

Griz Read 2018 Writing Contest

As part of the Griz Read, we invite you to submit an essay in response to any of the following prompts. These prompts invite you to engage with the ideas presented in *Wild*.

Patagonia has generously donated a Black Hole bag and backpack to be awarded to two writers of the most compelling essays, and the essays themselves (with the authors' permission) will be posted to the Griz Read webpage. Winners will also join a dinner with Cheryl Strayed on October 15!

Writing Prompts (select one of the following options):

1. Strayed writes that, "Fear, to a great extent, is born of a story we tell ourselves, and so I chose to tell myself a different story from the one women are told" (51). Have you ever changed the narrative surrounding something you were experiencing in order to change the meaning of that experience, both in the moment and upon reflection later? How was it successful? What, if anything, did it teach you about the way that narrative influences meaning? Good essays will be based on striking insights that depend on your unique personal experiences and the ideas in *Wild*, but that are also useful or instructive for readers who do not share your personal history.
2. Research the conversation around critiques of WILD arguing that Strayed was wildly unprepared to hike the PCT and the response that critics never freaked out about the same unpreparedness in male authors like Bill Bryson (*A WALK IN THE WOODS*). And, if you agree that critics judged Strayed more harshly, how do you see those same gendered judgments or prejudices at work along her hike? Good essays will be based on textual evidence and use of outside sources.
3. "To overcome an adversity you have manufactured for yourself is a bit silly." -Meg Howrey. Use personal experience and textual evidence to argue for or against the "silliness" of Strayed's overcoming adversity of her own design on the PCT.

Evaluation Criteria:

The primary evaluation criterion will be the smart and original engagement of the writing with the ideas presented in *Wild*. When the evaluators, who have read the book, read your submission, do they understand your insights and think about the book's ideas differently as a result? Can they remember your ideas well enough to summarize them to their friends at dinner the night after they read your submission? Do those friends—who also have read the book—then think about the book's ideas differently as a result of hearing your ideas third-hand?

Submission Instructions:

- Entries are due MONDAY, OCTOBER 8
- The contest is open to all first-year students enrolled for the first time at the University of Montana—Missoula (including Missoula College), beginning in Autumn, 2018.
- Submissions are limited to one entry per student.
- Submissions should be between 750 to 1250 words.
- Submissions should be given a title and SHOULD SPECIFY THE OPTION NUMBER CHOSEN.
- The student's name should not appear on the submitted writing.
 - Attach a separate sheet with a brief biography (100 words maximum), the word count, and the appropriate contact information: name, active email address, phone number.
- Send the submission as an e-mail attachment (in Word document format) to erin.saldin@mso.umt.edu
- Please type "Griz Read Writing Contest" in the message subject line.

Contact Information:

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