

BREVARD COLLEGE

BREVARD, NORTH CAROLINA

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Brevard College Professor to Release New Collection of Poetry

BREVARD, N.C. – Brevard College is proud to announce that Associate Professor of English, Dr. Alyse Bensel, releases her newest poetry collection, *Spoil*, today, Monday, September 16th. Dr. Bensel, a key figure in the college's literary community, also serves as the Faculty Advisor for *Chiaroscuro*, the student literary magazine, and directs the annual Looking Glass Rock Writers' Conference.

In *Spoil*, Alyse Bensel raises the question of what happens when our relationships and ourselves are compromised when we fail to meet impossible societal standards. These poems interrogate bodily agency under a patriarchal gaze, the damages wreaked by image-obsessed social media, and how chronic pain and reproductive dysfunction distort self-understanding. Through lyrically sensual and texturally rich language, these speakers, from gawky teenagers to a forgetful baker to Mermaid Midge Barbie, yearn and mourn their inevitable transformation over time. In defiance of this destructive impulse, *Spoil* names and takes into account all of the many lives that could—or could not—be led.

"*Spoil* is a personally important commentary on how the rise of social media can change us in various ways. Our social and cultural institutions often seek to uphold certain beauty standards that can narrowly define how we exist in the world. This work pushes back against that notion," says Dr. Bensel about her latest publication.

Dr. Bensel is also the author of *Rare Wondrous Things: A Poetic Biography of Maria Sibylla Merian* (Green Writers Press, 2020) and three chapbooks, including *Lies to Tell the Body* (Seven Kitchens Press, 2018). Originally from south-central Pennsylvania, she has made Brevard her home, where she continues to inspire students and nurture the college's growing literary culture.

Dr. Bensel will present her collection at Canto 34 Coffee Lounge, 114 W. Main Street, Brevard, NC, on Thursday, September 19 at 6:30pm. The event is free and open to the public. *Spoil* is available wherever books are sold, and can be found locally at Highland Books in Brevard and Malaprops in Asheville.

Brevard College is committed to an experiential liberal arts education that encourages personal growth and inspires artistic, intellectual, and social action.

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