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Pandemic Profiles: Why Chelo Ferschweiler Writes During Quarantine

Emily Then
Whittier College

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The Pandemic Profiles

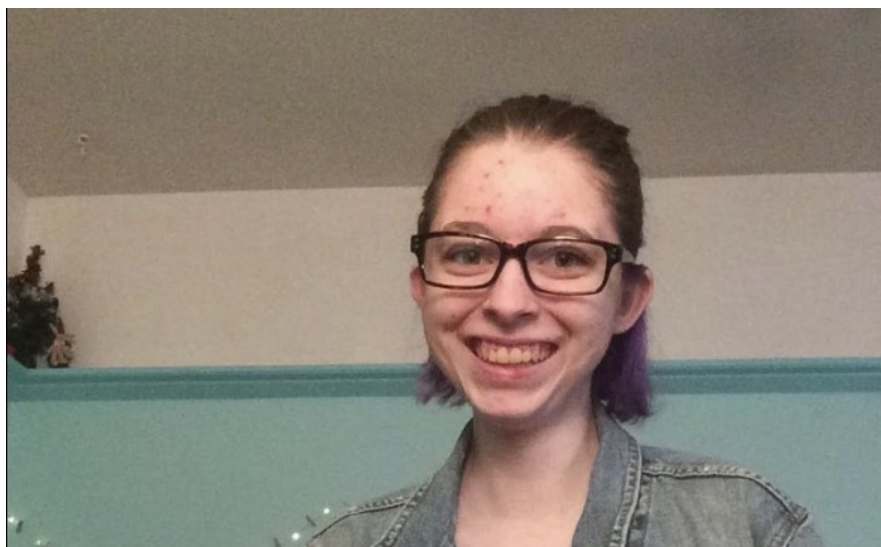
Why Chelo Ferschweiler Writes During Quarantine



Emily Then [Follow](#)

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Chelo Ferschweiler's bedroom walls are painted bright blue and have sticky notes haphazardly attached to them. When we spoke over Zoom, the small yellow squares caught my attention because I also keep sticky notes on my wall that contain ideas for stories and poems. I asked Ferschweiler what she's written and she told me she jots down ideas that inspire her to write creatively. My ears perk at the mention of our shared passion — creative writing.





Ferschweiler holding her first self-published children's book

During the seven months that quarantine has been in effect, Ferschweiler has been finding innovative ways to stay busy. Between online classes and taking care of her cats, she finds that she has little time for herself and tries to write as much as she can to prevent herself from feeling overwhelmed. The time spent in self-isolation motivated her to develop a novel in the fantasy genre about characters discovering the type of person they're meant to be while simultaneously realizing the planet they're living on looks and feels like Earth but isn't quite the Earth they once knew. All of these ideas are collected on the sticky notes that are attached to the blue walls in her room as a reminder that these ideas are meant to be written.

“I want my stories to be part of how I see the world, because I know there’s other people like me and there aren’t a lot of stories out there like mine.”

The content on these sticky notes are plot lines, details to her upcoming novel, and ideas that are both big concepts and small elements to her story. She purposely places the yellow squares against her blue walls to remind herself that there is a place for her voice in the authoring community and that she writes for the thrill of writing. This is something she wants to do for the rest of her life.

Ferschweiler wants to become a creative writing teacher to encourage young writers to build stories and create universes not of this world. She wants to teach people how to develop their ideas and share her passion for storytelling with people who feel just as passionate as she does. But as she learns about teaching and writing through online classes, she feels her focus dwindling as the semester continues and reminds herself of why she writes in the first place.

She admits that writing is a form of coping mechanism for her and quarantine has allowed her to explore her creative side. She

writes for the thrill of creating a body of work she can call her own and because it tailors to her specifically.

Inspired by C.S. Lewis, Ferschweiler writes about themes in her personal life that she wants to bring to the table. “I want to write these stories for me,” she says. She draws her style of writing from Lewis’ tendency to put his beliefs at the forefront of his stories and compares him to J.R.R Tolkien, who she describes as “weaving important themes in the background.” Being upfront about her beliefs is critical to Ferschweiler because she wants her voice to be heard and recognized.



C.S. Lewis

Ferschweiler's writing is motivated by connecting with others through reaching people who are going through or have had the same experiences as her. "It's like you look for certain stories and can never find them because they're not written or the idea hasn't been shared yet," she explained. "I want to write so these ideas are out there."

She often finds herself wishing she could relate to more stories that are being published. Her writing isn't inspired by books she read as a child because they're nothing more than nostalgic memories of simpler times. The books that sit on her bookshelf are more decorative than material she often returns to for inspiration. She feels as though what's missing is her own perspective and stories that she can relate to. Her intrinsic need to write is meant to fill that gap and to find audiences that feel the same way.

While the days of quarantine seem long and arduous, the time that Ferschweiler finds to develop her ideas and write her stories keeps her busy. She's taking the opportunity to engage in something she's passionate about with the hopes that her story will be published in the nearby future.