

Locus: The Seton Hall Journal of Undergraduate Research

Volume 4

Article 1

October 2021

Introduction

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.shu.edu/locus>

Recommended Citation

(2021) "Introduction," *Locus: The Seton Hall Journal of Undergraduate Research*: Vol. 4 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://scholarship.shu.edu/locus/vol4/iss1/1>

Introduction

In ancient Rome, those hungry for a good omen would participate in something called *Sortes Vergilianae*: a passage from Virgil’s epic *Aeneid* would be chosen at random and interpreted as if it were a divine message. The poetic language, under the pressure of intense scrutiny, could yield secret meanings encoded in its linguistic patterns. Of course, like a Ouija Board or astrological table, there was no “real” correlation between the passage and reality. The fun was discovering how readers could arrive at new meanings through creative analysis.

The *Sortes Vergilianae* comes to mind when looking over the impressive list of essays in our fourth volume of *Locus*, the undergraduate research journal of Seton Hall University. It can be futile to try deriving meaning from a litany of articles across so many different topics. And yet we couldn’t help but notice how these pieces reflected the world we live in. Some of these reflections are obvious, as with the work that deals directly with the COVID-19 pandemic, but more conceptual echoes abound, as well. Whether it’s the essays that deal with systemic racism—directly, as with one piece that looks at our justice system, or filtered through popular culture, as with another that examines a cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Othello*—or those that examine our ability to grapple with disaster (shark attacks! earthquakes!), these impressive student papers testify to the heartbreak and resilience we have all experienced over the past year and a half.

It is with this sense of weary optimism, of looking ahead to a hopefully brighter future, that we congratulate the authors of these fascinating and diverse essays. Here’s to better times! And thank you all for reading. Finally, if you are an undergraduate or recent graduate of Seton Hall, you are welcome to submit your work for our next volume. You can find our editors’ contact information on our website, <https://scholarship.shu.edu/locus>.

All our best,

The Editorial Committee