

# radix

McGill's Student Spirituality Magazine



*everything*  
Spring/Summer 2017

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Spiritual Life



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@RadixMagazine

the bottom line: "All I wanted was for you to be free from everything. And with

I have recently been reading the poetry of various Tibetan Buddhist masters. These beautiful poems are laced with symbolism and imagery, yet they discuss topics of non-duality. By looking through the vast expanse of objectivity, it is possible to find the basis of everything. Every symbol and object is built from the same tiny specks, the elements which build and unify to create the varieties of existence which we have today. It is from the barren ground that the flowers sprout to fill the fields with splashes of colour. Those colours which we see emerge from the completeness of light and lack of light. Everything comes from the emptiness of nothing, and this can be seen in the darkest of places.

The everything side of our special double issue includes written works from a variety of McGill students, and they are complemented by photos and illustrations from Montreal based contributors. Thanks should go out to Krista Liberio for providing a beautiful watercolour painting for the cover of Everything.

I would like to express the utmost gratitude to all of the members of our editorial board over the past two years. They have helped provide the support and submissions required to always continue publishing fantastic issues of Radix. I would also like to extend my deepest thank my co-editor, James, who has done an amazing job doing the editing and dealing with my constantly frazzled demeanour.

Please enjoy this exciting issue!

Edward Ross  
Radix Co-Editor

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*The cover design, called Emergence, was painted by  
Krista Liberio.*

that freedom, you often showed me another world, so I wanted you to be even

# untitled

*Katy Dmowski*

---

ghosts of you  
blossoming into my thoughts  
vivid  
rose petals behind my eyes  
left behind by the tide  
pulled by a white moon in a clear sky

ghosts of you  
transcribed into a crowd  
fleeting  
faces I half recognize  
a faint smile in a stranger's eyes  
disappearing round the bend of a river

ghosts of you  
resonate under my skin  
echoed  
taps and creaks and whispers  
your frequencies and murmurs  
woven into the world around me

---

*Katy Dmowski is a first-year Science student from  
Toronto who is excited to explore everything McGill  
and Montreal have to offer.*

freer. I wanted you to be so free that you would live your life for other people.”





*The above photo was taken by Mackenzie Roop in Bundanoon, NSW, Australia.*



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*Trisha Iyar is a U1 Political Science, Communications and World Cinema student from Georgetown, Ontario who focuses her writing on self-growth and exploration.”*

---

*The above photo was taken by Edward Ross*

thing.” - Aesop • “We had everything: love, attention, the best money could buy,

# i always blink at the wrong time

*Trisha Iyar*

---

i go there to meet you  
when the sun drowsily  
awakens from her sweet slumber  
her soft canary wings stretching  
across the rose glaciers  
that fill the lonely sky

my feet timidly sink into the soft earth  
the copper toned mud is thick and chilled  
melting between my toes  
the grass and moss are silky  
their misty dew grazes my ankles

when i arrive  
the wind faintly runs its delicate fingers  
through my unbrushed hair  
its touch sending me into a trance of tranquility  
i think about the way you taught me to breathe  
when my lungs were filled with water

an orchestra of waves gently caressing rocks  
can be heard from the waterfall nearby  
its beautiful song echoes in my ears  
almost as if each note was crafted specifically for me  
i think about the way you taught me see beauty  
when all i could see was pain

i stare at the white-crowned sparrow resting in her nest  
hidden within the branches of an aging willow tree  
today is the day her egg will hatch  
i see a flicker of light movement  
and hear the hushed, tender cries of a new life  
i think about the ways i know you're here  
and how if i had blinked, i might have missed you.

but we were taught that we had to first give to then receive.” - Cristiane Serruya

# repetere

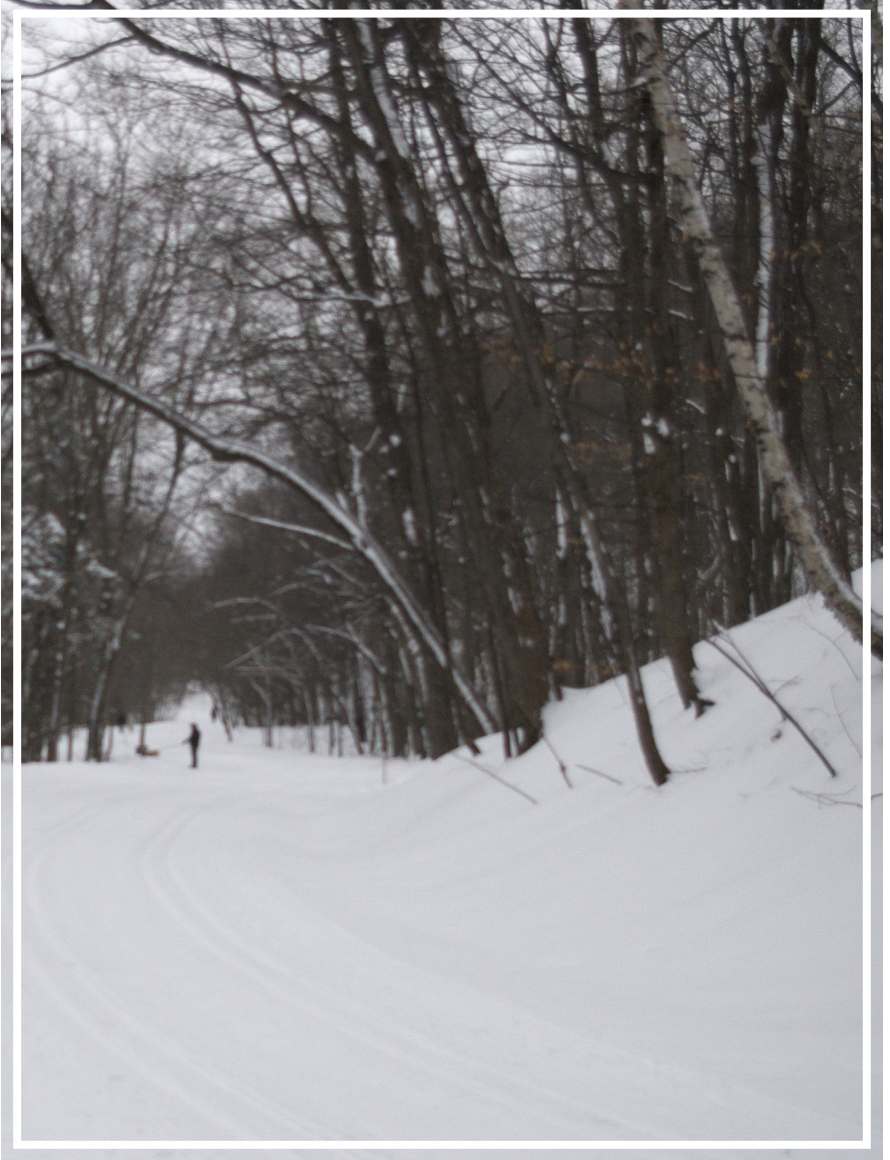
*David Epstein*

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Although the ground and flora may be unquestionably dead, there is a certain coming-together as winter begins to drag on. We escape with our skates, skis, dogs, and thermoses of coffee into one of the many wintry arteries of Mont Royal. At once you feel isolated and embraced among others. As your face numbs and your eyes lose focus, the world around you can blur and become a painting. Patrick Kavanagh wrote, “Gather the bits of road that were not gravel to the traveller but eternal lanes of joy on which no man who walks can die.” At that borderline of frostbitten stinging and unabashed enjoyment, we can sit and reflect as our faces change colours many times over a warm beverage. It reminds us that we are not just alive; we are flourishing, and it therefore makes us stouter.

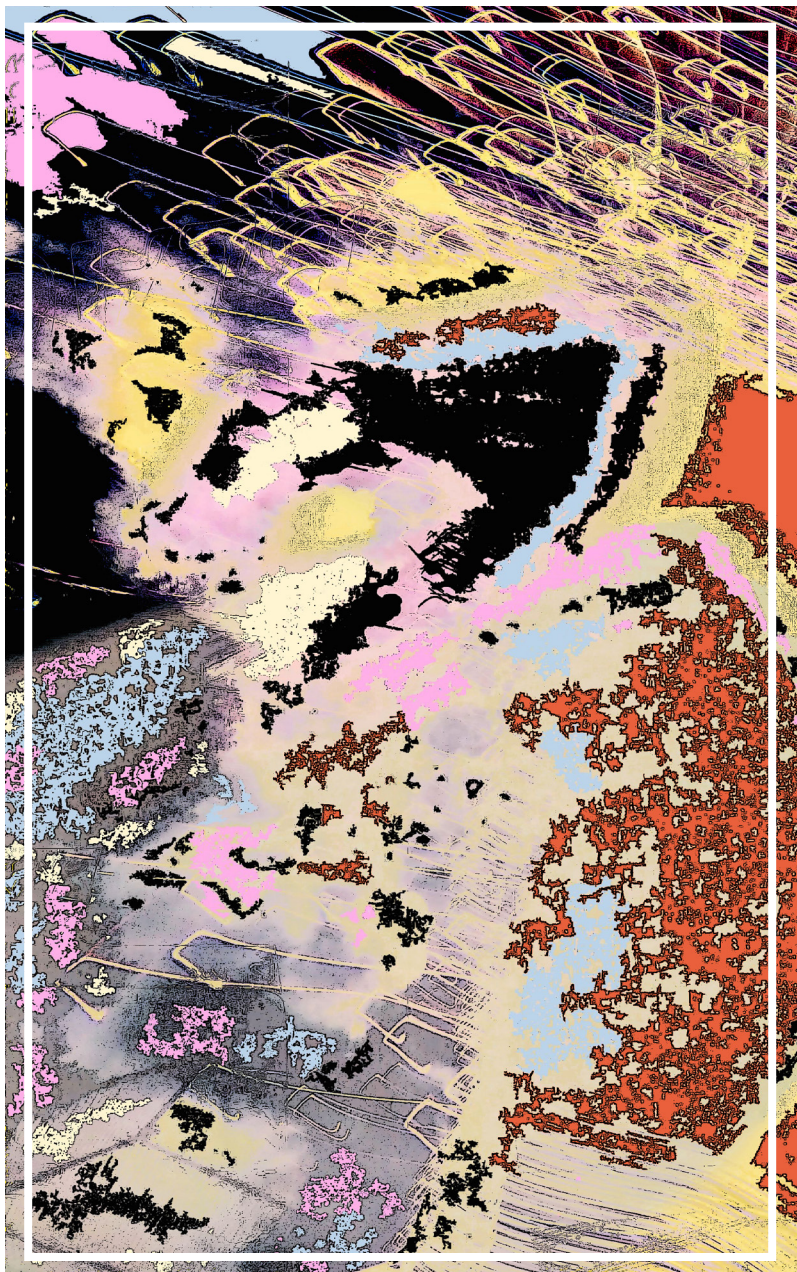
- “It is part of a good man to do great and noble deeds, though he risk every-





*David Epstein is a U2 Classics student from Montclair, New Jersey. His interests include photography and hiking. The above photograph was taken by David Epstein.*

thing.” - Plutarch • “To realize that everything in the universe is connected is to



*The above art is by Sam Thornley and is titled  
'Ugly and the Glitch Smashup'*

both accept our insignificance and understand our importance in it." - Jeffrey Fry



# spatial superposition

*Heydar Ensha*

---

When small, nothing can be ignored,  
all have impact and pull.

When large, anything can be ignored.  
Things are just things and they're acknowledged as such,  
shrugged off for forward vision.

Near-sighted are swept in intricacies and forced into channels.  
They are grounded with and by others.  
Linked and caged by roots,  
they cannot envision an onward.  
All they see is what is immediately in front,  
the dirt that nourishes and suffocates,  
the dust that trips them.

Built up, one can see that all-around expand and converge  
above the roots, the bends, meandering and all.  
Gliding over what those below see as walls.

When middles are stretched,  
when the short sighted get lasik,  
their visions are superimposed,  
in attempts to rectify and reconcile a new depth;  
what will eventually decohere,  
returning to the background.

---

*In 2008, Heydar Ensha went to South Dakota with his father for a week.*

- “When you experience something, it actually widens your understanding about

# morrighan

*Edward Ross*

---

I have always felt them near me.  
They are watching from the depths.  
Their eyes glow in the darkness of my mind.

## *Black*

I killed my sisters to take control.  
I cast them aside to attain ultimate power,  
But I can still feel them pulsing with rage.

## *Red*

Controlling this power alone is difficult.  
Constant battles drain my energy.  
Defence is no longer an option.

## *Yellow*

Their souls claw their way to the top.  
They push me aside and take the throne.  
I accept defeat and fall to the abyss.

## *One*

I feel a hand on mine.  
My sisters pull me back up.  
They are much wiser than I.

Without my sisters, I am nothing  
Together, we are everything.



*Edward Ross is a U3 student in Joint Honour Asian Religions and Classics from Cornwall, Ontario with interests in papercraft and spirituality. He is also Co-editor of Radix magazine.*

**beauty can be found. And everything has potential for beauty.” - Kamand Kojouri**

# swallow your words like swords

Amy Currie

---

I. “I want to say goodbye before I leave,” he tells me over the phone.

*we are nothing more than a bad case of Pavlov’s dogs, I am learned behaviour (filth teaches filth, right?). I’ve already moved on, I have better things to do than grieve a scumbag who doesn’t know how to commit or find a clitoris. who goes to the doctor at 9 pm? did you really think I would fall for that?*

“I have nothing to say to you”

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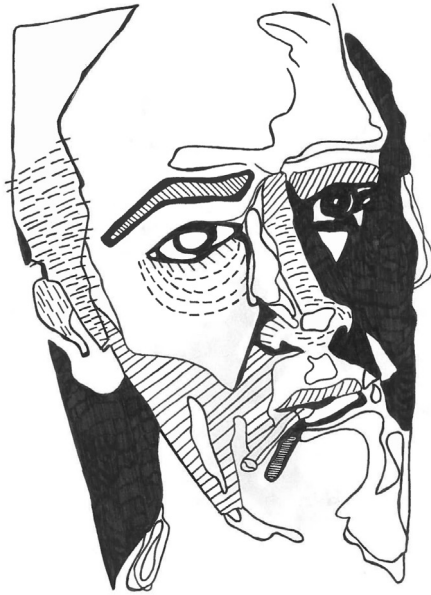
II. He finally texts back: “I’m sorry I cancelled again but I’m free right now if you want?”

*these past few months without you I wasted away, pickling my own body with wine and letting myself grow moss before I realized that you could never be home and I would be better off underwater, and I stayed submerged for so long that the kelp bound my legs together—committing me to a world separate from yours, forever. you should not have let that garden die out while I was away.*

“I already put your box of shit on your lawn” I press send, lock my phone, and unlock it again. “Didn’t wanna distract you from your new girl.”

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- “You have access to everything that has ever happened or ever will happen if



III. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean it like that,” followed by a frowning Facebook sticker.

*this is not child’s play. it never was. everybody knew, except for the boys. everybody knew except us. you’re the one that called time of death before checking for a pulse. go on, tell me you’re not lonely. act like you’ve forgotten everything. pretend like I’m not still the dirt on the soles of your shoes or the chipped black nail polish you can’t, or won’t remove.*

I open it and leave it read. She blocks me on every social platform the next day.

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*Amy is a U3 Sociology and Sexual Diversity Studies student from Washington, she enjoys deep fried pizza and not making eye contact.*

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don’t set yourself on fire to keep others warm  
Illustration by Angad Sharma, U2 Civil Engineering



*The above photograph was taken by Alexandre Daigle.*

**“Set yourself free. Realize you already have everything you need and don’t need**



# a humble hymn to something

Alice Damiano

---

I feel so distressed  
when I hear someone saying  
“Everything or nothing  
and there’s no third way”

Why should I limit  
one thousand options to two  
why should I approximate  
until I lose the clue

Why should I label people,  
as well as myself  
as perfect or awful,  
as normal or strange

Why should I replace  
a colour picture with black and white  
why should I describe the world  
in darkness and light

Every conquest is achieved  
one step at a time  
accepting only “everything or nothing”  
won’t earn us a dime

There are infinite shadows  
and if we are wise  
we’ll welcome *Something*  
and bear no labels in our eyes.

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*Alice Damiano is a PhD student in Renewable Resources, Economics for the Anthropocene project (<https://e4a-net.org/>), with interests in human-Earth relationships and climate change.*

anything else.” - Mabel Katz • “Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.” -

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# classifieds

## **Radix is looking for Volunteers.**

Like what you see?

Believe in student creativity, and inter-faith collaboration?

Help us do it better! We can always use help in marketing, web-development, research, distribution, writing, layout, and much more! Email us to join the community. [radix@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:radix@mail.mcgill.ca)

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## **The McGill Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (MORSL)**

MORSL, a proud member of McGill Student Services, is located in the Brown Building, suite 2100. Please feel free to stop by our Meditation/Prayer Room any weekday during the fall and winter semesters from 10:00am to 4:00pm! You'll find a full-spectrum light therapy lamp, CD's for guided relaxation, a serene space with floor pillows and meditation stools, and some suggestions on how to meditate in different traditions. Take time for some serenity! Stay connected with MORSL on Twitter @SpiritualMcGill or like us on Facebook: [fb.com/morsl](https://www.facebook.com/morsl)

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## **Newman Centre**

Newman Catholic Centre, 3484 Peel Street, is a home away from home for Catholic Students. Visit [www.newmancentre.org](http://www.newmancentre.org) to find out more about this centre for Catholic spiritual, social, and intellectual life on campus!

## **The Rabbit Hole Café**

The Rabbit Hole cooks up vegan lunches every Friday at 1:00 p.m. during the fall and winter terms. Drop by, pay a toonie, enjoy the company and eat up! All proceeds go towards maintaining this Yellow Door program (3625 Aylmer) along with their Food For Thought student food bank, sponsored by the McGill Office of Religious and Spiritual Life.

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## **Mid-Week Quaker Meditation**

Quakers practice silent group meditation. They listen in stillness to discern their highest truth, which it sometimes feels beneficial to share with the group. All are welcome at this relaxing weekly meeting. Montreal Mid-Week Quaker Meeting meets every Wednesday, 5:30-6:30. Keep an eye on our facebook page for locations, which may change from week to week: [www.facebook.com/groups/mtlmidweek](https://www.facebook.com/groups/mtlmidweek)

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## **REFORMATION AND THE CITY**

**MAY 8-9 2017**

talks, music, street theatre,  
panels, and more.  
Register (free):

[reformationandthecity.wordpress.com](http://reformationandthecity.wordpress.com)



**The Jewish community at McGill**  
Visit [www.hillel.ca](http://www.hillel.ca), [www.chabad-mcgill.com](http://www.chabad-mcgill.com), and [ghettoshul.com](http://ghettoshul.com) for information on shabbat meals, holiday celebrations, educational programming, and fun social activities!

**My Neighbour's Faith Series**  
This series of monthly visits to Montreal's places of worship provides a guided experience with various world religions being practiced in Montreal. Email [morsl@mcgill.ca](mailto:morsl@mcgill.ca) to join the mailing list.

**Local Gnostic Community Meetings**  
The Holy Grail Narthex is a study group of the Apostolic Johannite Church. We gather for fellowship, study, discussion, ritual, and generally uplifting times. Please feel free to get in touch with our lay leader, Rev. Mr. Jonathan Stewart, at [holygrail@johannite.org](mailto:holygrail@johannite.org) or at (438) 930-6969 for further information, to get details on upcoming meetings, or if you just want to chat.

**Weekly Zen meditation**  
Every Friday morning at 8:15am during the fall and winter semesters, McGill Zen Buddhist chaplain, Zengetsu Myokyo, offers guided Zen practice in the Birks chapel (3520 University Street, 2nd floor). Must arrive early or on time in order to join!

with the world's weight he had never chosen to bear." - F. Scott Fitzgerald

**Orthodox Christian Students**  
Join our twice-monthly student meeting, Orthodox Christian Fellowship! We also have monastery visits, picnics, and movie nights. Contact McGill's Orthodox chaplain, Father Thor for details: [ikutash@gmail.com](mailto:ikutash@gmail.com).

### **Mondays at MORSL**

The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life hosts "Mondays at MORSL"—a variety of free Monday-night events, including art therapy, yoga, zen meditation, Quaker meditation, Om meditation, talks on World Religions, Orthodox icon-writing workshop, movie nights, and more! Like us on facebook at [fb.com/morsl](http://fb.com/morsl) to find out more or email [morsl@mcgill.ca](mailto:morsl@mcgill.ca).

### **Midnight Kitchen**

Every day of the week at 12:30 pm in the SSMU Building during the fall and winter semesters, Midnight Kitchen offers free vegan lunches to students. Bring a tupperware container, and indulge in some vegan delicacies such as their famous vegan cakes.

### **McGill Interfaith Students' Council (MISC)**

Are you passionate about promoting interfaith dialogue on campus? Join MISC to have a chance to work with faith groups and promote inter-community dialogue and religious diversity! Work on the Council to make collaborative events like the Annual Interfaith Day happen and advance religious literacy and harmony on campus. For more information, contact: [jonahwiner18@gmail.com](mailto:jonahwiner18@gmail.com)

# this page was empty

G. Sanguine

Yeah, weird title right?  
Is this even poetry if I  
Break that imaginary  
Wall that separates us?  
Hell if I know.

So I'll tell you a story instead:

I think I almost died today.  
A gigantic hurdle of sharp  
Ice came speeding off the roof  
Of a restaurant while I was  
Walking down St. Laurent.

Maybe I'm exaggerating,  
But the face on the man  
Who saw it fall was probably more  
Terrifying than the sound it made as it  
Crashed right behind my head.

We had a good laugh after that.  
"Phew, that could've been bad man!"  
Hell if I know.

And I don't even remember  
What thoughts went through my  
Head as it fell from the sky.  
It was more like a suspension of  
Feeling and reason,  
That void beyond the periphery.

This page was empty  
Before I started writing.  
It lacked form and consciousness.  
It was without knowledge.  
Without fear.

Sort of like that ice,  
And the man beneath it.

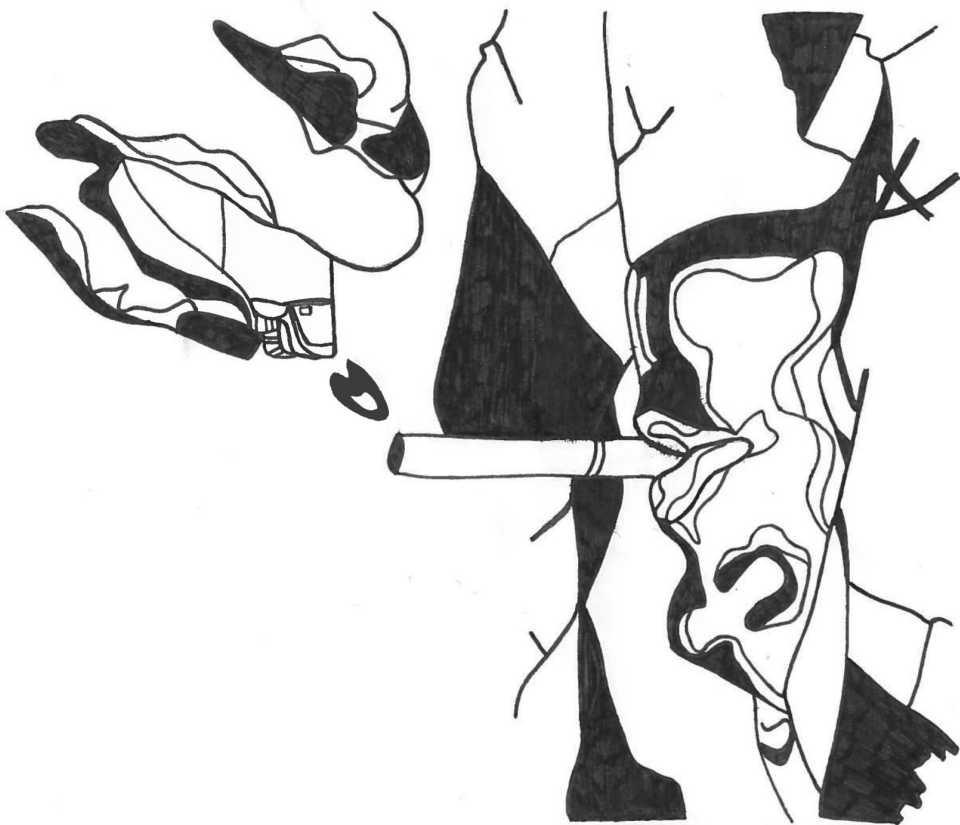
body." - Steven Magee • "Tired, tired with nothing, tired with everything, tired

“There is nothing to be lost by experimenting with the sickened human mind and

*G. Sanguine is a Master of Music in composition  
student from Antigonish, Nova Scotia with interests  
in film and poetry.*

---

Don't set yourself on fire to keep others warm  
*Illustration by Angad Sharma*  
U2 Civil Engineering



GYH is a student in Natural Resource Sciences.  
He hails from Montreal.

Note: This piece is partially based on one of my posts on the E4A (Economics for the Anthropocene blog <https://e4a-net.org/category/blog/>). Also, for further reading on the Buddhist Lojong tradition, you can check out: Thupten, J., ed. *Essential mind training : Tibetan wisdom for daily life*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2011.

An Ecological Bodhicitta/Awakening Mind would therefore understand the necessity of both the rational and the emotional, as well as how each concept can be used to help support the other. Of course, these are just my musings and may be considered too radical for some. My approach is probably not entirely novel, even within Buddhism itself, and I hope to be able to explore analogous concepts and terms in the future. In the end, I hope this short mental exploration encourages people to think about how we might address the uses and necessities of the rational and the emotional in environmentalism.

We may also consider the opposite perspective. Even with the proper scientific understanding of nature, getting people to go that extra step requires something more. This is the contribution of the emotional realm, that is to say the Conventional Ecological Bodhicitta. After all, effectively removing humanity's claimed, yet often unscientific, position of "privilege" towards nature tends to require an emotional connection to the nonhuman. Throughout history, those who have fought hardest against ecological degradation have done so with a strong emotional connection to the natural world.

order to succeed. For instance, it is much easier to care for nature Bodhicitta) that argues humanity is part of nature. People have always been capable of feeling deep compassion, but a proper understanding of the world can help reveal where this compassion should be directed.



# An Ecological Bodhi-citta/Awakening Mind would therefore understand the necessity of both the rational and the emotional.

for all beings helps destroy the feeling that the Self is more important and distinct from the Other. To truly feel compassion for everything sentient, a person must understand that all beings are of equal worth. As the distinction between Self and Other breaks down, Emptiness can be understood. Emotional altruism can thus lead to a realization of objective equality and Emptiness.

I suggest that a similar concept could be useful in environmentalism. Perhaps we might call it Ecological Bodhicitta.

Ultimate Ecological Bodhicitta would refer to the scientific/rational aspects of environmentalism. Buddhist Lojong practitioners cultivate Ultimate Bodhicitta in several ways, including mentally breaking down objects into constituent parts until nothing intrinsic remains. Similarly, science must break down the perception that humanity is intrinsically different from other beings and objects. The sciences of thermodynamics and evolutionary biology are important in this regard.

Ultimate Bodhicitta is achieved when there is no distinction between Self and Other. In my version, Ultimate Ecological Bodhicitta would be achieved when there is no difference, with respect to several issues, between humanity and nature.

Conventional Ecological Bodhicitta would then apply to the emotional realm. Compassion for those affected by ecological destruction, from species to ecosystems to climate change refugees, is necessary to stimulate change. It is a way of increasing what we care about from ourselves, to, well, all of nature.

Just as in the Buddhist concept of Bodhicitta, the Conventional Ecological and the Ultimate Ecological Bodhicitta require each other in

Of course, I am not the first to look at the intersection of Buddhism and environmentalism. To some, Buddhism may initially seem to be too escapist a worldview to encourage ecological thinking. After all, if Life is Suffering, and the goal is to achieve Liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth (Samsara) in which we all find ourselves, Buddhism might encourage people to separate themselves from the natural world. However, as one delves into an actual Buddhist worldview, it becomes clear that there is much that can help in creating an ecological ethos, not least of which is the emphasis on Compassion.

But let's return to the specific Buddhist concept I have in mind: The Conventional and Ultimate Bodhicitta/Awakening Mind. I'll offer a brief explanation of the term and then an analogous term I think might be useful for the current ecological crisis. Keep in mind, of course, that this is a complex topic with many variations and what I am offering here is my own, simplified, version.

At its core, the term Bodhicitta/Awakening Mind refers to an altruistic intention to achieve Liberation for the good of all beings. Conventional Bodhicitta refers specifically to feeling compassion for all beings. Ultimate Bodhicitta refers to the realization that all things are Empty of intrinsic reality.

Initially, these two ideas seem quite irreconcilable. Perhaps even examples of an Everything/Nothing dichotomy. If nothing possesses intrinsic reality, why care about all sentient beings? In reality, however, not only are both considered necessary to achieve Bodhicitta, but one is a path to the other. The Emptiness of all things removes barriers between Self and Other, encouraging compassion for other beings. Conversely, the very process of cultivating compassion

I was struck with how an analogous concept might be useful in shifting society to a healthier perspective.

Be willing to be disappointed, for if you risk nothing, you'll have nothing worth

# Ultimate and Conventional Ecological Bodhicitta:

How a Buddhist Concept Could Contribute to Environmentalism

G Y H

Recently, there seems to be a rise in “hybrid” issues, which combine the scientific and social realms. Such issues contain strong rational and emotional elements. In Western rhetoric, these dichotomies are often considered irreconcilable. This is particularly clear in one of the most pressing issues in our society, namely the environmental crisis and our view of how humans relate to nature.

An appeal to the emotional by a scientist can be seen as weakness. For instance, the claim that environmentalism, due to its appeal to emotions, is just another religion is often pushed by the more anti-environmentalist groups. In contrast, an appeal to scientific facts can be seen as a sign of heartlessness and a symptom that environmentalists are detached from the day to day lives of the public. Our society seems to be stuck in this odd dilemma, where environmentalists are criticized for being too rational and too emotional at the same time. So, what can be done about this? I feel we can look at other world-views for a way to solve this false dichotomy of the rational versus the emotional.

Recently, I participated in a course on Buddhist (Lojong) Mind Training, which allowed me to explore the Buddhist concept of the Conventional and Ultimate Bodhicitta/Awakening Mind found in this tradition.

Although the course did not really apply this concept to environmentalism, I was struck with how an analogous concept might be useful in shifting society to a healthier perspective, free of the strict rational/emotional dichotomy.

might have been.” - Jeffrey Fry • “Just follow your bliss, that’s all you have to do.

# who am i...?

*Alexandre Daigle*

it seems as if there are as many versions of me as there are people I meet;  
each with their own conception of me, each with their own impression of me.  
but with such diverse ideas associated with the name which was given to me,  
there remain these questions:

who is the real me? what is my true identity?  
can anyone really define me? can anyone really be the judge of what I am?  
and of what I'll come to be?

from this questioning comes the realization that I indeed have no definitive identity –  
and that is quite a relief for it essentially means that I am a being of plasticity;  
flexible and free to be whoever I want to be.

a being that can at a moment's notice change direction;  
a being that can overcome any self-imposed limitations;  
a being unbounded by otherly classifications;  
a being that transcends definitions.

as I look within, beyond the ego-illusion,  
ultimately I see no one – nothing...  
and that is the greatest of liberation.

the problems of the human race and divide those who achieve from those who

place of Persistence. The desire and ability to press on has and always will solve

*Alexandre Daigle is a last-year Environment and Religious Studies student expressing his experiences of spirit and nature as visual story-teller.*





not visible.

The crack in me has not fully healed. I still withdraw sometimes, and the pain still visits. But like the spaces between the stars where more stars are, my world is not empty, and I am learning to understand what the spaces and gaps do mean, the light they already hold even if it is

At that time, I had a choice of whether to move to Montreal or to London, Ontario, to continue my studies. I chose Montreal, because I knew that were I to forget how to live, how to operate, I could still go out onto the streets and watch a father walking with his daughter, a boy whizzing by on his skateboard, other people going about their lives. The busyness of the city core was to me an insurance policy, that should a crack appear once more in the centre of me I would at least have signs of life everywhere to cling onto.

In the end, I had been able to finish my semester at Queen's. I could not hide completely. One evening, my parents heard a change in my voice over the phone, and arrived in my small bedroom a few hours later to talk with me and to remind me that I was not forsaken. Thereafter, my father came to Kingston each weekend to take me out for a meal. Afterwards, we would go to the supermarket where he made sure I bought food to eat for the week. I have no words to convey the gratitude I will always have to them.

Tonight I am taking a walk outside. I stroll beneath apartment windows, see glimpses of lit rooms, and hear sounds of evening activity. Passing beneath an open window, I pick up the sizzle of oil droplets dancing on a hot pan. A man with an afro and dressed in a tucked shirt and trousers walks past opposite to me. A woman wearing a bright pink dress crosses at the intersection ahead. A motorcycle whizzes past, and as I turn my head to follow the sound I catch sight of a man sitting in the back, his arms encircling the waist of the girl who is driving, their bodies fitting snugly. Soon after, an ambulance rushes through the intersection.

### III

I felt a tremendous need for empty space in my life and my soul. So I withdrew, and waited until I may feel ready to re-enter the world.

# Journal entries

Anonymous

I.

On clear nights I would raise my head to look at the night sky, peering into the darkness to see what stars may be visible. I would often find a single star and then, if I was lucky, a second. In the spaces between those stars, if I looked long enough, sometimes more points of light would appear. If I do not look away too quickly and let my eyes adjust, I would see fainter stars around the brighter ones, and still even fainter ones around those. The stars begin to multiply in number, and what was at first a dark, empty space becomes full of light, even if it is light that I cannot see.

II.

I am in Kingston, during my last semester at Queen's University. I didn't want to rise from bed in the morning. I didn't want to go out of the house. I couldn't bring myself to shop for groceries. It was as though all meaning had gone out from the world.

*I don't know how to operate, I remember thinking to myself, staring ahead in my room. I don't know what to do. I don't know who I am.*

I had always had certain periods in my life that was darker than others, so I didn't think much of it when I began to worry more than usual. I still thought nothing was the matter when unrelenting worry turned to dread. By the time my body felt so heavy to me that walking to campus took effort, and the words *I am in pain* flashed through my mind, unbidden, several times a day, all I could think about was that I needed to hold together long enough to finish the semester and graduate.

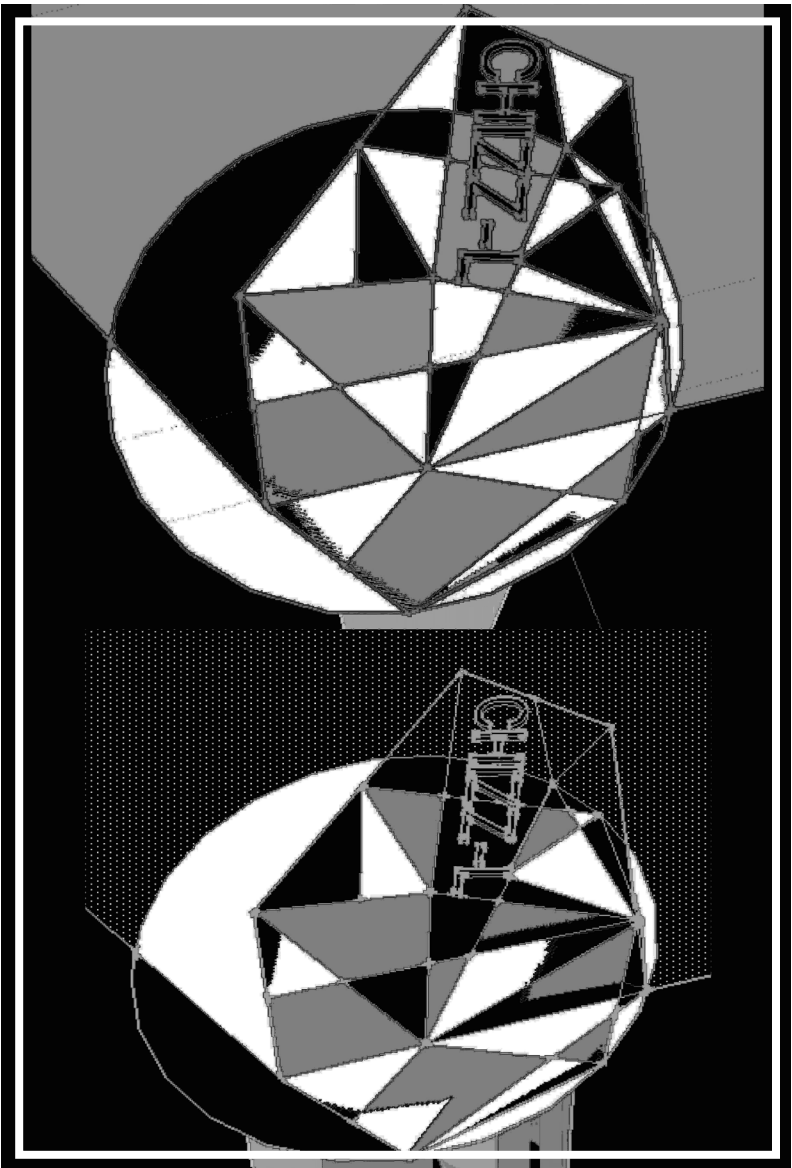
To do this, all I could manage was my schoolwork. I stopped spending time with friends. I avoided talking to people if I could. I stopped volunteering. I was bewildered. I did not know the difference between what I must do, what others wanted me to do, and what I desired to do. I remember feeling petrified at the prospect of letting other people do. I remember entering a reality in which I could not rely on myself, where I was always on the brink of letting myself down.

is that we were withholding nothing. That there was nothing on the other side of

I create to survive, each day is the same:  
Each day a race, to drown out the other  
I fight my battles with pen, no paper  
Maybe they'll win before I finish this prayer  
In a world so quiet I hear the growls  
Of a voice so loud I cover in silence  
"You're home," they say as they dangle the key  
Tantalizingly in front of me  
Not quite swallowed, not quite locked  
But with bars on my windows and a ticking clock

*Cheryl Chu is a GSFS and English Literature  
major with a passion for making music and  
writing poetry.*

*The above art is titled 'Chizz I'  
by Sam Thornley*



Ayn Rand • "I know only that it is time for me to be something when I am noth-

# lonely men

Emily Szpino

We keep a lonely man in our house.

I don't remember how he got in. Nowhere does he appear in my memories, except as a promise, and even then his name carries a sense of deferred satisfaction. In my mind, he is a man constantly in transit, never at home, but here he is, in our house.

I say *our* house. My mother sits at the head of the table when the lonely man gets out, and she relinquishes it when he returns.

*We must be nice to him*, Mother says with her impassive face. *He is so lonely, out there.*

Out where? He exists only when running away or running back. It is only *out there* that I know who he is, that I can remember what he is meant to be. In here, he is a voice behind a closed door.

Through the door, the lonely man in our house said to me once that long ago he thought to himself that he would not be like the lonely man who lived in his house. *I know*, I said.

It is unfortunate to find a lonely man crying in your house, but far worse when he does not. Far worse, I think, to see him staring out with the same eyes as yours, asking you *what is this here?* Far worse, I think, to know that this, like all the unassailable distances, has left him stranded on an opposite shore, leaving only his outline and a space in your memories.

*Emily Szpino is a U3 English Lit student who spends too much time reading and should probably stop because it's ruining her eyesight.*

a person..." - Ray Bradbury • "If you write a line of zeroes, it's still nothing" -



The way the sun lights up the morning sky with no  
 thought for its constituents:  
 for who slept, or how little,  
 the days that go by seem  
 so untimely, trivial –  
 you filled them with yourself  
 (but had to, I suppose)  
 trapped in these fleshy cages;  
 bones as bars,  
 an exercise in solipsism.  
 But til the sun lights up,  
 shifts the cold evening murk  
 to bigger and brighter things  
 The turgid gray seedlings dazzle in monotony;  
 a last-ditch effort not to die tonight,  
 and every night before echoes bare/  
 barely keeping with the times  
 Nose to the ground, ear to the grindstone/  
 I spin my webs and forgot about politics/  
 pop-culture – one and the same –  
 joining a cult has never felt better  
 at least then this  
 table for one wouldn't be so  
 empty

*Katharine Birkeness is a U1 Cognitive Science student who  
 enjoys exploring cities, minds, and art.*

From the pre-Socratic writings of Parmenides to the postmodern theatre of Samuel Beckett the question of Nothingness has assumed a curious selection of shapes. There's the quiet and contemplative emptiness of Buddhism, the noisy Nothingness of Chaos in Milton's Paradise Lost, the paradox shaped playing-fields of nothing in the Renaissance, captured in works like Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing or pretty much any of Donne's poetry, there's Schopenhauer's weird will to will-less-ness, or Heidegger, Sartre, and the Kyoto School and all their strange Nothings. Even modern physics weighs in, in a way, as doesn't Schrödinger's cat suggest the impossibility of observing no-thing? And what about black-holes? Or dark matter?

Such is the slippery and protean nature of thinking about Nothingness. It has a habit of turning into an engine of creativity, a spiral of stuff. This half of our everything/nothing edition is a great example of the different shapes Nothingness assumes. In particular, we have a fascinating article from GYH and a strange small story from Emily Szpirtó called "Lonely Men". Big thanks go to Time of the Sun for offering the cover-image and of course, the great Edward Ross for pulling everything together!

We hope you enjoy!

James is a second-year graduate student in  
English Literature.

James  
Co-editor

The cover design, called In Between, was painted by  
Time of the Sun.

est degree of human wisdom." - Leo Tolstoy • "For if we're destroyed, the knowl-

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the bottom line: "We can know only that we know nothing. And that is the high-

nothing  
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