Be brave,
Like a new seed bursting
With extraordinary promise.

-Kwame Alexander

English Department Capstone Conference





21 April 2023 Kirkhof Center

Grand Valley State University

Allendale, Michigan



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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: 9-9:50 a.m.

Panels A, B & C

Session Two: 10-10:50 a.m.

Panels D, E & F

Session Three: 11-11:50 p.m.

Panels G & H

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

Panels I, J & K

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

Panels L, M & N

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

Panels O, P & Q

Notes

Students will present in the order in which they appear in this program; a question-andanswer 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.

9 a.m.

SESSION ONE

Panel A

Romance and Retellings

KC 2259

Facilitators: Dr. David Álvarez & Dr. Sarah Williams

Jenelle Alberts

'Why You Should Give Romance a Chance: Analysis of Romance Genre Themes in Red Queen' The knowledge of self-growth that one can gain from reading books about relationships and love is often overlooked, and instead, romance novels are viewed as easy reads. Through this conference, I hope to bring to light the benefits of reading romance novels through the analysis of the main character, Mare, in the popular YA romance novel Red Queen. With the help of references from popular discourse on romance novels, I will explain how Mare is an example for readers of someone who grows as a person not only while challenging the social structures they live under but while navigating romantic relationships too. Mare's romantic relationships push her to think deeper about the world, the people around her, and herself. Her self-worth and self-love journey through her relationships accurately demonstrates how the themes within romance novels can benefit readers with more than just pleasure.

Abigail Caswell 'Pride and Prejudice in Black Brooklyn: Pride by Ibi Zoboi'

The body of books that traditional scholars believe define Western literature, known as the canon, has been treated as a series of works that exist purely to provide aesthetic or intellectual pleasure. However, several of the works we consider to be canonical literature embodied radical critique of their authors historical period. Modern retellings of these canonical texts not only acknowledge the work these texts did in their own time but build on their legacy by giving authors of color a foundation on which to base their own radical critique. In my analysis, I argue that literature can and should be a means of provoking change through the elevation of underrepresented voices. I ground my argument in an analysis of narrative frameworks of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice and its modern retelling, Pride by Ibi Zoboi, which contextualizes Austen through an adolescent Afro-Latinx lens.

Elizabeth Heffron-Richmond

'The Canterbury Tales as Proto-Feminist Text'

Medieval literature seems irrelevant to our modern era and to modern ideologies such as feminism, the advocacy of women's rights based on the equality of the sexes (New Oxford American Dictionary). A medieval literary work like The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer, for instance, seems completely irrelevant to feminism's concerns. However, in this thesis I will be showing different ways in which The Canterbury Tales embodies feminist perspectives and values. While they may seem worlds apart in theory, they hold a precise connection in how women are represented even before feminism emerged centuries later. The key is to look at these literary texts that we've inherited from the past and examine how these progressive ideas were embedded in our society long before they were theorized by feminists.

Panel B

The Future is Now! (...Uh-Oh)

KC 2266

Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo &

Dr. Brian White

Hannah Derwent 'A Robot Couldn't Write this Title'

The robot apocalypse is nigh, and ChatGPT is coming to take our jobs. In an attempt to understand our new robot counterparts, we must discover what it is that makes humans different. To do this, we consider the imitation game proposed by Alan Turing, the father of modern computer science, and question whether a robot who can consistently win the game might be said to be thinking. After considering what it means for a robot to think and what robots do, we then apply our research to Isaac Asimov's I, Robot (1950) asking if any of Asimov's robots can pass the imitation game. In doing this, we gain a better understanding of what robots are and what they aren't. The imitation game and I, Robot are relevant today as both have had significant impacts on technology and on how we view technology's capabilities.

Jordyn Gradowski

'A Modest, 21st-Century Proposal: Cannibalism as an Ecofeminist Critique in Tender is the Flesh' When a virus contaminates animal meat in Agustina Bazterrica's dystopian world, the only rational response is for the fictional society to substitute human flesh for chuck roast and brisket. The metaphoric and literal implications of cannibalism in Bazterrica's novel echo those of Swift's A Modest Proposal, leaving her traumatized audience with conflicting reactions to the text, including abhorrence, dissatisfaction,

appreciation, and/or urgency. In this presentation, I will argue that Bazterrica's metaphoric use(s) of cannibalism makes her novel a feminist, ecocritical text, in which she exposes the ubiquitous impartiality of humans towards industry, animal rights, and the maltreatment of women.

Maria McCarthy

'Ready or Not, Here We Come and Don't Open the Door'

In a tale of desire and revenge, Caryl Churchill's play, The Skriker, steeped in both the contemporary and the fantastic, demands attention. Churchill's use of fantasy elements within the play allows her to break into thoughts and emotions that otherwise may never be clearly expressed in real world conversation. In a swirling paradox, it is by breaking away from reality that she allows the audience to encounter something more real. Many works analyzing The Skriker focus on its more political elements, looking at both destruction of the environment and destruction wrought by a capitalist society. Rather than looking at this ravaged world as a result of a larger political machine, I will be looking at what caused the breakdown on a more individual level. Specifically, I will be examining fear as what poisons the characters' desire, leading to their own destruction and, in turn, the destruction of their world.

Panel C KC 2270

Updating the Canon in the Secondary Classroom

Facilitators: Roy Black &

Dr. Rob Rozema

Macy Lydigsen 'The Dangers of an

'The Dangers of an Existential Take on Albert Camus's The Stranger' Albert Camus's *The Stranger* (1942) is widely taught in secondary classrooms in the United States and is often used as a vehicle to instruct students about philosophical concepts represented in literature. However, too often Camus's novella serves as an introduction into existentialism for students rather than as an introduction to Camus's absurdist perspective. Educators typically avoid teaching the novel through an absurdist lens, because of the various pedagogical challenges it poses. However, this is problematic because the novel loses value when it's not read through this lens. Basing myself on feminist perspective of Camus' contemporary, Simone de

Beauvoir, I will argue that an existential interpretation of *The Stranger* is not only problematic but also illogical. I will show how this is so through a close examination of the novel's characters.

Olivia Medaugh

'Don't Say Feminist!:
Utilizing Feminist
Theory in Secondary
Schools using The
Great Gatsby'

Perspective, preparation, and ability to apply knowledge: three key skills that students must be equipped with after completing their secondary education experience. Education is the foundation upon which students build their own beliefs and identity and it correlates directly to their success in the future. That is why it is pivotal for educators to provide them with an optimal learning experience. While The Great Gatsby is often taught at a secondary level, the approach and pedagogy used to teach it can be improved greatly. For this presentation, I will explore the importance of bringing feminist theory into the classroom utilizing The Great Gatsby. I will examine how this theory can be implemented successfully, what social and political discrepancies may arise surrounding it, and how it can provide key skills for students and improve their overall learning experience.

Nathan Schmuckal

'Holistic Shakespeare: The Push for a New Pedagogical Approach' In the modern day, it would seem that the literary works of William Shakespeare have lost their value pertaining to education. Standing at a crossroads of abandoning classical literature in favor of more modern texts, educators and students alike cannot help but wonder if this is the way forward. While the current pedagogical approach might lend credence to this notion, it is imperative that the removal of his numerous significant plays and poetry is not the case. This paper will not only examine the various critical benefits that struggling students, particularly males, would otherwise not enjoy but also innovative teaching practices relating to Shakespeare.

10 a.m.

SESSION TWO

Panel D KC 2259

ELLs and EFLs: Encountering New Languages

Facilitators: Dr. Dan Brown & Dr. Shinian Wu

Jenna Adema

'Embracing Dialectal Diversity in the Classroom' America is vastly diverse in terms of culture and language, despite the longstanding standardization and codification of English as the primary language used in official documents and taught in classrooms. Schools must meet the needs of an increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse student body. In order to do so, it is essential for teachers to adapt their beliefs and confront their prejudices about non-standard dialects and educate themselves regarding both the causes and the effects, sociolinguistic and otherwise, of linguistic discrimination. Incorporating non-standard dialects into classroom activities, discussion, and readings is a practice that not only benefits the speakers of so-called "non-standard" dialects, but also native speakers of the "standard" dialect of English. This project explores the existing controversy surrounding the inclusion of nonstandard dialects into American English Language Arts classrooms and offers practical and effective strategies for creating a linguistically inclusive classroom.

Havanna Heeg

'The Importance of First Language Knowledge and Nativeness for Teachers of ESLs/EFLs' The English language is being taught in classrooms all across the globe. English language learners (ELL) come into the classroom with different levels of English language proficiencies and need appropriate support from their teachers to successfully learn English and academic content. This study will look closely at the importance of first language knowledge and nativeness for teachers in an abroad context. I will explore students' perceptions of first language knowledge among teachers of ELLs and students' preferences on having native vs. non-native native English-speaking teachers primarily in an English as a foreign language context (EFL). While recognizing the value of hiring teachers with expert meta-linguistic knowledge of English, I will also examine the bias held towards nativeness. This study will compare the differences between teaching in an EFL context abroad versus English as a second language (ESL) in the U.S.

Savanah Holmes

'The Importance of Recognizing Language Variations in the Classroom' This paper will look into how one variety of English is not standard for all students. I will analyze how a teacher can support each one of their students, as well as the importance of an educator supporting each student's variety of English and learning to acquire a solution on how to not diminish the language of their home. It will dive deep into the problem of disrespecting a student's language variation by deeming their choice of grammar and vocabulary as not proper

English. This can create a dominant language ideology leading to the student feeling their identity is not standard or valued. A student's identity is their language variety and ties into their culture. This paper will examine how a teacher must learn how to distinguish between error and home dialect within a classroom, so a student does not feel like their culture is being dismissed.

Panel E

Legal and Social Ills

KC 2266

Facilitators: Dr. Fred Antczak & Dr. Sarah Williams

Kera Deverman

'Censorship: Its Uses and Effects on Humans Psychologically, Physically, and Socially' Many Americans do not realize how much censorship affects peoples' lives on a daily basis, and the amount of regimes that use censorship as a tool to keep themselves in power. This presentation will cover examples of both linguistic and material censorship, specifically its psychological, physical, and social effects on human beings as well as why censorship may be used by those in power. I will also discuss how the use of censorship could be limited so that people can live a more free life.

Jessica Valle

'Beyond the Meetings: The Value of Reading in Alcoholics Anonymous' Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who help one another achieve sobriety. To accomplish this, they follow the 12 steps laid out in their self-titled book, also known as the *Big Book*. This book has helped countless alcoholics and addicts around the world. Despite its growing popularity, many scholars focus on questioning AA's effectiveness and make assumptions on its religious affiliation. I was surprised, however, to not see any real examination of the *Big Book*, which is the foundation of the group and answers these questions with clarity. In my paper, I will show the importance of this text, and through analysis, I will reveal why the *Big Book* should be thoroughly studied by scholars, medical professionals, and anyone who is personally affected by alcoholism.

Olivia Berryman

'Guilty as Charged: American Lack of Legal Literacy and its Associated Implications' Most American citizens face involvement with the legal system at some point in their lives. However, the legal system is often a source of fear and intimidation for non-legal professionals. A large reason for the negative feelings individuals feel towards the American legal system stems from legal illiteracy. This thesis will analyze studies, articles, and examples of past litigation, exploring the current lack of legal literacy in the United States. In doing so, this thesis will attempt to outline the importance of improved legal literacy of American citizens, suggesting potential solutions to assist the average American in understanding and navigating the legal system.

Panel F KC 2270

Validating Identities: Exploring Gender and LGBTO+ Issues

Facilitators: Dr. David Álvarez & Dr. Ashley Shannon

Jillian Beckwell

'Heartstopper:

The LGBTQ+

Representation

Libraries and Young

Readers Need'

The Patmos Library has faced several book challenges throughout the past couple of years, mainly of the LGBTQ+ themed graphic novels housed within its children and young adult section. The first two volumes of the Heartstopper series are among the controversial texts, targeted for their supposed sexual and morally wrong content. With an analysis of these two graphic novels, I argue that these books contain no content of the sort, and instead offer an innocent coming of age story representative of the LGBTQ+ community. The Heartstopper volumes should be viewed as essential resources, as they help youth feel validated in their own identity, develop empathy, and have an accurate and diverse view of the world. Book challenges stand to take away these resources and show those who are living the experiences represented in these books that they too, are not appropriate for the library, or the world in general.

Skylar Gelock 'How Children's Literature Can Lead Crucial Conversations'

In 2022, Roe v. Wade was overturned, leading many people to question gender equality in today's society. In the wake of this decision, many people are questioning how to discuss gender issues with the young girls and women in their lives. One way to start discussions on gender inequality is to examine strong girls in literature. In doing so, people will be able to

use these examples to discuss what these characters represent for gender inequality. In this paper, I will expand on this crucial conversation and examine the characteristics of the good examples of female protagonists in three children's books: The Higher Power of Lucky by Susan Patron, The Midwife's Apprentice by Karen Cushman, and Merci Suárez Changes Gears by Meg Medina to further elaborate on how people can use literature to have the important, but difficult conversations on gender inequality.

Paige Wagner

'LGBTQ+ Literature: Not Just for Secondary Students' Although the LGBTQ+ community has gained support from the public throughout the years, it seems that with every step forward, there are new bills that push progress two steps back. One of the current arguments relating to the LGBTQ+ community is whether or not schools should have books with LGBTQ+ content, which has led to bills stating that such content is to be banned from elementary schools. The biggest fears that educators have are that they are neither trained nor required to teach such content or that LGBTQ+ content is overtly sexual and thus inappropriate for young students. This thesis argues that there is an appropriate way to introduce topics concerning sexuality and gender identity to young students and the importance of providing students with those materials as well as how to find them.

11 a.m.

SESSION THREE

Panel G KC 2259

Tackling Tough Issues in the Classroom Through Literature

Facilitators: Dr. Amy Masko &

Dr. Janet Navarro

Elaina Monroe

'Exploring the Allegory of Psychological Disorders in A.A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh'

Winnie-the-Pooh is a story that is known and loved by so many. The book features a boy named Christopher Robin and his love for a bear called Winnie-the-Pooh. The storyline depicts their friendship and adventures with their other friends in the Hundred Acre Wood. More recently, the current conversation surrounding mental health has caused readers to suspect an allegory of mental illness in the beloved children's book. Much of my research consists of an analysis on the characters as well as a deep dive into author A. A. Milne's life.

The common consensus among critics concludes that the characters do express symptoms of psychological disorders. However, they do not necessarily believe this was the author's intention. *Winnie-the-Pooh* brings to light the importance of mental health and the possibility of starting a conversation about the wellbeing of students in the classroom.

Celina Pohl

'Empathy for Everyone: Why Children's Books on Tough Topics Belong in Classrooms' The use of children's literature in elementary classrooms has long been recognized as an effective tool for developing empathy in young children. Despite teachers knowing that empathy is important, there is a lack of literature being taught in classrooms that addresses difficult and tragic events, such as war, natural disasters, and social injustice. It is vital that children learn to understand and empathize with those who have experienced such events. This presentation will argue that literature on difficult and tragic events needs to be included in elementary classrooms in order to develop empathy in young children. This presentation will provide educators with evidencebased recommendations for selecting and using such literature in the classroom to promote empathy, the potential challenges of discussing difficult topics, and the long-term impact of empathy-building in childhood.

Madelyn Wesolek

'Children's Picture

Books and Their

Effects on Developing

Identities'

Although much progress has been made towards correcting racial injustice in the United States, racism still remains a problem across many levels of society. Racist attitudes start in childhood. American children absorb negative attitudes regarding people from racialized groups different from their own, which impacts a child's personal identity. For example, in many children's picture books, there are undertones of racist stereotyping and micro-aggression. Picture books are an essential building block on the pathway of learning to read. They are one of the main places that young children pick up on these understandings. Because of all the learning that takes place within these books, the American public school systems need to make available picture books featuring respectful language, diverse representation, and meaningful teachings so that young children are able to have positive takeaways of themselves, and of the people around them.

Panel H

Constructive Writing Feedback

KC 2266

Facilitators: Dr. Fred Antczak &

Dr. Dan Brown

Emma Goshgarian

'English Language Learners: Effectively Responding to Their Writing' The English language learner (ELL) population in Michigan's public school districts has grown exponentially, and the differing literacy proficiencies of these ELL students continue to challenge English teachers of mainstream secondary classrooms. Although recent efforts in schools have been made to help these students progress in their writing, many teachers still lack the tools, strategies, and awareness to give the effective and constructive feedback that is essential for their writing success. This presentation will focus on how mainstream English teachers can appropriately and effectively respond to student writing and, in the process, create a linguistically aware classroom for all students.

Kira Metcalf

'Preparing Students to Provide Effective Peer Feedback' Improving the quality of students' writing is one of the main goals of secondary English educators. As such, the provision of teacher feedback has become a practice widely utilized to expand the writing competencies of the ELA students in their classroom. However, teacher feedback is not nearly as effective at improving students' writing as many teachers assume and believe it to be. Both the existing body of research and the increased focus on student-centered learning suggest that feedback provided by peers can be more effective than teacher-provided feedback. Therefore, educating students on the provision of feedback should be regarded as an essential component of writing instruction in the ELA classroom. This project seeks to provide educators with evidence-based practices that prepare students to independently evaluate and provide feedback not only on the writing of their peers, but ultimately improve their own writing, as well.

Emily Paluk

'Utilizing Feedback to Improve Elementary Students' Writing and Motivation' Writing is one of the most challenging aspects of school for some elementary students. At this young age, students need to be motivated to improve their writing. Addressed to current and future elementary writing teachers, this paper works through the different feedback methods these teachers can utilize to motivate and improve their students' writing. As a future English Language Arts teacher, I understand the

importance of digging into research regarding elementary writing feedback in order to best help my students who are just learning to write. With many young students struggling with writing, this paper aims to educate writing instructors on what feedback is and how they can effectively give it to their students using oral, written, and technology-based strategies.

12 p.m.

SESSION FOUR

Panel I KC 2259

Exploring Genres: Mystery, Bildungsromans, and Autofiction

Facilitators: Dr. David Álvarez & Dr. Brian Deyo

Alexis Davison

'The Moment of Truth:

Comparison of

Autofiction and
the I-novel'

It is often said that works of literary fiction are born from truth. Alternatively, autobiographies generally tend to be read as fully truthful recounts of a person's life, but human memory can rarely hold up to this ideal. The French Autofiction and the Japanese I-novel (shishosetsu) build off these two concepts by merging the genre of autobiography with fiction. In my thesis, I will compare and contrast the philosophy and structural elements of each genre. Using the English translation of the novel Territory of Light by Yuko Tsushima, I will analyze my findings in use, specifically looking at the use of a nonlinear narrative structure and the earnest effort to reveal the true self, ultimately to identify how these two genres created across the world from each other ended up parallel one another on this unique approach in the pursuit of portraying the author's experience truthfully.

Austin Kienutske

'The Compelling Case of Mystery Young Adult Literature' Regardless of its immense popularity with teenage and adolescent readers, young adult (YA) genre literature continues to be overlooked in terms of scholarly research. This is especially true of YA mysteries and mystery thrillers. Mysteries are one of the longest lasting and most popular sub-genres for readers of YA literature. Unfortunately, these novels lack significant scholarly attention; within this paper, I plan to change that. Specifically, I'll be examining the protagonists in twelve different YA mystery novels ranging from the late 1920's all the way to 2021 and noting how these characters have developed over the years. In doing so I

will begin to answer the questions of why young adult mysteries are so successful and why they deserve to be taken more seriously in academia – there's still so much more to unravel in this mystery.

Savannah Stoepker

'Lions and Tigers and Existentialism, Oh My!: Storytelling as a Universal Religion in *Life* of *Pi*' The Life of Pi by Canadian author Yann Martel is a bildungsroman that "will make you believe in God." The narrator begs his audience to take several leaps of faith as he shares the experiences that have informed his identity: practicing Hinduism, Catholicism, and Islam simultaneously, surviving 227 days stranded in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger as his only companion, and discovering a carnivorous island. His main concern is not whether the audience believes this seemingly impossible story, but rather, if they prefer it to a realistic version. The idea that one would prefer the fantastical story that allows them their own interpretation makes salient the universal experience of trying to find meaning in the enormity and ambiguity of existence. In the novel, themes of spirituality and faith prove our inclination to combat existential angst with religion, but I will argue that this novel exemplifies that our religious urge can be satisfied through storytelling.

Panel J

Hear Our Voice: Women in Literature

KC 2266

Facilitators: Dr. Kathleen Blumreich &

Dr. Corinna McLeod

Clémence Daniere

'Willful Witchy Women as Portrayed in Mona Awad's Bunny and All's Well' Fictional novels about unstable female characters is a category that includes Mona Awad's novels Bunny and All's Well: two contemporary stories told in the magical realism genre. The two main characters, Miranda Fitch and Samantha Heather Mackey, contribute to society's negative connotation of unstable women; however, using feminist theory, scholarship on historical witchcraft, and scientific study of female dynamics, I argue that these novels shed a progressive light on the caricature of the characters. The novels shape a modern view of women that intersects femininity and witchcraft. By diving into the complex relationships between the characters and their identities, one can see that these modern takes on witchcraft and personal will lurch forward the redefinition of "unstable" women into willful and driven women.

Anna Simonait

"Good for Her":
Representations of
Female Rage and
(White) Feminism in
Contemporary
Horror Films'

In recent years, pop culture has titled a new subgenre of horror films "Good for Her," a phrase referencing the nuanced ways in which women's anger has been displayed through morally gray characters. The subgenre is meant to applaud female empowerment through demonstrations of rage, mainly in reaction to the abuse of men. However, critiques include that such films have limited the conversation of angerreclamation to white feminists, since the representation of women of color and how misogyny manifests through the intersectional experience is essentially nonexistent in most of them. I will explore how the "Good for Her" subgenre has structured the conversation of anger as a catalyst for change and defined itself in relation to feminist culture, as well as how it fails to include discussion of how women of color experience anger and how white women continue to contribute to the lack of representation within feminism.

Jamie Wilson

'Diagnosing Edna Pontellier: *The Awakening* as a Portrayal of Bipolar II Disorder'

When Kate Chopin's The Awakening was published in 1899, it was denounced and suppressed for its indecency. The novella resurfaced during the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s and has been widely taught ever since, particularly in relation to feminist literary criticism. While the main character, Edna Pontellier, certainly resists traditional 19th century society, viewing her through the lens of feminist literary criticism alone limits our understanding of her. To analyze Edna more deeply and maximize the novella's meaning, my talk will double as a psychological evaluation. I will assess Edna's thoughts, behaviors, and past experiences, all of which will support a Bipolar II diagnosis and determination that her "awakening" is not simply a realization or assertion of her autonomy, but a symptom of hypomania that will eventually drive her to a tragic demise.

Panel K KC 2270

Fostering Communication in Diverse Social and Linguistic Contexts

Facilitators: Dr. Ashley Shannon & Dr. Shinian Wu

Keegan Colcleasure

'Addressing Disaster
Linguicism:
The Importance
of Combating
Linguistic Inequity'

Linguistic discrimination and profiling, or linguicism, represents a severely under-addressed form of systemic inequity, made especially apparent in environmental and medical disasters, which poses a significant international threat to the physical, mental, and financial security of linguistic minorities. A society ignorant to the pervasiveness of multilingualism results in systemic negligence and the inability to provide safety to linguistic minorities in disaster situations - a phenomenon known as disaster linguicism. Reducing the existence and impacts of disaster linguicism is a matter of establishing equity and saving lives. This research aims to highlight flaws in United States language planning and policies currently contributing to the perpetuation of disaster linguicism. Through analysis of policy and disaster preparedness data, my second goal is to provide insight into what types of changes and research are needed to ensure the wellbeing of everyone within U.S. borders, regardless of linguistic background, and ultimately save lives.

Rachel Eggenberger

'Control & Connection:
Family Discourse
Styles, Diversity, and
Dialogue in the
Secondary
ELA Classroom'

As US secondary education shifts towards studentcentered, culturally sustaining pedagogy, many scholars and educators have discussed new activities and attitudes teachers ought to promote in their classrooms - varied forms of assessment, student choice in curriculum, etc. Relatively few have considered the impact of communication styles in creating these engaging, culturally sustaining environments, though. Despite this desire that students feel welcomed and engaged, the dominant discourse style in US secondary classrooms still seeks order and quiet above natural, candid discussion. The goals of communication in teacher-student relationships are very similar to those of parent-child relationships - in broad terms, both seek a balance between control and connection - yet styles of communication vary greatly between the home and the classroom. This paper identifies key tenets of these two domains to explore what secondary English teachers can learn from family discourse styles in order to promote diversity, engagement, and dialogue in their classrooms.

Karigan Pliml

'Gaelic Revitalization in Scotland: The Misalignment Between Language Policy and Revitalization Theory'

Around 3,000 of the world's current 7,000+ languages will be extinct by the end of the 21st century, according to UNESCO's latest estimates. When people become cut off from their linguistic heritage, they can feel disconnected from their culture. For centuries, Gaelic has been in continual decline. bringing it today to the point of near-extinction. Although revitalization efforts for Gaelic have been underway for decades, Gaelic currently holds its lowest record for number of speakers. Using a sociolinguistic framework for analysis (specifically regarding the relationship between language and power), this paper examines Gaelic language policy in Scotland and the results of these policies, along with what revitalization experts assert we should be doing in this regard. Insights into why revitalization isn't working as hoped may help find better practices to focus on in moving forward.

1 p.m.

SESSION FIVE

Panel L

Myths, Fairytales, and Gender

KC 2259

Facilitators: Dr. Corinna McLeod &

Dr. Ashley Shannon

Hannah Denbow 'Finding Truth in Myths: Modern Ideologies in Ovid's Metamorphoses' In recent years, social revolutions like the #MeToo movement have caused discourse surrounding gender theory and inclusive perspectives on sexual violence cases to grow and evolve in our society. Not only do these movements affect how modern literature is written and interpreted, but they also deeply impact the ways that we interpret ancient stories based in Greek mythology. In this paper, I will bring contemporary themes and classic writing together by discussing Ovid's Metamorphoses and its significance in modern conversations surrounding topics like sexual violence. In doing so, I will highlight the fact that newer translations and surrounding literature offer feminist perspectives of the epic poem that highlight rape as a catalyst for physical and emotional transformation. I will specifically examine the stories of Diana, Apollo & Daphne, and Persephone as lenses through which we can analyze feminine versus masculine desire and ideologies surrounding modernday rape culture.

Alyssa Driscoll

'Medusa and Circe: Transformation from Monster to Feminist Icon' In recent years there has been a boom in feminist retellings of Greek mythology. These retellings are written in hopes of allowing women to reclaim these stories for themselves and feel empowered by them; popular ones to retell are Medusa and Circe. Using examples from Madeline Miller's *Circe* and Jessie Burton's *Medusa*, I am going to explore these characters' transformations from being seen as monsters to being symbols of feminine power. This paper will examine why Medusa and Circe's stories are so appealing to women now and what techniques and themes are used by these authors so that they are able to rewrite their stories in a way that women can reclaim their own power in today's patriarchal society.

Jenna Hoving

'Golden Slippers to Metal Foot: Shifting Themes Throughout the History of the Cinderella Story'

Fairy-tale adaptations of Cinderella have garnered exceptional amounts of attention in popular culture from the modern era of stories because of the story's ability to be morphed into the model of femininity of any time period. This ideal of femininity has - in the past - been defined by the patriarchal structure of society, but with the onset of feminism in the 20th century, these values were found lacking to the modern reader. I will identify common themes throughout the Cinderella stories of history and how they relate to the cultural ideas of the time period, paying majority attention to the changes made in the modern age. In this, I will address themes presented in modern literature, like Marisa Meyer's Cinder and Olga Grushin's The Charmed Wife, and on-screen adaptations such as Ella Enchanted, Ever After, and Into the Woods.

Panel M

Questioning Censorship

KC 2266

Facilitators: Dr. Lindsay Ellis &

Dr. Janet Navarro

Sydney Cole

'The Importance of Inclusive Literature and the Harms of Censorship' Throughout recent decades, many parents, guardians, and school board members have posed a threat to the inclusion of various books within their children's classrooms, schools and township libraries. By raising concerns through PTA and school board meetings, and expressing concerns to neighbors in their communities, these groups have pushed for the removal of many titles from school curriculum and library shelves across

the country. Over the years, many of the books that have been challenged in these settings have tended to be the main targets of these campaigns and attempts at censoring curricular and library materials have been books by authors of color and authors from the LGBT+ community. These skeptics argued that these topics were regarded as not being "appropriate" for the environment in which they were included or the topics included were deemed too uncomfortable to discuss, and were better to be avoided altogether. However, these challenges are often made based on the beliefs that those who are unlike them are a danger to the readers or reading certain scenes out of context where even further reading would explain why these scenes are included. To limit access to these books is to limit discourse that is extremely important to understanding the wonderful backgrounds of members of these marginalized communities. By including and discussing censored children's and young adult books, students will have the opportunity to better understand those who are dissimilar to them while many will also have the opportunity to see themselves represented within the books pages through age appropriate stories.

Karissa Kaufman

'Pushing Back Against Censorship: Talking Critical Race Theory in the Classroom' Censorship in public schools majorly affects the material educators are allowed to teach in the classroom. Restriction in the form of banning books is becoming increasingly common in English education, with a large portion of the censorship being centered around racial concepts. Researchers have focused on the benefits of teaching students of color culturally relevant literature to promote inclusion. In my project, I seek to explore ways teachers can implement Brumaster and Howard's three-method critical race theory framework to teach literature about race to diverse groups of students. Educators will find this perspective to be a culturally inclusive tool that can be applied in the classroom in order to push back against the censorship debate regarding race.

Madison Koss

'Censorship and Representation of the LGBTQ+ Community in the Elementary Classroom' Censorship and representation in literature has been a constant battle throughout history. It is being talked about publicly now more than ever with a direct impact on the education our students are receiving. In this presentation, I will be discussing the overall effects of censorship and poor representation in literature on our country's LGBTQ+ youth. This presentation will

offer the current opposition to LGBTQ+ representation in classrooms as well as the tools teachers need to counteract pushback from parents, school boards, and policy makers. Within these tools I have included a lesson plan to incorporate an awarding-winning queer children's book into an elementary classroom.

Panel N KC 2270

Questioning and Harnessing Social Media and Technology

Facilitators: Dr. Rachel Anderson & Dr. Brian White

Nichole Cieslak

'The Impacts of SMS on Early Adolescents' Literacy Skills'

With an ever-growing technological force, the process and methodology that children use to develop their literacy skills are constantly evolving. With smartphones and tablets becoming exceedingly accessible, children are some of the first individuals to utilize the vast variety of social media platforms. Methods of building upon these foundational literacy skills have shifted, and teachers should adapt and utilize text messaging inside the classroom. Accumulated studies agree that using textisms (abbreviated words) benefits specific literacy skills. It will strengthen students' knowledge if educators take advantage of text messaging to adapt literacy education curriculum. My project aims to explain why and how text messaging can be utilized inside the classroom to promote and develop students' literacy skills. Students will be inspired to write and learn if educators leave traditional methods of teaching behind and include forms of writing that adolescent students use ubiquitously - text messaging.

Carli DeJager

'Slang and Social Media: The Negative Impacts on Teen Language' The way in which U.S teens speak and communicate has changed drastically due to the impact of social media. With slang on the rise, social media negatively affects forms of meaningful communication among teens. The main purpose of this paper is to discuss the negative influence that social media and slang has on the language of teenagers. Social media influences teens to feel as though they have to use slang to sound trendy, when in reality, slang is hurting their speech and writing skills. Using slang as an everyday form of speech poorly affects student success in the classroom.

Although an increase of social media use allows teens to communicate with friends and post through apps such as Instagram, the usage of slang due to social media is not beneficial for student learning and speech.

Aiden Martin

'Writing Instruction in the Digital Age: Technological Advancement and Best Practice'

With the advanced development of modern technology, the educational field will soon be undergoing rapid changes. In response to these changes, English teachers and school administrators will have to adapt instructional methods. Current research has revealed effects on education due to things such as digital note-taking and remote instruction, which will likely begin to occupy an even greater role in the classroom than they already do. It is also important to consider the implications of students accessibility to these technologies and school censoring of content that students both consume and create. The findings suggest a number of benefits and drawbacks to implementations of various technologies in a classroom environment. The purpose of this study is to outline the recent and ongoing evolution of classroomrelated technology, including ChatGPT, in order to inform best practices for current and future teachers when developing curriculum and modifying instruction.

2 p.m.

SESSION SIX

Panel 0

Lyric as Literature

KC 2259

Facilitators: Dr. Kathleen Blumreich & Dr. Rob Rozema

Kaleigh Soule 'Literary Masterminds' Music has taken over the world and the hearts of others for decades. There is something special about the connection that is found between the words of an artist and the ears that receive them. Two incredibly strong women have dominated this artistry. One of which being the renowned Taylor Swift, with her ability to speak to generations and bring people together with her lyrics. The other being Rupi Kaur, the poet who has created her platform on Instagram and taken the world by storm with the way she is able to relate and help others feel connected and not alone. The life story of each has played out for millions in the form of their art. I take a close look at each of their

work and life in order to determine what has caused the rise in popularity, and the part that social media has played in it.

Allison Blohm

'The Analysis of Taylor Swift's All Too Well (10 minute version)' Taylor Swift's version of All Too Well (10 minute version) is a masterpiece of a song filled with complexity and dives deep into the intricate mind of Swift. I will be analyzing in depth the way Swift portrays herself, and her feelings in this song. The way Swift analyzes her own experience using metaphors and similes in a very poetic way. I plan to indulge in the reasons behind what makes this song such a masterpiece and how her past experiences all lead to moments like this. Swift has had a very intense musical and life journey with other artists, record labels, and still continues to. With this I hope to shed light on the importance of Taylor Swift and why her music has such an impact on the people around her. Swift has a remarkable way of using her words and I look forward to being able to share the beauty of this song, and Swift as a whole.

Eddie Wesley 'Hip Hop & Literature'

In the past couple of years hip hop has become a wildly popular genre of music. Artists like Kendrick Lamar, Drake, J. Cole, Playboi Carti and more have been recognized for their creative music and unique lyrics. The purpose of this paper is to study how hip hop can be seen and incorporated in the arts of literature. Figurative language is a big part when we look at literature and the way artists incorporate similes, metaphors, and other forms of figurative language, in their lyrics is a major reason why we should look at it as literature. When many people think of literature, they refer to authors and poets, not knowing some hip hop artists are considered some of the best poets as well. Hip hop is currently seen as one of the most popular forms of music and polarized by today's youth. The focal point of the literature review centers on the history and use of hip hop in regards to language.

Panel P

Reinforcing Reluctant Readers

KC 2266

Facilitators: Roy Black &

Dr. Janet Navarro

Morgan Eddy

'Access to Non-Fiction Texts in Elementary Settings'

When an administrator, parent, or student walks into an elementary teacher's classroom, one of the first items they will see is the library. These libraries are filled with books from a variety of genres and allow students to discover their reading interests. However, is the accessibility and amount of each genre within these libraries equal? In this thesis, I will evaluate the access (physical location and quantity) of non-fiction texts in primary grades (K-3rd grade) and if there are any benefits or drawbacks for including non-fiction into this setting. My individual research will be conducted in K-3rd grade classrooms and school libraries in two separate schools. These findings will help me determine whether access to non-fiction is an issue within elementary schools and if solutions are necessary for student success.

Emma Raredon

'The Role Choice Reading Plays in Classroom Literacy Engagement' There is a large issue that can be seen when analyzing reading in a classroom setting. The fact is that students do not want to read. When the time for classroom reading comes, students' disgust towards the topic is very clear. Students lack a desire to read which sparks the question, how do we as educators inspire students' passion towards reading? This thesis will analyze and discuss the benefits that choice reading has on engagement from a literacy and overall classroom perspective. Through this analysis, the debate between choice and assigned text will be discussed, ultimately determining choice reading to be a solution towards ending students' distaste towards reading.

Sarah Flannery

'Shaking Up the Classroom: Introducing Literature Circles in Elementary School'

Picture a classroom full of elementary students sitting in perfectly aligned rows of desks. Their teacher stands in front of them, lecturing on comprehension problems to ensure they understand what the authors wrote down on the page. Their creative minds are overlooked. When they finally step foot into their upper-level English classrooms and are asked to interpret a piece of literature, their weary eyes stare back, for they only know how to tell you a summary of the book. Now, picture a classroom where the students sit in literature circles with books open in their laps. Their minds explode with creativity as they passionately discuss aspects of the literature with each other. When these students finally step foot into their upper-level English classrooms and are asked to interpret a piece of literature, their eyes boom with excitement. In my project, I explore how shaking up

the traditional teacher-centered classroom is key to helping students flourish in English language arts. Moving towards a student-based method of teaching, like literature circles, improves elementary students' learning about literature. Both current and future educators of elementary students will see how literature circles are a wonderfully proven technique to help students elicit literature discussion and should be taught in elementary school.

Natalie Lyon

'The Importance of Utilizing Creative Teaching Methods for Reading and Writing in Elementary Schools'

Elementary educators are given the job of teaching young children how to read and write. This is a complex and demanding task that is just one part of a day in school. Many believe that they can do this job best by keeping their practice traditional, with the expectation that all students will learn these crucial literacy skills because of teacher-centered traditional methods. Scholarly research suggests that traditional teaching methods are no longer effective and instead they should introduce creative teaching pedagogies, as this is best practice for young students. This analysis will explore ways of doing so and why it is crucial to promote learning literacy in creative ways beyond traditional methods. In my analysis, I argue that elementary schools should be implementing very creative ways of teaching to best serve students as aspiring readers and writers.

Panel Q KC 2270

Supporting Students' Literacy and Language Development

Facilitators: Dr. Lindsay Ellis &

Dr. Brian White

Olivia Kuiper

'Oral Language
Development and
Implications for
Audiobook Use in the
Classroom'

Throughout childhood, students have different exposures to the English language. Children must learn the language by listening in their early years. By the time they get to school age, schools expect students to have a sufficient range of vocabulary. Students whose parents read to them before bed or those with access to a wide range of literature have an advantage over their peers. A rich language is known for aiding reading development. Audiobooks have gained popularity over the last decade and are a tremendous oral reading support for students. Yet, there remains a debate over the effectiveness of audiobooks in the

classroom and in what contexts students should use them. This paper will analyze the discussion of audiobook usage for students underneath the framework of oral language and reading development.

Megan Crowley 'The Use of Nonstandard English Dialects in Children's and YA Books Throughout History'

Standard English is the name given to the "correct" way to speak and write in the English language, while nonstandard English refers to anything but the Standard. In the world of education today, the idea of there being a "Standard" English has become quite complex due to other forms of English spoken throughout our country, such as Black English and combinations of southern American dialects. This paper will examine different types of literature throughout history that contain nonstandard English dialects and the way the authors use this form of English dialect in their stories. It will also describe prior research on the topic of nonstandard English dialects and studies of students' reactions to reading books containing characters who speak in a dialect other than Standard English. By conducting research involving nonstandard English dialects in children's literature, it can add new insight into our societies' idea of Standards in language.

Jessie Chittenden 'The Dyslexia Debate'

Reading is an essential part of our education system. When we start school, we learn about letters, then we begin to put those letters together to read words, and soon we are reading sentences, then books, math problems, and textbooks about history and science. What if a student struggles to read? What if, despite the current school efforts, the student continues to fall further and further behind their peers? In my paper, I will examine a specific learning disability that affects 1 in 5 people, dyslexia. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that can be defined as persistent difficulty with learning to read and trouble with manipulating written language. My paper focuses on what it means to be dyslexic in our school system and what schools can do to better understand and support dyslexic students.

ENGLISH DEPT.

OLDENBURG WRITING CONTEST

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.

ENGLISH DEPT.

SCHOLARSHIPS

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 answers to the following questions:

- 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.

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