



Kevin McColley
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Dear Selection Committee:

I have a long history of success in the field of creative writing, publishing my first novel, *The Walls of Pedro Garcia*, with Delacorte Press. I have since published five other novels, one with HarperCollins Publishing and four with Simon and Schuster, with *Praying to a Laughing God* and *The Other Side* both nominated by Simon and Schuster for the National Book Award. *Praying to a Laughing God* was also a finalist for the Dashiell Hammett Prize for best crime fiction published in North America. I am the recipient of both the Bush Artist Fellowship in fiction and the Loft/McKnight Foundation Fellowship in fiction. I recently finished writing a novel based on my experiences running a sled dog team entitled *The Moon Song* that incorporates much of what I have learned living with the Anishinabe (Ojibway) people as neighbors and friends. I have also published short fiction in numerous publications, as well as creative nonfiction in the form of an autobiography for the reference series, *Something About the Author*, published by Gale Research.

I successfully defended my dissertation, *Man of God: A Novel*, and completed the requirements to earn a PhD in English at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee (April, 2020). *Man of God* explores the early settlement of the upper-midwestern United States and the clash and hybridization of the Ojibway, Dakota, and European-American cultures that occurred there as the American frontier pushed west, culminating in the 1862 Dakota Uprising in southern Minnesota that resulted in the deaths of as many as three thousand European-American settlers and the near extermination of the Dakota in Minnesota. At a meta-level, *Man of God* explores the nature of historical fiction—a “western,” in a time and place where the assumptions and conventions of the traditional western novel are either being seriously challenged or have already been overthrown.

I successfully defended my thesis to complete the requirements for my Master’s of Arts degree in English at Bemidji State University in May of 2016. In my master’s thesis, *Causes and Symptoms of Combat-Induced Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Macbeth*, I argue that William Shakespeare, in his creation of Macbeth, reveals an intimate knowledge of both the etiology and the symptoms of what modern psychiatry now defines as post-traumatic stress disorder, and that what we now refer to as post-traumatic stress disorder drives Macbeth’s actions throughout the play.

In addition to my writing, I have taught seventeen sections of seven different courses, both at Bemidji State University and at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. In first-year composition, second year argument and exposition, second year introductory creative writing, upper-level Writing in the Disciplines, and two upper-level and graduate level Shakespeare surveys in which I have served as a teaching assistant, I have capitalized on the small-classroom environment to emphasize critical reasoning and argument through a student-centered and

dialogic, interactive approach. Because of my teaching success at Bemidji State, the department has allowed me to design and implement several of my own courses in composition, argument, and writing in the disciplines within the existing system, and it has allowed me as well to design and implement a two week section on *Macbeth* in the undergraduate Shakespeare survey and a section on *Richard III* for the graduates. The department at the University of Wisconsin allowed me the same privilege in designing an Introduction to Creative Writing course. These courses have helped my students become better critical readers and thinkers, more articulate contributors and debaters, and better writers in both complex discourses and creative work, as indicated by the evaluations and accolades given me on my teaching by my students, by my peers, and by experienced professors. My average qualitative rating of instruction at Bemidji State is 9.6 out of 10. I received similar marks for my teaching at Milwaukee.

I have pursued both creative and academic service beyond the classroom. Through the Minnesota Arts Board I have served as a mentor for talented and aspiring fiction writers. I have a minor in electronic writing from Bemidji State, and I have served as an instructor for online teaching through distance education with other talented and aspiring writers in short fiction, long fiction, and creative non-fiction. I have conducted workshops in writing fiction in elementary schools, secondary schools, post-secondary schools, and in community education programs. I have five years of experience holding both unpaid volunteer and paid positions in university writing centers. I have also served as a judge for various national and international writing competitions, including the Edgar Awards.

One advantage of teaching at Bemidji State University has been that a large percentage of my students have been Anishinabe (Ojibway) students, which has further exposed me to the Anishinabe culture and the very large differences in both the teaching methodology necessary for and the expectations of Anishinabe students. In addition to gaining a greater understanding and appreciation for Anishinabe culture, through my first novel, *The Walls of Pedro Garcia*, I was able to explore the relationship between Hispanic and American cultures in northern South America, where I spent much time while I was in the military.

In addition to my education and teaching in creative writing, composition, argument, writing in the disciplines, and literature, I have served in the United States Navy as a nuclear engineer and as a supervisor of personnel for the control, protection, and instrumentation systems for the forward nuclear propulsion reactor aboard the USS *Bainbridge*, a guided missile cruiser. I also served as the training coordinator in charge of teaching nuclear physics, flow dynamics, electronic theory, and heat transfer dynamics to nuclear personnel aboard the *Bainbridge*, among other subjects. I was awarded the Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medal for actions taken against drug cartels while on temporary assignment to the Coast Guard in the Caribbean and northern South America.

Please contact me at 218-766-3885 or kevin@kevinmccolley.com if you would like to arrange an interview. Thank you very much for your time, your consideration, and this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Kevin McColley