Inside the Issue:

⇒ Technical Editing (Pgs. 2-3)
⇒ Spring Break in Dublin (Pgs. 4-5)
⇒ Student Poetry (Pgs. 6-7)
⇒ TCU Chapbook Contest Winner: Lino Anunciacion (Pg. 7)

“April...hath put a spirit of youth in everything.”
-William Shakespeare’s Sonnet XCVIII

Source: Texas A&M University
Exploring Professional Writing Careers: The Technical Writer and Editor

By Jordan Dickerson ’18

Writing with purpose and clarity is a highly desired skill in the workplace. Sondra White, Marketing Director at the Texas A&M Foundation, highlights the significance of communication in this way: "I can't think of a career where you aren't writing. Even surgeons at some point have to communicate with someone else." The editorial process may differ between an academic, a scientific, and a corporate environment, but in the end all fields of work call for articulate communication.

Katie Duelm with the Texas A&M University Press and Marissa Madsen with Presidential Studies Quarterly agree that the goal in academic publishing is to clarify field-specific language so that everyone can understand. As managing editors, both are tasked with facilitating author-editor communications, editing manuscripts, and managing project data to meet publication deadlines. Dr. Krista May, Associate Editor with the World Shakespeare Bibliography, and Amy McWilliams, Publication Services Editor for the Texas A&M Integrated Ocean Drilling Program, work with the same processes even though they operate in different settings.
While the goal of technical writing and editing is to enhance usability of information, this objective looks different depending on the work environment. Roberto Molar, technical writer for the NASA Langley Research Center in Virginia, takes difficult concepts and conveys them to the general population and government officials to gain support for scientific research. Sondra White and Dale Rice are directors of Marketing for the Texas A&M Foundation and the Department of Communication in the College of Liberal Arts, respectively.

As representatives of the university, White and Rice posses skills in technical writing and editing that are tailored to reflect the values and goals of their respective venues for the benefit of Texas A&M. White is the voice of the Foundation through the Spirit in the same way that Rice is the voice of the College of Liberal Arts through an upcoming alumni magazine.

As you can see, technical writing and editing is a widely applicable discipline. It begins with education and builds from the classroom to the workplace. In order to become a successful technical writer or editor, one must gain experience and additional skill sets. Most of the skills technical writers and editors employ are learned in writing courses and applied in real-world settings. Rather than being confined to a specific industry, technical writers and editors are language experts in virtually every profession.
This semester, Dr. Marian Eide offered a senior seminar (ENGL 481) over the works of Irish author James Joyce. As part of the course, students visited Dublin, Ireland, for a week in March to continue studying Joyce abroad. The course includes most of Joyce’s most iconic works—such as *Ulysses*, *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Finnegans Wake*. We asked student Hunter Corb ’18 to share some of his experiences with us at The English Aggie.

**What did you do in Dublin?**

I could write a novel for this question. We did quite a bit of walking (I think I walked almost 10-12 miles every day), but we did a whole bunch of things. We went to Sandycove and visited the James Joyce Tower, read *Ulysses* out loud to each other in a conference room; had three lunch lectures by visiting professors; took walking tours of each of the three books we have read; took a long hike around Howth along the coast of Dublin Bay; toured the Guinness Brewery; visited Stephen’s Green and Phoenix Park, as well as the National Library and the National Museum of Archaeology; went to St. Patrick’s Cathedral; saw two plays by the famous Irish playwright Sean O’Casey; witnessed a stage reading of *Exiles*, Joyce’s only play and considered a huge failure; and we ate fantastic food.
What is your favorite memory from this trip?

Going to jail. A handful of us decided not to go to the festival on St. Paddy’s Day and instead went to Kilmainham Gaol. This is a jail built in the late 1700s and housed, among many others, the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin. It was morbidly fascinating seeing the jail cells and the places where people were executed. Realizing that it was only 100 years ago and standing in this historic place, it makes the history come alive and feel very close. Our tour guide was extremely knowledgeable and was able to answer any questions we had. It was by far my favorite part of the trip.

Do you feel traveling abroad helped strengthen your understanding of James Joyce and the common themes, characters, and settings he wrote about? Would you recommend this course (or courses like it) to others?

I would highly recommend a course like this. I am one who, though loving to learn as much as possible about everything, really enjoys an engaged learning environment and seeing it for myself. All of Joyce’s works are set in the city of Dublin, and it was amazing and really neat for me to actually see the places that are mentioned in the works and walk where the characters in the books walked. You get a sense of what Joyce is talking about when he calls his city “Dear Dirty Dublin.” You understand why he is doing what he is doing with the books, why he uses certain phrases and language, and why he loves it so much. It was a fantastic and wonderful experience, definitely the best trip I have ever been on. I would highly recommend anything like this to anyone if they have the chance.

A Week in Ireland

<table>
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<tr>
<th>March 13</th>
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<tr>
<td>- 22-hour group reading of <em>Ulysses</em></td>
<td>- Walking tours of Joyce Tower and Sandycope&lt;br&gt;- Joyce Archive&lt;br&gt;- National Library of Ireland&lt;br&gt;- Play at the Gate Theatre&lt;br&gt;- Lunch lecture</td>
<td>- Walking tour of Bloom’s path through Dublin (from Joyce’s <em>Ulysses</em>)&lt;br&gt;- National Museum of Ireland&lt;br&gt;- Lunch lecture</td>
<td>- Walking tours of Stephen Dedalus’ path through Dublin (from Joyce’s <em>A Portrait</em>)&lt;br&gt;- Walking tour of <em>A Portrait</em> and Dublainers locales&lt;br&gt;- Lunch lecture</td>
<td>- Kilmainham Gaol tour&lt;br&gt;- Guinness Brewery&lt;br&gt;- Staged reading of Joyce’s only play, <em>Exiles</em>, at the Smock Alley Theatre</td>
<td>- Howth Castle day trip&lt;br&gt;- Play at the Abbey Theatre</td>
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Caskets
shut out the Light;
cover the room in surrounding darkness
and encapsulating blight,
declare yourself emperor of barren lands.
wear a crown upheld by bleeding hands and retire
to a bed of thorns, and sleep well.

Witness
a moment, uninhibited.
throwing our socks and shoes into the river and
watching them float away,
running through the fields of supple grass
and earthy soil, the wind is messing up our
hair and our feet are getting dirty, but for a minute or two,
We Don’t Care.

The Crimson Stampede
The raging bulls of red are stampeding through my mind
Kicking up the tired dust and forcing out the grime
They run without abandon, no they will not slow
So I must run with them telling them all where to go
As we travel on and on my back begins to sting
The raging bulls run faster as my back sprouts golden wings
I spread them out to their full span and feel my body rise
Then like a golden eagle does I start to surf the sky
The bulls of red grow smaller as I soar amongst the clouds
The world is my playground stretching up and straight back down
I keep on flying higher and escape the atmosphere
The titan universe above me is so crystal clear
Every single star in every single galaxy
Dares me to go on but now the strength has left my wings
I start to fall like Icarus screaming down to land
The ending to my odyssey looks not so very grand
Suddenly I snap awake my head all in a daze
I look down, to my surprise, I’m done with my essay

By Lewis Edwards ’19

Prent

clothes scrubbed against a yellowed washboard,
rubbing against its ridged surface
and clouding the water
with filth and grime;
and we will tell our children that This is how we spent our time, in
stories read at day’s end:
hanging wet shirts and socks on the line
with clothespins.
engaging in those middling conversations
about nothing at all.

Caskets

shut out the Light;
cover the room in surrounding darkness
and encapsulating blight,
declare yourself emperor of barren lands.
wear a crown upheld by bleeding hands and retire
to a bed of thorns, and sleep well.

Witness

By Steele Stephens ’16

The Crimson Stampede

The raging bulls of red are stampeding through my mind
Kicking up the tired dust and forcing out the grime
They run without abandon, no they will not slow
So I must run with them telling them all where to go
As we travel on and on my back begins to sting
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Suddenly I snap awake my head all in a daze
I look down, to my surprise, I’m done with my essay

By Steele Stephens ’16
Congratulations to Lino Anunciacion ’17:
Winner of the TCU Chapbook Contest!

“The TCU Chapbook Contest is a publishing contest that was put on by eleven40seven, TCU’s undergraduate journal for the arts. While they publish an undergraduate journal very similar to our own The Eckleburg Project, this year they decided to also host a chapbook contest. Submissions were open to any undergraduate student currently attending a public university in Texas. I had just finished self-publishing my latest chapbook, *The Light Bringers*, when I found out about this competition. I was lucky to have quite a few poems that I decided weren't fit for my first book. Coincidentally, they all had a very similar theme and actually stood well together as a separate collection of poems, so I decided to submit the manuscript. The staff at eleven40seven really enjoyed it, so I am working with them now to publish it. The reading ceremony will be on April 21st on TCU's campus.”

AN EXCERPT.

They say you can never know someone's true colors.
I know that when people get angry, they see red.
When some people see black, they get angry.
I know most of those people are white,
but the saddest part is that some of those people are black.
I know that somewhere along the line, blue stopped being my favorite color,
and that contrary to popular belief,
black and white are not things that you can sound like.
They say no situation is black and white, but
if you let white wear blue, and try to mix it with black, you'll get a lot of red --
all over.

To read more of Anunciacion’s work, please visit english.tamu.edu/sites/default/files/TheEnglishAggie.pdf.
These are a few of our **FAVORITE THINGS:**

**English Courses**

For each edition of *The English Aggie*, we will feature a section of “favorites.” Students will have the opportunity to respond with their “favorites” on the Texas A&M English Undergraduate Facebook and Twitter Page.

“**History of Literary Criticism** with Dr. Craig Kallendorf was my favorite class because as a professor, Dr. Kallendorf is nothing less than encouraging and excited about what he teaches every day. I’d wanted to take the class for two years before I finally enrolled in it simply because the subject matter seemed interesting. I was not disappointed, and the things we learned have impacted how I analyze literature as well as how I interpret various perspectives in non-literary environments. Dr. Kallendorf also offered helpful advice without being asked when I needed to improve in the class, which showed that he genuinely cared about the success of his students.”

- Halle Campise ’16

“My favorite English class was **Young Adult Literature** with Dr. Robinson. We read some great YA novels, and we did an interesting, unique study of fairy tales. I really enjoyed the class, and I feel like I learned a lot from it. Dr. Robinson is an awesome teacher, and she made the class very engaging and interesting. I would definitely recommend Young Adult Literature to other English majors and minors.”

- Taylor Dimmitt ’17

For more responses, please visit englishaggie.blogspot.com.

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Wishing you had more opportunities to use those excellent essays, creative fiction, and poetry that are languishing on your hard-drive or in the back of your mind? Like “Texas A&M English Undergraduates” on Facebook or follow @TheEnglishAggie on Twitter to stay informed about contests, magazines, and journals to which you can submit your work.