Mount Royal Undergraduate Humanities Review

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Editorial

The academic journal is an enigma to many undergraduate students. We typically begin our post-secondary careers with no knowledge of scholarly writing, only to become reliant on the published expertise of our professional colleagues as an invaluable source of knowledge. In many cases we hold the academic journal in such high esteem that the very notion of participating in the academic conversation within our chosen fields of research seems implausible. As undergraduates, our knowledge is often provided by the research of others. Our success is based upon our ability to take pieces of knowledge acquired by others and to compare them to each other. Our arguments rarely break new ground because we need the groundbreaking work of others to exist in order for us to meet our assigned requirements of citation and page number. It is because of this difference that the thought of participating in an academic journal is daunting to us.

As the editor of the second volume of the *Mount Royal Undergraduate Humanities Review (MRUHR)*, and as an undergraduate student, I cannot begin to describe the profound changes this process has made to the way participating students view scholarly writing. While corresponding with the authors over the last several months, I have had the absolute joy of witnessing the personal transformation within my fellow students. In many cases authors were initially unsure of themselves, but felt empowered after braving the peer review process and taking feedback to heart. These undergraduate authors have taken on the aforementioned daunting task of participating in an academic journal, and although they may not yet have the expertise required for groundbreaking research, the prospect of contributing to the scholarly conversation within their fields is no longer intangible.

The *MRUHR* embraces the array of interdisciplinary humanities subjects offered by Mount Royal University, which includes History, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Canadian Studies, Art History, Women's Studies, and Indigenous Studies. The published pieces within this edition represent this variety with topics ranging from the colonial homogenization of First Nations peoples in 19th century Canada to the role of public space within medieval France. Every submission has undergone a blind peer review performed by Humanities Department faculty members at Mount Royal. Many of these pieces began as an assignment for a course, but changed dramatically through the review process to become so much more. Witnessing these evolutions has been the most enjoyable.

I am truly grateful for the amazing opportunity to be the editor of Volume 2 of the *Mount Royal Undergraduate Humanities Review*. Reading these pieces in their various forms over the past few months has been an invaluable learning experience and the excellence demonstrated by my fellow students has been both humbling and inspiring. I would like to thank both the authors and the editorial board for their hard work. I would also like to thank the faculty for donating their precious time to this process, particularly to Dr. Kirk Niergarth, our sage faculty advisor throughout the year. And finally, thank you to the *MRUHR*'s first editor, Sabina Trimble, for laying the foundation of what hopefully becomes an institution of the Mount Royal University Humanities Department.

Heath Milo, Editor 12 December 2013