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I have three ways of getting to work, various alternatives of walking and bus.

ALL WALKING

I cross the northwest corner of the North Common; walk by QEH (crowds of teenagers smoking on the sidewalk - sometimes it's hard to get through); by Camp Hill Cemetery where a friend of mine was murdered 20 years ago, but I usually only think about that when I am on the Summer Street side; the Lawtons where I sometimes shop; a house at the corner of Robie and College where there used to be a green 1959 Chevy station wagon (known for its gull-wing tail fins) mouldering away in the late 1970s - it has been gone for 25 years but I still always think of it when I walk by); the fire station, the maternity hospital with more smokers on the sidewalk, but polite ones; Gorsebrook field; the SMU Science Building expansion under construction; McNally and I have to decide whether to go in the north door of Loyola or, in the summer, to walk through a little wood by the Sobey Building and the parking lot (a friend once kissed me in the woods after walking me almost all the way to work) and enter the gallery from Gorsebrook Avenue.

BUS

I'm usually hurrying to catch the bus; pausing to drop an envelope in the mailbox at the northeast corner of Robie and Cunard; past the corner store on the southwest corner where I might pick up The Coast from the dispenser box on the sidewalk; then the bus shelter, then the bus (two options):

BUS 17 or 18

Down Robie past the funeral home, the Willow Tree, the vacant lot where the crazily painted slum landlord houses used to be; Bruce Barber's house south of Jubilee; my dentist's office; turning onto Spring Garden; the old Oxfam shop that used to sell my sister's greeting cards; the Convent of the Sacred Heart, the apartment building I used to live in (with Smitty's on the ground floor); Robbie Burns' statue; turning onto South Park; the hospitals, the Holy Cross Cemetery with the dead Prime Minister and the tombstone in Arabic; Uncommon Grounds coffee shop, turning at the Christian Science church; getting off across from SMU and walking through the quad, with its trees and a deep crease in the lawn where a stream is partly buried; going in the north end of Loyola and through the Colonade where Middle Eastern students are flirting and horsing around and talking on their cell phones.

BUS 3 or 42

Same route as far as Coburg but continuing straight down Robie, past the Public Archives and as far as South; getting off and walking usually on the west side by the residential houses, including one that used to be a gatehouse and has the very grand, oversized gates of a much larger property that got broken up decades ago, crossing over by McNally or the Science Building.

Most of the buses (17, 18, 42) are full of university students (Dal and SMU), a pretty even mix of Middle Eastern, South Asian, Chinese, Black and European, some talking on cell phones, some studying text books, some listening to iPods. Some people of limited mobility going to one of the hospitals. The crowd on bus 7 is older, more working class. A lot of the bus drivers on 17 and 18 know my face and say good morning.