

**Annalemma** – Issue 5

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November 2009

Web Address: [www.annalemma.net](http://www.annalemma.net)

What They Publish: Fiction, nonfiction, photography, mixed media

Submission Guidelines: Accepts any genre fiction (though seems to prefer realism) and nonfiction. No cover letter necessary. Submit in Word or .rtf document, 12 point Courier font with 1 inch margins. Send to [chris@annalemma.net](mailto:chris@annalemma.net). Starting rate is \$50.

Description of Publication: Bound and online journal. Published twice a year. Colorful, flashy, and professionally organized with photographs accompanying each story. Photographs and summary of all contributors. Contributors vary from emerging writers to published authors. The writing is the star of the show here.

Prose Per Issue: 90% (10 fiction, 2 nonfiction)

Prose Reviews:

*Craig was a Retard* by Jay Riggio is a plainspoken story in a domestic setting told in first person. Craig, the always-smiling ice cream man, was “touched by God in a different way than the rest of us.” The unnamed narrator befriends Craig’s younger brother, DJ, and they play video games in the basement. One day, the narrator waits for DJ to come home from football practice and watches Craig laugh at cuss words from a standup comedian on TV. DJ never comes home because his father is always stealing him. The only time the narrator didn’t see Craig smile was when Sam Donaldson punched him because he “showed his little sister his dong.” Craig stopped driving the truck after that. The narrator learned that DJ was kidnapped from his Dad again and had been doused by gasoline and set on fire during his sleep—the thing that saved him was his waterbed. The narrator never saw Craig and DJ again. The new ice cream man was normal and not “retarded like Craig.”

Riggio achieves a realistic adolescent voice through his unnamed protagonist. The narrator’s age is never revealed—how he perceives the world and people are strong enough clues for the reader to understand. Craig’s character would definitely spark conflict in a small suburban neighborhood and all the events feel organic to the story.

*The King of the Jews* by Dan Moreau is a plainspoken story in a domestic setting told in third person. David is a young boy who fantasizes about becoming the leader of his people—the Jews. When his mother goes on dates, the neighbor Mr. Rubin, a retired mathematics professor, babysits David at his house. David watches his favorite show, MacGyver, and spots a black and white photo of a shabbily dressed woman in Mr. Rubin’s room. Mr. Rubin plays chess with a former student in Hungary through the mail. As he plays, Jehovah’s witnesses ring the bell and ask to talk about Jesus Christ. They ask if there is a Mrs. in the house and Mr. Rubin throws their magazine at them and slams the door. Later, he isn’t feeling well and kisses the black and white picture of his deceased wife before he goes to bed.

Moreau balances humor and drama, playing with themes of childhood fantasies and single adults trying to cope with loss. The story at first seems to be about David, but Mr. Rubin becomes the focal point by the end.

Rating: 6. Being published twice a year in print heightens the competition. Most of the writers have been previously published.