



Interdisciplinary Studies Department  
College of Humanities & Social Sciences

May 1, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend Mr. Keith Derrick. I was Mr. Derrick's professor and have known him since January of 2008, when he enrolled as student in a beginning fiction writing class I taught at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, USA. In August of 2008, Mr. Derrick studied with me again in an advanced fiction writing class. Because the classes were small and intimate and he is an engaging student, I came to know Mr. Derrick well and I feel very competent in commenting on his abilities as a student of writing.

Students in my fiction writing classes are asked to perform critically as well as creatively. Typically, my beginning class involves reading literature and writing critical papers, as well as, studying fiction writing craft, generating original texts, and in a workshop setting, critiquing other student writers and being critiqued by them. In this way the students began to develop an historical and critical context for the imaginative writing they undertake. In my class, Mr. Derrick performed marvelously. He proved to be a conscientious critic, with a special interest in Flannery O'Connor and Thomas Merton. His imaginative writings tended to be philosophical and characterized by a demonstration of strong narrative writing skills. My approach to the advanced class emphasizes generation and critique, and again, Mr. Derrick performed consistently well. In this class, he drew heavily on his knowledge of medieval literature, especially Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and created a frame story set in contemporary times. In his series, high school students set out on a journey and along the way each student tells a story. The stories were satiric or comedic, reflecting something of the narrator's personality and poking fun at character types associated with American high schools, such as "the jock" or "the cheerleader." In these portrayals, the characters were developed beyond type and often reveal surprising and thoughtful psychological depths. Mr. Derrick's work was received well by his class mates; and, I, myself, was not only impressed by his skill, but by the commitment and joy Mr. Derrick, as the creator of these works, demonstrated in presenting them.

Since his graduation from Kennesaw State, Mr. Derrick has studied writing and literature at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. I have maintained my relationship with him and so can attest to his continued development as a writer and potential teacher. Mr. Derrick is serious and well-organized, and I recommend strongly to your program.

Sincerely,



Tony Grohms

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