



12-15-2018

Westview: Vol. 34, Iss. 2 (Winter 2018)

Westview Staff

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

Recommended Citation

Westview Staff (2018) "Westview: Vol. 34, Iss. 2 (Winter 2018)," *Westview*: Vol. 34 : Iss. 2 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol34/iss2/1>

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access
by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been
accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized
administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more
information, please contact
phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.



A JOURNAL OF WESTERN OKLAHOMA

WESTVIEW

VOLUME 34 ISSUE 2

WINTER 2018

\$4.00



WESTVIEW STAFF

Editor Amanda Smith-Chesley

Assistant Editor Taylor Verkler

Publications Manager Taylor Verkler

Westview is published semiannually by the Department of Language and Literature at Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

Westview publishes short fiction, poetry, prose poems, nonfiction, literary criticism, and artwork. *Westview* holds first rights for all works published.

Subscription for two years (four issues): \$15 in United States; \$25 out of country. Single issues: \$6 including postage. Checks are to be made payable to *Westview*; 100 Campus Drive; Weatherford, OK 73096.

Stylesheet

1. Electronic submissions are preferred via dc.swosu.edu/westview/.

To help facilitate the journal's blind review process, authors should exclude identification information from manuscripts.

2. Electronic submissions are also preferred for artwork via dc.swosu.edu/westview/.

Artwork submitted should be suitable for black and white reproduction. Work should be no larger than 8.5" x 14". However, photographs of larger works may be submitted.

3. Include a brief biographical sketch for our contributors' notes.

4. Subscriptions and correspondence may be sent to Amanda Smith-Chesley at westview@swosu.edu.

Amanda Smith-Chesley

Editor, *Westview*

100 Campus Drive

Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Weatherford, OK 73096

W E S T V I E W



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 David Vancil

For Joe Conley, Ike Godsey on *The Waltons*
1928-2013

5 David Vancil

In the Pacific: A WWII Photograph

6 Sheila A. Murphy

My Father's Wars

8 Sheila A. Murphy

Petticoat in the Navy: My Mother's War

10 James E. Fowler

Qwerty

11 John Tavares

Heterochromia

30 Sarah Brown Weitzman

Well of Despair

32 David Vancil

I Remember Rodney

33 A. S. More Matthew Brennan

314 East 25th Street, on January 1st

34 A. S. More

half-way

- 36 Philip Wexler**
Looking as They Should
- 38 Katacha Díaz**
Stitch-by-Stitch
- 41 Amber Thompson**
Tuesday Night
- 42 Kevin Oakes**
Plowing
- 44 Catherine McCraw**
Nowhere is Nowhere
- 46 Jill Jones**
The Patience of Trees
- 47 Sheila Cohlmiä**
The Valley
- 48 Sheila A. Murphy**
September's Grapes
- 49 Matthew Brennan**
The Skaters
- 50 James E. Fowler**
Big
- 52 James E. Fowler**
frisk
- 53 James E. Fowler**
Lady: Bug
- 56 Cal Castle**
The YMCA
- 58 John Bradshaw**
Tennyson, By Allergies Immured
- 60 Contributors**
- 64 Photos & Illustrations**

For Joe Conley, Ike Godsey on *The Waltons* 1928-2013

by David Vancil

In your favorite episode, you are past your prime,
a smiling storekeeper with a snarky TV wife, when
Uncle Sam plucks you up to help save the world
from the Axis. In the Army now, you can't get out.
Of course, John Boy's father has to save your bacon.
Your nightmare of slogging through rice paddy muck
in South Vietnam was grist for the writers. I didn't know
until later that under fire in Korea during your real war,
you'd help lug a man down a hill to safety, receiving
a wound that plagued you the rest of your life to go
along with a Silver Star you didn't like to speak of.
I never told you I served in your dream war, remaining
silent. Instead, we spoke of your love of song and dance,
your talented and beautiful kids, and playing doubles.

In the Pacific: A WWII Photograph

In memory of France and Varlan Vancil, brothers

by David Vancil

In the black and white snapshot, my father and my uncle, sweaty from volleyball, stand side-by-side with other bare-chested men, by chance together on an unnamed island in the Pacific. Taller than my father, Uncle Varlan looks jaunty. Older and named for France, where Grandfather waged a war to end them, my dad, who goes by Eddie, looks triumphant, or so I see him. I conjure up Spartan athletes who spike the ball to win the game. Victorious, they share ocean-warm cans of Schlitz or Falstaff in a dark, green tent. Neither brother believes, in my rendition, he will survive the war to make babies, work in a job, or pay off home mortgages. It will be a mostly welcome surprise. This will be the last photograph of them playing together. Varlan will name his oldest son for a dead friend. And dad will act out dreams that will frighten my mother.

My Father's Wars

*In memory of Thomas James Gallagher,
1st Lt. U. S. Army Air Service Aeronautics (1885-1954)*

by Sheila A. Murphy

Longer now than sixty years ago,
dying in a veterans' hospital,
committed by my mother, unable
to be her husband or a lawyer or
my father, you are forever committed to
my memory: walking stiff-legged down
Main Street, and once, mirrored in my eyes,
turning as you tried, too late, to hide
an amber bottle under cellar stairs.

Born when you were fifty-one and deaf,
I find your face in fading photos,
smiling, proud, a man I never knew:

Perched atop your horse, in broad-brimmed hat,
on border duty in New Mexico—
the year is 1916. You look so young.

Standing near the cockpit of a bi-plane,
goggles perched jauntily above your brow,
you're poised to fly at Kelly Field in Texas,
before the 1917 crash that closed
your ears and introduced your pain.

In 1942, after leading the Memorial Day parade
to Victory Field, flanked by flags and cannon
and four wizened Civil War veterans, you call to
*render our tribute to the sacrifices of armed forces
scattered on far flung fronts....*

fading words on yellowed paper, brittle in my hand.
Oh Pop, you're marching, marching, still.



*Thomas J. Gallagher, Sgt. Amb. Corps, 2nd
Mass. Regiment Volunteer Infantry, 1916,
Mexican Border Campaign*

Petticoat in the Navy: My Mother's War

"Petticoats in the Navy! Damn'd outrage? Helluva mess! Back to sea f'r me."

—legal advisor to the Secretary of the Navy, 1917

by Sheila A. Murphy

In 1918 Julia Lehan, age nineteen,
lives in Roxbury, works downtown where
Boston streets swarm with servicemen,
storefronts are papered with recruiting posters,
air echoes with newsboy cries of doom:
Lusitania, the Somme, Ypres, Verdun.

The Navy is building ships, enrolling women,
Yeomen (F) the label for this new class.
Navy Secretary Daniels vows
women's pay will equal that of *Yeomen*
who will soon be sent across the sea
to make the world safe for democracy.

America enters the war and so does Julia,
USNR in gold on grosgrain ribbon
circling her broad-brimmed dark straw hat,
brass buttons gleaming on the Norfolk jacket
of her new navy blue uniform
with flared skirt and high-button shoes.

She will live at home, her widowed mother
grateful for the living allowance, the Navy
grateful for Julia's skills—bookkeeping, typing,
and shorthand—useful at the Custom House
and later at the Charlestown Navy Yard.

In her official portrait, faded now,
Julia's serenity and bashful smile
mask whatever hopes and fears led her
to choose to serve her country in
the war to end all wars.



*Julia B. Lehan, Yeoman (F) 2c,
1st Naval District, Boston, 1918*

Qwerty

by James E. Fowler

What you've seen but can't place,
always overlooking, looking past,
hellbent on further ends.

Consider your calico's Ohio-shaped patch,
a great-uncle's wartime photo,
that girl with bangs who sells pretzels.

The gift under your nose, hardly sniffed,
the slighted dwarf by the roadside
whose warning comes home to roost,
the many reasons women call
oblivious men dumb lummoxes.

It's the stuff of there-all-along,
coming into focus, if at all,
somewhere beyond the hill,
where late clarity weds regret,
and ever after rings
not quite happily.

Heterochromia

by John Tavares

As Warren rode the commuter train downtown, he joined two homeless straphangers in watching the news on the government-sanctioned news billboard on the train. The report was about a case thrown out of court after a member of the riot control squad was acquitted of extrajudicial homicide. The unarmed suspect allegedly instigated a food riot. The sole witness testified that the police officer who fired the fatal shot had blue eyes, but the police officer in question had a condition known as complete heterochromia, or “heterochromia iridis,” with the iris of her eyes drastically contrasting in color. The judge threw out the eyewitness’ testimony, and, as Warren listened to the reasons broadcast on streaming video, the train creaked and rattled into decrepit Yonge subway station, where he disembarked.





Outside the decaying subway station on Bloor Street, Warren fielded a cellphone call from his daughter, Paula. He learned he had an offspring only recently. In what seemed like a lifetime ago, during his last college year, Warren donated semen once a month to college friends, but he had a falling out with the lesbian couple. The dispute originated in a perceived failure to return pricey textbooks in a timely fashion, before examinations when he most needed them. Until his own daughter showed up at his apartment several years ago, he had never heard from the couple or discovered if the donations led to conception. Paula explained that her parents were killed during the reactor disaster and radioactive poisoning. They lived right next door to the nuclear power station. Young Paula and mature Warren went to a hassle-free black market laboratory for genetic tests, which confirmed what their distinct facial resemblances informed them: she was his daughter.

Now, as Warren walked south along Yonge Street, his phone connection to his daughter was filled with the crosstalk of police and paramilitary hunting down stray insurgents and anarchists. He thought Paula was taking a chance by calling him when the intelligence community and police agencies were likely eavesdropping. She asked him when he would drop by her apartment in Etobicoke. Having not seen him in months, she wanted to show him her home-based hair and beauty salon, which allowed her to earn an underground income after the government shut down the public elementary school where she had worked as a kindergarten teacher.

Meanwhile, Warren had a sensation of being pursued. The anxiety triggered tremors in his body and caused him to envision his death. Still, he strolled from the subway turnstiles and tunnels to his favorite used bookstore on Yonge Street.



Envisioning one's death in an apocalyptic atmosphere did not strike him as an unhealthy sensation, particularly since Toronto suffered riots in the midst of food shortages, police shootings, and civil unrest, and mass casualties in the aftermath of a lethal radioactive cloud, which spewed from the nearby nuclear plant after a terrorist attack. YYZ Books somehow avoided destruction, looting, and vandalism despite weeks of prolonged condominium riots, after the initial spree of arson and book-burning, which occurred in the aftermath of the early disasters. Miraculously, the used bookstore had managed to stay open through the imposition of new book codes and censorship laws. Warren heard rumors the business was exempt from police visits and raids affecting the few remaining bookstores and magazine stands along Yonge Street because of the police chief's tacit orders. Apparently, she and her partner had frequented this bookstore in their college days.

Warren remembered that his daughter's parents lived in Humber College dormitory many years ago. The police chief's partner lived down the hallway on the women's floor. He also remembered how his daughter's parents were homebodies and virtually lived in their pajamas the whole time he stayed in residence. The close couple even wore pajamas to a few of their publishing classes and had difficulty staying awake because they worked nights in the college library and morning classes started early. One Friday evening, Warren guided the pair via bus and subway from Humber College in the suburbs to YYZ Books. The couple had never visited downtown Toronto before and rarely explored Toronto outside the student dormitory, college campus, and nearby shopping mall. Apparently, one trip to downtown Toronto had been enough for the pair.

A few generations later, much in the city had changed. As



Warren walked southward along Yonge Street, he found himself staring at a handsome young couple. The young man stepped forward and asked him if there was anything wrong. He realized from the young man's uniform that he was a member of the book police. He had not bothered taking off his official uniform after his shift, during which he made the rounds at the bookstores and libraries around the overbuilt downtown, where the burnt shells of condominium towers blocked the sunlight. Warren remembered years ago, when storefronts and shops lined the blocks between College and Bloor Streets, natural light once strayed on Yonge Street, but now the hulks of burnt-out shells of condo towers, their walls of glass shattered, and the pocked, bullet-ridden concrete façades of bombproof apartment high-rises scarred the downtown district. A few public library branches and bookstores still somehow managed to stay open to the public and plied their trade, despite constant harassment from the media, politicians, and environmentalists, who protested grandfather clauses should be lifted. The books, activists argued, were legacies of an era in which trees were butchered to provide pulp, raw material for books and newspapers, most of which had been outlawed. Paper and newsprint, the green activists protested, should be recycled or burned in incinerators that provided electricity for the city's waning power grid to meet shortages and help rationing. The intermittent blackouts, brownouts, and power shortages reminded Warren of the nuclear power station accident, after the terrorists flew a plane into the cooling tower.

The disastrous reactor meltdown and plant explosions led to a massive toxic radioactive cloud that shrouded Toronto. The toxic fog caught virtually the whole population of metropolitan Toronto by surprise because residents were almost too busy, entranced, following live coverage of the event on television



and the live streaming video feeds from social media on their smartphones, tablets, and laptop computers.

The young couple reminded Warren of his daughter's parents. Still single after sixty years of living, he had to admit his passion seemed as strong as ever as he admired the women walking downtown on Yonge Street. He had to acknowledge with a sense of disappointment that they dressed more modestly than the women he remembered seeing on bustling Yonge Street and trendy Queen Street in his Humber College days. He had given up trying to explain why he never succeeded in finding a partner, a woman who could lay claim to his loyalty. He supposed the fact that he was not handsome and assertive enough around women might explain his single status.

The bookstore clerk Warren had known for three decades might have an explanation, but Nelson would probably joke Warren was a bachelor because he found solace in the world of print: collecting books, magazines, comic books, and graphic novels. Warren trusted Nelson sufficiently to find his favorite books and magazines, prohibited material stockpiled in the black-market adult section. Nelson had been working at this bookstore for as long as Warren was a customer, so Warren never expected that the clerk would betray him.

As a librarian at the University of Toronto, Warren observed that their libraries, belonging to an academic and research institution, were exempt from daily visits by the book police. Around the time he retired, though, the book police raided the humanities library once a month. Squads of enforcement officers dramatically pulled up to the front entrances in pickup trucks and armored cars and sent police charging through the stacks and study rooms. He occasionally wondered aloud with his colleagues if this was a military exercise



to reassure a distressed civilian population and to warn dissident students. His fellow librarians argued the big show of force was a spectacle: melodrama, shock and awe. But, he reminded them, the police usually ended up taking a few truckloads of books from the humanities and arts sections to burn in government-sanctioned incinerators, which were also supposedly eco-friendly. The book burnings provided electricity to the power grid, particularly during shortages and peak demand, the hot spells and cold snaps, when people went straggling through the streets, seeking fuel, food, and shelter. Some librarians at the campus joked the police confiscated books because of energy shortages.

During Warren's lifetime, which spanned seven decades, he realized he had been through some amazing changes in society, education, technology, readership, and censorship, even though he lived his entire life within the city of Toronto and hardly ever travelled outside of its metropolitan boundaries. The only time Warren travelled beyond the city boundaries was when the university library sent him for academic library science conferences to the Erindale campus in Mississauga, which some argued was merely a suburb of Toronto or a bedroom community within its forever-expanding boundaries.

The catalysts for revolution and upheaval seemed to have been the terrorist attack on the nuclear plant, the reactor explosions, and the ensuing condominium riots. That was around the time Warren told himself he had enough and abandoned his self-imposed ban, broke the law, and bought a *Playboy* from Nelson at YYZ Books. The vintage magazine featured an adult female model posing nude beside a jukebox in a nightclub. Taking such a chance, assuming a huge risk, breaking the law, he felt guilty. After all, adult magazines and videos became



restricted under the administration of Chelsea Clinton and then were abruptly banned following the election of Ivanka Trump. Both presidents helped influence and shape policy in Canada, particularly after the election of Prime Minister Caroline Mulrooney and then Sophia Trudeau.

Politicians aside, the whole world Warren knew—at least as far as the world within the boundaries of metropolitan city of Toronto—was a place of homelessness, squatting, panhandling, carjackings, vandalism, food shortages, and huge bonfires in parks and public squares. Books seemed the sole relic of civilization that brought him cerebral pleasure and a sense that he lived an existence worth continuing. He was unable to resist his book and magazine collecting habits in an era when such behavior was dangerous. Even his work as a librarian, instead of satiating his desire for books, stimulated his appetite for the printed word.

He looked through the single shelf of paperbacks and magazines. He could not believe it, but Nelson had stashed on the back shelves of YYZ Books a paperback edition of *The Story of O*, whose pages had been singed as if it had been rescued from a bonfire. Nelson had marked the price at only two hundred dollars, probably because of its condition, but the book was definitely too hot to handle. It would probably land him in prison for the remainder of his life if he were caught with it in his possession.

Beside him, there stood a woman, pale, paper-skinned, wearing a form-fitting jean jacket and tight pants. She had a tiny nose and ear piercings. But what he found most remarkable was the fact that she had the most unusual eyes, one brown and one blue. He remembered the censorship-board-approved news he saw on the authorized news billboard on the subway train: the report about a police officer



with an unusual eye condition acquitted of extrajudicial homicide. The sole witness testified that the police officer who fired the fatal shot at the unarmed suspect had blue eyes when the officer in question had heterochromia. This handsome young woman probably had the condition. Even though those around him were telling him he was becoming paranoid, he could not help but suspect that she was an undercover police officer. But he concluded such a woman could never work undercover because she possessed such distinctive physical traits. Seemingly, she lacked anonymity, unless they were mismatched tinted contacts, which seemed a distinct possibility. However, he understood the previous administration had banned tinted contacts because many manufacturers were starting to insert microprocessors and camera lenses that could surreptitiously provide still photography and a live video feed built into the lens.

He found a collectable *Penthouse* magazine, buried at the bottom of the heap of vintage *Life* magazines, which would have passed most community standards at the time it was produced, but which was illegal by contemporary standards because it depicted full frontal nudity. The magazine contained nude photographs of the celebrity Madonna. Warren remembered the magazine's release when he was a teenager; the pictorial created a scandal. People who viewed the picture now might be stunned that the pop star proudly exhibited her body, including her pubic and armpit hair.

Warren paid Nelson the magazine's list price of a thousand dollars. Nelson licked his fingers, pulled out a brown paper bag from beneath the counter, and counted out eight hundred dollars, which he set in the till and pocketed two hundred. Warren was reminded that, as a result of hyperinflation and because these were collectors' items and prohibited, he was



paying a hundred times what he paid for these magazines and books forty years ago. He even remembered he owned these issues as a teenager until his mother seized his collection and tossed the magazines in the garbage. Nelson slipped the magazine in a sturdy plastic sheath to protect its condition, because he knew Warren was a collector. Then he inserted the magazine into a brown paper bag, which he folded over the top and taped. Warren slipped the collector's item into his backpack. They chatted briefly about government-sanctioned e-books, authorized biographies of politicians, and the latest series of live streaming video, produced by the government media agency, based on former Prime Minister Brian Mulrooney's autobiography. As Warren was leaving, Nelson advised him he might have new collectables next week.

Warren started to walk southwards down Yonge Street toward his favorite café, where he usually met Rex. Nelson claimed that Rex had borderline personality disorder. Warren could not refute this claim. Though, as long as you did not expect gestures of actual friendship from Rex, you usually never ran into any trouble. Warren did notice he usually wound up always picking up the tab for Rex's coffee or lending Rex the use of his smartphone and laptop computer. Warren bought Rex a venti dark roast which he gulped before Warren could sit down. Warren couldn't even add sugar and cream to his coffee before Rex said, "Did you hear Fitz was busted?"

"Fitz? Busted?"

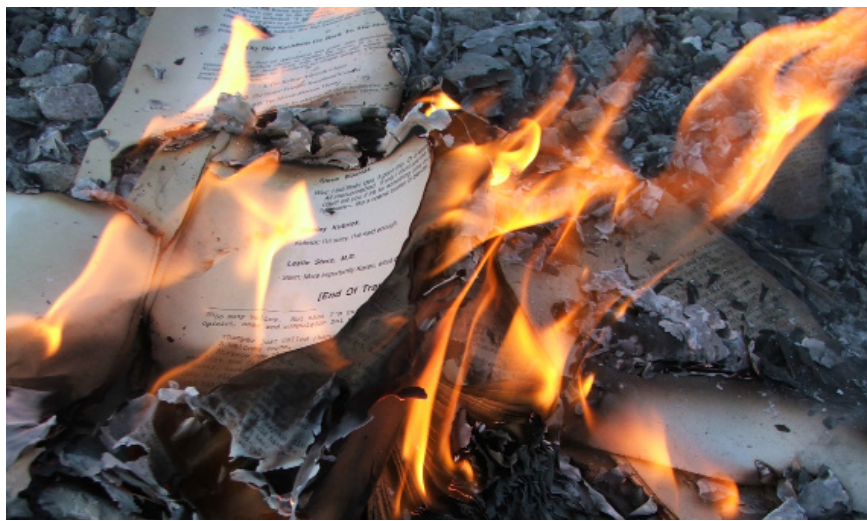
"Fitz was busted. They found a vintage *Playboy* on his computer hard drive."

"He got busted for an old *Playboy*?"

"The magazines were digital copies. He scanned his collection on the photocopier in his university office and saved the



copies in digital book format on the hard drive of his laptop computer. As soon as he got home, he loaded the magazines in his duffle bag, and then he took off to the beach and burned them in a bonfire."



"How was he caught? Did they have cameras at the university? Did someone spot him?"

"What does it matter how he was caught? I hear the police look the other way if you burn your stuff at the beach; they have too much illicit material to control, so people destroying their own books helps. They probably have cameras in more places than you can think of, but he used his laptop computer in the Café Queen at Wellesley and Church."

"Just down the street."

"Well, it's not just down the street; it's several blocks from here in a roundabout way. He needed to look at some medical journals on his laptop when a woman looking over his shoulder noticed some icons for *Playboy* magazines on his



monitor. She must have had sharp eyes because all you see is a file name and little thumbnail picture for the magazine cover, but, anyway, she called the cops. The book police set up a sting. The cop sat there noisily slurping a coffee, engaging Fitz in conversation about comic and magazine collecting. Meanwhile, his buddy sat at a nearby table and kept looking over his shoulder at Fitz's laptop screen. He saw the file names—he didn't even see the magazines contents."

"Fitz is a medical doctor, a leading researcher in drug addiction. They set up a sting for a medical scientist for some vintage *Playboy* magazines?"

"I guess you couldn't call it a sting, but a few undercover officers, you know, experienced guys with a little gray in their hair and mustaches, put him under surveillance. The first cop sat beside Fitz in the café and chatted, while the second watched. When Fitz started working on his research online, reading his medical journals, the first asked him, real friendly, if that was digital copy of the bicentennial edition of *Playboy* magazine he thought he saw. Well, you just don't know how stupid Fitz can be toward somebody who he thinks of as a friend. The cop said, 'Yeah, I guess they actually didn't shave their pubic hair back then. He didn't even say, like, pubes, like any normal person would. He said pubic hair, which should have been a warning to Fitz.'"

Warren felt bad for Fitz; as one of the professional's blue-collar buddies, one of his book collecting friends, they planned to meet sometime soon at his house and trade comic books, vintage early issues of *Spiderman* and *Fantastic Four*, and he supposed now the arrest postponed the deal indefinitely.

"Wait a second. Let me finish. And the guy, real friendly, says, 'Well, do you think I can see?' And, Fitz, real naïve, opens



the digital file right in the café for him to see. The cop makes a cellphone call, and soon a whole squad of uniformed cops fly into the café and bust him, like he's a homicidal maniac on a rampage when it's limp-wristed, effeminate Fitz who melts when he sees a homeless person or hears a sob story from a panhandler. Did you ever see Fitz when he sees a violent movie? He turns the TV off and bites his knuckle. He can't stand to see someone in pain: that's why he went into medical research. And *he* got busted."

"I thought Fitz was gay. Isn't that Internet café at Church and Wellesley a favorite in the gay community?"

"You're right on both counts. But what does it matter? Fitz is a collector like you and me. Anyway, if he could find a woman in real life like he can in *Playboy*, I bet he would date her."

"Those are two big ifs. Fitz had second degree burns all over his face, and plastic surgery couldn't correct the scars."

"He doesn't have problems finding any action as a gay man."

"I guess some men don't mind scars."

"Since he was arrested, he lost his teaching position at the university."

"I didn't know he was a professor at the university. I know he does cutting-edge research."

"He's not a professor, but an instructor or assistant professor, or whatever you call the instructors at the medical school. Anyway, he lost that teaching position. He lost his research grants, too. He got fired from the clinic where physicians consult him, and the college of physicians and surgeons has started action against him, you know, legal proceedings."

"For vintage *Playboys* in digital format?"



Rex shrugged. "I don't make the rules."

"You mean the laws. I guess Presidents Chelsea Clinton and Ivanka Trump decided enough porn, hard-core or soft-core, or anything even close, and Prime Ministers Sophia Trudeau and Carol Mulrooney followed course. Instead of *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, it's *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Good Housekeeping*."

"Whatever. Better housekeeping is important. I'm still trying to get my apartment organized. I notice when it's neat and tidy I feel much better and have a better outlook on life."

"A better outlook on life? Well, I guess society's loss is prison's gain. I suppose he'll be a good chemistry and biology teacher to all those convicts hoping to finish their college correspondence courses."

"Like I said, I don't make the rules."

"Yeah, but you seem pretty smug and happy about it," Warren said.

"I've got a university degree," Rex said. "It never did me any good."

"Except land you in jail when you started manufacturing those designer stimulants and hallucinogens. Was it the mind-benders that did you in, eh? They were too potent, too many overdoses?" Judging from the expression on Rex's face, Warren realized he touched a sore spot. He wished he had not mentioned past transgressions in their favorite café, where Rex liked to eat his brownies, laced with hash or cannabis, as he slurped hot strong coffee and laughed at his own off-color jokes. Warren decided to tell him about the woman with the bright blue eye and dark brown eye he saw a short while ago just up the street at YYZ Books. "Heterochromia. I think it's a



genetic condition, but it looks awesome.”

Rex looked pensive and worried at the description of the woman. Then Warren told him about the trial of the riot squad officer for extrajudicial homicide where the verdict hinged on the witness’ description of the cop who fired the shots as having blue eyes. The prosecutor argued that the witness saw the police officer with heterochromia, in profile. Therefore, he observed only her blue eye, but the judge countered that if the witnesses was standing where he testified he stood when he saw the shooting he would have seen the police officer’s brown eye. Besides, the judge decided he had problems with the credibility of the witness, who plainly indicated he nurtured an antipathy to the police.

Rex looked around the café, reached beneath the table, and from a handbag withdrew a magazine in a plastic sheath.

“Look what I have: the first issue of *Playboy* magazine to feature a black woman on the cover, and it’s in mint condition.”

“That’s a find for certain. It’s probably worth a wad of cash.”

“But it would be risky to try to sell it.”

Eager to show him his latest find, Warren lifted the magazine wrapped in cellophane from the plastic bag. “Hey, look what I found: the *Penthouse* issue with pictures of Madonna nude.”

Then Warren noticed the very pale woman, with the remarkable eyes, one bright blue, one dark brown. Rex took a bite of his walnut fudge with hashish. His mouth full of sugar and chocolate, he gestured toward the woman as if she wasn’t present and muttered. Warren’s suspicion etched lines across his face, adding years in age to his appearance. The woman had a scowl, a ruthless look that suggested she



could easily kill a man, which reminded Warren of law enforcement types, former friends. Feeling betrayed by Rex, he was not certain if he was just being paranoid, but he excused himself, saying he needed to go to the washroom. This time, he took his backpack and searched for his penknife inside its compartments, but realized he forgot the tool in his apartment with his envelopes and mail.

Warren managed to shred the *Penthouse* magazine, but he could not completely flush the fragments down the toilet. After he washed his hands, he dumped the plastic sheath and paper bag at the bottom of the wastebasket. There went a thousand dollars from his pension or cash from the book deals he occasionally made buying or trading. He skipped out of the washroom, after first checking to make certain that he did not leave any evidence behind. Then the lean muscular woman, with the vivid blue eye and the brown eye, urgently strode into the washroom, and he thought he should escape, make a run for freedom.

However, Rex urged him to stay in the café. He wanted to tell him sappy, sexist jokes about blondes and dead babies. Warren did not appreciate his sense of humor, but he forced himself to listen, justifying the collusion because, he figured, at his age he could not afford to be picky about his friends. Again he wondered why he spent much time with Rex, who could be obnoxious, particularly when he was stoned. Rex said Warren was paranoid, but the news about Fitz rattled him, and he realized he should leave the café. He told Rex he needed to leave early to finish organizing the latest additions to his collection.

Warren stepped out of the café and hurried down Yonge Street. As he strode down the broken sidewalk, he could see the fire and commotion from a book burning at the site



of a condominium tower demolition. When he reached the subway station, whose stairwell was still blackened from a recent blaze, he saw the flashing advertisement for a free day of digital file purges: electronic memory devices like flash cards, hard drives, USB sticks, and DVDs could be brought to disposal and recycle depots without retribution during an amnesty period. The technocrats urged the populace to delete and purge prohibited e-book literature and arts without risk of criminal prosecution.

As Warren waited for the last subway train, he saw the plainclothes book police approaching him with backup officers, who had IDs strung from lanyards around their necks, backups, body armor, and tactical weapons. He realized he was caught in a sting, when he saw the blue-eyed, brown-eyed woman at the forefront, leading the pack, running, the book police dangling identification badge from her neck. Warren thought his life was ruined, but, before he could reach the exit, the subway train sped into the dingy station. Warren saw the officer pull out her laser-guided revolver. As the officer aimed the pistol's sights, Warren realized in that moment the end was near and leapt in front of the roaring subway station, on the last run for the night. On the train tracks, poised for self-destruction, he realized he was afraid to die. Besides, he saw the eyes of the train operator, whose face appeared youthful and pretty. He thought of his daughter and the trauma both young women might experience with his body crushed and mutilated by a rusted, rattling train. He could hurtle himself in front of the train or cling to subway tunnel. He inched along the gangplank alongside tracks, hugging the cement wall, pressing his body against the grime, as the train roared past him, brushing the fabric of his coat. Underneath the overhanging ledge of the platform, he found and unbolted a heavy steel door that led to a trestle and a tunnel beneath



the subway line. He crouched through a dark emergency passageway that led to a concrete stairwell that opened into waning twilight and a serene park. After hiding in the forest through the drizzle along a riverbank, he slept on a park bench.

In the morning, he hiked along the trails bordering the river and winding through the forests. Then he walked along back streets for several kilometres across the sprawling city to his daughter's apartment in Etobicoke. It was not far from the Humber College campus, where he first met Paula's parents in the book and magazine publishing program, which was the closest formal education that Warren could find to comic book writing, his true aspiration. As soon as he knocked on the door, she knew the book police were after him. After she fed him seagull stew and racoon chili, they drank coffee and talked. Then she served homemade carrot liqueur and chatted some more, before she sat him in her clanky hairstylist chair. Paula shaved his beard then trimmed his eyebrows, nose, and ear hair. Then she dyed his hair, lending him a more youthful appearance. He even luxuriated in the sensation of a facial before she decided more drastic measures might be useful and injected him with botox. Warren was virtually unrecognizable after her clippers, scissors, ointments, and creams had conditioned and tamed his wrinkled, aging face and thinning grey hair.

Even though he repeatedly warned her he suspected the police may have put her apartment under surveillance, the following afternoon Paula returned with a change of clothes for him, which she found scavenging through a thrift shop. She dressed him in khakis and camouflage, inauspicious clothes, which would help him blend with the roving bands of homeless and refugees wandering the littered streets, living in parks, heated



and illuminated by bonfires. She even dressed him in body armor, a lightweight vest, which he could not believe was made from bulletproof material.

He managed to take her to a self-serve marijuana dispensary with an automated teller machine in the lobby and gave her some money. Despite the downturn in the economy and hyperinflation, he still received a healthy pension, indexed and linked to the cost of living. While he waited in a terminal full of refugees, the homeless, unemployed, and displaced persons, she bought him a ticket on the transcontinental train to the west coast.

Paula told him that she was sending him to her sister's house in Vancouver. "Do you know what that means?"

Stressed and fatigued, he might have felt stunned, but his newfound fatalism merely allowed him to nod his head. "That I have another daughter?"

"You do have another daughter." He blankly looked into the brown eyes of the face that uncannily resembled his own.

"The best advice I can give you: if you want to avoid the complications of family, never donate semen again."

"Back then I think I understood what I was getting into, and I may have even secretly hoped life and relationships might get complicated sometime in the future. Now it feels like it's a matter of survival and a little late for regrets."

"Agreed. No regrets, but it's never too late. You might be delighted to hear she does run her own bookstore, an underground bookstore. There might be a genetic marker for bookishness, or at least it runs in the family, and I'm certain you'll feel right at home." Paula told her father he should be able to stay with her twin sister indefinitely, or at least until he



was able to find some decent accommodation.

"If you want to know why I didn't tell you earlier, it's because finding you was my project, not hers. At the time, when I told her I wanted to find out who my father was, she accepted what our parents said and was not interested. Nikita can be a cold-hearted person, but I think knowing the identity of her true biological father was simply more than she could handle then; I know it was hard for me when I first found out. She is looking forward to meeting you, though. You're a hero to her—a librarian and fugitive from the book police." Paula fastened the straps on his bulletproof vest. "You're going to be all right?"

"Don't worry about me."

"But you never expected it to get so complicated?"

"True."

Paula saw him off on the transcontinental train, destination Vancouver, in the morning, along with a group of homeless Toronto residents and refugees from many exotic, faraway destinations. Warren realized he had become that thing he would have never expected in his own lifetime: a survivor, in the middle of retirement in what, even without advancing age, was the bleakest time of his life. As they embraced and Warren waved good-bye, he thought he was off to an inauspicious but fresh start. He felt as if he was on a new path, and, he reminded himself, he was the father to two twin daughters.

Well of Despair

by Sarah Brown Weitzman

As a follow up to that classic
experiment done in the 60's
on young primates fed by wire

figures, how they always rushed
right after to snuggle
with some padded forms

though those never fed them
anything nor ever hugged them
back. What hunger

that softness satisfied
science wanted to know.
So now to have the facts

on this early lack of mother,
a modern steel-lined crib
for infant rhesus monkeys

without the former cotton
clutter, each in its own
cylinder, sealed.

(The scientist had quite a bent
for lab language
who named that place



"a well of despair.") Forty-five days
and forty-five nights
of maternal deprivation.

While it lasts
each babe gives science its best
moments, watching through one-way glass

persistent spindly arms
trying to cuddle the smooth steel
sides of those metal mothers.

I Remember Rodney

by David Vancil

You admitted you'd abused your body
in youth, destroying kidneys and liver,
and said you wanted to pass your final
days with your mother and close kin.
The last time I saw you, I noticed you
across the commons, eating lunch alone.
In that space, where students congregated
with friends, we nodded at one another,
exchanging half smiles. We lifted our wrists
and made a sign, not knowing then we were
gesturing the last time. The next time I
went into the campus bookstore, I missed
you among the faculty books, where you
once led me to a bookshelf to reveal
my own slender volume proudly displayed
while you grinned proudly as a brother would.

314 East 25th Street, on January 1st

by Matthew Brennan

It's moving day—the sun glimmers as dimly
as Venus in the morning sky. Brown ivy
clings to the courtyard's bricks. The sundial there
pokes up through crusty snow, while your old man
maneuvers the rear tires of his pick-up
in and out of drifts. It's two below,
but something more than weather's cold:
the dead of winter, yet your heart's content.

Upstairs, I watch the overloaded truck
with you and what you took turn left and wobble
away, another botched new year beginning.
I start to make a resolution, then
think how, the brilliant fall that we moved in,
we saw a Dutch Elm, almost dead, become a stump.

half-way

by A. S. More

This distance is real.

This must be Buddhism's peace of detachment.

When I see her photo or think of her,
there is so much more feeling than ever before.

Half-way around the globe, now.

I sit, content with plated grapefruit, taro, avocado, and corn.

She is struggling with life,
more than seems well.

I would return tomorrow if she asked.

I would return tomorrow if I believed she would embrace my presence.

So, I wish her well.

The distance was real sometimes when I sat with her.

She would send me to the other room.

I would return the next day,
until she asked me to stop.

Half-way was not enough for her.

School-work or sleeping in the middle of the night
were not suitable excuses to her desire for my attention—

her requests for my assistance.

Just what I wanted, but I had a life.

I could not let go of my life.

I still hold to some one-things.

Still not detached from some-things.

Soon she will have her life in order.
She will find a way to live by her priorities.
Will have a moment to embrace.

And where will I be, J—?
Somewhere around the globe working something new?



Looking as They Should

by Philip Wexler

On the ferry to the Stockholm Archipelago,
Gunilla, no child herself, told me her husband

was eighty. They'd weathered other marriages
and were newlyweds. He opened the door

before she could turn the key. He was expecting
me. "I'm eighty, you know, can you believe it?"

I didn't have to feign astonishment. He led us
to the patio in back, where he set down on a tray

the frosty bottle of Aquavit and three tumblers.
"You know," he said, pointing a shaky finger

at the sunset, the water, and the closest island,
"When I was young...notice I did not say younger

...I would look out at the water, a different water,
and dream of Swedish girls." We all laughed,

but not in disbelief. He stroked his bushy beard,
a touch of black still on the chin. "It's true,

you know," he added soberly. "And I of Swedish
boys," remarked Gunilla with an impish smile.

"I'm well aware," he said. "Yes, Anders, I know
you are, but I said it for the benefit of our visitor."

"So you did. Now why don't we offer him a seat?"
They insisted I take the solitary chair. They'd grab

two more presently. We toasted to the sunset.
They stood hand in hand looking as they should.



Stitch-by-Stitch

by Katacha Díaz

Many years ago while on vacation in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I decided to take an early morning stroll in the city's art district. As I walked along Canyon Road, an open gate was an invitation to enter the courtyard of an old adobe house-turned-art-studio and gallery. I was charmed by the bronze lizards crawling up the walls and the whimsical dancing sheep sculpture by the old Spanish fountain in the garden. And what a delight to see painted lady butterflies swarming and feasting on the lush lavender bush, and the broad-tailed hummers as they performed acrobatic maneuvers and hovered motionless in the air!

As I continued to watch the hummingbirds sipping nectar from Indian paintbrush and cholla cactus flowers, I heard mariachi music coming from the direction of the city's historic plaza, so I decided to locate the source.

Much to my surprise and delight, the annual Spanish Market was being held that weekend. I was overjoyed to see the extensive collection of Spanish colonial arts and crafts on exhibit, including straw appliqué, metal work, carvings and paintings of religious figures, weaving, and embroidery. It brought back fond memories of my childhood in Peru, where I'd seen similar pieces in the homes of my relatives. But it was the young 5 to 17-year-old artists who caught my attention and captured my heart.

When I walked by the youth artist exhibit area and saw the colorful traditional colonial Spanish *colcha* embroidery pieces on display at a young artist's table, I was transported

back in time to summer embroidery lessons with Tía Mechita in Miraflores. I loved working side-by-side with my great-aunt on my embroidery and listening to her stories about our colonial Spanish ancestors and the women who brought sewing and embroidery traditions to Peru. Sitting up in the balcony reminiscent of the old Moorish-inspired *miradors* of Lima's colonial period, my great-aunt lovingly taught me the art of hand embroidery stitch-by-stitch. With a twinkle in her eye, Tía Mechita reminded me that embroidery was also what proper *señoritas* do!

I met and interviewed *colcha* artist Kate Murphy de Sosaya. She exhibits and sells her beautiful embroidery pieces every summer. The young artist showed talent and confidence, as well as a great deal of knowledge and passion about her art form. Kate was mentored by her maternal grandmother, Mónica Sosaya Halford, who is a master of *colcha* and a descendant of some of Santa Fe's earliest Spanish settlers. Kate proudly shared that some of her grandmother's ancestors had arrived with Don Juan de Oñate in 1598. The Spanish women brought sewing traditions and introduced the art of mending holes in bedspreads, or *colchas*, as well as embroidering colorful designs on the *sabanilla*, a plain utilitarian woolen textile used in New Mexico.

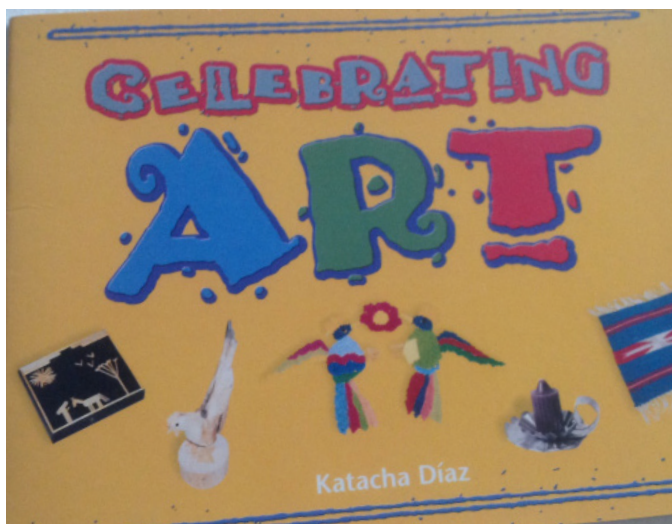
Some of the designs on Kate's embroidery pieces—birds, flowers, leaves, and animals—are traditional ones dating back to New Mexico Spanish colonial period. Stitch-by-stitch, Kate embroiders beautiful designs like her Spanish ancestors did many, many years ago. Keeping family traditions alive is a lot of fun! Kate earns money and prizes with her *colcha* embroidery.

The annual arts and crafts market is sponsored by the Spanish Colonial Arts Society in Santa Fe, and it attracts visitors and



serious collectors from all over the world. The market gives Kate and other young Hispanic artists the chance to exhibit their versions of Spanish colonial arts and crafts, share knowledge, and practice business skills.

Life is full of serendipitous happenings. Although the years have passed by quickly, I have fond memories of that early morning summer stroll in Santa Fe's art district. But it was the treasures celebrating centuries-old Spanish arts by modern young Hispanic artists that made that day so memorable and one of my most cherished memories.



Tuesday Night

Westview Poetry Contest Student Winner

by Amber Thompson

The coppery softness of cinnamon
sticks to my fingers.

It is dusk, and tomorrow
we will hang Christmas lights.

The smell of apples folds itself into
weighty yellow rose petals
—petals whose blooms have watched our
dinner and our games
and our fussiness—
like sweet batter.

In defeat,
I slide an “E” tile across the table.

The moment is suspended in syrup,
warmed by jeans too tight for more cravings
but soft enough
for laughter.

Plowing

by Kevin Oakes

As a kid growing up on a farm
You are expected to learn how to plow
Back then there were no cabs on the tractors
Just a shade and the sweat on your brow

You learned the true meaning of endurance
You were let out at the field at eight
Picked up round noon for lunchtime
Were done when Dad pulled through the gate

Those days you learned about working
About fixing things as they broke
Most farmers' equipment was older
Than today's farm and ranch folks

You learned about getting things done
As you moved from field to field
Your reward wouldn't come 'til next summer
As a good crop your farm ground would yield

That is if the elements would let you
Like the rain the bugs or the drought
Regardless one thing was for certain
The plowing would continue no doubt

But how bout that dirt that was fogging
Into your eyes your clothes and your lungs
Tween the swatting of flies and mosquitos
Still some folks are calling this fun



Now one time as we were a plowing
This fellow I think Keith was his name
Gave me some Red Fox tobacco
I puked 'til I was almost ashamed

But most days round three in the evening
Pa would bring us a nice tall cold drink
Pepsi was his choice for those chosen
He would hand us and give us a wink

Now I'm not saying we were mistreated
For being out in the hot burning sun
For character was what we were building
Others reasons I am sure there are some

But I wouldn't trade one of those minutes
On a tractor alone in the dust
For out of the dust came understanding
Of hard work responsibility and trust

Nowhere is Nowhere

Westview Poetry Contest Community Winner

by Catherine McCraw

People often speak
of rural Western Oklahoma

as the middle of nowhere.
I have been here thirty-odd years.

All my adult life has been spent
in a small, flat town,

crisscrossed here and there by railroad tracks
and surrounded by windswept fields.

In the middle of nowhere

I have fallen in and out of love,
been sick and well,
“starred” in community theater,
learned to write poems,
made and squandered money,
owned and buried pets,
acquired and lost friends,
encountered three versions of God
in the Episcopal, Lutheran, and finally
Catholic Church.

In the middle of nowhere



I've grown gray,
grown lined,
grown thick around the waist,

grown in wisdom,
grown in faith,
grown in hard-won endurance.

Everything that happens in the human heart
happens in small towns.

There's nowhere to unload
the freight of human life,

with all its burdens and spare graces.

There is no actual nowhere anywhere.
Nowhere is safe.

The Patience of Trees

Westview Poetry Contest Faculty Honorable Mention

“It lies in my imagination strongly that the black oak is pleased to be a black oak. . . . Who knows when supreme patience took hold, and the wind’s wandering among its leaves was enough of motion, of travel.”

—Mary Oliver, *Upstream*

by Jill Jones

We compare ourselves to trees,
Draw analogies and metaphors for human experience:
We talk of our roots, of flowering, of our rising sap.
We draw lessons from the great oaks that spring from small acorns
And the willow that bends with the fierce winds.

But with our mobility we are “other.”
Trees have the “supreme patience” of rootedness,
Through winter, spring, summer, and fall,
Remaining in one spot for the forever of that one life.

Although not mobile, there is movement:
The wind, rain, and snow tossing the branches and leaves,
Gravity pulling down the heavy leaves of fall,
Birds, squirrels, turkeys swaying and hopping on branches.

If the evergreen, live oak, or palm
Survives man with his houses, paper, and fireplaces
And withstands hungry forest animals and deadly parasites,
It concludes that outward and upward journey to maturity.

When I see a tree striking in its straightness or size,
I have to touch it, to connect with its stability,
its rootedness, its patience.

The Valley

Westview Community Contest Honorable Mention

by Sheila Cohlmiia

I wander through a deep narrow valley,
An earthly scar of good intentions,
A winding trail of youthful dreams
And unintended cruelties.

The tangle of rusted fence line is an
Unexpected detour with sharp repercussions.
Meaning the best doesn't produce the best
As a mob of hateful cedar proclaim.

The gentle sunny meadow hides many lies
Full of brambles and spiny thistles.
I trip and struggle with the path chosen—
Too stubborn to give it up now.

The sandstone cliffs laugh at me.
They know my failings. They know.
The animal dens at the edge of the path
Echo with the sighs of broken dreams.

The cottonwoods stare down with contempt
For trespassing so far into their realm.
The leaves shake with angry indignation
At my foolishness and pride.

It is a hidden valley of painful revelations,
But I often visit this special place—
A secret source of solace and enlightenment.
A place I treasure for its truth.

September's Grapes

by Sheila A. Murphy

There's grief from harvest early, or too late:
bitter, hard, or over-ripened fruit.
The time is now. September's grapes won't wait.

Behind the barn, Grandpa would cultivate
vines whose clusters we would loot,
oblivious of harvests early, or too late.

Then, tag or hide-and-seek would dictate
our hours, weeks, and days, excused by youth
from labor when September's grapes won't wait.

Now, we watch weather's moods dictate
crops, but age and wisdom don't dilute
the grief from harvest early, or too late.

Some years the clusters wither, touched by blight,
but when abundance blesses our pursuit,
our arms reach out—September's grapes await.

This week, in baking sun, we celebrate
with purple brimming baskets that will mute
the grief that comes from harvest early, or too late.
The time is now. September's grapes won't wait.

The Skaters

by Matthew Brennan

As in a winter scene of the Flemish Masters,
Skaters glide like swans across the surface
Of Lake of the Isles; the rink's white ice embeds
Red and green scarves and blue down jackets
In bold relief that Brueghel would have loved.
But farther off, beyond the borders of
The rink, sunset reflects like fire in
A picture window; shafts of yellow and orange
Shimmer like the blurred thoughts of someone dying
So that once more I see my mother driving,
Blinded by fog and drifting for an hour
Through Forest Park as if in darkening waters
Until we hear the lilt of a Strauss waltz
And know that life cannot be far away.

Big

by James E. Fowler

The setting sun
casts a Giacometti
shadow before me.

It stilts along
on giraffe legs
by the meter,

arms at side,
a small bulb
head on top.

Its list of
things to do
at some remove

must be simple,
perhaps an affair
of fruit trees

ripe for picking,
a neighborly hand
at mending thatch.

A folk figure,
this, opposite to
the petty dwarf



counting and grudging.
An innate largeness
of mild gesture

makes its arrival
at any scene
a pleasing turn.

Songbirds perch on
its narrow shoulders—
goodwives see hope

of clearing chimneys—
even cats find
cause to stretch.

Turning the corner,
though, I lose
this placid giant

and trudge onward,
taking daily concerns
in small stride.

frisk

by James E. Fowler

the air vent

is a cat

pawing

the

roll

of

toilet

paper

onto

the

floor

Lady: Bug

—after folk song, “I Knew an Old Lady”

by James E. Fowler

Tired of buzzing
humdrum,
she gaped.

The day grew
notable.

But not complete.

As a chaser,
she yawned up
a rappeling spider.

The plot thickened,
grew knotty.

Feathered feeling
seemed desirable.

All a-flutter,
her heart pled
its age.

And living alone,
she feared the cat’s
outlasting her.



Hours afterward,
she kept to
her vanity,
grooming placidly.

A social impulse
turned her mind
to dog.

Friendship is
imperative,
she decided.

Love came
wagging.

If only it
(mere, per se)
had not seemed
fatuous.

She needed that
slit of ornery
in a goat's eye.

Butting cleared
the head
but clabbered
the milk.

Sweet milk,
sweet teats.



Plenty for
baby and
the famished.

Bessie shambled.
She burped.
Indigestion.

Mother mammal
glow followed.

She felt . . .
penultimate.

Nothing for it
but manly
neigh.
Jaw unhinged,

she hung
an apple from
her uvula.
Nice horsey.

Altogether,
in the hole
she cut a
capacious figure.

The YMCA

Westview Student Contest Honorable Mention

by Cal Castle

Feet trampling,
Treading upon
The hardwood terrain.
Every step sends
Out an echoing
Reverberation.

ba dum

ba dum

ba dum

As buffalo,
The herd of children gallop,
In unison and one accord.
Exerting their energy,
Every limb yields itself
In subliminal submission.

ba dum

ba dum

ba dum

Breath escapes their nostrils,
Almost appearing to be visible,
Coolness flowing over their countenance
With serenity as their companion,
They graze and trod on.

ba dum

ba dum

ba dum

As a chieftain, admiring the buffalo,
Mesmerized by its Zen, I sit behind this wall
And gaze at the herd timelessly making
Its way through the Great Plains.

ba dum

ba dum

ba dum



Tennyson, by Allergies Immured

Westview Poetry Contest Faculty Winner

by John Bradshaw

Window bound

I sit and ponder

Letting my sheltered eyes go wander.

Peripheral panorama—grand, if merely framed.

Verdant panoply, if professionally maintained.

And there a flicker of life, a peculating squirrel—

Followed by a flash of feather, a mocking bird avenger.

A breeze, like the hand of a lover brushing aside languorous tresses,

Gently lifts the willow's branches, beyond the framing pane.

I perch longing

Like the Lady of Shallot

Letting my protected eyes linger.

A glimmer of the grand Lady Nature,

Fruitfully wafting on the wandering wind.

Her pollen-scented kisses land on others' cheeks,

As my frustrated fingers feel window glass in my library-lair.

Nature grants me discerning eyes to admire

And a voracious mind with which to aspire,

Yet *respiration* chains me in my lonely spire

For fears that in her arms—gasping—I would expire.

Contributors

Bradshaw, John

Bradshaw was born in Colorado, grew up in California, spent most of his life thus far in the mid-west and south (so he's herd to track down). Educated in Louisiana, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Barsoom, Bradshaw is currently employed at SWOSU.

Brennan, Matthew

Matthew Brennan has contributed poems to such journals as *Westview*, *Sewanee Review*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *The Hardy Review*, and *South Carolina Review*. His most recent books of poems are *The House with the Mansard Roof* (Backwaters Press, 2009) and *One Life* (Lamar University Literary Press, 2016).

Castle, Cal

Cal Castle is a Junior attending Southwestern Oklahoma State University. He is in his first year of studies at SWOSU, as he transferred from Allen Community College where he obtained his Associate's Degree. He is an English major, and he is seeking a Multidisciplinary study minor with an emphasis in Technology.

Cohlmlia, Sheila

Sheila Cohlmlia is a SWOSU alum and has lived in Weatherford 40 years. A couple of years after graduation she and her husband moved back to start a small family business—Eagle Supply and Rental. Her two children, son-in-law, and grandson also live in town. She has been published several times previously in *Westview* and also in other publications. She is originally from Tyrone, OK.

Díaz, Katacha

Katacha Díaz is a Peruvian American writer. She earner her BA and MPA from the University of Washington. She was a research associate at the University of California, Davis. Wanderlust and love of travel have taken her all over the world to gather material for her stories. Among the children's books she has authored is *Badger at Sandy Ridge Road* for the Smithsonian Institution's Backyard series. Her work appears in *Visual Verse*, *Cecile's Writers'*, *Medical Literary Messenger*, *The Galway Review*, *The MacGuffin*, *Flash Frontier*, *New Mexico Review*, *Route 7 Review*,

Gravel, Foliate Oak, and elsewhere. She lives and writes up in her perch with a wide view of the Columbia River in the Pacific Northwest.

Fowler, James E.

James Fowler teaches literature at the University of Central Arkansas. His poems have recently appeared in such journals as *Futures Trading Magazine*, *Sheila-Na-Gig*, *Cave Region Review*, *Valley Voices*, *Aji Magazine*, *Malevolent Soap*, and *Elder Mountain*. He has pieces forthcoming in *Common Ground Review*, *Seems*, *Angry Old Man Magazine*, and *The Poetry of Capital*.

Jones, Jill

Jill Jones is a retired English professor who has taught at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Georgia Gwinnett College, LSU Baton Rouge, and the University of Houston. Her Ph.D. is from the University of Mississippi, her M.A. from Auburn University, and her B.A. from Mississippi University for Women. She currently lives in Weatherford, OK, and occasionally teaches as an adjunct at SWOSU.

McCraw, Catherine

Catherine McCraw is a speech language pathologist in Western Oklahoma. Her poetry group published a book entitled *Red Dirt Roads* in 2013 which won the Oklahoma Book of the Year Award for poetry.

More, A. S.

Adelaide lives in the Midwest with a golden lab named Sam and spends time teaching English as a Second Language to more recent arrivers at an adult learning center. Writing has become an occasional distraction from life. Still, sometimes Sam does consider getting on a plane. Adelaide's work has appeared at *New Mystics*, *The Enchanting Verses*, and *Truck*. You can reach A. S. More at adelaide.s.more@gmail.com.

Murphy, Sheila A.

Sheila A. Murphy received a B.A. from Albertus Magnus College, an M.A. from Boston College and an M.A.L.S. from Wesleyan University. After a career teaching English and Latin, I became a teacher-consultant for the Connecticut Writing Project, co-editing two collections of essays: *Teacher Stories* (1998) and *Teachers' Ways of Knowing* (2001). She edited *Fair Warning: Leo Connellan and His Poetry* (2011), about Connecticut's second Poet Laureate. Her chapbook, *View from a Kayak in Autumn* (2008), honors the memory of two grandchildren

who died of Spinal Muscular Atrophy. She directs memoir writing workshops at her local library and at Wesleyan University's Institute for Lifelong Learning. Her poems have appeared in *Caduceus*, *Peregrine*, *TheSchulykill Valley Journal*, *The Alembic*, *Forgotten Women: A Tribute in Poetry*, and *Westview* (Volume 32, Issue 1).

Oakes, Kevin

Kevin Oakes was born in Clinton, Oklahoma in 1957, was raised on a farm 13 miles east of Putnam, Oklahoma, and now resides in Taloga. He graduated high school from Taloga in 1975 and graduated from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 1980 with a B.S. in education. He began his work career in the pipeline industry in 1980 and has been there ever since. He is currently serving as Director of Field Operations for ONEOK with 38 years with the company. He has been married to Tammy Oakes for 42 years and has two sons and five grandchildren. Writing poetry has been a passion all his life being inspired by his own life experiences with his writings being copyrighted in 2018.

Tavares, John

John Tavares' previous publications include stories in various literary journals, online and in print. Also, over a dozen of his short stories and some creative nonfiction was published in *The Siren*, then Centennial College's student newspaper. Following journalism studies, he had articles and features published in various local news outlets in Toronto and East York, including community and trade newspapers such as York University's *Excalibur* and *Hospital News*, where he interned as an editorial assistant. Born and raised in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, he is the son of Portuguese immigrants from the Azores. His education includes graduation from 2-year GAS at Humber College in Etobicoke with concentration in psychology, 3-year journalism at Centennial College in East York, and the Specialized Honors B.A. in English from York University in North York. He has worked as a research assistant for the Sioux Lookout Public Library and as a research assistant in waste management for the SLKT public works department and regional recycle association. He also worked with the disabled for the Sioux Lookout Association for Community Living. Following a long time fascination with psychology, economics, and investments, he recently completed the Canadian Securities Course.

Thompson, Amber

Amber Thompson is an emerging writer. Her themes are heavily influenced by her allergic-to-cats but otherwise supportive husband Daniel, her crazy wonderful family, and her passion for making the personal universal. Thompson truly feels she has blossomed in the English courses she has taken as electives at SWOSU. They have softened her after years as a hard-nosed journalist, and she is grateful to all her professors. Thompson has fallen in love with creative nonfiction and its reflective nature. She also enjoys exploring the poetic depths of her mind and trying her hand at flash fiction. Thompson's dream is to one day release a book of essays that is popular enough to be in a decent bookstore but not big enough to put her on a talk show.

Vancil, David

David Vancil is retired from the faculty of Indiana State University, where he was the rare books librarian and an occasional teacher of English classes. He has published scholarly works along with creative ones, including several poetry collections. With respect to his poems, he writes about things that interests him in culture, nature, and about family.

Weitzman, Sarah Brown

Sarah Brown Weitzman, a past National Endowment for the Arts Fellow in Poetry and Pushcart prize nominee, has been published in hundreds of journals and anthologies including *Rosebud*, *The New Ohio Review*, *Poet & Critic*, *The North American Review*, *The Bellingham Review*, *Rattle*, *Mid-American Review*, *The MacGuffin*, *Poet Lore*, *Spillway*, *Miramar*, etc. Pudding House published her chapbook, *The Forbidden*. A departure from poetry, her fourth book, *Herman and the Ice Witch*, is a children's novel published by Main Street Rag.

Wexler, Philip

Philip Wexler lives and works in Bethesda, MD and has had over 150 poems published in magazines over the years.

Photos & Illustrations

Cover “Terraforming” by Kelley L. Logan

Table of Contents “Autumnal Rainbow I” Scott Robinson

7 Photograph provided by Sheila A. Murphy

9 Photograph provided by Sheila A. Murphy

11 “Blue Eye (Original)” amandabanana87

20 “The House of Leaves - Burning 4” LearningLark

35 “Distance” William Chen

37 “Calmness” Petras Gagilas

40 “Celebrating Art” Katcha Díaz

58 “Basket” Marco Assini