



From the Director



If I were a creative person, I'd want to write a book right now. It would start, "The year is 2021. And we are still here." Then would follow the long list of events that made "We are still here," the place to start. "First came the...

Then...Finally..." Not terribly original, but I suspect lots of us could write that book. It's the start of 2022, and we are still here. We are weathering COVID variants and the need for continued vigilance, but we are still here. We are confronting mental health and medical challenges, but we are still here. We are facing crises in our families and communities that shake us up, but we are still here.

What does "We are still here" look like for the Literature & Criticism program? We welcomed a new cohort of students to the program this fall who were able to take classes face-to-face, the first time since spring 2020. We mask up and try for some social distance in the classroom, but we are here, learning and socializing and professionalizing together. Joining a class by Zoom is now a precaution we take rather than our primary way of connecting. It's a step in the right direction.

"We are still here" also looks like faculty coming together to take stock of the program after almost 30 years, and to identify areas we could strengthen to support student success even more. It's a step toward the future.

And we're continuing to see exciting research produced by students, forging new paths and insights in literary and critical study. They—you—are discovering and imagining new ways of engaging people with the humanities, and boldly taking your training into the classroom as well as careers that may at first blush seem to have little connection. You are making "We are still here" a bold statement of purpose and relevance.

Last year as we were learning of a reorganization that would move our programs and department to a new college, there were many unknowns. We now know that we are the [College of Arts and Humanities](#), led by Dean Curt Scheib. We are soon to meet with Dean Scheib to familiarize him with the ranginess of our research—from the types of literature and texts that we study to breadth of the historical periods we concern ourselves with to variety of theoretical and methodological approaches we employ. We want him to know us well so that he can envision ways of knitting together the strengths of all of the departments in the college. We also know that graduate education is understood to be central to the university's future, as evidenced in a number of emerging [strategic plans](#). It is promising to see work advancing on many fronts to strengthen the graduate student experience at IUP. As your program director, I will try to be involved in as many of those conversations as possible to ensure that our students' needs are well understood. And we know that we have only just begun to consider some of the more bedrock questions that have emerged from the many challenges we have confronted since the onset of the pandemic, the most pressing of which I may have articulated in the last newsletter, "What are our hopes and dreams and how do we get there from here?"

We are still here, and there is still much work ahead. But I remain hopeful that the "here" we are creating can be even better than the one we left behind.

Veronica T. Watson, PhD

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From the Director of the MA in Literature and the MA in Composition and Literature



First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Melanie Holm for working with MA students while I was on sabbatical in Spring 2021.

It has been a strange year, filled with politely regulated screens rather than with the direct personal contact and lively exchange of ideas that characterizes our work in the MA Programs. Nevertheless, everyone adapted well to life on Zoom and then adapted yet again to in-person, masked classes and scholarly events. Perseverance is the word of the day.

We are especially proud of Elizabeth Laughlin, Jenny Russell (MA Composition and Literature) and Dan Pintos (MA Literature), who have joined our Doctoral Program in Literature and Criticism. Working with literature, a life of its own, goes on!

Many MA students presented at the Spring 2021 Zoom English Graduate Organization conference. The conference theme, *Phoenix: Responses to Adversity*, enabled rich and vibrant discussions that have stimulated work this semester. Tom Hamilton (MA Composition and Literature) presented “Grief Observed in Jhumpa Lahiri’s “A Temporary Matter”: The Impact of Stillbirth Death on Parents’ Identities and Relationships in Fiction”; Josh Calandrella (MA Literature) shared “Surrealist Yeshivas/Yiddish-Tabernacles: Places of Imaginative Restoration”; Olivia Faiad (MA Literature) spoke on “Women’s Adversity in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* and Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalytic Theory”; and Mace Long (MA Composition and Literature) presented “The Playable Phoenix in Tabletop Gaming.”

Four students, Matti Thornton, Jacob Breslawski, Liz Laughlin and Josh Calandrella presented at the MA Graduate Research Spotlight series. Josh's paper, "Let Us Weave the Legend of Yiddish Poetry in Translation," is part of an ongoing translation project, and Liz was hired as a writer for *IUP Now*. Josh, Matti, and Jesse Rice co-authored an article with Dr. Emily Wender, "Religion, Young Adult Literature, and Me: Reflections on Teaching and Learning," which was published in *The ALAN Review*. This publication emerged from their research in Dr. Wender's ENGL 518 Adolescent Literature class.

Liz Laughlin and Tom Hamilton were both awarded the 2020-2021 Outstanding Scholarship Award for an MA Student.

In Fall 2021, MA students presented at the first in-person conference at IUP since spring 2020. Mace Long, Tyler Whitehead, and Zachary Black joined three Literature and Criticism doctoral students in presenting their research as part of IUP's Banned Books Week, a collaborative event coordinated with the Stapleton Library. Those presentations are under review for publication.

The range of our students' abilities and interests is impressive, as is your dedication to reading literature from many centuries and from many places without prejudice, bigotry, or the dismissive disinterest (current and historical) that characterizes some online depictions of our discipline. We are about what we read. We care about who wrote what we read. We care about each other. We nurture each other's ideas. In closing, I am sure you will join me in welcoming and congratulating the following students:

Fall 2021 New Students

Holly Acker (LIT)
Zachary Black (LIT)
Laura Lopez (LIT)
Tyler Whitehead (LIT)
Ryan Mahokey (COMP and LIT)
Aiden Mountain (COMP and LIT)
Karly Taylor (COMP and LIT)
Riley Stitt (COMP and LIT)

May and August 2021 Graduates

Joshua Calandrella (LIT)
Olivia Faiad (LIT) August
Evan Sakowitz (LIT)
Rachel Newbury (LIT) August
Erin Kline (COMP and LIT)
Daniel Pintos (COMP and LIT)
Wendy Scaife (COMP and LIT)
Mattison Thornton (COMP and LIT)
Elizabeth Laughlin (COMP and LIT) August
Thomas Hamilton (COMP and LIT) August
Well done, all!!

Michael T. Williamson, PhD



L&C faculty & students at English Dept Grab N' Gab

EGO: A Letter from the President

"Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."
- "Ulysses", *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*



These last lines from Tennyson’s immortal poem aptly sum up my attitude, the attitude of my fellow officers of the English Graduate Organization (EGO), and the attitude of the IUP community: we did not “yield” to the seemingly insurmountable obstacles that the

pandemic placed before us last academic year; instead, we emerged stronger from these challenges, ready to be a stronger community together, and once again physically together in our pursuits.

The underlying purpose of EGO this academic year is the same as described by President Kimberly Bressler last year: “Our aim is to provide all English graduate students—from the first semester master’s student to the dissertation phase doctoral student—with the support and resources needed for their particular place within the program.” This year, however, we are also working to re-establish the in-person community that will help promote the intellectual development of students in our graduate programs.

The desire for physical reconnection was salient at EGO’s first social event: a picnic at Getty Heights Park that drew dozens of students and Dr. Michael Williamson.

That excitement carried over to IUP’s participation in the nationally recognized [Banned Books Week](#), a week of events dedicated to “celebrating the freedom to read” across the country. With the help and guidance of IUP librarian Dr. Theresa McDevitt, EGO hosted two events. Banned Books Read Out was held on September 29, 2021, in which students, faculty, and members of university administration read excerpts from their favorite banned books. President Michael Driscoll kicked off the event with his reading of *Captain Underpants*; also in attendance were Interim Provost Lara Luetkehans, Dr. Curtis Scheib (Dean, College of Arts and Humanities), Dr. John Kilmarx (Vice President, Academic Administration), Dr. Thomas Seeger (Vice President, Student Affairs), Dr. Yaw Asamoah (Dean, University College and Libraries), and Dr. Gian Pagnucci (Chair, English

Department). All were excited to participate and share their personal favorite readings.

On September 30th EGO hosted a Banned Books Panel made up of six English MA and PhD students who presented on a fascinating range of banned authors, from Kate Chopin to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: Erick Marcos Ramos, Jennifer Russel, Jordan Hansen, Tyler Whitehead, Haleigh Hayes, Mace Long, and Zachary Black (a first-time presenter). Once again, dozens of students showed up, and Dr. Asamoah engaged one presenter, Haleigh Hayes, in a spirited conversation about Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s work and subsequent ban in his home country of Russia.

EGO is striving to continue building on the momentum that has been established this academic year. To that end, we have planned social events to promote personal connection, such as a campfire at my house and weekly gatherings at Commonplace Coffeehouse. Additionally, we will be collaborating with Dr. Williamson to provide workshops to help stimulate intellectual growth, working towards our spring conference: “Increasing Inclusivity at IUP.”

The English Graduate Organization is an incredible group formed by many dedicated and talented people whom I would like to recognize: Meghan Cronin and Jordan Hansen, the dynamic duo who just joined EGO; Kaitlynn Sass, our patient Secretary, who catches all my meanderings during our meetings; Aaron Heinrich, our Treasurer, who has kept my spending under control; and Joe Canton, my Vice President, without whom EGO would not be so successful. Last, I would like to recognize Dr. Michael Williamson, the EGO advisor, for his sagacity and tenacity. I sincerely thank you all for everything you have done and will continue to do in the future.

Brian Sateriale
President, English Graduate Organization



To PhD or Not to PhD?

By: Kimberly Nichols

I thought it was just me. I thought I was the only person who wasn't sure what to do next. As a second-year English MA student with graduation looming on the horizon, I find that I am not sure I want my time with IUP to come to a close. Should I pursue my PhD, or should I take my bright, shiny, new MA degree and head out into the world?

There is a wealth of information available online at IUP's website, Graduate Programs in English. I started seeking answers there, but I wanted to know more, so I decided to talk with students and faculty. From these conversations I have found that I am not the only person trying to figure out the next step, and I have also gained some valuable insights about IUP's Literature & Criticism program that might help me make the decision that is right for me.

The PhD, for a long time, has been seen as the path to one career—becoming a professor. But for those of us who are unsure about what we want to do, that thinking can lead us to hesitate in committing to a PhD program. Dr. Veronica T. Watson, Director of Graduate Studies in Literature and Criticism, says that seeing the PhD as a one-career track credential is too narrow. “When you earn a doctorate degree,” she observes, “you are learning to be a deep thinker and content expert on your subject. But you're also learning to be an exceptional researcher, to manage and analyze vast amounts of data, and to make it accessible to different audiences. You're learning particular ways of approaching problems, and in our field, you're learning how to foster dialogue and community through literature.” For all of these reasons, Dr. Watson says, “I want to see English PhDs in the classroom and the Boardroom, in politics and policy, in community organizations and think tanks. I want humanities knowledge, approaches and perspectives everywhere.”

ImaginePhD agrees. According to its homepage, ImaginePhD is “a career exploration and planning tool for the humanities and social sciences.” On that website, students can answer a series of questions that will help guide them toward an abundance of career possibilities. That encouraged me to start thinking more broadly about my interests and where I can put

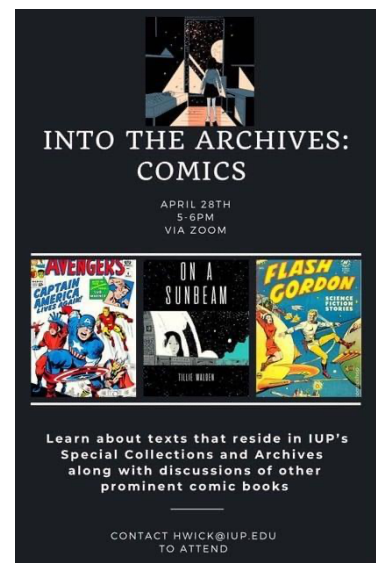
my skills to use. Dr. Watson encourages all incoming students to set up a confidential account and complete the assessments. She helps students continue to reflect on those results when she meets them for advising.

Dr. Mike Williamson echoed that exploratory approach, noting, “There is no traditional route for a doctoral student. It's imperative that we let people experiment with different kinds of audiences, inside, outside of and tangential to academia.” Elizabeth Laughlin, a first-year PhD student in the Literature and Criticism Program, credits this openness as one of the reasons she decided to pursue her doctorate. She wants go into academic publishing. She commented, “A big reason I was interested in IUP specifically was that Dr. Watson and Dr. Williamson told me that ‘You don't have to be a professor. There are lots of different avenues that you can take.’”

The L&C program, it turns out, offers several initiatives that can help students develop skills and explore possible career paths, experiences that are equally useful for those who plan to be professors. One student placed with IUP's Special Collections department for her GA, Marquel Sherry, helped to develop ‘Into the Archives’ series about three years ago. The program brings rare books and other treasures from the university archives and shares them with the community.

Sherry also worked with the archivist to create the exhibit, Print Matters: Selected Works from the Ed Colker Collection, which can be found on the third floor of the IUP Library. Laughlin, had a GA with IUP Magazine where she wrote features for online and for the print magazine.

Faculty collaborate with the Jimmy Stewart Museum in Indiana, PA, the Blairsville Underground Railroad Museum and the Blairsville Historical Society (both in



Blairsville, PA). The English Department is also the organizational home for the Dessy-Roffman Myth Collaborative, which is an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration with other groups in Western Pennsylvania, the Center for Digital Humanities and Culture, and the Digital Storygame Project. Graduate Assistants (GA) and graduate student workers often are embedded in these community and university organizations, giving them important opportunities to work in collaborative, interdisciplinary units that strive to reach a broad audience.

As Dr. Watson pointed out, “The L&C program has alumni who are faculty, who are university administrators, who are published authors, and who work in academic adjacent positions in libraries and faculty development offices. We have alumni employed at universities in other countries, who are in politics, and who develop curriculum for non-profit organizations.”

First-year L&C student, Dan Pintos, is going the more traditional route, preparing to teach at the college level, though he admits, “the goal of becoming tenure track faculty emerged rather late in my education.” He decided the doctorate was right for him because, “I recognized my strengths and deficits and felt that the faculty here were really invested in making me a better thinker. IUP faculty really push me to take my writing and thinking to the next level by giving me really honest, direct feedback to help me succeed.” The opportunities available in the program work for him, too.

As I mulled over my own concerns and talked to others, I continually heard and thought about the cost associated with pursuing a PhD. Having already taken out student loans for undergraduate and master’s degrees, some students are hesitant to take on more debt. Dr. Watson says those considerations are important, but also stressed there is hope for those who want to go on. “There is funding available!” she says, “Students can check a box on the application to indicate that they want to be considered for a Graduate Assistantship.” Those positions, as I previously shared, enable students to work closely with an office or a faculty member on a specific project, research and/or course-related tasks. They are great experience and an opportunity to develop highly desirable professional and research skills.

Watson also said that students from the US should submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) so that they can be awarded Federal Work Study (FWS). FWS enables students to pursue employment in various offices around campus, as well as on several projects within our program. Last year, for instance, L&C had openings for a social media manager, a web maintainer, graduate researchers, and professional development fellows.

I’ll be honest here, it took me a while to digest this treasure trove of information. But as I write this, I am thinking about my next steps with more confidence than before. If you (like me) are on the fence about whether or not to pursue your PhD, check out the websites. Talk to professors. Do the legwork. Don’t just leave it as a half-formed thought in your overtaxed, overtired, graduate student mind. Your future could depend on it.

Meet Our MA Students!

Holly LeAnn Acker (MA, Literature) graduated from Mount Aloysius College. Her current interests include Non-Canonical Literature, Narrative Structure across Genres, Transnational Literature and Religious Symbolism, and Social and Political Effects on Literature.

Zachary Black (MA, Literature) graduated with a B.A. in English Linguistics, French, and a Psychology minor from the University of Reno in Nevada. His academic interests include 20th and 21st century Modernism, 19th Century Romanticism, Women’s Literature, Comparative Literature and Global literature. He enjoys creatively writing fiction and poetry. Zachary, his wife and their cat moved to Greensburg, PA, from Reno, Nevada this past summer.

Courtney Harbaugh (MA, Composition and Literature and Post-Bacc English) graduated from IUP with a BA in Hospitality Management in 2017. Her plans upon graduating from the MA program include teaching high school English and literature, and eventually earning her doctorate, possibly in comparative literature. Courtney is currently interested in 17th and 18th century British Literature, 18th and 19th century American Literature, African American Literature, women’s literature, satire and political satire.



Laura Lopez (MA, Literature) earned her B.S. in WLED and Spanish at Penn State University and her M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction at Gannon University. She is a certified Spanish/English/ESL teacher and has taught for the last 13 years, both in the United States and abroad. Her interests include American LatinX literature, Hemispheric Studies, Translation and Women’s literature.

Ryan Mahokey (MA, Composition and Literature) graduated from Gettysburg College. His current interests include American literature and the intersections between literature and philosophy. His goals are to teach literature at a collegiate level while also pursuing a career in fiction writing.

Aiden Mountan (MA, Composition and Literature) earned their BA at Saint Vincent College. Their research interests include Asian literatures, neurodiversity and LGBTQIA representation in media. Other interests include creative writing, astronomy, animal behavioral psychology, travelling and Asian pop culture.

Kimberly Nichols (MA, Composition and Literature) earned her B.S. in Fashion Merchandising at IUP. Her current interests include mythology, fantasy, medieval studies, feminism, social justice and creative writing. She is a Dessy-Roffman intern. She is also a member of EGO and is currently working with the L&C newsletter team.

John Phillips (MA, Composition and Literature) earned his BA in English with a literature and culture concentration at IUP. He is interested in cultural studies and theory, particularly postcolonial and race theory. He is excited and truly grateful to be working with such amazing people in the program and getting to know them and their brilliant ideas.

Riley Stitt (MA, Composition and Literature) graduated with a BA in writing, literature and publishing from Emerson College in 2020. Riley is interested in researching fantasy and science aspects of literature as well as children’s literature and believes that children’s literature deserves more attention because that’s where most people first get their love of reading.

Tyler Whitehead (MA, Literature) holds a BA in Theatre Arts from Palm Beach Atlantic University, where they were also a member of the Frederick M. Supper Honors Program. They are primarily interested in music as a form of literary adaptation, with secondary interests in subcultural studies, queer and feminist theory, philosophy, and modernism/postmodernism. They recently presented their paper “Unmasking Werther: ‘Werther Fever’ and the Specter of Male Sensibility” as part of a Banned Books panel at IUP.



Interview with Dr. Powers By: Haleigh Hayes

Dr. Heather Powers is a professor of English at IUP, where she teaches in the fields of Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century British Literature, Film Studies, Cultural Studies, Critical Theory, and Composition. Her current research interests are in the fields of disability studies, fandom studies, and the pedagogy of using popular culture in the classroom. Dr. Powers is currently editing a collection of essays on using fairy tales in the secondary and post-secondary classroom. Her next project will be on the constructive use of comedy in popular media to depict individuals living with a mental illness or atypical minds.

Dr. Powers started at IUP in 1999 and recently began teaching in the graduate program.

Haleigh Hayes (HH): You teach a variety of classes here at IUP. Not to put you too on-the-spot, per se, but if you wouldn't mind, describe which class is your favorite to teach. Which class gives you personal joy?



Heather Powers (HP): Well, the most personally fulfilling class I teach is actually Humanities Literature—ENG121. It's a required liberal studies class for undergraduates. I began teaching it twenty-one years ago and one of the main goals of the course

was to create lifelong readers or learners. That was what I wanted to do. I know that trying to force people to read becomes such a chore and something so unpleasant in school.

We don't understand, perhaps because obviously we've chosen this field, right? So, there must be a reason, but seeing students who come in thinking reading is just a chore and that their job is to guess what's hiding behind the teacher's back becomes a perversion of the Socratic method. High school teachers have limited choice within this new culture of public education, but the result of that is that students don't see reading as being pleasurable in any way.

I like to start with poetry, which is typically the most challenging format. We just go from songs and music, writing about it, et cetera, then right into poetry. It sort of opens their eyes. I also teach Shakespeare and use a few different angles there. I like to try to make them see those [poetry and Shakespeare] in a different way. Then, of course, there's the short stories, which make me so happy.

Once, I was in a not-so-great part of Pittsburgh, and I saw a former student working at a pretty crappy grocery store there. She said to me, "I just love reading now." And I said, "You are my success story." Of course, I'd love everyone to have a great job and get paid a million dollars, but reading, wherever you are and whatever your circumstances are, I think, can help you enjoy it forever.

HH: What is the greatest challenge you find as an academic?

HP: My greatest challenge as an academic is—and I think everyone says this, but it's true—boundaries. Time management, of the anxiety. I wouldn't say that we as professors don't, even with a four-four teaching load as I've had every semester except last spring, have time to do the work. It's that there's no way to put the work aside, ever. There's always more. You can always do more. You can always put in more comments. You can always make a better assignment. You can always write something new, or better. And so, sometimes I miss the cut and dry nature of work I did in graduate school and before graduate school, where there was a task. You completed the task, and you moved on. I think that these personal boundaries for intellectual or mental work are really hard to hold on to.

HH: If you could give any piece of advice to both incoming graduate students and those currently in the program, what would it be?

HP: I think it would be to start looking into what's going on with the intellectual life of the academy and the culture right now. For example, in the next graduate class I'm going to teach, a lot of it is based on theory in the classroom and in publishing. I want to talk quite a bit about how open access publication is changing things. It's already in the sciences. It's already here and there is a lot of focus on it. Libraries can't afford to buy print anymore.

I don't want graduate students to lose their focus on paper publication. But they should also know there are many different ways to get your your thoughts and research out there. There are also more popular venues, or more accessible venues. Students should be aware of what hoops exist, and then focus on what success means for you. You've got to do both if you're in the academy. It's a juggling act.

HH: What is the worst piece of advice you've heard directed at graduate students, and how would you improve it?

HP: This is an actual quote that I heard someone say to grad students last year after the EGO conference. They presented their papers and afterwards, a professor said, "Well, that was pretty good. Now you know the real work begins." I was like, "Oh, what? What are you

saying to them?” That the only real achievement is that publication? I think that’s what he meant. He said, “Now, you’ve got to write it up and submit it.”

I don’t think you should just present something and put the brakes on. Often in professional conferences they’ll have sessions about how to publish. Once I heard someone say, “Sometimes I feel like Frankenstein! All I do is take all my ideas and cut them up and put them together in different ways.” But to do that you have to have ideas and to share them through conferences or through more accessible online things. I just don’t see that as nothing.

Do what you need to do to get a job or get promoted, but think about what your goals are. And sharing, especially in graduate school, sharing ideas—that becomes harder and harder after you graduate. Being with like-minded people who are also in the thick of it, it’s a wonderful time.

IUP has a really nice community of graduate students. It just seems very supportive and I really encourage students to take advantage of that.

HH: What’s next for you?

HP: Recently, I’ve had several life-turning moments. I turned fifty. Several years ago, I survived brain surgery and I jumped through my last hoop here, which is achieving full professor. So, all of those things—you know, some people buy a car for a mid-life crisis, but I’m trying to look at this time as a time to explore things that are different than what I’ve been doing. And really focusing on interacting with a wider intellectual, academic community at all levels.

I’m currently putting together a collection of essays about using fairy tales in the classroom. The inspiration for this came from the graduate class I taught last year. My GA and I are going to be choosing essays on for the collection. I already have a contract for that project.

The other thing that I am pursuing grew out of the last major conference I went to—the Popular Culture Association Conference. I did a presentation on the fandom of a podcast called My Favorite Murder. The thing about that podcast is that one host is a bit older and they’re very open about their struggles with addiction and mental health. *Very* open. It’s

encouraged fans to speak out and make communities where they can talk about mental health in relevant ways through comedy-horror-murder context of the podcast.

So, I talked about the mental health community created by this podcast in my presentation and at the end an acquisitions editor from a smaller academic press approached me. They want to start a series on depictions of mental health in popular culture. I had already been interested in disability studies because I live with a mental illness and many people I know and who are in my family are neurodivergent. They asked for a proposal and I’m writing one that focuses on representation and comedy, and how taking these things less seriously can help people be more open about mental health struggles.



English Students Apply Digital Humanities Learning

By: Dr. Ken Sherwood

Three English graduate and one undergraduate student--Laura Lopez, Kaitlynn Sass, Kheiriyeh Ahmadi, and Hayley Brown--are working with Dr. Ken Sherwood on the Ethnopoetics project, a digital humanities collaboration to extend the visibility and promote the study of global poetics.



Using the affordances of an open-access wiki, Sherwood initiated Ethnopoetics.org in Summer 2021 as a class project with graduate students in ENGL 766/866 Comparative

Literature - Ethnopoetics, who wrote and edited two dozen content entries. Student groups from the Fall 2021 ENGL 757/857 - Digital Humanities class have been helping to develop the project, producing guidelines for metadata and editing style, as well as helping build out the architecture. Lopez, Sass and Brown are each

tackling different facets in the first phase of the project -- from research and writing of content entries to copy-editing. Student scholars are learning to create accessible but informed context for poems, songs, stories and other materials from diverse cultures, languages, and traditions.

Ethnopoetics names an interdisciplinary movement involving poets, storytellers, singers, anthropologists, translators, linguists, and literary scholars, dating to the late 1960s. The term has come more broadly to designate writing that reflects a heightened awareness of the artfulness of oral and traditional poetics and the ways in which diverse verbal arts illuminate world cultures. This writing can also reflect innovative theorizing and practices of representational practices, including transcription/translation. The term *ethnopoetics* was coined by poet and translator Jerome Rothenberg and gained currency through the journal *Alcheringa/Ethnopoetics*, which was only accessible in rare books collections until its digitization by the Kelly Writers' House at the University of Pennsylvania -- but it still largely neglected.

On the launch of the *Alcheringa* reissue in 2010, Dennis Tedlock wrote: "Nearby and far away, contemporary poets continue to speak, sing, and write in hundreds of languages that are neither colonial nor sanctioned by national governments." The present phase of the Ethnopoetics.org project centers on an interpretive wiki built around these *Alcheringa* materials from the 1970s. With permission of U Penn and the original editor, Jerome Rothenberg, this DHC-sponsored site aspires to the larger aims of making these global poetics more discoverable by general readers, providing context for students beginning to learn about poetry and other traditions, and re-embedding ethnopoetic texts in the network of scholarly conversations in the 21st century humanities.

In the coming months, students will join Dr. Sherwood to talk more about what they have learned through this collaborative research, as well as next steps in the project. As we move forward, there should be opportunities for current students, as well as alumni and others outside of the IUP sphere, to participate in the project. Have a look at our very much "in progress" project

at <http://www.ethnopoetics.org>. Please reach out with your ideas and interests to sherwood@iup.edu.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By: Joseph Canton and Liz Laughlin



Dr. Peggy Manouka (L&C 2004) is an alumna from IUP. She is the Director of Admissions at Webster University in Athens Greece. While she teaches a variety of classes at her university, for the last six years, she has been the Director of Admissions at the University. In this role,

Dr. Manouka's job is to welcome new students to the campus, as well as to communicate with the various Greek embassies to help with any visa issues for new students. Her job brings her into contact with students from around the world, and she makes sure that the students are fitting in well on the campus. On top of making sure that new students are settling into the campus life well.

Dr. Manouka is in communication with high schools and colleges to recruit more students to the school's program as well as making presentations to corporate businesses in Greece and abroad to help students who are leaving the program find placement. Dr. Manouka said, "Every day I am using the skills that I learned at IUP to accomplish the amazing job that I have."

She speaks fondly of her time on the IUP campus and says that "more students of literature need to be in place to instill the love of literature into future generations."

Dr. Joshua Begley (L&C 2014) teaches creative writing



at Full Sail University in Orlando, Florida. He began working at Full Sail in 2011, while he was finishing his

dissertation. His research interests include play theory, genre fiction, and sociology. His academic work has been published by *Studies in the Humanities* and *Works & Days*. He has also published creative works, including “Orlando Lost,” (Burrow Press, 2017) and “Juliet’s Streeside Serenade,” which was published in *Benvidering Stories* (2018). You can find Dr. Begley blogging for *Fandompost*. Regarding his time spent at IUP, Dr. Begley states that reading critically in the program influenced his own pedagogical practices. “I looked back on how my professors taught their classes, the specific techniques they used, how they managed time--and I modeled my own class after their example,” Begley said.

Dr. Forrest Helvie (L&C 2013) currently serves as the Interim Director of Professional Development at Connecticut State Community College, located in Newington, Connecticut. During his time at Connecticut State Community College, he spends a lot of time engaged with their center



for teaching. In doing so, he focuses on pedagogy and how he can help others to learn. He also served as Council Chair of Connecticut State Teaching and Learning Council. Currently, he is an advisory board member of *The Comics Grid: The Journal of Comics Scholarship*.

Dr. Helvie’s reviews of comics have been published by *Marvel Comics*. In addition, he often writes articles for *Newsarama*, which features essays about comic books. He also writes his own comics in the genre of children’s literature and horror. He discussed the skills that he gained through his time at IUP, particularly when writing his dissertation. “Where it really worked for me was self-discipline,” Dr. Helvie said. “The depth and the demand, not only on myself, but on discourse with others in a professional setting.”



MEET OUR NEW PHD COHORTS

Sara Abdulqadir is a first-year Literature and Criticism Ph.D. student. Sara earned a BA in English and MA in Interdisciplinary Humanities from Pennsylvania State University. Her research interests include the shaping of identity, memory, and trauma in multiethnic texts from the U.S. Sara's Master's thesis from Penn State was a creative non-fiction biography that narrated her experience in a war-torn country in the 90s. Her thesis focused on trauma, memory, and loss of identity that shaped her childhood and adulthood once she and her family immigrated to the U.S. at age 8.

Ahmed Alsarhan graduated in 2018 from the University of Nottingham, England with an MA in English Literature. He is deeply influenced by Frost’s “The Road Not Taken” and follows Emerson’s star. His scholarly interests are the art of the novel and the short story form with a primarily focus on the 20th century period and a secondary interest on the development of the novel in the 18th and 19th centuries. He is interested in the following theoretical approaches: feminism, Ideology and discourse, Trauma theory, Eco-criticism, modernism, and finally comparative approach to 20th century and contemporary American and British novels.

Meghan N. Cronin graduated from Allegheny College in 2016 with her BA in English Literature. She then moved to the United Kingdom to pursue her MA in Shakespeare Studies and graduated from the Shakespeare Institute, through the University of Birmingham, in 2017. She recently joined the board for the English Graduate Organization. For her Graduate Assistant placement, she is helping gather papers for a book about using fairytales in the high school and college classroom. Her interests include Shakespeare and his contemporaries, Early Modern Drama, Austen, Romance and Gothic literature, Feminism, adaptation, and popular fiction.

Ashley Ensminger received an MFA in creative nonfiction writing from Carlow University. She works at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. Ashley's scholarly interests include queer theory, critical race theory, women's literature, dystopian fiction, 20th century American literature, memoir, and poetry.

Donhnall Godfrey has served as a lecturer at Washington State Community College, a small rural community college in Washington County, Ohio since 2014. He teaches courses in English and the Humanities and served as Faculty Senate President from 2019 to 2021. Donhnall earned his MA with Merit in Cultural Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London, U.K. His research interests include the structure of stories, genre fiction, Marxist theory, games as literature, and critical pedagogy.

Jordan Hansen is a former high school English teacher, preschool teacher, and high school theatre director from California. She graduated with her BA in English Literature and Theatre Education from Cal State San Bernardino (2016) before moving to Stratford-upon-Avon, England to get her first master's degree in Shakespeare Studies from the Shakespeare Institute (2018). She specialized in gender performance and gender-bending in Shakespeare's plays. She briefly worked with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust before returning to California to get her teaching credential and master's in education from University of Redlands (2019). She recently joined EGO as an outreach coordinator. Her areas of interest include Early Modern and Renaissance play texts, gender and feminist studies, theatre directing and adaptation, and classic British literature.

Haleigh Hayes is a former researcher, instructor, and writing coach. She earned her B.A. (2018) and M.A. (2019) from American Military University in military history. She is a 2021 graduate of the Seton Hill University MFA program, writing dark academic science fiction under Dr. Albert Wendland. Her historical work encompasses the American Revolution, the history of espionage, modern nuclear intelligence, and military philosophy. She recently presented her paper, "Ethical Force?: The Journey of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn from the Gulag to Required Reading" for EGO's Banned Books panel. Her research interests in literature include Russian literature of the twentieth century, Jungian analysis, modern spoken-word poetry, gothic literature, and

portrayals of the villain as a traitor. She writes horror and retellings of Greek mythology in her free time.

Emily Hicks is an English Language Arts instructor at Venango Catholic High School in Oil City, Pennsylvania. She is a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, majoring in Political Science and minoring in Philosophy and History. She received a Master's degree in Education with a concentration in history from Slippery Rock University. Currently she is enrolled in the Literature and Criticism doctoral program at IUP. Her research interests include the representation of economic and political institutions in speculative fiction as viewed through the lenses of ecocriticism and Marxism.

Elizabeth Laughlin is a first-year doctoral student in the Literature and Criticism program. She is a graduate assistant who helps run the Literature and Criticism newsletter, and she writes for a public humanities project titled "I Fear for My Life," shedding light on police

brutality toward the Black community. Her research interests include Gothicism, Modernism, Romanticism, and Latin American literature. She has presented her work at conferences by the University of Iowa, the University of Maryland, and Carnegie Mellon, and in the spring, she will present at the NEMLA conference. Her work has been published on the NASSR (North American Society for the

Study of Romanticism) website.

Ileana Leon received her B.A. in English Literature from The City Universities of New York's York College in 2018. In 2019, she graduated with her M.A. in English Literature from The University of Rochester. With an emphasis on race, class and gender, her research interests are multi-cultural identity formation and expressions of sexuality within liminal spaces in post-colonial literature and literature of the Harlem Renaissance. Her theoretical interests include intersectional feminism, postcolonialism, critical race theory, modernism, and queer theory. She currently works as a graduate assistant in IUP's thesis and dissertation office.

Avalon Manly currently teaches high school literature in Colorado. Outside the classroom, she facilitates professional development focused on diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in order to help develop the



competencies of educators to teach across lines of difference. She received her M.A. in literature with honors from Western New Mexico University, where she focused on Gothic narratives and what monsters can teach us. Her writing has been published in *Horror Homeroom*, *CommonLit*, and *The New York Times*.

Novia Murni received her B.A. in English Language and Literature from Andalas University, Indonesia in 1999. In 2003, She accomplished her master's degree in English Language and Education from Padang State University, Indonesia. Since 2005 she worked for Indonesia Government as civil-servant lecturer. In the Fall of 2021, she is a first year PhD student at IUP. Her areas of research and interest are American Literature (early American Literature) and Cultural Studies.

Daniel Pintos earned his MA in English Composition and Literature from IUP in 2021. His scholarly interests include ludology, romantic and modern poetry, British literature, the gothic, intersectionality, composition theory, and fantasy literature. He was a finalist in the English Association of the Pennsylvania State Universities poetry contest in 2018 and has presented his poetry at the 2019 Pennsylvania College English Association conference. He currently works as a graduate assistant in two courses combining traditional English composition theories with gaming literacy.

Tracy Fernandez Rysavy is currently a lecturer in English literature, creative writing, and women's & gender studies at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (Marinette and main campuses). She is also one of several EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion) consultant fellows on campus. As part of this EDI fellowship, she is developing a podcast with students on microaggressions on campus. She received her M.A. in English literature with distinction from Boston College and subsequently spent several years as the editor-in-chief of a nonprofit, nonpartisan environmental and social-justice magazine. Her research interests include multiethnic gothic fiction, multiethnic American literature, and women's literature through feminist, race, and postcolonial critical lenses.

Betsy Weeks currently works full time as an English teacher and CCP instructor at Grant Career Center in southwestern Ohio. She is also an adjunct professor at

the University of Cincinnati and Southern State Community College. Betsy graduated in 2015 from Ohio Dominican University with a MA in English. Her scholarly interests include studying women's literature through a feminist theoretical approach, as well as studying early 20th century American Literature and 17th century British Gothic writers such as Ann Radcliffe and Mary Shelley.



English Doctoral Students Cronin and Canton Awarded HASTAC Fellowships By Dr. Ken Sherwood

The graduate program in Literature and Criticism at IUP is pleased to announce that doctoral students Joseph Canton and Meghan Cronin have been recognized as 2022 HASTAC scholars. Only 100 scholars each year



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are recognized by the Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC), a national network administered by

CUNY Graduate Center and Dartmouth College with 16,000+ members from over 400+ affiliate organizations. HASTAC aims to support young scholars "rethinking pedagogy, learning, research & academia for the digital age."

Ms. Cronin plans to look at how Shakespeare can be studied and taught through digital means, with two scheduled presentations on the topic in 2022. She has previously conducted computational analysis of Shakespeare plays using the text visualization tool Voyant. "I am tremendously honored and thankful that IUP English has recognized my award. I am excited about the avenues of exploration HASTAC participation opens up for me," Cronin said.

Mr. Canton plans to lay the groundwork for his dissertation, helping to develop an academic podcast at IUP. "Incorporating podcasting will broaden the audience for my dissertation research and, through the process, should help expose others to how podcasting can complement literary study," Canton said. Canton's project aligns with the newly formed national Humanities Podcast Initiative and broader trends in the "Public Humanities."

Serving as the scholars' IUP/HASTAC mentor is Dr. Kenneth Sherwood, Professor of English and co-director of the Center for Digital Humanities and Culture at IUP. "It was a pleasure to nominate Meghan and Joe, as two of our most creative, energetic, and forward-thinking students," Sherwood said. Sherwood became acquainted with their work in two IUP courses: ENGL 857 Digital Composition, Literature and Pedagogy and ENGL 865 Literature as a Genre: Podcasting, Narrative, Poetics, and Sound.



Cronin and Canton are among only four IUP students ever to receive this recognition. "I am happy that they will enjoy this opportunity to nourish their scholarship and

professional development" says Sherwood, and "knowing Joe and Meghan, I am confident they'll also bring their experience back to IUP to enrich the graduate community."

STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Ahlam Abulaila (L&C 5th Year) has recently published a book chapter, "Once Displaced, Forever Displaced: Words Without Borders and Borders Within Words in Mourid Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah*" in Hager Ben Driss's edited collection: *Mobilizing Narratives: Narrating Injustices of (Im)mobility*, which has been released on August 10, 2021. The chapter

examines (Im)mobility injustice related to homelessness and statelessness as being the core of Mourid Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah*. Barghouti's rhetorical question "who listens to the stories of men, women, and children who are taken by their displacement to that other shore from which no one ever returns?" (Barghouti 11) provides a conflated case of epistemic and (im)mobility injustice. The text narrates the case of an entire population wronged in their capacity as tellers and knowers as well as (im)mobile agents. Barghouti's text defies all systems of immobilization and emerges as an intriguing example of the way texts move. Mobilized through translation, Barghouti's narrative gathers the power to mobilize attention to Palestinian damaged mobilities.

Abulaila's article "The Islamic Veil: A Deconstruction of the Western Discourse" has also been accepted for publication in an upcoming volume of *Portmanteau: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Gender and Intersectionality*. The article questions how the Western eye tends to focus on the practice of veiling as the most significant abuse against Muslim women, perhaps because, as Leila Ahmed in *Women and Gender in Islam* states, it is "the most visible marker" of Islamic identity (152) and of the social separation of the sexes. Within the context of Orientalism and postcolonial feminism, the article also examines how some Muslim women writers challenge and others embrace the Orientalist Western reduction of the veiled Muslim woman as an object of oppression. Abulaila received the IUP Graduate School Travel Award and presented a panel paper titled, "The Construction of the Female Chinese American Identity in Maxine Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*" at the 52nd (NeMLA) Northeast Modern Language Association Virtual Convention in March 2021.

Jeff Ambrose (L&C 3rd year) is celebrating his first publication, "Brodentity: Teaching Masculinity through *Fight Club*" in a work on teaching using the works of Chuck Palahniuk, just released through Vernon Press. This chapter came from a project from Dr. Watson's theory class here at IUP! A second chapter is expected to release later this year, "Memory as Monster: Remembering and Forgetting in Stephen King's *IT*", in an edited collection on King's novel entitled, *Encountering Pennywise: Critical Perspectives on Stephen King's IT* from The University Press of Mississippi (2022). Additionally, Jeff has a new G.A. position, working as the Literature, Arts, and Creative Writing Coordinator for the Writing Center.

Mark DiMauro (L&C 2021) received publication for his book chapter, "There Is No Ethos," which appears in *Julie Warner's Mistakes Teachers Make*, released in June 2021. In 2021, he saw his first article and encyclopedia entries reach print, as well as his first book chapter (joining his already published book from 2018). His essay and nine encyclopedia entries will all be appearing in *Dystopian States of America*, edited by Matt Hill. His essay in *Dystopian States* is "The World's Smallest Monsters: The Threat and Reality of Pandemic Outbreak in Dystopian Fiction." Please judge it kindly; it was written almost six months before that reality, well...became one.

Additionally, he considered two job offers, one from the University of Pikeville, KY and the other from the University of Pennsylvania Johnstown (UPJ). Ultimately, he accepted the UPJ position as a visiting professor of Multimedia and Digital Culture, where he constructs a forward-looking, 21st-century curriculum of digital literature and humanities.

He also presented his essay "The Gothic Memory Remains" at the Philadelphia, PA NeMLA conference in March, and, of course, finished his degree program and graduated with my PhD in August 2021. He has a new book due out in 2022 from Wavelength Laboratories, an annotated, illustrated anthology of the Gothic ghosts and haunts of the Christmas season: *The Ghosts of Christmas' Past*. As a newly minted alum, he shares a few words in lieu of a stage walk: "Thank you to everyone that assisted me and aided me along the way, and to everyone that let me rant or indulged my ludicrous essays, questions, and research. A very special thank you to my dissertation committee, and I can safely say it will be my pleasure to do IUP proud in all my future endeavors!"

Brandon Galm (MA Literature 2011, L&C 2018) just started his third academic year as a full-time instructor at Cloud County Community College, located in Concordia, KS. In addition to his teaching role, he has also taken over as department chair as of Fall 2021. Last year, he was awarded Cloud's Instructor of the Year. Outside of the classroom, he has been busy creating, producing, and co-hosting EcoCast, the official podcast of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE). The monthly podcast recently finished its first year of shows, and can be found on Apple, Spotify, and Google Podcasts or at asleecocast.podbean.com. The podcast is always

looking for proposals, so anyone doing work in ecocriticism or environmental humanities is encouraged to send a proposal. At the most recent ASLE conference, held virtually this past summer, he also presented the paper "(Un)Real White Survival: Red Dead Redemption 2 and the Play of Nature."

Karen Griscom (L&C 4th year) In April, Karen won a Graduate Research grant through the School of Graduate Studies and Research to study the collection of English Broadside and French Mazarinades at Harvard University's Houghton Library. In May, Karen presented "The Serious Work of Being a Translator: Katherine Philips, Reading, Craft, and Theory" at the annual workshop of the Women's Studies Group 1558-1837 "For Love or Money?: Women, Amateurs, and Professionals." At the end of May, her reflection on the pandemic titled "Feminist Scholarly Communities Have Been a Lifeline" was published in *ABO: Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts, 1640-1830*, a peer reviewed, open access, interactive, scholarly journal. This summer, she earned a certificate from Rare Book School at the University of Virginia for her participation in the workshop "The Handwriting and Culture of Early Modern English Manuscripts." Karen's panel proposal "Pindar and Pindarics in Vernacular Poetry: Translation, Imitation, Transformation" was accepted for NeMLA's 2022 conference in Baltimore.

Nick Katsiadis (L&C 2019) signed a contract to publish his book, titled *Romanticism in Comics: Faith, Myth, and Mood*, with the Rochester Institute of Technology Press (RIT Press). The book evolved from his dissertation in the L&C program, and it is slated to be published in mid-2022. In it, he explores how comic book creators, such as Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, and Mike Carey, invent mythologies in ways similar to nineteenth century authors, and he argues that such creativity is part of a greater literary history that extends from nineteenth-century Romanticism. The importance in these perspectives is that much comic book scholarship tends to limit the literary history of mainstream comics to classical mythology, and this project opens up the conversation to encompass a far larger swath of literature.

Lindsey Moser (L&C 3rd year) is preparing for the Comprehensive Exam and is focusing on 12th century monastic literature and affect theory. In June 2021, Lindsey was accepted to serve as an active duty chaplain in the United States Air Force and is stationed in

Colorado. Along with her husband Andy, Lindsey also welcomed James Stewart Moser into the world in August 2020, named in honor of the actor and USAF veteran Jimmy Stewart whose childhood home was Indiana, PA. Lindsey presented at the Moral Injury Support Network for Servicewomen, Inc. (MISNS) conference in 2020 and her presentation, "Words of Life - a Literature and Healing Workshop," was published in a proceedings book in January 2021. Lindsey serves as the MISNS Secretary and is participating in research on moral injury and trauma among military members and their families. Lindsey's research focuses on medieval monastic literature and the connections between literature, healing, and affective religious experience.

Reza Parchizadeh (L&C 2018) joined the editorial board of the international news agency Al-Arabiya Farsi, where he is in charge of setting policy for producing the most reliable news and highest quality analysis of the Middle East. During his time there, Reza has led joint efforts with other high-profile institutes such as Foundation for Defense of Democracies to shed light on the intricacies of the region for the benefit of the US national security.

As a political theorist and analyst, Dr. Parchizadeh was widely interviewed and published around the world with respect to Iran, Afghanistan, and the wider Middle East. Among others, his "Role of Modern Higher Education in Development of Liberalism in Iran" was published by Al-Arabiya; his "Afghanistan's Woes Will Haunt America" by The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies of Bar-Ilan University; and his "Shiite Crescent: The Middle East's Arc of Crisis" by Academia.

As a peace and democracy activist, Parchizadeh promoted the "Abraham Accords," the recent normalization agreement between Arabs and Israel, as the most viable method of attaining peace in the Middle East, especially in the face of the Iranian regime's aggression and expansionism across the region. Dr. Parchizadeh proposed that Iranian dissidents and democracy activists should form the third pillar of the Abraham Accords.

William Mark Poteet (L&C 2005) wrote the chapter on Reynolds Price for the recently published *Twentieth-Century and Contemporary American Literature in Context* (ABC-CLIO, 2021). He also recently wrote the

sections on southern drama and Tennessee Williams for the forthcoming (2022) *Routledge Companion to Literature of the American South*.

Meghan Hurley Powell (L&C 2019) has accepted a position as a Visiting Assistant Professor of English at Graceland University, where she teaches literature and composition. In addition, she has received a 1500\$ travel award to attend PCA/ACA 2022, where she will present my paper "Asexuality as Agency and Autonomy in Atwood's *The Testaments*." Outside of academia, she has also launched her own podcast, titled "The Power Within Her," her feminist real-world project, where she spreads the important message of critical thinking, personal growth, and self-empowerment for women.

Mauve Perle Tahat (L&C 6th year) has been accepted to speak at both PAMLA and MAPACA (Mid Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association) this year. At both conferences she will be delivering sections from her working dissertation, titled "Distended by a variety of prisms": Theorizing the Contemporary Carceral Narrative."

Rod Taylor (MA Literature 2012 and L&C 2020) is a Race, Freedom, and Democratic Citizenship postdoctoral fellow in African American Studies at the University of South Carolina. Rod's doctoral dissertation, *Writing Back: Anti-Plantation Literature in the Reconstruction South*, won the 2021 IUP School of Graduate Studies Outstanding Research Award as well as the 2021 IUP Doctoral Program in Literature and Criticism Outstanding Dissertation Award for his archival research on nineteenth-century African American writers. Rod is currently an American Humor Studies Association M. Thomas Inge First Book Fellow where he is converting *Writing Back* to a book-length manuscript.

Sarah Victor (L&C 3rd year) presented her paper at an international conference last fall organized by London Centre of Interdisciplinary, titled "Narratives of Displacement." The institute also provided opportunities for post-conference publication, where she submitted her article this summer. Her article, titled "Issues of Home/Homelessness in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*," is now in the process of being published. The paper discusses the interpersonal and interpersonal nature of the concept of home. She will be presenting again this fall at another conference, "International Conference of Ecocriticism and Environmental Studies,"

organized by the same organization. The paper she will be presenting discusses the representation of women in Mahasweta Devis's short stories and the way in which they are objectified just as land is objectified.

Lastly, her proposal was accepted for the International Poe Conference in Boston next Spring. Her presentation at the Poe Conference references Poe's views about the printing culture of 19th century America, and these views are mirrored by Monsieur Dupont in his detective fiction.



What Comes Next? Considering Life after Tenure By: Tracy Lassiter

As I write this, I am in the final throes of my tenure application. I must admit, I had plenty of days (months, years even) when I didn't think such an eventuality would ever happen. We all know too well the travails of the academic job market, especially for those of us in English, let alone in securing the increasingly rare tenure-track position. So, I do consider myself fortunate in this regard.

At the same time, as I gather the documentation that evidences this next stage of my academic career, I can see how hard I've worked for it – not just in the years I've been employed at the University of New Mexico-Gallup where I currently teach, but for the years before I even secured this position. Aside from the obvious benefits tenure can provide – a bit more job security, a new title, a bump in pay – it provides other benefits, like an opportunity to consider one's career path and priorities. It allows a certain . . . freedom to contribute to the profession in a different way. It's a subtle shift, like the difference in spending years and years as a graduate student, writing papers where you situate your work against the canonical scholars you've been reading and honoring, to becoming a doctor, an expert in your topic that perhaps future scholars will cite in their papers. With



tenure, we can consider taking on projects and research we would *like* to embark on, not that which we think we *must* accomplish in order to achieve tenure.

To be fair, I have only taken on writing projects, conference opportunities, and service work I believed in and am interested in. Yet our campus is a branch of an R1 university; our priority is teaching, which suits those of us who attended IUP because of its history as a normal school. But this emphasis meant I focused most of my research and publication time on pedagogy. I learned a great deal as I went, whether about online course design, best practices, or trauma-informed teaching. Yet that dedication meant I sidelined research in petrofiction (my dissertation topic) and comics/graphic narratives, an area I've published in and presented on for nearly twenty years. I don't regret sidelining those other research topics *per se*, but I missed them, and in recent months I've been excited to return to them even as I continue my pedagogical work. I feel at last I'm able to strike more balance in my work – I've taught seven different courses over the last five years, both in person, online, and in hybrid mode. Now that my courses are well established across all sorts of modalities, I can devote more time to research and writing, which means – hooray! – a legit excuse to read comic books, among other things.

My focused attention to my courses, online training, and trauma-informed teaching research culminated in my winning UNM's Branch Campus Tenure-Track Teacher of the Year for 2020-21 – it was awarded during the Pandemic Year, which I think is especially noteworthy, but it was granted in recognition of the work I'd done for the past five years. I helped students turn class assignments into community and conference presentations. I arranged showcases of student work and initiated first-generation celebrations. I trained colleagues in online course tools to help them develop and improve their own pandemic teaching. My advice to you is to learn as much as you can about online course design and tools, not just in case of any future pivot we might face again, but for the ways technology allows you to enrich your current classroom instruction.

But gratefully, as I mentioned, I was able to return to my comics/graphic narrative research, an area I was eager to

delve into again because it meant connecting with cohort members I've worked with since 2004. I am a member of the International Comparative Literature Association's Research Committee on Comics Studies and Graphic Narrative. Our committee hosts panels at each triannual ICLA Congress, and from that network a rich array of other professional opportunities has come my way. I was last able to join these colleagues in Paris in 2013, and my presentation on Alan Moore's Weeping Gorilla character led to subsequent opportunities. For example, one colleague, Umberto Rossi, and I recently co-edited a special issue of the online Italian journal *Status Quaestionis*. If you have any interest in history and/or graphic narrative, then please see our issue "Drawing (Hi)Stories: Rethinking Historical Graphic Narratives." Each of us wrote articles in addition to editing all the submissions, plus we arranged for all the peer reviewers. It was a wonderful project in that I worked with a great collaborator who knew what work was in store for us as editors; more importantly, we had contributions from scholars the world over, which made the issue interesting and inclusive.

Then, the other major opportunity that emerged from the Paris conference was an invitation to present as a keynote speaker at Università Ca' Foscari in Venice, Italy. The theme of the conference was "Visual Depictions of the American West." Once I knew about the conference and the keynote opportunity, I stepped up to help arrange things on the American side, posting the CFP on H-Net, for example, and lining up a Cherokee artist and animator and a Laguna writer/artist/entrepreneur to serve as other keynote speakers. The pandemic did cause us to postpone the event by a year, but we finally held it in September. While registrants could attend in person or virtually, I made the decision to join some of my colleagues in Venice, a trip I am so glad I made as a capstone activity to years of planning, writing, and anticipating. The proceeds from my teaching award, as well as a Love of Learning Award granted by the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, helped to finance my trip. Another piece of advice: consider accepting the Phi Kappa Phi invitation when it's extended to you. This was my third Love of Learning Award; the last I received was in 2013 to support my ICLA presentation in Paris.

So, this brings me back to the present, the tenure application throes and compiling all this information into coherence for my reviewers. This moment

represents a lot of work and dedication, and I am gratified for the letters of support I've received, the opportunities I've been presented with, the students I've been honored to know. While I anticipate working on publications like a book related to my petrofiction research and other comics/graphic narrative projects, I also am happy to pause, to take a breath and ponder the "What comes next?"

My friend Ann Amicucci, who is an IUP alum from the Composition & TESOL program, and I have answered that question in part with a new initiative. We launched our blog, [Two Profs from Ohio](#), as a site where we share the teaching strategies we've gleaned after more than a decade's worth of training and classroom experience. We do plan to publish in traditional academic presses, but we're so excited about the immediacy of the blog and the freedom we have in creating the content we would like to share. It's this sort of freedom I meant earlier; we're contributing to the profession but in a way that's inherent to us and to the community we want to foster.

It's a profound moment, to be at the edge of a different stage of one's professional career, looking back at past accomplishments and looking forward to all of those yet to come. I wish all of you the very same experiences during and well beyond your time at IUP.



FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Melanie Holm continued to keep herself busy with the eighteenth century this year. After the untimely death of its beloved editor, W. Blake Gerard, Dr. Holm was asked to take the position of Co-Editor of *The Scriblerian*, the semi-annual, comprehensive literature review of scholarship concerning literature and culture of the Restoration and eighteenth century in Great Britain and Western Europe. As co-editor, she oversaw the journal's transfer of ownership and estate to Penn State University Press with her colleagues Dr. Derek Taylor and Dr. Neil Guthrie, Esq., and contributed several book and article reviews to the last two issues.

When not critiquing the works of others, Dr. Holm's attempted some scholarship of her own. Her essay on teaching *Tristram Shandy*, "A Digression on

Three Digressive Assignments” was published by *Studies in the Novel* while later in the academic year, she submitted the manuscript of *Grimm Realities: Essays on Identity and Justice in the Television Series*, a co-edited essay collection with Dr. Daniel Farr (Kennesaw University). Dr. Holm wrote the introduction to the collection and contributed two essays, “All About Eve;—or, Juliette’s Original Sin” and “The Wesen Who Came to Dinner: Racial Allegory in *Grimm*.” (Andrea Yingling, whom Dr. Holm advises, will also have an essay in the collection, “Liminal Spaces and Identity in *Grimm*.”) This project reflects Dr. Holm’s interest in mythology and eighteenth-century folklore as a scholar as well as her desire, as co-director of the Dessy-Roffman Myth Collaborative, to generate conversation about the role and influence of mythology at all levels of culture. The collection will be coming out from MacFarland Publishing this winter.

In her capacity as co-director of the Myth Collaborative, Dr. Holm also delivered opening remarks on the role of myth in conceptions of adversity, “The Phoenix and the Turn,” for the 2021 EGO conference, and delivered inaugural remarks on Milton, Censorship, and the Myth of Osiris for the Banned Books Colloquium earlier this fall. Dr. Holm, as many of her students know, believes that Milton always has the answer.

Not to be accused of favoritism, Dr. Holm also has a forthcoming essay on Jane Austen in the collection *Geniuses, Addicts, and Scribbling Women: Writers in Literature and Film*, edited by Dr. Cynthia Cravens. The collection comes out this winter from Lexington Books, an imprint of Rowan & Littlefield. Her essay, “Jane as Fanny as Jane” interrogates the iterative generational practice of conflating the author Jane Austen with her heroines, and gives particular attention Patricia Rozema’s 1999-film, *Mansfield Park* which attempts to make the lead character of the novel of the same name likable by explicitly turning her into a modern incarnation of the author. In a pivot from Jane Austen at one end of the long eighteenth century, to the irrepressible Margaret Cavendish at the other, she delivered the paper, “Did Margaret Cavendish Invent the Heroine?” at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies for the multi-session panel: “Hardcore Heroines of the Eighteenth Century.” This paper was

the Rubicon crossing so to speak, for her in-progress monograph on Cavendish and the Heroickess.

Closer to home and the present, Dr. Holm has been doing what she loves to do most with literature from the long eighteenth century: teach it. Her creative methods for spreading the joy of eighteenth-century texts were recognized at the end of AY 2020-2021 by the Center for Teaching Excellence. For “making dead authors come to life,” she was awarded the Center for Teaching Excellence Faculty Recognition Award for Excellence in Innovation.

Dr. Mike Sell’s newest book *Systemic Dramaturgy: A Handbook for the Digital Age*, co-written with Michael M. Chemers of the University of California, Santa Cruz, will appear in 2022, published by Southern Illinois University Press. Sell and Chemers describe a new framework for understanding the relationship of theatre, performance, and technology that encompasses both centuries-old traditions (such as the sokyukuchi aesthetic of the 14th-century Zeami Motkiyo) and emergent platforms like videogames.

Video games are the focus of two other projects. His essay “What Is a Video Game Movie?” appears in a recent issue of the online, open-source journal, *Arts*. The second is the anthology he is editing with Megan Amber Condis of Texas Tech that explores the literature of videogames: novels, poetry, short fiction, memoirs, and paratexts such as boss-battle instructions and feelies. *Ready Reader One: The Stories We Tell With, Around, and About Videogames* will be published by Louisiana State University Press. It features an essay by L&C doctoral student Aaron Heinrich.

Sell is an avid player and scholar of tabletop roleplaying games. His essay “The Dramaturgy of Tabletop Roleplaying Games” will be included in *Experiential Theatres: Praxis-Based Approaches to Training 21st-Century Theatre Artists* (Routledge). He is developing with Chemers and leading game theorists Noah Wardrip-Fruin, micha cárdenas, Elizabeth Swensen, and Marcia Ochoa a collection of essays and critical-play materials for the popular TTRPG *Dungeons & Dragons*. His contribution will be co-authored with L&C doctoral student Shepard Maderer. Finally, his playable adventure for *Dungeons & Dragons*, “Curse of the Sugarplum Fairy” (which combines Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker* with Cronenberg-style body horror and a dash of *Charlie*

and the Chocolate Factory) has reached Bronze-bestseller status on DungeonMastersGuild.com.

Sell is founder and co-director of the Digital Storygame Project (DSP). The DSP supports middle- and high-school teachers in the incorporation of creative coding, design thinking, and ethically-oriented decision-making across curricula. L&C doctoral student Zeeshan Siddique continues to play a key role on the team. Though the DSP has focused on English Language Arts and Enrichment Programs, they have recently branched into university-level computer science curricula and, most excitingly, health and wellness education. In partnership with the Lopez Foundation Inc. and LCA Vantage Healthcare, they are launching a first-of-its-kind, federally funded healthcare technology course focusing on K-12 education in schools. The curriculum is being piloted during the 2021-22 school year at the Dupont Park Seventh-day Adventist School in Washington, DC, then implemented in schools around DC and Pittsburgh. An essay on the pedagogy of the DSP, "Designing Decisions: Choice, Plan, and Twine in the Secondary Education Classroom," is forthcoming from the leading composition studies journal *Literacy Today*, and features as co-authors both Siddique and L&C MA graduate Julie Babal.

Dr. Ken Sherwood's "Coal Code" will be anthologized in the the *Electronic Literature Collection*, fourth edition; this multimodal poem was written and coded in Javascript for the 2018 exhibition with IUP artist Bob Sweeny. Sherwood is excited about graduate student involvement in Ethnopoetics.org and is writing about this in "Recovering Ethnopoetics: Teaching Oral Traditions in a Digital Age" for the collection *Unsettling Poetry Pedagogy*.

Dr. Veronica T. Watson is passionate about expanding career opportunities for doctoral candidates and awardees. Believing that the humanities are needed broadly in American society, she has been researching and presenting in two related areas: career diversity and public-facing humanities. Both facilitate ways of thinking, habits of mind, and skill sets that enable highly trained humanities scholars to make meaningful contributions both in and outside of higher education. She co-authored a chapter with Laurie Zierer, Executive Director of Pennsylvania Humanities, entitled "Humanities in Action: Centering

the 'Human' in Public Humanities Work." The piece will be published in *Joyful, Engaged, Sustainable: Graduate Education for a Thriving Humanities Ecosystem*, edited by Drs. Stacy Hartman and Jenny Strakovsky and published by MLA Press.

Watson continues to lead the team that is developing and expanding the Humanities Training for Law Enforcement (HTLE) project that she launched earlier in 2021. The HTLE was featured in the [IUP Innovators Series](#) and a [WXPI story](#) featuring faculty work that advances diversity, equity, inclusion and justice. It was also picked up by [The Penn](#), IUP's school newspaper. The HTLE is supported by an external foundation which recently committed \$30,000 to continue the project. The HTLE team is set for a second year working with cadets at the IUP Police Academy and will expand to additional site in Pittsburgh in 2022. The HTLE also added Diana Forry to the training team, an alumna of the MA Composition & Literature program.

Watson was awarded \$67,000 to work bring the I Fear for My Life project, commissioned by the 400 Years of African American History National Commission, to a conclusion. Charged with the goal of increasing knowledge of and dialogue about issues of policing and race, the project has shifted scope from a publication to a public humanities project that will largely be accessible as a website and series of short films and recorded conversations. Two GAs, Elizabeth Laughlin and Haleigh Hayes, are conducting research for the project.

After a decade at the helm of the Frederick Douglass Institute Collaborative, Watson is stepping down as Convener of the organization. Under her leadership in this final year, the Collaborative is poised to partner with the PASHEE GEAR UP team to deliver several college prep and college transition programs to school districts/students in GEAR UP program. The \$16,000 award, when fully implemented, will provide support for student videographers, editors, program assistants, peer mentors and researchers.

Dr. Michael T. Williamson's essay, "Helen MacInnes's *The Unconquerable* (1944): Gender, Spying, and National Ethics" will appear in *Spying from a Gendered Perspective* (Bloomsbury 2022), and his review of *The Construction of Testimony: Claude Lanzmann's Shoah and Its Outtakes* will appear in *Studies in 20th and 21st Century Literature*. He presented a paper, "Language as a Marker of Race: Tradition and Modernity in Yiddish Poetry in

the Soviet Union,” at the 2021 Space Between Society, and his presentation, “Staging Nineteenth Century Jewish Literary and Religious Culture in the Face of Disaster,” won the Essay Prize for the Space Between Society: Literature and Culture, 1914-1948. With the help of Joshua Calandrella (IUP MA in Literature 2021), he has translated more than a third of a 1947 Yiddish epic Holocaust poem by Abraham Sutzkever, *gebeymsbtot* (Hasbeenhomecity). In November 2021, he presented “Tiny Surrealisms: Dali, Yiddish Poetry, and Post Holocaust Dead” at the International Society for the Study of Surrealism Conference (Nuits Blanches: Noches en Blanco: Around the Clock) international conference. Williamson is currently working on an essay on Wartime Surrealism in the short stories of Eileen Chang and Elizabeth Bowen.

These publications, presentations and translations round out a year devoted to 20th century, modernist, and multilingual literature. Work on 19th century British literature and science (including the influence of the sixteenth century poet and astronomer Giordano Bruno on Victorian conceptions of time) will begin in Summer 2022.

Dr. Williamson continues to serve as EGO faculty advisor, co-Director of the Dessy-Roffman Myth Collaborative, Editor of the journal *Pennsylvania English* (which features an excellent essay by current L&C program student and MA in Literature graduate Shepard Maderer), and editor of the Myth Journal, *ARISTEIA*. He recently completed his first year of training IUP Police Academy students with Dr.

Veronica Watson, Taylor Jones (current L&C program student and MA in Literature graduate), and Diana Forry (MA in Composition and Literature '19) for the Humanities Training for Law Enforcement Program.



Courtyard mixer following 2021 New Student Orientation

2020-21 L&C AWARD WINNERS

Outstanding Scholarship Award for Doctoral

Lisa Elwood-Farb

Outstanding Scholarship Award for Master's

Thomas Hamilton

Elizabeth Laughlin

Outstanding Leadership & Service Award

Kimberly Bressler

Outstanding Dissertation Award Student

Rodney Taylor

Ashraf Mansour

Jirayu Sinsiri

Outstanding Teaching Award Student

Taylor Jones

DATES TO REMEMBER

Spring 2022

MLK Holiday: No Classes:	January 17, 2022
Classes Begin:	January 18, 2022
Candidacy Portfolio:	March 23, 2022
May Graduation Application Due:	April 30, 2022
Last Day of Spring Classes:	May 2, 2022
Final Exams:	May 3-6, 2022
Graduate Commencement for Master's & Doctoral Degrees	May 6, 2022

APPLICATION DEADLINES

Priority review will be given to applications received by the following deadlines:

For summer: November 15, January 15 for early decision or March 15 for second round.

For fall semester: November 15, January 15 for early decision or March 15 for second round.

Applications received after March 15 may be considered on a rolling basis, but only in the case that there are still openings in the program.

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