

Winter 2014

Letter from the Editors. "What Can't You Do With An English Major" Winter 2014; Volume 5, Issue 1

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Recommended Citation

Aguilar, D. & Mikal Garza, R. (2014). What Can't You Do with an English Major. *Jostes: The Journal of South Texas English Studies*, 5(1), 1-2.

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"What Can't You Do With An English Major"
(Winter 2014; Volume 5, Issue 1)

To our readers,

Almost two millennia ago, Ovid wrote, "Note too that a faithful study of the liberal arts humanizes character and permits it not to be cruel." Then, as now, the liberal arts were grounded in education and are a staple for everyone. The editors of the *Journal of South Texas English Studies* invite readers to enjoy the winter 2014 issue (Volume 5, Issue 1), which addresses the question and theme, "What Can't You Do With An English Major?"

The works in this journal not only respond to this theme, but also to the recent attacks on the liberal arts, which undervalue an English degree presumably for lacking real-world applications. In the last decade, there have been many reports, surveys, polls, and news articles claiming that the humanities are in so-called decline. Many articles have cited labor statistics and professional liaisons- moreover, a push for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields in professional sectors has pressured Liberal Arts programs (and English specifically) to justify why we do what we do.

However, as we have read, the liberal arts are far from obscurity. They are the platform upon which human character is not only shaped, but is created; where the key to language and communication is untapped; where we study the world in breadth and in depth; and where the potential for true understanding grips us. The study of literature, for instance, is both philosophical and practical: philosophical because literature allows us to better understand the world and our place in it, and practical because many, if not most, students of English programs have found success in a variety of fields, not limited to teaching.

We are proud to say that the responses herein reflect our sentiments about the state of the liberal arts and offer a look at different career trajectories available for English majors. This issue also includes a "Notes from the Field" section, which showcases the variety of ways English majors can use their skills and craft to pursue the careers they have always wanted. The articles in the following section put to rest the decade-long argument that English must step aside to make way for the sciences by arguing against the "impracticality" of the humanities. They include anecdotal works that address the concerns of parents and employers alike and scholarly articles that discuss the cross-over between the liberal arts and the STEM fields. The issue finishes off with a short creative works section, in which one author plays on the subtlety of grammar and meaning and how that subtlety ties in with writing. The poetry not only highlights the principles of language and education (see "Good Writing") but that typifies the capability of poetry that no science could ever quantify (see "Trapped").

The editors of this publication hope to reach an audience of Liberal Arts majors who, despite resistance, continue to persevere and thrive. We hope this issue on "What Can't You Do With An English Major?" encourages our readers to stand by their degrees with pride and brush off comments from those who wish they hired an English

major.

David Aguilar and Ruth Mikal Garza

Co-Editors

The Journal of South Texas English Studies