

Classics Newsletter 2018

linguae tamquam ignis...



The Dead Among the Living: Classics at Lee University

Since its inception in 2016, Lee's Classics program has been a source of inspiration and delight for many students. For those who have joined us, the Classics program has provided an intense intellectual journey that has proven rewarding for its academic rigor and rich friendships with both the living and the dead (whether poets or philosophers, pagans or saints).

While the first student to receive a Classics diploma did so only in December 2016, Lee's Classics major has built upon the diligent efforts of students who have pursued the equivalent of a Classics degree under the Humanities major since 2010. The vibrancy of the current courses digging deep into the historical and literary terrain of the classical and medieval worlds, along with all levels of Greek and Latin, now rests on years of tireless engagement and good humor from nearly a decade of some of Lee's finest students.

These former students have pursued fascinating paths in life and continue to read much and live well. They live as far away as China, Israel, Turkey, and Canada or scattered across the US. An

impressive number has pursued further studies at the graduate level (*see pg. 2*).

Current Classics students are likewise living interesting lives, reading rich literature, and pushing themselves further than they thought possible. Many took intensive Greek courses this summer (Katherine Anderson, Hannah Holley, Asher Johnson, and Ashley Walker); several met weekly on campus to read Jerome in Latin; some travelled abroad (Emily Stephens, before graduating in July, visited Greece and Rome to the envy of us all; Asher Johnson visited the Czech Republic; Ashley Walker visited England); and two of our students received the competitive Ledford Scholarship for Latin translation (*see pg. 2*).

The Classics program is robust and healthy. The study of Greek and Latin may be rarefied air for many undergraduates; yet we have seen a steady rise in the number of Classics majors. We now have eight bright and disciplined students (in spite of no publicity or online presence) and others hungrily eye the seductive course listings and juicy texts that make up the Lee Classics "feast of words" (τὴν τῶν λόγων ἐστίασιν, Plato, *Timaeus* 27b7-8).

Where Did They Go?

Graduates of Lee's Classics program have gone on to further studies at several competitive graduate programs. To name only the more recent: Jodie Augustine (2015, née Rice) is in the doctoral program in Greek and Latin at Catholic University of America; Sam Rumschlag (2015) is in the doctoral program in Archaeology at the University of Wisconsin; Wes Lemke (2017) is in the masters program in Classics at the University of Colorado, Boulder; Matt Edholm (2017) is entering the masters program in English at Villanova University; and Emily Stephens (2018) is entering the masters of divinity program at the Pentecostal Theological Seminary. Meanwhile, the Toronto gang is doing excellent work further afield: Justin Arnwine (2013) is recently married and now in the doctoral program in History at the University of Toronto; Forrest Johnson (2014, née Wilson) is in the doctoral program in Humanities at York University; her husband, Jared Johnson (2014) is in the doctoral program in Medieval Studies, along with Matthew Orsag (2015), at the University of Toronto.



Other graduates have pursued the *ars amatoria* to the point of marriage. Just this summer Bethany Westcott (2017), Trinity Huhn (2015) and Justin Arnwine (2013) all tied knots and said vows.

Ledford Scholars: Nicole Tripp and Ashley Walker

The *Liber Diversarum Hereseon, or Book of Various Heresies*, written by the late fourth-century bishop Philastrius of Brescia, is an exquisite instance of "heresiology," a sort of compendium enumerating and briefly describing all heresies that were seen to threaten Christianity in the later Roman Empire. In spite of the book's clear literary and historical value, it has remained untranslated and thus reserved only for those with solid training in Latin until two fearless Lee Classicists decided to tackle it this summer.

Nicole Tripp and Ashley Walker received prestigious and highly competitive Ledford Scholarships from the Appalachian College Association in order to pursue their translation project. The scholarships funded their translation time and the research tools needed for the project, including copies of the critical edition of the text edited by Friedrich Marx and published in the CSEL. Ashley and Nicole are following in the footsteps of previous Lee Classicists who received Ledford Scholarships for their project on medieval pilgrimage (the indomitable Hanna Wyman and Bethany Westcott in 2016).

Regarding the project, Nicole remarked, "It is my one chance at glory." In company with this quest for glory, Ashley said, "I've enjoyed getting to interact with and learn about a new type of literature while working through the intricacies of translation."

In Philastrius's heresy watch-list, readers can discover such exciting "facts" as Satan's likeness to a partridge or the existence of a heresy of the Troglodytes. Such knowledge shaped the minds of Christians in Late Antiquity, including Augustine himself (who wrote his own heresiology a few decades after Philastrius).

Classics Faculty Abroad

Dr. Wielfaert led another successful Italy trip with over two dozen students. He remained behind for an additional two months to pursue training in spoken Italian. He is now at the level requisite for attending an Italian university, but has fortunately decided to return to Lee to teach multiple levels of Latin this fall. Dr. Johnson stayed in the country, with only short trips to Chicago and Nashville. In Chicago, he was invited to give the opening plenary address at the North American Patristics Society. In Nashville, he continued work on a book project on Cyril of Alexandria's fifth-century Greek text *Contra Julianum* (*Against Julian the Emperor*) with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Recently in the Humanities

Former graduates in Humanities have continued to push themselves in new directions. Alexis Mejia (2016) recently received his Masters in Business Administration from Lee. He continues to read philosophy and grapple with social, racial, and national inequalities. Drake Farmer is continuing his graduate studies in English at University of Tennessee (Chattanooga), and Alex Winters (2015) has moved from the masters into the doctoral program in Humanities at York University. Allie Thomas (2015) will continue to teach several core classes in the Humanities program at Lee, but is considering committing herself to a doctoral program in film studies in the near future. Dr. McCampbell has just returned from a well-deserved sabbatical spent in Vancouver, British Columbia where she was a Scholar in Residence at Regent College while working on her current book project: *Postmodern Prophetic*. See <https://www.regent-college.edu/faculty/visiting-scholars-and-in-residence/mary-mccampbell> for more information.



What's New at the Library?

Libraries have always been the universe for Classicists. In such sanctuaries of letters, we discover the world is larger and more complex than we ever thought (we also might begin to get cobwebs in our hair and wheeze at the dust that has settled on long-forgotten volumes, an experience of deep meaning for many of us). Lee's library continues to be pushed to acquire books of great variety for our continued edification. Recent acquisitions that come with high recommendations are:



News Updates?

If you have any updates about life that you would like to pass on to us, please send an email to ajohnson@leeuniversity.edu.

Bryan Doerries's *Theater of War* (2016), which shows the immense relevance of Greek tragedies for those in the armed forces, prison guards, and hospice nurses today, written by an author who has performed tragedies to audiences of soldiers and guards around the world (including Guantanamo Bay)

James Turner's *Philology* (2015), written by an historian who shows the pervasive impact in the modern era of philology, understood in its broader classical sense to include historical, literary, and grammatical pursuits

A. T. Reyes's *C.S. Lewis's Lost Aeneid* (2011), which introduces and presents the remains of Lewis's never-completed translation of Vergil's great epic poem

Tau Korhonen's and Erika Ruonakoski's *Human and Animal in Ancient Greece* (2017), which offers an empathetic approach to the representation of animals in many classical literary pieces

H. C. Teitler's *The Last Pagan Emperor: Julian the Apostate and the War against Christianity* (2017) puts in broad context the anti-Christian policies and thought of this fascinating and paradoxical Roman emperor, who renounced the Christian faith of his youth—and his uncle Constantine—when he became sole ruler of the empire; those interested in Julian the Apostate should also consult the collection of historical sources gathered in Shaun Tougher's *Julian the Apostate* (2007)