

## ✧ Introduction ✧

Sisyphus, the mythological character who was eternally condemned by the gods to repeatedly roll a boulder to the top of a hill only to have it roll down every time, is one figure that practically every student of philosophy is familiar with. As portrayed and interpreted by Albert Camus, Sisyphus is an absurd hero because in all of his tragically futile labour, he dares to negate the gods, claims his fate as his own, and achieves happiness. Underlying this achievement and making it possible is a uniform and heroic spirit of *perseverance*.

This year's issue of the *Oracle* is the outcome of perseverance manifested not by one person, but by many. The challenges that Philosophia, particularly the executive council, have encountered this year have, at times, felt not unlike that Sisyphean burden. With an entirely new slate of executives this year, the council was left to its own creativity and determination to ensure the club's active presence in the York community. Because of our commitment to our studies, some of us found it very difficult to dedicate full attention to the association. And, yes, as a result we did have to make some sacrifices (like cancelling the annual alumni workshop), but we did remain devoted to the journal. If there was one project each of us valued and believed would demand the full exercise of our potential and creativity and would call upon the participation of students as well as faculty, it was this year's issue of the *Oracle*. That you are reading these pages is validation of Philosophia's perseverance.

Of course, this journal is — more than anything — the fruit of the perseverance of each of the writers showcased here. The five essays featured are written by five of York University's undergraduate students who represent almost fully the different year-levels of study. And this selection also happens to be quite rich in the range of themes explored — ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of sex, Presocratic philosophy, and philosophy of law. I think they will not only make for a thought-provoking

read but will serve as great examples of how professional philosophical essays are written. The structure, tone, diction, and research in these papers have been given careful attention by their authors. And each of these students are further admired not for the mere commitment to the exercise of philosophy but to the humbling task of practicing philosophy in the open, like here, in this journal. It is no easy project, but a courageous and risky one, to sincerely inquire into life's mysteries while in full view of those with a more critical eye and to share the journey with others.

Alongside the commitment of the writers to their philosophical inquiry and of Philosophia to its aim of providing students with a forum outside of the classroom in which to engage in philosophy, we have witnessed the great support of a few significant bodies of York University. Philosophia acknowledges the York Federation of Students (YFS) and the Vanier College Council for their financial support and Vanier College for providing us with office space. Perseverance on Philosophia's part and, therefore, this journal are hardly possible without this kind of support. I also would like to thank the editors for all of their work, including their great and timely assistance in the selection of the manuscripts. Thank you to those professors and faculty members, including Professors Idil Boran, Gerard Naddaf, and Michael Gilbert, for assisting Philosophia to promote the journal and to acquire submissions.

Finally, if philosophy is not reserved for just the student of philosophy and the professional philosopher, but is a healthy exercise for everyone, and if philosophy requires a spirit of perseverance, then this trait is one each would do well to cultivate by practice.

So, continue. Reading, writing, inquiring.

Turn the page and enjoy this philosophical journey.

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