

## Virtually Conceivable

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It is a little odd to think that just a few decades ago, the online MAIS degree program would not only not exist, but wouldn't even have been conceived as possible. Students from all different walks of life, living across Canada and around the world, coming together in a virtual classroom to learn and discuss together. Not only that, but we routinely carry in our pockets or purses more computing power than existed in the entire world when our parents and grandparents were growing up.

We need to adapt to this heady cycle of change, but we also need to examine the larger effects of the changes, rather than just swallowing them indiscriminately. This issue of the *Journal of Integrated Studies* is, for the most part, about this examination.

Several months ago, we were delighted to have an anonymous offer of prize money for a writing contest. The contest topic we chose was "How has 'new media' changed life, work and relationships?" We were similarly delighted with the overall quality of the submissions we received for the contest; in fact, the editorial board has been discussing ways we might make writing contests a regular part of our lineup, so stay tuned for future contest announcements.

We are very pleased to be publishing the contest winners in this issue of the *Journal*. In first place, we have Aaron Johannes, with his narrative "A Personal Evolution", in which he describes his journey through changes in technology. Second place went to Graeme Tennant and "The Space Between", a short fictional piece about the disconnection between a man's online and offline lives. In third place is Patti McClocklin's article "Privacy and Presence" in which she discusses possible effects and consequences of virtual presence and the ease of monitoring online activity. When the judges' choices were tallied, there was a tie for fourth place, so we decided to publish both those pieces. They are Sherryl Melnyk's humorous narrative about the pitfalls of Internet dating, titled "Feminists Don't Online Date," and "Silent Reply" by Andrea Matrosov, a short story about a relationship ending badly in the electronic age.

In addition to our writing contest winners, we have three longer articles that will both stimulate and educate. First, Lauren Thompson's "Talking Nerdy" looks at the often unseen and undervalued female computer nerd and considers the groundless gendered beliefs that mask her role in today's digital world. Darlene Fisher's "Repatriation Issues in First Nations Heritage Collections" explores the numerous challenges associated with returning sacred and ceremonial artifacts to Aboriginal communities from Canadian and international museum collections. And "Local Food on a Global Scale: An Exploration of the International Slow Food Movement" by Anette Kinley examines the global structure of a multidisciplinary movement that takes moral, social and economic stances on food production, distribution and preparation.

Rounding out our third issue of the *Journal* we have poetry, a jury-selected offering of four works of visual art, and for the first time, "The Bookery", a section of short book reviews that we plan to make a regular feature. We hope you enjoy the *Journal of Integrated Studies*.

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