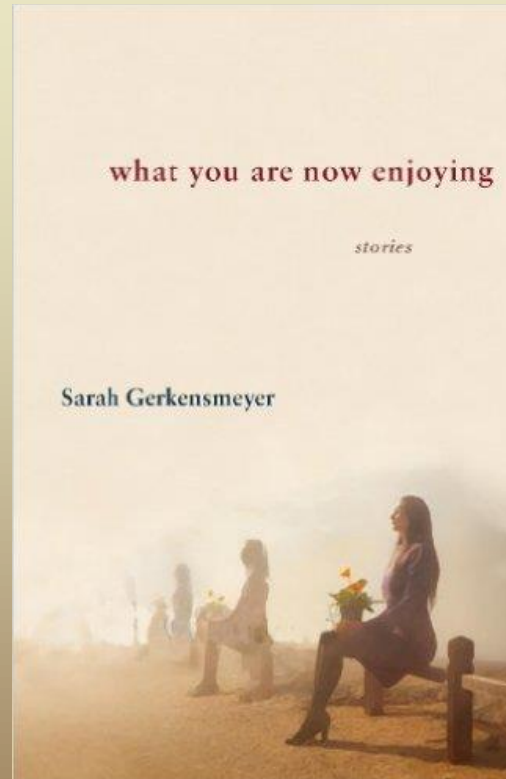


What You Are Now Enjoying

From Wonder Woman as an angst-ridden teenager to ghost twins to monster catfish to the secret relationships between polygamous wives, the stories in *What You Are Now Enjoying* approach the familiar in unfamiliar ways, allowing us to recognize and claim the unordinary moments in our own often ordinary lives. As Stewart O'Nan notes, "The smart, funky, well-turned stories in *What You Are Now Enjoying* keep the reader not just guessing and leaning forward but in a perpetual state of wonder. Sarah Gerkenmeyer is an original, a sneaky sorceress of a storyteller."

Book summary adapted from sarahgerkenmeyer.com.



Sarah Gerkenmeyer's story collection, *What You Are Now Enjoying*, was selected by Stewart O'Nan as winner of the 2012 Autumn House Press Fiction Prize, longlisted for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award, and chosen as winner of Late Night Library's Debut-litzer Prize. A Pushcart Prize nominee and a finalist for the Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Short Fiction and the Italo Calvino Prize for Fabulist Fiction, Gerkenmeyer has received scholarships to the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Ragdale, Grub Street, SAFTA's Firefly Farms and the Vermont Studio Center. Her stories and poetry have appeared in *American Short Fiction*, *Guernica*, *The New Guard*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *B O D Y*, *Hobart* and *Cream City Review*, among others. Her story "Ramona" was featured in a *Huffington Post* piece on flash fiction and selected by Lily Hoang for the 2014 Best of the Net Anthology. Sarah was the 2012-13 Pen Parentis Fellow. She received her MFA in fiction from Cornell University and now lives in her home state of Indiana. Gerkenmeyer is the 2016 Emerging Author winner of the Eugene & Marilyn Glick Indiana Authors Award.



Sarah Gerkenmeyer

The Eugene
& Marilyn Glick
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Authors

a program of The Indianapolis
Public Library Foundation AWARD ★

Useful Links

Sarah Gerkenmeyer news and reviews:
sarahgerkenmeyer.com/blog/

Sarah Gerkenmeyer interview with Midwest Gothic magazine:
<http://bit.ly/2hJsNdz>

Eugene & Marilyn Glick Indiana Authors Award:
www.indianaauthorsaward.org

The Indiana Authors Award

The Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana Authors Award was established when **The Indianapolis Public Library Foundation** received a generous grant from **The Glick Fund, a fund of Central Indiana Community Foundation**. This program seeks to recognize the contributions of Indiana authors to the literary landscape in Indiana and across the nation. The Award is divided into four categories: Emerging, for new writers of one or two books that show great promise; Genre Excellence, for writers who excel in a specific literary genre; Regional, for writers well known and respected especially in Indiana and the Midwest; and National, for writers of widespread acclaim and reputation. Each winning author receives a cash prize and a \$2,500 grant for the Indiana public library of his or her choice.



Discussion Questions

1. The stories in *What You Are Now Enjoying* are vastly different, yet linked by the themes of loss and longing. What story stood out most to you and why?
2. What effect do the fantastical or surreal elements in Gerkenmeyer's stories have on the reader?
3. Gerkenmeyer describes her work as "weird." Other Hoosier writers including Kurt Vonnegut and John Green have dubbed their work "weird" as well. What aspects of Indiana life inspire this weirdness?
4. Gerkenmeyer was working on a novel when the short story collection *What You Are Now Enjoying* came together. In what ways can short stories be more effective than a novel as a storytelling device? In what ways are short stories limiting?
5. The stories in *What You Are Now Enjoying* focus on women. How important is personal experience to enjoying these stories? How might they be interpreted differently by different genders?
6. What steps can you take as a reader or writer to open your mind to the bizarre or surreal?