



The Inkwell Quarterly

Volume 7

Issue 4

Spring 2013

In this Issue:

Summer/Fall Course Offerings	2
Chin Up For Chinua	2
BAH BAH BILL BLACK, HAVE YOU ANY WOOL?	3
Tim Parrish Homily to the Kirby Hall Congregation	3
Cravin' Some Quinoa Patties, Mate!	4
18th Century Facts with Dr. MA	5
Thomas Pynchon Word Scramble!	5
Senior Spotlight: Emily Yuscavage	5
A Children's Book Review: The Giver	6
Senior Splights	7
On The Value of Deviance	8
Hamil's Hunches	9
Is Poe a Friend or Foe in The Following?	10
Dude, Where's My Poetry?	11
Kuhar's Korner	11



Photo Courtesy of Miranda Baur

Hard Work Pays Off for Manuscript Society

The Manuscript Society unveiled its 2012-2013 edition of its literary magazine on April 30th in the Kirby Hall Salon. The new Manuscripts were hand-stitched, folded, cut, and sealed at Art Seen on the Square by this year's staff including **Jamie Alderiso**, **Miranda Baur**, **John Carroll**, **Kendra Kuhar**, **Vicky Hevener**, **Sarah Simonovich**, **Emily Yuscavage**, and **Gabby Zawacki**. The crew was led by bookbinder of Greenleaf Bookes, **S.L. Stitch Kester**, and given a space to work by the owner of the gallery, **Kim Coscia**. Under the advisement of **Dr. Michelle Anthony** and **Dr. Sean Kelly**, the team of Manuscript-ers managed to bring together the works of artists and writers to celebrate another year of creativity. This year's winner of Best Written work was **John Carroll** with his poem, "I Watch for Broken Glass," and Best Visual piece went to **Kat Dodson** for her photograph titled, "Welcome to the Creep Show." More copies of the magazine will be distributed throughout Kirby Hall and the Farley Library upon completion. To join the Manuscript Society staff, or to submit for next year's magazine, emails can be directed to magazine@wilkes.edu.

Summer/Fall 2013 Course Offerings

By Brittney Grizzanti

Summer Pre-session:

ENG 120 Reading The American Experience with **Dr. Kuhar**

First Summer Session:

ENG 101 Composition with **Dr. Kelly**

ENG 120 Cultural Crossroads with **Dr. Hamill**

Second Summer Session:

ENG 101 Composition with **Dr. Grier**

ENG 120 Introduction to Literature and Culture with **Dr. Davis**

EMG 281 American Lit. I with **Dr. Kelly**

Fall Session:

ENG 202 Technical Writing with **Dr. Wills**

ENG 225 Comparative Grammar with **Dr. Stanley**

ENG 228 Professional/Workplace writing with **Dr. Farrell**

ENG 233 Survey of English Lit. I with **Dr. Hamill**

ENG 282 American Lit. II with **Dr. Kuhar**

ENG 298 Adolescent Lit. with **Dr. Stamer**

ENG 342 Studies in Shakespeare with **Dr. Stamer**

ENG 393 Teach English Middle/Secondary School with **Dr. Grier**

ENG 397 Senior Seminar: Technologies of the Book with **Dr. Hamill**

ENG 398 (A) American Romanticism with **Dr. Kelly**

ENG 398 (B) Domestic Violence in Lit. with **Dr. Anthony**

Chin Up for Chinua

By Gabby Zawacki

Chinua Achebe, acclaimed Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic, passed away on March 21, 2013. Born on November 16, 1930, Achebe grew up in Nigeria where he excelled in school and became interested in world religions and African cultures, interests which are reflected in many of his works. Completing his most famous work, *Things Fall Apart*, as an undergrad, Achebe's novel gained worldwide attention in the late 1950's for its honest depiction of African culture and African history under British rule. Other famous works by Achebe include *No Longer at Ease*, *Arrow of God*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anhills of the Savannah*. Achebe's novels focus on traditional Igbo society, Christian influence, and the clash of Western and African societies, themes which he achieves through straightforward narration reminiscent of oral tradition, short stories, and folk tales. Chinua Achebe was a professor at Brown University from 2009 until the time of his death.

If you are interested in joining *The Inkwell*. Quarterly staff and/or enrolling in English 190:Projects in Writing: Inkwell, please contact Dr. Marcia Farrell (marcia.farrell@wilkes.edu) or Gabby Zawacki (gabriella.zawacki@wilkes.edu) for more information.

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By Victor

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BAH BAH BILL BLACK, HAVE YOU ANY WOOL?

By Victoria Hevener

Professor **Bill Black**'s students describe him as brilliant, charismatic, and thought provoking. Black taught this semester's section of English 203: Introduction to Creative Writing. Black is a fiction writer, though he was not always interested in writing. First interested in music, Black explains that writing first appealed to him because he wanted to learn to manage meanings. When working with language, Black explains that the author is "arranging things (words) that have meanings, and those meanings are relatively fixed. You put them in combinations so the meanings produce something beyond themselves. A note doesn't have an inherent meaning so you're not managing meanings in the same way. That's where it starts for me."

Since his interest in writing first sparked, Black has received an MFA in Creative Writing, published a number of short stories, and teaches at Johns Hopkins University

Black's interest in story as managing meanings rather than plot greatly influences the way he teaches. As a professor of creative writing, Black has the immense task of teaching different types of writers in one course. How does one utilize one class and curriculum to nurture writers varying from pop fiction writers to writers of fiction and poetry? For Black the answer lies within his focus on meaning. "Writing well requires thinking well," Black explains. He points out that, unlike more concrete subjects, writing has no standard starting place. As a result, Black approaches his lectures and workshops as an opportunity for students to think about themselves and the mode in which they understand and present their views of the world.

Black hopes to have the opportunity to return in the future, as he has greatly enjoyed his time at Wilkes.

Tim Parrish's Homily to the Kirby Hall Congregation

By Sarah Simonovich

The English Department hosted **Timothy Parrish** on Monday, April 15 as part of The Allan Hamilton Dickson Spring Writers series. The reading was held at 7:00 p.m. in the Kirby Salon and was open to the public. Parrish read excerpts from his upcoming memoir, *Fear and What Follows: The Violent Education of a Christian Racist, a Memoir*, which is scheduled for publication in September 2013. The book is about his experiences growing up in The South and his affiliation with the Southern Baptist church. It documents the foundation of prejudice and the fear which drove him to violence and bigotry.

Prior to the reading, Parrish met with students for a workshop to discuss his writings and writing process. He is also the author of *Red Stick Men*, which is a collection of short stories set in his hometown on Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He has served as a professor and director of creative writing at Southern Connecticut State University since 1994. His works have been published in many periodicals, including *New England Review*, *Louisiana Literature*, and *Shenandoah*.

The Inkwell Quarterly Staff

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Marcia Farrell

Editor-in-chief: Gabby Zawacki & Kendra Kuhar

Copy Editor: Vicky Hevener

Layout Editor: Miranda Baur

Staff Writers: Brittney Grizzanti, Emily Yuscavage, Cierra Humphrey, Jamie Alderiso

Faculty Contributors: Dr. Larry Kuhar, and Dr. Thomas A. Hamill

Cravin' Some Quinoa Patties, Mate!

By Cierra Humphrey

Yield: about 4 patties

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup uncooked quinoa
- 2/3 cup organic vegetable stock
- 1/4 tsp kosher or sea salt
- 1/4 cup shredded parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs (plus more if needed)
- 2 each eggs, beaten
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 medium pepper, chopped
- 1T olive oil, plus more for frying

Combine quinoa with vegetable stock and cook over medium heat until all the stock is absorbed. Remove from heat and set aside to cool. Heat 1 Tablespoon oil in medium skillet and sauté the peppers and onions until slightly caramelized and soft. Set aside.

Combine the cooled quinoa, peppers, onions, cheeses, salt, and some fresh pepper. Add approximately two thirds of the egg and all of the bread crumbs. Mix to combine. Add the rest of the egg or more bread crumb as needed with the end goal of a mixture that is moist enough to form into patties that do not crumble. If needed, allow the mixture to sit for a moment or two so that the bread crumbs absorb some of the moisture from the egg. Form into approximately four round flat patties.

Heat a medium size sauté pan with olive oil *just* covering the bottom over medium heat.

Carefully place the patties in the oil and cook until the bottom side is a golden brown. Flip patties and cook until brown on the underside. Remove from oil and place on paper towel to drain excess oil before serving with a side salad and poached egg.

Note: these patties freeze and refrigerate well uncooked for a quick and easy breakfast, lunch, or dinner. They are also tasty at room temperature. Feel free to add Italian herbs and spices, taco seasonings, or other veggies such as chopped spinach, broccoli, or even corn to make these even more exciting.



Our editor prefers simpler meals.

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By Jamie

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5. Tsaigar
6. Vanleic
7. Wols E
8. Samon

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18th Century Facts with Dr. MA

By Jamie Alderiso

-An African slave trade as the largest economic factor for 18thc "New World" (Americas), Europe, and Africa—all combined into something called "the Atlantic World," first called so in 1701 in Chinese guidebook, "the people of the Great Western Sea." The Caribbean & Africa played large parts in European economies because of slave trade and island goods.

-An interaction of nations from diverse explorations, trade & religious routes (not one grand colonial swoop) which resulted in many different types of interactions/interdependencies.

-An ongoing spirited conversation between critics and diverse authors. What should writing reflect or encourage? This question became central to eighteenth-century writers and lawmakers.

Thomas Pynchon Word Scramble!

Unscramble the words to reveal the names of Pynchon's novels!

1. Hte Ryicgn fo Otl 94
2. .V
3. Rvityas'g Binroaw
4. Henterin Cive
5. Tsaigan hte Yda
6. Vanleidn
7. Wols Eanerri
8. Samon dan Xinod

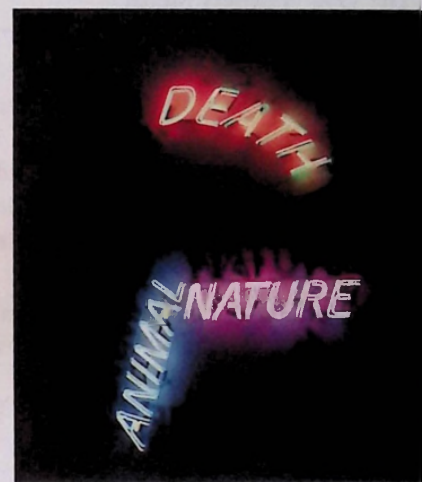


Photo Courtesy of Miranda Baur

Good luck finding the answers.

Senior Spotlight on Emily Yuscavage

By Gabby Zawacki

Graduating senior, **Emily Yuscavage**, is one cool cat with a string of great memories at Wilkes University. From walking into Kirby Hall to "class discussions that have ended in rolling waves of laughter," Emily's experiences at Wilkes have been filled with adventure, laughter, and time spent with friends.

Once she graduates, Emily plans to travel to see "the temples of Kyoto, the giant red wood forests of the West Coast, and go to the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh." After satisfying her wanderlust, Emily wants to run her own apiary. "Bees have a history in my family and being able to run my own hives and collect delicious organic honey would be amazing." Future aspirations include writing novels and "becoming a story teller" and world domination...even though "world domination sounds tedious." Her special skills include being an awesome friend, cooking, reading, and doing accents, which she doesn't "like to call a multiple personality disorder."

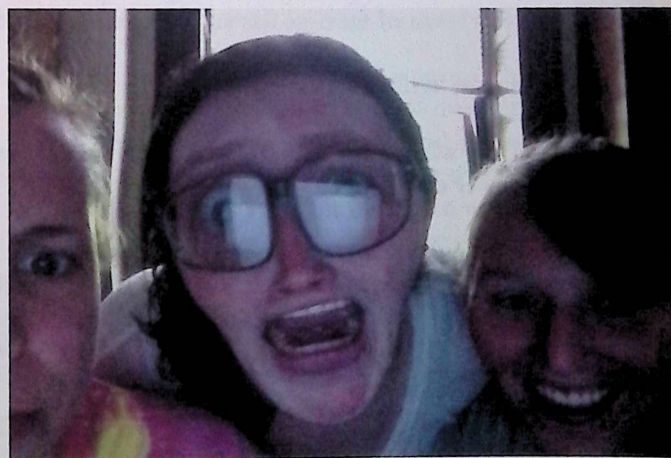


Photo Courtesy of Miranda Baur

A Children's Book Review: *The Giver*

By Victoria Hevener and Cierra Humphrey

Set in a futuristic reality where choice and emotions have been eliminated, *The Giver* follows Jonas, a twelve-year-old boy who has just been assigned his Occupation. Jonas is special and is designated as the Receiver of Memories. As the Receiver, Jonas is responsible for archiving the society's past not only in terms of events but also emotions. Records are kept in the form of memories bestowed upon Jonas by a man he calls the Giver, a man who has archived the records in his own memory since his twelfth birthday. As Jonas receives the society's records he comes to understand the values and consequences of emotion and begins to experience emotions outside of what he is given.

Louis Lowry won many awards for her work on *The Giver*, including the following:

The 1994 Newbery Medal

The 1994 Regina Medal

The 1996 William Allen White Award

American Library Association's "Best Book for Young Adults," "ALA Notable Children's Book," and "100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990-2000."

A Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Book

Booklist Editors' Choice

A *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year

From 6th and 7th Grade Students in Bloomsburg and Danville

"I really wanted a sequel! It was a great book, with wonderful elements, and wonderful suspense!"

"I feel like I learned a really important lesson about life, and the book really made me think. It was one of the best books I've read."

"[The Giver] was a book that kept me thinking about it after reading it. I wanted to talk about [the] book with others that read it also. Not many books do that for me."

"I think the most interesting thing in the book is that the Giver can transfer memories into Jonas, that the memories of this town of fairness has such a horrible past that if it is let out the town would go into ruins."

From Students at Wilkes University

"I loved *The Giver* when I read it, it really opened up a whole new concept that my young mind at the time [of reading] had never experienced."

"My opinion about *The Giver* is centered around plot and resolution. While the main character is certainly faced with a conflict he lacks power to change his situation, which creates a sort of meandering quality in the story. Furthermore, when Jonas manages to resolve his situation, the resolution is not satisfying, as the reader does not have the chance to revel in loss or success. It's not that *the Giver* is bad, certainly not. Rather, there is a lack of pay off."

Senior Spotlights

Morgan Palermo

By Miranda Baur

Graduating senior **Morgan Palermo** is a writing track English major with minors in political science and women's studies. Originally from Drums, Pennsylvania, Palermo spends her free time doing yoga, running, taking road trips, and cooking. After graduation, she'll be heading to Pennsylvania State University Dickson School of Law in State College. Some of her favorite memories from her time at school include heading to the Supreme Court to hear Oral Arguments and meet Justice Ginsberg last April with the Pre-Law society, and hearing and meeting the speakers from the lecture series on campus over the past four years. Good luck to Morgan as she ventures into the next chapter of her life story.

Stephanie Wilkie

by Victoria Hevener

When asked to describe her time at Wilkes in a word senior **Steph Wilkie** said, "Surprising." Like many other locals, Steph chose Wilkes because the school has a good reputation close to home. In fact Steph did not even expect to enjoy her time at the University; her choice to enroll was made out of the necessity to acquire a degree. Surprising is then an excellent description of her time here.

During her time as an English major Steph found a second family, including her professors who she describes as inspirational. That family surrounds Steph's favorite memories, and she attributes loving her time here to those people. Her favorite course was **Dr. Marcia Farrell's** *Study on the British Novel*, which she describes as, "hysterical and educational at the same time." Though Steph will not miss homework marathons and "those three am nights," she will miss discussions, writing, and the people that surrounded those activities.

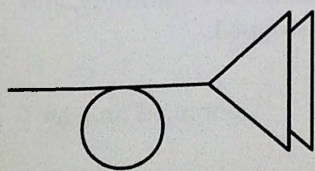
In the future Steph looks forward to teaching, catching up on sleep, and watching *Vampire Diaries*. Oh, and she'd like to have a pet fox some day.

Ashley Zerfoss

By Kendra Kuhar

Originally from and residing in Shavertown, Pennsylvania, Ashley Zerfoss is quickly approaching the end of her journey at Wilkes. As an actively involved student, Ashley has been a member of the Wilkes University Chorus and Inkwell. Additionally, she has become a part of Kappa Delta Phi, Sigma Tau Delta, and Alpha Chi Mu. When asked about her favorite professor at Wilkes, Ashley replied in saying, "I have had many wonderful professors, both in the English and Education departments." One of Ashley's fondest memories as an undergraduate student stems from Dr. Starnier's Shakespeare class in which students from the Gillingham charter school were invited to Wilkes to study and explore Bard's *The Taming of the Shrew*. Ashley explains, "I enjoyed having an opportunity to teach, discuss, and learn from these young individuals."

After graduation, Ashley plans to find a full-time teaching position at the secondary level. Once a teaching position is established for some time, Ashley plans to attend graduate school for Education Technology.



Thomas

Pynchon

Answer Key

1. The Crying
of Lot 49

2. V.

3. Gravity's
Rainbow

4. Inherent

Vice

5. Against the
Day

6. Vineland

7. Slow Learn-

et

8. Mason and

Dixon

On the Value of Deviance Or Why I Occasionally Forgo Shoes

By John Carroll

Shoes are not pleasant things. I do not like the feeling of constriction they give to my feet, nor do I think all the time and money spent buying shoes, putting them on, taking them off, cleaning and maintaining them, tying and untying knots (which, when not related to shoes is rather fun) is being used to its fullest potential. I think shoes are occasionally useful, and sometimes necessary, but are more often so for social reasons and not for practical purposes. However, this is all a matter of personal preference and thus not suitable for debate, except perhaps the real moral implications that are always concerned when resources are wasted.

There is, however, a social taboo associated with being barefoot. I don't like shoes; I like being barefoot, this is the primary reasoning for my not wearing shoes, or, rather, it was. After walking across campus barefoot for the first time I noticed, however, very interesting reactions from my peers, professors, and passerby, really most everyone seemed to notice, and many felt the need to comment. The general reaction was surprise or pity, asking where my shoes had gone or why I didn't have any etc. Upon telling them that I had shoes, but chose not to wear them, the reaction was nearly universally judgmental and derisive, with occasional instances of laughter or confusion. Some people skipped directly to derision or judgment. I had always thought the derisive responses were odd, though. I cannot fathom why whether my feet are exposed is a serious issue to anyone other than myself. This is in part because no one has ever explained to me the harm I was causing them, most simply imply that I *ought* to wear shoes with no reasoning provided.

In one instance, the response was so strong and so aggressive that I was simply taken aback, rendered unable to respond. A total stranger, passing me on the street, a person with whom I had interacted with for the first and likely last time in that brief thirty second window decided to tell me exactly how she felt about my shoelessness. She Shouted about how disgusting I was, how I should feel ashamed of myself, and that there was something simply wrong with my mind. All of this in front of her young child. What had shocked me the most was that I had seen such irrational and intense hatred before, but never in response to something so small, so simple. I was so shocked; I just looked at this woman, wordless, mouth agape, for a long moment. After a few more uncharitable words thrown in my direction, likely a response to my sheer confusion, she left muttering angrily and dragging her child who looked as confused as I was. I had simply never thought that I would cause someone so much distress by taking my shoes off.

It is vital to note that while wearing shoes, for example, is a social norm to which an overwhelming majority of individuals in this city conform, there are those, at least one, who choose or chooses to go without them. This little choice is in spite of that overwhelming social precedent, and is only one of the literally countless choices any given individual takes throughout any one given day. One chooses not only whether one will or will not get out of bed, but the exact moment. One can choose countless times to stay in bed before one chooses to get up. Each step is a choice, each breath can be a choice, each movement and each thought can be related to simple little choices.

There is similarly a social expectation on many of these choices. One is expected to get out of bed, get prepared, go to work or class, eat certain things at certain times, say certain things in response to other things, and generally behave certain ways. Each time we transgress, each time we decide to do what society does not dictate as the best, we run the risk of censure by our peers. This is more often useful than not, as the ways society teaches to do things are *usually* the result of trial and error, and are thus at least effective or efficient ways for things to be done. These teachings are valuable, however, only when they are, in fact, valuable in and of themselves. That is, it does not follow that since society is *usually* right, then we ought always to follow what society teaches. Were this the case, then those practices that society teaches that are useful would never have been found to be so, thus society without progress would not have existed at all. When those teachings are the cause of mindless conformity, and do not have any value in themselves at all then their practice is a bad thing and should be stopped.

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This is not to say that wearing shoes is a bad thing, not in the least bit. Wearing shoes is often, very usually, a good thing. It is not, however, a necessary thing at all times. Calling into question the little things, the questions of little import and deciding to deviate from the norm has a very real and special value in itself. We are creatures of habit, which is part and parcel to the problem at hand. If one gets into the habit of doing things a certain way, then it is likely that one will continue to do something that way, and this is either good or bad dependent upon the value of whatever that habit happens to be. However, there are habits to be formed in the making of choices which are quite possibly very bad. If one decides to line with society on each and every choice, then one is not making choices for themselves, and will often forget or not seriously consider their ability to choose at all. Deviance then becomes a thing to fear and hate as opposed to an opportunity to learn and to grow. Deciding whether or not to wear shoes each morning is one way of breaking this habit of conformity and forming a habit of real decision making. Practicing on the little inconsequential things makes deciding against the norm, when appropriate, on the big issues much, much easier. That is, if one wants to become a professor or a video game journalist, or a ballerina, or a pianist, if one is already in the habit of making choices for themselves and not letting others choose for oneself, then one will find making unpopular choices, ones that are most desirable to the individual, more easy to do. If one actively claims the responsibility and right to make choices for themselves, then one is more likely to make choices for one's self, and thus one is more likely to live a life more in line with their desires and not to be ruled by an oppressive system of conformist policy.

It seems wise, then, to occasionally forgo shoes in favor of walking to class barefoot (especially on warm Spring days), or to wear shorts in January, speak French to every stray cat one sees, hold pencils behind both ears but never use them, or any other silly thing one can do for no reason other than to choose to do something weird, something deviant. Were society to be more accepting of little deviations, and were we all more prepared to make those deviations when it is best for our own well-being, it seems that the world might be a more pleasant place to live in.

Hamill's Hunches

Just before Holiday Recess, on the day the real Paul Bunyans came to fell our famous silver maple ("He's up so high!" marveled Gracie, pointing to the one in the boom-truck bucket as we left for school that morning), I returned home to the sad, triumphant sight of the surprisingly huge flattened stump reifying the tree's presence as absence in the now shade-less bright of our transformed front lawn. Like Gracie, whose excitement in the moment was initially tempered by her concerns about the noise, I had anticipated the tensions between wonder and loss meted out by this scene even as we pulled away from the curb that morning, only after Gracie's third request to leave her car seat and again glimpse the man "up so high!" in the bucket. I initially fumbled to explain the context as we left, wrestling with the unexpected (and perhaps misperceived) burden of negotiating her understanding of the moment. I felt compelled to tell her that "We love trees, and we don't normally like to cut them down" but that this tree was "broken." I quickly recovered from the ridiculousness of "broken" and offered a better (or at least more accurate) explanation: "No, the tree's not really broken. It got sick, and its limbs were falling. It's too big, and it's not safe. It's unsafe, Sweetie, so we need to take it down."



Photo Courtesy of Desiree Wren

Continued on page 10

Hamill's Hunches Continued from page 9

Playing "shovel in the dirt" in the front yard that afternoon (Gracie's playtime ode to her favorite line from Bruce Springsteen's "Shackled and Drawn") affirmed all of the available logics of the morning's events, even in their flawed ambivalence: the lawn that had been rendered off-limits for weeks after the "limbàtext" incident was ours again, even if we had to dance on a tree-less stump to know it. Repaying our debts and forgiving our sins, the tree was still giving, as the story has always gone.

Indeed, behind the house, in front of the garage, still another allegory had begun to unfold. A pew (yes, a pew—pew #70) that had been rescued from a repurposed church in Wilkes-Barre was apparently now ours. My initial reaction, obviously, was to think of my next Hamill's Hunches. *The Inkwell Quarterly* had just been released that afternoon (at the exact moment of the initial realization of the anagogical meaning pondered in my last Hamill's Hunches), and the signifying process of limb to cross to text to ??? had proliferated still further. The felled wood, it seemed, had been reworked (and reworded) yet again, accreting along new structures of belief, new systems of faith, into the partial architectures of worship and thanks. Even the lack of a built-in kneeler seemed appropriate, for as much as I saw my own (future) Hunches (this one) in the grain, I wondered (later) if I weren't being told to simply sit and listen (even in my prayerful thanks).

The church-pew story doesn't really go anywhere (at least not yet—I'll keep you posted), and even its function here, as bridge into this paragraph, is marginal. That said, clearing space in my cluttered garage to make it fit (and save it from the imminent rain) did prompt deep and pained reflection. For as much as the pew was another text arrived from (a playful?) God, it was also another cross, another reminder of what I have done, and what I have failed to do. As I re-arranged the unarranged mess of my garage, I was reminded of other Hunches, of the (now finished) bathroom that once (unfinished) shamed these pages. I recognized that as much as the pew might offer my next Hunches it might just as likely emblazon the glossy pages of *The Inkwell Quarterly* years hence, when, still unrealized as yet another unfinished home improvement project, it might announce, text-less and again, my un-production of yet another Hamill's Hunches. The limb as text made flesh as pew had begun again already to mean at still another anagogical level.

It was the hope of production against the anxiety of shame.

And so it shall remain.

Is Poe a Friend or Foe in The Following?

By Kendra Kuhar

The Following, a network-television series which aired for the first time in January, tells the story of protagonist Ryan Hardy and his interactions with serial killer and antagonist, Joe Carroll. An English professor at Winslow University, Carroll specializes in Romantic literature; more specifically, he admires and is obsessed with work done by Edgar Allen Poe. Carroll's fascination with Poe is extended to such lengths in that phrases from Poe's writing, as well as details from the famous author's plot-lines, are incorporated in the murders committed by Carroll and his "cult" of followers.

Naturally, a television show based off of ideas rooting from 19th-century literature intertwined with a contemporary plot would appeal to any reader. However, such content forces the audience to question the overall relevance of Poe, and his work, in relation to the plot-line of the television show itself. A look at the early episodes of the series indicate a strong presence of Poe's work in that it uses quotation from "The Raven," synthetic replicas of Poe's head as masks, and claimed connections made by F.B.I. agents between Carroll's teaching career and events surrounding murder. Although Poe is relevant in the beginning of the series, he proves to be unimportant to the overall plot-line as the series progresses. The show is nearing the close of its first season, and Poe's relevance to the plot slowly dwindles away each episode.

Continued on page 11

...The Following continued from page 10

Using the presence of Edgar Allen Poe's work in the show has proved to function well as an advertising strategy. In fact, the show strongly appealed to me because I am familiar with how twisted and bizarre Poe's writing is, and I wanted to see what a modern-day spin would do the content. In episodes where the famous work was present, dialogue coming from the characters made it incredibly obvious of the "meaning" behind an event. (Granted this "meaning" was not always accurate, it sufficed as entertainment.) As I continued to watch, I realized that at one point I completely forgot that Poe was ever even concerned with the show; I was completely immersed in a well-written and thrilling plot-line that is independent from any 19th-century literature. As the first season approaches it's finale, it will be interesting to see if Poe's work will surface again in the plot-line of The Following in future seasons.

Dude, Where's My Poetry?

By Miranda Baur

More often than not, when I mention to someone that I'm a poet, I'm reminded that poetry is "dead." On the contrary, I see poetry-sharing events happening throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania and all the events I've attended have been inspiring and supportive. Let me plan out one month of poetry for you:

The first Friday of every month is Scranton's night to display local art and music from 6:00 to 9:00. Typically, the Vintage Theater is known for hosting open mic readings; however, to get a list and map of events, check out firstfridayscranton.com.

On your second Friday, you rest unless you're willing to venture to Clarks Summit, Elizabethtown, or Philadelphia.

The third Friday of the month is Wilkes-Barre's night to display art. Poetry readings are always hosted at the Art Seen Gallery on the Square at 7:30.

Fourth Wednesdays are open mic nights at the Library Express in Scranton at 6:30, and the fourth Friday of the month is Tunkhannock's art-sharing night, including poetry performances and open readings at the Dietrich Theater often starting a 7:00. Throughout the year, Wilkes's Manuscript Society also hosts a monthly reading. Poetry isn't dead to those who seek it.

Kuhar's Korners

A Final Exam: Five Ideas for Our Graduating Majors!

Congratulations to our English program graduating seniors! You should be proud of your accomplishments, you should feel prepared to succeed in life and in career, and you should be aware of your responsibilities going forward.

As you contemplate accomplishments at a moment of symbolic closure and grand achievement, I encourage you to consider five ideas as you imagine going forward to shape new stories beyond Kirby Hall.

"There was something critically missing from the things around him. They were unfinished, whatever that means. They were unseen, whatever that means."

Don DeLillo, Falling Man

Continued on page 12

Kuhar's Korner Continued from page 11

You possess the skills, talents, and values that will help you to succeed – help you to make meaning – in your life ahead. As he runs from the collapse of the North Tower in Don DeLillo's 911 novel *Falling Man*, Keith Nuedecker realizes that something was "critically missing from the things around him. They were unfinished, whatever that means." Your degree in English has provided you with writing and research skills, interpersonal and presentation skills, and critical thinking and collaborative skills. Your work prepares you to understand the importance of cultural diversity, to respect the dignity of all people, and to accept the responsibility that you need to contribute to society. You are entering a challenging world where false meanings are sometimes promoted or appear fully authorized. You are prepared to think through the haze of false meanings, to think creatively and innovatively about what life means in this complicated world. Use your skills to make meaning for yourself and for others. Know that you enter a world where you live your values when you respond to the ubiquitous question, "What does that mean?" You are prepared to do so.

"Hold your hand up in front of the flame. Don't let it go out."

Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*

You need to lead. In Cormac McCarthy's apocalyptic novel *The Road*, a conversation between a father and a son confirms importance of accepting the responsibility of leading, of being one of the "good guys." The father-son conversation begins with the son asking a question of leadership:

"What are we going to do?"

Hold your hand up in front of the flame. Don't let it go out. . . .

I know you're scared. That's okay. I think there may be things in there and we have to take a look. There's no place else to go. This is it. . . .

Okay. This is what the good guys do. They keep trying. They don't give up."

Unlike McCarthy's protagonist, let's hope your future will not require you to live through an apocalypse; however, you will need to prepare yourself, like the father in McCarthy's story, to keep the fire burning, to ask others to help keep it burning. In other words, you should reflect on the importance of leading through times of adversity in life and in career. You should also reflect on the need to celebrate the fire's warmth!

"The puppet master, open-mouthed, wide-eyed, impotent at the last, saw his dolls break free of their strings, abandon the rituals he had ordained for them since time began and start to live for themselves; the king, aghast, witnesses the revolt of his pawns."

Angela Carter, "The Bloody Chamber"

You can do it: You can get beyond the limitations of the roles given you. Our fictions tell us about how we can rewrite the roles we're supposed to play. Angela Carter's short story "The Bloody Chamber" retells a fairytale in order to redistribute the power networks that inform choice for the story's young female protagonist. When this woman finds herself in a loveless marriage to a sadistic murderer, she enters a forbidden room and discovers the possibility of her doomed fate. She refuses the story. She acts to rewrite her role in a revised story that recasts her life. She's able to do this because she is self aware about the strengths that she possesses as a woman who refuses to be trapped in a gender-defined role. Get beyond the stories that tell you about your limitations. You can do it. It begins with imagining, or reimagining, how you will shape who you will become after graduation. As Angela Carter said about her desire to rewrite the stories that told her who she was, "I am all for putting old wine in new bottles, especially if the pressure of the new wine makes the old bottles explode." I'm not sure about the exploding wine bottles – but you get the point: You make your future. You can do it: Be confident to challenge yourself, to reach beyond the limitations of the roles you're cast in, and to write your own endings to the many stories you will live.

Kuhar's Korner's Continued from page 12

**"And I let the fish go."
Elizabeth Bishop, "The Fish"**

You have more work to do. As you prepare to graduate, celebrate your accomplishments. But prepare to do more. In the poem "The Fish," Elizabeth Bishop feels wonder and astonishment at catching the "battered and venerable" fish. She stares and stares at the fish and begins to understand that the fish has lived a long story as revealed in the many hooks in its mouth: "[In] a lip / . . . / hung five old pieces of fish-line, / or four and a wire leader / with the swivel still attached, / with all their five big hooks / grown firmly in his mouth." As English graduates, you are, perhaps, "battered." You have accomplishments that show, like badges, your accomplishments. Be proud, but look ahead. Possess an awareness that you have more work to do. Be patient and disciplined in your efforts to move forward in your stories. But know that you need to go forward. Like the fish in Bishop's poem who has earned badges of honor, your accomplishments are negotiated against an awareness of the larger world around you. You should, like Bishop's speaker, feel a kind of "victory." But it's winning with an awareness of a reality – a future "rainbow" – that can only be realized by moving beyond the current story.

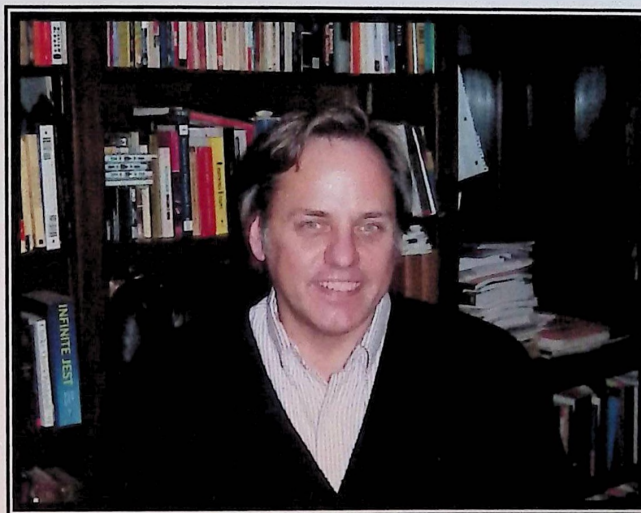


Photo Courtesy of Cierra Humphrey

**"I doubted if I should ever come back."
Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"**

You have a home in our program – Plan to return. Even though you're leaving Kirby Hall for now, know that you can return. Frost's speaker in "The Road Not Taken" contemplated how going forward with decisions in life – a kind of graduation – requires a self awareness about the possibilities for returning: "Yet knowing how way leads to way / I doubted if I should ever come back." Unlike Frost's speaker, you should plan to come back. We need you to return. We need you to share your stories because they tell us who we are. We need you to return so we can tell you who we have become and where we are going. Whether it's an alumni event or a departmental occasion, plan to come back to the faculty you worked with, the friends you shared ideas with and the place that defines *who we are*.

If anyone is interested in writing for *The Inkwell* please contact:
Dr. Marcia Farrell at marcia.farrell@wilkes.edu or Gabby Zawacki at gabriella.zawacki@wilkes.edu

