



Harry Brown

Recently Aurora Online reporter David Rockey had an opportunity to sit down with Dr. Harry Brown, an English professor from Eastern Kentucky University. Dr. Brown has been on staff at Eastern Kentucky University for some time now and has seen many trends come and go in the world of creative and academic writing.

Dr. Brown is a native of Baltimore but spent many of his early years in Hillsborough, NC. He graduated from Appalachian State University with an M.A. degree. Later he served in the US Army Intelligence Corps. Dr. Brown received his Ph.D. in English from Ohio University in 1971. Since 1970 he has been a teacher at Eastern Kentucky University.

David: Hello Dr. Brown and thank you for volunteering for this interview.

Dr. Brown: It is no problem David.

David: How long have you been a teacher at EKU?

Dr. Brown: I have been teaching here since 1970.

David: What kind of classes do you teach?

Dr. Brown: I started out teaching a wide variety of classes, but I mainly prefer poetry classes.

David: That leads me to my next question. You are a poet, right?

Dr. Brown: *chuckle* Yes I am a poet.

David: How much work have you had published?

Dr. Brown: I have had a total of six books published, five of them were my own poetry. The last was an anthology that I co-edited.

David: Wow, that is quite a bit. How many of your poems have been published in literary magazines?

Dr. Brown: More than I can count really. As a poet if you want to get published you have to send out so many copies of your poetry and just hope for the best. I have been really lucky.

David: You have been at Eastern Kentucky University since 1970. Any idea when you are going to step down from your teaching duties?

Dr. Brown: I am currently an adjunct professor meaning that I am not full time. Sometime in the next couple of years I will probably retire for good.

David: How do you think that students in college that major in Creative Writing or just take some Creative Writing classes can apply that into their future occupation?

Dr. Brown: Creative writing can carry over into many different fields. The ability to compose and relay thoughts effectively is important and can be applied to many occupations. Another thing that students learn when writing creatively is the importance of being accurate and specifying in detail. In addition many creative writing classes stress the importance of poetry. As I have said many times writing poetry can be very therapeutic and beneficial in expressing emotions. Learning and writing about poetry can teach students how to express themselves in as few words as possible.

David: I work for Aurora Online and it is an online resource. How do you feel like the internet has affected the creative writing landscape?

Dr. Brown: I don't go on the internet much at all but I do appreciate what it offers. Many amateur poets can post their poetry and have it exposed to more people than they thought possible. Most amateur poets don't really care about making money or getting famous, they just want to be heard.

David: Is there money in getting published?

Dr. Brown: I have never made any money writing poetry. With as much as I spend on making packets and sending in drafts, I have probably broke even.

David: Who would you say are your major influences?

Dr. Brown: I love so many poets but I would say that early in my career that Frost really influenced me. As time went on I found my own style and his influence is less noticeable in my later poetry.

David: Any other poets of note that you really like?

Dr. Brown: Whitman and Dickinson are two of my favorite poets. I don't think that there is any denying how iconic those two have been in the poetry world.

David: Do you have any other comments to add?

Dr. Brown: No matter what your major is in college I would really recommend taking a creative writing course. Creative writing is important for everyone.

David: Thank you for your time, sir it has been a pleasure.