

Eastern Illinois University

*English Studies
Student Conference*

Presented by

*English Undergraduate and
Graduate Students*

April 12, 2008
Third Floor Coleman Hall
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Coleman Hall 3130, 3140, 3150,
3160, 3170

Sessions 10:00 am

Room 3130

Language Relations

Shannon Sullivan

Written Communication and the Oral Tradition in the English Classroom

This presentation will look at ways to help students connect written communication and the oral tradition in the English classroom. We will compare and contrast the two, exploring the benefits and disadvantages of both forms of communication. A sample lesson revolving around a blues song will be included, as well as ideas on how to incorporate this concept into lessons and units on journalism, theater and playwriting, the spoken word and poetry, oral tradition, and folklore.

Erica Walker

Translation in the English Language Arts Classroom

Using the same cognitive processes as are required in foreign language classrooms, English Language Arts students can create more connected, cohesive projects through translation. Some examples of such translation include converting Shakespearean English to modern English, short stories to short films, and novels to soundtracks. The possible projects call for interdisciplinary skills, multicultural awareness, and multiple intelligences: all concerns for the English language arts classroom.

Lindsay Ragle

Teaching Vocabulary through Writing

Teachers and Future Teachers: Are you confused as to how to teach vocabulary? Are you relying on dictionaries and worksheets to teach your classroom new words? Do you even teach vocabulary at all? This workshop presents ideas for teaching vocabulary through writing, including some especially effective nontraditional methods. Bring your brain, as this presentation is interactive.

Kristin Hittner

Using Journalism in Language Arts Classrooms

As a journalism undergraduate and former editor in chief of Eastern's yearbook, *The Warbler*, I would like to invite you to my presentation on introducing journalism into the English classroom. I will be looking at a variety of ways in which English teachers can add journalistic writing to the curriculum, with lessons and projects that add creativity and fun to the discipline of writing.

The Monstrous in Literature, Panel 1: Monstrous Bodies

Ben Balanoff

The Monstrous Body in the Work of William S. Burroughs

The goal of my paper is to establish an understanding of monstrous concepts within the writing of Beat author William S. Burroughs, chiefly in relation to his seminal work, *Naked Lunch*.

Alayna Malicki

The Limits of Rationality: Doyle's *Hound of the Baskervilles* as a Response to the Boer War

Doyle wrote about the Boer War and published *Hound* after it ended. I'm hoping to establish a connection between Sherlock Homes and the British empire: Holmes uses his rationality to defeat Stapleton, the colonized, who is trying to get back what's his (the Baskerville estate). Holmes catches his man in the end, but his difficulties suggest British self-doubt in the wake of the Boer War.

Adrienne Battle

Sexual Deviancy in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

The restrictive societal rules that Dr. Jekyll and his associates were forced to live under created a dark, secretive underworld. I will talk about how Stevenson's novel depicts this underworld and its relation to prostitution and homosexuality.

Julia Morss

Hermaphroditic Reproduction in Koji Suzuki's *Ring and Spiral*

Hermaphrodites are seen as monsters because they have both male and female parts. In science fiction, hermaphrodites do not need the presence of a member of the opposite sex to reproduce. If reproduction can happen without a male, male control over reproduction is lost. Suzuki's novels explore this concern at a time of sperm banks and increased feminism.

Shakespeare's "Words, Words, Words" I

This panel, made up of students enrolled in Dr. Christopher Wixson's English 3892, endeavors to demonstrate the power of Shakespearean language in papers focused around a single word from some of Shakespeare's more famous plays. Each presenter will argue how the word in question (replete with etymological baggage, connotative association, and multiple usages) helps to shape the thematic issues of the drama as a whole. Each will explore how the meaning of the word evolves, transforms, and ultimately gathers profound resonance by the play's conclusion.

Panel #1:

Ashley Nolan

"Ice" In *Measure for Measure*

Kaylin Humerickhouse

"Seeming" in *Measure for Measure*

Megan Kvistad

"Virgin" in *Measure for Measure*

Multimedia in the Classroom

Kristen DiGiorgio

Integrating Communications Into the Classroom

This workshop includes a demonstration of how to incorporate communications into the secondary English classroom. Suggested strategies will be provided through sample lessons and activities addressing, among other things, the uses of journalism, advertising and public relations skills. Justification of these types of writing and activities will also be discussed.

Annie McClellan

Learning for Fun: The Use of Video Games in the Classroom

Do you worry about how to keep students interested once you're in the classroom? What can a teacher do to pull students out of a slump when they only seem to care about the next vacation or summer break? Shaking things up by using video games in the classroom may be just the thing! Such media offer students a unique perspective for analysis while revitalizing them with something new and exciting that they may never have seen at school before. In this workshop you will learn some of the reasons to incorporate video games into the English classroom, discover some ways of doing so, and participate in a learning activity that uses a video game.

Virginia Gaines

Strategies for Using Film in the Language Arts Classroom

Using film in the language arts classroom can be an effective way to tap into students' interests while increasing literacy and developing critical thinking skills. This presentation will look at benefits of using film and at strategies to engage students actively, in critical viewing that serves as an anchor for reading, talking, and writing.

The Autobahn of Literature

Mike Hennessy

The Light of Education

I plan to present on the topic of education in relation to the metaphor of light. Specifically, my interest is in two contrasting instances of a quest for “enlightenment.” Frederick Douglass struggles toward the light as part of his battle to overcome oppression. By contrast Joseph Conrad’s Marlowe, in *Heart of Darkness*, seeks the light while acting on behalf of those implementing oppression. An examination of their contrasting struggles should be especially interesting to those interested in multicultural issues in education.

Adam Ruff

Integrating Gothic Literature into the Classroom

After a brief discussion of the rationale for integrating Gothic literature into the classroom, I will present examples of classroom adaptations and some background information on American Gothic literature. I will argue the benefits of Gothic literature by demonstrating the genre's significance, appeal, and relevance to contemporary education. The presentation will utilize Microsoft Powerpoint and include a short video clip.

Tina Copenhaver

Interpretations of the Native American Vision Quest: Traditional, Fictionalized, and Hollywood

This presentation will explore the traditional vision quest as a religious rite of passage in the Native American religious tradition. In addition, an excerpt from *Vision Quest*, a novel by Terry Davis about a high school wrestler, will be read and compared to an excerpt from the 1985 Hollywood film starring Matthew Modine and Linda Fiorentino. The vision quest is a coming-of-age experience, and the novel and film bring the vision quest into the Anglo cultural tradition.

Sessions

11:00 am

Room 3130

The Monstrous in Literature, Panel 2: Women's Sexuality and Monstrosity

Alaina Morales

Fictions of the Uterus in “The Birthmark”

I will discuss “The Birthmark” in relation to Hawthorne’s awareness and fear of female sexuality. Georgiana Aylmer’s birthmark is directly related to her femininity (her uterus), and this is why her husband must ultimately remove it. I want to examine society’s negative attitude toward the uterus: how it not only seems to symbolize female sexuality but also dictates women’s inferior status in society.

LaToya Hill

The Color of Sex in LeFanu’s *Carmilla*

Drawing on information about the 19th century understanding of black female sexuality, I will examine the representation of the black woman in *Carmilla*. Although she is present in the story only a brief moment and never says a word, I will show how important she is to the novel as a whole.

Aaron Deckard

Monstrous Women in *Carmilla* and *Life and Loves of a She-Devil*

In *Carmilla* and *Life and Loves of a She-Devil*, there are two similar yet distinct female monsters: Carmilla, the vampire who preys on young girls, and Ruth, who takes revenge on her unfaithful husband by becoming a “she-devil.” Both women are involved in lesbian relationships. This paper will examine the relationship of lesbianism to monstrosity in the two works.

Kaleigh McRoberts

Women and Nature in Fay Weldon’s *Life and Loves of a She-Devil* and Doris Lessing’s *The Fifth Child*

In both novels, the main characters initially feel that they are tied to nature, or what seems “natural,” but in the end embrace the artificial over the natural, finding that nature has “let them down.”

Bridgette Murray

LeFanu’s *Carmilla*: Liberator or Oppressor Of Women’s Sexuality?

Does LeFanu’s novel depict the vampire Carmilla as a symbol of female freedom and rebellion, and if so, is it a good thing (for women, a leadership role) or a bad thing (for men, a source of fear)?

Graphic Novels

Jess Kinsella

Erin Collins

Ty Siemsen

Comics and Graphic Novels in an English Classroom

Our focus will be on incorporating graphic novels and comics into the English Language Arts classroom. Each of us will be focusing on one aspect of comics or graphic novels. **Ty** will concentrate on recognizing and analyzing comic-specific characteristics and techniques, with a focus on how this can aid students' writing and reading skills. **Jess** will discuss the graphic novel *Bone* and ways that it invites discussion of various aspects of modern culture. **Erin** will discuss the use of media to enhance historical graphic novels and their interdisciplinary possibilities. Though little is known about such new media, we feel that they provide excellent opportunities for creative engagement in the classroom.

Room 3150

Shakespeare's "Words, Words, Words" II

This panel, made up of students enrolled in Dr. Christopher Wixson's English 3892, endeavors to demonstrate the power of Shakespearean language in papers focused around a single word from some of Shakespeare's more famous plays. Each presenter will argue how the word in question (replete with etymological baggage, connotative association, and multiple usages) helps to shape the thematic issues of the drama as a whole. Each will explore how the meaning of the word evolves, transforms, and ultimately gathers profound resonance by the play's conclusion.

Panel #2

Joshua Boykin

"Maidenly" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Michael Thompson

"Would" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Elizabeth Hunt

"Mistake" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Writing Workshops:
Incorporating Journals and Writing Proficiency

Kendra Stone

My presentation will be about incorporating journals into the class room to improve writing skills. I will focus on the benefits and challenges of the journal, describing four types of journals that could be used in a classroom setting. The purpose of my presentation is to convince current and prospective teachers how beneficial journals can be in increasing writing proficiency in the classroom.

Kristin Kieca

This PowerPoint presentation focuses on persuasive writing in the High School English classroom. Persuasive writing is a weak area for most students because they are not exposed to it, or it is not explained in a way they can comprehend. This presentation will explain why students need persuasive writing, why this writing is being overlooked, why students' struggle, and what students achieve through persuasive writing. I will also suggest some creative ways of helping students enjoy and understand this form of writing.

Alyssa Ricca

This workshop will involve the use of music with writing instruction. I will play a couple of songs using a CD player or iPod (which I will provide) and will have the participants write what they are feeling and seeing. They will also describe the tone of the vocalist(s) and the accompaniment to determine what the message is. The target audience is high school upper-classmen who are preparing for a poetry unit.

Sessions

12:00 am

Room 3130

The Monstrous in Literature, Panel 3: Monsters and Binaries

Kevin Rheingruber

The Mob in Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*: Hero or demon?

I will show how the mob is depicted in the novel and what influence it has had on how the public perceives the Mafia.

Travis Billiter

Monsters as Anti-Heroes: Retribution and Reaction in *Sin City* and *The Crow*

I intend to analyze how the characters Marv and Eric act psychologically and interact socially with others. I will also show that both stories take place in slum-like cities and suggest the emergence of a new sort of urban gothic.

Diedre Mapes

Monsters and Doors in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Coraline*, and *The Fifth Child*

I will discuss the recurring theme of monsters coming through doors in these novels by R. L. Stevenson, Neil Gaiman, and Doris Lessing.

Ashley Hammock

The Master-Slave Relationship in *The Tempest* and "Hopfrog."

I will examine how the powerful master in these works becomes the more monstrous of the pair through his cruel mistreatment of the apparently monstrous, "othered" slaves.

Shakespeare's "Words, Words, Words" III

This panel, made up of students enrolled in Dr. Christopher Wixson's English 3892, endeavors to demonstrate the power of Shakespearean language in papers focused around a single word from some of Shakespeare's more famous plays. Each presenter will argue how the word in question (replete with etymological baggage, connotative association, and multiple usages) helps to shape the thematic issues of the drama as a whole. Each will explore how the meaning of the word evolves, transforms, and ultimately gathers profound resonance by the play's conclusion.

Panel #3:

Cassie Schnarr

"Blood" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Michael Carey

"Noble" in *Henry V*

Kali Cox

"Simple" in *Taming of the Shrew*

***Woman at Point Zero* and other Literature in Context**

Chanise Stephens

Breaking the Rules: Gender and Identity in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* and Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*

This paper will discuss the political side of gender issues, drawing on Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*, published in 1975, and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, published in 1928. Although the one text is Egyptian and the other European, I argue that both show gender as a universal issue. I will compare Saadawi's critique of gender, embodied in her portrayal of Firdaus, to the political argument implicit in Woolf's depiction of Orlando and his/her relationship to other characters. My paper will analyze how these two texts, written by women from different patriarchal cultures, show fictional protagonists ignoring the rules of their societies and doing what they must to break away from the constraints that enslave them.

Gina LoBianco

Hunger in My Father's Hands: Desperate Children in Fiction by Nawal El Saadawi and Frank McCourt

My paper will address political issues in Frank McCourt's novel *Angela's Ashes* (1996) and in Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* (1975; 1983). I will be discussing the way that family works as a political mechanism in McCourt's Ireland and El Saadawi's Egypt. Despite their different settings, these two novels meet on the same ground, which especially pertains to the father figure as the leader, controller, and mainly the oppressor. The father in each of these novels has all of the control over his family and uses this control to his own benefit, completely consumed by his own needs, ignoring the needs of hungry children. The family is ultimately oppressed by the culture, but it is the father who acts on behalf of society in oppressing the other members of the family. Bad living conditions and poverty become lifestyles throughout both texts, and the main characters find ways of coping that are considered unconventional and unrespectable in the eyes of society. The paper will pinpoint ways in which their respective societies have turned out these families and deprived them of the essentials for living. The society gives them little, and the father figure takes away the rest. In these novels, one by an Egyptian woman and the other by an Irish man, children oppressed by family and society make valiant attempts to break out of or rebuild the imprisoning walls of the family. My paper makes clear the political nature of their individual struggles.

Creative Writing: Poetry

Jennifer O'Neil

Fiction and Poetry Reading

I would like to read a short story of about ten pages. If time permits, I may also read a poem or two that I've written recently.

Jake Dawson

Poetry and the Blues

The purpose of this presentation is to workshop my poetry with a larger and more diverse crowd than I usually find here at school. Much of the inspiration behind my poetry stems from the Harlem Renaissance—Amiri Baraka, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, and blues artists such as Keb Mo and B.B. King. I find that much of my poetry takes on a musical and rhythmic quality and roots itself in a subtle lyricism of jazz and blues.

Doug French

Natural Simplicity

I find my poetry to be natural, and I wish it to be simple. I try to allow my poetry to remain unbound by form, unless form is what comes out when I write. I rarely start a poem with a form in mind. Usually, an idea strikes me unawares, and I write it down. Any idea is valid, and I do not wish my poetry to become restricted through subject matter. I write for my enjoyment, and I write for my expression. Opinions are welcome, and while I am not bothered by them, I am pleased when people like my poems.

Creative Writing: Fiction

Scott K. Walker

Science Fiction and Sabotage: A Reading

I will be reading a short piece of fiction that contains elements of science fiction and deals with a man trying to sabotage a future energy reactor.

Kristina Van Amerongen

The Monkey and the Green Closet

In my story a young girl, Katie, stays up late one November night to watch *Planet of the Apes* with her father. Christmas morning is when things start to get interesting. Katie receives a stuffed monkey from Santa Claus. From this moment the story progresses into a series of nightly events which brings Katie's imagination into full bloom.

The nightly escapades of her monkey follow her to Germany. Four years later her family returns to the United States, where it is not until she is 16 years old that Katie discovers the impossibility of the monkey's actions.

A whimsical journey through self discovery spiced with humor and moments of incredible disbelief leads Katie to the realization that her mind is a terrible and wonderful place to be. When Katie goes off to college—with monkey in tow—she decides to allow others to enjoy the catacombs of her imagination.

Sessions

1:00 pm

Room 3130

Life in the (Teaching) Trenches

Amanda Bright

Kristy Kash

Carrie Mueller

Shannon Littleton Sherer

After you grab your free lunch, you are welcome to join us for a panel presentation by two first-year teachers and two student teachers from our English Language Arts teacher certification program. They will discuss their classroom experiences and answer your questions about their transitions from student to teacher.

The English Department thanks the Dean of the College of Arts & Humanities, Dr. Johnson, for supporting our English Studies Student Conference.

Notes