


January 2018

Editors' Introduction

Emily L. Kring
Western University, emily.l.kring@gmail.com

Andy Verboom
verboom.ac@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/wordhoard>

 Part of the [Digital Humanities Commons](#), [English Language and Literature Commons](#), [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Fiction Commons](#), [Film and Media Studies Commons](#), [Fine Arts Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), [Philosophy Commons](#), [Poetry Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kring, Emily L. and Verboom, Andy (2018) "Editors' Introduction," *The Word Hoard*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 6 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/wordhoard/vol1/iss6/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Word Hoard by an authorized editor of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact tadam@uwo.ca.

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Ain't no way to explain or say
 how painful the hangover was today ...
 If I could I would keep this feeling in a plastic jar.
 —Atmosphere's "Sunshine"

In our call for submissions for this issue of *Word Hoard*, we asked potential submitters: "How do you prepare for a hangover?" Our declarative answer—"You can't"—reflects the mythic uselessness of the abundant folk medicines for curing or ameliorating the aftereffects of indulgence. There is neither preparation nor cure for the cotton-mouthed mornings after celebration, outburst, or exertion, yet we seek remedy through preemptive rituals and retrospective routines. So while there is little comfort when we are in the throes of hangovers, they continue to frame both what has come before us and what is still to come.

Wading through the muck of the morning after, we carry the twin burdens of reflection and critique. How did we arrive? How will we get elsewhere? In this respect, our submitters did not disappoint.

*

Our issue gets out of bed with a consideration of hangover as both physiological and social condition. Joshua Adair's irreverent personal essay "Chasers," a humorous working-through what we have come to know as the hair of the dog, considers whether poison can become remedy—or, perhaps, remedial address. Writing of a small, "moist" town in the American south, Adair invites us to reflect on how alcohol and

indulgence have saturated rituals of academic initiation and professional collegiality. How does one welcome a new colleague if not with a drink? Indeed, how does one express fondness, display celebration, or mark occasions without a drop of alcohol? Threading the professorial proclivity towards liquored indulgence together with the general prudishness of an ideally "dry" but practically "moist" population, Adair gestures toward the intertwining of hangovers and hang-ups, our quickness in condemning others' behaviour and our belatedness in critiquing our own. Lest we romanticize or trivialize the effects of alcohol on the collective, Napatsi Folger responds with "The Booze Blues," a personal essay on growing up in then-"moist" Iqaluit, Nunavut (previously Frobisher Bay, Northwest Territories). Folger recognizes experiences in Adair's story that run parallel to her own—e.g., the booze-hoarding obsession prompted by prohibition—but contextualizes Iqaluit's former "moist"-ness alongside both regional history and life in Iqaluit as well as the philosophical inspirations of the American temperance movement. When withdrawal is manufactured both by publically sanctioned sobriety and by the effects of decades of alcohol abuse, she asks, why do we still turn to the poison for the cure?

The notion of hangover extends beyond

the bodily schisms induced by alcohol, of course. Many of our contributors consider how our bodies process experiences, memories, relationships, and moments of intimacy that have marked us and that continue to shape our interactions with the world. The bodied, bawdy physicality of Devon Balwit's poems "Post-Operative," "Extraction," and "A God with Big Titties"—invoking medication, procedure, and recovery—show how this more existential dimension of hangover resonates with the bodily and chemical. Erica McKeen's response, the short story "A Slant Cut," explores the atomization of memory and self that accompanies the brutality of "remedy" through procedure. While critiquing the harshness of medicine and recovery as registers for addressing experience, McKeen's story formally attends to hangover's ability to shred one's will to pieces—particularly when in concert with other forms of physical and psychological desire and habit.

In the space of hangover, physicality and memory can indeed scatter, but they can also bleed together. Lars Horn's prose poem "The North Sea in February" shows us such fleshy retrospection in process. With its tumbling, oceanic illogic, this poem depicts a body that is both static, immobile, locked in violation and somehow also vicious, flailing, violently encroaching on memory. Annick MacAskill's short story response, "Night Comes Early," urbanizes a similar bodily disorientation. Here is grasping after somatic and narrative integrity in the face of routine labour and desire, the jaws of the cosmopolitan deep. MacAskill asks us to consider

how substances and architectures saturate how we conceptualize time and story.

Our issue's next fiction, Evelyn Deshane's "In Search of Lost Time," narrates the ways that our hangovers and hang-ups are baked into the texts and objects that shape our encounters—and into the encounters that shape ourselves. Animated in part by the idea of a "blackout" or "lost memory," Deshane's story reflects on how the occasions for filling the gaps in one's history—whether decisively omitted or strategically retold—leave one awash in a playback of formative moments and memories. From family photos to *Fight Club*, from Marcel Proust's madeleine cookie to a buttercream-frosted apology cake, Deshane sketches in the gaps of a "lost" time, a "blackout" of self and intimacy for the story's sarcastic yet disarmingly gentle lovers. Angie Quick responds to Deshane's short story with an original painting, a first for *Word Hoard*. *Interior Landscape*, from which this issue's cover is taken, binds a body through its limbs. Its central terracotta-esque form both embraces and recoils from itself, is both doubled and displayed in a pose of intimate connection. Quick's painting presents us with a vision of embodied reflection that is yoked to itself even in its apparent severance, that kisses itself even in contortion, and that flexes in constraint.

From personal and communal histories, bodies, and hangovers, we turn to Safiyya Hosein's interview with Ryan Clement, "The Proverbial and Image Hangover: A Discussion between Comics Researchers." Hosein considers the comic industry's efforts to wrestle with di-

versity, with patriarchy, and with which characters are and are not considered “canon.” Hosein and Clement discuss the hangovers of creative anachronism, authenticity, cultural representation, and consumer preferences, reflecting on and modeling a working-through of what has come before while also considering how the future may be hamstrung by the past. Responding through a thirteen-panel comic, “Modern Supr Heroes,” Hinson Calabrese recontextualizes Hosein’s and Clement’s discussion of industry hangovers within a “juvenile” entertainment culture still blind-drunk on capitalist accumulation. But even as Calabrese’s ranting avatar wants to leave behind his capitalist intoxication, he seems trapped in the nihilistic desperation of the hangover. Calabrese thus illuminates the great catch-22 of social criticism: either you are still drunk or you are hung over, attempting to reason with drunks.

From this discussion of comic and existential hangovers, Jennifer Komorowski continues our interrogation of the canonical in her essay “A Space to Write Woman-Becoming: Reading the Novels of Kathy Acker as Simulacra.” Komorowski considers Kathy Acker’s *Don Quixote* (1986) and *Blood and Guts in High School* (1978) as texts actively invested in using “pure plagiarism” to work through modes of writing, theorizing, and criticizing that lionize male-centric creation and pleasure. Taking up Komorowski’s analysis of Acker’s “pure plagiarism,” respondent Nina Youkhanna provides an interpretive re-writing, by way of translation, of Nawal El-Saadawi’s *Isis: A Play in Two Acts*. Youkhanna’s translation marks another first in *Word Hoard’s* short history. Plagiarism, copy, and interpretation coalesce in these

pieces to the point that working through a hangover must be done through the language, genres, styles, and structures of what has come before. Youkhanna tweaks and teases this assumption with translation, suggesting that copy—in the linguistic, interpretive sense—might exceed strategic regurgitation and retrospection.

Geoffrey Morrison’s two poems, “Two Diaries” and “After Van Dyke Parks’ ‘Van Dyke Parks,’” similarly take up the notion of hangover as both creative and social inheritance. From a folk singer’s self-titled opus to moments of national and social crisis, Morrison’s poems suggest that writing “after” or “following” another’s words, melodies, or experiences is less working through what has come before than it is composing and curating the lingering traces of those words, melodies, or experiences alongside the artists they have shaped. Blair Trewartha’s “Modern American Worship,” subtitled in turn “After Geoffrey Morrison,” invites us to critique “the wisdom / of worshippers” whose “word reversals and resuscitations” betray deeply held convictions that their actions are downright providential. In this sense, a uniquely American modernity—marked by resource precarity, violence, and ongoing colonization—uses writing and retrospection as tools of absolution that allow their users “to pull the slaughter out of the blade after the cut.”

Kevin Shaw’s double review of Sarah Schulman’s *Conflict is Not Abuse* and *The Cosmopolitans* brings this issue to its conclusion with a discussion of what is at stake in debates surrounding disagreement, harm, victimhood, and censorship. Addressing this issue’s concern—

how to look back and reconsider our choices with the (apparent) benefits of hindsight—Shaw asks, “[a]ren’t there moments in our intimate or public lives where we must shun another person—even temporarily and even if they are not directly at fault—because their words or presence are just too painful for our psychic survival?” Surviving our hangovers is, in this respect, a matter of social and personal intimacy—of address and engagement.

*

We cannot prepare you for a hangover, and we cannot accelerate your return to normalcy after celebration, outburst, indulgence, excess, memory, or experience. Yet, in the absence of preparation or remedy, we can offer attempts at working through and reflecting on what has come before. That is, if one cannot prepare for or repair a hangover, then one can at least wade through its muck to a variety of conclusions. We say cheers to that.

Emily L. Kring, Copy Editor-in-Chief
with Andy Verboom

Works Cited

Atmosphere. “Sunshine.” *Sad Clown Bad Summer* 9, Rhymesayers Entertainment, 2007.