

*Eastern Illinois University*

*English Studies  
Student Conference*

Presented by

*English Undergraduate and  
Graduate Students*

April 10, 2010  
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

*James McNierney* ..... "stone" in *Julius Caesar*  
*Whitney Shonk* ..... "guide" in *Titus Andronicus*  
*David Thill* ..... "Semiramis" in *Titus Andronicus*

### "Words, Words, Words" in Shakespeare

This panel, made up of students enrolled in Dr. Christopher Wixson's English 4752, endeavors to demonstrate the dexterity of Shakespearean language in papers focused around a single word. Each presenter will argue how the word in question (replete with etymological baggage, connotative association, and multiple usages) helps shape the thematic issues of the tragedy as a whole. They will each focus upon how the meaning of the word evolves, transforms, and ultimately gathers profound resonance by the play's conclusion.

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Room 3140

### Hamlet's Ghosts and Demons

*Justin Kimes*

#### The Reality of the Ghost in Films of *Hamlet*

William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is quite possibly one of the most popular dramas of all time. The importance of Hamlet's ghost is one topic persistently studied by many scholars; however, to apply the dramatic performance of the Renaissance theatre to digital techniques of 21<sup>st</sup> century production is a topic less emphasized. One fundamental problem stemming from this conflict is that our perceptions of Hamlet's ghost are based on 21<sup>st</sup> century interpretations through film where directors can take dramatic liberties in amending the original text. While new technologies develop in film production, unforeseen visual possibilities emerge. If closely studied, the production of Sir Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* (1948) and Franco Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* (1990) can be considered two completely different versions of the same play, while still holding all elements of the original text. To understand this phenomenon, we must explore the significance of the original text compared to its influence seen in these films and more specifically during the closet scene in Act 3, Scene 4.

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10:00 am

Room 3140 (cont.)

*Kevin Kreslin*

### **Gertrude's Evil Nature in *Hamlet***

In *Hamlet*, Gertrude displays some actions that make the reader believe that she is not innocent in the death of her late husband, Hamlet. The first matter that calls into question Gertrude's faithfulness as a wife is her hasty remarriage to King Hamlet's brother, Claudius. Does she remarry too soon? Was she involved with Claudius prior to her husband's murder? Gertrude's character comes into question for a second time after the drowning of Ophelia, which may imply that Ophelia's death was no accident. In the final act, Gertrude seems to suffer the same fate as the male characters: death by poison. Some feminist critics, like Rebecca Smith, view Gertrude as "the nurturing, loving, careful mother and wife—malleable, submissive, totally dependent, and solicitous of others at the expense of herself" (207-08). Another critic, Janet Adelman, argues that "the Queen is a source of *evil* to Hamlet but is relatively *innocent* of the fantasies that he projects upon her (30). Though some critics believe Gertrude to be a good-natured mother and wife, the aforementioned actions, which are seemingly aggressive in nature, prove that Gertrude was not a faithful mother and wife.

*Heather Miller*

### **"Something is Rotten in the State of Denmark": Hamlet's Insanity**

What is the meaning of the title character's insanity in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*? Now that Claudius is king, the country is in ruins. Hamlet's treatment of Ophelia results in an unnecessary self-destruction which only makes Denmark sink further and further into self-destruction by allowing Claudius to be king.

*Angela Richards*

### **Examining the Ghost and Gertrude in *Hamlet***

Why is Gertrude unable to see the ghost of Hamlet's father? I will argue that Gertrude is far more devious than anyone realizes. The Ghost does not appear to Gertrude because she does not need to be lured into vicious or perhaps even murderous ways; she is already on her own sinful path.

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**Room 3150**

*Catherine Lynch*  
*Veronica Cornejo*  
*Emily Abel*

### **Literature Circles: What is a Happy Ending?**

What is your happy ending? Is it when the Princess marries the Prince, or the game winning shot? All authors write with an intent to reach their target audience. Literature circles are a great tool to incorporate into the classroom, adhering to students' interests while falling under the same theme.

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## **Literatures of Concealment: Torture and Panopticism In J.M. Coetzee and Philip K. Dick**

*Natalie Doehring*

### **J.M. Coetzee and the Parallel Between Human Degradation, Animals, and the Ability to Torture**

This paper examines J. M. Coetzee's use of animals, in particular dogs, to portray the initial process of degradation and oppression that the protagonists suffer in his novels *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Disgrace*. Coetzee's protagonists invite us to examine both the need to demean that comes before the ability to torture, and the positioning of the torturer as a human being radically different from the victim of torture.

*Jeremy Ware*

### **The Age of Fear: Panopticism and Society in Philip K. Dick's "The Minority Report"**

This paper argues that Philip K. Dick (in his short story "The Minority Report") and Michel Foucault (in *Discipline and Punish*) both demonstrate that panopticism as a government system of control is strictly enforced by ensuring a heightened sense of the fear of punishment.

*Krystina Leyva*

### **Panopticism in "The Minority Report"**

Philip K. Dick's "Minority Report" has many parallels to the panoptic institution described by Michael Foucault. Precrime is a panoptic institution that serves as a moral reminder to the people. Anderton comes to realize that the sacrifice of free-will is a small price to pay for the survival of the panoptic institution.

## **Composition Pedagogies**

*Tia Micks*

### **Teaching Argumentative Writing in the Classroom**

My presentation will cover games and activities to use in the classroom that will help introduce skills for argumentative writing. Students will be able to see *why* these skills are necessary in making a successful argument and then learn to apply them in their writing.

*Hope Nottmeyer*

### **Editing Our Teaching**

This presentation will discuss peer editing and the many reasons why teachers should incorporate peer editing into their classes. Current teacher and teacher candidates are welcome!

## Sessions 11:00 am

Room 3130

### Paradise Still Lost: From Milton to Bret Easton Ellis

*Stacey Atteberry*

#### God's Road to Hell and Satan's Good Intentions: Reconciling Milton's Characterization with Thematic Intent in *Paradise Lost*

Milton intended his readers to identify with Satan and question God. They complement each other in order to illustrate the connection between good and evil: one must be defined by the other. Therefore, a small part of one can always be found in the other.

*Simyona Deanova*

#### Milton's Woman

It is my intention to undertake a feminist reading of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and to compare my own interpretations with those of other feminists. I have used articles from three different feminist writers to aid my own personal analysis. While some feminists agree that Milton did not have a very high opinion of the female sex or their abilities, other feminists have made it clear that this is not the only reading to take away from *Paradise Lost*. Speaking as another feminist reader, I have found myself in a position I did not expect: I now feel that I am at a place somewhere in between feminists like Susan Gilbert and others like Mandy Green. It is my belief that, while much of the immediate language used in Milton's epic seems incredibly anti-feminine, Milton's construction of Eve is infinitely more complex than it at first appears.

*Doug French*

#### Sympathy for Humankind: The Devil's Response

Take a look at Satan in *Paradise Lost*. In getting away from traditional interpretations, one can examine existence from Satan and God's viewpoints. One sees how Satan is more directly involved in the affairs of humankind because Satan is more humanlike and therefore better understands humanity.

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*Jim McNierney*

**Connecting Ghosts in Bret Easton Ellis's *Lunar Park***

*"In the end, Bret—you were the ghost"* (387). The distinction between the character of "Bret" and the character of "the writer" in *Lunar Park* by Bret Easton Ellis hangs on one of the novel's main themes: what it means to exist. The ghosts in the novel are never proven to have "existed," and the writer claims that Bret is "the ghost" for a similar reason. Bret never really exists for his family. Bret's lack of existence is based on his lack of human connection. Bret's tragedy allows Ellis to make the comment that it is through connections with other people that existence is defined; without attachments one is forced to move between existences like a "ghost," as Bret does. An examination of the ghosts, Ellis's relationship with his father, and Robby's disappearance reveals that all these things result from a lack of connections, and through them Ellis shows the necessity of attachments in order for a person to exist.

Room 3140

**Lessons Across Disciplines**

*Jennifer Brnusak*

**Crayons, Music, Glue and Scissors: Supplies Not Just For a Kindergarten Classroom Anymore**

Kindergarten – how we learned things was either by coloring it, acting it out, or singing about it. Fast-forward ten years – how do we learn now? We read...and write...and repeat. Why did we wash color out from learning? By bringing creativity back in the classroom, we'll gain an even greater lesson.

*Lanelle Claunch*

**The Case for Dramatization in the English Classroom**

This presentation focuses on the benefits of using creative dramatics in the English classroom. After a brief summation of some scholarly studies that exemplify these benefits and identify theories behind dramatization, the audience will witness how dramatic activities can enhance students' comprehension and enjoyment of literary studies.

*Ashley Hunsaker*

**Avoiding Plagiarism: Teaching Students a Valuable Lesson**

It is often times a topic that gets shoved under the rug in high school, but the act of plagiarism is a topic that all English teachers need to discuss with their students. Important steps for teaching students about plagiarism and different ways to plagiarize proof assignments will be presented.

## Creative Approaches to Teaching Literature

*Courtney Bruner*

### Everyday Creativity

This presentation will discuss why it is important to include creative writing in lesson plans, how you can use it to teach literature and other language arts topics, and give examples of how to do it. This is intended for people interested in teaching English but open to all.

*Leonard J. Grodoski*

### Teaching Poetry in the Modern Language Arts Classroom

My presentation will be a demonstration of a pedagogical approach. This will deal with the issue of teaching poetry in the Modern Language Arts classroom. This presentation will cover issues facing Language Arts educators in the teaching of poetry and will use modern research to address said issues.

*Ashley Wiberg*

### Teaching Literature in the 21st Century

Undoubtedly, our society is becoming more diverse in a number of ways. This paper proposes a plan to meet students' various needs in the 21st century by exploring the benefit of incorporating multicultural literature, young adult literature, and book talks into the classroom.



## **Cultures and Multi-cultures in the Classroom**

*Elexis Wilson*

### **Is it Culture or Curriculum?**

We are taught how to teach the canons and composition but culture is left out. I will present on the importance of teaching cultural studies and diversity. I will discuss the lack of preparation in most educational programs for cultural diversity. I will explain how standardized testing effects cultural expansion.

*Samantha Sizemore*

### **Teaching Multicultural Literature, Pairing Young Adult Literature with Canonical Texts, and Using Literature Circles**

The best way to teach to students of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to teach what is relevant to them in their everyday lives. Multicultural Literature, Young Adult Literature, and Literature circles in an English classroom are the most effective forms of teaching strategies for students of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I am prepared to prove that these are the most successful pedagogical concepts to be implemented into a high school classroom.

*Lauren Davidson*

### **Creating The Truth**

This presentation is a suggestion for a lesson plan introducing a unit on truth and how it plays out in literature. Should we take into account facts about an author's life when looking at their work, or should the work only speak for itself? This lesson is a fun way to get middle level or secondary level students thinking about how to analyze a piece of art.

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# Sessions

## 12:00 pm

Room 3130

### Literacy and the Integrated Language Arts

*Sara Whitaker*

#### Improving Literacy at the High School Level

The purpose of my paper is to explore ways that secondary educators can improve the nearly forty-year stagnation in high school literacy rates. Within my paper I examine the practices of incorporating children's literature in the secondary classroom, pairing young adult texts with canonical texts, and including graphic novel study in the classroom.

*Cally Tubbs*

#### Creating A Love of Reading: Combining the Advantages of Sustained Silent Reading, Literature Circles, and Battle of the Books

Instilling excitement in students to read has always been a problem for teachers of English. However, I will discuss in this presentation new ways to teach books, such as Sustained Silent Reading, Literature Circles, and Battle of the Books and how students are beginning to get excited and involved in reading in and out of school.

*Elizabeth Hunt*

#### Incorporating Book Clubs, Book Talks and Young Adult Literature in the English Classroom

Getting students involved in reading can be difficult, but using book clubs, book talks, and young adult literature can help. Through this paper you will learn how to use each of these methods in the classroom.

*Moe Samad*

#### Film in the Language Arts Classroom

The basis of this presentation is to stress the importance of movie clips in the classroom. A lot of what is read in the secondary English setting deals with emotion and most students relate better if the content is of relevance. To help relay the message, movie clips should be shown.

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## **Multi-Media Pedagogies**

*Darius Jutzi*

### **Teens Analyzing Media for Teens**

My presentation focuses on the educational value present in analyzing teens analyzing media for teens: what people are saying about teenagers and what that means for teenagers themselves. The presentation revolves around creating a unit which touches on both literary and media texts, fostering fun yet intellectually stimulating discussion.

*Darci Stoecker*

### **Pop Culture and the Classroom**

Who says popular culture cannot be placed in the classroom? Research shows that pop culture can be beneficial in the classroom if it is utilized properly. This presentation, designated for present or future language arts teachers, provides research on the benefits of popular culture and how to implement it properly.

*Michael Clark*

### **Teaching Film in the Classroom and the Challenges Teachers Face while Doing so**

This presentation will explore how teaching film in the classroom is a valuable media for students to learn. As well as exploring the educational value of teaching film, the presentation will also involve some of the challenges teachers will face when teaching film to high school and middle school students.

*Kevin Powers*

### **“The Simpsons in Literature”**

Mmmm...literature. What business could an animated TV show with yellow characters have inside an English classroom? This presentation will answer this exact question by showing how to incorporate “The Simpsons” effectively into a classroom. I will use video clips and episode highlights to show the concepts and connections for this presentation.



## Writers Reading

*Anne Owen Shea*

### *Where the House Lands*

Anne Shea will read newer work and from *Where the House Lands*, a collection of poems which reflect on domestic life from a variety of perspectives. In these poems, she takes on the voice of literary heroines such as Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* and Alice from *Alice in Wonderland*.

*Dan David*..... "The Playhouse"

*Daniel Paquin*..... "Letters"

## Fiction Reading

Entering the world of strange and unexplained phenomena, these two short episodes of fiction will showcase various uses of the oft-overused twist ending, each from a different perspective: one involving a humorous happening and the other a suspenseful situation.

## Multicultural Literatures

*Sarah Kriz*

### **The Impacts of Birth Place on Asian American Literature**

This paper addresses the differences in poetry between Chinese Americans who are born in the United States and those who immigrate to the United States. In this paper I will address such labels as American Born Chinese (ABC) and how such distinctions mold the literature of Chinese Americans.

*Joseph Courtney*

### **African American Spirituals**

The topic of my paper is African American spirituals. My thesis is that the spirituals communicate that Africans do not believe they deserve enslavement; god does not believe they deserve enslavement; and Africans deserve to be and will be free in their life on earth or in the next life.

*Rachel Raper*

### **Deception in Nella Larsen's *Passing***

Few novels have provoked as much controversy, confusion, and conversation as Nella Larsen's *Passing*. While discussing this novel, the academic paper, "Deception" by Rachel Raper, puts the author in conversation with the scholarship of such critics as Nick Bromell, Peter Rabinowitz, and Hayden White, examining accepted pedagogies and their effectiveness at deciphering "how the text means."

# Sessions

1:00 pm

Room 3130

*Kaleigh McRoberts*

*Tim Broecker*

*Jenny Cortez*

*Lee Roll*

## **Life in the (Teaching) Trenches**

After you grab your free lunch, you are welcome to join us for a panel presentation by two 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, Dean Lynch, for supporting our English Studies Student Conference.

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