

The Inkwell

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English 201: "The Gateway to the English Major"

By Lauren Mannion and Philip Muhlenberg

English 201: Writing About Literature and Culture, often referred to as the "Gateway to the English major." English 201 is a requirement for all English majors. This gateway course introduces foundational materials and critical theory approaches in the world of the English major. A trait unique to the course is the fact it is taught by a different professor each semester, thus bringing fresh pedagogical perspectives to the material each time the course is offered.



Photo Courtesy of Desiree Wren

Dr. Michelle Anthony, who is teaching this fall's English 201, admits, "This class is very savvy." In Anthony's class, students are exposed to critical theory while using the text *Falling into Theory* by **Anne Dobie**. Students apply various critical theories from Dobie's text to pieces like **Charlotte Perkins Gilman's** "The Yellow Wallpaper" and **Voltaire's** *Candide*. Anthony also uses a method of familiarizing students to library research by referring to last year's English 201 taught by **Dr. Marcia Farrell**. Five days in the course schedule are set aside for referential instruction and discussion, such as the academic debate of "Wikipedia versus proper sources" and archival research.

In all English 201 courses, writing figures heavily into the course objectives. When **Dr. Chad Stanley** taught English 201 in fall 2007, he used *Writing Essays about Literature*, a text designed to introduce students to approaches to writing thesis-driven, analytical essays about a studied piece.

In particular, the writing in English 201 focuses on critical theory and the application of critical theory to an argument about a text. Stanley points out, "Working with critical theory is especially significant in contemporary English program studies, and students need to develop and practice their abilities to identify various critical modes (such as New Criticism, Structuralism, and Cultural Materialism) and work within and around these modes." Students then learn how to use these critical approaches in their own work.

Applying the modes of literary criticism to course material, Farrell's English 201 students used *Contexts for Criticism*, a text of critical theory. From *Contexts for Criticism*,

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Humanities Picnic

The Fall Humanities Picnic was held on Wednesday, September 23, 2009 on the Kirby lawn. **Dr. Chad Stanley** took on the responsibilities of the Burger King.



Photo Courtesy of Desiree Wren

Senior Spotlight: Zachary Sobota

By Sabrina Hannon

Wilkes senior **Zachary Sobota** is an English major with a concentration in writing. Hailing from Pequannock, NJ where he began his football career at the age of seven, Sobota now plays center on the offensive line for the Wilkes football team. When not snapping hikes or blocking tacklers, Sobota is busy studying, working out at the Wilkes gym, hanging out with his friends, and writing poetry.

Throughout his college experience at Wilkes, Sobota has encountered many influential and valuable courses and professors; most notably **Dr. Chad Stanley**, whom Sobota cites as “the most influential professor” on campus. Sobota also enjoyed **Dr. Michelle Anthony**’s ENG 203: Introduction to Creative Writing course because of “how much better of a writer [he] became...by writing in different genres.” The

course’s unique approach to different types of writing was also valuable to him.

In addition to writing, Sobota enjoys reading and blending his love of sports with his interest in literature. His biggest literary influence mirrors his athletic persona, as he acknowledges the importance of acclaimed sportswriter **H.G. “Buzz” Bissinger** (*Friday Night Lights*). Bissinger is the author Sobota would most like to meet and speak to about his experiences with athletics and how they shaped him as a writer and as a person.

After graduation Sobota aims to attend graduate school, acquire a graduate assistant position for a Division I football program, and become a college football coach. Sobota also plans to continue writing with hopes of being published and possibly becoming a teacher.

Club Updates

By Kelly Cappellini

- **The Manuscript** held its annual Halloween poetry reading on Thursday, October 29, 2009 at 7:00pm at the Sordoni Art Gallery. The submission deadline for the fall issue of *The Manuscript* was October 2, 2009. Submissions for the Spring issue are now being accepted at magazine@wilkes.edu.
- **Sigma Tau Delta** held their annual Banned Book reading on Friday, October 12, 2009 in the SUB to celebrate the close of Banned Book week.
- **Wilkes in the World** is focusing on bringing clean water to Africa in conjunction with the group lead by **Dr. Jim Merryman**. If you have questions, or would like to join, please contact **Carli Heston** at carli.heston@wilkes.edu.
- **The Writing Center**’s hours of operation are as follows: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10:00am to 5:00pm and Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00am to 5:00pm. Writing Mentors are reminded to submit their monthly reports to **Dr. Chad Stanley**.
- Junior **Justin Jones** has been named as the Online Coordinator for *Inkwell*. Please contact him at justin.jones1@wilkes.edu with any events and/or photographs which need to be shared prior to the publication of the next newsletter.

Journey to England

By John Acito and Rachel Cannuli



In July, **Dr. Mischelle Anthony** spent two weeks in England. Anthony's trip was spent at the Harris Manchester College at Oxford University, where she was invited to participate in the Oxford Round Table Conference.

The Oxford Round Table Conference consisted of a series of small group discussions on various topics

surrounding English literature. Numerous English professors came together daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This year's Round Table focused on The Idea of Women's Education in the Nineteenth Century. For her part in the discussion, Anthony presented the paper, "Where Didacticism Went: Nineteenth-Century Women Writers." The essay focused on how the dash began its popular usage with gothic/sentimental melodramatic prose in the late eighteenth century. By the end of the next century, writers known for their realistic elements such as **Kate Chopin** and **Louisa May Alcott** still used the dash for their melodramatic moments. The gothic/sentimental had gone underground, but the

message regarding gender and class inequality was still prevalent in women's writing. During Anthony's visit, she stayed in the Oxford dorms and dined on the Oxford campus. Anthony described the dining hall as "[looking] like the dining hall in Harry Potter."

After the conference, Anthony spent time at the British Library. She discussed how British libraries admitted all visitors and made ancient manuscripts available to the public. Anthony mentioned, while looking at the manuscripts, librarians cautioned her to "touch the pages as sparingly as possible." Overall, Anthony enjoyed her time in a "progressive city" with polite citizens and numerous free activities.



All Photos Courtesy of
Dr. Mischelle Anthony

National Day of Writing: "Rhetorical Exercises"

By Vicky Hevener

The National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) hosted a National Day of Writing on October 20, 2009. The idea of the project is to celebrate the many facets of writing. English teachers across the country have begun setting up virtual galleries of chosen submitted works. **Dr. Marcia Farrell** is a curator of the "Rhetorical Exercises" gallery, which currently features 48 texts, ranging from opinion pieces to poetry, recipes, and essays.

A few students from Dr. Farrell's English 308: Rhetorical Analysis and Non-Fiction Prose Writing, headed by sophomore **Dave Cook**, planned a reading that featured **Dan Waber** of Paper Kite Press, senior **Sabrina Hannon**, junior **Kenny Stucker**, and **Dr. Larry Kuhar** in the Kirby Salon.

Dr Farrell's gallery can be located at: <http://galleryofwriting.org/galleries/215971>. Junior **Amanda Kaster**'s essay, "She says her feminism just kind of took over: 'The Gilmore Girls' Feminism" is the featured piece of writing.



The Inkwell staff would like to wish the readers a Happy Fall. If any reader is interested in reviewing the ghost stories surrounding Kirby Hall, please check out the article in *The Inkwell Online* archives, volume 3, issue 1. Photos Courtesy of Dr. Marcia Farrell



“201” Continued from Page 1

students read a chapter on formalism that applied “formalism to *The Tempest*, *Benito Cereno*, ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn,’ and ‘The Yellow Wallpaper,’ just as the poststructural chapter applied poststructuralism to those same four texts.” Farrell adds, “Other faculty use different textbooks, but all accomplish the same basic goal—introducing English majors to the terminology, theories, and positions with which they will be working throughout their degree program.”

Recent Wilkes alum **Melissa Bugdal** had an experience unique to the world of English 201. Bugdal took English 201 during her sophomore year, and in her senior year, she worked as a writing mentor for **Dr. Janet Starnier’s** English 201 in the spring of 2009. Bugdal explains, “Serving as a Writing Mentor for 201, and thereby getting to essentially take the course a second time, was a wonderful experience for me.” Bugdal speculates on the differences between mentoring for English 101 and English 201. She believes, “Overall, the students in 201 were asking different types of questions than the 101 students. The question types were no better or worse for either group, just different in terms of how to get from point ‘a’ to point ‘b’ in the paper. For example, a 101 student may ask about how to transition from one idea to another in a paper, whereas a 201 student would take it one step further and ask about the transitions and approach of the paper in terms of the literary criticism.”

As **Dr. Thomas Hamill** observes, English 201 is “several different classes in one, which makes it so special.” While the course is an introduction to applying critical methodologies and literary theory, it also engages English students in an introduction to basic practices and behaviors in literary studies. Furthermore, the course is an opportunity to focus on and write about literature and culture.

Hamill brings up one of the most unique features of the English 201 course by commenting on the added layer of student analyses. While Hamill’s students would work “on any text, such as **Philip Roth’s** *American Pastoral*,” the progressive discussion of the text would shift to reach an “outcome” that was “not simply responding to the text, but responding to our own responses.” As Hamill points out, the English 201 course brings critical attention to “how we are applying critical analysis to the text. For example, how are we being New Critical? How are we being Marxist?” This course makes students and professors pay attention to the text and the reactions provoked by textual analyses.

Some of the most significant aspects of the course are the relationships forged between students and professors during this introduction to the English program. Stanley sums up this dynamic, remarking in his personal experience, “the dynamic of English 201 is energetic, enthusiastic, and engaging. Students in English 201 form a distinctive cohort of developing English majors, and their experience in this course fosters communal work. This course, in other words, helps form a community of student-scholars.” While English 201 can be a challenging course, it engages students beyond classroom activities into a broader scholarly community.

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Kuhar's Corner

By Dr. Larry Kuhar

When was the last time you played the air-guitar?

Your question constructs, for me, around tensions inherent in all mourning for “yesterdays,” for the unrecoverable loss of time. Without the usual symptoms that plague efforts to elucidate life’s larger issues, my efforts here to respond will rely chiefly on the function of remembering the air guitar for the sake of questioning notions of progress in our twenty-first century world. Like Rock Band, consider this a kind of historical game-play.

First of all, thank you (“I hope all is well”) for asking the type of question that, while often overemphasized in trivial simulated game-play where epistemological matters are settled, engages us in a consideration of the function of memory and imagination. This is no small matter in an age where immediacy revokes memory’s license for confirming the interrelated values of experience, nostalgia, and even history (oh, person, don’t share these words, please, with anyone other than English majors!).

Of course, as many of you are now thinking, we need to negotiate this idea through a consideration of **Jacques Derrida’s** *erasure*, i.e., guitar/air guitar (with a slash through it). Let me explain. Like Madison Avenue-driven anticipation satiated through the arrival of a *reality-based* Beatles Rock Band collection—or buying “chords” of wood to complete what we know as “chopping wood”—our consideration of “the last time” constructs around the anticipation to play air guitar *again* (i.e., “when was the last time you played?”). This mirroring backward in time identifies the absent future (will I do it again?), and must, if only in our minds, unpack (I love that word) the kind of simulated reality established in, let’s say, a power chord *sans* guitar or a reality-based TV show. Huh. Let’s just say this: An air guitar power chord confirms in its performance the value of knowing something about a lost past, a yesterday. **T.S. Eliot** was onto something. So was **John Mellencamp** (uh, Johnny Cougar), “You better learn to play air guitar” and **Pete Townshend**, too, “Pick up my air guitar and play / *Just like yesterday*.”



Photo Courtesy of Stefanie McHugh

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Sigma Tau Delta Announces New Executive Council

By Stefanie McHugh

The following students will serve as the Executive Council for *Sigma Tau Delta*, the International English Honors Society, in the 2009-2010 Academic Year:

President: **Ashley Filipek**;

Vice-President: **Bianca Sabia**;

Secretary: **Erin Wimer**;

Historians: **Jami Butczynski** and **Sabrina Hannon**;

Public Relations Director: **Megan Smith**;

Alumni/ Alumnae Liaison: **Lauren Mannion**;

Web Director: **Samantha Bartolomei**.

Dr. Thomas Hamill, faculty advisor, also notes since no final nominations were received for Treasurer, he will work with **Debra Archavage**, the Humanities Department Administrative Assistant, until the position is filled. If any member of the society wishes to be nominated for Treasurer, please contact Hamill at thomas.hamill@wilkes.edu.

Why Literature?

By Dr. Sean Kelly

“Why study literature?” or, more often, “What good is a degree in the humanities?” are questions a student of literature must answer sooner or later, either for someone else (a parent, perhaps) or for himself or herself. Often the implication is a degree in the Humanities does not easily translate into a “good” job. I happen to think that we—students, advisors, faculty members—have all become fairly skilled at meeting these pragmatic (though sometimes condescending) questions with good humor, thoughtfulness, and healthy amount of pragmatism of our own. I would like to reflect on the study of the humanities, specifically English literature, not as a means to another (professional) end, but as an end in itself. To my mind, the question “Why study literature?” is only answerable when one considers the potentially ethical nature of the encounter between reader and text.



Photo Courtesy of Desiree Wren

I remember once hearing a prominent professor explain the notion of “slow,” close-reading was elitist, since, of course, *no* one has time to linger over texts in this fast-paced, information-driven, post-modern world. I continue to believe one of the most important aspects of literary studies is the necessity of tarrying with a text, transcribing the flow of our own fleeting impressions, associations, and ideas in the margins—in effect, supplementing the text as we attempt to make meaning. **Ralph Waldo Emerson** was right when he proclaimed “one must be an inventor to read well” (1142). So was **Roland Barthes** when he said that much of reading happens “when we are looking up” from the page, thinking. When one engages literature in good faith—as I think English majors are uniquely in a position to do—the text, the reader, and the world are, or at least have the potential to be, changed.

My first upper-level “English” course was not about English or American literature at all, but featured such authors as **Albert Camus**, **J.M. Coetzee**, and **Manuel Puig**. As a student with very little background in literature and no experience whatsoever in philosophy, I was deeply moved by what I perceived to be the moral significance of literature. I learned *not* simply to appreciate literature as a cultural artifact, but to see that literature has the ability to affect us—to enlarge our perspectives, challenge our beliefs, and expand the range of, not only *what* we think, but also, *how* we think. Rather than reinforcing one’s sense of identity or ideological position, literature often has the opposite effect of undermining or disturbing it. This is because literature, in both its form and content, stages an encounter with otherness: it *bails us, moves us*, demanding sustained periods of introspection and reflection. One of my favorite moments from **Nathaniel Hawthorne**’s story “Old Esther Dudley” occurs when the narrator informs us that the partially-crazy, ghost-like, reclusive Esther, in telling stories of times before the American Revolution, is able to transmit to the children of the town the “old feelings” of a “dead world” (230). Hawthorne is pointing to the fact that literature allows the reader to grapple with feelings and desires that correspond to fundamentally alien identities, perspectives, and ways of life. **Walt Whitman** powerfully dramatizes a similar idea in “Song of Myself” when he merges the voice and cadence of epic desire with a multiplicity of ambiguous and contradictory perspectives.

From my first undergraduate encounters with Shakespearean vernacular, the vitriolic poetry of **Amiri Baraka**, and the grotesque imagery and fractured sentences of **Samuel Becket**’s novels, I have often felt the scene of reading is, indeed, a vital ground of negotiation and creation. The study of literature is important because it moves us toward the sphere of otherness. It compels us to take an active role in our own humanity and in the humanity of others.

If you are interested in joining *The Inkwell* staff, or you have news to share,
please contact
Dr. Marcia Farrell (marcia.farrell@wilkes.edu)
for more information.



Photo Courtesy of
Desiree Wren

Lucinda; Or, the Mountain Mourner Published

Dr. Michelle Anthony's critically edited version of **P. D. Manvill's** nineteenth-century memoir *Lucinda; Or, the Mountain Mourner* was published by Syracuse University Press on September 28, 2009. The scholarly edition contains Anthony's new introduction and is the first reprinting in more than 100 years. The memoir is by **Lucinda Manvill**, a woman who was raped and abandoned by her fiancé. After giving birth to her daughter, Lucinda passed away.

Anthony's research methodology includes contacting Lucinda's living relatives for information along with viewing historical documents from various libraries. Anthony's edition is part of the press's Women Writers series. Copies of Anthony's book are available online at Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. For more information regarding purchasing of Anthony's book, contact her at mischelle.anthony@wilkes.edu.

English Education Announcements

Compiled by Anthony Truppo

All Teacher Education Program candidates should note the following requirements for students pursuing certification at Wilkes University:

- A student must have an overall GPA of 2.7 in order to register for ED 190: Effective Teaching with Field Experience.
- A student must have earned a 2.5 in ED 190 prior to registering for any other Education Course.
- A student must obtain an overall GPA of 2.85 in order to proceed to 200-level Education courses and an overall GPA of 3.0 to proceed to 300-level courses.
- A student must take and pass Praxis I – Reading, Writing, and Mathematics prior to registering for any 300-level Education course or secondary content methods course with a field experience.
- No student will be allowed to register for any 300-level Education course or secondary content methods course without a hard copy of a formal passing report of Praxis scores on file in the Wilkes Education Department office in Breiseth 204.
- There are two types of formal reports: labels of candidates' scores sent directly to the Wilkes Education Department, and formal reports sent to the candidates' personal addresses. At least ONE of these formal reports must be on file in the Wilkes Education Department office in order for any student to register for 300-level Education courses. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that a formal Praxis report is on file in the Wilkes Education Department office.

Drs. Robert S. and Judith A. Gardner will be hosting an Educational Forum Series, a series of lectures celebrating the philosophy that not all learning takes place in the classroom. All lectures are free and open to the public:

- November 9, 2009 at 4:00pm in Marts 214:
Using Technology to Teach the Millennial Generation
Speaker: **Michael Speziale**, Ed.D., Dean of the School of Education, Wilkes University
- November 24, 2009 at 4:00pm in Marts 214
Anti-Bullying
Speaker: **Tom McHugh**, Director of Penn State Wilkes-Barre Cooperative Education
- December 3, 2009 at 4:00pm in Marts 214
Autism
Speakers: **Suzanne and John Joseph**, owners and operators of David's Coffee Shop, Wilkes-Barre

Film Review: Cormac McCarthy's *No Country for Old Men*

By Matt Kogoy

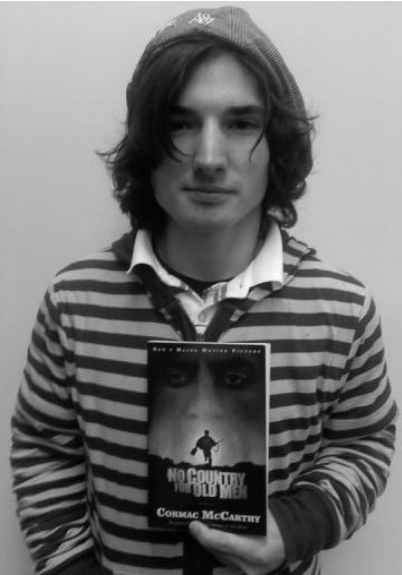


Photo Courtesy of Jackie Butwinski

Cormac McCarthy's *No Country for Old Men* was adapted from novel to big screen on November 21, 2007 and went on to gain critical acclaim. The novel recounts a complicated story of greed, blood-lust, sociopathy, and survival. The adaptation of *No Country for Old Men* continued to impress both fans and critics by winning an Oscar for Best Picture at the 2008 Annual Academy Awards.

In writing this critique, I would like to focus on a specific aspect of the narrative which only garnered a minute or two of the movie's 122 minute-length—the conversation piece between **Llewelyn Moss** and the “Waitress.” This conversation expands to include a variety of character elements not addressed in **Ethan and Joel Cohen's** script. This conversation helps to highlight Llewelyn's more intrinsic side. We become more conscious of Llewelyn's motives throughout the story. We see a deep rectification of his otherwise starchy nature whereby McCarthy, through ingenious dialogue and direct tone, indicates a tragic flaw within Llewelyn's character. This flaw is his inability to express emotion. The Coen brothers do well to interpret the novel from a film perspective, but we are undoubtedly left with wanting more from this scene since it plays such a pivotal role within the broad textual surface of McCarthy's novel.

As film critics and readers of the English language, we would suffice to notice these differences as they affect the key plotline in and of itself as we look to examine, more deeply, a redefinition of social behaviors and conventional character relationships. Llewelyn's interlude from mayhem with his interaction with the “Waitress” stresses key concepts of individual identity and a broader social consciousness developed through such artistic mediums as the novel and film.

We're All Guilty

Compiled by Desiree Wren

Summer is a time for students and faculty to indulge in leisure reading. Wilkes students and professors divulged the guilty pleasures they enjoyed during the summer.

English Professor: **Dr. Michelle Anthony**
Let the Great World Spin by **Collum McCann**

English/Psychology Major: **Jackie Butwinski**
Perfect Fifths by **Megan McCafferty**

English Professor: **Dr. Marcia Farrell**
Laced in Magic by **Barbara Bretton**

English Major: **Sarah Hartman**
Of Mice and Men by **John Steinbeck**

English Professor: **Dr. Thomas Hamill**
The Graveyard Book by **Neil Gaiman**

English/History Major: **Matthew Kogoy**
Sex, Drugs, and Cocoa Puffs by **Chuck Klosterman**

English Professor: **Tom Jones**
Smart Boys Swim in the River Sticks by **Robert Bombay**

English Major: **Lauren Mannion**
Please Don't Kill the Freshman by **Zoe Trope**

Graduate Correspondent: **Stefanie McHugh**
Sense and Sensibility by **Jane Austin**

English/Philosophy Major: **Kenneth Stucker**
Mason & Dixon by **Thomas Pynchon**

Faculty Updates

By Kelly Cappellini

- **Dr. Michelle Anthony** presented her paper, “A Grotesque Tea and Sympathy: Claustrophobic discourse in Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper”” at The Society for the Study of American Women Writer’s Biannual conference in Philadelphia, PA. The conference was held from October 21, 2009 through October 24, 2009.
- From June 4 through June 6, 2009, **Dr. Helen Davis** attended the International Narrative Theory Conference in Birmingham, England and participated in a roundtable presentation called, “New Feminist Narratologies” that examined current feminist narratological theory.
- *Studies in Modern Fiction* solicited a review by **Dr. Marcia Farrell** about *Elizabeth Bowen: New Critical Perspectives*, edited by **Susan Osborn**. Farrell is also writing a review of *Mirrors to One Another: Emotion and Value in Jane Austen and David Hume* by **E.M. Dadlez** for the journal *Consciousness, Literature, and the Arts*. Both reviews will be published in the spring.
- **Dr. Sean Kelly** presented a paper entitled “A Fearful Sympathy: Poe’s Metaphysics of Dissolution in *Eureka* and *The Fall of the House of Usber*” at the Third International Bicentennial Edgar Allen Poe Conference which ran from October 8, 2009 through October 11, 2009, in Philadelphia, PA.

From November 12, 2009 through November 15 2009, Kelly will be chairing a panel called “Imagining Frontiers: Identity and Movement in Early American Literature” at the Midwest Modern Language Association Conference in St. Louis.

- **Dr. Chad Stanley** is writing an “Afterword” for the Signet edition of **Joseph Plumb Martin’s** “A Narrative of a Revolutionary Soldier.”

Stanley is also working on a paper entitled “White, Dark, or Pink?: The Racialized Consumption of Gender in **H. G. Wells’s** *The Time Machine*,” and an article on **Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s** film *Delicatessen*.

- **Dr. Janet Starner** will be present at the Attending Modern Women—Conflict and Concord conference, on November 5, 2009 at the University of Maryland.

Starner is also assisting her English 218, Writing Practicum class in designing peer response plans which they then plan to test in real English 101 classes.

Dr. Thomas Baldino: Interim Dean of the CAHSS

By Courtney Sperger

With the resignation of **Dr. Darin Fields** as Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences in Spring 2008, the university announced the appointment of **Dr. Thomas Baldino**, professor of Political Science. As Dean, Baldino will “coordinate, assist, and advocate for the various departments in the college, mostly involving the programs in the divisions which include the English department, History, Philosophy, Spanish, Psychology, Sociology, Criminology, Political Science, International Studies, Anthropology, Women's Studies, Communications Studies, Integrative Media, and Visual and Performing Arts.” While overseeing so many programs may be daunting, Baldino’s says, “I would like to leave the college in a better place than it was when I took over. I'd just like to do things a little differently, and where possible, build on what Dr. Fields already did.” Although Baldino admits to missing teaching, he is energized and enthusiastic about his new role at Wilkes where he is able to look at the whole of the college and then attend to its needs as a significant part of the university.

“Kuhar’s Corner” Continued from Page 5

But the air guitar is no longer sold at Toys R Us. It’s unavailable. It’s gone the way of Tinker Toys and Bit-O-Licorice. What did **Paul McCartney** say, “Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.” But gone is not forgotten in this guitar case.

To satisfy the hunger of memory—the need to play again—we can try, I suppose, to reconstruct the air guitar in Jurassic Park fashion (i.e., draw DNA from air sap, take it over to a Stark lab and, presto, we’d have, I am sure, in just a few days thousands of air guitars ready for shipping to market). Just *remember* the invisible dog or pet rock. But this effort relies on capturing the air’s sap and we all know how this process will move us to nullify the air guitar player’s ontological status and, so . . . we’re going to have to jettison the premise that moved us to consider this approach. Sorry. (I haven’t, however, given up on the return of Tinker Toys!)

Finally, let’s agree to this: When we effort to remember—in the age of Rock Band—the last time playing the air guitar, we confirm absolutely the function of the imagination. With Rock Band, you can experience the music, confirm your ontological status (as a member of the band), and enjoy ‘game-play’ without tuning those pesky strings. But, as always, compatibility remains an issue. Is this really progress? Air guitar, on the other hand, provides all the benefits of Rock Band while also being fully compatible with all existing game-play hardware. (The hard wiring came at birth.) If we can remember the *last time* playing air guitar—and who, of my generation, cannot (remember playing air guitar)—then we have begun the work of failing to forget the importance of its arrival *in our imagination*. Think “wooly mammoth grazing the grass along Kirby Hall” or “the *apparition* of these faces in a crowd.” This is what we can take away from our efforts to remember playing air guitar: The inherent need to cherish memories as they offer us a rare return to a presumed original form. Moreover, unlike Rock Band, these memories are, well, *priceless*. As Paul McCartney said, “*I believe in yesterday.*”

What most excites you about teaching Contemporary Fiction this semester?

Teaching this course gives all of us in the class an opportunity to engage the fiction that shapes our world, reflects on our world, as well as informs our understanding of who we are in a world that increasingly complicates our abilities to do this. Where else—except other English classes—can you participate in discussions on the mimetic and meaning, Vietnam and *la violencia*, an Austrian Nobel Prize winner, **Thomas Pynchon**’s new novel, the southern grotesque, Afghanistan and Iraq, absurdity, and (without fail) the ubiquitous CE-6.

Why did you choose to be an English professor, and what was your journey like to get to this profession?

The notion of a “career journey” by definition suggests a self-aware process of forward life-story movement. What’s this mean? How is this possible in today’s world? Our career stories are invariably marked by trial and error, successes and failures, unpredictable tribulations and accomplishments, and a gradual *coming of age* about the significance of the experiences encountered along the way. This last point, I think, is the key. I know this sounds a bit cliché but my “journey,” like most career journeys, is marked by my on-going efforts to identify my core values and to find my voice. I value lifelong learning.

Like my English faculty colleagues and our English majors, I’m passionate about ideas, writing, literature and language—not only in the classroom but in the world outside of the classroom. But it took quite a while—and a few different jobs and voices—before I started to understand that working with people who share these values was what I was searching for in career. In the abstract, education can be a pathway toward personal fulfillment and professional accomplishment. But it’s the people—faculty and students—with whom we work that matter most as we try to distill our values and voices. While working at a nuclear plant, I began to question the value of and fulfillment in the work I was doing. Studying and teaching in Duquesne University’s M.A. program, I started to realize that the conversations in classrooms and offices at Duquesne were fundamentally different than anything that took place at other workplaces. Working with undergraduates on literature and writing was a privilege. It still is. The classroom is sacred space where we can find our voice. We test and share our ideas, insights and stories in these rooms. I do not see my story as unique or inspiring in any way; however, I encourage our undergraduates to think about the idea of career as a journey and to search for a career that aligns with their values and voices.

Pros and Cons of Double Majoring

By Melissa Leet

If a student wishes to double major, what he or she should keep in mind are the two subjects he or she chooses. By choosing subjects that are naturally interdisciplinary, the chance of graduating on time may be greater. For example, choosing two complimentary majors, such as English and History, would allow for some overlap of coursework. However, a potentially difficult double major choice would be Music Performance and Pharmacy because of the availability and schedule of courses along with degree requirements, which could result in an individual needing an extra year or so to graduate. However, sometimes even seemingly discordant majors might make for an interesting career path. For example, a student majoring in Biology and English could feasibly find a career in scientific writing and publishing.

Being an English major allows for a degree of flexibility in choosing a second major, and adding another discipline to one's resume may make him or her more desirable to employers. If a student has an extensive knowledge of one or more discipline, he or she has a greater chance of being hired because a dual focus shows employers that he or she is able to handle a large workload successfully and that the student has a strong work ethic.

Another positive aspect of having a double major is that some subjects that are enriched by learning another discipline. An example would be the parallels between History and English. Learning about certain historical periods, such as the Renaissance, can be readily applied to the corresponding era of literature. The parallels between psychology and literature can also be made, where the two disciplines can assist with textual analysis.

Despite the positive aspects of double majoring, negative aspects exist. The first major problem could be the workload. Even by choosing two disciplines that correspond with one another, one would need to complete a lot of work, with twice as much learning.

Attending college is also expensive, and double majoring can impact that aspect, as well. Sometimes a double major is unable to finish both degree programs within the traditional four years and may have to stay for a fifth or sixth year beyond their initial projected graduation date. Students who need to extend their time at the university may need to take out more loans, which causes them to accumulate more debt.

However, the benefits of double majoring and the possible career paths that it opens up may outweigh increased student loans. While double majoring is a personal decision and needs to be an informed decision, being aware of the pros and cons of choosing two majors will make the decisions easier.

Majors and Minors Fair

On Tuesday, October 13, 2009, Wilkes University Student Services held the annual Major/Minors Fair in the Ballroom of the SUB. **Drs. Larry Kuhar, Thomas Hamill, and Marcia Farrell** represented the English department and passed out copies of *Kirby Cannon* and *The Inkwell* while also informing students about career opportunities associated with the English major and minor.

If anyone knows of students interested in majoring or minoring in English, please direct them to Kuhar (lawrence.kuhar@wilkes.edu), Humanities department chair.

Brown Bag Lunch Updates

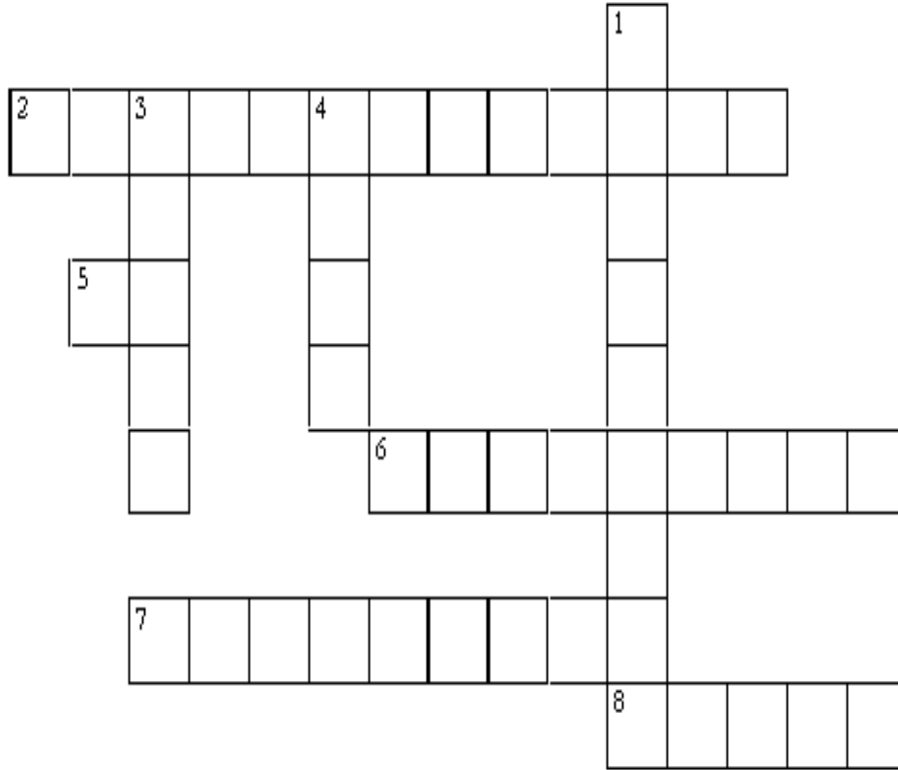
On September 16, 2009, **Drs. Marcia Farrell and Helen Davis** hosted the first Brown Bag lunch of the semester, focusing on graduate school applications. "Navigating the Classifieds" took place on October 23, 2009.

Future lunches include: "Making the most of the major" on Thursday, November 12, 2009 and "Teaching English Strategies" on Friday, December 4, 2009. Those attending should bring their own lunch to Farrell's office.

General English Crossword Puzzle

By Dave Cook

Use the clues below to fill in the missing spaces.



ACROSS

- 2 Name of one of the protagonists in a Tale of Two Cities.
- 5 Kurtz/ "He Dead", in Conrad's Classic, Heart of Darkness.
- 6 He had a jumping frog in a Twain classic.
- 7 Form of Criticism promoted by T.S. Eliot and others.
- 8 Rhetorical term for an ethical appeal

DOWN

- 1 An informally stated syllogism.
- 3 The first line of The Waste Land.
- 4 Beowulf and the Odyssey are examples of this type of poem.

Answers to the Previous Game:

Across: 1. Walmart; 5. State Farm; 7. Kay; 8. Old Spice; 10. Verizon; 11. Axe; 12. Target.

Down: 2. AllState; 3. UPS; 4. HeadOn; 6. Boost Mobile; 9. Cover Girl; 13. Dunkin