

Dry Erase spreads undergrad writing

The magazine aims to 'lay the foundation' for visibility of the work of new writers

By Heather Crabtree
Freelance Reporter

Sophomore Ashley Keneller and juniors Jeff Frawley and Jeff McClain had been brainstorming the creation of a new literary magazine since fall term, but it wasn't until a meeting early one February morning that production of Dry Erase began.

Not one of the three magazine editors can remember how they decided on what to call the publication — which had its debut Saturday night — but they all remember the board. The three chose the name "Dry Erase" because of what they felt a dry erase board represents — a medium used for quick informal messages.

The magazine, which includes fiction and nonfiction stories from undergraduate students, will be distributed around campus and the community this week.

Keneller, an English major, said the style of Dry Erase is relaxed and friendly so authors won't feel threatened by the publication.

"We didn't want it to be stuffy," she said. "We wanted it to be more like messages between friends."

The students created an undergraduate-produced publication to give new writers the opportunity to have their work published and to exhibit quality material. Keneller said the materials selected for print in Timberline, another literary magazine at the University, are usually written by more experienced writers.

The majority of students contributing work to the first Dry Erase attend the University, but Keneller said she hopes more students from other institutions will submit pieces in future issues.

"It's a challenge for young writers to get their work published when they have to compete with graduate students and faculty," said McClain, a

political science and philosophy major. Frawley, a journalism major, said one of the hardest things about writing is having the confidence to have others read it.

"Especially with creative writing, it is imperative to have others read; otherwise, stories and poems would never improve," he said.

He described the magazine as a not-too-competitive publication that will lay the foundation for a more noticeable undergraduate creative writing community.

The production of Dry Erase was trial and error. Keneller said this is the first time she has produced and published a literary magazine, although she worked on a similar project in high school.

Keneller became discouraged two months ago when she hadn't received submissions, but entries starting coming in a week before the March submission deadline.

"We had a lot more pressure sometimes," she said.

McClain said his frustrations were centered around layout. Having never worked on a literary magazine or with layout, he said he often found it difficult and confusing. However, once he learned how to format the pages, he said production went smoothly.

Keneller, Frawley and McClain paid for the printing and other expenses. The cost of production limited the number of magazines to 300.

Dry Erase is not financially aligned with the University, and for future issues the editors will fund raise to "keep the magazine free," McClain said. "However, despite limited funding, everything ran smoothly."

The three chose to make the publication free to ensure widespread access.

"We wanted to avoid having people who submitted be the only readers," Keneller said. "Hopefully people will take them and will like them."

Heather Crabtree is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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the role of women in the Third World in the global peace movement; University of California-Berkeley rhetoric and comparative literature Professor Judith Butler, who examined the social and political aspects of the Iraqi prisoner abuse photos; and Brooklyn College post-colonial theorist Moustafa Bayoumi, who criticized the war's effects on public knowledge.

"Rights have evaporated like a kettle whistling dry. ... This is not just a stupid war. It is a war designed to make us stupid."

Moustafa Bayoumi
Brooklyn College theorist

The afternoon panel was led by Fiona Ngō, a visiting instructor in the ethnic studies department. Panelists examined post-Sept. 11 labor discrimination against Filipino immigrant workers, the effects of the USA PATRIOT Act on Asian Americans, the parallels between the Vietnam and Iraq wars and the detention of Muslim and Arab immigrants.

By projecting stereotypes and encouraging public ignorance about the Islamic world, Bayoumi said, the American government gains more power to create discriminatory policies.

"Rights have evaporated like a kettle whistling dry," he said. "This is not just a stupid war. It is a war designed to make us stupid."

A recurring theme of the symposium was the history of profiling in the United States. A screening of Jason DaSilva's documentary "Lest We Forget" compared post-Sept. 11 immigrant detentions with the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. This connection, panelist Irum Shiekh said, has led to Arab-Asian alliances against profiling.

"Japanese- and Korean-Americans have been really supportive, and they were some of the first groups that spoke up against the detentions of immigrants," she said.

The symposium did not include arguments in defense of U.S. policies post-Sept. 11. Organizers said this was because scholars critical of the government needed a forum to discuss their concerns.

"The other side is amply provided a predominant position on FOX News and Clear Channel," MCC adviser Steve Morozumi said. "This is an opportunity to look at how scholars are examining these issues."

The symposium inspired some attendees to organize against discriminatory policies.

"It's going to take a lot more effort on the part of people in this country to come together as a whole," freshman Adam Lewis said. "Workshops like these help us get our ideas in sync."

Kera Abraham is a freelance reporter

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