

New River Anthology

2016



2016 New River Anthology

A Collection of Student Art & Writing

Volume 20

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Jacksonville, North Carolina

The Right to Write Award is sponsored by George and Lora Cole of Jacksonville, given in memory and in honor of their daughter. George earned an Associate in Fine Arts from Coastal; he is an accomplished artist with awards received from many campus and local art exhibitions. The Coles are passionate about recognizing the academic achievements of successful students, and we are pleased to present this award to three writers in particular:

"Like a Dandelion in the Wind" by Kyle Dibert

"The Lark and the Lab" by William Clark Gayton

"The "He" in "HeforShe" by Rachel McMillan

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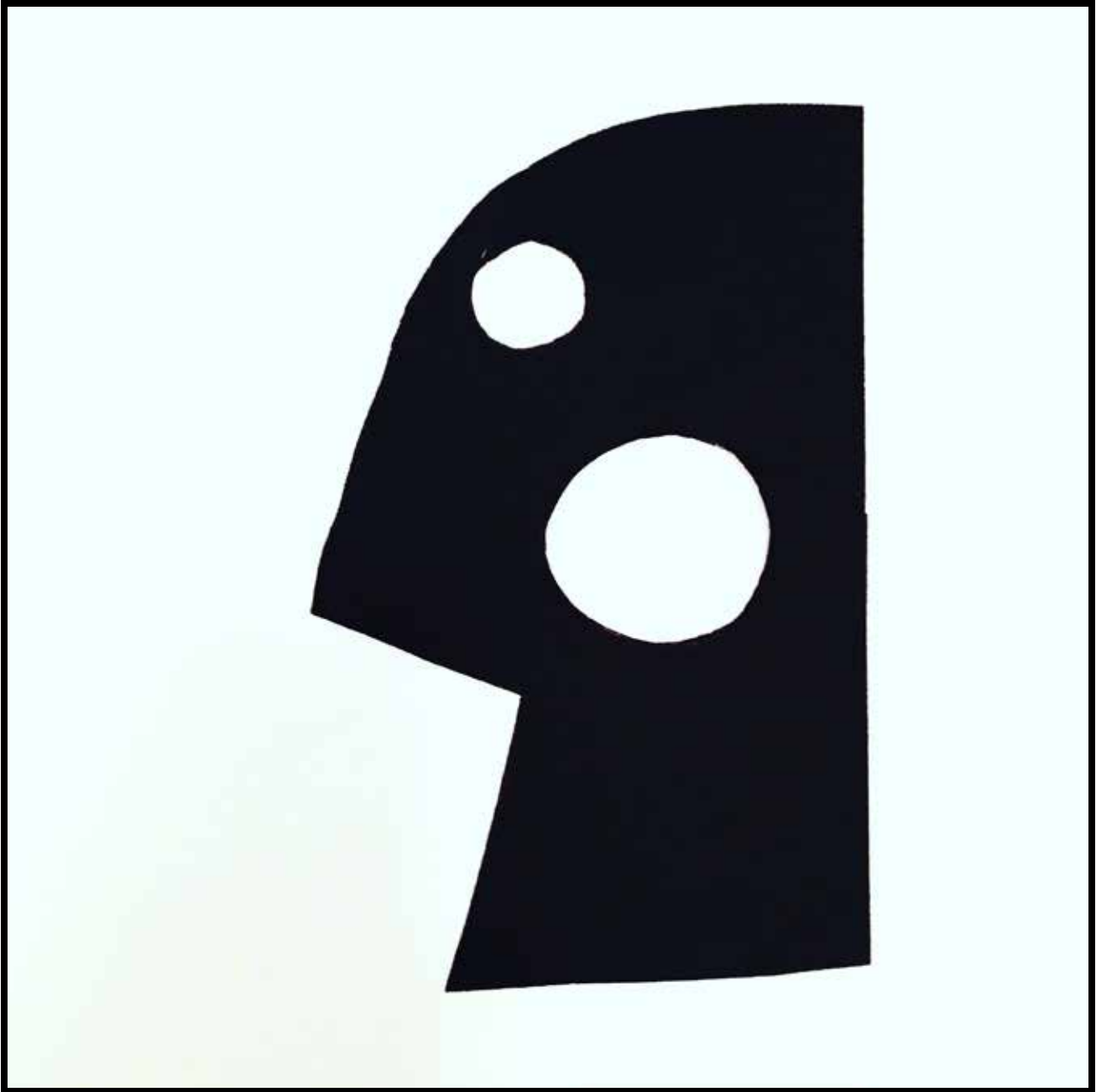
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***Artwork pieces are bolded.**

The Meaning of Art

by Kyle Dibert

A brand new page – there is something exciting about it. It is so inviting, enticing, mesmerizing, energizing; it sends my mind reeling with dreams and visions— artistic ideas that could flourish into a masterpiece that will stand the test of time. The whiteness of a clean page like the innocence of a fresh canvas, asking and pleading to be used, but most of all, to be remembered. A tombstone serves no purpose; it cannot teach nor inspire anyone. In years to come it will be broken by idiotic vandalism or Mother will grind it down to shambles and the memory, the aura, the feeling will be gone like a lost dream. Hope is what makes art, art; without it how could the miserable millions and wretched souls have the will to go on? A painting can tell stories; words can paint the sky in such a way the whole world will understand. Intermingled within the darkness shines a light so magnificent that it saves lives, brings people back from the brink, stays in the hearts of many, and lasts for eternity. How strange is it that the intangible things in life truly last forever. Paintings will discolor, books will fall apart, but thoughts or words last through the ages. The feelings, thoughts, and emotions evoked from art is what makes it forever lasting; when you die it still lives on through the magic of spoken word. Art lives and breathes and cries intermittently amongst societal and philosophical realizations as it mends hearts and pierces through grey reality, showing repeatedly the meaning and importance of existence.



Falling Circles and a Face

Andrew White

“You Are” (Before)

You are what the stars couldn't align.
You are what words can't define.
You are the beauty that won't be tamed.
You are a masterpiece, unable to be framed.
You are the belle of the ball.
You are the fairest of them all.
If my eyes went blind, if my ears couldn't hear,
if my mouth couldn't shout...
you're the last person I want to see—
whose voice I'd hold dear.
You're what I'd write another novel about.

One day, maybe now, maybe never...
the stars will align...
and we'll run away together.

— *William Clark Gayton*

“Always” (After)

“After all this time?”

You will always be what the stars could not align.

Always, what words could not define.

Always, the beauty that would not be tamed.

Always, the masterpiece, unable to be framed.

Always, the belle of the ball.

Always, the fairest of them all.

Always, the girl with the golden hair.

Always, the lady with the starry-eyed stare.

Always, the princess of beauty and perfection.

Always, the queen of her lovely reflection.

Always, the first who I thought of as art,

always, the first who broke my heart.

It took a while for it to mend.

But no matter what, no matter what the world may send,

you will always have a place in my heart even when we’re miles apart.

If you’ll let me, I will always be a friend,

I promise this, without end.

I know you’re taken; it’s okay.

As long as you’re happy (which, as of late, seems and looks to be true),

every day, eight days a week, I will always have a smile,

just for you.

Perhaps, one day, maybe now, maybe never

the stars will align and

we’ll run away together.

— *William Clark Gayton*

The Lark and the Lab

A Sonnet

You dream of home, bonfires, fields of hay.
Being with friends, their presence a present.
You're a homebody and won't run away.
You are a Labrador, kind and pleasant.

I dream of lands, away, far and afar.
I want to journey there, do something new.
I will travel and stare at every star—
I'm a Lark, a songbird, singing for you.

I won't leave, not without you, no, no, no.
I will stay if need be, until the end.
What's life without you? I don't want to know.
Life, love, time, with you, all I will to spend.

Oh, the stars may align, maybe never.
Oh, one day we'll run away together.

— *William Clark Gayton*



Chain Link

Barry J. St. Onge

Unexpected Happiness

by Joseph Lyons

Anticipation filled the class as our professor returned the test scores from yesterday's exam. I surveyed the room to see the excitement on the faces of those who passed. I hesitated, turning my paper over to see my score because I had an all-too-familiar feeling that I failed. I was never good in English, unlike my big brother Isaac, also known as Izzy. My little sister gave him the nickname because she couldn't pronounce "Isaac" as an infant. Isaac was so smart he could get As in his sleep. Every time I needed an answer to a question or a problem, he was the person to ask. As soon as I built up the courage to reveal my score, the bell rang to dismiss class. Without acknowledging my test grade, I wedged the paper between my books and stuffed it in my backpack. Leaving the classroom, I felt a heavy burden lift as I made my way towards Art class, my best subject.

Dashing from one shelter to another in a desperate attempt to dodge the rain, I finally made it to class. Soaked from head to toe, I entered and sat in my seat. Rifling through my bag for materials, I passed the book concealing my test score. Assuming the worst, I closed my bag and began the art assignment.

Minutes in, the class fell silent. Suddenly, my pocket began to violently vibrate. I quickly smacked my pocket in a feeble attempt to suppress the vibration—that awkward moment when everyone is staring at you became a reality. I looked around the class, as if to join the majority in seeking out the cause of the interruption. After I thought I fooled the class, my phone vibrated again, making it apparent that I was the troublemaker all along. I usually didn't check my phone during class, but for some reason I felt this was an important call. I quickly suppressed the call and exited the room.

Walking down the hallway, I checked my caller ID. My mom had called. A deep chill ran up my spine, and my stomach dropped simultaneously. *She knows I'm in school, so why would she be calling?* I quickly dialed her number. Waiting for her to answer, scenarios began coursing through my mind—possible explanations—but none made any sense. Then, as if a light bulb flickered on above me, I concluded, *my professor must have contacted my parents and told them I had failed.* The dial tone stopped, and a silence fell over the phone.

"Hey mom," I said timidly as I awaited a reply. Nothing. "Mom?" I repeated in confusion, examining my phone to see if I had dialed the right number. Contemplating my punishments made me anxious.

Just as I was about to hang up, my mom yelled my name. "Yes, Ma'am?" I said with a timid voice, bracing myself for certain disaster. A pause fell over the phone.

"It's your brother," she said, fighting back tears.

"What? What happened?" My hands began to sweat as I clutched the phone. It took a moment for my mother to regain her strength.

"Your brother's hurt real bad, Joey," she continued. "The doctor doesn't know how long he has, so get to the hospital as soon as you can." After struggling to deliver the message, my mom hung up the phone. I stood there in denial, shocked by the situation.

"I usually didn't check my phone during class, but for some reason I felt this was an important call."

Fortunately, since we lived in such a small town with a population under 5,000, the hospital was not far away. Oblivious to the pouring rain, I hailed a cab.

I lunged into the back seat. "Memorial Hospital, please," I cried while brushing the water off my shoulders. Just as the driver threw the car in gear, someone from outside came rushing into the cab.

Suspiciously observing the area, the man asked in a distraught tone, "Where, uh, where is the closest mechanic?"

The taxi driver replied, "There's one just down the road." After a few miles, we passed the garage. It was closed.

"There's another one a few miles down the road called Tony's Garage," I insisted, pointing in the direction. A few miles passed, but not a word was said. The car had an awkward feeling to it as the shady passenger continued to scan the area as if he were being followed.

"What's wrong with your car?" I asked just to create conversation. He paused then turned to look at me.

"Flat tire," he said in a low voice, followed by another pause. "Must have been a nail or something," he concluded.

"What kind of vehicle do you drive?" I asked.

"Dodge Challenger," he answered proudly.

"The flat black Challenger with the hood scoop?" I asked. He looked at me and smiled in confirmation. I couldn't help but compliment his car because it was the only car in town that could outrun the police. After a minute or so, we finally reached Tony's. Exiting the taxi, the driver informed the man of the price. Patting his person in search of his wallet, it became apparent that he didn't have money. Not to cause any more time-consuming altercations, I offered to pay for the man's ride. He shook my hand in gratitude and shut the door.

By this time I had exhausted my patience with the driver. I insisted that it was an emergency and to please drive faster. Ten miles and four minutes later we arrived at the hospital. I took the elevator up to the third floor and made a beeline to Izzy's room. I paused outside the door before entering to regain my composure. I knew now, no matter the condition my brother was in, I had to be strong emotionally. Especially in front of him or my mother. I took a deep breath, exhaled, and entered the room.

The scene was horrific. Faces buried into the blankets that covered my brother. Everyone surrounded his bed, their eyes swollen from crying. Entangled in tubes and wires connected to heart monitors and other stabilizing machines, lay my unconscious brother, awkwardly fixed in an uncomfortable position as not to disturb the freshly-placed stitches. A moment passed as everyone consoled each other.

"Wake up, Izzy!" cried my little sister while shaking his limp fingers in search of a response. Silence hovered around the room. The only noise was the distinct blips of the heart monitor as it fluctuated in rhythm. "Wake up!" she cried again as tears rolled down her cheeks. By this time my sister realized that he was not waking up. Not anytime soon, that was. She started crying hysterically and started to shake his hand, harder and harder. My dad scooped up my little sister and left the room. It was just my mom and me, sitting across the bed from one another. She hasn't said a word since I got there. My mother clutched Izzy's limp hand.

"Why, God? Why now, why him?" said my mother as she started to tear up again. My family was never very religious. We would go to church once in a blue moon, and for her to say that, I knew right then and there that my brother wasn't coming back.

"What happened?" I asked, searching for answers.

"Izzy was in an accident!" my mother exclaimed. It was confusing to hear that because I knew my brother; I knew that he was a good driver. He never got a ticket, always wore his seatbelt, and certainly wouldn't do anything to jeopardize his life.

After I heard that, I immediately replied, "How? How did it happen?"

"Police said it was a hit-and-run. The bastards left him there to die!" yelled my mother. Enraged, she slammed her fists on the bed, shaking the mattress my brother lay on. Then she buried her head back into the blankets and continued to cry.

I grabbed my brother's hand in a desperate attempt to get a response.

"This can't be happening. Please, if you can hear me, please wake up. Please wake up or move or something. Let me know you're still here." As I continued to talk to my brother, it became more and more difficult to hold back my tears and remain strong for my family. My throat began to choke, and I, too, soon found myself buried in the blankets.

Moments passed as the steady blip of the heart monitor remained in rhythm. My mom left the room, leaving just me and my brother. I gripped my brother's hand, absorbing the realization that this might be the last time I saw him. I whispered my last few words, words so difficult to conjure into a sentence that my voice began to tremble.

"You can't leave now, you just can't! Who's going to take care of the family? I can't do this on my own; I can't do this without you." Words began to slur as talking became more and more difficult. Then, just before I released my grip to let go, Isaac squeezed my hand. I immediately looked up in amazement.

"Squeeze my hand hard enough and I'll have to get surgery on that, too," Isaac said, trying to create levity.

"What happened?" I asked to see if he had any recollection of the accident.

"I don't remember much. I was driving down the highway, when all of a sudden I get T-boned at the intersection." I kept bombarding him with questions, trying to get any information.

"The police said it was a hit-and-run, do you remember what the vehicle looked like that hit you?" He paused, trying his best to remember. He shook his head.

I began walking towards the door to leave the room. My family didn't know he was awake. When I walked out the door, Isaac yelled my name.

"Hey, Joey?" I turned back, peeking my head through the door.

"Yeah, Izzy?" I replied.

"Do you have any books I can read? I don't think I'm leaving this bed anytime soon, so I might as well catch up on some reading."

I reached into my backpack and grabbed the only book inside. I gave him my English textbook. It had plenty of passages that were time consuming but entertaining. I knew he would enjoy it.

I exited the room, drying my eyes as I found my parents in the lobby. They were talking to the police officers from the scene of the crime. They explained the scene in great detail, leaving no room for questions. Except for one.

"I gripped my brother's hand, absorbing the realization that this might be the last time I saw him."

"Did you catch who did this to my son?" my father asked uncomfortably. The officers' heads dropped, ashamed that they didn't have an answer.

"The only lead we have is from an eye witness with the car's description," the officer continued, "The eye witness stated it was a muscle car."

"Did they say what type of car it was?" asked my father.

"No, they weren't sure; they did, however, mention the car having an exposed hood scoop." As soon as I heard that, goosebumps crawled up my neck, standing every hair on end. I didn't realize until that moment that while I was sitting in the taxi, I was sitting next to the guy who almost killed my brother; I even paid for his taxi fee.

In shock and disbelief I asked, "Was it black?"

"Yes," the officer responded. "The car has a flat black paint job. How did you know that?"

I quickly explained to the officer that I had just shared a taxi with a man on the ride over to the hospital who was in need of a mechanic. He had a black Dodge Challenger with a hood scoop.

"Do you know what mechanic he went to see?" It took me a second to recollect our conversation.

"Tony's Garage—ten minutes down the road. He may be still there if you hurry." The officer radioed his partner the details and quickly left the hospital.

Later that night, sitting in the lobby of the hospital, I couldn't help but watch the TV on the wall. Scrolling through the channels I stumbled upon the news channel. I didn't usually watch news, but I wanted to see if my brother's story would appear. Shortly after a few stories, the wreck he was involved in came on the screen. Seeing his car totaled on the highway made me appreciate how strong my brother was. To go through hell and still want to read a book was beyond me. Then at the

end of the story, officers announced that they apprehended the runaway suspect hiding out in a local garage a few miles away from the wreck. Filled with excitement, I went back to Izzy's room to tell him they found the culprit. Much to my surprise, he was still awake, watching the same news channel in that same awkward position on his bed, reading the book I gave him.

I knelt by his bed, admiring his strength as he gestured at me. "They found the guy that did this," I said as I turned down the volume on the TV. "He's going to prison for a long time." Izzy didn't say anything. "You know, I wish I could be as smart and tough like you. Doctors say it took a lot of willpower to wake up as early as you did. As a matter of fact, they thought you weren't going to wake up at all."

A brief moment of silence filled the room.

"You are smart, Joey, and you are strong. No brother of mine is going to talk down on himself like that."

"It's true. I'm definitely not as strong as you, after what you've just been through. And, I'm certainly not smart enough; I can't even pass a stupid exam," I said in disgust.

My brother looked at me and asked, "Which exam did you fail?" He thumbed through my textbook.

"My English exam," I replied, looking down at the floor.

"You mean this paper you shoved in this book?" he asked, holding my exam in the air.

"Yeah, that's the one," I replied in horror. Seeing him holding the paper in his hand, I began to panic again. I assured myself that he knew I failed and that he was going to tell my mom and dad. I began pleading with him, "Please don't tell Mom and Dad; they don't need any other stress after today." He looked back at me and smiled.

"Stressed over what, Joey? You got an A. You passed!"



A Select Few

Donavan Birdsong

Those Alive Don't Understand

by Kyle Dibert

I am so grateful for writing; I truly, truly believe it has kept me alive this long – without it my life would be utterly meaningless. It provides the spark...the fire present in my flashing eyes, rejuvenating and filling the over-encumbered-yet-empty-spaces in my heart, mind, and soul. I am nothing but an ant lost away from the colony. However, I feel I am away for good; a vagrant; a nomad – a sojourner that has traversed many roads and lived through an uncountable number of half, crescent, and full moons. The air of life has finally hit my dry lungs. I can speak. I can dream. Alas, I can live with pen in hand, writing feverishly throughout all walks of life—through the downpours and enveloping fog of substances, beyond the limit of infinite, past the blinding light of complacency and indifference, but above all away from the fear of the unknown. I await the darkness to cloak me in its embrace, for I know only the cleverest and fair things arise out of the perceived nothing. It is the mind that churns and burns, using the last of the midnight oil. And I know, somewhere hidden deep within the corners of black, under the radar flying low, lurking beneath an ocean of facades, lies one pure and simple thought. Are not those of the most refreshing kind? My mind once lit up my puny, eager dreams with a vision unparalleled to anything a mortal man can dream of – it was only white – and white only. A room lacking color, but present in one uniform of Hope. And on the wall, written plainly for all to see, it said, “Those who find don't search; those who walk aimlessly don't travel; those who talk plainly don't speak; and those alive don't understand, but those who testify for the lives they live, write; and so to record conscious thought is to live as to breathe is to be alive.”



Clear Future Goals

Donavan Birdsong

McDougan Manor

by Jamie Wells

Every town has one of those houses. You know the one: boarded up windows and doors, overgrown lawn with grass taller than you, gaping holes in the walls and ceilings, and strange noises every night. I live next door to that house. In my small town of Evalor, we have a house called McDougan Manor, but most people call it "McCreepy Manor."

The Manor was built in the late 1800's by Jeremiah McDougan. Jeremiah was a very wealthy man and had a beautiful wife, Ruby, and a young daughter, Avalon. They lived in Scotland. However, one night Ruby was found dead on the back lawn with a knife in her chest. Jeremiah was very heartbroken that the love of his life was dead, so he decided to leave his home in Edinburgh and move to America. He settled here in Evalor so he could give his daughter a better life away from all the heartache that was left behind. Two years after the Manor was built, Jeremiah awoke to the sound of a loud thud that came from his daughter's room. When he went to investigate, he was horrified at what he saw behind Avalon's door. His daughter was lying on the ground in a pool of blood with a knife protruding from her chest, just like her mother all those years ago. As Jeremiah moved closer to her body, he found a note lying on the floor, nearly concealed by her nightgown. It read:

Father, I am so sorry for what I have done, but I could not live like this anymore. I miss living in Scotland; smelling the grassy fields in the summer, dancing with the falling leaves in autumn, watching the dazzling snowflakes fall in winter, and hearing the wonderful sounds of springtime. You were so enthused about this big trip to America that you never asked how I felt about the move. I will always love you Father, now and forever...

Ever since that night, Jeremiah lived in pain and eventually died of a broken heart.

I moved to Evalor in 2001 and heard about the history of the Manor next door. Every night since then I would hear Jeremiah's spirit sobbing over the loss of his daughter. Occasionally, I would go over to the Manor and talk with him. He never answered. It was always me doing the talking, but I felt that he was listening to me. I think Jeremiah liked it when I came over because he knew that someone knew he was there. That night I decided to ask him some questions. "Jeremiah, what did Avalon look like?" As I mentioned Avalon, I heard a loud crash and saw that a painting had fallen off a wall in the next room. I went over to pick it up, and inscribed on the back was, "Avalon on her seventeenth birthday." I thought, "How strange, I'm seventeen..." As I flipped the painting over, I almost collapsed with fear. The painting was of me. I mean, I could tell it couldn't have been me but Avalon looked exactly like me, like a twin sister almost. She was dressed in a midnight blue ball gown standing in the middle of a very polished parlor.

I said, "Jeremiah, this has to be some kind of joke, right? Avalon looks exactly like me. Wait, that's why you like when I come around, isn't it? You think I'm Avalon, don't you?"

As I said those last words, a blast of cold air rushed by me and standing there was a very sickly-looking man wearing very old and tattered clothing. He didn't have any eyes, just two dark holes where his eyes would've been. I stood there in terror as I watched him moving towards me. I noticed he was hovering above the ground and had almost a silvery haze surrounding him.

"I think Jeremiah liked it when I came over because he knew that someone knew he was there."

I asked, "Jeremiah? Is that you?" The ghost nodded and held out his hand. I reached out for it, expecting my hand to pass through his, but as soon as I touched his hand it felt very real. I looked up at Jeremiah and was shocked when I saw that his eyes had returned. They looked just like mine— bright crystal blue with silver flecks. I gasped and released his hand. As I did, his eyes disappeared once again, leaving dark holes in their place.

I told him, "I'm so sorry, Jeremiah. I am not Avalon. She died a long time ago and even though I look like her, I'm not." He hovered there for a moment, not believing what I had said. I thought I saw a faint, ghostly tear stream down his face. He then pointed over to the door, indicating that I should leave. As I walked over towards the door and stepped onto the porch, I whispered my apologies once again, but when I turned around the doors were boarded shut, like I had never been there at all.

Ever since that night, I've not heard a single cry, sob, or creak coming from McDougan Manor. It has been quiet around town without the presence of Jeremiah McDougan. I have always regretted what I said to Jeremiah; I have always wondered what would have happened if I hadn't told him the truth. To this day I haven't told a single soul about my experience, until now, that is.

"I have always regretted what I said to Jeremiah; I have always wondered what would have happened if I hadn't told him the truth."



Fall Drawing

Barry J. St. Onge

The “He” in “HeForShe”

by Rachel McMillan

Feminist: “A person who believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes” (Beyoncé). Beyoncé takes this simplistic definition from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and based on this definition, would you consider yourself one? Over the years, the word has conjured up negative emotions and feelings towards people who readily accept the label. It has started being interpreted into words like “femi-nazi,” someone so radically feminist that he or she goes about it in a manner displayed only by Nazis in the Third Reich, and people have begun to call feminism the new “F-word.” What some people have seemingly forgotten about is that feminism is not synonymous with man-hating. Emma Watson makes it a point to prove this in the speech she gave as an United Nations Goodwill Ambassador, as well as explains why feminism is not just about women. Men have a solid place in the feminist movement and have as much of a right to it as women do.

On September 20th, 2014, Emma Watson delivered a speech as United Nations Goodwill Ambassador that helped change the face of feminism. She spoke with passion when she delivered her speech about “HeForShe.” In “HeForShe,” she discusses why she feels it is important to galvanize men into acting on behalf of women when it comes to their basic rights. She also discusses why the feminist movement is equally as important to men when it comes to expressing themselves emotionally, their role as parents, and the stigmatism they have compared to women when it comes to asking for help with a mental illness. She asks, “If not me, who? If not now, when?” (Watson). When she mentions the campaign “HeForShe,” she explains that the point is to galvanize, to shock into action men and boys to become advocates for the cause. Throughout the speech, Watson drives the point home by stating statistics, percentages, and further examples to explain how women are

oppressed (Watson). She then does something never done before...she invites the entire male counterpart to join the conversation, the cause, and the fight. When explaining how feminism benefits them as well as women, she mentions her father is seen as less important than her mother as a parent, how suicide kills more men than car accidents, and how when she was a teenager, she observed her male friends withdrawing because they were becoming more oppressed from publicly expressing their emotions (Watson).

Firstly, let it be made known that the feminist movement is nowhere near new. In North America alone, it still dates back to the 1700’s, from the Seneca Falls Convention of July 1848, to World War II where woman took over jobs previously filled by men who had been drafted. Almost seventy years after Seneca Falls, the suffragette movement had arisen and with it the Nineteenth Amendment, granting women the right to vote. Women in North America have continued to fight and protest in order to obtain their constitutional rights. It is the year 2016 and they are still currently fighting for wage equality.

Anthony Maddaleni, the author of the article “Feminism: A Male’s Perspective,” attended a high school party where he had a chat with an inebriated attendee. This person informed him that if a girl was intoxicated and all over a guy, she “obviously wants it” (Maddaleni). Furthermore, if a girl does not want to make out with a guy, she is stuck up, but if she has sex with a guy (or has had three or more sexual partners), she is a slut. When questioned about his logic and double-standards, the party-goer shrugs and concludes, “Look, man, that’s just the way things are” (Maddaleni).

“Men have a solid place in the feminist movement and have as much of a right to it as women do.”

Maddaleni is thoroughly outraged, though. He decides that, no, that is simply not how things should be. He speaks about how the young man's words stuck with him over the next few days. Eventually, he begins to question everything he had been taught as a male pertaining to women, sexuality, and gender roles. He speaks about how he was expected to lose his virginity in high school – an experience that can be equally as sensitive or important for men as it is for women – how he was expected to pursue in a relationship, be dominant, and how “real men played sports, fought people, and defended their inherent manhood,” a logic which he had questioned since the beginning (Maddaleni). He continues by discussing his brief stint in football and how much he disliked it based on his personal experiences with blatant homophobia and misogyny, regardless of an absence of queer players and women alike. It is further explained that players who underperformed were labeled slurs (Maddaleni). He concludes the article by saying that if men embraced feminism, not just seeing women as more than objects, they would be rid of cruelty and ridicule that presently exists between males. They would be free to get rid of hyper-masculinity and sexism among ranks. There would no longer be anymore pariahs or outcasts among male friends for showing vulnerability, physically and emotionally.

Contrary to popular belief, men really do need feminism just as much as women do. Even though women are oppressed in more ways than you can count on one hand, men hold a solid, concrete place. Sexism and gender roles can be just as devastating to a male's self-image and self-worth. Unfortunately, some men think they cannot be feminists because they are “a dude,” they “support women's rights,

but feminism isn't really their thing,” or they think “their lives are not affected by feminism” (Kreitler). Based on traditional gender roles, a large percentage of men will be oppressed based on their sexuality, their role in a relationship, their bodies and body image, and their softer feelings of sadness, hurt, and shame. At one point in his life, almost every male will be called a “sissy,” “wimp,” or another slur because of this oppression (Kreitler). Despite everything our American culture portrays, it doesn't have to be this way.

In order to help men feel welcome to join the movement, they cannot simply be invited. Feminists have to make them feel that this is their movement as much as it is a woman's. Perhaps men feel like they cannot join the argument because of the “fem” in “feminism,” so I propose a solution: change the name. It may seem ridiculous to some old-school feminists, but perhaps the change that is needed ought to start from the inside before we bring it to the outside.

Emma Watson's point is for us to unite all genders (men, women, trans*, intergender, third gender, and people who identify as all of these or none of these) as one group and fight our noble fight together. She tries to begin this dialogue by inviting men to stand up and join those already in the fight by convincing them that they too have a place in the movement as much as other members. Her ultimate message is that women cannot do this alone. The feminist movement needs allies, and they must begin with the “he.” After all, “she” cannot stand without “he.”

“The feminist movement needs allies, and they must begin with the ‘he.’”

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A Lover I Never Got the Chance to Love

As if in some dream in which I fell into,
either by sleep or some potion,
I found myself immersed in conversation
nearly mouthing her words, and,
if not, then finishing her thoughts for her.
Submerged in her consciousness;
Conscious of our hearts beating in sync
I felt the weight of the day lifted,
as her eyes led me safely from the brink.

She was the valley, and the mind was rocky cliffs.
When I began to stray away, her hand reached out
but we never once touched –
Somewhere in our souls
we were connected through the Divine
and nothing to me
means quite as much as her fragile, brilliant mind.

I thought of her yesterday morning;
the thoughts painted delicate strokes
on the insides of my eyelids
as if in some dream in which I fell
into all over again....

— *Kyle Dibert*



Walking the Line

Donavan Birdsong

Like a Dandelion in the Wind

The leaves fell softly like dandelions floating in the wind,
the crinkling sound under my feet unmatched except by the cackling of flame.
Wintery winds gusted and pushed me back into remission
as the warmth left my fingertips – as the frigid air
crept in, suddenly the addiction fled like a bad memory
you blot out. All the brown, orange – violet sky with the tiny
mechanized birds departing for home . . .
it seems all the troubles are flying east, too.

The budding flowers of spring began, and, with them a newfound Hope
as the spectators, the diminutive beings, stare in content bewilderment
with glossy eyes and a half smile;
they realize subconsciously that
even in the seemingly empty spaces, the good still has time to grow.

— *Kyle Dibert*

Big Woman Love

When lips lightly press against sensuous belly fat
I mimic a charming tom cat.
My arms wide and warm during pillow talking chit chat
with bare hands that happily unite with her soft back.

Flirtatious flesh that doesn't kiss
leaves me in sportsman's bliss—
Hoping, wishing, needing, for sure
for her to let me kiss her belly some more.

Those double zero dreams were never mine,
so please, oh please, just one more time
allow me kiss those hips.
I love them plus-sized.

— *Donavan Songbird*

Reading: Mind, Body, Print and Screen

by *Marissa Cantu*

Throughout analyzing research, one thing has been made obvious: reading does many different things to your mind and body. It is no secret that reading is great for you. If you read for just six minutes, that is enough to reduce your stress and anxiety by 68%. Not only that, but reading helps your brain function as you age (Jabr). Does this apply when reading an e-book? How does the brain and body alter the moment your eyes reach text?

Because we were not programmed to “read,” our brains consider letters as a physical object. The brain improvises a new approach to reading by combining spoken language, motor coordination, and vision (Jabr). Beyond treating individual letters as objects, the brain likes to perceive text as a physical landscape (Jabr). As we read, we make a mental representation of the text-meaning as a physical structure; within that structure we tend to locate key words. Jabr points out, “In published studies, people report that when trying to locate a particular piece of written information they often remember where in the text it appeared.” These features make print books easy to navigate and also easier to form a coherent mental map.

Based on the results of experiments and consumer reports, modern screens and e-readers fail to recreate tactile experiences that can be achieved through print books (Jabr). These things prevent people from navigating long text in depth and in a satisfying manner. When in comparison to print, screens drain more of our mental resources while reading, making the material harder to retain (Jabr). In the tactile experience of a book, all of the book’s characteristics make a huge difference in retaining information, such as the thickness of the pages in your hands, the placements of the word on the page, or even a textured book cover; these things help your memory of the text.

Reading can reduce stress just as fast as listening to music

or even taking a walk. According to a study that was done in 2009, researchers measured heart rates as well as muscle tension; they found that after just six minutes into reading people relaxed (Bushak). However, reading on a screened device is proven to, in fact, raise your stress levels. Excessive use of cellular devices or laptops at night has been linked to depression, higher levels of stress, and fatigue (Bushak).

Psychologists have done studies conceding that those who have studied material on a screen relied on remembering rather than knowing; those who read on paper depended on remembering *and* knowing (Jabr). The volunteers who read on paper learned the material quickly, whereas those who studied by screen were trying to trigger the right memory (Grate). Other research studies have found that people comprehend less when reading on a screen due to the fact that the physical and mental task is rated higher (Grate). Though e-ink seems to be easy on the eye by reflecting light just like a paper book would, the liquid crystal display (LCD) is bright and directly in your face, and depending on the model, the pixilation and flickers put quite a strain on your eyes.

To get a better understanding of the brain, a parallel line of research was conducted to focus on people’s state of mind when approaching a computer or tablet. Constant use of screens creates shorter attention spans and displaced focus due to social media and technological distractions (link to link). It has been concluded that the mind is less conducive to learning with an e-book than with print books (Jabr). In an experiment that included 72 volunteers who completed a Higher Education Entrance Examination READ test, the authors concluded that those who took the test on a computer scored lower and reported higher levels of stress and tiredness than those who completed the very same exam on paper (Jabr). Wästlund conducted another study; this one involved 82 volunteers who completed the READ test on computers as a continuous piece of text. Wästlund thinks that scrolling requires the reader to

focus on both the text and the movement; this drains more mental resources than simpler gestures such as turning a page (qtd. in Jabr).

Many studies emphasize that screens not only cause mental strain but people don't always bring much mental effort to reading on screens to begin with (Grate). Many people consider reading on a screen less serious than reading the same material on paper. In fact, based on a 2005 survey, 113 people in Northern California, San Jose State University concluded that people who read on screens tend to take shortcuts and spend more time scanning for key words compared to those who would read on paper and not only read the text once but multiple times (Grate).

Screens have altered our reading habits and created new ones. Our brains have actually adapted to skim text rather than absorb the full meaning of the text. In 2006, a study concluded that when reading on screens people read in an "F" pattern (reading the entire top line but then only scanning through the text along the left side of the page) (Grate). When reading in an "F" pattern this reduces the level of comprehension and actually makes it harder to focus the next time you face a lengthy piece of text.

Reading an old-fashioned novel is also linked to improving your sleep health. By reading a paper book about an hour before

bed, your brain will enter a new zone; this zone is distinct from that enacted by an e-reader (Bushak). A study out of Harvard University found that reading an e-book before bed lessened production of a sleep hormone, melatonin (Jabr). People had a harder time falling asleep, experienced less of a deep sleep, and even felt fatigue the following morning.

Though there are many advantages to reading, the medium truly makes a difference. Research shows that though e-books are very convenient, they just do not bring enough benefits to the table. A print book causes us to approach the text with a serious, determined, and focused manner. Along with our determination comes another advantage of reading printed text which is memory. The physicality of a book triggers our brain to not only remember but to really know the material. These two aspects of printed text are very important. Print books not only help with memory and comprehension habits, but they also help with mental and other physical health, such as not having a bright LCD in your face or simply just having a good night's sleep.

E-books may be the eco-friendly option, but the simplicity of holding a physical book in your hands makes the old-fashioned paperback the better option. Make that commitment to a classic print book and you will receive a unique reading experience as well as a healthier one.

"Though there are many advantages to reading, the medium truly makes a difference."

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Contributors

Donavan Birdsong

Donavan has found beauty in the world and decided that he would love to try to show it in its best light. He thinks it is best displayed in art whether it is words or other forms of art, such as paintings, photographs, poems, or stories.

Marissa Cantu

Marissa is a student at Coastal.

Kyle Dibert

Kyle is an aspiring, and hopefully inspiring, artist; writer; photographer; and musician. He is inclined to everything on the artistic and creative side. He enjoys writing and making music in his spare time. His life dream is to be a world-renowned poet. He was born near Seattle.

William Clark Gayton

Clark is a Filipino-American who lives in Jacksonville, NC. His hobbies, other than Creative Writing and reading, include: piano, tennis, chess, watching movies, and hanging out with friends.

Joseph Lyons

Tragically, Joseph passed away in March 2016. Here, in his own words, is Joseph's bio: Joseph was born in North Carolina to the two most hardworking parents he knows, Alicia and David Lyons. He is the baby of the family; however, he is also the tallest. He has an older brother and sister and two dogs. He always knew that he wanted to be a writer since he was a child. This is his first time submitting to the anthology.

Rachel McMillan

Rachel grew up in the south her entire life; she is proud of her liberal values, which she believes are reflected in her writing.

Barry J. St. Onge

Barry intends to transfer to a four year university to become a high school History teacher. He recently retired from the USMC with twenty years and three months of honorable service. The "Chain Link" artwork piece was a thirteenth wedding anniversary gift to his wife in 2014. The thirteen links represent each year of marriage. The Morning Glory flower and box with ball represents his wife, the point at the end with the ball represents himself, and the box with four rings in it represent their four children. Each is a different type of wood and it is all hand carved. The "Fall Drawing" artwork piece represents his favorite time of year in New Hampshire, during the first snowfall. It is made with colored pencils and chalk.

Jamie Wells

Growing up, Jamie's teachers and parents always told her how her stories were "amazing" and "great." She has always enjoyed writing, and she tries to be concise and think about the meaning of each piece.

Andrew White

Andrew loves to create things and finds that "bringing something into existence out of nothing" is part of what makes creating so much fun. He is a Christian, striving to honor God with all of his work, as well as an artist, animator, musician, and poet. He is also fascinated by computer programming.



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