

HUMANITIES

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES SPRING 2020



Congregation



Although we decided last autumn to focus this issue of *Humanities* on gathering and what we gain when people come together, we are, as I write this, experiencing a pandemic that has made the theme much more relevant. This was recently brought home to me in a poignant way.

It has been my privilege for the past five years to enjoy weekly BYU devotionals and forums seated on the stand at the Marriott Center. Being short, and opting to sit on the back row, I have been unable to see the faces of the speakers projected on screens directly above our heads or on the floor at the front of the stand, so I have come to view these uplifting and edifying experiences from a very different perspective. Although I could only see speakers from the back, I could, for example, follow along on the teleprompter to see where they improvise and if they include pronunciation cues. I also have had the chance to observe audiences, both to gauge attendance as well as to see individual faces as they respond to the message. Often, when I have been moved by something the speaker says, my feelings have been mirrored, and even validated, by the emotions I witness in some of the faces of those sitting in the audience.

When, such as now, we are unable to attend a wedding, funeral, or baby's blessing, we learn that showing up does much more than feed us information.

That privilege evaporated around the Ides of March, when the pandemic touched campus in dramatic and challenging ways. On St. Patrick's Day I sat in my office watching the first "livestream" devotional and, although the message was uplifting, I missed the ineffable but very real presence of what is so often referred to in scripture as multitudes.

to things, so that by "just showing up" we have advantages over those who fail to attend. Through today's (socially distanced) looking glass we may think back with nostalgia on

A number of years ago International Cinema was suffering a lack of attendees, given the increase at the time in new ways people could enjoy films without needing to go to a theater. I was involved in discussions about how we might better lure patrons to attend. Out of those discussions came the realization that watching a film on a small screen, especially alone, was a very different experience from watching one on the big screen in a packed theater. Granted, the visual and aural dimensions were certainly superior in the latter case, but there also is a value added to film by the presence of, and being embedded within, a large audience. Musical performance is no different; listening to a piece on even the finest quality headphones is fundamentally a very different experience from participating in a live concert. If that were not the case, why would we pay much more than the cost of an album to attend? Being surrounded by other people simultaneously means we are influenced in subtle and profound ways by their laughter, their silence, and their sobs. We leave the venue having had both personal and communal experiences.

President Worthen began the 2019–20 school year with a nod to the power of assembly, presciently underscoring the unique opportunity gathering at BYU represents. Now that our congregating is virtual rather than physical, we are learning more of what he was talking about. Well before the advent of social distancing, Woody Allen suggested that "80% of life is just showing up."¹ I think he was implying that, in normal life, sometimes it takes great effort to assemble, to gather, to "show up"

gatherings that, at the time, we may have begrudgingly attended, or skipped altogether.

It occurs to me that, by the time we reach adulthood, we have logged tens of thousands of hours sitting through myriad types of meetings and gatherings. Some would say that such a number would make us experts in attendance! However, given an abundance of distractions and remote technologies, the easier it is to attend an event the less we may be prone to "just showing up." We often make our choices about attendance based upon the personal value the meeting or event will have to us, but that should only be a minor fraction of our concern. When, such as now, we are unable to attend a wedding, funeral, or baby's blessing, we learn that showing up does much more than feed us information. It also, for example, reveals things about us and our relationships with other people: that we care, that we support them, that we want to share their joy, or their sorrow. There are social dynamics involved in gatherings that go far beyond the personal value of appearing live at a particular event. We are showing support to one of our network of interconnected communities that serves as a precious social resource, and that also is part of what makes us human.

In mortality, gathering is an internship we experience to prepare us for our divine vocation: connecting, creating, assembling, and, ultimately, sealing. As Walt Whitman intimated, we all contain multitudes.² The essential presence of others in us may be hidden during our frenetic interactions as large congregations, but is reinforced by the loneliness and clarity of thought that comes through solitude. May we emerge from our respective isolations more committed to community, more eager to gather and to enjoy the blessing of being part of the multitude of humanity.

1. Susan Braudy, "He's Woody Allen's Not-So-Silent Partner," *New York Times*, Section 2: Arts and Leisure, August 21, 1977.

2. Walt Whitman, Robert Hass, and Paul Ebenkamp, *Song of Myself and Other Poems*. (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2010).

J. SCOTT MILLER PORTRAIT BY ELIJAH THOMAS. RIGHT: PHOTO OF PRESIDENT NELSON BY J. SCOTT MILLER.



President Nelson delivering a BYU Devotional on September 17, 2019. For more about President Nelson in this issue, see page 17.

HUMANITIES I SPRING 2020



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Feedback? We would like to hear your views, your memories of campus, or an update on your life since leaving BYU.

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R

READER
RESPONSE TO
HUMANITIES
MAGAZINE

Want more thought-provoking discussion with fellow BYU Humanities alums? Connect with us between issues of *Humanities* on social media!



The views and opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the faculty, administration, or staff of the BYU College of Humanities. Submissions may be edited for length, grammar, appropriateness, and clarity.

WINTER 2020

TIMELINE

FEBRUARY
Acclaimed pianist Marcus Roberts partnered with professor Greg Clark (ENGL) in a University Forum to teach what jazz music brings to the conversation about democracy and the art of getting along. [speeches](#) [byu.edu/speakers/marcus-roberts/](#)

MARCH
Professor Francesca Lawson (CAL) presented her research on musicality in the interdisciplinary humanities as this year's P.A. Christensen Lecturer. For more, [see page 10](#).

APRIL
Professor George Handley (CAL) partnered with BYU

Magazine to produce "A Thing of Beauty: The Lessons of Water," youtube.com/watch?v=AKOV0cvWqEI. Associate professor Roger Macfarlane (CAL) delivered a lecture series in partnership with The Leonardo titled "The Last Days of Pompeii." For more, [see page 11](#).

Due to COVID-19, this year's Convocation was celebrated by each major department in different ways. Read the Dean's letter to humanities graduates here: bit.ly/HumConvocation20.

Associate professor Chip Oscarson (CAL) was appointed as a new associate dean of general education.

of my broken Korean. But I was at a dinner appointment with the stake patriarch when he used his English to ask me if I was a "pregnant member of the church." After an initial start on my part, I got my brain thinking and realized he was mistranslating a difficult doctrinal concept. What he really wanted to know was had I been "born in the covenant"! Translating is hard enough as it is, without throwing in religious idioms and the complexities that arise from literal translations.

—KIMBERLY JUDD DAYTON, BA HUMANITIES '84

Lost in Translation

IN 1983 I immigrated from Germany to the greater Seattle area, learned English, and stopped speaking German altogether. Eleven years later, I was called to the Germany Düsseldorf Mission and found myself having to relearn everything. Things came back

pretty quickly in the MTC . . . but not as accurately as I would have hoped. In my first city, Aachen, my companion and I were caught in a rainstorm after teaching a lesson, and our investigator offered to give us a ride home. I was giving turn-by-turn directions, and I thought I had

told him to turn right at the next intersection (*kreuzung*) but instead had told him to turn right at the next *kreuzigung* or "crucifixion." He had a good laugh and told me that there was a law against crucifixions in Germany. Seven months later, he became a member of the Church.

—DAVE JUNGHEIM, BA GERMAN '01, MBA '13

AFTER GRADUATING from BYU and many years of French classes, I was called to serve a mission in Korea. The language was tough—and that went both ways. I was usually kind when mistakes were made by my Korean friends who were practicing their English, as I hoped they would likewise be tolerant

AFTER GETTING a degree in English from BYU, I later became an ear, nose, and throat surgeon and spent my career in a very small town in the mountains of rural Georgia.

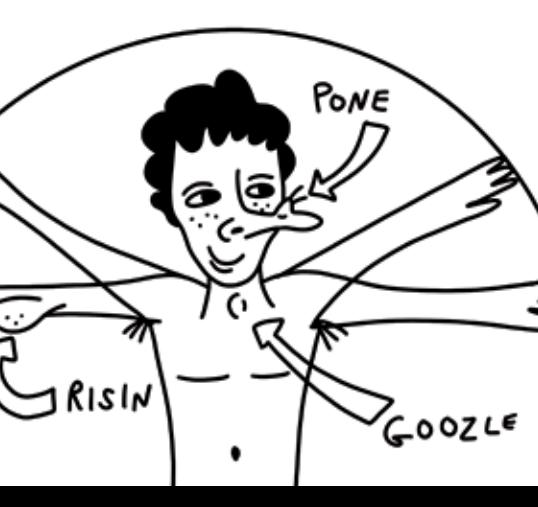
One day, a patient asked, "I got a *pone*. Can you fix it?"

Out of all the Latin terms I had encountered during medical school and residency, I had never come across that one. My nurse, bless her heart, spoke Southern much better than I could translate this foreign language and whispered to me, "A 'pone' is a lump or a mass."

"Ah, Doc, that's just a *risin'*. Don't mean nothing," the patient added.

My nurse translated. "A *risin'* is something that rises above the surface of the skin. Kinda like a *pone*."

"My *goozle* hurts," said the patient.



RYANN WOODS, GRAPHIC DESIGN '21



Did you know the College of Humanities sponsors a Medical Humanities club for majors interested in pursuing careers in medicine? We extend our appreciation to all essential workers during this exceptional time. Visit clubs.byu.edu/clubs#/medium.

Of note: For more about the un-serpent medical symbol's origins and usage, see BYU Humanities alumnus Dr. Howard G. Malin's (Latin '69) "The Asclepiadian-Hermian Dilemma" in the *Archives of Podiatric Medicine and Foot Surgery*, Vol. 4:2, 53–60.

By this time, I was used to getting lost in translation and smoothly replied, "Well, as long as your *goozle* is located in the head or neck area, I'll examine it."

It was his esophagus.

Some of my patients were from the northeastern part of the United States and had summer homes in the area. A hearing aid customer complained to my audiologist, "Do you have any hearing aids that don't make people sound so Southern?"

And if you like these tales, you're just "finer than a frog hair split four ways."

—WENDY L SMITH, MD, AA ENGLISH '82

I FIRST came to BYU as a transfer student, and when I asked some of my roommates where the Halloween dance was, they said, "The Mennonite Hall." After searching my campus map unsuccessfully, I decided to ask a few of my coworkers where the hall was. One of them laughed and joked, "I don't think I've ever heard of that hall. I think you must be at the wrong school!" Eventually, I got an answer from one of my classmates. She had a funny look on her face, like she had just figured out a riddle. She then said, "You must have misheard it. The dance is at the *Amanda Knight Hall*!"

Thanks to her, I had a most memorable Halloween. I met the man of my dreams that night at the dance, who is now my husband!

—SONJA KURTH, BA ENGLISH '92

Technically Fluent

EVEN THOUGH I am in a high-technology occupation with an MS and a PhD in software engineering, I frequently recognize how important my humanities education at BYU has been for my career of sixty years in the field of computing. This morning, at breakfast, I was telling my wife that ENG 251, Theory of English Grammar, taught by Zane Alder, was one of the most important classes I took that helped me with deeper insight into the general concepts of communication in the grammars of computing languages.

—RICHARD RIEHLE, BA ENGLISH '65

a clay burro, some chia seeds, and spent the first minute of class every day discussing (in Spanish) the qualities of having a burro named Pícaro. I had 95 students that year, and 93 later signed up for second-year Spanish!

Later on, I was offered two more Spanish-teaching positions in the San Diego Unified School District. I could end my story here, but it's not really the end of my experience with the Spanish language. Since the San Diego Temple opened in 1993, I have been an ordinance worker for almost the entire time. Friday nights the temple is frequently filled with Spanish speakers, and I am privileged to help them.

—CHRISTINE EDWARDS, ENGLISH MAJOR AND SPANISH MINOR, '91

Cultural Mistranslation

IN 2015 I gave a lecture at a small university in Bordeaux. I accompanied the students to the local museum's exhibition "Chicano Dream," and the following class I presented on Hispanic life in the United States. Before my presentation, we began the class by addressing the Charlie Hebdo shootings, which had taken place the previous day.

The local exhibition had been frank in discussing the US economy's need to exploit immigrant labor, and I was similarly open in my discussion, but not five minutes into my presentation I was met with hostility and anger. Having only lived in France for a few months, I didn't realize the French relationship to North African immigrants is similar to that of Americans vis-a-vis Hispanics, including being justified by similar rhetoric. The situation, of course, was additionally fraught due to the previous day's killings.

Had I understood this, I could have been more delicate in broaching the conversation. A careful awareness of background and culture is now something I try to account for when discussing sensitive topics, especially across cultures.

—CARLOS OSORIO, ENGLISH '21

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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3. Soft 16, Acryl 6, Iglo 7, Alto 8, Myope
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Finding Meaning in the Middle

BETWEEN 1505 and 1515, Hieronymus Bosch painted *Ascent of the Blessed*. The painting depicts angels guiding souls through a dark tunnel and toward the brightness of heaven, which is represented as a literal “light at the end of the tunnel.” While there is no confirmed etymological link between the painting and this cliché, the phrase is often used to remind us that dark times have the possibility of glorious outcomes.

The problem with this platitude is that it seems to limit our capacity for growth during trials. It suggests that meaning and light are only available at the end of a difficult experience. It tries to tell us that once our eyes adjust to the sudden darkness, the middle is nothing more than a trudge through blackness until we reach the light.

As the effects of COVID-19 spread through the world and reached BYU campus, it felt like we were all taking our first steps into a dark tunnel. Surely, a lot of BYU students will remember exactly where they were and what they were doing when they heard the announcement that classes would be moved online due to the growing threat. When we tell this story years from now, we’ll probably talk about how we felt in those first few moments when we came face-to-face with our new reality. We’ll talk about how we rushed home to avoid infection but then turned right around and rushed to the grocery store to stockpile supplies (toilet paper, especially).

But now we’re living in the middle. The initial panic has subsided, and at times it feels like all we can do is try to navigate our way through the darkness of fear and uncertainty. For some students, one of the hardest things about living in the middle of the pandemic is not knowing when we’re going to reach the end. Two weeks becomes six weeks becomes “until further notice.” And during all of this, we’re grieving events that were canceled or opportunities missed, like graduation, internships, and studies abroad.

But we don’t have to think of this as a trial we simply have to get through. Yes, there is pain and sadness, but perhaps the grief we are experiencing can help us to be grateful for things we previously took for granted. It can help us remember the people that we missed

during our busy day-to-day lives and help us realize how much we need each other.

Being in the middle of a pandemic can seem scary and lonely. But while this has been happening at a global level, many of us have been able to make time to appreciate what’s right in front of us. In our search for silver linings, we’ve found more flexibility with how to use our time and professors’ help to succeed with online classes. We’ve seen the miracle of being able to unite in large numbers, even when physical proximity is restricted. And we’ve found creative ways to continue being there for each other.

I hope that we won’t define the year 2020 by the coronavirus and its effects but by our response to it—that we’ll see this year as a time when we learned how to effectively utilize technology and a time when we realized how important it is to connect with others. When we finally reach the end, and we all walk out our front doors, maybe we’ll be more inclined to leave them open or to make room for others.

Perhaps, years from now, we’ll look back at the middle and remember the memes and the online classes and the Zoom birthday parties, all of which provided bright spots in between the hard-hitting news. I hope we’ll remember that the light in the metaphorically dark tunnel, the one we thought only appeared at the end, actually shone all the way through.

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH '21



The scene at left is the final panel in Bosch's polyptych *Visions of the Hereafter*, above.

I hope we'll remember that the light in the metaphorically dark tunnel, the one we thought only appeared at the end, actually shone all the way through.

gather

verb. To join or unite; to put together, form by union.¹

A RECENT LETTER from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles quotes a June 2018 statement by President Russell M. Nelson that the gathering of Israel on both sides of the veil is “the greatest challenge, the greatest cause, and the greatest work on earth today.”² A lexical study of the root of the word “gathering” may provide insights as we accept the challenge, embrace the cause, and do the work of missionary service and family history research.

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots*, the reconstructed phonological antecedent of the English word GATHER is *ghedh-, and its reconstructed meaning (gloss) is “to unite, join, fit.” The adjective GOOD, the noun GOODS, and the adverb TOGETHER derive from the same root as GATHER.

According to Strong’s Hebrew dictionary in the WordCruncher scripture concordance, the Old Testament words that underlie the English translation of GATHER include

מִקְוֶה *mqveh*, meaning ‘something waited for, confidence, a collection, a pond, or a caravan’ from *qvh*, meaning “to bind together, twist, collect, expect” (see Genesis 1:9–10)

and

רְכַשׁ *rksh*, meaning “to lay up, collect” (see Genesis 12:5).

In the New Testament, the Greek word that underlies the translation of GATHER is συνάγω, *synágō* meaning “to lead together, collect, convene, or entertain hospitably,” which is the root of the word SYNAGOGUE (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1).

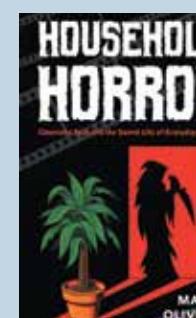
In the present virus crisis, I have learned how good it is to gather my family history records together. I found “Kinsmanship” (Dickinson F456) in curating the family history records that I have been archiving for many years. One of my former students made a website for her Digital Humanities class, using my family letters, biographies, stories, and photos for content: bravecolumba.com/familyhistory/. Scanning and labeling materials for the website is helping me document the experiences of my father’s immigrant ancestors who survived the Civil War and the Great Peshtigo Fire of October 8, 1871. It is good to learn about the disasters they faced as we face present challenges.

—CYNTHIA HALLEN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

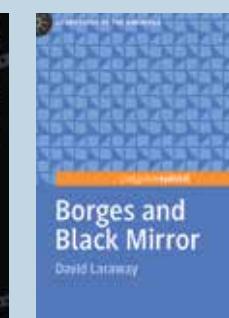
1. OED, “gather,” v. I.1 accessed June 8, 2020, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/77077?rskey=rKqKx&result=3&isAdvanced=false#eid>

2. [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org)

FACULTY PUBLICATIONS



Household Horror: Cinematic Fear and the Secret Life of Everyday Objects
MARC OLIVIER



Borges and Black Mirror
DAVID LARAWAY



An Unarmed Woman
JOHN BENNION



Teaching Mindful Writers
BRIAN JACKSON



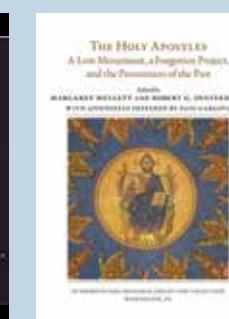
Waiting for Fitz
SPENCER HYDE



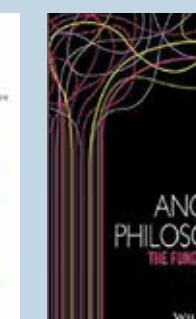
Ezekiel's Third Wife
JOHN BENNION



The Island of Lace: Drawn Threadwork on Saba in the Dutch Caribbean
ERIC ELIASON

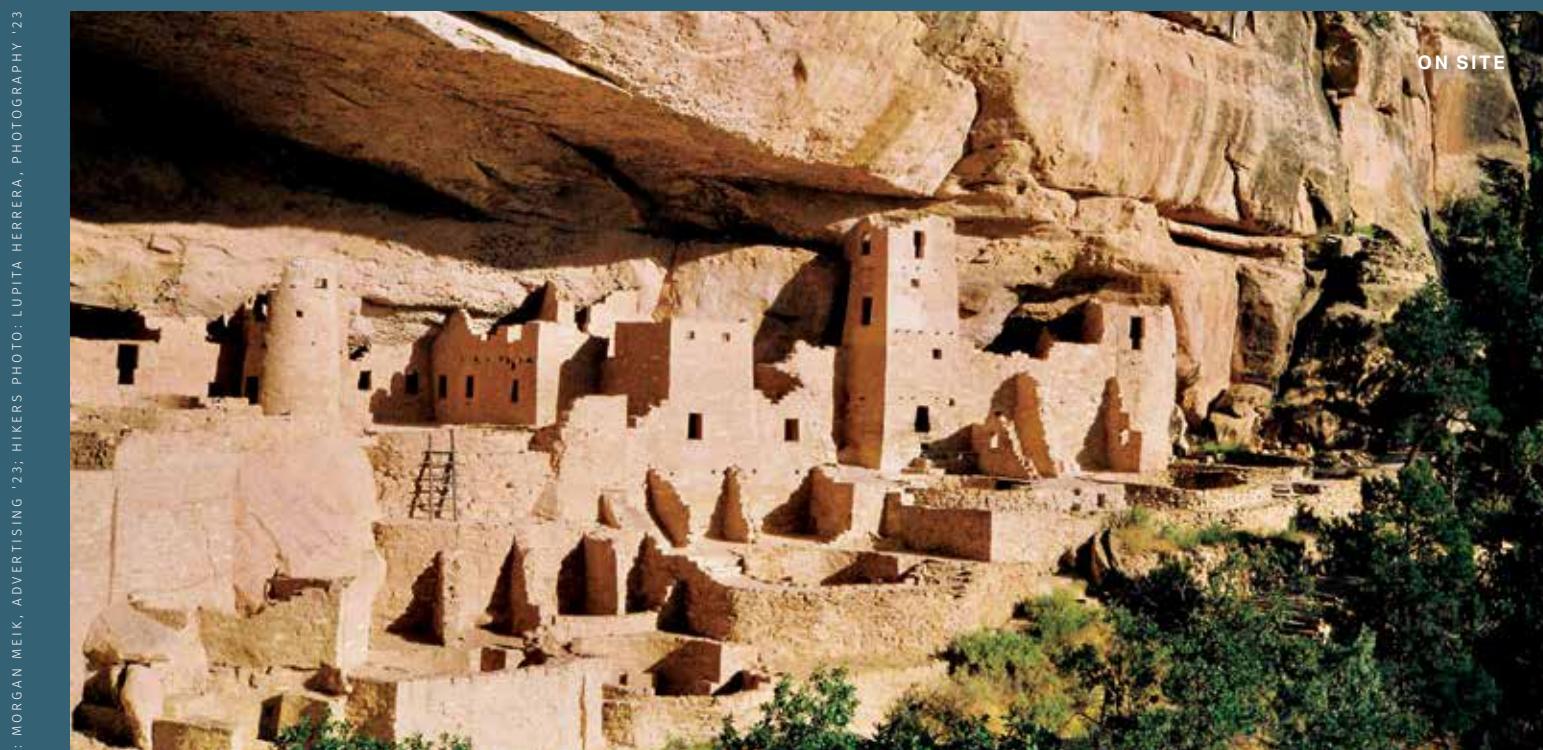


The Holy Apostles: A Lost Monument, a Forgotten Project, and the Presentness of the Past
Ch. 6 "Constantine's Apostoleion, a Reappraisal"
MARK J. JOHNSON



Ancient Philosophy: the Fundamentals
DAN GRAHAM

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EXPLORING MESA VERDE

DURING A TIME when gathering is not only looked down upon but dangerous, thinking back to last fall semester, when 25 students in associate professor Travis Anderson’s PHIL 214 Philosophy of Architecture expedition jostled each other down a stone trail to see awe-inspiring ancient architecture, is bittersweet.

The Mesa Verde ruins of the Ancient Puebloans are a testament to the determination of humanity to adapt and thrive amidst difficulties. Those ancient peoples (ca. 1190 AD) carved habitats out of stone to protect their communities. They lived together, inches close, under rock overhangs with cliffs for their front steps. It’s safe to say they clung to each other for all kinds of support.

I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to document this field trip for the college communications team. Brigham Young University, and the College of Humanities in particular, have always done their best to keep students and faculty feeling connected and cared for. Trips like the one to Mesa Verde are part of the Humanities+ initiative to bridge

the gap between classroom learning and real-world understanding. But they do more than that. They strengthen relationships among peers, times, and cultures. They give us a greater understanding of where we come from and who we are.

Last fall, we couldn’t help but wonder what it would have been like day-to-day in the Cliff Palace. There, most of the dwellings shared walls and required residents to pass through adjoining apartments, deeper into the rock, to arrive at a particular destination. In those close quarters, moving through the dark and stillness toward one another’s sound—gathering—must have been the default. Isolation? Unimaginable.

Now, due to COVID-19, gathering has gained new meaning, both in physical presence and in purpose. In a global crisis that calls for total solidarity, we gather *by socially distancing* for the vulnerable, for the researchers. We gather against a virus that doesn’t recognize our human-made divisions.



Gathering can take place in many ways: physically, digitally, purposefully. As a student of BYU, I am so grateful for the emphasis placed on expanding views and experiences beyond what might be expected, and for the unique connections I have found in these strange circumstances at my own university.

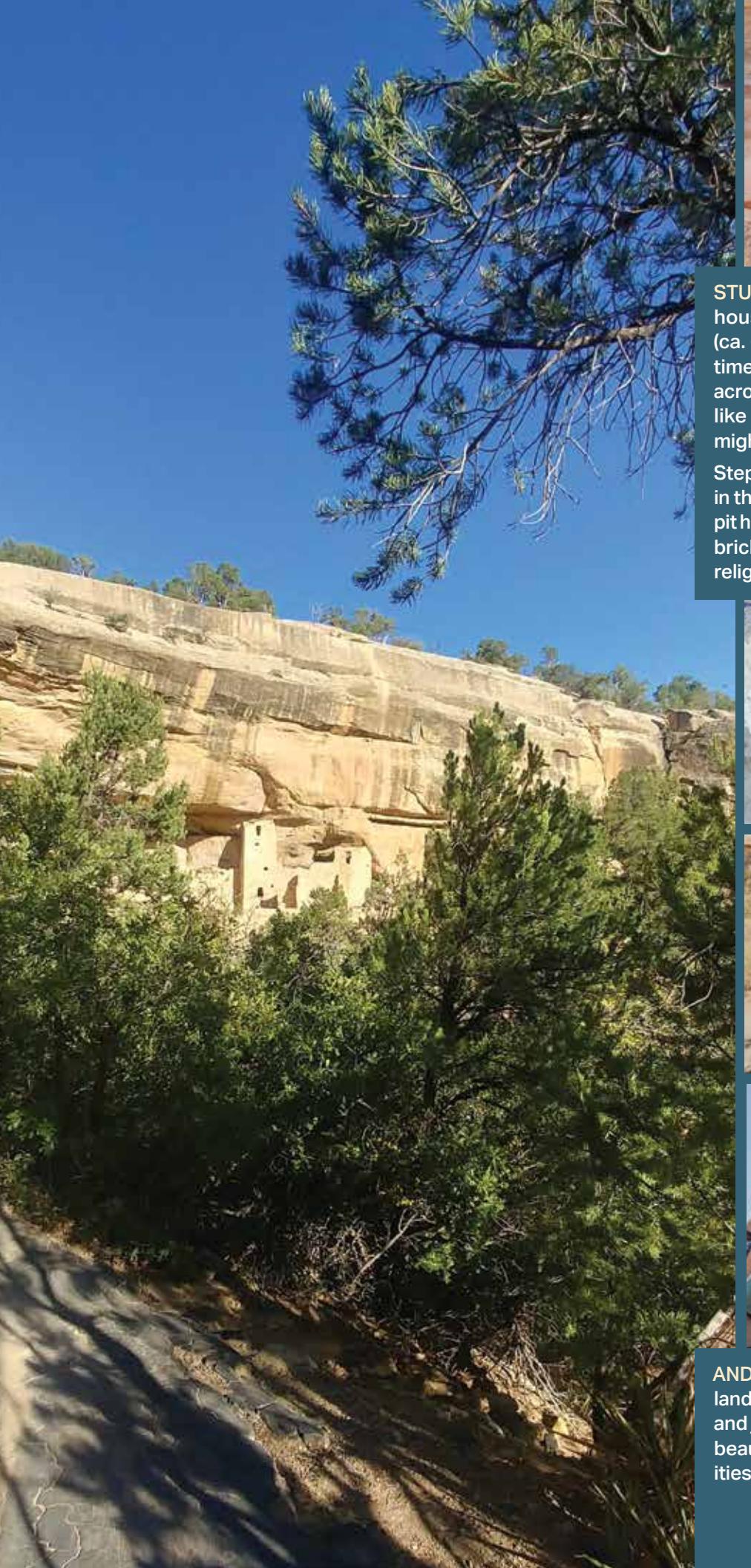
—RYANN WOODS,
GRAPHIC DESIGN '21



THE PUEBLOANS AT MESA VERDE used tools like the sandstone *manos* and *metates* below for grinding food. Other tools, like baskets and pottery, evolved into intricate, specialized works of art that were passed down through generations. Scholars now use such designs to identify a tool's geographic and historical provenance.

LEFT AND ABOVE: Balcony House ladder, kiva, and structures.

RIGHT: Cliff Palace view from the trail.



STUDENTS also visited Step House, where pit houses from the Early Basketmaker Period (ca. 600–750 AD) have been restored. In their time, pit houses were commonly 12 to 20 feet across, two to four feet deep, and had low roofs like the one recreated above. This example might have housed up to 10 individuals.

Step House was recolonized by the Puebloans in the twelfth century, when it is theorized that pit houses were dug deeper and reinforced with brick to serve as *kivas* (below and far left), for religious and political meetings.



ANDERSON invited students to reinterpret the landscape through photography, sketchbooks, and journals, to examine the balance between beauty and utility and the "capacity of humanities to overflow traditional art channels."



PHOTOGRAPH BY MELISSA ROBLES; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY X-22; LUPITA HERRERA; PHOTOGRAPH 23; ERIN JACKSON

FROM THE WORLD OF HUMANITIES—BOOKSHELF

Dispatches from Twenty-First Century Europe

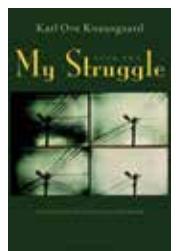
AS A SPECIALIST in the literature of Britain's Romantic period, I had little occasion during graduate school or the first twelve years of my professorial career to venture outside the Anglophone world in my teaching and research. This suddenly changed, though, in 2012, when I began a five-year stint running BYU's European Studies program. Besides providing regular opportunities to learn more about the history and politics of individual nations and the continent as a whole, this position brought new course assignments requiring me to expand my literary horizons in a hurry.

Eight years later, I am now teaching my fifth iteration of a European Studies course that uses contemporary fiction as a lens for examining major social, political, and aesthetic trends in modern Europe. Although I still have much to learn on the subject, I thought I might recommend five newish titles that my European Studies students have especially appreciated. Here they are, then, in descending chronological order:



Olga Tokarczuk, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* (2009 in Polish; English transl. 2018). Few contemporary writers better illustrate the hit-and-miss nature of what gets translated and when than Tokarczuk, whose works were only just beginning to appear in English when she won the Nobel Prize in Literature last year. Along with her memoir/fiction hybrid, *Flights* (also published in English in 2018),

Drive Your Plow has been one of the breakout books of European “literary” fiction in recent years. A thoroughly engaging “eco-thriller”—and an all-too-rare example of a tale narrated by an elderly woman—this is a must-read for fans of William Blake (the protagonist is a Blake translator and aficionado) and those looking for smart and compelling dramatizations of modern environmental crises.



Karl Ove Knausgaard, *My Struggle* (especially books 1 and 2) (2009–11 in Norwegian; English transl. 2012–19). One of the landmark artistic undertakings of the new century, Knausgaard's six-part, 3,600-page autobiographical “novel” ranks among the least likely literary sensations of any age.

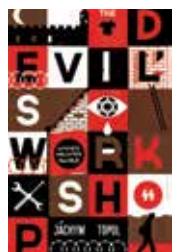
Although controversially titled *Min Kamp* in the original Norwegian, this series avoids referencing Hitler's similarly titled memoir until its final installment. Until then, *My Struggle* painstakingly retraces both mundane and momentous scenes from its 40-something author's largely unexceptional life. What would quickly grow tedious in most writers' hands is inexplicably enthralling, as evidenced by the consistent levels of Knausgaard-mania among the students I have assigned to read books 1 and 2. Contrary to my expectations and theirs, my students have consistently reported that the middle-aged Knausgaard's neo-Proustian musings trigger a flood of reflections about their own childhood experiences, family relationships, and current place in the world.



Watch: If you're interested in some great film recommendations to go along with our recommended reading, visit ic.byu.edu/archives/.

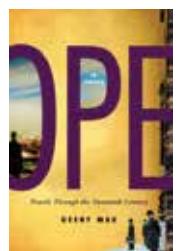
Listen: In case you missed it, Sharon J. Harris' Maxwell Institute podcast about Enos, Jarom, and Omni aired in March, just after BYU classes migrated online and Church meetings were temporarily suspended. Review this helpful resource here: mi.byu.edu/mip-bti-harris/.

Laurent Binet, *HHhH* (2010 in French; English transl. 2012). Were I to poll my present and former students, the likely winner of the “People's Choice” award would be *HHhH*. This riveting postmodern historical novel retells the story of Operation Anthropoid, the 1942 Czech Resistance plot to assassinate Reinhard Heydrich, the notorious SS commandant then serving as the governor of Prague. Taking his title from the German aphorism “Himmlers Hirn heist Heydrich” (“Himmler's brain is called Heydrich”), Binet recaps Heydrich's rise, the atrocities he oversaw, and the heroism of Jozef Gabčík, Jan Kubiš, and other “parachutists” tasked with killing him. More than just a thrilling war story, though, *HHhH* offers extended meditations on the methods and ethics of historical fiction. Binet regularly pauses to detail his research process, question his assumptions, and interrogate the efficacy of the historical novel in general. As a result, this winner of the prestigious Prix Goncourt for 2010 has been widely hailed as a prototype for twenty-first-century historical fiction.



Jáchym Topol, *The Devil's Workshop* (2009 in Czech; English transl. 2013). Another novel exploring the legacies of World War II, *The Devil's Workshop* holds particular appeal for those with a taste for black humor. From his early years contributing to Communist-era Prague's underground press and the Velvet Revolution, Topol has been among the most influential Czechs of his generation. In

The Devil's Workshop, he eschews the bleak realism of much contemporary European fiction, embracing instead absurdism to satirize the ongoing contest among Eastern European nations to attract Holocaust tourism by self-representing as the ultimate victims of Nazi atrocities. While not for everyone, this winner of the 2013 English PEN Award for Writing in Translation seems destined to go down as one of the most original depictions of the Holocaust's lingering effects on the Central and Eastern European psyche sixty years after the fact.



Geert Mak, *In Europe: Travels through the Twentieth Century* (1999 in Dutch; English transl. 2008). As the most catastrophic century in European history drew to a close, the Dutch journalist and historian Geert Mak sought to chronicle and make better sense of this epoch by visiting the sites of its greatest triumphs and disasters. The resulting 900-page journey through the twentieth century crisscrosses the continent, alternating between sites synonymous with culture (London, Vienna, Paris) and barbarism (Verdun, Guernica, Srebrenica). Along the way, Mak interviews scores of living eyewitnesses to the century's great events, making this perhaps the most affecting and personal history of modern Europe.

—NICK MASON, PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

QUOTE

“

When we pay attention to the lives of those who live with life-threatening illness, the most insistent question I have found seems less to be *why*. For so many of us, there's simply no logical explanation about why we got the disease we did. The more pressing question really is *how*, as in how do I live with this reality that is now my life? And for those of us who claim the Christian story as our story, the question becomes: how does the Christian story offer a framework of meaning to this illness-filled life where meaning is constantly under threat?”

Deanna Thompson, founding director of the Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community and Martin E. Marty Regents Chair in Religion and the Academy at St. Olaf College, speaking at the BYU Humanities Center Colloquium Thursday, February 13, on “Faith in a Traumatized World.” For more, visit humanitiescenter.byu.edu/events/colloquium-deanna-thompson.

DEPARTMENT NOTES

Creating Community: BYU Devotionals and Forums

EVERY TUESDAY at 11:05 a.m., a hymn echoes across the BYU campus. Those who are familiar with BYU know that this is the time when help desks close, classes are paused, and students and faculty gather in the Marriott Center for the weekly Devotional or Forum.

During winter semester, Associate Academic Vice President John Rosenberg, a professor of Spanish and former Dean of the College, urged the importance of attending Devotionals in person at the Marriott Center. He noted that Forums and Devotionals carry with them the “concept of the creation of a sense of personhood, or identity. By participating in Devotionals, or convenings (which comes from the same root word as covenant), we are coming together for the purpose of not only becoming a person, but for the purpose of becoming a people.”

In a Devotional address given at the beginning of the 2019–20 school year, President Kevin J Worthen stated, “You students have the rare opportunity to be part of [a] gathering—to be part of a compact society that God has prepared to help you learn and develop Christlike attributes.” He continued, “There is something about physical proximity—about gathering in a compact society—that is essential to education, at least to the kind of education that is most important.”

Rosenberg elaborated on this idea of unity in education, saying that “universities are institutions where we don't just educate individuals in their journey toward wholeness *as individuals*, but where we create a sense of identity as a people . . . and that is the Zion society.”

Whether you're a student sitting in the Marriott Center, a faculty member watching online in your office, or an alumna reading at speeches.byu.edu, Tuesday mornings can be a time for anyone to feel connected to a larger community.

Devotionals and Forums, Rosenberg said, are “one of the most powerful opportunities we have to gather, to see ourselves as a part of a larger people—with whom we share values and aspirations and pains and sorrows and covenants—and have a remarkable experience of solidarity.”

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH '21



Three-Minute Thesis Competition Rewards Graduate Students for Exceptional Research

THE COLLEGE of Humanities' eighth annual Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition provided eight graduate students an opportunity to present their research in front of a panel of judges for a chance to win \$500. The caveat? Just as the competition's title suggests, presentations were strictly limited to just three minutes.

What the presentations may have lacked in length was more than made up for by outstanding quality and depth of research. Topics ranged from studies of adolescent development in eighteenth-century literature to ancient perspectives on our current refugee crisis.

The competition's winner, Fernanda Zamora, gave a presentation titled, "Special Needs Students: Can They Learn a Foreign Language?" A Spanish pedagogy student, her exposition was the culmination of extensive

research on the abilities of mentally disabled youth to develop foreign language skills.

"When I was in Mexico, I had a chance to do a thesis regarding students with special needs," explained Zamora. "I had so much information that I had to put in three minutes. It was hard, but it helped me a lot to see the main objectives of my research."

The runner-up, linguistics student Barret Hamp, devoted his thesis to the study of an individual suffix in the Kichwa language, as spoken in Ecuador's Pastaza province. The third-place winner was Rebecca Cazanave, a creative writing student, whose presentation, "Write What You Know, Right?" urged authors to venture beyond their field of expertise.

Presenters were allowed a single slide to be displayed behind them on stage and nothing more. No other props, electronic media, or items were permitted, and the three-minute limit was enforced. Judges evaluated the presenters on a basis of comprehension and content, engagement, and communication, and awarded the clearest, most persuasive presentations accordingly.

The 3MT competition originated in 2008 at the University of Queensland, and BYU's College of Humanities hosted its first 3MT event in 2013. A university-wide competition was held on March 12 at the Wilkinson Student Center Varsity Theater, where Zamora and winners from other colleges around the university competed for a \$2,000 prize.

—SAMUEL BENSON, SOCIOLOGY '23

John Rosenberg Wins Lifetime Achievement Award

Professor John Rosenberg received the UFLA Friend of the Profession award, which is given to individuals who have advanced the study of world languages in Utah. Rosenberg chaired the BYU Department of Spanish and Portuguese from 1993–97 and served as associate dean in the College of Humanities from 1997–2005 and dean from 2010–15. Rosenberg's dedication to education has resulted in nine juried grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities to direct intensive summer seminars for schoolteachers. He was also decorated with the Officer's Cross of the Order of Civil Merit from Spain in 2011 and now holds BYU's Washington Irving Professorship of Spanish and American Relations and serves as an associate academic vice president.

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH '21

The Relationship between Music and Language

FRANCESCA LAWSON, professor of interdisciplinary humanities, was recently awarded the P.A. Christensen Lectureship and presented on her studies on musicality and language. This lecture series began in 1977 to honor longtime English professor Parley A. Christensen and is awarded to faculty in the fields of literary and intercultural studies.



Lawson's presentation explored how music and language are interconnected and sought to apply that connection to a Chinese comedy performance tradition called *Xiangsheng*. First, Lawson explained how this research stemmed from the questions "As cognitive domains, how are music and language related?" and "How might that knowledge aid research in the humanities?" To answer these questions, Lawson primarily focused on exploring the concept of musicality, which she defined as "a biological process that undergirds our ability to speak and sing."

She argues that "musicality is one of the most misunderstood aspects of communication" and that it is constantly operating in our lives as we communicate with each other. This is especially evident in *Xiangsheng*, which is a comedic dialogue between two performers.

When Lawson analyzed the second bout in the *Xiangsheng* performance, she found



statistically significant results that showed how all three performing agents—the two performers and the audience—approximated each other's pitches as they responded to one another during the course of the performance. From this study, Lawson concluded that "pitch approximation appeared to be determined by a high level of emotional engagement or attitudinal alignment."

Musicality has been at the heart of Lawson's research in interdisciplinary humanities and has prompted her to ask questions about "the visual, auditory, narrative, and kinesthetic aspects of mother–infant communication"; "emotional engagement in different art forms"; "reader responses to literature and visual art"; and "AI research."

"Pitch approximation appeared to be determined by a high level of emotional engagement or attitudinal alignment."

Lawson concluded, "I hope these questions inspire us to contemplate the richness of our musicality as the basis of human communication and its considerable potential for creating meaningful and enduring connections."

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH '21

Reading Ancient Papyri, Using Space-Age Technology

IN SPITE of social distancing, this spring associate professor Roger Macfarlane in the Department of Comparative Arts & Letters connected with a virtual audience of 800+ attendees to complete a series of lectures in partnership with the Leonardo Museum. "Out of the Ashes: Recovering Ancient Texts with Space Age Technology" focused on measures taken to carefully open and decipher ancient papyri found in the well-preserved wreckage of Pompeii and the nearby city of Herculaneum.

A large number of carbonized papyrus scrolls have been discovered in Pompeii and Herculaneum over several hundred years, but these had remained unopened and illegible

to curious scholars until recently. Due to the unique and powerful nature of the Mt. Vesuvius eruption in AD 79, the great quantity of ash propelled into the air collapsed on itself and covered the nearby areas in a fatally hot surge of volcanic material. However, the pyroclastic blanket that killed many people actually preserved the cities' collections of papyri—they were "carbonized by the heat of the eruption and sort of frozen in time and kept from decay," said Macfarlane.

As a part of the BYU Herculaneum Papyrus Project, technology was introduced to solve this seemingly impossible problem, and members of the Project discovered that employing multispectral imaging, a reflectivity-based technique, could be the solution.

These carbonized scrolls must be carefully cut open to ensure that the two-column format of the ancient writing remains in the correct order. Once opened, the papyri remain unreadable because the black ink used to write is indistinguishable from the blackened, carbonized parchment. However, because the ink and papyrus reflect light differently, they can be distinguished from each other in the infrared spectrum.

Thanks to technology, Macfarlane and his colleagues are learning new things about the ancient language and culture today. They continue to investigate new methods that will make the process even easier, and Macfarlane believes that they're "not far away from the next advance with the Herculaneum papyri."

To watch the series, visit watchtheleonardo.org/lah-last-days-of-pompeii-lecture.

—TORI HAMILTON, BA EDITING & PUBLISHING '20

Research & Writing Center Serves Students through Quarantine

MANY CAMPUS SERVICES have adapted to the unexpected circumstances surrounding COVID-19, including the Research & Writing Center (RWC). Annually serving 15,000 students from majors across campus, the RWC has transitioned completely to virtual consultations with students needing research and writing help.



Calling on the Protection of a Japanese Tradition

Recently, associate professor Jack Stoneman (A&NEL) contributed to an article reigniting the conversation about traditional Japanese *yōkai*, or monsters, who protect from all kinds of threats, including pandemics.

Read the article here: atlasobscura.com/articles/japanese-healing-spirit-covid-19.

According to the RWC's associate coordinator Shannon Liechty, "The end of the semester can be an especially busy time for students, even with the current changes," and this winter semester was no exception.

Students can schedule virtual appointments on the RWC's website and decide how they want to receive feedback. They can meet virtually with a consultant in a private Zoom conference or submit a copy of their work via email and receive written and video commentary within a few hours of their scheduled appointment. Students can also drop in to chat with a secretary if they don't have an appointment.

Since making the switch to virtual assistance, the RWC has held more than 700 consultations, and counting.

—TORI HAMILTON, BA EDITING & PUBLISHING '20

Chinese Flagship Students Find Solace in Shared Story

IN LATE JANUARY, 2020, BYU called for all of its students living in China to return to American soil. It was the beginning the global coronavirus pandemic, and by February 5, all Chinese Flagship students were back in the States.

The BYU Humanities Chinese Flagship is a rigorous program that trains BYU students studying Chinese how to apply the Chinese language to their prospective careers. The program gives students the chance to spend a semester at the prestigious Nanjing University and another in a Chinese internship. This year, however, the Chinese Flagship students' time in China was cut short due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Though the five Chinese Flagship seniors were already good friends during their time at BYU and at Nanjing University, this unexpected event not only literally gathered the students back together in Utah but also unified them in their shared uncertainty about the future.

"We had this beautiful, rigid schedule in China with all these responsibilities, and we were growing and progressing really fast—getting thrown back into nothing is strange, so we've gotten together quite a bit," McKay Christensen said. Despite the uncertainty, these students have been able to turn an inconvenient circumstance into an opportunity to come together and learn. "I think that common shared experience is helpful—having people to talk about the situation with because they were there in China," said Brayden Sampson. "We all have friends in China. Some of us have friends who are in [Wuhan]."

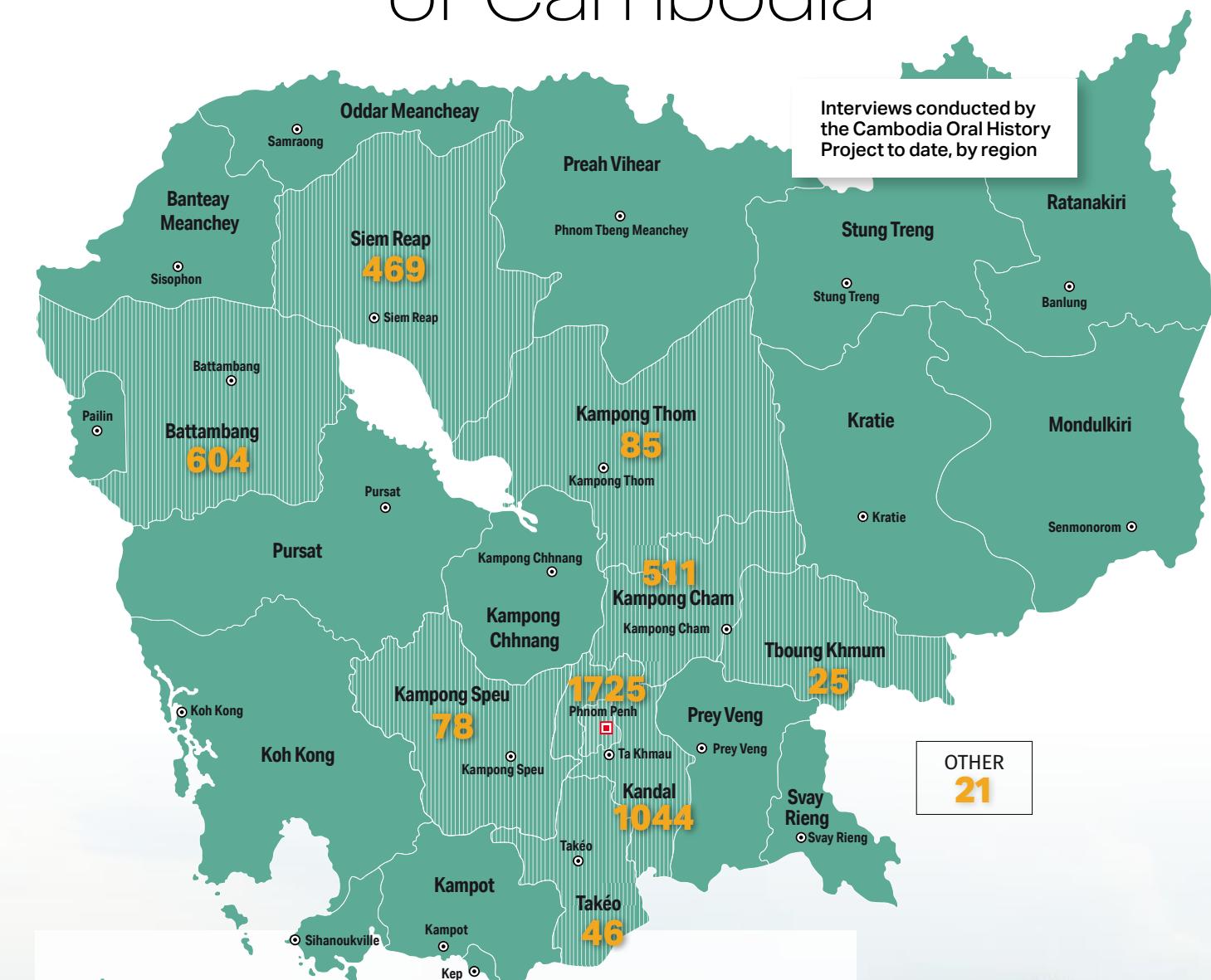
Amid a national health crisis in a country they love, BYU's Chinese Flagship students have been able make the most of their situation. Back in Utah, the students have gathered in mutual support. With the outbreak continuing still, some BYU students await updates from the administration on the continuation of study abroad programs and international internships, while others have chosen to move on.

—NATALIE SHORR, SOCIOLOGY '22



"I think that common shared experience is helpful—having people to talk about the situation with because they were there in China."

Remembering 5,000 stories of Cambodia



As a child in Cambodia in the 1970s, nine-year-old Chab Chheang, nicknamed "Nike" for his love of the shoes, crossed the border into Thailand with his family. But instead of finding safety, Nike's starving parents were greeted by farmers who presented an excruciating choice: a bag of rice in exchange for their son.

by Erin Jackson and Dana Bourgerie

Many Cambodian records were destroyed deliberately and as many as one third of a generation killed.



Chab Chheang, nicknamed "Nike," picks coconuts in a refugee camp, 1982.

Nike lived as a slave to strangers, first in the countryside and then in the city, where he worked underground for a light company in Bangkok. Three years later, at the age of twelve, he escaped to the Cambodian Embassy in Thailand, and, from there, eventually made his way to the US. He recounted his miraculous journey, including an unlikely reunion with his father in 2002 at the Thai–Cambodia border, to a BYU team working to preserve oral histories nearly forgotten in Cambodia's tumultuous past.

Nike's story was just one of the nearly 5000 collected as the BYU Cambodia Oral History Project (COHP) entered 2020. Many of the Cambodians interviewed invited family members to accompany them as they shared never-before-told memories, often about their lives under the Communist Khmer Rouge.

Visit cambodiaoralhistories.byu.edu to hear the rest of Nike's story in his own words, along with many other personal histories filled with heartbreak, hope, and the indomitable human spirit.

In preparing a documentary on the COHP efforts, BYU Communications videographer Julie Walker described both the challenges and sense of urgency volunteers on this project feel as many of the generation who lived through the Khmer Rouge begin to age. "My plan from the beginning was to have the Cambodian people speak for themselves, but the language barriers, lack of images, and lack of quality video overall [from that

time] created a real challenge," Walker said. According to professor Dana Bourgerie (A&NEL), many of the records were destroyed deliberately by the regime (1975–79), and as many as one third of a generation killed.

To view Walker's short film, visit bit.ly/BYUCambodiaProject.

Professor Dana Bourgerie is chair of the Department of Asian & Near Eastern Languages.

A Blessing for Cambodian Members of The Church of Jesus Christ



Late in 2019, President Russell M. Nelson visited Cambodia, unveiling a rendering of the first temple to be built in the country. This follows recent visits by BYU President Kevin J Worthen and Vice President for International Affairs Sandra Rogers to Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia in 2018, to research potential collaborations between the two universities. Read more about President Nelson's visit to Cambodia here: newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/president-nelson-cambodia-2019.

COHP Stories Collected to Date

Year	Transcriptions	Interviews
2016	1	198
2017	373	589
2018	710	2342
2019	408	1352
Total	1562	4608



Student Jordan Denkers conducts an interview with Toun Reoun and a relative for the BYU Cambodia Oral History Project.



[Cambodiaoralhistories.byu.edu](http://cambodiaoralhistories.byu.edu)



Literature & Disease

IN THE FALL OF 2017, my colleague Brian Poole and I co-taught an Honors 220: Unexpected Connections course we titled “Literature and Disease.” The class was Brian’s idea. He’s a microbiologist in the College of Life Sciences, a virologist, and an expert on the human immune system.

Our class focused on the ways that disease and human culture, including literature, have been intertwined for as long as people have been writing things down. We taught the class four times between that fall and the winter semester of 2019, and at least once a week I walked out of the lecture hall afraid of touching the bannister as I descended the stairs in the Maeser Building. I didn’t know which was worse, contracting some awful disease or taking a tumble.

Many of the texts our class read offered lessons I have thought about a great deal during our current COVID-19 pandemic. Disease, particularly pandemic disease, tends to peel away our façades and reveal more about what is inside of us than we are typically comfortable exposing. Brian and I began that first semester

by reading a chapter of Thucydides’s *History of the Peloponnesian War*, written in 431 BCE. In book II, chapter 7, Thucydides describes the plague of Athens, which may have killed as many as 100,000 Athenians and which nearly destroyed Athenian society. Thucydides notes that the plague caused a sharp decline in civility in that great center of Western civilization. When “it was so uncertain whether they would be spared,” the ancient historian laments, many came to believe that “present enjoyment, and all that contributed to it, was both honourable and useful. Fear of gods or law of man, there was none to restrain them.”¹ This image of a world without the rule of law is probably more frightening, for me at least, than the disease that led to it.

Illness has been recorded in art for much of human history.

To Thucydides, we added a number of historical and fictional texts that documented or imagined the effects of pandemic. Two of my favorites are Richard Matheson’s 1954 novel *I Am Legend*, and W. E. B. Du Bois’s “The Comet,” a 1920 short story. Matheson’s novel follows a slow-motion apocalypse in which a flu-like disease, spawned by bats and spread by the wind, overwhelms the world, turning those it infects into vampire-zombies who sleep during the day and wander the streets at night. Robert Neville, the last “normal” man in Los Angeles, begins a single-handed crusade both to find a cure and to exterminate the living dead. Students are usually quick to recognize the paradox in Neville’s motives. This is a point Matheson drives home at the end of the novel as Neville comes to realize that some of the infected humans have established a new, post-infection culture in which he is, in effect, the boogeyman. Vincent Price, Charlton Heston, and Will Smith have all appeared on the big screen as Neville, and in each film adaptation, as well as in the novel, the lesson that Neville learns only when it is too late is that his own prejudice, his inability to see the “other” as anything but monstrous, is as problematic as the disease that has devastated the planet.²

San Rocco Hit by Plague by Il Tintoretto, Church of San Rocco (Venice). Photo by Didier Descouens, public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

A surprisingly similar idea is expressed in “The Comet.” Here Du Bois—and, yes, that’s the same Du Bois who graduated from Harvard, helped found the NAACP, wrote one of the first texts in the nascent discipline of sociology, and publicly feuded with Booker T. Washington—imagines a poisonous, space-borne gas in the tail of a comet. As the comet passes close to the earth, the gas kills almost all human life in a matter of minutes. Jim, a black bank employee, is accidentally locked in a vault when the deadly comet passes and thus survives the catastrophe. When he leaves the vault and realizes what has happened, he begins a cross-town trek to find his family. On the way, however, he hears the cries of Julia, a white woman who had been locked in her darkroom when the comet passed. Finding no other sign of life, these two people from different races and different social classes begin to see each other in a new light. Du Bois writes that Julia “was no mere woman. She was neither high nor low, white nor black, rich nor poor. She was primal woman; mighty mother of all men to come and Bride of Life.” And in her eyes Jim became “glorified. He was no longer a thing apart, a creature below, a strange outcast

of another clime and blood, but her Brother Humanity incarnate, Son of God and great All-Father of the race to be.” For Du Bois the end of society also meant the end of unjust laws, of race and racism alike. There is a glimpse in “The Comet” of a new world, free of the kind of prejudice that was very much a part of 1920s America. But it is only a glimpse. Readers soon learn that the effects of the gas are localized, and at the end of the story Julia’s father and a mob of armed white men show up and threaten to lynch Jim. The restoration of normality, with all of its racist baggage, feels tragic in this tale.³

This is not the case, however, in what is perhaps my favorite novel in this genre, one we didn’t read in class, Emily St. John Mandel’s 2014 *Station Eleven*. Set in America twenty years after a flu has killed most of the earth’s population, *Station Eleven* imagines a world in which the electrical power grid is largely inoperative, and thus most modern forms of entertainment have disappeared. In their place, troupes of musicians and actors performing Shakespeare and Beethoven travel to remote communities and are welcomed by survivors starved not for food, but for culture—as one character notes, “People want what was best about the world.”⁴

Disease, particularly pandemic disease, tends to peel away our façades and reveal more about what is inside of us than we are typically comfortable exposing.

Ethnocentrism aside, I love the idea that twenty years into the apocalypse what we might miss the most is music and drama.

On Thursday, March 12, the day after campus was closed, I found myself at 9 p.m. in the Harold B. Lee Library. I confess that I was in a panic, but I wasn’t desperately seeking toilet paper or bottled water; I wanted books, and I was suddenly afraid that the library might close before I got them. I didn’t want to survive the quarantine on the thin gruel of Netflix. I wanted at least a little of what is best about the world.

I wish we could have avoided this pandemic. I don’t think we have any idea what the final cost will be, but as I write these words it looks like we might have dodged the worst-case scenario. Nevertheless, COVID-19 has forced me to reevaluate my life a little. Along with Thucydides, Matheson, Du Bois, and Mandel, I’m pretty sure that there are things about my “normal” that need to change.

Dennis Cutchins is a professor in the Department of English. For more faculty perspectives about the intersections of illness and art, visit humanities.byu.edu/coping-with-covid/.

1. Thucydides. *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. Translated by Richard Crawley, Gutenberg.org, 2009, www.gutenberg.org/files/7142/7142-h/7142-h.htm.

2. Matheson, Richard. *I Am Legend*. Tor Books, 1995.

3. Du Bois, W. E. B. “The Comet.” *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil*. Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1920, Gutenberg.org, 2005, www.gutenberg.org/files/15210/15210-h/15210-h.htm.

4. Mandel, Emily St. John. *Station Eleven*. Vintage Books, 2014, p.38.



Desdemona and Othello, by Antonio Muñoz Degrain, public domain.

Shakespeare & the Plague Years

Othello is only one among several plays in which Shakespeare makes reference to the plague. Others include *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Tempest*.

IN OCTOBER of 1562, Queen Elizabeth I was diagnosed with smallpox. The young queen—only 29 at the time—survived and would go on to rule for another 41 years, but England's most remarkable monarch would carry the scars of survival to the end of her days. Shakespeare was born two years later, in 1644, and like the queen, seems to have avoided death from the four main diseases of the day: smallpox, bubonic plague, typhus, and malaria. The bubonic plague, or “black death,” was particularly virulent, a disease that reached pandemic proportions several times; the most written-about cases—noted by a variety of international observers—occurred in 1582, 1592–3, 1603, 1607, 1610, 1625, and 1665, but there were more.

Each time plague broke out, the theatres were promptly closed, apothecaries were suddenly in demand (despite being a favored comedic target among playwrights and poets), and those with means headed to their country houses. We don't know much about what Shakespeare might have been up to during these episodic outbreaks, but some evidence suggests that the King's Men headed for provincial destinations outside the city, taking their performances to other parts of the kingdom. We know, for instance, that in 1610 the troupe was hired by the municipal government of Oxford to perform Ben Jonson's satire, *The Alchemist*, and Shakespeare's tragedy, *Othello*. Thinking of Shakespeare's play, it's difficult to miss the striking similarities to our own moment, as we attempt to limit the effects of COVID-19 while firmly advancing the cause of Black Lives Matter. Imagine the audience in 1610, dealing with the plague-incurred loss of loved ones while taking in a play about an admired black general, Othello, who is destroyed by his white subordinate, Iago. Iago's motives are murky but fixed on destruction, and evidence tells us that the actors speaking Shakespeare's lines managed to wring both tears and groans from the audience. *Othello* is only one among several plays in

which Shakespeare makes reference to the plague in ways that resonate with our own moment. Others include *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Tempest*. Forming pleasure from plague may have been part of Shakespeare's genius.

Interestingly, some scholars have suggested that the pandemic-induced lulls in theatre work led Shakespeare to write some of his best poetry. Certainly, Shakespeare's preoccupation with death, loss, memory, and the preciousness of enduring friendships support the possibility, as in Sonnet 30:

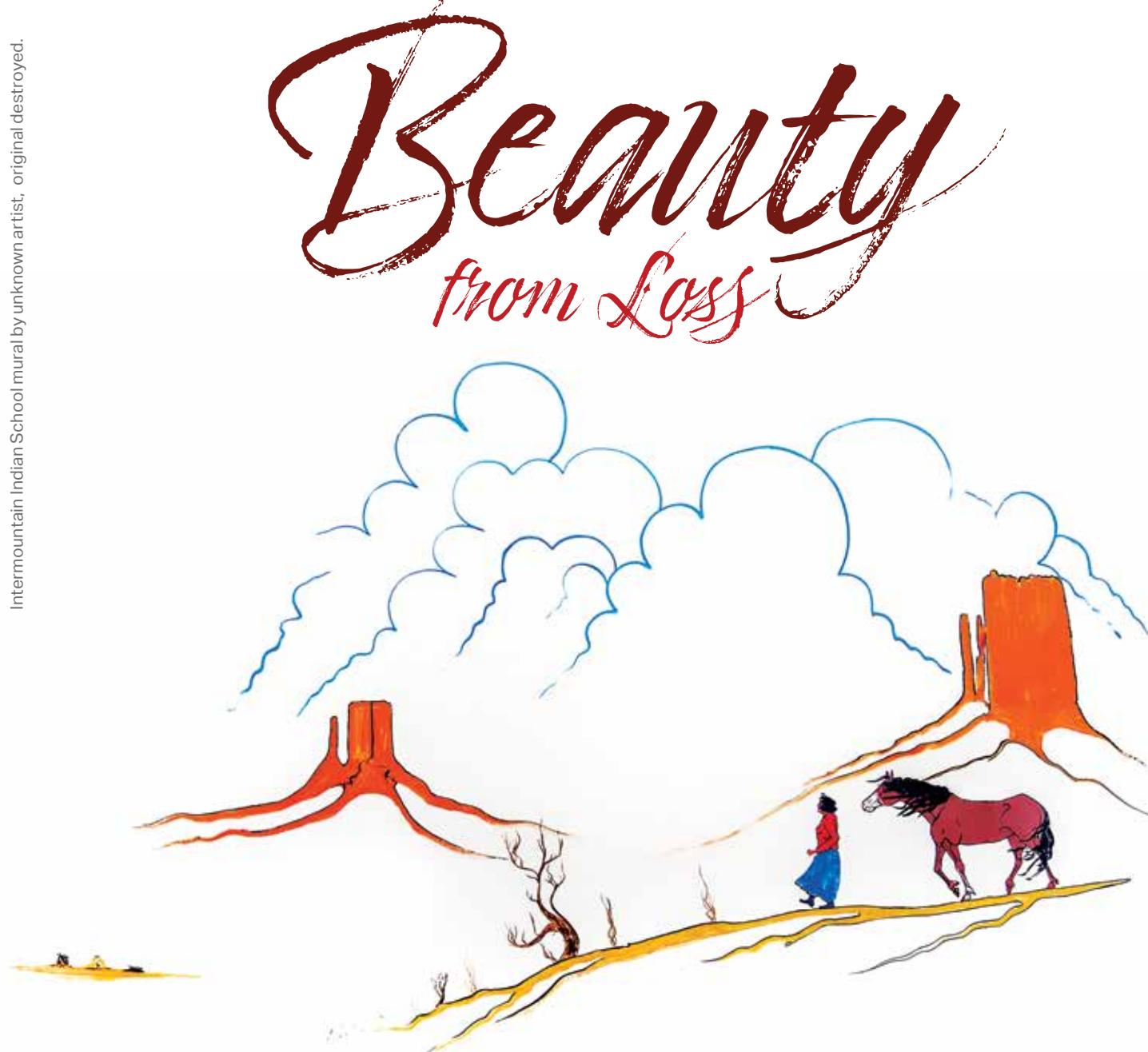
When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since canceled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restor'd and sorrows end.

The poem doesn't eschew the reality of grief: “precious friends hid in death's dateless night” gives us a searing sense of the enduring nature of real loss. Yet the volta at poem's end reveals the nature of restoration to be a function of remembrance—friendship doesn't really end, if we continue to recollect the particular preciousness of the individual person. We're not sure whether the “dear friend” of the conclusion is still living, or one among others lost to death, but in either case, taking time to reflect brings, somehow, a renewal and “sorrows end”—at least for the duration of “while I think.”

by Brandie R. Siegfried

**Forming
pleasure from
plague may
have been
part of
Shakespeare's
genius.**

Intermountain Indian School mural by unknown artist, original destroyed.



Creative works made by students at the Intermountain Indian School shed new light on a dark past.

SEPTEMBER 1967 marked Lorina Steah Antonio's first month as a student at Intermountain Indian School (IIS) in Brigham City, Utah.

A somewhat rebellious 12-year-old, Lorina had attempted to run away from her previous school in Shiprock, Arizona. Unable to return to her family on the reservation in northeastern Arizona, she was sent to an off-reservation boarding school in northern Utah.

“When I first arrived [at IIS], I was very scared,” she recalled more than 50 years later. “I didn't like being 400 miles away from home. I cried a lot.”

Lorina wasn't alone. Tens of thousands of Navajo youth were relocated from the Navajo reservation and sent to IIS from 1951 to 1974. IIS was integrated and welcomed members of some one hundred tribes during its final decade before closing in 1984.

by
Samuel Benson

Though they were distanced from their homes, the artwork showed that the students were unwilling to abandon their cultures.

In many ways Intermountain's story isn't unique. Though IIS was historically the largest of the federal Indian boarding schools, thousands of the schools existed in the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. Much has been said of their purpose (to assimilate and integrate Native American youth into the purported "American culture") and the horrors associated with that cultural genocide. Thus, such a study leaves many gaps—gaps that faculty members at Brigham Young University, in partnership with peers from many other universities, are working to fill.

"Whenever we repeat colonial histories, what we do, even if we're critiquing them, is we dehumanize the objects of colonial violence, of colonial pressure," said Mike Taylor, an assistant professor of English at BYU. "We almost never highlight the resilience of the people suffering under it."

Taylor, in tandem with associate professor James Swensen of the Department of Comparative Arts & Letters and assistant professor Farina King of Northeastern State University (a BYU alumna and Miss Indian BYU 2006–07), have undertaken a monumental project to do just that—to highlight the resilience, creativity, and ingenuity of Navajo youths who attended IIS during the mid-1900s. Taylor, Swensen, and King have accumulated paintings, drawings, poetry, stories, and other artwork created by students at IIS and have curated the exhibit, *Returning Home: Navajo Creative Works from the Intermountain Indian School, 1951–1984*, which was hosted by BYU's Harold B. Lee Library from April to June 2019 and is now traveling to various locations in and around the Navajo Nation, including the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Arizona.

The exhibit serves as an effort to recontextualize the history of IIS by allowing the creative works of its students to tell the story. For many, including Lorina, the history of Native American boarding schools has long been misrepresented and misunderstood.



An Intermountain Indian School boy drawing in the sand, public domain.

The art of these students, though, provides glimpses of what life was really like.

"This is the power of rethinking a very traumatic historical moment through the creativity of those who experienced it," Taylor explained. "It allows people to rethink or to see that their ancestors and their family members are being remembered in a way that is true to who they were, rather than just as victims of an ongoing colonial process."

A Longing for Home

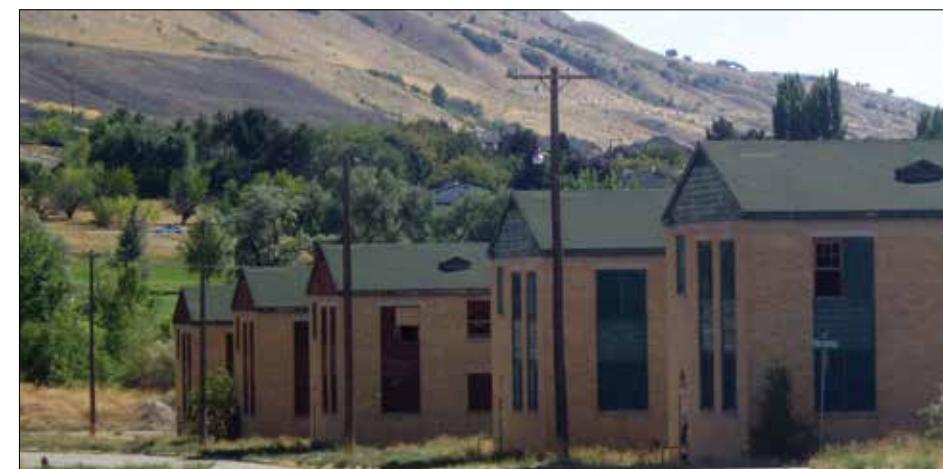
Even so, life for young Native Americans in the twentieth century was not easy. The institution of Indian residential schools—an effort to "kill the Indian and save the man," as some professed—separated them from their families and plunged them into a world with a distinctive language, culture, and character. In many of the boarding schools, abuse ran

rampant; the efforts to strip the young people from their roots left deep marks.

The artwork that flowed from IIS shows not only creative genius but also the students' resistance to shedding their identities as Native Americans. Paintings portrayed the desert landscapes from the reservations where they were born; sketches illustrated men atop horseback facing the setting sun; poems were adorned with references to "my country" and "my people." Though they were distanced from their homes, the artwork showed that the students were unwilling to abandon their cultures.

"They were not just blank slates to be brainwashed, assimilated, and detribalized, to have their connections to home erased," explained King. "The students revealed their critical thinking and that they were sustaining their ties to home and their homeland."

Take, for example, Jesse Holiday. As a teenager living in Monument Valley in the



Intermountain Indian School, Brigham City, Utah, public domain.

1950s, the absence of local schools for Native Americans meant few options. He attended several boarding schools, went through the Indian Placement Program, and eventually was sent to IIS on the far side of the state in 1958.

Holiday began turning to art as a form of solace, of connecting with home. He learned how to paint and draw. He developed his skills, especially in more traditional Navajo styles. His art, though conceived in the shadow of the Wasatch Mountains, portrayed scenes hundreds of miles away: sandstone towers, horses galloping amidst red rock, bison trotting through desert landscapes. His creativity expressed what he most associated with; the attempted assimilation only deepened his connection to home.

When King and her colleagues asked the children to draw what they considered to be "home," in an art exercise, the prompt served as a touching reminder of times when Holiday used the same inspiration to feel a connection to his far-away homeland.

"[The children] were practicing and emulating his art," recalled King. "We told them about how students like Jesse were far away

to a wheelchair, Holiday no longer produces art like he once did, but his work continues to reach countless people both inside and outside of his community.

Last year, some sixty years after his time at IIS, Holiday joined King, Taylor, and a group of BYU and Northeastern State graduate students to visit Tse'bii'nidzisgai Elementary School in Monument Valley. He shared his story, and the professors presented some of the creative writing and visual art that was collected for the exhibit.

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Support the Navajo Nation Confronting Coronavirus

Friends in the BYU School of Social Work held a food and supplies drive on June 5–6 to benefit the Navajo Nation, one of the latest "hot spots" of the coronavirus pandemic. To support their effort, or for more information, visit www.unhsinc.org/donation/.

from home, hundreds of miles away, and these kids could just look out the window." The children drew their homes then ran to show Holiday their work, seeking his approval.

"It just brought tears to his eyes," said King. "The kids adored him."

Gathering the Pieces

Curating a traveling exhibit wasn't the original plan for King, Taylor, and Swensen. King had first heard of IIS and its creative works in 2011 while teaching at Utah Valley University, but she never pursued extensive research until Taylor's suggestion several years later.

In 2016, Taylor stumbled across a digital archive containing artwork and poetry from the school, and he mentioned the possible research opportunity to one of his classes. That led to Terence Wride, an English major and Native American studies minor, receiving a grant from the Office of Research and Creative Activities (ORCA, now called a HUMGrant) to pursue a more in-depth study of the creative works.

Wride's research uncovered some 1500 poems from three decades during the school's operation. When Taylor saw the

quality of these works, he knew they needed to be returned to the Navajo people.

"When [Taylor] reached out to me, I could tell he was interested in trying to learn more," recalled King. "It just happened to be the most ideal time, I think, where you just feel like the lightbulbs all click and an idea sparks."

As King, Taylor, and Swensen worked to gather creative works from IIS teachers, alumni, and their families; eBay; wherever they could locate the art, the goal of the exhibit remained unchanged: to bring this artwork back to the Navajo Nation so it might be a source of pride and inspiration.

The exhibit, *Returning Home: The Art and Poetry of Intermountain Indian School, 1951–1984*, made its first public appearance at BYU last spring, but it later traveled to the Gallup Cultural Center in Gallup, New Mexico, and the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Arizona. After leaving the Navajo Nation, the exhibit will be hosted by Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, then Utah State University in Logan.

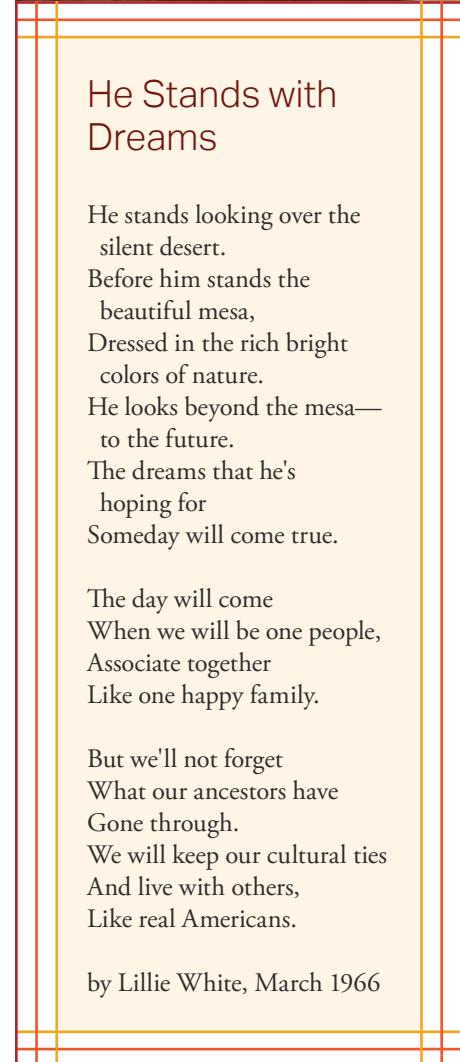
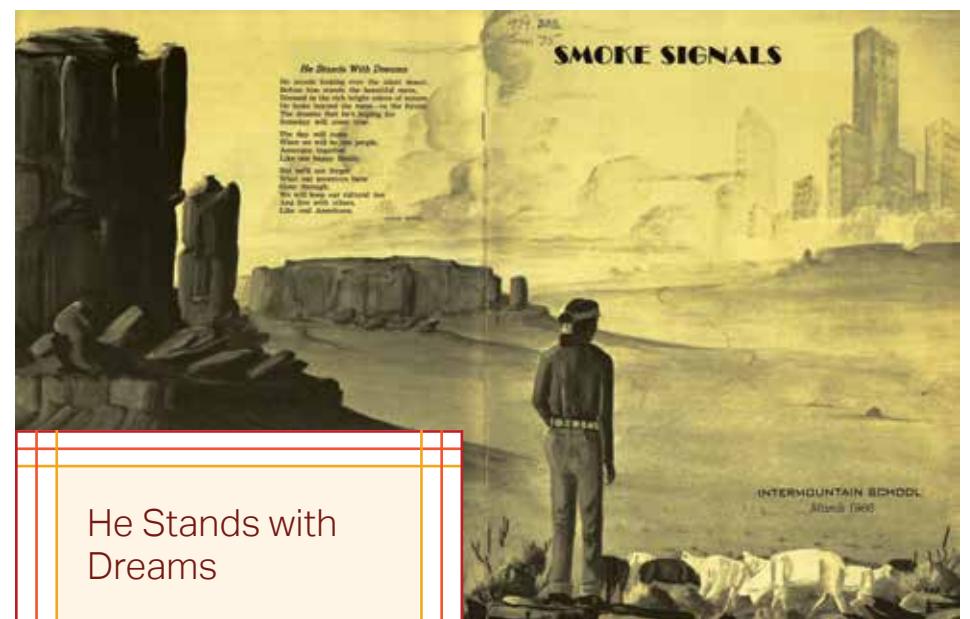
At each location, alumni of IIS and their families have been able to see their creative work recontextualized. The exhibit has brought back memories—some sweet, some dark—of a time when one of these students' few connections to home was the art they produced. And, for some, it has rekindled intimate connections to loved ones who have since passed on.

Eileen Quintana was in eighth grade when her older brother, Henry Tinhorn, was killed while serving in the Vietnam War. Henry, a former IIS student, had been writing poetry during his time in Brigham City and in Vietnam. Quintana and her family had never seen any of it.

"We didn't know he was writing," Quintana said. "I don't remember him saying anything about his writing, at all."

In the process of gathering artwork for the exhibit, some of Henry's poetry was discovered, along with several images of him. Quintana and other family members were invited to the exhibit's opening at BYU to read some of Henry's poetry. At first, Quintana was reluctant. She didn't want to relive the turbulent times she'd spent in a boarding school. But it resulted in an emotional, and positive, day for all involved—Taylor called it the "most powerful experience" he's had in relation to the project.

"It brought out a lot of emotions," Quintana recalled. "It was really something."



Taylor described it as an opportunity to heal, how Quintana's "seeing the creativity of her brother reminded her of that aspect of his life" rather than the tragedy that cut his life short.

Quintana's experience isn't the only evidence that the curators of the exhibit have collected more than art. They've provided an opportunity for healing, a recognition of artistic



For more information about the exhibit, including the pieces included here, visit bit.ly/spring2020artexhibit.

capacity, and a tribute to a generation that has long been overlooked or forgotten.

"The act of curating is the act of gathering," Swensen summarized. "We've gathered this material, and we need to get out of the way, right? Because it is such good work, it provides a great opportunity for people to see and to come to an understanding of who these people are."

Samuel Benson is studying sociology and plans to graduate in 2023. He is currently completing an internship with the Opinion Editorial section of the Deseret News. For more about the Returning Home exhibit, visit art.lib.byu.edu/exhibition/returning-home/.

Intermountain Indian School mural by unknown artist.



"The act of curating is the act of gathering. We've gathered this material, and we need to get out of the way."

30 Years Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall

ONE OF the most surprising and joyous occasions in my life occurred in November of 1989. Not only was it the Berlin Wall that fell, but also the entire border fortifications system between East and West Germany that had been erected by the Stalinist regime. It was then that I finally reunited with my family.

You see, I was born in Mecklenburg, a province located on the Baltic Sea north of Berlin. My parents and grandparents were born there before me. In fact, my ancestors had lived in Mecklenburg for five hundred years. It had been our family's home forever.

In May 1945, when Germany capitulated and the Second World War ended, my mother, my sister, and I lived with my grandmother in Schwerin, the capital city of Mecklenburg. While American and British troops occupied the western part of Germany, Mecklenburg was occupied by Soviet

I remember how frustrated I used to be when I drove up to the border, reading a sign that Schwerin was only a few miles away, and knowing I could not cross. It might as well have been a thousand miles distant.

My father, a navy officer, had been stationed in the Mediterranean area throughout the war, and towards the end of the war, was taken prisoner by American forces. After two years, he was released from an American prisoner-of-war camp and returned to Bremen in the American occupation zone. He learned that we were in the East and asked my mother, my sister, and me to join him in the West.

Miraculously, we were allowed to join him, leaving my grandparents, my aunts and uncles, and all my cousins behind in Mecklenburg. Gradually contact with them became more and more difficult and since they were not allowed to visit us in the West, we on rare occasion received permission to visit them. We had to pay for our visas and our visit with Western currency and were limited to a short stay. The permissions we



A demonstration in Schwerin, Germany, 1989, public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

obtained confined us to the city of Schwerin and its immediate surroundings.

Eventually, rules were put in place that prevented us from calling family members in the East. Correspondence became extremely difficult, because Eastern officials routinely checked mail coming through the border. Thus, both my relatives in the East and we in the West had to be very careful about what we wrote. It was hard for my parents when my grandparents passed because they could not attend their funerals. I

remember how frustrated I used to be when I drove up to the border, reading a sign that Schwerin was only a few miles away, and

knowing I could not cross. It might as well have been a thousand miles distant.

The day the Berlin Wall and fortifications came down, I was at BYU in Provo, but I well remember how thoroughly surprised I was, for I had not anticipated the event. I had hoped for the barriers to come down, of course, but had believed that it would never happen in my lifetime. I was ecstatic—my family members and I now could visit each other without restraint, without having to endure the humiliating checks at the border. On my TV, I watched with utter delight as the people from East Berlin streamed into West Berlin, and the caravans of those small East German automobiles came on the Autobahn into the West. Family members who had not seen each other in years, some never before, and total strangers as well, embraced. Later I visited my family several times; we also embraced, rejoiced together, and have stayed in contact ever since.

— PROFESSOR HANS WILHELM KELLING,
DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN & RUSSIAN



We Want to Hear from You!

How did a study of humanities at BYU affect your life? How do you apply the humanities now? We'd love to hear about the classes, teachers, books, ideas, or experiences that have made a difference to you. Please share your story in 50–200 words, and we will consider it for publication in a future issue of the magazine.

Email humanitiespr@byu.edu. Submissions may be edited for length, grammar, appropriateness, and clarity.

Bill and Barbara Benac's Pathway for Disadvantaged Children

AFTER BILL BENAC retired from a career in finance in 2016, he and his wife Barbara have continued to play an active role in their Dallas community and elsewhere in the world. Bill (BA German Literature, '71) is co-Founder of the DFW Alliance for Religious Freedom, President of Pathway Centre in south India, and on charitable boards in Texas, Utah, and New York. Barbara (BA Spanish, '91) is highly involved in the Dallas arts community and as a bilingual docent at the SMU Meadows Museum of Spanish Art and the Dallas Museum of Art.

"We believe humanities or liberal arts degrees allow one to better understand and function smoothly in the increasingly global community in which we now live," remarked

Mr. Benac. "My German literature degree has helped me relate to others as I've been involved in complicated global business and financial matters, and more recently in working with partners from various countries and cultures on important philanthropic endeavors."

We help clothe the naked, feed the hungry and uplift the downtrodden, the sick and the infirm. We are blessed as a family to be involved in humanity as well as the humanities.

Pathway has provided aid to more than 40,000 handicapped children and now provides free medical, dental, and therapeutic care in 13 surrounding rural communities.

"As a family, we've gained the satisfaction of striving to practice true religion," explained Mr. Benac. "We help clothe the naked, feed the hungry and uplift the downtrodden, the sick and the infirm. We are blessed as a family to be involved in humanity as well as the humanities."

The Benacs have nine children (all of whom have attended BYU) and 23 grandchildren.

—SAMUEL BENSON, SOCIOLOGY '23

RETIREMENTS



Masakazu (Kazzy) Watabe
Asian & Near Eastern Languages



Van Gessel
Asian & Near Eastern Languages



Rick Duerden
English



Danette Paul
English



Nicolaas Unlandt
French & Italian



Mark Davies
Linguistics



Bill Egginton
Linguistics



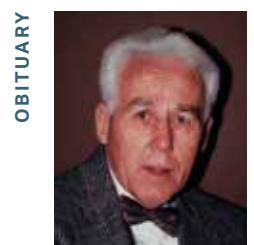
Cynthia Hallen
Linguistics



Royal Skousen
Linguistics



Dan Graham
Philosophy



Norman Clyde Turner
French & Italian

OBITUARY

On the Other Side of the Pandemic

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the great symbol of our gathering.

By Thomas B. Griffith

I WAS A SENIOR in high school, having joined the Church only a year before, when I attended a BYU Education Week in suburban Washington, DC. One member of the visiting faculty in particular caught my eye. John Staley, a BYU professor of sociology, was himself a recent convert to the Church. Before that he had been a Catholic priest for more than 30 years. As a lifelong admirer of Catholicism and a newly minted Latter-day Saint, I was intrigued and ended up attending every one of Staley's six lectures. With his unique perspective, Staley offered profound insights into the Restoration. During this time of social distancing, I have thought much about how one of his insights can make our ward gatherings on the other side of this pandemic even more joyful.

In Catholicism, the parishioner receives the Eucharist from the priest, a sacred act that underscores the vital role the priest plays in the believer's relationship with Christ. The priest becomes a conduit for the dispensation of Christ's grace to the disciple. According to Staley, the manner of blessing and passing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper among Latter-day Saints is equally important for what it teaches about our relationship with Christ. We begin by joining a prayer that each other will be blessed by our collective remembrance of Christ's life and death. Then we act out that blessing. We receive the consecrated bread and water from the person sitting on one side of us in the pew and pass them along to the person sitting on the other side. Those persons may be family, friends, acquaintances, or strangers. Regardless, for those moments of receiving and giving we are linked one to another by sharing the emblems of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. From one person, we accept an invitation to come unto Christ. To another, we extend that same invitation. I encounter Christ's Atonement through you and you do so through me. We become inextricably intertwined in each other's spiritual journey.

Learning the lessons of the Two Great Commandments takes place best when we gather with others, put our shoulders to the wheel, and undertake the hard work of creating community.

The first is the parochial nature of ward membership. We belong to a ward based on where we live and not based on our preferred companionships. In other words, we attend church with some people we might not want to go to lunch with. The second is our commitment to lay leadership. Everyone has work to do in the ward. As if it isn't hard enough to attend Church with people who voted for X, get their news from Y, and root for Z, now I have to work with them in the Primary or the Sunday School. Or harder yet, I may be asked to minister to them!

But, as England pointed out, that is when the miracle begins. Slowly, sometimes very slowly, by working with such people in the close quarters of the interconnected life of a ward, we begin to realize something fundamental that we have overlooked. The Lord

loves these other people as much as he loves me. The Lord endured what he experienced for them as much as he did for me. That is the beginning of wisdom.

There is a place for the lonely pursuit of God. We need moments when we withdraw from others. Moses climbed Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness before launching his public ministry. He fulfilled his mortal mission three years later alone in a garden. Joseph Smith experienced the First Vision while praying in a grove of trees. But learning the lessons of the Two Great Commandments takes place best when we gather with others, put our shoulders to the wheel, and undertake

the hard work of creating community. After all, it was Enoch's city that created Zion. And that is still the work we are called to do. N. T. Wright points out that the New Testament Christians were likewise motivated. For them, the message of Jesus was not about how to get to heaven so much as it was about how to help create the kingdom of heaven on earth, here and now.²

When the pandemic ends and we are given the "all clear" to meet again in the flesh, it will be our sacrament prayer for each other and the receiving and passing the emblems of Christ's Atonement one to another that will be the symbol of the purpose of our gathering as a ward, where we take the first steps towards building Zion.

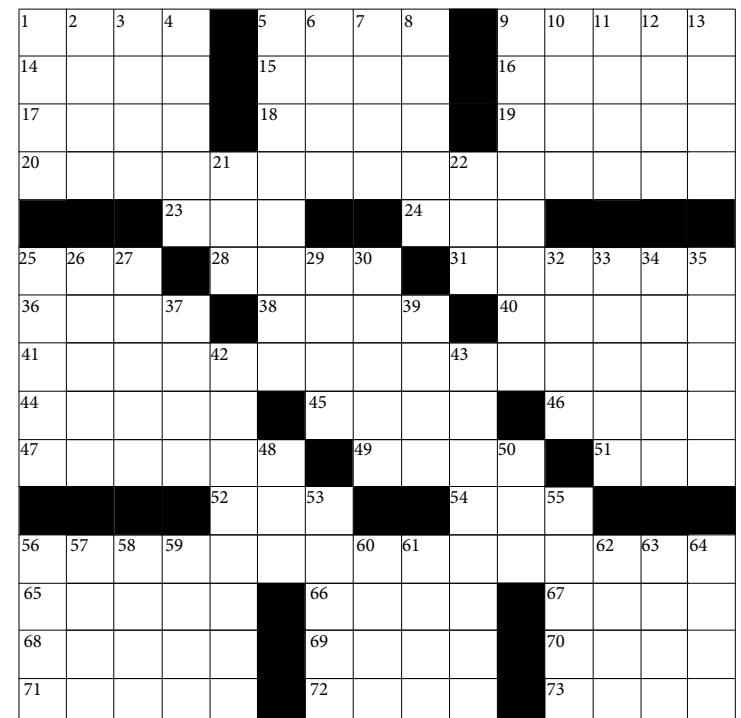
Thomas B. Griffith, a BYU humanities graduate, is a judge on the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. He has served as BYU general counsel and as legal counsel to the US Senate.

1. Eugene England, "Why the Church Is as True as the Gospel," accessed May 12, 2020, www.eugeneengland.org/why-the-church-is-as-true-as-the-gospel.

2. N. T. Wright, *The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus's Crucifixion* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2016).

Clothes Lines

by Corry Cropper



Check your answers on page 3 or visit us online at humanities.byu.edu/magazine.

ACROSS

1. It's pulled by an ox
5. Thailand, formerly
9. They accompanied Nazi salutes
14. Jai ____
15. ____ Betty (TV series)
16. A bit of history
17. ____ skills (Humanities students have them)
18. "Say ____ drugs"
19. Spandex brand
20. Immediately
23. New Year's ____
24. "Just ____ It" (Weird Al song lyrics)
25. Course for non-English speakers
28. Prefix with -tor and -trix
31. Capricious
36. Vincent and ____ (1990 Robert Altman film)
38. What engines do at a stoplight
40. University of Hawaii site above Waikiki
41. Act spitefully
44. Yale, Brown, Harvard, Cornell...
45. Lois ____
46. Former Red Sox and Mariners pitcher Aaron
47. Provo ____
49. *The Longest ____* (1974 Robert Aldrich film)
51. Common dictionary abbreviation [or... prefix with -chronic and -tactic]
52. Keyboard stroke used at start of paragraph
54. Je suis; tu es; il ____
56. How one might rise out of misery
65. Less common
66. Traditional Indian robe
67. It can be ploughed by one person with one ox in one day
68. Loves, to Luigi
69. ____-ball (arcade game)
70. "Are you ____ the joke?"
71. French wine region near Bordeaux
72. Questions
73. What Russian dolls do
48. Capture
50. What one "springs forward" to (abbr.)
53. ____ nova
55. Get in shape
56. Dracula author Stoker
57. Spanish "____ voy" (I'm leaving!)
58. Stepped
59. Leonato's daughter in *Much Ado About Nothing*
60. LDS First-Presidency member Dallin
61. Handcart ____
62. It can be treated with Clearasil
63. They play in the majors
64. E-mail folder

Corry Cropper is a professor of French and an associate dean in the College of Humanities.

DOWN

1. "Mi ____ su ____"
2. Mucho
3. Way off a deserted island
4. Tenth given to the Church
5. Arizona State mascot
6. Mad scientist's assistant
7. Between tenor and soprano
8. Nearsighted one
9. When the Cougar Band plays
10. One name Irish musician
11. Kind of worm
12. ____ Croft: Tomb Raider
13. Venetian blind component
21. Actress Longoria
22. Dullard

25. "Protestant work ____"
26. Hindu deity
27. *All That We ____* (Indigo Girls album)
29. It may be American or pagan
30. "Forever" in New Testament parlance
32. Taxis
33. Holy people spend hours on them
34. Prefix with -gag or -pop
35. Moth-____ clothes
37. "The wind and the waves shall ____ thy will: Peace, be still."
39. Sicilian volcano
42. Obscure and abstract
43. Galileo's and Calvin's teachings to the Catholic Church during the Renaissance
48. Capture
50. What one "springs forward" to (abbr.)
53. ____ nova
55. Get in shape
56. Dracula author Stoker
57. Spanish "____ voy" (I'm leaving!)
58. Stepped
59. Leonato's daughter in *Much Ado About Nothing*
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61. Handcart ____
62. It can be treated with Clearasil
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PERHAPS in a prescient moment last summer, while brainstorming future themes for *Humanities*, we selected “gathering” for the Spring 2020 issue. By now, it is old news how the coronavirus has changed all of our human family’s plans for 2020.

In place of Convocation, this spring each major department celebrated separately with their newest alums in its own way. Some sent mailings with notes from professors or small tokens of commemoration. Many met online via video chats, offering parents and other celebrants the chance to “meet” favorite friends and mentors via remote tech. The Department of English celebrated by compiling an online yearbook with a photo and quote from each graduate alongside encouragement from professors. In it, department chair Lance Larsen recalled David Foster Wallace’s famous commencement speech titled “This Is Water,” which is available to read or listen to online.

One of Wallace’s many insights from the talk is that, just as fish might struggle to perceive the water they’re swimming in, those of us who study humanities must make a conscious and consistent effort to perceive our own assumptions and act with empathy toward those around us.

Isolated into our own “jars,” we can learn to see more clearly the beauty and benefits of the common stream we took for granted. We also can use our time in isolation to learn to perceive others differently, and as we begin to gather together again, our common humanity can help us better navigate the changing tides and currents.

