

December 2014

Notes from the Editor

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Recommended Citation

Straple, Rebecca (2014) "Notes from the Editor," *The Hilltop Review*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/hilltopreview/vol7/iss1/2>

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Notes from the Editor

I am pleased to present the winter 2014 issue of *The Hilltop Review*—my first as editor. For those of you who have not met me, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Rebecca Straple, and I was approved as editor of *The Hilltop Review* by the members of the Graduate Student Association in a General Meeting in May 2014. I'm a PhD student in the Department of English, and my research focuses on gender, the body, and sexuality in early medieval literature, particularly that of the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians. I have a BA in Publishing Studies and Dance Performance from Illinois State University, an MA in Medieval English Literatures from the University of York, and have experience in a variety of publishing environments. I am excited to present my first issue of *The Hilltop*, and look forward to continuing to work on the journal for the next three issues, giving graduate students the chance to publish their research, art work, and creative writing and to experience the review and publication process. Please feel free to contact me at gsa_hilltop@wmich.edu if you have any questions for me or if you would like more information about how to get involved with the journal.

We also have several new members of the editorial board: Roland Black, of the Medieval Institute; Cameron Manche and Hannah Pankratz, of the Department of Geosciences; Caroline Ray, of Integrative Holistic Health and Wellness; and Dani Ryskamp, of the Department of English. Joshua Berkenpas, a former editor of the journal and member of the editorial board, also continues his service to graduate research as a member of the board. My sincere thanks go out to all of them—each member of the editorial board reviewed two articles for this issue, and they also read each submission marked for publication and determined the winners of the Paper, Artwork, and Creative Writing awards for this issue.

Thanks also to the Executive Board of the Graduate Student Association, which has been rebranded this year from the Graduate Student Advisory Committee. Damon Chambers continues as President (formerly Chair) and Marcial Amaury Pineda takes over the role of Vice-President (a position formerly known as Vice-Chair). The E-Board of the GSA has worked tirelessly over the past two years to rebrand the GSA, spread awareness of the organization and the work they do, and restructure the organization to spread the duties of the E-Board over a greater number of positions and to create the Graduate Ambassadors program. I encourage all of you to attend General Meetings, as we are all automatically members of the GSA and the GSA is, as Mr. Chambers likes to say, “your voice on campus.” The members of the GSA, in fact, helped to break a tie between our two pieces of artwork in this issue that resulted from our editorial board’s votes, and chose “Autumn on the Kal-Haven Trail” as the winner of the Artwork Prize and the cover image of this issue. This is just one small example of the ways in which your voice matters as part of the GSA.

Finally, the biggest thanks of all goes out to the graduate students who submitted their work to *The Hilltop Review*, and to the graduate students and faculty members who served as peer and faculty reviewers for each piece submitted. The double blind reviewing process is a vital step in the publication process, and I greatly appreciate the effort and time of each of our reviewers. If you are interested in reviewing for *The Hilltop*, please contact me! The review process usually takes only 1-3 hours and it's a great line on your CV.

Congratulations are in order for the winners of our various Prizes! Paper Prizes: First Place to Mark S. Barajas for “Thinking and Feeling: The Influence of Positive Emotion on Human Cognition,” for which he will receive \$500; Second Place to Yi-chin Huang for “The Rhetoric about Exile in the Preaching and Teaching of the Anglo-Saxon Church: Glimpses of Cultural Ideology Revealed in the Homilies,” for which she will receive \$300, and Dani Alexis Ryskamp for “Neurodiversity’s Lingua Franca?: *The Wild Iris, Autobiography of Red*, and the Breakdown of Cognitive Barriers Through Poetic Language,” for which she will receive \$150. Artwork Prize and Cover Image: Charles Lein for “Autumn on the Kal-Haven Trail,” for which he will receive \$250. Creative Writing Prize: Luke Chambers for “The Four

Seasons,” for which he will also receive \$250. Congratulations to our winners! (All reviews and judging are double-blind; I do not take part in the judging process, and Dani Ryskamp did not consider her own paper in her judging.)

In this issue we have ten articles, two pieces of artwork, and four creative works that represent the best research, thinking, and creativity of Western Michigan University graduate students. This issue features articles from Counseling Education and Counseling Psychology, English, Philosophy, Sociology, Educational Leadership, Research and Technology, Computer Science, Chemical Engineering, and Engineering. Creative and art works have also been received from a wide variety of departments, including the Medieval Institute, Geosciences, Communication, Evaluation, and Anthropology.

The editorial board and I look forward to receiving and publishing more articles, art work, and creative writing by WMU graduate students. The Call for Papers for the spring issue can be found at the end of this issue or online at wmich.edu/gsa/hilltopreview. This is also the first issue of *The Hilltop* that was not only hosted by ScholarWorks, but for which submission, review, publication, etc., were entirely managed through ScholarWorks. We plan to continue using this resource in the future, and the process is explained in submission guidelines, available on the website and on *The Hilltop Review*'s homepage on ScholarWorks: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/hilltopreview/policies.html>.

The winter 2014 issue of *The Hilltop Review* did not have a theme; the next issue, spring 2015, will be organized around the theme of “Changes in Culture and Technology.” We believe that this theme will be an interesting way to focus the content of the journal in the next issue while remaining broad enough that students from all departments and schools could potentially submit articles that fit it (and thanks to editorial board member Cameron Manche for the suggestion!). Whether you are interested in cultural changes in modern or ancient times, changes to technology, or changes in culture brought on by changes and advancements in technology, I encourage you to submit for spring 2015. The editorial board and I look forward to reading your interpretations of next issue's theme.

I hope you enjoy this issue, and look forward to working with you all for the next three.



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