



THE ENGLISH AGGIE

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www.english.tamu.edu

Texas A&M University– The Department of English Undergraduate Studies

Autumn Has Arrived!

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Texas A&M Student Published in Literary Journal

Corey Kirby is a student at Texas A&M, double-majoring in English and Philosophy, who plans on graduating this semester. In a previous semester Kirby was alerted by one of his professors to the call for submissions from the 2014 edition of the *Sagebrush Review*, a literary journal run by students at the University of San Antonio. The decision on what to submit was difficult for him; he had short stories and poems that he felt were all capable of being published, but he eventually chose to submit six of his poems. Five out of the six were published and they are as follows: "The Searcher," "On the Road," "Times Past, Now, and Times to Come," and "The Sky is Magenta." He plans to acquire a copy of his publication for the English Undergraduate Office, which as of now should be very soon.



Look for his poems to be featured on our blog at:

englishaggie.blogspot.com



People Serving People

By: Sara Salazar-Ramirez

English Rhetoric major with minors in Psychology and Film Studies

The story of a former Texas A&M English student who spent a year in Chicago volunteering with other individuals to help homeless people in the area.

From July 26th, 2013 to July 25th, 2014 I lived on the third floor of the Marquard Center, located in the Wicker Park neighborhood of Chicago, IL. I lived with twelve other young adults in something called an intentional community, which, admittedly, sounds a bit commune-y. It really means exactly as it sounds: we were a group of individuals with the shared interest of service and we deliberately chose to live with each other. "What I did" is not a very simple question to answer, nor is it one I wish to give a generic response. The answer I give most often goes a little like, "Franciscan Outreach is a non-profit organization that provides services for the homeless and otherwise marginalized of the Chicago area. On a weekly basis at the Marquard Center we have case managers to meet one on one with individuals, twice a week we offer shower and lunch services, and four times a week we offer laundry services. We serve dinner 365 days of the year, holidays and snow storms included. I, along with 5 others, plan and prepare meals for anywhere between 70 to 150 guests per night." The really real answer I want to give is more like, "I spent a year of my life devoting time and energy and attention to cooking, cleaning, talking, supervising, learning, fumbling, laughing, crying, and being for/to/from/with many homeless, some struggling, all humans."

"While a student at Texas A&M, I was active with St. Mary's Catholic Student Center. I heard there was going to be a recruiter for Catholic Volunteer Network to speak to students about serving with a volunteer organization, something which had interested me since before entering my college life. He spoke so highly of his year of service, of the growth he had experienced, and of the lives he met, that I desired what he felt, what he learned, and what he experienced. I flipped through the thick book and created an account for what he called "the E-Harmony for service sites." The process began late in 2011, but solidified in February of 2012 when I received an email from the Volunteer Coordinator for Franciscan Outreach who had seen my profile and my interest in this particular program. Part of the requirements included "A desire to live out the core values of Spirituality, Service, Community and Simple Living," values I believe are very important. Truthfully, I have a strong liking for St. Francis of Assisi, which is very big reason for my bookmarking the program. Still, the program kept coming to the front of my mind, and I have a hard time ignoring such persistent goads."

Although the program prefers volunteers to have Bachelor's degrees, it does not require or specify the need for any particular field of study. One might think I did not use my writing skills during my year in the kitchen, but that individual would be mistaken. A few of my community members worked on applications to graduate schools and medical schools, so I, being the token paper-fixer-upper, helped out where I could. I also had the opportunity to edit papers and scholarship essays for a particular guest earning his Master's degree. That aside, I can honestly say my ability to interact with individuals had been significantly enhanced due to my discussion based English classes. Investing my time with my classmates by listening, learning, digesting, and discussing an array of topics, I had great practice in putting time into people and in hearing them first.

I'd really like to scream "EVERY PERSON SHOULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS!!!" but social norms don't receive this type of approach well. So, this, my fellow English majors and eager individuals embarking on society's fringes, is my scream and shout: I encourage you to seek a similar experience. Every opportunity you have, every job, every relationship, every everything you do will involve other humans, each making up the world in which we live. No matter what your religious background or spirituality level, this type of experience is a deeply spiritual one simply because of the relational level in which you meet others. I challenge you to experience humanity in a way that allows you to see beyond the scope of the superficial tiers of our culture. I challenge you to see humanity.



Welcome Our New Faculty Member



Dr. Ira Dworkin

B.A. from Wesleyan University in Connecticut
M.A. from the City College of New York
Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York

Dr. Dworkin graduated from Wesleyan University with a degree in African American Studies and English. His graduate degrees are in English including a Certificate in American Studies with a M.A. from City College of New York and a Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. His studies focused mainly on American and African American literature and culture. He is currently completing a book on African American responses to imperialism in the Congo in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This book includes studies of figures such as Booker T. Washington, Pauline Hopkins, Langston Hughes, and Malcolm X. His book focuses on how the shifting definitions of “America” and what it means to be “American” are determined by a range of political and cultural encounters beyond the also-shifting geographical borders of the United States. He is interested in understanding the ways American literature and culture are informed by international encounters and he has already found himself learning so much from Aggie students, as well as from new colleagues.

He has been fortunate to travel internationally and meet with students and colleagues throughout Europe, Africa, and west Asia. For the past six years he has been teaching American literature, African literature, and American studies in Cairo, Egypt. In addition, he has taught as a Fulbright professor at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He sees the opportunity to teach at Texas A&M as a chance to translate his international experiences into a U.S. classroom. Teaching a course over the nineteenth-century novel, he is reminded that Texas was not even part of the U.S. chronologically at the beginning of his course, but by the end the course it became a part of the United States. He is looking forward to working in a place whose own relationship with the United States allows for many similar questions to those which he encountered teaching American literature to student’s abroad. As an English professional, Dworkin finds countless examples of inspiration from poetry by Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Jayne Cortez, and Ted Joans. His favorite literary quote is from one of the first people to occupy Wall Street, Herman Melville’s *Bartleby the Scrivener*: “I would prefer not to.”

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

By: Langston Hughes

I’ve known rivers:

I’ve known rivers ancient as the world
and older than the flow of human blood
in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns
were young.

I built my hut near the Congo and it
lulled me to sleep.

I looked upon the Nile and raised the
pyramids above it.

I hear the singing of the Mississippi when
Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans,
and I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all
golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:

Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.



Spring Course Descriptions

More courses, requirements and prerequisites are listed at:
www.english.tamu.edu/spring-2015

ENGL 356: Dr. O'Farrell

FILM 356, Jane Austen on Screen (MWF 1:50pm-2:40pm)

This course will examine Jane Austen's place and function in our cultural imagination by thinking about her appearance on screen: in film, in television, on the web, and in social media. Austen's persistent presence as a cultural reference has been made clear in the ways her work has been adapted. In our class, we will want to think about how and why Austen continues to work as an object of fascination and signification, about what issues we as a culture use her to think through, about Austen love and fandom, and also about what buttons she pushes: there is always some online version of an "I hate Jane Austen" webpage or anti-fan group to be found. Thinking about her screen presence, we will want to think about questions of adaptation and about the relation of the verbal to the visual. And of course we'll discuss all those things Austen loved discussing: marriage and money and dancing, annoyances, styles, and wit.

Class texts will include two Austen novels and some biographical material about Austen, as well as several direct and indirect film and television adaptations of her work. We will also spend time considering Austen's continuing online existence, and we will read scholarly and critical materials that will help us think through Austen's media and cultural afterlife.

Requirements will include exams, online projects, and brief papers.

ENGL 481: Dr. Howell

Nineteenth-Century Travel and the Body

This course will examine nineteenth-century depictions of travel's effect on the body. It also analyzes nineteenth-century worries regarding travelling bodies that cross national and cultural borders. Our reading includes invalid diaries, nonfictional travel memoirs, short and long fiction, with a focus on works set in colonial Africa, India and the Caribbean. We will discuss how authors depict the transformative effects of travel—both the physical as well as emotional changes undergone by travelling subjects. To this end, we will first consider the risks and rewards of travel abroad for different kinds of bodies in the nineteenth-century—how a subject's gender, class, and racial identity affected their choice whether to travel, their means of travel, and their health while traveling. Further, we will examine how depictions of the body highlight anxiety and desire regarding travel, by discussing instances within the texts of the breaching of borders and boundaries, hybridization, extremes of climate, and 'degeneration'.

Readings:

Excerpts from *The Diary of an Invalid* (1825), Henry Matthews
Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands (1857), Mary Jane Seacole
King Solomon's Mines (1885), H. Rider Haggard
The Island of Dr. Moreau (1899), H.G. Wells
Heart of Darkness (1899), Joseph Conrad
 And More...

ENGL 415: Dr. Ives

Studies in a major author: Christina Rossetti

In recent years, Rossetti—author of "Goblin Market"—has been recognized as one of the most important poets of the 19th century. But in addition to eight volumes of poetry, Rossetti also produced two collections of short fiction, six volumes of devotional writing, and a semi-autobiographical novella published after her death. Sung as hymns, read aloud to children, transformed into visual art and continually reprinted and re-illustrated, Rossetti's writing is still very much a part of our cultural heritage and our everyday lives. During our semester's study of Rossetti's work, we will proceed in loose chronological order through Rossetti's career, paying special attention to topics such as the nature of biographical scholarship on Rossetti, and Rossetti's relationship to the Pre-Raphaelite movement, the visual arts, feminism, music, and religion.

Prerequisite: 3 credits of literature at a 300 level or above.





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ENGL 320: Dr. Hawkins
Technical Writing and Editing

Interested in publishing or editing?
Want to sharpen your writing and document design skills?

In this course you will gain experience in editing documents for a variety of clients in real-world settings, engage in service learning with local community agencies, and get insight and advice from practicing professionals in publishing and editing.

Prerequisite: ENGL 210

ENGL 359: Dr. Wollock
Songwriting, section 502

This new course gives students the chance to experiment with songwriting in a variety of genres, to meet active faculty songwriters of different kinds and to build a song writing portfolio that will include original song lyrics as well as evaluations of inspiring models. We anticipate gaining insight into opportunities for songwriters through conversations with active songwriters, as well as performers and producers, in the course of the semester. There will also be opportunities to perform songs written during the class, and to collaborate with student and faculty musicians, as well as with fellow student songwriters.

ENGL 359: Dr. Hannah
Forms of Creative Writing

This course will examine the short story through its historical development as well as concentrate on the three most prominent modes: traditional, modern, and post-modern; analysis of structure and elements coupled with writing assignments illustrating principles and narrative forms.

Prerequisites: ENGL 235; junior or senior classification

ENGL 394: Dr. Benefiel

Studies in Genre: The Vampire in Literature and Culture
LAAH 466 MWF 3:00-3:55

The Vampire in Literature and Culture is a survey of the vampire narrative from 1816 through the present. In readings and viewings, the student will be introduced to major themes in vampire literature, and to some of the most important writers and works in genre. The course will focus on development of the concept of the vampire in narrative works, and look at the uses, issues, and impact of this pervasive figure. We will explore how the works we approach are products of their moment in time, and how the vampire has changed and diversified throughout its history. By the end of the course, the student should have a broad understanding of the historical trail of the vampire, and its enduring presence in popular culture.

ENGL 481: Dr. Dworkin

Afro-Arab Encounters in American Literature and Culture

African American literary culture arguably has its roots in the infrequently read early-eighteenth-century narrative and writing of Ayyub ibn Suleiman Diallo, which were authored and published more than a century before Frederick Douglass's canonical autobiography. Many African Americans who were enslaved in the Americas brought with them various forms of Arabic literacies developed through networks of Islamic education in West Africa. From this point of departure, this senior seminar will consider the ways that American literature and culture is, in part, the product of centuries of African American encounters with the Arab and Islamic worlds. This course will focus on several exemplary encounters: Afro-Arabic writing in antebellum America; the rise of Islam among African Americans' cross cultural literary engagements in poetry, fiction, and film; and the globalization of hip hop culture.

ENGL 481: Dr. McCann

Sylvia Plath and the Confessional Poets

Senior seminar. Seminar on a significant figure, movement, or issue in literature, linguistics, or rhetoric with special attention to the methods and materials of scholarship. Writing- Intensive Course

Prerequisite: 12 credits in English, including 3 at 300-level

ENGL 356: Dr. Alonzo

FILM 356, Literature and Film: Science Fiction

This course examines literary texts and their subsequent translation into cinematic texts. Concepts and issues in adaptation and genre development will be our main concerns. How do texts' meanings change when they are transferred from written to cinematic form? How do themes and foci change in these translations? How do particular film genres develop their own conventions, separate from the literary traditions and antecedents? While adaptations are acknowledged as such for their closeness to their source texts, we will treat them as texts unto themselves, productive of particular meanings within specific contexts.



*Courses Continue
On Next Page*



ENGL 474: Dr. Reddy

Asian American Women's Writing

In this upper division course, we will examine a range of literary and cultural production by Asian American women produced after the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, when Asians immigrated in greater number to the U.S. We will explore the ways in which these artists' various cultural forms—novels, short stories, memoirs, films, visual art, among others—serve as sites for the formation of subjectivities and communities within and beyond the national borders of "America." This course will challenge you to think critically about categories that might otherwise be taken for granted and to try and see the world from the perspective of someone who is located in a different body, situation, place than perhaps your own.

Imperial wars abroad, military interventions, immigration laws, gendered labor migrations, and the global restructuring of capital all have served to make invisible if not erase the histories of Asian migrant and Asian American women.

We will think about these histories through Asian American women's writing, as it constructs and disrupts national identity—even how it points to the limits of nation-centered models of identity and community formation—by revealing its multiple gaps and fissures. In addition representing the lives and experience of women from East and Southeast Asia, some of the women artists engage with South and West Asian contexts. Others imagine the borders of Asian "America" as extending north to Canada and south to Latin America and the Caribbean in order to construct transnational cartographies of erasure, exploitation, resistance, community, and belonging.

ENGL 481: Dr. Collins

Law and Literature

Crime, detection, trial, punishment, rehabilitations, freedom: This is the familiar cycle of justice in the United States and many other nations. The whole of this cycle, as well as the legal framework in which the cycle unfolds, is the subject matter of the interdisciplinary subfield of literary criticism and legal studies known as "Law and Literature." As a way of introducing "Law and Literature," and its subfield, "Law as Literature," this class will explore works that represent, theorize, or condemn all or part of this cycle as the authors explore the intricacies of injustice and its opposite. At a larger level, this class will explore the impact of legal systems on societies like that of the United States, where, as the Law and Literature scholar Robert A. Ferguson has written, "Legal formulation both created and capped the conservative American Revolution: it provided the rationale for rebellion even as it [shaped] the continuum of revolution with the archetypal patterns of a new order."

Possible readings range from novels such as Robert Bloch's *Psycho* to Kafka's *The Trial* to Marian Faux's *Roe v. Wade: The Untold Story of the Landmark Supreme Court Decision*.

ENGL 359: Dr. Ellis

Creative Forms

Screenwriting is an intensive writing workshop with weekly assignments intended to build a foundation in narrative screenwriting. This course teaches students to produce screenplays by developing character, story, and structure. Students master systematic work habits in order to fully develop the screenplay, from initial idea to completed script. The course provides consistent critique of work, as students will evaluate course mate's writing. The expected outcome is a draft of a feature length screenplay 80-120 pages long.

ENGL 481: Dr. Del Negro

Ethnic Studies

Humor is a social and ethnically bound form of expressive culture. It serves to enhance group cohesion, but it also represents the prejudices and stereotypes of inter-ethnic relations and often manifests covert aggression. This course will examine humor directed toward marginalized groups in the U.S. and abroad, and humor produced by different outsider groups: protest humor that satirizes the attitudes and behaviors of members of the mainstream culture and humor that intimately examines their own culture. This course will look at novels, short stories, radio, minstrelsy, party records, television shows, films, and stand up comedy.

Textbook: *Ethnic Humor in Multiethnic America*, David Gillota, Rutgers University Press, 2013

ENGL 481: Dr. Taylor

Senior Seminar in American Nature Writing

American nature writing is a seminar that allows students to read and actively discuss creative nonfiction, fiction and poetry produced in our time and in the nineteenth century by the best American nature writers. Students will also keep a nature journal and produce written works influenced by their experiences in nature and by interaction with the readings. These works may be a major critical paper or creative works, depending on the student. Research will be required of students for both types of writing.

The seminar will include selections, large and small, from such writers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Rachel Carlson, Rick Bass, Edward Abbey, and Mary Oliver. Students will present an oral report on an important American nature writer. The course will give students the opportunity to understand the challenges presented to the American writer who wishes to write intelligently and beautifully about nature at a time when many see the environment under threat. The seminar will also show students how attitudes toward nature have evolved, and provide a means for the development of their own appreciation and concern for the natural world.



2014 English Essays and Awards Contest

English Research Essay Contest

Recognizes and rewards with an award of \$250 for outstanding undergraduate research writing at Texas A&M University.

Eligibility:

- Researched essay, treating any literary subject or writer, between 2500 and 5000 words.
- Written for a 300-400 level English class at Texas A&M University by an undergraduate student during the calendar year of 2014 .

Deadline: December 18, 2014

Rhetoric and Discourse Studies Essay Contest

Recognizes and rewards with an award of \$250 for outstanding undergraduate writing at Texas A&M University.

The competition is open to any analysis treatment of a topic related to Rhetoric, Linguistics, or Discourse Studies.

Eligibility:

- Address rhetoric, linguistics, and discourse studies in some way
- Have been written for an English or Linguistics class at TAMU by an undergraduate student during the calendar year of 2014.

Deadline: February 6, 2015

The English Faculty Graduating Senior Award (For December 2014, May 2015, August 2015 graduates only)

Recognizes and rewards with an award of \$250 for an outstanding undergraduate English student at Texas A&M University.

Eligibility:

3.5 GPA Overall
3.75 GPA English

Deadline: March 6, 2015



Texas Grand Slam and Mic Check Poetry

Written by **Madison Mae Parker**, *President of Mic Check Poetry and Co-Director of Texas Grand Slam*

Mic Check Poetry is a spoken word nonprofit located in Downtown Bryan. Okay, now that we have the formalities out of the way—Real talk to what that *actually* means. Mic Check is dedicated to bringing performance poetry, art, and writing to people for absolutely free with the idea that art is important and art changes lives. We are a weekly, open mic located at Revolution Café in Downtown Bryan every Sunday at 8:30 pm. In addition to our weekly open mics, we host writing workshops free to the community every Wednesday, host weekly youth poetry workshops in the high schools, and lead workshops at the Juvenile Justice Center in Brazos Valley. Basically any action that involves art, words, and people, you will most likely find us.

Texas Grand Slam is a spoken word, slam poetry competition right here in BCS. This year, the 4th annual festival took place on October 24th and 25th. Forty-two poets from around the nation competed for some serious cash prize of \$3000 and a Texas-sized belt buckle. The first two rounds of the competition took place on the 24th at the Village Café and The Grand Stafford Theatre in Downtown Bryan. On the 25th, the final round took place at Rudder Tower on the TAMU campus and brought a large crowd from all over the area. Third place went to Jess Howard, second place went to Christopher Michael, and the first place winner and Texas Grand Slam Poetry champion was The Fluent One.

Don't forget to come out on Sundays to Revolution Café at 8:30 pm for open-mics and slam poetry every weekend in downtown Bryan.

The Fall

By: **Marla Wardell** ©

The abundant, redundant season.
Ushering in the winter, like an appetizer
before a big meal.

Just a taste of what is to come.
Beautiful, and temporary.

Leaves dying, revealing their true selves.
Falling, soft at first, then dry and fragile.
Beautiful, and temporary.

Temperatures falling, days shortening.
Sunshine falling, slowly, readying the
whole world for rest.
Beautiful, and temporary.

Fall.

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