crossroads in their relationship as it is meant to answer the impending question as to whether or not they will marry. The characters of Mann and McEwan are

looking for sexual revival. This is exemplified by the fact that Aschenbach wants more than cold passion for his work in the same way as Colin and Mary want to rekindle the passion they once had for each other. Therefore, both Mann and McEwan create characters who desire the resurfacing of past feelings and accomplish this by perpetuating the romantic stereotype of Venice.

Conversely, du Maurier's Laura and John appear to be driven by different motives: they want to repress the past, they want to find comfort in each other as a way to deal with the loss of their child. However, even this more lofty aspiration is underpinned with sexual tension as it is apparent that grief has impeded their sexual relations. On the surface, "Don't Look Now", *Death in Venice*, and *Comfort of Strangers* all appear to break down the barriers and sexual restraints faced by the characters. After meeting the sisters, Laura is given the closure she had been searching for and as a result, the couple also gets the "blessed" sexual "release after all those weeks of restraint" (du Maurier 13). Colin and Mary too rekindle their sexual passions after meeting Caroline and Robert. The lovers go back to their hotel room where they are surprised by their lovemaking "for the great, enveloping pleasure, the sharp, almost painful, thrills were sensations" they remembered from when they have first met seven years ago (McEwan 77). Aschenbach's original desire was to flee to Venice to escape his 'humdrum' and nonexistent love life. Even he, who has no female lover, is able to renew not only feelings of physical and emotional love, but is roused from lofty, educational writing as being the sole purpose of his life. In exchange, Aschenbach discovers the joy and passion of poetry and takes to writing on the beach. "How curiously fruitful the *intercourse* of the mind with body! When Aschenbach put away his work and quit the beach he felt *exhausted*, and yes, *spent*, as if his conscience were reproaching him after a debauch" (Mann 86 my emphasis). His act of writing is his outlet, his catharsis of sexual release. John, Laura, Mary, Colin and Aschenbach appear to be given new life, new hope from Venice; however, the romantic Venice is merely a facade and the true battle has yet to come.

The Cretan labyrinth myth explores the relationship between sexuality and violence. There are many different interpretations of the ways in which the centre of the labyrinth functions in literature. According to Wendy Faris, the centre of the labyrinth "implies a place of rest, an end to the confusion experienced in the paths of the labyrinth, or at least temporary reprise from it" (4). In this way, the hotels become important spaces of security and rest in all three of the works. The power of the hotel bedroom is explicitly explored in "Don't Look Now" as John examines Laura's things on the dressing table. The place is familiar, like home, but it also presents him with a strange feeling of excitement (de Maurier 13). The hotel, in addition to the beach for Aschenbach, does offer the characters a place of rest. However, they do not rest in these space, they kiss, talk, embrace, write, and love in this potential centre. Therefore, although the

hotel room and the beach appear to end the confusion experienced within the labyrinth, the characters actually use this space to continue to explore and experience the passion granted to them in the labyrinth. As a result, these spaces do not offer protection from the labyrinth; instead it is merely another pathway leading them inevitably towards the real centre of the Venetian labyrinth where they will face the Minotaur alone.



Brittany Lamers "Body Language" (2012)

According to Donald Gutierrez, “the labyrinth is a metaphor for the painful, even dangerous, but necessary, or unavoidable experience. A labyrinth, then is a quest form, a mode of urgent examination or perilous exploration” (3). To suggest that exploration of the labyrinth is a quest further implies that those doing the exploring are potential hero characters. Colin and Mary resist the typical tourist conventions because they are searching for the authentic Venice. Both Mary and Colin recognize the danger of Robert

and Caroline; however, they choose to ignore, or are powerless to resist these instincts. Colin and Mary are drawn to Robert and Caroline because they believe they can guide them towards the authentic Venice they so desire to find. In this way, Venice is presenting the solution that the couple desires while simultaneously leading them towards their destruction. Similarly, John's initial reaction to the dreadful cry is to ignore it. However, the labyrinth of Venice leads John back. In this way, just as Colin and Mary are delivered into the hands of their murderers as a result of the maze of Venice, John too encounters the possible redemption from his own grief that he has been searching for. In the same way, Aschenbach too is given what he desires; he is given a worthy subject that allows him to exercise his sexual and artistic frustrations. Just as Colin and John recognize the danger of their situation and are unable to resist, Aschenbach understands the perversion of his obsession with Tadzio but looks to rationalize rather than reject it.

Von der Lippe claims that the instincts of these men tell them to resist their urges but they are powerless against that which will destroy them "deep within the heart of the labyrinth" (Von der Lippe). However, he does not explain what it means to be deep inside the heart of the labyrinth. In fact, none of these novels presents a definitive heart to the labyrinth. On the surface, the texts present the possibility that the center of the labyrinth, and thus the centre of Venice, is sex and passion. However, this sexual fulfillment is undermined: what Venice gives, Venice can take away. Each man has the possibility of being the hero in his story. John believes he can save a little girl and Aschenbach has the ability to save Tadzio. Colin is too passive to be the hero as it is he who needs to be rescued from the sexualized murder that will occur. Thus, McEwan presents and rejects Mary as the hero in his place. In truth, these men are bound to fail as heroes from the moment they decide to return to Venice because they have renounced their heroic abilities and turned to the city of Venice itself to provide the answers and exercise their own personal demons for them. It is important to recognize that these trips to Venice are not the first for any of the characters. Mary and Colin had been to Venice when they met seven years ago, Laura and John had celebrated their honeymoon in Venice, and Aschenbach recalls how previously the Venetian air had been detrimental to his health. As a result, the city of Venice is not the danger, the difference between the initial visits and the return to Venice is that John, Colin, and Aschenbach want Venice to save them, thus, they are no longer capable of saving themselves.

The Cretan myth allows Theseus to conquer the Minotaur, but he can only do so with the help of Ariadne. In the myth itself, the labyrinth is a male dominated space, King Minos orders it to be created, Daedalus fashions it, and Theseus penetrates it. Yet, there is a strong female presence wrapped up in the labyrinth myth. On one hand, it is Pasiphaë, King Minos' wife, who is impregnated by the bull sent by Zeus as a punishment for Minos who failed to uphold his promised sacrifice. Therefore, it is

Pasiphaë's lust that results in the Minotaur who needs to be shut up in a labyrinth (Padel 77). Thus, at the centre of the labyrinth myth, there lies the malignant product of women's lust. On the other hand, Ariadne's love of Theseus is what drives her to save him from the inescapable labyrinth. Ariadne's string then functions not only as a symbol of love, but also sets women up as having the means of decipherment (Padel 78). In both "Don't Look Now" and *Comfort of Strangers*, Laura and Mary are the ones who see Venice as the labyrinth. Laura is able to listen to the sisters and warns John to escape Venice; or, it will be his death. In the same way, by deciphering the picture that Robert showed her, Mary is able to identify the danger of Venice and warn her partner to escape so that they might be together. Mary calls Venice a prison and desires to leave, but Colin rejects this idea based on the fact that they had already paid for the rest of their vacation (McEwan 49). Similarly, John, unable to release his grip on rationality, ignores the warnings of Laura. In the end, the rejection of the female guides leads to the inevitable deaths of these failed male heroes.

Venice was once the cliché city of beauty and romance. However, this superficial description diminishes the inherent mythic qualities of the liminal and transformative space. Thus, the twentieth-century authors like Maurier, Mann, and McEwan added the gothic and thriller characteristics to mirror the city's complexity. The Cretan labyrinth myth depicts the masculine hero conquering the violent, death-dealing product of feminine lust. Theseus is able to succeed because of his bravery, but more importantly, because of his trust and reliance on Ariadne. The Venice presented by du Maurier, Mann and McEwan is not inherently dangerous which is suggested by the fact that these couples had survived Venice on previous occasions. The idea that is being explored by all three of the authors is the danger associated with the desire for Venice to resolve the pain and ennui of the desperate traveler, thus removing their sense of responsibility. In this way, "Don't Look Now", *Death in Venice*, and *Comfort of Strangers* suggest that Venice itself is not dangerous. The murders are not related to the plethora of canals or tourist attractions. Instead, the danger of Venice is being found whilst lost in the city and being given exactly what is desired - a solution to the problem- and there is no simpler solution than death.



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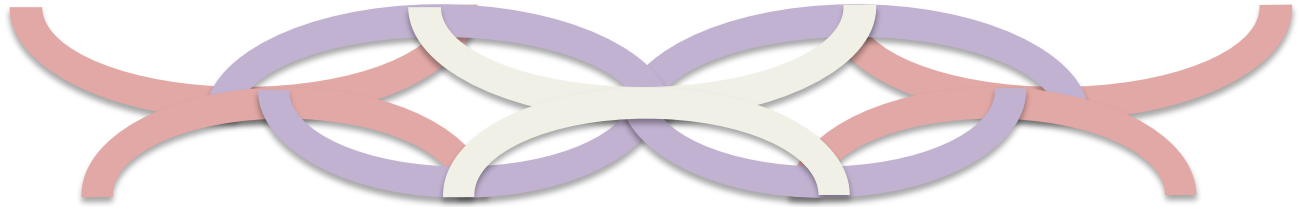
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Creative Contributions



Patrick Klein Working

you think	we	she	some
all is lost	are told we're filthy	is an object	are slaves to circumstance
you feel	we	he	resignations
fated	try to clean our insides	is a savage	signed and sent out
you see	we	baby	my
holocaust	are told we're guilty	hasn't learned to	abrasive worker's hands
you	we	walk yet	you
can taste it	believe in this lie	crawling	can't pry the pen out.



Samantha Kurtzer
"Pathways" (2012)

Shannon Moore
January

These setting suns of winter
leave no little crumb of hope.
Accidental solitude
leaves you lonely, not alone.



Samantha Kurtzer "Blue" (2012)

Community Profile

Katlyn Hebert

**An Interview with the
*FARM: Fashion as Art***



The FARM is a collective that supports local and Canadian talent— both in the fashion and art sense. Having made several stops over the summer, and having talked briefly to Liz Lott and Andy Williamson when I visited during the Downtown Gallery Hop earlier this fall, I’ve had a chance to see each artist’s work as well as the pieces brought in from outside the collective. Boutiques like the FARM emphasize the multifacetedness of identity while staying firmly grounded in the local community. “I think identity is how you see yourself and who you think you are. And I think that changes constantly. I also think it’s partially what you do, what you put back into —for me as a businesswoman it’s the community,” says Katie Bevan, the owner of the store. “My whole practice is based on identity,” adds Jaymie, a member of the FARM collective. Katie defines herself as a designer, arts advocate, and entrepreneur while Jaymie sees herself as an artist first. Nonetheless, both say that art underpins what they do.

What do you do at the FARM?

Katie: “I’m the owner basically. I’m also a clothing designer. I’m also an arts advocate. And an entrepreneur, which is the important thing.”

Jaymie: “I’m not here as often as I’d like to be at the moment. My work here varies – right now I’m doing mostly textile work, which is Bula, but I’m also a fine artist, I work in water colours and water colour sketching.”



How does being an artist contribute to your identity?

Katie: “Art shapes who I am. I’m creative. Being creative, I tackle business differently than other people do. I have a visual arts background (that was my Bachelor’s degree), so I understand the artists. But I am also a business woman.”

Jaymie: “Art practice is an act of finding myself.”

Are you able to support yourself solely on your art/work at the FARM?

Katie: “This is what I do. But it’s different. I have no set paycheck. So that really changes how I live from month to month. But I think my drive is stronger because of that. I have to make things happen. I have to reach out as a new business and generate interest. What I’m really doing is investing in myself.”

Jaymie: “No. Maybe one day. The business does help though.”

***How does working in a collective impact what you do and how you do it?***

Katie: “The business helps to support local artists. It gives me confidence to see the excitement that customers take in the collective. As an artist, I’m giving people what they don’t normally get. And as a business owner, I get to know my market better. They’re complimentary identities. Having many hats helps.”

Jamie: “We are all supportive of each other, but there’s no real overlap in practice. Liz does photography. Andy does amazing things with Photoshop; Katie’s got her clothes—and I am definitely not a fashion designer. I’m not trying to do the other artist’s work, nor do I want to. I think that’s something that’s lacking in today’s society, people don’t have a focus, and I think that’s an issue. Passions can change and that’s fine, but people need to be able to say: “This is what I’m good at, and I’m going to do this one thing.””

The FARM runs campaigns to attract shoppers Downtown: what message/value do you hope they will take away?

Katie: “I’m an advocate of people opening businesses and shopping Downtown. On the business side of things, I want people to realize that, if I can do it, they can do it. There’s so much potential here. Businesses should be a part of a community and work together to generate a customer base. As far as the shoppers go, I want people to realize that you don’t have to go to the mall or Toronto to get what you want. I think the more people come to shop Downtown, the more incentive there will be to open new businesses.”

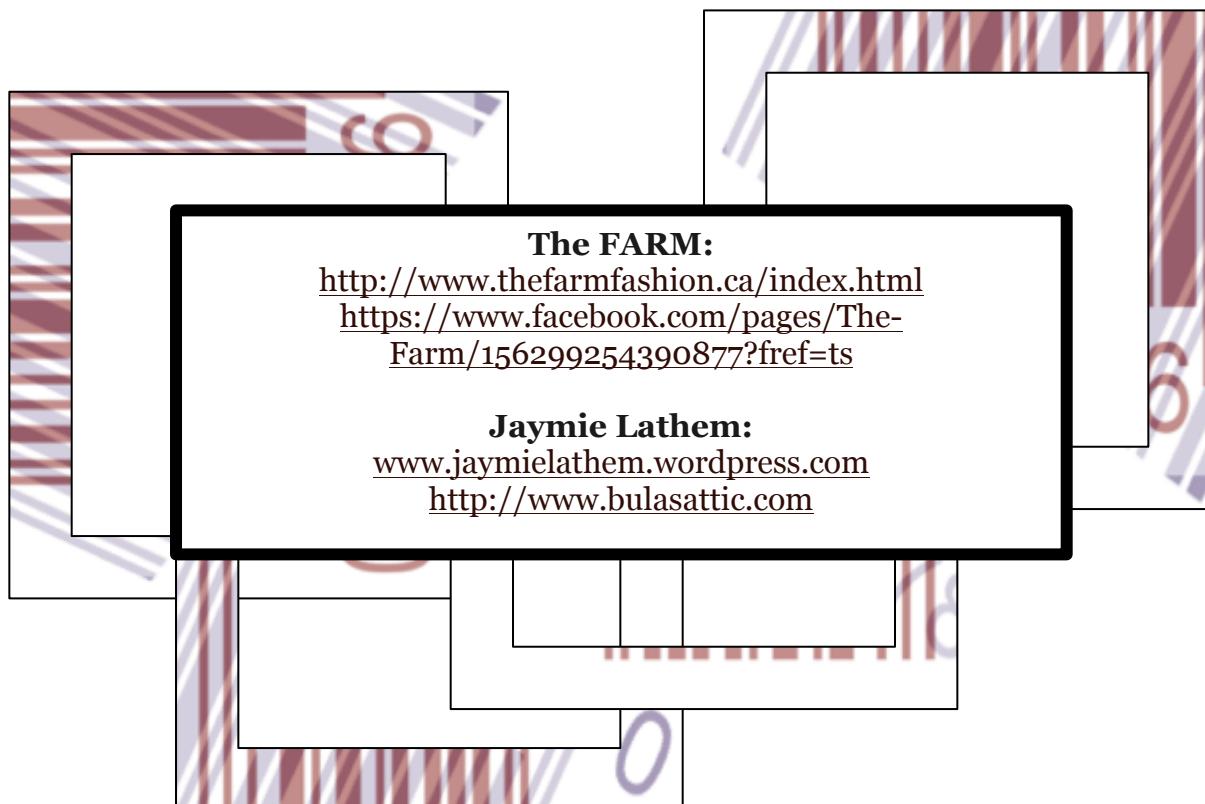
Jaymie: “Downtowns tend to cultivate a different kind of consumer, the type of people who are more community oriented. But I want to attract not just the people who are already likely to frequent Downtown, but the larger community, and build awareness that way. I want to help Downtown thrive and renew itself, and build new business as well.”

Any closing thoughts?

Katie: “When I was younger I honestly didn’t know what I would do with my life. I did fine arts, then fashion school, and a business came out of that. I think that, even if you can’t define your identity on paper, you need to be able to adapt to change, and a lot of people have a hard time with that.”

Jaymie: “Identity is ever-shifting and trying to put it in a concrete box never works.”

To find out more about Katie Bevan, Jaymie Lathem, and the FARM follow the links below!

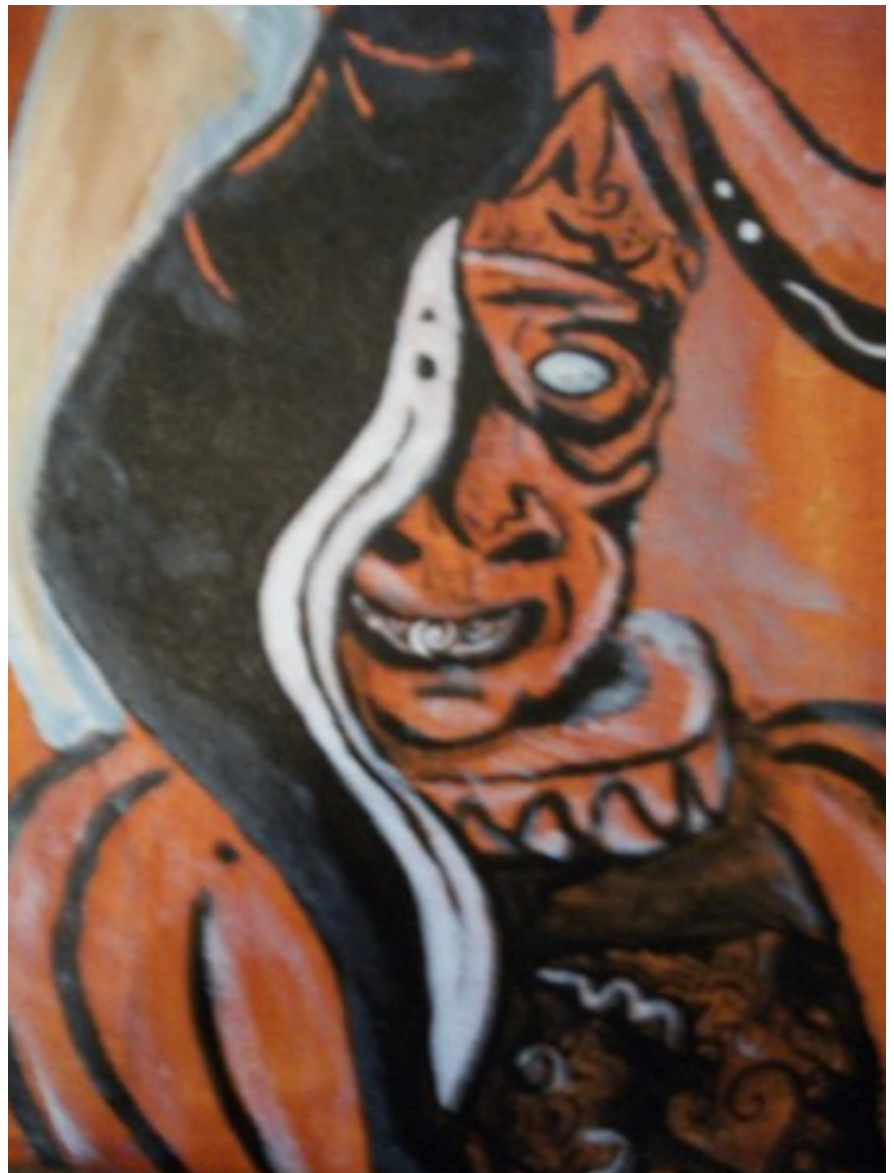


Reviews

Taylor Seed

A Student's Review of the Common Book Project: M.T. Anderson's *Feed*

M.T. Anderson's dystopic novel, *Feed*, critiques the decline of contemporary culture and its deleterious effect on language and grammar. "Text talk," or the shortening of words and phrases, has crept into everyday speak to meet the ever-growing desire for immediate gratification. In *Feed*, this is shown through the eyes of Titus, a teenage boy living in a futuristic society, run by the world's big corporations. Words such as "like," "shit," "huh," and "dude" dominate Titus' and his friends' everyday language. This is only one of many language lapses present in *Feed*. M.T. Anderson imagines a future in which society as a whole has begun to collapse, but the people have lost the ability to understand and comprehend that they are in decline. As Anderson's *Feed* suggests, when we lose our ability to communicate and use language properly, we ultimately lose ourselves.



Samantha Kurtzer "Jester" (2012)

A Word from "Loose Sense" Lauren!

"Loose Sense" Lauren

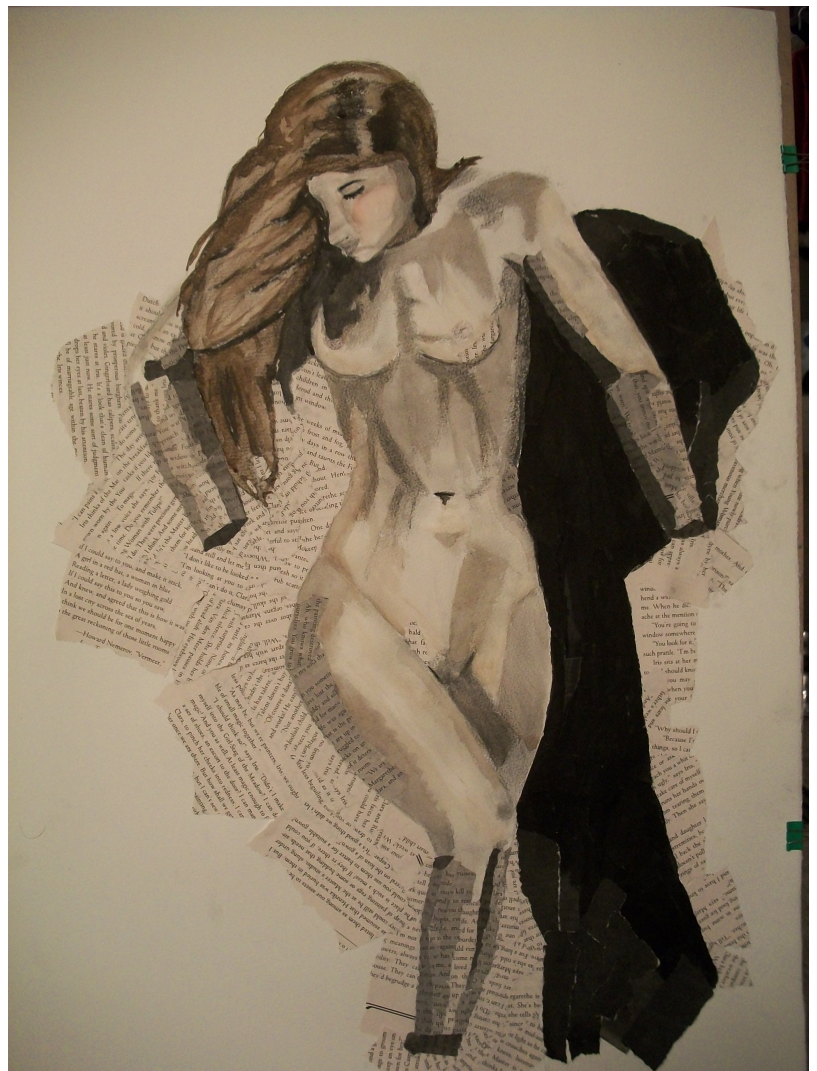
Attacking Sleeping Beauty

Oh look! It's story time with Lauren!

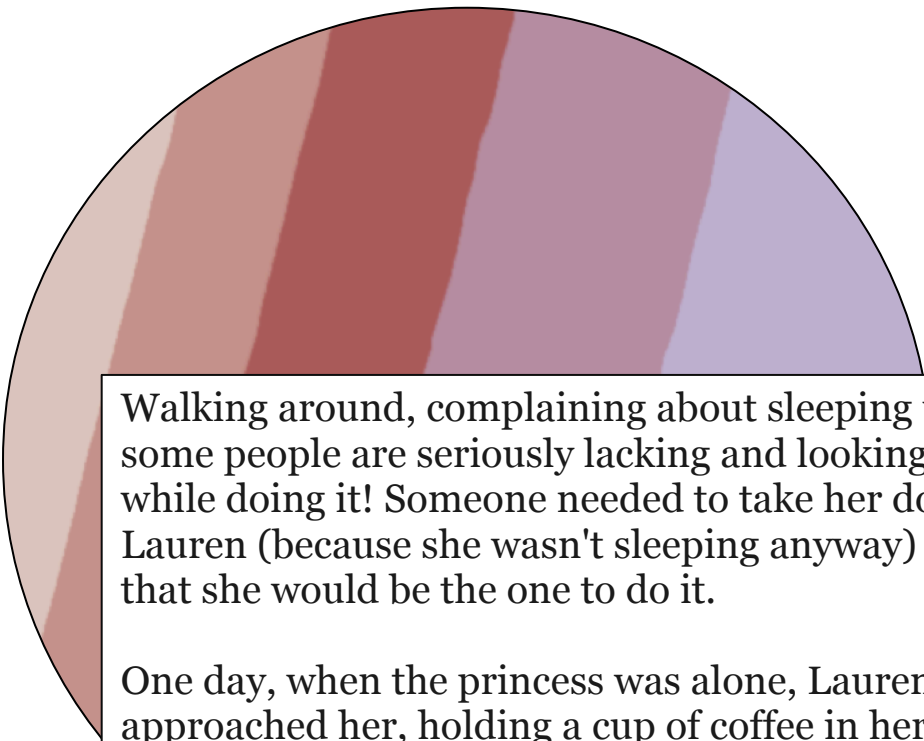
Once upon a time, there was a beautiful princess. There was also a witch, a couple of fairies, a huge dragon, and, later, scholars added vaginal imagery just for fun. I swear, they did it for fun. In any case, that princess came to be known as Sleeping Beauty. Look at her flitting about without a care in the world...

Now, Lauren had a serious issue with Sleeping Beauty. Actually, she had many problems with her, but she didn't feel like airing all her grievances. After all, that requires time and no self-respecting princess would listen to a rant that long.

Sleeping Beauty, after she woke up, spent a considerable amount of time whining about all the time she lost while sleeping. And while she complained, she looked refreshed, energized, and ready to face the world. Lauren, on the other hand, could only watch her jealously. Because really, what a nerve!



Samantha Kurtzer "Jester" (2012)



Walking around, complaining about sleeping when some people are seriously lacking and looking beautiful while doing it! Someone needed to take her down and Lauren (because she wasn't sleeping anyway) decided that she would be the one to do it.

One day, when the princess was alone, Lauren approached her, holding a cup of coffee in her outstretched hand. The princess was grateful for the refreshment and very much enjoyed the burst of energy she got from the caffeine. She drank more and more coffee and slept less and less as the days progressed. Lauren had succeeded in her mission. Now they were both tired and just crazy enough to indulge in maniacal laughter.

Mwahahahahaha! Success is mine! My plan is complete!

Night! But not you Sleeping Beauty... you've had enough. It's time you learned to share.

Cheerio Darlings! (Insert English accent)

