

# ISSUE 2

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## Editorial

Editor-in-chief – Hollie McAndrew

‘Never Trust the artist. Trust the tale. The proper function of a critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it’ ■ D.H. Lawrence, ‘The Spirit of Place’ in *Studies of Classic American Literature* (New York: RosettaBooks, 2022) pp. 66- 71, p.67

Do you know the feeling of reading your favourite book over and over again until your understanding of it moves so far away from the initial response you had to the plot and into a special place in your heart? Where the meaning and lives of the characters become so important that you understand the purpose of every word on the page. All we ever wish is to relive the sensation and emotion of finishing your favourite book for the very first time. Well, what if that feeling was only the beginning of how much a text can really make you feel?

In our magazine we began with the connections created in association with our favourite books and began looking back to where it all started; in our childhoods.

Sociologists like Margaret Mead highlight the importance our surroundings have on nurturing us at a primary age and how this has shaped our humanity. Well, as English Literary students we have learnt to understand the importance of language and the formation of what our favourite texts are. These texts influence our environmental and cultural understandings and ultimately cause us to engage with the fields we are in today. But literary studies sit so deeply rooted in all of our society, so why must our rich engagements not become an available insight to anyone who might share within the entertainment factors of the work we have become so invested in?

Far too often, books are understood and appreciated from a surface level of an engaging plot, and even when encouraged (like at GCSE level Shakespeare) we can become put off with the discussion that an author may have intentionally foreshadowed the ending or strategically used alliterative assonance within a sentence, for example.

Hollie McAndrew, Nottingham Trent University

The function of this magazine is to relay some of our appreciation of understanding a text, one that reads deeper than anything achievable after just one read and further than what the author set out to do. Every book is read differently in every reader's mind due to their own psyche breaking down the words in their individual understanding. As Bennett and Royle put it in their chapter on readership in *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 'the meaning of the text is created through the process of reading...interpretation is a function of identity and that all of us, as we read, use the literary work to symbolize and finally replicate ourselves.'

In today's society, we struggle to embrace this concept of definitions derived from our personalities. So much censorship guarding encourages individuals to hold back on disagreements and our personal interpretations. To be encouraged to be different and go against the grain within society becomes difficult with the culture of etiquettes, not wanting to offend by seeing a ulterior perspective. However, this issue is not just an exemplar for free speech but instead, it also importantly tackles those messages and meanings that may be hard to face and may not agree with the consensus view. Creative literacy is losing its importance as nepotism for artificial intelligence (A.I.) takes over and capitalism takes ownership over individuality. Within 'Bittersweet' we aim to tackle opinion-based re-readings through the light of reminiscing.

We encourage you while reading our work to reduce this gap between the freedom of creativity that existed in the naivety of childhood and the contemporary change amongst our societal or political viewpoints, and to reconnect with your younger self, where the possibilities could be endless. Re-visiting texts is a way of tracking our own change and development as each time we read something over and over again the words appear to make sense in a slightly different way. That is why we have chosen to discuss the importance of interpretation through the function of the biggest development we know; from childhood understanding, against our adult selves. Here, we can factor in how the world has changed and therefore what new lenses we can incorporate in the way we read work. For example, how many of us can no longer re-watch World War Z without connecting it to the Covid-19 pandemic?

We will take you on a nostalgic exploration, re-visiting texts that you may originally have thought would have no further relevance to you than the old teddy you still have, collecting dust somewhere. In fact, our works display interpretations of meaning and hidden messages that may inspire your own thought process or open your eyes to a depth of literary study not yet explored. Our hope is to reignite your love for reading by taking our readers back to where it all began. To opening your eyes to the importance that literary factors have on our everyday lives. Developing tools to interpret and extract your own definitions in acknowledging our creative possibilities and how they weave the tapestry of our issue.

The publication of *Bittersweet* is positioned geographically crucial in the literary developments taking place in Nottingham today with the city being home to so many

great authors, such as Jonathan Emmett, Alan Sillitoe, Helen Cresswell and of course D.H. Lawrence. Yet the city's library was on a decline in 2010 and eventually shut down for good in 2020. This summer, the summer of 2023, a new city library is to be open near the Broadmarsh bus station, which will kickstart 'the year of stories' here in Nottingham. This long-awaited announcement is the start of a new chapter for the city, and will be celebrated through the medium of storytelling. Our issue exists to re-visit and celebrate the stories, and even to discuss and explore some new ones, opening the floor to both new and pre-existing creative juices that will hopefully ignite a love for reading in-line with the contemporary changes for Nottingham's locals.