

# Paperback Writer

## Student publishes coming-of-age book

For Tara Lengsfelder '07, senior year includes one unusual extracurricular activity: publicizing her new book, *Dancing in the Rain: The Final Cut*. Released by Pneuma Springs Publishing in Britain, this coming-of-age novel reflects her personal experiences as an adolescent engaged in self-mutilation.

Popularly known as “cutting,” this self-harming behavior affects one out of two hundred girls between the ages of thirteen and nineteen, including a reported two million in the United States alone.

Because cutting is an easy-to-hide coping mechanism, it typically goes undetected; growing up with her sister and parents in California, Lengsfelder could easily have been mistaken for a well-adjusted teen who had everything, even as she became progressively more addicted to self-mutilation.

By sharing a fictionalized version of her experience, she hopes to provide readers with a better understanding of the disorder—what causes it, how addicting it is, and what it takes to regain control of one's life.

“I want people to acknowledge this problem so we can face it and fix it,” she says. “I also want them to realize that life can get better, that we all have more strength in us than we believe, and that you don't have to live with depression.”

An economics and business major, Lengsfelder plays the oboe in the Wind Ensemble and Top Score music, races with the ski team, and competes with the Mock Trial team. Currently working on her second novel, she hopes to work in human resources for a finance firm in New York or Dublin after graduation.