

# The Word Hoard

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## Editors's Introduction

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# The *Word Hoard*

*/wɔrd/hɔrd/* n. 1. A journal open to all Arts and Humanities scholars.

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Issue 1: Community and Dissent

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"& Then": Word Hoard's Closing Remarks

🍷 EDITORS'S INTRODUCTION:

*There is only one rational way in which states coexisting with other states can emerge from the lawless condition of pure warfare. Just like individual men, they must renounce their savage and lawless freedom, adapt themselves to public coercive laws, and thus form an international state (civitas gentium), which would necessarily continue to grow until it embraced all the peoples of the earth.*

Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, 106.

*What could be the politics of whatever singularity, that is, of a being whose community is mediated not by any condition of belonging (being red, being Italian, being Communist) nor by the simple absence of conditions [...], but by belonging itself? [...] Whatever singularity, which wants to appropriate belonging itself, its own being-in-language, and thus rejects all identity and every condition of belonging, is the principle enemy of the State. Wherever these singularities peacefully demonstrate their being in common there will be a Tianamen, and, sooner or later, the tanks will appear.*

Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 85-87.

Agamben might as well have said: the police will appear (especially once one puts on the red square). Kant might as well have said: the internet will come (or globalized capital). Community and singularity, solidarity and dissent: these are the poles around

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which the inaugural issue of *Word Hoard*, the journal you hold at present, began to take shape.

*Word Hoard's* current form and content reflect the diverse critical interests of the students and faculty whose work it comprises. Here you may read essays about subjects ranging from, for example, Zied Khemakhem's discussion of identity politics to Rita Gardiner's essay questioning individuality as the prime attribute of leaders. Here too is an essay by Jamie Rooney, unfolding the self-annihilating power of words, as well as an interview conducted by Matthew Halse and Dock Currie with an author—Daniel Allen Cox—whose work interrogates the subversive potential of self-annihilation. Some of these essays insist on physical place: Kelly Baker's contribution questions the common conception of queer identity as placeless, and of urban environments as no-place. Karim Abuawad, meanwhile, re-tools post-colonial theories for use in the study of in-digenous literatures. In their array of intuitions and observations, analyses and predictions, the articles gathered herein are exercises in dialogue, disagreement and solidarity. They range the gamut of suggestive essay, scholarly article and interview, crossing the fields of literary studies, leadership studies, women's studies, queer studies, anthropology, theory, and philosophy.

There is a question worth asking about focus: why do so many of these essays take as their subject representations and realities of queer community? Maybe because queer communities are built on the model of solidarity between groups whose goals are wildly different, whose only likeness is dissent and who can't avoid the tensions their differences raise. Or, perhaps, "it's in the air," along with cries from all corners of the world, against oppression, as communities form and dissolve in pained, laborious

struggles. Whatever the case, the lesson is clear: communities change slowly, being made of myriad interlocking discourses and interlocutors. Dissent can and should be expected. And behind it all are familiar ghosts: struggles for education, for gender equality, for class equality, for sexual freedom, for political liberation—these struggles stage the questions that haunt the discussions of this issue.

In a unique feature of the *Word Hoard*, each of these submissions finds a response within our pages. Picking up on stray threads of argument, questioning foundations, applying ideas across disciplinary fields, sometimes following their own perversities, queering the discourse, our content editors have authored a response to some facet of each of these contributions. Frederick D. King examines the representation of urban queer identity in R. Raj Rao's 2003 novel *The Boyfriend*. Christopher Langlois writes on the utility of fiction in the nation's imagined community. Casey Stepaniuk profiles a Canadian publishing house that takes up Abuawad's and Daniel Cox's calls for publishers willing to support art made for and by marginalized communities. Mary Eileen Wennekers finds in the myth of Prometheus an apt allegory for the vexed gift of solidarity. Diana Samu-Visser interviews celebrated professors Joel Faflak and Alison Conway on leadership in the classroom. Leif Schenstead-Harris reflects on the subversive power of silence and invisibility. Created in response to the questions and issues raised by their peers, these authors' essays begin a dialogue in print that we hope to continue in the pages of *Word Hoard's* coming issues.

Taken as a single document of multiple personal observations, disciplinary formations, and theoretical approaches, formed from relationships

across faculties and building connections among scholars of disparate disciplines, this issue reflects in numerous ways the founding aims of this new journal. It must be said: without the dedication of our excellent and generous peer editors, copy editors, content editors, and faculty advisors, this project would have quickly foundered. It is thus with great gratitude that we are able to present this issue.

Look at us, rambling on. This is simply the *Word Hoard*, a collection of words, after all, a nascent journal based in the graduate community at the University of Western Ontario. Perhaps we should let the articles do their own talking. It is our distinct pleasure to present them to you without further comment, in the spirit of hospitality. Be welcome.

Yours,

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