



DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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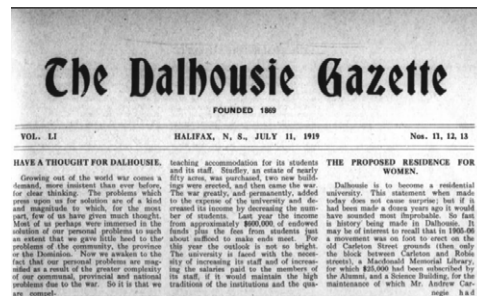
CHAIR'S MESSAGE

By Jason Haslam

I HOPE THAT THIS EDITION of English and Creative Writing's Newsletter finds you all in good health and doing well. It was on March 13th (a Friday the 13th, not that we're superstitious...) that Dalhousie announced the suspension of face-to-face classes and the transition of courses to online delivery, marking the beginning of one of the more difficult, and indeed strangest, periods in our department's and institution's collective history, and a singular moment globally. It's simply impossible to overestimate the depth and breadth of the transitions we have seen in those five months (only seven months since we learned about the spreading novel coronavirus).

We've all heard the word "unprecedented" too often lately, but it certainly applies to our situation in many ways. But still, it can be instructive to remember that there are some precedents, however imperfectly they map onto our time. A search of the [Dalhousie Archives](#), for example, brings up several references to the 1918-20 influenza epidemic: students were sent home for "about six weeks" due to the "Influenza plague—for plague it soon proved to be" (*Dalhousie Gazette* 11 July 1919, p. 10). When they returned, it was to immense celebration, not because of the epidemic (which continued), but because of the armistice ending the war. Tracing references to the influenza epidemic back through the *Dalhousie Gazette* also reminds us that the losses due to that disease followed on the heels not only of the war in Europe, but also of the Halifax Explosion.

And yet, through all of those horrors, Dalhousie emerged, changed, and continued, and the same day-to-day (I hesitate to say "mundane") details that concern us now also appear in the historical record: "As for the class work, every attempt was made to recover as much as possible of the time lost by the Influenza. Christmas



holidays were much abbreviated and the mid-session exams rushed through without loss of time" (p. 11). I find in these everyday efforts of a century ago, if not reassurance, at least a sense of continuity, a continuity in both our educational activities and our hope for the future they build towards.

Through our current pandemic, that hope continues. Faculty in English and Creative Writing, and across campus, are performing the Herculean task of converting our courses for online education (less precedent appears for this process in the nineteen-teens...). I'm privileged to be able to watch these courses develop and new strategies produced (like the "liquid syllabus"—which students can access on computers, tablets, phones—to introduce them to their courses (see examples [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#))). I'm hearing about new pedagogical tools faculty are developing that provide space for student engagement and collective discussion, even when those students are physically distanced by time zones and even continents. And all of this is being done at an astounding pace. I'm humbled by the dedication of all of our faculty, front-line staff, and students. We get a sense of that dedication in the various pieces of this newsletter (with tremendous thanks to Shauntay Grant for her editorial skill in putting this issue together at this busy time!).

And we also find hope for our future in the significant number of new faculty who have joined us over the past two

years, profiles of whom you can find in this issue. Working in areas that have traditionally been strengths in our department, in new and previously under-represented areas, and often jointly with interdisciplinary programs, these amazing scholars and teachers point to an exciting future for English and Creative Writing, and it's one I hope you will join us in building.
–Halifax, 09 August 2020

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWS

Lyn Bennett was awarded a Connection Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for a conference titled *Early Modern Maritime Recipes through Theory and Practice* that will include scholars from English, Sociology and Social Anthropology, History, Human Nutrition, Medicine and Agriculture as well as presenters from Parks Canada and the food and wine industries. The conference will center on the SSHRC-funded database *Early Modern Maritime Recipes* launched in April 2019.

Brad Congdon has won Dalhousie's 2020 Sessional and Part-time Instructor Award for Excellence in Teaching.

One of our recent graduate students, **Brandi Estey-Burtt**, is Dalhousie's nominee for the 2020 CAGS/UMI Distinguished Dissertation Award in the Fine Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences category) which recognizes Canadian doctoral dissertations that make unusually significant and original contributions to their academic field. Brandi's dissertation *When the Messiah Comes: The Postsecular Messianic in Contemporary Literature* also earned her a Dalhousie Doctoral Thesis Award.

Sue Goyette was appointed Poet Laureate of Halifax this Spring. Her forthcoming collection of poems, *Anthesis: A Memoir*, is expected from Gaspereau Press this year. The work reclaims both a childhood trauma and a fictionalized telling of that experience, retrospectively gleaning bits from an autobiographical novel published early in Goyette's career.

Shauntay Grant's stage play *The Bridge* – which premiered in 2019 at Neptune Theatre – received 11 nominations at Theatre Nova Scotia's 2020 Robert Merritt Awards, taking home four including the award for Outstanding New Play by a Nova Scotian. Playwrights Canada Press will publish a book version of the play in 2021.

Asha Jeffers has a new article out with *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*. "Hidden Histories and Second Generation

Struggles in David Chariandy's *Soucouyant*" is published in the journal's January 2020 edition.

Margaret Robinson will be taking up a Canada Research Chair in Reconciliation, Gender, and Identity. Margaret's refereed book chapter "Indigenous American/Two-Spirit Mental Health" was recently published in *The Oxford Handbook of Sexual and Gender Minority Mental Health* (209-220). E Rothblum (Ed.) London, UK: Oxford Press.

Bart Vautour's *The Truth About Facts* was longlisted for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, presented annually by the League of Canadian Poets for a debut collection of poetry. *The Truth About Facts* makes intimate the seeming noise of information and facts by using the tradition of the alphabet book to get back to basics: to make room for wonder, devotion, and a reinvigorated role for poetry in both quick and methodological thought.

Julia Wright was awarded an Insight Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) as Principal Investigator for *Insecure States: The Nation and Knowledge in Irish Literature, 1787-1829*. Julia was appointed President of the Royal Society of Canada's Academy of the Arts and Humanities last fall, and this summer she was named the new George Munro Professor in Literature and Rhetoric. With **Jason Haslam** she also published a scholarly edition of Ian Fleming's novel, *Casino Royale* (Broadview, 2020).

THE FOLLOWING 2019-20 GRADUATE STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY SUBMITTED THEIR MA AND PHD THESES:

Master of Arts: Sarah Boyle, Erin Bragg, Sarah Byrne, Eden Conwell, Justin Moir, Jade Nauss, William Riley, and Noah VanBrenk.

Doctor of Philosophy: Emily Ballantyne, Mark Diachyshyn, Brandi Estey-Burtt, Michael Fontaine, and Kaarina Mikalson.

Q&A WITH OUR NEWEST FACULTY MEMBERS

Our newest faculty members share some of their plans for the Fall semester, and a bit of what's been getting them through the summer.

ANDREW S. BROWN (EARLY MODERN LITERATURE)



Q. What are you most excited about teaching in 2020-21?

A. I'm most excited to be teaching "Shakespeare at the Globe" this year! The original Globe Theatre existed for only 14 years (1599-1613), but it was the original site of so many performances that shape our perceptions both of William Shakespeare as an author and of the broader culture of playacting/ playgoing in this period. Especially in our current moment, its legacy as a physical space where people gathered together to witness plays—and one that was closed multiple times due to plague—also has much to teach us about the emotional and intellectual dynamics of human contact, I think.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. I'm currently in the early stages of a project that explores how early modern people (ca. 1550-1700) understood water as both a site of human experience and an important infrastructural resource. Here in Canada especially, it's become important to recognize that water management

and sanitation remain a contemporary problem, for example in the case of decades-long boil water advisories in some Indigenous communities. My research hopes to show that some of these current limitations in how we think about water also have deeper roots in the history of literature and settler colonialism.

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. Daily bike rides and long walks, mostly, especially when I can be near the lakeshore. Plus a lot of cooking experiments (with mixed success)!

Q. Summer reading?

A. I've recently been enjoying Sarah Perry's *The Essex Serpent* (a historical novel set in the English fen country) and Scott Hawkins' *The Library at Mount Char* (pulpy modern fantasy that makes for a good beach read, even if the beaches are closed).

BRIAN GILLIS (ENGLISH AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES)



Q. What are you most excited about teaching in 2020-21?

A. I'm especially looking forward to teaching the Indigenous Graphic Novel Honours Seminar this winter term. The class examines the visual legacy of Indigenous writing.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. I'm currently putting together a project on Garrick Mallery's 19th-century work on indigenous sign language and "picture writing," and using the theories of meta-pragmatics and stylolinguistics to understand how Mallery goes about "indexing" meaning. Fun fact: in the early 20th century, the Boy Scouts of America used Mallery's research as guide books for awarding merit badges in American Indian Sign Language, long after the language had stopped being used in the American and Canadian Plains and Prairies.

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. My husband, Theo, and our two cats (Georgia & Amelia). Though the latter two are living their best lives; there's never been more brushing, Zoom meetings to interrupt, or keyboards to jump on.

Q. Summer reading?

A. I've just finished reading *The Treaty of Waitangi*, a bilingual (translated in both Maori and English) graphic novel that tells the story of how the Maori negotiated their 1840 treaty with the British. It has some beautifully rendered images.

Q&A WITH OUR NEWEST FACULTY MEMBERS CON'T

ASHA JEFFERS (ENGLISH AND GENDER & WOMEN'S STUDIES)



Q. What are you most excited about teaching in 2020-21?

A. I'm most excited about teaching my first ever grad class, "The Black Atlantic Goes Pop." I'm looking forward to getting to talk about the interconnections of African diasporic pop culture, literature, and theory with excellent students in a rigorous way. Paul Gilroy, Rihanna, Claude McKay, and Muhammad Ali will be together at last.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. This summer, I'll be buckling down with my book project about rebellious daughters in African and Caribbean US immigrant fiction. I'll be delving into the research materials I've been gathering and bringing together all the talks, conference papers, and notes that I've been writing on this theme over the last couple of years. This is my first crack at writing a book so any advice people have would be welcome!

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. Comedy podcasts, dancing, and a lot of video chats with friends and family.

Q. Summer reading?

A. In terms of pleasure reading, two of my brilliant friends, Noor Naga and Irfan Ali, have books out that I'm looking forward to soaking up. I also

plan to read comic books as a nice counterbalance to all of the research and reading I'll be doing.

HEATHER JESSUP (ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING)



Q. What are you most excited about teaching in 2020-21?

A. Creating a supportive creative community so that we can write. Toni Morrison notes: "This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal." This is what I'm most excited about for my classrooms this year.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. A novel about underwater mermaid performers and wrongful incarceration, as well as, in this time of parenting in isolation, what I have found myself writing is a series of personal and theoretical essays about family, community, sleeplessness, make believe, neighbourhoods, and belonging.

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. Mr. Rogers. Seriously. The archive of his programming from WQED in Pittsburgh is full of calming and insightful moments of pedagogy for people of all ages, and the theoretical links between his show and the work of psychologists and theorists Erik Erikson

and Margaret McFarland is fascinating me right now in terms of ontology and pedagogy that promotes belonging and inclusion. The podcast *Finding Fred* by Carvell Wallace is a great listen if you want company while you do your dishes.

Q. Summer reading?

A. *How to Pronounce Knife* by Souvankham Thammavongsa (stories); *The White Album* by Joan Didion (essays); *Reproduction* by Ian Williams (novel); *Playing and Reality* by Donald Winnicott (theory); *Fred's Big Feelings* by Laura Renauld, illustrated by Brigette Barrager (children's literature); *Lean Out by Tara Henley* (non-fiction); *The Courage to Teach* by Parker Palmer (non-fiction - a re-read to re-focus my teaching between terms); *Jonny Appleseed* by Joshua Whitehead (novel).

MARGARET ROBINSON (ENGLISH, SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY, AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES)

Q. What are you most excited



about teaching in 2020-21?

A. I'm looking forward to my new course, *Queerness in Detective Fiction*, in Fall 2020. I'm queer (bi/queer/ two-spirit) and fascinated by how detective works treat sexual and gender difference: spinsters farming in butch-femme pairs, gentry gents whose red ties hint at sexual comradery, ice-pick wielding bisexuals, and gunsels lurking in hotel lobbies. Eventually we see queer twists on the stereotypical tropes and

fully rounded queer detectives (not just victims or killers). Combining detective fiction with my love of critical analysis is going to be fun, and I look forward to seeing what the students make of the material.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. There's always a pile of manuscripts on the go, and I hope to complete a few that have been waiting patiently. Research-wise, I'm partnering with economist Dr. Maryam Dilmaghani at Saint Mary's University in an experimental study about sexual minority employment. I'll soon be starting a study of poverty among two-spirit people. I'm also developing a project related to the Indigenous New Wave movement in the arts.

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. There's been some stress baking. Banana bread is nice with chocolate chips in it. My partner and I bought a house in Chezzetcook, so there's a lot of house and yard work. I'm learning about gardening and drywalling, and trying to be a good neighbour to the animal life around. Even so, it's been a challenge to keep active. In the evenings I've been re-watching old tv shows like *Columbo* and *Streets of San Francisco*.

Q. Summer reading?

A. I've got a lot of mystery and detective reading to do. For fun, I read and write fanfiction.

**CAMILLE VAN DER MAREL
(CANADIAN LITERATURE)**



Q. What are you most excited about teaching in 2020-21?

A. Next year I'm teaching my first grad seminar on ecocritical approaches to CanLit and the Anthropocene. I am very excited to see what our department's MA and PhD students make of Nalo Hopkinson's and Waubgeshig Rice's works of Cli-Fi, visual attempts to represent the Anthropocene like Ted Burtynski's photographs and Warren Cariou's petrographs, as well as contemporary ecopoetry by Rita Wong and Cecily Nicholson. This is going to be a fantastic class.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. I'm making my way through a few different projects over the summer: this week I'm finishing a conference paper for the Association for Literature, Environment, and Culture in Canada (ALECC) that argues works of Cli-Fi like Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* and N.K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy expose the essentialist notions of biological race that persist in climate change discourse; I'm drafting an article about Dionne Brand's *Theory* and the role complicity critiques play in contemporary CanLit scholarship; and I'm trying to edit my dissertation into a monograph on debt and obligation in Caribbean Canadian literature. If anyone has any recommendations or questions about any of these projects, reach out: I'd love to share ideas and

hear your thoughts.

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. What's been getting me through lockdown...? Well, my dog Fozzie Bear is a pretty good pandemic buddy: very sympathetic, doesn't complain much, always game for a walk or cuddle. It is odd, social distancing in a city that's still new. I miss going in to the department and seeing everyone, but I'm optimistic about 2021. I can't believe I haven't had people over for dinner yet. This is the #1 thing I would have done differently had I known a pandemic was coming...

Q. Summer reading?

A. I've just started N.K. Jemisin's *The City We Became* (great, weird, funny) and I'm looking forward to catching up on the latest in Canadian ecocriticism before this Fall's grad seminar.

**BART VAUTOUR
(WRITING STUDIES)**



Q. What are you most excited about teaching in 2020-21?

A. Though I'm excited to get the chance to talk with Grad Students about the Spanish Civil War again, I'm most excited about teaching "Editing and Publishing Literature" (CRWR/ ENGL 3311) for the first time. We are going to start with bookbinding and bibliographic description and work through to contemporary publishing practices.

Q. Any new research or projects underway?

A. Given the current conditions, some things have had to be put on hold. I've shifted to things I can do in the brief moments when I'm not being asked a million and one questions by a four-year-old: finishing a collection of poetry, editing a novel by Martha Ostenso in the Throwback Series with Invisible Publishing, and I've proposed to edit a selected poetry book of an amazing poet (I'm REALLY hoping the publisher says yes!)

Q. What's been getting you through the COVID-19 lockdown?

A. During the month of April (poetry month) I posted a photo of a book/chapbook/broadside/magazine (that is in my house) each morning. It was just a little thing that helped structure my day. And I started a zillion tomato plants.

Q. Summer reading?

A. I'm just about to start Isabel Allende's latest: *A Long Petal of the Sea*. I always get excited to read a new novel about the Spanish Civil War!

A TRIBUTE TO LEN

By Melissa Furrow

LEN DIEPEVEEN JOINED THE

Department of English at Dalhousie in July 1987. He retires from it at the end of June 2020. Between those baldly stated factoids lies a career that has brought the Harlem Renaissance into the department's offerings for the first time, changed the lives of students (you who read this know who you are), shaped international scholarly understanding of American and British modernism, demonstrated exemplary service to the running of the department, faculty, and university, and culminated in a stormy session in the university's Senate that earned Professor Diepeveen both a rebuke for being uncooperative and an award for academic integrity—for the same session, from different perspectives on the same issues.

He arrived in 1987 as a Brash Young Man. He was soon drafted onto the department's softball team as pitcher, and inevitably dubbed Gyro Gearloose. When I first met him, he assured me that he knew of my recently published book, he had looked it up ahead of his campus interview in order to show his interest in the department, but luckily the book had been checked out of the library so he was off the hook for actually reading it. All this was delivered with an impish grin. But despite his failure to achieve conventionality, and often because of it, that was the beginning of a long collegial friendship during which our coffee break discussions of fuzzy categories and metonymy, syntax and etymologies, plagiarism and politics, classes and curricula, fraud and universities, taught us both (I hope) a great deal. I know they taught me, and I admire the way his conversation influenced and sparked ideas in not only the other modernists among colleagues and post-doctoral fellows and students, but those as far afield as the medievalists.

He turned out to be a prolific and an interesting writer. The titles of his three monographs, two edited works, and three co-authored books with art critic and historian Timothy van Laar tell what you need to know about his scope: *Modernist Fraud: Hoax, Parody, Deception*; *The Difficulties of Modernism*; *Changing Voices: The Modern Quoting Poem*; *Tender Buttons*, by Gertrude Stein; *Mock Modernism: An Anthology of Parodies*, Travesties, Frauds, 1910-1935; Artworld Prestige: *Arguing Cultural Value*; *Art with a Difference: Looking at Difficult and Unfamiliar Art*; *Active Sights: Art as Social Action*. They address similarly large questions about perceived intention and value in modernist literature and art.

At Dalhousie he has held key positions, including those of Chair of the department from 2005 to 2007, Assistant Dean of Research in FASS, and three-time Chair of the Graduate Committee, a role in which he has been deeply involved in striving for the success of our graduate program and our graduate students. His recent term on the University's Senate earned him the Jay Newman Award for Academic Integrity, bestowed by the faculty association at the University of Guelph in 2019.

He leaves in 2020 as the George Munro Professor of Literature and Rhetoric, retiring to travel (though not in the time of pandemic, alas), summertime gardening and kayaking at his family cottage, and more writing. His string of aperçus chronicling anomic daily adventures in isolation (Facebook, 2020) will doubtless join *The Decameron* and *Journal of a Plague Year* as compellingly pestiferous literature. His last term of teaching has been sadly mangled by COVID-19, so those of Len Diepeveen's current and past students and colleagues who want to say thanks and good-byes will have to go out of their way to do so by electronic means or even archaic pen and paper.

SUE GOYETTE BECOMES HALIFAX'S 8TH POET LAUREATE

By Bart Vautour



MANY OF US HAVE KNOWN SUE

for a long while and realize just how lucky we are to have her unwaveringly inspirational presence as a teacher in our Creative Writing program. Some of us are newer to the Department and haven't been around as long as Sue has been teaching with us, so may be less familiar with her and her substantial accomplishments. So, allow me to (re) introduce you to Halifax's newest Poet Laureate!

Sue is now a long-time Nova Scotian (30 years) and it feels like she is very much a constituent part of the city. She published her first collection of poetry, *The True Names of Birds*, in 1998 with Brick Books. She also published her second and third collections—*Undone* (2004) and *Outskirts* (2011)—with Brick Books. The publication of her fourth collection, *Ocean*, in 2013 represented a shift in publishers to Gaspereau Press, based here in Kentville, Nova Scotia. Gaspereau Press published her *Brief Reincarnation of a Girl* in 2015 and *Penelope* in 2017, and they have just published her seventh collection: *Anthesis: a memoir* (Spring 2020).

Her poetry has won the Pat Lowther Memorial Award, the Atlantic Poetry Prize (2012, 2016), the CBC Literary Prize for Poetry, the Earle Birney Prize,

the ReLit Award, the Nova Scotia Established Artist Recognition Award in 2011, the 2013 National Magazine Award (Silver), the 2014 Atlantic Independent Booksellers Choice Award, and the Bliss Carman Award. Her first book, *The True Names of Birds* (now in its seventh printing), was shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award for poetry and her fourth book, *Ocean* (also in its seventh printing), was shortlisted for the 2014 Griffin Poetry Prize—perhaps Canada's most prestigious prize for poetry. *Ocean* was the recipient of the 2015 Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Award. She was the Guest Editor of the 2013 edition of *The Best Canadian Poetry in English*. She was a Judge for the 2017 Griffin Poetry Prize and edited *The Griffin Anthology* (House of Anansi Press, 2017). Her 2013 collection, *Ocean*, was recently translated by Georgette Leblanc, an Acadian Nova Scotian and Canada's Parliamentary Poet Laureate. The French-language translation, *Océan*, was published by Les Éditions Perce-Neige in 2019.

In addition to her seven published collections of poetry, Sue has also published a novel: *Lures* (HarperCollins, 2002). Met with critical acclaim, *Lures* was shortlisted for the 2003 Thomas

Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Award, which is awarded each year for a novel or a book of short fiction that was written by a full-time resident of Atlantic Canada. Sue has recently edited *Resistance*, an anthology of poetry about sexual assault and abuse. She wrote the forward to the edited anthology, which is forthcoming.

Sue has been a mentor to many, both formally and informally. Formally speaking, she has been a frequent mentor in the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia Alistair MacLeod Mentorship Program, working with emerging authors to hone their craft; she has also mentored in the MFA Creative Writing Program at the University of Guelph. Informally, she has advised many, many of Nova Scotia's writers. Sue has also served as the Writer-in-Residence at Dalhousie University and University of PEI.

Sue has been teaching students in the Creative Writing Program at Dalhousie University for thirteen years. She has also been faculty at the Banff Centre for the Arts, the Sage Hill Experience, The Blue Heron Writing Workshop—St. FX University, Mount Saint Vincent University, NSCAD School of Extended Studies, and has worked for the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia. She is currently completing a graduate degree in Women and Gender Studies at Saint Mary's University.

We remain incredibly fortunate to have Sue as a colleague and now the city of Halifax will get a taste of just how lucky we are! I know I can extend an uncontroversial collective "Congratulations!" to Sue on behalf of her colleagues here at Dal!

PETER CHYKOWSKI AND THE QUEEN'S GREEN DRESS

By Kathy Cawsey

During the coronavirus crisis, the Queen, for only the fifth time during her reign, gave a non-Christmas address to the nation. She wore a green dress. Royal watchers said it was the same colour as hospital scrubs, in honour of health workers.

But Dal English and Creative Writing (MA, BA) grad Peter Chiykowski noted that the colour was the same as something else: a television greenscreen.

HE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY to create laughter and joy during the lockdown, and photoshopped a picture of a spacey cat onto her dress, with the caption, "I, for one, would like to thank the Queen for making her royal address and providing the nation with something it sorely needs right now... The perfect Photoshop bait..."

It rapidly went viral, garnering 28.5K retweets and 111.3K likes. Imitations quickly followed, everything from Queen Elizabeth sporting a Star Trek uniform to wearing the iconic World War II propaganda poster of a female machinist. The best were tongue-in-cheek: the Queen wearing Queen (the Bohemian Rhapsody

headshots); Queen Elizabeth II wearing Queen Elizabeth I; the queen wearing a playing card queen. One had a mise en abyme of the queen wearing herself wearing herself wearing herself...

Chiykowski's joke made its way to more traditional media as well, reaching the notice of BuzzFeed, Yahoo News, and even John Oliver's show.

In response to people claiming he was being disrespectful to the queen, Chiykowski apologized, saying they were right: "The queen is definitely a corgi over cats lady."

(He also included a link to the Queen's charities.)

Chiykowski isn't a stranger to the internet, or to going viral, though this is his biggest feat yet. In 2016, he launched the Twitter account @dadjokehansolo, which got a response from geek favourite George Takei.

Dad Joke Han Solo told some real groaners:

Ben: I'm trying to read, you're in my light

Me: Because I am a Solo eclipse!

Ben: Dad I swear to-

Me: I am blocking the light of the son!"

"Ben you should call yourself 'Pound Ren' not 'Kilo Ren'; if you like the Imperial system so much!"

"Ben said 'I'm being torn apart, I want to be free of this pain'

So I said NICE TO MEET YOU 'BEING TORN APART' I'M DAD

Did not go over well"

More than one of the responses said that it is clear now why Kylo Ren went over to the dark side.

Recently – stuck inside during the pandemic – Chiykowski revived the Dad Joke Han Solo account to make coronavirus-themed jokes:

"Leia and I are not divorced We are 'social distancing' For the next 10-20 years"

"If we are being honest I spent the first week of the pandemic under the misapprehension that COVID-19 was the name of a droid"

Chiykowski isn't just about laughs, however. Dad Joke Han Solo recently has echoed some of the politics of Chiykowski's long-running online comic, *Rock Paper Cynic*. In response to the racial violence in the US, Dad Joke Han Solo has posted comments such as,

"You must have been looking for the other Han Solo, from the pro-fascist *Star Wars*. I'm the one who married a terrorist general and dismantled an authoritarian galactic regime But yeah, your movie sounds cool too"

"The Rebellion famously succeeded because we asked very nicely and when the Empire said 'no,' we said 'oh well, guess we tried.' Haha, just kidding! We suited up, fought injustice, mobilized to protect the vulnerable, and didn't go home until we secured freedom & dignity for all"



Peter Chiykowski
@rockpapercynic

I, for one, would like to thank the Queen for making her royal address and providing the nation with something it sorely needs right now...

The perfect Photoshop bait...



He has also posted links to donate to charities against racial violence. And he couldn't resist when Kelly Ann Conway recently wore a green shirt.

During the lockdown, Chiykowski recently made his crowd-funded game, "The story engine," available free for parents to download, to keep their kids occupied, creative, and off screens. The

game features cards that can serve as inspirations for stories, that people are then to write or tell. (Unfortunately, someone soon stole the templates and posted them online. If you want to support Peter's enterprise, you can pre-order the game here: <https://storyenginedeck.myshopify.com/>)

After the green-screen-queen

explosion, one of his tweets said wryly, "This is not the job I thought I'd have when I graduated..."

Peter won the Paul MacIsaac Memorial prize in his third year at Dal for an "enquiring and original mind." You may not have foreseen it, Peter. But we did.



ATLANTIC UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH CONFERENCE

By Beatrice Glickman

THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL ATLANTIC

Undergraduate English Conference (AAUEC) took place at Acadia University. Dalhousie's attendees were Danielle Blais, Frances Grace Fyfe, Beatrice Glickman, Stuart Harden, Oyinda Lagunju, and Ghislaine Sinclair. The faculty advisor and driver was Dr. Lyn Bennett.

The AAUEC began on Friday with a trivia and open mic night at the Wolfville Farmer's Market. If you want a piece of trivia to rile up your modernist-inclined friends, I learned that Woolf once called Joyce's *Ulysses* "the work of a queasy undergraduate scratching his pimples." Saturday was a full day of panels, followed by a banquet. On Sunday, we attended the last session of panels and heard the closing remarks.

I was impressed by everyone's enthusiasm and engagement with the texts they were studying. It was lovely

to hear people express ideas and ask questions that they care deeply about. I got to see what people thought about texts that I love, and just as importantly, about texts I don't particularly like, and I found some new titles to add to my ever-growing reading list.

At every panel I attended, people listened intently and seemed excited to ask questions. I felt none of the hostility or competitiveness that is sometimes present in academic spaces. After the panel I was on, which focused on representations of women and femininity, I talked with some other students about how awesome Mrs. Ramsay from Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* is. I may have even convinced some of them to read Anne Brontë's masterpiece, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

It feels strange to be writing about a conference, which seems like a hallmark of the Before Times, what with

its communal gathering and podium germ-spewing. But given everything that's going on, I've been thinking about why literature is so important to me and why books have been keeping me going.

Literature can be a way to escape the world around you, or your own mind, and that is a genuine good, especially at times like these. But it can also be a way to actively engage with the world. It is a way to understand what people are going through, to learn, to change how we think, and to create social change. Part of this engagement happens when we find community. When we talk about literature together – at a conference, in a classroom, over a Zoom call, or at the kitchen table – we see ourselves, the world, and how the world could be, more clearly.

COOKING THROUGH COVID-19

With yeast (and other grocery items) in short supply these days, here's an old favourite from the Early Modern Maritime Recipes project:

ANOTHER WAY OF MAKING LEAVEN

TAKE two pounds of potatoes; boil them and bruise them fine, add to them half a pound of brown sugar, half a pint of emptings and a pint of warm water,

mix them well together, and set them by the fire, but not too near until they rise, then put them by in a crock or stone jug. Half a pint will make a batch of bread.

Early Modern Maritime Recipes collects recipes that were circulating in Canada's Maritime provinces before 1800. The project has been directed by Dr. Lyn Bennett (Dalhousie, Department of English), and Dr. Edith Snook (University of New Brunswick, Department of English).

DEPARTMENT OF

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