NEWS AND EVENTS

Student Spotlight

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UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
CREATIVE WRITING STUDENT FINDS INSPIRATION IN DR. SEUSS

Like Dr. Seuss before him, Brian Lupo embraces a bit of the nonsensical in his writing. The senior English major and creative writing student applies what he calls the "poetics of randomness and nonsense" to his writing as a way of addressing the awkward and complex realities of the world.

Lupo is incorporating this style in much of his honor’s thesis, a collection of short stories aimed at breaking down the metanarratives of suburban Orange County (CA) and America at large.

“The collection is a type of Orange Country horror show that uses metaphor and hyperbole to expose truth,” said Lupo, who grew up in Anaheim Hills.

“The approach of exploring the poetics of nonsense comes from a variety of experiences, film readings, and other art and media,” Lupo said. “But more than anything, the root of the idea spawns from one of my favorite quotes by Dr. Seuss, who said ‘I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, It’s a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life’s realities.’”

“I try to embrace this in my writing,” he added. “It’s disturbing, a gritty reality, but it is also random, nonsensical, and humorous. It’s a kind of exposé that aims to embrace the humor and nonsense while navigating an uncomfortable world.”
While Lupo enjoys reading and writing poetry, his true love is fiction, specifically short stories.

“Everyone is so impatient these days; the shortened format just seems more naturally reflective of the society I’m trying to capture. It is also a fun challenge to write something emotionally charged in such a short space,” he said.

Lupo is active in the DU and local writing community. Selah Saterstrom, associate professor in English and director of the creative writing program, has long been impressed with the way Lupo seeks to build community with his writing colleagues.

“It’s clear that writing isn’t just a privatized activity for Brian, but a way of engaging with the complexities and mysteries of the world,” she said.

In particular, Lupo works closely with friend and fellow DU creative writing student Steven Dunn.

“We constantly edit each other’s work and occasionally host our own workshops with friends. I’ve pretty much edited his whole novella Potted Meat, which will be his honor’s thesis, and likewise he’s read almost all of my work,” he said.

Lupo recently became the managing editor of Foothills, the DU student writing journal. His story Carnival was published in Below Magazine this past September. When he’s not writing he works as a replay operator for Pioneer Net, DU’s sports broadcasting service.

Following graduation next June with degrees in English and political science, Lupo plans to spend a year working on his fiction (both short stories and novels) before applying to graduate school for an MFA in creative writing.

“I hope to also spend that time continuing my work in sports broadcasting as well as picking up a job doing some writing or editing. Eventually I hope to achieve my Ph.D. in English and become a professor at a university,” he said.