English Studies Symposium

English 2.0:
Discoveries and Recoveries

Tennessee Tech University
March 27, 2010
English 2.0: Discoveries and Recoveries

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Acknowledgments

The planning committee for the Tennessee Tech University English Studies Symposium would like to thank the following people and organizations: English and Education faculty members for chairing panels and speaking; the University Bookstore for its donation of folders; Ms. Linda Fisk and Ms. Amy Foster in the English office; and the Department of English and Communications and the Office of Graduate Studies for their financial support.

Finally, we would like to extend special thanks to Dr. Betsy Smith for her keynote address and Dr. Tony Baker for his professional development workshop.

The Planning Committee:

Tony Baker          Robert Cloutier          Elizabeth Robinson
Schedule and Room Guide

8:00-8:45  **Registration** (Henderson Hall 10)

8:45-8:55  **Welcoming Remarks** (Henderson Hall 205) – Dr. Jack Armistead

9:00-10:20  **Session One**
- Teaching: The Cutting Edge (Henderson Hall 316)
- It’s All About the Students (Henderson Hall 307A)
- Victorian Ghosts (Henderson Hall 308)
- Outsiders and Oddities (Henderson Hall 305)
- Creative Writing: Nonfiction (Henderson Hall 216A)

10:30-11:15  **Keynote Address** (Henderson Hall 205)
Dr. Betsy Smith, Tennessee State University
“TECHNOLOGY --> Research / Teaching / Service”

11:15-12:15  **Lunch** (Roaden University Center – Dining Commons)

12:15-1:15  **Professional Development Workshop** (Henderson Hall 205)
Dr. Tony Baker, Tennessee Technological University

1:30-2:50  **Session Two**
- Writing Center 2.0 (Henderson Hall 216A)
- Dynamic Writing Classrooms (Henderson Hall 305)
- Bildungsromans, Whiteness, and Colonial Discourse (Henderson Hall 308)
- Galactic Hitchhikers from the Grave (Henderson Hall 316)
- Creative Writing: Poet’s Muse (Henderson Hall 307A)

3:00-4:20  **Session Three**
- Good Ol’ Lit, Neat with a Twist (Henderson Hall 308)
- Putting the Pop (Culture) in Reading (Henderson Hall 216)
- Taboo (Henderson Hall 316)
- Creative Writing: Fiction (Henderson Hall 305)
Abstracts

Session One (9:00-10:20)

Teaching: The Cutting Edge: Session Chair - (316)

Discovering the 4G Student Through Progressive Learning Techniques
Dawn Bell Fears, Nashville State Community College

Technology plays a major role in the classroom today and it has transformed the way we communicate to students and disseminate information. Over the past decade, technology has increased significantly in higher education consequently the way we teach has experienced a paradigm shift in the college classroom. The 4G student is described as an early adopter of technology, a social networking guru, and a student that embraces a kinesthetic classroom. With the advances in technology coupled with the demand for a more responsive instructor, a progressive classroom has a profound impact on a student’s future. This research investigates the following questions:

• How does progressive teaching positively impact student success in college?
• How do text messaging and other technologies impact the college classroom?
• Do non-traditional students perform better in a progressive environment?

First, I will identify progressive teaching methodology as it relates to the college classroom today. Next, I will identify the benefits of text messaging and identify how it impacts college students, professors and the learning environment. I will look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of introducing this technology to your classroom as a means of communication and learning for the 4G student. I will also identify specific tasks necessary to implement a progressive learning program. The research includes studying the non-traditional and underrepresented student (e.g., older adults returning at least 10 years after high school or an international student new to US classroom and culture). Ultimately, my goal is to provide professors with the pedagogical tools that will be critical for student success in the nontraditional classroom. I believe this will provide significant benefits to 4G students from these populations who dream of attaining a degree from a community college or a four-year institution.

Exploring New Worlds: Using Second Life, Podcasting, and Texting with American Literature Students
William M. Teem, Chattanooga State Community College

Imagine having a group of students leading the entire class through a Poe graveyard they have constructed which not only includes good information about Poe, but a Poe library where one could thumb through Poe’s complete works. Enter a class where the professor sits down individually with each student and carefully goes over each reading assignment. And if there is a last minute change in plans for the class or an important announcement that needs to be made the students will all receive an instant text on their cell phones. Using readily available and free technologies, this presentation will demonstrate how certain Web 2.0 tools have been used to enhance the teaching and learning in one Professor’s English classroom. We will see how students have worked in groups and creative information-rich research projects in the virtual world of Second Life. We will also examine how podcasting in the classroom has benefited students. Finally, we will look at how to get students attention by easily reaching them on the one device they always carry with them. This
presentation will move beyond the theoretical and offer practical advice to incorporate any or all these strategies into the curriculum.

**Immediacy in the Classroom**

Scott Christen, Tennessee Tech University

The quality of the communication between the instructor and the students is an important factor in teaching. Communication between students and teachers is no longer limited to the classroom. Email, course management systems, Facebook, instant messaging, texting, etc… are increasing communication opportunities, but all of them have rules and expectations that instructors need to understand. With the increase in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), instructors need to address certain CMC issues to increase the student’s sense of immediacy. Immediacy refers to communication strategies that engage individuals in communication thus reducing social distance between them and foster feelings of closeness. Immediacy has been linked to student motivation and cognitive learning. Thus immediacy strategies are important to all classroom communications. This presentation will discuss various communication strategies and ways in which to increase the effectiveness of communication in-class and online.

**It’s All About the Students:** Session Chair – (307A)

**Universal Authorship and the Implications of “Living” Online**

Jessie Daniels, Tennessee Tech University

Ironically, as Universal Literacy is still a looming problem in our world, Universal Authorship is rapidly becoming an ever present reality. Students are already unacknowledged authors in many ways within their online networks; it is helpful to make them aware of the contributions they are making to their online community and recognize the significance of such interactions. This presentation will offer a brief history of how technology has evolved to offer such possibilities and examine the social implications of such rapid changes in communication. Problematic issues such as the definition of author vs. artist, authority, and identity creation will be analyzed. The audience may participate in a discussion about using these types of technology in the classroom and will receive a list of resources about technological tools of interest.

**Heroes, Hellions and Hags: Harnessing Celebrity Culture in the Composition Classroom**

Wyeth O. Burgess, Belmont University

Inundated with images and sound bites of pop stars, news pundits and disgraced athletic champions, our students’ youthful perceptions and aspirations about themselves and their futures are molded by contemporary celebrity culture. Much of voluntary student reading, I find, is celebrity based. For the past three spring terms I have built my Third Year Writing class around this common fascination with celebrity. At the center of a wheel whose spokes include history, politics, business, religion, psychology, and literature, celebrity culture is a fertile interdisciplinary subject, one rich in both primary and critical texts. My paper explores my use of this pervasive subject as a vehicle for teaching both writing and critical thinking beyond the introductory level and how it has enhanced student success in analytical thinking and research writing. As eager consumers and members of cyber communities, students are experts on certain aspects of the mass media’s celebrity machine unfamiliar to the professor and are thus eager to take an active role in the classroom and in research activities. In addition, as juniors, students must demonstrate some self reflection on this
topic and evaluate the function of celebrity in their major fields—however subtle—and what their observations imply for their futures.

**Breaking the Ice: Practical Solutions for the ESL Classroom**
Rachel M. Robinson, University of Memphis

Assembling an ESL Classroom around Authentic Assessment provides teacher opportunities to measure student's learning through meaningful instructions. Using icebreakers to start conversations help bring students closer to real-world applications of knowledge and can better prepare students for life. There are many different activities that fall under the umbrella of authentic assessment which will be discussed and demonstrated in this presentation.

**Victorian Ghosts: Session Chair – (308)**

**Jumpy Jane: A Gothic Feminine Heroine?**
Caroline Sapp, Tennessee Technological University

Charlotte Brontë creates a gothic feminist heroine in *Jane Eyre* that allows her main character to have the wish fulfillment fantasy of a nuclear family, prosperous inheritance, and feminized husband. Brontë implements supernatural elements into her Gothic novel, which permits readers to explore the inner workings of a Victorian novelist in the nineteenth-century who constructs the character of Jane to be the dream of every Victorian woman.

Brontë, like many other female writers of the Victorian age, implement the poor and orphaned plain child who prevails over her adversaries in the end with wealth, happiness, and an ideal existence. She uses supernatural elements, paranormal beings, and forbidding settings in her novel in order for Jane to preserver over the unnatural occurrences she must face in order to live her fantastical life as an affluent wife and mother. Jane must overcome many obstacles and then return to her beginning spot as a changed woman. She prevails over crazed vampires, possible witches, and her dead uncle’s ghost in order to triumphant and to develop into a gothic heroine who succeeds to become the virtuous and equal partner to her husband, Mr. Rochester.

Jane is the heroine who karate chops all of her paranormal and human adversaries innocently and passively in order to become Brontë’s gothic feminine heroine. Readers see how Brontë incorporates the Gothic features into her novel while constructing her character to overcome her own ghosts and demons of her past; thus, establishing Jane in a fantasy life with the cauterized Rochester whom eventually turns out to be her husband and equal creating the perfect nuclear family of the Victorian age.

**Creating a Victorian Fairy Tale: Popular Mythology in *A Christmas Carol***
James Hamby, Middle Tennessee State University

In order to create the story of *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens relied on many archetypal narrative paradigms and mythological characters that were familiar to the popular imagination of the time. The main structure of the plot, that of a man who takes an enchanted trip and redeems himself by changing his wicked ways, is a common formula in fairy tales. Furthermore, all of the supernatural beings that visit him are based on traditional mythological beings: Jacob Marley is based on popular notions of ghosts, The Ghost of
Christmas Past is inspired by German folk stories, The Ghost of Christmas Present is a reworking of Father Christmas, and The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come is a representation of the Grim Reaper.

Dickens’s use of fairy tale motifs is not limited to *A Christmas Carol*. He in fact uses traditional fairy tale structures throughout his work as a way to find stability in an uncertain age. In so doing, he anticipated the work of many modernist writers, such as James Joyce, who also looked to the past for guidance in an increasingly unsettled world.

**Outsiders and Oddities: Session Chair – Tony Baker (305)**

*A Humument: Treated Time and Forms of Art*

Kevin Burmeister, Tennessee Tech University

Divorced as its form must be from the tastes and methods of its predecessors, Tom Phillips’ *A Humument* nevertheless unfurls a fragment of life whose themes echo those of more familiar (and “stable”) literatures: love, loss, death, despair, endurance. Culled from the text of a neglected Victorian novel, Phillips’ work pieces together an entirely new story about an artist, Bill Toge, who seeks doggedly to win a woman through his artistic aspirations and creations. Toge’s artistic ambition and outlook constitutes his attempt to confront the instability of the past, present, and future, and—following Phillips himself—to carve his own identity out of their larger ambiguities. Evidenced by its physical situation (the text of *A Humument* is indelibly embedded within a historical document) the temporal immediacy of the work itself reinforces the intensity of Toge’s personal longing. A work of art itself composed atop, beneath, around, and through a preexisting artistic production, *A Humument* itself becomes evidence of its own thesis: that time alters art, and art, time. Phillips’ playful approach to time’s destructive force and the artist’s catalogue of possible responses bears the weight of close reading, and a temporal study of his work might provide its viewer-readers another opening into this complex image-text.

**Transcending Student Resistance to the Transparent Eyeball and Other Oddities**

Arden Jensen, Lee University

For most students, the American Transcendentalists are difficult to understand and really only interesting as they are a prelude to the fun stuff—the American Romantics. However, not only is an understanding of the Transcendentalists important in order to understand American history and literature, but I believe that students can become engaged with and appreciate Transcendentalist writers. My paper explores how these writers can be introduced in such a way that the students will understand and enjoy Transcendentalist texts.

**Young Adult Literature, Literary Criticism, and Scholarship: Why We Need to Think “Outside the Classroom”**

C. Elizabeth Allen, Madisonville Community College

Young adult literature (YA lit) continues to be a rapidly-developing genre, branching out of the K-12 classroom setting and into the realm of higher education. With literary publications such as the *ALAN Review* that are primarily focused on YA lit, teachers can peruse scholarly criticism of current YA titles, as well as read benefits for and outcomes of using such texts in their classroom. But should scholarly research into YA lit be limited to its use in academia (particularly, in the K-12 setting)? I plan to discuss the current split in YA lit criticism: scholarly research for classroom use, and scholarly research for growth of
the genre. I will explain why literary critics must break from the perspective of “classroom use only” scholarship and critique YA works through the same lenses used for studying contemporary literature. I will also show how this advancement will essentially come full circle to not only aid in the growth of the genre, but also the students’ understanding of literary criticism in the classroom.

Creative Writing: Nonfiction: Session Chair – (216A)

Hobbies and the Importance of Self: The Balloonists and Defining a Revolutionary Marriage
Samantha Day, Western Kentucky University

A Discriminating Palate
Julia Watts, South College

Keynote Address (10:30-11:15) Room 205
“TECHNOLOGY --> Research / Teaching / Service”
Dr. Betsy Smith, Nashville State University

Lunch – Roaden University Center (11:15-12:15)

Professional Development Workshop (12:15-1:15) Room 205
Dr. Tony Baker, Tennessee Tech University

Session Two (1:30-2:50)

Writing Center 2.0: Session Chair – (216A)

Writing Center 2.0: Upgrading Old Technologies to Discover New Methodologies
Ms. April Benson, Ms. Rhonda Kavan, Ms. Leah Soule, Tennessee State University

The Tennessee State University Writing Center was infused with technology in 2009. Since the implementation of computers redesigned the writing center as a dedicated computer lab, the staff was able to incorporate technology seamlessly into tutorials, use Desire2Learn to rebuild the Virtual Writing Center, and create a variety of versatile, cross-disciplinary workshops. The incorporation of these technologies better meets the needs of our students because writing is quickly evolving into a technological skill.

Writing with technology is also becoming a social endeavor, and having the Writing Center double as a computer lab provides opportunities for students and tutors to support each other’s learning. The revised Virtual Writing Center in D2L affords greater access to tutorials and personal assessment because students can review tutorials at home on their own.
time or with a tutor in the Writing Center. With access to technology, writing workshops have become mobile and can be easily modified to meet the needs of individual students or entire classes.

**Dynamic Writing Classrooms: Session Chair – (305)**

**It's Practically Magic: Using *The Dresden Files* to Teach Critical Analysis and Argument**
Holly Tipton, Middle Tennessee State University

The presenter explains how she utilizes *The Dresden Files*, both the popular novel series by Jim Butcher and the adaptation of the series into a television show, in her freshman composition course on research and argument. This “pop-lit” series, which focuses on the adventures of a large cast of supernatural and science-fiction characters, isn't a traditional choice for literature in the writing classroom—but the characters' struggles with their identities in an ever-changing and more dangerous world appeal to students and provide a safe-haven for students to begin critically analyzing real-world issues in the novel and constructing written arguments based on their analysis and research into these same issues of “otherness” and ethical systems. Students are also asked to think in terms of multiple modalities by the use of writing assignments that ask them to analyze and argue about the television adaptation of the series, and how pop-lit functions beyond the page by explorations of the Internet fan community. This presentation also explores the pitfalls encountered (due to the nature of the novel’s sci-fi genre) when using this approach in the writing classroom, and poses questions of whether writing instructors should privilege texts such as these that take students out of their comfort zones.

**Unpublished and Unflat: Rethinking Research in a Freshman Composition Course**
Catherine Cooper, Middle Tennessee State University

If Angela Lunsford takes the stance that “everything’s an argument,” then Bonnie Stone Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater would probably say, “Everything’s a researchable document.” These authors of *FieldWorking*, an ethnography-based composition textbook, encourage instructors and students to work with unpublished documents and “unflat stuff” as research materials for ethnographic writing. In a *FieldWorking* classroom, unpublished sources to collect and analyze include brochures, flyers, menus, signs, and scrapbooks. Unflat sources to be mapped, photographed, and recorded include places, people, and artifacts. Dumpster-diving, attic-sacking, and coffee-talking are encouraged in order to uncover one’s research materials. The presenter will explore research techniques used in her “Ethnography and the University”-themed Research and Argumentative Writing course in Fall 2009. Non-traditional research methods discussed and practiced included everything from in-class informal writings to a final “mini-ethnography”—a ten-page essay portfolio plus multi-media presentation. The presenter will consider how using unpublished and unflat resources encourages creative research and discourages plagiarism. The presenter will also consider challenges faced, especially considering willingness of students to “get out there” in order to find the “unflat stuff” and the instructor’s methods of assigning and assessing such research while also fulfilling departmental guidelines.

**Abandoning the Traditional Research Paper: How Formalizing the Research Process Can Benefit Student Writers**
Julie Myatt, Middle Tennessee State University

Presenter three discusses her decision to abandon the traditional research paper in favor of a series of related writing assignments that breaks the research process into separate steps culminating with the completion of a researched essay. Drawing on the work of theorists
such as Lev Vygotsky and Gerald Graff, presenter three argues that many college students would benefit from greater transparency and guidance as they seek to master the conventions of academic discourse. Rather than assigning three or four research essays throughout the course of a semester, the presenter proposes that assigning a variety of formal writings (such as summary and response papers, annotated bibliographies, and exploratory essays) allows teachers to introduce students to specific components of academic research at various points throughout the semester, thus making academic discourse more accessible for students and helping them become more effective researchers and writers. Specifically, the presenter outlines her current approach to teaching Research and Argumentative Writing, reflecting on the potential benefits and challenges of such a pedagogy, noting students’ reactions to the assignments and their sequence, and highlighting issues for other instructors to consider before adopting a similar method.

**Bildungsromans, Whiteness, and Colonial Discourse: Session Chair – (308)**

"The Story of an African Farm" and the Failure of the Colonial Bildungsroman
Jennifer Crocker, Murray State University
Bildungsroman story arches simply do not work within a colony, and break down even faster within a South African colonial context. Jed Esty, within his essay entitled “The Colonial Bildungsroman: The Story of an African Farm and the Ghost of Goethe,” attributes this lack of progression through the “pervasive political and economic fact of imperial time: the colonies do not – cannot – come of age under the rule of empire” (426). Esty's conclusions are sound, yet he could pursue them much farther. In my paper, I explore the late-Victorian concept of the New Woman within Olive Schreiner's The Story of an African Farm and her character of Lyndall. I detail the different steps of a bildungsroman and further explain how Lyndall does not get to fulfill any of her relational goals because she is both a woman and a member of a colony. Lyndall would have classified as a New Woman had she been living within the European continent. Her South African heritage keeps her living the life that she would have wanted.

On the Surface and In the Skin: Looking & Living White, Feeling (Palpably) Black in Jessie Redmon Fauset’s Plum Bun and There is Confusion and Nella Larsen’s Passing
K. Danielle Edwards, California State University & Nashville State Community College
The phenomenon of passing is commonly explored in Black literature of the early twentieth century. Yet scant attention has been paid to holistically analyzing the underlying Black identification punctuating the journey into – and gradual retreat from – Whiteness, even when such a step, in some cases, seems practical and pragmatic, if not morally and ethically defensible. Eschewing sensationalism, here the focus shifts to “passing” characters’ foundational, kindred connection to Blackness. Mentions and markers of a spiritual and emotional attachment to Blackness persist and perpetuate even when suppressed by the veneer of Whiteness. While their externality may court favor and help them find a conditional sense of freedom, they in great measure cannot – and do not wish to – completely escape the ethos of their African-American inheritance. Indeed, inner struggles and compulsions show they can’t shake off its pathos, either. An analysis of Jessie Redmon Fauset’s novels Plum Bun and There Is Confusion and Nella Larsen’s Passing show that what is presented on the surface cannot always be correlated with what transpires in the skin. The act of being constantly in search of, longing for and struggling against an African-
American source that consistently beckons – and belongs – to them suggests that the idea of the tragic mulatto is not merely iconic, it’s ironic.

Almost the Same, but Not Quite: Depicting the Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse through the Inversion of the “Other” in Jamaica Kincaid’s *A Small Place*
Philip M. Shafer, Middle Tennessee State University

I explore how Homi Bhabha’s colonial/postcolonial theories of ambivalence are depicted in Jamaica Kincaid’s *A Small Place*. While Kincaid accomplishes this portrayal of Bhabha’s ideas through a variety of textual methods, I focus my discussion primarily on her various inversions of the typical Eurocentric “othering” paradigm that has for so long permeated colonial/postcolonial discourse. Essentially, Kincaid’s text functions as a novella-length appropriation of a tourist guide of her native Antigua; however, in this case, it is not the Antiguans who are “othered” or belittled for being different. Instead, it is the tourist, the original colonizers, even the reader. While it is certainly important that a work like Kincaid’s *A Small Place* is studied so that we may extend the canon to include more colonial/postcolonial works and perspectives, it is just as vital that we study it so that the very definition of what is and is not accepted as a colonial/postcolonial text can continue to be debated. In this way, Kincaid’s use of effective rhetorical devices as weapons of counterethnocentric discourse can be illuminated as both a potent example of West Indian literature as well as further silage for many of the current colonial/postcolonial arguments.

**Galactic Hitchhikers from the Grave: Session Chair – (316)**

“Multiplicities of the Past” in *Battlestar Galactica*
Gary Gravely, Middle Tennessee State University

The “multiplicities of the past” in the science fiction series *Battlestar Galactica* will be explored in this analysis. The history of the wars between the Cylons and their human creators along with the religious prophecies regarding the future depicted in the series can be analyzed as a rendering of Marxism, counterhistory, and radical culturalism within the confines of science fiction and modern American television. The work of left-wing British historian E.P. Thompson will be used as a framework from which to examine the remake of a cheesy seventies television show into a philosophical and political commentary of the first decade of the twenty-first century. This television series, airing from 2003 to 2009, tells of the survivors from the Twelve Colonies as they seek a mythical home called Earth after almost being annihilated by the artificial lifeforms they themselves created. Major issues of the Bush administration including 9/11, terrorism, insurgency, and religion are examined in this fictitious world using a Marxist paradigm. This setup allows the viewer the opportunity to see the impact of authorial viewpoint and purpose on both history and counterhistory. I hope to relate how a fantastic setting like the universe of *Battlestar Galactica* can serve as a textual tool for authors to communicate political commentary.

**Blood and Biting Social Criticism From Beyond the Grave: How EC Comics Picked Up Where Superhero Comics Left Off**
Brian Curtis, Nashville State Community College

With the inception of American comic books, in the 1930s, young artists and authors had a new outlet for creativity and social criticism. Since the format appealed to the young, it fell under the radar of many people. However, early Superhero comics acted as a social critique for 1930s problems such as city overcrowding, slumlords, racism etc. During World War II,
comics changed to pro-American propaganda. After the war, comics came under fire from Dr. Frederick Wertham and other groups for being un-American, promoting homosexuality, and indulging children’s violent tendencies.

The horror and science fiction comics of the 1950s, mostly from EC Comics, subverted the authority of Eisenhower’s America and nuclear family values to paint a vivid and grim picture of the social problems plaguing America. EC Comics provided an outlet for social criticism while the superhero comics devolved into Pro American propaganda.

My essay will analyze the 1950s comics of EC as well as the prevalent superhero comics and how each played a role in social criticism of the time. This social criticism and the backlash that followed helped to create the modern graphic novel landscape that mixes all genres to create a hip stirring critique of our culture and values.

Don’t Panic! It’s Only Marxism
Audrey Peters, East Tennessee State University

The five books that comprise *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* have been a major pop-culture phenomenon for decades, but they are more than mere entertainment: they are concise and pointed criticisms about the nature of western society. In this series, Douglas Adams explores the problems inherent in bureaucratically-minded societies, as well as those which hold money as the highest good. He also deals with issues of inefficient governing systems, apathetic populations, the systematic exploitation of the working class, and the unforeseen consequences of rash political decisions.

In my paper “Don’t Panic! It’s Only Marxism,” I explore the ways Douglas Adams uses Marxist critique in his social satire. Although I uses textual evidence from all five of the novels in the series, I focus on Marvin the Paranoid Android (as an example of the reified worker); the Vogons (as an example of the capitalist State); and the Golgafrinchans (as an example of bureaucratic governments). Through the application of Marxist criticism, Douglas Adams’ world comes alive—and becomes much more than a mere science fiction story. The series is revealed as social commentary as relevant and biting as that of Jonathan Swift.

Creative Writing: Poet’s Muse: Session Chair – (307A)

Departure
Caroline Malone, South College

*Psychrolutes Marcidus*
Morgan Oldacre, Tennessee Technological University
Session Three (3:00-4:20)

Good Ol’ Lit, Neat with a Twist: Session Chair – (308)

Digital Scriptoria: The Implications for Enhanced Research
Ben Taylor, Eastern Kentucky University

Classrooms and research-driven essays depend on finding the appropriate source to inform and set context for discussion, be it a presentation or a written essay. Such emphasis on past literary and scholarly work is requisite for directing future study and informing it of its past. This essay assesses the need for, and benefit of, the addition of software based and web based editions of medieval manuscripts in university libraries as well as in medieval studies classrooms. Such visual displays allow students and researchers to view centuries-old manuscripts in minute detail and without worry that the original will be damaged. The Electronic Beowulf project, for example, stands as a supple example of the extent to which medieval literary and linguistic research could be heightened by the proliferation of digital manuscripts.

Such electronic volumes enable scholars to complete research which currently relies on expensive trips to manuscript reliquaries. Digital manuscripts allow scholars to analyze the literature as an historical textual monument instead of only a piece of text which has been transcribed and edited in the necessary an attempt to make the literature available to the largest possible audience. Digital imaging technology has made such transcription unnecessary by bringing past textual record into the future.

Strauss and Whitman Bring Poetry to the Classroom
Taylor Emery, Austin Peay State University

Trying to teach poetry in the second semester freshman classroom is becoming increasingly more difficult. Most students associate poetry with other four-letter words in their vocabulary, so much so that I have begun referring to poetry as the P-word. They complain that poetry looks funny, is impossible to comprehend, and is completely inaccessible to them. I attempt to counteract these fallacies by asking the students about their favorite songs. Not surprisingly, they can discuss the narrator of the song, the plot, and usually irony or symbolism. Then, when the discussion changes to what happens to songs when the music is eliminated, they are amazed they have analyzed poetry, or lyrics, not the song, or the music. This alleviates some of the anxiety they fear toward poetry, but not all. One of the most successful stress relievers for students concerning poetry is a pair of jeans and the accompanying commercial.

English in 2010: Pen, Notebook, and DVD Required
Erin Smith, Roane State Community College & York Institute

Film has long been a supplementary part of the English classroom. Its use, like most educational tools, has been governed by the ebb and flow of popular educational theory. It is again time for a change in the pedagogical approach. Film as text is a powerful tool that is currently being overlooked in secondary and post-secondary classrooms. The utilization of film as text allows students to empower themselves as critical authorities within the confines of a medium with which they are comfortable. That confidence can then be transferred onto
the most complex traditional texts. As a result, students gain proficiency in the traditional
sense of English requirements as well as being a critical and analytical reader of their world.

Selection of a film with which students can readily engage must be based on the instructor’s
sense of their students’ interests, course focus, and administrative approval. However, a
simple model may be applied to the use of any film. An effective piece, The Dark Knight,
serves as a model for classroom implementation of film as text. An overview of applicable
literary theory, assignments, and assessment allows instructors to return to their classroom
with the skills to select and implement their own film as text.

Putting the Pop (Culture) in Reading: Session Chair – (216)

The Pedagogy of Popular Culture
Lenee’ Hendrix, East Tennessee State University, ETSU and Unicoi County High School
“Do not confine your children to your own learning for they were born in another time.”
- Hebrew Proverb

Iron Maiden, The Simpsons, 300, and Twilight. This may not be a list one would expect
when reading an abstract on educational strategies. However, each of the aforementioned
pop-culture icons can transform into powerful teaching tools in the right classroom. Our
students are living in an increasingly technological and visual society. From iPhones to
MP3’s, 3D movies to Facebook, students are becoming progressively more dependent on
visual and auditory stimulation. Teaching exclusively from a textbook is no longer an
engaging or relevant method for today’s learners. As teachers we have greater access to
technology than ever before as well as classrooms that are filled with students displaying a
deeper connection to popular culture than ever before. Connecting popular culture,
technology, and literature has the power not only to transform our classrooms into an
engaging point of learning but also bridge the gap to educational relevance in the eyes of our
students.

Using Innovative Strategies to Build Reading Comprehension
Sara Eik, East Tennessee State University and John Sevier Middle School
“Why do we have to do this?” “But, I don’t like reading –it’s boring. I’d rather watch the
movie.” “Why should I read?” “Why should I write?” These are difficult questions that all
English teachers of adolescents are faced with on a daily basis. And let’s be real, these
students are growing up in a dramatically different world than past generations. With
rapidly changing technology, they have access to instant information, entertainment and
communication twenty-four hours a day. With all this “competition” of “better things to
do,” how do we find ways to increase our students’ literacy skills in meaningful ways? The
bottom line: In order to teach them, we must find ways to appeal to their intrinsic
motivations. The purpose of this presentation is to provide teachers of English with
innovative, fresh strategies that can easily be incorporated into the English/Language Arts
classroom. The focus will be on how to create and effectively use a Weblog (blog) as a tool
for reflection to increase reading comprehension. The presenter will share how this
experience worked during a unit of study on Holocaust literature that included Susan
Campbell Bartoletti’s novel The Boy Who Dared and non-fiction book Hitler Youth.

Super Hero(in)es and Super Readers
Phyllis Thompson, East Tennessee State University
This paper demonstrates how graphic novels like *Batman*, *Persepolis*, and *Maus* can rescue readers from low self-confidence, fake reading, and failing literacy rates. In *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (1994), Scott McCloud identifies iconography, closure, movement, and time/space as the primary visual elements of comics. By applying these elements to the practice of reading, one can tease out the individual processes that effective readers use to construct meaning of graphic texts. Working with literature students, first, at the graphic level to sharpen skills in “reading” comprehension engages not only the lower-level reluctant readers but also the highly skilled although mightily bored readers in the classroom. Working at the graphic level has the added benefit of de-bunking some of students’ mistaken notions about strategies for reading comprehension, opening them up to trying new methods. Mastering these skills is the first step in learning how to engage with the text. Then, by transferring visual practices to narrative texts, readers increase not only their engagement with texts but also their comprehension of texts. Using the graphic elements of an increasingly popular super hero/heroine culture is an effective way not only to promote active reading practices but also to produce super readers in your classroom.

**Taboo: Session Chair – (316)**

**“By Cock They Are to Blame!” (Gratuitous?) Sex in Shakespeare Film**
Martin Mason Broadwell, Western Kentucky University

As part of the cinematic revival of Shakespeare in the 1990s, the films released since Branagh’s *Henry V* have all been notable for an emphasis on sensuality as the disguise which will best sell Shakespeare’s texts to the average movie-goer. After all, Hollywood has to sell tickets to Shakespeare films in the same way they sell tickets to other films, and sex indisputably sells tickets. This shift is noteworthy both for the ways in which it can either contribute to Shakespeare’s continuing currency or hinder a deeper appreciation of the text in question. To investigate these effects, I explore the sexual additions to Shakespeare film, noting how, in various films, the additions either enable or disable the filmmaker’s interpretation of the text, because the task for filmmakers who use sensuality to tempt audiences, especially younger ones, into watching Shakespeare is to do so in a way that enables both the text and their interpretation of it.

**“It is either me or the horse”: The Empire of the South in Edna Ferber’s Giant**
Charmion Gustke, Belmont University

As for the boasted Virginia background, this lay so far in the past as to be misted by the centuries and discernable only to Mrs. Lynnton’s somewhat bemused eye. A great-great-great grandfather had sailed overseas to Virginia in the 1600’s, one of those indentured servants or jail bait whose descendents later become First Families of Virginia... He had moved with the tide of travel from Virginia to Kentucky to Indiana to Ohio. (Giant)

In this paper, I propose that capital, in Edna Ferber’s *Giant* (1952) is configured in relation to the South through the displaced and sexualized body of Mrs. Leslie Benedict. The post-antebellum South, specifically Virginia, is delineated by Ferber as a vanishing empire of abundance and fecundity, which must seek to secure new means of income and exchange in the face of capitalism. Charted materially, geographically and socially by her marriage to the Texas millionaire Jordan (Bick) Benedict, Leslie, one of the “beautiful Lynnton sisters of Virginia,” is both an insider and an outsider, divided between two opposing states with distinct colonial histories. With the aid of Trinh T. Minh-Ha and Gayatri Spivak, I argue that
Leslie’s double-binding, further complicated by the fact she was born in Ohio, allows her to resist the non-totalizing strategies of capitalism while confirming the civilizing mission of the Southern legacy of empire. Always under revision, the South serves as the operating principle around which the action and the plot are determined in both Ferber’s novel and George Steven’s lavish Hollywood production (1956). Throughout this paper, I refer to Steven’s film as a commentary to Ferber’s novel, a mythical remaking and a commercial correcting of the problematic racial relations as they are explored by Ferber in both her critique of capitalism and her mapping of an imagined South.

One Woman’s War: The Chattanooga Times Free Press and the Issue of Immigration in 2008
Lisa Brown, Middle Tennessee State University & Upperman High
It is the thesis of this research that a single reporter for the southeast Tennessee newspaper known as the Chattanooga Times Free Press, through her linguistic creation of an immigrant model, is making a deliberate and seemingly successful effort to ease tensions between area natives and the newcomers, but at the cost of journalistic ethics. This study examines the impact of print journalism in the form of the newspaper on the issue of immigration and details the linguistic methods by which the reporter, Perla Treviso, creates a positive model of the Hispanic immigrant in her stories for the paper. In addition, it offers evidence that the model might indeed be working to produce empathy for the immigrant in the native community. However, this study argues that the means used by Treviso are suspect, and it looks at the ethical and human problems which are likely to accrue from her actions.

Creative Writing: Fiction: Session Chair – (305)

Against Nature
Culley Jane Carson, Austin Peay State University

An Unaltered History
Cynthia McWilliams, Austin Peay State University

Millard Duke: A Son of a Bitch
Nancy Moore, Columbus State University

Thank you for taking part in this year's English Studies Symposium!