



# THE INKWELL QUARTERLY

## Teaching During COVID: In This Issue: Is it Getting Better?

By Nicole McNelis

As the “light at the end of the tunnel” of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to grow, institutions and public buildings are beginning to lift restrictions in an attempt to bring life back to “normal.” One of the most controversial topics in the realm of COVID and how to handle it has been public schools. The majority of public schools students, at least in Northeastern Pennsylvania, have had mostly online instruction for about a year now. Of course, these measures are in place to keep students and teachers safe, but lots of parents are itching to get their students back into the classroom. The one question of everyone’s mind during this difficult time is simply “Is it safe yet?”

Luckily, I have had experience as a student observer at a local high school as they transition between fully remote learning and fully in-person learning. When I started my observation, the students were prohibited from entering the school building and were only able to receive instruction online via Google Classroom and Google Meet. Live classes were held every day, with teachers readily available

to teach lessons as well as answer questions as needed. Just as students started getting used to this format, the school reopened and a certain number of students and teachers were allowed back in the classroom. Finally!

However, my cooperating teacher and I found this transition to be exceptionally difficult. As a disclaimer, I will note that I am currently placed in a special education classroom, so the experience may have been a little different than usual; however, I think the students in my classroom exhibited what every other student may feel when transitioning back to in-person learning. The first few days were rough; students were asking to go home early because they felt “sick,” behavior was not so good, and a few meltdowns ensued. There was little to no explanation for this other than the students were enduring a difficult transition from virtual to in-person learning.

As the weeks have gone on, however, this has become a lot easier and students are growing more accustomed to the in-person classroom format. There are still a handful of students who

A Message to Adult Learners...  
Review of *Nice Work If You Can Get It*

Review of *Julius Caesar*

Various takes on Zach Linge

Junior Spotlight

A Visit with Poupeh Missaghi

*Shin Megami Tensei IV: The Power of Myth*

Cancellation of Dr. Suess

Recognizing Writers and

Members of Literature Arts

have decided to stay home despite the school being open, and these students must be integrated into what is going on in the in-person classroom, which has posed a challenge in itself. Technology still malfunctions, student attendance rates are still low, and learning still just doesn’t seem “normal.” Overall, however, I do believe that it is getting better.

The school at which I am placed does a fantastic job at enforcing CDC Guidelines of wearing masks and staying six feet apart. Students are constantly reminded to keep their masks over their nose and stay six feet apart from each other, and most follow the rules accordingly. The social aspect of learning that was so desperately needed during the pandemic has come back, although in a different form, and I can tell that this interaction helps students.

# Teaching During COVID: Is it Getting Better?

Continuation from page 1

And, perhaps the best of all news, teachers and paraprofessionals in the Northeastern region of Pennsylvania have been offered and administered the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. This is a sure way to ensure that students and teachers can safely be together within the coming year, and learning can return to some semblance of normalcy soon. Teaching during the pandemic has had extreme highs and extreme lows, and it seems that we are finally toward the end of a very, very difficult year.

## A Message to Adult Learners: Success Comes in All Forms

By Ryan Zaruta

Confession - I am struggling. Like many of us, we are trying our hardest to succeed within this paradoxical world of virtual learning in the midst of a pandemic. Virtual learning, alone, can be an obstacle for students who, despite applying themselves to their fullest potential regarding their academic studies, feel limited to succeeding in an entirely new environment. Some students may be financially burdened, and others may face other hardships and challenges. Personally, the pandemic has been the cherry on top of life's concoction full of stress.

I feel out of place in my studies. Not because of the institution, but because of my personal obligations outside of my academic studies. I know there are many adult learners who share the same feelings, yet I feel I'm the sole adult learner in all of my courses. Outside of school, I balance a full time schedule with my employer. Add moving from Kentucky back to the Wyoming Valley, and I feel maxed out. I struggle finding time between classes and work to not

only complete the assignments required, but to also pack and arrange everything I need in place for a successful move.

Yet, with the obstacles I face in my daily life, I am successful. I'll be the first to admit that I do not obtain the grades I desire to receive. I have worked full time outside of school since my high school graduation, and I have never been able to apply myself the way I know. Yet, I have shown up to class when I could, and I have applied myself to the fullest extent possible. And I have passed. With life's heavy weight on my shoulders, that alone feels like a huge success for me.

Another one of my recent successes would be moving in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. For months I struggled trying to find housing within a decent price range, and was met with even more obstacles when walk-throughs were extremely difficult to arrange. Finally, during the first month of the new year, I finally found a place in which I could call home.

I used to be so afraid

to reach out to professors and instructors in the past regarding my personal hardships, which have led to even more stress. I know I am a dedicated student, and my studies are very important to me - yet previous professors thought I was lacking in participation and overall quality of assignments and knowledge learned from courses because I had no interest in applying myself. When I transferred to Wilkes University, I knew I needed to do something different. I could not change the amount of hours I work with my employer, and I did not want to change my school schedule to part-time. Instead, I remained open and honest with my professors, who have all understood the personal matters I have outside of the classroom, and have been willing to help me in many ways.

For all you adult learners who are struggling more than I am, focus on the successes you achieve, no matter great or small. Whether you were finally able to hand in that ten page paper you struggled writing while caring for the kids

Story Continued on Page 3

# A Message to Adult Learners: Success Comes in All Forms

Continuation from page 2

after a long day at work, or passing an exam you studied extensively for in the limited amount of time you had. Whether you were able to complete your assignments for the day, or even get out of bed - these are all successes. Do not be afraid to reach out to your professors if you are struggling, for they are not

only there to teach a classroom, but to help their students out. Maybe they can offer you an extension on an assignment you have been struggling with and have not had the chance to submit it on time, or maybe they can direct you to different university resources to assist you with any needs you may

have.

Take pride in your work, take pride in your accomplishments, and never focus on the negatives. Life is full of challenges, and we all overcome them one way or another. Be strong and diligent, for your hard work will pay off in the long run.

## Review of *Nice Work If You Can Get It*

By Caitlyn Bly

This past March, the theatrical department here at Wilkes University put on the performance of the famous Broadway musical *Nice Work If You Can Get It* by Joe DiPietro. This performance happened mid March 2021, from March 11th to March 14th. I was lucky enough to sit in on this performance, although through a live stream due to the current circumstances brought on by the Coronavirus. It was delightful that the department made it possible for fellow students and the public to be able to still enjoy the play even though the present circumstances limited seats for in-person viewings.

This play by Joe DiPietro takes place during the 1920s, otherwise known as the “Prohibition Era”. In short, the plot of *Nice Work If You Can Get It* regards a very wealthy ladies’ man named Jimmy Winter who goes on to marry his fourth wife. Before the wedding, he meets a female bootlegger named Billie Bendix. Under the assumption that Jimmy never uses his mansion on Long Island, Billie decides that she will hide crates of alcohol in the cellar. When Jimmy and his new wife’s family arrive at the mansion in Long Beach, Billie and her bootlegging buddies must pose as Jimmy’s servants, which leads to a series of escapades and a new flourishing romance between Billie and Jimmy.



Alex Booth and Marcy Ledvinka in a scene from the Wilkes University Theatre production of *Nice Work If You Can Get It*. Photo credits: Wilkes University Theatre and News@Wilkes

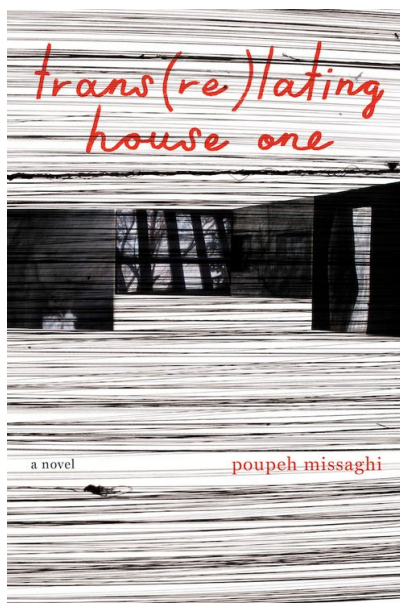
# A Visit with Poupeh Missaghi

By Nicole McNelis

Wilkes University's English Department recently had the honor of hosting Persian author Poupeh Missaghi and discussing topics such as her writing process and her work *trans(re)lating house one*. Although I was unfortunately unable to attend her reading on Wednesday, March 17 or the writing workshop she hosted on Thursday, March 18, we were fortunate enough to have her in our Seminar to Postmodernism class with Dr. Kuhar. Through this visit came some interesting details and anecdotes about her writing as well as her education.

One of the most compelling pieces of information to come from Poupeh's discussion with our class was about her writing process. She shared with us that most of her writing, specifically in *trans(re)lating house one*, comes from her own dreams. She keeps a dream journal and writes down all of the dreams that she can remember every morning upon waking up. Sometimes these entries are long and elaborate, and other times they are short and inconclusive.

Through doing this exercise for a number of years, Poupeh was able to construct *trans(re)lating house one* in its entirety, with lots of inspiration coming from these dream journals. To me, this process was extremely fascinating as dreams are always something I have been interested in. To Poupeh, dreams hold so much weight and significance within our minds and our lives as a whole, and she made sure to emphasize this idea throughout her writing process of *trans(re)lating house one*. Her approach also makes writing on such a high caliber seem more accessible to even beginning or inexperienced writers, with dreams acting as a gateway to an entirely unique story. Since this discussion with Poupeh, I have been keeping a dream journal, and I'm hoping I get to utilize it like she did!



Accessed from @PoupehMissaghi on Twitter.

Another interesting aspect of Poupeh's visit was her knowledge of postmodernism. Since Dr. Kuhar is teaching a Seminar in postmodernism, we read Poupeh's work with that sort of mindset and discussed aspects of her writing that could be considered postmodern. It turned out that *trans(re)lating house one* is more postmodern than any of us realized, with both thematics and aesthetics relating to those within the postmodern realm. So, Dr. Kuhar asked what Poupeh's understanding of postmodernism is and what it means to her, and her answer was basically, "not much." She has never had any formal instruction on postmodernism and, frankly, does not think of her work in that way. This was interesting to find out, considering we concluded, as a class, that her work is very postmodern in nature. Plus, as Dr. Kuhar noted, we know more about postmodernism than a critically-acclaimed writer, which is pretty fascinating to think about.

Overall, Poupeh Missaghi's visit to Wilkes was insightful and informed discussions about writing and reading. Using dreams as a basis of her writing opens doors to interpretation as well as making such complex writing seem more accessible. And, the "postmodern spin" that we assigned to her writing was one that she had not put much thought into, which is both interesting and exciting for our class and how we view literature in a variety of ways.

# A Take on Zach Linge's Visit

By Daniel Stish and Darren Martinez

Wilkes was recently virtually visited on February 17th, 2021 by the published poet and editor-in-chief of the Southeast Review Zach Linge. Linge led Dr. Anthony's Modern American Poetry course in the morning, before hosting a workshop in the afternoon, followed by a reading in the evening. Below are reflections on the visit from Darren Martinez and Dan Stish on the class and workshop respectively:

## **Darren:**

Upon walking into class, I found it starkly empty aside for two of my other classmates. It seems we all missed the email that the class would be meeting online. Our neglect to read our emails didn't stop us from joining via Zoom, though. Though late to the party, I arrived just in time to join in on the conversation about "What is there to do in Wilkes Barre?" Zach Linge, in true poet fashion, wanted to get a sense of the community that we all inhabit. Multiple students were eager to talk about local eateries, especially the trifecta of pizza joints: Gerry's, Angelo's, and Ricci's. We laid out the dynamic between the three to Linge where I gave an expert testimonial as an Angelo's employee myself. Through this conversational tactic, Linge had the class buzzing and energetic from the start.

We hopped into the lesson on Paul Laurence Dunbar and Alexander Posey. Linge chose poems that were not in our anthology, which actually helped the lesson. We came in having read a certain selection of poems, and then we took on an additional one in the spur of the moment. In reading Dunbar's "Invitation to Love," the poem was tonally and structurally different from what the Modern American Poetry anthology contained. Dunbar often wrote with dialect, covering themes of being African American. Linge surprised us with their suggestion of "Invitation to Love" because it was so different. The poem was painfully sweet, to the point of which I had to comment on it. Linge turned my criticism around, saying that the poem's emotional core was the fact that such pristine love does not actually exist. The best poems exist in tension, and Dunbar's poem reveals that deep down, everyone wishes they could embody love in which you were always invited, always welcome. Such love is unobtainable, and thus compelling.

## **Dan:**

The workshop was hosted via Zoom and Linge led the attendees through various activities to aid in writing poetry, along with some Q&A. Activities included an association game, in which two nouns were described using the first five words which came to mind, and then swapped—each taking on the other's associations. This approach was an effort to break free from monotony and cliché, and to allow for the defamiliarization which is so crucial to the poet's art. The second activity was impromptu poetry writing, in which each person in attendance would offer up a word or piece of punctuation to contribute to a group poem. As a whole, this event served as a fantastic stepping stone towards being a better writer of poetry, giving one tools which allow for creative associations, and advice from an accomplished poet.

*Editor's Note:* For access for the live, full, and public reading, visit the WilkesUVideo "Poet Zach Linge Lecture at Wilkes University, 2/17/21" on [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

See also, fellow English Major, Genny's article in Wilkes University's newspaper, *The Beacon*

# A Take on the Cancelling of Dr. Seuss

By Alexis Charowsky

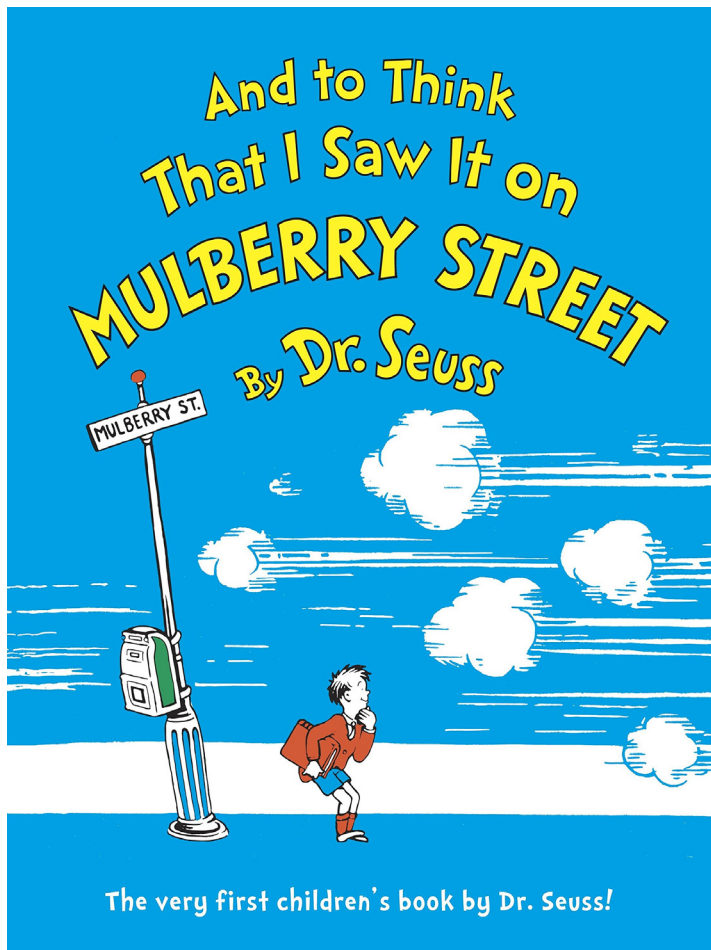
The childhood writer Dr. Seuss has been cancelled recently for racist images and language in some of his work. Multiple copies of his books are being taken off of shelves and discontinued because of these actions. They hold images that are racist and no child should be taught to look at people like that.

Starting with the book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, we see a parade of people. A reference that Suess adds to his book is “a Chinese man who eats with sticks.” This is unnecessary to the book

and quite random to refer to the man eating with sticks. Suess also adds a line for eyes on a Chinese man but everyone else has dots for eyes. This would be considered a problem because the Chinese man is made to look different than everyone else. If the character wasn't a Chinese man and the only character with lines for eyes, it wouldn't be such a big deal. By putting lines for eyes on the Chinese man, it is being disrespectful to the race by only making that one character, who happened to be Chinese, have lines for eyes.

In the book *If I Ran the Zoo*, Suess adds “I hunt in the mountains of Zomba-ma-Tant with helpers who wear their eyes at slant.” Again he has it out for Asian people and continues to refer to the race. He also added two characters into the book from the “African Island of Yerka.” These characters resemble monkeys wearing no shoes or shirts. Could this be a possible reference to the people who live in Africa, or just a coincidence he added that it was an African Island?

The four other books being taken off shelves are McElligot's Pool, *On Beyond Zebra! Scrambled Eggs Super!* and *The Cat's Quizzer*. These books are being removed from shelves for racist images and commentary throughout. All of these books



Accessed from Dr. Seuss's book-covers.

characterize people in hurtful ways. Society has changed significantly since the time when Suess wrote these books. These books may have not seemed racist back then and they might have been seen as just children's books, but in today's times we have a clearer understanding of why these representations can be harmful to the people the book is portraying. Books become old and are taken off the shelves or simply not read once they are no longer enjoyed as much. Those who say that these books are not racist are part of the problem. Taking these books away will help the younger generation to not portray others like that and maybe at some time make the world an equal environment for everyone.

I feel as though taking these Dr. Seuss books off of the shelves will help children learn to not look at others differently just because they don't match up to the degree that earlier generations wanted them to. As children, we grow up learning things. We aren't born racist; children are taught to be racist. In order to make a change in racism, we have to stop teaching our kids to be racist to those that don't match the standards of others. In order to make a change in racism we shouldn't teach the next generation how Suess did in these selected sections of his books. We should instead teach that everyone is equal and unique in their own way.

# Junior Spotlight

By Caitlyn Bly

For our third issue of the Inkwell, we decided to shift our focus onto the juniors in the English department. Each junior majoring and minoring in English was asked a series of questions. These questions were aimed to allow the Juniors to express themselves and ultimately give us an insight on their experiences during their time in the English Department here at Wilkes University. Here are the responses we received.

## Hannah Simerson



Photo given by Hannah Simerson.

**Q:** Which English class has been your favorite so far? Why?

**A:** My favorite English class that I have taken so far has been the Advanced Workshop in Screenwriting course that was just offered this semester. During the course, we watched plenty of different genres of movies and even created our own script to a full-length movie! It's a special feeling to have created something so large in its entirety and I am so thankful for all that I have learned in the class.

**Q:** Which college professor has influenced you the most? How?

**A:** Every professor that I have had at Wilkes has touched my life and

my education in various ways, but Dr. Churcher has definitely been the most influential in my college career. As a double major in English and Communication Studies, I spend a lot of time in the Karambelas Center in Dr. Churcher's classes. She was actually the professor that helped me declare my double major! She is truly so supportive and genuine to her students and that certainly makes her stand out to me.

**Q:** If you could go back in time, what would you change about your college experience so far and why?

**A:** If I could go back in time, I would participate in class more. I have always been a shy person and this translates over into the classroom as well. I worry a lot about sounding stupid or saying the wrong thing, but I wish I had spoken up more.

**Q:** If you could give First-Year English majors one piece of advice, what would it be?

**A:** First-Year English majors, please do yourselves a favor and never take a class in 305. Those stairs are brutal! In all seriousness, I would advise against putting off major papers until finals week. You're already stressed enough with tests and final projects. The last thing you need is a huge research paper on top of it all.

**Q:** Do you feel prepared to take on your future career? Explain.

**A:** I hope to go into the world of publishing after graduation and I feel that I am both prepared and unprepared for this next step. On one hand, I am confident in my abilities and the knowledge that I have gained from my time in undergrad so far. On the other hand, my heart belongs to academia. I feel as if I will never know enough or study enough to be fully ready. I guess it's a good thing that I want to go to graduate school!

## Nicole McNelis

**Q:** Which English class has been your favorite so far? Why?

**A:** I really liked the Seminar in Postmodernism with Dr. Kuhar this past semester as well as Toni Morrison/African American Literature with Dr. Kelly last fall.

**Q:** Which college professor has influenced you the most? How?

**A:** Probably Dr. Polacheck in the Education Department because she has inspired the type of educator that I wish to be one day.

**Q:** If you could go back in time, what would you change about your college experience so far and why?

**A:** I would definitely either spend two years at a Community College, or take some college classes while

# Junior Spotlight

Continuation from Page 7

in high school. This definitely would have saved time and money in the end!

**Q:** *If you could give First-Year English majors one piece of advice, what would it be?*

**A:** I would tell First-Year majors just to keep up on their class work before it all piles up and becomes unmanageable. Also do the readings!!!

**Q:** *Do you feel prepared to take on your future career? Explain.*

**A:** I absolutely feel prepared to take on my career as an Educator and mentor in English

## Lindsey Bowman



Photo given by Lindsey Bowman.

**Q:** *Which English class has been your favorite so far? Why?*

**A:** My favorite class that I've taken so far has been the horror and sci-fi seminar with Dr. Stanley during

the fall 2020 semester. Horror and Sci-fi are some of my favorite genres so that made it really enjoyable. It was also cool to read stories written by more modern authors.

**Q:** *Which college professor has influenced you the most? How?*

**A:** Dr. Davis has probably been the most influential professor I've had at Wilkes. I originally started out as a chemistry major and I was required to take her ENG 120 class my Sophomore year for the general education credit requirement. I loved reading the stories and talking about them in class. I never had that same level of engagement or excitement in a chemistry class before. After my second day in ENG 120, I had a huge realization that I was meant to be an English major instead. By the end of the first week, I had went ahead and switched from chemistry to English. If I hadn't had Dr. Davis as my professor, I may have never of made the decision to switch majors. I'm always going to be grateful for that ENG 120 class.

**Q:** *If you could go back in time, what would you change about your college experience so far and why?*

**A:** If I could go back in time, I'd start my freshman year as an English major instead of a chemistry major. I would have maybe considered dual majoring in English and communications as well, provided I had enough time. I feel like I wasted my first year in a major I didn't like, so I'd make this switch so that I could get a head

start in my actual major.

**Q:** *If you could give First-Year English majors one piece of advice, what would it be?*

**A:** Don't be afraid to participate in class discussions. They're a big part of most English classes, so it's always good to have everyone contribute. Literature can be incredibly subjective as well, so putting your personal opinions out there is always great. Some people may have not considered something that you have to say, allowing for the conversation to further expand. So just make sure you complete all of the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss.

**Q:** *Do you feel prepared to take on your future career? Explain.*

**A:** Yes, I'm feeling prepared. I just went to an alumni panel over zoom a few weeks ago where English alumni from Wilkes talked about their experiences in the field after they graduated. There are so many various paths and opportunities this major can provide. It teaches you not only about writing and literature, but also valuable skills like communication and critical thinking as well. Although the job market looks intimidating right now, I know that I have so many valuable skills from my time at Wilkes and I can succeed if I put forth the time and effort to do so.

Story Continued on Page 9



# Junior Spotlight

Continuation from Page 8

## Briauna Robinson



Photo given by Briauna Robinson.

**Q:** Which English class has been your favorite so far? Why?

**A:** My favorite English class I have taken so far has to be the Horror and Sci-Fi Seminar I took with Dr. Stanley. Horror has always been my guilty pleasure and my absolute favorite to read and watch. It was amazing to study the genre in an actual course and learn all the ins and outs of it. It was especially exciting to discuss how authors portray horror and insight fear into their readers. Since I aim to write horror novels of my own, it was a wonderful experience to dive so deep into what it means to write within the horror scene.

**Q:** Which college professor has influenced you the most? How?

**A:** Honestly, Dr. Hamill. My first class with him was ENG 120 during my second year at Wilkes

and it was so enlightening! Even if studying “great works” isn’t the *most* exciting for me, he managed to still make the class interesting. Actually, Dr. Hamill has taught me *how* to get excited about English (*more than I thought I already was*) and has shown me how to be patient with my writing. Being taught how to be patient and forgiving of the writing mistakes I make has been such a valuable skill to learn over the last few years; especially with being a perfectionist. I am not sure how he taught me to be this way besides Dr. Hamill just being Dr. Hamill, truthfully. He is so kind and shows an extensive amount of understanding towards his students. Having him as a professor has been an honor and has shown me exactly who I want to be when I, myself, also become a teacher.

**Q:** If you could go back in time, what would you change about your college experience so far and why?

**A:** I am not sure, to be honest! I have actually enjoyed my college experience so far. I suppose if I **HAD** to go back in time, I would have put creative writing as my minor earlier. Though there have been no bumps in the road from me pursuing it so late, it would have just made choosing my future classes easier, I suppose.

**Q:** If you could give First-Year English majors one piece of advice, what would it be?

**A:** Please, please, PLEASE, do not hold back from speaking in class.

Most of the English professors actually enjoy discussing these topics openly and not so much in a lecture style. As soon as you open up and participate in class discussions, you will learn so much more than you thought you would about a text. It is also a really great way to pass the clock of those two hour courses! Active class discussions are probably the best way to study English.

**Q:** Do you feel prepared to take on your future career? Explain.

**A:** Most definitely! I am an English major with secondary education and creative writing, and the English department has been so supportive of my decisions and my track. The classes I have taken have been so educational and so enlightening towards my favorite aspects of English and studying literature. I have noticed my writing ability has gotten better since my first semester here at Wilkes University; all thanks to Dr. Davis, her ENG 101 course. and her portfolio assignment. I am now able to analyze a text, and share it with ease, because of both the education department assisting me with teaching, and the English department with polishing my literature skills. It truly has been such an amazing experience, and I am more than ready to set off into my future career as an educator and writer. I am actually planning on pursuing a MFA in creative writing to further my studies - all thanks to Wilkes!

# Review of *Nice Work If You Can Get It*

Continuation from Page 3

I personally love the Prohibition Era, and the style that accompanies it. I feel like the actors did an amazing job depicting this time period between their accents to their body language. They all did a wonderful job portraying characters that came from this specific time period. In particular, Alex Booth, who portrayed Jimmy Winter, did a fantastic job with nailing the accent of a 1920s New Yorker and also the persona of a privileged rich man. He really did the character justice. The same goes for Marcy Ledvinka, who played Billie Bendix, and Jack Flynn, who played Cookie McGee. They both were spot on with their accents and behavior that would represent someone living during the 1920s. Marcy in particular did a great job on having her character seem rough around the edges.

I really enjoyed this play and the dynamic it represented. I am really a sucker for a good romance, so the play kept me intrigued and glued to the screen. The set itself provided minimal props, but just enough so the audience could really feel the 1920 dynamic trying to be represented. It is definitely a play I would recommend anyone to see, especially if you enjoy the Prohibition Era. I am so glad that the Wilkes University Theatre department was able to solve the problem of limiting seating in the theater, and decided to live stream the play so more people could enjoy this production. I know this was probably different and much more difficult for the actors to perform, but overall everyone did an amazing job.

## Wilkes's Own *Julius Caesar*

By Alexis Charnowsky

The Wilkes University Theatre held their annual spring play with the showing of William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* directed by Professor Joe Dawson. For a course of three nights and two matinees, many Wilkes students worked hard and dedicated their time to put on a great show. Some main roles of the play were Julius Caesar (Brianna Rowland), Brutus (Alex Booth), Mark Antony (Olivia Schanbacher), Cassius (Marcy Ledvinka), Calpurnia (Jayna Johnson) and Cinna the Poet (Sam Uggla). Throughout the play, it felt as though you were a part of the show. The live action and sound effects were a great contribution to take viewers back into Roman times. Though *Julius Caesar* was set back in Roman times, the production of the ancient Roman

setting was also modern. The crew had computers and technology they used that was not available during Roman times. Many sound effects, such as the sound best described as R2D2, were also applied. The use of modern technology and other effects allowed those watching to have a sense of the Shakespearian era while still keeping it contemporary and upbeat. These features were a key interest to me, leaving me entertained and fascinated by the use of current technology for an older play. The play starts in the streets of Rome with Caesar standing on the steps. Setting the scene, the stage had an eerie backdrop of red lights and smoke.

During the course of the play, we see that Brutus and Cassius are teaming up to put an end to Caesar.



From the Gardens of the Tuileries, 1872

# Wilkes's Own *Julius Caesar*

Continuation from Page 10

They negotiate on how they want Caesar gone and come together with others to kill him. Brutus, Cassius, and a collective group take down Caesar. This takes an unexpected turn since Caesar had no idea that his acquaintances would do such a thing to him. Caesar's last lines before being killed are "Et Tu, Brute" and she falls to the ground. This leaves watchers in shock, wondering how something like this could happen so quickly. Fast forward to later in the play, a funeral for Caesar was coordinated. Marc Antony is on her knees asking to speak on behalf of Caesar. Caesar was her friend too and tells those of the Romans and the audience that yes Caesar may have wronged some, but at some point or another everyone loved him. By the end of the play, both Cassius and Brutus die. Cassius is killed by the same sword that killed Caesar. Brutus hands a dagger to Lucius and runs into it, killing himself. The stage transforms back into the beginning scene with red lights and sound effects. Members look over Brutus's dead body and the stage goes dark.

The members of Wilkes University Theatre did an awesome job bringing together *Julius Caesar*. Seeing this play in person, rather than just reading about it, gave me a better understanding of Shakespeare's language and work. I felt indulged in the play, wondering what would happen next. The Shakespearean language can be hard to understand but the characters helped me interpret the language better. Their costumes were modern, with the use of pants and tops. Back in Roman times, men would wear a toga while women would wear stolas. The use of costumes being present day allowed the audience to relate better. Everyone was very successful in carrying out their roles, whether it was a large or small, no one broke character and convinced the crowd of the role they played. This play had a great amount of female roles, who did an excellent job of portraying male characters. The use of feminine roles grabs the audience's attention, making them more attentive. This can change the way audiences view the masculine roles played by females. It gives a new perspective of how women can portray the roles the same way men can. I am personally a fan of plays, no matter the play type, and feel that the Wilkes University Theatre cast did a fantastic job of organizing *Julius Caesar*. If you didn't get a chance to watch fellow students in this past play, Wilkes will be holding multiple plays and musicals next year. We hope to see your faces out there and support those of Wilkes University Theatre!



A still from the Wilkes University Theatre's production of *Julius Caesar* demonstrates how the adaptations modern dress and setting contrast with the play's ancient subject matter. Photo credit: Wilkes University Theatre's Facebook page.

# MANUSCRIPT UPDATE

The *Manuscript* Society will be publishing two issues of *The Manuscript* this 2020-2021 Academic Year.

The submission period for the general issue will be open through 02 April 2021.

If you're interested, please submit your work to [magazine@wilkes.edu](mailto:magazine@wilkes.edu) with your Wilkes email by that date.

The submission period for the Black Lives Matter issue of *Manuscript* closed on 19 February 2021. Keep an eye out for the forthcoming release of this issue!

If you would like to learn more about *The Manuscript* Society or about upcoming *Manuscript* events, please contact [magazine@wilkes.edu](mailto:magazine@wilkes.edu). You can also stay connected to *Manuscript* by following our social media on Facebook ([Mauscript @ Wilkes University](#)), Twitter ([@WilkesMag](#)), and Instagram ([@wilkes\\_manuscript\\_](#)).

## Writing Center Hours

The Writing Center, located in the Alden Learning Commons, is open and offering support to student writers across the Wilkes curriculum.

Throughout the Spring 2021 semester The Writing Center is hosting virtual drop-in hours from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, for any member of the Wilkes community who needs writing assistance.

To access the Zoom links, please go to the Student Services tab in the Wilkes Portal.

For more information, contact:  
**Dr. Chad Stanley**  
email: [chad.stanley@wilkes.edu](mailto:chad.stanley@wilkes.edu)

## Fall 2021 Upper-Level Class Listings

Course Number/Name	Date/Time	Instructor
ENG 201: Writing about Lit. & Cult./WI	TR 1:00-2:40	Dr. Kuhar
ENG 202: Technical Writing/WI	MWF 9:00-9:50	Prof. Lobb
ENG 203: Creative Writing/WI	MWF 11:00-11:50	Prof. Kovacs
ENG 225: Comparative Grammar/DH	MW 2:30-3:45	Dr. Stanley
ENG 233: Survey of English Lit./WGS/&H	MWF 10:00-10:50	Dr. Hamill
ENG 282: American Lit. II/ WGS	TR 9:30-10:45	Dr. Kuhar
ENG 342: Studies in Shakespeare	MWF 12:00-12:50	Dr. Hamill
ENG 352: American Novel/WGS	TR 3:00-4:15	Dr. Kelly
ENG 397: Jane Austen Empire	MW 1:00-2:15	Dr. Davis