

4-15-2019

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(2019) "Cover, Title Page, Staff List, Editors' Note, Table of Contents," *The Oval*: Vol. 12 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

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OVAL

Vol. XII · 2019



THE OVAL

Volume XII · 2019



The Oval is a literary magazine published annually by the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM), The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, and the Creative Writing Program of the University of Montana English Department.

The title font for this volume is set in Reem Kufi, and the body font in Georgia.

The Council of Literary Magazine and Presses' (CLMP) Literary Press and Magazine Directory and Newpages.com's Index of Literary Magazines include *The Oval* in their listings.

The Oval accepts electronic submissions of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and visual arts. Only current undergraduate students may submit. For more information, visit *The Oval*'s website.

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ISBN: 978-0-578-48634-5

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I have the honor of presenting to you the twelfth volume of *The Oval*. The individual writers and artists featured in this issue have come together to form a diverse, imaginative collective of creative representation at the University of Montana. This year, our student contributors take us from the dirt beneath our feet to the stars above, offer us diverse cultural perspectives, and explore the beauty and brutality of being human. I've had the pleasure of working closely with my peers and our contributors of *The Oval* for the last two years, and in my time, I have seen the most promising creative work that our university has to offer. For many of our contributors, *The Oval: Vol. XII* is their first publication. We strive to publish the best work of our student body and remain a place where emerging artists can freely express themselves within our pages.

The Oval is only made possible by the generosity of ASUM, Megan Stark and the Mansfield Library, the Creative Writing Program, the English Department, Ken Price and the AlphaGraphics staff, and Kevin Head and the annual Writers' Fall Opus. Thank you for your valuable time and unending support.

Special thanks to our faculty advisor, Robert Stubblefield, who has nurtured the creative minds of both this magazine and the students who are lucky enough to come across his path. Thank you for your patience, your quick wit, and your confidence in our abilities. Your generosity and compassion touches all of us. Thank you to our technological advisor, Shannon Janssen, for your technological savvy and gentle guiding hand. And thank you to Carlos Medina for your poetic expertise and valuable perspective. Together, the three of you make us a group of writers and artists with a clear and passionate purpose.

I am grateful for our staff, without whom there would be no magazine, for your countless hours of reading, editing, and marketing, and for your fearless questioning of the familiar. A special thanks to our genre editors and our design and layout board, who took on the extra responsibilities of directing the editing process and forming a cohesive magazine. And to Luke Larkin, our design and layout editor, I am forever in your debt. You are the backbone of this issue. Thank you for your dedication, your voice, and your kind character. I am honored to have worked alongside everyone on this year's *Oval*. Thank you all for your brilliance.

More so than ever, I am grateful to every single student that submitted to this year's *Oval*. Thank you for sending us your stories, your poetry, your art. Your creative minds and your strong voices shape *The Oval* and allow us to continue to publish student work. You are the reason this magazine has prospered for twelve remarkable years, and you are the reason we will continue to thrive.

Happy reading,
Madison Haynes
Editor-in-Chief

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