CONTENTS

4 Democracy and the Aesthetic: Taming Nietzsche through Mimesis
5 Perfect Timbral Synthesizer: The Aesthetics of Early Electronic Music
6 Imperfect Perspectives on Perfection: Optical Theory and Visions of Culture in the Work of Geoffrey Chaucer
7 Romance and Utopianism: The Ideal Society and Generic Transformation in Medieval Fiction
8 Taking back the night: Midnight movies and the postmodern canonization of anti-bourgeois class antagonism
9 Can the Manichean generic model maintained by masculinist discourse be deconstructed from the perspective of exiles in Cristina Peri Rossi’s Panic Signs and The Ship of Fools?
10 La représentation de l’œuvre de Gabrielle Roy dans les anthologies de langue française
11 Convivium: Structure and Agency at the Roman Table
12 L1 Allophony and the Acquisition of Non-Native Contrast
13 Revealing Differences in Slums: South Africa and Mexico
14 Publications Support

Arts Insights is committed to the belief that research is a continuum and is committed to support and disseminate that research. More often than not, the research you read about in university and other publications is that done by those who are already established in their fields and careers.

In this issue of Arts Insights, we take you back to where, we believe, the continuum begins, and focus on the research done by those of our undergraduates who have excelled in the very competitive environment that is McGill’s Faculty of Arts. It is not easy to become an undergraduate in the Faculty of Arts at McGill. The stakes for admission are high. Simply to have your application for admission considered: if you apply to McGill from the Quebec CEGEP system, you must have obtained an overall Cote R of 27.3; if you apply from the rest of Canada or from the USA, you must have a minimum 86% average in your last two years of high school. Equivalencies apply for overseas applicants.

We asked every department and unit in the Faculty to submit to us the name of their leading undergraduate who would receive his or her Bachelor of Arts at the May 2008 Convocation and we wrote to each of those students asking them to contribute to this issue. We also wrote to every student who received an award at the May 2008 Convocation. Here are some of their responses.

No matter whether these students, our most recent graduates, decide to pursue careers in academia or choose other career paths, both they and we will know they found their passions here, in the Faculty of Arts, at McGill.

Welcome to this issue.

NATHALIE COOKE
Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies
Faculty of Arts
Although it is difficult to negate Friedrich Nietzsche's disdain for democracy, it is possible and necessary to recognize his aesthetic sensibility in works untainted by authoritarian tastes. An aesthetic vision offered by Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, particularly in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, demonstrates a similar concern with illuminating the limits of instrumental reason and creating space for the yet uncovered to be represented and appreciated. Such a philosophy is usually judged a threat to democratic values, yet a closer look at the critical theory of Adorno and Horkheimer suggests that the ability of the aesthetic to enrich democratic rule should not be disregarded.

The implications of Nietzsche's aesthetic vision are rather clear; the gifted artist instinctually creating great works parallels the able statesman who masters the masses through his own genius. It is the ability of art to grasp at the new, at that which lies at the limits of reason and science, which makes it ultimately so valuable. The complex nature of Adorno and Horkheimer's work makes it almost impossible to explicate a clear political vision. The two do not, however, espouse Nietzsche's autocratic drive, as their work condemns Europe's demise into fascism and their evaluation of modern society identifies troublesome conditions which when alleviated could make society more conducive to democracy. The usefulness of the aesthetic for democratic politics can be explicated from an aspect of Adorno and Horkheimer's argument which surprisingly parallels a duality introduced by Nietzsche in his evaluation of Greek tragedy in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

Adorno and Horkheimer's notion of mimesis provides a consciousness that surpasses the boundaries of the individual subject, moving the subject beyond the limits established by instrumental rationality. A natural human instinct, originally acting as camouflage or a "bodily adaptation to nature", mimesis became over time a conscious act performed in magic. The magic phase, in which man imitates nature, was ended by rational praxis and science, where instead of adapting to nature, man dominates her. Mimesis, which is today exemplified in aesthetic experiences, also allows one to grasp the new via contact with the nondeterminate and thus to ultimately expand the concepts and ideas which permeate the public arena. This phenomenon parallels the Apollinian and Dionysian duality so intrinsic to Nietzschean aestheticism. The dichotomy between the two art deities reflects the relationship between man's individuality and his self-annihilation which engulfs the individual and destroys the boundaries which separate individuals from one another and from nature.

By recognizing the Apollinian/Dionysian divide in the mimetic impulse it is easier to see how aestheticism, rather than pure rationalism, may appeal to democrats addressing issues of deliberation and communicability between political agents. This is because Nietzsche recognized the value of the aesthetic for providing freedom from the confinement of reason and its laws. For society and politics this means adapting people to new events and concepts which may not be completely intelligible but which should be included in the discussion. Adorno and Horkheimer's parallels with Nietzsche and the powerful concept of mimesis may indeed imply a taming of Nietzschean politics.

**TAMARA RAMUSOVIC** (BA, Honours in Political Science, Minor in Economics) received the Saul and Freda Frankel Prize.
The early decades of the twentieth century saw a proliferation of strange and fascinating electronic instruments invented by scientists and tinkerers worldwide. I believe that the design of these instruments and the rhetoric surrounding them reflects the influence of the acoustic research of Hermann von Helmholtz. Using Fourier decomposition, Helmholtz described the combinations of overtones that produce the characteristic timbres of various acoustic instruments. Helmholtz’s acoustic research connected normative accounts of aesthetic quality with measurable qualities of sound. Rather than attempting to ascertain the qualities of the aesthetically perfect sound *tout court*, his project took the form of an attempt to describe the ideal form of the timbres of a variety of existing acoustic instruments. Others followed this up with attempts to realize in practice these purified, ideal timbres: Helmholtz’s work was the inspiration for the first generation of electronic instruments, including the theremin, the Telharmonium, and the Ondes Martenot.

Helmholtz drew a distinction between musical tones, those that consist of periodic vibrations, and non-musical tones, or “noise”, which include aperiodic vibrations. Noise also tends to be what betrays the causal origin of an instrument’s sound: for instance, playing a violin produces, in addition to the pitches of the notes played, the sound of the bow scraping across the strings. While the act of moving a bow across a violin’s strings can’t be conceptually distinguished from the act of playing a violin, under this conception of timbre, the sound of the bow’s scraping can be conceptually distinguished from the ‘musical’ sounds produced.

I see the mark of this way of thinking of timbre and noise as different in kind reflected in the design of early electronic instruments. These instruments used Fourier synthesis to recreate the characteristic overtone series corresponding to the timbre of various popular Western acoustic instruments, while consciously excluding the tones they conceived of as extraneous noise.

Having drawn this historical connection, I find in this history an implicit ontological account of the extent to which different aspects of musical practice are relevant to the identity and value of musical works. Followers of Helmholtz, such as Edmund Gurney, argued that when a score specifies a work as being for a particular instrument, they have in mind an idealized timbre of that instrument, purified of noise. This way of looking at music regards the scored work as primary, with its performed realizations being intrinsically impurified by their materiality in the form of inevitable extraneous noise.

The Perfect Timbral Synthesizer is a rhetorical device used by Jerrold Levinson and other analytic philosophers of music to describe a machine which, unlike imperfect humans playing imperfect acoustic instruments, can effortlessly realize perfect performances of scored musical works. I argue that electronic instruments represented an attempt to create perfect music and to realize in practice theories of the aesthetics and ontology of music. In doing so, these instruments demonstrated that what makes a sound philosophical theory, or an efficient scientific model, does not necessarily make for pleasing or interesting musical performance.

LILY PEPPER (BA, Honours in Philosophy)
The work of Geoffrey Chaucer, an English-born diplomat speaking Italian, French and Latin in 14th century Europe, ties together many pervasive anxieties regarding the consequences of multiple perspectives that shaped his time and seem to echo in our own. As Islamic culture and military presence expanded, Europeans redefined their own lifestyles, either by blending new and old practises, or with reactionary attitudes that created new, more repressive cultures than had existed before.

My research examines two major approaches to the concept of perspective at the heart of many European reactions to increased Islamic influence, both of which are prevalent in Chaucer's work: medieval optical theory and treatments of paganism. Optical theory is a science that, incorporating new work from Arabic texts, revolutionized Christian perspectives on humans’ relationship to the world around them. It exemplifies the intense, contradictory cultural exchange between Latin and Arabic speakers that brought questions of what are “East” and “West” or “them” and “us” to such a crisis.

Similarly, treatments of paganism in Chaucer's work incorporate the European re-evaluations of the nature of self-perception, the earthly and the divine catalyzed by this cultural crisis. By paganism, I mean anything non-Christian, for medieval Christian propaganda lumped Muslims, Jews, polytheists, and unorthodox Christian sects into this category with much the same spirit that news agencies use the word ‘terrorism’ today. Sensitive to the difficulties of such generalizations, Chaucer drew parallels between the individual and cultural experiences of perception to suggest how forces of exchange and translation common to both shape human reaction to the world.

Through stories of war and marriage, Chaucer depicts the link between abstract ideas of cultural otherness and immediate, personal ideas of otherness. Complicating tales of intercultural conquest with those of marriage between the sexes, Chaucer employs the language of optics to suggest that the subject and object of a relationship have equal potential to influence each other. The effect of such influence on traditional, lasting resolutions of difference, such as marriage or the union of two lands under one ruler, becomes a source of great anxiety.

This interplay between love, war and vision becomes a matter of knowledge and faith. Regardless of deep intimacy or special knowledge, uncertainty still plagues those who seek control over their fates; translation from one medium to another, whether from culture to culture or from eye to mind, is ubiquitous, governing all interactions between a human and the surrounding world.

Chaucer balances the positive and negative aspects of continual translation and exchange, portraying a world of strife that encompasses both love and hate. From many incomplete, inconsistent, wholly human perspectives on this world, however, Chaucer distils another, more divine perspective that requires faith: with this, the universe is one complete unit of a single fabric, and the world of strife, misunderstanding and translation is bypassed.

This unity cannot translate, and regardless of one’s faith in it, Chaucer's work suggests the tension of multiple perspectives that exist within one person as well as one culture, that both facilitate and continually undercut human understanding on a number of levels.

HEATHER LAIRD (BA, Joint Honours in English and Middle East Studies) received the Algy Smillie Noad Memorial Prize and the Norman Prentice Award.
The genre of writing called utopianism emerged in the Early Modern period, beginning with Thomas More’s 1516 eponymous work *Utopia*. The standard historiography of the genre attributes its birth to the rediscovery of classical works such as Plato’s *Republic*. However, this creates a gap of nearly two thousand years between the two seminal utopian texts, occasionally complemented, with a millennium on either side, by St. Augustine’s *City of God*. This creates the impression of direct, linear transmission of ideas across the centuries, which serves to obscure a tradition of social speculation and utopian thought that ran through the popular medieval genre of the romance. My research aimed to elucidate medieval thinking on ideal societies through study of texts in the centuries leading up to the Early Modern period, from Brutus’ England in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain* to the Kingdom of Prestor John in Mandeville’s famous travelogue, including the romances of *King Horn*, *Havelok the Dane*, *Sir Orfeo* and the *Roman de la Rose*.

A number of commonalities emerge that come to define medieval utopias. Law and order are very important to medieval utopians; the ideal society is expected to be fair in judgment, impartial in application of the law to all social classes, and ruthless in enacting punishment against transgressors. Such societies are rich, and given the standard of a magnanimous ruler, all classes profit from that wealth. They are also expansionary, colonizing new lands, conquering ‘bad’ neighbouring kingdoms, and/or arranging dynastic marriages merging several kingdoms into one greater political entity. Surprisingly, medieval societies need not be overtly Christian (though many are); rather, the moral framework they present need only be compatible with Christianity.

Certain features of medieval utopias observably progress over time. The earliest texts see the ideal society as an outgrowth of the ideal hero who (eventually) rules it; in the absence of the hero’s totemic power to transmit his virtue to his people, society degenerates. Later texts are increasingly concerned less with the hero and more with the society, such that the ruler becomes little more than a figurehead. The physical marvels of earlier romances, like individual courage and strange beasts, become social marvels, such as absolute honesty, in later texts. The location of the ideal society also shifts: early utopias are set in or near England and are similar in character to contemporary society; in later texts utopia is increasingly remote, geographically and/or temporally, and its conventions are foreign to current medieval society.

Medieval utopias are frequently contrasted with dystopian neighbours. Some are overtly degenerate, but others appear (at first) to be paradisiacal, demanding that readers make a critical judgment about what truly makes an ideal society and what are merely ancillary benefits. Over time, the utopian societies become increasingly aligned with the conventions of classical epics, while the ‘false utopias’ cleave more closely to local folklore, particularly otherworldly, fairy realms.

Many of the characteristics of the evolving medieval utopias can be found in More’s work. Instead of a work breaking with recent history, *Utopia* is rather the next stage in an ongoing tradition of medieval inquiry into the nature of ideal societies.

STEVE ASSELIN
(BA, Honours in English Literature) received the Mary Keenan Scholarship in English and the Chester Macnaghten Prize.
When George Romero’s gruesome, rough-hewn zombie flick *Night of the Living Dead* was first screened on weekend afternoons in late 1968, nauseated critics and audiences unanimously dismissed the film as tasteless trash. The next year, the limit-pushing picture was re-released in inner-city American grindhouses on the bottom half of a kitschy double-bill and began to amass a dedicated cult following of outcast teenagers and fanatical horror buffs. By spring 1969, *Night of the Living Dead* had grossed over $1-million in midnight screenings, and the Museum of Modern Art invited Romero to present the film as part of its prestigious Cineprobe series.

In the years that followed, a number of equally eccentric and cut-rate pictures achieved analogous success on the late-night circuit. While wildly diverse in their content, these ‘midnight movies’ were consonant in their brazen antago-nism toward standards of cinematic good taste; produced for marginal audiences on shoestring budgets, the idiosyncratic films revelled in unsettling aesthetics and illicit themes, while the subterranean nature of their exhibition allowed for unruly, participatory spectatorship. In spite of the films’ deliberate breach of bourgeois cultural codes, however, their remarkable ability to attract audiences and turn pro-fits inevitably piqued the attention of the mainstream culture industry. Time and again, the arbiters of American culture turned their livid derision to retroactive praise, insistently peddling the crude cult films to adventurous middle-class viewers.

In “Taking back the night,” I analyze this monumental shift in the popular estimation of 1970s late-night cult films, specifically focusing on the late capitalist depoliticization of these films’ many radical affronts to the mainstream culture industry. Examining four notorious ‘midnight movies’ from three perspectives – production and distribution methods, narrative and aesthetic content, and spectatorship practices – I demonstrate that these films deliberately transgressed the hegemonic taste conventions of the period; by achieving success in alternative underground economies, viciously assaulting standards of cultural capital, and cultivating antagonistic class formations, midnight movies articulated a defiant challenge to the existing bourgeois social order.

Initially, I demonstrate, these films’ hostility was duly recognized by the reigning cultural elite; studying popular reactions to these oppositional pictures, I find that all four films were dramatically derided by mainstream America at the time of their release. Nevertheless, further examination reveals that as midnight movies proved sensationally successful in their late-night forums, the hegemonic culture industry covered over its original contempt and began to incorporate the films into the very canon they so passionately endeavoured to oppose. Distributed through the mainstream, read apolitically, and watched in a conventional manner, these once-loathed cult films are now considered mere aesthetic eccentricities.

By scrutinizing the historical fate of the midnight movie, my research shows these films serve as the site of political opposition; once raucously articulating a counterhegemonic aggression, the tasteless cult films of the 1970s have been steadily drawn over into the camp of official culture. This postmodern canon-ization strategy, I demonstrate, threatens to stifle these antagonistic films’ deep-seated subversion while bolstering the bourgeois’s sweeping hegemony. “Taking back the night” therefore endeavours to offset the politically neutralizing cultural logic of late capitalism by re-examining midnight movies in light of their vivid, virulent class hostility.

CLAIRE CRIGHTON (BA, Honours in English-Cultural Studies, Minor in Communication Studies) received the Dora Forsyth Prize.
Her approach to these models is always dialogical, inviting her readers to partake in a deconstruction of normative identities as well as in the construction of new, more inclusive processes of identification. In her literary works, the rejection of these normative identities is often communicated and developed through the voices of marginal characters who offer resistance to an established and oppressive hegemony.

Although Peri Rossi claims to be bound to no cause in particular, she has dedicated much of her work to challenging the Manichean categorization of gender sustained by patriarchal societies. This type of categorization not only polarizes masculine and feminine attributes but also creates an unequal hierarchy, advocating for and maintaining the supremacy of a masculinist discourse. Peri Rossi attempts to demystify these generic biases by breaking down the naturalist correspondence established between feminine anatomical functions and femininity, which relegates women to a position either deficient or excessive in nature, but certainly always negative.

Due to this exclusion of femininity from hegemonic discourse, woman situates herself in a position of rejection and oppression not unlike that of the exile. This is one of the associations that Peri Rossi develops throughout her fragmentary and fictional testimonials in Panic Signs, as well as through the evolution of the characters in The Ship of Fools. It is through the voice of these marginalized figures that she suggests the construction of a new hybrid generic identity which allows for the interchangeable nature of accepted masculine and feminine characteristics.

Just as she refuses to do for gender issues, Peri Rossi also refuses to assign an absolute definition to the word, and to the experience, of exile. Exile for her is not a state but another type of identification process which admits opposites and plurality. For example in Panic Signs – which she published in 1971 in reaction to the increasing oppressive measures implemented in her native country of Uruguay – she makes an attempt at resisting the absolutist discourse not only of a totalitarian regime but also of the masculine supremacy of the Manichean generic model through the eyes of internal exiles.

Just over a decade later, she published The Ship of Fools, which also pushes its characters to reject limitative perceptions of generic identities, although this time through the eyes of the external exile as a physically marginalized figure. Although both novels tend towards the same deconstructive process by portraying woman not only as body, but also as a sexual and polemical being composed of a plurality of aspects that make her generic identification ambiguous, the different experiences of the internal and external exile may influence the success of this attempt at deconstructing the Manichean generic model.

MARIE-EVE MONETTE (BA, Honours in Hispanic Studies, Minor in English Literature) received the Victor Ouimette Memorial Prize.
**LA REPRÉSENTATION DE L’ŒUVRE DE GABRIELLE ROY DANS LES ANTHOLOGIES DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE**

L’anthologie est un instrument qui contribue à former un canon littéraire.

En contexte scolaire notamment, l’inscription d’une œuvre dans un manuel contribue à intégrer cette œuvre à l’institution littéraire. Cependant, l’anthologie n’est pas un instrument neutre. Reflet d’une époque, d’une société et de certaines valeurs, elle se fait souvent l’écho de la critique littéraire. Les extraits choisis, la préface, les titres, les notes et commentaires accompagnateurs, les illustrations et photographies sont autant d’éléments qui contribuent à fournir une certaine lecture des œuvres présentées dans une anthologie.


Un survol d’un échantillon d’anthologies de langues anglaise et autres permet de constater des tendances différentes, soit par exemple la prédominance de Rue Deschambault, se déroulant au Manitoba, ou l’importance accordée à La Rivière sans repos, œuvre se situant en pays esquimau et absente de notre corpus de langue française. Nous considérons qu’une étude approfondie des anthologies contenant des extraits en traduction constituerait une suite souhaitable à notre travail.

Une telle étude, en plus de compléter le tableau de la représentation de l’œuvre de Gabrielle Roy dans les anthologies, présenterait un outil comparatif pertinent qui mettrait en lumière les conclusions tirées au sujet du corpus francophone, et permettrait de mieux voir quelles valeurs l’œuvre de Gabrielle Roy est appelée à illustrer en différents contextes.

**KARINE BÉLAIR**
(BA, Programme spécialisé dans la Département de langue et littérature françaises)
received the Prize of the Ambassador of Switzerland in Canada for French.

---

1 Ces anthologies ont été répertoriées par le Groupe de recherche sur Gabrielle Roy, dirigé par les professeurs François Ricard et Jane Everett de la Faculté des arts de l’Université McGill.
Although the convivium was, according to ancient writers, a relaxed and enjoyable evening with friends, it appears to have taken on a much more serious role in Roman society.

In the world of an ancient Roman aristocrat, the barrier between public and private space was virtually non-existent: personal villas in the early days of the Empire were centres of political and economic activity, and as a result, traditionally private events became part of the public domain. In such a context, the convivium, a dinner hosted by the owner of a residence for anywhere from a couple to over a dozen family members and guests, became much more than simply the largest meal of the day: it transformed into a complex physical performance of status, hierarchy, gender, age, reciprocity, hospitality, elite aesthetics and appropriate etiquette. Although the convivium was, according to ancient writers, a relaxed and enjoyable evening with friends, it appears to have taken on a much more serious role in Roman society.

My research focused on how Roman social structures manifested themselves in the dining room, and how aristocratic dinner-parties reflected preexisting social hierarchies. Literary evidence suggests that both verbal and nonverbal interactions between guests were, like a performance, carefully observed and ruthlessly critiqued by everyone else in the room. Similarly, archaeological evidence demonstrates that the preference for a small dining room intentionally restricted the number of guests, making the event more exclusive, an invitation more coveted, and seating arrangements all the more significant. Even the right to recline on a couch became an indication of status: divisions of class, gender, and age were therefore physically reproduced at a Roman convivium.

In addition to examining preexisting structures, my research also looked at the potential for change through personal agency. There were, in fact, many possibilities from which an individual could choose: a Roman could refuse an invitation, invite a complete stranger, include his family, recline with her husband, voice an opinion, or even drink too much wine. Of course, these possibilities were not endless, nor did they exist in some kind of vacuum; therefore, while major changes in social hierarchy did not take place in the dining room, individuals should not be seen as simply reproducing old social orders. For example, while a single dinner at which a guest reclined on the wrong couch or insulted the guest of honour might have no serious repercussions, a series of such infractions would have impacted the aristocrat’s invitation or seating position at the next convivium, thus restricting access to certain opportunities for social interaction and personal advancement. Positive changes in status could similarly take place, as convenient seating arrangements might allow a lucky client or freedman the chance to make a connection with a wealthier aristocrat or potential political ally.

Because of the presence of individual thought and action, the expression of status and hierarchy at a convivium was not bound up in universalities, but was entirely dependent on the location of the dinner and the people in attendance. It is in this flexibility that we find the potential for change at the Roman dinner table: a simple meal took on wider significance as each Roman performed a balancing act between personal preference and social obligation, and therefore between agency and structure, during every course of the convivium.

EMMA WARNKEN JOHNSON (BA, Joint Honours in Classics and Anthropology) received the Peterson Memorial Award in Classics.
Native allophony is known to aid in the acquisition of non-native contrast. This study investigates whether native (L1) allophones resulting from different types of allophony are more easily acquired as contrastive in a second language (L2) than others, by focusing on both perception and production.

Brown (1998) shows, by means of perception tasks, that L1 segmental structure can determine the successful acquisition of non-native contrasts. Similarly, Curtin et al. (1998) state that the perception of non-native contrast of aspiration in Thai (e.g. [phon] 'watch' vs. [pOon] 'shovel') is more easily acquired by native English speakers (who have allophonic aspiration) than by native French speakers, whose L1 has only a voicing contrast (e.g. [bat] 'bat' vs. [pat] 'paw').

In this study, the acquisition of the Canadian English vowels [ø, A, A:] (the vowels in 'cut,' 'cot,' and 'call,' respectively) by native speakers of Russian and German is studied. The L1 groups are chosen based on the sound inventories. In Russian, [ø] occurs as an allophone of /a, o/ in pretonic position (Jones and Ward 1969): e.g. /xorøSø/ [xorøSø] 'well.' This is an example of vowel reduction. In Russian, [A] also occurs as an allophone of /a/ before a velarized [:] /dal/ . [dA:] 'gaveMASC.SG.' This type of allophony is assimilation in place of articulation. In contrast, German has neither [ø] nor [A] (Wiese 1996). Because [ø, A] are allophones in Russian, I hypothesize that the Russian native speakers should acquire English [ø, A, A:] more easily than the German native speakers.

As a preliminary analysis, 7 German native speakers and 8 Russian native speakers were studied.

Intermediate and advanced speakers of English were chosen. The subjects participated in an AXB sound perception task, designed to evaluate the participants’ perceptual accuracy in distinguishing between the novel English [ø, A, A:] and native Russian and German phonemes (e.g. /o, a/). The subjects’ first and second formants for the target English sounds were also acoustically measured using Praat 4.5.16 to see how similar their articulation of the vowels was in comparison to native Canadian English speakers. The formant values for Canadian English speakers were taken from previous literature (e.g. Boberg 2004). The findings of the study show that for both the perception and the production tasks, the native Russian speakers behave more target-like than the native German speakers. This suggests that native allophony does help establish novel contrasts, both in terms of perception and production. However, the native Russian speakers are more target-like for English [ø] than for [A], suggesting that not all types of native allophony are as effective for the learning of non-native contrasts.

The results of this study show, by means of perceptual and production data, that different types of L1 allophony aid in the establishment of novel L2 contrasts. The findings also suggest that some types of L1 allophones (i.e. those caused by vowel reduction) are more easily learned as L2 phonemes than other L1 allophones, such as those triggered by assimilation in place of articulation.

MARC GARRELLEK
(BA, Honours in Linguistics, Minor in Russian)
received the Cremona Memorial Prize in Linguistics.

References
More than a billion people on this planet live in substandard housing, characterized by the lack of adequate (if any) access to clean water, poor sanitation conditions, insecurity of tenure, crowded spaces and flimsy construction materials. Yet, despite the widespread existence of slums in many developing countries, it remains a challenge to identify the main factors that determine the quality of housing available in these nations.

My research investigates the differences in incidence, extent and distribution of slums in Mexico and South Africa and explores the reasons behind these variations. To identify quality of housing, I construct an index based on the characteristics of public services received by households in both countries. To the extent that a household’s access to adequate shelter is partially the responsibility of the government and partially determined by the household’s resources, I select some variables that influence the development of slums in any given country: household income, rural-urban status, and location in particular economic regions (i.e. provinces or states).

If household income is the primary factor in determining quality of housing, in theory I should be able to explain the differences that exist in the occurrence and distribution of slums solely by variations in domestic purchasing power (assuming households face the same prices in services). Yet, I find that even when household income is a decisive factor in determining the quality of housing in both Mexico and South Africa, it can not explain the differences that exist between the two nations. In fact, when holding household income at the same level for the two countries, there is still a higher prevalence of slums in South Africa than in Mexico and the conditions in them are worse.

There are some theories that attempt to explain why urban regions have better public services than rural areas even when controlling for income. The "urban-bias" hypothesis suggests that urban residents enjoy more political power and influence than their rural counterparts. Another hypothesis is that cities display economies of scale in which fixed costs can be spread over a greater number of people. Not surprisingly, therefore, I find that in both Mexico and South Africa urban homes are always in better condition than rural ones. This is still true even when I discard the effects of different income levels across both areas. The gap in the quality of housing between rural and urban houses is larger in South Africa, however, indicating that the lack of provision of public services in rural South Africa is worse than in rural Mexico.

Another explanation for the differences in slums points to disparities in the capacity of the province or state to generate revenue. Since governments with unequal capacities to generate funds cannot exhibit similar spending patterns, their provision of public services will also differ. For both countries, an increase in state (Mexico) or provincial (South Africa) GDP per capita is related to a decrease in the prevalence of slums. Nonetheless, this variable can not explain why there is a higher incidence of slums in South Africa, when this wealth factor is controlled for. Interestingly, in richer provinces or states, the level of household income does not define the quality of housing as much as in provinces or states with lower GDP per capita. This may imply that households in wealthier states or provinces enjoy more equal access to public services.

All these results suggest that governments play an important role in improving housing quality, both by targeting it directly and by choosing sound economic policies that improve the overall economic performance of their states and provinces. I believe that understanding more about the reasons for inadequate housing is fundamental to the development of more effective policies to improve the lives of more than a third of the world’s population.

RAISSA FABREGAS ROBLES GIL (BA, Honours in Economics, Minor in Political Science, Minor in Mathematics) received the Allen Oliver Fellowship.
Master of prose and polemics, for nearly five decades Mordecai Richler was one of Canada’s most compelling writers. Though Richler insisted that his private life was not important to his work, Reinhold Kramer shows that Richler’s uneasy Jewishness, his reluctant Canadianness, and his secularism were central to all of his writing.

Based on never-before published material from the Richler archives as well as interviews with family members, friends, and acquaintances, Mordecai Richler: Leaving St Urbain shows how Richler consistently mined his remarkable life for material for his novels. Beginning with the early clashes with his grandfather over Orthodox Judaism, and exposing the reasons behind his life-long quarrel with his mother, Kramer follows Richler as he flees to Ibiza and Paris, where he counted himself as one of the avant-garde who ushered in the 1960s. His successes abroad gave him the opportunity to remain in England and leave novel-writing behind – but he did neither.

More than a biography, Mordecai Richler: Leaving St Urbain is the story of a Jewish culture finding its place within a larger stream, a literary culture moving into the colloquial, and a Canada torn between nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

Reinhold Kramer is professor of English at Brandon University and the award-winning author, with Tom Mitchell, of Walk Towards the Gallows: The Tragedy of Hilda Blake, Hanged 1899 and Scatology and Civility in the English-Canadian Novel.
Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, and Margaret Thatcher were all described at various times as the “only man” in their respective cabinets – a reference to their tough, controlling behaviour. What explains this type of leadership style? In Women in Power, Blema Steinberg describes the role that personality traits played in shaping the ways in which these three women governed.

For each of her subjects, Steinberg provides a personality profile based on biographical information, an analysis of the patterns that comprise the personality profile using psychodynamic insights, and an examination of the relationship between personality and leadership style through an exploration of various aspects of political life – motivation, relations with the cabinet, the caucus, the opposition, the media, and the public.

By bringing together some of the best work in psychological leadership studies and conventional personality assessments, Women in Power makes a significant contribution to the study of political leadership and the advancement of personality-in-leadership modelling.

Blema Steinberg is professor emeritus, McGill University, the author of Shame and Humiliation: Presidential Decision Making on Vietnam, a member of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society, and a practicing psychoanalyst.
Arts Insights, a new series from McGill-Queens University Press, showcases current research in the social sciences, humanities, and social work.

Arts Insights, an initiative of McGill’s Faculty of Arts, brings together research in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Social Work. Reflective of the range of expertise and interests represented by the Faculty of Arts at McGill, Arts Insights seeks manuscripts that bring an interdisciplinary perspective to the discussion of ideas, issues, and debates that deepen and expand our understanding of human interaction, such as works dealing with society and change, or languages, literatures, and cultures and the relationships among them. Of particular interest are manuscripts that reflect the work of research collaborations involving McGill faculty and their colleagues in universities that are part of McGill’s international affiliation network.

Arts Insights will publish two titles a year in English. The editors prefer original manuscripts but may consider the English language translations of works that have already appeared in another language.