

SAINT AUGUSTINE'S
MAGAZINE

VOLUME 1, 2021

Saint Augustine's Magazine
Saint Augustine's University
1315 Oakwood Avenue
Raleigh NC 27610
<https://staugmag.org/>

Saint Augustine's Magazine, Volume 1, 2021

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Department of English & Multimedia Studies
Saint Augustine's University

ISSN 2770-6176

EDITOR'S NOTE

Throughout this year we have embarked on hardships like we have not seen the likes of before.

COVID has been an ongoing challenge, misinformation has threatened the public while screams for social justice and civil unrest are heard throughout the media.

Difficulties and struggles came with the pandemic. Our *Saint Augustine's University* was especially impacted by personal losses though we are proving our resilience as a community. In December 2021, we officially launched *Saint Augustine's Magazine*. It brings me great pleasure to write this message on behalf of all the staff, both our former and current team members, who worked tirelessly to get *Saint Augustine's Magazine* off the ground.

Each article was handcrafted by first-hand experience. We tried our best to capture our campus life and to bring it to you in the form of this magazine. I want to thank Dr. Rob Greene who is our Faculty Advisor. Without his insights and determination this magazine would have been a casualty to the pandemic. We are especially grateful to our campus' leadership team who are giving us this opportunity to bring this issue to you.

Thank you to our contributors and our staff. Now enough from me, we hope you enjoy our magazine.

Chris Ingram, Senior Editor

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Chris Gordon | SAU Class of 2019

LOGO DESIGN

The *Saint Augustine's Magazine* logo featuring our historic chapel doors was made by Professor Mike Bissinger in 2019.

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DA'JAH JORDAN | POEMS

SEASONS

In life, most Spring
But I, only Winter
With no flow of Autumn
A Summer breeze unfamiliar
Just Winter

CHOICES

If life ever gave me a choice, it was to walk
If my mother gave me a choice, it was to jog
When my father gives me a choice, I must run
But my choice is to listen not to other choices
And then God grants me the choice to Fly

COLOR YOU YELLOW

Yell to the sky how much this love feels warm
Enter all the gardens my heart has planted for you
Leave the past blues, and follow me into tomorrow
Let our love see no end, only happy beginnings
Only love me with your heart, not your eyes.
Will you follow me on the journey to forever

A HAIKU'S REMINDER

You are valuable
You are the missing piece here
You are unlike them

Da'Jah Jordan is a senior at Saint Augustine's University majoring in English. She is an intern with *Raleigh Review*.

DARIUS SIMPSON | POEM

AND IT DON'T STOP

Marvin Gaye's lyrics trickle // down along kitchen appliances like honey // layers of smooth talk spilling over aluminum pots // between the simmerpop of canola oil // backyard full of kool-aid grins with drumstick bones for teeth // sucked clean // full lips licked by moist midwest July air brown skin battered in lotion and deep fried by sunlight // rainbow plastic barrettes percussing against the slickshine of hair grease // inside the spinning nucleus of blurred jump ropes // tiny relentless stomps beating a familiar song into an asphalt driveway // tender rib meat pressed against every other mouth // like a protective mask // cigarillo smoke dripping off the bottom lip of all men in attendance over 30 // plastic tip if ya old school // wood tip if ya fancy // wine flavored if you lookin for a plus one to disappear the night with // at all times red solo cup hands are itchin for a dance partner // itchin for a melody that curls hips into a question about the space around them // at all times a fold-out card table huddled with hunched backs // is a slap-down symphony you must be *grownfolk* to play along with // at all times notyourchild is asking you for a bite of something you did not cook // and there's a grandmother bent over a lit stovetop performing surgery // and there's an auntie taking notes by the sink for her apprenticeship // and there's another auntie patrolling the yard // passin out water // so no one blacks out // or throws a punch // at least not until the kids get their plates and disappear in front of a TV screen // and there's a big cousin in a car down the street // breaking down a whole forest worth of green into a paper tunnel // and this is the scene // for the 112th day in a row // four months ago a bad excuse for a standup imperialist made an announcement // said *national emergency* // months too late some folks recognize negligence by how many times a president blinks during a speech some homes never floated back to the surface // so some of us learned the language of genocide as government assistance // offered posthumously // this new name for contagious death // says it means to swallow equal parts of this country // and does // not know there are no equal parts of this country // a megaphone attached to an amplifier says *if we gon die we might as well dance* and it started in a backyard on the east side // with the jingle of a chrome chain collar around a rottweiler's neck // expanded into a rhythm that beckons feet to a routhoreography // spread to all the houses on that block until one whole neighborhood burst into a coordinated line shuffle stretching through liquor store intersections and up the side of telephone poles and on the top layer of pool water and pool tables and it spread like a virus from one hood to the next niggas of all hair lengths and skin types two-steppin in unison to the tune of another armageddon that swears it won't discriminate like the last one so we fix it a styrofoam to-go plate equipped with two protective layers of foil and a slice of poundcake individually wrapped in silver and soon you cant tell the difference between the last song at one cookout or the first song at the next what kills you quiet and at random makes yesterday seem like gossip of white quarantine tents and military attacks on poverty and failed health care and look // it's not that *pandemic* don't sound like serious business // but we tried goin out in prayer and in protest and in front lawns and on balconies and if this might be another end let the bass be so loud we can't hear the bodies drop.

Darius Simpson won the 2020 Laux/Millar Poetry Prize at *Raleigh Review* with the above poem. His poem “And it Don't Stop” also appears in the Readings in African American Literature course-pack at Saint Augustine's University.

TYREE DAYE | POEM

TAMED

I was the unbroken horse of that town,
slept standing up,
held on to the breeze like wildflowers.
I kept caterpillars in jars,
my mama let them go,
I figured they just disappeared.

There are moments you can hear God say things soft-spoken,
the sunsetting between thin pines.

Collected crickets in 2 liter bottles,
dropped them on a path far from the house
one or two at the bottom drowning in the last swig of cola,
the smell of mama's leaf pile faint and almost gone.

My mama would say to kill a cricket
is a sin against the night.

The poem “Tamed” by **Tyree Daye** first appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*. Daye teaches at UNC Chapel Hill and is a supporter of our student majors/minors in Literary Publishing & Creative Writing at *Saint Augustine's University*.

TYREE DAYE | POEM

WHAT THE ANGELS EAT

as children we ate watermelons over trash bags in my aunt's back yard
filled with so many black & blue-eyed crows
it stopped being an omen & they'd eat what fell to the ground
& our skin stayed on
we'd get yelled at for spitting seeds at each other
 saliva thick with red
we made a war from the sweetest things
the flies made a mess of our dancing
the flies made a dance in our messes
our mothers thanked god it was not the blood feared
a watermelon's vine would wrap itself around you
if you fell asleep under them watching meteors
melons make magic under midnight moons
i once grew watermelons that flowers could sing
if i sat there singing
the way my aunts break out into song i mean beautiful
like that the flowers would start moving
i'm so free i make a river on both sides of my mouth
a fruit full of kinship
it once grew wild & bitter
 in the kalahari desert
the grandmother of all the watermelons the first water
my grandmothers share a bowl every sunday
and drip juice on the floor
but never stain a sole
the only fruit the dead can eat.

The poem “What the Angels Eat” by **Tyree Daye** first appeared in *The New Yorker*. Daye teaches at UNC Chapel Hill and is a supporter of our student majors/minors in Literary Publishing & Creative Writing at *Saint Augustine's University*.

CHRIS INGRAM | EVENT RECAP

FALLing for SAINT AUGUSTINE'S UNIVERSITY

Gospel Explosion was off to a huge start to Saint Augustine's University Homecoming Blue and White Homecoming Experience 2021. All hands were lifted, and all voices were exemplified as the Gospel Explosion started off with a bang! There were many prominent singers who graced the stage that sunny Sunday Afternoon. Saint Augustine's own praise dancers made a special appearance. The main focus was on The Voices' very own Victor Solomon; he brought a powerful presence with the Solomon singers. Solomon rocked the stage, lifted spirits, and engaged with the crowd as he sang, danced and praised. Homecoming was off to a bang and throughout the week the events only got better.

The week of **Homecoming** was filled with many fun events and activities. One of the biggest events that was thrown was the Falcon N' Out Homecoming Comedy Show. The quad was packed as the whole campus came out on Monday evening. There were two Special Guest appearances by Emmanuel Hudson and Darren Brand. It was all vibes and laughs as the two comedians battled each other on the stage Wild N' Out style. Students joined in on the fun participating in the black squad or the red squad. Nothing was held back as shots were thrown and jokes were let loose. Feelings were hurt but it was in the spirit of laughter all was forgiven! The comedy show was a hit and the falcon community thoroughly enjoyed this awesome event.

Thursday September 24th Saint Aug brought the heat! The most anticipated event of the homecoming season occurred. The **Boosie Badazz** and **K-Camp** concert was finally underway. Students put on their best outfits and packed emery gymnasium out. Down south Boosie is a legend, and everybody loves K Camp's "Money Baby" and Tiktok sensation "Renegade hits". It was lit, the crowd was turned and everybody was feeling the vibes. CAB had the student section turned up. Before the artist showed up there were student performers who graced the stage. Saint Aug's best talent put on a show before the big one began. K Camp came on stage and performed a 30-minute set performing his best hits and singing to the ladies in the crowd. He showed the Falcons some major social media love. K camp definitely gave some exposure to this small HBCU. K camp had the crowd pumped up and Boosie Badazz was next. An initial delay occurred but the DJ had the crowd rocking out. When Boosie came through it was all lights on, everybody's cell phone lit up the room. The students were so loud you would have thought the roof was going to blow off. Boosie had the crowd jumping, he performed his greatest hits and let the crowd know he loved the energy. Boosie cut his performance short and decided to meet with some of us students backstage. The concert was definitely lit, and one the students and faculty enjoyed. We are looking forward to another great one next year.

Chris Ingram is the current SGA president of Saint Augustine's University. He is the senior editor for *Saint Augustine's Magazine*.

CHRIS INGRAM | EVENT RECAP CONTINUED

DIABETES PRESENTATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

On November 9th, 2021 Professor Lamont Sparrow and Professor Renee Swain in collaboration with the Delta Research and Educational Foundation hosted a Diabetes awareness seminar. Prof. Lamont Sparrow is the Chair of the English Department and Assistant Professor of English. Prof. Swain is an Assistant professor of health and physical education. Together they conducted an awesome seminar. Prof. Swain presented slides on the importance of diabetes. She shared her wealth of knowledge on the subject by differentiating between the four types of diabetes. Breaking it down as what the symptoms and effects for each stage of diabetes are. And what is life like for that person in each stage. Being hydrated and slow healing and using the restroom are signs to look out for as they are all associated with diabetes. People living with diabetes are also pretty common; some people do even know they have it because the symptoms are too minimal, however, if left untreated it can get more severe as time passes by. Getting the student's attention Swain showed animated videos explaining how it is to live with diabetes and what you can do to prevent it. One of the most alarming items about diabetes is blood sugar. The majority of those living with diabetes regularly have to watch what they consume. Eating sweets is often prohibited because it contains too much sugar. However, having a balanced diet of salty and sugar is healthy because when living with diabetes your blood sugar cannot get too low or high. Many people test their blood sugar level by pricking their fingers or having an arm monitor. There are also scheduled times throughout the day a diabetic may set to remember to eat. Swain finished off her presentation by reminding students to stay healthy and stay six feet away as we are still in a pandemic. Prof. Lamont Sparrow took the stage light to share his experience as a newly diagnosed diabetic. Sparrow recounts that he is the first in his family to have diabetes and he lives a relatively healthy lifestyle. The pandemic brought on his diabetes. He struggles but he had to learn how to adapt to his diabetes. He consistently has to watch his blood sugar. Keeps sweet candy nearby just in case his blood sugar gets too low. He had to give up many foods he once loved. All to protect and preserve his health. Prof. Sparrow recounts that his diabetes also makes him very tired at times and that it takes him much longer to get up after waking up from bed. It's a constant struggle however with the balance of a proper diet and exercises it can be managed. Diabetes truly shows how it is a constant struggle one will have to undergo battles. There can be little to no signs of diabetes but that doesn't mean you do not have the disease. It is important to watch what you eat, drink a lot of water, and get great exercise weekly. Diabetes can happen to anybody and you can prevent it by living a healthy lifestyle.

Chris Ingram is the current SGA president of Saint Augustine's University. He is the senior editor for *Saint Augustine's Magazine*.

JEREMEE JETER | THE 71'st CORONATION

The scenery of the 71'st coronation was beautiful with the theme of it being Under the Sea. Where the royal court participated in a retelling of the little mermaid and showcased their talent before they began to walk. Heave Nahra the 70'th Miss Saint Augustine's University took her last walk with her 70'th Mister Saint Augustine's University Alex Johnson. She leaves a huge legacy behind. She leaves a legacy of owning and knowing your African heritage. The campus kings and queens also walk and represent their organizations. Then, comes the court of the 71'st Coronation, where they speak about what's important to them and why they are thankful for the people that have supported them and the promise they bring to our illustrious campus.

We are then greeted by the 8th Mr. Saint Augustine's University Benjamin London. He speaks about his road to becoming Mister Saint Augustine's University. Benjamin began to walk to his family area and they began to hug him. At that moment he became emotional and embraced his family for an extended amount of time to feel and enjoy the moment.

And finally, we meet our beautiful 71'st Miss Saint Augustine's University, McKenzie Taylor Estep. Her words spoke of her journey. She speaks about her trailblazer through her academic career and leadership roles. She walks with grace and elegance as she takes her place to be crowned as the next Miss Saint Augustine's University. She leaves a path of hopefulness and pride for her University and shows what it means to be a true falcon leader.

Jeremie Jeter is a sophomore at Saint Augustine's University. He is currently the Junior Editor of Saint Augustine's Magazine as well as an intern with *Raleigh Review*.

JEREMEE JETER | CHRISTMAS TREE ON OAKWOOD AVE

On November 9th, 2021, A small group of students was found on the quad in the center of the campus. The tree lighting event was hosted by the office of student engagement at Saint Augustine's University. The lighting of the Christmas tree was the center of attention and the main event. We celebrated the spirit of Christmas and the meaning of Christmas. After the Christmas tree was lit the group of students began to socialize and discuss their time on campus and see what their future plans were for Thanksgiving and for Christmas.

At the event, there was a horse carriage ride that a lot of the students enjoyed and got to experience. There was also accompanied by the Superior Sounding Marching Band (SSMB) and the University Chamber Singers. We also had funnel cakes and hot chocolate that were sponsored by the office of student engagement.

Students spoke about how this was a great social event to bring in the Christmas time and to briefly get away from a hard time that some students may have faced while on campus. This event was the start of Christmas on oakwood and offered promise and positivity around the campus.

Jeremie Jeter is a sophomore at Saint Augustine's University. He is currently the Junior Editor of Saint Augustine's Magazine as well as an intern with *Raleigh Review*.

ROB GREENE | BOOK REVIEW | THE POETRY SCHOOL OF EXPERIENCE REVISITED

Joseph Millar, *Dark Harvest: New & Selected Poems*, Carnegie Mellon Press 2021, \$16.95 USD, paper.

Among the many poets I introduce my students to at Saint Augustine's University are those who write of experience. This introduction is based on the poetic and the human experiences including the elements of addiction, war, loss, recovery, love, work, parenting, caretaking, and fear that all humans encounter either directly or indirectly, regardless of any set demographic that is used to separate us as countrymen and as citizens of the world. My students therefore get introduced to poets that convey such a compelling humanness through the poems of Etheridge Knight, Lucille Clifton, Dorianne Laux, Walt Whitman, Philip Levine, Federico Garcia Lorca, and many others, including Joseph Millar, as all these poets write of experiences on the elemental level of the human condition.

In an interview with his wife Dorianne Laux in my PhD thesis *The Poetry School of Experience*, Joseph Millar supports the concept of love and work in poetry by calling it:

... one of the great mysteries of life, our "love made visible" as Kahlil Gibran says. So there's something honorable to becoming what Marx calls a worker among workers. Not trying to be a boss, not complaining (too much) about the labor, trying the best we can to bring humor into a tough day, helping somebody else maybe, trying to get the job done well. Questions of character. So the workplace becomes a deep field of possibility, something realized earlier by poets like Wordsworth and Whitman and then more recently by James Wright, Adrienne Rich and Philip Levine. The state of mind of the worker, the attitude of sardonic resignation, sometimes bordering on outrage, the moments of acceptance and even triumph. In addition, craft-wise, when it comes to imagery, there's something that happens to the tools and materials of our trades as we handle them day after day. They take on a different hue, they become sort of magnetized. Just naming them can help to imbue our poems with life.

Millar's poem "Telephone Repairman" from his first book *Overtime*, now found in his latest collection of new and selected poems *Dark Harvest*, illustrates these ideas through inclusion of tools and materials as images:

All morning in the February light
he has been mending cable,
splicing the pairs of wires together
according to their colors,
white-blue to white-blue
violet-slate to violet-slate,
in the warehouse attic by the river.
When he is finished
the messages will flow along the line:
thank you for the gift,
please come to the baptism,
the bill is now past due:
voices that flicker and gleam back and forth
across the tracer-colored wires.
We live so much of our lives
without telling anyone,
going out before dawn,

working all day by ourselves,
shaking our heads in silence
at the news on the radio.
He thinks of the many signals
flying in the air around him
the syllables fluttering,
saying *please love me*,
from continent to continent
over the curve of the earth.

In this poem, Millar employs standard American English in conversational language that evokes a kind of dreadful distraction from our work lives, as in the lines “thank you for the gift, / please come to the baptism, / the bill is now past due.” Millar also evokes the language of the specific trade in lines such as,

he has been mending cable,
splicing the pairs of wires together
according to their colors,
white-blue to white-blue
violet-slate to violet-slate,
in the warehouse attic by the river.

He begins with “mending cable” and then goes on to define the process in the very next phrase as he describes the action as “splicing the pairs of wires together according to their colors.” Millar then moves from work to love with the lines,

He thinks of the many signals
flying in the air around him
the syllables fluttering,
saying *please love me*,
from continent to continent
over the curve of the earth.

Joseph Millar’s style as demonstrated in this poem has influenced my writing directly, as I explore my many trades within my own poems.

The first poem I memorized during my graduate studies in Dorianne Laux’s class is a poem that has stayed with me in both trying and joyful times as I have aged, as this poem is one of mature love. Below is Joseph Millar’s “Dark Harvest,” which is of course the namesake from his collection.

For Annie

You can come to me in the evening,
with the fingers of former lovers
fastened in your hair and their ghost lips
opening over your body,
They can be philosophers or musicians in long coats and colored shoes
and they can be smarter than I am,
whispering to each other
when they look at us.
You can come walking toward my window after dusk
when I can’t see past the lamplight in the glass,
when the chipped plates rattle on the counter
and the cinders

dance on the cross-ties under the wheels of southbound freights.
Bring children if you want, and the long wounds of sisters
 branching away
 behind you toward the sea.
Bring your mother's tense distracted face
 and the shoulders of plane mechanics
slumped in the Naugahyde booths of the airport diner,
 waiting for you to bring their eggs.

I'll bring all the bottles of gin I drank by myself
 and my cracked mouth opened partway
as I slept in the back of my blue Impala
 dreaming of spiders.

I won't forget the lines running deeply
 in the cheeks of the Polish landlady
who wouldn't let the cops upstairs,
 the missing ring finger of the machinist from Spenard
whose money I stole after he passed out to go downtown in a cab
and look for whores,
 or the trembling lower jaw of my son, watching me
back my motorcycle from his mother's driveway one last time,
 the ribbons and cone-shaped birthday hats
scattered on the lawn,
 the rain coming down like broken glass.

We'll go out under the stars and sit together on the ground
 and there will be enough to eat for everybody.
They can sleep on my couches and rug,
 and the next day
I'll go to work, stepping easily across the scaffolding, feeding
the cable gently into the new pipes on the roof,
 and dreaming

like St. Francis of the still dark rocks
that disappear under the morning tide,
 only to climb back into the light,
sea-rimed, salt-blotched, their patched webs of algae
blazing with flies in the sun.

In "Dark Harvest," Millar begins with the line "You can come to me in the evening," and he immediately brings the reader into a poem that examines the beauty of mature love, which is a type of love that recognizes that the lovers had mates before they met the one they were supposed to be with, though this poem ultimately dismisses those former lovers in the lines "with the fingers of former lovers / fastened in your hair and their ghost lips / opening over your body." Love, in this case, means more than the sum of the former lovers combined because those who can last together are the ones who know they can be better than their predecessors who are often the selfish and pretentious ones that Millar labels the "philosophers or musicians in long coats and colored shoes / who are smarter than I am / whispering to each other / when they look at us." Millar goes on to say Annie (Dorianne Laux) can bring it all and they will always have plenty to eat because he will go to work, and they both work very hard to train and support their students.

Joseph Millar's "Dark Harvest" directly influenced my poem "Biloxi Back Bay." In "Biloxi Back Bay," I look back on my preteen years as a homeless youth as I fished and shrimped to support myself and my brother. As I stated in one of my previous *Raleigh Review* editors' notes, there is an authenticity in the language of work, whether changing a timing belt or a tire, fishing in the Alaskan Gulf or shrimping in the Biloxi Back Bay, tarring a roof in London, slinging drinks to those who think they need them in any pub throughout the world or being told "enough" when we have had our fill, filling up fuel tanks in the rural North Carolina town of Rolesville and commuting to work together from the capital of Raleigh to the rural northeastern town of Louisburg.

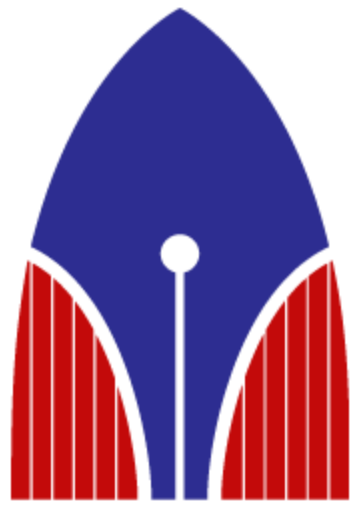
There is an immense amount of material that comes from workers' daily lives, getting up early or working swing shifts in order to pay the rent and keep the lights on in their homes, that far exceeds the attention of the onlooker who catches a whiff of the rot as they pass over a town on the bypass bridge and then gets back to their comfortable big-city life as they open up their laptop to research the town so that they can put it all into a poem they can get published in *Best American Poets* because they are on the inside as the gatekeepers of the poetry publishing world.

There is something authentic about the daily life and struggles that come with living and working in a town, with struggling in that town to raise kids or care for an elderly parent or a disabled family member, that far exceeds a surface-level view of that town, and this means poems of experience have no boundaries and that poetry, in terms of experience, does not belong to the superstandard elite.

Poetry is a vehicle for redemption for many of us; it is not a throne. Millar's examples of experiences are here to say that the poetry of experience is about the everyday, the work and the enjoyment and the struggles of life that we all share on this rock we call earth while lapping the sun together on average of eighty times in our lifetimes.

With lines like "say what you mean, and mean what you say," my grandfather Jack first taught me to be dependable. After Jack, it has been Joseph Millar through his poetry who echoes the lessons my grandfather gave me when he took me in from the street. And now, I share that same eagerness for redemption through resilience shared by poets who write of experience with my own students at Saint Augustine's.

Rob Greene received his PhD from University of Birmingham in England and his MFA from NC State University. He is the founder and the publisher of *Raleigh Review*. Greene teaches at Saint Augustine's University, where he and his colleagues continue to lead the innovative curriculum for the benefit of their students.



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*Thank you for reading Volume 1 of Saint Augustine's Magazine!
We're at work on the next issue due out in Spring 2022.*