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Horst Frenz Prize, 2025

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Winner: "Exorbitant Critique: Deconstruction as Environmental Thinking," by Abigail Culpepper

"Exorbitant Critique: Deconstruction as Environmental Thinking" brings ideas of Derrida into dialogue with Rousseau's *Confessions*—itself a provocative move. Abigail Culpepper illuminates with new light the old idea that *inside* is separate from *outside*, *culture* separate from *nature*. The paper masterfully analyzes the chapter from Rousseau's *Confessions* wherein he rotates between writing and botanizing, inside and outside. This is an important intervention, especially to readers who might find Derrida's writing difficult: the juxtaposition with Rousseau makes it possible to better understand Derrida's preoccupation with the animal/nature. But the paper also reexamines the meaning of Rousseau's wavering between writing and botanizing, showing that critique is sometimes fraught with dialectic challenges.