

IN THE MARGINS

LITCITY

1/6

Nickel City Poetry Slam. 8pm. Sign-up at 7:30pm. Co-sponsored by *just buffalo literary society* and *Gusto at the Gallery*, and hosted by Gabrielle Bouliane. Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1285 Elmwood Ave. (882-8700)

1/7

Literacy Volunteers. 11am-12:30pm. National Mentoring Month recruitment and information session for prospective literacy tutors. Literacy Volunteers, 1313 Main St. (845-6500).

1/8

Poetry Reading. 4pm. Artists' Salon and Verbal-Visual exhibit by Douglas Manson. Also featuring Michael Bainski and Michael Kelleher. Rust Belt Books, 202 Allen St. (885-9535).

1/10

The Falls: Session 1. 1-3pm. 5-week literary workshop explores Joyce Carol Oates's novel "The Falls," along with paintings and slide presentations. Meets every Tuesday through Feb. 7 with instructor Dr. B.G. Flickinger Larkin Center, 65 Lincoln Pkwy. (400-9786). Registration required.

1/11

Open Readings. 7pm. Hosted by Livio Farallo and featuring Russ Galeta, with 10 slots for open readers. Carnegie Art Center, 240 Goundry St., N. Tonawanda (694-4400).

RECURRING EVENTS

Children's Writers & Illustrators Group. 7pm, every third Thursday each month. Borders Books, 2015 Walden Ave., Cheektowaga (685-2844).

EM Tea Coffee Cup Open Mic Poetry Series. 7-9:30pm every Tuesday. EM Tea Coffee Cup Café, 80 Oakgrove Ave. at Hughes St. (884-1444).

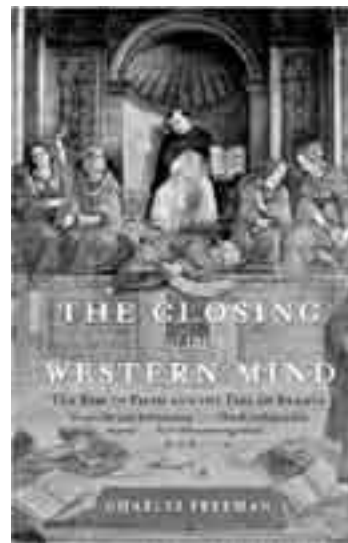
Just Buffalo Writers Critique Group. 7pm, meets first and third Wednesday of every month. Open to just buffalo literary center members; call 832-5400 for membership details. Flux Gallery, Market Arcade Arts Centre. (832-5400).

Moonlight Poetry Circle. 9pm, first Friday of each month. Share poetry informally through spoken word, song, music, art, etc. 289 Winspear Ave (upper). All are welcome. More info: (903-2884).

Northside Writers Group. 7pm, first and third Thursday of each month. Ascension Lutheran Church, 4640 Main Street, Amherst. (626-4204).

Send weekly literary event info (name, description, location, date, time, and admission) to: editorial@artvoice.com, subject "In The Margins" or fax to: 881-6682. Listings must be received by the Wednesday before publication for consideration.

BOOKREVIEWS



The Closing of the Western Mind: The Rise of Faith and the Fall of Reason
by Charles Freeman
New York: Vintage, 2005 \$16.95 (paperback)

At a time when the avowal of religious principle is increasingly prominent in public life, and faith informs policy in the way ideology used to, Charles Freeman's *Closing of the Western Mind* sheds light on the political impact of Christianity on its first adopters. This intellectual history of Mediterranean late-antiquity explains how the philosophical achievements of ancient Greece were superseded by Christianity following the conversion of Emperor Constantine in the fourth century A.D. His was an authoritarian religion wielded as an instrument of state, belief with political purpose, fashioned to impose its orthodoxy as a means of retaining control over a disintegrating empire. As Hellenic culture was absorbed into the new church and theology dispensed with reason, rational argument was effectively silenced by a system that called for no reasoning beyond faith, ultimately plunging Europe into a dark age from which it did not emerge until the fourteenth century. Clearly, Freeman's sympathies are with the rationalists, but this by no means a secularist's dismissal of religion as so much superstition. Rather, it is a deeply rich and well-researched book that attempts to return the events and personalities of the primitive church to their historical contexts and chart the connections between social forces and philosophical systems. Character sketches of impossibly distant personalities are exceedingly welcome: Hadrian hysterically mourning his boy love Antinous, and declaring him a god; St. Paul a visionary, indefatigable man who "could also be abrasive and deeply sensitive to any threat to his assumed authority" (p.109); an array of Byzantine bishops processing with all their ascetic quirks and pieties held up to view. Freeman's is an enormous undertaking, and keeping up with its cast of minor philosophers, blood-soaked Romans, pagan and Christian communities and their sects and schisms can be as exhausting as it is overwhelming. Fortunately, the deep antiquarian past is Freeman's territory and under his guidance the journey is fascinating.

—andy stott



O Spam Poams
by Rob Read
Book Thug (www.bookthug.ca), 2005 \$17.95 (Canadian)

In Rob Read's book he manages something quite rare—at least rarely done well—combining a formally rigorous approach with a distinct voice that comes through the constraint. Read manipulates his spam e-mail into poems, and the manipulation has rules: basically, anything can be removed, but virtually nothing (save the occasional letter) can be added. Why would anyone do this? Well, the project was not meant to be saved or even published. Read would simply send his "Daily Treated Spam" to anyone's e-mail address he had, and eventually his list grew to include publisher Jay MillAr (sic) who enjoyed them so much he found someone who had archived enough of Read's poems to publish a "best of." And yes, a "best of" is entirely possible, as Read writes in the Author's note "this is not novelty verse, it is verse that happens to have an aura of novelty around it." Also, it is a form of recycling language, which, essentially, all poetry is anyway. This book, like spam, has something for everyone: Cialis, internationally honored degrees and discount brand cigarettes—a must-have for anyone who thinks poetry is boring.

—kevin thurston



Eastern Sun
Naturopathic Medicine

homeopathy the safer medicine

- pediatric asperger's . ADHA . autism
- women's health menopause . thyroid issues
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gilda's club seminar

january 10th . 12 noon

a free one hour question & answer period



Dr. Maria Herod

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