

KEEP-ENG IN TOUCH

A Message from the Chair

The English Department has big news to announce! After many years of hard work, we have finished revising our English major program. Starting in the fall, new majors will no longer have a menu of one-size-fits all requirements. Instead, students will have a choice among several strong concentrations or even have the option of designing their own concentration. To learn more, see page 5!



Lisa Rowe Fraustino

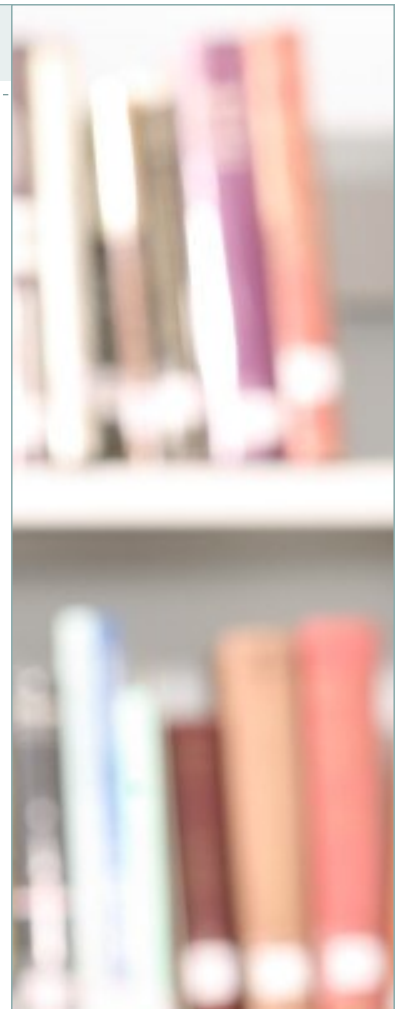
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A Message from the Editor

I'd like to give a special thank you to Dr. Fraustino for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to thank the English Department faculty for allowing students to thrive and find their passion. Most importantly, I would like to thank everyone who contributed and helped make this newsletter a reality.

Ryan King

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UNIVERSITY HOUR: HARTBEAT ENSEMBLE

By Ashley Bressette

HartBeat Ensemble visited Eastern on February 4 to celebrate and recognize African American History Month. The group was invited by English professor, Miriam Chirico. HartBeat is a community-based ensemble that performs provocative theater centered on societal observations. Their performances are written by their own members and each performance uses pieces of public conversations as a central base for their dialogue and principal message. This particular performance aimed to draw conclusions about the effects and effectiveness of the Civil Rights Movement.

HartBeat took the stage and performed a piece titled “Can’t Wait: Reflections on the Movement” in the Student Center Theatre. The piece starred three women of different backgrounds performing a combination of singing, acting and dancing. The women started off by discussing the progress America has made since the Civil Rights movement. Then the ensemble changed the tone of the discussion in order to highlight how there are still improvements that need to be made when it comes to racism, particularly for African Americans in the United States. The central theme of the piece demonstrated that although it is easy to believe in the idea of all races being equal, we must sometimes do the difficult thing and take a stand when racism is evident.



Ensemble interacting with students

ACCLAIMED AUTHOR OKEY NDIBE SPEAKS AT EASTERN

By Ryan King

With the spring 2015 semester coming to an end, the Department of English at Eastern Connecticut State University brought acclaimed Nigerian author Okey Ndibe to speak on campus. Ndibe is the author of *Arrows of Rain* and *Foreign Gods, Inc.* which he read excerpts from during his presentation.

Foreign Gods, Inc tells the story of Ike Ozondu, a Nigerian immigrant. Ozondu excels in school, graduating magna cum laude from Amherst College, but struggles to find employment after graduation due to his thick accent. In addition to familial and race issues, the book explores the fleeting idea of the American dream. Although the protagonist is willing to do whatever it takes to find success in American culture, success continues to elude him as he is undermined by his own ethnicity.

His struggles to find a career lead to Ozondu driving a cab despite his advanced education. Ndibe explained that this is a problem that plagues many immigrants, and not just

Nigerian immigrants like his protagonist or himself. Despite possessing master’s degrees, immigrants struggle to support their families with stop-gap jobs like driving taxis in a country where they thought they would be able to live out the American dream.



Ndibe during a reading
www.okeyndibe.com

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. ALLISON SPEICHER

By Mae Ehrnfelt

As one of the newest faculty members of the English Department, Allison Speicher is passionate and ready to make her mark on Eastern's campus. She is eager to instill new ideas and concepts about the older texts of 19th century America, along with children's literature. With her impressive dedication to her interests in these fields, Speicher brings an exciting look into the world of readers in the 19th century.

On Wednesday, April 8, Dr. Allison Speicher, assistant professor of English, held an informational session as part of the Author Series at the J. Eugene Smith Library. At this session, Speicher spoke in-depth about her book entitled *Schooling Readers: Reading Common Schools in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction*, forthcoming from the University of Alabama Press. The book focuses on four main themes in reform fiction: teachers adopting children, violence against teachers, spelling bees and school exhibitions, and school romance. In the session, Dr. Speicher discussed the latter theme.

Through her research she discovered that more than 70 out of the 125 stories that she read featured romance plots. There were only four examples of schoolmistresses marrying schoolboys; instead, a majority of the plots included schoolmasters marrying schoolgirls. This may have been because of the fact that in the nineteenth century more girls were going to school than ever before. But it also raises the question of whether schools were meant to educate girls intellectually or to prepare them for marriage and motherhood.

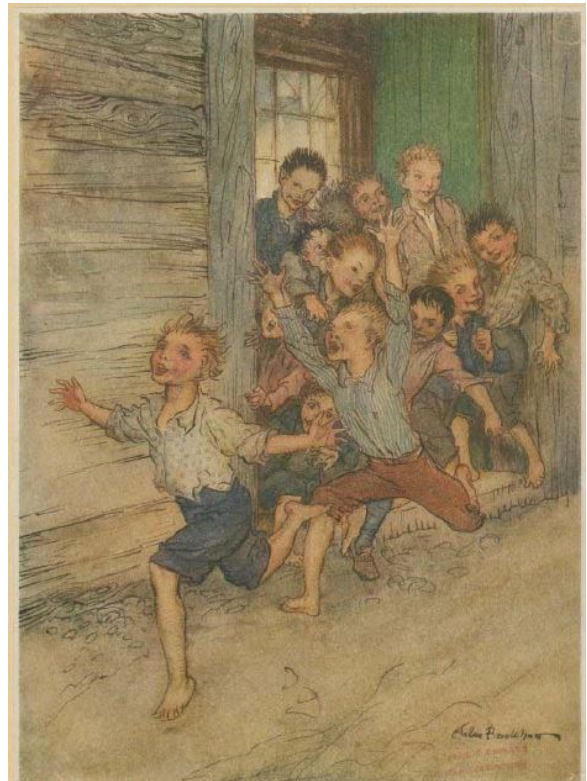
Schooling Readers looks at this question and many more as it explores what it meant to be a female pursuing education in 19th-century America. Once the book is released in fall 2016, it will be available in the J. Eugene Smith Library at Eastern.

Speicher received her Ph.D. in English, with a specialty in 19th-century American literature, from Indiana University. While at Indiana University, she taught a range of courses, including courses on tomboys and single women. At Eastern, she now teaches American and children's literature, drawing on her experiences working at an inner-city high school to help prepare future educators.

As someone who specializes in nineteenth-century American literature, Speicher will be teaching a variety of courses regarding American literature and how it has changed as we have progressed as a country. One of these courses, Survey of American Literature, focuses on how literature has developed throughout the country and how its progress has been shaped by historical context. Another course, called the Nineteenth-Century American Short Story, analyzes work from prominent authors like

Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, Louisa May Alcott and Nathaniel Hawthorne.

She also recently began teaching a course at Eastern called "The Golden Age of the American Tomboy," which focuses on the historical context of the phrase tomboy and how it has developed over time. Students will be using literature to make observations about the societal expectations and roles of tomboys. "The question for me is always why: why was this the historical moment that gender-bending girls became a cultural phenomenon? These aren't fringe books. *Little Women* is a major best-seller and has never been out of print since it was published, which is interesting because we don't normally see gender-progressive literature become mainstream," Speicher said.



**The prospective cover of Speicher's book
Arthur Rackham**

THE WRITING PROCESS: LITERATURE FROM A WRITER'S PERSPECTIVE

By Ryan King

Eastern Connecticut State University's English Department hosted a panel featuring young adult authors Chris Lynch, Caragh O'Brien and Jason Reynolds in January. Eastern students were able to prepare questions and receive thoughtful answers and valuable advice from three novelists who have all had their books published by major presses. Panel members answered questions about their books, discussed aspects of the writing process, and gave advice on how potential writers in the audience could begin to brainstorm their next work. English Department Chair Lisa Rowe Fraustino moderated the event and emphasized the importance of being able to see the art of writing through a different lens. Addressing the audience, she said, "We don't often get to look at [literature] from the writer's perspective."

The authors spoke briefly about their recent books but chiefly focused on the process of writing. They all agreed that one of the most vital elements is to write about topics that you are truly passionate about. For Reynolds, who was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, that passion is family. "Most of my work involves family and dispelling the idea of broken homes... They're not broken, they're different," said Reynolds.

"Writers have a different job as translators and conduits of situations and circumstances," Lynch

said. He went on to describe how it becomes necessary to convey situations in new and creative ways as a writer in order to pique the interest of readers.

When asked how they decided to advance their plots, the authors attributed that to their characters. "You cannot outrun yourself," said Lynch, describing how the unchanging nature of his characters dictated where his story would go. These characters should become real people, "who all have their own stories, issues and subplots." Through thorough character development, the authors create nuanced characters who are forced to make their own decisions. "What shows a person's character is making really tough decisions," said O'Brien, while discussing how the plots of her novels came to be. By allowing your character to dictate the terms of the story rather than allowing the story to create the character, the authors are able to create impressive works of literature that are consistent in their plot and complete in their character development.

Repeatedly, the three authors spoke of the importance of giving one's ideas time to take shape when writing. "Writing has to have its own process," said O'Brien. This process entails countless hours of brainstorming, research and constant revision.



Lynch, O' Brien, and Reynolds speaking about their books

It is no easy task to reflect the outside world through writing, which Fraustino touched upon as the event was concluding. "Writers must become astute observers of humanity," she said. It is only through this astute observation, continued devotion to their craft and passion for writing that these three authors were able to create such complete works of literature. This process, although extensive, is well worth it, because as Reynolds put it, "At the end of the day, telling a good story is paramount above everything."

EASTERN'S NEW ENGLISH MAJOR, EFFECTIVE IN FALL 2015

By Dr. Lisa Rowe Frasutino

Over the last few decades, the field of English Studies has expanded its reach beyond the traditional study of literature to include creative writing, rhetoric and composition, and cultural studies. Our faculty, therefore, includes professors who are trained in these different areas. Departments have responded to the growth and change in the discipline in various ways, depending on their contributions to the university's mission. Some have even split into separate departments offering specialized majors, particularly in programs offering graduate degrees. Here at Eastern, our "liberal arts, practically applied" mission for undergraduates led us to the concentrations model.

The concentrations we developed include:

- * Literary Studies
- * Creative Writing
- * Cultural Studies
- * English for Education (either early childhood/elementary or secondary)
- * Rhetoric and Composition

While these concentrations were chosen to reflect the current state of the field of English Studies and the expertise of our faculty, the interests and needs of our students have been our

primary motivation and guide. In the past while advising students and getting feedback from alumni, we increasingly noted that the various required categories in our major seemed to be a series of hoops to jump through or even stumbling blocks to program completion rather than the comprehensive educational experience faculty had intended when designing the program over a decade earlier.

Current majors who were surveyed during the process of our curriculum revision expressed enthusiasm about developing a concentrations model. Students commented that the current requirements "are not concentrated enough to suit my career aspirations," that "students should be able to have a program that is more tailored to them and what they want to do with their degree," and that "I know what I want to do for a career and this concentration would help me prepare for it."

By the beginning of the fall semester, the English Department web site will be revised to include all the details of the new major—we'll let you know when it's ready so you can take a look. There you'll see a number of new and modified courses we have developed to enrich the concentrations, and you'll be hearing more about those in future issues of Keep-ENG in Touch.



English professor Susan DeRosa instructing a student

EASTERN WRITERS GUILD ENJOYS SUCCESSFUL SEMESTER

By Seth McCullock

Each year the Eastern Writers Guild produces Eastern Connecticut State University's literary magazine *Eastern Exposure*. Since the publication of its first issue in 2002, *Eastern Exposure* has been an annual journal that has allowed Eastern students to submit their creative works in hopes of being published. As Eastern's only literary magazine, *Eastern Exposure* offers a unique opportunity to students seeking to expand their horizons in the field of creative writing.

Dr. Daniel Donaghy, the advisor of the Eastern Writers Guild, stated, "A vibrant student literary journal is vital to the health of a liberal arts university community. The Eastern Writers Guild student editors and I work very hard to assemble a high-quality literary journal that reflects an understanding of contemporary professional editorial standards and the range of urgent, accomplished literary works that Eastern students compose each year."

To get published in *Eastern Exposure*, students must submit pieces to the Eastern Writers Guild.

The process of creating *Eastern Exposure* is a collaborative effort since all of the members of the group review every submission. Once the reviewing process is finished, club members take a collective vote on whether they feel pieces should be featured in the year's edition of *Eastern Exposure*.

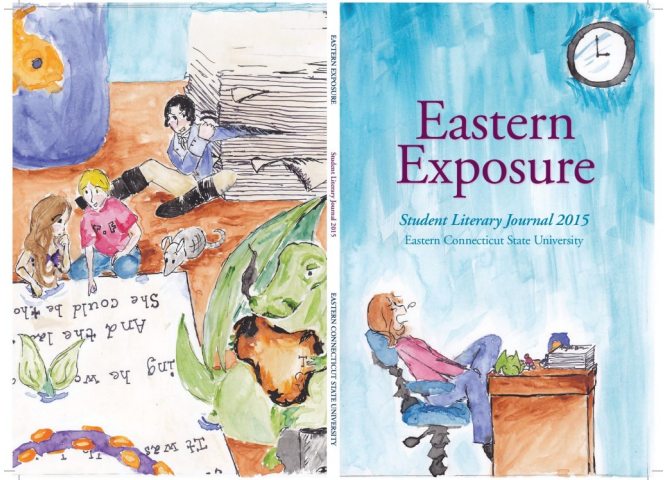
Christopher Morris, a freshman student and member of the Eastern Writers Guild, said, "Writing is a dynamic and social process; student writers need to share their work if they're ever going to have any kind of impact on others. And, at least in my experience, few people ever write anything without some larger social purpose in mind."

For many aspiring writers, *Eastern Exposure* is the embodiment of an easily accessible literary magazine in which they could be published. For many students, creative writing is something that is done leisurely during their free time. As such, pursuing publication from a large publishing house could prove difficult during the hectic life of a college student. Although numerous Eastern students — such as Chimamanda Adichie whose novel "Americanah" was named one of The New York Times Ten Best Books of the Year in 2013 — have gone on to become authors and have had their works published at large publishing houses, *Eastern Exposure* is often their first opportunity for publication.

Morris continued by saying, "It isn't like every gifted writer can be published by a mainstream publisher. As students, we rarely have the time to focus on our writing, tragic as that is. We need an outlet and a mechanism through which we can tell our stories to a larger audience. *Eastern Exposure* is that mechanism for our students."

For members of the Eastern Writers Guild, working on *Eastern Exposure* offers them a unique experience in that they get direct practice in the publishing field— an experience that they would be hard-pressed to get elsewhere. Dr. Donaghy stated, "Working on *Eastern Exposure* provides students with an introduction to and hands-on pre-professional experience in the field of literary magazine editing and publishing. It gives students the opportunity to learn how to use the latest desktop and online submission managing, editing, and publishing software."

In many aspects, *Eastern Exposure* offers rewarding opportunities for Eastern students. From the social environment created from the collaboration of Eastern Writers Guild club members when reviewing submissions to the practical experience learned by building the magazine, *Eastern Exposure* plays a definitive part in shaping the atmosphere of the Eastern community.



SPRING 2015 ENGLISH NIGHT

By Ryan King

Eastern Connecticut State University's English Department presented English Night in the Paul E. Johnson Room on April 30. The night included the English major awards ceremony, the announcement of the fall 2014 first-year writing award winners and senior seminar presentations.

The evening began with the presentation of the English major awards. The first award, for service to the department, was given to Mae Ehrnfelt. This award highlights the achievements of a student who has helped the department to coordinate events, organize clubs or complete departmental projects.

Ehrnfelt said of receiving this award, "It was an honor to receive an award from the English Department. Through my internship with the department, I've met so many great mentors and learned valuable professional skills that will no doubt prove to be useful when I graduate next year."

The next award was given to Jessica Wainman for lifelong learning. Wainman was extraordinarily grateful, saying, "I was honored to receive this award. It feels so good to be recognized for all the hard work that I have put in. It is also a great example of how supportive the professors in the English department are. Thanks in large part to their support, I feel like I can accomplish anything!" The lifelong learning award is given to a returning or continuing student who has shown a passion for English.

Two recipients, Kelsey Haddad and Sabrina Scott, were given awards for contributions to the cultural life of the campus. This award is designed to emphasize the hard work put into student-run organizations such as the Campus Lantern, or in these two students' case, *Eastern Exposure*.

Another award, for commitment to teaching, was given to Erika Delgado. Erika received this award for tirelessly pursuing her future in teaching, and demonstrating her passion for teaching in the classroom. Finally, the academic excellence award was given to Alexis Ballirano. The academic excellence award is given to a student who

demonstrates an aptitude for interpreting literature and continued dedication to reading the course materials and contributing to class discussions.

Following these awards, the two winners of the first-year writing awards were announced.

The first award, which is given to students who

demonstrate innovative and creative writing, was given to Nadia Noelle Balassone for her personal narrative. The second award, which celebrates a student who has done thorough research and uniquely articulated this research, was given to Jessica Kokoszka for her research paper "How to Love Them Back." Both students were in Professor Patrick Griffis's English 100 class.

After a brief break was taken for refreshments, the event picked back up with student presentations from Dr. Rita Malenczyk's "Rhetoric of Sports" senior seminar. The speaker for this class, Alyssa McLaughlin, presented her research paper, "Keeping the Status Quo: ESPN's Marginalization of Football Player Michael Sam." She spoke about how the material that ESPN chose to report on regarding Sam unfairly labeled him as a "bust," long before he was given a legitimate chance to succeed in the NFL. Prior to the NFL draft, Sam, a former SEC defensive player of the year in college, wasn't lambasted by ESPN, who used a "rhetoric of exclusion [that] focused primarily on devaluing his athletic prowess," according to McLaughlin.



Awardees winners Balassone, Haddad, Scott, and Ballirano with Dr. Fraustino at English Night.

SPRING 2015 ENGLISH NIGHT (CONT.)

The next seminar to present, Dr. Meredith James's "Literature of the Wild West," was represented by Jonah Craggett. Craggett's research, titled "Whitewashing the American West: Frontier Ideology and Film," focused on how people of color were often misrepresented in adaptations of the western frontier. We never questioned the cowboys and Indians narrative that we were fed," said Craggett as he used examples from popular films to demonstrate the hardships that minorities faced pursuing the American dream. In these films, he argues that "people of color are painted as tools." Craggett argues that even despite being routinely regarded as lesser than their white counterparts, people of color played a vital role in shaping the west and that role has been and continues to be understated.

There were two presenters from Dr. Kenneth McNeil's "Culture of War" seminar. The first, Renae St. John, highlighted the role that music had played in wars in her research "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah: American Music from the Civil War to World War II: Popular Music, Propaganda, and Psychological Warfare." This was followed by Alex Zacharie's presentation, "Four Major Characteristics of War, and a Philosophical Analysis of Why We Do Not Recognize Modern Nonmilitary Warfare as War." This presentation focused on how despite modern culture moving away from traditional warfare, conflicts throughout the world constantly demonstrate char-

acteristics that would classify them as war based on definition.

The event concluded with a question and answer segment where audience participation was encouraged.



Dr. McNeil with St. John and Zacharie

CAMPUS SLAMMER: STORYTELLING AT EASTERN

By Ryan King

On April 7, several students participated in a storytelling competition at Eastern Connecticut State University. Many of these students were members of Dr. Raouf Mama's Storytelling class, a course that dissects conventions common to both oral and literary narratives in order to explain the motives and strategies behind the art of storytelling. This event was part of the "Campus Slammer" series of story contests sponsored by the Connecticut Storytelling Center.

"I loved getting involved in the storytelling competition, mainly

because it gave me a chance to express myself and my creativity," student and participant A.J. Bonetti said. "Storytelling truly is an underestimated form of human communication and connection. I'm lucky to have stumbled upon it through Dr. Mama's class."

One Eastern student, Jared Leitzel, was invited to tell his story at the Connecticut Storytelling Festival but was unfortunately unable to attend due to illness.

Students who participated in this event were competing for an

opportunity to tell a story at the 34th Annual Connecticut Storytelling Festival and Conference held on April 25 in New London. Students from Eastern were given the opportunity to present their own stories at a venue with nationally known storytellers such as David Novak and Linda Goodman.

Five other Connecticut colleges, the University of Hartford, Connecticut College, Western Connecticut State University, the University of Connecticut and Manchester Community College also participated in this event.

HOW THE LIBRARY RESEARCH AWARD SHAPED MY FIRST YEAR

By Nicole Green

I decided to be an English major in my senior year of high school. I was confident in my decision, but there was no grand plan that accompanied this. My freshman year would consist of me going through the motions, orienting myself and chomping down the dining hall food, I told myself. My plan was to survive, rather than thrive, which fortunately is not how the year played out.

I have always prided myself on self-discipline, or perhaps better said the fear of disappointing others. So, when my professor approached me to submit a paper to the Library Research Award, I said yes. Few expectations accompanied my submission; I was just really thrilled to have such an opportunity. When I found out I won the award for the freshman and sophomore category, I was in complete shock, but my professor was not. She was excited and gracious, but not

surprised, because she saw something in me.

The Library Research Award is an undergraduate research competition open to Eastern students. There is a large focus on the creative and effective use of the library's materials. Accompanying the research paper, applicants were required to submit a bibliography, the rubric or syllabus that corresponded to the paper written, and an essay explaining the use of library materials. The award winners are judged by a committee of readers, who are faculty and staff of at Eastern. The research paper was one of the most rewarding and exciting papers I have ever written.

The positive attitude I have towards my major and intended career path has derived from the wonderful encouragement I have received here at Eastern. Although hard work and

dedication is necessary for success, I won the award largely based on the happiness English brings me. The paper I submitted, "The Cat in the Hat vs. Piggyback: Where Do Women Belong?" was more than just a research paper, it was the beginning of my career. I enjoyed researching and writing it, because I found my niche, and that's what my professor saw. Her confidence in me allowed me to step out of my comfort zone. Starting a new chapter in your life, doing something impossible, or even just trying a new food comes with a leap of faith. My leap of faith was the Library Research Award, and I landed on solid ground, thanks to the support system I found during my freshman year.

A Link to Green's essay can be found at: <http://easternct.libguides.com/content.php?pid=62741&sid=5555270>



Green with university president Elsa Nunez.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. DANIEL DONAGHY

By Mikayla Zagata

Dr. Daniel Donaghy was recently awarded the Board of Regents Teaching Award for the Connecticut State College and University System this year. He has impacted student life by becoming the faculty advisor for the literary magazine, *Eastern Exposure* and by developing several courses including the English Department's study abroad experience, ENG 372: Creative Writing Abroad that has allowed students to travel to Dublin, Ireland or Florence, Italy. Receiving nominations from both professors and students alike, Donaghy says that "this award validates the work that I've done with our students in and out of the classroom over the past ten years and motivates me to keep improving as a teacher, writer, advisor, and mentor."

An author and award winning poet who made a recent appearance in the English Department's *Eastern Visiting Writers Series*, Jim Daniels, says this of Donaghy's latest collection of poems entitled *Start with the Trouble*: "Donaghy is the real deal. He's not striking poses or doing any fancy dances. These poems grab you by the collar and compel you to listen." Torockio also praises his colleague saying that "Donaghy has established himself as one of the top poets in America today," and that Donaghy "stands as a model of excellence, living proof of what can be accomplished with hard work and dedication. He guides his student writers with a steady hand; his comments on their work is always honest, kind, thorough, and specific."

Donaghy's creative caliber then ripples into his courses and his teaching. As the English major

undergoes some big changes, Donaghy has seized the opportunity to create new courses. These courses include ENG 238: Literary Magazine Editing, a course that details the process regarding the publication of *Eastern Exposure*, and ENG 252: Harlem Renaissance. With these new courses in addition to the ones that he already teaches, students can expand their knowledge and creative ability within the new concentrations in the major.

Donaghy praised Harry Humes, a mentor of his from his time at Kutztown University, who, according to Donaghy "...talked to me about my work ... he taught me—a first-generation college kid from a rough part of Philly—that I belonged in college, that my voice mattered, my story mattered, that I had something important to say to the world." Donaghy now hopes to carry that philosophy into every course he teaches so he can reassure students of the importance of their voices. "I am grateful, every day, for the opportunity to work with Eastern students as they develop their own written and spoken voices and learn to listen—truly listen, with humility and respect and loving kindness—to the written and spoken voices of others," said Donaghy.

Donaghy has been praised by students for his openness and innate trust and willingness to work with them, regardless of major. He pushes his students to do better and encourages them to write about what matters to them.

A recent graduate and past Vice President of the Eastern Writers Guild, Sabrina Scott, says that Donaghy is "very

supportive and generous with his time," "walks you through every step of anything that the Writers Guild had to do," and "is just great" as an advisor and mentor to aspiring students.

Erin Drouin concurs similarly after taking his course that was being offered as a colloquium through the Honors Program, citing the impact Donaghy had on her: "Every day I read the poets' work and was encouraged to not only understand and admire their stylistic choices and poetry as a whole, but to also try and appreciate them as people. Donaghy doesn't instruct on how to read poems, but how to experience them ... A lot of professors think that the purpose of a course is to progress you as an academic. Dr. Donaghy allows for the intersection of academic and humanity within his courses. You develop not only as a scholar but as a person."

Congratulations, Dr. Donaghy! It is clear that this award is well-deserved.



Daniel Donaghy

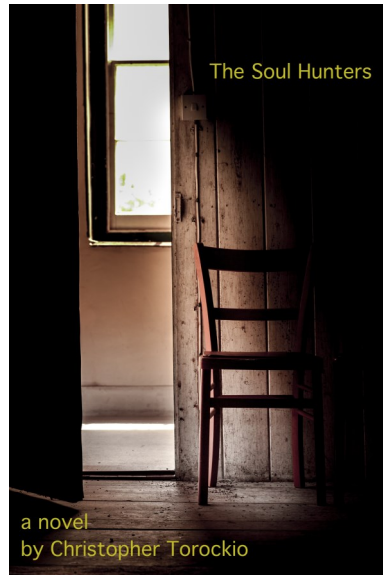
FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. CHRISTOPHER TOROCKIO

By Ryan King

“In order to be a good writer, you have to be a voracious reader. Read the classics, read what’s coming out now, and read everything in between.”

Dr. Christopher Torockio, who has been an esteemed professor in the English Department at Eastern for nearly 15 years, is set to have a novel published over the summer.

Torockio’s novel, *The Soul Hunters*, was described by its publisher Black Lawrence Press as a “multi-generational exploration of a family that has just lost its patriarch.” Torockio, citing a predisposed interest in people and family dynamics as his inspiration, hopes that his book will give readers a glimpse into the human condition.



finishing his book, Torockio responded, “I just want them to say ‘holy shit.’ I want it to have an impact even if the reader doesn’t know what it is.”

At Eastern, Torockio teaches students about the art of creative writing. He also teaches a course every summer called “Creative Writing Abroad” where students use Italian culture and the Tuscan landscape to inspire their own writing during a five-week stay in Florence, Italy. He stated that this course gives him inspiration as he is able to see many students find their passion for writing as they stray from their comfort zone and see the world in a new and exciting light.

Torockio got his start in writing as a journalist, but claims that he had no passion for it. It took him most of his undergraduate career to learn of his love for creative writing. “During the last semester of my senior year, I took a fiction workshop, and that was it,” Torockio said. He also stated that helping students to realize their interest in creative writing in college, just as he did, is “[his] favorite part of being a teacher.”

Since Torockio claims that his first love was short stories, it is no surprise that he began *The Soul Hunters* with the idea of creating what he called a “novel in stories.” This format necessitated a complex narrative that blends the perspectives of multiple characters as they reflect on the past.

When asked about what he hopes readers will take away upon

Torockio also offered some words of advice and encouragement to future writers: “In order to be a good writer, you have to be a voracious reader. Read the classics, read what’s coming out now, and everything in between.”



Dr. Torockio (far right) with students on a trip to Italy for his Creative Writing Abroad class.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

By Alexandra Rogan

This semester, I had the opportunity to intern with Dr. Fraustino. I've been working on electronically publishing her pre-teen chapter book, *WAHH! A Day in the Life of Riley O'Reilly*. Dr. Fraustino has given me much control over the process, including editing the manuscript, writing copy, finding an illustrator, learning about copyright and ISBN numbers, and ultimately formatting the manuscript into an eBook that will look polished on e-readers such as Kindles, Nooks, and iPads. Since I've been learning a lot from this experience, I decided to share some thoughts about a few of the processes. If you're interested in electronic or self-publishing, read on!

Editing *WAHH!* was one of the more challenging tasks I undertook during the internship. I learned that becoming a strong editor takes years of practice. Unfortunately, I was never taught much grammar in grade school—what rules I do know I picked up over years of writing papers for school. This meant that editing was tedious and time consuming. I consulted the *Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)* to check rules regarding commas, dashes and other punctuation. I didn't doubt Dr. Fraustino's grammar, but wanted to gain a basic understanding of the *CMS* and rules I felt shaky on. I also asked questions while I was reading. Using the track changes feature in Word, I commented on details in the story that seemed off or didn't make sense to me based on what I had read earlier in the story. Being mindful of these details required me to read the story closely and slowly multiple times.

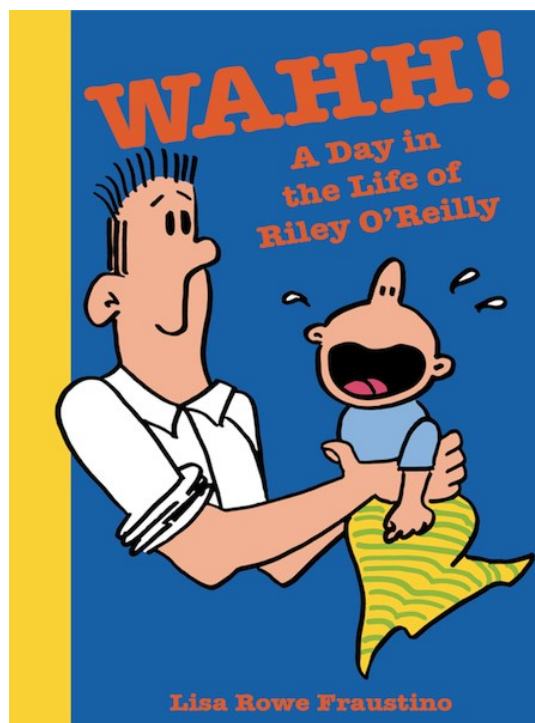
Writing copy for *WAHH!* was one of the more enjoyable tasks. Copy is usually written for a book's flap or back cover, but I wrote it for the description will appear on websites in order to help sell the book. This was an easier task for me because the amount of writing is minimal (about 270 words) and because I had already practiced writing copy in Dr. Fraustino's online Literary Publishing class. It was most satisfying because I enjoyed incorporating key info about the book with details that appeal to readers and pique their interest. Ultimately, creating copy is an exercise in concise, creative writing.

Finally, formatting *WAHH!* has been, in my opinion, the most unfamiliar yet important part of the internship. I knew absolutely nothing about HTML coding prior to beginning this process, but now have a basic understanding largely thanks to a tutorial titled "Take Pride In Your eBook

Formatting" by Guido Henkel. Using a programming editor called TextMate has allowed me to format the eBook into an HTML file that will later be translated into a legitimate eBook file using a software package called Calibre. Formatting *WAHH!* has required me to come up with different codes that set apart italicized text, bold text, small and large text, etc. Sometimes this process is straightforward because Henkel's tutorial explains and provides code; other times, I have to try different variations of a code until the text looks right in the HTML file.

Ultimately, working to electronically publish *WAHH!* has been an exercise in patience for me. Each step has required me to go back and rework something I previously thought I could "check off the list." I've also learned that I enjoy writing more than editing. Best of all, however, this internship has taught me that I can figure nearly anything out on my own (with a little help from the Internet, of course). Keep an eye out for *WAHH! A Day in the Life of Riley O'Reilly*, available through Amazon and Barnes & Noble this summer!

More info can be found at:
www.lisarowefraustino.com



ENGLISH STUDENTS PRESENT AT CREATE EXHIBITION

By Ryan King

Several students from the English department had the opportunity to participate in the first CREATE (Celebrating Research Excellence and Artistic Talent at Eastern) exhibition at Eastern on April 17 and 18. This event is an undergraduate conference where students are able to present their own research and creative works, often for the first time. Co-chair of the CREATE exhibition, Professor Dickson Cunningham, said of the event, "It's an interdisciplinary forum where we can all learn from each other, so we encourage everyone to attend multiple presentations and see what your classmates and colleagues have been up to."

One of those classmates, junior English major Mikayla Zagata, embraced the opportunity to present her research. After she submitted a paper which focused on the use of façade in several of Shakespeare's comedies, Zagata was encouraged to present her research at CREATE by Dr. Maureen McDonnell. "As an English major, I have a place for Shakespeare in my collection of literature. However, I came to love his comedies through Dr. McDonnell's course," Zagata said.

"I've been fortunate to have such great professors and mentors throughout the past three years that have helped me grow as a student, but if I had to choose one professor, it would be Dr. Lisa Fraustino of the English Department," Zagata went on to say. "I have been incredibly lucky to have her as an advisor, professor, and mentor since freshman year; she is always pushing me to do better and encouraging me to take on different opportunities, both for critical and creative work."

Brooke Baldwin, a senior English and Education major, also presented her research at this conference. Her research, titled "See Me After Class: Student-Teacher Relationships in Short Stories," centered on a collection of original short stories. She classified these stories as "school stories," a genre of fiction that deals with older pre-adolescent and adolescent school life.

Baldwin was excited about the new format of CREATE as it provided her a more suitable platform to present her collection of short stories than previous years. "I was really interested in showcasing my research and creative efforts to an audience that could appreciate the creative process. Presenting at a typical research conference was not as appealing, as much of the research done there is strictly critical and does not involve creative works or projects," she said.

Another student who presented at the conference,

Alee Rogan, was thankful for the opportunity to present her capstone project. Rogan initially conducted her research about a religion-based group called The Sunday Assembly as part of her honors thesis with Dr. Barbara Liu. When asked about her experience, Rogan spoke about the many benefits of CREATE. "I think CREATE definitely helps highlight student achievements by allowing them to share their work with other students and faculty.... Presenting at CREATE could be a good stepping stone for students who'd like to eventually present at larger conferences," explained Rogan.

She went on to thank Liu: "She always provided me with detailed comments and suggestions for revisions in a timely manner despite her multiple other commitments. Her comments pushed my work to a higher standard; sometimes they were extremely challenging, but I know they helped me grow as a writer."

Rogan, however, also spoke about one disappointing negative aspect of CREATE: "Something I did notice, however, was that there weren't many students in attendance who weren't already presenting work." Although the event showcases the scholastic achievements of their peers, many students did not attend. "This may be because of when CREATE was held—on a Friday night and Saturday morning," Rogan went on to say. Perhaps, as she implies, the event could be better attended in the future if it was held midweek instead of on a weekend.

Three other English majors also presented their capstone projects at this year's CREATE exhibition. Matthew Bossi's exhibited his research, titled "Scrap It!": Creative Evolution through Disillusion in Shaw," which was conducted in Dr. Miriam Chirico's "Classics in Comedy" senior seminar. Kristen Chonko, also from Dr. Chirico's class, presented her project, "'Do not you love me?': Wit, Deception, and Love in Shakespeare's Comedies." Lastly, Megan Sargent, a senior English and Education major, displayed her research, "Journaling in the Classroom," as part of Dr. Lauren Rosenberg's "Community Literacy Studies" seminar.

All in all, the event spanned the course of two days and featured 170 student projects in a variety of different genres. These genres included oral presentations, live music and dance performances, photography exhibits and documentary viewings.

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Meet the Fall 2015 English Department Interns!

Help Wanted!

Any current student who is interested in doing a department internship in the fall or spring semester, please contact the chair at: fraustinol@easternct.edu

Seth McCulloch is a senior at Eastern. He's an English and Communications double major with a minor in Writing. When asked how he felt about assuming the role of editor of Keep-ENG in Touch, Seth replied, "I am excited to take on the editor position of the newsletter and I think that it will be a great opportunity."



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