



# HUMANITIES

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

FALL 2020



# Over the Long Run



By Dean J. Scott Miller

AT WHAT POINT in this life do we first despair of finding relief from pain or struggle? It must surely happen well before we can remember, perhaps from the instant we are born. Each successive moment

after birth brings on new, stunning experiences: the pain of oxygen debt, shocking cold as liquid evaporates off skin that knows only warm immersion, our first pangs of hunger, enervating fatigue from flailing our limbs and finding our voice.

Built into each new, distressing incident is both despair and the possibility of our deliverance from it, if only we can learn something new in mind, body, or both. From birth onward these repeated experiences of suffering and discovery rush at us incessantly, and, if we do not die, we subconsciously stumble upon a key to future survival: *perseverance*, a willful choice to keep trying until we get it right.

Like latent muscle memory, the instinct to persevere lies deep within us, ready to be engaged whenever life gets difficult. Etched into the very strands of our hair are cortisol residues recording the stresses we experience. Although we may quickly forget some of our trials, we retain their memory in our bodies, a unique and personal chronicle of survival.

Curiously, the average duration of our suffering seems to lengthen as we grow older. Unbearable pain that lasts only microseconds for an infant may persist seconds for toddlers, minutes for children, hours or days for adolescents, and months or years for adults. In every case, we repeatedly find ourselves confronting the need to look inside for that remedy that goes by myriad names: *grit*, *mettle*, *nerve*, *resolve*, *resilience*, *pluck*. Mustering it means power to change an attitude, gear up

our resolve, or even shift from suffering fate's slings and arrows in distracted misery to tolerating, or even ignoring, those outrageous fortunes while reorienting ourselves toward some original, or new, intention.

As we age, we experience the distress-perseverance pattern over and over again. Sometimes we find ourselves invoking it in dire circumstances that threaten our lives, but most often, especially as adolescents, its call comes to us in small, seemingly inconsequential moments when the stakes are mostly about degrees of comfort or the challenge of inertia. Very often, although not necessarily always, we learn how to get up off that particular couch through sports activities. In my case, it involved signing up for the cross-country team as a freshman in high school.

Being a fast sprinter, and possessing no skills or interest in football or tennis, I decided to try distance running because, well, how bad could it be? The first day of practice, our coach had us run five miles around a reservoir. I'd never run farther than a mile, but resolved not to stop for anything. In doing so, somewhere along the way I discovered, in addition to a new kind of suffering, a second wind that kept me going just a bit more. As

I finished the run I was exhausted as never before but delighted, both because I was not last and because I went the distance without stopping. (The next morning, when I stood up out of bed and collapsed in spasms of leg muscle agony, I was less exultant.)

Years later, I came across William James's famous quote that seemed to encapsulate that moment: "The human individual lives usually far within his limits; he possesses powers of various sorts which he habitually fails to use."<sup>1</sup> Although I think most people do have dramatic experiences in life that teach them about their own resilience, James emphasizes that learning some lessons requires us to push beyond our limits. We can all remember instances of grit

during short sprints of difficulty, but its manifestation in life's marathons is less obvious.

For example, looking back on our university days, we may see our personal growth stemming from a series of discretely difficult events or people: *that* test, *that* class, *that* roommate. But there is something about four years of constant exposure to intellectual fatigue and training that gives us self-awareness of our potential, builds up our power to analyze, reason, synthesize, carry a hypothesis through to discovery. We learn to read long and difficult books, endure and understand erudite lectures, sustain complex conversations, and evaluate convoluted arguments. The sum total of this low-grade perseverance is something once called *character*, and it is certainly more valuable in life, and eternity, than our diploma.

Like our time at the university, our spiritual journeys are often punctuated by warping distractions and repentant realignments, because perseverance can also involve recommitment to something that may have moved out of focus. Likewise, although dramatic conversions and spiritual development are frequently narrated as a series of trials and divine interventions, life itself is a school, and it is equally, if not more so, in the day-to-day struggles to maintain a humble life of devotion and obedience that we slowly become aware of our divine potential. That longer run is where we truly develop spiritual strength and endurance.

Based upon this common fact of our shared humanity and mortality, no wonder we find that acts of faith and acts of perseverance so often overlap. Fundamental to our shared experience of life is the need to go on despite pain, difficulty, obstacles, or even death. By mustering the mettle to take that next step, we may learn how to ignore our suffering or at least become so engrossed in the act of learning that we come to better disregard the bitterness of the exams.

1. William James. "The Energies of Man." *The Philosophical Review* 16, no. 1 (January 1907): 1–20.

Like latent muscle memory, the instinct to persevere lies deep within us, ready to be engaged whenever life gets difficult.



**HUMANITIES** | FALL 2020

**12** Staying Power: Women and the Art of Perseverance

Associate Professor Belnap examines the stories of women who use art to redefine their experiences.  
By Heather Belnap

**14** Universal Humanities

While NASA shoots for the stars, the humanities searches for meaning closer to home.  
By Heather Bergeson

**16** Project Perseverance

BYU professors are finding new ways to help students navigate the world of language learning.  
By Cristiana Farnsworth

**18** Jazz and Democracy

Two seemingly unconnected concepts provide a study in human interaction on all planes.  
By Natalie Shorr

**2** | **RESPONSE**

Have something to add to the conversation? Send us your feedback!  
Timeline, Puzzle Solutions

**4** | **PERSPECTIVE**

Kusama's Infinite Art

**6** | **ANTHOLOGY**

Perseverance, Finishing the Race, Faith and Love and Hope—in Waiting

**10** | **HUMANITIES REVIEW**

Keeping on in spite of it all! Don't miss these faculty and student highlights.

**22** | **ALUMNI UPDATES**

**24** | **VOX HUMANA**

Heroic Disappointment

**25** | **CROSSWORD**

True Grit



**Publisher** J. Scott Miller  
**Editor** Heather Bergeson  
**Art Director** Jess Dansie Anderson  
**Illustrator** Rebekah Mecham  
**Editorial Team** Cristiana Farnsworth, Lupita Herrera, Natalie Shorr, Molly Ogden Welch, Sage Wheeler  
**Design Team** Jake Gonzales, Ryann Woods

**For information about giving to students in the College, contact Dean J. Scott Miller at 801-422-2779 or scott\_miller@byu.edu.**  
 BYU College of Humanities  
 4002 JFSB  
 Provo, UT 84602  
 801-422-2775  
 humanities.byu.edu

**Feedback?** We would like to hear your views, your memories of campus, or an update on your life since leaving BYU. Please send email to humanitiespr@byu.edu.

*Humanities* magazine is published twice per year for alumni and friends of the BYU College of Humanities. Copyright 2020 by Brigham Young University. All rights reserved.



READER  
RESPONSE TO  
HUMANITIES  
MAGAZINE

Want more thought-provoking discussion with fellow BYU Humanities alums? Connect with us between issues of *Humanities* on social media!



The views and opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the faculty, administration, or staff of the BYU College of Humanities. Submissions may be edited for length, grammar, appropriateness, and clarity.

## COHP Update

AS TRAVEL TO Cambodia is on hold, the Cambodian Oral History Project (COHP) has shifted its focus to remote work, including Zoom interviews with Cambodian-Americans—and especially to the large Massachusetts heritage community. Also, our BYU student team is building an interview database and implementing a machine translation protocol with the help of Dr. Elsa Perez (Spanish and Portuguese). To address the heavy transcription need, COHP is collaborating with a leading speech technology company, Cobalt Speech, to create an automatic speech recognition tool for the

Khmer language.

—DANA BOURGERIE, COHP DIRECTOR



## Gathering Her Story

YOU ASK FOR what's been happening in my life since I left BYU?

Forty-two years of marriage to my sweetheart.

Five moves.

Three lovely children; one grandchild.

Ten years working at BYU in theatre and media arts and then exercise sciences.

Retirement, which has been anything but relaxing.

A kitchen remodel.

And yesterday I submitted my second book to the publisher.

Writing has been something I've always wanted to do—to share, to connect, to teach, to learn. I feel very blessed to have a chance to realize that dream. Earlier, I thought I

wanted to write fiction. In fact, many years ago I wrote a murder mystery (unpublished). But now, I am drawn to real stories—primarily stories I've had a part in, so family history. People are fascinating to me, as are the stories they tell, and sometimes the stories they choose not to tell.

My mother, Helen Mar Carter Monson (b. 1916 in Salt Lake City), left me thirty or more boxes full of diaries, letters, scrapbooks, photo albums, poetry, and a one thousand page manuscript of her autobiography through age twenty-four, when she was married. Beginning last year, I've taken the opportunity to organize that manuscript into three books, which I am publishing because I believe her stories have universal appeal. Her autobiography is filled with stories, like when she, as a child, slid down a haystack into a convict's lap, or when she and her friends convinced a fledgling Hogle Zoo that they were dignitaries from Chicago interested in investigating the new zoo after hours (because they didn't have the 10¢ each for legitimate entry), or how her mother passed away leaving my mother to raise her six younger brothers and sisters when she was only seventeen, and all the stories that challenging adventure involved, or how she was able to be on set for the filming of a Shirley Temple movie at the end of her mission in California.

Gathering my family virtually, through Mom's history, even when I've been unable to be with them physically, has been a beautiful experience. I've "met" cousins online whom I've never known face to face. Strangers have read Mom's stories and told me that they feel like they knew her and that, in many ways, she told the stories they had never shared, or helped them remember other stories they now want to share with their loved ones.

COVID-19 for many has been a disruption, but are disruptions always bad? For me, I count the simpler lifestyle a blessing. Thank you for asking.

—KIM POOLE, BA ENGLISH '80

## FALL 2020

TIMELINE

### JULY

Chinese Flagship students were awarded seven (and one alternate) Boren Scholarships.

[www.borenawards.org/statistics](http://www.borenawards.org/statistics)

### AUGUST

We saw new growth on the Norfolk pine in the hallways near JFSB 4002, and mourn the continuing loss of foliage to the fiddle-leaf fig outside of JFSB 4186.

### A new testing prep lounge

was constructed next to the testing center in the JFSB basement.

### Some students returned

to campus, others opted to complete their coursework online.



### SEPTEMBER

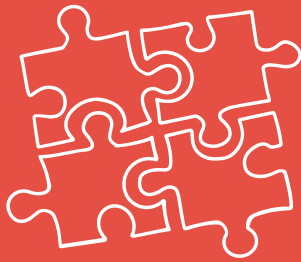
We did not hold the Humanities Symposium on September 21st, which did not include guest speakers nor did it address a theme.

### OCTOBER

Short Story Dispensers arrived and were

installed in the Harold B Lee Library.

Range Fire at the base of Mount Timpanogos near the mouth of Provo Canyon burned over 3,400 acres near the mouth of Provo Canyon (see back cover photo).



**Do you love** completing the crossword puzzle in each issue? Well, we've included an extra word game for those who want to take their puzzle-solving skills to the next level.

Try your hand at the cryptogram on **page 23!**

## A Minor Change

WHEN I ENROLLED AT BYU, I majored in English and minored in theater, planning to teach high school.

After participating in a BYU Summer Residence Program in Mexico City, I was frustrated that, for the third semester in a row, I was unable to fit a required theater workshop into my work/class schedule. Because I needed the same number of credits to complete a Spanish minor as a theater minor, I decided to switch.

I never expected to teach Spanish; however, nearly every professional opportunity I have had has been because of my Spanish studies. I often wonder if the Lord's hand was in that decision.

I have also been privileged to serve as one of the translators in our Southern California ward, as a substitute teacher in a Spanish-language Sunday school in Texas, and as a volunteer Spanish teacher in my

children's elementary schools in Kentucky and Washington when I was a stay-at-home mom. Several of our seven children are fluent in more than one language and have inspired me to delve into additional languages as well.

But much of the credit goes to what seemed at the time an arbitrary and inconsequential change of minor.

—KATHLEEN PEDERSON WHITWORTH,  
BA ENGLISH '69

## Pro Bono Blessings

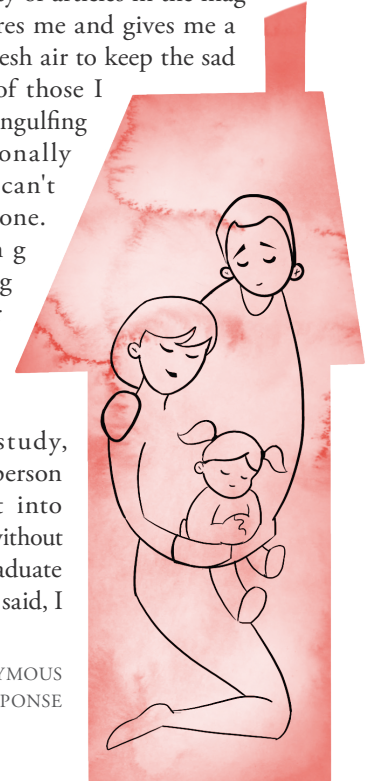
I AM ACTUALLY a product of the first distanced-learning program at BYU. I love BYU. For decades, I had no idea how my patriarchal blessing would be fulfilled by the words: "You will have the gift of healing in your hands and many people will seek you out." I didn't need that undergrad degree, I was already a certified computer programmer and loved my job, but it was a great program and a great day when I received that diploma.

Many years later I became ill and had to take a medical retirement just three months short of thirty years at my employer. For ten years I was retired, and then I had surgery which greatly improved my health. I was sitting on the couch one day speaking with my son when the idea popped into my head that I should attend law school, which I did. I was the oldest student in the school. Maybe if I had known about the LSAT at that time, I wouldn't have committed myself. I had to leave my family and go out of state. It was the hardest thing I have ever done.

When I was finally a lawyer, people with special needs began to cross my path, and I became a pro bono attorney serving people who needed justice but could not afford an attorney. I make no money being a lawyer; my retirement income sustains me. I am being baptized by fire, so to speak, but I am also fulfilling my patriarchal blessing.

The variety of articles in the magazine inspires me and gives me a breath of fresh air to keep the sad situations of those I serve from engulfing me emotionally because I can't help everyone. Looking back, being a lawyer all started with BYU's independent study, because a person cannot get into law school without an undergraduate degree. As I said, I love BYU.

—ANONYMOUS  
SURVEY RESPONSE



*Following each issue of the magazine, a survey is sent out to a random selection of our readers. Thank you to those that responded. For more anonymous responses, see page 22.*

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

**DOWN** 1. Mas. 2. Acer 3. Race 4. Sits 5. Kahilo  
6. Olives 7. Bike 8. Eve 9. Power 10. Anise  
11. Tens 14. Ess 15. Dire 20. Omar 22. The 25.  
Team 26. Inca 27. Ad in 28. Rude 30. Peace 31.  
Arp 32. Cats 34. Earp 36. Bari 37. Iron 38. Long  
39. Edge 42. Doe 47. Tsar 48. Set 49. Drove 51.  
Loman 52. Agent 53 Kona 55. Duets 56. Boca  
57. ABC 58. Cave 59. Awls 60. Goal 61. Erte 64.  
Rim 66. Kew

**CROSSWORD: ACROSS** 1. Mars 5. Kobe 9. Pat  
12. Acai 13. Alive 15. Done 16. Sect 17. Hikes  
18. I win 19. Resolve 21. Stress 23. Moe 24.  
Here 25. Tiara 29. Space 33. Endure 35. Era 36.  
Bile 40. Acid 41. Adapt 43. A rod 44. Mane 45.  
Roc 46. Strong 48. Speed 50. Singe 51. Lake  
54. RDA 56. Bogota 58. Courage 62. Omen 63.  
Brave 65. Work 67. Cana 68. Civet 69. Late 70.  
Ant 71. Mess 72. Slew

**CRYPTOGRAM:** "Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do." — Pele



**This section of the timeline is closed until further notice.**  
Thank you for your patience during these unprecedented times.

## Kusama's Infinite Art

MIRRORS, LIGHTS, and of course, the famous polka dots. The work of 91-year-old Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama has inspired millions to break away from the norms of art and society, and to embrace the person within.

Kusama's work famously incorporates walls of mirrors and bright designs to create a world of endless beauty. These "infinity rooms" allow viewers to get lost in Kusama's mind.

Growing up in Japan, Kusama experienced hallucinations, and she frequently saw the world covered in fields of polka dots. She was later diagnosed with schizophrenia and anxiety.

Kusama often refers to her art as therapy, calling it "art-medicine."<sup>1</sup> Kusama uses these hallucinations as inspiration for her art, letting people experience how she sees the world.

"I fight pain, anxiety, and fear every day," Kusama once said, "and the only method I have found that relieves my illness is to keep creating art."<sup>2</sup>

Kusama's work redefined pop art and minimalism, but she often faced discrimination, which made it difficult to gain recognition in the art world. After moving to New York in 1958, Kusama faced racism stemming from post-World War II attitudes toward Japan.

Being a woman also posed challenges. Kusama's unique style inspired artists like Claes Oldenburg, Lucas Samaras, and Andy Warhol, who produced art that resembled or even copied Kusama's mirror room concept without acknowledging Kusama.

Still, Kusama soldiered on with her work. She once said, "Polka-dots can't stay alone; like the communicative life of people, two or three polka-dots become movement. . . . Polka-dots are a way to infinity."<sup>3</sup>

Associate Professor Heather Belnap (Comparative Arts and Letters) commented, "The concept of self-obliteration is critical to Kusama's art as both a rationale and a process. Kusama uses repetitive patterns such as polka dots or nets to relinquish her own identity and become one with the universe, and her art encourages us to do the same. When you step into one of her infinity mirror rooms, you join Kusama in this state."

Kusama moved back to Japan in 1973. By her own choice, she currently lives in a psychiatric hospital so that she can focus solely on her art. Her work has inspired millions to see beauty in the simplest of things, despite challenges and setbacks that arise.

—MOLLY OGDEN WELCH, COMMUNICATIONS '22

1. Anna Fifield. "How Yayoi Kusama, the 'Infinity Mirrors' Visionary, Channels Mental Illness into Art." *The Washington Post*. WP Company, February 15, 2017. wapo.st/3oR3tlf.

2. Carl Swanson. "The Art of the Flame-Out." *New York Magazine*, July 6, 2012. nym.ag/2TUYLo4.

3. Katy Kelleher. "The History of the Polka Dot, from Minnie Mouse to Yayoi Kusama." *Artsy*, April 3, 2018. bit.ly/2l4V8t2.





# perseverance

[/ PƏR-SƏ-'VIR-ƏN(T)S/]

**noun.** Continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition<sup>1</sup>

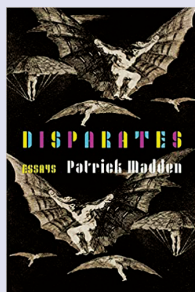
WHEN WE PERSEVERE, we stick to a task. This mentality comes through in a word my mother used to use: *stick-to-itiveness*.<sup>2</sup> I thought it was her own nonce formation until I saw it in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), which cites a use in 1859, and Google n-grams produces 211 occurrences since 1881.<sup>3</sup> The OED also points to a cousin, *sticktoitness*,<sup>4</sup> with citations from 1881 to 2014. A similar word is *stickability*,<sup>5</sup> as in the title of a recent book by Greg Reid called *Stickability: The Power of Perseverance*. But sticking to a task is not limited to vernacular words. We find the same senses incorporated in their more refined, staid Latinate relatives *perseverance*<sup>6</sup> and *tenacity*.<sup>7</sup> The *ten-* in *tenacity* comes from Latin *tenere*, which also means “to hold” and gives us *obtain* and *continue*. Similarly, the *se-* in *perseverance* comes from the Proto-Indo-European root *\*segh-*, meaning “hold,” and the *-ver-* comes from the root *\*wērə-o-* meaning “true” as in *veracity*.

When we persevere, etymologically speaking, we hold to something true, or perhaps we are true in our holding to it. This connection with truth is repeated in yet another vernacular term: “true grit.” *Grit* takes its meaning from “gravel” or “stone,” and a person with grit has a hard, indomitable character that cannot be worn away. It seems that even the way we talk about the word *perseverance* perseveres as early etymologies are repeated centuries later. So, whether we have perseverance or tenacity, stick-to-itiveness, stick-to-itness, or stickability, we hold fast to a true cause and show our true grit.

—DON CHAPMAN, ASSOCIATE CHAIR AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

1. Merriam-Webster, s.v. “perseverance, n.” accessed October 21, 2020, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perseverance](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perseverance).  
 2. OED, s.v. “stick-to-itiveness, n.” accessed October 21, 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/51397301](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/51397301).  
 3. [books.google.com/ngrams/graph](https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph)  
 4. OED, s.v. “sticktoitness, n.” accessed October 21, 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/56633983](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/56633983).  
 5. OED, s.v. “stickability, n.” accessed October 21, 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/190155](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/190155).  
 6. American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. “persevere, v.” accessed October 21, 2020, [ahdictionary.com](http://ahdictionary.com).  
 7. American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. “tenacity, n.” accessed October 21, 2020, [ahdictionary.com](http://ahdictionary.com).

FACULTY PUBLICATIONS



*Disparates: Essays*  
Patrick Madden



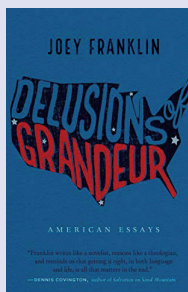
*Mormons in Paris*  
Corry Cropper & Chris Flood



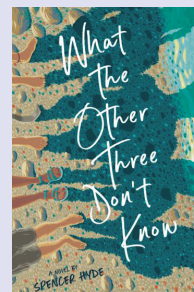
*Literatur und Apokalypse*  
Christian Clement



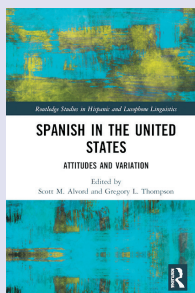
*Juan Rulfo en el Cine*  
Douglas J. Weatherford



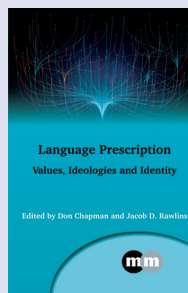
*Delusions of Grandeur: American Essays*  
Joey Franklin



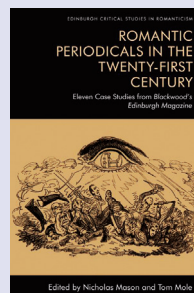
*What the Other Three Don't Know*  
Spencer Hyde



*Spanish in the United States*  
Gregory L. Thompson and Scott M. Alvord



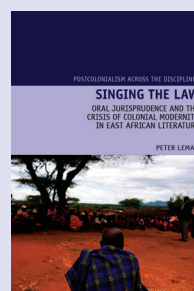
*Language Prescription: Values, Ideologies, and Identity*  
Don Chapman and Jacob D. Rawlins



*Romantic Periodicals in the Twenty-First Century*  
Nicholas Mason and Tom Mole

*This Is the Plate: Utah Food Traditions*  
Eric Eliason, Carol Edison, and Lynne S. McNeill. Includes chapters by Eric Eliason, Jill Rudy, Frank Christianson, and Dennis Cutchins  
*Fairy-Tale TV*  
Jill Rudy and Pauline Greenhill

*Anthologizing Poe: Editions, Translations, and (Trans)National Canons*  
Emron Esplin and Margarida Vale de Gato  
*The Banned Books Reader. Essay, "Rushdie's Deal with the Devil"*  
Kevin Blankenship



*Singing the Law*  
Peter Leman



**But Wait, There's More!**

The list of faculty publications continues on page 23



# Finishing the Race

BIKING OVER TWO HUNDRED MILES pushes the human mind and body to its limits, but so does trying to learn a new language. Associate Professor Troy Cox (Linguistics) has experience with both.

This past summer, after months of training, Cox finished the iconic LoToJa (Logan to Jackson) bike race for the fourth time. Clocking in at over two hundred miles, this race pushes bikers to their physical and mental limits. And as a researcher of second-language learning, Cox has not let this metaphor of endurance escape him.

Just like preparing for an long race, language learning requires consistent training and intelligent goal setting. And while you can simply complete a race, it's better to strive for a lifestyle that promotes good health, which can be felt in all aspects of life.

Cox noted, "This is where I tie my scholarship and my hobbies together. How do we make sure that we're mindful of our learning goals? And how can those goals change us so we can meet the aims of a BYU education for lifelong learning and service? Speaking another language is one of the great ways we can serve our neighbors throughout this life. If you just focus on trying to get through the class, you'll get your sixteen language credits, but you won't have changed from the process of it."

This past summer, Cox and his research team developed what he calls the "Language Proficiency Diagnostic Assessment (LPDA)." Cox shared an experience that contributed to the genesis of the LPDA, which came as he was hiking in Bogota, Columbia. After going a ways up the trail and hitting his fitness goal for the day, he decided to turn around and head back, but the people he met coming down convinced him to turn around and finish the hike. In the end, he was met with a stunning view of the city.

Just as Cox was tempted to turn around once he met the minimum requirement of his fitness goal, he is worried that BYU students are not reaping the benefits of completing their language studies.

"Here's what I think happens at BYU," Cox explained. "People come in and they have a program of study that the Advisement Center gives them, like their Apple Watch, and once they hit their language credit requirement, they turn around and go back to their lives without really changing their world perspective, and it might hamper their ability to be of service in the future."

The LPDA is designed to help language learners better understand their language proficiency through self-evaluation and reflection. It helps them determine which level of language course would be best for them and allows them to reflect how they can improve.

Cox hopes that this new assessment will help students studying a language to recognize their weaknesses and then take the needed steps to continue their language-learning journey.

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH, '21



# Faith and Hope and Love— in Waiting

By Matthew Wickman

I LOVE READING ABOUT about the humanities across multiple disciplines. Sometimes, that means reading about the humanities *outside* of humanities disciplines.

Outside of humanities *disciplines*, but not outside the humanities; because the humanities address potentially *everything*. If it's produced by humans—whether it's math or science or engineering, or anything else—it's in the province of the humanities. And if we're reading it, even if we're using “read” as a metaphor for interpreting natural phenomena, it's humans doing the reading. The humanities are uniquely capacious; nothing about our human experience escapes them.

Still, in the narrow way we divide up knowledge in universities, you can technically leave the humanities for other fields. But even then, you often find the humanities there, or the humanities find you. So it has been for me in recent months as I have been perusing work by prominent theologians across the Christian tradition.

I love reading theology and am often struck by the profound insights of people in other faiths and the impact their insights have on my own. During this difficult pandemic year, I have read theology with particular interest. One text of special relevance, perhaps because it was written with our present circumstances in mind, is *God and the Pandemic* by the Anglican theologian N.T. Wright, a text brought to my attention by my friend and English Department colleague Miranda Wilcox. Wright reflects compellingly on prayerful Christian

responses to the pandemic. These responses include openly lamenting human misfortune, acknowledging the dreadful reality that has befallen so many, and laboring to improve the lives of those who suffer. “[W]hen the world is going through great convulsions, the followers of Jesus are called to be people of prayer at the place where the world is in pain.”<sup>1</sup>

Perseverance, the theme of this issue of *Humanities* magazine, also turns out to be one of the important themes of Wright's short but powerful book. If we are to be, in Wright's words, “people of prayer at the place where the world is in pain,” then

we must be people who are willing to work *and* to wait: to work for a better world even as we wait to understand fully all of what “better” may mean. After all, is “better” defined solely by a return to “normal”? Was “normal life” in, say, mid-February 2020 something to be desperately desired? Can we do no better? Can we not draw on our experience of the pandemic to become more understanding, more equitable, more caring, a little less selfish, less frenetic, less driven by things that matter least? And are we sure we know how to create that better world? Are we ready for the world we desire?

The humanities are uniquely capacious; nothing about our human experience escapes them.



PHOTO: “FAMILY PRAYER” BY NATE EDWARDS/BYU PHOTO

Wright is doubtful. Indeed, he believes all Christians should feel some helpful, faithful doubt. And it is in doubt—and in persevering through that incomprehension while waiting for further light and knowledge—that we may be most spiritually (and perhaps socially) transformed. To give expression to this complex sentiment—to a feeling of hope that we may come to understand how we do not yet know for what we should hope—Wright turns to the humanities. Specifically, he turns to poetry, to these lines from T.S. Eliot’s “East Coker”:

I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope,

For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love

For love would be love of the wrong thing; there is yet faith

But the faith and the hope and the love are all in the waiting.<sup>2</sup>

Here, Eliot appeals to apophatic mysticism, that is, to the idea that in being too eager to define God and His will, we project our own needs and limited understanding onto God’s eternal nature and purposes. And Wright appeals to Eliot because he recognizes our natural desire not to “have to face the darkness. So that we don’t have to ‘watch and pray’ with Jesus in Gethsemane.”<sup>3</sup> But our moment, right now, requires more deeply Christian behavior. And so, Wright continues, this “is a time for restraint, for fasting, for a sense of exile,” or at least of social distancing, a time “of not-belonging. . . . A time for not rushing to judgments.”<sup>4</sup>

Ours is a time, in short, for waiting. During the pandemic, such waiting has been made a little more bearable for me by books like Wright’s. And his book is made a little more poignant by poems like Eliot’s.

—MATTHEW WICKMAN,  
FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE  
HUMANITIES CENTER

“It is possible to reach your goals if you work hard, keep the right perspective, and use your challenges as opportunities to grow and develop . . . It is possible to make your journey a journey of hope and a journey of success.”

*Estela Marquez, an advisor for BYU’s Multicultural Student Services, speaking at the weekly BYU devotional address Tuesday, September 22, 2020, on “Enduring and Trusting to the End.” For more, visit [speeches.byu.edu/talks/estela-marquez/enduring-trusting-end/](https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/estela-marquez/enduring-trusting-end/)*

1. N.T. Wright. *God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath* (London: Zondervan, 2020), 42, emphases deleted.

2. *Ibid.*, 54.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

## Plagues and Pandemics



*Isenheim Altarpiece: The Resurrection* by Mathias Grünewald, Unterlinden Museum (Colmar, France), Wikimedia.

PLAGUES HAVE AFFLICTED mankind for millennia without end. Yet, in the arts, one can find both empathy and hope when enduring a global pandemic. In September, at a “Café Europa” forum panel, BYU faculty from the College of Humanities gathered to discuss how literature, film, and art can teach modern audiences about pandemics.

Professor Nick Mason (English) shared how Daniel Defoe’s *A Journal of the Plague Year* highlighted the impact of plagues on the poor because they could not afford as many protections as the wealthy. Mason added, “By September 1665, some seven thousand people died in a single week in London, and these are almost all poor people. It’s the poor who bore the brunt of this plague, and it certainly speaks to our moment.”

Unfortunately, world history is not only riddled with literal plagues but also with several plagues that afflict the emotional health of society. Associate Professor Chip Oscarson

(Comparative Arts and Letters) discussed how Ingmar Bergman’s Swedish film *The Seventh Seal* (1957) depicts a world ravaged by a physical plague that symbolizes the moral destruction spawned by both the Crusades and World War II—highlighting humanity’s failure to overcome the plagues of hatred, greed, and intolerance.

However, the very works of art and literature that depict the horrors of emotional and physical plague also offer messages of hope and perseverance for those who look deeply. Assistant Professor Elliot Wise (Comparative Arts and Letters) talked of the sixteenth century *Isenheim Altarpiece* by Matthias Grünewald, which depicts Christ’s suffering on the cross in particularly graphic detail. “For many people [the image is] very disturbing at first, until they realize that this is a painting of the Savior with all of the symptoms of ‘St. Anthony’s fire,’” a common and deadly disease at the time that is now known as ergotism. Wise expounded, “This is, in short, a God who suffers viscerally with his people.” But upon opening the altarpiece, one finds a resurrection scene that is “as triumphant and effulgent as the body of Christ was grotesque and pained on the exterior.” Wise remarked, “This is the hope for those patients in their pandemic: that one day their weeping sores will become like Jesus’s—effulgent radiant rubies and badges of triumph.”

For victims of St. Anthony’s fire, COVID-19, and all other mortal and societal plagues, the message found in literature and art is ultimately one of hope: endure, for relief will come, pain will fade, and loss will one day become reunion.

—CRISTIANA FARNSWORTH,  
EUROPEAN STUDIES AND RUSSIAN ’21

## A New Translation



BYU STUDENT Lila Norton (English, ’22) returned home from missionary service in Macedonia in April 2019. Just a few months later, she got a call inviting her to help translate the Book of Mormon into Macedonian.

In 2012, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent their first young, proselytizing missionaries into Macedonia. The Church is still very new in that country, and they only have one branch in the city of Skopje.

While Norton was serving in Macedonia, there were only eight to twelve proselytizing missionaries, and they would mainly use Serbian or English church materials to teach investigators. But there were no official materials for those people who only spoke Macedonian. In October 2018, the Church approved a project to translate the Book of Mormon into Macedonian, and Norton was asked to join the translation committee shortly after her return from missionary service.

Norton’s main responsibility is to “read through [the initial translation] and make sure it’s doctrinally accurate, and that the language sounds scriptural instead of like modern lingo.” Norton remarked, “I think it means a lot to [Macedonians] that we’re actually trying to translate it into their language, because oftentimes, they kind of feel forgotten. It means a lot that we’re at least trying to connect to them and their language. I think, with time, people will realize that there’s something special about it, and they will hopefully cling to that.”

Translation is all about connecting with other people. As Norton and her committee work on translating, they have to make sure that “it feels Macedonian and will mean something to Macedonians,” she commented. “It’s more about the ideas and the feelings of the verses, and that’s what you’re translating rather than the exact words.”

Working on this project has had a valuable impact on Norton’s life. She has learned to rely on God’s help to guide her through the difficult aspects of the imperfect work of translation. But she has also learned more unexpected lessons. Norton stated, “Going in, I figured I’d get a better idea of what the Book of Mormon really means and how it works linguistically. And I have definitely gotten a greater appreciation in all of that, but what has had an even bigger impact on me throughout this process is having to work so closely with other members of the translation team and being able to build relationships and work with them in all areas of their lives in order to complete this task.”

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH ’21

## Short Stories, Big Impact

EVERY PERSON has a story worth telling, and telling those stories is about to get easier for students at BYU. The College of Humanities recently partnered with the Short Édition publishing house, which provides universities, restaurants, and even train stations worldwide with a new way to enjoy literature on the go: the Short Story Dispenser, which prints freelance literature from writers across the globe.

“The Short Story Dispensers provide an innovative, whimsical approach to literature,” said College of Humanities Associate Dean Leslee Thorne-Murphy, who spearheaded the project.

With the wave of a hand, readers can choose a one-, three-, or five-minute story to print for free from the touchless kiosk.

“Obviously it was an alternative to having a phone glaring in your face,” she said. “In a way that is conducive to modern life, the dispensers give us short, compelling works of literature that make us pause and actually pay attention to a piece of paper. It’s both delightfully retro and forward-thinking.”

—MOLLY OGDEN WELCH,  
COMMUNICATION '22

## Remembering Wordsworth



LAST FALL SEMESTER, Associate Professor Paul Westover (English) and the students in his “Romanticism and Memory” course created two exhibitions

for the Harold B. Lee Library: one about William Wordsworth’s remarkable sister, Dorothy, and one commemorating the poet’s own 250th birthday.

Westover created this nineteenth-century literature course to help students examine memory “not just in terms of how the literary texts are embodying memory or talking about memory or dealing with memory in some way, but also in thinking about how we remember Romanticism and Romantic writers.” The research he has conducted shows that memory can be transferred not only by literary texts but also through sites, practices, and material objects.

As Westover thought about “what kind of assignment could help students do some memory work that would be valuable,” he decided to task the students with curating their own exhibits to be shown in the Harold B. Lee Library in March and April 2020. While the March exhibit about Dorothy Wordsworth was shown as planned, due to COVID-19, the April exhibit celebrating Wordsworth’s 250th birthday was pushed back and shown in September 2020.

The September exhibition was part of a worldwide effort to honor the birth and legacy of the famous poet. In response to the many events that have happened around the world, Westover stated, “There hasn’t been anything quite on this scale since 1970, which was his 200th birthday. . . . This has been a pretty big deal, and it was undertaken in conjunction with a big renovation project at the Wordsworth Trust in England.”

Wordsworth has always held a special place here at BYU: “Certain values in his work resonate with our people,” Westover explained. “And so, he’s been a part of the curriculum in our English department basically since the department was invented. We’ve had several really engaged Wordsworth scholars in our

department over the years, and we love to honor that tradition.”

Westover, who has spent much of his professional life researching Wordsworth and other Romantic poets, noted, “There’s something about the connection between our university and this poet that’s unique. We’re just the torchbearers in a relationship that has gone on for many years, and we hope that it will continue long after we’re gone.”

The exhibition *Wordsworth at BYU* was on display in the HBLL Special Collections reading room through mid-October. But the accompanying websites created by Professor Westover’s students are accessible at [dorothywordsworth2019.byu.edu](http://dorothywordsworth2019.byu.edu) and [wordsworth250.byu.edu](http://wordsworth250.byu.edu).

—HEATHER BERGESON, ENGLISH '21

## Amour de la Langue— Love of Language

BYU IS WELL KNOWN for its language classes, which provide exposure to new cultures and promote a love of language learning. The BYU Center for Language Studies (CLS) is committed to spreading this love of language to people across the world.

BYU is partnered with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to “develop . . . world language resources, and . . . educate students to be linguistically and culturally prepared to function as world citizens” ([actfl.org](http://actfl.org)).

CLS recently donated funds to ACTFL’s new advocacy effort, [leadwithlanguages.org](http://leadwithlanguages.org), a resource for students and educators who advocate for language learning.

The CLS assistant director, Rebecca Marks, commented, “In some parts of the U.S., foreign languages are not seen as essential, so funding for teaching them goes down.” She continued, “We are always trying to educate people why [foreign languages are so important].”

CLS and ACTFL work together to develop and administer language proficiency tests for the language certificate, which is offered in nineteen languages at BYU. Thanks to generous funding by the Mary Lou Fulton Chair for World Languages, these tests are free to BYU students.

BYU’s involvement in promoting language learning will no doubt prepare students for life-long learning and have lasting effects on students and educators for years to come.

—MOLLY OGDEN WELCH,  
COMMUNICATIONS '22





# Staying Power:

## Women and the Art of Perseverance

By Heather Belnap

*THE OBSTACLE RACE: The Fortunes of Women Painters and Their Work*, Germaine Greer's pioneering text on the history of women artists, was aptly named.<sup>1</sup> The obstacles women artists have encountered—and continue to experience—while trying to obtain a foothold in the art world are legion. Compounding these professional challenges are the personal adversities we all face to some degree or another: poor physical or mental health, troubled relationships, economic insecurity, faltering faith, the passing of loved ones. Some of these trials are temporary; others are lifelong battles. Over the centuries, women artists have navigated difficult realities and made significant accomplishments by dint of their tenacity, fearlessness, resilience, and creativity. Their stories, told in paint and clay and ink and a host of other media, can reach across time and space to teach us something about the art of perseverance.

The odds of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (b. 1940) becoming a highly successful artist were not in her favor. Raised on the Confederated

Salish and Kootenai Reservation in Montana by a single father who was an itinerant worker, her childhood was filled with instability. But she knew from the age of four that she wanted to be an artist and persisted towards realizing that goal. After earning an undergraduate degree, her application for graduate studies at the University of Mexico was turned down three times, but she was ultimately admitted and earned a Master of Arts at age forty.

While Quick-to-See Smith is no stranger to discrimination in the art world, she has taken these experiences and transformed them into works that call for its reorientation. She recounts, “After my first year at a community college, the professor told me even though I could draw better than the men students, that a woman could not be an artist.”<sup>2</sup> In another art class, she was told that the golden mean was not formulated for the representation of the female body.<sup>3</sup> Years later, she would revisit this bias in her mixed media piece, *The Red Mean: A Self Portrait* (1992). Using Leonardo da Vinci's drawing *The Vitruvian*

*Man* (c. 1492) as a starting point, she traced the outline of her own body—not white, not male, not European—onto a messy bed of tribal newspapers, her figure spilling untidily beyond the confines of the Vitruvian circle and cancelled out by a large red X slashed across it. *The Red Mean* expresses her position as an interloper in the art world, but also as an innovator. In it, she questions the assumptions undergirding the Eurocentric art world *and* recuperates the rich visual culture of her Native American heritage.

Similarly, Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) found a way to translate her physical and psychological hardships into some of the most compelling self-portraits of the twentieth century. She was diagnosed with childhood polio at age six, and at age eighteen she was involved in a bus accident from which she narrowly escaped with her life. Kahlo turned to art during her long recovery, and she had a special easel with a mirror installed at her bedside so that she could be her own model.

The 2018 exhibition, *Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up*, featured a number of her orthopedic corsets, which were prescribed to help ease Kahlo's chronic pain. She used these corsets as canvases, covering them with images that brought her comfort: vibrant flora and fauna, the symbols of the hammer and sickle, and, on one, a meticulously painted fetus. These corsets stand as a powerful testament to the ways that art can succor.<sup>4</sup> Kahlo used art to not only persevere through her own pain but also to speak to others who suffer.

Other artists have also found healing in painting their life stories. In 1969, Betye Saar (b. 1926) created *A Black Girl's Window*, an autobiographical assemblage of her childhood. The bottom half features a silhouette of her face and hands, enveloped by cosmological signs and painted on glass; hers was a future open to possibility. And yet, above her visage, panes of a wooden window frame are filled with reminders of the burdens of the past that she carries: a tintype of a woman reminiscent of her Irish grandmother, a phrenological chart long used to legitimize racism, and a small plastic skeleton that alludes to her father's death when she was five years old.

Painted at the height of the race riots, and in the year that Saar divorced the father of her three young girls, *A Black Girl's Window* captures a pivotal moment for the artist and for the country. For Saar, creating art such as this is a deeply spiritual and cathartic act, and a way to work through the difficulties confronting herself, her family, and her community. In an interview last year, Saar opined: "Once you start making something with your

hands, the healing starts. I call this creative grieving."<sup>5</sup>

This concept of creative grieving is at the heart of the recent exhibition *Encounters with Grief*, which was created by BYU student Myleka Bevans. Framed as an exploration of the rituals of grief, the series of installations incorporates the balloons, flowers, stuffed animals, sympathy notes, and words of advice that she received after the death of her baby girl. Bevans explains that she came to understand that these expressions signified a kind of "club initiation." She writes: "Each object was from a person who knew pain and was welcoming me into the deeper and darker aspects of life. I had entered into a part of life that allowed for emotions to be deeper, connections to be more precious, and life to be richer."<sup>6</sup>

One of Bevans's "cloud" installations, titled *Flower Cloud*, is perhaps her most powerful rumination on grief. Suspended from the ceiling, this cloud is a cluster of flower bouquets with sheets of pink and purple tissue and clear cellophane tucked into its crevices. The distended mass threatens to shed some of its weight, and on the floor below lies a mound of single stems that have escaped to form the shape of an open grave. To stand before the cloud and watch the inexorable process of grief slowly give way in the form of dropping flowers is a profoundly moving experience, made even more so in the midst

of a pandemic that has made death all too palpable.

Pausing to consider the life stories and artworks of women who have faced devastating loss, chronic pain, rampant discrimination, and low odds of recognition can be therapeutic. These narratives and objects can remind us of our capacity to turn the dross of tribulation into something precious and enduring. It is possible that time spent contemplating the historical and material traces of their journeys might just provide us with what we need: a broader perspective, a welcome distraction, a bit of solace, a sense of kinship, an increase in compassion, a deeper humility, and maybe even a conviction that we too can transform our own struggles into something praiseworthy.

*Associate Professor Heather Belnap teaches art history and European Studies Coordinator at Brigham Young University, as well as an affiliate of the Global Women's Studies program.*

1. Germaine Greer, *The Obstacle Race: The Fortunes of Women Painters and Their Work* (London: Farrar, Straus, & Giraud, 1979).
2. "Jaune Quick-to-See Smith," Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, Brooklyn Museum. [bit.ly/3oU0us5](https://bit.ly/3oU0us5). Accessed October 24, 2020.
3. Quoted in Charles Giuliano, "Visiting Smith College of Art: Thoughts on Grunewald, Bouts, and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith," *Berkshire Fine Arts* (24 January 2014): [bit.ly/3mWs5Ib](https://bit.ly/3mWs5Ib). Accessed October 24, 2020.
4. *Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up*, V&A Museum (June 16–November 18, 2019). [bit.ly/2HZgB6O](https://bit.ly/2HZgB6O). Accessed October 24, 2020.
5. Holland Cotter, "'It's About Time!' Betye Saar's Long Climb to the Summit," *The New York Times* (September 4, 2019).
6. "Encounters with Grief: Myleka Bevans," (September 28–October 8, 2020), Gallery 303, Harris Fine Arts Center, Brigham Young University. <https://bit.ly/2JwaM1j>. Accessed October 8, 2020.



JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE SMITH, *THE RED MEAN: A SELF PORTRAIT*, 1992, SMITH COLLEGE, NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS.



BETYE SAAR, *A BLACK GIRL'S WINDOW*, 1969, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK.




FLORENCE ARQUIN, *UNTITLED [FRIDA KAHLO WEARING A PLASTER CORSET WITH HAMMER AND SICKLE AND UNBORN BABY]*, c. 1950. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THROCKMORTON FINE ART.

# UNIVERSAL HUMANITIES

BY HEATHER BERGESON

“EVERY FIELD NEEDS PEOPLE WHO CAN TELL STORIES.”



WHEN NASA downloaded its first image of Mars from the Mariner 4 flyby mission in 1964, our closest neighbor was still a mystery—a perfect landscape for the imagined civilizations found in Ray Bradbury’s *The Martian Chronicles*, H.G. Wells’s *The War of the Worlds*, and even *Looney Tunes*’s Marvin the Martian. But when the pictures returned, they revealed a desolate and lonely planet, prompting then-President Lyndon B. Johnson to state, “It just may be that life as we know it with its humanity is more unique than many have thought.”<sup>1</sup>

Despite many setbacks, scientists have not yet given up hope that there is, or once was, life on Mars. As NASA has sent more missions to the Red Planet, they’ve found evidence of past water, proof that its environment is much more varied than previously thought.

In March 2020, NASA launched the latest Mars rover, sent to explore

the landscape and search for signs of ancient life. As has been the tradition with all Mars rovers, NASA called for children across the nation to submit short essays with a proposed name for the new spacecraft. A boy named Alexander Mather won the 2020 Mars rover naming competition with his submission: Perseverance. In his winning essay he wrote, “We as humans evolved as creatures who could learn to adapt to any situation, no matter how harsh.”

Perseverance is one of the core attributes that has allowed us to continue as a collective community. And just as scientists haven’t given up on their pursuit of finding life on Mars, humanity has never stopped questioning what it means to be alive. While scientists look to the light in space to “address fundamental questions about our place in the Universe,”<sup>2</sup> humanists study literature, art, language, and philosophy to “remind us where we have been and help us envision where we are going.”<sup>3</sup> The study of humanities isn’t rocket science, but it is essential to the mental and emotional health of a society.

So what role does the study of humanities play in our society? Science may be what helps us survive and understand the natural world, but the humanities is what helps us thrive and derive meaning from our circumstances. Yet, despite this important role, departments in the humanities have continually struggled recruiting students, especially as college students are increasingly gravitating toward fields of study that promise a large monetary return.

In response to this trend, Associate Professor Trent Hickman (English) reasoned, “I think sometimes people don’t go into the humanities because they think it’s not a real-world major

or it’s not a practical major, but I think you need to understand that the humanities are perhaps among the most practical of majors because they deal with the fundamental life questions, and they deal with the kinds of things that you get to carry with you into the eternities.”

In addition to the fact that studying the humanities is beneficial to our personal growth, Hickman argues, “Every field needs people who can tell stories and who can evaluate the stories that other people tell them.” And these stories that we tell each other are made effective by our ability to think clearly, act well, and appreciate life—traits that the College of Humanities seeks to imbue in students every day.

The Perseverance rover will reach the surface of Mars on February 18, 2021, and there’s no telling what might happen here on Earth in the interim. But if there’s one thing we could say for certain, it’s that humanity will persist to that day and beyond, just as it has for thousands of years; and the humanities will continue to provide meaning and guidance to those who choose to read, observe, and listen to the world around them.

*Heather Bergeson is a student majoring in English and plans to graduate in 2021. To learn more about the Mars Perseverance Rover, visit [mars.nasa.gov/mars2020](https://mars.nasa.gov/mars2020).*

1. APPEL News Staff. “This Month in NASA History: Mariner 4 Flies by Mars.” NASA. ASK the Academy, July 30, 2010. [go.nasa.gov/367ZzMI](https://go.nasa.gov/367ZzMI)
2. Jennifer Wiles, “Why We Explore,” (NASA, June 13, 2013), [go.nasa.gov/3mPZovI](https://go.nasa.gov/3mPZovI)
3. The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2013).

“JUST AS SCIENTISTS HAVEN’T GIVEN UP ON THEIR PURSUIT OF FINDING LIFE ON MARS, HUMANITY HAS NEVER STOPPED QUESTIONING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ALIVE.”

# PROJECT

# PERSEVERANCE



*Empowering students to become successful, life-long language learners*

By Cristiana Farnsworth

IN 2010, BYU faculty members, including Kirk Belnap (Asian and Near Eastern Languages), Jennifer Bown (German and Russian), Dan Dewey (Linguistics), and Patrick Steffen (Psychology), launched a project aimed at empowering students to become successful, life-long language learners. They called this endeavor Project Perseverance, and, true to its name, this project has both persevered through the past decade and driven students to persevere in their language programs despite enormous difficulties.

The foundations for this project first began in 2002, when the U.S. Department of Education announced that BYU would become the headquarters for the National Middle East Language Resource Center (NMEELRC). Funding for this project began as a congressional response to the events of September 11, 2001. Twenty other institutions of higher learning partnered with the NMEELRC, all determined to increase national language capacity in Middle Eastern languages, including Arabic, Modern Hebrew, Turkish, and Persian. With the help of experts like Madeline Ehrman, a clinical psychologist retired from directing research at the Foreign

Service Institute School for Language Studies, and Andrew Cohen, former director of the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, Project Perseverance formed as a way to help students become more effective language-learners, especially when in intensive study abroad settings.

Project Perseverance (PP) is an integral part of BYU's intensive Arabic study abroad program in Amman, Jordan. Here, the project has focused on helping students acquire advanced-level proficiency, improve social networks, increase the quality of speaking opportunities, develop self-efficacy, and learn to self-regulate. The PP team found that even students who had succeeded in learning challenging languages before and "done so in stressful circumstances, were not necessarily well-prepared to take advantage of their study abroad opportunities in Jordan. They leave Provo fully intending to immerse themselves in Arabic and in Arab culture, but almost all struggle to do so," commented Kirk Belnap, one of BYU's directors of the project. "Self-regulation is what it's all about, if you can't keep yourself emotionally in the game, then it's all over. . . . What most students fail to appreciate as they prepare to travel, even if they have previously done so, is that highly-

prized growth is typically the result of overcoming significant challenges."

The challenges students have faced on international study abroad and internship programs range from frustration with the language and culture shock to racism and sexism. Living in a new environment and learning a new language are far from easy or relaxing situations. Dr. Belnap explained the crux of stress experienced in intensive language programs as follows: "Expressing your identity in another language takes time. This is one of the biggest struggles people have, that they're unable to express themselves in the language. Their sense of identity can be shaken by that. They find themselves unable to be the funny or witty person that they are in English and that process of being reduced to [the language abilities of] a child and only communicating the basics to survive proves an emotional and psychological challenge to work through. It takes a lot of time and patience to be able to express your personality and beliefs and to understand others and connect with them on a deeper level. . . . You can be a cracker-jack language learner and still find yourself struggling to stay in the game. It's a matter of the long game."

In response to the need for coaching students to stay in the long-game emotionally, the PP team researched how to handle stress in language-learning environments. To do this, the team studied cortisol levels in hair samples from BYU students in Jordan; they have also studied students' blood pressure to track the stress levels of students at times

**"YOU CAN BE A  
CRACKER-JACK  
LANGUAGE LEARNER  
AND STILL FIND  
YOURSELF STRUGGLING  
TO STAY IN THE GAME.  
IT'S A MATTER OF THE  
LONG GAME."**

of language performance, such as in an oral proficiency test.<sup>1</sup>

Dan Dewey, another member of the PP team at BYU, remarked that “the hair cortisol levels of students on intensive language study abroad programs were similar to cortisol levels of people going through divorce. . . . Learning a language can clearly be a very stressful experience, but it’s not impossible if you are motivated.” Dr. Dewey added that he studied German in high school with a very rigid, strict teacher. “It was very stressful, and I did poorly,” he said. “When I got a mission call to Japan, I thought ‘If I can’t learn German, how can I learn Japanese?’ I learned it because I had strong motivation; I loved the people and wanted to share the gospel with them. I met people and couldn’t say to them what I wanted to say, so I decided to change that. . . . The best motivation is intrinsic and [students] have to find it themselves.”

Intertwined with motivation, Dewey found that social interaction is one of the most important factors in learning a language well. While it is undoubtedly stressful for most students to talk to people in a different language and in a different country, Dewey claimed that “those who were most effective took personal time when they needed it, but didn’t ignore their tasks either—they went out and tried things and talked to people. The best things you can do on a study abroad are meet lots of people, open your mouth, talk to everyone, find your golden contact, and don’t lose track of your purpose.”

So, what else does the PP team recommend to handle stress and anxiety associated with language learning? According to their project description, their research efforts are currently focusing on the effectiveness of a combination of (1) student self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses, (2) coaching in order to help students recognize and deal with anxiety from culture shock, and (3) “biofeedback and the mindful use of breathing to deal with anxiety.”<sup>2</sup> Belnap explained, “We have solid evidence that if you don’t keep your anxiety in check then your chances of learning the language well are pretty low. We learned that interventions that keep stress down make a big difference. . . . For example, a student who employed breathing as a relaxation technique was able to engage and make progress far beyond what his aptitude scores predicted.”

Dewey added that “Can Do” statements are effective in helping students realize their strengths and establish “next-step” goals linguistically. If students have these goals to

focus on, they know what they can control in a stressful situation. “It’s essential to make a plan of what you can and will do in stressful situations, then students need to anticipate internal emotional obstacles and plan for them,” Dewey said. “Plan for the obstacle, envision your goals, and use those to drive you and help you get over the stress. Most importantly, be patient with yourself and put in the time . . . understand that it will work out.”

To help motivate current and upcoming language learners, the PP team is putting together a website called “You Can Do It” with case studies and short articles on principles of successful language learning. Belnap commented, “We have some amazing underdog stories. You never could have predicted how far these people would go; they’re great stories for a growth mindset . . . and we would love to get more stories.”

After reading of all the stress and struggles that go into learning a foreign language, one might ask: Is it worth it? According to Dr. Belnap and the PP team, the answer is a resounding “yes.” They found that students come out of these intensive experiences having developed character, resilience, and perspectives that will help carry them toward success in whatever field they enter. “For centuries, language-learning was foundational to a classical education and was supposed to help one to think logically,” Belnap reflected, “but the more I’m around it, the more I see it as all about personal growth. . . . When I ask students what they have learned, other than the language, they inevitably answer, ‘I learned that I can do hard things.’”

*Cristiana Farnsworth is a student majoring in European studies and Russian and plans to graduate in 2021. For more about Project Perseverance, visit [youcandoit.byu.edu](http://youcandoit.byu.edu)*

1. Dewey, D. P., Belnap, R. K., & Steffen, P. (2018). “Anxiety: Stress, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, and Enjoyment During Study Abroad in Amman, Jordan.” *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 38, (pp. 140–161). doi.org/10.1017/S0267190518000107

2. Belnap, R.K., Bown, J., Dewey, D.P., Belnap, L.P., & Steffen, P.R. (2016). “Project perseverance: Helping students become self-regulating learners.” In P.D. MacIntyre, T. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds). *Positive Psychology in SLA* (pp. 282–300). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

I LEARNED THAT  
I CAN DO  
HARD  
THINGS.





“Ultimately,  
democracy  
is about  
friendship—  
it’s about  
how we treat  
each other.”

# JAZZ

&

# DEMOCRACY

By Natalie Shorr

ON STAGE in the large, dark, and spacious BYU Marriott Center auditorium sits a group of musicians ready to share both music and insight. Beside them (among others) is BYU Professor Greg Clark (English). The auditorium, full of students, faculty, and other staff, is silent, but the air is full of buzzing anticipation for the Jazz and Democracy forum. Here, in February 2020, continues a purely American conversation that has been around for years and one that will (beyond the prediction of anyone present there) be reinvigorated among the entire United States population in the months to come.

Young and old (but mostly young), black and white (but mostly white), the BYU population sat ready on that cold winter morning to hear what Professor Clark and world-renowned jazz pianist and composer Marcus Roberts had to share with them. The prayer was given, introductions were shared, and Professor Clark stood up and told the audience why he was there. “Ultimately, democracy is about friendship—it’s about how we treat each other personally as well as how we treat each other publicly, civically, as we work together to organize our lives that we live together.” Clark continued, “The thing is, individuals influence each other, and they can make changes, positive or negative, in response to those influences. To do that well requires us to learn values and practice actions that help people stay together.” Clark entreated his audience to “Watch. Don’t just listen, watch.” The emphasis on how jazz music and democracy connect is more than an experiment in sound; it is a study in human interaction on all planes.

This is not a new concept to jazz musicians. According to Professor Clark, “It’s a truism in jazz circles that jazz is ‘the music of democracy.’” And the musicians in Marcus Roberts’s band, the Modern Jazz Generation, would agree. “Jazz music was a democratic art form invented in the early twentieth century by people who were just a few short decades out of slavery,” trumpeter Wynton Marsalis said at the forum. “Through the music, they created a system of equality that allowed everyone’s voice to be heard and everyone’s talent to shine. . . . Every time we listen

to everyone’s voice, we become stronger and better musicians and better people.”

Fast forward to July 1st of 2020. Professor Clark was able to expand upon the idea of jazz being a democratic art form and a blueprint for us in the modern social context. With the onset of the pandemic, the civil rights movement, and the reinvigoration of the ever-present issue of political polarization and animosity, intellectuals began searching for solutions to these pressing social problems. As a doctor of American studies, analyzing the state of American affairs through the lens of the humanities is Professor Clark’s lifeblood. Unlocking the history behind jazz and the skills it teaches us today is, to him, one avenue of thought that can help us learn how to heal our democracy.

Over the phone on a hot summer morning in July, as anti-mask and anti-racism protests erupted across the country, Professor Clark explained, “Jazz musicians bring their own voices to the bandstand and tailor how they use them to make the music being made by the whole [group] better. As they make music interdependently, as the band faces, together, shared problems and opportunities, individuals find themselves making music that’s better than anything they could have envisioned [on their own].” He went on to say, “This is because they are improvising within the support system of a [collaborative] structure. Freedom in this music—individual freedom—takes the form of entering one’s own unique voice into a common creative process of advancing a purpose and project to which each musician chooses to be responsible and accountable.”

He concluded, “In jazz, my voice as a musician would be adapted in a particular situation to what the other musicians are saying and doing.”

Clark described how the foundational characteristics of jazz music

**Listen to Marcus Roberts and his band perform for BYU at the February 2020 forum, [speeches.byu.edu/speakers/marcus-roberts/](https://speeches.byu.edu/speakers/marcus-roberts/)**

can be representations of the ideal characteristics of a healthy, functional democracy. “[The music] is made coherent and purposeful by a group, but the individual contributions are not written out on scores. There is writing and there are composers, certainly there is rehearsal, but the music is made in moments of exchange among individual virtuosos who bring their own voices to the ensemble project,” he explained. “It’s very much individualism in the service of the whole.” This pure democratic form is something that Clark professes he has never seen so clearly in any other art form.

The way our current social and political environment is functioning is very different from the respect and high functionality that the Modern Jazz Generation shows. Clark observes that the push for individualism has gotten to an extreme point that is threatening our democracy. “The fact is, we are far more interdependent than independent,” he said with a sigh.

According to Clark and Roberts, Americans have a lot to learn from a well-functioning jazz band as well as from the history of the Jazz movement. “Jazz is the music of the people for whom the promises of the Declaration of Independence and the principles of ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness’ never have been kept. As with the Native Americans, violations of those principles have been, and continue to be, real and constant for Black people,” Clark said. “The origins [of jazz] are in the Black experience in America, an experience formed by slavery and its aftermath,” he continued.

Jazz offers lessons not only to the American public and political systems but also to smaller populations. Clark makes it clear that bringing in Marcus Roberts and the Modern Jazz Generation was an effort to open the eyes of the BYU population. The lessons that the February forum taught have only increased in relevancy. Upon being asked what the people of BYU can learn from jazz, Clark replied that he hopes we “can use these insights to contemplate equality, what equality really means, what equality really requires, and why equality is necessary in a free society

where people pursue their own happiness.” It is Clark’s intention that BYU students, faculty, staff, and alumni take the opportunity to learn from the principles of unity and collaboration that jazz so beautifully demonstrates. “Jazz, thoughtfully and carefully experienced, can help us awaken to what this country has failed to do for people without privilege,” Clark added.

As he did through giving Marcus Roberts a platform at BYU, Professor Clark wishes that we can make a conscious effort to “listen to the Black people, believe Black people. Don’t argue with them. Remember that you don’t have that experience . . . understand that Black people have a fundamentally different experience than white people do in this country,” and then strive to “amplify their voices.”

Through taking these lessons from jazz to heart, it is possible to heal what is broken in our world today.

*Natalie Shorr is a student majoring in sociology and plans to graduate in 2022.*

# STUDENT VOICES

from the  
Summer Protests

## ALIXA:

USUALLY, I SPEND part of the summer with my family in Ghana. There, I enjoy eating fried plantain, dancing to Afrobeats, and feeling like I can blend into large crowds and disappear whenever I want to. As one of the few Black students at BYU, that's not a luxury that I'm afforded when I'm in Provo, and I've never felt more visible than this past summer.

When Black Lives Matter protests were renewed and began gaining prominence around the country, I wasn't sure how to react. Seeing Black Lives Matter signs around my neighborhood was comforting, but it was sad logging onto social media and seeing how controversial this simple statement apparently was. In the past, I've sometimes masked my real interests and emotions in order to fit in. So, while part of me wanted to play my role in raising awareness of such an important issue,

## CONOR:

THIS SUMMER, events surrounding racism have been partially poignant and partially hopeful. Poignant because they brought me, and all Americans, face to face with the devastating outcomes of our nation's racist history. Hopeful because I saw how it rallied people together for the pursuit of justice. The murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor were not seen as isolated incidents, but as results of a nation inflicted with deep wounds of racism. Much learning and listening began among the white community. Various non-profits received a flood of donations. Sales for books like *White Fragility* and *How to be Anti-Racist* shot through the roof. Thousands of demonstrations took place across the world, united under the phrase

another part of me just wanted to melt into the background.

Consequently, I avoided discussing the topic with those around me. Though I agreed to read a poem at a rally about racial discrimination, I kept the performance a secret. When some family friends, who are BYU alumni, found out I was attending, they offered to drive me there, and I nervously accepted. My knees shook as I stood in front of the

microphone, feeling small and naked. Later, both friends and strangers thanked me for my words and bravery, but I didn't feel like it took courage; it was simply the right thing to do. And though it was scary and uncomfortable, being that vulnerable made me feel closer to my friends. I felt like I was being my full, authentic self, and Provo felt more like home.

—ALIXA BROBBEY, ENGLISH '21

“Black Lives Matter.” Millions of people taking to the streets and posting on social media formed what the *New York Times* suggested is the largest social movement in history. Amidst the mourning in early June, there was a feeling of solidarity in the air.

Since that time, an increasingly divisive social climate has gripped us. I became worried about the contentious nature of political rhetoric regarding the movement. Counter-movements emerged and gained traction. Media outlets focused more on mistakes the movement made than the reason why the movement exists. By September, approval ratings for Black Lives Matter fell back to what they were before June. Considering the minor legislative changes the protests brought,

one wants to look around and say, “That's it? Millions of protestors and we can't get any major reform?” It is easy for discouragement and cynicism to set in.

However, I have learned from others who understand that these feelings have always been a part of the struggle for racial justice. I, with them, am committed to help do the work because I know that tackling the issue of racism in America is a deep wrestle, one where change seems to move far too slow. But it moves. I feel a shared duty to keep working for real racial equity. Let's not forget what we learned in June.

—CONOR THOMAS, PHILOSOPHY '21



## RETROSPECTIVE

AFTER BYU, I went to graduate school at the University of Oklahoma (OU), where I earned an MA in mass communication. The rigor of the undergraduate coursework at BYU was an advantage in my transition to a similarly rigorous academic program at OU. My writing skills, honed at BYU, were probably what made me most successful as a graduate student. I could sometimes get away with a weaker argument because I was better at communicating that argument. For instance, I was once assigned to debate an issue from a disadvantaged position, arguing that advertising to children is a positive thing. And though I disagreed with the position, I still won the debate.

In my opinion, studying literature makes you better at understanding people and things. It enables you to consider multiple viewpoints and be a compassionate, but competent, communicator. Honestly, my humanities education has blessed many parts of my life: as a husband and father, as a church leader, and as a neighbor. I still read widely and often, so my understanding of and ability to use the humanities in everyday life continues to improve.

—ANONYMOUS SURVEY RESPONSE

I'VE ALWAYS VALUED my undergraduate education in humanities with my Italian major. It has helped me to see challenges in my career with a fresh perspective and has allowed me to come up with creative solutions. It's foundational for life in any career field a student decides to pursue. Life is more art than science—in any field. Art brings out beauty, intrigue, purpose, and fun from any aspect of life.

—ANONYMOUS SURVEY RESPONSE



## OBITUARIES



Fred "Kent" Nielsen  
Philosophy

F. KENT NIELSEN passed away June 23, 2020, in Provo, Utah. Kent was born to Lloyd Nielsen and Maurine Carlisle on January 23, 1931, in Ogden, Utah. He grew up with an older brother Carlisle and a younger sister Lorna. He followed Carlisle to Harvard University, on scholarship, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Physics and a master's degree in Education. He later pursued doctoral studies in the History of Science. Kent also served as a missionary in the Northern California mission.

After teaching in Palo Alto, California and Detroit, Michigan, Kent moved to Provo, Utah where he taught for many decades at BYU. His insatiable curiosity and diversity of interests lead to his involvement in the mathematics, physics, religion, and philosophy departments.

His love for the Book of Mormon and his intense study of the gospel was evident in the many Sunday School lessons he taught. He loved the world God created, and reveled in the beauty of the canyons, wildflowers, autumn leaves, waterfalls, and deep blankets of snow. His many hours of genealogical research helped to provide blessings for his ancestors.

Kent married Gaylon Tanner in 1956, Shawna Robison in 1963, and Pat Haglund in 1968. He adored his family and was so proud of everything they accomplished. He is survived by seven children, seventeen grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. His smile, persistent cheerfulness, and his deep love will be greatly missed.

*To read Kent's full obituary, visit [bit.ly/38pfrwr](http://bit.ly/38pfrwr).*



Wendell H. Hall  
Spanish

WENDELL H. HALL passed away on December 24, 2019, in Provo, Utah surrounded by his wife and family.

He was born April 10, 1923, in Ogden, Utah to Howard and Florence Tracy Hall.

He attended Ogden High and Weber College, but his studies were interrupted by World War II and combat through France, Germany, and Austria.

Shortly after his return home from the war, he served for three years as an LDS missionary in Argentina. He continued his education at Weber State, the University of Utah, the University of Vienna (on a Fulbright Scholarship), the University of Michigan, and La Universidad Interamericana (Saltillo, Mexico).

He married Merrill Evelyn Watkins on August 25, 1950 in the Logan, Utah LDS Temple.

After the Cold War, he became a professor of Spanish at BYU, retiring in 1986. Though he taught courses in linguistics, literature, culture, and pedagogy, his major interest was the adaptation of modern media for foreign language learning.

Wendell served as a mission president for the LDS church in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 1981–84. He was president of the LDS Missionary Training Center in Santiago, Chile from 1989–90. He credited most of his success in all his endeavors to his able, loving wife, and the support of their beloved children.

Entertaining his grandchildren was always a major focus, as was basking in the sun on the deck as he enjoyed the beautiful view of Wallsburg Valley.

*To read Wendell's full obituary, visit [bit.ly/2Uc1QAw](http://bit.ly/2Uc1QAw)*

# CRYPTOGRAM

Put your humanities skills into action.  
Can you decipher this famous quote  
based on these clues? M = U, W = M

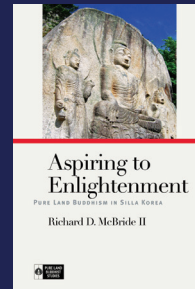
EMBBHEE VE RU JBBVNHRZ. VZ VE  
LJSN KUSQ, CHSEHIHSJRBH, GHJSRVRT,  
EZMNPVRT, EJBSVOVBH JRN WUEZ UO  
JGG, GUIH UO KLJZ PUM JSH NUVRT US  
GHJSRVRT ZU NU.  
– CHGH



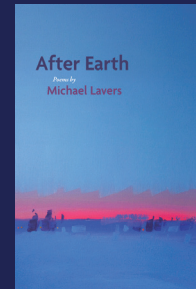
\*Submissions may be edited for length, grammar, appropriateness, and clarity.

## FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Continued from page 6



*Aspiring to Enlightenment: Pure Land Buddhism in Silla Korea*  
Richard D. McBride II



*After Earth*  
Michael Lavers

*Amazonian Quichua Language and Life: Introduction to Grammar, Ecology, and Discourse from Pastaza and Upper Napo, Ecuador.*  
Janis B. Nuckolls and Tod D. Swanson.

*Critical Explorations of Young Adult Literature.* Chapter, "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry: Disrupting the 'All-White World of Children's Books'."  
Chris Crowe.

*En otras palabras: Género, traducción y relaciones de poder.* Chapter, "Traducir las cartas de la Marquesa de Alorna (1750-1839)."  
Valerie Hegstrom and Vanda Anastácio.

*Script-Based Semantics: Foundations and Applications.* Essay, "A Creative Approach for Linguistic Funny Business: Using Linguistic Paradigms and Taxonomies."  
Dallin Oaks.

*Spanish in the United States: Attitudes and Variation.* Chapters, "Systematizing the Use of the Aspectual Distinction by Level of Proficiency: A Case of Spanish as a Heritage Language" and "Communicative Purposes behind Language Choice and 'Netspeak': Use of Facebook by Heritage Speakers of Spanish in the American Midwest."  
Valentín-Rivera, Laura and Earl K. Brown.

*The Complexities of Morphology.* Chapter, "Irregularity, paradigmatic layers, and the complexity of inflection class systems: A study of Russian nouns"  
Jeff Parker and Andrea D. Sims.

# Heroic Disappointment

Imperfections and failures give us the opportunity to look to the Lord for wisdom and strength

By Thomas B. Griffith

AS A TEEN, my least favorite talks and lessons in church were those that fit under the rubric of “enduring to the end.” The topic seemed to be standard fare among the gray beards and gray hairs in my ward. More times than I can recall, the adults at the podium and before the chalkboard would recite 2 Nephi 31:20 or quote the octogenarian J. Reuben Clark, Jr. voicing his hope at general conference that he would, after a lifetime of service to the Lord, yet have the strength to tough it to the finish line. Flush with the zeal and enthusiasm of the recent convert that I was, I wondered why there was not more of an emphasis about what a “marvelous work and a wonder” we have in the restored gospel or the “abundant life” promised followers of Christ? They made life seem so dreary, I thought. Why describe life in general, and discipleship in particular, as a grind? Why not something more upbeat? Where’s the *joie de vivre*, I wondered? What happened to *carpe diem*?

Then life happened. As Irving Kristol quipped, maturing means being “mugged by reality.”<sup>1</sup> I can recall an NPR “driveway moment” as a young father of (then) four just starting out my legal career. While driving home to my family from a Sunday church-related appointment, I was listening to Garrison Keillor spin one of his tales of life in Lake Wobegon on *A Prairie Home Companion*. Keillor told of the commencement address he would have given to that year’s graduating class at Lake Wobegon High School had he only been asked. But he was not. His talk was about failure and how life was full of it. Rarely does our lived experience match our expectations, Keillor warned his imaginary audience, whether those expectations be about school, work, or relationships. There is almost always a gap between what we hoped for when we set out on our life’s courses and what actually happens. Wisdom, Keillor concluded, lies in understanding the inevitability of that gap and pressing forward anyway, with bruises and scars that become the source not of disillusionment but of insight and greater empathy.<sup>2</sup>

In his forthcoming book, *Mormon: A Brief Theological Introduction*, Adam Miller adds a

spiritual perspective to Keillor’s reality-check by pointing to the person of Mormon, who is “a case study in how to live in a . . . world that is . . . imperfect and incomplete.”<sup>3</sup> The lesson learned from the case study? For the disciple of Christ, “imperfections [are] occasions for healing and creation.”<sup>4</sup>

Brian Kershnik captures this reality in his painting, *Heroic Disappointment*. Human failure is met not with rebuke but with divine encouragement and gratitude. “I have failed,” confesses the beleaguered and anxious supplicant. “Thank you,” responds the Divine Voice.



“Thank you”? Not a rebuke? Not a word of encouragement such as, “I’m sure that you can do better next time”? No. Failure is met with an expression of gratitude from the divine, words of congratulations. It’s the effort more than the outcome that reshapes who we can become.

My favorite scene from *Chariots of Fire* (my favorite movie) portrays the future Olympian Eric Liddell competing in a quarter-mile dash. The most renowned running coach of the day, Sam Massibini, has come to watch Liddell who has created a stir in the athletic world immediately following WWI because of his unusual style that has resulted in a string of

victories. The gun sounds to start the race, and only a few strides in, Liddell is pushed to the ground by an elbow thrown by a competitor. The crowd gasps. In slow motion, the camera captures Liddell’s tumble into the infield. In real time, the camera then cuts away to Sam Massibini, who watches in horror. With stopwatch in hand, Massibini utters words under his breathe that only we can hear. “Get up, lad! Get up!” The camera returns to slow motion, and we see Liddell pick himself up off the turf. And then with the camera again in real time, Liddell runs, catches the pack, overtakes the dastardly Frenchman who had tripped him, and wins the race before collapsing in exhaustion, his chest heaving for air. Massibini runs to Liddell’s side and says, “It wasn’t the prettiest quarter I’ve ever seen, Mr. Liddell, but it was certainly the bravest!”<sup>5</sup>

So it is with our efforts to stay on the covenant path. They may not always seem beautiful, but they are brave. And here’s the irony: It’s the bravery of perseverance over failure that is beautiful to the Lord. Faith in Christ is trust that when we stumble, He will be urging us to get up, and He will be cheering us on. And then, as C. S. Lewis bears witness, “No amount of falls will really undo us if we keep picking ourselves up each time. We shall of course be very muddy and tattered children by the time we reach home. But the bathrooms are all ready, the towels put out, and the clean clothes are in the airing cupboard. The only fatal thing is to . . . give it up.”<sup>6</sup>

*Thomas B. Griffith is a BYU College of Humanities graduate and former judge on the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. He has served as BYU general counsel and as legal counsel to the US Senate.*

1. Irving Kristol quoted in Jonathan Bronitsky, “The Brooklyn Burkeans,” *National Affairs* (Winter 2014), <https://bit.ly/35n2rWo>.
2. “To the Graduates,” Narrated by Garrison Keillor, *A Prairie Home Companion*, June 9, 2001, <https://bit.ly/2lwKvjB>.
3. Adam Miller, *Mormon: A Brief Theological Introduction* (Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2020), 63.
4. *Ibid.*, 64.
5. Hugh Hudson, Colin Welland, David Puttnam, Nicholas Farrell, Nigel Havers, Ian Charleson, Ben Cross, et al. 2005. *Chariots of Fire*.
6. C.S. Lewis to Mary Neylan, January 20, 1942.

# True Grit

by Fred Piscop

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	
12					13			14		15			
16					17					18			
	19			20				21	22				
				23				24					
25	26	27	28		29	30	31	32					
33					34		35			36	37	38	39
40					41	42				43			
44					45			46	47				
				48				49	50				
	51	52	53					54	55				
56					57		58			59	60	61	
62					63	64				65			66
67					68					69			
70					71					72			

Check your answers on page 3 or visit us online at [humanities.byu.edu/magazine](http://humanities.byu.edu/magazine).

**ACROSS**

- 1. Springtime in Paris?
- 5. Lakers legend Bryant
- 9. President Holland's wife
- 12. Trendy berry in smoothies
- 13. Still in contention
- 15. Ready to serve
- 16. Religious offshoot
- 17. Enjoys a nature trail
- 18. "Heads \_\_\_\_, tails you lose!"
- 19. Steadfastness
- 21. Emphasize
- 23. Stooge with a soupbowl haircut
- 24. Neither \_\_\_\_ nor there
- 25. Pageant headgear
- 29. The final frontier
- 33. "\_\_\_\_ to the end"
- 35. Period of history
- 36. Liver excretion
- 40. Corrosive compound
- 41. Change with the times
- 43. "I beheld \_\_\_\_ of iron": Lehi
- 44. Lion's locks
- 45. Huge bird of fable
- 46. Adjective that may describe smells or weightlifters
- 48. It's limited on highways
- 50. Burn the surface of
- 51. Utah, Bear, or Salt \_\_\_\_
- 54. Nutritionist's stat
- 56. Colombia's capital
- 58. *The Red Badge of \_\_\_\_*
- 62. Sign to heed
- 63. Pixar movie in which characters speak with Scottish burrs
- 65. Join the rat race
- 67. Biblical water-into-wine site
- 68. Catlike beast with a spotted coat
- 69. Not in time
- 70. Hill-building bug
- 71. Sloppy condition
- 72. What David did to Goliath

**DOWN**

- 1. Graduate degrees in our college: Abbr.
- 2. Taiwan-based laptop maker
- 3. *So You Want to Talk about \_\_\_\_* (Ijeoma Oluo book)
- 4. Poses for a portrait
- 5. Mexican Artist discussed by Professor Belnap in this magazine
- 6. The Mount of \_\_\_\_
- 7. Professor Cox's mode of transportation described in this magazine
- 8. Adam's mate
- 9. "Scripture \_\_\_\_" (primary song)
- 10. Licorice-like flavoring
- 11. Low cards in royal flushes
- 14. Snaky shape
- 15. In \_\_\_\_ straits
- 20. Actor Epps, known for his role in *House*
- 22. The "T" in BTW
- 25. There's no "i" in it
- 26. Ancient Peruvian
- 27. Score after deuce, in tennis
- 28. Having no manners
- 30. Treaty goal, often
- 31. Dadaist Jean
- 32. Lions and tigers
- 34. Wyatt of the old west
- 36. Italian port on the Adriatic
- 37. Branding tool
- 38. Mandela's autobiography \_\_\_\_ *Walk to Freedom*
- 39. Neaten, as a lawn
- 42. Female deer
- 47. Russian ruler of old
- 48. Matched pair
- 49. Large numbers of animals on the move
- 51. Willy in "Death of a Salesman"
- 52. FBI worker
- 53. Ironman district on the Big Island of Hawaii
- 55. Musical compositions for two
- 56. \_\_\_\_ Raton, Fla.
- 57. Alphabet starters
- 58. Plato's "Allegory of the \_\_\_\_"
- 59. Hole-punching tools
- 60. Result of a well-taken penalty kick
- 61. Art Deco master
- 64. Basketball net holder
- 66. London botanic gardens site

**BYU COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

**J. Scott Miller**  
scott\_miller@byu.edu  
Dean

**Frank Q. Christianson**  
frank\_christianson@byu.edu  
Associate Dean

**Ray T. Clifford**  
rayc@byu.edu  
Associate Dean

**Leslee Thorne-Murphy**  
leslee\_thorne-murphy@byu.edu  
Associate Dean

**Corry Cropper**  
corry\_cropper@byu.edu  
Associate Dean

**Jared D. Christensen**  
jared\_christensen@byu.edu  
College Controller and Assistant Dean

**Sherami Jara**  
sherami\_jara@byu.edu  
Liberal Arts Advisement Center Director and Assistant Dean

**ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT CHAIRS**

**Dana Bourgerie**  
dana\_bourgerie@byu.edu  
Asian & Near Eastern Languages

**Carl Sederholm**  
carl\_sederholm@byu.edu  
Comparative Arts & Letters

**Lance Larsen**  
lance\_larsen@byu.edu  
English

**Daryl Lee**  
dlee@byu.edu  
French & Italian

**Grant H. Lundberg**  
grant\_lundberg@byu.edu  
German & Russian

**Norman Evans**  
norman\_evans@byu.edu  
Linguistics

**David Laraway**  
david\_laraway@byu.edu  
Philosophy

**Jeff Turley**  
jeffrey\_turley@byu.edu  
Spanish & Portuguese

**Scott M. Alvord**  
scott\_alvord@byu.edu  
Spanish & Portuguese

**DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS OF ACADEMIC CENTERS AND PROGRAMS**

**Brian R. Roberts**  
brianrussellroberts@byu.edu  
American Studies

**Ray T. Clifford**  
rayc@byu.edu  
Center for Language Studies

**Matthew B. Christensen**  
matthew\_christensen@byu.edu  
Chinese Flagship Center

**Ben McMurry**  
ben\_mcmurry@byu.edu  
English Language Center

**Cecilia Peek**  
cecilia\_peek@byu.edu  
Ancient Near Eastern Studies

**Heather Belnap**  
heather\_belnap@byu.edu  
European Studies

**Valerie Hegstrom**  
valerie\_hegstrom@byu.edu  
Global Women's Studies

**Matthew Wickman**  
matthew\_wickman@byu.edu  
Humanities Center

**Devin Asay**  
devin\_asay@byu.edu  
Office of Digital Humanities

**Dan Muhlestein**  
daniel\_muhlestein@byu.edu  
Study of Christian Values in Literature

For information about giving to the college, please contact any dean, department chair, director, or coordinator. Thank you.

THIS FALL, concerned and devastated onlookers at BYU's campus watched as the Range Fire burned at the base of Mount Timpanogos near the mouth of Provo Canyon—seeing the world literally on fire.

In a year that has come at us with trial after trial, this was an eerily symbolic reminder of the more metaphorical fires burning in our own lives, families, and communities.

Featured on the front cover and the photo to the right is Justin White, an Assistant Professor of Philosophy in the College of Humanities, who finds solace in the consistent effort of running. As he makes his way along the hillside covered with black ashes left by the fire, it appears as though the landscape may be scarred forever.

But maybe not. Some of the native vegetation, such as scrub oak, responds to fire by resprouting new growth from unburned roots.

“The process of change is difficult, often painful,” White commented, “and requires us to be open to learning (sometimes unpleasant) things about ourselves and then working to change—to develop the habits, skills, and dispositions that allow us to be the people that we aspire to become.”

“I'm also very interested in peak performance and in what it means to live a meaningful life,” White notes. “For me, as I understand it, a big part of that involves learning how to find a balance between different aspects of one's life, such as family, work, and, for me, running.”

The question of what it means to live a meaningful, balanced life is one that each of us has to deal with, and it can seem especially difficult to answer when going through intense trials and difficulties. However, hope can be found when we remember that next spring, new growth will emerge from the charred mountainside, just as the problems we now face will give us the opportunity for a fresh start.

