

*may you
open your eyes to water
water waving forever
and may you in your innocence
sail through this to that.
—Lucille Clifton*

English Department Capstone Conference



19 April 2024

Kirkhof Center

Grand Valley State University

Allendale, Michigan

ENG 495 *Capstone Conference*

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Why a Capstone Conference?

The English Capstone provides several important opportunities for English majors not offered elsewhere in the curriculum: the opportunity to reflect individually on the intellectual impact of majoring in English (intellectual autobiography); the opportunity to engage in the development and writing of an extended paper (senior thesis); and the opportunity to participate in the public presentation of the thesis work (departmental student conference).

Our Capstone course underscores the department's principles and values: to cultivate critical reading and reflection; to produce excellent writing in a variety of forms; to speak, read, and write effectively; and to achieve literary, analytical, pedagogical, and theoretical skills.

This conference is the culminating event for the English Capstone course. It requires that students publicly present a project for which they have been responsible from its inception to its final form. The presentation makes concrete the expertise that students have accrued in the research process and allows them to speak as authorities on their topic. No matter what career our students enter, public speaking is an essential skill, as is the act of distilling complex knowledge into a compact yet comprehensible package. Thus, this final assignment for the Capstone course is the one that perhaps most clearly transitions students out of the major and into the next phase of their lives. We see this element of the course as a way to help students recognize each others' accomplishments—and to help them be proud of their own as they move forward into their various futures.

Schedule

Session One: 11-11:50 a.m.

Panel A & B

Session Two: 12-12:50 p.m.

Panels C, D & E

Session Three: 1-1:50 p.m.

Panels F, G & H

Session Four: 2-2:50 p.m.

Panels I & J

Notes

Students will present in the order in which they appear in this program; a question-and-answer session will follow once all students on the panel have presented their papers.

Should you have questions, issues or concerns during today's program, please contact faculty in KC 2264.

Panel A
KC 2266**Narrative Discourse in Contemporary Music**

Facilitators: Mr. Roy Black &
Dr. Sherry Johnson

Nina Koos
‘Conscious Rap:
Discourse on Society
Set to a Beat’

Hip Hop music has a reputation of being provocative and vulgar. Parents warn their children to stay away from the genre so as not to spoil their innocent minds. While sometimes this is true, many rappers have something important to say, and they use their platform to empower social movements, spread the word of God, and bring awareness to political issues. I will argue that rap music can be a culturally relevant and accessible way to make a statement and shed light on what is happening in society. I will also elaborate on the negative implications of denouncing rap music for the Black community. Lastly, I will provide examples from conscious rappers such as Kendrick Lamar, Krs-One, BROCKHAMPTON, Public Enemy, Eminem, and more.

Janet Castro-Leon
‘The Life & Death of
Ethel Cain:
Intergenerational
Trauma & Identity in
Preacher’s Daughter’

Intergenerational trauma and identity have an interwoven relationship, one that leaves detrimental effects on the development of the self. One’s familial dynamics and upbringing pave the way for how one ventures through life. When those cycles of abuse and trauma overpower someone, the fate of their life may be in danger. Ethel Cain, stage name of singer/songwriter Hayden Silas Anhedönia, explores these issues in her album *Preacher’s Daughter*. The album takes the form of a concept album to narrate the life and death of Ethel Cain, a fictitious character whose life has been impacted by her oppressive religious upbringing. By using literary elements in her concept album, Anhedönia takes her listeners on a cathartic storytelling experience that reveals the horrors of intergenerational trauma and identity. This medium of storytelling opens itself up to new audiences in an innovative way, one that identifies such themes as ongoing issues to discuss.

Jessica Taylor
'Taylor Swift's Lyrical
Narratives: Dissecting
the Love Triangle
Narrative within
folklore

Viola, Olivia, and Orsino from "Twelfth Night" by Shakespeare, as well as Bella, Edward, and Jacob from Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series, prove how the love triangle trope has spanned generations and types of media. While being more popular within literature and film, it has even expanded into musical media in more recent years. With her eighth studio album, *folklore*, Taylor Swift introduces to us what she calls the "teenage love triangle" involving three high school teens: Betty, Augustine, and James. Swift tells each side of the story through three songs: "cardigan", "august", and "betty." Swift enables the use of several storytelling elements such as the use of motifs/symbols, interconnected narratives, and a back-and-forth timeline between the three songs used to tell her story of the teenage love triangle.

Panel B
KC 2270

Rhetorical Dialogue & Discourse in
Literature

Facilitators: Dr. John Gibbons &
Dr. Shinian Wu

Stephen Vickery
'The Divine Pull:
Exploring the Way
Milton's God & Satan
Sway Free Will'

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton examines the influence between divine figures and human agency, mainly through the representation of God and Satan's influence on Adam and Eve. Milton's view of the fall occurs after God sends Raphael to Adam and Eve to warn them of their enemy: Satan. Raphael's presence echoes a common trope in epic literature: the divine messenger. Dante, Homer, and Virgil also present divine messengers to influence their respective heroes and divine enemies attempting to thwart human plans, as Milton's Satan does. Through an analysis of epic tropes and dialogue techniques, interplay between divine figures and humankind can be explored to reveal what Milton considers a fundamental attribute of humanity: free will. "To stand or fall Free in thine own Arbitrement it lies" (VIII, 641-42).

Sam Pitz
'Navigating Courtship
through Language in
Pride and Prejudice

An expert way of navigating life's journey is through understanding the language of courtship, which manifests in various forms such as dancing, writing, walking, seeing, or consenting. These forms are richly depicted in the world of literature, notably in the works of Jane Austen. Throughout Austen's many

works, the nuances of language become a captivating lens through which the intricacies of love and relationships are explored. Austen's first novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, is a timeless masterpiece that perfectly executes the use of courting language to enrich the reader's understanding of the characters, their interactions, and the social expectations of the Regency era. The characters come to life within the novel's pages, offering insight into human psychology and self-examination, thus contributing to Austen's works standing as a testament to the enduring power of literature in unraveling the intricacies of life's journey.

Rowan Armour
**'Stoker's *Dracula*:
Unveiling Victorian
Fears of Death,
Disease & Sex'**

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is an influential work that reflects and responds to societal fears surrounding death, disease, and sex in Victorian-era England. This paper will explore how Stoker's narrative navigates cultural anxieties prevalent in the Victorian era such as diseases like porphyria and syphilis, which were deeply misunderstood and stigmatized. The fears surrounding contagion led to the assignment of morality to health and thus shaped Victorian attitudes. As portrayed in *Dracula* through the symbol of vampirism, the disease became a badge of moral inferiority and an agent of sin. In contemporary times, Stoker's *Dracula* continues to ring relevant as will be portrayed through the novel's juxtaposition to the AIDS crisis.

12 p.m.

SESSION TWO

Panel C
KC 2259

Language Development & Implications

Facilitators: Dr. Colleen Brice &
Dr. Shinian Wu

Olivia Ousley
**'Baby Sign Language:
Exploring Its Role in
Early Language
Acquisition'**

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in alternative approaches to enhance early communication skills. Such approaches include the exploration of baby sign language. This method, which involves infants using hand gestures to convey basic needs and thoughts before developing verbal abilities, has gathered attention for its potential impact on language acquisition. However, despite the increasing enthusiasm surrounding baby sign language, the existing body of evidence and research remains insufficient to draw definitive conclusions about its

efficacy and long-term effects. This paper seeks to address this gap by examining the current state of research on baby sign language acquisition and identifying the methodological limitations. By illuminating the existing gaps in knowledge, I will contribute valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges associated with incorporating baby sign language into early childhood communication interventions. This will facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of its role in language development.

Sam Bailey
‘Using Inner Experience to Unlock our Linguistic Potential’

Inner experience is the psychological term for someone’s internal cognitions and perceptual awareness. The weight of specific elements of it are often less considered: inner speech and unsymbolized thought have created a stir in both psychology and philosophy, but the untapped potential that they possess should not be understated. Due to the difficulty that comes with researching such abstract and innately private phenomena, little research has been conducted on their applicability. However, inner experience is a pivotal aspect of the human condition. Language, something uniquely human, is a representation of our inner experience as demonstrated by Ted Chiang’s sci-fi approach to philosophical linguistics in “The Story of Your Life” (2002). By removing the human aspect of language, he stretches its limitations: a paradigm shift which may prove beneficial. Gaining understanding of inner experience will further our understanding of language in its entirety, changing how we teach, read, write, and learn.

Lex Larkspur
“‘Them’s Frightenin’ Words!’: Barriers & Potential Paths to Implement Gender-Neutral Pronouns’

The debate over gender-neutral language has platformed numerous arguments over the necessity, ease, and grammaticality of singular ‘they/them’ pronouns. Generic singular ‘they’ has extensive historical precedent and has become largely accepted, but its use for a specific person, non-binary or otherwise, has yet to become standard practice. In this essay, I argue that with the provision of proper discourse context, singular ‘they’ could easily function as an inclusive alternative to assuming gendered pronouns. Rather than posing a grammatical threat, I contend that the most challenging obstacle to this change is sociocultural and political resistance. Although singular ‘they’ is not inherently tied to

specific political beliefs, its common cultural association with queerness may mean that wider acceptance of gender non-conformity has to precede directly teaching this use of singular 'they.'

Panel D
KC 2266

Adapting Fairytales & Folklore

Facilitators: Dr. Kurt Bullock &
Dr. Lindsay Ellis

Elizabeth James
'Fairytales
Transcend Time'

Adaptation is an important concept for all stories, but especially for fairytales. In this paper I am going to be analyzing the fairytale story of "The Little Mermaid" and how this story has changed over the years, starting with the original version by Hans Christian Andersen, moving into the book created by Walt Disney, the animated movie, and finally the live-action film. These different versions demonstrate how the story has changed to become more diverse and family-friendly to fit our current society. The adaptations of "The Little Mermaid" will help us recognize how much a story can change over time and how important adaptation is to keep fairytales alive.

Emelia Tombrella
'Baba Yaga: Ageism,
Feminine Archetypes
and Societal
Constructs in
Slavic Folklore'

Although Baba Yaga may not be a common household name, those who know the mythological Slavic witch are more than familiar with her chicken-legged hut and her preference for human flesh. Far from the meek grandmother archetype, she is a force to be reckoned with, often playing cruel tricks on the heroes brave enough to seek her help. With reference to Russian folkloristics and the portrayal of aging women in narratives, I will explore the ways in which she embodies both the harrowing crone and wise elder, perpetuating and yet challenging archetypal constructs of traditional femininity. This paper will also examine Baba Yaga's role as a symbolic manifestation of society's fears and desires surrounding women and shed light on the impact of folk narratives on perceptions and attitudes surrounding gender, age, and power in society.

Sydney Cole
**‘Storytelling through
the Ages: Country
Murder Ballads and
True Crime Podcasts in
Mainstream Media’**

In recent years, the genre of True Crime podcasts has become one of the top listened to categories in the field. Throughout history, oral storytelling has been passed down for centuries as an incredibly important form of communication. In recent decades, with the improvement of media and technology, oral storytelling has taken form in various manners, particularly mainstream music and podcasts. In my thesis, I will examine what drives these types of stories to be so popular within these forms of media. I will also analyze trends in True Crime podcasts and popular country murder ballads in order to explore the important inclusion of various underrepresented groups in the media. I will additionally question both common judgments surrounding these styles as well as the importance of telling these types of stories in order to prevent these judgments further.

Panel E
KC 2270

**Language Approaches Inside & Outside
the Classroom**

Facilitators: Dr. David Álvarez &
Dr. Sherry Johnson

Lauren Methner
**‘Workshopping “New
Math”: An Inquiry-
Based Approach’**

Parents play a vital role in supporting, facilitating, and continuing their student’s mathematics education at home, but struggle with “new math.” Current approaches to mathematics education rely on Inquiry-Based Design (IBD), a method in which teachers provide the tools and framework for students to explore a subject through experimentation. As a result, modern students have a larger, more complex, and different register of language than their caregivers, who were not taught with IBD. Thus, when the two try to communicate their understanding, there is often a translation error. Current research demonstrates that there is a difference in mathematical comprehension between caregiver and student for reasons such as mathematical anxiety, use of modern technology, and socioeconomic gaps, but minimally discusses generational differences in instruction practices. This paper will argue for the need for inquiry-based mathematical workshops for parents to expand their mathematical literacy and “math register” in support of their learners.

Lucas Southwell
**‘Figurative Language:
The Importance of
Metaphor in the ELA
Curriculum’**

Modern linguistics has, in recent decades, established that the vast majority of the English language is figurative. This is due to the fact that the majority of human language is abstract in nature, and abstract language is built and understood through metaphors that allow us to use our embodied cognition to explain and understand incorporeal concepts and ideas. As such, metaphorical comprehension could be more crucial to cross-discipline academic literacy than previously thought, which has implications for ELA teaching and pedagogical theory. This paper explores some of these implications and concludes that there is a need for a greater emphasis on and awareness of the use of metaphor within our modern ELA teaching curriculum.

Lynnae Fisher
**‘Empathy in the
Classroom:
How & Why to Utilize
Children’s Literature
about Poverty’**

With poverty levels on the rise, the need to discuss its effects—and unfortunately, also its stereotypes—within the classroom grows increasingly more important. A variety of research can be found related to teaching students in poverty, but less research exists to argue why students should learn *about* poverty. Although more research is emerging on this topic, there is still not a desirable amount, especially in terms of using literature as an aid to do so. Furthermore, while some analyses begin an attempt at studying the concept of using books to teach students about poverty, not many studies describe strategies to help teachers do this (Bazemore-Bertrand, 2020). In my thesis, I will explore the question: What are the benefits of teaching about poverty in the classroom? Through this lens, I will analyze the ways students, across grade levels, gain empathy through reading about poverty.

1 p.m.

SESSION THREE

Panel F
KC 2259

**Strengthening Support of English
Language Learning**

Facilitators: Dr. Adeline Borti &
Dr. Colleen Brice

Julia Regan
**'The Paradox of
Classroom Technology:
Navigating the
Cognitive Benefits &
Challenges for ELLs'**

While technology offers unprecedented opportunities for personalized and accessible learning experiences for ELLs, concerns are growing about its broader effects on young learners' cognitive development, attention spans, and social skills. In this thesis, I will explore the balance between using technology for educational progress and protecting against its potentially harmful cognitive impacts by contrasting these features using current research. This thesis argues for a balanced approach to technology integration, and it proposes strategies for educators to implement technology in ways that promote deep engagement with the language and foster the development of critical cognitive skills. Ultimately, this study contributes to the ongoing dialogue on educational technology, offering insights that could guide future research, policy-making, and pedagogical decisions to better support ELLs in their language learning journeys and ensure their cognitive well-being in the digital age.

Johnathon Pipila
**'Teaching English as a
Second Language to
Adults: Barriers & Best
Practices'**

Adult learners in the United States are an often overlooked and underserved educational demographic who face a host of unique challenges in second language acquisition. Even as the world increasingly globalizes, and demand for multilingual workers expands, the education system in the United States continues to largely prioritize younger populations. Additionally, adult learners who manage to gain access to a language classroom frequently find themselves facing distinct economic and affective barriers to education. This thesis seeks to uncover, understand, and address these myriad barriers, in order to promote programs, educational reforms and teaching methodologies that will lead to a diverse, cohesive, and linguistically proficient adult population in the United States.

Isaiah Fabbro
**'The Universal
Language:
Music as a Means of
Conducting
Authenticity &
Appreciation in ESL
Classrooms'**

As immigration rates continue to rise, the demand for ESL instruction has followed suit. Such a surge has further strained pedagogical resources, and, as a result, traditional curriculum that effectively accommodates the diversities and backgrounds of English language learners is subject to revision. The prominence music possesses as a cultural, collaborative and conceptual medium elicits the mode as a promising candidate in accounting for said alteration, while remaining accessible in abundant avenues. Accordingly, through various utilities, several dividends have manifested

themselves within learner ability via language pronunciation, grammar, and application. Furthermore, music's extension to serve as a motivational mechanism demonstrates its capacity to meet the needs in fostering ELL development in an encouraging format. By incorporating music in a way that complements contemporary ESL methodology, ESL instructors can foster an environment that is not only inviting, but simultaneously pragmatic.

Panel G
KC 2266

Now & Then: Landscape & the Environment

Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo & Dr. Rob Rozema

Emma Haney
'Recognizing (Human) Nature: Restoring Humanity's Appreciation of Nature through Ecocritical Fiction'

Ecophobia has been the human response to the natural world for far too long. In its wild and daunting character, nature creates a wrathful fear within humans that permits them to destroy it. By extracting the nature within humanity, humans have enabled themselves to exert destruction as they see fit over the earth. Anthropocentrism, humanity's perception of themselves as inherently more valuable than the natural world, formulates a worldview that informs the current ecological apathy that pollutes modern life. Evidently, logic and reasoning appear to be futile in combating the anthropocentric worldview; what is required to overcome disdain toward the natural is an emotional rekindling of human spirit with the natural world. Fictional texts present a solution by creating a form of emotional persuasion that nonfictional texts cannot compete with. By exploring various creative works and their commentary on anthropocentrism, attention and care toward the natural world can be restored.

Amanda Babcock
'The Intervening World: Railroads, Landscapes & Ideologies in Eliot's *Middlemarch*'

George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, published in installments in 1871 and 1872, was written at the turning point of Great Britain's industrialization period. As the modern railway sped its way across England, Europe, and much of the Western world, it ripped land apart and forever changed man's relationship with his environment. This essay serves as an environmentalist perspective on how George Eliot incorporated a changing world into her greatest work, by means of her

conflict between old and new ideologies, and her articulation of the many ways in which people fall short and fail in their efforts to change their world. By looking at one of the world's most significant ideological and ecological changes through the stories of Dorothea Brooke and Tertius Lydgate, we can identify those same patterns in today's shifting ideologies.

Alora Bowers
**'The Metaphorical
Cyborg: A Critical
Reading of Berman's
Me, Who Dove into the
Heart of the World'**

Me, Who Dove into the Heart of the World, a novel by Sabina Berman, extends a growing conversation on the relationship between those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the environment. The novel follows an autistic narrator named Karen Nieto who revolutionizes the tuna industry and develops an ethical tuna slaughter method. Current discussions about the novel position Karen Nieto as a "posthuman cyborg" figure who helps bridge the gap between neurotypical humans and non-human animals; such discussions ask how neurotypical environmentalists can learn from autistic people and their connection to non-human animals. However, while there is a pressing need for more neurodivergent voices to be heard within the context of environmentalism, I argue that the post-humanist perspective does not take a sufficiently nuanced perspective and question the authenticity of Berman's representation of autism due to its connections to both the historical pathologizing of autistic traits and Temple Grandin's story.

Panel H
KC 2270

**Societal Critique in the Novel, Television
& Film**

Facilitators: Dr. Corinna McLeod &
Dr. Sarah Williams

Gwendalyn LaComte
**'Living Was Not
Meant for You:
Dazai's Illustration of
Society & Suicide'**

Some societies are not conducive to living. Family, marriage, religion, wealth, relationships—social factors and norms perpetuated under the guise of maintaining order—lead to the detriment of those who do not belong. Osamu Dazai demonstrates in *A Shameful Life*, *Flowers of Buffoonery*, and *The Setting Sun* that the inability to conform in Japanese society leads to the increased likelihood of a certain outcome: suicide. His popularity in Japan began during World War II and remains to this day due to his contradictory depiction of the gradual process and consequences of those who

want to commit suicide. The deviation lies in that the act of suicide is not honorable or noble, but instead, a shameful conclusion for those that society views as ‘other.’

Allison Bair
‘With Great Power Comes Great Irresponsibility: How *The Boys* Satirizes the 21st Century Superhero’

Ever since their creation in the 1930s, superhero stories have commented on social and political injustices. These hyperbolic stories leave us feeling gratified that our superheroes have saved the day once again. Over time, however, the line between “good” and “bad” guys has been blurred with the inclusion of humanistic flaws, such as alcoholism or infidelity. Though our hero is more relatable, what happens when they become ungovernable? After a brief history of the superhero, I will be examining how Eric Kripke's *The Boys* satirizes what a realistic superhero would be in comparison to the true American superhero ideal. From Nazism and nationalism to forced diversity and corporate greed, *The Boys* comments not only on powerful, unchecked superheroes, but also the flaws in our capitalist society.

Robert Hyma
‘Punching Upwards: Social Critique & Mel Brooks’s Comedic Canon’

Mel Brooks once said, “You can’t bring down despots, dictators, and murderers like Hitler by getting on the same soapbox with them. The only way to win is to... heap comedy on them and make them ridiculous.” Coming from the legendary comedy writer-director who wrote four of the one hundred Greatest Comedy Films of all time (according to the American Film Institute), this means something. Brooks’s comedy reflects his Jewish heritage, but also his great love for satire and parody in a world dying for a laugh. Instilled in his comedy is a sharp social critique that never punches down on anyone cruelly, but instead, punches up at abusers of power. This presentation celebrates Mel Brooks as the quintessential example for how comedy’s power to ridicule instills societal resilience and personal identity through a brief tour of his major films.

2 p.m.

SESSION FOUR

Panel I
KC 2266

Development of Online Reading & Writing

Facilitators: Dr. Brian White & Dr. Sarah Williams

Megan Smith
'Is Technology
Impeding Students'
Reading Skills?:
An Investigation into
Tech in the Classroom'

The Covid-19 pandemic has undeniably changed the way our education system functions. The biggest difference has been the switch to online learning. One aspect of online learning that many find challenging is online reading. Although people find reading on a screen more difficult than on the printed page, and studies indicate a person does not comprehend as well when they read on a screen, we are still shifting towards more online reading. In this paper I will examine the potential downsides of online reading as compared to reading from the printed page. On top of that, I will seek to answer the question: Why is online reading becoming more prevalent in our education system when it does not benefit most learners? Finally, I will examine the groups of students who do benefit from reading on a screen and how teachers can use that to our advantage.

Isabel Kubiak
'Magic Beyond the
Canon: *Harry Potter*
& the Complexities of
Fandom & Fanfiction'

Everyone is a fan of something, and any aspect of culture can develop a fandom. Fan culture is most importantly characterized by a group of individuals' shared enjoyment of a particular element of media or culture, making community key to fan practices such as creating fanfiction and other such fanworks. While not all fandoms display practices such as fanfiction writing, many do, and scholars are often interested in the reasons why fans create fanfiction, how fans manipulate their source's canon in their works, and how fans interact with each other in their creative communities. This paper will examine such practices and motivations of fandoms and fanfiction, using the *Harry Potter* fanbase as an example, to highlight the complexities within this aspect of culture some may consider simple.

Katie Rauhut
'Fanfiction: A Unique,
Digital Playground
for ELL Literacy
Development'

Online fanfiction functions as one of the largest collections of native and non-native English writing that is freely available to the common netizen. At its core, fanfiction is the practice of fans reshaping the source material of an existing franchise to reflect and represent their existence as multifaceted humans. Fanfiction writing emphasizes creativity and experimentation; because of this, it can act as a conduit for young people all over the world to dissect their social and personal identities both online and offline. Fans of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds converge in a digital supermarket of ideas that are mostly governed and conveyed in English; thus,

English Language Learners (ELLs) have the opportunity to tap into this rich resource for authentic exposure to the target language. In this presentation, I will analyze the extent to which online fanfiction acts as a legitimate tool for identity and literacy development in ELLs.

Panel J
KC 2270

Myth, Mystery & Rage: The Female Reclaimed

Facilitators: Dr. Corinna McLeod & Dr. Rob Rozema

Hannah Florian
‘Modern Mythology: Using Miller’s *Circe* as a Companion Text to Homer’s *Odyssey* in the Classroom’

Madeline Miller’s *Circe* reclaims the female narrative involving heroism in Greek mythology. In comparison, Homer’s *Odyssey* provides multiple examples of the misogynistic history tied to many classic Greek myths. Considering the commonality of Homer’s *Odyssey* being included in secondary and higher-ed literature classes, my research will focus on the ways in which Miller’s *Circe* and Homer’s *Odyssey* are intertwined and why they should both be included in the mythology curriculum. Specifically, I will be assessing the educational merit of both Miller’s *Circe* and Homer’s *Odyssey*, discussing the misogynistic past of Greek mythology, and making the argument that *Circe* and the *Odyssey* should be taught together to provide a diverse perspective on mythology.

Michaela Triemstra
‘The Clues in the Novels: Bringing the Discussions of *Nancy Drew* to Modern-Day Conversations’

Nancy Drew has been a household name since her introduction in the 1930s. Known for being a strong, independent woman intent on solving mysteries, Nancy Drew has had a long-lasting impact on young women and society as a whole. Spread out over decades, scholars have been working to solve the mystery of Nancy Drew’s popularity and timelessness, while also discussing the racial and ethical issues surrounding both the character and the series itself, which was not considered “real” literature. I will further investigate the mystery of the famous “girl detective,” focusing on its positive and negative effects on young girls and the controversy about the series, bringing them to the modern-day conversation. The issues within the Nancy Drew mystery series remain heated topics of discussion in today’s society.

Hope Leinen
'The Beautiful Demure:
Otessa Moshfegh's
Depictions of
Feminine Rage'

Women have been rejected and demonized by society for generations. Their respective subjugation has come in many different forms, but at the heart of it all is the imposition of the patriarchal society on the role of women. The patriarchy has cultivated an environment for the subservience of women through institutionalized consolidation of power; however, the continual repression of the feminine psyche breeds a rage that no longer belongs to masculine connotations. Novelist Otessa Moshfegh dismantles the notions of paired identities and implores women to embrace their repressed identities by channeling their feminine rage stemming from historical precedents. Her novels *Eileen*, *Death in Her Hands*, and *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* explore these concepts through different socio-demographics of women in different stages of their life. Ultimately, Moshfegh embraces the darkest characteristics of the feminine psyche to disrupt pre-existing notions of femininity.

**Honoring Student
Writing in the
Persuasive and
Personal Essay,
Poetry, Fiction,
& Drama
Held in Conjunction
with the Departments
of Classics &
Writing**

Named in honor of former department member E. William Oldenburg, this annual contest offers GVSU students first-place prizes of \$100, second-place prizes of \$75, and third-place prizes of \$50 in each of the following categories:

- Personal, analytical, or persuasive essay written by a freshman;
- Personal essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior;
- Analytical or persuasive essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior;
- Poetry written by any GVSU undergraduate student (a portfolio of three to five poems would be an appropriate entry, and a single poem would not be considered);
- Fiction written by any GVSU undergraduate student (one short story per entrant);
- Drama written by any GVSU undergraduate student (one short play per entrant);
- Essay, poetry, fiction, or drama written by a GVSU graduate student.

Entry Requirements:

- Entries must have been written while enrolled at GVSU;
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced, and submitted with a detachable cover sheet indicating:
 - title of work;
 - category entered (please specify graduate or undergraduate);
 - contestant's name and student ID;
 - address, phone number, and e-mail for March and April of the academic year;
- Place contestant's name on the cover sheet only, not on the entry itself.
- Entries are submitted via the English Department website.

All winners who have not been or currently are a student employee at GVSU must complete an I-9 Form, which may be obtained and turned in to Student Employment (104A STU). Entries are accepted online through the English department website.

**The Robert C.
Chamberlain
Scholarship**
**A Tuition Scholarship
for Junior English
Majors
Demonstrating
Excellence in Writing**

Eligibility Requirements

- Students must be English majors;
- Students must have Junior status;
- Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- Students must be full time;
- Students must demonstrate financial need by filing the FAFSA.

Application Requirements

Each student must submit:

- A short letter explaining why the student qualifies for this scholarship;
- Two pieces of writing, at least one from a class at Grand Valley State University.

**The Gilbert R. and
Patricia K. Davis
Endowed Merit
Scholarship**
**A Merit Scholarship
for Full- or Part-Time
Junior and Senior
English Majors**

Eligibility Requirements

- Students must be a Junior or Senior declared English major;
- Students must have completed 30 credit hours at GVSU;
- Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- Students may be full or part time (part-time students are especially encouraged to apply);
- Financial need is not a criterion;
- Students who receive the award as Juniors are eligible to receive the award as Seniors if they maintain their eligibility.

Applications Requirements

Each student must submit:

- An essay of up to 1000 words explaining why the applicant chose to major in English.

**The English Faculty
Scholarship for
New Majors
A Scholarship Made
Possible through the
Generosity of GVSU
English Department
Faculty Members**

Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be a declared English major at the time of application;
- Applicants must be a currently-enrolled student with fewer than 60 credit hours completed (1st or 2nd year student) during the semester of application;
- Cumulative 2.5 grade point average or better;
- First-generation college student.

Application Requirements

Each student must provide responses to the following question/statement:

- Are you the first person in your immediate family to pursue a college degree (neither parent/guardian(s) has a four-year degree)?
- In 100-200 words (1-2 paragraphs), explain why you are applying for this scholarship, why you should receive the award, and how it will assist you in achieving your academic goals.

Students must also include an academic writing sample, minimum three full pages in length, submitted for a class during your freshman or sophomore year.

**Dr. Andrew M.C.
Brown Memorial
English Scholarship
A Scholarship
Created to Assist
Language &
Literature Emphasis
English Majors**

Eligibility Requirements

- Candidates should be accepted or currently enrolled at GVSU;
- Must be a senior with a declared major in English with Language & Literature emphasis;
- Must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher;
- Preference will be given to students intending to pursue an advanced English degree;
- Financial need may be considered, as evidenced by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Application Requirements

Each student must:

- Provide a short statement of why you qualify for this scholarship;
- Submit two pieces of writing, at least one from a GVSU English class.

**Robert Franciosi
American Literature
Scholarship
A Scholarship
Created to Assist
English Majors who
Express Interest in
American Literature**

Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be accepted for or currently enrolled at Grand Valley State University;
- Applicants must be an undergraduate junior or senior enrolled full-time or part-time with a major in English with Language & Literature or Secondary Education emphasis;
- Applicants must be a resident of Michigan;
- Applicants must have completed 30 credit hours at GVSU with a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA;
- Applicants must be meeting satisfactory academic progress (<https://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/satisfactory-academic-progress-sap-17.htm>).
- Preference will be given to students who demonstrate an interest in American Literature.
- Financial need may be considered and will be demonstrated by the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Application Requirements

- Please describe in 1,000 words or less your experience studying American Literature and why you feel it has been valuable.

Armour, Rowan — 6	Southwell, Lucas — 10
Babcock, Amanda — 12	Taylor, Jessica — 5
Bailey, Samuel — 7	Tombrella, Emelia — 8
Bair, Allison — 14	Triemstra, Michaela — 16
Bowers, Alora — 13	Vickery, Stephen — 5
Castro-Leon, Janet — 4	
Cole, Sydney — 9	
Fabbro, Isaiah — 11	
Fisher, Lynnae — 10	
Florian, Hannah — 16	
Haney, Emma — 12	
Hyma, Robert — 14	
James, Elizabeth — 8	
Koos, Nina — 4	
Kubiak, Isabel — 15	
LaComte, Gwendalyn — 13	
Larkspur, Lex — 7	
Leinen, Hope — 17	
Methner, Lauren — 9	
Ousley, Olivia — 6	
Pipla, Johnathon — 11	
Pitz, Samantha — 5	
Rauhut, Katie — 15	
Regan, Julia — 11	
Smith, Megan — 15	