



# THE ENGLISH AGGIE

February 2014

[www.english.tamu.edu](http://www.english.tamu.edu)

Texas A&M University– Department of English Undergraduate Studies

## A CLOSER LOOK AT



## *The Eckleburg Project*

Their advertising is excellent, the contents of their magazine intriguing, and their use of social media an example for all undergraduate organizations. In an interview with Editor in Chief Madison Mae Parker, former Managing Editor Amanda Hendrix-Black, and Advisor Florence Davies, learn more about how *The Eckleburg Project* is the result of several semesters

of intense planning, teamwork, and learning from mistakes. Has one of your stories, poems, or pieces of artwork been published in this magazine? One of your classmates'?

**Read more about this developing undergraduate publication on Page 3.** And then consider submitting your own work to *The Eckleburg Project*.

## Julia Garcia's *Long-Distance Internship*

When senior English major Julia Garcia applied to intern with Susan G. Komen the summer after her freshman year at Texas A&M, she had no idea how far her internship would take her. Through her internship with Komen, Julia formed connections with a co-worker who later offered her an internship with the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS) beginning in late summer 2013, just before her senior year at Texas A&M.

**The only problem? NCCS headquarters are located in Washington DC.**

Is such a long-distance internship possible? How has her experience helped shape Julia's plans for the future? **Read about her experience on Page 7.**



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: AGGIE AUTHORS

The Association of Former Students is keeping track of Aggie writers who have been published—an excellent resource and encouragement for aspiring Aggie authors. While the running list of authors is certainly far from complete, English Aggies now have the chance to see what former students are writing.



### BESTSELLING AGGIE AUTHORS

**Overall:** Forrest M. Mims III '66 (pictured top left), "the Country Scientist," has written more than 60 books, mostly technical tomes on electronics, some in various editions and in two or more languages. His total sales exceed 7 million copies. He is probably best known for his hand-lettered and illustrated *Getting Started in Electronics*, published by Radio Shack in 1983, which has sold more than 1.3 million copies and is still in print. He is working on a new memoir.

**Fiction:** Kathleen Miller Y'Barbo-Turner '80 (pictured middle left) with 52 books written and 1.6 million copies sold, which to our knowledge is the most of any Aggie author other than Mims and the most of any Aggie fiction author.

**Nonfiction:** Michael Lee Lanning '68 (pictured bottom left) with 1.1 million copies sold across 18 books, the most (to our knowledge) of any Aggie nonfiction author other than Mims.

Images (from top):

<http://www.forrestmims.org/biography.html>

<http://www.kathleenybarbo.com/bio/>

<http://www.michaelleelanning.com/>

### AGGIE-AUTHORED BOOKS:



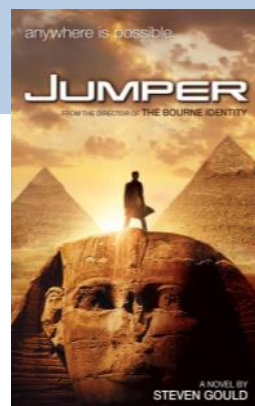
**Author:** Amy Tintera  
**Genre:** YA/Sci-fi  
[amytintera.com](http://amytintera.com)



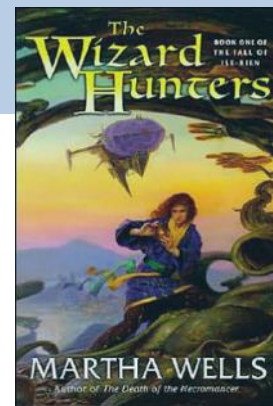
**Author:** Donna Cooner  
**Genre:** YA  
[donnaconner.com](http://donnaconner.com)



**Author:** Emily McKay  
**Genre:** YA-Dystopian  
[emilymckay.com](http://emilymckay.com)



**Author:** Steve Gould  
**Genre:** YA-Sci-fi  
[eatourbrains.com/steve](http://eatourbrains.com/steve)



**Author:** Martha Wells  
**Genre:** YA-Fantasy, adult  
[marthawells.com](http://marthawells.com)

The complete list of Aggie Authors can be found at <http://www.aggienetwork.com/news/136261/aggie-authors/>



# THE ECKLEBURG PROJECT

*Hipster glasses, bright colors, and an intriguing literary title*—Texas A&M's new literary magazine has stirred the imaginations of Aggies across campus. In order to chronicle its rise to campus recognition, we talked with Editor in Chief Madison Mae Parker, former Managing Editor Amanda Hendrix-Black, and Advisor Florence Davies, who shared some interesting insights on the past challenges and future goals of The Eckleburg Project.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

The Eckleburg Project began as the brainchild of Amanda Yanes, a Texas A&M student and Writing Center employee. Supported by Dr. Valerie Balester from the University Writing Center, with funding from Texas A&M University and The Association of Former Students, the original editorial team of 8 undergraduates began advertising for the first edition of this new literary magazine in the spring 2013 semester. They were met with an overwhelming response. Texas A&M students sent in between 200 and 300 submissions which included a variety of immensely creative poetry, prose, and art.

In just its second semester of publication, The Eckleburg Project has grown rapidly in size and prestige. The editorial team stretched to 30 members for the fall 2013 semester, and the number of submissions doubled. But when you take a look at The Eckleburg Project's marketing and social media, it is clear that the magazine owes its growth to the ingenuity, persistence, and hard work of its publishers.

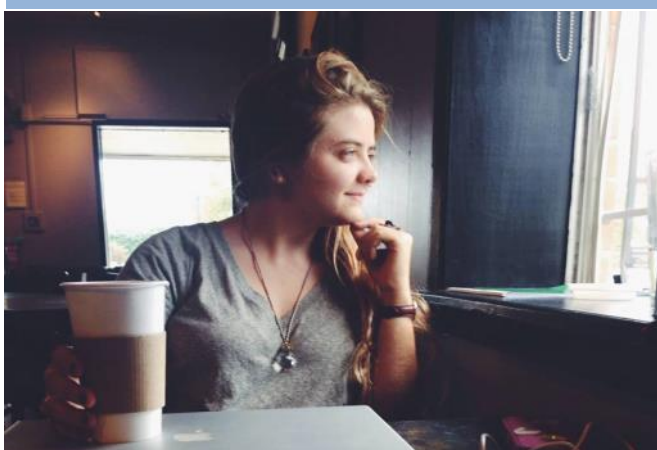
## SOCIAL MEDIA: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

In addition to their newly redesigned website, The Eckleburg Project team maintains a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr (a blogging site), YouTube, and Instagram. The undergraduates who comprise the marketing team have made good use of these online platforms to inform interested readers about upcoming deadlines or updates and, most interestingly, to create a quirky corner of the internet for literary-minded people. Their posts range from artsy photographs to literature-related comics to internet memes—a variety that allows them to communicate in a creative and relevant fashion with their audience, which is mainly comprised of college students.

Because of their presence on social media (especially Instagram), The Eckleburg Project has been noticed by various publishing companies, including Bloomsbury Publishing and Random House, as well as several print and web-based literary magazines like Bare Fiction, ANON, and Yay! LA.



(Article continued on Page 4)



*Above: Editor in Chief Madison Mae Parker*

*Below right: Advisor Florence Davies (left) and Former Managing Editor Amanda Hendrix-Black (right)*

**“THE ECKLEBURG PROJECT IS MEANT TO STAY AND GROW AND SHAKE THE LITERARY WORLD.”**

**CHALLENGES**

Part of the difficulty of heading up a new literary magazine is learning as you go. The editorial team managers learned many things by trial and error, refining editorial positions and adapting to overcome each new obstacle. One of the biggest challenges was the rapid growth of the editorial board. Editor in Chief Madison Mae Parker was responsible for coordinating a group of 30 (a dramatic increase from the original team of 8) in the course of one semester. However, she and former Managing Editor Amanda Hendrix-Black understand that it is important to take advantage of the growing period, to adapt while the organization is still malleable and changing.

The challenge of managing the magazine is heightened by the fact that everyone involved in producing The Eckleburg Project is a volunteer. “We love it,” remarks Amanda. “That’s why we’re willing to sacrifice time.” Through their roles with The Eckleburg Project, these English majors have developed valuable life and leadership skills. The work has shaped many of the students professionally, and has reinforced what we have all learned about challenges being positive things.

**A LITERARY BEACON**

Unlike *Callaloo*, a top literary magazine based at Texas A&M and a *Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters*, The Eckleburg Project has no particular theme for content. Its open guidelines allow students to submit any creative work—“If you think it’s creative, send it to us,” says Amanda. Describing the team’s hope for the magazine, she says, “We want [The Eckleburg Project] to be a beacon for creative students. We want it to draw students to Texas A&M, to help them find a home in the arts.”

As it grows in prestige, the magazine is also fulfilling its original purpose, which as Madison Parker recalls from the first meeting in December 2012, is “that it would serve as a platform for Texas A&M students’ voices, allowing those voices to be heard and connecting Aggies to other Aggies.”

Florence Davies, the Advisor for The Eckleburg Project, believes that the magazine has filled a void. Past attempts at student-produced literary magazines have died away, but Florence is confident this endeavor will not. “We’re



looking for longevity,” she says. “[The Eckleburg Project] is meant to stay and grow and shake the literary world.”

Judging by the rapid growth of The Eckleburg Project, the interest people continue to take in its production, and the talent and creativity of its Aggie contributors, it seems this literary magazine is well on its way to doing just that.

# Get involved with The Eckleburg Project!

## SUBMISSIONS

All undergraduates are invited to submit their poetry, prose, and art before the deadline of **February 28th** at the link below.

[www.TheEckleburgProject.com/submit](http://www.TheEckleburgProject.com/submit).



## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Come visit with other writers and get some tips and practice at one of our workshops!

- **Prose Workshop:** February 11 7pm, Rudder 701
- **Poetry Workshop:** February 19 5:15pm, Rudder 402

“IF YOU THINK IT’S CREATIVE, SEND IT TO US.”

## ANNOUNCING THE SPRING 2014

# UPREP Awards

Undergraduate Professional Research Experience Program

*Each of these English undergraduates will work with a professor on a research project that can serve as an internship or credit for an English class*

### Bethany Moore

Editorial Assistant, *Seventeenth-Century News* with Dr. Don Dickson

### Kimberly Fayard and Allison Ward

Critical Childhood Studies Seminar Assistantship with Dr. Lucia Hodgson. **John Paul Abbott UPREP.**

### John Heggelund

Archival Research for Book Preparation with Dr. Laura Estill

### Kathryn Wilmotte

Ballad Studies Research Assistantship with Dr. Jennifer Wollock

### Jennifer Klein

Preparing a classroom edition of two Restoration Plays with Dr. Margaret Ezell.  
**Funded by the John and Sara Lindsey Chair)**

### Hayley Ellisor

Victorian Woman Poets research assistantship with Dr. Maura Ives.  
**Fasken Historical-Literary Award**



## A TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR Dorothy Van Riper

On Thursday, January 2, 2014, the TAMU English community lost a dearly beloved former professor in Dorothy Van Riper, who passed away at age 83.

We learn in her obituary that she was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1930, taught English at Texas A&M University, enjoyed the opera, fine arts, and traveling the world. However, the greatest tribute to her memory comes from the recollections of her colleagues here at Texas A&M. Their memories reveal the cleverness, capability, and caring nature of this professor of children's literature and adolescent literature. We know that she will be sorely missed by her fellow faculty members and the English community as a whole.

### DR. MARIAN EIDE WRITES:

"The first time I saw Dorothy was when she showed up at her office with a gaggle of students following her. My office was across the hall, and I got accustomed to the trail of people who would follow her from the lecture hall to Blocker. I was newly out of graduate school and indoctrinated in the teaching-as-nurturing school of thought, and Dorothy was shocking! She was so hard on her students, but they kept coming back for more."

### DR. DENNIS BERTHOLD REFLECTS:

"Dorothy had a wicked eye for the absurd and didn't mind commenting on it with an acerbic humor. When I passed her on the way to class she often made a remark about some pointless memo like 'Be sure to leave your office promptly when the fire alarm sounds,' at first sounding put out and offended and then breaking into a big grin and chuckling as she went on her way. Such comments were always a bright spot in my day."

### DR. JANET McCANN REMEMBERS:

"[Dorothy] was direct and outspoken and often showed a lot of courage. For instance, at one point we had dozens of lecturers and suddenly, all but a couple of them were not rehired for financial reasons. One of the remaining lecturers, and therefore vulnerable herself, Dorothy actively campaigned for the rehiring of the others. I remember she had on her office door a couple of photos from Scientific American, one showing a long line of meerkats on a rocky ridge, the second showing only two. Her own subtitle read, 'English Department lecturers?'"

"Dorothy was a highly respected though demanding instructor. She never stopped insisting that her students write well, and some wrote her years later thanking her. She was also a valuable resource for the Department, organizing Freshman English workshops and ending the workshops with a rousing party at her historic, antique-filled residence. Once when someone (name withheld) dropped the punch bowl, she watched the wave of orange liquid flow across her polished wood floors without raising an eyebrow."



# Julia Garcia's *LONG-DISTANCE INTERNSHIP*



*Senior Julia Garcia has rediscovered the value of the study of literature through her internship with a DC-based cancer advocacy organization.*



*Above: Julia and Shelley Fuld-Nasso, CEO of NCCS, at the Rays of Hope Gala*

## Julia's Experience

The National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship's headquarters are located in Washington DC because it is an organization that strives to influence public policy pertaining to cancer survivors' healthcare and insurance. Part of its mission is to organize events, such as the September 2013 Rays of Hope Gala (picture above), which was the first event Julia traveled to DC to attend. Julia took notes and served as an assistant to her boss at this event, where congressmen and women and a panel of oncologists spoke about cancer in the media. At this event and several others, Julia has been introduced to celebrated journalists and members of congress and has experienced an interesting side of the public policy making world.

Not all of Julia's internship involves traveling, however. Between classes at A&M, Julia calls the offices of members of Congress, trying to gain support for the NCCS's PACT Act—a form of lobbying. Although she studies literature at Texas A&M and not rhetoric, Julia has learned from her phone calls about the importance of altering her persuasive techniques depending upon her audience—staff members respond better to different arguments depending on the partisanship of the mem-

ber of congress for whom they work.

## The Value of Studying Literature

In her work with NCCS, Julia observed that despite frustrations and the difficulties of working for a non-profit, her coworkers are extremely passionate about the cause; their empathy is why they are so dedicated to seeking more rights for cancer survivors. Empathy—the ability to understand and share the feelings of another—is key in non-profit work.

Fortunately, English majors have great opportunities to develop this quality. "When we're reading literature," Julia says, "we're not just reading stories—it's another form of empathy." In a typical English major moment, Julia referenced Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (her favorite book), remarking upon the power of the human soul. "Literature changed my life," she explains. "Our classes are briefing us on life—your English major can take you down any path. It's just important to be curious, and to apply for anything and everything." Grateful for the ability to choose empathy and a path of her own making, Julia reflects on the words of Steinbeck's character Lee, "[The human soul] is a lovely and unique thing in the universe. It is always attacked and never destroyed—because 'Thou mayest.'"

## Future Plans

Although Julia has gained some valuable experiences in her work with NCCS, she doesn't see herself pursuing non-profit work in the future. However, she is hoping to pursue a graduate degree, either in Public Policy or at Law School, and would like to do something associated with law and politics. She has learned over the past year that political work is often hard and frustrating (lobbying between classes and flying to DC every month, for instance), but, as Julia also knows, "Every good novel is sprinkled with sadness, loss, heartache—you just have to be able to turn it around."

# These are a few of our **FAVORITE THINGS:** New Books

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 Page.

◇ “I am currently reading *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green and can’t wait to start *Allegiant* by Veronica Roth.”

—Elizabeth Anderson

◇ “Just finished Veronica Roth’s *Divergent*, and I need to get my hands on the rest of the series.”

—Molly McGee



## Upcoming Deadlines

### English Department Graduating Senior Award

**DEADLINE: MARCH 7, 2014**

If you are graduating in May or August of 2014, you should consider applying for the English Department’s *Graduating Senior Award!*

Applicants must have at least a 3.5 GPA overall and a 3.75 GPA in the major in TAMU completed course work. The winner receives a check for \$250 and a certificate of recognition at the Department’s annual Lewis Lecture in April.

Visit the **Scholarships, Awards, and Contests** link on our website for more information.

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