The English Magazine

Featuring:

- Sci-Fi Author Monica Byrne: The Girl In The Road
- Rebeca Garcia: To Teach or Not To Teach?
- Poem: A Line Or Two
- Why You Should Never Fall In Love With A Writer

February 2018
MONICA BYRNE: THE GIRL IN THE ROAD
What is the central idea of The Girl In The Road?

Whether life is worth living. Some think the book says yes. Others think it doesn’t. I like that it’s ambiguous.

What did you edit out of this book?

Ninety percent of the adverbs.

Why go as far as to learn another language and culture to help with the concept of this book?

Because we live in a pluralistic society. Any immigrant to the U.S. already knows that, and so do most people in the world, they have to learn two or three languages to survive. Any vision of the future has to take global pluralism into account, and so does any author who wants to write those futures.

Once you finish writing a book, what is the first thing you do?

Try to forget about it.

If you could have been the original author of any book, what would it have been and why?

Mating by Norman Rush. He transcribed the inner monologue I never knew I had.

Any advice for aspiring writers but find the industry to be intimidating?

Imagine everyone in their underpants! Read every day, no matter what you read. Write every day, not matter what you write. There’s nothing more important than those things.

What was your hardest scene to write?

The ones involving physical violence. I haven’t experienced very much, myself, so it’s hard to imagine the kind of mental space someone enters, and even harder to write it, because it’s such a heightened and surreal state.

Why do you think you wrote the sci-fi genre?

It’s the literature of the future, and therefore the most activist kind of fiction. It literally imagines new worlds.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I once went to The Eagle and Child pub in Oxford, where C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien met to read their works-in-progress aloud to each other. I even found the exact room and the exact corner. I sat there drinking mulled wine and writing for a very, very long time.

If you could have been the original author of any book, what would it have been and why?

You chose to pursue a career in writing over biochemistry and geochemistry. What was your first thought on your decision?

“Thank God I’m finally letting myself do what I love.”

What made you decide to sit down and actually start something?

Haha, honestly, because I had bills to pay, and I didn’t want to pay them through day jobs that made me miserable. So I had to write a book that was both commercially viable and true to me.

How do you deal with writer’s block?

I don’t really get writer’s block. Or, put another way, I get it often, but then just show up and try again. It’s like any other job: if you get into a funk, you still need to be at your desk again the next day and work through it.

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To read our full interview, head to englishaggie.blogspot.com.
To teach or not to teach? That was the question for the loudest and proudest member of the Fighting Texas Aggie Class of 2019, Rebeca Garcia. From Roma, Texas to becoming an English major at what is considered the best university in existence to teaching English 285: Young Adult Literature in Film as an undergraduate student, Garcia chose to better prepare for her future by choosing the teaching route for the semester. “I was able to spend a semester planning out this course with my mentor, Dr. Elizabeth Robinson, and am now able to see it actually come to life. Which has been a wonderful experience so far,” she said. The class only meets on Tuesdays and bases itself on novels and how the themes and characters are depicted related to film adaptations. This lecture/discussion based class later presents arguments on whether the presentation of the films were positive or negative changes in contrast to the book, presentable creative works, or what type of messages were they trying to give.

Have you ever wondered what a day of an undergraduate teacher would look like? “My teaching days are honestly like any other day except it’s filled with nerves that plague me until the very last minute. From then on it’s just focusing on my presentation and information I need to deliver,” Garcia said. But don’t let this intimidate you! Teaching has always had its perks. The most rewarding thing, you ask? Being able to hear everyone express themselves and interact with everyone’s points. It’s your work being brought to life! What’s a greater feeling than that?! “My advice would be ‘Go for it!’... The actual teaching itself is very fun and a great way for [you] to prepare for [your] future as an educator. Even if [you] don’t want to be an educator in the future. If you really love something and think it’s worth bringing awareness for, then ‘Go for it,’” she advised.

And where can you expect to see Garcia in the next ten years? She’ll be conquering the world! Garcia has been accepted into a post-bacc master’s program at Texas A&M. This master’s program will give her the opportunity to teach at a high school while also being able to get a Master’s in Curriculum and Instruction. Whoop!

To read our full interview, head to englishaggie.blogspot.com
Lengthily our love should be,
Strength in “we”, that hopes won’t flee
And if winds blew or when they do
On gusts, I’m thrust to write;
A line or two in thought of you
And if it were, that words fall short,
Then let them sail t’wards soulless port
For ships are that, deprived of crew
And still I write;
A line or two in thought of you
Lost adrift, in search of land
You are my beach, you are my sand
And if my-life boat sinks, “tis what boats do
Then first I’ll will write;
A line or two in thought of you
Gone to sea, our love is current
Bald and barren, if it weren’t
Oceanic tides sweep forth anew
Flowing with, I write;
A line or two in thought of you
If swept away, if drowned or swallowed
It’s here I say: press down your sorrows
And when they swell, because they do
I’ve written words, but far too few;
A line or two, in thought of you:
Sweep with me, into the sea
Weep with me, for us to be
Set sail, set sail
They say that if a writer falls in love with you, you can never die. Believe me when I say you will forever be immortalized living within the souls of their every word and description of every sunrise. It’s a bloody curse, and the only healing potion in existence is in their spilled ink. So, what happens when they decide to stop writing about you? That’s a mystery the broken heart has yet to figure out.

When you fall in love with a writer, you’ll become the protagonist in their current chapter, a tattoo in your every unrecognizable detail on paper. They’ll create an ideal story in their minds and will have you waiting for a happy everafter only to possibly have you broken by the end of the novel. Writers fall in love with stories, their stories, you.

They’ll admire you and compare your brown eyes to the color of hot chocolate on a cold winter night that engulfs you in its warmth, welcoming you home. They will observe them closely and can reveal the exact thought that crosses through your ominous mind. They will show you the most beautiful sunrise with colors that don’t naturally exist and they’ll take it with them when they decide to leave. You’ll never be able to see it again, only in the midst of your imagination. They’ll kiss you in the stormy rain, taking your breath away. You’ll crave it every time a raindrop touches your lips. They will have you walking down an endless holloway in search for the way their fingers traced stories on your bare skin only to leave you imprisoned behind their distraught love poems.

There’s no escape. They will strip your soul and explore your darkest thoughts finding beauty in your insanity and creating sonnets out of your nightmares. They will cut open every scar exposing every your flaws and turning everything about you to beautiful metaphors of the world. They will turn your name into your favor-

When you fall in love with a writer, don’t. Never fall in love with a writer. Should you dare to, be prepared to lose your sanity and forever fear the immensity of their love.

By Ashley Salas
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?

Email your work to EnglishAggieStories@gmail.com and you could end up published in The English Aggie!

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Editor: Ashley Salas '18
This publication is brought to you by:
Texas A&M Department of English
Writer
By Ashley Salas
Charles Gordone, the distinguished namesake of the Texas A&M Creative Writing Program’s annual fiction and poetry spring competitions was born in 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio. He grew up in Elhart, Indiana and received his B.A. from California State University in Los Angeles. He also attended New York University and Columbia University.

Charles Gordone’s famous play, “No Place to be Somebody,” was initially staged Off-Broadway. Audiences and critics were taken by its vivid characterizations. It was compared by a number of critics to the works of Eugene O’Neill; and much of the play’s material came from Charles’ own experience. “No Place to be Somebody” won the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1970, along with several others.

During the last two decades of his life, Gordone directed plays and lectured in community theaters around the country. Gordone began teaching in the English and the Drama Departments at Texas A&M University in 1986. He was a very popular instructor and he continued to teach at the College Station campus until his death in 1995. Since then, the English Department has held an annual competition in both fiction and poetry at the undergraduate and graduate level to celebrate his contributions to TAMU.

GORDONE AWARDS COMPETITION

Deadline: March 30, 2018
Open Genre!
(Creative Nonfiction, Fiction, Flash Forms, Hybrid Forms, Poetry, Screenplays)
$250 Prize

Competition Guidelines

Students submitting manuscripts must be currently enrolled at Texas A&M University in College Station (or have graduated in December 2017). Only one entry for each category is allowed.

- Undergraduate/Garudate Poetry: No more than 10 pages of poetry; no more than one poem per page. May be single or double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- Undergraduate/Graduate Prose (Fiction, Creative Nonfiction, Screenplay): No more than 20 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1-inch margins
- Undergraduate/Graduate Hybrid Form: No more than 20 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1-inch margins
- No name should appear anywhere on the manuscript
- Failure to follow these directions will eliminate the submission from review
- Winners will SHARE their work during a Spring Reading

LINK TO SUBMIT: english.tamu.edu/awardscontests

Manuscripts will be judged by Creative Writing faculty or by outside judges in each genre. The Creative Writing Program reserves the right to withhold awards in any category should submitted manuscripts prove to be insufficient quality.