

## Week 1: A Miracle on Zoom

Hey, fellow Tar Heels. How is everyone holding up?

I can't tell you that this is how I thought I'd be spending my final semester at UNC - in my parents' house instead of my dorm room, writing this blog post instead of a paper, hanging out with my cat instead of my friends. Instead of senior pictures at the Old Well and the Bell Tower, I'll make do on my parents' porch; instead of savoring the last precious moments of college with my friends on Franklin Street, we meet over Zoom and FaceTime.

I can't change any of this, but I'm not going to downplay it either. There's a profound kind of loss that we're all experiencing right now - all of us, not just the class of 2020. Staying home and sacrificing these precious moments is an essential duty that we all owe to each other, not to mention to the healthcare professionals working tirelessly to steer us through this. But it is a loss nonetheless, and it deserves to be recognized.

To everyone who spent last week moving, adjusting to online lectures, saying goodbye, and mourning what we never got to have - I am so sorry. Thank you. We will get through this together, by being apart.

Speaking of Zoom- what a wild and wacky change this has been! I have been so impressed with how my professors have adapted. One professor of mine has shifted from not even using a Sakai site to being a Zoom master within two weeks! While I miss our classroom in Greenlaw, I must say it was kind of nice to wake up twenty minutes before class started- not to mention, discussing eighteenth century British literature was much more fun with the family cat in my lap.

For my first Zoom class of the semester, we discussed an essay about miracles by the philosopher David Hume. Hume argued that when you are told about a miracle, you must weigh the weight of that testimony against all of human experience to decide what to believe. In short- a miracle is something that has never happened before, and Hume believes that that is impossible.

I wonder what he would think, watching a group of twenty people, all in different places, some in different countries, meeting together digitally to discuss his work. Three weeks ago, we were all together, in a classroom, and now we are apart- but still together, gathered with the help of technology and our commitment to each other and our education.

I don't know what the rest of the semester holds for us. I certainly don't know what

comes after the semester ends, when the class of 2020 must leave UNC once again, in a different, but equally significant way. But I do know this: twice a week, from now until the end of April, my classmates and I will gather together from the comfort of our own homes, and discuss eighteenth century literature.

If you ask me, that's just a little bit miraculous.

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