

PROCLAMATION !

UPCOMING AMRS EVENTS

Oct. 31 - Faculty roundtable on Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Horror. Come see your favorite professors discuss horror in the Pre-Modern world!



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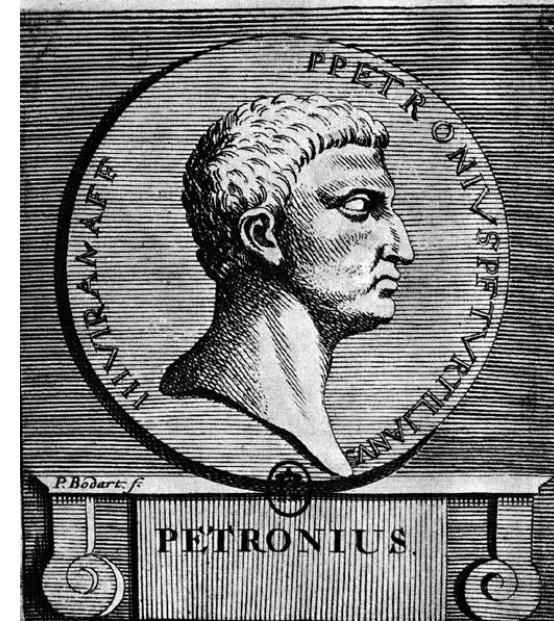
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ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL, AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES

THE TRIDENT

Vol. XXXIV, Issue 1

October 2016



ON THE WORK OF PETRONIUS

By Merritt Ver Steeg

Petronius Arbiter was a Roman who lived during the reign of Nero, and—according to most historians—the author of *The Satyricon*. We don't know much about Petronius' life, but according to Tacitus, "His days he passed in sleep,

and his nights in the business and pleasures of life. . . Indolence had raised him to fame, as energy does others. . ." and he was seen as an "expert in luxury." Despite his free-wheeling lifestyle, Petronius became

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governor of Bithynia, and later Consul. He was exemplary at his job—hardworking and intelligent. Eventually, Nero chose him to act as his “arbiter of elegance”—a sort of official trendsetter. Nero “thought nothing charming or elegant in luxury unless Petronius had expressed to him his approval of it.” Ofonius Tigellinus, a Praetorian Guard, became jealous of Petronius’ influence. He accused Petronius of having been part of a conspiracy against Nero.

Petronius didn’t want to wait and see if Nero was going to have him executed or not, so he decided to commit suicide. He cut his wrists and bound them so he would bleed out slowly, and died as he lived: eating, drinking, and talking trash. “He wrote a detailed report of the emperor’s shameful excesses, with the names of his gigolos, his women and their innovations in indecency, and sent the account under seal to Nero.”

Today, Petronius is remembered as the author of *The Satyricon*, a humorous work of fiction that explores vulgarity and ridiculousness. It follows three miscreants as they feast, fight, and debauch their way through the Mediterranean

world.

The Satyricon mocks the extravagant debauchery of Neronian society. However, it is difficult to determine the meaning of *The Satyricon* partly because it survives in fragments, which makes it difficult to understand, and partly because it is so utterly bizarre, so no one can make heads or tails of it. It has been classified as—among other things— a mock epic, an early novel, and a Menippean satire. But the first two definitions seem too narrow, and “satire” implies a preoccupation with morality that Petronius . . . lacks.

Despite *The Satyricon*’s raunchy reputation, it does have scholarly value. Unlike most Latin texts, which are poetry or oratory, *The Satyricon* has sections of informal prose—giving historians and classicists an insight into how ordinary Romans spoke.

Though it has its confusing and salacious reputation, *The Satyricon* has stood the test of time—it’s influenced many great authors. For example, Oscar Wilde mentions Petronius in *A Picture of Dorian Gray*, stating that Dorian wanted to be the London equivalent of what Petronius was to Rome. The epigraph of T. S. Elliot’s *The Wasteland* is a quote from

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OFF-CAMPUS EVENT
OCT. 28: NOSFERATU
AT THE DREXEL
THEATER



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The Satyricon. Most famously, F. Scott Fitzgerald based *Gatsby*, in part, off of the character Trimalchio—a pretentious nouveau riche freedman—and had originally intended to name the book *Trimalchio in West Egg*.

The Satyricon, whatever else it might be, is a criticism of the excess, depravity, and shameless cupidity that Neronian Rome tried to pass off as sophistication. When other authors reference Petro-

nus, they speak of him to promote restrained elegance and condemn unrefined extravagance. Perhaps, more than anything else, *The Satyricon* is a testament to three of humanity’s most enduring qualities: pretension, hypocrisy, and bad taste.

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Arbiter, Petronius, Robert Bracht Branham, and Daniel Kinney. *Satyricon*. Berkeley: U of California, 1996. Print.
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Tacitus. *Annales*, Book 16, AD 14-68.



LUTHER'S ACT

By Christopher Shanley

This Halloween marks the 499th anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses on the church door in Wittenberg castle. Luther's theses were against the act of indulgences which were certificates one could buy from the church to skip part of the penitential process. An extremely pious man, Luther was deeply troubled by his sins. Indulgences seemed to be a way for guilty people to gain a pure conscience.

This act clearly shaped our world, but it was not nearly as dramatic as we like to imagine. Luther simply desired a debate in the Catholic Church and the church door served as the unofficial bulletin board for the university, so the location was no major protest. The day, however, was deliberate as it was the day before All Saint's Day, an important holiday in Wittenberg. The local prince, Frederick the Wise, had a collection of over 18,000 relics of various saints. On All Saint's Day, pilgrims would have flocked to the city, specifically to the castle church. But the pamphlet was in Latin, unreadable

to any except the educated, proving Luther was not out for a revolution against the church. Luther wanted to reform the church in the beginning of his movement, not split off from it.

Regardless of Luther's intent, his actions "shattered the unity of Christendom" as Dr. Spall is fond of saying. Prior to 1517, all of Western Europe was united in its belief. There were heretics, like John Wycliffe and Jan Hus, but they were suppressed by the church and by local rulers. Luther managed to find support among the educated, a key piece missing from the earlier dissensions. Humanists, like Desiderius Erasmus, initially vocalized their support for Luther's arguments. Additionally, the church's initial willingness to debate helped Luther's cause. Rather than immediately branding Luther a heretic and having him executed, they allowed him to defend his position. Luther then created his own church: an idea that drastically altered the future of both Europe and the world.

THE WANDERING CHEVALIER

By Joseph Acero

In the days of old, in land both quaint and faire,
There lived a Knight, strong and filled with care,
Though quaint are his travels filled with calm and bliss,
'Tis this summer's day the Knight's heart has gone amiss,
For on his travels he saw many lands open to graze,
Yet frozen, was he, when faced with a lady far from his gaze,
She stood resolute, her hair glowing and pure,
For she carried compassion, the Knight was quite sure.

For lonely his travels were, so empty and cold,
He fought every battle and traveled every road,
Yet he faltered when he saw her golden hair,
He had not seen anything quite so faire.
But he could not stop for her alone,
For he had a duty to travel over every stone.
He yearned to find her again when his duty done,
For she struck him harder than any opponent with brawne.

THE RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL: A HOME FOR ALL

By Ashley Vassar

On September 5th 2016, I attended my 13th Renaissance Festival and 9th Ohio Renaissance Festival. The Ohio Renaissance Festival is located in Waynesville, Ohio and this year, it ran from September 3rd to October 23rd. Since my friends and I dress up, we usually wait until October when the weather has cooled to attend. This year, the festival offered a buy one get one free ticket promotion for the opening weekend and the deal was too good to pass up.

The first thing I noticed was that, despite the almost 90-degree heat, just as many people were dressed up. Though my friends and I usually wear what are effectively Halloween costumes, many attendees choose a more authentic route. Before entering the festival itself, I saw several men in chainmail or leather armor and women in multi-layered Medieval- and Renaissance-styled dresses. Once inside, there were even more guests dressed in clothes ranging from jeans and t-shirts to full plate armor. It

was clear that the heat did not deter any of the attendees from making the most of the festival.

At last year's festival, I found myself thinking a lot about the love of the Middle Ages and Renaissance that attendees of the festival share. This year, I found myself thinking about how that same love permeates other aspects of our society, especially popular culture. My costume was pieced together from various generic Halloween clearance finds, but my friend had created a costume based off of a video game that takes place in a Middle Ages/Renaissance inspired setting. Plenty of other attendees were also dressed as characters from TV shows, movies, and video games with similar settings. Many booths sold merchandise based off of these same pop culture phenomena. From jewelry to replica swords to art prints, staples of popular culture that borrowed their settings from Medieval and Renaissance history were present. To me, this served as a reminder that the cultural impact of these time periods is not just limited

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THE APPARITION BY JOHN DONNE



When by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead
 And that thou think'st thee free
 From all solicitation from me,
 Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
 And thee, feign'd vestal, in worse arms shall see;
 Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,
 And he, whose thou art then, being tir'd before,
 Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
 Thou call'st for more,
 And in false sleep will from thee shrink;
 And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou
 Bath'd in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie
 A verier ghost than I.
 What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
 Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
 I had rather thou shouldst painfully repent,
 Than by my threat'nings rest still innocent.



to a festival that runs for two months of the year: It's constantly around us.

For the artists who created handmade jewelry, soaps, candles, clothing, etc., I imagine the festival represents a sort of sanctuary from the mass-produced goods of today. Attendees expect to buy imperfect handmade goods and pay the higher prices necessary to help the makers of these goods so they can continue to do their work. Though there are certainly goods that are mass-produced, it is also a place attendees come to find unique handcrafted items more similar to the ones that would have been available in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

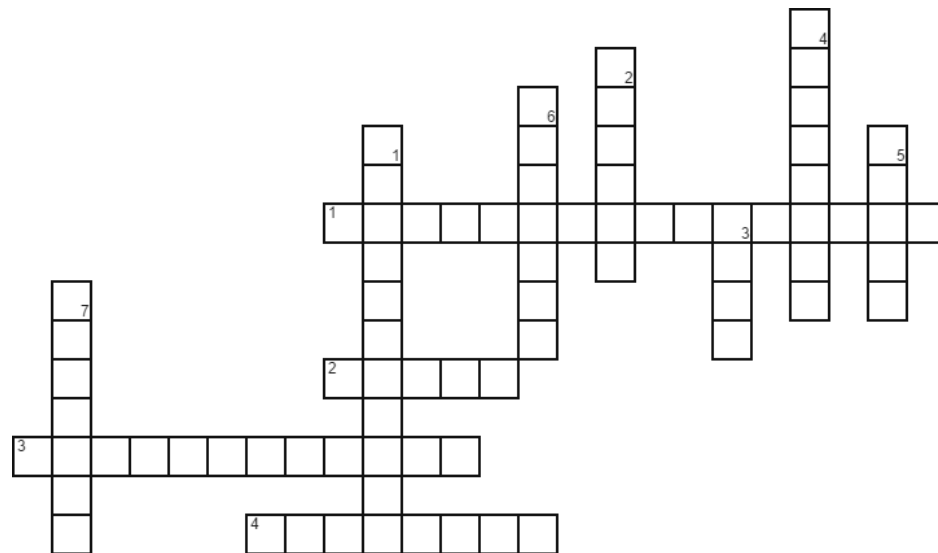
As someone who has studied these time periods, the Renaissance Festival never fails to fascinate me. Since it

is dedicated to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the many ways in which these time periods affect us today can be seen in one place. There are those who love history and dress in historically accurate clothing, those who love pop culture influenced by these time periods and use the festival as a place to celebrate that love, and those who love the chance to return to a time of handcrafted goods. If you haven't attended a Renaissance Festival, go. Share your love of the Middle Ages and Renaissance with all of the attendees that are just as in love with it as you are.

Ashely Vassar is an OWU alumni who majored in Medieval Studies, English Literature, and Classics. She graduated in 2015.



TO CROSS, OR NOT TO CROSS...



ACROSS:

1. Shakespeare's most used meter
2. dresses in men's attire to win her love
3. Othello's gift to Desdemona
4. "Fire burn, and ___ bubble"

DOWN:

1. alternative name for *Twelfth Night*
2. Prince of Denmark
3. wife of the Bard
4. number of lines in Shakespearean Sonnet
5. color; world of merriment and disorder
6. a foot consisting of one long or stressed syllable followed by one short or unstressed syllable
7. last name of the most famous Globe actor

Be the first to complete the crossword and win a \$5 gift card to Whit's!

The first person to email jmwaterw@owu.edu a picture of the completed crossword will win!

DÚN AONGHASA: AN ANCIENT IRISH HILL FORT

By Colin McGarry

While romping around Ireland's historical landmarks for the semester pretending to be a serious student, I was lucky enough to see the large, ancient hill-fort of Dún Aonghasa, a massive three-tiered defensive fortress on the Aran Islands. The fort itself is made from three dry-stone walls, roughly D-shaped, that go to the steep cliffs of Inishmore Island. The outer wall is a long stone fence, which hold little defensive value as it was apparently never that tall, and is largely thought to be a more symbolic gesture or a boundary marker between the land directly controlled by Dún Aonghasa's residents (although the chieftains of Dún Aonghasa would have ruled over at least the entire island, and very likely the rest of the Aran Islands as well as some of the Irish mainland). A middle wall, also of dry stone, is much more of a strong defensive feature; they stand slightly taller than a person (though possibly could have been taller while occupied), and include a parapet to protect defenders standing atop the wall—an interesting fea-



ture, since other stone forts occupied at the same time lack this characteristic—and a line of jagged rocks known as a *cheval de frise* around the wall to prevent the enemy from coming too close. The innermost enclosure of Dún Aonghasa is yet another large dry-stone wall, many times thicker and taller than the previous layer. Each section of the fort would have served a specific purpose: the outer shell (between the first and second wall) is marked by many grids of land divided by low stone fences and probably would have been used to house livestock (as the modern owners use it for today); the central and inner enclosures of the fort both contained residential and artisan artifacts (molds for casting metal, post-holes of buildings, and the like), and probably would have served as

the residence for important members of the community. The entire hillfort is built on an incline, and features a twisting path which one uses to enter the main gate, marked on both sides with a low stone fence until one goes through the central wall, both of which would help defenders see any attacking force approaching before they were within range of any missiles.

Dating the structure is much more problematic, since it seems to have been built and rebuilt in phases over many centuries, but archaeological evidence shows it was first built in the Late Bronze Age, which marks it as contemporary with many of the great hill-forts of Ireland, such as Navan Fort, and the emergence of complex, hierarchical societies in Ireland. The second important phase of Dún Aonghasa is in the Iron Age, where there is an unusually large amount of activity despite a large scale decrease in population, cultivated land, and artifacts across the whole of Ireland. Dún Aonghasa then has its final phase under the Ua Briain kings of the Early Medieval Period in the 11th century, as part of their rise to power in the southern kingdom of Munster and occasionally as the High Kings of Ireland. What happened in each of these phases remains a mystery since the stones of

the fort are impossible to date and written records are scarce (the Medieval annals only tell us that Dún Aonghasa expanded under the Ua Briains, and the Bronze and Iron Age peoples had no writing), and so the extent of each phase is unknown, but it is thought that the Iron Age and Early Medieval people of Dún Aonghasa each added to the defenses. The adding of the parapets to the walls are generally thought to be Medieval, because they are absent from most earlier forms of fortification (probably due a lack of emphasis of missile weapons—even the bow and arrow disappears from the archaeological record during the Bronze Age) and it has been suggested that the outer enclosures are Iron Age and only the innermost wall is Bronze Age, but this is largely conjecture.

Dún Aonghasa marks an interesting development in Irish history, perhaps made more interesting by what we are not able to know.

Colin McGarry is an OWU Junior currently adventuring through Ireland. He is visiting various archaeological sites across the island in order to better understand the history of the country.