

# THE INKWELL QUARTERLY

## Seminar Class Travels to See Production of *The Tempest*

By Emily Cherkauskas

Dr. Hamill's seminar class, ENG 397: "Staging Worlds in Medieval and Renaissance Drama," recently had the opportunity to go see a production of *The Tempest*, performed at the Round House Theatre in Bethesda, Maryland. The play was produced in collaboration with the Folger Theatre and adapted and directed by Aaron Posner and Teller. In our seminar class, we would discuss and ponder *The Tempest's* staging implications and where magical elements are implemented. While our discussions were productive as we brainstormed our own ideas and examined brief clips of various productions, being able to sit down for a good two hours and watch a production in its entirety was a valuable, educational experience that offered even more insight into our profound discussions.

The wooden, rustic stage itself was beautiful, detailed with textures and decals of cards and scribes. Upstage included two more levels. In between and above resided the orchestra, including the actors playing the omniscient yet physical beings of Juno, Iris, and Saturn, who sang prophetic and catchy lyrics. This unique production performed arrangements of original songs from the play and selected songs by Tom Waits, musician and composer. The songs were performed by a small orchestra featuring percussion and strings, accompanied by the vocals of Juno, Iris, and Saturn.

The topmost level, a more hidden layer, served as the location of the play's first scene being the ship, later on serving as more secretive entrances for characters as they descended below. Notably, with the staging area donned with warm lights and posts that changed color to fit the theme, the environment went from cozy to ethereal and otherworldly in just seconds as the play progressed.

To start, a few minutes before the show began, the spirit character Ariel (played by Nate Dendy, who also serves as the production's magic consultant) presented himself on stage, silently performing card tricks and participating with involuntarily selected audience members. Not only did it already create some hearty laughs (it is a comedy, after all), the

### In This Issue:

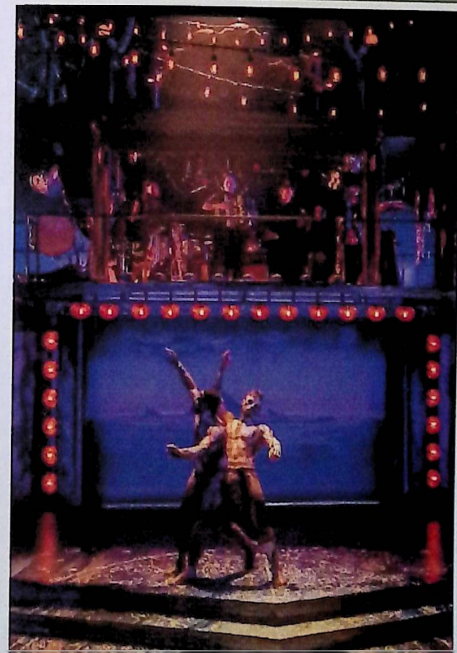
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Ryan Sellers and Hassiem Muhammad (Caliban) and Musicians in *The Tempest*. Photo by Scott Suchman. Accessed from <https://www.roundhousetheatre.org/On-Stage/Explore/The-Tempest>

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# Seminar class travels to see production of *The Tempest*

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reshow also served as a world-building tool. Before the play itself even began, the audience was already opened up to a world of magic, wasting no time in letting us be fully immersed into the world of *The Tempest* and giving a subtle preview of what sorts of tricks were in store for us as an audience.

In regard to the casting direction, it was impressive, and in some instances, just too good. In our contemporary time, adapting a Shakespeare play into the modern world accounts for awkward instances and combing through moments and dialogue in general that would typically be too problematic today, but the production and direction seemed to allow the actors to have satisfying chemistry and opportunities for adapting to their Renaissance (or early modern) characters. Combined with the magical elements, there were a wide variety of dynamics to the production, from moments of shock and awe, to hilarious moments, to dramatic visual spectacles.

A notable magical moment included Prospero's torturing and twisting of Ariel's body and delving into visual body horror with the use of mirrors. Another instance presented the captivating moment of the bride Miranda's body floating in midair. Throughout the play, Ariel's eye-catching card tricks were used as props to help further the plot and character development, with actors interacting with those cards. In addition the cards added emphasized aesthetic value to this particular production's worldbuilding.

One notable example of the production's unique features includes the casting choice for the character Caliban, an earthly spirit that seems to almost mirror the tendencies and placings of the other characters as a way to critique them. Caliban's character is subjected to, and representative of, many elements including the problems of slavery, deep imagery of his stolen home under colonial rule, and the implications of nobility as corrupted.

With this complex character, his staging is always unique in direction. In this particular production, Caliban was cast to be played by two actors of different races, acrobatically intertwining with one another at all times as they move on stage (courtesy of choreography by the dance company Pilobolus), speaking together as one (and sometimes independently).

This casting is in contrast to the albino-looking Ariel. These particular portrayals of Ariel and Caliban furthered the extent and implications of the effects of colonialism. Ariel appeared to take on more human-like behavior and mannerisms, while Caliban was portrayed as more beastly and uncivilized. Tough decisions to confront when choosing staging methods, these choices in casting allowed for a modern look at racial and sociological issues from a contemporary standpoint. When studying Caliban specifically, the duality of two actors of different races playing him engages the issue of his being under colonial rule. Does the biracial, double soul identity of Caliban make him stronger than everyone else in the play's world? Does it make him more accepted or isolated? The fact that he still remains a slave shows harsh truths about the oppression inflicted upon him and his land.



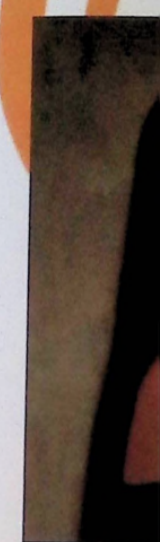
Eric Hissom (Prospero) and Nate Dendy (Ariel) in *The Tempest*.

Photo by Scott Suchman. Accessed from <https://www.roundhousetheatre.org/On-Stage/Explore/The-Tempest>

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## Second-Year Faces Spotlight



Meet Mya!  
Mya Corcoran

**Q: What is your major / minor and area of concentration?**

A: I am majoring in English and my area of concentration is writing. I am minoring in Workplace Writing, Communication Studies, and am thinking about also minoring in Business Administration.

**Q: What has been your favorite English class thus far? Why?**

A: My favorite English class so far has been Rhetorical Analysis and Nonfiction Prose Writing with Dr. Davis. I really liked this class because I learned a lot about rhetoric and think I will continue to use what I learned in future English classes and in my career someday.

**Q: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**

A: In five years, I hope to have graduated from Wilkes, be doing a job that I love, and working towards earning my master's degree.

**Q: If you could be any fictional character, who would you be, and why?**

A: I would want to be Violet Baudelaire from *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. This was the first book series that I really fell in love with in elementary school and always thought Violet was such a strong and intelligent character. She is a natural leader and is able to save herself and her siblings from any predicament, and because of these great qualities, I think it would be really cool to be her.

**Q: Where are you from?**

A: I am from Wilkes-Barre, PA.

## Seminar class travels to see production of *The Tempest*

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Outside of the play, to add to the charm, the theatre's own bar and café offered drinks and small meals. Also included were specialty cocktails which happened to match the theme of the show, with each drink offering its own "illusion." For example, one cocktail had butterfly pea flower with lemon added, creating a color-changing drink. Although I did not have a drink, the thought and detail certainly added to the charm of the overall experience.

Despite being a senior university student about to enter my final semester, this was my first ever class or co-curricular-related trip as a college student. All other opportunities for that kind of experience have been lost either due to the pandemic, work obligations, or schedule conflicts and cancellations. With that said, I wasn't sure what to expect going into this trip, but I left Bethesda feeling enlightened and instilled with a newfound knowledge of English literature in modern times.

The play was completely worth seeing. These moments create core memories, and they are what makes the English Department so special. I encourage all other English students to take advantage of these opportunities if and whenever they can.



# Is There Still Value in Being an English Major in Our STEM Focused World?

By Mya Corcoran

In recent years, there has been increasing value placed upon the STEM fields. Local high schools have implemented STEM programs in which students can spend the majority of their school day learning solely STEM subjects, and many colleges have increased their funding towards their STEM programs allowing for state-of-the-art equipment and facilities to be purchased. Of course, I agree that STEM is important and deserving of this increased recognition in our current era of rapid scientific and technological development. However, as our society has increased its focus on STEM, its appreciation and regard for the humanities has diminished. The number of students majoring within the humanities has steadily declined each year for the past decade as students are convinced to believe that jobs within the humanities hold no real value in society, as funding towards the field has greatly decreased at many colleges, and as there seems to be a general lack respect for those who pursue what are made out to seem futile and senseless fields of study. Yet, those within the humanities continue to advocate for their fields' importance and hundreds of

humanities. Without the humanities, we would have no literature, art, music, politics, history, or philosophy. In other words, we would lose the very basis of what makes us creative and innovative humans and instead exchange it for an unimpassioned and mechanized version of the world we know today. This is not to say that the humanities' sole purpose is to entertain us and counteract the pragmatic nature of STEM, nor am I suggesting that STEM disciplines are not creative or innovative. Rather, my point is that humanities disciplines themselves promote many of the essential skills that our society needs to function. As an English major, I have many times been subjected to the false ideology that all we do is read the works of dead authors and write essays about them. I must say that this impression is far from the truth. Of course as English majors we read and write, but we also learn a much broader set of skills including how to think critically, communicate effectively, solve problems, consider issues from diverse perspectives, and collaborate with others. In comparison to the technical skills learned by those in STEM, these skills may seem abstract and inapplicable to most modern-day jobs. This perception may be common because what STEM students learn applies much more directly to a specific job. For example, a nursing major will more than likely become a nurse, a pharmacy student will probably become a pharmacist, and a computer science major will presumably get a job in IT. The skills taught to humanities students appear much more abstract because there is often a much more diverse set of jobs that their degree qualifies them for.



Image by Freepik, accessed from <https://www.freepik.com>

thousands of college students continue to pursue their passions within the humanities each year instead of turning towards the supposedly safer STEM degree. This continued pursuit of the humanities despite its decreased appreciation brings up the question: Is there still value in the humanities?

As an English major, I absolutely believe there is value and a crucial need to continue studying the

Despite these skills seeming abstract, they translate well to modern day jobs. For example, in Dr. Hamill's Survey of English Literature course that I am currently taking, we recently read Shakespeare's *Othello*. It may be hard to imagine how reading Shakespeare prepares one for a job compared to the technical skills taught in STEM, such as an engineer learning how to build a bridge, but these skills are just as important to modern jobs. For instance, Shakespeare uses an earlier version of modern English that is quite different from the English we speak today, so reading the play forces one to deeply engage with the complexities of







## Second-Year Faces Spotlight



Meet Lily!  
Lily Hebda

**Q: Where are you from?**

A: I was born in Wilkes Barre and have lived in the surrounding area my whole life. I originally planned on leaving the area for school, but once the pandemic hit I really began to appreciate the stability and comfort of living at home.

**Q: What has been your favorite English class thus far? Why?**

A: Although the semester hasn't begun, I am very excited to be taking English 234 (Survey of English Literature II) in the Spring because of the material we are going to cover. I was excited to see Tennyson and Rosetti will be on the syllabus!

**Q: What is your major/ minor and area of concentration?**

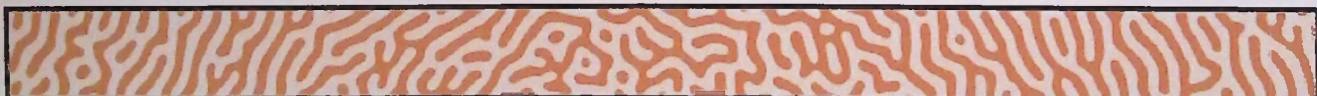
A: I am majoring in English and Secondary Education, with a minor in Women's and Gender Studies.

**Q: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**

A: In five years I hope to be teaching at the high school level. I love learning and want to pursue my education further after graduation, so I would like to expand into other academic areas that would qualify me to teach electives such as psychology or sociology.

**Q: If you could be any fictional character, who would you be, and why?**

A: Growing up, *The Phantom of the Opera* was my favorite movie, so Christine Daae is my first choice. I took voice lessons for a long time growing up, so I would be able to utilize those skills for the first time in a long while. Plus, her wardrobe is pretty sweet.



## Is There Still Value in Being an English Major in Our STEM Focused World?

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Thus, these fields actually benefit each other when they are used conjointly.

Steve Jobs argued for this conjunction between the STEM and humanities fields: "Technology alone is not enough. It's technology married with the liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields the results that makes our hearts sing." As our society continues to advance, we will undoubtedly continue to praise STEM and the scientific and technological innovations it brings us. However, we must not privilege STEM at the expense of the humanities. It is only when we recognize the importance of both STEM and the humanities that these fields will begin to be used to improve each other instead of being pursued in spite of each other.

## Inkw By Darren

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# Inkwell: The Path to Employment

By Darren Martinez

Hi folks. I'm sure most of you are aware of how bad the job market is right now. Business conglomerates sponsor think tanks to make up concepts like The Great Resignation and quiet quitting. It's not enough that most Americans can't make ends meet with a single job and a forty hour work week; we're now to be haranged about the time we aren't working either. Hustle culture has rotted the minds of these billionaire CEOs. Poverty only exists because those people don't work hard enough, in their eyes. For those of us who seek



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out higher learning to accelerate our lives, we are saddled with thousands and thousands of dollars in debt.

Admittedly, I do not have my degree yet. But I've also amassed multiple skills across my previous employments, an internship, and my studies. I am not a slouch. My initial glance upon the job market is an endless wall of jobs expecting 3+ years experience in the field. Every single job, be it a social media manager, community director, journalist, editor, or technical writer wants you to

already know what you are doing. I get it. But how do employers expect anyone to amass any sort of experience when nobody is going to hire applicants off rip?

My nicest rejection was from my dream company, Viz. I think I mostly got rejected because I don't live in the San Francisco Bay area to commute to their offices. Their rejection boiled down to "Hey, you don't really have what we're looking for right now, but we'll keep your info on file if we have need of you as we expand." Maybe they were just trying to keep

me from putting in subsequent applications, but honestly I don't mind that much. I don't think I'm moving to California any time soon. But that's another issue. Many of these jobs expect you to be within driving distance of these grand media hubs, even as remote work evolves to become more of a standard. I'd imagine if a job really wanted you, they'd probably help you find housing close to their offices. But that also might not be in their power. An indie book publishing company is definitely not going to have those sorts of resources.

My only successful employments are with freelance jobs that are cool, but do not pay the bills. So far with BrandYourself, I get maybe 6 hours a month guaranteed at \$18 an hour. I track these hours myself. Forbes Insurance is a much better gig, but it's also not enough work for stability. BrandYourself will send me blog post prompts very infrequently. I get maybe one of these every two months. Monthly, I usually research articles and create taglines to go with these articles. These taglines and articles are then posted on the social media platforms of CEOs that are partnered with BrandYourself. The taglines I do monthly, whereas the blog posts, I am lucky if they ask me to write any. Working with BrandYourself pretty much covers my filling my car with gas. I'm sure I could just keep applying to more freelance jobs so I could decide my own hours and work from home. But is there any security in working the hours that are at the whims of your bosses?

Freelancing is a great way to build experience in the industry, but it is also incredibly predatory to the worker. ScreenRant opened my eyes the most to the state of the industry. Their rates were atrocious. For writing a news article you earn \$10 flat. For every 1,000 views of your article, you get 33 cents. Super features were the most at \$30. As far as journalistic integrity, ScreenRant has none. As I researched their guides in preparation for the test they were going to have me go through, I



# Inkwell: The Path to Employment

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laughed out loud. They had an article on “Unlocking Vegeta in *Fortnite*,” which literally boils down to buying *Fortnite*’s premium currency and getting a skin. There is no unlock, no skill test, nothing worth writing about. But there it was: a 1,500 word article on literally nothing. And the person who wrote it got beans to write it. But I forged on ahead and worked on my test, confident I was a better writer than most of the people they currently employed. I wrote a mini guide on diving for sea creatures in *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* and wrote a few sentences on my thoughts on the industry and what game guides needed. And you know what? They rejected me. Good. To hell with Screen Rant. They’re a terrible company that grubs clicks with articles that don’t even have anything to say. I’m too smart for that, and I did not want to debase myself in this way. Some of my favorite writers in the gaming space, like Jacob Geller and Dan Olson, generate meaning when they write critiques. They do not write for views; rather, their videos receive views because of the quality

of their commentary. I cannot see myself farming clicks. I just wanted to write for video games in an official capacity. But now I know to aim for better venues for doing that.

I’ve tried applying to jobs I am definitely not qualified for, just to see what would happen. Usually I get ghosted. Occasionally I’ll get notifications that some hiring manager is looking at my unfinished, raw LinkedIn profile. I think the last thing I want to do is maintain a social media platform dedicated to making business acquaintances just to try and find a job. One worthwhile path is to follow your interests. Considering the fact that where you are aiming has likely been tread before, look to others in the industry. See where they have gone. In my case, manga is created and sold by humans. People inevitably found their way into that field, somehow. I tried with Viz, and there are other places I can still try. If you follow my writing trajectory, I have constantly been introducing my professors to the depth of video games. Whether in my academic work or previous editions of *Inkwell*, I want to treat

video games like they are worthy as pieces of literature. That’s my advice to you. It’s a little vague and particular to me, in this case. And I’m still working on finding my place. But what you want to do is worth taking seriously.

It’s probably hard to think about those sorts of things for a lot of you. I know when I was in your shoes, I was more preoccupied with the way my body was falling apart because of caffeine addiction and lack of sleep. I see pictures of me from freshman year, and dear god was I disheveled. I say this a lot but working out or getting some physical exercise will drastically improve your quality of life and mental health. A job or a grade doesn’t define who you are. Neither does your physique. Just take care of yourself. Invest in your own body and mind. You should be the most important person to you. It’s hard to succeed if you’re neglecting a part of you. There comes a certain clarity after working out that we are meat computer mechas who run on bioelectricity. Everything about the circumstances of being human is uncanny. Just make the most of it and put your best foot forward.

## The I Mode

By Jessica

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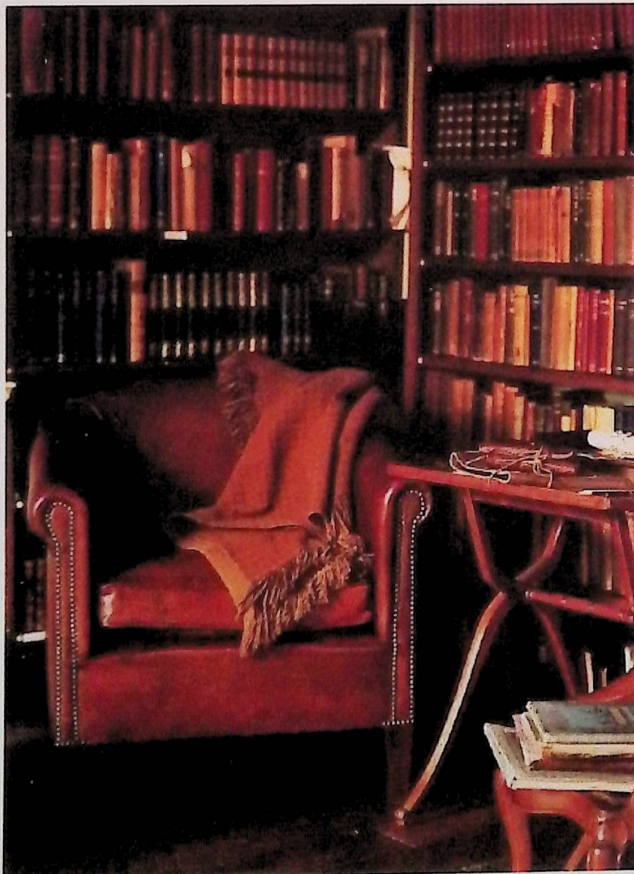


# The Importance of Space and Being: The Modern Role of the Public Library

By Jessica Van Orden

When I was young, I spent many an afternoon lost within our public library. It was housed within this incredible historic building at the time, which left visitors to twist and turn through open door frames as they stretched their necks to peruse the towering shelves overflowing with books along the walls. I would imagine that, for many of us, similar imagery comes to mind when we think of a library. One may first imagine these same endless stacks which they slowly weaved their way about, or, one may recall the distinct smell that lived within the old collection. Perhaps, you too had that one armchair beside the window that sunk in just right. Whatever these memories that surface may be, the physical space is almost always certain to be a living thing within them. It has been a playground, a classroom, a secondary home, or even a sanctuary for those who find themselves within its walls, and while the memories may feel unique—saturated in a manner only our childhoods can be—the truth is that for some the concept of what a library is has remained familiar amidst great change. Yet, that very familiarity has been the note of critique amongst voices who posit that the public library's time has finally come to a close. They consider that the work of the public library has been obviated by recent developments in technology, for they believe that *everyone* may be their own librarian if they only have the internet. With information and entertainment sources, as well as interpersonal services such as reference work, being ever more digitized, what does the modern role of the public library look like?

I would not think it amiss to note the ease and enjoyment technology has established within our daily routines in recent years. From ordering goods, to finding that particular book or movie, or even to monitoring



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our home's security, technology has made instant gratification a greater reality today than we have seen before. It has even worked to reduce historical information gaps we have seen as a society, for digitized collections and information resources are more easily accessible than former cumbersome print collections. Yet, amidst these advancements of note, an unnerving disconnect seems to hum beneath the surface. Information literacy has suffered, as one's ability to navigate and certify the material chosen is more difficult when presented with numerous resources available at our very fingertips. The truth of the matter is that as technology continues to outdate itself, and as it becomes less of a luxury and more of a requirement to exist within our society, there is a greater need for hands-on spaces that may teach, aid, and guide users through these developments. Additionally, one could argue that our dependency upon technology has left us more isolated as a society, distancing us from our physical environments. In this manner, the public library alone is the institution best fit to meet these emerging needs.

I remember first reading an article published by the National Endowment for the Humanities a couple of years ago, where they examined and explained what they considered the library's modern role in our communities. It sat with me, for they explained that our public libraries have always been, and are of the last, truly "neutral space".



# The Importance of Space and Being: The Modern Role of the Public Library

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The library alone requires no purchase, attire, or time constraint from those who find comfort and intrigue within its walls, and users may even utilize different collection materials on-site without a library card. They are space first and service second. That is why the physical space first forms within our mind when we consider the word *library*, and why technology has vastly contributed to the continued, as well as new, efforts being pursued by the library. As former, more cumbersome print collections are digitized, library space is opening up. This transition allows the library to create both enriching and literacy-building programs that they may house within the building, creating a space of collaboration and equitable opportunities. These resources include various technologies, such as virtual reality or 3D printing, as well as coding or programming services that seek out younger users within the community. These technologies, which are becoming more widely used within our professional spaces, are often more costly, creating a new digital gap where technology was once considered to be closing them. These newer technologies, such as VR devices, are expensive and only create greater means of cost risk, as manufacturers appear to have a newer model readily available in the next moment. This can only

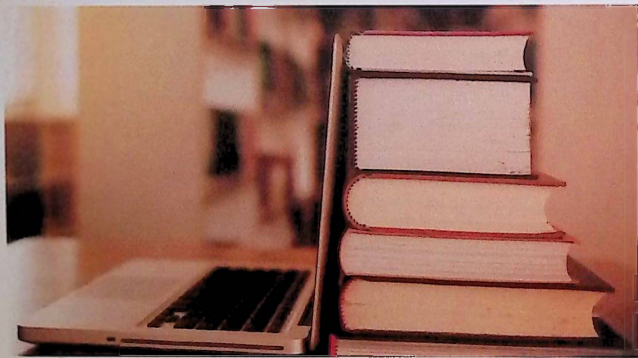


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foster frustration and fear of the idea of investing in these technologies, which are becoming required skills within our professional spaces. For, as families acquire them, they are told that their needs can only be best served by this newer, *improved* model. This reality has caused a digital literacy gap within our communities, as the right to develop these skills or create these experiences depends upon the families socioeconomic status once more. Just as the quality of early print collections depended upon a library's space and budget, the developments of equity that technology first offered in the distribution of information have come to their first gully. Even if families choose to prioritize these devices momentarily, they have to make up what they have put aside for them, while families who can afford to buy the newest models hold a monopoly of access. Thus, our public libraries allow everyone to have the space to learn how these technologies function and develop these important skills. However, it is not simply the ways that technology has been acquired or utilized within library programming, but how library staff, then, utilizes these technologies to address various needs that have evolved due to these innovations within their communities.

All communities, no matter how similar they appear, face unique struggles due to their different environments and demographics. Having spent much of my life rurally, many of the libraries I frequented were small, lively epicenters of even smaller communities. While they resembled each other a great deal physically, the needs noted and addressed varied greatly. While one public library in Kentucky focused heavily on transportation barriers, homework aid, and basic literacy development for isolated elderly users, another in Georgia focused on different programs that aided the newly forming immigrant population through language support, resume creation, and offering a space for community members to build their own collective programs. The aspect that sets this work apart from other programming, however, is its comprehensive nature. For, as noted, the public library requires little to nothing of the user base that it aims to serve. In Kentucky's case, this dynamic meant that the library gauged interest through physical mail, as many users relied upon the library's computers, and sent vehicles to pick interested parties up for the different programs. These roles become solutions after having collected all necessary data concerning any identified need.

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# The Importance of Space and Being: The Modern Role of the Public Library

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I was, thus, intrigued to learn how our own local library moved and served throughout Wilkes-Barre. I thought it might be interesting to see how these roles might mirror or differ from the more rural areas I had seen throughout my life due to the influence of the local community. I was able to speak with Mr. Rick Miller, the Executive Director of the Osterhout Free Library, and Ms. Amber Loomis, the Director of Development and Community Relations, to better learn how professionals within the field see a continuation, and expansion, of their important roles. As technology exists within our everyday lives, it becomes so ingrained within many of our lives that we may not recognize how it has created its own gaps within our communities. The realities of our covid shutdowns highlighted the large numbers of those within our communities who do not have access to the internet within their homes. As families struggled to acclimate to working and learning from home, they



Osterhout's All "FORE" Books Mini Golf Event  
Accessed from <https://www.facebook.com/osterhoutfreelibrary/>

were left to figure out how they would access those digital spaces without the public spaces they once utilized. Many libraries have been researching and implementing hotspot technologies into their circulations, enabling users within the community to borrow the device and work on what they may from the privacy of their own homes. We spoke of the program within Osterhout Free Library, which worked alongside on-site computers, to offer the most rounded approach to user needs. While the lending program allows users to create their own spaces for work, many may only have smartphone devices or tablets to work from which are sometimes difficult to properly read or fill out forms from, as these forms aren't designed to be viewed solely on these devices. Such devices also may be difficult to work on while creating professional documents, such as a resume. The library's on-site desktops enable ease of use for users within the community once on-site, while the hotspot program recognizes that having the space to work within one's own home also offers its own benefit or appeal. It may seem like a small emphasis for some, the many options that these dual programs create, but it highlights the importance of the library's position. For, access can only be equitable when all persons have the choice of where and how they create their workspace.

Aside from directly working with technology, there were many different programs or "life-skill learning" programs that were particularly intriguing to learn about or consider. The first was the Osterhout's Library of Things, which includes items such as hotspot devices, projectors, or specialized tablets, but also offers tents, badminton sets, or even acoustic guitars. These items provide the opportunity to try out new skills or plan afternoon or weekend events, such as camping or games, which encourage community building. They are interactive and work to ground us within our environments while also honing new interests and creating different experiences. Moreover, these programs even allow people to engage in different hobbies that they may have been interested in for a great deal of time without the stress of investing or prioritizing something over another. Many people may shy away from pursuing skills such as sowing or playing an instrument due to the cost of beginning the skill itself. The Library of Things, growing within many public libraries, stresses the importance of honing hobbies and collaborative works, alongside practical skill building. They work to build fully rounded individuals and support the informational and interest health of our communities. Mr. Miller, Ms. Loomis, and I also spoke of the importance that their different on-site programming may have, as it offers a space to break away from our own spaces.

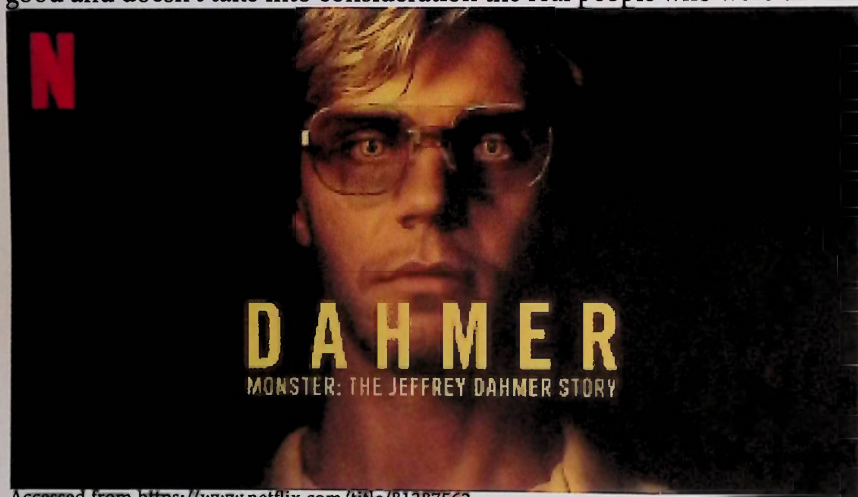


# Serial Killer Sexualization

By Juliana Lueders

The story of Jeffrey Dahmer is not a new one. It has been retold again and again in film, television, and documentaries. But something different happened after the release of Netflix's *Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story*.

After its completion on the platform, there was a striking surge of teenagers and women sexualizing Jeffrey Dahmer, going beyond Evan Peters' version of the character to defend and flatter the real-life serial killer. Now, I do not doubt that people were sexualizing Dahmer before this new series, but at least they had the decency to be a little quieter about it. While the show has been said to not romanticize his story, the fact of the matter is that this piece of media adds to the ever-growing desensitization that we as a society are experiencing. This inappropriate response to the series speaks to an ongoing disconnection from reality that this type of media inspires, allowing people to consume these shows as if they were fictional. Navigating the ethical dilemma of the true crime genre as a whole is difficult. The genre faces constant allegations of glamorizing serial killers while they respond that they are just telling the story as it is. But the problem with that is that the events they discuss aren't stories. True crime is the retelling of real people's actions that resulted in real deaths. While the idolization of serial killers in media is nothing new, there is a clear separation between real and fictional portrayals of these characters. The condition of a fictional character that performs these same actions is just that, they are a character and there are no real consequences to their actions. But portraying a real serial killer in such a way that allows for them to become idolized by one's audience is extremely harmful to the collective good and doesn't take into consideration the real people who were devastated by their actions.



Accessed from <https://www.netflix.com/title/81287562>

horrible and immoral. But that's what happens when characters like Dahmer are idolized and sexualized in the media: his actions seem less grotesque, and people are quick to defend him. Dramatic representation gives the audience an opportunity to excuse the real-life atrocities because they feel as if they know and understand him in such a way now. This is where true crime becomes dangerous as people begin to attribute their own ideas to the character Dahmer and separate that from the real person, which is the opposite of what these types of shows claim to be doing.

A similar case can be shown for another Netflix serial killer adaptation: *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile* starring Zac Efron playing the role of Ted Bundy. There is an intentional decision in casting the even more attractive actor, and there shouldn't be any surprise at the dangerous effects it creates. This is enough charisma to gain him a fanbase. Now after the show airs, people are crawling out of the woodwork to defend and fawn over the real-life killer. After the show's premiere the glasses that Dahmer wore in prison were auctioned off for a total of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

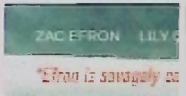
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# Serial Killer Sexualization

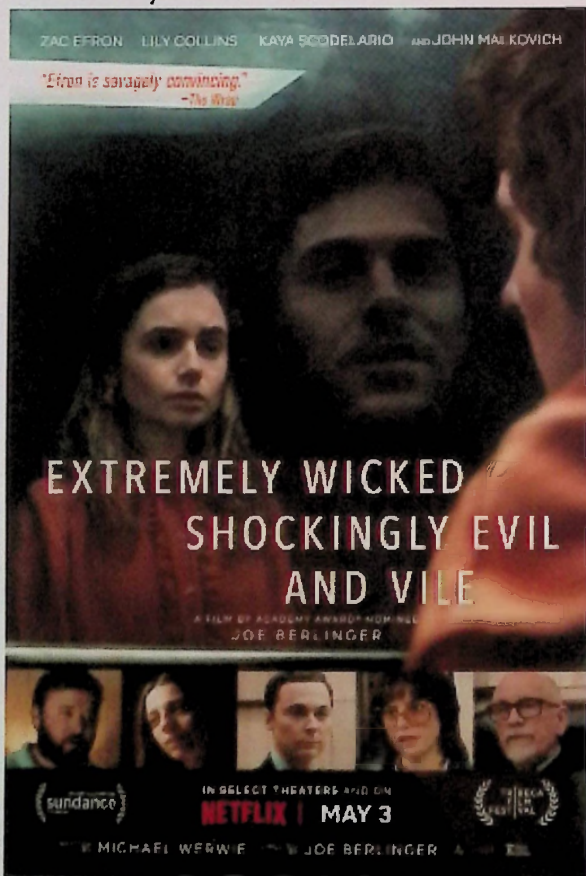
Continuation of Page 12

One could argue that this type of media is nothing new and is all around us. Shows like *Criminal Minds* and *Law and Order: SVU* showcase the worst that humanity has to offer. But the difference between media like this and media that describes itself as true crime is the fact that viewers are meant to connect with the people in charge of apprehending the individuals committing the horrible act, unlike true crime where the central focus is the person committing the crime by explaining their reasons and motives to better understand all angles of their psyche. In fictional crime media, there is a balance between gore and order that is built into each episode, and while yes, part of the intrigue comes from the disgusting lengths that the antagonist goes to, the episode is complete when they are caught and no real individual was ever harmed.

The difference between being infatuated with dark characters and themes versus the idolization of actual serial killers is the real impact that they have had on actual people. There are more than moral considerations to be made in this argument.

One concern is particularly poignant in regard to this show considering that the families of the victims were not notified of the show's creation and found out about the project at the same time it was released to the public. These people watched as the internet tore into adaptations of their experiences and recreations of their court testimonies and saw some people side with their child's murderer. They saw a portrayal of Dahmer's face on ads and billboards and on people's social media as they talked about how hot he looked in each episode.

It is valid to criticize a production company that has made such an effort to firmly embed itself in the serial killer docu-series genre. While it capitalizes on the popularity of serial killers such as Dahmer it continues to ignore the broader range of devastation that this killer caused after the murders had taken place. Intentionally or not this show sensationalizes a murderer who primarily targeted African American men and boys. And the damage to historically stigmatized communities doesn't stop there. The harm that Dahmer has done to the gay community and how people view homosexuality is staggering, as homophobes continue to associate him and his actions with the gay community. After his trial, there was a significant rise in hate crimes against gay men in the form of "vigilante justice," as people thought they could prevent the next Dahmer before he could strike. The number of murders Dahmer committed can be attributed to the people he chose to go after. These stigmatized groups were people who went unnoticed and were uncared for by the authorities. It's important to keep in mind the cruel reality that this specific story presents specifically to the black and queer communities.



The adoration of serial killers is not a new phenomenon sparked solely by this new adaptation. There has been for years a strange kind of acceptance of serial killers and a fascination with their actions based in part on their mediocre and white appearance. But in the wake of this show's popularity, before Netflix rushes off to make six more docu-series just like it, viewers should understand the impact of their entertainment. The price of this media comes at the cost of real lives that were taken, the real pain that the families are forced to relive, and the perpetuation of fame of a man who is better left dead and forgotten.

Accessed from <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2481498/>



# A Deeper Look at the Round House Theatre's Production of *The Tempest*



Kevin Mambo (Sebastian), Cody Nickell (Antonio), Kenyatta Rogers (Alonso), and Naomi Jacobson (Gonzala) in *The Tempest*.



Eric Hissom (Prospero) and Nate Dendy (Ariel) in *The Tempest*.



Ro Boddie (Ferdinand), Eric Hissom (Prospero), and Megan Graves (Miranda) in *The Tempest*.



Ryan Sellers and Hassiem Muhammad (Caliban) in *The Tempest*.

All Photos by Scott Suchman, accessed from <https://www.roundhousetheatre.org/On-Stage/Explore/The-Tempest>

## The Importance of Space and Being: The Modern Role of the Public Library

Continuation of Page 11

After having experienced covid shutdowns, as well as working or learning from home, loneliness has only increased. Even before covid, there were many instances where I spoke with people who expressed their loneliness as a physical weight on them. For most of Kentucky, the isolation is a huge factor in the other issues arising, such as poverty. Those conversations alone would illustrate how important a library's in-house programming is for the community. Moreover, it is open for all, in a space that is not looking for anything more than a person themselves has to bring to the event. It prioritizes community building and personal enjoyment, for free, in the face of a society that often views them as a subscription-based cost.



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## Can You Guess Some of Our Titles from this Semester by the Cover?



### Title Hints:

- Course: Gothic Literature** (cover accessed from <https://shereadsnovels.com/>)  
In a world where the ghosts are all too real, our sisters should pay heed to those who follow too closely.
- Course: Survey of English Literature 1** (cover accessed from <https://literariness.org/>)  
In this morality play, every soul appears to hang in the balance while Good Deeds attempts to guide.
- Course: Writing about Literature and Culture** (cover accessed from <https://abebooks.com/>)  
The song of the siren requires the peeling away of what once was to become what must be.
- Course: Medieval and Renaissance Drama** (cover accessed from <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/>)  
Introduced in the eye of a storm, the tumultuous ties within this play appear magically tangled around every new turn.
- Course: Writing about Literature and Culture** (cover accessed from <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/>)  
The exhibit of one's intention in art begs many questions, one of which may be can we aim too far?
- Course: Survey of English Literature 1** (cover accessed from <https://amazon.com/>)  
One need never fear Despair, or the grip of Error, so long as they ere on the side of Truth.
- Course: Gothic Literature** (cover accessed from <https://goodreads.com/>)  
Here, none need fear false ghosts, but rather, the tail of a Monk or Nun's garb.

### The Inkwell Quarterly Staff

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**Faculty Advisor**  
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# MANUSCRIPT UPDATE

The *Manuscript* Society is currently accepting submissions for its upcoming 2022-2023 issue!

The submission period will be open through 31 March 2023.

If you are interested, please submit your work to [magazine@wilkes.edu](mailto:magazine@wilkes.edu) with your Wilkes email.

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 Fall 2022 semester The Writing Center is offering in-person as well as online support for all members of the Wilkes community who need writing assistance.

Stop by the Alden Learning Commons, or access online support via <https://www.wilkes.edu/academics/english/the-writing-center/index.aspx>

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

## Spring 2023 Upper-Level Class Listings

Course Number/Name	Date/Time	Instructor
ENG 202: Technical Writing	MWF 10:00-10:50	Prof. Brown
ENG 222: Intro to Digital Humanities	TR 9:30-10:45	Dr. Kuhar
ENG 234: Survey of English Lit. II /WGS/&H	MW 2:30-3:45	Dr. Davis
ENG 281: American Lit. / WGS	TR 2:30-3:45	Dr. Kelly
ENG 324: History of English Lang. /DH	MWF 12:00-12:50	Dr. Hamill
ENG 336: Studies in Victorian Lit.	MW 1:00-2:15	Dr. Davis
ENG 397: Tenn. Williams & Contemporaries	TR 1:00-2:15	Dr. Stanley

### Book Cover Answers

1. *The Monk* (Matthew Lewis)
2. *Everyman* (Anonymous)
3. *The Life and Loves of a She Devil* (Fay Weldon)
4. *The Tempest* (William Shakespeare)
5. *The Shape of Things* (Neil Labute)
6. *The Faerie Queene* (Edmund Spenser)
7. *The Italian* (Ann Radcliffe)