

Spring 2021

Legacy Spring 2021

Southern Adventist University

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SPRING 2021

LEGACY

FICTION + NONFICTION + POETRY



EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Reader,

Hi, my name is Aaron Mumu, the student editor for the Legacy Magazine, and I'm so grateful you've decided to read this.

As part of my duties as editor, I get to brainstorm Legacy themes for the year. However, it was hard picking a theme for this year's Legacy contest. I wanted to pick something that both captured how challenging 2020 and 2021 have been, while at the same time not being too depressing. A huge challenge indeed!

But the first week back on campus, I fell ill and found myself locked into quarantine. Being isolated from everyone and starving because of early kinks in the dorm food delivery service helped me land on a relevant theme: resilience.

It's been over a year since COVID-19 hit the United States, and we've dealt with much more than just the pandemic: it's challenged our sense of justice, our ability to empathize, and maybe even our own faith and spirituality. But if you're reading this, it means you've made it. Your resilience has brought you through.

Of course, I have to shoutout the wonderful people who helped make the Legacy possible this year: Kahelena Giltner, our graphic designer who created the incredible cover and layout you see in this magazine; Professor Kathy Goddard for her input in the judging process that was so valued; Cheyenne Wilson and Paula Macena who stepped in and offered their voices on such short notice; and of course, Legacy Sponsor Professor Clarise Nixon, who after receiving approximately 17 emails a week just from me, was probably the most resilient of all in the Legacy team.

It's been a privilege working as editor on this magazine, and I'm so proud of the resilience these authors captured with their words.

I hope it reflects your own resilience too.

Sincerely,



LEGACY MAGAZINE

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JUDGE
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Junior, English major

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Junior, History major

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Senior, Religious Studies major

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Sophomore, Graphic Design major

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Luz Daniela Trejos

Senior, Liberal Arts Education major

SECTION ONE:

FICTION

SOMETHING SOMEONE SOMEWHERE SEES (abridged)

1st Place Winner

Jamie Henderson

***Warning: This piece contains graphic depictions of suicide and self-harm.

“O my friends, there is no friend,” I think, staring at the popcorn dots and solar system cut-outs on the ceiling. The planets are faded, and their lamination is peeling; Mom put them up years ago to convince me to be a scientist or something. “O my friends, there is no friend . . .”

“Who said that?” I ask the room; the room declines to answer. I close my eyes and try to picture those words on a page somewhere. Maybe a textbook or an article or a meme . . . Maybe if Nietzsche made memes. I huff a laugh and picture a heavily-mustachioed philosopher bent over my crappy desktop monitor pairing his carefully curated critiques with photos of Kermit the Frog. I groan and sit up; quarantine isolation has irrevocably damaged my sense of humor.

I shuffle to the bathroom and ignore the time – what’s the point of waking up early if you can’t go anywhere? I give my wretched reflection a disdainful glare as I debate taking a shower for the first time in . . . two? Three weeks? Whatever.

“Cleanliness is the scourge of art,” I say, carefully watching the way my lips form the words. “Craig Brown.”

I wet my hair in the sink and call it good. I glance at the razor balancing precariously on

the sink’s edge and scratch my neck uncomfortably. . . Maybe not today.

The faucet drips in an unsteady rhythm. I leave the bathroom before my pulse starts to match and drives me to a panic attack; it’s happened before. The smallest things set me off these days: a car backfiring outside my window, the cat skittering from one room to the next, my mom asking if I’m going to at least make an appearance outside of my room for once. Speaking of which, it’s 2:00 PM; Mom’s at work so it’s safe to emerge from my lair for sustenance.

“I feel like I never see you anymore, Darren,” she’s taken to saying when she catches me in the kitchen after I think she’s fallen asleep. “I miss my son.”

I usually shrug and say nothing. I don’t have the words to explain what’s going on in my head anymore.

My middle-school poems pinned to the fridge with mismatched magnets remind me that I once took pride in bringing my thoughts to life, making myself heard . . . my seventeen-year-old brain can no longer comprehend that twelve-year-old’s optimism and creativity. I haven’t written anything in months – not since before school sent us home for spring break in March. It’s almost August now,

and I haven't seen anyone except for my mom. Even my friends and I have stopped facetime-ing.

Or maybe I stopped answering. I really can't remember.

"Tell me what you eat, and I shall tell you what you are," I say as I pop two old pieces of bread into the toaster. "Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin."

I am stale toast, burnt and stiff, unbuttered and unaffected.

"*You're not unaffected,*" a familiar voice sneers inside my mind. "*You flinch at your razor and hide your sleeping pills. You're a coward.*" I try to drown him with room-temperature coffee, but he persists. "*You were spent even before your isolation. You peaked at twelve and have been coasting by on left-over intellect ever since. You purposeless prodigy, you abysmal artist, you—*"

I remember the quote I woke up with this morning and decide that it's a perfectly good distraction from my tormentor.

"O my friends, there is no friend," I murmur, perusing the bookshelves in the living room in search of a title that might spark my memory. "Where are you?"

My wrists itch and I rub them, tug my sleeves down, try to rid myself of the feeling I've grown to fear. My eyes skip over the rows of books again and again; I can't concentrate. I almost give up and give in, almost go upstairs and to the bathroom where I know that razor is waiting . . .

"Michel de Montaigne," I breathe a sigh of relief when I spot the tome. "It's in here somewhere." I pull the book off the shelf and take it to the couch. I flip through the pages, back and forth, until finally the quote catches my eye.

O my friends, there is no friend . . . but he's attributed it to Aristotle, so this isn't the source. I shut the book and throw it back on the shelf. Mom will be mad that I've ruined her organizational masterpiece – but I don't care. My mother thinks she's doing something special with these shelves . . . I know that nothing any of us does truly matters. It's impossible for one person to make a significant mark on humanity when everything's already been said, already been done.

"*You haven't had an original thought in years,*" the monster returns. "*Stop trying to wax poetic on the banality of human existence and do what we both know you really want . . .*"

"You haven't had an original thought in years," the monster returns.

I head back upstairs and consider monstrosity. Nicholas Royle wrote that Jacques Derrida wrote that monstrosity is more than what is outrightly monstrous, but rather what is unknown and never can be. Derrida says a monster can only be recognized after the attack, but my monster is everywhere. I hear

him whisper sweet nothings in the darkness, I feel him wrapped around my heart like a vice, I taste him when my mouth fills with blood from biting my lips to keep them closed . . . to keep myself from screaming, or crying, or trying to say something that might matter; I know it won't.

I thump into my desk chair and boot up my computer. I need an occupation; I need a distraction. I need to find out who really said that quote.

My leg shakes as I wait for the search engine to load. My hair is still wet and hanging in scraggly strands across my eyes.

I'm thinking about the razor in the bathroom when I type the quote into the search bar; thinking about how empty I feel, with or without it. Thinking about how euphoric it would be to cut too deep just once and free myself from the monster within.

"Derrida was right," I think. "Because I

so bountiful that I awake with its nectar on my tongue.

"Just do it," the monster crows. *"What are you waiting for? Why are you wasting time trying to justify the meaninglessness of your existence?"*

If there is no such thing as originality, surely *someone* has found the answer to my life's most daunting question: Do we choose to believe that there is innate value despite a lack of evidence, or do we simply cut our losses?

"Our throats," the monster says. *"We cut our throats."*

"This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine," I whisper, shutting my eyes as tight as possible. "William Shakespeare."

I open my eyes; the screen has loaded.

The words are not Aristotle's. Or Montaigne's. Or Nietzsche's. Or Derrida's.

The words are no one's.

They belong to no man and yet, they

**The words are no one's.
They belong to no man and yet, they belong to every man.
They belong to me.**

am not scared of the razor or pills or the gun in my mom's closet; I'm scared of what I might do with them."

I hit enter and wait for the screen to load, wait for the internet to confirm what I already know – of course Aristotle wrote that line. Of course one of the most prolific and memorable philosophers would coin a phrase

belong to every man. They belong to me.

If I can wake with these words swirling in my mind, these words that many men have quoted and yet stem from anonymity, then maybe I, Darren Williams, might one day write something that someone somewhere will remember. Maybe I, Darren Williams, will pen a phrase that someone, somewhere, might find

so delightful that it dances on their tongue first thing in the morning. Maybe they will know my name, maybe they won't, maybe I have to be okay with that.

"O my friends, there is no friend," I laugh and turn off the computer without shutting it down properly. "Of course."

"This doesn't mean you'll ever say something worth reading," the monster reminds me. *"This doesn't mean you'll ever be remembered."*

"I don't have to be remembered," I say to the monster, to no one. I go into the bathroom and stare at my reflection again. He's different now; there's a spark in his eyes I haven't seen in a long time . . . I can tell that one day he might smile again. While I'm still not sure that this man is me, I'm willing to try. I'm willing to fight. I'm willing.

I turn on the shower and knock the razor into the trash, "I just have to live."

SECTION TWO:

NON FICTION

WAITING FOR THE RAIN TO STOP

1st Place Winner

Allison Carbaugh

I'm waiting for the rain to stop. The rhythm reminds me of rainy days past as it tap-tap-taps on the pavement outside my apartment. Today, the house is quiet. There is no aroma of cinnamon dancing its way into my nostrils while snickerdoodles plump in the oven. There are no adventures to lose myself in and forget about the weather. There's just me, and the rain, and a small gray cat. Alone together, in the skeleton of what used to be home.

It's a drizzle now. Not like the downpour from a few minutes ago. The clouds must be running low on energy. I wonder if raindrops know of their inevitable destiny - before they are sent barreling down to the ground from thousands of feet above. Do they know where they will land? Will they become a part of the ocean, or quench the thirst of the parched deserts? Perhaps instead, they will flow into a stream that feeds into a river that feeds into a bay that feeds into the sea. Does a raindrop know when it will get sucked back up into the sky to start the cycle all over again? Does it know how long it will be in any single place before being whisked away into a new state of matter?

I wonder if raindrops ever get lonely. At least raindrops can still be together in puddles after they fall from clouds. Raindrops don't have to stay six feet apart and visit their friends

But raindrops can't use FaceTime. Nor can they strum chords on a ukulele or deliver mason jars full of soup to the faces on the other side of the safety glass. Raindrops

Raindrops don't have to stay six feet apart and visit their friends through quarantine windows.

cannot hear the soft purrs of a kitten or feel the warmth of a cozy blanket in a drafty room. They are just the background noise to moments of solitude. Some somber, some peaceful, some refreshing.

The solitude will fade eventually. Winter will come to an end. Whether it is here for the night or the next two weeks, it will pass in time. In a hundred years, these days will one day be nothing more than a bleak memory from a time when the world was sick. Until then, I'm waiting for the rain to stop.

I DON'T KNOW WHY

2nd Place Winner

Kelli Miller

The English language is ill-equipped to paint the picture of one's soul. Forgive the coarseness of this picture as I use these insufficient brushes. The point of this is not to evoke sympathy, but to try and better understand myself. Why can I feel so heavy sometimes?

I can beat myself into submission. The internal dialogue, whims and desires I mean. But I am tired of being bruised and bloodied all the time. A physical metaphor for emotional wounds. I think the wounds that don't actually bleed are the ones that can ruin us most completely. It is difficult to walk, to breathe, to cry, to do homework for the love of all that is holy; when my intracellular matrix is focused purely on healing those wounds. In a constant state of brokenness, moving from one wound to the next, not from strength to strength like He promised me. Where is He now? And what am I doing to prevent the flood of His mercy from cleansing my wounds with a clean and gentle salve. Am I asleep? Is the only way I can survive this pain by being anesthetized? My eyes gently covered; guarded from the true nature, the lethality of my condition. Literally, dying from sin... even if it takes 80 years.

I don't like wounds. They scare me. I fainted last week at the blood bank. Death scares me; life scares me more. Love scares me; loneliness scares me more. I try to stay in the middle. To stay away from pain. Instead, I experience it. It tugs at my heart when I am not

looking. It gnaws in my stomach. It shouts at my mind. I cry, only when I am lucky. Because you see tears are a very gentle way to experience pain. They are like a silky shower rolling tenderly down your little cheeks. Like the hands of so many angels brushing and cleansing you. Then that sweet relief, even the merciful exhaustion that comes at the end of a good session of tears would be preferred to nothing at all. Finally, you can feel peace. Or, at least sleep. Most of the time my body denies me even this.

I cannot tell you the number of times this year I have wanted nothing more than to cry for an indulgent hour. I have not been able to summon one righteous tear to my cheek. Who am I to feel pain? With all of my privilege, supportive and caring parents and my new car. Why should I deserve the gentle mercy that tears provide? I don't, but last night it finally happened. I visited the grave of my childhood friend. I wished he were alive because maybe I would have married him and then I wouldn't feel so alone in the world. Of him, I only had the purest memories. He didn't really come to my house anymore by the time we reached high school. I was not a part of any of his high school shenanigans, nor he mine. This left the friendship very innocent, child-like.

I thought somewhere in the back of my mind that eventually we would have a chance to catch up, to become better friends than we

we ever were as children. Like I already said, I even thought he could be a future romantic partner. We both had crushes on each other at one time or another when we were kids. I suppose that is what kids do. I think he had a crush

I have wanted nothing more than to cry for an indulgent hour. I have not been able to summon one righteous tear to my cheek.

on my best friend for a time period too. It's not like from any logical perspective we were destined to be. But I think his death made me realize how much you can't count on second chances. It made me wish I had been bolder in reaching out to reconnect with him before the opportunity was gone. Maybe, I even thought that if I had, somehow, he wouldn't have been where he was in the situation that allowed him to visit the morgue as a member. This is pain. It is not logical, or is it?

I asked him to sign my high school sophomore yearbook and I could tell he was nervous. But like a little self-righteous prude, I didn't offer understanding because of my own insecurity, fear, and suspicion of other human beings. Then he left. He finished high school in another state. For the last two years I only saw him maybe once a year, if even. On one of these occasions during my junior year of high school, he came looking for me in the woods when we were on a camping trip. I had been annoyed with everybody so I left to go

for a walk without telling anyone and they all became worried. I saw his sister smile what I thought was a coy smile from the corner as he and I walked round the sidewalk bend side-by-side. He casually climbed on his bike and flipped a wheelie. I thought, how nice. A chance to connect a small amount with this human, but I also thought things were pointless at this period in my life. I think I was some form of depressed. I think that was the last time we spoke. Then he died. My senior year of high school, his freshman year of college.

As the words fell from my mother's tongue to my dolled up, distracted, and entitled face I could feel my grasp on reality slip from my fingertips. The axis on which I hung the forms of life I called reality perceptibly moved between two and three degrees upward, leaving me dangling at the end feeling further than before from the "country they call life" (Rainer Maria Rilke's words, not mine). Since then, I have felt a desperate need to express myself emotionally to the people around me. I am trying to learn to do it in a healthy and positive way. But because of how much I wish I had expressed to him that I didn't, I began to know that I needed to live differently. I needed to live my life in a way where I would not feel such deep regret and pain when something like that happened.

The pain of not existing. The pain of not having existed in the life of someone emotionally that you cared for. And for what reason? There was no good reason. There was nothing but my foolish self-image to get in the way of

me speaking with him and even saying something mild, insignificant, small.

I cried at the tree and in the chapel. I gently removed the leaves from his head stone and hoped one day when Jesus returns that my friend will know that I felt deep affection and affinity for his spirit. Even though I did not have the tools to express it to him when he was here, I admired him so much and he is the first person I remember missing. When I was twelve years old in Hawaii swimming with turtles, I wished he was there, too; I felt a small void, something that was new to me. I don't know why I felt that for him in particular.

Since then that void has only deepened, widened, and turned into a Grand Canyon. And it is not his void. It is not because of him that I feel that void, but he represented it to me. I do not know why. This canyon may be lovely and the shadows it creates an impeccable view, but it is terrible. It is deadly. And I am heartbroken, which seems to be a perpetual state for me. I don't know why I am still grieving this particular person. It is sad, of course.

Since then that void has only deepened, widened, and turned into a Grand Canyon.

Forever: it will be sad. It has been nearly four years since he passed, and fourteen since he made weekly appearances in my day to day.

There are plenty of other things I could choose to be sad about, but perhaps this is the only one I feel truly justified for crying

over. A death. Something you are allowed (by society?) to truly be in a state of grief for. I need to cry. So, I think about this. But perhaps I am really grieving my own death. The one I accepted before I even met him. The one where I beat my own soul into submission. The poison that touched my being that didn't allow me to be tangibly present for him, for myself, for anyone. I think this deep darkness took hold of me young, but maybe that is only my tainted present perspective. And, I don't know why. I think about the shortness of life and the smallness of the problems we like to make big. But I am still here (on the earth I mean) and I still do things and I suppose if anything is resiliency... it is that.

SECTION THREE:

POETRY

FRIGATE

1st Place Winner

Christina Cannon

Frigate birds can remain in the air for up to two months, the ornithologists say.

They can sleep while they fly, they say, resting one half of their brain while the other remains awake, then waking the first half to let the other one doze.

They lock the joints in their wings, they say, so they can glide at jet-altitude atmosphere without summoning a muscle. They sail for weeks without food or water, rising on up-drafts and drifting out of the way of the whirling skirts of storms.

Sailing, static, surviving.

If this isn't resilience, what is?

This isn't resilience. What isn't?

Atlas, brother of Prometheus, stood under the weight of the heavens, his sentence for insurrection. For eternity, he would stand with his knees locked under the weight of all that was not under his feet, mind locked against the cold of the jet-altitude atmosphere on his shoulders.

Standing, static, surviving.

Enduring.

But not resilient.

Prometheus hung chained to a cliff. His freeing humanity stupor reciprocated his bondage; someone had to take their place. Every night, he was visited not by a frigate bird, wings locked and brain dozing, but by an eagle, talons spreading and beak gaping. The eagle did not, like the frigate, fast for months. Rather, it feasted each night on the liver of chained Prometheus, which grew back by day only to be torn out again that night.

Writhing, dying, regrowing.

Not enduring.

But resilient.

To endure is to sustain, to remain unchanged. It demands no dying, requires no regrowing.

Resilience is regeneration of that which is eaten, torn, deceased. One cannot lock the fire door and throw away the key, rather one must forget the lock and throw away the door. Locked doors and joints and minds preserve endurance.

But they stifle resilience before its host is alive enough to be killed, to regrow and be killed again.

To regrow.

To • get • her

2nd Place Winner

Aimee Hunt

I've always been
obsessed
with hands

they are what
or what I always
thought held
people together

together
together

I learned to spell
'together' in the first
grade when my teacher
told me to think
'to get her'

get her

so now I can spell

but still somehow
I have trouble with
certain words

I don't like to say them
or feel

or feel them

so maybe I'll forget
how to spell them

but not 'together'

that word I can't forget

I got a concussion last
year
and I thought I
remembered who was
holding my hand but
I got it wrong
I didn't remember right
who was holding my
hand
holding me together

no hands
no
it's tape
maybe some glue
I'm gluing myself
together
to-get-her

to get her back
to get myself back

I am taping

I am gluing

nothing wants to stick
so I stuck out my hand

I am grasping
I

need to feel more than
glue dripping down my
cracked skull
my concussed
memories my taped up
wounds

I need to be more
than a third-grade art
project

I want to be a
masterpiece with my
tape and my glue

I can be put together
to get her
back
to get me back

bring me back
together

FROM WHENCE COMES THE ROSE

3rd Place Winner

Jamie Jansen

A drop of sunlight falls to the earth
 Dripping from the leaves
 A soft tinkle of twilight

An orange leaf falls
 Joining the river of fire below
 Orange, red, gold
 Bones of once verdiant foliage

A raindrop falls
 A crystal tear in the wind
 Slammed to the earth and shattered
 Its shards seeping into the earth
 Beneath the fiery river

The sunlight spent
 Trees bare
 The raindrop gone
 Cracked in the tight fist of winter mist

Spent for the spring

A speck of sunlight
 The tears the sky has cried
 The pink breath of dawn
 Become a rose
 Among the dust of the faded leaves

For each falling
 There is a rising

And it is in a death
 That we find our life

FLICKER

Honorable Mention

Missy Syvertson

I was taught
Resilience
Is walking in Darkness
and
Choosing to believe
In Truth,
Though it arrives
In the form
Of dimmest light.

A DIFFERENT BELL

Missy Syvertson

To just once
Let the endless
Clanging in my head—
The “Why? Why? Why?”—
Be hushed
By an
“I love you”.

EPITHALAMIUM OF RESILIENCE AND REJECTION

Christina Coston

Rejection, when I first met you, I didn't like you very much. But overtime we became acquainted and I realized I needed you. A dear friend that's been with me in the pits of my despair, I knew you needed someone special by your side to be part of an eternal pair. When I met Resilience, I had just said a prayer. I saw how brave, how strong, and how beautiful Resilience was. I knew you were opposites, but I knew you were a match, so I introduced you and that was that. Today as we celebrate the marriage of you two, I want you to remember I love the both of you. Together you're a pair that I will always need.

Together you help me grow and so let me raise a toast to the pair of you!

To Rejection and Resilience, may you forever be together. Cheers!

CLAY HEART*Missy Syvertson*

A heart is not
 Porcelain.
 It's not
 Wooden,
 Plastic,
 Glass,
 Marble,
 Papier-mâché,
 Or stone.
 It's resilient
 Flesh
 Protected
 By bone
 And more
 Resilient flesh
 And a resilient brain
 That's learned better
 Than to believe
 A heart has broken
 That's merely been
 Temporarily misshapen.

EVERYPLACE, EVERYTHING, EVERYDAY*Christina Coston*

Ant in jungle carrying 50 times its weight
 Baker in the kitchen baking at 4 am
 Caterpillar in cocoon breaking free from its mold
 Doctor in hospital staying awake at hour 20
 Resilience in everyplace working in everything everyday

RESILIENCE*Blake Tousignant*

Negative thoughts cloud your mind.
 You're higher than that.
 Just let the rain settle.

And Yet... SHE Persisted

Luz Daniela Trejos

In 2020, **SHE** learned the true meaning of being resilient
It never had to do with **HER** grades or how **SHE** performed as a person
It was something bigger than **HERSELF**
Something that required **HER** to be broken by people and circumstances
In order to be built up again.
And Yet... **SHE Persisted.**

Like Sara pleading for a child and Esther pleading for her people
HER faith was shaken and tested
SHE experienced a different level of heartbreak
One that no materialistic thing could fill
HER mental health sunk lower than it ever had
Satan was truly trying to go in for the kill
and Yet... **SHE Persisted.**

SHE never physically harmed **HERSELF**
That was never something **SHE** planned to begin
However, the damage **SHE** was causing **HERSELF**
The bleeding scars were coming from within
HER pride and ego were broken down
Friendships that **SHE** thought were blessings became curses
Doubt and fear were clouding **HER** thoughts
And Yet... **SHE Persisted.**

My resilience was Heaven-sent
 A gift that only came from the Father above
 Who despite **My** madness and bitterness
 Looked down as **ME** and only saw
 Unconditional love

Yes, **I** was hurt many times
 Yes, **I** was empty and numb
 Yet in **My** brokenness
 He carefully picked up the pieces of **My** heart
 And made **ME** whole
 Again.

Although 2020 was a year of trials and disappointments
 It taught **ME** who **I** am as a person
 How strong **I** can be if **I** give control to the most resilient of them all-
 -**My** Father
 It taught **ME** purpose
 It gave **ME** hope for tomorrow

I Persisted...

...Yes, **I** Persisted...

...And **YOU** will Persist too.

LEGACY MAGAZINE

2020-2021