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Notes from the Editor

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Notes from the Editor

I and the rest of the Editorial Board are proud to present the fall 2015 issue of *The Hilltop Review*, containing scholarly articles, creative work, and art work by the graduate students of Western Michigan University, and, once again, the winners of the Graduate Humanities Conference. I am also excited to announce that this is the 10th anniversary of *The Hilltop Review*—the first issue was published in fall 2005! That first issue had five articles. Ten years later, we have published countless more articles, opened the *Review* up to creative work and to art work, established prizes for the best articles, creative writing, and art work, and formed a partnership with the Graduate Humanities Conference. Looking forward, we are working on forming more partnerships with other research and creative initiatives at Western Michigan University, including the recently launched Three Minute Thesis Competition, and looking into other ways the *Review* can grow, including utilizing the digital capabilities of ScholarWorks. We are very excited to continue to develop *The Hilltop Review* as a publication opportunity for graduate students.

An interesting phenomenon that I have observed in my time as editor of *The Hilltop Review* is the ebb and flow of submissions that we receive from certain fields. In this issue, for example, the social sciences are particularly well represented; we have several papers from the Departments of Sociology and Comparative Religion. In other semesters we have had strong showings from students in engineering and mathematics, and in others, a large humanities presence. Next semester, in the last issue that I will work on as Director and Editor of *The Hilltop Review*, I hope to present a well-rounded issue with submissions from a variety of fields represented in graduate study at Western Michigan University with the theme of “Interdisciplinarity.”

Our fall issues are open to submissions on any subject or theme; our spring issues are organized around conceptual or thematic foci that represent the cutting-edge of graduate studies, but also need to be broad enough to allow students in any field of graduate study to submit work. I think that “Interdisciplinarity” fits the bill nicely: interdisciplinary work is increasingly recognized as a vital way to make discoveries and complete research that would not be possible in a single, isolated field and is becoming a more popular way to work in fields from the humanities to medical sciences. As a medievalist, I am convinced of the importance of looking at trends and issues not only from my own “specialty” of literature, but also through the lenses of history, linguistics, and cultural studies—and some of the most fascinating work to come out of medieval studies in the last few years is in the field of medical humanities! I’m sure many of you have heard of the study done at The University of Nottingham where Anglo-Saxonists worked together with microbiologists to find that a 10th-century Anglo-Saxon remedy for eye infections is effective in treating Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). Perhaps similarly surprising and boundary-breaking research is happening among graduate students of various fields here at Western Michigan University! It is my hope that we can publish some of that research in our spring 2016 issue. The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2016. Information on how to submit can be found at wmich.edu/gsa/hilltopreview.

Many congratulations to authors and artists in this issue are in order. First, to the winners of *The Hilltop Review* Awards: Simon Purdy will receive \$500 for First Place Paper for “Surveillance, Knowledge, and Inequality: Understanding Power Through Foucault and Beyond”; Jennifer Deranek and Ceceila Parnter will split the \$300 prize for Second Place Paper for “Academic Honesty and the New Technological Frontier”; and Daniel J. Patten will receive \$150 for Third Place Paper for “An Unfinished Journey: The Evolution of Crime Measurement in the United States.” Carolyn Nims will receive \$250 for Best Creative Writing for “Funeral Season” and Muthanna Yaqoob will receive \$250 for Best Artwork for “Path to PhD.” His work also appears on the cover of this issue. (All reviews and judging are double-blind; I do not take part in the judging process.)

We must also congratulate the winners of the Graduate Humanities Conference, co-sponsored by the Center for the Humanities and the Graduate Student Association! The mission of the Center for the Humanities is to “recognize and support the humanities at Western Michigan University,” and one way in which they do that is by hosting an annual conference to showcase the work of humanities graduate students on campus; the work of the winner and the runner-up of each conference is then published in *The Hilltop Review*. The winner of this year’s conference was Joel Sanford, with “Proof of Heaven?: Controversy Over Near-Death Experiences in American Christianity”; the runner-up was Anna Alioto, with “Controversy in Skeletal Biology: the Use of Pathological and Osteological Markers for Activity Patterns.” Congratulations to these students!

A huge thank-you to all 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. And, of course, I would like to thank my wonderful Editorial Board: Joshua R. Berkenpas, Roland Black, Cameron J. Manche, Jill McEldowney, Hannah Pankratz, and Carolyn M. Ray.

As I mentioned earlier, my tenure as Director and Editor of *The Hilltop Review* will be coming to an end with the spring 2016 issue. We are therefore looking for a new Director and Editor! The call is open for applications, information about which can be found at wmich.edu/gsa. The position requires a two-year commitment (from May 2016 to April 2018) and involves 10 hours of work per week; it includes a stipend of \$4,000 per year. Applications are due by January 29, 2016, and the new editor will work with me on completing the spring 2016 issue so I can show him or her the ropes. If any of you are curious about the job or have questions, please feel free to email me at gsa_hilltop@wmich.edu.

Please enjoy this issue of *The Hilltop Review*! I look forward to continuing to work with you all as graduate students and as authors for the spring 2016 issue.



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