

KEEP-ENG IN TOUCH

A Message from the Chair

Dear alumni, current students, and friends of the English Department at Eastern:

Another academic year is ending as I write this, with another group of English majors and Writing minors moving from the ranks of students to alumni. There are so many whom I and the rest of the faculty will miss — but it is gratifying to know that we will be able to remain in touch through this newsletter and through our "English at Work" alumni panels. As always, we are eager to hear about your experiences in graduate school and careers, so please do send us your news! I invite you to connect with me on LinkedIn if



you have not already done so.

A big thank-you goes to Ashley Cholewa for her fine editorial work on the Spring 2016 issue of *Keep-ENG in Touch*. She is very modest so I will have to toot her horn and tell you that she did a marvelous job of moderating the alumni panel you'll read about on page 5.

Lisa Rowe Fraustino
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A Message from the Editor

I would like to thank Dr. Fraustino for giving me the opportunity to edit and compile the newsletter this semester. It has been a valuable experience. I would also like to thank everyone who contributed their work to the pages that follow—you all did a wonderful job, and this final product would not have been possible without you.

Ashley Cholewa
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Former Professor Gray Jacobik Wins William Meredith Award

By Nathan Boutin

Gray Jacobik, a poet, artist, and former Professor of English at Eastern Connecticut State University, has been awarded the 2016 Award for Poetry presented by the William Meredith Foundation. The foundation, which has provided a number of awards to poets including former United States Poet Laureate Natasha Trethewey in 2014, seeks to enrich the public's appreciation for poetry and other forms of art by sponsoring poetry readings, art exhibitions, and prizes such as the Award for Poetry. The award is entirely unsolicited by the recipient. Jacobik was stunned when she received the notice: "I had put poetry aside during the previous four years and was concentrating entirely on painting," she commented during an e-mail interview. "My mind and preoccupations were so utterly elsewhere; it took me some time to consider whether or not I even wanted to accept it." Deciding ultimately that she owed it to her existing volume of poetry to accept the award, Jacobik formally received the honor in April.

Along with the prestige, this award sponsored the publication of a new, selected collection of poetry published by Poets' Choice Publishing. Her collection titled *The Banquet* was officially released on April 22 at Connecticut College. Jacobik calls it her *magnum opus*, her greatest and most important work to date, and perhaps of her career. The book contains over 400 pages of poetry comprised from her three previous collections *Brave Disguises*, *The Surface of Last Scattering*, and *The Double Task*, alongside a number of uncollected poems written since 2002. The astonishing page length is a result of the freedom Gray was allowed during the creation of her collection: "The President of the William Meredith Foundation told me that I could make it as long as I wanted to," Jacobik shared with enthusiasm, "so I had *carte blanche* regarding length." Creating the book appears to have

doubled as a course in self-discovery, which she is grateful to the William Meredith Foundation for providing: "If not for this award," Jacobik explains, "I would never have known what an accomplished poet I was."

But her accomplishments will not end with the recognition of her newest collection. Her dramatic monologues written in the voice of Eleanor Roosevelt are



Former Professor Gray Jacobik

planned to be published as a book titled *Privileged Access* in 2018 or 2019. Having been retired from the world of academia since the age of 60, she looks forward to creating more art, both literary and visual: "This is freedom," she said. "My vocation was never teaching; it has been, since the age of 7, art." This freedom Jacobik speaks of is valuable to any artist. Due to her perfectionistic and workaholic nature, though, she "feels enormous conflict because there just isn't time enough to do justice to each passion."

Gray Jacobik started her journey as a visual artist, and began writing poetry at 29 after an intense epiphany she experienced in which she suddenly "understood the nature of metaphor, how it serves to generate consciousness itself." This epiphany, she admits, is incredibly difficult to explain, as it has "presented itself as a gestalt of very complex phenomenon." From there, Gray began writing. She began reading poets such as Wordsworth and Dickinson, slowly taking undergraduate courses, eventually earning her M.A. and Ph.D., went on to teach poetry at ECSU, and now is the recipient of William Meredith Foundation's prestigious award. Even though Jacobik has retired from the University and feels as if there just is not enough time to do everything, her lasting piece of advice for budding writers strikes home: "For writers of any stripe, the practice is writing, and the study is reading. Live as fully, richly, deeply as possible and say "yes" as frequently."

Professor Christopher Torockio Talks About Newest Novel

By Christina Rossomando

Christopher Torockio, associate professor of English at Eastern Connecticut State University, spoke to the Eastern community about his newest novel, *The Soul Hunters*, on April 5th in the Student Center Theatre.

The Soul Hunters is a story about three brothers who are cleaning out their recently deceased father's home. The boys are facing the fact that they have lost the last family member of that generation. All in their fifties, the brothers are dealing with endings and the process of moving on. The entire novel takes place the night after the funeral as they go through and clean out their father's house. Each chapter, narrated by a different character, allows the reader to experience different perspectives as well as personal conflicts and issues.

Torockio discussed the idea behind the book and how the characters came to be, saying, "I try to separate myself from the characters as much as I can, but I end up injecting a little of myself into every single character but not specifically one."

The Soul Hunters is based on a story from Torockio's own life; which was his grandfather's death and subsequent funeral. All the characters have ties to real-life family members.

"This is one of the few times I used a real-life incident as a springboard for my fiction," said Torockio. "I try not to, it makes me feel weird. I am more in the 'what-if' school of writing."

Although Torockio worried about using personal experiences in his book, the plot was inspired by the interesting experience of sitting around an invisible kitchen table. "I remember after the yard sale we went inside to sit and chat. We sold the kitchen table but not the chairs, so we all sat in the chairs around where the table should've been. I remember thinking, 'there is definitely a story



Professor Christopher Torockio

here,' so I used that as a jumping point," said Torockio.

Torockio describes his writing process for *The Soul Hunters* as being based on a bunch of little moments that he pieces together. He discussed that while writing, he was more concerned with the progression of his novel's plot, rather than working toward a pre-determined ending. "I don't like outlines," said Torockio. "I write novels like I write stories, about half-way through I hope I can see the end."

Torockio expressed the difficulty that he faces while writing a novel, saying "I'm better at capturing a single moment, which is nice because that can really carry you." His collected bibliography prominently features short stories that are published in a plethora of literary journals such as *The Antioch Review*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Iowa Review* and others.

The English department and Eastern's Writer Guild sponsored this event. *The Soul Hunters* was published by Black Lawrence Press on February 15, 2016.



Torockio's novel

ECSU: A Destination from Halfway Around the World

By Quinn McAdam

When I first met Qing Zhang, who goes by Candace with her English-speaking friends, she was introduced as a visiting scholar from China who had come to the United States to experience the English department here at Eastern. However, I quickly learned that we students were learning just as much from her as she was from us. I had the opportunity to ask Candace a few questions for this this newsletter, and her responses were thoughtful and informative.

In regards to the college experience, she said that “back in China students need to listen to professors and memorize a lot. And we have a final exam in almost every course instead of submitting papers. In China, educators are more concerned with the learner being fully informed and equipped with knowledge tools at the undergraduate level. Here in the United States I have a very different experience. Students here need to think a lot over the proposed issues.” This response indicates that there are many differences between the Chinese and American educational systems, but that there are also similarities in terms of the importance of a well-rounded education.

In addition, Candace says that there is intense competition for students to get into college in China, and that what they learn when they get there is focused on memorizing concrete facts. She also mentioned that “most Chinese students do not feel comfortable to speak out their view in front of the whole class, although many of them are very thoughtful. Chinese students don’t write as much. But we are turning our attention to that.”

For the project she’s been working on while at ECSU, she revealed that while she “came to study pedagogy of English writing and composition,” she has learned a lot more than that. She has gained knowledge on other subjects including, as she terms it, “a different way of interacting between professors and students, a heuristic approach, a reflective approach.” She is using all of this information to form a new study on Chinese students’ writing experience in the United States.

Candace also discussed how she will use her

research when she goes back to China. She said, “What I learn here shall benefit China in two ways. First I shall introduce Eastern’s ideas and practice to Chinese educators and students by publishing relevant articles in academic periodicals. At a more immediate level, I will practice what I learn here in my classroom as most observations and thoughts I make are pedagogy related.”

Finally, Candace talked about her own favorite experience about being at ECSU. She identified interacting with professors as her favorite aspect, saying, “talking to them helped me form a real, vivid image of American university students. I anticipate sharing my experience with my students in China. They love to learn about the real United States.”

Whereas Candace and her students love learning about the United States, we in the United States love learning about China first-hand—knowledge that we have thanks to Candace and her hard work here at Eastern. Building connections like these is what will make English departments around the world flourish as they share ideas, information, and pedagogies with one another. Each day with Candace means more progress at Eastern, and the positive effects stretch from our campus across the world.



The author (left) and Candace (right)

Eastern Hosts “English At Work” Alumni Panel

By Ashley Cholewa

On March 11, 2016, Eastern Connecticut State University’s English Department held its biannual “English at Work” alumni panel discussion on graduate studies. This semester the English Department welcomed back seven alumni guest speakers: Lauren Biatowas ‘12, Rosanne Carlo ‘08, Angela DiLella ‘14, Melissa Dwelley ‘12, Christian Gallichio ‘13, Samuel Lisi ‘13, and Ashley Parker ‘14. These alumni, now in different fields, all majored in English here at Eastern. The event was moderated by this writer, the then-English department intern.

The event began when the moderator introduced each of the panelists and gave a little background information on the field of study each panelist decided to pursue after leaving Eastern, then asked each panelist to elaborate on how majoring in English at Eastern led to graduate school. Biatowas is currently a secondary educator, Carlo is an English professor in the CUNY system, DiLella is pursuing a Master’s degree in Creative Writing from the New School, Dwelley received a Master’s degree in Student Personnel Administration and currently works at a Massachusetts community college, Gallichio is pursuing a Master’s degree in English Literature, Lisi is currently attending Law School, and Parker is finishing her Master’s degree in Linguistics.

Then, the panelists were asked questions generated Dr. Clermont-Ferrand’s English 202 class. The queries challenged the panelists to describe whether they felt that graduate schools interpreted a degree from Eastern differently than a degree from a private school, how they felt their degrees from Eastern prepared them for graduate school, what they plan on doing with their graduate degrees, and what advice they had for students entering the new major.

The English 202 students also had a question for panelist Samuel Lisi in particular, which was if he could quantify the amount he studied per week. This question was directed at Lisi because he decided to attend law school after Eastern, but was opened up to the rest of the panelists after Lisi answered. The resulting discussion gave the audience a realistic idea of both the advantages and benefits of attending graduate school, as well as the amount of work that advanced degree entails.



From left: DiLella, Carlo, and Dwelley

The panelists ended the event by giving current students some advice about graduate school, and about making the most of their undergraduate career.

Lisi encouraged students to attend graduate school if they think they

want to. He said, “If grad school is something you’re really considering, do it. Don’t put it off and think ‘I’ll make some money and then come back to it.’ It’s better to get it done earlier than later.”

Dwelley built off of Lisi’s advice and added advice about taking advantage of time at Eastern. She said, “It is so important to do things outside of your program curriculum. So, take advantage of internships. Do part-time jobs within the field. Get a lot of experience. Because not only will that make you more marketable, allow you to put more things on your resume, you’re going to get a sense of what you like and what you don’t like.”

Intrigued? Want to hear more advice from these English alumni? Watch the full video of this enlightening event here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xVi8Crs5iQ>

Internship Spotlight: Sports Information Office

By Kathryn Jankura

I always thought failure was a bad thing, until last fall, when the Eastern athletic department told me that I was not selected for a secretarial job on campus. I am a proud member of Eastern's field hockey team, and I was looking forward to working alongside the athletic department, which I know so well. Reflecting now, I realize that this small failure inadvertently led me to other ways I could become involved in the athletic field—ways which incorporate my skills in English and writing.

Once Bob Molta, the Sports Information Director, heard that I was not offered the secretarial job, he asked if I would consider being an intern for the Sports Information Office. Although I had never written any form of sports article before, I was more than willing to work in the athletic department completing projects that related to my English major.

For those unfamiliar with the athletics department here at Eastern, the Sports Information Office, located in the Sports Center, provides internships and job opportunities for Eastern students. Some write articles, announce sport events, or capture the essence of Eastern's athletics through the athletic department website.

I accepted the internship to write articles for the website. When I met with my English advisor for the internship, Dr. Ferruci, he appeared to be more excited about the position than I was. Since I had been so used to writing academic papers for my English classes, I was nervous because I didn't know what to expect when writing in a journalistic style.

I completed a total of five articles during my internship, which were all posted on the website. Bob Molta assigned me each story. Although he asked if I had any suggestions for a topic, I typically went with his ideas because they were current events relating to each sport. Yet,

the articles were not necessarily about various Eastern sport teams and their accomplishments. They also focused on the coaching staff, season previews, and even athletic community engagement.

Although new to the process of covering sports topics and to the style of journalistic writing, I felt as though I quickly caught on after my first article about National Girls & Women in Sports Day. I was introduced to the long process of contacting those involved with the

event, collaborating with Bob Molta to write, having interview questions approved, scheduling a date, a time and place for the interview, and making the interview process as much of a natural conversation as it could be.

With each article, I wrote an outline to be approved by the Sports Information Director to see if I was correctly fo-

ocusing on the necessary information to be published. Since the style of the articles are direct and relatively short, it was difficult for me to transfer my academic writing skills to this style of writing. However, I researched the work of past interns to get a general idea of this style, and mirrored it in my own stories. Ultimately this process helped me become a more concise writer.

This internship not only allowed me to learn about a different writing style, but it also taught me how to professionally communicate with interviewees and my advisors, collaborate with peers, and how to manage my time to meet deadlines. Since there was always something new in Eastern athletics, I had to quickly schedule meetings, take accurate notes, and write a concise article to get approved and then move on to the next story.

Through this internship, I have acquired a new set of skills that can be applied to my classes as an English major. I have learned a more journalistic approach to writing, which has allowed me to be more concise and



A graphic designed for one of Jankura's articles

“Internship,” cont. from prev. page.

detailed when writing papers for my English classes. By being a better communicator and direct with interviewees, it also has allowed me to do the same with professors. This internship has given me an opportunity and has exposed me to all that Eastern has to offer when gaining experience for post graduation. Although I am majoring in English and Secondary Education and plan on being a teacher, a new field of writing has been revealed to me, and I will pursue it further in the fall.

I would like to thank Bob Molta and Dr. Ferruci for their constant support that made my internship one of the best academic experiences at Eastern.

Want to read Kathryn’s articles? Find them at the following addresses:

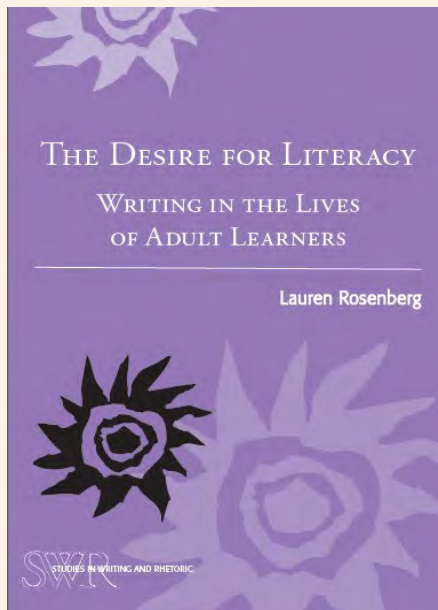
- https://easternct.prestosports.com/sports/mtrack/2015-16/releases/ndibe-feature-april_29
- <http://www.gowarriorathletics.com/sports/fh/index>
- http://www.gowarriorathletics.com/releases/2015-16/coaches_interview_story
- http://www.gowarriorathletics.com/releases/2015-16/coaches_interview_story
- <http://www.gowarriorathletics.com/releases/2015-16/ngwsd-feb1>

Dr. Rosenberg Wins Board of Regents Award

By Seth McCulloch

Dr. Lauren Rosenberg has recently won the 2016 Board of Regents award for Research Excellence. The award is given annually to one recipient from among the seventeen Connecticut State University schools. Each year, every CSU institution may nominate one candidate to receive the award and the Board of Regents can grant up to five awards.

Rosenberg received the award in recognition of her book’s recent publication. Her book, *The Desire for Literacy: Writing in the Lives of Adult Learners*, was a ten-year qualitative study that surveyed four adults, two men and two women, and detailed the struggles they faced in the United States’ highly literate society while being non-literate individuals. Rosenberg’s study indicated that there are numerous populations in the United States that are non-literate. Her study wanted to serve as a spotlight of populations (who are American citizens) that were non-literate into adulthood. In regards to receiving the award, Rosenberg stated,



Dr. Rosenberg’s Book

“I was really hoping to get the award, I was glad to get it, but I wasn’t very surprised. It’s really good to be acknowledged for hard work.”

What is truly notable about Rosenberg’s reception of the award is the fact that she is a qualitative researcher. The majority Eastern’s faculty members conduct quantitative research. Rosenberg stated that she thinks that the award will reflect well on the Eastern community.

Rosenberg has already begun her next research project, which she thinks will take place over an extended period of time like the study she conducted for her recent book. “I’ve been doing this study of student veterans and the kinds of writing they did in their military jobs and the

ways that they identify as writers.” Her current study is again looking at a

population of writers that is oftentimes overlooked. Rosenberg stated that despite not being very familiar with the population, she thinks that it will be a fun and enjoyable experience.

Eastern Hosts CREATE Conference

By Ashley Cholewa

On April 15th, in the Student Center, Eastern hosted the second annual CREATE conference. CREATE stands for Celebrating Research Excellence and Artistic Talent at Eastern, and is a combination of two different conferences the school previously hosted—the Arts and Sciences Research Conference, and the Excellence Expo for students in the School of Education and Professional Studies. This year’s CREATE conference was the largest showcase of undergraduate work that Eastern has hosted to date.

Senior English major Meghan Kelly, who presented her project “Humans of Eastern,” said “The CREATE conference provided the perfect venue for me to present about a topic which played an integral part of my college experience.” Reflecting on the experience of presenting, she added, “I’m glad I got to share a little piece of myself with the greater Eastern community.”

See the table below for a list of all the English majors who presented at CREATE this year, as well as their project titles and the professors who sponsored their work.

Student	Presentation	Professor
Catherine Allegretti	“Caulfield ‘s Cognitive Crisis”	Dr. Lisa Fraustino
Allie Coppola	“Creative Writing Abroad: Words to Live By”	Dr. Christopher Torockio
Ashlyn Hart	“‘Just Call Me Aimee’: Confronting Stereotypes of People with Disabilities“	Dr. Maureen McDonnell
Meghan Kelly	“Humans of Eastern”	Dr. Lisa Fraustino
Emily Komornik	“Divine Intervention: Images of the Christian Ghost in Shakespearean Tragedy”	Dr. Maureen McDonnell
Alexis Kurtz	“Modules to Assist Nutmeggers in Performing Six Major American English Dialects for the Stage and Screen“	Dr. Elena Tapia
Seth McCullock, Mikayla Zagata, Meaghan McFall-Gorman	“Writing for Young Adults”	Dr. Lisa Fraustino
Christopher Morris, Nicole Green, Hannah Bythrow	“Divergent Narration: Subverting the Power Dynamics of the Fix-It Shop“	Dr. Susan DeRosa
Rebecca Rubin	“A Poetry Collection”	Dr. Daniel Donaghy
Lauren Teta	“Creative Writing Abroad”	Dr. Christopher Torockio
Megan Velasquez	“Child Must Have a Ticket: An Analysis Book-to-Stage Adaptations of Alice in Wonderland and Matilda“	Dr. Miriam Chirico

Five Months of Triumphs: A Look at Dr. Lisa Rowe Fraustino's Spring Semester

By Nicole Green and Mikayla Zagata

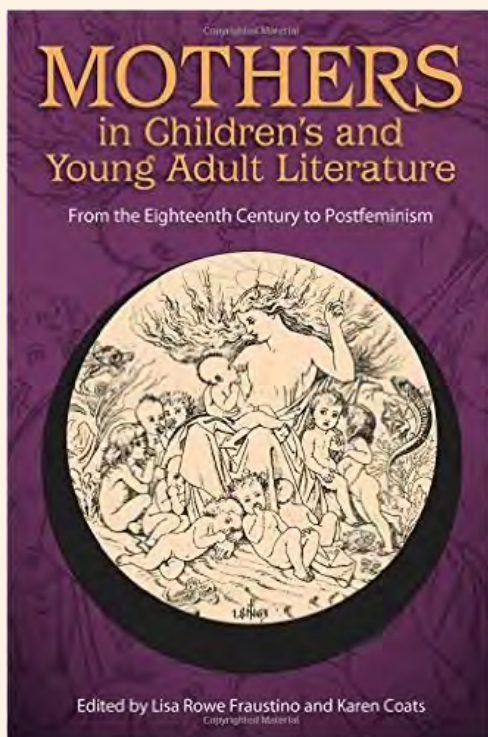
Dr. Lisa Fraustino, our very own English Department chair, spoke at the Faculty Scholars Forum on Wednesday, February 3rd 2016. The Faculty Scholars Forum, a formal opportunity for faculty to share their research with one another, started up again for the Spring Semester, and Dr. Fraustino was the inaugural presenter. She shared her article, "The Rights and Wrongs of Anthropomorphism in Picture Books," which was published in the collection of essays *Ethics and Children's Literature*. Dr. Fraustino's article recently won the Children's Literature Association Article Award, a distinction which indicates outstanding research in children's literature.

In her presentation of the article at the forum, Dr. Fraustino discussed the ethics of anthropomorphism in children's books at length, calling into question whether or not it is morally right to expose children to scientifically incorrect anthropomorphism. She discussed several different works of children's literature, including *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter (1902), *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown (1942), *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown (1947) and *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister, but focused primarily on *Swimmy* by Leo Leoni (1963) and *This Is Not My Hat* by Jon Klassen (2012).

Anthropomorphism, the act of giving animals humanistic qualities, has not yet been analyzed in great detail from an ethical standpoint, as Fraustino explores in the article. She argues that anthropomorphism in children's literature is not completely harmless, and, however unintentional, may be a tool used to avoid ethnicity inclusion and cultural diversity within the genre. Fraustino also argues that animals are not accurately depicted through anthropomorphism. Instead, anthropomorphism can take

an animal that may be perceived as scary, such as a bear, and make it into something cute.

Fraustino also discussed how anthropomorphism in children's literature may perpetuate humans removing themselves from nature in order to be more superior, a concept particularly prevalent in the texts *Swimmy* by Leo Leoni and *This Is Not My Hat* by Jon Klassen.



Dr. Fraustino's new book

Fraustino explained that although these texts are different in meaning, they are extremely similar in structure. Each have similar color palettes, characters and plot lines. However, *Swimmy* deals with the beauty of nature and freedom, supporting the idea of working together as a community, creating peace, and supporting human rights. On the other hand, *This Is Not My Hat* contains the idea of self-interest and rationalizes stealing, but accurately depicts the natural food chain.

Fraustino concluded her presentation by discussing the cultural significance that children's literature has, and its ability to instill anthropocentrism, the idea that humans are the most important species, in us at a young age. This presentation and the article on which it is based begs us to reexamine our own anthropomorphism-filled childhoods and reevaluate the anthropocentric mindset that we may have developed.

Not only did Fraustino enlighten the campus with her presentation on ethics in children's literature, she also took on other academic projects this semester. Being a department chair inevitably makes a professor's life doubly busy with paperwork, prospective and current students in the major coming in and asking questions, departmental meetings, and the list goes on. In spite of the position, increased busyness, and traveling, Dr. Lisa Fraustino has taken on student interns for the English department, students in independent studies, and has yet another book to

“Fraustino,” cont. from prev. page

add to her collection of publications. *Mothers in Children’s and Young Adult Literature: From the Eighteenth Century to Postfeminism* (Children’s Literature Association Series), of which Fraustino is a co-editor with Illinois State University English professor Karen Coats, is a book that has gathered, edited and carefully crafted a collection of essays analyzing and discussing the role and prominence of mothers in children’s and young adult literature.

Beverly Lyon Clark, author of *Kiddie Lit: The Cultural Construction of Children’s Literature in America* and renowned critic of children’s and young adult literature, praises the efforts of Dr. Fraustino and her co-editor Coats, saying that “*Mothers in Children’s and Young Adult Literature* is an exciting—even brilliant—collection of diverse criticism on a surprisingly under-studied topic. The thirteen astute essays chosen by Lisa Rowe Fraustino and Karen Coats use a wide array of theoretical approaches to investigate topics that range from innovation in an eighteenth century book for toddlers to animal mothering

in picture books to the postfeminism of recent young adult novels.”

The book project emerged when Coats visited Fraustino’s Mothers in Children’s and Young Adult Literature course at Hollins University, where Fraustino is a visiting faculty member, in 2013. The book splits into four sections that spans the eighteenth century to the postfeminist era: the first section is a historical lens, looking at pedagogical reasoning for maternal influence. The second section focuses on cultures and subjectivity, examining the changing image of the mother during the twentieth century. The third focuses on the bond between mother and child along the fantastical vs. realistic dimensions of motherhood that is portrayed in literature. The final section looks through a postfeminist lens, which is where Fraustino’s essay, entitled “Abandoning Mothers,” is included. The book was officially released on May 5th, 2016.

Congratulations, Dr. Fraustino, on a fruitful semester!

Eastern Writer’s Guild: Semester Wrap-Up

By Seth McCulloch

In the Spring 2016 semester, the Eastern Writers Guild once again successfully produced Eastern’s literary magazine *Eastern Exposure*. The literary magazine features the very best literary works of Eastern students and alumni. Each issue typically includes a large variety of poetry and pieces of extended fiction.

The Spring semester proved to be one of innovation for the Writers Guild. The club attempted to expand their activities beyond what they had done in past years. While making the literary magazine preoccupied the majority of the club’s time, the Writers Guild also hosted their first spelling bee fundraiser. As stated, it was the first time the Writers Guild had ever hosted an event like the spelling bee. Though the event ultimately received little in terms of involvement from the student body, it is a clear sign that the Writers Guild is



This semester’s *Eastern Exposure*

attempting to expand the activities of the club beyond the monthly coffeehouse events, the College Writing portfolio sales, and the production of *Eastern Exposure*.

Aside from the spelling bee event, the Writers Guild had a successful semester. In total, the Writers Guild hosted three separate coffeehouses that each had high rates of attendance among Eastern students. Additionally, the 2016 edition of *Eastern Exposure* had a large number of students attend and participate at its release party. The *Exposure* can also be found online at the following link:

<https://issuu.com/easternctstateuniversity/docs/eastern-exposure-2016/1?e=12068228/35319330>

Looking forward, it seems like the Eastern Writers Guild will attempt to expand the number of activities that they conduct during the school year.

Sigma Tau Delta Is Spreading!

By Meaghan McFall-Gorman

The English Honors Society, Sigma Tau Delta, has made great strides this past year and is already making plans to continue its momentum for next year.

Coming into the 2015 – 2016 school year, the newly elected Executive Board included Vice President

Seth McCullock '16, Secretary Mikayla Zagata '16, Treasurer Catherine Allegretti '17, and myself as President.

There was a definite anxiety as we assumed these roles, because there was much we desired to accomplish, but had no experience or established practices from previous Executive Boards to draw from. This anxiety dissipated largely due to the involvement of Dr.

Alison Speicher, who has been the best advisor we could have

ever hoped for. Consistently going above and beyond, Dr. Speicher has definitely helped make every Sigma Tau Delta event a great one, and her enthusiasm has continued to motivate the E-Board into taking on new projects.

Sigma Tau Delta possessed a very small presence on campus prior to our joining the association, and our main goal from the start was to turn Sigma around onto the track of widespread recognition, interest, and active membership. The purpose of Sigma is to promote literacy and the love of reading through our principles of Sincerity, Truth, and Design. As such, we thought to follow these principles in the events, programs, and projects that we developed and enacted throughout this year.

Our first attempt was a book return box through Better World Books, and it was not the most successful as we actually had books disappear on us! However, we were able to donate many textbooks that were very much

appreciated by those who received them. It was a very well-intentioned program, and in the future, as Sigma Tau Delta's active membership continues to grow, we can make it more widespread and successful.

After the moderate level of book donations, Sigma



Member of Sigma Tau Delta at Harry Potter Night
(picture courtesy of Hope-Marie Cook)

Tau Delta decided that it would be a good idea to take a different route in gaining the attention of both English majors and non-English majors. That is where the idea for a “Nostalgia Night” came into play, because the concept of sitting around eating childhood snacks and reading our favorite childhood books was something that we believed would apply to a multitude of students.

The next event, “The NEW English Major: By English Majors” was meant to answer any questions or concerns that students may have about their major requirements, class expectations, course load, and the professors that taught in certain fields. After organizing a group of English students to be panelists, we encouraged all English majors or minors to attend our panel discussion. Each panelist was given a starter question to promote dialogue, but after each panelist contributed, the students in attendance kept the conversations going. It was made clear that there are plenty of questions regarding the new concentrations, and Sigma Tau Delta was more than able to give informed answers, as well as increase student interest in joining our organization in the future (an unforeseen bonus).

However, that's enough of the serious, educational stuff—let's talk about Harry Potter! Our most successful

“Sigma,” cont. from prev. page

event yet, Harry Potter Night, was a huge hit with students, faculty, staff, and even community members. The night of Harry Potter-themed fun included Wand-Making, ‘Pin the Snitch on the Quidditch’, House Sorting, Butter Beer, Chocolate Frogs, Trivia with *prizes*, and more! Attendees were welcome to wear wizarding attire, and people of many ages and Houses took us up on that offer (shout-out to Dr. Pauley for wearing his full, official regalia and looking like a legitimate Professor of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry).

Another of Sigma Tau Delta’s projects was designing, ordering, and selling the first ever Sigma Tau Delta t-shirts. These shirts are for Staff, Faculty, Members, and anyone who would like to support our organization. The proceeds from the t-shirts go towards scholarships that will decrease incoming students’ membership dues.

If you would like to support Sigma Tau Delta in another way besides a t-shirt, perhaps you would be



Harry Potter fans enjoying Potter-themed activities

interested in our next (ambitious) project: the English Mentorship Program! This program seeks to make meaningful and helpful relationships between established English majors and incoming freshmen English majors. Catherine Allegretti, next year’s Vice President, has

adopted the program as her own, and has made wonderful progress already as she has increased the number of volunteer mentors and has been in contact with interested students.

To conclude, Sigma Tau Delta extends a huge thank you to outgoing Executive members Vice President Seth McCullock and Secretary Mikayla

Zagata, because even though this was their

senior year, they gave this organization their all and helped it grow. Also a big thank you in advance to next year’s Executive Board members Vice President Catherine Allegretti, Treasurer Michelle Congleton and Secretary Kyle Hottin. I am extremely excited to continue this momentum next year as President, and know that even better things are in store for Sigma Tau Delta.

The English Mentorship Program is seeking more mentors, so if you are not graduating this year and would like to assist please contact Vice President [Catherine Allegretti \(allegrettic@my.easternct.edu\)](mailto:allegrettic@my.easternct.edu) or [Dr. Allison Speicher \(speichera@easternct.edu\)](mailto:speichera@easternct.edu). You do NOT have to be a Sigma Tau Delta member to be a mentor, so it is open to any genuinely interested and dedicated English student!

Spring 2016 English Night

By Ashley Cholewa

On May 4, the English Department had its annual English Night celebration in the Paul E. Johnson Community Room of the J. Eugene Smith Library.

First on the docket were the first year writing awards, which went to Megan Albert, Raymond "RJ" Carroll, and Madison Fitzgerald. Albert won the award for Creativity and Innovation for her paper "Voting for Hall

President," written for Professor Phil Fox's ENG 100 class, and Carroll and Fitzgerald won awards for Excellent Research Papers. Carroll's paper was entitled "School Shootings: A Nation's Tragedy," and was written for Professor Mika Taylor's ENG 100 class, and Fitzgerald's was entitled "The Rhetoric in Photography," and was written for Professor Mark Dodd's ENG 100 class.

Then, the department awards were presented. Seth McCulloch was selected for the Award for Service to the Department, Cherie Green was selected for the Award for Lifelong Learning, Dakota Dolan was selected for the Award for Contributions to the Cultural Life of the Campus, Alexandra Coppola was selected for the Award for Commitment to Teaching, and Alexa Plante was selected for the Award for Academic Excellence.

After all of the awards were presented and refreshments were served, senior seminary presentations began. The three seminars that ended this semester were Dr. Raouf Mama's seminar "Social and Political Issues in Contemporary African Literature," Dr. Elena Tapia's "Conceptual Metaphor in Literature," and Dr. Jordan Youngblood's "Science Fiction and the Body."

Dr. Mama's seminar focused on the ways in which colonialism has impacted African culture, and how the aftershock of colonialism still appears in contemporary works by African authors. As representatives of this seminar, Rebecca Arrigoni presented her paper "Symbolism of Death and Madness in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*," and Matthew Smigel presented his

paper "In Search of the Middle Way: Cultural Synthesis in *Season of Migration to the North* and *Ambiguous Adventure*."

The next seminar to present was Dr. Tapia's, which was about a different, cognitive linguistics-based method for analyzing literature. Ashley Cholewa and Meghan

Kelly served as representatives with their papers

"Characterization by Conceptual Metaphor: An Analysis of Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's*" and "Understanding Alcoholism through Conceptual Metaphor in Tim Tharp's *The Spectacular Now*," respectively.

The final seminar that presented was Dr. Youngblood's, and unlike the previous two seminars, its presenters completed creative projects instead of research projects. Tiffany Pfeiffer presented a portion of her story "Lost in Reality," and Stephanie Stauble presented her children's story, "When You Give an Alien a Name." Both projects used elements of science fiction and embodiment as a basis for original plotlines.

After each seminar were brief question and answer sessions where students could elaborate on what they learned after their two-semester seminar sequence.



All the English Night Award Recipients

CONTRIBUTORS

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Christina Rossomando is a junior majoring in Communications and minoring in Writing with a concentration in Journalism.

Mikayla Zagata is a senior majoring in English and Secondary Education and minoring in Psychology.

Meet the Fall 2016 English Department Interns!

Ashley Schmitt is a senior at Eastern who will be graduating this December. She is currently majoring in English with a concentration in Early Childhood/Elementary Education and will begin her Masters in Education this January. She is so excited to be taking over as the new editor-in-chief of Keep-ENG in Touch for two reasons: meeting and talking with new people about their work in the discipline, and becoming more familiar with various strategies of editing and/or revising. Ashley looks forward to applying the knowledge gained from this experience to her future as an aspiring educator.

Help Wanted!

Are you savvy with technology? Do all your friends love the articles you share on social media? Do you love English? If so, you may be interested in the position of Social Media Intern! If you are a current student looking to complete a department internship in the Fall, please contact the department chair at: fraustinol@easternct.edu

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