

Wordsworth

The Newsletter of Lewis & Clark's English
Department: Spring 2020-Summer 2021



Hello, Lewis & Clark students, alumni, and faculty! It's been two years since our last newsletter. With our staff both in-person and remote, we waited until now to synthesize our experiences into an adequate newsletter. To stray away from the overused coronavirus expressions like "whirlwind of a year" and "a year like no other," we start this newsletter a little differently...with a poem by our namesake.

William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" explores finding contentment in our own isolation. Additionally, the poem celebrates daffodils, and our campus's collection, thankfully, appeared merry and thriving this spring. Much like the flower, this past year has held occasion for the solitary and, surprisingly, the sublime.

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"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"

By: William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.



Campus daffodils by the reflecting pool. Photo taken by Kit Graf

We want to hear from you!

Drop us a line to let us know what you've been up to, where you're living, and what plans you're making. You can email the department at english@clark.edu or write to:

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Written & Compiled by Kit Graf
Edited by Amy Baskin

Intersection of Literature & Gender Studies: A Conversation with Gender Studies Symposium Co-Chairs Phoenix Bruner & Kendall Arlasky



The 2020–2021 Gender Studies Symposium (GSS) looked a little different this year with the move from on-campus events to online events. Additionally, these events had more of a literary focus. Bestselling author Carmen Maria Machado gave a keynote speech and professors of English, from Lewis & Clark as well as other institutions, featured throughout the schedule. And, notably, senior English major, Phoenix Bruner stood as a co-chair for the GSS. *Wordsworth* sat down with symposium co-chairs Phoenix and also senior SOAN major, Kendall Arlasky, and they spoke about their engagement with GSS, how this year contrasted past years, and what the intersection of literature and gender studies meant to them.

The theme “Lack & Absence,” Kendall explained, stemmed from reading from her class on Post-Modernist thinking. Originally, Kendall was interested in exploring “Invisibility & Visibility,” but wanted it to be broader, hence “Lack & Absence.” Finally, she landed on the question: “What if presence is not desirable?” Phoenix and Kendall believed that this question invited all sorts of responses to the theme as it “wasn’t our job to answer what’s missing, but instead to invite people to answer,” said Kendall. Phoenix added that “Lack & Absence” has a lot of negative connotations, “but we didn’t want to focus only on the negativity, as that much of gender studies focuses on lack of representation.” Instead, Phoenix explained, they wanted to frame the Symposium with the understanding that silence or absence can be healthy and safer for some people.

Both Kendall and Phoenix were involved in past Symposiums as attendees and had been scheduled to present last year, but their sessions were cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic precautionary measures. Kendall and Phoenix agreed that the biggest difference between past Symposiums and this event was the palpable loss of in-person community. Phoenix explained that there was “less bringing together of people you have never met before, from different schools and different parts of the country.” This was disappointing because of lost opportunities. Symposium planners focused on determining how to recreate the community through online spaces, taking into account that unavoidable difference. However, event moderators learned to form new avenues for community to develop through topics, conversation, and themes. The shift to online events allowed for unorthodox audiences and attendees to join, including families and friends of students and presenters which ushered in an new intimate dynamic that hadn’t been available in past years. Additionally, Phoenix mentioned that because there were no travel and accommodation expenses this year, GSS organizers allocated that money into garnering prominent speakers nationwide.

With this larger budget, GSS invited Carmen Maria Machado to speak about her recent memoir, *In the Dreamhouse*, which recounted her experiences in a toxic queer relationship. Kendall appreciated how Carmen “restructured her relationship with her identity and her queerness” through her writing. “Forming new relationships with your identity”, Kendall said, was what the intersection of literature and gender studies meant to her, because “you can play with relationships with your identity, using the written word.” Both Kendall and Phoenix mentioned that the focus on literature in the Symposium wasn’t intentional. For Phoenix, a literary approach was just the lens through which she naturally approached gender studies. For Kendall, her first gender studies class required her to read a Toni Morrison novel with which she found a deep connection. Phoenix added that, “English is the way I discovered gender studies because literature is another form of representation. You can study older literature or contemporary literature. Gender issues have always been present.” She explained, “There’s something really powerful about having yourself represented, to find yourself within a character.”



An Update from the Literary Review

This year the Literary Review has been accepting more and more visual art submissions and we are hoping to continue this trend in the coming years. We are always looking for new members, and board members in particular, who review submissions. You do not need to apply- we welcome any and all with open arms! We are currently in the process of publishing the 2020–2021 magazine, and it is the longest one that Lit Review has published in the last few years. If the club fair is in person next year, we plan to have copies of our 2019–2020 magazine “Head First” as well as our 2020–2021 edition to give out to LC students! Mary Szybist is the club sponsor and we received many poems from her classes. It is always exciting to see new poets submit their work!



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To submit, email your poetry, prose, art, etc. to lcreview@lclark.edu.

A Year of Remote English Events

Summer Literary Lunch Hour

In Summer 2020, the English Department kickstarted a summer reading series described as a “low-key and fun opportunity for English faculty, current students, recent alumni, and incoming students to get together and geek-out over literature.” The book club didn’t require any prior reading as the sessions mostly consisted of short pieces of poetry or prose. While the club was created in response to the closure of the school due to the pandemic, the department may reprise it in future summers.

For those interested in what we read, here is a list of the material covered by each professor:

Andrea Hibbard: “Jump / Rope,” “I saw Emmett Till this week at the grocery store,” and “sightseers” by Eve L. Ewing

Kurt Fosso: “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley

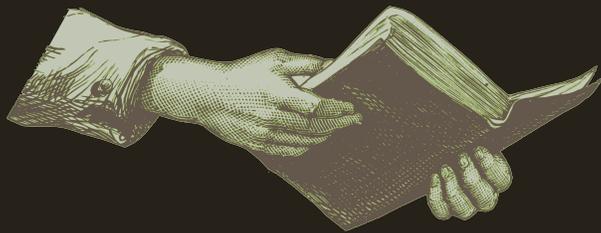
Mike Mirabile: *The Intuitionist* by Colson Whitehead, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan, and *Zero K* by Don DeLillo

Kristin Fujie: excerpts from *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, and from *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner

Will Pritchard: “To the Fair Clarinda, who made Love to me, imagin’d more than Woman” by Aphra Behn

Rishona Zimring: “Exile! Exile!” by Eavan Boland and “For the Sake of Retrieval” by Linda Bierds

Rachel Cole: “Tonight, in Oakland” by Danez Smith



An Abundance of Visitors

Despite remote and hybrid learning, we managed to have a wide variety of visitors come to our English classrooms through Zoom. As always, we had our fall and spring “Reading Series,” which brought a multitude of writers to our students. We were thrilled to have **Nikky Finney** join our series with her new book, *Love Child’s Hotbed of Occasional Poetry: Poems and Artifacts*. We also hosted in the fall **Elena Passarello**, **Alexia Arthurs**, **Charles Baxter**, and **Santi Elijah Holley**. In the spring, we hosted **Michael Torres**, **Yasin Kakande**, **Tim O’Connell**, **Amy Woolard**, **Allison Hutchcraft**, and **Stephen Dowden**.

Dickens Book Club

Starting in the Spring 2021 semester, Will Pritchard began the remote, extracurricular Dickens Book Club in which students and faculty read and participate in discussion of Charles Dickens’ *Little Dorrit* (1855-77). From January through April, the group read the novel in ten installments and passed around the role of discussion moderator each week. Emboldened by their success, the group also completed *David Copperfield* (1849-50) over the summer and on Monday, September 6, the group embarked on *Great Expectations* (1861). New members are always welcome to join!

Remote vs. Hybrid Teaching: How LC Professors Handled It

Remote-

Michael Mirabile: “While teaching remotely last year definitely presented challenges for the learning process, the experience was nevertheless a positive one. I am very grateful to the Lewis & Clark students for sustaining great interest and enthusiasm throughout these circumstances.

Working together, we were able to make the most of the technological format, finding ways to use features of the Zoom classroom—like breakout rooms, Google docs, etc.—to the benefit of group discussion. (We also found multiple ways to display and interact with visual materials like film clips.) The students made what could have been an isolating experience into a collaborative, productive, and fun experience. I am happy to return to campus this year but learned a lot in the previous year.”



Remote vs. Hybrid Teaching Cont'd...

Kurt Fosso: One of the first things Kurt said about his year as a fully remote instructor was going was, "It hasn't been that hard for me...I'm a bit of a hermit." He explained that he didn't mind being home that much, but he had been feeling the Zoom fatigue from "having to project so much more because you don't have a feel for the room." He encouraged all of his students to have their cameras on and to lean in so he could better figure out the class atmosphere, but mostly, Zoom has worked for his teaching. Kurt uses the William Blake Online Archives frequently and online screen sharing turned out to be an improvement. Kurt admits that online classes have made him "finally use Moodle, which I refused for fifteen years. Kurt says Moodle is actually "really convenient... even I use the syllabus that I put on Moodle." Still, Kurt missed in-person teaching, particularly in-person office hours and casual drop-ins for conversation.



Hybrid-

Will Pritchard: Last year, both students and faculty at Lewis & Clark were given a choice between "remote" and "in person." Several members of the English department taught all their classes from home on Zoom, but a majority were teaching on campus. Still, even professors who were in the classroom every day had students who were not. Some of my students had chosen the "remote" option for the semester. Others had to be periodically remote, since social distancing guidelines would not permit all the "in person" students in the classroom at once. Thus, almost every class I taught last year was "hybrid" or "mixed access," with one group of masked students in widely spaced rows in the classroom and another group Zooming in from home (or from a dorm room, the library, outside...). The Zoom folks, in their little windows, were projected on the big screen in the classroom and over the classroom speakers; we could see and hear them well, if they chose to be seen and heard. It was harder for the remote students to see and hear all that was going on in the classroom; we had one centrally located mic and (usually) two cameras – one on me, one on the rest of the class – that broadcast the classroom action as best as they could.

Many people have referred to hybrid instruction as "the worst of both worlds," but I kind of liked it. I'm a remote person to begin with; I've never minded a little social distance. And the technology never ceased to amaze me; it felt like a miracle and a victory every time those people in South Dakota, Texas, Minnesota, etc. popped up on the screen. Take that, COVID! Having two modes of participation also made me feel a little like Phil Donahue on his old talk show, when he used to ask, "Is the caller there?" I liked being the ringmaster of a two-ring circus. When one group flagged, the other could come to the rescue. And when no one saved us, when everything failed and a class went disastrously (as classes sometimes will, even in the best of years), I had the perfect, built-in excuse. What will I blame it on now?

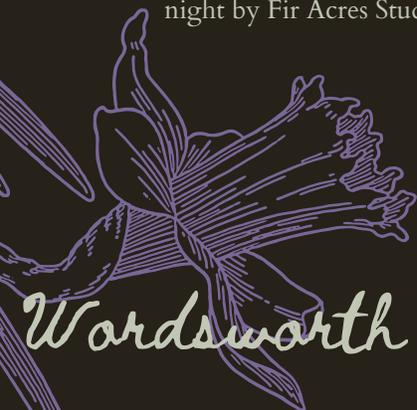
Running Fir Acres Writing Workshop Online

Despite hosting the two-week program online, the summer 2021 Fir Acres Writing Workshop was again a success. Due to the remote nature of the creative writing workshop, Director Don Waters secured a stellar faculty lineup: writers Alexia Arthurs, S. Yarberry (LC, '16), Mark Mayer, and Ashley Colley. He also decreased enrollment from 60 to 40 students so that the faculty could provide ample mentorship time with the students.

The first week focused on poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction workshops. During the second week, students explored elective classes including "Magical Realism" and "Social Justice and the Creative Writer" and met independently with faculty mentors. These 40 talented high schoolers came together online for workshops, visiting writer readings, anthology editor meetings, and casual hangout hours. The students Zoomed in from Brooklyn to Los Angeles, and even braved time zone challenges from Australia!

Participants formed a unique and encouraging community, which was evident in the Fir Acres Virtual Cafe, run night after night by Fir Acres Student Advisor Samantha Mueller '20.

Fir Acres was delighted to welcome Distinguished Visiting Writers as well: two LC faculty members Mary Szybist and Pauls Toutonghi, and also Kauai Hart Hemmings, author of *The Descendants*, who Zoomed in from her house in Hawaii. Fir Acres Writing Workshop staff, students, and faculty worked hard together to turn a year of isolation into two weeks of deeply creative and supportive fun. The program's final Friday evening event—"The Talent / No Talent Show"—was scheduled for an hour and a half, but after witnessing student and staff volunteers dance, recite prose and poetry, play instruments, and perform self-written guitar songs, the community stayed up and celebrated well into the night.



New Courses

Kurt Fosso's "Animals & Animal Rights in Literature" Course

Starting in Fall 2020, Kurt Fosso's "Animals & Animal Rights in Literature" (ENG 276) course has drawn in a large number of students from different majors and beliefs. Kurt explained, "The course has had a pretty broad spectrum of students [he laughed]...some are vegan!" The class is a 200-level course, meaning that anyone can take it, plus, it counts for an ENVS credit, bringing in a larger STEM crowd. Because of the environmental component in the course, Kurt said that it needed to be partially reconstructed, culminating into the addition of a scientific research project to the course. Kurt had been wanting to make the course since 2017, knowing he wanted to somehow teach about the environment and animals. Over time, he narrowed down his idea because his personal scholarship had become more focused on animals. Kurt mentioned that his personal work was specifically in romantic texts like Wordsworth, Blake, and Keats. "Mostly," he said, "I gotta teach what I'm working with...and what's near and dear to me."



Andrea Hibbard's "Law & Literature" Course

Andrea Hibbard's "Law & Literature" (ENG 271) is a new course offering this fall. The course, which builds on professor Hibbard's scholarship on the intersection of nineteenth-century novels, spectacular court cases, and gender studies, is designed to appeal to prelaw students and English majors. Her interest in the subject grew out of her love of Victorian sensation novels of the 1860s. In an interview, she explained that "These wildly popular novels catered to a Victorian fascination with dangerous women, crime reporting, detectives, and courtroom dramas. Often, they fictionalized real trials." In ENG 271, students bring legal cases and constructs to bear on fiction, even as they also use methods of literary interpretation and theories of narrative to construe real trials and legal documents. The class will focus on works by Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, Edgar Allan Poe, Nella Larsen, Bernard Schlink, and Hannah Arendt, among others. To what extent can we read high profile trials as storytelling contests that pit one genre against another? How do similar ideas about character and representation inform literary criticism and legal doctrine? How does the literary device of the unreliable narrator illuminate the problem of testimonial injustice? What is the relationship between legal and poetic justice? These are just a few of the questions professor Hibbard hopes to entertain in her class this semester.

Faculty & Staff Updates

Karen Gross received the Lorry Lokey Faculty Excellence Award along with professors **Margaret Metz** (Biology) and **Elliott Young** (History). The award "prioritizes and celebrates inspirational leadership, rigorous scholarship, and creative accomplishments in the classroom and in the broader academic community." English Faculty **Rishona Zimring** and **Pauls Toutonghi** are also past Lokey Award recipients. Last summer, Karen participated in "Law and Culture in Medieval England," a summer institute sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities. She also helped the College acquire a rare Italian book of hours for the Watzek Library's Special Collections and Archives. The manuscript is valued at more than \$45,000 and Karen worked with Head of Special Collections Hannah Crummé to obtain a highly competitive grant from the B.H. Breslauer Foundation to underwrite the purchase. The book will be used in her Spring 2022 "Working with Medieval Manuscripts" course, where students learn about the development of manuscripts in the Middle Ages.

Andrea Hibbard is now in charge of helping CAS students explore taking classes and/or transition to the Lewis & Clark Law School. With this, Andrea is also teaching a class called "Law & Literature" this fall, which focuses on the intersection of the two disciplines.

Kurt Fosso plans to develop his new senior seminar on "Frankenstein and the Shelleys"—including such other works as Percy's "Mont Blanc" and "Ozymandias" and Mary's novella *Mathilda*. He'll also be continuing his research and writing on the representation of animals in the poetry and prose of John Keats.

Lyell Asher's essay, "Villanova and the Compulsory Pieties of Higher Education" was published in the online magazine, *Quillette*, in November 2019. Shortly following, Lyell's essay, "Look Who's Talking About Educational Equity" was published in *Quillette* in August 2020. Additionally, Lyell appeared on an episode of the Foundation of Individual Rights in Education (FIRE)'s podcast episode entitled, "Are Education Schools Secretly Driving Campus Censorship?" The episode is available on YouTube.



Faculty & Staff Updates Cont'd...

Jerry Harp has some recent poems appearing in *Dappled Things*, *Hubbub*, and *Otis Nebula*. His short story “Marathon” appeared in the June issue of *Mississippi Review*. He is currently finishing an essay, “In the Nick: Theatre in and of Our Times” (about the LC production of Anne Carson’s *Antigonick*, directed by Rebecca Lingafelter), for a collection, edited by Sindy Homan, titled *Why the Theatre: Personal Essays by College Teachers, Directors, and Actors on Why the Theatre is So Vital*, forthcoming from Routledge in 2021.

Michael Mirabile is currently working toward the completion of a book project on film noir, with the title *Edges of Noir: Extreme Filmmaking in 1960s America*. Since last September he has participated in the Literature/ Film Association Conference and the Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference, and will participate in the upcoming Modernist Studies Association Conference.

Amy Baskin is the new Administrative Coordinator for the 4th Floor Departments of English and History, and for the Fir Acres Writing Workshop. For the past 6 years, she has served as the Community Friends Coordinator, connecting LC international students with local volunteers to help them feel welcome and at home during their time at LC. An award-winning writer and editor with 20+ years in the fields of poetry, k-12 education, and grant writing, her work is currently featured in *Pirene's Fountain*, *Friends Journal*, *Blue Heron Review*, and forthcoming in *Pilgrimage*. She is a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net nominee, an Oregon Literary Arts fellow, and an Oregon Poetry Association prize winner. Amy is excited to assist all denizens of 4th Floor Miller and encourages both students and faculty to come and say hello!



Student Honors & Awards

2020 & 2021 Dixon Award Recipients:

Ashley O’Leary, Riley Hanna, and Justin Howerton

The Dixon Award, made possible through the generosity of alumni Hillary (*99) and Adam (*01) Dixon, supports rising seniors in independent summer research projects. The work of our 2020 recipients, **Justin Howerton** and **Riley Hanna**, was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Justin Howerton planned to attend the annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference and to examine Faulkner’s papers at the University of Mississippi, with particular interest in Faulkner’s development as a poet. Riley Hanna proposed visiting the University of Washington to study the personal library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf and the Hogarth Press Collection. The 2021 Dixon Award winner, **Ashley O’Leary**, used the Dixon Award to support her archival research into Charles Dickens’ role as an editor of women writers and to support her participation in the 40th Annual Dickens Universe sponsored by UC Santa Cruz.

2020 & 2021 Jerry Baum Award

Recipients: Bryan Miller & Julianna Volta

The Jerry Baum Award recognizes outstanding seniors whose seminar papers address the relationship between literature and history. **Bryan Miller** received the 2020 Baum Award for “One Man in a Century: Nabokov’s Struggles Against History in *Bend Sinister* and *Speak, Memory*.” Bryan’s paper focused on two books by Nabokov: *Bend Sinister*, Nabokov’s first novel written in America, and *Speak, Memory*, his memoir of his life before coming to America. Bryan examined the versions or models of history encoded in each book and contrasted two types of history: one that is tyrannical and authoritarian, and one that is more personal and less ideological. **Julianna Volta** received the 2021 Baum Award for her essay “The Art of Collaboration,” which sensitively explores Virginia Woolf’s exchanges with Vanessa Bell, Katherine Mansfield, and Vita Sackville-West. Julianna extensively studied the letters exchanged among these artists, weaving insights from the correspondence into readings of Woolf’s short fiction and, by extension, offering different models of the fluid process of literary influence. There were two 2021 Baum Award Honorable Mentions: **Tobias Luongo**, “Something Worth Listening to: The Music and Blither in Modernist Short Fiction by Woolf and Mansfield,” and **Brendan Mitchell**, “Modest Stature, Great Heights: Keats’s travels in the summer of 1818 and their influence on his poetic development.”



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Student Honors & Awards Cont'd...



2020 Honors Theses Recipient

In 2020, **Maura Phillips** received honors for her thesis, “The Edges of Imagination: Women, Art, and Desire in Keats’s Late Romances.” In Maura’s careful reading, Keats struggles to redeem the unruly desires of his female heroines like Lamia (“Lamia”) and Madeline (“The Eve of St. Agnes”), allowing them to rise above constraining gender norms even as they seem to confirm such prescribed roles as femme fatale and virginal bride. Maura outlines a liberating path for Keats’s female characters and exhorts the readers as well to assist in that liberation.

2021 Honors Theses Recipients

Mackey Estelle, “Obverse Reflections: Racial Interdependence in Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*” Mackey’s thesis explores Faulkner’s treatment of race in two of his most difficult novels. Mackey impressed us with his careful attention to the complexities and nuances of Faulkner’s language, his polished prose, and his courageous engagement with difficult and sensitive material. This is a thoughtful and thought-provoking essay that opens up new perspectives on Faulkner’s treatment of race.

Riley Hanna, “‘Tiny Beads of Pure Life’: Insects, Snails, and Hidden Gems in Virginia Woolf’s Short Fiction.” Riley developed keen insights about Woolf’s experiments with form and posed important questions about animal consciousness and the ethics of literary imagination. Through insightful and carefully crafted interpretations, Riley modelled to readers how to share with Woolf and other modernists’ newfound appreciation for the tiny creatures and treasures that lie beneath our feet.

Justin Howerton, “‘It must matter’: Judith Sutpen’s Embrace of the Ephemeral in *Absalom, Absalom!*” Judith Sutpen only speaks at length in one instance, but in Justin’s reading, this scene levels a powerful critique of the novel’s male characters and their obsession with immortality. Justin demonstrates how Judith sets herself apart by embracing ephemerality over immortality. What matters in human life is not leaving a permanent mark, but acknowledging the fleeting interactions that happen between human beings. This is an ambitious, insightful, conversation-inspiring essay.

Mattie Sienknecht, “Katherine Mansfield’s ‘Greensickness’: Primitivism, Sophistication and the ‘Call of the Wild’” Mattie’s thesis dazzled with its panoramic range, drawing from diary entries, to French and Scottish Fauvist art, and some of Mansfield’s greatest literary masterpieces produced at the height of her career. Taking on the complex topic of “greensickness,” Mattie’s essay offers a persuasive and powerful explanation of how wildness attracts artists seeking subversion, freedom, and sublimity, bringing us to new understandings of the call of the wild.

2020 & 2021 Senior Poetry Prize Award

The 2020 Vern Rutsala Academy of American Poets Prize was awarded to **Ben Virgin** for his poem “Cow.” Two honorable mentions of 2020 were named: **Skyler Pia** for “A Plaster Cast” and **Lucas Martinez** for “Duerme Negro.” The 2021 Vern Rutsala Academy of American Poets Prize went to **Devin Poleyumptewa** for her poem “There is no word ‘Ahwatukee’ in the Crow language.” Devin’s poem was praised for its rich imagery and its risks, exhibiting just the right balance of elucidation and mystery. **Ailish Duff** was chosen as 2021 honorable mention for their poem “Chicken Stewards.”

2020 & 2021 Senior Fiction Prize

The 2020 Fiction Prize was shared by “Forgive Us Our Trespasses” by **Anna DeSmet**, a story that “wasn’t afraid to address difficult questions,” and “What Walks with Them” by **Kaes Vanderspek**, singled out for its “piercing, poetic voice.” In 2021 Fiction Prize was presented to **Yash-shree Raj Bisht** for their story, “Lost Child.” The judge remarked that “The prose in ‘Lost Child’ flows beautifully and is filled with striking imagery — a broken tooth, unspooled cassette tapes.” Other stories of distinction from 2021 are **Sophie Gauthier**, “A Fishing Story,” and **Julianna Volta**, “Calm Waters.”



*Congratulations to the Classes of 2020 & 2021!
Congratulations to our honorees and to all our graduates!
We are proud of all of your accomplishments,
and we are so thankful to have had the
opportunity to learn with you.
Much love to you from all of us in English!*

Wardsworth

A Letter from the Chair, Karen Gross

Dear Friends of the English Department,

Golly, it has been a while since our last issue of *Wordsworth!* A lot has changed since our Summer 2019 newsletter.

You may notice a new name signing this Chair's Letter: in summer 2020 Associate Professor Rachel Cole wrapped up her years of service as Chair and is currently on a well-earned sabbatical. Thank you, Rachel, for your leadership!

If you were on the fourth floor of Miller, you would have seen that other names have changed as well. After heartily congratulating Debbie Richman on her promotion to Executive Assistant to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences in September 2019, we welcomed Kristin Brown as our Administrative Coordinator. Kristin had barely gotten her sea legs before the College's closure in March 2020, and she valiantly supported us as we pivoted to doing all work in a remote or hybrid format. Last summer, Kristin made the difficult decision to resign the position to concentrate on family matters. Thank you, Kristin, for your hard work, creativity, and buoyancy: we are grateful for your help in steering our fourth-floor ship during such troubled waters. Thankfully, we now have a new Administrative Coordinator: just after Labor Day, Amy Baskin joined Team Miller, and she has already proven herself an All-Star. Assisting in this period of transition has been our indomitable work-study, Kit Graf.

Wordsworth 2019 was also abuzz with news about writers whom the department hosted in public readings, English majors' involvement in performance activities and archival research, faculty travels to conferences. Our tidings from these last two years look a little different. But we persisted in doing what we love to do together, even if Zoom proves a weak simulacrum. As I remarked to the seniors in our virtual send-off to the Class of 2021:

It is a cliché to say that this last year has been apocalyptic, especially here in Portland, which has endured wildfires and ice storms along with other challenges. However, as someone who researches medieval Apocalypse manuscripts, I can say that reducing the Apocalypse to crisis—just as reducing your college experience to this one extraordinary year—distorts them both of their power and their beauty. The Apocalypse can also be a template for moral reflection, an opportunity to recognize the wonders of this world, a wild adventure, a beginning as much as an ending. At its root, Apocalypse is an unveiling, and that is what you have done in your time with us, not just this year, but in your entire journey with us.

You have revealed yourselves to be intellectually curious and undaunted by difficulty. You have shown yourselves to be compassionate and generous to each other, to us, your teachers, and to the texts we have read together. You have argued persuasively; you have researched and written senior capstones; you have composed poetry, fiction, and nonfiction; some of you have edited literary reviews; some of you wrote honors theses. All of you have demonstrated your great capacities for strength and grace.

Thank you, all students, faculty, and staff in our community. In September 2021, the English Department hosted its first in-person event in almost eighteen months—a reading from our very own creative writing faculty to celebrate our newly expanded sequence in creative nonfiction. The details about that event are reserved for *Wordsworth* 2022, but let me close by saying that, in my witnessing the exuberance, joy, and wonder found in sharing the powers of literary art in company of others, I can attest that our community is emerging from this period as vibrant as ever. Alumni, please feel free to join our virtual reading groups as well as attend our events if you are in the area. (Check event details for special pandemic protocols.) Should you have news to share, please email us at english@lclark.edu. We'd love to re-connect.

In the meantime, English wishes you a restorative year.

Until our next installment,



Karen Elizabeth Gross
Associate Professor and Chair of English