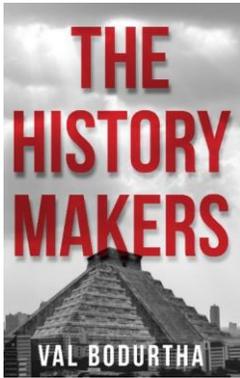


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**Award-Winning Young Writer Crafts a Compelling, Modern Tale Inspired by Aztec Civilization**

*A Young Woman Battles the Secrets and Corruption of an Empire in this Gripping Dystopia*



**ALPHARETTA, GA.** - "What if the Aztec Empire had never fallen, and a bloodthirsty, secretive priesthood reigned, unopposed to this day?"

That is the subject of *The History Makers*, the debut novel by 20-year-old Val Bodurtha, an award-winning writer, comedian and producer about to enter her senior year at the University of Chicago.

Lanier Press, an imprint of BookLogix in Atlanta, acquired the book after Val's manuscript won BookLogix's 2015 Young Writers Contest. The company has since announced a publication date of Monday, July 24.

The book presents a fast-paced tale of dystopian fiction that Val wrote when she was 17, the summer before she left for college.

The idea for the book originated in an offbeat homework assignment she completed for her AP World History class during her senior year of high school. Students had to imagine themselves as a citizen of an Aztec or Mayan civilization and write about their experiences. Val turned in a well-received short story featuring Myla, a young protagonist growing up in a world where the Aztec Empire never fell to Spain and a bloodthirsty, secretive priesthood reigned, unopposed to this day.

The following summer, Val reworked her alternative history into the full-fledged manuscript that she submitted to BookLogix for its writing competition, winning First Prize in the older age category.

The story follows Myla, an upper-class teenager in modern-day Azteca who parties her days away with friends and the man who claimed her as his wife. Her seventeenth birthday takes an unexpected turn when she is finally "enlightened" and told the truth: that the high priests who rule by decree have been lying to everyone. Then, in a daunting twist of fate, Myla finds herself in the hands of Azteca's rebels and their confident leader, Tezca.

Myla must now sort through all the lies she has been told her whole life and confront old secrets buried deep. Can she trust the rebels? Are they terrorists or freedom-fighters? And will she help them dismantle the theocracy and its lies, or will she pay too high a price?

Young adult readers and older audiences alike will be enthralled as *The History Makers* brings to life the Aztecs' rich and complex history, while tackling timeless moral dilemmas in a contemporary context.

To learn more about the book and its 20-year-old creator, a classics major from Connecticut who also performs with UChicago's hottest improv troupe, go to [www.ValBodurtha.com](http://www.ValBodurtha.com). That site is accepting pre-orders. The novel will also become available at many retailers including Amazon.com, Shop.BookLogix.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Apple iBooks and Kobo, beginning July 24.

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