



Magazine Report  
By  
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# The Gettysburg Review Fact Sheet

Magazine: The Gettysburg Review

Web Address: [www.gettysburgreview.com](http://www.gettysburgreview.com)

Mailing Address:  
The Gettysburg Review  
Gettysburg College  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325-1491

Founded: 1988

Founding Editor: Peter Stitt

Current Editor: Peter Stitt

Frequency: Quarterly

What They Publish: Poetry, Fiction, and Essays

Submission Guidelines: Poetry submissions should consist of, “one to five poems, depending on length, typed or printed, either single- or double-spaced, on one side of the page only.” Nonfiction and fiction pieces are accepted in any form, though they shy away from genre fiction.

Simultaneous Submissions: Yes. The Gettysburg Review asks that you notify them in your cover letter if the piece is in consideration elsewhere.

Reading Period: September 1 through May 31

Circulation: 1,000 to 2,500

CLMP: (print) yes

## Why The Gettysburg Review?

I chose to do my report on The Gettysburg Review for a few reasons. I am a follower of the Best American series and in every issue there are at least a couple of stories from the Gettysburg Review that are notable works or selected for publication in the anthology. The perennial success of the journal really interested me and I wanted to have the opportunity to ask the founding editor his thoughts on that. The work printed in the magazine is of the highest quality and they are one of the most respected journals today.

## Issue Comparison Chart

	<u>Volume 25 Issue 1.</u>	<u>Volume 25 Issue 2.</u>	<u>Volume 25 Issue 4.</u>
M:F Writers:	10:12	12:9	8:11
1 <sup>st</sup> ,2 <sup>nd</sup> ,3 <sup>rd</sup> POV.	6:0:5	6:1:3	7:0:3
Credits: First, Magazine, Book	N/A	N/A	1:9:9

The ratio of male to female writers is pretty consistent in the Gettysburg Review. They receive more than 6,000 submissions and the equal representation is largely due in part to this.

The prose in Gettysburg Review is most often written in the first person. All but one of the non-fiction pieces were written in the first person the only other one being in second.

In the winter 2012 issue the credits were rather intimidating. All but one of the authors had been previously published either in magazines or with their own books. However, many of the authors were publishing books of poetry. One writer had her first publication ever with the Gettysburg Review, it was non-fiction.

## Prose Reviews

Issue 25: 4

*Tigers in Red Weather* by Bayard Godsave is a third person plainspoken story set in a domestic setting. It is the story of a boy, Hiram, who spots a tiger in the woods surrounding his home. Nobody believes what he saw. He shows his father where he saw it and points out the footprints in the dirt. Still he doesn't believe, or doesn't want to believe. Hiram, his cousins, Molly and Jackie, and a boy from school, Marshall, decide to go into the woods one day. As they are walking Molly confides in Hiram that Jackie isn't the only girl who has been with boys, "I know what peckers are just as much as she does," she said. "I've seen three." When Molly and Hiram begin to kiss they hear screaming from up ahead of them in the woods. The tiger has pulled Marshall off of Jackie and bitten his arm off. The town goes out to find and kill the tiger. Hiram and his father are walking through the woods with their guns when they hear a barrage of bullets. Hiram runs toward the bullets to see the tiger but his father stays behind preferring not to see the tiger.

Godsave characterizes Hiram by comparing him to the tiger. Hiram knows that his feelings toward his cousin will get him in trouble but follows through with them because they feel natural to him. Godsave splits the story between Hiram and the tiger's point of view, giving us a glimpse into what the tiger is thinking. The tiger is only doing what comes natural to him, his predatory instincts are to hunt and kill so in a way both Hiram and the tiger are doing what they feel are right although it may be frowned upon by others.

Issue 25:4

*Lake People* by Cara Stoddard is a first person plainspoken essay set in a domestic setting. Stoddard recalls the death of her father and the process of writing of his eulogy. She is given a template by her mother's pastor and equates filling it out to filling out a Madlib. She intersperses memories of her family and her father outdoors at the lakes surrounding her childhood home. Her father said they were lake people, "because we would stand out at any restaurant in October, the only ones still tan, still wearing sandals, still eating outside on the deck." As a teenager Stoddard was a lifeguard. She pulled many kids out of the lake. She practiced lost swimmer dives weekly, anticipating the worst. Stoddard describes drowning as, "death by water. A lack of oxygen to the brain. Asphyxiation." Then concludes the story with, "My father didn't die of a brain tumor. He died when his lungs gave up. He died by drowning, an anchor heaving into the murk and muck at the bottom of a lake." She, along with her mother and brother, drive up to Glen Lake in northern Michigan with her dad's ashes in a box on the seat next to her ready to spread his ashes into the lake. There is no trail leading to the lake and the hike is steep, but, "none of us doubts that this is the right place, the right thing to do."

Stoddard does a wonderful job showing the way the mind works when experiencing grief. She goes through some of the more memorable moments with her father and tries to cope with his death through research of how he died as well as the actual spreading of his ashes. Stoddard's inner dialogue and retrospect give the story a good amount of emotion that the reader can relate with.

Issue 25: 2

*The Fourth Wall* by David Tucholski is a plainspoken third person narrative set in a domestic setting. Tucholski tells the story of Iraqi prisoners being guarded by American soldiers.

They are held in a pen with three walls of razor wire. The fourth wall is an invisible line that the Americans tell them not to cross or they will be shot. The Iraqi men are nervous of the Americans and watch twice a day as one of the American soldiers draws the fourth wall in the sand. An old man is brought into the makeshift prison. He is nearly blind and the soldier who brought him in whispers in his ear. One of the loyalist prisoners starts kicking at the old man and disobeys the Americans when they tell him to shut up. Later the Americans lead all of the prisoners but the loyalist to a trench filled with human feces. As they stare into the trench the old blind man jumps into the latrine. The old man was preparing to be executed and yells in Arabic from the latrine. One of the American soldiers tries to get one of the prisoners to tell him he was just brought there to use the washroom, but he doesn't understand. When the prisoners are brought back to the pen the loyalist has been taken away.

Tucholski paints a very unsettling picture in *The Fourth Wall*. "The American with the big rifle is gnawing his flavorless gum. The American who is often smiling is not smiling. The man with one boot is retching into the dirt. The man who fears smiling soldiers is frantically watching for any sign of a smile." Every character in the story is uncomfortable in some way and Tucholski's use of gesture brings that to the forefront of the piece. The use of the third person is another wonderful technique employed perfectly by Tucholski, it allows his readers to get glimpses into the psyche of both the Americans and Iraqis and only reinforces the unsettling feeling of the story.

## Interview with Founding Editor Peter Stitt



Jeremy Jasper: What is the editing process like at *The Gettysburg Review*?

Peter Stitt: We receive approximately 6000 submissions per year. Fiction and poetry are read first by the assistant editor, with the help of a contract fiction reader, and he recommends approximately ten percent to the editor. The editor reads all nonfiction submissions and makes all final decisions on what is to be published. The art features are also entirely handled by the editor. Production, getting the thing into print, is handled by the managing editor.

JJ: How involved with contributors are you when it comes to editing a potentially publishable piece?

PS: We do no copyediting until after acceptance. Then the assistant editor and managing editor do team copyediting and the editor does the final look through. The results are sent to the author for agreement.

JJ: What are some of the biggest challenges in editing a magazine like *The Gettysburg Review*?

PS: It is a hard job. Obviously much time goes into reading and evaluating submissions, and this is the biggest challenge. We take copyediting seriously, more seriously than most magazines, and that is quite time consuming also. Distribution is also a problem; it is difficult to increase readership.

JJ: How are budgets handled? Are there any profits?

PS: Literary magazines, without exception, lose money. We are supported by the college and by contributions and grants. This is obviously a serious issue.

JJ: The stories, essays, and poems published in your magazine are consistently considered for inclusion in the *Best American* series as well as for many other prizes. Does the magazine get any recognition for these? How are you notified of selections?

PS: We are always notified and are extremely proud of our record in this area; it is a clear, objective, recognition of our quality. We rarely can predict which pieces will be chosen, though of course, we have our favorites and do sometimes recommend them.

JJ: How have you viewed the magazine's rise to the top of the world of literary journals since its inception in 1988?

PS: As founding editor, I naturally take great pride in the success of my vision for the magazine and for the follow-through, for the recognition, all of that. I was hired from the outside with the

specific goal of producing what we are: one of the best literary [magazines]. I am so gratified that we seem to have succeeded.

JJ: What changes have you noticed in literary journals and the literary world in general since *The Gettysburg Review* debuted?

PS: Literary journals come and go. Some have lasted for years, but not without a lot of trouble along the way. Journals can be divided into categories, and the category that I have noticed is the increase in trendy efforts, attempts to be popular and on the cutting edge of taste. We stick to pure quality of writing.

JJ: What other publications or publishers do you admire?

PS: A lot. Many small publishers, really too many to list. Large book publishers are gradually dying away and the future is with the small presses. As for journals, again I admire many, particularly the ones I consider on our level—Georgia [Review], Southern [Review], Kenyon [Review], New England [Review], Shenandoah [Review], Paris [Review]—Inevitably I will forget many, so I am reluctant to say even this.

JJ: How has editing affected your process as a writer? Do you write as often as you would like?

PS: It is no job for a serious writer. I have done what I can and am proud of my books and essays. I don't know that I would have done much more were I not an editor because I feel this is what I was targeted for. In high school I took a test that would predict my future career. Because of my skills then at math and science and English the answer was that I could be a technical editor. Not a bad prediction.