

Editor's Introduction

When it came time to think of this year's cover, I wanted something that felt representative of the remote learning experience COVID-19 thrust upon our campus community this past year. I soon realized this was a daunting task, though; how do you capture the solitude and isolation brought about by a global pandemic while also celebrating the twenty-four impressive undergraduate authors whose pieces are included in this anthology? Thankfully, Darlene Atizado Langit's single-line rendering of the writing process did just that. Beginning with an idea that's turned into an essay and subsequently published in our volume—being read by a masked individual, I might add—Darlene's art captures the unflappable, continuous excellence UC Davis students exhibited during the 2020–2021 academic year. Although social distancing may have kept us away from some of the notorious campus landmarks depicted on the back cover, the nearly four hundred submissions we received to *Prized Writing* this year prove that we are still the same UC Davis community.

As with the last thirty-one volumes, this edition of *Prized Writing* represents an interdisciplinary collection of documents written by undergraduates over the last year. While some speak to contemporary political, social justice, and even pandemic-related issues, others highlight the timelessness of one's own story or personal experience. Ranging in topics from medicine to history to soybeans to “hideous green knights,” the featured essays illustrate an array of genres written for classes from across campus. They showcase the diversity of our student body and the course material they're engaging with, and we hope faculty are able to use them as teaching tools for their future students.

Just like past editions, this volume of *Prized Writing* relied on the support and participation of a number of different people. We are only able to publish this anthology because UC Davis students continually submit their work to share with the public; to them we owe a great deal of thanks. I'd also like to thank our authors for their time and attention during the editorial process, as well as their instructors, who graciously provided the introductory comment that accompanies each essay.

I don't think it's an exaggeration to say this volume of *Prized Writing* wouldn't be what it is without the extraordinary dedication of my Assistant Editor, Amara Deis. From start to finish, through more obstacles than either of us would have expected, Amara has worked diligently to encourage submissions, maintain an active social media presence, work

with contributors, revive our “where are they now” section of the website, and rewrite, reorganize, and reimagine more of our behind-the-scenes documents than I can enumerate. During an academic year that felt inundated with change, Amara’s quick thinking and willingness to take on any task was the consistency that kept our ship afloat. Her mark on *Prized Writing* will be felt by Assistant Editors and Editors for years to come.

Similarly, our judges were especially appreciated this year as we turned what would normally be in-person scoring sessions into virtual ones. Many thanks to Agnes Stark, Amy Goodman-Bide, Andrea Ross, Cassie Hemstrom, Erika I-Tremblay, Greg Miller, Karma Waltonen, Nate Williams, and Sophia Jin for your patience throughout the process.

I am grateful for the support and assistance *Prized Writing* receives from the University Writing Program (UWP), in particular, Director Dana Ferris (Director), Anita Rodriguez, Darla Tafoya, Jasvir Mann, Kevin Bryant, Melissa Lovejoy, and Vicki Higby Sweeney. A special thanks to UWP’s webmaster, Elliot Pollard, who not only helped us in maintaining our *Prized Writing* website but who also provided vital support for our new online judging process.

Prized Writing is also fortunate to have the continued institutional support of Gary May (Chancellor), Mary Croughan (Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor), Cynthia Carter Ching (Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education), and Ari Kelman (Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences).

I’d also like to express my thanks for the advice and assistance I received from Terry Flemming with Repro Graphics, Morgan Liu with the UC Davis Bookstore, and Sarah Meredith (Director of CARE).

One final note: the *Prized Writing* community lost one of our own this year with the passing of former editor James “Jim” McElroy. As well as being a Continuing Lecturer with the UWP, Jim was *Prized Writing*’s first solo editor, and it was under him that the anthology endeavored to include both “the essay” and “technical writing,” a decision that has left a lasting impression on the publication. This only pales in comparison to the impression he’s left on his fellow UWP colleagues, who repeatedly remember his stories of his Irish upbringing and fondness for birding. It is his memory that we dedicate this issue of *Prized Writing*.

—Jillian Azevedo,
Continuing Lecturer, University Writing Program

Editors of Prized Writing: 1989–2021

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Vol. 1 (1989–1990): Eric Schroeder & Kathy Dixon

Vol. 2 (1990–1991): Eric Schroeder, Marlene Clarke, & Kathy Dixon

Vol. 3 (1991–1992): Eric Schroeder, Marlene Clarke, & Kathy Dixon

Vol. 4 (1992–1993): Marlene Clarke, Kathy Dixon, Jan Probst, Sondra Reid, Eric Schroeder, James Steinke, & Jayne Walker

Vol. 5 (1993–1994): John Boe, Marlene Clarke, Kathy Dixon, Sondra Reid, & Eric Schroeder

Vol. 6 (1994–1995): Gary Goodman with Cynthia Bates, Pamela Demory, Aliko Dragona, Lara Gary, Donald Johns, James McElroy, Sondra Reid, & Jayne Walker

Vol. 7 (1995–1996): Gary Goodman with Cynthia Bates, Elizabeth Davis, Pamela Demory, Aliko Dragona, Lara Gary, Paula Harrington, Donald Johns, James McElroy, Sondra Reid, Raquel Scherr, & Jayne Walker

Vol. 8 (1996–1997): Gary Goodman with Cynthia Bates, Elizabeth Davis, Pamela Demory, Aliko Dragona, Lara Gary, Donald Johns, James McElroy, Raquel Scherr, & Jayne Walker

Vol. 9 (1997–1998): James McElroy

Vol. 10 (1998–1999): James McElroy

Vol. 11 (1999–2000): James McElroy

Vol. 12 (2000–2001): Eric Schroeder

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Vol. 13 (2001–2002): Eric Schroeder

Vol. 14 (2002–2003): Eric Schroeder

Vol. 15 (2003–2004): Eric Schroeder

Vol. 16 (2004–2005): Pamela Demory

Vol. 17 (2005–2006): Pamela Demory

Vol. 18 (2006–2007): Pamela Demory

Vol. 19 (2007–2008): Pamela Demory

Vol. 20 (2008–2009): Pamela Demory

Vol. 21 (2009–2010): Pamela Demory

Vol. 22 (2010–2011): Amy Clarke

Vol. 23 (2011–2012): Karma Waltonen

Vol. 24 (2012–2013): Karma Waltonen

Vol. 25 (2013–2014): Karma Waltonen

Vol. 26 (2014–2015): Amy Clarke

Vol. 27 (2015–2016): Amy Clarke

Vol. 28 (2016–2017): Gregory Miller

Vol. 29 (2017–2018): Gregory Miller

Vol. 30 (2018–2019): Gregory Miller

Vol. 31 (2019–2020): Gregory Miller

Vol. 32 (2020–2021): Jillian Azevedo