English scholars and Textual CSI!

There are moments in a literature scholar’s life when detection and literary criticism merge, when we are led into a world of trace evidence that invites us to decipher mysteries and discover the richness hidden in plain sight. Such was true this past November when a First Folio of Shakespeare’s plays was discovered in France. My friend and colleague, Eric Rasmussen of the University of Nevada-Reno, played the role of the protagonist in this drama, authenticating the Folio as one of the 233 copies now extant in the world. Discovered at a public library in St. -Omer, near Calais, this Shakespearean Folio teases our imagination and resurrects for us the questions of Shakespeare’s own origins, his religious and political allegiances. As another colleague noted, this kind of archival discovery and the subsequent authentication is somewhat akin to a textual “archaeology,” the leatherbound covers and folio pages stitched together by hand providing us with “hands-on” contact with the past, shaping our present from a world 400 years in the past.

Events like this remind me how vital and essential English is for the world today, not only for the headlines they produce in newspapers and blogs around the world but also for the power of the written—and spoken—word to transform and transfix us. English studies remain, for me, a rich unfolding of language, in all its forms. This past semester I have had the good fortune to teach a new course, which itself provided me with a perhaps less dramatic revelation than an uncovering of a First Folio. English 371, Critical Practices, is now one of the core courses taken by all English majors. It is a course designed to allow students to explore and discover their own passions for English, whether they hope to become budding novelists or poets, teachers in secondary or post-secondary classrooms, or linguists and translators working within a global setting. It is a powerful experience to be in the presence of the future, to watch it unfold as students explore their passion and their dreams within the classroom.

As I recede into the past, the future is unfurled for them, and that is how it should be. Lest I get too maudlin, please let us know how your own pasts have unfolded as the future unfurls for you as well.
ANDREW KOPEC

Dr. Kopec teaches American literature from the colonial era to 1914 as well as L202, which combines writing instruction with critical reading. He has experience teaching composition from when he was a graduate student and lecturer at Ohio State University.

Dr. Kopec was a finance major at the University of Dayton before becoming an economics major and an English major. He wrote an undergraduate thesis about literature of the Great Depression, and then in graduate school he took a class on early American literature and realized how much he enjoys the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In these centuries, as he explains, are the beginnings of American literature as well as the beginnings of industrial capitalism in America.

His dissertation is about financial crises and American literature, particularly those happening in 1819, 1837, and 1857—before the Civil War.

He is also interested in the history of literary criticism and literary studies as a profession. His most recent article to be published deals with the topic of the digital humanities.

Dr. Kopec’s Dream Class: PANIC! And American Literature
Examining multiple types of crises from the 1700s onward, and looking at literary (and sometimes movie) responses to the various panics from the colonial era up to 2008.

TROY J. BASSETT

This past spring, Dr. Bassett received a Curran Fellowship, a grant which provided funding for him to go to England. He worked at Cambridge and the British Library, where he had the opportunity to examine nineteenth century British periodicals that had never been digitalized. Some of the periodicals’ pages hadn’t even been cut yet: he was, in his own words, literally the first person to see them.

Dr. Bassett describes his area of research as the history of the Victorian novel, in terms of its production and distribution during the nineteenth century: the intersection of literary history, the history of the book, and the field of bibliography. Much of the backbone of his research comes from the database of Victorian fiction that he has created, which also places him in the field of digital humanities.

After spending a year teaching himself database design, Dr. Bassett put his database, At the Circulating Library, online in 2007. With the database, he is able to do statistical analyses and keep track of the number of novels and serials published between 1837 and 1901. The database contains entries for 11155 titles, 2724 authors, and 331 publishers within that time frame.

More information about Dr. Bassett’s Victorian fiction database can be found here: http://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/

Dr. Bassett’s Dream Class: a History of the Book class, looking at how the book has evolved from “the dawn of time, to the present.”
Dr. Rumsey is a literacy scholar in the field of writing studies; she studies the ways people read and write in particular situations. In the past, her work has been specifically in literacy. However, her future work is leaning more toward the study of family and history together.

She has recently been awarded two grants. One was from Indiana Campus Compact, where statewide service learning information and grants are housed. The ICC offers grants for Service of Engagement. The first grant Dr. Rumsey received was to help her do a service learning course, a graduate seminar which works with the Fort Wayne Urban League in various departments to craft documentation and eventually write grants.

The second grant is a research grant through IPFW, funding summer research. Dr. Rumsey’s book project, Rhetorics of Peace and Kindness: Letters from CPS Camps, was inspired by a box of her grandparents’ love letters from 1941-46. Her grandfather was a conscientious objector during WWII and part of one of three government-recognized peace churches, Dunkard Brethren. Because of this, he was sent to a Civilian Public Service Camp once he was drafted for the war. One of the duties of men at CPS Camps was to go into hospitals for the mentally ill.

Dr. Rumsey’s Dream Class: Literacy and Family History, combining her passion for archival research with teaching.
Beverly A. Hume, 63, professor emeritus of English, passed away on July 17, 2014.

A member of the IPFW Department of English and Linguistics since 1988, Beverly was a devoted professor and colleague, whose impact on her students and her colleagues was immeasurable. Beverly completed her undergraduate degrees from Shasta College (A.A.) and California State University, Sacramento (B.A.) before obtaining her Ph.D. from the University of California, Davis in 1983. Leaving her native California, Beverly moved to Atlanta, where she was a visiting professor at Emory University and the Georgia Institute of Technology. She re-settled in Fort Wayne in 1988, where she made her mark as a teacher and scholar of American literature at IPFW. Her ethical disposition and her passion for teaching remain the hallmarks of her tenure at IPFW. Renowned for her critical work on Herman Melville, Edith Wharton, Mark Twain, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Beverly acquired a reputation as a scholar whose critical acumen allowed her to extract from her close readings of literature the historical, social, and intellectual surroundings of their authors. Reprinted often, Beverly and her scholarship had an impact in classrooms around the country.

Beverly was promoted to full professor in 2011 after establishing her role as a prominent scholar of American literature. Despite the success of her scholarship, or perhaps because of it, Beverly chose to devote her energies to her students and to the classroom. Many of her students later were admitted to graduate programs at some of the most prestigious universities in the country, and they remained in contact with her because of her role in contributing to their success. As one of her students commented following her passing, “Now we know there is intelligent life elsewhere in the universe.” Her encouragement of her students, as well as her dedication to the enriching power of literature to transform and effect social change, drew students to her classes to experience her generosity of spirit, her often ironic wit, and her trenchant understanding of the major figures of the American canon. In her honor following her retirement, the department established an award for students to celebrate their success as scholars of American literature. Beverly’s spirit and her contributions to IPFW will endure. Beverly is survived by her husband Craig Thorne and her sister Diana.
The Spring 2015 Writing Showcase took place on Monday, April 13, 2015. Participating students submitted work from a composition course that they had taken in 2014. Seven projects were displayed at the showcase:

**The Power of Unique Expression: Visual Analysis of Banksy Art** by Thomas Bolinger, ENG W131 (Instructor: Emerald Yorke)

**Rafael Correa, Media Regulation, and Presidential Disruption in the Republic of Ecuador** by Elizabeth Erazo, ENG W233 (Instructor: Worth Weller)

**Early Detection of Schizophrenia: How Treating Schizophrenia Early Affects Long-Term Prognosis** by Elisa Hernandez, ENG W233 (Instructor: Jennifer Stewart)

**Dangers of Concussions** by Malissa Hofmeister, ENG W233 (Instructor: Worth Weller)

**Making Nice with Social Anxiety Disorder** by Sara Spaulding, ENG W233 (Instructor: Kevin Smith)

**Dentistry and Mercury: Breaking Up is Hard to Do** by Makayla Wakeman, ENG W233 (Instructor: Steve Amidon)

**The Black Death** by Ali Rairigh, ENG W367 (Instructor: Suzanne Rumsey)

Judges for the showcase were Karol Dehr, Dr. Hardin Aasand, and Dr. Blake Moore. Next year’s Writing Showcase will accept project submissions from any 2015 composition course.

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**English Majors’ Networking Event**

On April 16, the English & Linguistics Department hosted a networking event for English Majors and Minors. The event was organized by Ali Rairigh, the department intern, and Dr. Kate White, the internship coordinator. Students and faculty mingled with professionals from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. and sampled catering from Penn Station.

Seven individuals and organizations attended the networking event in a professional capacity. Alums William Ramsey of Barrett McNagny Law Firm in Fort Wayne and Matthew Willits of Indiana Tech’s Distance Education Program both attended.

Sigma Tau Delta and the IPFW Writing Center had representatives at the event; Dr. Lewis Roberts of the Graduate Studies Program was also present.

Sue Rawlinson, Executive Editor of The Papers, Inc., attended the event to speak to students about her own experience; she also showed examples of Glo Magazine and Home Living Magazine.

Representatives of Poly-Wood, Inc., a company out of Syracuse, Indiana, were also present to talk to students about opportunities within their company.
The 2015 Conference on College Communication and Composition was held on March 20 in the Le Méridien hotel in Tampa, Florida. The English & Linguistics Department hosted a reception at the conference for current and former IPFW students who now have jobs in communication or composition. The reception was organized by Dr. Mary Ann Cain. Next year’s CCCC will be in Houston, Texas.

“It was nice to be able to connect with people and hear their achievements.”
- Dr. Cain

Top left: George Kalamaras, also at the reception, prepares for his special Poet Laureate session afterwards.

Top Right: Tim Amidon and Mary Ann Cain (reception organizer) share a moment.

Right: Food and drink at the Bizou lounge in Le Meridien Hotel prompted much good talk.
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Email: mstudies@ipfw.edu
Visit: ipfw.edu/marlowe

W398: Internship in Writing

Students: Interested in gaining some real-life job experience while you’re still in college? W398 is an upper-level writing course in which you can intern in the English & Linguistics Department or off-campus in an organization. One- and three-credit internships are available. Contact Dr. Kate White at whitek@ipfw.edu for more information.

Alumni: Have an opportunity for an intern at your organization? We would love to hear from you! Please email Dr. Kate White at whitek@ipfw.edu about any opportunities.

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