

Cornelius gives in to teaching career, loves it

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Representing the Clackamas High School Department, Instructor Trista Cornelius fell into teaching. "It's the one profession I was not to do," she said. "Isn't that crazy? I don't go to work and honestly feel like my professional 'calling' some- like no matter how hard I try to get into it, and happily so." Cornelius was very specific when she described why she chose teaching. "Reading and writing help us understand ourselves and each other," Cornelius said. "These things make a positive difference in our lives. Because through writing, we find a voice and can express ourselves in the world; be heard. Because in literature, we read those

kinds of voices; [we] gain understanding about our own lives and lives different from our own."

Cornelius has been a full-time instructor at Clackamas for two years now and has taught at a number of different universities, but prefers the community college setting.

"I taught for three years as an adjunct instructor at—Are you ready for this? Portland State, Portland Community College, the University of Portland, Marylhurst University and Pacific University," she said. "Not all at the same time, thankfully. Even though I had good experiences at all of those places, I much preferred teaching at the community college. The student body tended to be more diverse, students seemed to speak up more for themselves in class, and the education really mattered to the community college students—they didn't take it for granted, and

many of the community college students were honestly changing their lives in really inspiring ways."

Currently Cornelius teaches WR 121 and the English literature sequence. She will also be teaching Creative Nonfiction Writing next fall and Native American Literature next winter.

"Teaching English is incredibly challenging and exhausting, but equally inspiring and rewarding. I hope I do this for thirty years, right? However, it's not for everyone and there is more that you can do with a degree in English," she said.

Cornelius graduated from

Pacific University, where she double-majored in literature and art with a minor in creative writing. She completed her master's in English at Portland State with an emphasis on composition theory and rhetoric, which Cornelius describes basically as writing.

"[Teaching is] the one profession that I did not want to do. Isn't that crazy?"

Trista Cornelius
English Instructor

"I taught writing classes while earning my master's degree, and I loved the experience," Cornelius said. "Then, right after graduation, I started teaching writing for a variety of schools,

Portland Community College in particular."

She cites her favorite type of fiction as creative nonfiction.

"I like to hear people's real stories, how they deal with their fears and

anxieties, what insights they gain from their experiences," she said.

In addition to her love of reading, writing, art and movies, Cornelius also enjoys painting. She currently resides in P-town, but grew up outside of Salem, calling herself sort of a "country kid." However, she said she loves the diversity of the Rose City.

"I love the city now ... being able to walk to restaurants and cafés; all the theater, the music, the cultural events, the public transportation and Powell's Bookstore!"

Cornelius has this bit of advice for any students thinking about a degree in English.

"I really think you should take the classes that challenge and inspire you and see where it leads," she said. "Be confident that it will all come together, and keep your eyes open for opportunities—then pursue them when they're presented to you."



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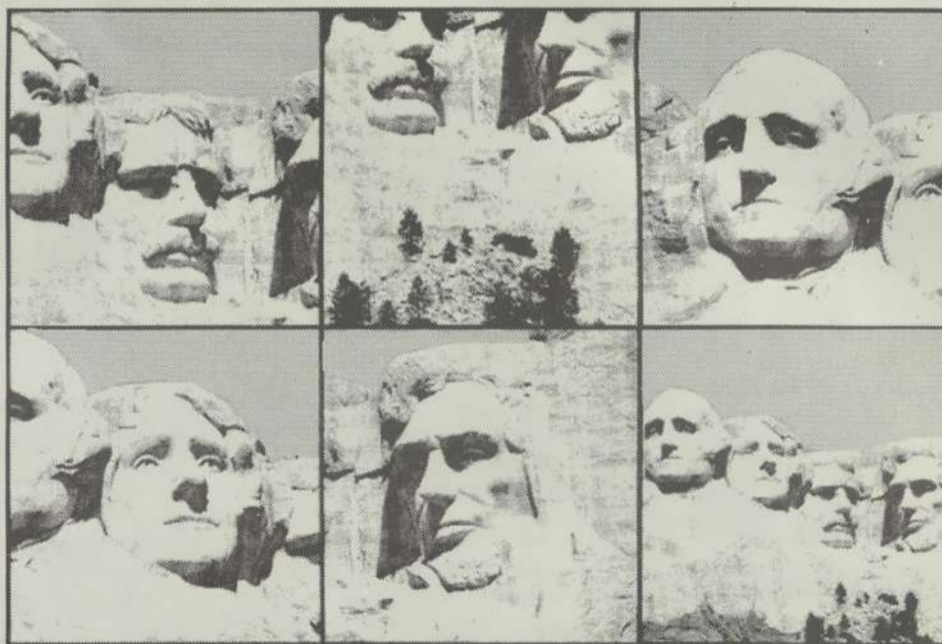
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Is there a God?

LOOKING AT MOUNT RUSHMORE, COULD WE EVER believe that it came about by chance? Even given infinite time, wind and rain, could those carvings ever be randomly formed on the side of a mountain?

But what about the men themselves—Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln? If the figures on Mount Rushmore are too complex to come about by chance, wouldn't the actual men be too complex to come about by chance? Indeed, they were much more complex than their mountainside counterparts.

And what about you? Could a carving of your likeness just appear on a mountain? If not, then how could the real

you—with all your greater complexity—come about by chance?

The complexity around us and within us points to a deliberate Designer who not only made us, but also sustains us today. But why would a God create us in the first place? The consistent message of the Bible is that God created us for the purpose of knowing him and finding our meaning and joy in him.

To learn about who God is and what it's like to know God, read the section of the Bible called "John." To see more evidence for the existence of God, read the feature article "Is There a God?" at www.EveryStudent.com.

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