

**Verso: An Undergraduate Journal of
Literary Criticism © 2011**

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“Literature is the question minus the answer.”
- Roland Barthes

Editor's Note

Several of the following essays were stressed and sweated over – were written – in the Killam Memorial Library. While much of our undergraduate degree is spent labouring in library stacks, filled with the discourse that has come before us, it is important in the end to remove our noses from these books and direct our gaze up and out into the world. This year, *Verso's* cover art displays the atrium roof: a lens supported by a hefty and enduring piece of academic infrastructure. The view through it is not a static one; it changes as frequently as the weather of our (un)fair city. It will please us and frustrate us, trap us and let us explore. We will feel warmed and sodden, lost in fog and snowed in, swamped, and struck by lightning.

Here, among other things, we call on television, science, and video games to remind us that literature is neither limited to the written page nor a single understanding. Roland Barthes's declaration, "Literature is the question minus the answer" advises that any allegedly indisputable answer should be subtracted from this open-ended formula. Literature must always remain fluid, ready to accept the multiple interpretations which may move between and play off each other. These literary criticisms, esteemed undergraduate "answers," insightfully demand readers to question the very nature – and nurture – of literature.

Leslie A. Gallagher
Editor-in-Chief

Contributors

Brittany Kraus is a second-year English major at the University of King's College. Originally from Saskatchewan, she moved to Halifax on an existential whim and now lives with two suspicious cats and an even more suspicious roommate. She holds a diploma in Music Performance from Grant MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta.

Naomi Cooperman is a third-year student majoring in English and Early Modern Studies. In her spare time, she is involved in the Dalhousie English Society, Early Modern Students Society, and Jewish Students Association. She looks forward to writing her thesis on the literary concept of Carnavalesque in her final year at the University of King's College.

Adrien Robertson studies English at the Honours level. He will be graduating in May of 2011 and hopes to continue working with ideas of hypernarrative and digital media in the future.

Kaarina Mikalson is a full-time Can. Lit. junkie and part-time Classics nerd in her third year. Although she fled from Alberta years ago, she can still be heard avidly defending its merits, though her love of Halifax grows with every windy, icy day. She also enjoys dresses, cupcakes and giraffes.

Sunjay Mathuria hails from the Oaks in Pickering, Ontario, but can trace his family roots to Rexdale, Downsview, and Scarborough. He is currently working on a project examining the representation of urban and suburban Toronto in Canadian youth television. Sunjay will complete his degree in Journalism, English, and Canadian Studies in April.

Rodger Moran: Originally a psychology major, Rodger Moran found literature's lure too much to resist and changed his major to English after his first semester. He graduates in May of 2011 and will be continuing on to his Master of Arts at the University of Western Ontario.

Alexandra Fenton is from Halifax, Nova Scotia. She attended the Foundation Year Program at the University of King's College before transferring to Dalhousie University to pursue a Combined Honours degree in English and History, with an emphasis in English. Though her focus is on Victorian literature, she is also interested in Russian literature.